



BURLINGTON VICINAGE PRESS RELEASE

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PROBATION OFFICERS GO HIGH TECH

MOUNT HOLLY – Probation officers working for the Burlington County Superior Court have a new tool that will enhance their ability to supervise offenders in the community. The objective of this project is to increase the productivity of probation officers by providing them with remote access to the Judiciary's computer systems, e-mail, and word processing software. Access is granted from wireless laptop computers from any location such as clients' homes, schools, treatment centers, automobiles and courtrooms.

Probation officers are able to view case information immediately and update case records without the need to return to the office. In order to preserve the security of the data accessible from these computers, specialized precautions have been implemented. The computers have specialized biometric features that require the users' fingerprints in order to gain access.

Burlington County is one of only three counties that have been selected to participate in this pilot program. Burlington, along with Atlantic and Hudson counties, is working collaboratively with Information Technology Office staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts to implement this new initiative. Burlington County Assignment Judge John A. Sweeney said, "This is another example of the court using technology to better serve the public." The statewide assistant director for Probation Services, Robert Sebastian, came to Mount Holly to help launch this new initiative. Sebastian pointed out, "The success of this effort will have a major impact on using wireless technology in other areas of the Judiciary."

Currently, nine probation officers are assigned to the project and must file weekly reports of usage and any technology issues. If this pilot is successful, the goal is to obtain more laptops to assist in supervising the approximately 1,800 adults and 500 juveniles under probation supervision in Burlington County.

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