



# Court Technology Fund

## *Odyssey to Improve Access, Enhance Data Sharing, and Maximize Efficiency*

Report to the Governor

C.L. "Butch" Otter

and the

2nd Regular Session of the

63rd Idaho Legislature



Idaho Supreme Court

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In the second year of a five-year plan, the Idaho Judicial Branch began implementing its most significant business and technology transformation, which includes a transition to digital court records and statewide business practices in Idaho's courts. In accordance with the plan, the pilot implementation of the new case management and electronic filing applications in Twin Falls County propelled Idaho forward in delivering enhanced technology services for Idaho's courts. This new capability provides improved access to court records, greater convenience for court users, better information exchanges with judicial partners, and greater efficiency for court personnel.

### **STATE-OF-THE-ART COURT CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND ELECTRONIC FILING**

On June 22, 2015, following three weeks of on-site training, Twin Falls County was the first county to discontinue use of the legacy Idaho Statewide Trial Court Automated Records System (ISTARS) and transition to Odyssey, a proven case management solution from Tyler Technologies. Odyssey is used to operate courts across the United States for over 35 percent of the population.

On the first day of operation, District Judge Richard Bevan and Magistrate Judge Calvin Campbell fully transitioned to a digital courtroom, managing their caseload using the electronic court record within Odyssey, blazing the trail for all Idaho judges. Twin Falls County court clerks were able to fully manage daily court operations and worked with the implementation team to refine application configuration and business processes for future deployments throughout Idaho. According to Tyler Technologies, the Twin Falls County pilot court implementation was "one of the smoothest pilot court" deployments in the history of their company.

In addition, the Twin Falls County adult misdemeanor probation office and the problem-solving court staff fully transitioned from their legacy applications to Odyssey to manage their probation and problem-solving court case load. Additionally, numerous data integrations were established with various state and county agencies (to include the Idaho Department of Transportation, Idaho State Police, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Division of Juvenile Corrections, Idaho State Tax Commission, local law enforcement agencies, and others) to facilitate the timely exchange of criminal justice information. This transition marks the first time the Idaho Supreme Court has provided a fully integrated solution, laying the foundation for a comprehensive criminal justice system.

In coordination with the pilot court go-live event, the iCourt Portal was deployed for Twin Falls County. The portal replaces the Idaho Supreme Court Data Repository for counties that have transitioned to Odyssey and is used by both anonymous public users and extended access users (such as prosecutors, public defenders, government agencies, etc.). The portal provides functionality for case searches, party searches, hearing searches and electronic payments. This technology, also provided by Tyler Technologies, is a new product; due to the early stages of this product in its life-cycle, the usability and flexibility of the portal is limited. Tyler Technologies has committed to maturing this product over time.

Effective November 9, 2015, voluntary electronic filing and service was made available to all attorneys filing cases in Twin Falls County. Parties can now submit electronic documents to Twin Falls County courts at any time, from anywhere. Upon acceptance, the system automatically files the document into the electronic court case record, driving significant efficiencies for attorneys and court clerks. This system also allows parties to digitally serve others, eliminating paper service costs. Following a two month voluntary time period, the Court plans to require mandatory electronic filing in Twin Falls County, effective January 11, 2016.

The focus has now shifted to the delivery of Odyssey to Ada County, Idaho's largest county, in early summer 2016. Due to the complexities of the scope, scale and system integrations within Ada County, the timeline for deployment to this early adopter county has been extended by several months. This adjusted schedule allows the deployment of Odyssey to better align with a separate large-scale systems replacement project with the Ada County Sheriff's Office, minimizing the amount of business impact and change to Ada County. This phase of the project will be the most complicated Odyssey deployment due to the number of integrations, data conversions, external users, and varied business processes. Over the next several months, the project team will assess the business processes in Ada County, work with local law enforcement agencies to facilitate the exchange of criminal justice data, establish the foundation for a new county prosecutor and public defender software application that is fully integrated within Odyssey, and prepare Ada County for the conversion of their ISTARS data to Odyssey to ensure historical court data is preserved.

## STATEWIDE BUSINESS PRACTICES

Uniform business practices and forms were implemented in Twin Falls County to enable the courts to maximize the use of Odyssey and to establish a framework that all courts will use as they transition to the new system. These new business practices will be critical to the ability of Idaho's courts to achieve the maximum efficiencies and benefits of a statewide system, providing operational consistency across the state. These processes will benefit traveling judges and attorneys who file in multiple jurisdictions, and improve the quality and access to statewide court data through uniform court forms and data fields. Over the past year, various stakeholder workgroups, including district judges, magistrate judges and court clerks, have been finalizing the common business processes and associated court forms. Some of these processes and forms have been improved based on the experiences from the Twin Falls County pilot court deployment. The team is now assessing how these standardized processes and forms will function within Ada County, the early adopter court.

## EXPANDED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR FUTURE COURT TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

Necessary enhancements to the Court's technology infrastructure are continuing to be implemented to support the transition to a statewide case management system. The central data center systems (servers, storage, core network equipment) have been implemented in the Court's primary technology facility. The focus now has shifted to the statewide hardware rollout of local county servers and desktop computers for judges and court clerks. In partnership with Executive Branch agencies, the project team is also continuing to install greater network capacity with redundant connections to the courts that will be deploying Odyssey in the next year. This network initiative will continue to all of Idaho's courts, ensuring each facility is equipped with the necessary infrastructure to support their operational needs.

## STATUS OF THE COURT TECHNOLOGY FUND

The legislature has long supported a statewide approach to court technology, beginning with appropriations in FY89, the creation of the Court Technology Fund in 1997, a subsequent increase to the Fund in FY06, and continuing with the funding provided in 2014. Pursuant to Idaho Code § 1-1623, the Supreme Court is required to provide an annual report on the following aspects of court technology and the Court Technology Fund:

- (1) **Status of the Fund:** In response to the Supreme Court's proposed five-year business plan to fund the technology project, the Legislature has appropriated two one-time general fund appropriations in FY15 and FY16, in the amounts of \$4.85 million and \$2.18 million respectively. The Court is requesting a third one-time appropriation for FY17 of \$2.0 million. The Technology Fund also receives funds from increases to civil filing fees. For FY15, the revenue received was 1.8% below projections for the year and appears to be below projections for FY16 as well. The Court continues to review the revenues monthly.
- (2) **Maintenance, replacement, and enhancement of technology:** The Court continues to use the Fund to maintain the existing ISTARS software and will do so until all counties are converted to Odyssey. As indicated above, the technology team has made significant progress, not only in rolling out the first Odyssey site in Twin Falls County, but in preparing Ada County and other counties throughout Idaho for Odyssey by installing new hardware and increasing the network capabilities and backup systems.
- (3) **Manner in which court technology has advanced the courts in Idaho:** In Twin Falls County, most of the judges are now able to conduct their court proceedings electronically without any paper court file. This is a tremendous savings of time for the clerks and law clerks in not having to prepare paper files. It also enables the judges to prepare and sign documents electronically, again saving time and paper costs. With the advent of electronic filing, clerks will no longer have to spend time looking for files or documents; attorneys will save time and costs of producing documents; and judges will have instant access to all court files.

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