

REDEFINING PRETRIAL:

From Agency to Systemwide Engagement

March 26, 2026



AGENDA

- 1 A Rising Tide: Court Reminders Help Everyone**
- 2 Why People Miss Court: It's a Human Thing**
- 3 Why Reminders Work**
- 4 Texas OCA Reminder Program: It's Free!**

ABOUT US



TODAY'S PRESENTERS



Shannon McAuliffe
*National Director of
Implementation,
(Un)warranted initiative, ideas42*



Greg Shugart
*Director of Government Affairs
eCourtDate*

UNWARRANTED: OUR WORK

INCREASING COURT APPEARANCE RATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Improve court date communications

- Court date forms
(*citations, release and bond forms*)
- Court date reminders
(*text, email, mail*)

Help create effective reminder programs

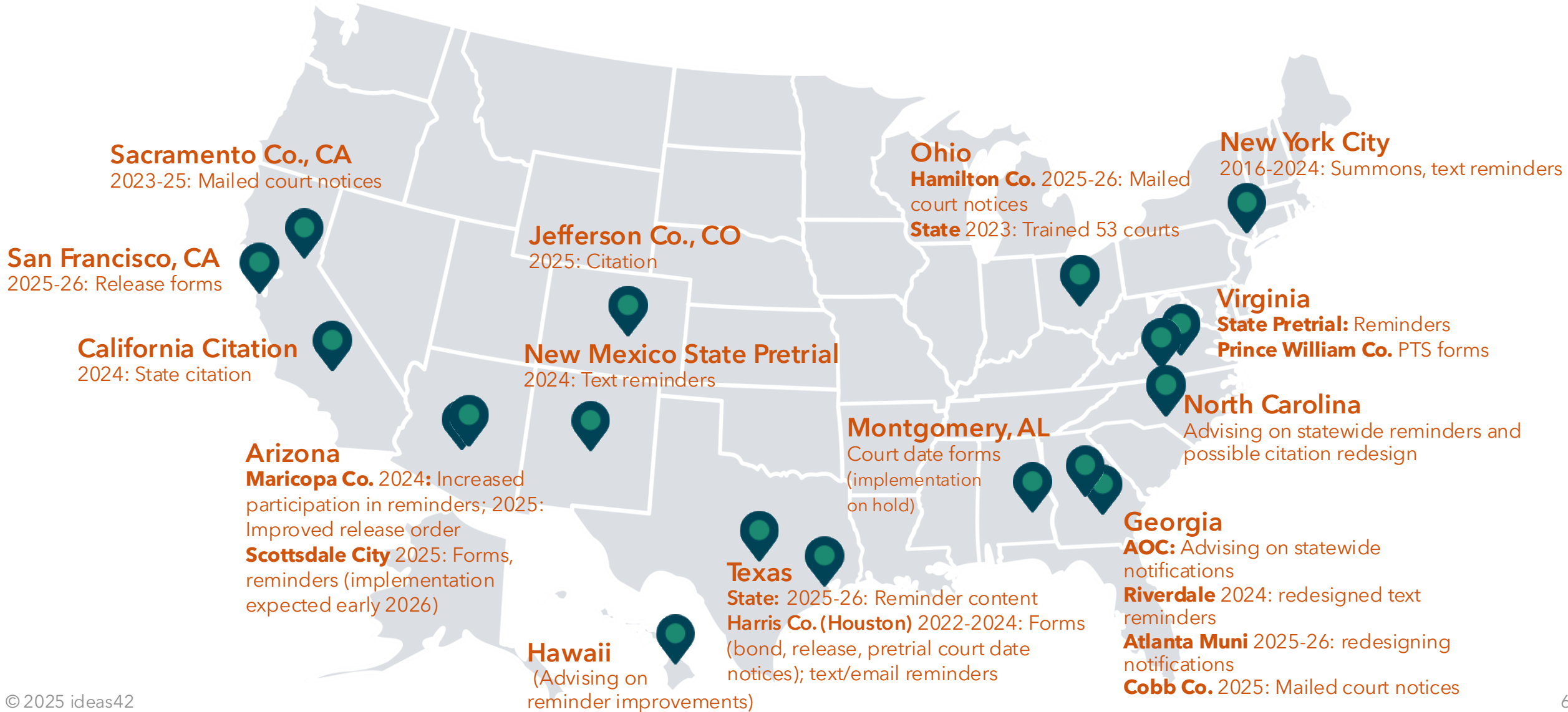
- Use proven content and adapt for each court's specific processes
- Improve collection of contact information to expand reach of reminders



GOAL: Reduce nonappearances by 20% - 40% and help the system save time, money, and effort currently wasted on missed court dates

OUR WORK

IMPACT THROUGH 2024: 125K MISSED COURT DATES PREVENTED



eCourt Date



On a mission to modernize access to justice.

eCourtDate builds court reminder technology and data analytics for government agencies across America — helping courts run more efficiently and helping people stay connected to the justice process.



100% USA-Built | HIPAA Compliant | AWS GovCloud

eCourtDate

PARTNERED WITH OCA TO PROVIDE REMINDERS

A FULL-PLATFORM GOVTECH PARTNER

Court Date Reminders

Jury Management

Data Dashboards

Document Management

Pretrial & Probation

Victim Notifications

Payment Notifications

Emergency Alerts

Scheduling Portals

Electronic Warrants



2025 LegalOps
Platform of the Year



2025 Court Integration
Excellence Award



2024 American Legal
Technology Winner



Serving 9,570+ locations across all 50 states · 100+ languages · Zero cost to Texas counties via OCA

SECTION 1: A RISING TIDE

Reminders Help Everyone –
Including Pretrial Services



EXPANDING YOUR IMPACT

YOU ALREADY OWN THE OUTCOME. NOW CLAIM THE TOOLS

Keep people out of jail who don't belong there

Get them to court

Reduce the jail population from administrative failures, not public safety decisions

That's the core of what pretrial services do.

THE REALITY: YOU TRACK SOME. NOT ALL.

SUPERVISED DEFENDANTS

- ✓ Appearance rates
- ✓ Compliance metrics
- ✓ Supervision outcomes
- ✓ Reminder systems

VS

ALL DEFENDANTS

- X Recognizance releases
- X Surety bond defendants
- X Cite-and-release cases
- X No reminders. No support.

THE ACCOUNTABILITY REALITY

Everyone released pretrial reflects on pretrial services.

Whether you're tracking them or not.

Someone on recognizance misses court and a warrant issues.



Who gets the call about jail population?

A surety bond defendant cycles back through booking.



Which system metrics are affected?

The jail population rises because people forgot court dates.



Who's in the room when it goes wrong?

THE OPPORTUNITY: THE LAW HANDED YOU THE TOOLS

Texas Government Code **§75.601**

Requires OCA to provide a free court reminder program to every county.

18

States with
statewide court
reminder programs

19

States with no
program at all

- ✓ Reduce costs from failures to appear
- ✓ Improve court efficiency
- ✓ Remind defendants to appear
- ✓ Reduce jail population from missed dates

Texas built the infrastructure. It's operational, free, and designed for the mission you already own.

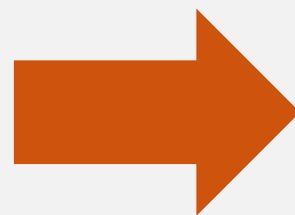
ASSUMPTION: PEOPLE MISS COURT INTENTIONALLY

Traditional model of behavior: How we **BELIEVE** people act



INTENTION

“I want to go to court.”

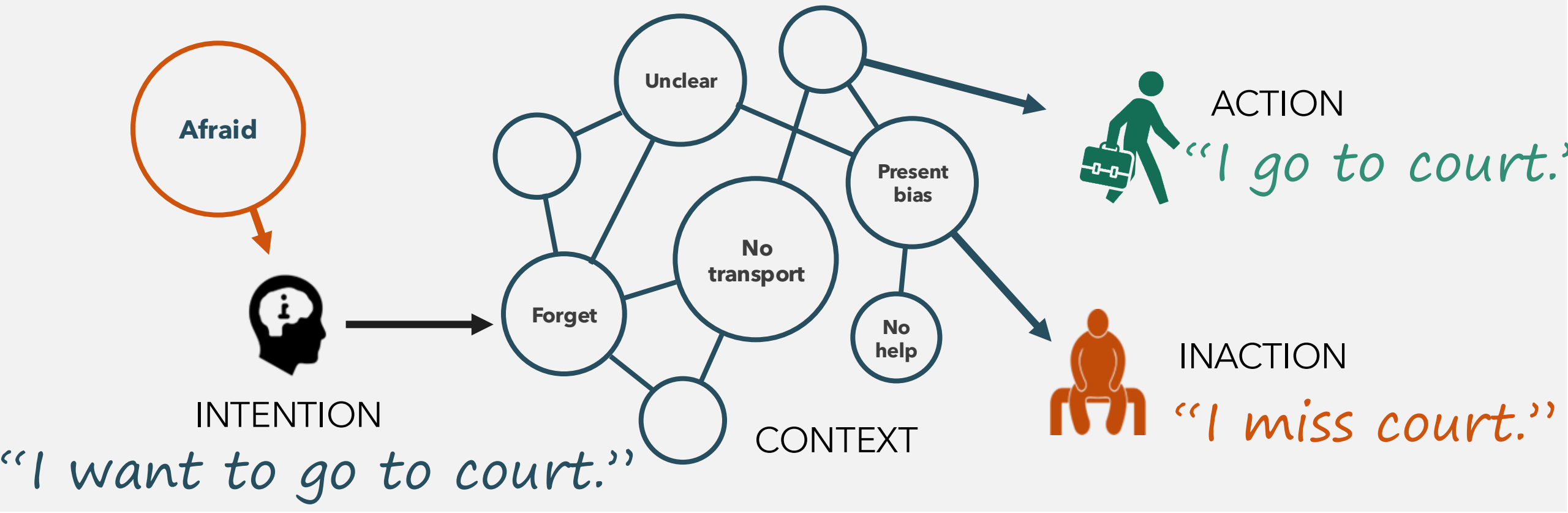


ACTION

“I go to court.”

REALITY: PEOPLE MISS COURT EVEN WHEN THEY WANT TO GO

Behavioral science: How people **REALLY** act



COURT IS OFTEN DESIGNED FOR TWO TYPES



CREATE PROCESSES FOR REAL PEOPLE....



MAJOR BARRIERS THAT KEEP PEOPLE FROM SHOWING UP

Behavioral barriers

Limited mental bandwidth due to scarcity

Unclear and hassle-filled processes

Fear

Forgetting

Everyday challenges & hardships

Resource gaps

- Limited access to technology
- Transportation challenges
- Lack of childcare

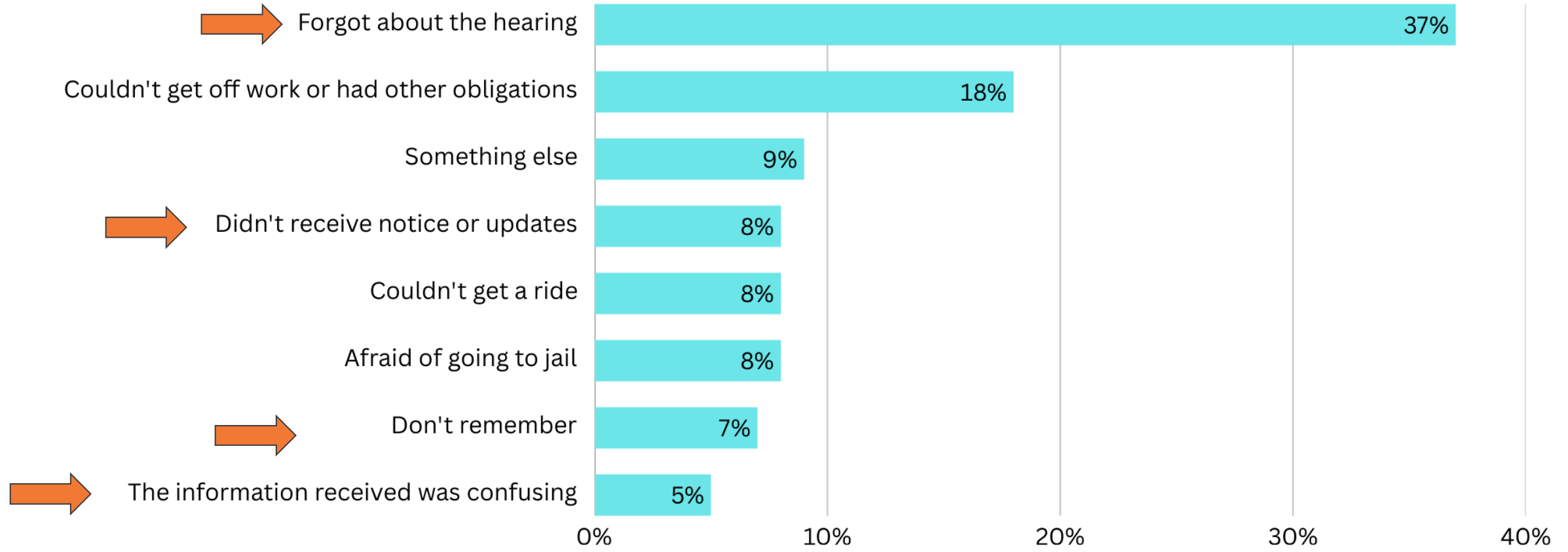
Health

- Mental and behavioral health challenges
- Medical emergencies
- Disability

Personal situation

- Inflexible work schedules
- Housing instability

FORGETTING: MOST COMMON REASON PEOPLE MISS COURT



Self-reported reason for missing court, individuals with any case type.

Source: Pew poll

SCARCITY DEPLETES OUR COGNITIVE BANDWIDTH

Scarcity: *When vital resources (money, food, time) are in short supply*



- We focus on the scarcity to exclusion of all else
- Depletes our cognitive bandwidth
- Like a tight deadline
- Adaptive in the short term

Chronic scarcity: *Living in a continual state of scarcity (like experiencing poverty)*




- Bandwidth is used all the time!
- Like being under a tight work deadline all day, every day
Like losing a night's sleep!



IN A SITUATION OF SCARCITY, WE CAN FORGET ABOUT THINGS EVEN WHEN THEY ARE IMPORTANT TO US

*My car was towed and I totally got caught up on getting my car back and **forgot about my court date...***

*It know I need to make my monthly court payment, but **I needed the money for a car repair to keep my job** ... and now I do not know how to get back on track!*



memory

It's totally slipped my mind** – my Mom is sick and I am her caregiver ... **I was over stressed, tired, and could barley keep us both above water...

RESERVE YOUR HARD WORK FOR THE HARD CASES

PTS value lies in the hard work – risk assessment, support services, case management, etc.



When **everyone gets a reminder**, PTS can stop wasting their expertise on low-risk defendants who simply forgot



The result:

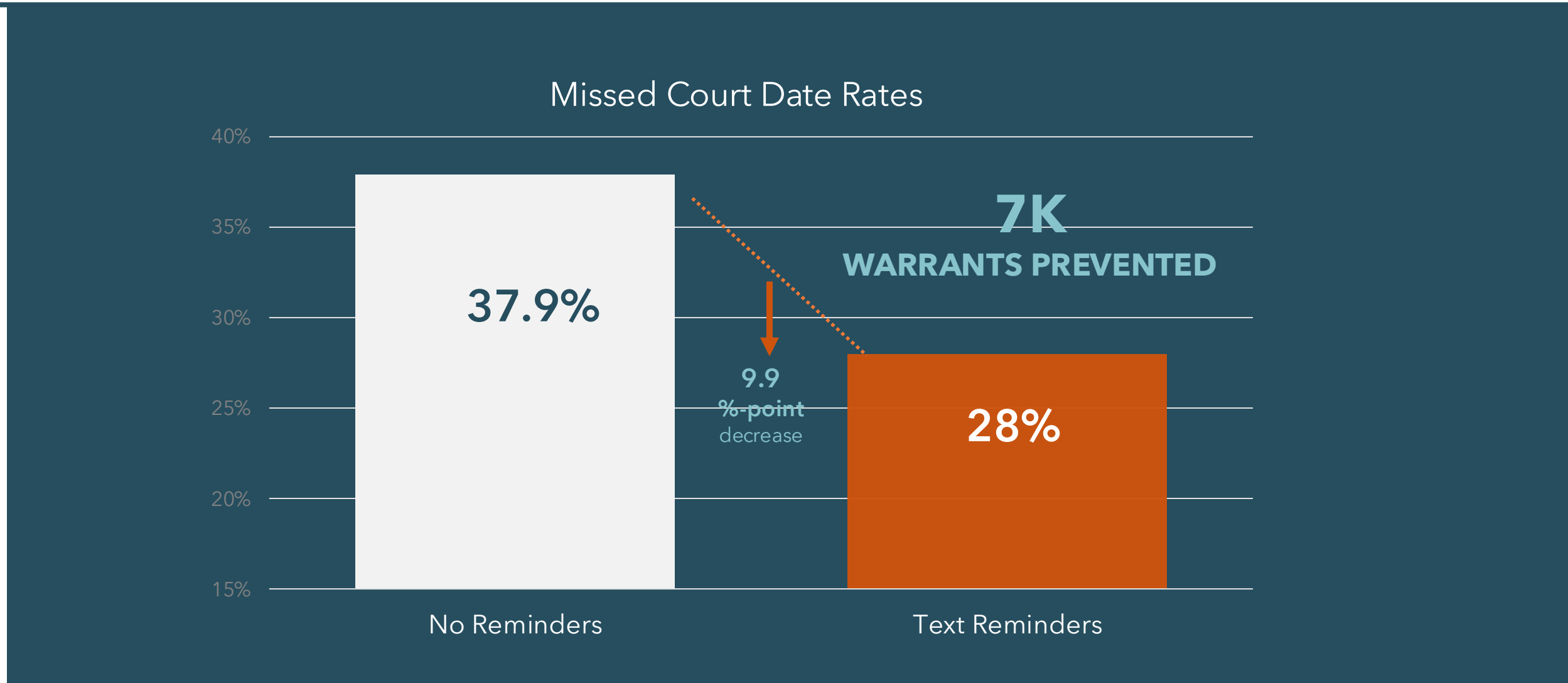
- Fewer warrants for forgotten court dates
- High-need cases get the attention they deserve

SECTION 3: REMINDERS WORK WHEN DONE RIGHT

It's All About Content and Reach!

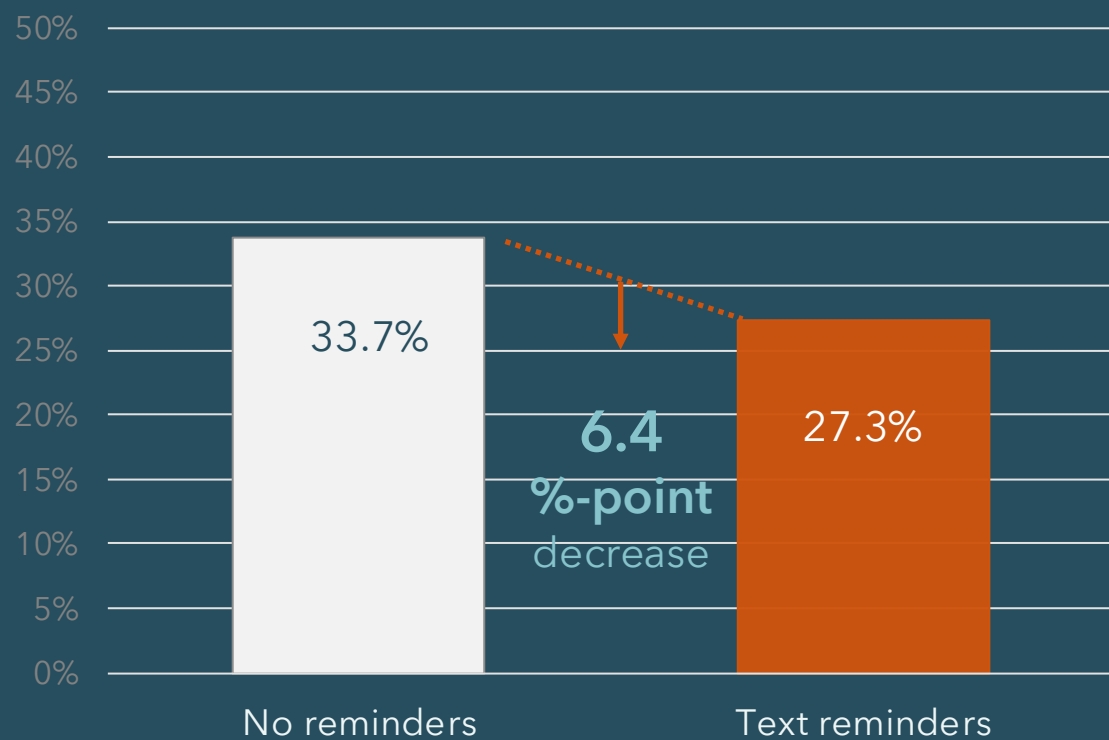


OUTCOME: 26% DECREASE FROM TEXT MESSAGE REMINDERS AMONG THOSE WHO PROVIDED A PHONE NUMBER

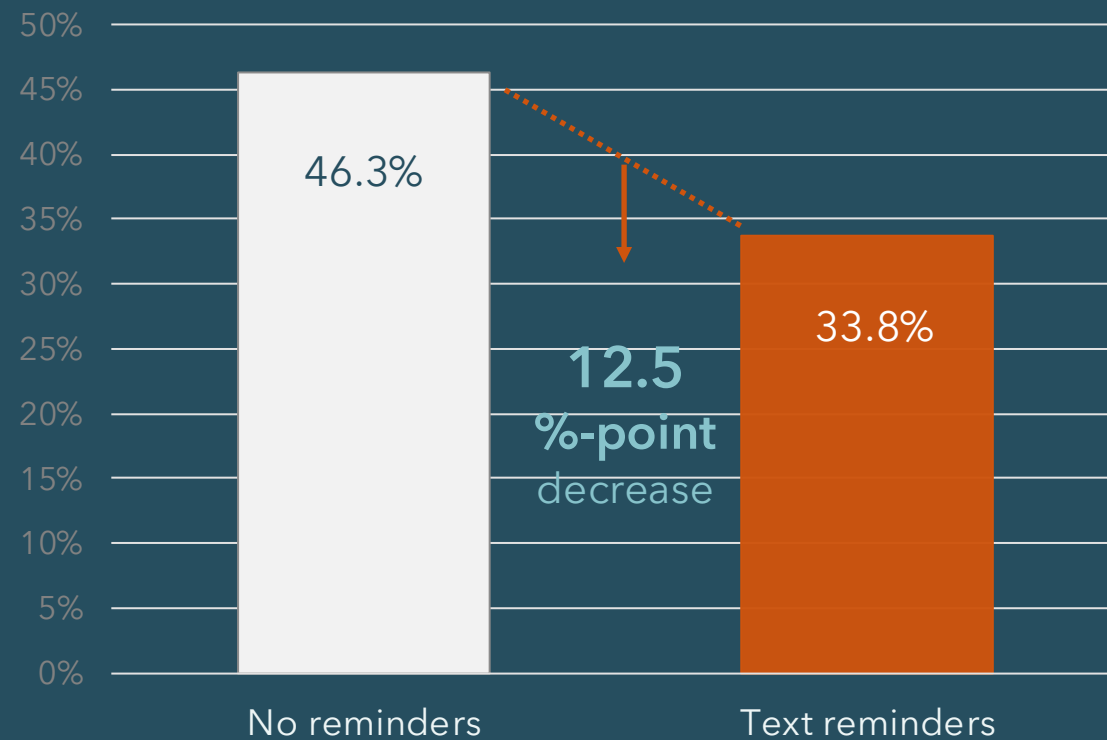


DOUBLY IMPACTFUL AMONG COMMUNITIES WITH LEAST WEALTH

Missed Court Date Rates Effect of text reminders in wealthiest neighborhoods



Missed Court Date Rates Effect of text reminders in least wealthy neighborhoods



MISSED COURT DATES ARE (SURPRISINGLY) COSTLY FOR BOTH THE SYSTEM AND THE PEOPLE MISSING COURT

~\$2,850 per missed court date prevented*

GOVERNMENT COSTS:
~\$1,500
For each missed appearance

- \$ Court staff
- \$ Attorneys
- \$ Warrant issuance
- \$ Warrant clearance
- \$ Arrest
- \$ Booking
- \$ Jail
- \$ Possible pretrial supervision

PERSON COSTS:
~\$1,350

When missed appearance results in warrant

- \$ Fines
- \$ Lost wages (jail)
- \$ Potential loss of bail
- \$ Possible pretrial supervision
- \$ Inability to work
- \$ Benefits forgone
 - Food (SNAP)
 - Housing (Section 8)
 - Tax refunds (EITC)
 - Health (Medicaid)

* Conservative estimate with only easily quantifiable costs. Based on misdemeanor cases; cases with warrants for missing court. We can provide detailed calculations upon request.

EXAMPLE: AVOIDING MISSED COURT DATES SAVES COURTS BIG \$\$\$\$

25K Hearings Missed
ANNUALLY

\$Costs 37.5 Million
(25K missed court dates X \$1,500)
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

WITH REMINDERS

+6.5K More Hearings Attended
Decrease missed court dates by 26%

\$9.75 Million Saved
Avoiding 6.5K missed court dates, saves the system
\$1.5K each

? Could YOUR SYSTEM use \$9.75M in better ways?

IT'S NOT ABOUT ANY REMINDER PROGRAM, BUT ONE PROVEN TO WORK!



ADHERE TO BEST PRACTICES
PROVEN FOR EFFECTIVENESS



BASED ON BEHAVIORAL
SCIENCE, NOT JUST ANY
CONTENT



DESIGNED TO REACH AS MANY
PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE

ESSENTIAL BEHAVIORAL CONTENT FOR ALL REMINDERS

Consequences must be clear

- When warrant possible for not appearing, tell them!
- “Show up to avoid an arrest warrant”

Encourage a plan to get to court

- Forming a specific plan (when, how) increases follow through
- “What time should you leave to arrive by 9am? Write out your plan now”

Offer help

- Knowing help is available improves follow-through
- List helpful phone numbers and websites
- Live help is a plus

Offer instructions

- Remove any hassles that can stop action
- For virtual hearings- add link
- For how to remedy a nonappearance or warrant, be specific
- Assure NO ARREST

SPECIFIC WAYS REMINDERS HELP BEFORE COURT DATES AND AFTER MISSES

Helpful reminder:
Anthony, go to court
Mon Jun 03 9AM,
Smith County Court.
**Show up to avoid an
arrest warrant.**

Before court date

Anthony, you missed
court Jan 05. Email
court@court.com to
reschedule by January
15 to avoid an arrest
warrant. This is a one-
time courtesy.





After missed hearing

You missed court Jan 05
and a warrant issued. Go
to Smith County Court to
clear it. You **WON'T** be
arrested when clearing
the warrant.

After warrant issued

TIMING OF REMINDERS

ONE WORKS BUT BETTER CONTENT WITH MORE

		How many reminders	When to send
Text		3 texts	<i>7 / 3 / 1 days before</i>
Email		3 emails	<i>14 / 7 / 1 days before</i>
Mail		1 mailed item	<i>14 days before</i>

THINK THROUGH COLLECTING CONTACT INFO

WHO, WHEN, AND FOR WHAT

Who collects info?

- Sheriff/Jail at booking or police when issue ticket
- *Does ticket have phone field? If not, ticket may require revision*

When to collect?

- Before first out-of-custody hearing
- Can also collect at court if person appears

Which cases and hearings?

- Once have contact info, use for reminders for all cases in a court system
- Send reminder before every hearing and after missed hearings

SECTION 4: THE COUNTY COURT TEXAS REMINDER PROGRAM

*Built on behavioral science. Delivered
statewide. Zero cost to your county.*



TEXAS OCA RMEINDER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Free for All.

OCA

Texas Office of Court Administration

Statewide platform, coordination & funding



eCourtDate

Technology partner

Infrastructure, integrations & technical support for 177 Texas agencies



ideas42

(Un)Warranted initiative

Behavioral science expertise & evidence-based message templates



100+ Languages

Zero Cost to Counties

CMS Integration available

24/7 Automated

SECURITY & COMPLIANCE: BUILT TO GOVERNMENT STANDARDS!

AWS GovCloud	PCI DDS Compliant	AWS GovCloud Hosted Government-grade encryption and infrastructure
CJIS Certified	SOC 2 Type II	Full Compliance PCI DSS, CJIS, SOC 2 Type II, FedRAMP Ready
FedRAMP Ready	HTTPS AES-256	Secure Tenancy Each county in its own secure environment

Questions from your IT team are expected. eCourtDate provides dedicated technical support throughout implementation.

HOW IT WORKS

Welcome

Before Court

Introduces court's reminders program. Supports legitimacy.

7 Day

Before Court

First reminder sent. Provides basic info and identifies consequences of inaction.

3 Day

Before Court

Second reminder reinforces commitment and logistics.

1 Day Before

Before Court

Day before confirmation. Maximum recall impact.

Post-FTA

After Court

If missed: clear instructions to resolve before warrant issues.

- All messages sent in defendant's preferred language
- Defendant can reply and message routes to court staff
- Courts get real-time delivery and appearance reporting

BEST PRACTICES: DO WHAT ACTUALLY WORKS

Use ideas42 Templates

Don't over-customize. Counties see 5-8% better appearance rates with the standard approach.

Implement Post-FTA Messaging

24-72 hr window before warrant.
Notify of missed court and what to do to avoid warrant
\$1,500 saved per avoided warrant.

Collect Phone Numbers Early & Often

At citation, booking, first appearance, and pretrial interviews. Get from 70% to 90% reach.

Enable the Web Portal

Defendants self-update contact info and check dates 24/7. Reduces calls. Improves data quality.

Let Pretrial Services lead to drive system-wide data quality and coordination.

TX SUCCESS METRICS TO DATE FOR CRIMINAL COURT DATES

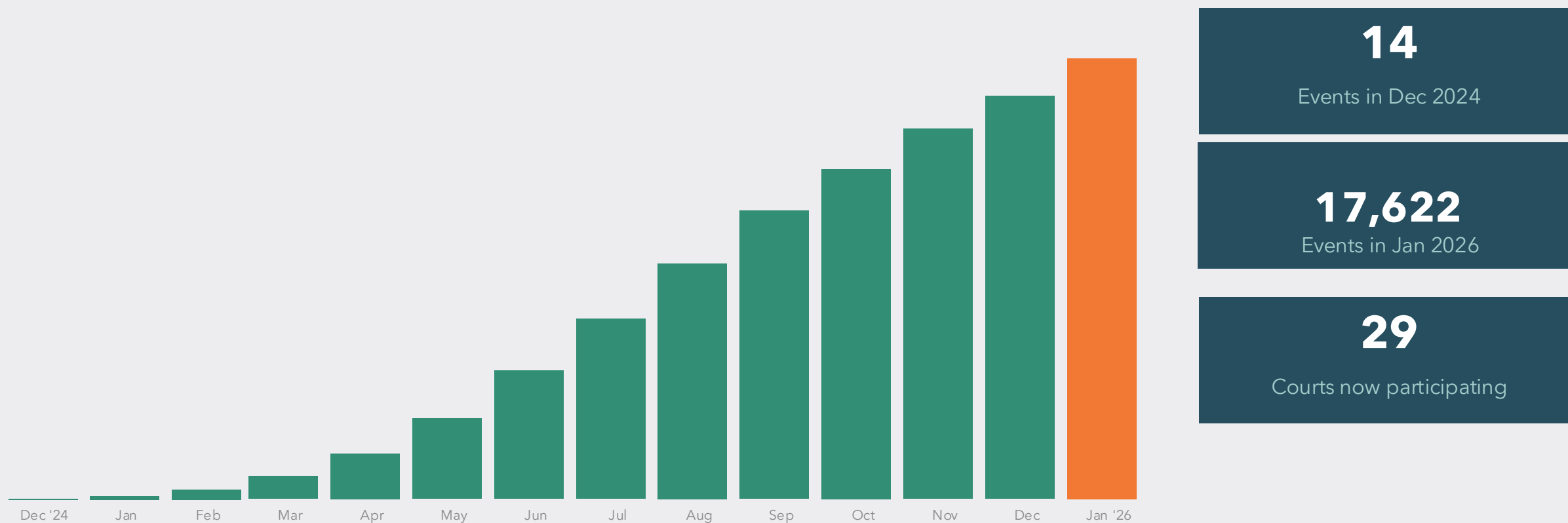
~79%

Court Appearance Rate

29 Texas courts | 78K court events | 14 months

Compare to 73% National Baseline – 4,595 Nonappearances Avoided!

SCALE & GROWTH - 125X IN 14 MONTHS



HOW TO GET STARTED - 4 STEPS TO LAUNCH

1

Sign Up with OCA

The program is free, but counties must enroll officially through the Texas Office of Court Administration.

Must send reminders for criminal cases, and this unlocks reminders for any case type, jurors, payments, etc.

2

Technical Integration

eCourtDate connects to your existing CMS.

Your CMS may charge for integration.

Ask your commissioners court about the County and District Court Technology Fund (CCP Art. 102.0169)

File upload and manual options are also available for all systems. Typically 30-60 days.

3

Configure & Launch

ideas42 provides message templates and helps court identify how to increase phone number collection

You choose timing, post-FTA settings, and language defaults.

4

Pilot, Then Expand

Start with one court or case type.

Validate.

Then expand system-wide with ongoing free support.

Free technical support | Training | ideas42 consultation - throughout implementation and ongoing

COST IMPACT: THE MATH IS SIMPLE

~\$6.9 Million

Estimated cost savings
across participating
counties (14 months)

4,595

Avoided Nonappearances (*criminal cases*)

\$1,500

Cost per FTA (*system costs: court staff, officer time +
booking + jail days*)

\$0

Cost to your county for the reminder program

THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER TO JOIN—BUT WHY WAIT???

This is free. It's proven. It's available now.

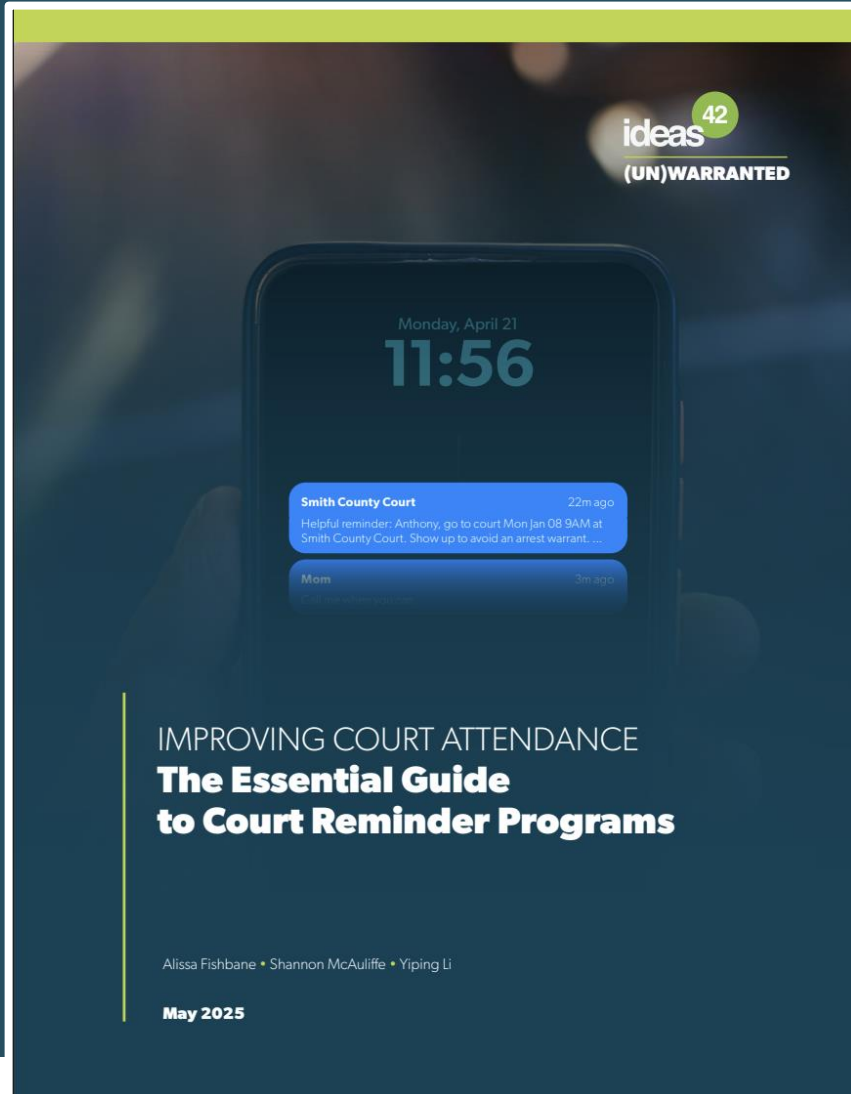
- ideas42** did the behavioral science work
- eCourtDate** built the infrastructure
- OCA** is funding it



Scan to sign up

Let reminders work so you can focus your supervision where it is most needed

RESOURCES TO ANSWER ALL (OR MOST) OF YOUR QUESTIONS...



Learn more:
 ideas42.org/unwarranted

WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

(Un)warranted helps courts design, implement, and test effective court date communications.

We live for this stuff so no need to be shy!

Come to us for:

- Examples of reminders, ROI calculations, fact sheets, and any technical info you need!
- To help troubleshoot operational nuances and set systems up for success

Reach out:

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unwarranted@ideas42.org



Thank you for joining us!

