



Time to Resolution

District Attorneys' (DA) offices across Colorado are using data dashboards to inform and implement strategies to reduce long case processing times. This two-pager provides an overview of how to review, interpret, and act on time to resolution data in your jurisdiction.

Why is Time to Resolution Important?

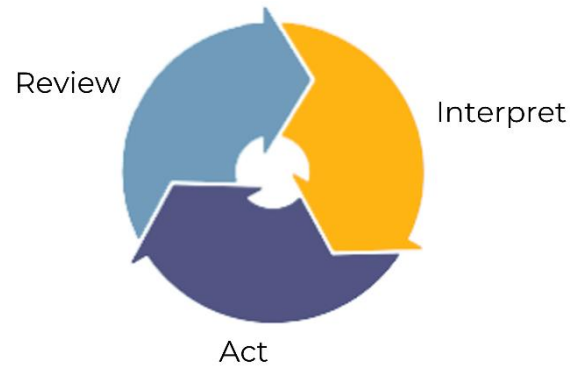
- Impacts **victims**: Lengthy waits can delay restitution, prolong victims' healing, and result in a loss of interest or faith in their case.
- Impacts **defendants**: Slow case processing can cost defendants time and money; create personal hardships and employment issues; and delay necessary treatment or intervention.
- Impacts **your office**: Longer case processing times equate to more time and resources spent, create case backlogs, and increase feelings of burnout. Delayed resolution can result in cases being reassigned or witnesses losing interest or memory, thereby weakening the case.

Framework for Data Use

Review: What data points do we look at?

Interpret: What patterns do we notice?

Act: What do we do?



Review: What data points do we look at?	Interpret: What patterns do we notice?
Average and median days to case resolution Number of hearings per case and days between hearings	How has time to resolution, the number of hearings, and time between hearings changed over time? What might be influencing these trends?
Timeliness page filtered by charge level, charge type, and/or top charge	What types of cases take the longest to resolve? Which are taking the shortest? Why? On what types of cases do you want/need to spend the most time? Are there specific types of cases that should be resolved quicker?
Timeliness page filtered by case disposition Case resolution page	How long does it take to get to different resolutions? Are there specific resolutions (diversion or deferred judgment) that you might be able to reach quicker? What percentage of felony cases are resolved as misdemeanors? How can you get to that resolution quicker?
Timeliness page filtered by failures to appear (FTA)	How does time to resolution differ based on whether there is a FTA? For what types of cases is FTA most likely?
Timeliness page filtered by referral agency, court division, and/or judge	Are there certain agencies that have shorter or longer case length? How is this influenced by informal expectations and practices? Can you provide an agency with guidance for charges and discovery practices?

Act: What do we do?



Build Awareness

- Educate your office regarding time to resolution and provide each team with their division length of case times. Let them know that resolving cases in a timely way is a priority. Ask for feedback about potential causes and brainstorm potential solutions.
- Talk to your judges, clerks, public defenders, and other stakeholders. Schedule data meetings or send reports—show them their specific data and strategize.



Identify Causes

- Assess turnover and staff experience. Are you fully staffed? Do you have a balance of experienced and newer staff in divisions? Emphasize that addressing time to resolution can ultimately help decrease workload.
- Are there known structures in place about reasonable or unreasonable offers? Are there pain points or structures that can be tweaked? Provide clear expectations and guidance to staff.
- Are there numerous and lengthy continuances? Notify the court.
- Are there delays in testing or lab results?
- Are law enforcement discovery practices hindering case resolution?



Address Failure to Appear

- Raise awareness about the frequency and impacts of FTA.
- Advocate for the state's for court text reminder program. Encourage law enforcement agencies to get a good cell phone number for each defendant.
- Encourage the court to provide population-specific services like language support; address barriers to appearing, such as transportation; provide grace periods; and redesign court forms to simplify language and minimize confusion.
- Hold warrant purging / warrant forgiveness events.



Build Solutions into Workflow

- Get the *right* offers out on time and seek mitigation that will assist in resolving the case.
- Set clear negotiations expectations with public defenders/opposing counsel.
- Object to excessive or lengthy continuances.
- Set clear expectations with law enforcement regarding discovery deadlines.
- Create “120 days lists” which show cases that have been outstanding for over 120 days; distribute lists to chiefs and encourage them to review and discuss with their staff.
- Identify whether there are alternative resolution options for lower-level offenses that can support cases resolving quickly, such as diversion or deferred judgment.

A partnership of



The Evaluation Center
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



Funded by the Microsoft Justice Reform Initiative

Suggested citation: Kilpatrick J, Wilcox C, Gonzalez G, and Gase L. (2023). Colorado Prosecutorial Dashboards: Time to Resolution. The Evaluation Center at the University of Colorado Denver.

You can learn more about the Colorado Prosecutorial Dashboards project on our [website](#), or contact Lauren Gase at lauren.gase@ucdenver.edu.