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**SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT AWARDED PUBLIC SAFETY GRANT**

The days of escorting inmates back and forth to court are numbered in Lincoln County. The Sheriff's Department was recently awarded a \$38,000 grant through the Missouri Department of Public Safety for a state of the art video arraignment system.

The new video arraignment system is on the cutting edge when it comes to adopting technology to help reduce operational costs. Through a partnership with the Sheriff's Department, the Lincoln County Justice Center, the Public Defender's Office and Department of Probation and Parole, a system-wide and alternative approach to criminal justice proceedings began.

"The hours required for corrections personnel to process the required paperwork and prepare the inmates for transportation is significant and is greatly reduced when inmates are arraigned using a video arraignment system," said Sheriff Kent Hanshew.

In fact, significant reductions in expenditures can be realized by eliminating the need to transport inmates to and from the court site as witnessed by agencies who utilize video arraignment systems. County jailers normally required to supervise inmates during transport can now use the time for other duties.

"The county's goal is to reduce incarceration time from an average of 28 days to around 7 and provide a quick and reliable means for Public Defenders to meet with their clients," said Major John Cottle. "Reducing the number of days that non-violent and indigent offenders are incarcerated is good for both the taxpayer and individual," said Cottle.

Transportation costs can also be reduced since inmates no longer have to be transferred between the facility and the Justice Center. Reductions in gas and maintenance costs alone can add up to a large savings.

Video arraignment systems reduce the amount of exposure that correctional personnel and court employees have to inmates and reduce the risk of an incident occurring. Using a video arraignment system also experiences improvements to the overall efficiency of court proceedings.

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