Cisco Connected Justice

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Connected Justice is a set of solutions, built on safety and security. Utilizing Webex at its core, it brings an encrypted foundation that layers on top of the already robust security offerings from Cisco such as SecureX, DNA Center, Duo, and Firepower. That being said, these solutions were built with the guidance of our justice customers to meet their needs, as well as the overall justice community globally.

The entire justice system, including courts, corrections, and community supervision, is reimagining how they can administer justice in a hybrid fashion, where appropriate, with equity for all participants.

All participants in justice benefit from this platform, including judges, court staff, attorneys, victims, defendants, correctional officers, incarcerated individuals, community supervision program participants and supervisors. Cisco Connected Justice delivers access to all users in an intuitive manner, increasing availability and access for all who are justice-involved.

These solutions can change the lives of justice-involved offenders by enhancing their support system with programming and educational tools, thus equipping them to become more productive members of society. Empowering offenders with technology driven programming helps to reduce recidivism rates, lower violence levels and sick call within facilities, and helps to drive successful outcomes and reductions in recidivism.

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Benefits to Justice Partners

Ensure improved outcomes for government entities, justice workers, and the public they serve.

Continuity of operations and services

Cisco Connected Justice enables the flexibility to operate both virtually and in person – today's hybrid model. Facilitating hearings and pre-trial interviews, enabling vulnerable and confidential witnesses to participate remotely, and providing the collaboration elements for complete virtual court proceedings when legally appropriate are paramount to enabling a hybrid justice system. In normal operational times and during times of a disaster recovery, man-made or by nature, we enable correctional facilities to receive virtual support services with an instant pivot capability to remote operational services. This enables the agency to deliver the constitutionally mandated services needed, including legal services, telehealth, visitation, re-entry services, and education.



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Increased efficiencies and productivity

Pre-trial services for community supervision eligibility can be conducted virtually, as well as meetings between community supervision officers and those on supervision programs. This same video service enhances collaboration court programming for drug courts, veteran courts, and mental health courts.

Increased citizen engagement

Increase community engagement by providing the opportunity to attend and participate in remote appearances for certain hearings like traffic court. Typically only available in-person, and during business hours, attending traffic court in the past meant loss of work time.

Appropriate cases are being decided more quickly, speeding docket reduction. According to Matthew Dietz, director of IT for Elkhart County, *“Elkhart county’s traffic court can now process 80 cases per day. Prior to using a virtual solution, the maximum number that could be processed in a day was 35.”*

According to Dietz, *“Citizens no longer have to plan entire days around a 15-minute court appearance, and the docket is moving much more smoothly.”*

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Reduced transport and travel costs

Enabling courts to conduct appearances and hearings virtually helps correctional facilities reduce costly internal escorts, processing, and external transportation of offenders. Remote court appearances speed up access of hearing timelines for offenders, while also saving on costs of vehicles, personnel, and equipment.

Other corrections system service providers such as therapists, social workers, and educators can leverage virtual delivery to provide services from home or their office, reducing or eliminating travel costs.

Additionally, because these providers are not traveling, this increases the time to deliver more services to more offenders.

Enhanced security and access control

Connected Justice solutions provides options to the legal system in how hearings and appearances are delivered. This reduces potential public safety risks that occur when offenders are being transported for non-trial appearances and hearings.

According to Dietz, *"Connected Justice offers a higher level of security, because 20 or 30 incarcerated individuals are no longer required to sit together in a courthouse with several corrections officers present."*

Additionally, Connected Justice Solutions enable improved control of who has access to hearings and proceedings, documentation, and confidential user information.

Deeper visibility into user behavior

Enable a transparent user experience that results from a natural and intuitive atmosphere. Webex Audio minimizes the fatigue and mental strain that can occur after a long video discussion, by eliminating challenges to on-line experiences such as conversations that have echo, background noise, and distorted sound.

"A smile can demonstrate understanding. A nod can connote agreement, which may be evident during real-world interactions, but it is not so clear when your telepresence tool has stuttering audio and video. Our Webex rooms provide clear sight and sound, resulting in a transparent user experience."

Benefits for the People

Attorney

Attorneys can schedule virtual meetings with clients in corrections facilities, ensuring that they have adequate representation, even during periods of quarantine or other lock-down.

Typical virtual solutions don’t consider the personalization required when there needs to be a candid conversation, especially the importance of maintaining the attorney client privilege. While in a hearing, the court can instantly create side rooms, supporting personal conversations to take place with attorney client privilege maintained.



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Interpreter

In many courts, Interpreters are required for cases, including those tried in civil, criminal, family, probate, and juvenile courts.

An interpreter often splits their day, walking from court room to court room. This creates unnecessary travel time and reduced interpreter availability – not an ideal situation for the court or an interpreter.

With Cisco Connected Justice solutions, an interpreter can be situated in any location allowed by the court, and receive on-demand requests from a court when they are needed.

While in the virtual courtroom, enhanced video allows the interpreter to see a defendants' facial expressions, enabling the interpreter to determine if the limited English proficiency individual is absorbing the information. Based on this judgment, the interpretation needs for a different dialect interpreter can be identified.

Court Attendees

Using existing Webex solutions, courts can make it easy for individuals to join hearings remotely, such as defendants, witnesses, and observers. Participants enter the hearing virtually and participate when the court allows.

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Incarcerated Persons/Offenders

It is established fact that recidivism rates drop when offenders take part in programs that address the reason for their incarceration. Such programs for behavioral and addictive behavioral disorders can be delivered more often and with more individual impact through video sessions.

Connected Justice solutions helps offenders meet with their legal aid provider while incarcerated. It also provides the manner in which offenders can visit with family and receive education.

The more visitation an offender has while incarcerated leads to less sick calls and incidents of violence.

The increased use of tele-medicine can improve inmates' access to medical services, especially in facilities that are under quarantine (as experienced during Covid-19). Healthcare professionals can conduct virtual appointments with offenders without having to be on-site.

Community Supervision (Probation/Parole/ Alternatives to Incarceration)

The recent COVID-19 lockdowns helped many leaders in the justice system to better understand the value of mobile technologies that empower remote check-ins and services. For program participants, it allowed remote reporting, as well as continued access to critical services.

For the individual who is entering such a program, and for those who are incarcerated and expected to enter back into society – Connected Justice solutions provide access to these programs with a more interactive and positive way to reintegrate with their community.

Vital services that were once only provided in specific locations – such as cognitive therapy programming, homeless shelters, and reporting with supervision officers– can now happen virtually via their program issued smartphones or their own personal smart device.

Cisco's mobile app from Tracktech connects those on community supervision programs with resources they need, including homeless shelters, substance abuse assistance, and mental health services.

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