

Electronic Monitoring Alleviates Jail Overcrowding and Generates Savings

Lycoming County Case Study

BACKGROUND

For decades, Lycoming County, along with the rest of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, has faced many challenges around incarceration and public safety. Lycoming County's high recidivism rate, prison overcrowding, and over-exhausted correctional budget was threatening public safety and costing taxpayers. To combat the overpopulated prison, Lycoming County was in discussion to build a new county prison with a \$40 million price tag.

THE APPROACH

Instead of building the costly prison, the County implemented an electronic monitoring program, enabling the County's court and agency to release individuals to community supervision. Electronic monitoring allows individuals to live their lives, support their families, and contribute to the community, all while meeting conditions of release. In turn, with the support of these innovative tools, fewer individuals are packing the prison system, which saves taxpayers dollars and helps enhance public safety.

"Reentry programs with electronic monitoring are working, and they are far less costly than incarceration." – Brad Shoemaker, Lycoming County Prison Warden

CONCLUSION

Agencies are faced with large challenges including high recidivism and reconviction rates and tight county budgets. As a result, early release and other strategies are used, and judges have fewer sentencing alternatives. To cope with the inflow of inmates, cities, states, and counties across the nation look to add costly jail beds and facilities at a high expense.

Electronic monitoring programs are just one of the many ways agencies can help transition individuals back into the community after incarceration. Reducing the jail population and jail bed days by diverting or releasing individuals to community supervision results in significant capital and operating cost savings. Through the delivery of electronic monitoring solutions, agencies can enhance community safety, and give individuals a real chance at leading a crime-free life.

RESULTS



* Based on days served on monitoring services by all processed clients. ** Based on data provided by the Lycoming County Adult Probation Office. *** Based on the actual operating costs of electronic monitoring services versus the cost of incarceration.