



Superior Court of California, In and For the County of Placer

Traffic ECalendars Program Summary – January 2014

In October 2011, Placer Superior Court transitioned to an electronic case filing system for its traffic division. What began as an effort to reduce delays in the clerks office, has evolved to a fully-electronic calendar and the complete elimination of case files.

This change resulted in significant staff time savings and a reduction in storage space needs, all without compromising the accuracy and integrity of the traffic documents. The system is directly credited with reducing traffic staff workload by 20%. This reduction in necessary staff time has allowed the court to better absorb the crippling funding reductions of the past several years and enable remaining staff to focus on more value added activities.

HOW IT WORKS:

The recent changes to court record retention laws and rules allow the court to maintain the record in either paper or digital form. Capitalizing on this change, the court designated the electronic record as the official record in traffic-related cases in 2011.

Today, all incoming and outgoing documents are scanned into the court's Document Management System (DMS), creating the official record of the case. All paper copies of court records are then stored for a retention period of 210 days. Once the retention period has been met, the court disposes of the paper copies. This time period was established to ensure that an image would be reviewed at least once, or the case resolved, prior to the destruction of the original paper.¹ What used to be shelves of paper now sit empty!

¹ Paper copies of citations that were verified via thumbprints along with original bail bonds are still retained indefinitely in paper form.



After ensuring the reliability of the electronic case files, the court focused attention on how best to construct a judicial officer view of the calendar and the electronic case files. The Court's Information Technology staff built a custom application that combines data from the court's case management system (CMS) and the DMS. The design focused on an easy to use system that provides the speed necessary for the high volume traffic calendars. The nightly interface between the CMS and DMS queues up the most frequently viewed document types providing the judicial officer fast access to key documents. Other less frequently used documents are still accessible but take slightly longer to load. This tiered response time allows the judicial officer to dispose of most matters quickly, while allowing more deliberate access to information on cases that require a more in-depth review.

In the three (3) years since the system was first implemented, this easy-to-use system has been fully embraced by staff and judicial officers alike. Judicial offers are able to open all the tagged image file format (TIFF) format documents associated to the case on calendar including DMV records, court forms and the traffic citation before the defendant even reaches the defendant's table after his or her name is called. This is made possible through an easy to use interface that is able to feature the document, the list of cases on calendar, a walk-in option search bar and a toggle button option that will filter heard and unheard cases for organizational purposes all in one easy-to-use page!

This....



....is now this.



After a few short months of using the system, the court was able to completely discontinue the historic “calendar preparation” process. Gone were the repeated and non-value added tasks of printing pull lists, pulling case files, transporting files to court, returning files from court, and replacing files on the shelves. Staff devoted to these tasks was then shifted to more value added tasks to help the court adjust to a reduction in staffing that has exceeded 40% over the past five years.

For more information on the system, please contact Greg Harding, IT Manager, or Sharry Shumaker, Operations Director, at 916-408-6186.