

As New York State continues to meet the needs of its CPS workforce, it is apparent that mobile devices are a necessity. Introducing these devices is inevitably a change in the way work is completed and throughout the **Demonstration Project** continuous feedback was essential. These recommendations follow input already given during the deployment process and are in addition to those made in previous deployment initiatives.

Discuss Working from Home Policy at State Level

Three things are learned about working from home: 1) caseworkers are using the mobile device to do work from home 2) it has an impact on their productivity, and 3) districts are not consistently developing policies to address it. With this said, leading discussions at the state level and engaging districts in coordinated thinking about these policies may help in moving all organizations closer to a comprehensive approach to caseworker mobility. Its not a matter of “if “ this will be an issue, it is now a matter of when.

Invest in a More Robust Statewide Deployment Approach

Deploying technology to an entire state requires a cadre of resources. This includes staff to negotiate, receive, image, deliver, train, and support the devices to a large geographic region. It also includes resources to develop fundamental informational pieces about things such as hardware and software, connectivity options, security procedures, and training and support. Whereas, child protective services in NYS is a state supervised and locally administered program, early and continuous coordination with districts is essential for a comprehensive and smooth deployment.

Further Investigate a Potential Connection Between Replacing Desktop PCs and Mobility and Productivity

Some of the interview comments and anecdotal information from this assessment hinted at a possible connection between productivity and replacement of desktop PCs. If a caseworker is given a mobile device as a complimentary piece of equipment as opposed to the primary device to do their job, do they use it differently? Do they bring it with them more or less often? Do they modify work patterns in one scenario more than another? Or is the initial technology adjustment period simply compounded with the deletion of desktops PCs and affect initial work habits? These questions, and others, are worth investigating.

Perform Additional Assessments After Initial Period of Adjustment

Introduction of new technology into an established field of work takes an initial period of adjustment. Not only is the technology new, but it has unforeseen impacts on work practices and policies. In each of the three CPS mobile technology initiatives much was learned to inform subsequent phases. For the future, we recommend that more can be learned from those caseworkers who have used the device for over six months. After they have worked through their initial period of adjustment, their mobility and use, productivity, and satisfaction can be better assessed. In addition, it is important to assess how they have incorporated the technology into their work after they come through the normal learning curve. Focusing on this stage will yield different and possibly more meaningful results about long-term change.
