

Utah Council on Criminal Justice Administration  
Project on Criminal Justice  
Standards and Goals

## INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### Court Information Systems

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Approved by  
Utah Information Systems Task Force, and  
Utah Council on Criminal Justice Administration  
Room 304 State Office Building  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114



CALVIN L. RAMPTON  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF UTAH  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
SALT LAKE CITY

OCT 22 1975

Dear Citizens:

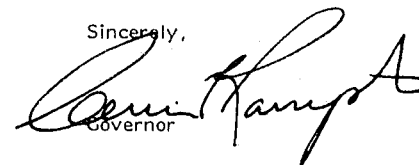
This pamphlet is one of a series of reports of the Utah Council on Criminal Justice Administration. The Council's five Task Forces: Police, Corrections, Judicial Systems, Community Crime Prevention, and Information Systems, were appointed on October 16, 1973 to formulate standards and goals for crime reduction and prevention at the state and local levels. Membership in the Task Forces was drawn from state and local government, industry, citizen groups, and the criminal justice profession.

The recommendations and standards contained in these reports are based largely on the work of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals established on October 20, 1971 by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. The Task Forces have sought to expand their work and build upon it to develop a unique methodology to reduce crime in Utah.

With the completion of the Council's work and the submission of its reports, it is hoped that the standards and recommendations will influence the shape of our state's criminal justice system for many years to come. Although these standards are not mandatory upon anyone, they are recommendations for reshaping the criminal justice system.

I would like to extend sincere gratitude to the Task Force members, staff, and advisors who contributed something unknown before--a comprehensive, inter-related, long-range set of operating standards and recommendations for all aspects of criminal justice in Utah.

Sincerely,

  
Governor

# COURT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

This report was published by the Utah Council on Criminal Justice Administration with the aid of Law Enforcement Assistance Funds.

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## COURTS INFORMATION SYSTEM

The problems of the courts in criminal proceedings often arise from delay and congestion aggravated by the growth in filings.

To cope with this situation, the Office of Court Administrator has been established to provide active and centralized court administration. Information is the cornerstone of a central court management system. It is used for case processing and planning; provides necessary facts needed in making critical discretionary decisions; and makes it possible for courts to deal with cases on an individual basis.

The courts information systems should provide data for decision-making in individual cases and generate management data. Defendant data and case handling (or following data) should also be provided. The ability of the courts to use specific information on each individual case increases the opportunity for effective prosecution and fairness to all parties.

These standards focus on the information and management needs of courts and prosecutors in both felony and misdemeanor proceedings.

Required information relative to individual cases, calendar management, capability to determine case flow and work load, data and statistics necessary for prosecutors, research and evaluation, and transactional and event data elements are all stipulated in these standards.

## STANDARD 6.1: DECISIONMAKING IN INDIVIDUAL CASES

### STANDARD

A court information system should provide information unique to the defendant and to the case. Required information includes:

1. Defendant background data and other characteristics needed in decision-making such as defendant's family status, employment, residence, education, past history, indigency information relative to appointment of counsel, and such data as might be determined by a bail agency interview.

2. Current case history stating the proceedings already completed, the length of time between proceedings, continuances (by reason and source), representation, and other participants.

### UTAH STATUS AND COMMENTS

Defendant background data and other defendant characteristics are collected and maintained by the Adult Probation and Parole Department for the court. Specific information gathered is generally left up to the parole officer, although judges will ask for specific types of data. Generally, the Parole and Probation Department obtains all the information related to family status, employment, residence, education, and past history. In addition, county clerks are supplied information relevant to setting bail and appointing counsel for indigents.

Information relative to the current case history is maintained by clerks' offices throughout the State of Utah. This information includes proceedings, representation by counsel, and other participants. Continuances by reason and source are maintained in the register of actions. The clerks' offices throughout the state currently maintain adequate information through existing systems to support relevant decision making in individual cases.

## METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

This standard has been identified for implementation through administrative policy except in cases of eliminating manual procedures for automated procedures wherein legislative action may be necessary.

## STANDARD 6.2: CALENDAR MANAGEMENT IN THE COURTS

### STANDARD

Criminal courts should be provided with sufficient information on case flow to permit efficient calendar management.

All court clerks' offices will maintain the following data to support this activity:

1. Periodic disposition rates by proceedings; these statistics can be used to formulate and adjust calendar caseload limits;
2. Judge and courtroom schedule; and
3. Range of time which proceedings consume.

The following provisions will be adopted for use by large and medium sized clerks' offices with caseload being the determining factor in agency size:

1. An age index of all cases in pretrial or awaiting trial (by type of trial requested) to determine if special attention is required or the speedy trial rule endangered;
2. An index relating scheduled cases to whether the defendant is confined, released, rearrested, at large, or undergoing adjudication on a separate offense.
3. A recapitulation of offenders booked in jail but not released, to determine if special attention is required;

4. An index of multiple cases pending against individual defendants, to permit consolidation;

5. An index of information on possible or existing case consolidations;

6. An index of defendants whose existing probation or parole status may be affected by the outcome of current court action; and

7. An attorney and police witness schedule which can be used to minimize scheduling conflicts.

#### UTAH STATUS AND COMMENTS

Calendar management information in clerks' offices throughout the state is generally lacking. The larger clerks' offices maintain judge and courtroom information. Recap of offenders booked in jail but not released is available through the larger jails but generally is not used by the clerks' offices in determining if special attention is required on a specific case. The larger traffic violations systems provide indices of multiple cases pending against individual defendants and information on possible or existing case consolidations. This consolidation cross-indexing does not exist, however, in criminal cases in the larger clerks' offices. Two of the smaller county clerks indicated that they kept indices of defendants in jail awaiting trial. The minimum of smaller clerks' offices throughout the state maintain statistics on case consolidation and indices on defendants on probation or parole.

It was observed that there were no courts big enough or with enough backlog in rural Utah to require keeping track of defendants awaiting trial. In most rural courts in Utah the number of cases is so small that the particulars of each case can be remembered. However, certain elements of Standard 6.2, such as periodic disposition rates by proceedings, judge and courtroom schedule, and range of time which proceedings consume, are relevant to all court record keeping operations in the State of Utah and should be formally documented.

#### METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

This standard has been identified for implementation through administrative policy.

#### STANDARD 6.3: COURT MANAGEMENT DATA

##### STANDARD

For effective court administration, criminal courts must have the capability to determine monthly case flow and judicial personnel workload patterns. This capability requires all court clerks' offices to maintain the following statistical information for both in misdemeanors and felonies:

1. Filing and dispositions - number of cases filed and the number of defendants disposed of by offense categories;

2. Monthly backlog - cases in pretrial or preliminary hearing stage; cases scheduled for trial (by type of trial) or preliminary hearing; and cases scheduled for sentencing, with delay since previous step in adjudication;

3. Status of cases on pretrial, settlement, or trial calendars - number and percent of cases sent to judges; continued (listed by reason and source), settled, placed off-calendar; nolle prosequi, bench warrants; terminated by trial (according to type of trial); and

4. Time periods between major steps in adjudication, including length of trial proceedings by type of trial.

The following statistical data will be maintained by large and medium sized clerks' offices:

1. Judges' weighted workload - number of cases disposed of by type of disposition and number of cases heard per judge by type of proceeding or calendar for the purpose of internal scheduling use of courts only, and designed with their input;

2. **Prosecutor/defense counsel workload - number of cases disposed of by type of disposition and type of proceeding or calendar according to prosecutor, appointed defense, counsel, or private defense counsel representation;**

3. **Jury utilization - number of individuals called, placed on panels, excused, and seated on criminal or civil juries;**

4. **Number of defendants admitted to bail, released on their own recognizance, or retained in custody, listed by most serious offense charged;**

5. **Number of witnesses called at hearings on serious felonies, and misdemeanors; and**

6. **Courtroom utilization record.**

#### UTAH STATUS AND COMMENTS

Clerks' offices throughout the state are required to maintain statistical information on filing and dispositions, monthly backlogs, status on cases of pretrial, settlement or trial calendars, number and percent of cases sent to judges, cases continued and settled, and cases terminated by trial. In addition, statistics are maintained on time periods between major steps in adjudication including the length of trial proceedings by length of trial. These data are required by the Office of Court Administrator for the submission of monthly reports.

Other provisions of Standard 6.3 are generally not adhered to by rural clerks' offices; however, one clerk's office was found to maintain judges weighted workload statistics. Another clerk's office maintained prosecutor/defense counsel workloads statistics. Two offices were found to maintain statistics on the number of defendants released on bail, released on their own recognizance, or retained in custody.

Information was generally maintained regarding jury utilization and the number of witnesses called at hearings; however, the smaller clerks' offices do not tabulate statistical reports regarding jury and witness utilization. The larger clerks' offices maintain statistical information regarding filing of dispositions,

status of cases on pretrial, settlement, trial calendars, time periods between major steps in adjudication, and judges weighted workload. Other information, such as statistics related to the defendants released on bail, released on their own recognizance, or retained in custody are maintained by jail booking offices throughout the state.

#### METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

This standard has been identified for implementation through administrative policy.

#### STANDARD 6.4: CASE MANAGEMENT FOR PROSECUTORS

##### STANDARD

For the purpose of case management, prosecutors shall be provided with the data and statistics to support charge determination and case handling. The following provisions apply to all prosecutorial agencies:

1. **Time periods between major steps in adjudication;**
2. **Age of cases in pretrial or awaiting trial (by type of trial) to determine in part whether the right to a speedy trial is enforced;**
3. **Record of continuances by case, number, and party requesting; and**
4. **Criteria for rating adequacy of investigation and legality of procedure by each police unit.**

Provisions listed below will apply only to large and medium sized prosecutorial agencies with caseload being the determining factor in agency size:

1. **A means of weighting cases according to prosecution priority, policy, and the probability of success;**
2. **Daily calendar workloads and dispositions; and**



**3. Case schedule index listing police witnesses, expert witnesses, defense counsel, assigned prosecutor, and type of hearing.**

**UTAH STATUS AND COMMENTS**

Prosecutors in the State of Utah do not maintain a method of weighing cases according to prosecution priority, policy, or the probability of success. The larger prosecutorial offices felt that this would be an effective procedure in major operations. Attorneys for smaller counties indicated that they prioritized cases in their own mind but not in any systematic fashion. Only three counties in the state, including Salt Lake County, maintain records on time periods between steps in the adjudication process. Smaller counties indicated that the case load was too small to warrant that type of information.

The major prosecutorial offices in the state maintain some type of calendar such as trial and civil calendar. Information related to the age of cases awaiting trial and pretrial is maintained by three prosecutorial offices in the state. The large prosecutorial offices do not maintain any type of aging information. Case scheduling, indexing, police witnesses, expert witnesses, defense counsel, assigned prosecutor and type of hearing are maintained by approximately 50% of the counties in the state. Several other county attorneys indicated that this information was maintained as a function of the case folder. Four counties in the state, including Utah and Salt Lake County, maintain a record of continuances by case number and the requesting party. Several other counties indicated that this information was recorded in the form of a memorandum and maintained in the case folder.

None of the prosecutorial offices in the state utilize a specific selection criteria for witnesses at court hearings. All prosecutors related that witnesses were interviewed prior to the hearing. However, some prosecutors questioned the feasibility of developing selection criteria for witnesses that could be used effectively.

None of the counties reviewed had any specific criteria for rating police investigations. But over half of the counties, particularly the larger ones, said they often meet with policemen and evaluated their investigations. Several of the smaller counties had little or no involvement with police agencies and evaluating

investigations. Prosecutors felt that criteria for rating the adequacy of investigation and the legality of procedure by each police unit could be a more effective tool across the state and advised the development of such a criteria.

**METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION**

This standard has been identified for implementation through administrative policy.

**STANDARD 6.5: RESEARCH AND EVALUATION IN THE COURTS**

**STANDARD**

**To create the capability for continued research and evaluation, minimum data elements for establishing a research and evaluation data base be established through the Office of Court Administrator in conjunction with the Utah Criminal Justice Information Systems staff to insure that Utah's specific needs are met.**

**UTAH STATUS AND COMMENTS**

Currently, the Office of Court Administrator maintains statistical information generated by court clerks throughout the state for the purposes of research and evaluation. In addition, out of the Utah Bureau of Identification, a project entitled "Offender Based Transaction Statistics" is under development which will provide complete defender tracking information. The OBTS effort maintains, as a minimum, data elements recommended in the Project SEARCH Document related to implementing statewide criminal justice statistics systems.

**METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION**

This standard has been identified for implementation through administrative policy.

## STANDARD 6.6: CASE COUNTING

### STANDARD

Transactional and Event Data Elements shall be recorded for counting purposes as follows:

1. Data elements using individual defendants as the basic statistical unit shall record action taken in regard to one individual and one distinct offense. The term "distinct offense" refers to those sets of related criminal activities for which, under State law, only one conviction is possible, plus conspiracy.

Under this standard, if two men are charged for the same criminal activities, this is reported as two defendant cases. If two charges for which an individual might receive two separate convictions are consolidated at one trial, it is to be reported as two trials. If a jury trial is held for three men on the same crime, the event should be reported as three jury trials.

2. Data elements that describe events occurring in the criminal justice system shall record the number of events, regardless of the number of defendant transactions involved. Those data elements may report the number of individual transactions as an additional explanatory item.

Under this standard, if two men are charged for the same criminal activities, this is reported as one charge or one charge with two defendants. If two charges are consolidated at one trial, it is to be reported as one trial or one trial on two charges. If a jury trial is held for three men for the same crime, the event should be reported as one jury trial or one jury trial for three defendants.

### UTAH STATUS AND COMMENTS

Currently, there exists no specific uniform method or procedure for case counting within the state. Considerable confusion currently exists throughout the state regarding case counting when multiple-event defendants in one trial exist. In order to adequately measure and monitor case loads throughout the state, improved procedures should be adopted to further define, for statistical purposes, cases.

## WHAT IS THE UTAH COUNCIL ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION (UCCJA)?

In 1968 the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act was passed resulting in the creation of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) in the U.S. Department of Justice. The act required the establishment of a planning mechanism for block grants for the reduction of crime and delinquency.

This precipitated the establishment of the Utah Law Enforcement Planning Council (ULEPC). The council was created by Executive Order of Governor Calvin Rampton in 1968. On October 1, 1975, the council was expanded in size and redesignated the Utah Council on Criminal Justice Administration (UCCJA).

The principle behind the council is based on the premise that comprehensive planning, focused on state and local evaluation of law-enforcement and criminal-justice problems, can result in preventing and controlling crime, increasing public safety, and effectively using federal and local funds.

The 27-member council directs the planning and funding activities of the LEAA program in Utah. Members are appointed by the governor to represent all interests and geographical areas of the state. The four major duties of the council are:

1. To develop a comprehensive, long-range plan for strengthening and improving law enforcement and the administration of justice . . .
2. To coordinate programs and projects for state and local governments for improvement in law enforcement.
3. To apply for and accept grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration . . . and other government or private agencies, and to approve expenditure . . . of such funds . . . consistent with . . . the statewide comprehensive plan.
4. To establish goals and standards for Utah's criminal-justice system, and to relate these standards to a timetable for implementation.

**END**

*7. 11. 1954*