



OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

LESSONS LEARNED IN COVID

HOW PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT HAS CHANGED



- Rapid adaptation and experimentation during COVID
- What lessons can we learn from COVID
- How to improve future engagement with clients beyond COVID



PRE-COVID

SURVEY OF TRIBAL
COURTS
TECHNOLOGY



POLL QUESTION

BEFORE COVID WAS YOUR COURT USING REMOTE TECHNOLOGY FOR PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT?



POLL QUESTION

AFTER COVID WERE YOUR SERVICE PROVIDERS USING REMOTE
TECHNOLOGY FOR TELEHEALTH SERVICES?

SURVEY OF TRIBAL COURTS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Identified current use of technology for:
 - Case Management
 - Client Engagement
 - Teleservices/Telehealth
 - Remote Court Appearances

Building Capacity for Tribal Justice Solutions

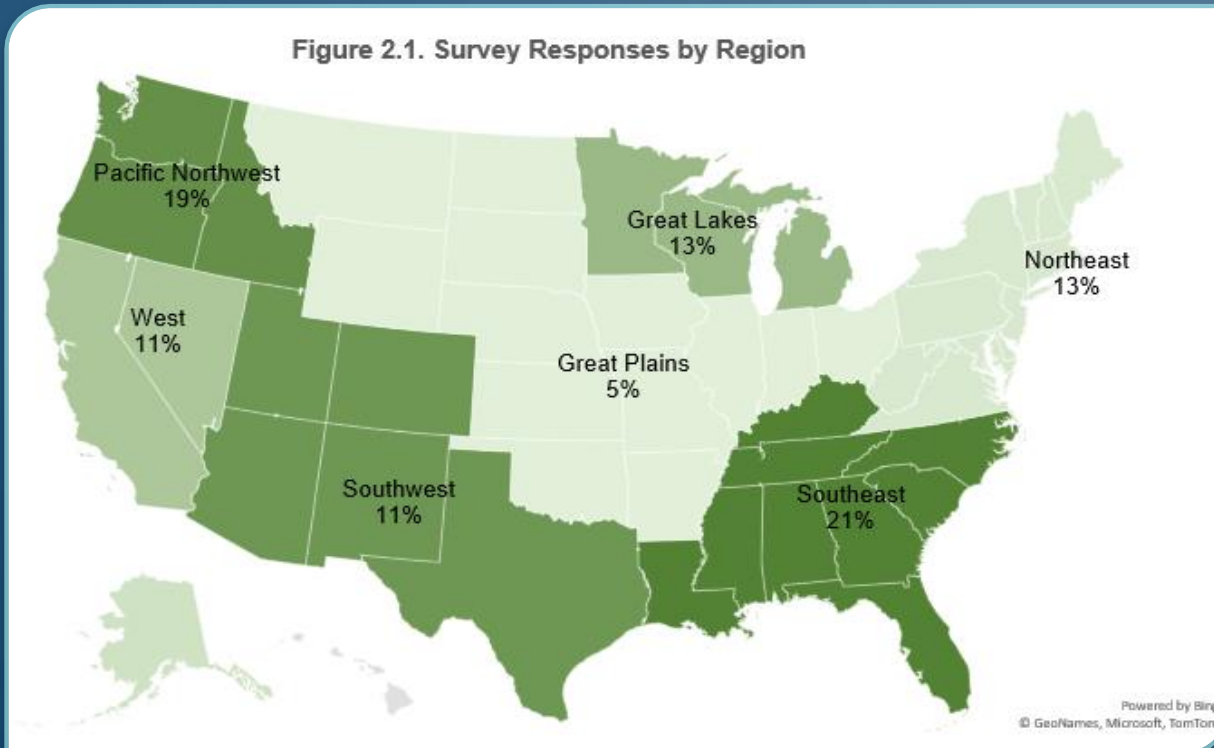
A Portrait of Assessments and Technology in Tribal Courts

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Center
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SURVEY RESULTS

Figure 2.1. Survey Responses by Region



- Data Collection
- Technology Access and Infrastructure
- Inter-Agency Information Sharing
- Teleservices and Remote Technology

TECHNOLOGY



Infrastructure

Widespread internet use for work

- (59% reliable)
- (36% somewhat reliable)

Limited Cell Phone Service

- (86% somewhat reliable)
- (13% unreliable)



Data Collection

Collect electronically (41%)

Collect through paper (33%)

Some use of custom or off the shelf court databases

- Reviews are mixed



CLIENT COMMUNICATION

In person communication (76% weekly)

Hand delivered paper communications (61% weekly)

Phone Calls (72% weekly)

Email (36% weekly)


Text Message (39% weekly)

Letters (46% weekly)

Fax (15% weekly)

Remote Video Conferencing (6% weekly)

Database messaging (100% never)



REMOTE TECHNOLOGY

Court Hearings and Client Communication

- 12.5% used often, 12.5% never used)

Client Monitoring and Case Management

- 6.25% used often, 50% never used

Telehealth and Remote Access to Services

- 0% used often, 75% never used

Specific Treatment Modalities

- (MRT/CBT) 0% used often, 87.5% never used

Interest in more Teleservices

- 71% would like to see more teleservices



POLL QUESTION

AFTER COVID WAS YOUR COURT USING REMOTE TECHNOLOGY FOR PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT?



POLL QUESTION

AFTER COVID WAS YOUR COURT USING REMOTE TECHNOLOGY FOR PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT?



CHALLENGES WITH REMOTE TECHNOLOGY

Unreliable internet and cell phone service

Cost of broadband and service equipment

Needed infrastructure upgrades

Costs of technology use and maintenance

Other issues

- Resistance to new technology
- Usability and device compatibility challenges
- Lack of coordinate use among agencies



POLL QUESTION

HAS TECHNOLOGY ACCESS BEEN A CHALLENGE FOR YOUR COURT DURING COVID?



POLL QUESTION

HAS YOUR COURTS TECHNOLOGY ACCESS INCREASED DURING COVID?




CHANGING COMMUNICATIONS

REDEFINING SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

HOW TRIBAL COURT ENGAGEMENT IS CHANGING

- What are the strategies we used to rely on?
 - Direct communications
 - Flyering, letters, information at court
 - In person access to treatment and medication
 - Town Halls
 - Festivals/Community Gatherings
 - Phone Calls



ADAPTING TO CHALLENGING TIMES

DEVELOPING NEW SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD: CREATIVE INNOVATIONS IN PROBLEM SOLVING COURTS

TREATMENT COURTS AND COVID-19

Beginning in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the United States, upending communities, economies, institutions, and the daily life of millions. Among the most vulnerable were people involved in the criminal justice system, especially those experiencing from mental illness and substance use disorders, who faced the ripple effects of the pandemic as courts abruptly shut down and the virus spread through crowded jails and prisons. Treatment courts were directly affected by these shutdowns. Court shutdowns and stay-at-home orders made it challenging for drug courts to adhere to best practices such as regular court appearances, referrals to treatment and other social services, and frequent drug and alcohol testing.¹ In the face of these limitations, many courts across the country acted quickly with innovative solutions to meet participants' needs amid new and ever-changing restrictions and court closures.

To support these solutions, the Center for Court Innovation's technical assistance team provided a series of weekly webinars and facilitated remote discussion groups between statewide treatment court administrators. During these sessions, Center staff heard inspiring stories from around the country about courts that mobilized quickly and found creative ways to connect with, support, and engage participants remotely. The Center also conducted a national survey of unique strategies that treatment courts implemented to meet the challenges of the pandemic and received 24 submissions from 14 states.

This document highlights some of those efforts. The purpose is to provide a set of themes and lessons on how courts are adapting to better serve the vulnerable populations involved in the criminal justice system and promote improved life outcomes through their programs—even in a moment of national public health crisis.

OVERALL THEMES

Treatment court staff described a range of important measures they took to improve their ability to serve participants and maintain program success remotely at a time of severely limited access. These included efforts to transition to teleservices, expand access to technology, enhance recovery supports virtually, adjust drug testing, and reimagine incentives and sanctions.

Transitioning to teleservices. Treatment court teams and providers around the country used phone, email, text, and virtual platforms to conduct remote treatment, case management, court sessions, clinical assessments,

staff meetings, staff trainings, graduation, medication counts, and supervision. Numerous courts said that communication between participants, staff, and peers not only continued during the COVID-19 pandemic but often occurred more frequently than before, leading to more meaningful conversations.

The transition to virtual court appearances produced some unexpected results. Some drug court teams found that participants were more talkative and open with the judge about their lives and struggles when not in the open courtroom. Some participants reported feeling a stronger connection with the judge and were less overwhelmed by the atmosphere of the courtroom, leading them to speak more freely.

Expanding access to technology. Communication with treatment court participants was a challenge in some areas due to a lack of technology or wireless internet access. To remedy this problem, the New Hampshire judicial branch used general state funding to purchase

**TAKING
ACTION**
A SERIES ON
JUSTICE
INNOVATION

Transitioning to teleservices

Expanding access to technology

Enhancing recovery supports virtually

Adjusting drug testing

Reimagining incentives and sanctions

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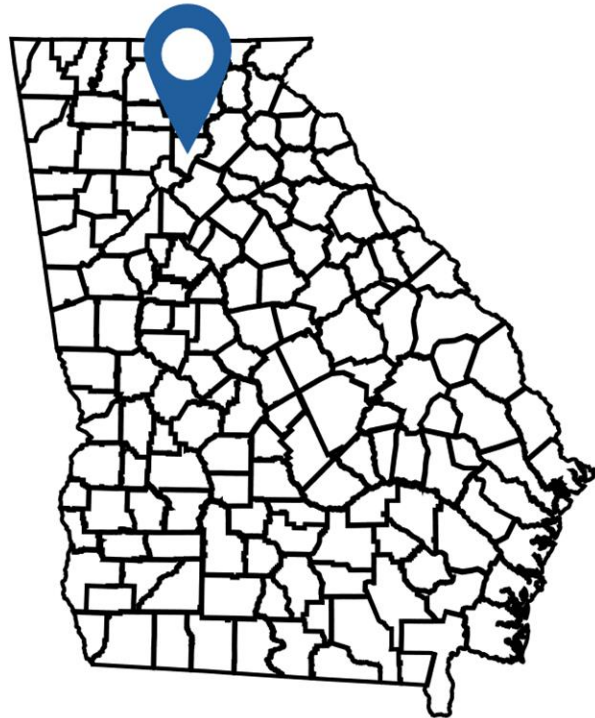
For more information about
treatment courts and available
training and technical
assistance, contact us at
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POLL QUESTION

HAS YOUR COURT ADJUSTED YOUR DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING PROCEDURES?

GEORGIA



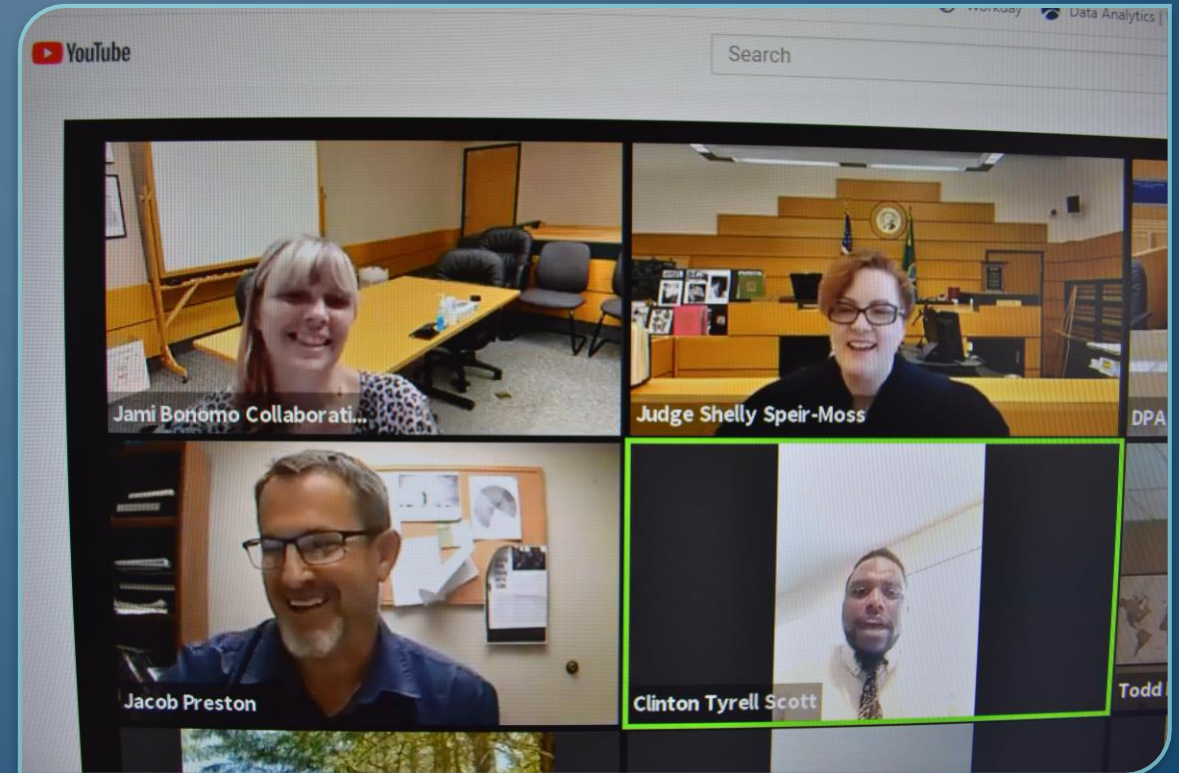
Northeastern Judicial Circuit

Georgia

- The total number of treatment hours remained consistent with the previous in-person schedule.
- Accountability court judges recorded motivational videos for participants.
- Partnered with the local recovery community organization to establish daily online support meetings.
- Social media challenges
- Nonprofit provided participants in need with necessity items.
- Treatment Services developed a new policy and procedure manual for all teleservices.

WASHINGTON

- Stayed connected remotely with participants, via team briefings three times a week, daily recovery meetings, group sessions for mindfulness meditation, and mental health and wellbeing sessions
- Virtual town halls
- Graduations
- Partnered with a local nonprofit that provided tablets for participants to engage in online art classes.





POLL QUESTION

HAS YOUR COURT DEVELOPED NEW INCENTIVES AND SANCTIONS DURING
COVID?

MINNESOTA

- Mental Health Court in St. Louis County, Minnesota hosted virtual “craft and snack” sessions
- Team purchased individualized and pre-packaged snacks and supplies for the sessions
- Boosted morale and reduced some of the loneliness and isolation



TENNESSEE

- Drive-through court sessions and graduation ceremonies
- Participants received free coffee vouchers, masks, and food delivery for attending
- Drive-through courts allowed connection with participants in a deeper and more meaningful way





POLL QUESTION

HAS YOUR COURT IDENTIFIED NEW WAYS OF MEASURING FOR COMPLIANCE
AND PROGRESS?

NATIONAL SURVEYS – MACRO-LEVEL THEMES

- Easier to transition clients from in-person to virtual services than it is to orient new clients to virtual services
- Community supervision (probation/parole) struggled to function
- Courts heavily restricted the use of sanctions
- Creative graduations and incentives
- The transition to virtual has necessitated a greater focus on logistics than ever before.
- Practitioners generally like remote if facilitated via video, but not phone
- Participants liked one-on-one treatment sessions, many disliked groups
- Larger recovery networks for participants



LESSONS LEARNED

- Colorado Presentation
- How to incentivize participation
- New (old?) ways to measure success/progress/compliance (Recovery is more than supervision and monitoring)
- Respecting client autonomy (clients and staff are resilient)
- Technology is no longer an innovation, it's a necessity



POLL QUESTION

HAS YOUR COURT DEVELOPED NEW POLICIES, PROCEDURES OR PRACTICES
TO MAKE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CLIENTS DURING COVID?

GENERATING NEW SOLUTIONS

Peer Exchange

- Spreadsheet of ideas
- Practitioner Listserv
- Workshopping calls

Engagement & Collaboration

- Dissemination of supplies
- Improving access to technology and resources
- Provider check-ins and client coordination

COURTS ENGAGING HOMELESS CLIENTS

- Go to where clients are
- Mobile pop ups
- Reduce barriers



SHARE YOUR STORY

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING OR EFFECTIVE STRATEGY YOUR HTWC DEVELOPED TO IMPROVE CLIENT ENGAGEMENT DURING COVID?



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

A STORY OF RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

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