



# MARYLAND JUDICIARY

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE 2017

*fair ... efficient ... effective*

## GREETINGS FROM CHIEF JUDGE MARY ELLEN BARBERA

I am pleased to share in this report the details of the work of the Maryland Judiciary in moving justice forward. The Maryland Judiciary made significant progress in 2016 toward achieving the objectives identified in the five-year strategic plan adopted in 2014. The Judiciary's eight strategic goals guide us in our work and help us to advance our mission to provide fair, efficient, and effective justice for all:

1. Provide access to justice
2. Be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs
3. Communicate effectively with stakeholders
4. Improve systems and processes
5. Be accountable
6. Assure the highest level of service
7. Build partnerships
8. Use resources wisely

During 2016, we expanded electronic case filing and management to 40 percent of the state, effectively transitioning from paper-based transactions to the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) platform. We are on pace to achieve our goal to bring MDEC to every court by 2021.

More than two million cases were handled by Maryland's state courts in 2016. As I reflect upon the past year, I am mindful of how we serve the people of Maryland as they work to resolve the issues that bring them to the courts. We achieved meaningful progress for Maryland's youth, seniors, veterans, non-English speakers, victims of crime, lower-income Marylanders, and the many others who rely on the Judiciary for resolution of legal matters.

We now have 54 problem-solving courts throughout the state, which, through collaboration among justice partners, social workers, treatment providers, and court personnel, collectively helped approximately 3,900 Marylanders in 2016 to take back their lives from powerful addictions and other conditions. With each life back on track, Maryland communities grow safer and stronger.

As we enter the third year of the strategic plan, we draw inspiration from our accomplishments of the past year. We also remain motivated by a sense of urgency about all that remains to be achieved. We, therefore, reaffirm our commitment to fulfill the mission of the Judiciary in serving the people of Maryland.

### MARY ELLEN BARBERA

*Chief Judge  
Court of Appeals of Maryland*



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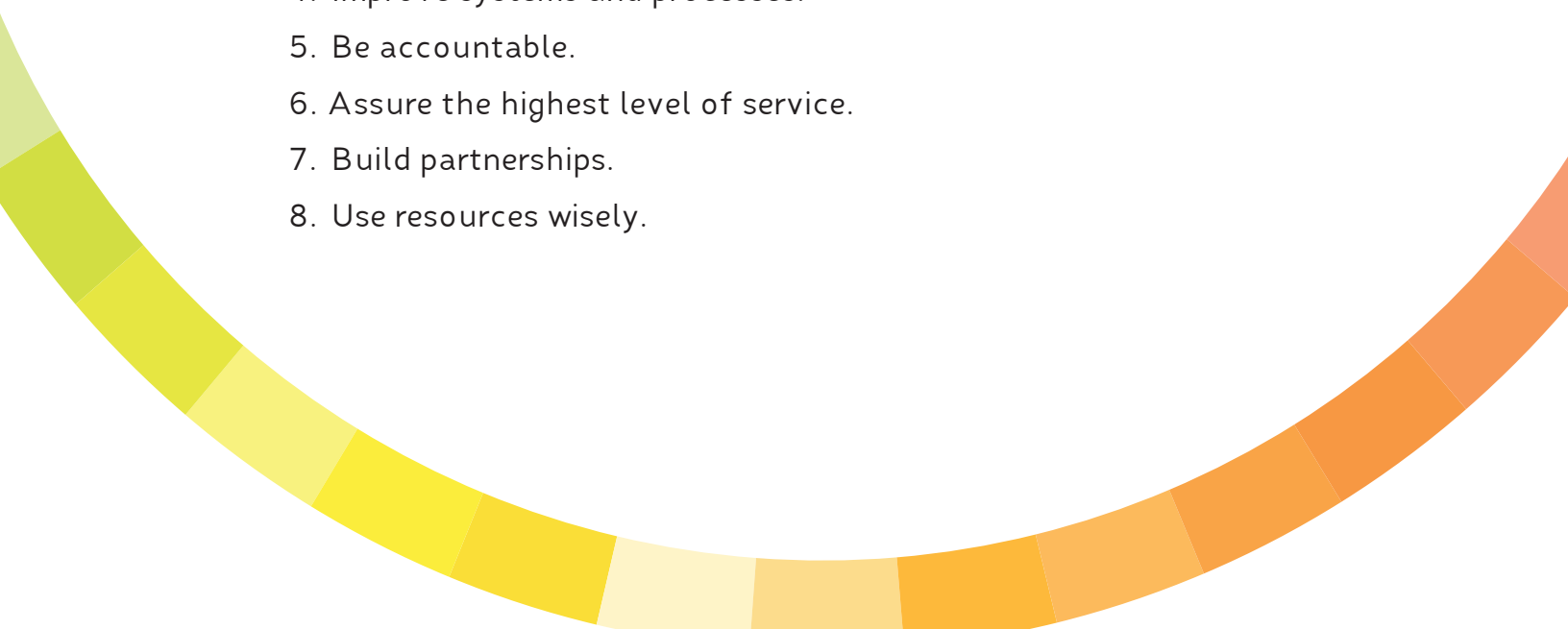
## *Mission*

The Maryland Judiciary provides fair, efficient, and effective justice for all.

## *Vision*

The Maryland Judiciary advances justice for all who come to Maryland's courts. We are an efficient, innovative, and accessible court system that works collaboratively with justice partners to serve the people with integrity and transparency.

## *Goals*

1. Provide access to justice.
  2. Be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs.
  3. Communicate effectively with stakeholders.
  4. Improve systems and processes.
  5. Be accountable.
  6. Assure the highest level of service.
  7. Build partnerships.
  8. Use resources wisely.
- 



## Snapshot of major trends, efforts, accomplishments

- The Maryland Judiciary was acknowledged as a **NATIONAL LEADER IN ACCESS TO JUSTICE**, ranking fourth in the nation for overall performance by the Justice Index, an independent and national online resource that scores and ranks states based on the adoption of selected best practices furthering civil access to justice.
- **EXPANDED ACCESS TO JUSTICE** resources by growing self-help and language services, providing free limited legal help and information for people representing themselves in civil cases. Services are available via email, telephone contact, online chat, video, walk-in centers, and by mobile app (Maryland Law Help).
- **RESPONDED** to the drug epidemic **IN MARYLAND COMMUNITIES** by expanding the use of problem-solving courts and family recovery programs to help individuals get the addiction treatment, mental health treatment, and other services they need to complete probation and other court-ordered programs.
- **CONNECTED MARYLANDERS** to court information and services through video, public information, media relations, employee outreach, social media, advertising, online resources, and events.
- **IMPROVED** case management **PROCESSES STATEWIDE** by launching the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) initiative in all nine of Maryland's Eastern Shore counties, supporting courts to design and implement case management plans, and striving to meet all case processing time standards. For the third consecutive year, Maryland's Court of Appeals met its standard of issuing rulings on all cases during the same term in which the cases were heard.
- Remained **ACCOUNTABLE TO PUBLIC NEEDS** by improving juvenile justice, adult guardianship, landlord and tenant, and bond review processes to ensure fair, efficient, and effective justice for all while remaining focused on case processing time standards and other court operations best practices.
- Reinforced the Judiciary's **COMMITMENT TO HIGH-LEVEL SERVICE** by providing over 350 training and orientation courses to more than 1,500 Judiciary personnel, including online courses, webinars, on-site classes, intranet training modules for administrative systems, as well as in-depth orientation for new and elevated judges.
- Built and **STRENGTHENED LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS** by supporting approximately \$24 million in grant-funded programs administered through Circuit Courts, District Court, and justice partners throughout Maryland's 24 jurisdictions.
- Invested in **PROCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS** to strengthen court operations, upgrade security and technology statewide, increase access to the courts, and expand services to the public.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**



## 1. PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

## Expanding Help for the Self-Represented

- The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) increased access to Judiciary information and services through the Maryland Law Help app, with more than 2,600 downloads through GooglePlay and iTunes.
- AOC and District Court expanded a contract with Legal Aid to increase daily operating hours of a statewide self-help center that provides services remotely via phone and online chat while continuing services in District Court locations in Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties to provide help with civil legal matters.
- The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County conducted weekly "Ask a Lawyer in the Library" programs to assist members of the public with civil non-family issues.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County offered monthly classes to provide limited legal help to self-represented litigants in domestic cases.
- Calvert County District Court collaborated with community and faith-based organizations to increase public awareness of domestic violence issues, court services, and resources available to the community.
- Caroline County District Court participated in an Expungement Expo hosted by Caroline County Department of Social Services, the Caroline County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and other organizations at the Caroline County Public Library in Denton. Court staff distributed expungement petitions, waiver forms, and expungement brochures to participants seeking to expunge prior criminal records, and attendees were connected to employment opportunities and resources.
- Dorchester County District Court staff hung posters and distributed brochures to help promote the new District Court Self-Help Center in Wicomico County.
- The Circuit Court for Harford County supported the growing public demand for limited legal help for self-represented individuals through the Family Self-Help Center by increasing attorney staffing as well as volunteer support from student interns.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County completed renovations to its law library, expanding access to public legal resources, and developed a family law self-help workshop to assist individuals involved in domestic cases.
- Wicomico County District Court launched a new walk-in Self-Help Center to provide free, convenient, limited legal help for people on Maryland's Eastern Shore and later added new tables and an additional public access terminal as public demand grew.
- Worcester County District Court added public access terminals for both of its court locations and computer terminals for additional staff to support self-help services.

More than

21,000

unique visitors

accessed **SELF-HELP** pages  
on the Maryland Courts website



## 1. PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

## Removing Barriers and Improving Processes

- The Judiciary expanded access to court resources for people with limited English proficiency through new website portals that offer the most-requested resources, including court forms and requests for interpreter services, in Spanish, French, Russian, Chinese, and Korean.
- Instituted a new requirement that Maryland court interpreters earn 16 hours of continuing education every two years.
- Provided pads of referral forms statewide to help judges, magistrates, and court personnel in directing self-represented litigants to self-help centers, law libraries, and other state and local service providers.
- Upgraded assisted listening devices in nearly every Circuit Court location to improve court services for the hearing impaired.
- The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County updated its docket display system to provide a bilingual directory.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City developed an online request form and tracking log for interpreter requests and displayed court tutorial videos in all four Baltimore City District Court locations, focusing on rent cases and eviction prevention.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County created a one-stop shop Law Library and Self-Help Center to increase access.
- The Circuit Court for Cecil County installed juror check-in kiosks, providing more convenience for jurors while using court resources more efficiently.
- The Circuit Court for Dorchester County continued its support for the growth of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of the Mid-Shore by providing operating space within the courthouse and by welcoming the group's participation in the Juvenile Coordinating Council and Dorchester County Criminal Justice Treatment Network.
- Howard County District Court modified the public counter work station to improve accessibility and customer service.
- St. Mary's County District Court completed several renovations and updated courtroom signage in public areas to improve efficiency and comfort for customers and employees. Improvements were made to courtrooms, vestibules, attorney-client rooms, front lobby and advocates' office services, and part of the Clerk's Office.
- Talbot County District Court provided courtroom space to the Circuit Court to conduct court proceedings during renovations.



STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**

2

BE RESPONSIVE AND  
ADAPTABLE TO CHANGING

**COMMUNITY  
NEEDS**



## 2. BE RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTABLE TO CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

## Youth

- The Judicial Council recommended and the Chief Judge approved a resolution against the presumptive shackling of children when they appear in juvenile court. The resolution is based on a set of principles adopted by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.
- Enhanced and streamlined the juvenile record expungement process by developing a detailed procedural manual for court personnel that provides step-by-step directions.
- Continued to work with the Governor's Office and the Maryland General Assembly, as well as other state agencies and additional stakeholders throughout Maryland, to meet the evolving needs of children and families who access the courts.
- Organized and hosted the 18th annual Child Abuse, Neglect, and Delinquency Options (CANDO) conference, bringing together local, state, and national experts to share knowledge on substance abuse and its impact on child welfare and juvenile justice, raise awareness of best practices within Judiciary programs, and make effective use of federal and state Foster Care Court Improvement funds.
- Developed and began educational programs for judges, magistrates, staff, and justice partners on issues related to human trafficking and began developing resources and processes for helping victims of human trafficking who come into contact with the court system.
- Partnered with state agencies on a multifaceted approach to addressing human trafficking and, with these partners, secured a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. The Judiciary's portion of the grant is being used for judicial education and educational materials.
- Implemented the second phase of the Maryland Research Online Communication Center (MDROCC), providing juvenile court judges and magistrates a secure online document vault and communication forum.
- Contracted with the University of Maryland School of Social Work to complete a series of focus groups to assess participation of caregivers and foster parents in child welfare court proceedings.
- Awarded 11 child welfare program grants through the Judiciary's Foster Care Court Improvement Project (FCCIP) to help courts and other child welfare agencies improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for abused and neglected children in the child welfare system.
- The Judicial Council adopted 25 recommendations for improving the way courts appoint counsel and guardians and monitor guardianship cases post-appointment.
- Worked with the Department of Juvenile Services to promote a more science-based understanding of juvenile court jurisdictional issues, to increase the use of juvenile risk assessment instruments, and to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in the juvenile system.
- Allegany County District Court partnered with the local school system to provide facilities for mock trial competitions.
- Anne Arundel County District Court expanded its participation in the Schools in the Court program, hosting four sessions throughout the year for local high school students.

## 2. BE RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTABLE TO CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Developed procedures to establish a Courthouse Dog and Child Witness Pilot Program in the Circuit Courts for Anne Arundel and Harford counties. This pilot program will provide information needed to assess the feasibility of implementing a structured, defined, and systematic approach for making therapy dogs available to support child witnesses testifying or appearing in Circuit Court proceedings statewide.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City convened a task force to address and discuss the needs of LGBTQ youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and developed and implemented a support group for youth in the city who identify as LGBTQ.
- The Circuit Court for Calvert County worked with the State's Attorney, the Office of the Public Defender, and the Board of Education in Calvert County to implement a truancy court program, which has improved participant attendance rates by 52 percent.
- Created a new truancy court in the Circuit Court for Kent County and began planning for a truancy diversion program in the Cecil County District Court, working in partnership with stakeholders from the Cecil County Board of Education, Office of the State's Attorney, and Community Mediation Upper Shore.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County hosted its sixth summit to prevent teen violence.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County developed a pro bono Best Interest Attorney list to ensure adequate representation in family law cases involving children.
- Continued support for teen court programs in many Circuit and District Court locations. These programs provide a diversion for minor offenses where individuals have admitted guilt and may receive a range of sanctions. During teen court proceedings, a judge or magistrate sits as judge and students act as defense attorneys, prosecutors, and jurors.

## MARYLAND'S PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS

*graduated*

# 389 PEOPLE

*from Drug Treatment Court programs*



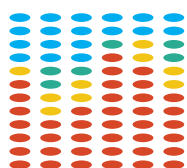
## 2. BE RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTABLE TO CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

## Seniors

- Baltimore City District Court, in partnership with the Bar Association of Baltimore City, Maryland Legal Services Corporation, and city government agencies, hosted an annual Elder Law Symposium at the Wabash Avenue courthouse, providing approximately 300 participants with access to free workshops on estate administration, pension rights, and real property taxes.
- Allegany County District Court partnered with the Cumberland City Police and the Cumberland Police Department Citizens' Police Academy to bring seniors and other adults from the community into the courtroom to meet with judges and learn about the judicial process. These residents were looking for ways to promote safety in the community, deter crime, and learn more about the policies and procedures that govern the Judiciary.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County hosted orientation programs to assist newly appointed guardians.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County offered guardianship training, including a review of required annual accounting forms, decision-making as a guardian, and working with agencies when a guardianship order is obtained.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County provided video and printed instructional materials, as well as assistance with guardianship filings, as part of the Adult Guardianship Assistance Program and Family Law Self-Help Center and, further, developed an online training class for newly appointed, out-of-state family guardians.

## Families

- Approximately \$14 million in fiscal year 2016 grants was awarded to local Circuit Courts and justice partners for family support services.
- Anne Arundel County District Court partnered with the YWCA of Maryland to connect victims of domestic violence with resources and support, including help with filing pleadings and assigning of YWCA counsel to cases.
- The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County provided an online, ongoing, parenting program for families involved in custody cases.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County expanded its Family Recovery Court to cover domestic cases.
- The Circuit Court for Caroline County began conducting an online and ongoing parenting seminar for parents unable to attend the in-person program.
- The Circuit Court for Dorchester County operated a family access center to facilitate safe visitations in custody cases.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County held a "reunification celebration" for parents who were able to reunify safely and successfully with their children who had been placed in the child welfare system.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County launched a periodic family law self-help workshop to help individuals involved in domestic cases.
- Updated and provided a new copy of Judges' Domestic Violence Resource Manual on a USB drive to all judges.
- Renovated the Circuit Court for Worcester County to create a family waiting area for family court participants.



Approximately 39 percent  
of all self-help clients  
are age 50 or above.

# CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

More than

**170,000** PEOPLE

accessed the Maryland Judiciary's

WEBSITE AND

**ONLINE SELF-HELP**

**RESOURCES**

on smartphones and tablets

IN 2016.



## 2. BE RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTABLE TO CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

## Problem-Solving Courts

- More than \$4 million in grants was provided during fiscal year 2016 to support problem-solving courts statewide.
- Drug treatment court programs helped 389 people recover from addiction and graduate in 19 jurisdictions.
- More than 60 participants in the Baltimore City, Howard County, and Prince George's County District Courts graduated from drug treatment courts.
- Implemented a three-year, \$200,000 U.S. Department of Justice grant to develop a set of benchmarks and standards for 22 drug treatment courts serving adult offenders throughout the state.
- Anne Arundel County District Court began planning for a veterans docket by designating judges, working with the State's Attorney, the Office of the Public Defender, and the Parole and Probation Office and consulting with colleagues at existing veterans courts in Baltimore City and Prince George's County, with plans to reach out to the Veterans Administration in early 2017.
- Connected more than 750 people with mental health care in Baltimore City, Harford County, and Prince George's County through mental health court programs.
- Veterans drug treatment courts in Baltimore City and Prince George's County completed their first full year of operation, serving more than 50 veterans and preventing their recidivism.
- Assessed the need for new veterans drug treatment courts in Frederick, Talbot, and Anne Arundel counties.
- The first drug treatment court graduation in the Circuit Court for Calvert County celebrated and recognized the efforts of participants who successfully completed the rigorous program.
- Prince George's County District Court finalized plans to begin a new DUI/DWI treatment program.
- The Circuit Court for Caroline County collaborated with justice partners to complete a "mapping" exercise to identify all points of entry for individuals in need of mental health services.
- Harford County District Court collaborated with justice partners to transition its existing diversionary adult drug treatment court to a post-conviction, treatment-based opiate recovery court.

## Serving DIVERSE Populations

The people who get help from Maryland's problem-solving courts come from many different backgrounds and represent the diversity of our state. In fiscal year 2016, there were 3,399 active clients.

51% Black      46% White      3% Other  
 72% Male      28% Female  
 34% 40 and Over      26% 30-39      32% 21-29      8% 20 and Under  
 4% Veterans

## 2. BE RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTABLE TO CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Montgomery County’s Circuit Court and District Court together launched a Mental Health Court program, and the Drug Treatment Court program in the Circuit Court for Montgomery County implemented a new screening and assessment process to accept high-need participants who would otherwise pose a high recidivism risk.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George’s County added specialty dockets and launched a reentry docket to prevent recidivism by providing tools to help people succeed upon their return to their communities after incarceration.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County helped manage the return to the community of individuals being released from prison by expanding the scope of its problem-solving court to include a reentry component and planned a problem-solving court and reentry docket alumni association in order to mentor graduates and help them avoid recidivism.

## Dispute Resolution Alternatives

- More than \$2 million in grants was awarded to 12 courts, 15 community mediation centers, five community conferencing programs, and five statewide programs to support new or existing mediation and conflict resolution initiatives. The community-based programs partner with the courts to take direct case referrals and handle cases from other referral sources to prevent conflicts from escalating to a level at which court intervention is necessary.
- The Judicial Council’s Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Committee began a review of Maryland statutes, rules, and standards of conduct to recommend revisions to optimize the availability, use, and quality of ADR in Maryland courts statewide.
- At the request of the Maryland General Assembly, the Judiciary studied and identified best practices for criminal mediation referrals based on experiences from across the state and original research.
- Collaborated with the Johns Hopkins Center for Communications Programs to advance the use of mediation in disputes related to the home improvement industry.
- Operated resolution conference dockets in the District Court for debt collection cases, helping litigants reach agreements without trial.
- The District Court instituted a new ADR program in Garrett County and piloted a new ADR program during the morning rent court docket in Baltimore City to promote a higher rate of settlement. Preliminary feedback and data are promising and show a higher than expected rate of achieved settlements in these new programs.
- Kent County District Court established a pre-trial mediation program, and Howard County District Court initiated a landlord-tenant day-of-trial mediation program. Since the Kent County program’s launch, 90 percent of citizens who take part in voluntary mediation have resolved their differences.
- Cecil County District Court has collaborated with the State’s Attorney for several years on mediation for certain criminal cases in Cecil County. The court has now launched a new initiative to establish a civil ADR program.



**During fiscal year 2016,  
Maryland's community-  
based mediation centers  
handled 2,598 cases, with  
1,845 (71%) resulting in  
full or partial agreements.**

- The Circuit Courts for Carroll County and Garrett County launched new pre-trial ADR programs.
- Charles County District Court partnered with the Charles County Community Mediation Center and the College of Southern Maryland to provide additional mediators and expanded coverage for civil cases.
- Montgomery County District Court continued its resolution conference docket for large and small claims civil cases to resolve cases without having to place those cases on the regular trial docket, allowing for more efficient calendaring and trial of contested cases.
- Prince George's County District Court created a pre-trial mediation program with volunteers identifying cases for mediation.
- Talbot County District Court launched a pre-trial mediation program with Mid Shore Community Mediation, determining eligibility and sending letters offering mediation services to people who have filed civil matters. Some day-of-trial mediation is also provided, depending on scheduling and resource availability.
- Baltimore County District Court restructured the trial schedule to increase ADR use in its Essex courthouse.
- The Circuit Court for Charles County centralized its ADR programs to improve the quality of services for litigants and to encourage greater use of mediation and conflict resolution resources.



STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**

3

# COMMUNICATE

EFFECTIVELY WITH STAKEHOLDERS



### 3. COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH STAKEHOLDERS

## Increase Awareness

- All four levels of Maryland's courts welcomed hundreds of visitors from local schools, community groups, out-of-state courts, and multiple international justice systems.
- The AOC and the individual courts responded to hundreds of Public Information Act requests and inquiries from the news media to increase the public's understanding of court operations and key rulings by the courts.
- The AOC promoted access to justice and court services by providing educational materials, on-demand, for display in Circuit and District Court locations statewide.
- The AOC strengthened public awareness of Judiciary programs, projects, services, and initiatives through a variety of communication methods, such as media relations, advertising, website content, social media, web and on-site videos, published reports and materials, and programs hosted by judges throughout the state, including the Civics and Law Academy, mock trials, and student visits.
- The AOC communicated step-by-step progress on MDEC implementation to help prepare attorneys, justice partners, and the public for upcoming requirements in advance of go-live dates for the statewide electronic case management system.
- The Judicial Council approved Judiciary-wide social media policies to guide judges, judicial appointees, and employees on the appropriate use of social media and authorize use of social media for official communications.
- Launched a series of transit ads to inform the public about the Maryland Law Help mobile app for easy access to the Judiciary's most popular resources and the Judiciary's self-help services.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City provided the public with exhibits and information about the history of Maryland's courts and the legal community via its Law Museum, which is staffed by volunteer guides.
- Developed an email newsletter as a forum for judges statewide to communicate local updates, new laws, accomplishments, and best practices in their courts.
- Published an email newsletter for employees and posted multiple stories and announcements each week on the Judiciary's intranet site to strengthen morale, focus employees on key strategic initiatives, and connect employees to internal and external resources.
- Researched and developed a plan to strengthen the Judiciary's Speakers Bureau, providing community groups more opportunities to hear directly from judges on issues related to the courts.
- Launched an online "Suggestion Box" forum for employees to engage with court leadership and identify process efficiencies while reinforcing the impact all employees make through public service.

### 3. COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH STAKEHOLDERS

## Outreach

- The Court of Appeals hosted the annual high school mock trial state championship. Supported by local courts and judges, the Judiciary volunteered time, space, and resources to hold mock trial competition events statewide throughout much of the school year.
- The Court of Appeals hosted the 22nd annual Department of Juvenile Services/Maryland Department of Education Oratorical Contest for juveniles in facilities throughout the state, providing a chance for positive interaction with the courts at the highest level.
- The AOC held an annual statewide art contest for grade school students to help develop skills in peacemaking and conflict resolution, receiving more than 2,100 entries from children throughout Maryland.
- Produced and promoted online videos, brochures, and legal help webpages to inform the public about access to, and expungement of, court records.
- The Circuit Court for Calvert County's Drug Treatment Court met with local community, business, and faith-based organizations to raise awareness and build public support.
- Carroll County District Court judges conducted three mock trial sessions as training for the Maryland State Police and Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County provided school supplies to students through its "Backpacks for Success" program and honored local veterans at the Circuit Court's annual Veterans Appreciation and Muster Ceremony.
- Baltimore City District Court participated in Courting Art Baltimore, a new program promoting youth artwork by connecting the legal community with local communities to reduce stress and anxiety for litigants and visitors by beautifying local courthouses. Courting Art Baltimore is a partnership of the Bar Association of Baltimore City, Baltimore Bar Foundation, Baltimore City Community College, Baltimore City Public Schools, and the District Court. Courting Art Baltimore garnered the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA)'s 2016 Best Service to the Public Project Award.
- Partnered with the MSBA, Citizenship and Law-Related Education Program (CLREP), local bar associations, and schools to hold the Civics and Law Academy, which helps high school students gain a better understanding of the law, how U.S. government works, and the roles individuals play in a democracy. Sessions were held during the school year at various locations throughout Maryland.
- Circuit Courts for Baltimore City and Prince George's County took part in the MSBA's "Law Links" program to provide high school students with summer employment, an opportunity to learn about the law and professional work habits, and encourage the pursuit of higher education and post-high school career goals.



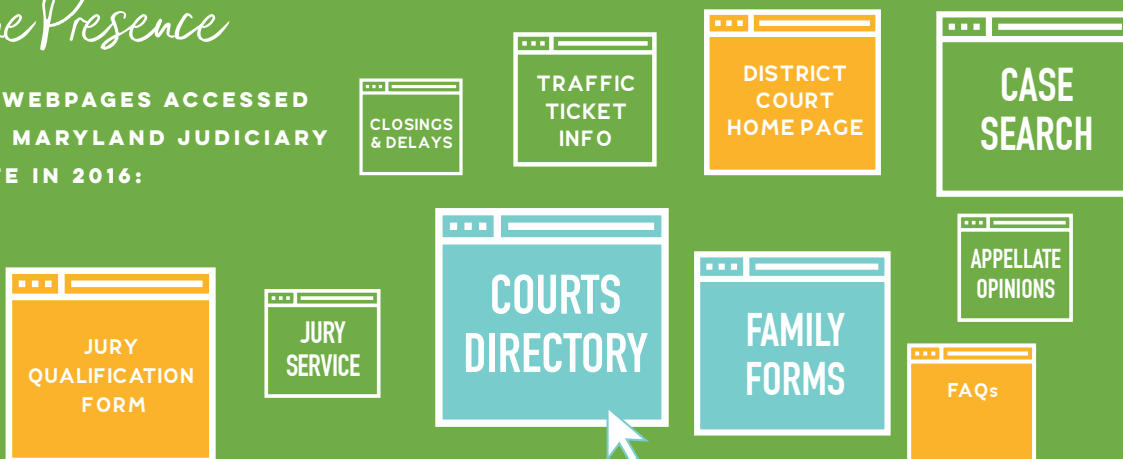
### 3. COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH STAKEHOLDERS

## Inform and Help

- Continued free, open forums for the public and courthouse staff on topics relating to “everyday law” in Circuit Court law libraries statewide.
- Circuit Court law libraries partnered with local bar associations to provide “lawyer in the library” programs and, with the People’s Law Library and the MSBA, provided presentations at public libraries.
- District Court locations throughout Maryland displayed videos daily to provide an overview of court processes in civil and criminal matters, including rent case tutorials in Baltimore City.
- The District Court delivered continuing education, skill-building content, and materials, including teleconferences, advanced mediation skills training, volunteer orientations, and a full-day conference with workshops for active ADR practitioners.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George’s County engaged self-represented litigants, witnesses, and victims through website and social media outreach to improve the understanding of the justice system in Prince George’s County.
- Created videos, in partnership with the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, to help Maryland homeowners understand the foreclosure process, including mediation. The videos are part of the Judiciary’s growing online self-help video library.
- Regularly informed the public about scams that target people by using false court-related information to obtain private information or money.
- Anne Arundel County District Court hosted clerks from the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland courts to observe MDEC operations in preparation for the implementation of MDEC in those jurisdictions. Judges and staff worked to support the MDEC rollout in nine Eastern Shore counties.
- The Circuit Courts for Baltimore City and Montgomery County redesigned their websites to improve navigation and the overall user experience.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County held periodic meetings to bring together the domestic bar, magistrates, court clerks, and family division staff to share information, coordinate scheduling, monitor caseflow, and address any suggestions from the organized bar.

## Online Presence

TOP 10 WEBPAGES ACCESSED  
ON THE MARYLAND JUDICIARY  
WEBSITE IN 2016:



STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**

4

# IMPROVE

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES



## 4. IMPROVE SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

### Identify, Plan, and Implement

- The Judiciary expanded the use of electronic case filing to 40 percent of the state after the Circuit Court and District Court on both the Upper Eastern Shore (Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties) and Lower Eastern Shore (Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties) transitioned to MDEC.
- Trained 405 court staff throughout the Eastern Shore on the Odyssey Case Management system and new MDEC processes and procedures for e-filing.
- Conducted planning and training sessions to prepare for the June 2017 launch of MDEC in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties.
- Approximately 435 miles of wiring and cabling has been upgraded since July 1, 2015, to support MDEC implementation. This is roughly the distance from Annapolis to Boston.
- Contributed to the national effort to improve child welfare services by providing data to federal agencies and reporting on process improvements.
- Prepared to implement fully the requirements of the Justice Reinvestment Act in 2017, including the management of increased requests for expungements and shielding and the anticipated expanded role of problem-solving courts.
- Implemented a secure e-warrant process in Circuit Courts and District Court locations to transmit more quickly and conveniently warrants from judges to officers. Warrants and other related documents are processed and filed with the Clerk's Office.
- Developed and tested phase 1 of the Attorney Information System (AIS), a secure web-enabled tool permitting the multiple entities within the Judiciary that together regulate the profession of law to share and maintain attorney status and contact information in real time.
- Piloted randomized security screening days in District Court locations for all individuals entering the courts as a more robust overall deterrent.
- Began a multi-year effort to evaluate and recommend improvements to existing business and technology case management programs.
- Anne Arundel County District Court began hearing protective order and peace order cases in both Annapolis and Glen Burnie, resulting in improved and more efficient case docketing and greater convenience for litigants.
- The Circuit Court for Calvert County increased Wi-Fi capabilities to expand access to online legal resources, inform the public during emergency events, and improve the use of electronic communications among attorneys and their clients.
- Calvert County District Court implemented video bail reviews for jailed defendants. This new practice substantially increased security at the courthouse and reduced the risks associated with transporting defendants to and from the courthouse.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County collaborated with state and local partners to launch a new electronic recordation system for land records, bringing greater convenience, accuracy, security, and reliability to the process for transferring real property.
- The Circuit Court for Washington County completed the planning and training stages for the launch of e-recordation of land record instruments.
- The District Court adopted and implemented "try by" dates in all Southern Maryland courthouses. Case jackets include "try by" information to inform judges when they are considering postponement requests. Baltimore City District Court was the first jurisdiction to implement this best practice.

## 4. IMPROVE SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

### Internal Efficiencies

- Continued to standardize and simplify forms used throughout District Court locations statewide.
- Designed a database to track translation projects, addressing areas in need of improvement, and shortening the time new forms and translations are made available to the public.
- Launched “Service Now,” a web-based tool used to streamline IT support and improve time management for staff.
- Implemented new time management software, a secure web-based platform to replace paper timesheets and provided training throughout the Judiciary for use of the new system.
- Modified the Judiciary’s web-based accounting system to capture more detailed information on interpreter assignments and improve cost-effectiveness.
- Completed the Judiciary-wide rollout of updated Office 365 software to improve the quality of work-sharing and communications across separate functional areas and locations.
- Launched a self-service password reset service for Judiciary personnel to improve information security, work flow, and staff efficiency by allowing personnel to update expiring or forgotten passwords independently.
- Centralized “PaperVision,” a digital imaging system that simplifies record storage and retrieval in Circuit Court Clerk of Court Offices in 22 counties, on a Judicial Information Systems server, enhancing security of the data.
- Baltimore City District Court partnered with Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland to resolve debt collection cases, reducing the docket from five days per week to two.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County improved efficiency by consolidating the criminal, civil, and central assignment divisions into a centralized and updated office space.
- The Circuit Court for Calvert County replaced the secured entry access system to enhance building security.
- The Circuit Court for Harford County refined and modified the scheduling and hearing of juvenile cases to hear and decide matters as expeditiously as possible.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County completed the planning phase for enhancements to classes covering self-representation and guardianship.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County created a database to provide better information, support, and resources for guardians.
- Improved procurement cost-effectiveness statewide by standardizing how contracts and grants are processed and administered.
- Coordinated facilities management functions to streamline processes and be more efficient and cost-effective in identifying, planning, and completing maintenance, upgrades, and improvement projects.

## 4. IMPROVE SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

## Update and Reinforce

- Bolstered efforts to maintain the security of accounts and judicial assets by implementing a requirement for 12-character passwords for all network accounts.
- Continued a thorough examination of access to court data through Case Search, which provides public access to case records originating within the trial courts, and through Odyssey, the web-based application for registered MDEC users.
- A joint Circuit and District Court workgroup evaluated legislative changes to ensure that needed forms, website, and programmatic changes were comprehensive and complete.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County implemented recommendations from the Justice Management Institute for improving business processes.
- Montgomery County District Court continued to make improvements in processing jailable traffic cases to improve case-time standard performance, including sending notices to defendants to appear before a commissioner, and identifying substance abuse cases (alcohol and drugs) in District Court to determine if defendants qualify to participate in a diversion program and notifying defendants prior to trial of the opportunity.
- Virtually every judge took part in a detailed time study as part of a Judiciary-wide judicial needs assessment, which will be used to construct a newly updated, valid and reliable model of judicial needs for the next decade.
- Updated the digital collection of Administrative Orders issued by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and/or the entire Court, dating back to 1955.





STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**

5

**BE ACCOUNTABLE**



MORE THAN **15,000**



UNIQUE PAGE VIEWS  
of live-stream video

from the  
COURT OF APPEALS  
IN 2016

## 5. BE ACCOUNTABLE

### Improve Information and Incorporate Best Practices

- Expanded online publication of Court of Special Appeals' opinions.
- Expanded the use of data management to provide enhanced tracking of problem-solving court programs and to report capacity trends for drug, reentry, mental health, and veterans court programs.
- Continued to develop and hone best practices for promptly identifying and referring cases that are appropriate for ADR.
- Incorporated the use of instructional videos on the Judiciary website to: complement existing resources; improve public awareness and understanding of foreclosure laws. Instructional videos are also available to explain how to request an expungement, utilize mediation, request a filing fee waiver, and request fee waivers at the appellate level.
- Increased information provided to judges, administrators, court staff, community partners, and day-of-trial ADR practitioners on continuing education and best practices.
- Continued implementation of "CourTools," a project introduced by the National Center for State Courts, to gather and report performance data and drive greater accountability and better results across key objectives.
- Baltimore City District Court launched the Criminal Reentry Project, which provides workforce training, continuing education, and community service opportunities to approximately 50 enrolled participants. Thirteen companies are participating by training and hiring ex-offenders upon their successful completion of the program.
- Improved reporting on criminal cases in alignment with rigorous national standards set by the National Center for State Courts; increased Circuit Court reporting by 28% and District Court reporting by 42% over the previous year.

## 5. BE ACCOUNTABLE

## Case Management

- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City finalized new case management plans, and a total of 10 Circuit Courts and 13 District Court locations began updating or developing new case management plans.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County decreased day-of-trial postponements by establishing a criminal assignment docket and scheduling reviews in advance of trial.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County created a family law status review docket, administered by a magistrate, to address procedural roadblocks.
- The Circuit Court for Calvert County installed an electronic docket and information display system.
- The Circuit Court for Caroline County conducted scheduling conferences at the outset of criminal cases to reduce postponement requests and to identify potential conflicts.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County developed a case screening tool and case management database for family law cases to assist in monitoring case progress, and the court enhanced Special Immigrant Juvenile Status case management by developing a new case management database to track cases and generate management reports.
- The Circuit Court for Harford County restructured calendar management and docket assignments to improve scheduling and the resolution of cases and completed the certification of all sitting judges to hear child welfare and juvenile cases.
- Montgomery County District Court modified its case management process and, while maintaining the number of cases assigned to dockets, improved case processing time, increased efficiencies, and in almost all cases, concluded dockets one to two hours earlier than under the previous system.
- The District Court achieved case-time standard improvements for criminal, traffic payable, and both large and small claims civil case types. The District Court statewide average case processing times also decreased, indicating that courts were diligent at getting cases adjudicated promptly.
- The statewide Circuit Court caseflow analysis showed reductions in statewide overall average case processing times in general civil, family law, and juvenile delinquency case types.
- Montgomery County District Court improved on case processing time standards for DUI/DWI cases by scheduling preliminary inquiries before a judge within 30 days after charge or arrest.



During fiscal year 2016, the Court of Special Appeals disposed of a combined 87 percent of its criminal and civil appeal cases within nine months, exceeding the case processing time standard of 80 percent.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**

6

ASSURE THE  
HIGHEST LEVEL OF

**SERVICE**

## 6. ASSURE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SERVICE

### Ongoing Education/Skills Development

- Sixty-two employees throughout the state took part in the Court Professional Certificate and Court Supervisor/Manager Certificate programs, which help participants gain expertise in court system management and supervisory functions.
- Completed an educational program in e-warrants for judges to receive, execute, and return applications, warrants, and related documents electronically; the comprehensive training program is a key component in the Judiciary's efforts to expand e-warrants across the state.
- Provided 43 educational development courses for judges and magistrates, and conducted in-depth orientation for 36 new trial judges and four elevated judges, drawing on the expertise of 58 faculty members.
- Created a structure to guide the development and facilitation of education and training opportunities, better ensuring that the Judiciary's mission, vision, and goals are communicated clearly and resources are used wisely.
- Offered 89 courses (42 percent increase over 2015), 23 webinars (50 percent increase over 2015) and five online courses for 1,430 Judiciary employees. Judiciary technology training included 178 on-site courses with 1,074 attendees and nine online courses.
- Established a specialized magistrate track for courses offered by the Judicial College.
- Provided programs for prospective interpreters to help them gain skills needed for certification exams, specialty courses for existing interpreters, and support and training for local court interpreter coordinators.
- Designed seven new on-site courses and three new webinar courses that were offered multiple times throughout the year.
- Developed and provided online training tools for CONNECT, the Judiciary's paperless time management and HR system.
- Laid the groundwork to launch a mentor program for new trial judges in 2017.
- Conducted a Judiciary-wide education and training survey to help identify barriers to education, training needs, and performance development interests.
- The Judicial College developed and provided training for circuit-wide personnel in the Seventh Circuit (Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, and St. Mary's counties), providing technology training for judges and staff, and conducting an assessment of employee skill sets, development needs, and compensation.
- Trained senior judges on the use of MDEC, the electronic case management system, and GEARS, the coordinated accounting system.
- Introduced a new course for judges on ethics and professionalism inspired by a Maryland Professionalism Center pilot program.
- Promoted the Judiciary's educational assistance program statewide to encourage all eligible employees to improve their professional skills through courses toward college degrees or professional certifications.
- Staff from the People's Law Library (PLL), District Court, AOC, and Circuit Court libraries continued an ongoing program of visiting courts to provide clerical staff with information about the PLL, court libraries, and the Family Forms Finder on the Judiciary website.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County developed a comprehensive orientation program for employees and a manual for Assignment Office employees to better assist self-represented litigants.
- Washington County District Court clerks began intense, immersion cross-training in preparation for MDEC.

## 6. ASSURE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SERVICE

## Service Excellence & Employee Engagement

- The Chief Judge and the State Court Administrator routinely shared information about key issues, developments, and programs with all Judiciary employees via regular Judiciary-wide email communications and through intranet messages.
- Courts throughout Maryland held events to honor employees, recognize service and commitment, build teamwork, and enhance camaraderie. Examples included team-building activities, a community volunteer campaign, a charitable drive, and wellness programs in all 24 jurisdictions.
- Continued a detailed employee classification and compensation review as a part of ongoing efforts to ensure the Judiciary is a public sector employer of choice.
- Fielded more than 400 employee submissions to the online “Suggestion Box” to strengthen employee morale, drive process improvements, maximize productivity, and save on costs.
- Provided updates about educational opportunities, technology and customer service tips, and other topics in regular Judiciary-wide email communications to all personnel.



STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**

7

BUILD

**PARTNERSHIPS**

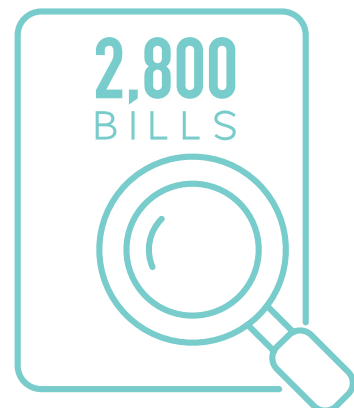


## 7. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

## Working Together

- Worked closely with the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor's Office to prepare for Justice Reinvestment Act implementation, which will bring comprehensive reform to the criminal justice system and emphasize treatment and rehabilitation over incarceration.
- Worked closely with the Governor's Office to secure timely residential evaluation for defendants with mental illness and placement for residential drug treatment.
- Analyzed more than 2,800 bills during the 2016 Session of the Maryland General Assembly, offered positions on 184 bills, and submitted 505 fiscal impact statements to the Maryland Department of Legislative Services.
- Worked with the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor to add 13 new judgeships and adopt legislation that addresses requirements for courts ordering Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangements (APPLA) in child welfare cases.
- The Judiciary and the MSBA held a Joint Bench/Bar Conference in Ocean City, Maryland. During the conference, the Judiciary heard from Senate President Thomas V. "Mike" Miller Jr., Senator Wayne Norman (Judicial Proceedings Committee), Speaker Pro Tem Adrienne A. Jones, Delegate Joseph Vallario (Chair, Judiciary Committee), and Delegate Kathleen M. Dumais (Vice Chair, Judiciary Committee).
- Provided input to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) Forensic Services Workgroup. The workgroup is charged with developing specific strategies to address hospital capacity issues in order to provide mental health services for those in need of assistance. The Judiciary was able to help and offer information while maintaining its impartiality during policy development and decision-making stages.
- Hosted site visits for General Assembly staff to learn more about the Judiciary and issues facing specific courts throughout the state.
- Hosted a town hall meeting at the Islamic Society of Baltimore to review and collect input on plans for the construction of a new courthouse in Catonsville.
- The Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure engaged in an ongoing dialogue with legislators and members of the news media to address issues regarding the appropriate use of online, publically accessible court records.
- Allegany County District Court judges continued their involvement with the Allegany County Coalition, a collaborative effort that focuses on criminal justice issues such as the opioid crisis, bringing together the Allegany County Health Department, local law enforcement, the Division of Parole and Probation, the Allegany County State's Attorney, and the Office of the Public Defender.

THE JUDICIARY  
analyzed more than



DURING THE  
**2016**  
MARYLAND GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY SESSION



## 7. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

- Continued the partnership between the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County and Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) to co-sponsor an in-house foreclosure ADR program.
- Calvert County District Court continued to provide space for justice partners, including the District Court's ADR office, Southern Maryland Center for Advocacy, Calvert County Health Department, and Calvert County State's Attorney, and hosted quarterly meetings with the Family Violence Coordinating Council and the Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team.
- The Circuit Court for Caroline County coordinated with the District Court of Maryland and other courts on the Eastern Shore with problem-solving courts to permit referrals into programs for defendants who do not reside in Caroline County.
- Carroll County District Court expanded its partnership with the ADR office and Carroll County Mediation Services and distributed mediation information with all civil summonses. Mediators are available for day-of-trial mediation for all civil dockets. Pre-trial mediation and settlement conferences are scheduled when requested by the parties or ordered by the court.
- Charles County District Court provided two interview rooms for the Office of the Public Defender for client intake on the days when the District Court holds preliminary inquiries. This provides ease of access for defendants who require the services of a public defender.
- Conducted annual informational and training symposiums for problem-solving courts, including juvenile drug and truancy courts. Approximately 400 court staff members, clinical staff, attorneys, local law enforcement officers, public safety staff, Department of Human Resources, and ancillary service organizations across Maryland attended the symposiums, featuring state and national experts.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County provided family law continuing legal education presentations to the Montgomery County Bar Association.
- The Circuit Court for Harford County partnered with the Bar Foundation of Harford County to support the new "Lawyer in the Lobby" program, allowing volunteer lawyers to provide brief advice to individuals in 15-minute appointments.



AFTER THE ELLICOTT CITY FLOOD,  
 THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR HOWARD COUNTY  
*provided space for*  
 THE HOWARD COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION,  
 WHICH PROVIDED  
*free legal assistance*  
 to area flood victims.

## 7. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

- The Circuit Court for Harford County increased opportunities for nonviolent offenders to make amends with the community through work service.
- The Circuit and District Courts for Kent County partnered with the Kent County State's Attorney and Public Defender to implement the Post Adjudication Supervision and Treatment (PAST) initiative to help address a growing heroin problem in the community.
- Montgomery County District Court collaborated with the Office of the State's Attorney and the Office of the Public Defender to plan an efficient resolution-type docket for jailable traffic offenses.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County opened the Family Justice Center, a collaborative effort by several county agencies and nonprofit organizations to provide coordinated services for victims of abuse and their children in a convenient one-stop location.
- Prince George's County District Court bench and Bar Association co-hosted the second annual Roundtable Symposium, featuring small group discussions on criminal, civil, and domestic violence cases, as well as landlord-tenant disputes, problem-solving courts, professionalism, and ethics.
- Queen Anne's County District Court continued to provide space for several vital community services, including the Office of Administrative Hearings' foreclosure mediation program, Mid-Shore Pro Bono's Debtor Assistance Project (DAP), and the Reset Program, which involves many agencies, volunteers, professionals, and facilities working with 14- to 24-year-olds who have problems with drugs or alcohol or who are considered at-risk of delinquency or criminality.
- St. Mary's County District Court continued to support the Southern Maryland Center for Family Advocacy by providing office space within the courthouse and conference rooms for ADR.
- The Circuit Court for Worcester County collaborated with community and faith-based organizations to increase opportunities for individuals to complete community service requirements.



## 7. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

## Collaborating with Partners and Responding to Needs

- Partnered with the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law to provide mediation skills training for judges, magistrates, and court staff.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City established a free after-school tutoring program for court-involved youth at the Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center.
- Engaged with public and private sector partners during a Rent Court Summer Workgroup to analyze the current rent court process and determine areas where improvement is needed. This included studying the New York City Rent Court Navigator Program in order to begin developing a pilot program in Maryland. Through the collaboration and distribution of resources with the University of Baltimore, the pilot program will be implemented with little or no cost to the Judiciary.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City's Juvenile Court worked with community stakeholders to conduct the Baltimore City Adolescent Resource Fair at the Juvenile Justice Center.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City collaborated with the Baltimore City Health Department to train Adult Drug Treatment Court participants to recognize and respond to opioid-related overdoses.
- Baltimore City District Court arranged for the University of Maryland's "Just Advice" program to offer weekly legal advice clinics for civil cases and arranged for the Public Justice Center to offer legal representation services to tenants in rent court cases.
- The Circuit Court for Calvert County teamed with Calvert Arts Council to display locally created artwork in the courthouse.
- Assisted low-income individuals with pro bono legal services through a partnership between the Garrett County Bar Association and the Circuit Court for Garrett County.
- Prince George's County District Court collaborated with county agencies to reduce the number of cases of domestic violence, strengthening the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's work.



STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
**MEETING OUR GOALS**

8

USE  
**RESOURCES**  
WISELY

## 8. USE RESOURCES WISELY



## Continuous Improvement

- Created tiered guidelines concerning what all Circuit Courts need for safety and security, access to justice, and programs and services, based on a comprehensive courthouse equity review.
- Expanded the use of video conferencing between courts and justice partners, including video bail reviews, to enhance public safety. To date, video bail capability has been installed in Baltimore City and in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, and Worcester counties.
- The District Court completed renovations to courthouse interiors in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Howard, and Washington counties to improve operations.
- Baltimore City District Court's monthly rent court workgroup created a new, easier-to-understand Petition for Rent Escrow form for statewide rollout.
- Clerks at Frederick County District Court began cross-training staff in preparation for the launch of MDEC. Additional facilities upgrades were completed in all three courtrooms.
- The Circuit Court for Somerset County reconfigured the Clerk's Office for greater efficiency and accessibility.

**Courtrooms in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's District Court locations were modified to accommodate for MDEC, which is scheduled to launch in Southern Maryland in June 2017.**

## 8. USE RESOURCES WISELY

## Safe and Effective Facilities

- Circuit Courts and the District Court completed renovations and added new technology to upgrade courthouse security in Allegany, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Garrett, and Howard counties.
- St. Mary's County District Court completed a Memorandum of Understanding with the State, Circuit Court, and St. Mary's County Detention Center to allow bail hearings to be heard by video.
- The Circuit Court for Charles County renovated the Clerk's Office and court operations space, relocating the law library and upgrading courthouse security.
- The Circuit Court for Frederick County renovated the magistrate hearing room and chambers, relocating the law library and jury assembly room and upgrading security; the court began a review of the space needs that will allocate resources for upgrades to courtrooms, hearing rooms, office space, mediation rooms, and administrative areas over the next 10 years.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County installed new projectors for litigants to display supporting materials for their cases.
- Prince George's District Court Clerk's office installed new work stations and carpeting, improving efficiency and comfort for employees and customers.
- Construction began on a new courthouse for the Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County renovated space to install an elevator for improved access and managed the temporary loss of two courtrooms by shifting proceedings to other locations during construction.
- The Circuit Court for Washington County expanded payment options to begin accepting credit card payments, and relocated the Register of Wills Office within the courthouse to create space for an additional magistrate to meet public needs.
- The Circuit Court for Wicomico County completed facilities renovations in a non-jury courtroom, an expanded jury assembly room, and office space.
- The Circuit Court for Worcester County improved wiring and upgraded computers for wireless access and installed a new phone system.

### *The Judiciary continues to help local Circuit Courts improve safety through:*

- X-ray machines and magnetometers in public entry ways;
- Access control systems in limited access areas;
- Duress alarms in courtrooms and other sensitive spaces;
- Camera systems in public areas, lock-up, and secure corridors;
- Building alarms for security after hours;
- Prisoner/sallyport entrances at lock-up areas.

# *Looking to the Future*

## **Moving justice forward through innovation**

The Maryland Judiciary continues to evolve and innovate operations, technology, education, infrastructure, and the wide range of services provided for all who access our courts in-person and through secure technology-enabled communications. Maryland is a recognized leader in fair and effective justice. We are continuously seeking creative solutions to modernize and implement best practices statewide.

## Priorities for the Coming Year

- Providing excellent customer service throughout the Judicial Branch.
- Launching MDEC in Southern and Western Maryland, following successful implementation in all nine counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore and in Anne Arundel County.
- Continuing to enhance the Attorney Information System, a secure web-enabled database to be shared by court-related agencies supporting the Court of Appeals in its role regulating the legal profession, which will allow attorneys to view and update their profiles and pay Client Protection Fund fees online. Future upgrades include the ability of attorneys to file pro-bono and Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) reports, updated attorney and public portals, and integration with MDEC.
- Expanding services for self-represented litigants by at least 10 percent by creating a new District Court Self-Help Resource Center in Baltimore City and increasing services at the statewide center in Annapolis and court-based centers in Glen Burnie, Salisbury, and Upper Marlboro.
- Providing faster responses to service requests through the implementation of ServiceNow, an internal information technology support processing system.
- Implementing Maryland's Justice Reinvestment Act to strengthen our performance and reform the justice system.
- Breaking ground on the District Court complex in Catonsville, which will provide eight new courtrooms in an environmentally sustainable facility.
- Continuing to support the Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County in the construction of a new courthouse facility.
- Modernizing and improving court technologies, including network and system security, to protect and preserve official court records and access to public information.
- Expanding access to justice services and support to build on Maryland's fourth place rank in the national Justice Index.
- Launching the Maryland Judiciary Annual Statistical Performance Measures data dashboard, an interactive website with trial and appellate court caseload and performance data, including case volume and case processing time to disposition.
- Supporting trial courts to finalize case management plans for District Court and Circuit Courts, making case management information more accessible online.
- Continuing to respond to the evolving needs of the community by offering additional problem-solving courts to align Marylanders with the help they need to overcome drug addiction and other underlying issues that cause them to enter the justice system.
- Strengthening security measures in courts statewide to ensure public and personnel safety.
- Continuing to work with the Maryland General Assembly and Governor's Office to ensure that the Judiciary has sufficient resources to support services provided in Circuit and District Courts.
- Expanding the use of e-warrants to support law enforcement and improve efficiencies in the justice system.
- Providing at least a 70 percent increase in courses offered through the Judicial College of Maryland.
- Retaining a professional workplace through the compensation, recognition, and training of Judiciary employees and fostering the sharing of ideas and best practices at courthouses and court offices statewide.

**PAMELA HARRIS**

*State Court Administrator*



**HONORABLE JOHN P. MORRISSEY**

*Chief Judge, District Court of Maryland*





## Judicial Council and Committees

The Maryland Judicial Council serves as the central governance body of the Judiciary. The Council develops recommendations for the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and is the central hub for all policy changes, judicial reforms, legislative issues, and other developments both internally and externally.

Committees, which report to the Maryland Judicial Council, are an essential part of a revitalized and coordinated interdisciplinary effort to fulfill the Judiciary's mission. They are inclusive, recruiting talented professionals throughout the Judiciary to work together to accomplish key tasks that move the Judiciary forward.

### Maryland Judicial Council 2016

#### Honorable Mary Ellen Barbera, Chair\*

Chief Judge, Court of Appeals

#### Honorable Peter B. Krauser\*

Chief Judge, Court of Special Appeals

#### Honorable John W. Debelius III\*

Chair, Conference of Circuit Judges  
Circuit Court for Montgomery County

#### Honorable Kathleen Gallogly Cox

Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Judges  
Circuit Court for Baltimore County

#### Honorable Thomas C. Groton III

Circuit Court for Worcester County

#### Honorable James A. Kenney III

Chair, Retired and Recalled Judges Committee

#### Honorable Laura S. Kiessling

Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County

#### Honorable Karen H. Mason

Circuit Court for Prince George's County

#### Pamela Q. Harris\*

State Court Administrator  
Administrative Office of the Courts

#### Honorable Wayne A. Robey

Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks  
Circuit Court for Howard County

#### Honorable Susan Braniecki

Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks  
Circuit Court for Worcester County

#### Jennifer Keiser

Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators  
Court Administrator, Circuit Court for Howard County

#### Honorable John P. Morrissey\*

Chief Judge, District Court of Maryland

#### Honorable JoAnn M. Ellinghaus-Jones

District Court, Carroll County

#### Honorable Susan H. Hazlett

District Court, Harford County

#### Honorable Gerald V. Purnell

District Court, Worcester County

#### Honorable Alan M. Wilner

Chair, Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure

#### Honorable Eugene Wolfe

District Court, Montgomery County

#### Roberta Warnken

Chief Clerk, District Court of Maryland

#### Carol Llewellyn-Jones

Administrative Clerk, District Court, Wicomico County

#### Robert Prender

Administrative Clerk, District Court, Prince George's County

#### Timothy H. Sheridan

Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators  
Court Administrator, Circuit Court for Baltimore County

\* Member of Executive Committee

**Faye D. Matthews, Secretary**  
Deputy State Court Administrator  
Administrative Office of the Courts

## 2016 Committees

### Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee

*Honorable Thomas G. Ross, Chair*

Promote the use of appropriate dispute resolution processes throughout the courts. Provide an avenue for courts to vet changes to their ADR rules and standards of conduct.

### Court Access and Community Relations Committee

*Honorable Larnzell Martin, Jr., Chair*

Address barriers to access to the courts and legal services in Maryland, strengthen public awareness of the Judiciary's programs, projects, services and initiatives, and promote knowledge and understanding of the Judiciary.

### Court Operations Committee

*Honorable E. Gregory Wells, Chair*

Address matters related to the efficient operations of the courts and assist in the development of consistent statewide operations policies and best practices.

### Court Technology Committee

*Honorable Gary G. Everngam, Chair*

Ensure that the technology operations of the Judiciary are efficient and effective. Provide advice and guidance regarding the implementation of technology and its effect on judicial operations/functions.

### District Court Chief Judge's Committee

*Honorable John P. Morrissey, Chief Judge,  
District Court of Maryland, Chair*

Advise the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals on the operation of the District Court in all its locations and aid the Chief Judge of the District Court in the administration, operation, and maintenance of the District Court statewide.

### Domestic Law Committee

*Honorable Kathleen Gallogly Cox, Chair*

Provide guidance and direction regarding policies, rules, and legislation surrounding family domestic law, including domestic violence. Recommend policies, rules, and legislation that improve the effective administration of domestic law.

### Education Committee

*Honorable Susan H. Hazlett, Chair*

Guide, promote, and encourage the education, training, and professional development of all judges, magistrates, commissioners, and Judiciary employees.

### Juvenile Law Committee

*Honorable Michael J. Stamm, Chair*

Provide guidance and direction regarding policies, rules, and legislation surrounding juvenile law, including juvenile justice and child welfare. Recommend policies, rules, and legislation that improve the effective administration of juvenile law.

### Legislative Committee

*Honorable Daniel M. Long, Chair*

Protect and promote the Judiciary's interests regarding new laws and initiatives.

### Retired/Recalled Judges Committee

*Honorable James A. Kenney III, Chair*

Advise the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and the Judicial Council on matters relevant to senior judges.

### Specialty Courts and Dockets Committee

*Honorable Nicholas E. Rattal, Chair*

Promote and oversee the development, implementation, and evaluation of specialty courts and dockets in the courts.

# MARYLAND JUDICIARY AT A GLANCE

## PERSONNEL PROFILE Fiscal Year 2016

### Judges

Court of Appeals	7
Court of Special Appeals	15
Circuit Court	162
District Court	116
<b>Total Judges</b>	<b>300</b>

### Magistrates and Law Clerks

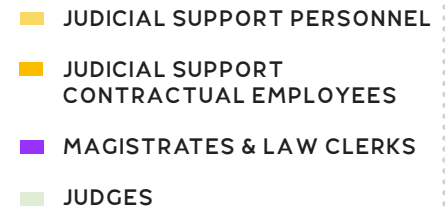
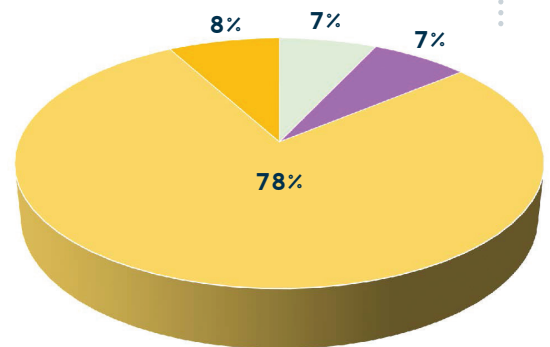
Circuit Court Magistrates <sup>1</sup>	74
Law Clerks	242
<b>Total Magistrates and Law Clerks</b>	<b>316</b>

### Judicial Support Personnel

Court of Appeals	19.00
Court of Special Appeals	50.50
Circuit Court Clerks' Offices	1,419.50
District Court	1,387.50
Administrative Office of the Courts	389.25
Court-Related Agencies	32.75
<b>Total Judicial Support Personnel<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>3,298.50</b>
<b>Judicial Support Contractual Employees</b>	<b>329.00</b>
<b>Total State-Funded Judicial Branch Personnel</b>	<b>4,243.50</b>

### Locally Funded Judicial Branch Personnel

Orphans Court Judges <sup>3</sup>	66.00
Circuit Court Personnel	963.70
<b>Total Locally Funded Judges and Personnel</b>	<b>1,029.70</b>



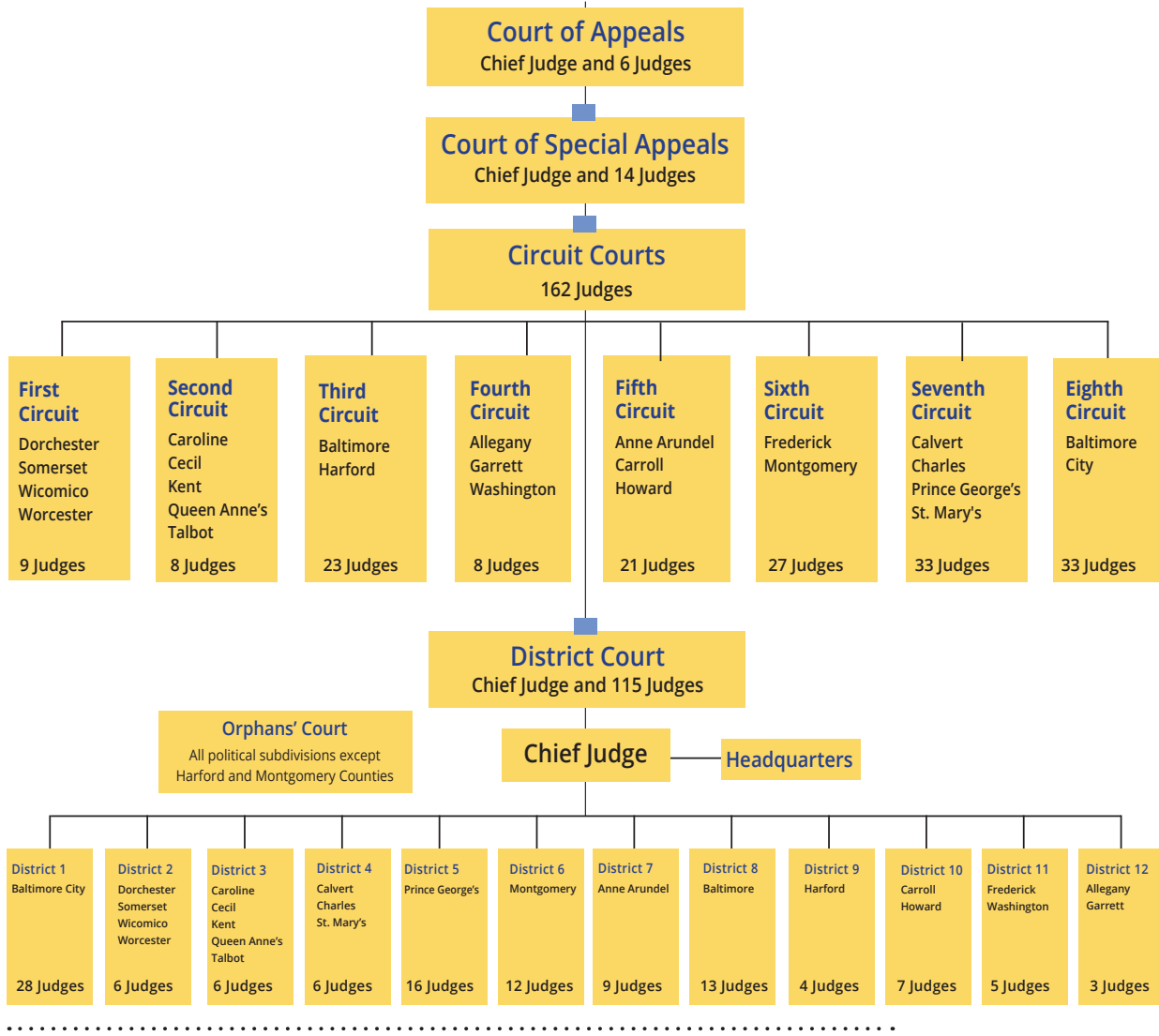
1. Includes One Contractual Magistrate
2. Excludes Judicial Support Contractual Employees
3. Three judges sit on the Orphans' Court in Baltimore City and each of the counties. Circuit Court judges sit as judges of the Orphans' Court in Harford and Montgomery Counties.

## JUDICIAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES \* Fiscal Year 2016

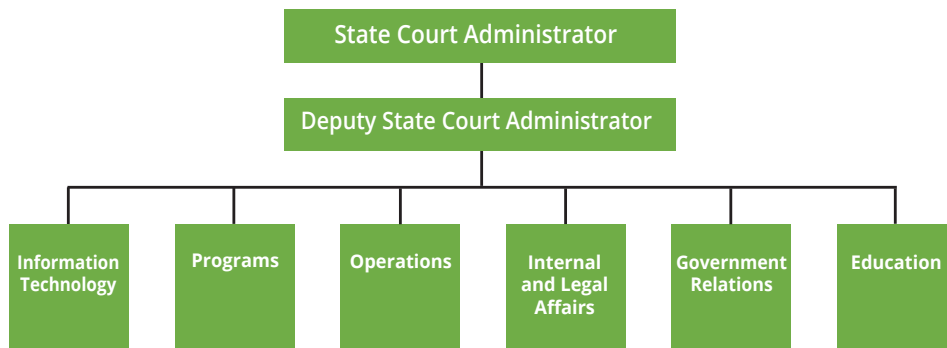
REVENUES	\$511,001,744
EXPENDITURES	\$507,015,624

\* includes all fund types

# MARYLAND JUDICIAL SYSTEM FISCAL YEAR 2016



## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS (AOC) FISCAL YEAR 2016



The AOC is the central support agency for the state judicial branch and provides a broad range of support services to Maryland's courts in operations, information technology, management, legal, government relations, financial, administration, and programs.

## MARYLAND JUDICIARY TOTAL FILINGS AND TERMINATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2016

	Filings	Terminations
Court of Appeals	922	930
Court of Special Appeals	2,053	2,274
Circuit Courts	258,485	263,514
District Court	1,669,678	1,835,318
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,931,138</b>	<b>2,102,036</b>

Note: Due to the transition to Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC), data on filings and terminations are obtained from multiple source systems, which may result in some differences in the comparability of data across jurisdictions and between reporting periods.

## COURT OF APPEALS FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS FISCAL YEAR 2016

	Filings	Dispositions
Regular Docket	94	100
Petitions for Certiorari	676	673
Attorney Grievance Proceedings	94	100
Bar Admission Character Matters	3	2
Certified Questions of Law	6	7
Miscellaneous Appeals	49	48
<b>Totals</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>930</b>

The Court of Appeals is Maryland's highest court. It hears cases almost exclusively by way of certiorari, a process that gives the court the ability to decide which cases to hear. By law, however, the Court of Appeals is required to hear cases involving legislative redistricting and removal of certain state officials. The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals sits with the six other judges on the court to hear oral arguments in each case.

## COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS FISCAL YEAR 2016

Appeals Filed	2,053
Appeals Disposed	2,274
Opinions Filed	1,390

The Court of Special Appeals is the intermediate appellate court. It reviews a trial court's actions and decisions in given cases and decides whether the trial judge properly followed the law and legal precedent. Judges sitting on the Court of Special Appeals generally hear and decide cases in panels of three. Sometimes, all 15 judges sit together, en banc, to hear the case.

## CIRCUIT COURT STATEWIDE FILINGS AND TERMINATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2016

	Filings	Terminations
Total Civil General	69,383	72,786
Total Civil Family	94,329	93,609
Total Juvenile	20,522	19,857
Total Criminal	74,251	77,262
<b>Totals</b>	<b>258,485</b>	<b>263,514</b>

Circuit Courts generally handle more serious criminal cases, major civil cases, including juvenile and other family law cases such as divorce, custody and child support, and most cases appealed from the District Court, Orphans' Courts, and certain administrative agencies. Circuit Courts also hear domestic violence cases. Each county and Baltimore City has a Circuit Court. Trials in Circuit Courts may be decided by either a judge or a jury.

## DISTRICT COURT STATEWIDE MOTOR VEHICLE, CRIMINAL, CIVIL, LANDLORD-TENANT FILINGS AND TERMINATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2016

	Filings	Terminations
Motor Vehicle <sup>1</sup>	588,520	712,829
Criminal <sup>2</sup>	143,878	174,650
Civil <sup>3</sup>	300,152	310,711
Landlord-Tenant	637,128	*
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,669,678</b>	<b>** 1,835,318</b>

\* Landlord-tenant filings are used as a proxy for terminations in the totals for District Court. Given the paper-only process used in most locations and quick processing of landlord-tenant cases, we assume that all matters are concluded.

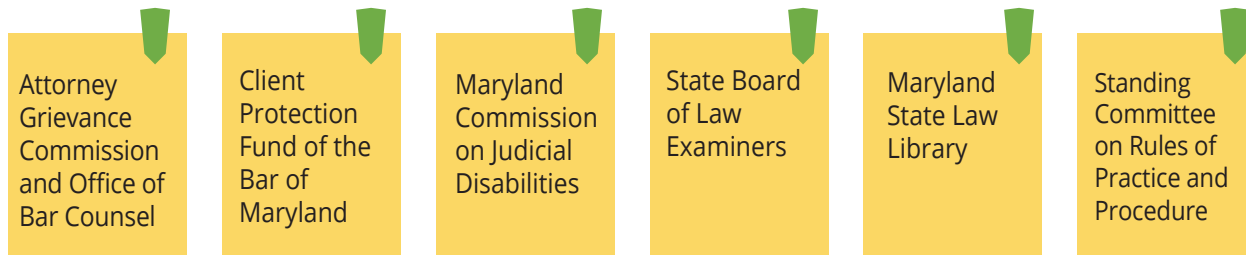
\*\* Includes landlord-tenant terminations.

1. Includes DWI, serious, and non-serious traffic cases by incident (including cases prepaid before trial), as well as parking/red light requests for trial, Natural Resources citations, and Maryland Transit Administration citations.
2. Criminal filings include fugitive warrants.
3. Civil case filings are comprised of the following categories of filings: civil complaints; domestic violence; peace order; possession; miscellaneous petitions; aids of execution; municipal infractions; civil citations; emergency evaluations; forfeitures of contraband; and injunctions.

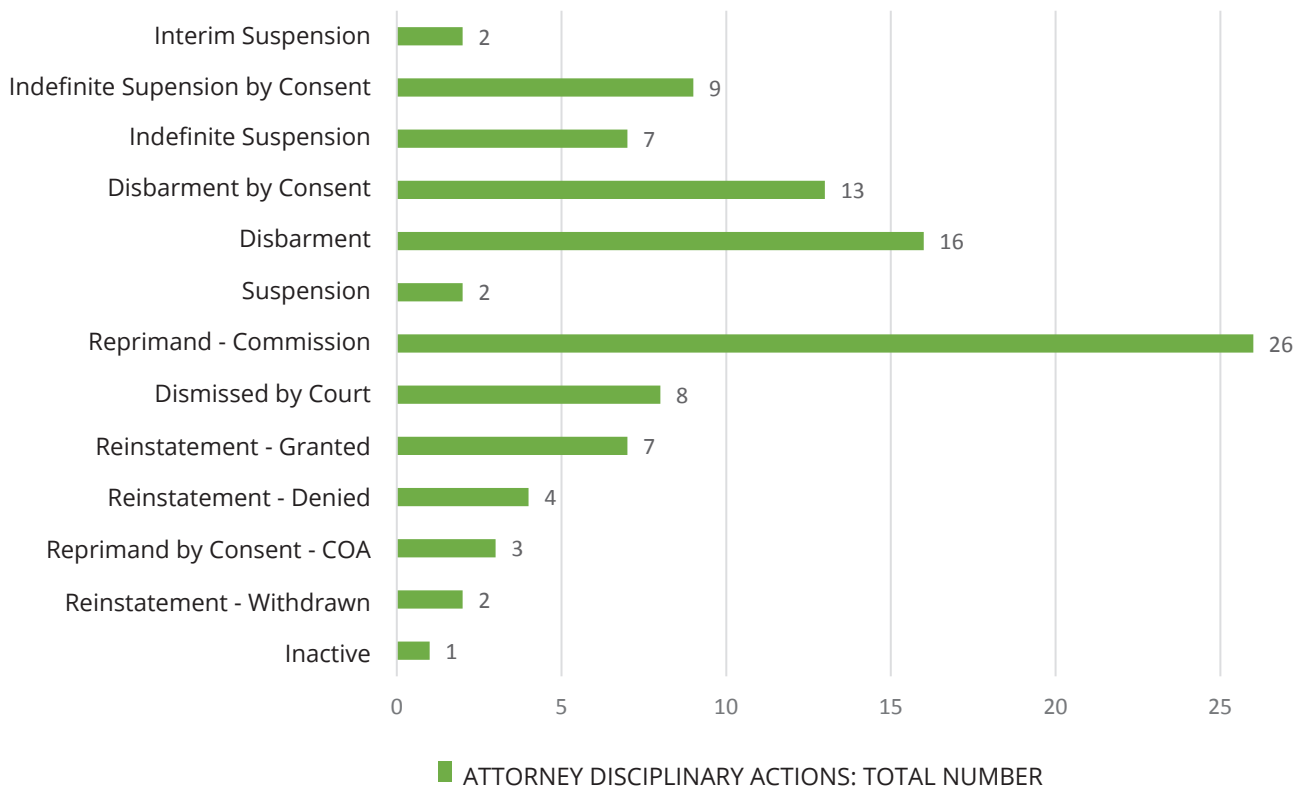
Note: Due to the transition to Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC), data on filings and terminations are obtained from multiple source systems, which may result in some differences in the comparability of data across jurisdictions and between reporting periods.

The District Court is where most people experience the court system in Maryland. Cases heard here include motor vehicle (traffic) and natural resources violations and other misdemeanors and specified felonies, domestic violence, and peace order petitions, landlord-tenant disputes, small claims and other civil cases involving limited dollar amounts, and replevin (recovery of wrongfully taken or detained goods). Each county and Baltimore City has at least one District Court location. A case in the District Court is tried before a judge only; there are no jury trials in District Court.

## RELATED JUDICIAL BOARDS, COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, AND ENTITIES



### ATTORNEY GRIEVANCE COMMISSION AND OFFICE OF BAR COUNSEL FISCAL YEAR 2016



The Attorney Grievance Commission oversees the conduct of both Maryland lawyers and nonmembers of the Maryland Bar who engage in the practice of law in the state. The Office of Bar Counsel investigates and, where indicated, prosecutes attorneys whose conduct violates the Maryland Attorneys’ Rules of Professional Conduct as well as those engaged in the unauthorized practice of law. Bar Counsel also reviews notifications of overdrafts on attorney escrow accounts.

## CLIENT PROTECTION FUND OF THE BAR OF MARYLAND FISCAL YEAR 2016

<b>Claims</b>	
Decided Claims	256
Approved Payment	198
Total Payment on Decided Claims	\$1,732,715
<b>Revenue from Assessments</b>	<b>\$808,432</b>

The Client Protection Fund of the Bar of Maryland (formerly "The Clients' Security Trust Fund"), was created in 1965 for the purpose of maintaining the integrity and protecting the good name of the legal profession. The Fund, supported financially by practicing attorneys, reimburses claimants for losses caused by misappropriation of funds by members of the Maryland Bar, acting either as attorneys or as fiduciaries.

## MARYLAND COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES FISCAL YEAR 2016

<b>Sources of All Complaints</b>	
Attorneys	16
Investigative Counsel Initiated Inquiries	10
Inmates	30
Public	145
<b>Total Verified Complaints</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>Complaints by Level of Court</b>	
District Court Judges	57
Circuit Court Judges	125
Orphans' Court Judges	12
Court of Special Appeals Judges	6
Court of Appeals Judges	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>Disciplinary Actions *</b>	
Filing of Charges by Investigative Counsel	2
Private Reprimand	6
Dismissal with Warning	2

\* The vast majority of complaints in fiscal year 2016, as in prior years, were dismissed because the allegations set forth in the complaints were either found to be unsubstantiated, or the conduct complained about did not constitute sanctionable conduct.

The Maryland Commission on Judicial Disabilities is an independent body with the power to investigate complaints against Maryland judges and, when warranted, conduct hearings concerning such complaints and take certain actions or make recommendations for other actions to the Court of Appeals.



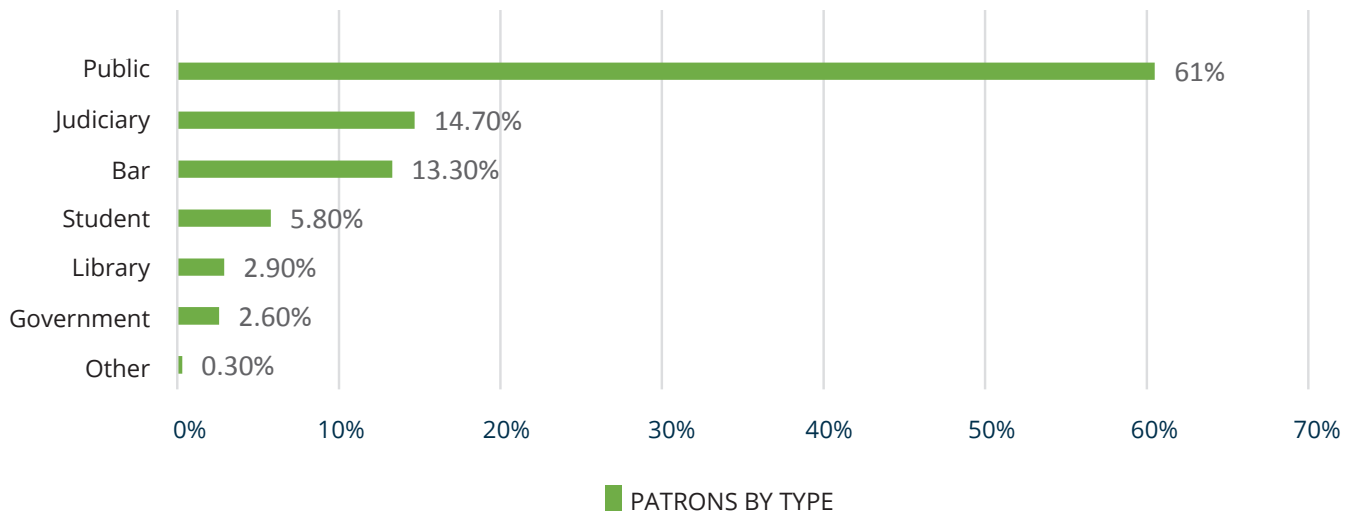
## STATE BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS CALENDAR YEAR 2016

	Applied	Sat	Passed	Cleared *
General Bar Exam	2,153	1,868	1,115	1,087
Out of State Attorney Exam	205	151	135	127

\* Applications are processed by SBLE and investigated by the Character Committees regardless of whether the applicant sat for or passed the exam. SBLE only “clears” those who are approved for character AND passed the exam.

The State Board of Law Examiners administers the Maryland Bar examination, investigates the legal competence and character and fitness of persons who seek a license to practice law in the courts of the State of Maryland, and recommends to the Court of Appeals those candidates qualified for admission to the Maryland Bar.

## MARYLAND STATE LAW LIBRARY FISCAL YEAR 2016



Library staff handled a total of 10,051 information interactions during fiscal year 2016 through in-person visits, telephone, email, online chat, and regular mail. 4,812 interactions (48%) were identified by patron type (email and chat sessions are not identified by patron type at this time).

The Maryland State Law Library, which is open to the public, serves the needs of Maryland’s government and citizens by building and preserving collections of legal information resources, promoting access to these collections, and creating educational opportunities that enhance the understanding of legal information. The Maryland State Law Library operates the People’s Law Library, a Maryland legal self-help website.

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE FISCAL YEAR 2016

Reports Published *	7
New Rules Proposed	390
Existing and Pending Rules Changes and Forms Proposed to be Amended	499
Proposed Deletion of Rules	241
Proposed Deletion of Forms	3

\* Part III of the 178th Report; three Supplemental Reports (Supplements to Parts I, II, and III of the 178th Report); and the 188th, 189th, and 190th Reports, all totaling 2,128 pages.

Topics addressed in these reports include:

**178th Report and Supplements:** Comprehensive Revision of the Rules pertaining to Court Administration, Judges and Judicial Appointees, and Attorneys;

**188th Report:** Alternative Dispute Resolution • Administration of Estates • Access to Court Records • Bail Bonds • Expungements • Guardianships • Detention of Juveniles • Charging Documents • Post Conviction DNA Testing • Remands from Appellate and Federal Courts • Removal of References to the Death Penalty • Discovery in Aid of Enforcement • Pre-trial Discovery • Default Judgments • Allocation of Costs • Supersedeas Bonds • Recording of Depositions by Electronic Audio or Audio-video Means • MDEC (Maryland Electronic Courts);

**189th Report:** Transfers of Structured Settlement Payment Rights • Limited Scope Representation;

**190th Report:** Bar Admission Requirements and Orientation Program for Newly Admitted Attorneys.

The Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure, often referred to simply as the Rules Committee, considers proposed amendments and additions to the Maryland Rules of Procedure and submits recommendations to the Court of Appeals.

MARYLAND



JUDICIARY



**Maryland Judiciary Office of Communications  
and Public Affairs**

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