



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Maine

ONE STATE'S EXPERIENCES WITH JUSTICE INFORMATION SHARING USING THE OPEN JUSTICE BROKER

Ordinarily with projects of this sort, the State Police would have developed their N-DEx records submission project and the Maine Prosecutors' Association would have developed a solution to pull incident records from law enforcement agencies around the state—and both efforts would have been separate, standalone efforts. Now, by reusing the architecture and infrastructure (via the OJB), we can bring those efforts together, hold down the cost, and eliminate duplicate work. Local law enforcement agencies are not burdened with building and maintaining multiple interfaces—they can have a single point of origin with multiple end points. This approach avoids the silo implementations.

**—Col. Robert Williams
Maine State Police**

Two Projects, One Solution

Recently, the Maine State Police and the Maine Cumberland County District Attorney's Office collaborated on two parallel initiatives that required participating law enforcement agencies to extract incident data out of their records management systems (RMS): one to report incidents to the FBI's N-DEx repository, and the second to enable agencies to electronically refer cases to county prosecutors.

By using common architecture and governance models and the flexible technology platform of the OJB, Maine was able to build *one* data extract to fulfill both needs. As a result, the state is contributing data to N-DEx and leveraging that powerful tool to obtain critical investigative information, not only from agencies within Maine, but from hundreds of agencies across the U.S. Meanwhile, prosecutors are seeing time and cost savings with the electronic transmission of charge information. In the future, the extract can be used for other justice information sharing purposes, and the "adapters" built to extract information from prominent commercial RMSs can be reused in agencies across other OJBC member states, as well as in Maine.

Architecture/Governance

With SEARCH's assistance, Maine went through a careful process of defining its business architecture—the foundation for sharing information among criminal justice partners in the State. They then created a governance model for their system—an agreement on how the group makes decisions. This clearly states the rules of engagement for participants, which all parties agree to adhere to. They developed a strategic plan to focus limited resources on the highest-value initiatives and outcomes. With architecture and governance in place, Maine began using the OJBC platform to turn their information sharing dreams into reality—under budget and ahead of schedule.

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Information Sharing in Maine

Several years ago, justice officials in Maine recognized they needed to address the State's critical lack of justice information sharing. Its 130-plus police agencies, 16 county sheriffs, and several state justice agencies saw great opportunity to improve the state's justice system through better electronic exchange of data.

Driven by a desire to share data and operate more efficiently, justice stakeholders (led initially by the State Police, Courts, Corrections, and Maine Prosecutors' Association) envisioned an integrated system that would allow each agency to maintain its own autonomy and keep its own software, yet communicate with all other agencies statewide. They wanted a system in which an officer could enter data once and have it "pushed" to wherever it was needed.

The result of their collaborative efforts is the Maine Justice Information Sharing Architecture (MJISA), which provides decision-making guidance and calls for information to be exchanged in a way that minimizes unnecessary dependencies between systems. It allows agencies to maintain autonomy over their internal business processes, and improves everybody's collective ability to respond rapidly to new business needs and opportunities.

MJISA has deployed two principal statewide information sharing solutions using the OJB, and plans to implement more in the near future. The OJB platform has provided tangible benefits to Maine—significant cost savings, eliminating duplicate design efforts, and providing critical investigative data through access to incident reports from agencies statewide.

OJBC CAPABILITY

Incident Reporting

The OJB facilitates sharing of law enforcement incident information at the local, state, and Federal level, by extracting incident information out of a records management system (RMS), sending the information to the broker at the state level, which then routes charging documents to local prosecutors and incidents to the FBI's Law Enforcement National Data Exchange (N-DEx) system. This allows law enforcement agencies to leverage the power of N-DEx while also creating efficiencies at the local level.

Maine was the first state to implement this capability through the OJB, and county jurisdictions are now experiencing significant savings by eliminating duplicate data entry. Prosecutors in Maine now need only approximately 30 seconds to create a case using the electronic transmission from police agencies, versus a minimum of 5 minutes to create a case via manual data entry. This allows prosecutorial staff more time to prepare and manage their cases, making better use of taxpayer resources.

OJBC CAPABILITY

Disposition Reporting

Maine has developed a new OJBC capability that enables the reporting of dispositions. Maine will use this capability to automate the sharing of dispositions from the courts to the criminal history repository. By implementing the Disposition Reporting Service, Maine is able to eliminate duplicate design efforts; this means Maine is able to share dispositions in other scenarios without the need to create point-to-point connections between systems. This new service greatly increases the potential for re-use and subsequent cost-savings. Because of Maine's investment in developing the Disposition Reporting Service, other OJBC members are now better positioned to automate policies related to the occurrence of dispositions.

OJBC CAPABILITY

Subscription/Notification

Leveraging work in Hawaii and Vermont, Maine is implementing a reusable infrastructure to notify practitioners of key events that occur in the justice process. The initial goal is to notify probation and parole officers, via email, any time one of their supervisees is arrested or has been issued a summons. Subscriptions occur automatically as a result of information entry in the probation and parole case management systems.