



**South Carolina Court Administration**  
South Carolina Supreme Court  
Columbia, South Carolina

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August 5, 2022

VIA EMAIL: [HCommLegOv@schouse.gov](mailto:HCommLegOv@schouse.gov)

The Honorable Weston J. Newton  
Chair, Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Subcommittee  
Legislative Oversight Committee  
South Carolina House of Representatives  
Post Office Box 11867  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Representative Newton:

You have asked the South Carolina Judicial Branch, Office of Court Administration, to provide information that may assist with review of the executive agencies that routinely interact with the South Carolina Judicial Branch.

Specifically, you inquired:

1: Has Court Administration involved the Attorney General's Office State Grand Jury Clerk of Court in the electronic sentencing sheet project to help avoid the State Grand Jury Clerk of Court from scanning and emailing documents that multiple agencies then manually re-enter into separate systems?

**The Electronic Sentence Sheet will be available to all South Carolina prosecuting agencies. The Clerk of the State Grand Jury can utilize the Electronic Sentence Sheet as the confidentiality of their processes allow.**

2: Please provide potential recommendations for maintenance of records of court proceedings within the Judicial Branch's discretion beyond five years. It is our understanding transcripts previously held on physical tapes are now commonly held digitally and applicants can seek belated appellate review of his or her direct appeal pursuant to White v. State or belated appellate review of his or her initial post-conviction relief proceeding pursuant to Austin v. State, both of which are

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not barred by the one-year statute of limitations as set forth in the Uniform Post-Conviction Procedures Act.

**Court records are commonly held digitally; however, the records are not readily accessible due to the variety of software used by court reporters. Moreover, as the maintenance of records of court proceedings is governed by the Supreme Court of the State of South Carolina, Court Administration has no recommendation at this time.**

3: Please state the cost for all Clerks of Court to digitize records for cases newly filed and standardize the process across the state. If unknown, please state the information needed to make this determination.

**Records received from Clerks of Court are currently collected in digital form in the Case Management System. All Clerks submit the same information.**

4: What actions in review and implementation of the Judicial Branch's new case management system are being taken to encourage and simplify acceptance and use of the system by all counties and municipalities (e.g., make the system internet accessible to avoid the need to purchase unique software to utilize the system)?

**The new application will be web based; therefore, no unique software or hardware will be required to use CMS.**

5: Is Court Administration willing to work with the entities below to reach a consensus among prosecutors, courts, and public defenders on (1) how cases will be counted (e.g., defendant, warrant, indictment) and (2) certain data fields/formats that will exist across all entities, so agency and other data applications provide consistent information on caseloads and applicable information can be efficiently shared between the entities?

**Yes. Court Administration would like to engage South Carolina's state agencies on a set a data standards, such as those defined by the National Center for State Courts, that are comparable across state agencies and state courts.**

Sincerely,



Tonnya K. Kohn