IDOC Streamline Offender Data Sharing

Illinois Department of Corrections created a cloud-based system to efficiently transfer offenders' information from county to state

Summary

In December 2015, Offender 360 became Illinois Department of Corrections' (IDOC) official offender management "system of record." Offender 360 is a data-driven offender management system designed to optimize management of an offender's justice-involved lifecycle. Offender 360 is a cloud-hosted, client relationship management technology solution that modernized IDOC's 1980s mainframe system and 41 disparate offender management applications, while also reducing the use of paper files. Offender 360 is a user-friendly, web portal access system that includes all offender data. Offender 360 automates workflows, enforces business rules to reduce data entry across multiple systems, and reduces the need to print and store permanent offender records that are costly to use and maintain. Offender 360 allows for two-way, real-time data sharing between justice-involved and human services agencies at both the county and state levels. This two-way data capacity enables these entities to share demographic, criminal history, medical and mental health, and offender assessments entering State custody and being released or discharged into the community. This information exchange provides a comprehensive approach to assisting IDOC staff and its justice-involved partners to make more effective and informed decisions regarding placement, rehabilitation, and release of offenders.

Problem

Prior to Offender 360, IDOC's reception and classification centers received offender information in a paper format when the offender was transferred to IDOC custody from the county. IDOC was faced with collecting demographic information and repeating the offender examinations and assessments already performed at the county level. The Department spends approximately $50 million annually processing around 17,500 offenders. This is roughly over $2,800 per inmate on processing alone without including housing. A change was needed to streamline the offender information sharing across agencies.

The demand to provide real-time information on IDOC's offender population was heightened in 2010 when the Department's Meritorious Good Time (MGT) Push program, allowing early release of nonviolent offenders from IDOC based on MGT, was suspended.

IDOC's ability to collect information, either scattered across multiple databases or maintained in physical hard copy files across multiple locations, and to provide real-time information compromised the Department performing appropriate evaluations of key early release factors for the MGT Push population. New legislation was passed to ensure quality offender evaluations to reduce the offender's risk of re-offending once released. IDOC recognized that a new offender management system was required to address the new legislative requirements.
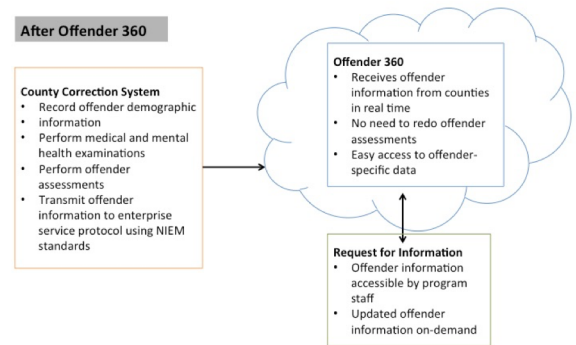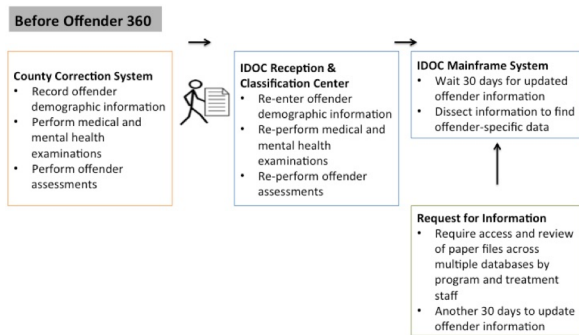
Analysis

IDOC evaluated its technology landscape for managing its offender and parole populations with the goal of improving efficiency, reducing costs, and ensuring unwavering corrections operations. The evaluation included a review of over 20 possible solutions, including other State operating systems. IDOC viewed the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) grants management application. IDOC determined that IDOT's client relationship development platform could be used to develop the Department's new offender management system. IDOC initially acquired development licenses from IDOT and proceeded with product development.

Solution

IDOC contracted for technical assistance to develop its cloud-based offender management system (Offender 360). Offender 360 was constructed using a client relationship management (CRM) platform to meet the IDOC's specific needs and requirements. CRM helps manage and analyze client data and interactions. The cloud-hosted Offender 360 solution houses the application modules and all offender data. Offender 360 includes an enterprise service data-sharing portal that enables Illinois' counties to send and receive offender information using the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) compliance standards. This seamless data-sharing solution enables IDOC to:

- Track, manage, and report on the populations through the entire justice continuum from arrest and bail decisions to intake to release and discharge from IDOC custody
- Accelerate IDOC's ability to classify and determine offender risks and needs for programming and treatment
- Implement a standards-based offender information sharing capability across state and local justice-involved agencies
- Achieve a prescribed, repeatable process to integrate all Illinois counties
- Reduce offender processing time and costs

Before Offender 360

County Correction System
- Record offender demographic information
- Perform medical and mental health examinations
- Perform offender assessments

IDOC Reception & Classification Center
- Re-enter offender demographic information
- Re-perform medical and mental health examinations
- Re-perform offender assessments

IDOC Mainframe System
- Wait 30 days for updated offender information
- Dissect information to find offender-specific data

Request for Information
- Require access and review of paper files across multiple databases by program and treatment staff
- Another 30 days to update offender information

After Offender 360

County Correction System
- Record offender demographic information
- Perform medical and mental health examinations
- Perform offender assessments
- Transmit offender information to enterprise service protocol using NIEM standards

Offender 360
- Receives offender information from counties in real time
- No need to redo offender assessments
- Easy access to offender-specific data

Request for Information
- Offender information accessible by program staff
- Updated offender information on-demand

Impact

The Offender 360 offender management system provides IDOC with a number of benefits: 1) streamlines and provides real-time access to information from Illinois' committing counties; 2) mitigates errors and redundancy by reusing common system components; 3) provides relevant and comprehensive offender information to accelerate classification, programming, and treatment tailored to each offender's needs; 4) isolates the information-sharing process across individual agency system changes; and 5) supports Illinois move toward collaboration and each entities' public safety goals.

Offender 360's data-sharing capabilities are estimated to save 2.5 hours, equivalent to $800, per offender during the reception and intake process by eliminating the need to re-enter offender information from Illinois' committing counties. Additional cost savings are anticipated as additional phases of the project are completed.

Improvements

The next phase of the Offender 360 project is scheduled to be completed by September 2017. This phase includes new classification and placement instruments designed to inform management decisions on personal behavioral planning for the offender population. This data-driven improvement will be used to optimize Department resources for training staff and for developing and implementing evidenced-based programs that help ensure an offender's successful re-entry into the community and mitigate the offender's risk of re-offending.

References

Big leap in inmate tracking: Offender360 Accelerating Illinois' Modernization

Inmate data paroled from mainframe

New Offender Management Solution Emerges from Public-Private Partnership

Illinois prisons escape mainframe, move to CRM