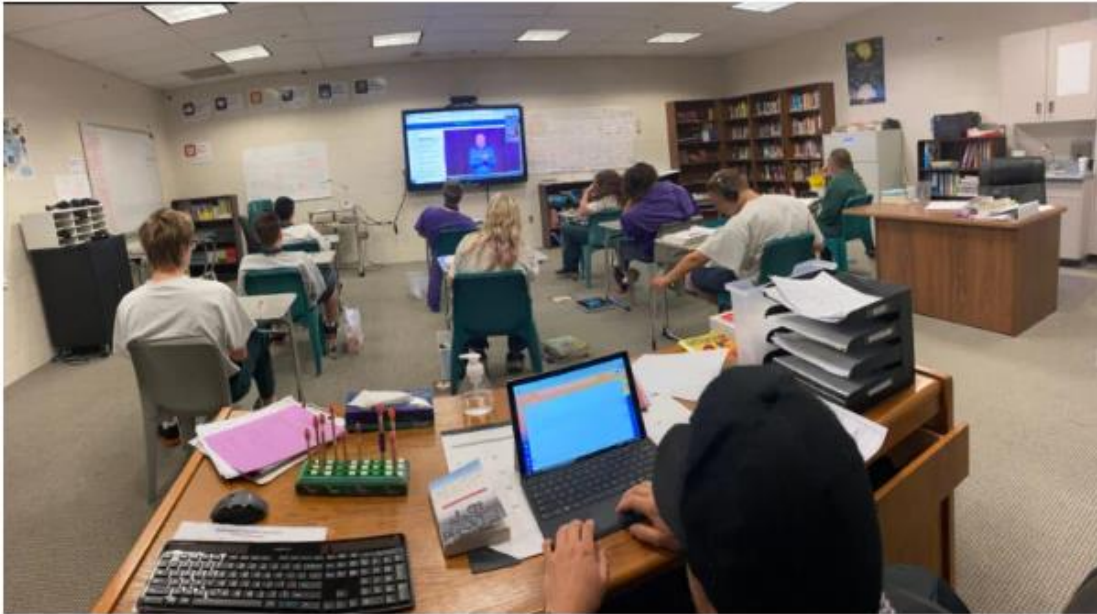


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Secure Zoom [video](#) conferencing is being used to help youth continue their education with online classes proctored by teachers from home and probation staff within the facility. Courtesy photo

News

Probation officers get creative with technology during pandemic

By Contributor

El Dorado County Probation

News release

El Dorado County Probation has implemented and expanded the use of telecommunications and technology to ensure that supervised youth and adults have access to the programs and services they need during the COVID-19 crisis.

Specifically, they have implemented software to stay in remote communication with supervised adults and youth who live in the

community, technology to ensure youth in detention continue their educational classes and enrichment activities and have adopted new technology to enhance supervision in the shelter-in-place environment.

Technology has allowed El Dorado County Probation to adapt and enhance their work in innovative ways, to keep clients and communities safe.

“Our highly trained officers have quickly adapted to using effective technology to continue supporting and connecting with our clients while keeping the community as safe as possible,” said local Chief Brian Richart, who also serves as president of the Chief Probation Officers of California. “For example, we are using technology to ensure that every youth in our care at our juvenile facility has full access to educational classes, service providers as well as family and community support during this crisis.

“The importance of connectedness during this pandemic is ever-present on everyone’s mind, both in and outside of probation work. But our clients being connected, both for accountability and for support, is of paramount importance to the well-being of those individuals trying to turn their lives around and the safety of our communities. We are using new and expanded resources in all aspects of our work to ensure our clients and our officers remain connected.”

Examples of technology adopted by El Dorado County Probation to support adults and youth under probation's supervision include:

Technology for youths' education: Secure Zoom video conferencing is being used to help youth continue their education with online classes proctored by teachers from home and probation staff within the facility. Youth with additional needs receive additional one-on-one time with teachers and therapists on the phone and by video. In addition, video and telecommunication technology is being used for youth to access any court proceeding and ensure visits with family members as well as other community support.

Enhanced virtual supervision: With Secure [Continuous](#) Remote Alcohol Monitoring (SCRAM) systems software, probation can augment supervision through GPS. Officers use TouchPoint software, which allows adults under probation's supervision to check in via an electronic form using a smartphone and communicate with their officers who can identify client need and areas of risk in terms of compliance. The Nexus software platform we have recently adopted brings an added element of support for our officers to focus their conversations with clients and improve their use of evidence-based practices in a time when these skills matter more than ever.

Technology for day reporting center: Trained officers are continuing group meetings and services by using online group conferencing where supervised adults have opportunity for ongoing growth and uninterrupted support that they need during this crisis.

“El Dorado County is a leading example of how probation is adapting to ensure every adult and youth continue to receive the programs, supervision and support they need,” said Karen Pank, CPOC executive director. “County probation departments are taking strenuous steps to ensure the health and safety of all individuals under probation’s care, which includes instituting strict health protocols, limiting in-person contact and supporting social and education connections through technology platforms. The impacts to probation throughout the pandemic have been huge, but departments like El Dorado are going above and beyond their normal call of duty to ensure community safety and client success.”

For information [visit cpoc.org](http://cpoc.org).