



MAGISTRATE VIDEO PROJECT

IMPORTANT STATISTICS Fiscal year 2014–15

55 counties and districts approved by senior resident superior court and chief district court judges to use MVP procedures

42 counties and districts implemented the technology

111 county and local law enforcement agencies used MVP

WHAT USERS ARE SAYING

Thomasville Police Department Captain

"It's used from A to Z. If we had someone in here for a minor offense or armed robbery, we still use it. It's used every time an arrest is made... This system saves time and expense. We can handle all of that right here."



Initially piloted in 2012, the Magistrate Video Project (MVP) provides software and equipment for video communications between a magistrate and local law enforcement officers. The video software runs on a laptop computer, which is standard equipment in magistrates' offices and most law enforcement vehicles. With the addition of wireless capabilities in the car, officers are able to connect with the magistrate from almost any location and at any time of day.

The video technology may be used by law enforcement only for criminal offenses at this time. (The processing of involuntary mental commitments and domestic violence orders must still be conducted in person before a magistrate.) Currently, the following can be performed by law enforcement officers and the magistrate via video appearances:

- Probable cause determinations for the issuance of criminal processes and search warrants
- Initial appearances following arrest, including the setting of conditions of release

The MVP system's infrastructure requirements and maintenance costs for local law enforcement agencies are very minimal. The video call is hosted on secure computers with cameras and video call software. The software can be downloaded for free, although there is no technical support for this option, or it may be purchased for a minimal monthly charge, which does include technical support. The NCAOC provides software, hardware, technical support, and infrastructure statewide for magistrates using MVP systems.

Local law enforcement agencies realize immediate benefits in cost and efficiency when their county and district court officials approve the use of MVP. It also reduces risk to the officer by eliminating the need to transport the arrestee to the magistrate's office.

Magistrates and court officials are pleased with the flexibility and convenience it provides them and their law enforcement partners. In rural counties, where magistrates often operate on an on-call basis, the technology allows magistrates to begin processing an offender from home. The officer can continue booking the arrestee rather than waiting for the magistrate to drive in to the office location.

Adoption of MVP in North Carolina has proven to be a technological and procedural success for the state courts and local law enforcement.

