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Media Advisory

For further information contact:
Winnie Comfort, AOC
(609) 292-9580

Anna Domurat Thomas at OIT
(609) 633-9032

For release: Aug, 6, 2002

Domestic Violence Central Repository Awarded by Center for Digital Government

The New Jersey Judiciary's Domestic Violence Central Repository has been selected as a 2002 "Best of Breed" Program by the national Center for Digital Government, announced Judge Richard J. Williams, administrative director of the courts. The repository, which is managed by the Administrative Office of the Courts, was recognized as one of the eleven best technology applications among more than 1,500 projects across the nation.

"We are pleased that our system has been selected from such a large number of entries from across the country," said Judge Williams. "The development of the repository illustrates the success of our ongoing efforts to use technology to provide better, more efficient service to those who need the services of our courts.

"While many of our recent technological innovations, such as electronic filing of court papers or paying traffic fines online, have focused on making it more efficient to do business with the courts, this application was designed with a more critical goal: to protect law enforcement officials and domestic violence victims with real-time information in dangerous situations. We are particularly proud of this project," Judge Williams said.

State executive branch Chief Information Officer Judith Teller praised the Judiciary's repository, "The Domestic Violence Central Repository is an example of technology working at its best," said Teller. "Information about restraining orders possessed by the courts is very useful to law enforcement. By sharing that information across the enterprise, more than 600 agencies, including local law enforcement and the State Police, are able to use the system to get real-time restraining order verification and other details in the field. This information helps us better serve victims of domestic violence by giving law enforcement background information about the scene with which they are dealing. I extend my congratulations to the Administrative Office of the Courts for this well deserved honor."

Prior to the existence of the repository, New Jersey law enforcement officials lacked timely information about restraining orders. The repository, which was first developed in 1998, lists all Family Court-issued restraining orders. The domestic violence inquiry screen was upgraded and extended to the 600 state agencies in 2000. In 2001, the system was expanded to provide additional information beyond restraining order verification. Law enforcement officials now can connect from the domestic violence registry to any existing criminal history record of persons involved in a domestic violence incident. Officials also can access firearm applications, helping them to know if a suspect has any handguns.

The Best of Breed awards are selected from submissions to the Center for Digital Government's Digital State Survey. The Courts category was included in Part 1 of the survey along with Social Services and Law Enforcement. New Jersey ranked fourth in the Courts and Law Enforcement category this year.

Additionally, New Jersey's Judiciary Electronic Filing and Imaging System received an honorable mention in the Best of Breed report. The system allows attorneys to electronically file certain documents statewide.

"The Best of Breed Programs showed the best of the best, especially when it came to building cross-jurisdictional, enterprise-wide projects," said Cathilea Robinett, Executive Director of the Center for Digital Government. The center is a national research and advisory institute providing government, industry and education leaders with decision support research and educational resources. The center can be found at www.centerdigitalgov.com.

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