NASCIO 2011 Recognition Awards Nomination

Nomination Category: Data, Information and Knowledge Management

California Courts Protective Order Registry

Judicial Council of California - Administrative Office of the Courts

Section B - Executive Summary

"The California Courts Protective Order Registry is one of the most dramatic advances in the handling of domestic violence in many years," said Judge Colleen Toy White, Superior Court of Ventura County. "For a judge who presides over domestic violence cases, it is critical to have the ability to get immediate online access to court protective orders. This registry will enhance victim safety and help ensure that judges don't make duplicate or conflicting court orders."

The California Courts Protective Order Registry (CCPOR) is an innovative new system developed by the Judicial Council of California - Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). CCPOR provides major improvements to victim and peace officer safety in domestic violence cases and cases involving violent crimes. Unlike previous systems, CCPOR creates a statewide repository for restraining and protective orders, containing both data and scanned images of orders that can be easily accessed by judges, court staff, and law enforcement officers. Launched June 7, 2010, CCPOR was deployed to 21 California counties in 2010. Planning is under way for the next phase of deployment.

CCPOR provides judges with critical information necessary to prevent issuance of multiple protective orders that may have conflicting terms and conditions. It also provides law enforcement with complete images of these orders, including handwritten notes and enforcement warnings that are not captured by other California or federal systems. By creating a system that is shared by courts and their law enforcement partners, CCPOR bridges communication gaps and improves interagency cooperation. As a result, more—and higher quality—data is collected during the protective order issuance process — information that is then synchronized with California Department of Justice and National Crime Information Center databases. These benefits help safeguard victims of crime and peace officers in the field.

CCPOR also benefits the public through operational efficiencies made possible through easy access to scans of restraining orders. Court staff may now immediately print copies of orders, rather than having to search for (and wait for shipment of) case files across multiple records storage rooms, courtrooms, or even different courthouse locations. Daily, CCPOR helps save hours of staff time and hundreds of dollars at locations across California.

CCPOR was developed and is maintained by the Information Services Division, AOC. It was created in response to a recommendation by the Domestic Violence Task Force addressing concerns by the Attorney General regarding the handling of restraining and protective orders across the state. By promoting victim safety and perpetrator accountability, CCPOR supports the California Judicial Branch's strategic plan, Goal IV, Quality of Justice and Service to the Public, and the related operational plan objective for improved practices and procedures to ensure fair, expeditious, and accessible administration of justice for litigants in domestic violence cases. CCPOR is also aligned with NASCIO's State CIO Top Priorities, the California Governor's priorities/mandates, and the California Technology Agency Information Technology Strategic Plan.

Section C - Business Problem & Solution

Problem Statement – The California Courts Protective Order Registry (CCPOR) addresses two systemic problems in the handling of restraining and protective orders:

1. **Lack of access to information may result in issuance of conflicting orders.** Judges typically lack access to information about pre-existing restraining orders and frequently issue new orders with conflicting terms, such as different expiration dates, stay away distances, and child custody terms. Conflicting orders create confusion and jeopardize victim and officer safety because law enforcement must sort through details in the field; valid protective orders may not be enforced in the confusion.

2. **Incomplete information for orders.** Prior to CCPOR, orders would be faxed by courts to law enforcement partners for entry into the Department of Justice's California Restraining and Protective Order System (CARPOS), a database of protective orders used by officers in the field. This process resulted in delays as faxes were lost or corrupted by fax machines. As a result of this communication breakdown, some orders were never entered into CARPOS. Even when orders were entered into CARPOS, additional terms, notes, or warnings that were handwritten on protective orders were frequently skipped during the entry process.

Solution - The CCPOR system:

1. Is easily accessible by judges. A web-based user interface provides an innovative, easy-to-use and intuitive system that judges can navigate with little or no training. The system has broad search capabilities that allow judges and staff to access relevant data quickly. Perhaps most importantly, scans of existing protective orders can be reviewed in a format that judges are familiar with, allowing for a quick understanding of order history for different parties.

2. Provides a searchable electronic repository with scanned images of protective orders. This allows peace officers to review all aspects of a restraining order, including any handwritten terms or warnings, so they can better protect themselves and the public.

Length of Time in Operation - CCPOR began production operations on June 7, 2010 with deployment of the system to Marin County, the first of three pilot counties. Deployments continued through 2010, with a total of 21 counties on-boarded. (See http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/ccpor/documents/ccpor-courtslive2010.pdf for a list of CCPOR counties and deployment dates.)

Selection Criteria and Project Management Approach - CCPOR was created based on a recommendation by the California Judicial Council's Domestic Violence Task Force in response to concerns by the Attorney General regarding handling of restraining and protective orders across the state. The strategy to store both order images and data was chosen to give law enforcement easy access to complete details of a protective order. Pre-existing systems that stored only data often missed key information and warnings that were handwritten on the order forms.

CCPOR was developed using a known technology stack deployed at the California Courts Technology Center for the statewide California Case Management System project. By reusing infrastructure components, AOC was able to speed application development and reduce costs by leveraging existing technology investments in shared technical infrastructure.

CCPOR was developed using formal project management principles and practices. An AOC Project Manager worked with the courts and law enforcement to gather requirements, and with in-house architects to design a solution and manage development. A deployment manager managed system rollout to the counties.

Solutions Architecture & Functionality - CCPOR is a single web-based system hosted at the Judicial Branch California Courts Technology Center (Technology Center). The system is broadly configurable. All counties on-board to the same system which runs a single code release. This makes it easy for AOC to maintain the system or deploy new features while giving each county flexibility to configure the system to align with their business processes. CCPOR can be accessed only by authorized court staff or law enforcement officers in counties that have on-boarded to the system, through any internet-enabled computer. The application has a clean intuitive user interface and supports many internet browsers, including internet Explorer, Firefox, and Safari.

CCPOR is deployed with a standard scanner setup comprising a Fujitsu fi-6130 scanner and Kofax Capture 9.0 software with a custom scanning profile, but the system supports upload of PDF images of orders from any source, including office multifunction copiers.

CCPOR uses an Apache Struts framework and is deployed on clustered Oracle WebLogic application servers. It is the first application at the Technology Center to use Oracle's Real Application Cluster database technology to help ensure 24/7 uptime. Computer Associates SiteMinder is used for user authentication.

To enable secure encrypted access to the Technology Center by law enforcement partners not connected to the Judicial Branch network without needing to deploy a VPN client, CCPOR became the first application at the Technology Center to leverage the clientless SSL VPN capabilities of Cisco's Adaptive Security Appliances (ASA).

CCPOR automatically transmits order data and updates to the Department of Justice California Restraining and Protective Order System (CARPOS) database. To enable asynchronous communication, CCPOR uses web services deployed on the Judicial Branch Integration Services Backbone (Tibco JMS infrastructure) to submit and receive messages through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System (CLETS) network; CCPOR is the first application at the Technology Center to use the web services interface of the Technology Center's Datamaxx Omnixx system.

Information Security - Privacy and security are built into CCPOR. Information entered in CCPOR is available for use only by authorized court staff and law enforcement partners. The system supports flagging of records as sealed or confidential, and

controls access through a broad set of fine-grain user roles and permissions. Application traffic is encrypted using 2048-bit SSL certificates. The application is also designed to comply with the CCTC three-tier layered security model. The system also meets Department of Justice's standards for encryption and storage of CLETS data.

Accessibility & Usage - CCPOR can be accessed by authorized court staff or law enforcement partners through any internet-enabled computer. It has been deployed in 21 counties. The system currently has over 34,000 protective orders and is growing by 4,000-5,000 new orders per month. The system has nearly 2,440 named users, reflecting broader than anticipated usage by law enforcement partners.

Communications & Training - The AOC supports ongoing CCPOR communications and training. New users receive hands-on training. A detailed written communications plan documents audiences, purpose, roles, actions, key messages, communicators, tools, and venues. A monthly user group meets via WebEx and phone conferences to provide feedback and to request enhancements.

Section D - Significance of the Project

CCPOR Effectiveness & Improvements to Government Operations - CCPOR is highly effective at addressing its defined, targeted issues, and has resulted in many side benefits, such as operational efficiencies with electronically accessible copies of court orders. At monthly CCPOR court users meetings, participants report that CCPOR improves victim's rights and public safety, and that counties are identifying new ways to use the system. For example, with CCPOR, on-call judges can search for restraining order histories before issuing emergency protective orders from their homes in the middle of the night.

CCPOR Improvements to Court Operations - Court executives and staff praise CCPOR for its positive effect on court operations. Improvements include:
- Case preparation time is greatly reduced. Before CCPOR, court staff had to research paper court files and dockets to prepare for a court hearing and to determine whether existing protective orders were in place. This task is time consuming and often difficult, as court files are frequently maintained off-site. Now that orders are in CCPOR along with their images, staff can spend time to better understand and process case information, instead of looking for files.
- Copies of orders can easily be made available for victims and attorneys without locating the court case file. Hours of staff time and hundreds of dollars are saved through this process on a daily basis across the state.
- With immediate access to accurate information, judicial officers no longer issue protective orders that conflict with previously issued orders.
- Orders are more understandable and enforceable by officers in the field.
- CCPOR automatically forwards data to the California Department of Justice's CARPOS database, which in turn exchanges data with the National Crime Information Center's databases. No double data entry is required by law enforcement.

- Courts and law enforcement partners review program status, upcoming features, and share ideas for improvement in monthly meetings. They have gained a better understanding and appreciation for each other's processes through CCPOR.

CCPOR Alignment to Priorities - CCPOR furthers Governor Brown's priorities of reducing the cost of government while increasing its efficiency. CCPOR supports Goal 2 of the state's IT Strategic Plan by developing an innovative solution that leverages investments in data and infrastructure while enhancing outcomes for the public and law enforcement. CCPOR is also aligned with a number of NASCIO's State CIO 2011 Priorities:

- CCPOR **enhances the value of data** in a protective order, with details that could not be included in previous processes.
- CCPOR is hosted in a **centralized data center,** at high service levels that support solutions to **centralized administrative tasks** while improving scalability and workloads through methods such as **server consolidation and virtualization**.
- CCPOR improves **partnering** with courts and justice partners through a shared system that improves the efficiency and accuracy of protective order information.
- CCPOR reflects a **significant enhancement of legacy systems** for protective order management, providing improved access to better data and resulting in improvements to public and **officer safety.**
- CCPOR supports better **budget and cost control** by optimizing resources such as staff time, and supporting cost-saving paperless office initiatives.

Section E - Benefits of the Project

Beneficiaries/Stakeholder Groups - Judges, court staff, and peace officers are primary users of CCPOR, while primary beneficiaries are the public, particularly victims of domestic violence and violent crimes; and officers in the field who must enforce protective orders while protecting themselves and the public.

Benefits– The CCPOR:
- Helps protect victims of domestic violence, the public, and law enforcement: The system reduces issuance of conflicting protective orders and ensures that court and law enforcement personnel can access current, accurate, and complete order information, including handwritten details and warnings on protective order forms.
- Creates operational efficiencies: Court staff and law enforcement partners benefit from workflow support in the system and electronic access to scans of protective orders. By creating an electronic repository of protective orders, CCPOR saves court and law enforcement personnel across California hours of staff time and hundreds of dollars each day.
- Leverages existing infrastructure: By leveraging existing infrastructure, the CCPOR solution reduced costs and sped system development.
- Ensures privacy and security: With enterprise user authentication integration fine-grain user roles and permissions, and 2048-bit SSL encryption, CCPOR ensures that confidential information is accessed only by authorized personnel.

Court Feedback on CCPOR -
The following unedited statements on the system's benefits are from a report by the Superior Court of Santa Clara County and are provided by Jean Pennypacker, Director, Family Resources Division, Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara.

> CCPOR has had a very positive impact for Court operations in the savings of staff time and effort. In the past when the public requested to see a restraining order, the staff would pull the file and look for the order among all of the papers in the file. If the file were missing from the shelf, staff would spend time searching for the file or have the public come back another day when the file was found and available. With CCPOR, staff can now pull the order on-line and make a copy immediately.

> Our Court also has several locations in the county. A restraining order may be located at any one of these courthouses depending on where the matter was heard. Before CCPOR, when a judge requested a copy of the order from another location, a clerk from the other courthouse had to find the file, then the order and fax it. Access to the other order was delayed depending on how difficult it was to find the order. Printing the order from CCPOR is now convenient and quick.

> Finally, our Sheriff's Office enters our orders into CLETS. Before we had CCPOR, we would fax copies to the Sheriff's Office for same day entry. The faxed orders were not always readable and our Sheriff's Office had to call to get clarification about what was written on the orders. The scanned version is clearer and consequently the number of calls has greatly decreased along with the need for staff to find the order.

Web Sites, Press Coverage, Additional Resources
General web site: http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/ccpor/

Complete list of California counties and CCPOR on-boarding dates.
http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/ccpor/documents/ccpor-courtslive2010.pdf
Link to screenshots: http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/ccpor/documents/ccpor-overview.pdf

Court Press Releases (reverse chronological order)-
Santa Clara: http://scscourt.org/general_info/news_media/newspdfs/NRCCPOR100726.pdf
Marin: http://www.marincourt.org/data/news/32.pdf

Media Coverage
KCBS (Doug Sovern): http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2010/12/30/san-francisco-courts-to-participate-in-online-restraining-order-registry/

Awards & Recognition
CCPOR was awarded a Center for Digital Government 2011 Best of California award in the category of Best Application Serving an Agency's Business Needs:
http://www.centerdigitalgov.com/survey/2581