



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 20-148

For business meeting on: July 24, 2020

Title

Judicial Branch Administration: Judicial
Branch Statistical Information System
Felony Case Aging Update

Agenda Item Type

Action Required

Effective Date

July 1, 2021

Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected

None

Date of Report

July 2, 2020

Recommended by

Court Executives Advisory Committee
Nancy CS Eberhardt, Chair
Emily Chirk, Senior Research Analyst,
Business Management Services

Contact

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Executive Summary

The Court Executives Advisory Committee recommends that the Judicial Council approve the definition updates to the case aging sections of the Felony report in the Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS). The case aging data in JBSIS is used in the *Court Statistics Report* (CSR), an annual publication released by the Judicial Council. The current definition in JBSIS does not include a data category that would make it possible to report to JBSIS on all cases that dispose in 12 months or fewer. This update would allow for clearer reporting to JBSIS regarding timeliness of felony case processing data to be included in the CSR.

Recommendation

The Court Executives Advisory Committee (CEAC) recommends that the Judicial Council adopt the definition updates to the reporting categories for the case aging section of the Felony report in the Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS). If approved, the new definitions would become effective for data reported to JBSIS on or after July 1, 2021.

Relevant Previous Council Action

At its June 19, 1998 meeting, the council approved the JBSIS manual for use in defining the data elements that courts were expected to report.¹ Since then, there have been minor technical adjustments made to JBSIS and JBSIS data reporting. On January 12, 2018, the council approved the first set of major changes to JBSIS filing definitions² since 1998. On May 17, 2019, the council approved the JBSIS Version 3.0 Manual that incorporated the definition changes³ adopted in January 2018.

Analysis/Rationale

The *Court Statistics Report* is an annual publication released by the Judicial Council that reports on the business of the courts. Data used in the CSR is collected through JBSIS. Due to the limitations of the current JBSIS reporting categories in the case aging section, there have been instances in which timeliness of felony case processing reported in the CSR has been misconstrued because the current definition does not include a data reporting category that would make it possible to report to JBSIS on all cases that dispose in 12 months or fewer. By redesignating two of the current data definitions of “greater than 91 days” to be “91–365 days” and adding two rows to report cases that are greater than 366 days, courts will be able to report on cases that are resolved in the pre-preliminary stage that take longer than 90 days but less than 365 days. Reporting these cases to JBSIS will more properly depict the timeliness of felony case processing. The attached memo from the JBSIS Subcommittee to CEAC dated January 17, 2020 (Attachment A), details the changes as proposed to CEAC.⁴

Policy implications

Revising the reporting categories will create better alignment with the current felony disposition time standard as described by standard 2.2 of the California Standards of Judicial Administration and would be consistent with national time standards for felony cases.

Comments

The proposed definition changes were not circulated for public comment. The JBSIS Subcommittee discussed the definition changes at the March 2019, May 2019, September 2019, and December 2019 meetings, and no public comments were received about the definition changes. The proposal was approved unanimously by CEAC at its February 2020 meeting.

¹ See <https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/jc-19980619-minutes.pdf>.

² See <https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=M&ID=559778&GUID=3553B33A-BE03-4DF3-84E1-8196225C58DB>.

³ See <https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=M&ID=640297&GUID=9C71CADA-D8FB-4AA9-A887-0260DB284273>.

⁴ The memo indicated that if approved by CEAC, staff would present the changes to the Judicial Council in May 2020. While approved, staff were not able to bring the item until the July 2020 meeting and the implementation timeline was modified to align with a pending subsequent phase of changes to JBSIS.

Alternatives considered

The JBSIS Subcommittee did not consider any alternatives to the present proposal, other than alternatives related to the sequencing of these changes relative to other proposed updates to JBSIS. The subcommittee is currently reviewing the entirety of JBSIS for updates and changes that would improve the quality of data collected through JBSIS. The JBSIS Subcommittee discussed the possibility of waiting to propose the changes to the case aging section with when the rest of the changes are proposed for the Felony report, but ultimately decided there was urgency to updating the case aging sooner rather than later due to its inclusion in the CSR. Additionally, the JBSIS Subcommittee agreed that later review of the Felony report would not result in an additional modification to the case aging section.

Fiscal and Operational Impacts

In order to implement the change, all 58 courts and their case management system vendors will need to make the appropriate revisions to their felony data collection and data reporting systems to capture the new data elements. Those changes would need to be implemented between July 2020 and June 2021 in order to take effect by July 2021. This will allow courts and vendors enough time to make the modifications. The fiscal impact of making these modifications to case management systems depends on whether the specific vendor will need to make a configuration change or a change to the system's application code and also varies on how each court's contract with the vendor defines changes to JBSIS as maintenance or an enhancement. Additionally, Judicial Council staff will need to modify the JBSIS technical platform and related documentation such as the JBSIS manual to accommodate the newly reported data elements.

Attachments and Links

1. Attachment A: Memo from the JBSIS Subcommittee to CEAC dated January 17, 2020



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MEMORANDUM

Date January 17, 2020	Action Requested Please Review
To Court Executives Advisory Committee	Deadline N/A
From Emily Chirk Senior Research Analyst, Office of Court Research	Contact Emily Chirk Office of Court Research 415-865-7453 phone emily.chirk@jud.ca.gov
Subject Correction of JBSIS Felony Time to Disposition and Case Aging Reporting	

Background

The Court Statistics Report (CSR) is an annual publication released by the Judicial Council that reports on the business of the courts. Data used in the CSR is collected through the Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS). The CSR provides information on criminal case processing time by county and currently reports “Felonies Held to Answer Disposed of in Less than 12 Months.” The case aging categories in JBSIS for Age of Disposed Preinformation Cases from Complaint Arraignment to Final or Interim Disposition do not include a category that would make it possible to report on cases that dispose in 12 months or fewer. As a result, there have been instances in which timeliness of felony case processing has been misconstrued in some counties.

Current Data Definition

The current definition for Age of Disposition Cases from Complaint Arraignment to Final or Interim Disposition reads: “Report the number of cases that, in a stage prior to the filing of an

Impact and Implementation

This change would impact all 58 courts, regardless of whether they are reporting through the automated JBSIS transmission or are reporting manually through the Web Portal. If approved by the Court Executives Advisory Committee (CEAC) the recommendation would be presented to the Judicial Council at the May 2020 business meeting. If approved, the changes would be effective July 2021. To effectuate the change, courts and case management system providers would need to make the appropriate revisions to their data collection and data reporting systems to capture the new data elements. Those changes would need to be implemented between May 2020 and June 2021 in order to take effect by July 2021. Additionally, JBSIS would need to be modified to capture the new data elements.

Recommendation

The JBSIS Subcommittee of CEAC recommends that the proposed changes to the case aging sections of the JBSIS 7C Felony report be accepted to allow for an accurate depiction of felony time to disposition in the CSR.