COLORADO Prosecutorial Dashboards NEWS

Advancing Innovation and Transparency

We are excited to announce that the eight pilot offices have launched their public facing dashboards. In this newsletter we provide an overview of the September 8, 2022 launch event and the links to each of the publicly available dashboards. We discuss how offices are utilizing data to enhance prosecutorial practices.

The Colorado Prosecutorial Dashboards Project

The **Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab** (Colorado Lab) and the national **Prosecutorial Performance Indicators** are working with **eight judicial districts in Colorado** to develop data dashboards to assist district attorneys' (DA) offices with tracking progress toward greater efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness. Following this initial phase, we will develop tools and infrastructure to scale use of the dashboards statewide.

Pilot Site Dashboard Work
1 Eight pilot sites work groups develop internal and external facing dashboards

Statewide Scale
2 Develop tools and provide technical assistance to other offices

September 2021   December 2022   August 2023

Statewide scaling is slated to kick off early next year!

The Public Dashboards are Now Live!

On September 8th, the project partners gathered at History Colorado in Denver to meet with key stakeholders and members of the media to unveil their dashboards. As a bi-partisan effort, the event celebrated Colorado as the first state in the nation to move toward statewide use of data to improve decision-making in prosecution.

- DA Alexis King (1st) and DA John Kellner (18th) introduced the project and discussed why this work was undertaken.
- Don Stemen, **Prosecutorial Performance Indicators** team, and Kevin Miller, a representative from the project's funder, **Microsoft Justice Reform Initiative**, discussed how the Colorado work fits into the national landscape of 21st century strategies for prosecutorial transparency and justice.
- DA Beth McCann (2nd) discussed how this work builds on Denver's previous examination of racial/ethnic disparities at points of prosecutorial discretion and advances disparity reduction efforts.
- DA Gordon McLaughlin (8th) and research partner Lauren Gase, **Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab**, discussed how the dashboards can be leveraged to inform policy and practice changes.
- DA Michael Dougherty (20th) and Melba Pearson, Prosecutorial Performance Indicators, spoke to how community engagement supported dashboard development and the commitment to sustained two-way dialogue with the public.

Check out **media coverage** from the event, including a **livestream recording** of the event. Read the collaborative statement issued by the eight elected DAs **here**.

Each participating district's dashboard is now publicly available:
- 1st Judicial District (Gilpin, Jefferson) – **data dashboard**
- 2nd Judicial District (Denver) – **data dashboard**
- 5th Judicial District (Clear Creek, Eagle, Lake, Summit) – **data dashboard**
- 6th Judicial District (Archuleta, La Plata, San Juan) – **data dashboard**
- 7th Judicial District (Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, San Miguel) – **data dashboard**
- 8th Judicial District (Jackson, Larimer) – **data dashboard**
- 18th Judicial District (Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert, Lincoln) – **data dashboard**
- 20th Judicial District (Boulder) – **data dashboard**

As described in our **July newsletter**, each public-facing dashboard presents data in eight sections: felony referrals, charging and filing, case resolution, diversion and deferrals, sentencing, defendant characteristics, serving victims, and staffing and caseload. Looking at one data point can be a signal that something is going on and that we need to look deeper at an issue. It is rare that one data point will tell the "whole story." That's why it's important to look at data points in relation to one another.

Using Data to Enhance Practice

DA Offices are using their dashboards to identify and address a variety of areas, for example:
- **Timeliness of Case Resolution:** Offices have explored their case resolution timeliness indicators to consider how to improve case processing efficiency. Staff have analyzed potential causes of case delay, including: the number of continuances, competency issues, and the rate at which individuals fail to appear. Offices are advancing practices changes, for example, increasing efforts to make their best offer early. Offices have shared data with partners, including courts and defense counsel, in order to identify opportunities to work together to support timely case resolution.
- **Outcomes by Race/Ethnicity:** Offices are examining disparities in pretrial detention, plea offers, and incarceration by race and ethnicity. In particular, one Office is focused on how to improve practices and minimize disparities for undocumented defendants. The Office plans to review agency practices and liaise with the defense counsel on improving outcomes.

- **Victim Support Services:** To improve victim services, several Offices are working to improve the data they collect from victims to better understand the victim population and provide more effective services. Additionally, Offices are changing their data collection practices to better understand the quantity and timeliness of engagement with victims and witnesses.
- **Staffing and Caseloads:** Offices are using data to explore trends in caseloads over time, including the number of new and resolved cases each quarter. One Office used their dashboard to identify a sustained increase in the number of new traffic cases, which has not been met with an increased number of staff. The Office plans to use this insight to inform conversations about their budget.

Digging Deeper into Race and Ethnicity

The dashboards include a number of indicators that disaggregate outcomes for White, Black, and Hispanic defendants. This descriptive information is intended to serve as a diagnostic. There could be many possible explanations for differences we see, for example differences in cases (e.g., severity of charges) or defendants (e.g., criminal history)—or it could be differences in prosecutorial practices.

In the coming months, we will work with each of the eight pilot offices to dig deeper. The forthcoming disparity analyses will examine racial/ethnic differences at key points of prosecutorial discretion including filing and disposition. We will examine whether there are differences for different types of crime and different charge severity levels. We will also look at defendant characteristics such as gender, age, and criminal history.

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Prosecutorial Performance Indicators

The Colorado Prosecutorial Dashboard project is funded by the Microsoft Justice Reform Initiative.