

terminology and specifications that are based on local and State procedures, policies, and customs. The standards include 16 function categories, each of which identifies a full range of functions. Examples of these functions are provided below.

- Case initiation and indexing functions (e.g., assign referral numbers and person identifiers; establish links between each juvenile and his or her family).
- Docketing and related recordkeeping functions (e.g., create docket entry and update case information; maintain history of attorney assignments).
- Scheduling functions (e.g., identify, display, and suggest resolutions to scheduling conflicts; output schedules upon user request).
- Document generation and processing functions (e.g., generate notices to notify parties that petitions and other documents have been received/accepted; produce electronic forms and other documents).
- Calendaring functions (e.g., produce calendars individually—by judge, for example—or in batches; distribute calendars electronically).
- Hearings functions (e.g., provide for minute entry; create and print orders and supporting documents resulting from hearings on line in courtroom).

In addition to using automation to improve court efficiency and track performance, efforts to automate court models and improve strategies for caseflow procedures, case management, representation of children, interagency interfaces, intercourt interface (e.g., dependency and criminal courts), and “best practice” standards can be incorporated, as appropriate, into selected pilot courts.

Grantees will be required to coordinate with child welfare agencies and, when possible and appropriate, with child welfare collection systems, including the statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS) and the adoption and foster care analysis and reporting system (AFCARS). Coordinating with other key courts involved in child abuse and neglect cases (such as domestic violence cases) is also encouraged. However, coordination, consultation, and systems integration with the related State court is *required*, particularly with regard to the State court improvement plan funded under section 13712 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 670 note).

Selected pilot courts will be required to establish a collaborative committee to plan and implement the project. The collaborative must include the presiding

judge or judges, key court staff (e.g., court administrators, clerks), court MIS staff (including contractors and software developers), representatives from the child welfare agency, prosecuting attorney(s), guardians *ad litem* and attorneys/advocates for children (including CASAs, if appropriate), and other court and community organizations and individuals involved in efforts to improve the manner in which courts handle child welfare cases.

Selected sites will be required to identify key staff, including both lead program staff for coordinating the overall project within the court and its partners and technology staff. Applicants may contract out technology services; however, awardees will be required to establish and maintain control of all project activities (including software development, system implementation, training activities, staff supervision, and report generation). In addition, selected pilot sites must retain the ability and capacity to generate reports on their own, without relying on independent contractors.

Selected pilot courts will be required to develop a plan for MIS development and enhancement efforts. Following the grant award, OJJDP and the national technical advisors for the SANCA MIS project will issue guidance regarding the requirements of the plan. These plans must be reviewed and approved by OJJDP; approval will be based in part on advice and recommendations submitted by the national technical advisors. Once approved, selected pilot sites will be authorized to move to the design phase and then to the pilot implementation phase, with access to corresponding funds. Plans must be developed with both the core partners and stakeholders described above (and identified in the application) and with program and technology staff. Selected pilot courts will be expected to adopt the national performance measures and functional standards and to customize them according to the jurisdiction in which they will be used. The customized measures and standards should then be transferred directly into plans for systems development. Plans also should be based upon and include an assessment of current infrastructure; data and data needs specific to the jurisdiction; issues related to confidentiality, case management, and communications and data sharing across court dockets; and compatibility with, and data needs similar to those of, other courts and the child welfare agency.

Eligibility Requirements

Applications are invited *only* from State and local courts responsible for processing child abuse and neglect cases in jurisdictions where the *following projects* are being implemented: HHS’s Court Improvement Program (CIP), OJJDP’s Model Dependency Courts, OJJDP’s Safe Start Initiative, and OJJDP’s Safe Kids/Safe Streets Initiative. In all cases, the child abuse and neglect court must be the lead agency for the SANCA MIS project and must apply on behalf of and with full support from the collaborative partners from the projects listed above.

If a court applies through one of the OJJDP eligible projects, the application must be coordinated and consistent with the State CIP strategic plan. These OJJDP eligible projects are required to provide a letter of support from the State CIP coordinator ensuring that the application is consistent with the State CIP strategic plan and the State CIP efforts. This letter must be provided via fax by the application deadline.

For the HHS CIP, courts that receive a grant from the State CIP are eligible to apply; however, *only one court per State may apply* in this HHS CIP category. Any eligible CIP court interested in applying for the SANCA MIS project must, therefore, first contact their State CIP coordinator to indicate their interest. If more than one CIP-eligible court expresses interest, the State CIP coordinator will then need to make a determination regarding which court should apply as the designated CIP applicant for that State. The State CIP coordinator must fax a letter clearly identifying the application by the assigned GMS number and stating that it is being submitted as the one State-designated CIP applicant. This letter is to be faxed as part of the application deadline.

Note: In cases where the above projects overlap in a single jurisdiction, the court must apply collaboratively with *all* the projects identified above. OJJDP will accept only one application from each of the four projects in a specific jurisdiction. Applicants and jurisdictions that fail to comply with the eligibility requirements by submitting more than one application may disqualify *all applicants* from that State or locality. *Exception:* This requirement will not preclude, however, the State CIP coordinator from offering one State-designated CIP application in addition to the collaborative application. If, for example, a local jurisdiction has a CIP grant, a Safe Kids/Safe Streets project, and a Model Dependency Court project, the local court is required to apply collaboratively with each of the projects or grantees. The State CIP coordinator would be required to provide a letter of support for this collaborative