

Tools for Safe and Smart Bail System Changes: Data and Technology

Blog post by Lisel Petis dated March 29, 2024.

View the blog post [here](#).

Location	Type	Summary
Harris County, Texas	Information-Sharing and Electronic Case Management	To combat an exploding caseload with insufficient resources, Harris County Pretrial Services implemented a new system to provide real-time compliance data for defendants released pretrial. This allowed judges to monitor and adjust the intensity of pretrial conditions through the course of a defendant's supervision period. It also helped pretrial staff and judges quickly identify defendants who could shift to less demanding conditions as well as respond to rule violations faster. Supervision conditions were lightened for over 2,000 defendants during the pilot period without any negative impact on compliance or rearrest rates.
Cass County, Indiana	Electronic Case Management	In 2018, Cass County Court and Pretrial Services (CCCPS) introduced several evidence-based pretrial changes including tracking voluntary support referrals for individuals under pretrial supervision. CCCPS was soon able to double participation in voluntary support services, with less than 3 percent experiencing supervision revocation. These improvements, along with effective monitoring of pretrial outcomes, have increased the number of people benefiting from pretrial services. Meanwhile, rearrest and flight rates remain extremely low, resulting in significant cost savings for the county.
Adams County, Colorado	Data-Driven Performance Management	In 2015, over 60 percent of inmates in Adams County jail faced mental illness. To tackle this crisis, the local Criminal Justice Coordinating Council created a dashboard and analytical tool to facilitate information exchange between the jail and the Community Resource Center. The tool merged data between jail custody and behavioral health and provided real-time data for this subpopulation, revealing higher rebooking rates (48 percent versus 29 percent) and longer stays (40 days versus 31 days) for those with serious mental illness compared to the general population.
El Paso County, Texas	Data-Driven Performance Management	El Paso County utilizes a data dashboard to track justice system trends like pretrial outcomes, rearrests, failures to appear, and diversions. Key stakeholders meet to discuss the findings, leading to immediate improvements. Data has revealed insights like the correlation between longer jail stays and a higher likelihood of rearrest, which has influenced pretrial release decisions. It has also allowed the county to track impacts, such as a reduction in violent crime and the minimization of racial disparities, following the elimination of a money bond schedule. Additionally, data has identified courtroom backlogs, allowing for case reallocation to expedite processing.