Background

Approximately 122,000 offenders on supervised release or probation are being supervised in Minnesota's communities. By comparison, approximately 9,700 offenders are incarcerated in Minnesota's prisons. This reflects Minnesota's commitment to serving offenders at the local level when possible and reserving prison beds for the most serious, chronic offenders.

Community Correction Services

Locally delivered programs are a significant part of the state's correctional services. Correctional service providers need to hold offenders accountable to their conditions of release, provide supervision of offenders, and manage victim restitution, community service and other restorative justice programs. There are three delivery systems that are responsible for community supervision of offenders; the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC), Community Corrections Act Counties (CCA), and County Probation Officers (CPO).

CSTS Created

Members of these three delivery systems saw the need for a common computer system to support them and worked with the Minnesota County Computer Cooperative (MnCCC) to develop CSTS for supporting the needs of community supervision in Minnesota. Currently, all County and State supervision service providers use CSTS.

Use of Integration Services

CSTS uses Integration Services from Court Integration Systems to gather and maintain court case information from the Minnesota Court Information System (MNCIS). This happens throughout from offender intake through release.

Offender Intake

When a judge sentences a defendant, the local probation office is notified of a new intake into its program which includes the court case.   Probation staff then enter the MNCIS case number into CSTS which updates case and sentence information directly

from MNCIS. This eliminates duplicate data entry, improves the timing of receiving information, and provides CSTS users more complete and accurate court data. To get the offender's past cases, CSTS uses the Case Search by Party query to find all the criminal cases for this offender prior to intake and then uses Case Get query to retrieve all the case information needed for each case found. Over time, court case information can change. Each of these changes are communicated to CSTS using Charge Disposition and Charge case notifications.

Offender Monitoring

Since offenders are in the community during their supervision, they can get into trouble which will violate their conditions of probation. The probation officer uses CSTS to create a probation violation report and related order and then uploads them directly to MNCIS. The judge then rules on the reports to determine any consequences for the offender. CSTS receives No Contact Order and Warrant notifications when issued. CSTS notifies the probation officer so appropriate actions are taken.

Benefits of Integration

The integrations with MNCIS have a significant effect on the community corrections business process. Rather than waiting for paperwork to be sent to the community corrections office, the court case information for intake is automatically provided which saves time on each intake. Probation officers appreciate concentrating on the rewarding aspects of their work rather than entering court case and probation violation data. As a result of these integrations, data entry duplication is reduced, CSTS stays in sync with MNCIS, and corrections officers can focus in on the higher priority aspects of their work.