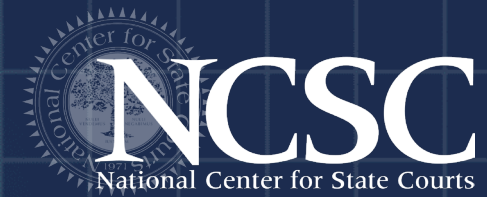


FLORIDA

17th Judicial Circuit Court



LOCATION	Fort Lauderdale, Florida
COURT JURISDICTIONS	Criminal, Civil, Domestic/Family, Small Claims, Traffic, Probate, Specialty
PROJECT STATUS	Completed November 2021

PROJECT VISION

A singular courtroom underwent comprehensive technological integration to adeptly facilitate remote and hybrid court proceedings with ongoing initiatives to retrofit all 75 courtrooms in the west tower of the Broward County judicial complex with comparable advancements.

PROJECT DETAILS

In response to the immediate requirement for remote court proceedings amid the 2020 pandemic, the court swiftly introduced mobile rolling technology carts that could be relocated to any courtroom or location to meet this need. These carts were a temporary solution to what became a permanent need and were the impetus behind the drive to integrate permanent, cutting-edge technology for remote proceedings into all the existing courtrooms. In 2021, Broward County, in collaboration with the court, constructed an additional courtroom on a previously vacant floor of the courthouse. This new courtroom was an opportunity to intentionally incorporate the technology necessary to support their current and future needs for remote proceedings and has become an example which they hope to implement in the other 75 courtrooms of the West Tower of the Broward County Judicial Complex.

The project involved equipping the courtroom with necessary tools including mini processors that controlled USB connections, microphones, and touchscreens. The courtroom was also outfitted with QSYS Touch Panel systems, replacing the previous outdated Crestron technology. Notably, the ceiling cameras were integrated with voice activation features based on microphones, allowing automatic panning and zooming to the speaker. Judges were given



FLORIDA 17th Judicial Circuit Court

control over the microphones and the ability to select which attorney could present evidence and which jurors had access to specific information. Court reporters were also provided with the ability to monitor courtrooms, as the touch panel systems enabled them to turn recordings on and off as needed.

ENHANCING OPERATIONS AND THE OVERALL BUILDING EXPERIENCE

The project offered significant benefits to the 17th Judicial Circuit Court. The implementation of advanced technology facilitated the continuation of court proceedings during the pandemic, ensuring access to justice and preserving due process. The integration of QSYS Touch Panel systems and automated camera features facilitated seamless audio and video control, enabling judges to manage proceedings smoothly. The ability to share documents and evidence directly from the attorneys' desks enhanced collaboration and presentation capabilities, further expediting the legal process. Many hearings, such as dependency cases, experienced an increase in attendance rates as individuals could participate remotely without the need to take an entire day off work or travel to the courthouse. The flexible policy approach driven by Supreme Court Administrative Order provided circuit chief judges with the freedom to determine the format of proceedings, whether remote, in-person, or hybrid. This allowed for efficient and tailored delivery of court services to meet the needs of participants.

The solution allows the court to seamlessly allow for remote and hybrid court proceedings, without any advance notice. Across many court divisions, we have seen an increase in attendance rates among the trial participants when remote or hybrid proceedings are offered. The increase in attendance rates by all participants allows the court to timely address all issues and disputes. The availability of technology to support remote and hybrid court proceedings offers all participants cost and time savings.

