



2013 Report to the Pennsylvania State Roundtable

CPCMS Users Workgroup

Chairperson:

Honorable J. Brian Johnson

Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County



Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS) USERS WORKGROUP

Chair

Honorable J. Brian Johnson
Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County

Members

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Court and Community Services Director
Lackawanna County

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Background

In June of 2008, statewide implementation of the Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS), a court-based statewide dependency case management system, began. By 2010, all 67 of Pennsylvania's counties were actively entering dependency cases into the CPCMS system. CPCMS provides the ability for individual courts to track and manage dependency cases into an automated system and offers a reporting protocol that can be followed by all courts within the state while standardizing procedures across the Commonwealth. Gathering statewide court data provides the ability to measure current practices in each jurisdiction to determine the effectiveness of these practices and the efficiency of the court in improving the lives of abused and neglected children.

During the 2011 State Roundtable meeting, the quality and integrity of the statistical dependency data generated from CPCMS continued to be of primary concern. State Roundtable members saw value in forming a workgroup that could voice county/court concerns and assist in the development of solutions in cooperation with the staff of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC). As a result, the CPCMS Users Workgroup ("The Workgroup") was formed and Judge J. Brian Johnson, Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County, volunteered to be its chairperson.

The Workgroup, comprised of members from various-sized counties and positions within court administration, clerk of courts and child welfare, met twice in 2011 and 2012. The Workgroup shared experiences, successes and concerns related to CPCMS and examined mechanisms currently in place to address system modifications. Workgroup members provided input that led to several positive system enhancements, for example, the need to track the number and reasons for continuances in dependency matters. CPCMS now requires the user to record the reason for the continuance and the party requesting the continuance.

The Workgroup members also tested, prior to its release, the Dependency Data Dashboard ("Dashboard") and reviewed the *Best Practices for Achieving High Quality CPCMS Dependency Data*.

Dependency Data Dashboard Successful Release

In February 2013, the Dependency Data Dashboard was released on the AOPC's website, providing the public, judges and child welfare professionals, for the first time, with a comprehensive picture of the demographics of every county's dependent child population.

The Dashboard presents statewide and county-specific data in an easy-to-understand format that includes elements such as age, gender, race, length of court supervision and adjudication, current child placement and permanent child placement plans. It presents dependency case data for the year 2011 and can be used in a number of ways:

- Counties may review demographic groupings (age, gender, race and ethnicity) to determine if there are populations which may benefit from preventive services that can reduce the likelihood of families entering the dependency system.
- Data about permanency plan goals may be reviewed to ensure that effective planning is being done to ensure that dependent children will receive permanent homes.
- Placement data may be analyzed to ensure that appropriate placement resources are available and being fully utilized.
- Caseload data may be reviewed to determine the appropriate amount of judicial resources that are required to hear dependency cases and for county agencies to review their rate at securing adjudications.
- Data may also be used by local Children’s Roundtables to identify strengths in the local dependency system as well as areas of opportunity.

Conclusion

The Workgroup’s original purpose was to assist in making CPCMS and the data produced accurate and relevant; to identify needed system enhancements; and to provide a meaningful voice to key system stakeholders.

Since 2008, CPCMS has become fully implemented in all 67 counties with very few system enhancement requests being made. In fact, 2012 saw only six minor requests made to the CPCMS Help Desk for functional enhancements and of the six requests, five were implemented.

With the successful release of the Dashboard, so few requests made for CPCMS functional enhancements, requests for CPCMS form changes being reviewed/authorized by the Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Forms Sub-committee, and the overall improvement of the quality and integrity of the statistical data generated from CPCMS, it is believed that a workgroup specific to CPCMS is no longer necessary.

The Workgroup believes that data generated from CPCMS would greatly benefit the efforts of other State Roundtable Workgroups as well as state and county teams and that this data should be shared, as needed and that this can be more effectively accomplished through OCFC/AOPC staff rather than through a workgroup.

Recommendation:

Based upon the above information, The Workgroup respectfully recommends that the State Roundtable disband the CPCMS Users Workgroup, acknowledging that its original tasks have been completed and that there is no further need for it at this time.