

Connecting for Care:

CTIP's Role in Health and Justice Outcomes

CATEGORY

Data Management, Analytics
& Visualization

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The criminal justice system (CJS) population has higher medical and mental health acuity levels than the general population. A capacity for secure sharing of health and safety information between jails and other criminal justice (CJ) partners in Colorado can improve health and safety outcomes for justice-involved individuals and the staff who serve and help people during and after incarceration.

The Colorado Trusted Interoperability Platform (CTIP) connects county jails across Colorado to partners within the Colorado Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (CICJIS). The platform allows jails to improve the safety, security and health of staff, incarcerated persons and other CICJIS members, verify the jail detention status of justice-involved individuals, and improve reporting, protection, management and programming needs.

Jails in Colorado select their data management system and technology, and most of these products are from different vendors and not created to connect with competitors' products. This lack of interoperability severely limits the exchange of information housed within various systems and is the primary challenge that has prevented the development of a system such as CTIP anywhere within the U.S. The pilot project took an innovative approach by utilizing a data broker to connect agencies that use different information systems for data sharing, completely changing the game.

IDEA

Colorado faces significant challenges at the intersection of behavioral health and the criminal justice system. The state ranks seventh in the nation for prevalence of mental illness among adults, yet access to mental health care remains limited¹, and substance use disorders affect more than one in five adults². Justice involvement often becomes an unfortunate outcome for individuals facing these challenges. The data paint a stark picture:

- Nationwide, an estimated 44% of individuals in jail have been diagnosed with a mental illness, and 63% have a substance use disorder³.
- Within Colorado's jails, about 65% of people experience mental health symptoms⁴.
- Unfortunately, only a quarter of these individuals have received professional help while incarcerated, with suicide being a leading cause of death in jails⁵.

¹ Mental Health America. (2023). *Ranking the States*. <https://www.mhanational.org/issues/2023/ranking-states>.

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2022). *State Estimates*. <https://datatools.samhsa.gov/saes/state>.

³ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2024). *About Criminal and Juvenile Justice*. <https://www.samhsa.gov/criminal-juvenile-justice/about#:~:text=It%20is%20estimated%20that%2018,have%20a%20substance%20use%20disorder>.

⁴ Colorado Department of Human Services. (2020). *2020 Statewide Behavioral Health Needs Assessment: Individuals with Criminal Justice Involvement*.

⁵ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2024). *About Criminal and Juvenile Justice*. <https://www.samhsa.gov/criminal-juvenile-justice/about#:~:text=It%20is%20estimated%20that%2018,have%20a%20substance%20use%20disorder>.

Beyond higher rates of behavioral health conditions, justice-involved individuals frequently struggle with chronic conditions, trauma, disabilities, housing and food insecurity, employment instability, being uninsured, and other criminogenic needs⁶. These factors complicate the path to effective services and care. Without appropriate treatment, and given that incarceration itself can exacerbate symptoms, the cycle of justice involvement becomes nearly impossible to break.

The Colorado Trusted Interoperability Platform (CTIP) addresses these challenges by supporting treatment provision and continuity of care for individuals experiencing incarceration in Colorado's county jails through information sharing. The program enables data-sharing capabilities between jails, allowing them to exchange vitally important information about the health and safety needs of an individual previously in custody. This allows any subsequent jail improved access to information to better develop or reengage a previously created care plan rather than starting the assessment and evaluation process from scratch. Ultimately, this helps avoid service gaps and assists in a successful community reintegration process. Maintaining a continuous relationship with a primary care provider is associated with a lower risk of reincarceration⁷, and improving health information exchange for justice-involved people can help improve these outcomes.

While cross-jurisdictional data sharing presents obstacles, emerging data-sharing networks are improving the review of crime patterns over time and space, enhancing crime prevention⁸. Research has found that data review on particularly high-utilizers of healthcare services, including justice-involved individuals, can better help to coordinate care for these individuals, generating treatment efficiency, quality care, and cost savings⁹. In general, there is support for data and information exchange improving outcomes across criminal justice and public health fields alike. CTIP is one more tool that Coloradans can depend on as we recognize that criminal justice concerns *are* public health concerns.

The research reviewed above highlights how a lack of exchange of historical and current physical and mental health information across justice entities and community providers delays services that pose serious health and safety risks for individuals, first responders and justice professionals who manage and ensure access to treatment. Stability becomes impossible to achieve without resources and more efficient processes to identify and treat individuals under jail supervision. CTIP can meet needs in ways never thought possible due to the siloed data infrastructure of various CJ agencies, with the potential to redefine “collaboration” by creating efficiencies that agencies will utilize in their everyday operations.

⁶ Prison Policy Initiative. (2022). *Chronic Punishment: The unmet health needs of people in state prisons*. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/chronicpunishment.html>.

⁷ Sheu M., Hogan J., Allsworth J., Stein M., Vlahov D., et al. (2002). Continuity of Medical Care and Risk of Incarceration in HIV-Positive and High-Risk HIV-Negative Women. *Journal of Women's Health, 11*(8), 743–50.

⁸ Pickering, J. C. & Fox, A. M. (2022). Enabling Collaboration and Communication Across Law Enforcement Jurisdictions: Data Sharing in a Multiagency Partnership. *Criminal Justice Policy Review, 33*(7), 732-755.

⁹ Wu, D., Davidson, N., Walker, K., Yock, B., & Jha, A. (2020). Three Strategies to Overcome Data-Sharing Challenges and Improve the Social Determinants of Health. *Patterns, 1*(5).

No state has a system that connects local jails statewide. Building this information exchange platform creates an innovative model that other states and agencies can replicate to manage interoperability. Benefits of CTIP and connecting County Jails across Colorado to the CICJIS:

- Provides jails an opportunity to improve the safety, security, treatment and health of staff and people experiencing incarceration.
- Provides other CICJIS members an opportunity to verify an individual's jail detention status and improve reporting, security, management and programming needs.
- Allows agencies control of access to sensitive information and creates options for direct data transfers.
- Improves criminal justice and health outcomes through information sharing and continuity of care.

Based on stakeholder input and partner feedback, the project identified three initial CTIP priorities and use cases:

1. Custodial data transfer between jails
 - This system streamlines intake by exchanging prior health and safety information between jails, improving well-being, safety, and staff management through alert reporting and resource identification.
2. Statutory reporting of jail quarterly metrics
 - CTIP streamlines statutorily mandated quarterly jail reporting (C.R.S. 24-33.5-518 (4.5) & 17-26-118). The system automatically populates reports from jail management systems for review and submission, increasing efficiency and data quality.
3. Release data for Judicial processing
 - By providing weekly release data to the State Court Judicial System, CTIP will enable courts to track release and sentence completion accurately, avoiding unnecessary extensions of conditions like protection orders and alleviating CJS burdens.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Trusted Interoperability Platform Advisory Committee, established in [SB20-037](#), strategized how to implement a secure information exchange aimed at improving health and stability within the justice system, decreasing recidivism and evaluating system needs. This project executes that plan.

Initially proposed in 2018, CTIP secured a Justice Reinvestment Initiative grant of over \$1.2 million in 2019. However, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted jail operations, halting initial stakeholder engagement and platform development. With federal funding extensions and additional resources, the project resumed in 2023 when a full-time project manager was hired who identified staffing needs, organized stakeholders, structured the budget, and launched the CTIP pilot project.

The enthusiastic engagement of numerous partners and stakeholders was crucial in developing CTIP. Several agencies were involved in the development phases, working with project staff to gather input on how the platform should operate, the data to be exchanged, draft participation agreements and other documentation outlining technical specifications, security compliance, and data governance requirements, and how the project would be funded and maintained. Once a road map for development was established, several additional agencies were engaged in the technical creation of the platform and deployment of the solutions to integrate the pilot jails. Major stakeholders and contributors to CTIP include the State of Colorado Attorney General's Office, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Departments of Corrections (CDOC), Human Services (CDHS) and Public Safety (CDPS), the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ), Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT), Colorado Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (CICJIS), Judicial Branch, Office of Behavioral Health Offender Services, the Task Force Concerning the Treatment of Individuals with Behavioral Health Disorders in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice System, Slalom Consulting, LLC, and the Pilot Jails and their Jail Management System (JMS) vendors including the Sheriff's Offices for Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver, and Moffat Counties. Stakeholders will continue to grow as the platform gains additional county jail participants.

Key benefits of the development and implementation process of CTIP include:

- All Colorado jails can participate, as access to the jails' exchange platform can be managed through a web portal, JMS application interface add-on, or individually developed application. This offers many options for users based on their current technology.
- Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) implement CJIS-level security standards to ensure data is secure. The integration platform operates through Mulesoft APIs deployed to the GovCloud FedRAMP security-compliant platform and performs as the data broker that orchestrates the data search and aggregation.
- Custodial data requests are submitted by entering unique identifying information [first name, last name, date of birth (DOB), inmate state identification number (SID)] to query for a potential match among other participating jails, which will return the formulated report.
- Custodial data returned is not stored; reports are read-only, allowing jails to maintain data governance of the information they collect and store within their jail management systems.

Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver and Moffat county jails piloted this project due to their geographical location, incarcerated population capacity and jail management system vendors. This allowed for the development of integration solutions that could be applied to other jails in the state with the same vendors. To further streamline adoption, a web application interface was developed for jails with less flexible vendor systems. This efficient and cost-effective approach encourages wider participation, ultimately enhancing match rates and statewide data sharing quality.

The current process by which CJ agencies exchange custodial information is time-consuming and does not promote safety, security, or a continuum of care and treatment. Expected outcomes of the primary use cases established through the initial development and pilot deployment of CTIP include:

1. Custodial data transfer between jails

- Prior operation: Jails call or fax one another if they are aware another jail has specific information about a person previously in their custody, but requests for information must be specifically directed, meaning a jail must know where to send a request and await a response.
- CTIP capacity: A jail can query all jails participating in the CTIP for available health and safety alerts to optimize the intake, classification, and housing placement processes. This helps staff be more immediately aware of an individual's needs to prevent serious health and safety crises.

2. Statutory reporting of jail quarterly metrics

- Prior operation: Quarterly jail reporting currently requires manual data entry of about 200 different fields and metrics, which is very time-consuming and demanding for jail staff, and carries a high risk of user entry error and reporting inconsistencies.
- CTIP capacity: Enabling a software and API-driven process automates reporting. At runtime, a jail-defined process gathers the data, formats it, and sends it to the State, reducing several manual steps and improving reporting standardization, consistency, and reliability.

3. Release data for Judicial processing (forthcoming use case in Summer 2025)

- Current State: Courts are not often notified when an individual has been released from custody and if their sentence has been completed. This frequently results in the continuation of other sentencing conditions, such as protection orders, that should have otherwise been vacated, resulting in unnecessary CJ involvement for the individual and additional system-wide demands.
- Future State: Similar to statutory reports, specific data points on individuals recently released from custody will be automatically pulled from jail databases in a weekly report for the courts. If the subscribed jails can provide courts with release information, the courts can then address other sentencing considerations for more efficient court processes.

The impacts discussed above for each initial use case are expected to become the new standard processes as the pilot project provided a strong proof of concept. The benefits of CTIP for partners and participants once more jails are integrated will become clear. The project team will work to gather data and metadata to evaluate the exchanges occurring between participants and partners. A few evaluation points include:

- The rate at which jails use CTIP to review existing data on individuals coming into custody.
- Whether data received by jails is helpful and what adjustments would better meet needs.
- Measures for how the Custodial data exchange between jails improves health and safety outcomes, including a greater awareness of the needs of individuals incarcerated in county jails and how to address those needs effectively.
- Error handling to improve system functionality.
- Feedback from participants and partners to improve use cases and user experience.
- Changes in statutory reporting outcomes, improvements in data reliability and consistency, and the usefulness of CTIP's automated reporting compared to the legacy submission process.
- Improvements in Judicial and Court processes with information provided by participating jails
- Cost savings to the state through the efficient use of CTIP avoid CJS-related crises, especially among individuals incarcerated in county jails.

Research supports data-sharing initiatives, and the challenges of the pandemic further highlighted the need for better information exchange practices. CTIP will be an instrumental platform in helping manage long-term, statewide interests to improve continuity of care for justice-involved individuals. The project has gained widespread attention, as the CTIP team has presented at several state, regional, and national engagements and conferences on the innovative nature of the platform and the utility other agencies might find in similar efforts and solutions to complex data sharing challenges.

Looking Ahead

At the end of May 2025, the pilot jails are successfully exchanging real-time custodial data and the CTIP team is actively developing statutory reporting. The judicial release data use case will be live by summer's end, paving the way for integrating approximately 16 grant-awarded Colorado jails before year-end, reaching 40% of the state's incarcerated population. Potential for inclusion of additional jails through 2026 continues to grow as the team will conduct outreach to additional JMS vendors. One particular target vendor hosts several large-capacity jail clients. Their participation would boost CTIP's scope to encompass closer to 75% of Colorado's jail incarcerated population.

CTIP is a goal for Colorado's Health Equity Strategic Plan. The team imagines expanding use cases to the Colorado Department of Corrections to facilitate the exchange of information between jails and prisons for a more successful transition of individuals in custody. Other future use cases may also involve the Colorado Department of Human Services, utilizing data exchange for reentry planning purposes to further meet the needs of justice-involved individuals. This would create greater stability and opportunities for successful community reintegration.