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Justice of the Peace Court Call Center Logs One Million Calls

The Mark E. Hitch Information Center was created in 2015 to improve access for the public and allow staff at courthouses to focus on in-person clients.

This month the Justice of the Peace Court's eight-year-old call center – set up to improve access for the public and increase efficiency for court staff – received its one millionth call, a significant milestone and proof that the center is fulfilling its mission.

The call center was founded in March 2015 as an evolution of the court's Voluntary Assessment Center (VAC) that had been originally created to handle traffic tickets. Use of the VAC had been dropping as the traffic ticket-issuing system became more and more automated. Chief Magistrate Alan Davis and then-Court Administrator Marianne Kennedy tasked then-Operations Manager Mark Hitch with researching and developing a plan to expand the services provided by the VAC. After months of research and planning, the Voluntary Assessment Center was converted into a call center, taking calls for 24-hour court locations statewide. This helped reduce call volumes, allowing court staff to focus on servicing in-person court users. The process worked so well that a couple of years after the initial calls were taken at the call center, all Justice of the Peace Criminal Court locations were having their calls answered by the Information Center which can effectively answer over 75% of the incoming inquiries. The services at the center have since expanded to include taking calls for the Civil Court locations and servicing tax intercept calls.

In April 2023, following the passing of Hitch, the center was renamed "The Mark E. Hitch Information Center," as a tribute to Hitch's years of service to the Justice of the Peace Court and his work on the call center project.

"From its humble beginnings in a conversation with Mark Hitch about relieving front line clerical staff from having to answer very fundamental questions, to its implementation in record time, to now receiving its one millionth call, the Information Center has proven its worth to the Justice of the Peace Court as an efficient and important service to the public we serve," said Chief Magistrate Alan Davis. "As it has taken on more and more locations and responsibilities, the two millionth call is no doubt not far off. We commend our staff, as they are some of the most important members of the court due to their reliability and versatility."