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**OFFICE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR
SCREENER-COLLECTOR PROGRAM IN
FIFTH, SEVENTH, & NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICTS**

Prepared Pursuant to
Laws 2001, 1st Sp., Chapter 8, Article 4, section 4

Office of State Court Administrator
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Introduction

The 2001 Legislature appropriated funds for the Judicial Branch to implement screener-collector programs in the Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth Judicial Districts. The enabling legislation provided that:

...The fifth, seventh, and ninth judicial district courts shall implement screener collector programs to enhance the collection of overdue fine revenue by at least ten percent in each location serviced by a screener collector. By August 15, 2002, and annually thereafter, the state court administrator shall report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representatives and senate committees with jurisdiction over criminal justice policy and funding issues on the total amount of fines collected, the amount of overdue fines collected for the two preceding fiscal years, and the expenditures associated with the screener collector program.

This report is filed pursuant to this mandate.

Screener-Collector Duties

Trial courts throughout the state utilize screener-collectors to enhance the collection of fines, restitution, public defender reimbursement and other revenue owed to state and local government. This collection responsibility is accomplished through post-conviction interviews where the offender and screener-collector mutually agree on a payment plan which is subsequently monitored by the screener – collector and through professional debt collection methods, such as Revenue Recapture. In addition, this position is usually responsible for screening applicants for public defender services.

Fifth/Seventh/Ninth Judicial Districts' Screener – Collector Programs

Screener-collectors funded under this legislation serve the following counties in the Fifth/Seventh/Ninth Judicial Districts:

District 5: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, and Watonwan

District 7: Becker, Benton, Clay, Douglas, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Otter Tail, Stearns, Todd, and Wadena

District 9: Cass, Crow Wing, Itasca, Koochiching, Polk

2006 Program Collections

The 2001 enabling legislation asked for historic and current information on the total amount of fines collected under the new program. Figure 1 shows a comparison of all revenue collected during FY05 and FY06. As can be seen, the amount collected increased by **\$1,276,750 or 3.95%**.

FIGURE 1

Trial Courts Screener Collector Data Districts 5, 7, & 9 FY2005/06

	FY05 Collections	FY06 Collections	Increase/ (Decrease)	Percent Change
District 5	10,287,309	10,241,040	-46,270	-0.45%
District 7	15,878,958	17,251,422	1,372,464	8.64%
District 9	6,147,021	6,097,577	-49,444	-0.80%
Total	32,313,288	33,590,039	1,276,750	3.95%

This information can also be depicted on a county-by-county basis, as seen on the following page in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Fifth/Seventh/Ninth Districts
Trial Courts
Screener Collector Data
Districts 5, 7, & 9
FY2005/06

County	FY05 Collections	FY06 Collections	Increase/ (Decrease)	Percent Change
Blue Earth	2,245,863	2,379,869	134,006	5.97%
Brown	903,439	763,012	(140,428)	-15.54%
Cottonwood	406,814	311,734	(95,080)	-23.37%
Faribault	536,730	479,627	(57,103)	-10.64%
Jackson	457,689	417,848	(39,841)	-8.70%
Lincoln	136,095	158,026	21,932	16.12%
Lyon	846,494	922,429	75,935	8.97%
Martin	917,418	771,352	(146,065)	-15.92%
Murray	258,492	263,182	4,690	1.81%
Nicollet	1,147,807	1,160,514	12,707	1.11%
Nobles	670,582	771,326	100,743	15.02%
Pipestone	399,092	468,580	69,488	17.41%
Redwood	569,602	527,070	(42,531)	-7.47%
Rock	350,111	356,190	6,079	1.74%
Watonwan	441,081	490,279	49,197	11.15%
5th District Total	10,287,309	10,241,040	-46,270	-0.45%
Becker	1,200,072	1,314,179	114,107	9.51%
Benton	1,089,278	1,226,525	137,248	12.60%
Clay	2,410,028	2,635,251	225,223	9.35%
Douglas	1,011,835	1,118,043	106,208	10.50%
Mille Lacs	1,094,394	1,120,897	26,503	2.42%
Morrison	1,067,862	1,164,109	96,247	9.01%
Otter Tail	1,519,847	1,703,064	183,217	12.05%
Stearns	5,165,476	5,581,851	416,375	8.06%
Todd	897,267	930,275	33,007	3.68%
Wadena	422,897	457,227	34,330	8.12%
7th District Total	15,878,958	17,251,422	1,372,464	8.64%
Cass	995,214	899,635	(95,579)	-9.60%
Crow Wing	2,118,573	2,479,492	360,918	17.04%
Itasca	1,567,507	1,403,335	(164,173)	-10.47%
Koochiching	412,836	347,655	(65,181)	-15.79%
Polk	1,052,890	967,460	(85,429)	-8.11%
9th District Total	6,147,021	6,097,577	-49,444	-0.80%
Total Districts 5, 7, & 9	32,313,288	33,590,039	1,276,750	3.95%

The enabling legislation also requested information on the amount of overdue fines collected for the two preceding fiscal years. The current judicial branch case management system does not maintain this data and the manual data collection effort undertaken to comply with this report was unable to distinguish between overdue and current financial obligations and payments.

Program Cost

The enabling legislation also asked that the report address the expenditure associated with the program. Using the average cost of a court employee of \$60,000 (salaries and benefits), the cost of the 19.24 FTE screener/collectors serving 30 counties in the three Judicial Districts is approximately \$1,154,400.

Conclusion

The screener-collector program authorized by the 2001 Legislature has had a positive impact on revenue collection in the 30 counties being served in these three judicial districts. The annual cost of the program (\$1,154,400) is offset by the increase in revenue (\$1,276,750) generated through the active collection efforts provided by these programs. The use of screener-collectors facilitates the payment of fees, fines, surcharges and public defender fees ordered by the courts, which in turn benefits the state and local governmental agencies responsible for proving public safety to the citizens of this state. The judicial branch is committed to continuing these efforts.

APPENDIX A

COUNTIES WITH SCREENER – COLLECTOR POSITIONS

At present fifty (50) counties are served by 1 or more full or part-time screener-collectors:

Becker	Morrison
Benton	Mower
Blue Earth	Murray
Brown	Olmsted
Carver	Otter Tail
Cass	Nicollet
Clay	Nobles
Cottonwood	Pine
Crow Wing	Pipestone
Dakota	Polk
Dodge	Ramsey
Douglas	Redwood
Faribault	Renville
Freeborn	Rice
Goodhue	Rock
Hennepin	Scott
Houston	Sherburne
Itasca	Sibley
Jackson	Stearns
Koochiching	Steele
Kandiyohi	Todd
Lincoln	Wabasha
Lyon	Wadena
Martin	Wantonwan
Meeker	Waseca
Mille Lacs	Winona