



NEWS

Advancing Innovation and Transparency

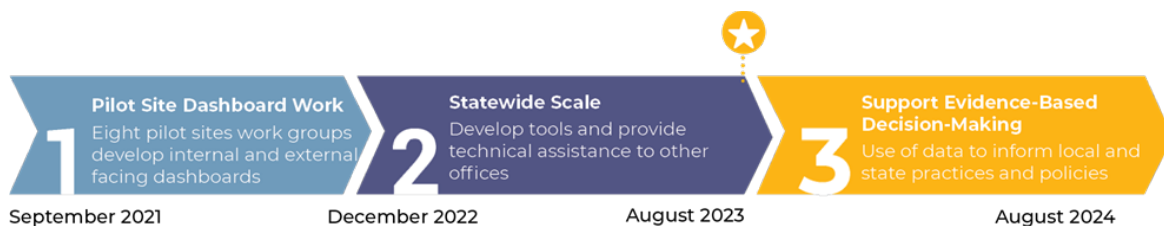
Issue 8: August 2023

Last month, the 12th, 17th, and 21st Judicial District Attorneys' (DA) Offices released their public facing dashboards, a huge step for enhancing transparency and advancing data-driven decision-making! These three offices joined the eight pilot offices, convening at the end of July to discuss their priorities for continued work.

The Colorado Prosecutorial Dashboards Project

The **Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab** (Colorado Lab) and the national **Prosecutorial Performance Indicators** (PPI) are working with **judicial districts across Colorado** to use data dashboards to assist DA Offices with tracking progress toward greater efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness.

Eleven Offices have developed **publicly-available data dashboards** to promote more effective, just, and transparent prosecution. In collaboration with the Colorado District Attorneys' Council (CDAC), we have developed the tools and infrastructure to scale use of the dashboards statewide. In Phase 3, we will continue to support stakeholders in using data to inform decision-making.



Three More Offices Release Public Dashboards!

On July 19, three new Offices unveiled their public dashboards! We celebrate this milestone in moving Colorado forward on its path to be the first state in the nation to use data to improve decision-making in prosecution. Read the **news release** and media coverage **here**, including an article from **Alamosa's Valley Courier** and **Grand Junction's The Daily Sentinel**.

Check out the new dashboards:

- 12th Judicial District (Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache) – **data dashboard**
- 17th Judicial District (Adams and Broomfield) – **data dashboard**
- 21st Judicial District (Mesa) – **data dashboard**

The dashboards present data in eight sections: felony referrals, charging and filing, case resolution, diversion and deferrals, sentencing, defendant characteristics, serving victims, and staffing and caseload.

Each dashboard includes a data story. The **12th Judicial DA's Office** discusses how they are using data as a first step to restore the community's trust in the criminal justice system and to measure progress toward their goals including robust case filing, making appropriate and fair sentencing recommendations, and boosting their diversion program.



“ The San Luis Valley has overcome great challenges in our criminal justice system in recent years. Central to the task of rebuilding trust and restoring hope is transparency. We remain committed to building the community's trust in the District Attorney's Office and our law enforcement community. The people of the San Luis Valley deserve our full dedication to this task. Our partnership with PPI and the data dashboard project will have a significant positive impact on these efforts and I am very excited to be part of a statewide mission to provide our citizens with accurate and informative data about the work we are doing.

– Anne Kelly, DA for the 12th Judicial District ”

The **17th Judicial DA's Office** describes their response to the rise in domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic through the creation of the Domestic Violence High Risk Team that provides an enhanced, collaborative response to domestic violence situations.

The **21st Judicial DA's Office** describes their recent success in obtaining grant funding to expand the work and personnel of the Office. In particular, the growth in their victim/witness services unit has translated to speedier contact with victims and enhanced referrals to resources.

The Project Has Supported DA Offices in Building Their Capacity for Data-Driven Decision-Making: Results from the Phase 1 Survey

Before the project's start in fall 2021, we administered a survey to all staff in six of the eight pilot Offices that focused on understanding priorities, prosecution strategies, perceptions of community engagement, disparities in the criminal justice system, and prosecutorial practices. In spring 2023, we re-administered the survey to the same Offices to understand how priorities, practices, and perceptions may have changed.

We identified three key findings:

1. Staff in DA Offices have benefited from—and continue to see the value in—increased access to information about the Office as a whole.
2. Staff in DA Offices continue to believe in the importance of community engagement, and, since the start of the project, more strongly believe in transparency efforts.
3. Staff in DA Offices remain mixed on their perceptions of racial/ethnic disparities in the justice system.

In **this report**, we discuss these findings, share accomplishments, and identify ongoing opportunities. Lessons learned will support the scale of prosecutorial dashboards across the state and the expansion of efforts to support data-driven decision-making across the criminal justice system.

Celebrating Accomplishments and Planning for Our Next Phase

On July 27, the DA Offices, national PPI partners, the Colorado Lab, and CDAC convened to celebrate accomplishments; give Offices an opportunity to hear from each other about how they are using data; and identify the highest priority next steps.

Offices provided examples of how they are translating data to action. One Office discussed how they used data to identify the need for greater use of deferred judgments and steps they have taken to update their deferral policy to reduce deferral length and standardize deferral terms and conditions. Another Office discussed their use of the dashboard to track case outcomes associated with updated guidelines on motor vehicle theft and explore whether outcomes are similar across individuals of different races/ethnicities. A third Office shared how they are using data to track staff workload by creating standardized methods to quantify case workload.



Kenneth Boyd, Chief of District Court at the 17th DA's Office, showcases how they are using data to track the outcomes of their work.

The next phase of the project (September 2023-August 2024) will focus on the following:

- Increasing the use of data to inform decision-making in DA Offices
- Bringing additional justice system stakeholders into this work
- Ensuring sustainable structures for ongoing work

Let us know if you would like to discuss the dashboards work and potential opportunities for collaboration! Contact Joanna Beletic at joanna@coloradolab.org.

We welcome feedback and input. Our hope is that your questions and ideas will strengthen this work. Reach out any time to Jo Beletic at the Colorado Lab (joanna@coloradolab.org)

In case you missed it, our previous newsletters can be found [here](#).



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