

Innovating Community Supervision: Notifying Probation and Parole Officers of Critical Events

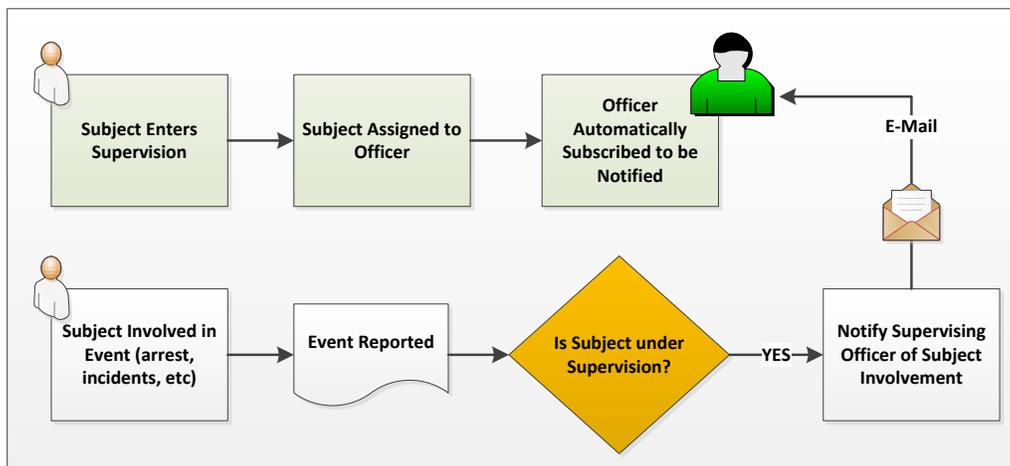
The Open Justice Broker Consortium (OJBC) is a nonprofit membership organization of government agencies and jurisdictions, dedicated to improving justice information sharing through the reuse of low-cost, standards-based integration software. The OJBC unlocks the power of open source software and cross-boundary collaboration to promote a more effective, efficient justice system.

Increasingly, more jurisdictions across the country are adopting alternatives to incarceration as a way to reduce corrections populations. By default, this policy shifts the burden of offender management from facility supervision to community correctional services—often without a corresponding increase in resources. This leads to higher caseloads, as well as greater expectations and public accountability for monitoring client activity during pretrial, diversion, and post-incarceration. A significant challenge for community supervision officers is being aware of contact with law enforcement involving their clients.

Currently, many community supervision officers do not have a reliable or consistent means to learn of client contact with law enforcement. If they can spare the time, officers manually review arrest reports or make jail visits to review intake logs. This process is time-consuming and inefficient, as it can delay an officer’s awareness and ultimately hinder decision making. ***With the technology available today, there must be a better solution.***

The Open Justice Broker (OJB) offers that solution: a flexible and standards-based **subscription and notification** capability that notifies officers (via email or another electronic means), in real-time, when supervised individuals are involved in qualifying events like incidents and arrests.

The process is very straightforward: As a by-product of electronically sharing information about events, such as incidents or arrests, the OJB can automatically examine details of those events—as they’re reported—to determine if a parolee or probationer has been involved in the event and then immediately notify the appropriate officer of the client’s involvement.



SUCSESSES IN THE FIELD

Many officers in Vermont, Hawaii, and Maine have incorporated this functionality into their daily caseload processes. In **Vermont**, officers receive e-mail notifications any time their client is involved in an incident—whether as a suspect, witness, victim, etc. In **Hawaii** and **Maine**, officers receive e-mail notifications when their clients are arrested.

Officers using this functionality in these states have reported the following benefits:

- Officers learn of behavior not usually reported by clients
- Officers can gather greater information about client lives
- Clients are more likely to disclose law enforcement contact
- Clients are becoming aware that their assigned officer will be notified of any law enforcement involvement; therefore clients are becoming less likely to be involved in law enforcement incidents.

STANDARDS-BASED FUNCTIONALITY

The OJB subscription-notification capability conforms to national information sharing standards, including the Global Information Sharing Toolkit and the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM).

IMPLEMENTING THESE FEATURES

This functionality enabled through the use of open source technologies, meaning there are no licensing fees required to take advantage of these solutions.

If you think this functionality could be beneficial to your organization, you can learn more by visiting the OJBC website at <http://www.ojbc.org> or contact us at info@ojbc.org.

Officer Testimonials:

“The...notifications have been especially useful in situations where a client fails to disclose recent police activity or contact. Having this information also aids in proper investigation and research for requesting police reports or as informative data for frequency of rearrests, as it is nearly impossible to audit every case in CJIS to verify any new arrest.”

“I had a female who I had a warrant on for over 2 years, [and I] got the ... notification that [the police] had her. I was able to talk to the arresting officer as he was charging her.”

“I had a guy get arrested...and the probationer did not tell them he was on probation. He probably would have slipped through if I had not gotten the notification. Instead, I was able to hold the guy, who was on a tear with his addiction, which probably would have led to him committing [more] crimes to further fuel his addiction.”

“Essentially it has given me insight into relationships when there are many domestic arguments going on, yet the offender is saying things are just fine, or when a person keeps coming up as a passenger in vehicles where the driver is a drug dealer, or when I see that someone on my caseload is being the complainant in cases which he never would have done before due to his pro-criminal code.”