

## **Framing**

This purpose of this project was to turn an existing Massachusetts Probation Service resource document into an interactive Q and A bot. The document that is the subject of this project was provided to me by Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Coordinator Mindy Schiedler and includes both a flow chart and guiding information to assist juveniles on probation with probation violation hearings. These documents may be accessed in their original form in the repo.

I worked closely with Ms. Sadler to create an interactive QnA platform that displays the same information contained in the original document. The goal of creating this product was to provide those individuals and families involved with probation an opportunity to access necessary information in a fast, clear, and engaging way. The program's reach is limited to those individuals who are already in the probation system and is not intended to substitute for legal advice.

## **Research**

As the flowchart had been provided to me, I did not have to do extensive outside research to create this product. In earlier prototypes I had created areas to include links to give more information such as examples of violations of probation, but it was ultimately decided that for clarity, and to avoid giving unauthorized legal advice, it was best to leave out links and only include the information contained in the original documents.

## **Ideation & Prototyping**

It was clear that the source material lent itself perfectly to a QnA bot, with the user-friendly aesthetic and simple question and answer format being easy to access and use for juveniles, family members, and experienced employees of the Massachusetts Probation Services department. The final format was then put into a QR code, which was placed onto the original paper document and can be scanned and accessed on mobile phone.

## **User Testing/Refinement**

There were two pools of testers that this product needed to satisfy. Firstly, it needed to be easy to both use and to understand for children around age 12-17. Second, I was made aware that there was some potential hesitancy around bringing in new technology to Massachusetts Probation Services, so the product also had to receive positive feedback around usability, access and clarity for those working within probation.

I tested the earliest drafts of the product by sending them to Ms. Schiedler. It is from the initial few drafts that we decided to keep things simpler and I was also made aware of the importance of making sure the exact same language was used in the online platform and the Probation Services resource document.

After some initial feedback, to get input from younger users, I sent the QR code to a former colleague who teaches computer science to get feedback from middle school age students. Ms. Schiedler also tested the product out with some youths in her community.

Ms. Schiedler also shared the QR code with her colleagues and supervisors, who had a positive reaction to the format and usability. Minor feedback, such as type-os, were caught and sent back to me for feedback. I also eventually figured out how to get rid of strange blurbs from issues with line breaks.

The final version was edited for color contrast, type-os, and line breaks, and is still accessible from the same QR code that is now incorporated into the source document.

[Access User Feedback Form Here.](#)

### **Intro Pitch**

[Access Here.](#)

### **Complexity/Robustness**

The product is using an expert system (QnA bot) to do exactly as was requested by the community partner. Additional features were discussed but ultimately fell out side the scope of the project's goals in serving its users.

### **Impact & Efficiencies**

I was told that the community partner is very pleased with the final product's fitness and appropriateness in achieving their goal as indicted under framing. The department is reportedly excited about continuing the use of technological aids to best serve the individuals, communities and families they work with.

### **Fit/Completeness**

Pending final edits/discussion following a January meeting with the legal department, probation intends to use this final product, as is, and has already incorporated the QR source code onto its official resource document.

### **Documentation**

See "sustainability"

### **Real World Viability**

See "Fit/Completeness"

### **Sustainability**

Ms. Schiedler and I had a closing phone call where we discussed her future plans for the program and potential concerns with any need for future edits. I discussed the program I used and my process for creating and editing the project and securing the QR source code. I agreed to be accessible throughout the following semester for any edits needed following more user testing and final discussions with the legal department.