

Texas Juvenile Justice Department Protects PII With Simple and Secure File Sharing

OVERVIEW

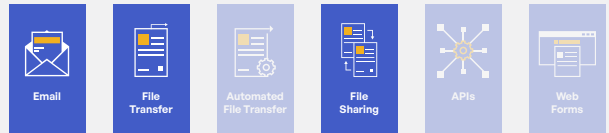


Customer: Texas Juvenile Justice Department

Industry: Government

Location: Austin, Texas, USA

Kiteworks Capabilities Used:



The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) is a state agency created to provide a cost-effective continuum of youth services that focuses on keeping individuals in their home communities while balancing rehabilitative needs with public safety. TJJD has 2,500 employees and operates dozens of treatment facilities, correctional institutions, and halfway houses throughout the state.

TJJD regularly handles highly confidential data pertaining to the youth it is entrusted with protecting. Legislation, including Texas Family Code, Chapter 58, mandates that TJJD take the proper measures to maintain the integrity of all juvenile justice information, including any references to individuals within TJJD’s various facilities.

Seeking a Secure, Effective File Transfer Process

The agency originally used a dedicated link using transport layer security (TLS) encryption to support confidential communications. Unfortunately, this process created a barrier on the recipients’ end, as most did not have a full-blown encryption solution that would sync with TJJD’s. This led staff members to seek workarounds like mailing hard copies of files, burning documents to CDs, or encrypting emails individually—all very cumbersome procedures with varying degrees of security. The bottom line: TJJD did not have an effective file transfer mechanism and needed one, quickly.

TJJD knew exactly what it wanted in an enterprise file transfer solution: a physical appliance to maximize control and minimize maintenance costs; rock-solid security; and ease of use. “Almost all of our data—95%—must be kept confidential for one reason or another, driving us to find a secure mode to exchange information with parents, between staff members, and with the community at large,” said Josh Kuntz, information security officer for TJJD.

Deploying and Growing Kiteworks

The organization looked at several vendors, but Kiteworks was the only provider that offered an enterprise-class physical and virtual appliance, with significant, successful deployments in the government sector. “Kiteworks was the only solution that met our strict security guidelines, yet was easy for nontechnical individuals to use,” Kuntz relates.

“As new education and youth services initiatives are rolled out, we’re ahead of the curve with communications. With Kiteworks, we have the technology foundation in place to support important information exchanges.”

– Josh Kuntz, Information Security Officer, Texas Juvenile Justice Department

Case Study

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TJJD engaged with SolidBorder, a Kiteworks value-added reseller (VAR) and an approved vendor with the Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) program for Texas government and public education entities. The first step was to deploy the appliance and put it through rigorous testing. “When Kiteworks was tested, deployed, and ready for use, we announced availability to our executive management team,” Kuntz recalls. “Our general counsel used the solution that afternoon to communicate with the Department of Justice, immediately demonstrating Kiteworks’ value.”

Kiteworks was initially used among TJJD’s medical services group, but rapidly grew to include the agency’s legal counsel and extensive roster of case workers. “We started with 100 Kiteworks licenses and that number quickly grew to 600,” Kuntz describes. “Kiteworks adoption has taken off because it allows users to work as they always have. It looks and acts like email, making it a no-brainer to use.” For example, Kiteworks’ integration with Active Directory allows TJJD employees to use their existing log-in credentials to send confidential files.

Bringing Benefits to the Department—and to the Communities It Serves

Kiteworks has been particularly valuable for ongoing community interactions, allowing TJJD employees to securely and efficiently communicate with parents, who only need to click on a link to access files. “As new education and youth services initiatives are rolled out, we’re ahead of the curve with communications,” Kuntz says.

“With Kiteworks, we have the technology foundation in place to support important information exchanges and simply need to add more licensed users to accommodate our growing needs,” Kuntz concludes. “It is as simple as that.”

Needs

- Enable nontechnical staff and constituents to share sensitive files easily and securely
- Comply with state law regarding the protection of highly sensitive juvenile justice information

Kiteworks Solution

- Kiteworks secure file transfer for agency staff to share PII securely and easily with parents, the courts, and other trusted third parties

Business Impact

- Better service through efficient, while still secure, communication with parents
- More control of sensitive data, enabled by a physical appliance deployment

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