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**PROJECT MANAGER UPDATE**



In [last month's newsletter](#), I introduced the five phases of a project and shared that the CLJ-CMS project is squarely in the Execution phase. I talked about this project's 1500+ requirements, our 300+ business practices, and the millions of rows of data that are being converted from our legacy systems into our new systems.

Basically, I shared what the project team has been focused on. But what about the courts? Specifically, what about our pilot courts? What are they doing as key partners in the project, and how will their efforts influence the rest of our CLJ courts? Just as crucially, what can your court be doing today to prepare for your implementation phase?

In March of this year, the project team met with our five pilot courts (Fircrest/Ruston, Gig Harbor, and Tacoma Municipal, Pierce County District) to kick off the countdown toward go-live. Over the course of our first few meetings, we introduced a working version of the implementation plan. This plan outlines tasks from 33 weeks prior to go-live to three weeks post-go-live, totaling 212 tasks. The tasks range from the very technical such as "Review Court Network Communications" to some not-so-technical like "Remind Users to Complete LMS Learning". Tasks are tagged with a category (Management, Configuration, Training, etc.), a responsible party (CLJ-CMS Project Team, Tyler Technologies, Court, etc.), and a short description of what is to be accomplished. The project team meets with the courts regularly to review the status of open tasks and to introduce and discuss upcoming tasks. In between meetings, we invite our pilot courts to attend "office hours". Much like a college professor's office hours, during these twice-per-week sessions, our business analysts and project

leadership are present, there is no set agenda, and court staff can drop in to discuss any questions that they might have in a free form manner.

The implementation document is a working document. Questions and feedback from the pilot courts are helping the CLJ-CMS project team refine the implementation guide – adding or removing tasks as necessary, clarifying descriptions or assignments, and re-arranging tasks to better fit the needs and desired outcomes of the project. The pilot courts are helping CLJ-CMS pave the way for future courts, and their collaboration and feedback on this process are invaluable.

As for what your court can do to prepare for your implementation phase – here are a few things to consider:

- Preparing your eFiling local rule for public comment per GR 7 with subsequent submission to AOC by July 1 requires careful coordination on timing.
- Early coordination with your court’s Information Technology support team will ensure that the project team and your IT staff have plenty of time to address any hardware or software compatibility issues that might delay us from deploying the new tools to your court.
- Determining how you’ll schedule staff to attend training, and finding dedicated space to ensure they can attend training away from their normal work station. Ensuring that staff has the time away from their regular duties to complete training is essential. Equally important is providing them with the space and/or equipment to ensure they can attend training uninterrupted by phones, customers, or other distractions.
- As a last quick tip, you’ll want to have a lighter calendar the week before and the week of go-live (implementation go-live days are usually on the weekend) – for those of you that schedule specific types of cases months in advance, keep an eye on your calendar. For example, our Phase I courts are anticipated to go-live in September 2023 – which means that a large district court may need to start planning in late spring of 2023 for a lighter calendar for September.

I also encourage you to read previous newsletter articles from Angie Autry, our Court Business Supervisor on the project; she’s offered some excellent tips on how to review your business processes and document “how you do business” in your court. In this issue, we’ve also offered a deeper dive into some of the ways we want you to think about documenting your court’s business practices below, so please also review that.

**Garret Tanner**  
**Project Manager**

## **PREPARING FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION - ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION -**

In April's newsletter, Angie Autry, Court Business Supervisor, provided some tips on how to prepare for project implementation (you can catch up on that [here](#)). We've received excellent questions from a few courts asking for greater clarification on the information specifically needed with the questions that were presented. The goal is that if they better understood how this information would be used, it would help them to prepare what the project was looking for during implementation activities. To build transparency and share this information broadly, we are presenting the specific questions cited from the article where clarification was requested, and the answers provided:

- If you have multiple calendars, what is your process to determine how hearings are scheduled?
  - Each court will have a local configuration (court-specific set up) based on their current processes. Things that your court can discuss and the document would focus on:
    - What types of hearings are scheduled?
    - What times are hearings scheduled?
    - Does the court have different hearings daily, weekly, or monthly?
- Do cases get assigned to a specific judicial officer? If yes, which judicial officer is assigned to specific cases?
  - Things that your court can discuss and document:
    - How does the Court assign Judicial Officers?
    - Are they assigned at case initiation?
    - Are they evenly distributed in order by last name?
    - Are they assigned to specific case types or calendars?

Documentation of this information ahead of time will help with local configuration (set up) when Enterprise Justice rolls out to your region's courts. We encourage you to think of these business documentation exercises as if you were describing to a fellow court manager or staff member "how you do business" in your court. You may have processes documented in a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual, but every office often has methods of getting work done that they don't always have time to document. This type of information is more often than not taught to new employees verbally or shared via email, and is exactly the kind of information the project team will need when we begin implementing the new tools at your court.

## **GETTING TO KNOW PROJECT STAFF**



### **Liz Oest**

Liz Oest is a Software Quality Assurance Tester for the CLJ-CMS Project. She works closely with the project’s technical and business analysis teams to test the new system’s functionality to ensure it performs as intended based on business needs. Before joining AOC, she worked in the social services field (Dept of Social and Health Services/Health Care Authority). She considers her background in social services to be invaluable in many ways, especially as it taught her how to effectively communicate with a wide variety of people in different ways. Then, she says she made “the biggest career move I have ever made and one of the best decisions I have ever made” by accepting her first position working on an IT project as a member of the testing team.

Prior to joining AOC, Liz had heard good things about working with the agency, and when she was notified by a friend about an open position, she decided to apply. Since joining the project team, she says “This project team is turning out to be one of the best I’ve been a part of – the devotion, knowledge, and passion that the folks on the project have is incredible, and it makes my job easier and more enjoyable because of that! The teamwork on this project has been invaluable, and so is the passion that people have for their jobs.” She appreciates how supportive her team and Project Manager has been, and she hopes that the new systems will be able to seamlessly support the day-to-day work of the people who use them so that the inner workings of the court community can run more smoothly and efficiently.

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## **DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS TO ASK OR FEEDBACK TO PROVIDE?**

Questions, comments, and feedback related to this newsletter and the CLJ-CMS Project are welcomed at [CLJCMSProject@courts.wa.gov](mailto:CLJCMSProject@courts.wa.gov).