



OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

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22-15 Colorado Springs Police Department Records and Identification Operations

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Purpose

The purpose of this audit was to evaluate the Police Department Records and Identification processes. Opportunities to improve processes to register sex offenders (RSO), complete court orders, and other work conducted in the Fingerprint room was the focus. This review was requested by Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD).

Highlights

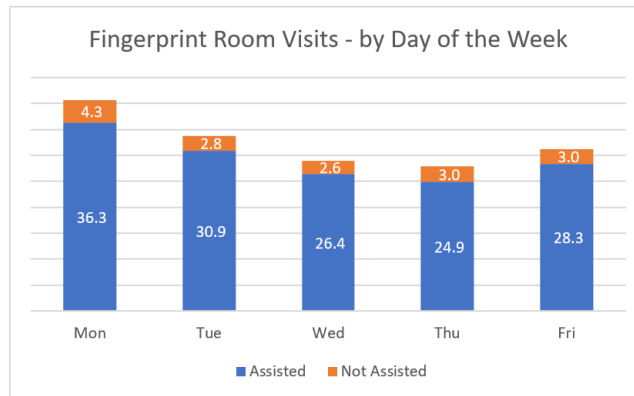
Four opportunities to improve processing for fingerprint clients and CSPD staff were identified. Data entry and paperwork requirements were difficult to improve because of regulations.

CSPD maintains and staffs the Fingerprint room at the Police Operations Center. Fingerprint Technicians process fingerprints, mug shots, and data entry of paperwork. Clients include RSOs, court orders, liquor or marijuana license requests, and juveniles. Approximately 87% of the work completed related to RSO's or court orders.

We reviewed 15 months of data, which included 10,000 check ins, from the client check-in system.

Approximately 90% of clients who signed in for service were processed to completion. The remaining 10% of clients left before their turn, or were turned away due to problems with paperwork or jurisdiction. Monday had more visits than any other day of the week and Thursday had the fewest visits.

We would like to thank the Fingerprint staff for their help on this review.



Average customers assisted or not assisted per day. Source: check in software data from October 19, 2020 to January 13, 2022.

Opportunities

1. Investigate possible improvements to reduce the number of clients that sign in but leave before they can be assisted.
2. Make improvements that would enable more clients to complete the entire registration process on their first visit.
3. Review client check in system data to see if there are trends that could help them better process clients.
4. Review current processes to identify ways to increase throughput of clients, especially during busy periods.

Management Response

Management was in agreement with our recommendations.

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Opportunity 1

Using data from the client check-in system, 4.3% of Fingerprint room clients left after they signed in but before they could be helped. Because they left without being assisted, we cannot be certain why they left. However, data also indicated more clients arrived on Monday than any other day of the week, and more left without being helped on Mondays. Information regarding wait times was not provided to clients. Wait times were longest on Monday. Fingerprint Technicians waited to determine if a client was still in the lobby when called, which interrupted their process and made the remaining client's wait time longer.

Management Response

We agree. Records and ID staff is looking at several potential improvements to better communicate wait times to clients. We anticipate resolving this by 03/31/23.

Recommendation

We recommend Records and Identification management investigate possible improvements to reduce the number of clients that leave before they can be assisted. Improvements could include communication regarding wait times to help steer clients to less busy days and times, showing clients at time of registration the anticipated wait time, or providing them with a number to help them assess how many others are waiting ahead of them.

Opportunity 2

Persons arriving for services were not prescreened to determine if they had the correct information. We found 5.4% of persons that met with a Fingerprint Technician did not complete their service process.

- Of those that did not complete the process, 36% had come to fulfill their obligations because of a court order and they did not have the correct information to complete the process.
- RSO clients made up 42% of those that could not complete the process because of missing information such as license plate and VIN for their vehicles.
- Other reasons for not completing the process were the client was in the wrong jurisdiction or the visit was not required or not timely.

Management Response

We agree. We are looking at re-starting the prescreen process to determine if clients have the correct information when they arrive. We are looking into technology and paper improvements that would help communicate requirements. We have already implemented a shared email box. To date, it has greatly improved the client experience and provided a more efficient method of obtaining needed documentation, thus reducing the need for a person to come back a second time. We anticipate this will be complete by 03/31/23.

Recommendation

Management should consider making improvements that would enable more clients to complete the process on their first visit.

Possible improvements include:

1. Develop a method to pre-screen clients.
2. Better lobby signage that alerts clients of items needed for various processes.
3. Update the website to include more information on requirements to be processed.
4. Coordinate with the courts to pass out a packet with clear information on the needs of the Fingerprint Technicians to better prepare the client to be processed.
5. Create a shared email box where clients can forward documentation.

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Opportunity 3

A software tool was used for clients to check-in for a visit. Limited review of client check-in system data was being completed to help understand trends or staffing needs. The software may be customizable to further assist clients and management.

Recommendation

Management should review client check-in system data to see if there are trends that could help them better process clients. Also, consider what areas of the client check-in system that need to be updated to better understand the data.

Management Response

Records staff will be exploring further configuration options with the sign in software vendor and explore any features we did not initially subscribe to. Staff will also research other potential solutions if the current vendor cannot meet the requirements. We anticipate this will be complete by 03/31/23.

Opportunity 4

Currently a Fingerprint Technician will complete the entire process for one client before moving on to the next.

Fingerprint Technicians were difficult to fill positions, requiring specialized training and shift work.

Volunteers were previously used to assist the Technicians, but volunteer usage stopped during the pandemic.

Most visits occurred on Mondays and most clients checked in early in the day. However, staffing and processing steps were not adjusted to accommodate these high demand periods.

Recommendation

Management should review current processes to identify ways to increase throughput of clients, especially during busy periods.

Consider using an Administrative Technician to complete part of the process for the Fingerprint Technicians.

Management Response

We agree and have increased our hours and updated some forms. Records Staff are exploring the feasibility of a "pre-registration" center to help reduce the time a client waits to be processed. We anticipate this will be complete by 03/31/23.