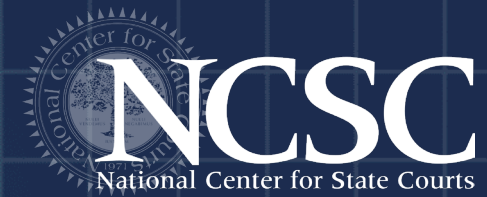


UTAH

Salt Lake City Justice Court



LOCATION	Salt Lake City, Utah
COURT JURISDICTIONS	Criminal, Civil, Domestic/Family, Small Claims, Traffic, Specialty
PROJECT STATUS	Completed 2023

PROJECT VISION

The original spatial function of a single courtroom has been reimaged into a versatile space offering accessible valuable information, virtual services, and community support.

PROJECT DETAILS

The need for virtual arraignments as a result of the pandemic in 2020 resulted in a change that has transformed the public's experience at the Salt Lake City Justice Court. The Court's project centered on a redesign of its largest courtroom into a resource center to help guide the public through the legal process and spaces for the public to engage in hybrid and remote court proceedings for those who prefer having a hybrid hearing but don't have access to or are intimidated by technology. The resource center includes workstations with computer access to allow patrons to work on their court requirements, spaces where public defenders can have private conversations with their clients, and friendly staff to assist with notarization and nonlegal questions.

The gallery against the wall was replaced by four small remote hearing pods, and two additional hearing pods were placed in the courthouse lobby. Across from the hearing pods in the former gallery is a comfortable sitting/waiting area with couches and chairs. Inside the former well of the Court is an ADA-compliant meeting space and two workstations for attorneys to meet with their clients. To maintain the long-term flexibility of the space, the Court decided not to remove the judge's bench.



UTAH

Salt Lake City Justice Court

ENHANCING OPERATIONS AND THE OVERALL BUILDING EXPERIENCE

This renovation has significantly enhanced accessibility and streamlined access to justice for the public. The Justice Court worked with researchers at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City to study the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the changes which require fewer people to attend court in person. Not only have fewer car trips to the courthouse had a positive environmental impact, but the option to attend court virtually has allowed court users to avoid missing work, finding childcare, and incurring transportation expenses which has contributed to a more accessible, equitable, and user-friendly experience.

The Court has also implemented innovative case scheduling practices, resulting in improved appearance rates. Previously, while prosecutors prepared for approximately 120 cases a day, the reality was that only 30-40 people would actually attend their hearings. Now, citations include a link directly to the Justice Court's website where the individual is directed to schedule their arraignment. There are typically 30-40 arraignments per day now, with close to a 100 percent appearance rate.

