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PROFESSIONAL LEVEL AUTOMATED APPLICATIONS BETWEEN 1983 AND 1987

MARCH, 1987

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I. INTRODUCTION

In late 1980, the Suffolk County Probation Department introduced word processing and information processing technology to the production of Court ordered investigations and the previously totally manual system of records maintenance. In 1981, the Probation Department dramatically expanded its use of automation especially in the area of records maintenance. Between 1980 and the present, expansion of automated word and case processing applications has been constant, and clerical productivity has increased dramatically as a result.

In addition, since 1983, Probation has also attempted to increase professional level productivity using a variety of automated applications. This effort has been quite successful and this report describes eleven of these projects. Each automated application is presented in this report using the following format: 1) Problem/ Concern; 2) Solution; 3) County Role; 4) Costs; 5) Results; and 6) Contact Person or Persons. The most recent programs are presented first.

In addition, Section VI presents the rationale and design of the Probation Automated Systems Planning Committee which was implemented to develop and continuously update a comprehensive Departmental automation plan.

II. PROBATION AUTOMATED FAMILY COURT SYSTEMS PROJECT:

PROGRAM SUMMARY

PROBLEM/CONCERN:

The Family Court Division of the Probation Department is charged with the responsibility to provide a referral service for Suffolk County residents within the framework of the New York State Family Court Act. Intake referrals are screened by Probation Officers and those cases requiring legal intervention are brought before the Court through legal instruments known as "Petitions". Matters such as Family Offenses, Custody Proceedings, Truancy and Juvenile Criminal Offenses all necessitate the filing of a petition before a legal adjudication can be considered. Depending on the nature of the allocation, a petition can be from two to six pages in length. In 1986 alone, the Probation Department filed 11,000 such petitions for both walk-in and scheduled clients. Each petition document is handwritten by the Probation Officer, drafted on a typewriter, and returned to the Probation Officer for corrections before the final is typed. While the redundant draft is a continual problem, a major bottleneck occurs on busy days. When several clients are being serviced the entire process creates backlogs that result in delays of up to an hour. During this time the client is left waiting and the Probation Officer is continually interrupted during the next interview. While pre-formated documents do help, the data must still be typed twice. This problem is further exacerbated by a change in procedure. Formerly, a Support petition could be filed on behalf of all the children residing in the home. Under a new statute, a separate petition must be filed for each child. This single change will result in a projected annual workload increase of 13.5% or 1500 petitions. This is on top of a 1987 projected workload increase of 15% or 1,650 referrals. Thus, in 1987 the Family Court Division can expect an estimated overall workload increase of 30% or a total of 14,150 petitions. Under the present workload demands, the manual systems have been taxed beyond capacity. Budgetary restraints prevent the addition of both professional and clerical staff, and the increases are imminent. If the Department was to meet it's legal mandates, a plan for more productive use of existing resources had to be designed.

SOLUTION:

Prior planning reports had indicated that workload in the Family Court Division was exceeding capacity. As such, the Probation Department's Data Committee began needs assessment and PERT analysis to determine what systems could be automated to accommodate the projected increases. Critical areas of available personnel, hardware, and software received priority since the utilization of these individuals and items would be the key to a stable solution. In addition, petition process work flow was studied along with current data paths to determine how a new data collection point could be integrated into actual operations with a minimum of modification. While in the planning stage, the committee also considered problems inherent in the manual petition design and solicited changes that could be incorporated into the new project. All proposed changes were coordinated with Family Court Administration. Once all facets of the project had been closely examined, data

SOLUTIONS: Continued

processing staff began the task of designing an application program on existing hardware that would meet the needs of the project and permit enough flexibility to handle changes as dictated by other agencies and internal staff. The resulting solution met the criterion for the original design without the need for additional staff.

The first step was to establish a data collection point by placing a computer terminal at the Intake window where referrals are initiated. The operator enters pertinent data into a Master file and assigns the referral to a Probation Officer. In addition, the operator checks the Master file to determine any historical data that may have been gathered from a previous referral and attaches the information for the Probation Officer's perusal.

Next, as clients are interviewed, the Probation Officer will fill out a worksheet in a data list format. This data will consist of both identifying variables and descriptive text. The handwritten copy will then be given to one of three typists currently assigned to type petitions.

With the addition of three new terminals, it will be possible to type petitions on the existing computer system. The typist enters the data from the Probation Officer's data sheet into a terminal exactly as it appears on the sheet. Document formats for the 23 different types of petitions are resident in the computer. Using the files processing capabilities of the software, the program will merge the data with the appropriate petition format to electronically generate the draft of the petition. The draft will be returned to the Officer for review and correction. Since the petition is now an existing word processing document it is simply a matter of making on-screen corrections before the final document is ready for signature. This process reduces typing entry by 60% since all redundant entry of data and text is eliminated.

COUNTY ROLE:

As a result of cooperation between the Probation Department's Data Committee and the County's Data Steering Committee, funds were approved for the purchase of four computer terminals to handle the volume of data entry required by the Project. This approval cleared the way for a one time expenditure of $14,100.00 for required hardware and software.

COSTS:

As stated above, $14,100.00 was spent on equipment. No additional personnel were required since existing clerical personnel were used for the Project. This expenditure covered all hardware, software and supplies. While indirect costs are incurred for design testing and training, these functions are performed by existing data processing staff.

RESULTS:

The program has exceeded initial expectations. Working with a Master File technique, critical data can be utilized in several different operations. File updates are handled through background processing and a permanent transaction file is created. The transaction file can then be used for statistics, MIS, historical reference or accounting purposes. Previously these tasks were all completed manually. The process is so efficient that simple petitions can be entered into a terminal by the Probation Officer during the interview, thereby eliminating the clerical handling. The Project will reduce waiting time for clients, improve work flow of the petition process, increase productivity of available staff and reduced turnover time for filing petitions. The improvements are possible since first, only unique data needs to be typed; second, multiple petitions for the same individual are simply duplicates of the original with appropriate changes made by the word processor; and finally the Master file acts as an electronic card filing system. The productivity gains will allow the Family Court Division to assimilate a 30% workload increase at current staff levels. In addition, there will be an additional cost saving through the elimination of over 50 different pages of pre-printed forms that will be generated by the computer.

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III. PROBATION CONDITIONAL DISCHARGE RESTITUTION PROJECT:

PROGRAM SUMMARY

PROBLEM/CONCERN:

The Suffolk County Court system frequently uses restitution to compensate victims of crime. Restitution is generally ordered in cases where a monetary loss, such as property damage or uncollected debts, is the result of an act that violates a section of the Penal Law. In a County of 1.3 million residents, hundreds of defendants were sentenced each year to a Conditional Discharge with the condition that they pay restitution. This created a problem since the Courts had no system to actively monitor Conditional Discharge cases. The only method of informing the Court of a defendant's failure to pay was for the Complainant to come forth and file a statement of delinquency. A significant portion of the Conditional Discharge cases went unsatisfied since the victims were unaware of their rights or intimidated by the process. Through diligence the Courts and the ADA would cross-reference cases and catch those delinquent defendants who returned to Court if they appeared for a subsequent charge. It was evident that, without proper safeguards, Judges were reluctant to impose a sentence of Conditional Discharge in cases where simple restitution could have satisfied justice. When the reparation was for a significant amount, the Court was even more inclined to sentence low risk defendants to probation in order to insure collection. These factors combined to reduce the legitimate and effective use of a Conditional Discharge sentence as an appropriate judicial prerogative.

SOLUTION:

The Probation Department has always been responsible for the collection, posting and disbursement of restitution owed by those offenders sentenced to Probation. Recently, the Suffolk County Probation Department instituted an automated restitution tracking system to handle these responsibilities. Since an automated system was already in place, it was clear that an interagency coordinated effort could extend unsupervised monitoring to Conditional Discharge cases. Working in cooperation with the Judges, the District Attorney's Office and the Court Clerk's Office, the Probation Department incorporated Conditional Discharge cases into the automated restitution system. Under the new system, Conditional Discharge cases with restitution are directed by the Judge to report to the Probation Liaison office where court documents are copied and sent to Probation Restitution Accounting. The cases are then entered into the computer in the same manner as a standard probation restitution case. The only difference being that an officer is not assigned to supervise the case. In effect a "tickler file" monitors the case. If the defendant defaults on restitution, the computer automatically generates a letter, notifying the Court Clerk to place the case back on the court calendar. In addition, the legal instrument, known as

SOLUTIONS: Continued

a "Declaration of Delinquency" is generated by the computer and used by the ADA for further prosecution. Finally, a letter is generated to the complainant informing him/her of the new court action which has been filed on their behalf. This simple system has established a Conditional Discharge as a viable alternative sentence. By utilizing the existing resources and procedures of the various agencies involved in the legal process, a cost effective system was established to better serve the community.

COUNTY'S ROLE:

Suffolk County encourages interagency cooperation to coordinate matters of mutual concern and benefit. The administrators for each agency involved in this project met several times to coordinate this effort and established clear communication lines to help resolve problems as they were manifested. This technique allowed solutions to be instituted informally on the interactive staff level where day to day operations are centered. Efficiency was realized since communications were handled dynamically rather than through formal interdepartmental channels.

COSTS:

The institution of this system resulted in no appreciable cost to the County or any agency involved. Since the the Court Clerk, District Attorney and Probation all were initially responsible for separate parts of the system, the coordinate effort simply modified existing procedures and resources to produce a unified solution to a mutual problem. In fact, capital is actually generated since a 5% surcharge is levied on all funds collected.

RESULTS:

Since January of 1986, the Probation Department has collected $163,241.63 in restitution from 610 Conditional Discharge cases sentenced through the Suffolk Court system. Of the total cases sentenced, 101 Declaration of Delinquencies were filed. From these 101 delinquent accounts, 65 defendants were returned to court for further action and eventually paid a total of $30,682.51. The remaining 36 delinquent accounts are pending. These figures are a direct result of the computer monitoring project. In addition, the Conditional Discharge cases have generated $8,162.00 in surcharge collections to be deposited into the County's General Fund.

While less tangible, the system has resulted in better service to victims and monitored accountability of the unsupervised defendant. Judges have expressed confidence in the Conditional Discharge sentence and there is a reduction in clerical output. While the impact on Probation has yet to be measured, reason dictates that the increased use of Conditional Discharge sentences should reduce referrals to the Department.

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IV. PROBATION AUTOMATED ARCHIVING PROCESS:

PROGRAM SUMMARY

PROBLEM/CONCERN:

The Probation Department provides the Courts with over 8,000 pre-sentence investigations a year. Since automation was first introduced, over one million pages of text have been generated. Our System's storage capacity is only 60,000 pages or 130 megabytes. Therefore, memory purging is a necessary task and was performed by each clerical operator on an individual basis. Due to the development of automated procedures more and more operators were creating automated documents, which in turn, created a critical need for intense memory management. The individual interactive process for archiving data was tedious, error prone and time consuming. Each operator took an average of up to two hours per week to complete the archiving and purging tasks.

Additionally, archived documents are referred to frequently and portions of old cases can be added to pre-sentence investigations when an old case is reopened. This process utilizes the advantages of word processing by reducing the need for retyping and also saving the probation officer from redictating. Unfortunately, the process of locating an archived document was extremely difficult and time consuming. The archived documents were listed in the order of the diskette number on which they were archived. This order was impractical for reference purposes since pre-sentence investigations are identified by the defendant's name, case number and sentence date. Because each operator performed their own archiving, individual archiving systems developed which made locating archived documents even more difficult. Locating the document meant poring through pages and pages of listings of diskettes contents by approximating the diskette number on the assumption that the operator archived the document near the time of the sentence date.

Due to these problems, it was necessary to provide a systematic archiving and purging process which would be more efficient. Institution of this type of process would provide an easier way of locating archived documents resulting in increased productivity for both the clerical and probation officer staff.

SOLUTION:

In an effort to provide a more unified system, an automation method of archiving and purging was devised. The new procedure is performed by one operator who initiates it once weekly. Because all documents created need not be archived, this automated procedure selects the documents by the type of document and the sentence date. This one program also selects documents which are to be purged from the system without being archived. These selections are done automatically and in the background. The operator initiates the program and can continue with other work. This procedure takes one operator approximately 15 minutes to initiate as opposed to two hours of interactive working per operator with the previous method.

SOLUTION: (Cont.)

In addition, after the documents have been archived, the names and diskette numbers are automatically transferred to an on-line Master Index file which can be referenced by all operators. This file is sequenced by the document name which is comprised of a code for the type of document, the defendant's last name and the case number. Locating previously archived documents is reduced to a simple task of querying this file. Furthermore, a trained operator can find a document just by knowing the defendant's last name or case number. As a result, any operator can actually locate, retrieve, revise or print any document that has been archived since installation of the system. The revised Master Index file takes up less memory space and productivity is improved since location of previously archived documents is reduced to a task taking a few seconds rather than 15 to 30 minutes.

From this Master Index file, a printed alphabetical index is created and updated twice yearly. This printed document affords file room and professional staff, who do not have access to a terminal, knowledge of archived documents. With this knowledge, they can make simple requests for previous documents with the necessary information for trained clerical staff to quickly retrieve these documents.

COUNTY ROLE:

The Data Processing Department of the county provides guidelines for storage of automated documents. Off-line storage is required to insure the integrity of the system. In addition, due to the nature of the documents, secured access to these documents is imperative. Because these documents are stored off-line on diskettes, access is limited to trained operators.

COSTS:

No additional costs were incurred. This process required no additional personnel or equipment.

RESULTS:

The automated archiving system provided favorable results. Due to the fact that only one operator is responsible for the archiving, the system has become much more uniform and consistent. System memory remains at a constant percentage level which allows for productive processing time. This process saves an average of two hours per week for each of eight operators which calculates to a savings of 832 clerical man-hours per year.

RESULTS: (Cont.)

Since the creation of the automated Master Index file, the retrieval feature is more readily used. This index allows instant access to over 1,000 diskettes containing approximately 74 documents each. Because the retrieval process has been reduced to a simple query, trained clerical staff are capable of locating and using previously typed reports. Also, because a printed index listing is available to other staff, the requests for previously typed information are made more frequently. Since the initiation of this procedure, retrievals of previously archived documents has been an average of 9 per week. For each retrieved document, an average of 50 minutes of typing time has been eliminated due to reusing previously typed material. This provides an additional savings of 390 clerical man-hours per year.

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V. PROBATION AUTOMATED RESTITUTION PROJECT:

PROJECT SUMMARY:

As a result of Chapter 965 of the Laws of 1984, The Suffolk County Probation Department was designated as the agency responsible for the collection and administration of restitution and reparation payments for the Criminal Courts in Suffolk County by the County Executive. Previously the accounting section of the Probation Department carried approximately 1100 restitution cases at any particular time. However, the changes in the new law with regard to surcharges, interest, undisbursed payments and reporting requirements served to significantly compound the complexity of the necessary accounting procedures. In view of the changes occasioned by the new law, and the complexity of the accounting procedures involved, the Department analysed the system previously utilized to handle restitution payments as well as the requirements of the new law and developed a plan to faithfully discharge the responsibility entrusted to us.

The plan devised involves the centralization of the collection and disbursement of restitution as well as the automation of the restitution system. The efficient operation of this system required the intergration of the IBM 5520 word and files processing system in operation in the Yaphank office of the Probation Department with an IBM PC XT microcomputer. As configured, this system has been able to process restitution payments made by probationers, cut checks and produce correspondence to victims, keep the books necessary for the accounting portion of the function and produce various reports necessary for the efficent operation of the system as well as those required by the State.

The cost of the hardware necessary to implement this plan was limited to the purchase price of the IBM PC XT, a printer and the hardware required to connect the PC XT to the IBM 5520.

As of November 1, 1984 the laws governing restitution were modified to ensure that more crime victims would be compensated for their losses as well as allowing for the imposition of a 5% surcharge by the court. These changes necessitated the development of a new system of restitution collection and disbursement that is both efficient and in compliance with the requirements of the new law. The system developed had to be able to integrate a data base with a number of specific tasks to effectively manage the restitution account. It was believed that the best way to accomplish this was through the centralized collection and disbursement of restitution.

The entry point to this system is when a judge orders restitution or reparations as a part of the sentence in a criminal proceeding. The court order, along with the necessary supporting material, is delivered to the centralized restitution unit for processing. Once received

by the restitution unit the case is added to the files interactively through an on-line terminal. This system employes three files linked by a unique identifier. One file contains information on the defendant as well as restitution account information. The second file contains data on the complainant(s) such as name, address, amount owed to a complainant, etc. The third file holds balances and totaling accumulators.

After a case is included in the files, the computer determines if the particular case falls under the new law, if so, the system merges certain data from the files with a text document to produce a form letter notifying the complainant that restitution has been ordered and at what rate it is to be paid. However, if the case does not come under the provisions of the new law, this letter is not produced.

Once a case is on the file, the restitution staff can easily ascertain the current status of that case by simply calling up the record and viewing it on the terminal screen or by producing a hard copy on a printer. Maintenance of the records on this interactive system is simple and immediate. The file update module has been designed so that when an operator makes an entry through the keyboard, that entry results in the immediate modification of that record in the file.

The second major task for the system is the processing of restitution payments made by probationers. The first part of this task requires an operator to enter the date and amount of the payment onto the file. The computer then performs several additional tasks to properly update various accumulators and fields necessary for bookkeeping and report production. The computer first determines if the 5% surcharge is applicable in the particular case. If so it separates the surcharge amount from the restitution payment and credits both the defendant's individual surcharge accumulator and the monthly surcharge accumulator for all cases. Next the system determines if the last restitution disbursement for a particular defendant was made from the restitution account or the I.P.U. account and the restitution portion of the payment is credited to the appropriate account. Additionally, various accumulators and fields are updated where appropriate.

At the end of each day the totals in the restitution and I.P.U. accumulators are used to produce deposit slips for each account. Once the deposit slips are produced, these accumulators are reset to zero so that they are available for use the next day.

The third major task this system accomplishes is the disbursement of restitution. As designed, this system is able to produce the checks necessary to efficiently disburse

restitution on a monthly basis. If there is a balance on hand in the defendants file, the system matches that record against the complainant file and sends out the correct amount to each complainant, updating all appropriate fields in both files as it does so. At the same time that it cuts the checks, the system also merges data from the files with a text document to produce a cover letter to be mailed with each check. Additionally, the system writes a check to the County Treasurer for the amount in the surcharge accumulator on a monthly basis.

Any interest earned in the restitution account is deposited into the I.P.U. account on a monthly basis. Additionally, if the department is unable to locate a complainant and thus cannot disburse restitution to that complainant, after one year the restitution paid by the defendant will be transferred from the restitution account into the I.P.U. account. Monies in the I.P.U. account are available for disbursement to complainants who have not received restitution for a period of 60 days on the basis of who hasn't received payment for the longest time.

The system is also able to produce various reports on a daily, weekly, monthly, and as requested basis using information available in the files. It produces weekly transaction reports by P.O. and defendant. On a monthly basis, the system produces a report, by P.O., of all those probationers who failed to make their restitution payments. At the same time that the missed restitution report is being produced, the system produces a letter to the probationer informing him that his account is delinquent, and the amount of arrears owed. Also required on a monthly basis is a report for the State outlining the amount of restitution collected by crime category, the number and amount of new restitution orders received, by crime category and the amount of surcharges ordered and collected by crime category. The system also produces monthly total transaction reports for the restitution unit.

Theoretically this restitution function could be managed using the files processing capability of the IBM 5520. Unfortunately, this system has inherent limitations that will negatively effect operational implementation and restrict utilization of information retained in the established files. These limitations are:

1. FIRMWARE:

The IBM 5520 is not a user-programable CPU. The CPU operates off an IBM installed program and is dedicated to running that program. The user has no capacity to alter or modify the installed "firmware". Since the firmware does not permit modifications we did not have the freedom to tailor a program to the specific requirements of this

application. This places restrictions on the efficient execution of this operation.

2. QUEUING:

All work processed by the CPU is placed in the appropriate job queue and is completed on a first in/first out basis. One of the more useful queues takes files and combines them with text documents to generate form letters or reports. This queue is vital to the functioning of many of the applications currently run on the 5520. File processing time in this queue varies with the degree of complexity of the job. Most letter and text processing jobs take a minute of queue time. However, complex tasks such as processing for management information may take several hours. Once such a job is in the queue, the use of that queue is eliminated until the job is completed. Resulting delays can interrupt work flow for several operators. The restitution task under consideration would require extensive use of this queue effectively eliminating the availability of this queue for all other tasks and causing severe disruption of work flow.

3. Calculation:

The 5520 firmware is limited to simple mathematical functions. The system is incapable of performing algebraic functions and has absolutely no "number crunching" ability. In truth, math functions are performed in the word processing queues. Numbers must be assigned numeric strings before they can be processed. Another limitation is that all conditional statements must be processed in a set order even after a logic condition has been met and performed. In a complex application such as this one where several conditions must be checked this will slow down processing significantly.

ADOPTED SYSTEM:

A. Essentially, the limitations mentioned above are overcome by introducing a microcomputer into the network. The licensed software on the 5520 includes the capability to recognize the IBM PC XT as a terminal and accept documents from the PC. Restitution processing is handled by the microcomputer providing the user with 1.) a programmable CPU 2.) operation which is independent from the queues and 3.) virtually instantaneous calculations. The following hardware was necessary to institute this approach:

MICROCOMPUTER:

IBM PC XT - The basic system incorporates 128K RAM with a 10 megabyte hard disk, a 360K 5¼ inch floppy disk drive and the appropriate controllers. Also necessary are the IBM monochrome Display (CRT) and adapter (expansion card). The unit provides sufficient memory space to down load files from the 5520 and perform programmable manipulation.

IBM PC EMULATION ADAPTER KIT:

Hardware adapter card and PC/5520 emulation program to interface the PC XT with the 5520. The adapter card and emulation program are necessary to link the PC with the 5520. In effect, the PC can operate as a stand alone microcomputer or emulate a 5520 display terminal depending on the needs of the operator.

MEMORY EXPANSION CARD:

Hardware adapter card that permits 256K memory expansion for additional RAM. This card would extend the RAM to the maximum limit (640K). It must be remembered that files can contain more than 2000 records with up to 80 fields in each record. Currently, there are approximately 1100 restitution cases processed by the restitution section.

MATH CO-PROCESSOR:

Hardware chip (Intel 8087) incorporated into the PC XT motherboard. The IBM PC XT operates under an Intel 8088 CPU which is a hybrid microprocessor designed for general data manipulation. Complex mathematical calculations involving non-integers when processed through the 8088 can take from two to three times longer to process. However, the 8087 is specifically designed to handle both non-integer and integer calculations. Tripped by software, the 8088 transfers control of number crunching tasks to the 8087 and waits for the results. When the calculations are returned by the 8087 the 8088 resumes command. The 8087 is designed to perform mathematical functions 100 times faster than the 8088.

PRINTER:

The IBM Proprinter is a medium speed bidirectional, high resolution printer with graphics and font select capabilities. The unit is reliable, low priced and extremely versatile. Attached to the PC XT, the 5520 need not be on line for the computer to produce reports, graphs or file documents. This allows the microcomputer to operate totally independently from the IBM 5520.

SOFTWARE:

Because of the specialized requirements of this restitution application, the necessary software was written in-house.

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VI. PROBATION AUTOMATED SYSTEMS PLANNING COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

During the last five years, the Suffolk County Department of Probation has expanded its use of automated technology dramatically. One result of this utilization has been a significant increase in both clerical and professional productivity. At the present time automated technology is used in the following areas: 1) Criminal Court Investigations; 2) Criminal Court Supervision; 3) Automated Warrant Caseloads; 4) Family Court Investigations; 5) Restitution Accounts; 6) Word and Case Processing; 7) Management Information Systems; and 8) Program Evaluation.

With the evolution of both IBM 5520 automated and technical word and case processing systems, a re-evaluation of systems development was required during 1985. Initially, the major purpose of automation had to be an increase in productivity. However, as the initial goals were met, a complex data processing system developed and this system needed organization in order to be productive. All systems have effective operational capacities, pushed beyond a point, their effectiveness is ultimately diminished. Organizing work flow is just as important for a computer as it is for personnel. In a short period, user development experienced a rapid growth. In the rush to become productive, the system was becoming inefficient. In one year the demand for Central Processing Unit (CPU) time jumped from nine users in one application to twenty users in seven applications. Overall CPU demands shifted from 90% word processing and 10% files

operations to 40% word processing and 60% files operations. Memory requirements jumped from 30% available to 79% available in 6 months. At this rate of growth, the system would have reached overload by mid-1986 but in reality operations would have been crippled long before peak capacity.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Before these problems became critical a comprehensive evaluation of current system design and future directions had to be undertaken. This evaluation had to be timely and could not require large resources due to heavy workload requirements of probation personnel.

The 'Probation Automated Systems Planning Committee' was developed and implemented during the spring of 1985. The major characteristics of this Committee are as follows: 1) a small core of representatives of administrative, supervisory, line and clerical staff levels are members of the committee; 2) users as well as technical staff are represented; 3) the focus of the committee is to develop long-range strategies rather than to solve immediate operational problems; 4) the results of the deliberations of this committee are shared with other probation personnel for input and modification if required; 5) other relevant staff are invited to participate on an as-needed basis.

The committee's major task involved assessing future directions and developing strategies for the following areas: 1) Outside Data Base Systems; 2) In-House Data Base Systems; 3) Clerical Systems; 4) Storage/Retrieval Technologies; and

5) Other Technologies.

COUNTY ROLE

This program was initiated as a management tool in order to analyze current Departmental directions and trends regarding technology utilization. All of the planning and implementation of this approach was conducted by County Probation Department employees. The County pays 70% of the cost of these personnel while the State pays 30%.

COSTS

There are no additional costs incurred by this program. Existing staff use this management approach and actually a net cost savings has resulted from using this program.

RESULTS

Although this process is ongoing, the results that have been realized so far have been excellent. This 'long-range' planning approach has allowed meaningful planning for probation automated services for a future court complex to be constructed by the County. In addition, before the problems described on page 2 became critical, a shift in automation strategy was developed.

A shift from "runtime processing" to "batch processing" in daily operations was implemented for appropriate functions. "Runtime processing" refers to operations which the CPU performs interactively with the operators input. Each step of a job is performed by the CPU as it is requested. For instance, a correspondence format is merged with an address file to form a single letter. The process is

quick and requires very little CPU time but is very inefficient since the same set of commands must be executed for each letter you need to produce. On the other hand, "batch processing" allows the operator to select different correspondence forms for different individuals and then merges them all at once to produce several letters simultaneously. In addition, batch processing allows the CPU to be used during "off times" or overnight. Thus, all applications were examined to see if they would be more efficiently managed through batch processing.

Another area of change was files storage. Not all files are needed on a daily basis or data stored in files may become outdated. Procedures were developed to regularly purge daily or weekly files of outdated records. Monthly files were stored on diskettes and only loaded onto the system when updating was necessary. The systematic archiving of unused documents and the deleting of unnecessary documents has also been instituted.

This approach is constantly paying dividends and is a recommended practice for all automated programs.

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VII. AUTOMATED COMPACT CASE LOAD PROGRAM

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

PROBLEM/CONCERN:

In 1985 419 Criminal Court cases sentenced to Probation Supervision by the Suffolk County Courts resided outside of Suffolk County. Supervision of these cases is routinely transferred to the jurisdiction in which these defendants live. Additionally, cases that resided within Suffolk at the time of sentence, but that subsequently relocated outside of Suffolk County, also had their supervision transferred to the jurisdiction to which they moved.

This transfer procedure requires a considerable amount of paperwork. At the minimum, forms must be signed by the judge approving the transfer of supervision to another county along with a cover letter requesting that supervision be accepted by that county. If a case is being transferred outside of New York State, the case must be processed through the Inter-state compact service in Albany. This requires agreement to return forms, and an application for compact services in addition to the judges approval and a cover letter. All forms for cases being transferred outside the state must be completed in triplicate.

Probationers who are waiting for the receiving county to accept their case must contact us by letter twice a month until supervision of their case is formally accepted by the jurisdiction in which they live. If restitution is involved, the probationer must pay restitution to the defendant through

the Suffolk County Probation Department, which involves our collecting and disbursing payments on a monthly basis. Additionally, in cases in which we retain jurisdiction the agency providing supervision must periodically provide us with progress reports. Finally, should a case require return to court for any reason, either for a violation of the conditions of probation or a discharge request, we would have to prepare the paperwork for that also.

In Suffolk, all cases being transferred outside the County are handled by a special caseload. This caseload averages about 425 cases per month. The problem has been how to effectively manage a paper intensive caseload of this size.

SOLUTION:

The solution to these problems was found through the expanded use of the files processing capabilities of the I.B.M. 5520 word and case processing system already in operation in the department. Cases assigned to this specialized caseload are entered into an automated file on the 5520. Through the process known as merge-file-text, all the paperwork required to effect the transfer is automatically produced at the time the case in entered into the file. Subsequent contacts on each case are also entered into the file providing a powerful case management tool enabling the probation officer to easily ascertain the current status of each case. Additionally, the system has the ability to produce

lists, VOP's followup letters, and other paperwork required for the efficient operation of this unit.

COUNTY ROLE:

This approach was designed, developed, and implemented by county employees. Suffolk County provides approximately 70% of the funding for these positions while New York State allocates the remaining 30%. Expansion of the Probation Department's automated capabilities was made possible because of the County's progressive policy towards utilization of cost-beneficial technology.

COST:

The automation of the Probation Department's transfer unit required no additional cost. This automated design was developed by existing staff and utilized existing equipment. In fact, the net cost of this program is considerably less than the cost of the previously used manual system. Therefore, there is a cost savings associated with the use of this program.

RESULT:

As a result of the implementation of automated case processing techniques, the Suffolk County Probation Department's transfer unit has been better able to manage the high volume of correspondence and communications required in supervising cases residing outside Suffolk County. Because the automated system produces all of the routine paperwork associated with this type of operation, the probation officer

involved has more time to dedicate to those cases which are presenting problems, or which for one reason or another require special attention. For example, before this system was made operational, every month the Probation Officer who handled this caseload was compelled to physically examine each case folder to ascertain the current status of each and every one. This manual system generally consumed two days. However, since this sytem was instituted, the Probation Officer has only to enter a parameter in a stored procedure and the system automatically selects and lists those cases which have not contacted the department within a specified time frame. This has resulted in a considerable time savings for professional staff. Where previously a probation officer needed two days to review this caseload for non-compliant cases, today the automated system can search it's files and produce a list in less than 45 minutes. Additionally, while the system is producing the list of non-compliant cases, the probation officer is free to conduct other business. The overall result.

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VIII. AUTOMATED PROBATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

PROBLEM/CONCERN:

One of the major problems confronting the Suffolk County Department of Probation in 1984 was the inability to retrieve planning, workload management and statistical information for decision-making in a timely fashion. The data-retrieval and statistical system for this Department was basically a manual data retrieval system. Although a clerical word processing system had been implemented for the production of reports to Court, the management information system prior to 1984 remained a manual operation.

For example, if needed to determine the number of cases supervised in a particular offense category (e.g. DWI, sexual offenders), the information could only be secured through a time consuming search of a manual ledger system. In addition, the data regarding sentencing and referrals required for State reports could only be secured through a time consuming search of several manual ledger systems. Also, there was no reliable way to predict work-flow through either the supervision or investigations sections of the Department.

SOLUTION:

The Suffolk County Department of Probation found a solution to the above stated problems by designing the 'Probation Management Information System'. This system was developed and implemented by expanding the IBM 5520 word and case processing system already operating in the Department. Through the process of 'merge-file-text' combined with the administrative identification of priority needs, a cost effective, timely management information system was operationalized. The type of information required, necessary format and time frame have all been integrated in one program design so that management information is now periodically produced.

COUNTY ROLE:

This program was completely designed, developed and implemented by County employees. Suffolk County provides approximately 70% of the funding for these positions while New York State allocates the other 30%. Expansion of the Probation Department's automated capabilities was made possible because of the County's progressive policy towards utilization of cost-beneficial technology.

COSTS:

The 'Probation Management Information System' required no additional cost. This program was developed by utilizing existing staff and equipment.

RESULTS:

As a result of the implementation of this program, Management now has information readily available for planning, decision-making, and staff

reallocation. This has reduced the time spent on data collection and compilation, allowing decision-makers to use time more efficiently. It also has reduced the statistical informational demands placed on clerical and supervisory staff enabling them to devote more time to meet other responsibilities.

For example, utilization of this management information system currently enables the Department to routinely gather accurate information concerning DWI offenders, violent felons and sexual offenders for needs determination and program planning. The usefulness of this capability is also apparent when preparing the annual report and the budget. By simply running a merge control document, the information necessary for the investigations section of these reports are quickly gathered, whereas without this program it would be necessary to examine several different manual documents.

Also, monthly supervision workload statistics required by the State are now routinely run over night at a workload savings of 2 days per unit steno. The management information program has also been useful to many supervisors conducting case load reviews. This system now provides a list of cases by Probation Officer for the supervisory personnel conducting case load surveys.

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DEMOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATION STATISTICS

MARCH 84

Date of Run: April 18, 1984

BREAKDOWN BY CHARGE LEVEL OF TOTAL CONVICTIONS FOR REFERRAL MONTH

COURT	FELONY					MISD				TOTAL
	A	B	C	D	E	A	B	U	V	
COUNTY	7	2	14	70	63	18	1	6	-	181
Violent Fel	-	7	11	47	-					65
Pre Plea										4
SUPREME	7	7	10	20	12	1	-	-	1	58
Violent Fel	-	-	2	4	-					6
Pre Plea										1
DISTRICT						134	115	211	31	491
Pre Plea										-
LOCAL						30	10	4	5	49
Pre Plea										-
TOTALS	14	16	37	141	75	183	126	221	37	855

Total Felonies 283 Total Misd 567

Custody Status	ROR	BAI	SCJ	PROB	NO SHOW
	354	98	80	61	25

Miscellaneous Info	Prior Inv	New Case#	Updates	Adjournments
	287	341	4	2

DWI CASE PROFILE

COURT	County	Supreme	District	Local	TOTAL
DWI	25	1	164	8	198

AGE	18/-	19/20	21/30	31/40	41/50	51+
	1	10	83	54	28	22

CHARGE/CASE	1192.1	1192.2	1192.3	1192.4	511	Male	Female
	3	142	66	1	25	185	13

TREATMENT HISTORY	Psych	Alcohol	Drug	Medical
	17	13	-	7

DEPARTMENT HISTORY	Prior Case	No Record	On Prob	In Jail
	68	130	21	5

DEMOGRAPHIC SEX OFFENSE INVESTIGATION STATISTICS

SEX STATS 1

Date of Run: November 8, 1984

PROBATION ELIGIBLE
SEX OFFENSE CASE PROFILE

AGE	18/-	19/20	21/30	31/40	41/50	51+		
	9	7	36	27	14	8		
SEX	Male		Female					
	101		-					
	Sx.Mis	Rape 3	Rape 2	Rape 1	Cn Sdy	Sdmy 3	Sdmy 2	Sdmy 1
CHARGE/CASE	130.20	130.25	130.30	130.35	130.38	130.40	130.45	130.50
	2	7	3	1	-	7	4	2
	Sx A 3	Sx A 2	Sx A 1	Ag S/A	Chd Sx	Obs Sx	Pr Sex	Incest
	130.55	130.60	130.65	130.70	263.05	263.10	263.15	255.25
	19	9	39	-	-	-	-	-

TREATMENT HISTORY	Psych	Alcohol	Drug	Medical
	17	2	1	1

DEPARTMENT HISTORY	Prior Case	No Record	On Prob	In Jail
	31	70	3	31

DEMOGRAPHIC SEX OFFENSE INVESTIGATION STATISTICS

SEX STATS 2

Date of Run: November 8, 1984

SEX OFFENSE CASE PROFILE

AGE	18/-	19/20	21/30	31/40	41/50	51+		
	9	7	36	27	14	8		
SEX	Male		Female					
	101		-					
	Sx.Mis	Rape 3	Rape 2	Rape 1	Cn Sdy	Sdmy 3	Sdmy 2	Sdmy 1
CHARGE/CASE	130.20	130.25	130.30	130.35	130.38	130.40	130.45	130.50
	2	7	3	11	-	7	4	9
	Sx A 3	Sx A 2	Sx A 1	Ag S/A	Chd Sx	Obs Sx	Pr Sex	Incest
	130.55	130.60	130.65	130.70	263.05	263.10	263.15	255.25
	19	9	39	1	-	-	-	-

TREATMENT HISTORY	Psych	Alcohol	Drug	Medical
	17	2	1	1

DEPARTMENT HISTORY	Prior Case	No Record	On Prob	In Jail
	31	70	3	31

IX. PROBATION AUTOMATED WARRANT ENFORCEMENT UNIT

1. Summary:

The Suffolk County Probation Department has developed a highly effective Warrant Enforcement Unit that has increased the protection of the community by making probationers more accountable for their behavior. The Probation Department has taken direct responsibility for locating and arresting probation absconders and other probationers who have violated the conditions of probation,

Basically, the Warrant Enforcement Unit has five major components:

1) the assignment of full time probation staff to warrant enforcement functions;
2) the utilization of the latest investigative techniques and procedures by highly trained probation officers;
3) the utilization of flexible work schedules and an operational teamwork approach;
4) the development and implementation of an automated case management and statistical recording system; and
5) the development of close interagency cooperation between other regional and state criminal justice agencies.

The current design has resulted in the increased accountability of probationers in Suffolk County. The integration of automation, flexible work hours, the teamwork approach and other technological advances have enable this design to be highly effective at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer.

2. Program Objectives:

During recent years the type of offender sentenced to probation has become more severe, both in the severity of criminal convictions and type of dysfunction. The number of felons sentenced to probation has increased dramatically, as has the number of alcoholics, drug dependent individuals and severely emotionally disturbed offenders. In order to insure that probation remains a highly effective dispositional

alternative for criminal court, it is absolutely necessary to insure that absconders and violators of probation are held accountable for their behavior. Thus, probation can not solely rely on the police to locate and arrest unsuccessful probationers.

In order to increase the protection of the community in this area, specific objectives of the Warrant Enforcement Unit include the following:

A. to increase the number of warrants executed on probation violators;

B. to minimize the incidence of injury to probation officers during the course of arrest;

C. to increase the number of probation absconders located through the utilization of advanced investigative techniques;

D. to reduce the cost of providing comprehensive warrant enforcement services (by utilizing flexible work hour schedules and automated statistical case management techniques);

E. to eliminate case recording errors in daily operations; and

F. to increase interagency cooperation.

3. Program Results:

A fully automated, cost effective warrant enforcement operation is currently in operation. In 1983 this unit was responsible for the following actions:

A. Seventy (70) Arrests and assisted on twenty (20) other probation arrests;

B. Eleven (11) Felony Extraditions;

C. Sixty-seven (67) Warrants lodged;

D. Two (2) Surrenders; and

E. Two (2) Narcotic Condition Searches.

Automation of the case and statistical records helped to significantly reduce necessary clerical work hours while improving the quality of available information. Also, there were no injuries of designated staff during 1983, in part because of specialized training of warrant unit.

Basically, this project has helped to increase the protection of the community by making probationers accountable for their criminal behavior. By helping to locate probation absconders and failures and by returning them to court, probation in Suffolk County is a more accountable dispositional alternative for the criminal courts.

4. County Role:

County employees developed, implemented and evaluated this program without assistance from special grant funds.

5. Program Design, Implementation and Operation:

The Probation Warrant Enforcement Unit consists of two highly trained probation officers and one probation investigator. When an individual on a regular supervision caseload absconds, the case is transferred to this unit. Consistent probation resources are then spent to locate (extradite if necessary), arrest and bring back before the court the probation violators. The following functions are performed by the unit:

A. investigation, location and arrest of absconders;

B. to provide tactical and technical assistance to other probation officers who must execute other 'Violation of Probation' warrants;

C. to execute search warrants requested by probation officers from the court.

In order to achieve the above stated objectives, the following elements have been integrated into the overall design:

A. the assignment of a full time probation staff to warrant enforcement functions;

B. the utilization of the latest investigative techniques and procedures by highly trained probation officers;

C. the utilization of flexible work schedules and an operational teamwork approach;

D. the development and implementation of an automated case management and statistical recording system; and

E. the development of close interagency cooperation between the Police Departmen the District Attorney's Office and other regional and state criminal justice agencies.

6. Funding:

The funding is 70% County funding and 30% State reimbursement.

7. Legal Requirements:

New York State Executive Law 243,246; New York State Rules of Probation and the New York State Criminal Procedure Law, Article 410.

8. Ongoing Activities:

This unit is currently operational and will be expanded as needed.

9. Transferability:

This program is directly transferable to other jurisdictions.

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X. PROBATION AUTOMATED LEVEL III ADULT SUPERVISION PROGRAM

PROBLEM/CONCERN:

As a direct result of the current jail and prison overcrowding problem, and because of the overall increase in serious crime, there was an unprecedented increase in the number of convicted criminal offenders sentenced to probation supervision in Suffolk County in 1983. There was also a significant increase in the number of probationers experiencing alcoholism, drug dependency, and serious emotional problems. Thus, not only was probation experiencing a numerical case load increase of unprecedented proportions, but also a qualitative increase in terms of seriousness of the offender requiring supervision services.

In 1983, a total of 9,789 Criminal Court cases received probation supervision services as compared to 9,138 in 1982. The 1983 total represented an increase of 651 offenders or 7.1% as compared to 1982. The number of convicted felons supervised in 1983 totalled 2,790, as compared to 2,505 in 1982. This represented a 465 or 18.6% increase in 1983. The number of convicted felons sentenced to probation in Suffolk County in 1983 totalled 1,201 which represented a 10.6% increase over 1982, or a 109.6% increase as compated to 1980. The more aggressive use of probation supervision as an alternative to incarceration in Suffolk County clearly was resulting in a significant increase in probation supervision case load size.

The major concern of Probation in this area was to develop strategies that would enable effective supervision of the increased case load size, while insuring the protection of the community. Also, each strategy had to be implemented with limited resources.

SOLUTION:

In order to meet the challenge of ever increasing workload size, in April, 1984 the Department implemented a case load management plan to provide appropriate supervision to 'low recidivism risk', paper intensive cases. Basically, routine cases that required an inordinate amount of paperwork (because of restitution processing, etc.) would be removed from regular supervision case loads and supervised on specialized Level III case loads. In addition, an automated supervision case management design was developed utilizing the Department's IBM 5520 word and case processing system.

Prior to implementation, a waiver was obtained from the State Division of Probation to accommodate the more conservative contact requirements necessary to facilitate the new design. By removing these low-risk cases from the regular case loads, workload standards could be directed to the more serious cases through a reduction in "routine" processing.

The design for the "Level III" low-risk case loads was accomplished through two key components: 1) a comprehensive screening criterion, and 2) automation of case work processing.

The following factors were involved in the implementation of the overall program design:

1) Identification of potential appropriate cases.
2) The establishment of policy for eligibility criteria.
3) The screening process by the receiving Level III units.
4) Training on the automation equipment and job function.
5) The data entry of cases into the Level III files.
6) The standardization of work flow to insure compliance.
7) The realignment of personnel to meet Departmental needs.
8) Interactive dependence on outside systems.

COUNTY ROLE:

The development and implementation of this program was totally achieved by existing County Probation staff. Suffolk County's progressive approach in supporting development of innovative, cost-effective automated systems was essential to the overall achievement of program objectives. The County funds approximately 70% of personnel and 50% of the automated equipment. New York State provides funding for the other 30% and 50% respectively.

COSTS:

This program was accomplished with existing Departmental staff and equipment. Cost benefits resulting from this program exceed $50,000 on an annual basis.

RESULTS:

The program diverts approximately 300 cases annually to the two Level III case loads. This has allowed our field operations to concentrate on more severe probation populations.

The Level III results have been most encouraging. Through a series of monitoring checks and management information programs, each case is evaluated monthly to determine whether the probation is appropriate for continued Class III status. This internal prioritizing has assisted Probation with the task of mitigating the burden of increased case loads at a negligible cost to the public.

At least partially as a result of this program, more appropriate resources are now being allocated to the 'high recidivism risk' cases. Both fiscal and 'protection of the community' issues are adequately addressed through the operation of this program.

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XI. AUTOMATED PRESENTENCE INVESTIGATION REFERRAL SYSTEM

SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK

AUTOMATED PRESENTENCE INVESTIGATION REFERRAL SYSTEM

1. Program Summary:

Through procedural modifications and the expanded use of available word processing equipment, the Suffolk County Probation Department has been able to efficiently absorb a 77.5% workload increase utilizing the same staff levels. One innovative technique that has helped to increase professional and clerical productivity in this area has been the design and operationalization of a centralized data transcribing system for accessing and tracking criminal court investigation referrals. The automated referral system produces computer generated letters, documents and statistics previously completed through manual cross-referencing and transcribing procedures. Batch processing saves time and material costs while reducing mailing and handling expenses. It is conservatively estimated that the present system saves at least 1700 work-hours for professional staff and 1900 work-hours for clerical staff annually. (Refer to Attachments A, B, C, D.)

2. Program Objectives:

Specific objectives are as follows:

1. To increase the productivity of professional probation staff by significantly reducing the amount of paperwork required of them to complete a pre-sentence investigation.
2. To significantly increase the productivity of clerical staff in this area by utilizing an automated investigation referral system in place of the manual system.
3. To significantly reduce the informational error rate of the manual pre-sentence investigation referral system.
4. To reduce the overall net cost of producing a probation pre-sentence investigation prepared for Suffolk County's Criminal Courts.

3. Program Results:

The results of Suffolk Probation's 'Automated Presentence Investigation Referral System' are as follows:

A. Combined Professional & Clerical Work-Hour Savings Annually - 3650 hrs*

a. Letter & document processing - clerical @ 10 minutes per case for 6917 cases.....1153 work/hrs.

b. Letter & document processing - professionals @ 15 minutes per case for 6917 cases.....1729 work/hrs.

c. Statistical computation - clerical @ 4 X 16 hours per month.....768 work/hrs.

B. Mailing Cost Savings Annually - $1600*

a. Batch processing DMV (Dept. of Motor Vehicle) & FBI information requests @ 2 X 200 days (16 pieces) $1200.00

b. Form letters no longer need to be inventoried or ordered $400.00

C. Information Accuracy Levels

Accuracy levels were also measured. The manual process showed an eleven percent error rate while the automated referral system resulted in a four percent error rate.

D. Other Time & Cost Savings

One valuable result of the automated filing system is that the case file created for the pre-sentence investigation is then used as a data resource for supervision cases if and when they were placed on probation with the Probation Department. Therefore, different divisions within our agency are able to exchange information without manual interfacing. Also, handling of the above material was reduced considerably and windowed envelopes also improved time management.

4. County Role:

The County Executive's Office, under the direction of the Honorable Peter F. Cohalan allocated County funds for automating various county agencies with

high volume workloads. System analysis revealed that the cost benefits of purchase and leasing of computer equipment outweighed placing an additional burden on the taxpayers by hiring extra personnel.

5. Program Design, Implementation & Operation:

Probation staff made a detailed analysis of both the word processing and files processing capabilities of the IBM 5520 Level 51 computer. Special attention was given to the system's ability to interface file data with text processing. Expanded use of this feature held the key element to eliminating repetitious entries. If data could be placed in a centralized file, then access to the information could be gained by any user for their specific need without having to re-enter the information as text.

The next step was to undertake an empirical analysis of the way information was processed and used by various units. The key element here was to apply the system's analysis to existing operational uses. The information trail analysis showed significant redundancy in the transcription of data on each individual docket. (Refer to Attachment A for a more detailed description of the systemic problem definition.)

In view of the above system analysis, it was evident that the more individuals who physically accessed the referral material, the greater the chance for delay and error. Further, a detailed monthly unit statistic report was required for all referrals assigned to each of the four PSI units. This procedure alone took two days to complete by a laborious case by case manual court procedure. After twelve weeks of detailed dissection and restructuring, a system was devised and instituted applying modified existing procedures to the expanded capabilities of the computer equipment. It worked.

The solution was relatively simple. After the court material and questionnaire were assembled by liaison, they were immediately sent to the Yaphank Central Office. The same day the referral was logged, assigned, and sent to a specially trained data

entry operator. Data from each referral was then entered into an investigation master file and given an unique identifying number. (Refer to Attachments B, C, D.) Using the computer's faculty to merge file data with text, all letters, information requests and documents could be automatically generated by the system using that initial data entry file. This instantly removed the need for form letters and carbon copies. The clerical position that was freed up in liaison was simply shifted to data entry. All monthly statistics now became a computer task and access to information could be immediate and stylized to specific needs of the user. The need for hands-on access was minimized and error rates were reduced. In fact, by adding a step in the handling of data we increased productivity and efficiency. One valuable lesson that was learned dealt with user resistance. In order to illicit the cooperation of the user, it is always better to adapt the computer's abilities to the existing procedures. Individuals are always more willing to use modified existing procedures rather than learn a completely new set of "easier" procedures.

6 Funding:

No additional funding for staffing was required, although cost of modified software and the additional terminal was estimated at $4,000.

7. Legal Requirements:

Statistical & "Due Process".

8. Ongoing Activities:

Further study shows that the uses of the investigation master file can be expanded to encompass the actual typing of various portions of the PSI report where the same identifying data is transcribed to the face sheet.

9. Transferability:

Conceptual and operational application can be extrapolated for any probation agency with automated word and file processing equipment.

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XII. PROBATION CRIMINAL INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEM

County Of Suffolk
State of New York

Probation Criminal Information Retrieval System
Corrections - Management

Summary:

Suffolk Probation's 'Criminal Information Retrieval System' represents a 1983 systemic redesign that has helped to significantly improve the delivery of probation services while at the same time reduce the net cost of those services. This project basically involves the redesign of the system used for accessing criminal information in the Probation Department. Criminal history information is needed in the course of conducting pre-sentence investigation reports, and for effectively supervising criminal offenders sentenced to probation.

The major components of the newly designed 'Criminal Information Retrieval System' include the following:

1. A 'batch process' referral system;
2. Training of line staff to increase appropriateness of requests;
3. Development of an instructive procedural manual for system operators (see Attachment A);
4. Development of sufficient backup personnel to insure overall reliability and productivity of the overall system.

The improved system has resulted in a more efficient, less costly probation information accessing system. Time delays have been virtually eliminated and numerous work hours have been saved for both clerical and professional staff.

Program Objectives:

The system of accessing criminal information as it was originally configured required each probation officer conducting a pre-sentence investigation to fill out a probation form manually in order to request a criminal history on a probationer. The

probation officer was then required to deliver the criminal history request form to the Burrough's terminal operator in a timely fashion so that the criminal history would be returned in time for the investigation to be typed. This system was somewhat unreliable and inefficient because it depended upon each probation officer to request his or her own rapsheet and keep track of what was requested and whether or not it was returned. Due to high workloads and variations in the degree of organization and different probation officers, this system resulted in frequent last minute requests for special rapsheet inquiries, a process which is quite involved and causes a severe disruption of work flow. Sometimes inappropriate requests were made because of a lack of understanding of the system.

Also, Suffolk Probation's previous system for accessing criminal information was limited in the amount of backup available to the lead operator of the Burrough's system. Downtime of the system was common and delays of several days were routine.

In order to improve the delivery of services, specific objectives of the redesigned system include the following:

A. To reduce the time necessary to secure criminal history information for pre-sentence investigations and probation supervision cases;

B. To increase the appropriateness of requests from line investigation and supervision staff;

C. To reduce downtime of the (Burrough's computer) system by developing sufficient backup personnel to operate the system 250 days per day;

D. To develop an instructive, operational manual for system operators (to insure the quality of service); and

E. To increase productivity and reduce the net cost of operating the 'Probation Criminal Information Retrieval System'.

3. Program Results:

The results of this 1983 program include the following:

A. By having the requests for criminal histories "batched" at the initial entry point, we have been able to reduce the probation officer's workload by relieving him or her of the responsibility of making these requests. At least 1116 professional work hours are saved on an annual basis;

B. An instructional, procedural manual has been pretested and instituted. This manual is used for daily operations and training purposes (see Attachment A);

C. The training of professional probation staff has resulted in a significant reduction in inappropriate requests;

D. Three backup staff have been trained so that there is coverage for a full 250 days per year.

E. Delays in securing criminal history information have been virtually eliminated.

F. The reduction in inappropriate and untimely requests have resulted in a savings of at least 250 clerical work hours annually.

4. County Role:

This system improvement was made by County employees with County funding. No additional grant funds were used to accomplish the results.

5. Program Design, Implementation and Operation:

The previous system for requesting and securing criminal history information for probation officers was not able to accommodate the increased workload experienced by the Probation Department. Inappropriate requests for services, delays in securing information and the lack of adequate backup causing inordinate 'downtime' all seriously jeopardize this operation.

In 1983, the 'Probation Criminal Information Retrieval System' was developed, tested and operationalized. This system is comprised of the following essential components:

A. The development of an instructive, operational procedural manual;

B. Training of professional line staff as to system capabilities.

C. The development of adequate backup staff in order to increase coverage to 250 days per year; and

D. The redesign of information request procedures to allow batching of request thereby reducing system disruption.

This approach is an integrated system design that reduces professional and clerical work hours. The operational manual is an extremely useful tool and clearly describes the interactive nature of this system. The overall design has reduced the labor intensive nature of the previous approach to a streamlined efficient operation.

6. Funding:

No additional resources were used for this project. The funding rates for existing staff, however, is 70% County and 30% State.

7. Legal Requirements:

Criminal history information must be secured for pre-sentence investigations and before discharge from probation supervision.

8. Ongoing Activities:

This improved system design is currently in operation.

9. Transferability:

This program has been readily accepted by Departmental personnel because of the time and work savings to line staff. The concept and design is readily transferable to other jurisdictions. The procedural manual would have to be modified for different states.

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XIII. PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTIVITY PROJECT

SUFFOLK COUNTY, STATE OF NEW YORK

PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTIVITY PROJECT

1. Program Summary:

In 1983, 3,865 new cases came under the supervision of the Suffolk County Probation Department. This represents a 54.6% increase over the 2500 new cases sentenced to probation supervision in 1980. Budgetary constraints have required that the Department use innovative means to absorb these ever-increasing caseloads with existing staff. Office automation implemented in the Department in 1980 had been proven effective in increasing clerical productivity. In 1983 the Department applied that new technology to the management of probation supervision case records to improve professional staff productivity.

Automation of supervision case records has allowed for computer generated letters, documents and reports, previously completed manually by probation officers and clerical staff. It has also made information on the characteristics of the caseload readily available to probation officers and supervisory staff for better caseload management. By eliminating routine paperwork and providing accessible caseload information, the automated supervision records will enable probation officers to better meet the needs of the clients and provide protection to the community.

2. Program Objectives:

As is the case across New York State, probation in Suffolk County is increasingly being used as a sentencing alternative for more offenders, including serious felony offenders. Since 1980 the number of convicted felons sentenced to probation in Suffolk County has risen by 120.9% from 573 in 1980 to 1,201 in 1983. Similarly, the total number of probationers supervised each year has increased 54.6% over this period. Unfortunately, because of economic conditions during this period, the Department actually lost 11 professional positions in criminal court supervision. This Department has sought a means to increase productivity while maintaining the

quality of services. The objective of the Professional Productivity Project was to redesign the management of case information, utilizing the Department's IBM information processing system, to archive the following results:

1. To eliminate the routine, repetitive transcription of case information by probation officers on forms, letters and reports required in probation supervision.
2. To provide accessible information on probationers which would enable probation offices and supervisory staff to manage caseloads more productively.
3. To utilize the capacity of the IBM system in generating statistical and management reports.
4. To provide a data base on the characteristics of the probationer population for program development and evaluation.

3. Program Results:

At the end of 1983, the Probation Department was supervising 6,614 adult cases. The central office in Yaphank supervises 36% of the total cases. Utilizing the IBM information processing system located in Yaphank, automated files have been established encompassing over 2,000 cases on regular supervision and specialized supervision in the Yaphank catchment area, as well as the Department-wide warrant caseload. From this automated data base a variety of documents which had to be completed by probation officers and then typed, are now automatically generated by the system. These include routine letters to probationers, forms required on summaries to court and violations of probation, affidavits, notifications of new arrests, discharge requests, and notifications to the Police Department of VOP warrants issued. In addition, the system generates case information by probation officer and geographical area for better caseload management and supervision.

The probation officer can utilize the time freed from paperwork to provide more effective services to the client. In addition, valuable case information need only be entered once into the automated system to be accessible for multiple purposes.

4. County Role:

The County Executive's Office, under the direction of the Honorable Peter F. Cohalan, was quick to recognize the increasing workload experienced by all of the various county agencies. Through appropriate fiscal planning, funds were allocated for automating various county agencies with high volume workloads. The Probation Department was one of the first agencies to receive and use this equipment. Initially, the equipment was primarily used for word processing. A phenomenal 83% increase in productivity was realized when word processing was applied to the typing of pre-sentence investigations. On the basis of the success in word processing, the Department made the decision to move into the area of information processing to increase professional and administrative productivity. A proposal for upgrading and expansion of the equipment was presented to the County Executive's Office, as well as to the Offices of Budget and Finance and Audit and Control. Based on our Department's prior accomplishments with automation and the obvious potential, the request for upgrading and additional terminals was approved.

5. Program Design, Implementation & Operation:

In 1983, the Probation Department received approval to upgrade its IBM 5520 system to increase its storage capacity and add additional terminals. This provided the opportunity to utilize the files processing capacity of the system in the management of case information. An empirical analysis of the way information was processed and used by various units was undertaken. The key element here was to apply the system's analysis to existing operational uses.

The study showed significant repetition in transcribing of information onto forms and documents used in supervision. Probation officers repeatedly transcribed the same

names, addresses, case numbers, docket numbers and other information onto appointment letters, restitution letters, court notification forms, summaries, violations of probation paperwork, early discharge requests and myriad other forms employed by the Probation Department. Many of these forms were then sent to a typist after being hand written by a probation officer. Additionally, each unit clerk was required to submit a detailed monthly statistical report outlining the number and type of case supervised by that unit. This report alone took two days to complete.

In conjunction with personnel involved in the actual operations and production of these reports, a data base was established for probation supervision case records on the IBM system. The necessary programming instructions were developed to enable the system to generate the needed forms and documents from this data base.

Through the time consuming process of historical conversion, all existing supervision cases had to be entered onto a file for each supervision unit. However, once that was accomplished, the data on new cases received can simply be transferred from the investigation referral file to the appropriate supervision file. Once a case record exists in the supervision file, it is possible to use the IBM system's ability to merge file data with text to produce all letters, information requests and documents required by the supervision process. Also, monthly statistical reports are now compiled and produced by the system and access to information is immediate and specific to the needs of an individual user.

6. Funding:

Once the IBM 5520 system was upgraded in 1983, no additional funding was required to implement the Professional Productivity Project. The cost of the system upgrade was $21,655. Five additional work stations were added at a total monthly rental cost of $780. However, the capacity is shared by a variety of program areas, including Departmental administration, the production of investigations, the automated

investigation referral process and the Professional Productivity Project. Roughly 25% of the cost of the system upgrade could be attributed to this project. The expenditures are reimbursed by the State Division of Probation at a rate of 46.5%.

7. Legal Requirements:

The State Division of Probation mandates monthly statistical reporting of case information and requires that certain records be maintained on supervision cases. However, the automation of case information is not a legal requirement.

8. Ongoing Activities

The Probation Department is actively planning the utilization of automated supervision files to further increase professional productivity in the areas of the development of administrative caseloads for low risk cases, the records management of cases being transferred to other jurisdictions and the statistical analysis of specialized caseloads to evaluate the effectiveness of different treatment approaches.

9. Transferability:

Direct application would be limited to agencies which have access to an IBM 5520 computer system. However, conceptual and operational application can be extrapolated for any agency with automated word and file processing equipment.

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ATTACHMENT A: Probation Supervision Files Data Base

FIELD NO.	PROMPT	FIELD NAME
F001		logno
F002	Count Number	CN
F003	Case Number	Caseno
F004	PO	PO
F005	SPO	SPO
F006	Court	Court
F007	Sentencing Judge	Judge
F008	Last Name	Lname
F009	First Name	Fname
F010	Middle Initial	MI
F011	AKA	AKA
F012	Race	Race
F013	DOB(yy/mm/dd)	DOB
F014	Street Address 1	Street1
F015	Street Address 2	street2
F016	Hamlet	City
F017	State(2 letters)	State
F018	Zip	Zip
F019	Sex	Sex
F020	Marital Status	Marst
F021	Employer Name	Empnam
F022	Employer Address	Emp_St
F023	Emp. City State zip	Empcsz
F024	Telephone Number	Telno
F025	Social Security #	Socsec
F026	Ref/Convtn Date YY/MM/DD	Refdt
F027	Dkt/Ind #	Dkt_Ind
F028	1st Count	Fchrg
F029	2nd Count	Schrg
F030	3rd Count	Tchrg
F031	Conviction Charge	Con1
F032	Total # of Convictions	Totcon
F033	Offender Type(J,Y,A)	Otyp
F034	NYSID #	NYSID
F035	FBI #	FBI
F036	Document Type(P,O,I,R)	Doctyp
F037	Length of Sentence	Probation
F038	Sentence Date YY/MM/DD	Sent_Date
F039	Max Expiration Date YY/MM/DD	Exp_Date
F040	Conditions 1	Conditions1
F041	Conditions 2	Conditions2
F042	Conditions 3	Conditions3
F043	Other Conditions	Other_cond
F044	Restition Amount	Rest_amt
F045	Jail sent.	Jail
F046	Fine	Fine
F047	Supervision Category	Supvcat
F048	Risk Score	Diff_Score
F049	Closind Date YY/MM/DD	Date_Closed
F050	Reason Closed	Why_Closed
F051	Date of Acceptance	Accpt_Date
F052	PO's First Name	Poln
F053	B.A.C for DIW'S	Bac
F054	Accident if DWI(y/n)	Acc

XIV. SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

During the past five years Office Automation has played an important role in the Probation Department. The transition of automation from single application word processing to complex text and files management has allowed the Department to achieve impressive professional productivity gains in those operations where the equipment is available. Currently both the Yaphank Office and the Hauppauge Bldg. 15 Family Court Office utilize the IBM 5520 Administrative Processing System.

As of March, 1987, the systems are used for the automated processing of over 8,000 presentence investigations in both Criminal and Family Courts. In addition, data processing application have been expanded to 1,812 Criminal Court cases based in Yaphank and over 10,000 annual Family Court petitions filed in Hauppauge. These functions represent approximately 35% of the Department's overall information processing tasks.

In order to cope with projected workload increases and further improve productivity, the Department's planning process, calls for the upgrade of existing computer equipment and the expansion of automated services into the other decentralized offices in the near future. The Probation Department's automated design will electronically link work flow of all four decentralized offices into a single data management network. Each office will have an independently functioning operating system providing both word processing and files management. The offices will link to a Department-wide database that can be uti-

lized to electronically distribute documents and information.

In addition, the program applications described in this report will be implemented on a Departmental basis, further increasing professional productivity.