



**MARYLAND JUDICIARY**

**Justice at Work**

**2016 PROGRESS REPORT**

# Message from Chief Judge Barbera



Greetings,

I am pleased to present you with “Justice at Work,” the Maryland Judiciary’s progress report. This report shows where we are at the beginning of 2016, documenting progress we have made on the Judiciary’s strategic plan, which was published in June 2015.

In that plan, we set the mission for Maryland’s courts to provide fair, efficient, and effective justice for all, and we highlighted eight major strategic goals to help us fulfill this mission:

- Provide access to justice
- Be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs
- Communicate effectively with stakeholders
- Improve systems and processes
- Be accountable
- Assure the highest level of service
- Build partnerships
- Use resources wisely

I am grateful to my colleagues at all levels of the Judiciary across the state who have incorporated the Judiciary’s mission and goals into their daily work. Judiciary leadership and staff have embraced challenges enthusiastically and taken ownership of new tasks. They are working together every day to move justice forward. That important work is reflected in these pages.

To illustrate the Judiciary’s progress, we highlight in this annual report just a few of the many initiatives implemented by our courts and the administrative offices that support them. We have made important progress in the launch of

Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC), creating a single Judiciary-wide integrated case management system that will be used by all in the state court system. We are focusing upon juvenile justice reform. We are working to protect the rights of older Marylanders who come into our courts. And, we have improved and expanded self-help services for people representing themselves in civil matters.

This report shows our significant progress, but there is much work left to do. The future presents challenges and opportunities alike. We are at the beginning of a long-term commitment to advance justice for all who come to Maryland’s courts. I look forward to working with all of you in building a Judiciary that is smarter, more efficient, and increasingly accessible to the people of Maryland.

Mary Ellen Barbera



# Contents

**Mission, Vision, Goals . . . . . 4**

**Major trends, efforts, accomplishments . . . . . 6**

**Strategic plan progress: meeting our goals**

1. Provide access to justice . . . . . 8

2. Be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs . . . . . 11

3. Communicate effectively with stakeholders . . . . . 15

4. Improve systems and processes . . . . . 17

5. Be accountable . . . . . 19

6. Assure the highest level of service . . . . . 21

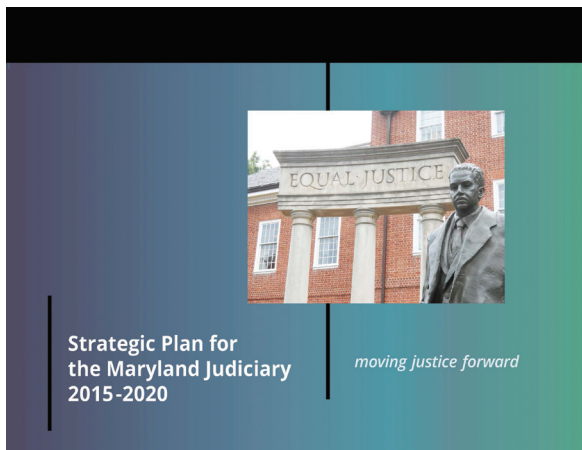
7. Build partnerships . . . . . 24

8. Use resources wisely . . . . . 27

**Looking to the future . . . . . 30**

**Judicial Council and committees . . . . . 31**

**Maryland Judiciary at a glance . . . . . 33**



Strategic Plan for the  
Maryland Judiciary  
2015-2020

## 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

MARYLAND  
JUDICIARY

# Major trends, efforts, accomplishments



Outreach for self-help

- Continued the implementation of Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC), the Judiciary's electronic case management system, which links courts into a single modern case management system.
- Instituted electronic filing for civil and criminal filings in Anne Arundel County trial courts and appellate filings that originated in the county.
- Expanded self-help services in a demonstrated high-need area in Prince George's County including a new walk-in center and extended hours and services for phone and online help for people who have civil matters in the District and Circuit Courts.
- Reorganized the Judiciary's governance structure, the Maryland Judicial Council, which serves as the principal policy advisory body to the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals.
- Awarded more than \$20 million to local Circuit Courts, District Court, and justice partners to support innovative programs and services in fiscal year 2015.
- Expanded the scope of problem-solving courts to include veterans dockets.
- The Court of Appeals adopted case time standards for the first time in 2013 and has, in the two terms since, met the standard of deciding all cases in the term in which the cases are heard.

- Surveyed all the Circuit Courts to assess adult guardianship programs, identify opportunities to expand services, and increase access to justice for aging populations.
- Hosted a national juvenile justice reform summit of the Mid-Atlantic Region and created a Maryland action plan to take a more science-based approach to juvenile court jurisdiction, to increase the use of juvenile risk assessment instruments, and to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in the juvenile system.
- Chief Judge Barbera, Judiciary leadership, and senior policy advisors participated in a national summit on human trafficking and developed an action plan to increase services for sex trafficking victims and implement a full pilot program in the District Court in Baltimore City to ensure human trafficking victims access needed services.



Nearly 23,000 juvenile cases were filed in fiscal year 2015 (delinquency, adult, CINS, CINA, guardianship, adoption, and peace orders).

By 2020, 25 percent of Marylanders — 1.6 million people — will be over age 60.

# Strategic plan progress: meeting our goals

## 1. Provide access to justice

Court interpreters speak a total of 70 languages, including rare languages, helping to ensure access to justice for litigants and witnesses.

78 percent of domestic cases have at least one self-represented litigant at the time of trial (includes divorce, custody, adoption, guardianship, paternity, and domestic violence).

Family law self-help walk-in centers serve approximately 40,000 individuals per year.

Since it opened in December 2009, the District Court Self-Help Resource Center has served more than 100,000 people statewide by phone, live web-chat, and in person.



**Expanded free self-help services,  
online and telephone help**

### Expanding self-help

- Expanded free self-help services for people representing themselves in civil cases in Maryland’s trial courts. The newly named Maryland Courts Self-Help Center provides extended hours of phone and online help from attorneys for a wide range of civil matters in either the District Court or Circuit Courts.
- Upgraded online chat technology to allow more attorneys to provide online help to people through the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center.
- Expanded self-help services for District Court matters with a new walk-in location in Prince George’s County District Court in Upper Marlboro.
- The Allegany County Circuit Court worked with the Allegany Law Foundation to assist with pro bono services.
- The Anne Arundel County Circuit Court held weekly “Ask A Lawyer” sessions in its law library to help with civil non-family issues.
- The Harford County Circuit Court overhauled staffing of its self-help center to provide two attorneys and one administrative staff person, improving and nearly doubling the ability of the walk-in service to help citizens, serving 640 people compared to 350 before the overhaul.
- The Howard County Circuit Court added two additional days each month to the Family Law Assistance Program, which provides volunteer attorneys to answer questions and assist litigants with filling out forms and drafting pleadings.
- The Montgomery County Circuit Court, in collaboration with the county bar association, implemented a low/no-cost attorney referral service and limited scope representation in family cases.
- The St. Mary’s County Circuit Court operated legal clinics for self-represented litigants in family law matters in the courthouse and a local library.



Increased support for interpretation and translation services

The District Court's Traffic Processing Center answers inquiries from the public about traffic citations. In fiscal year 2015, Spanish language operators handled 6,611 calls to the center.

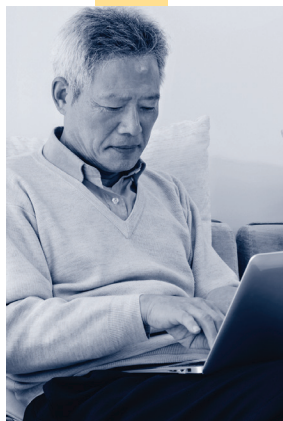
## Removing barriers

- Launched the Maryland Law Help app for mobile devices, which brings the Judiciary's most popular resources together on one easy-to-access platform.
- Procured infrared assisted listening devices in nearly every Circuit Court location to improve court services to the hearing impaired.
- Translated signs in many Circuit Court and District Court buildings statewide into five languages.
- Improved signage in courthouses and other efforts to publicize and facilitate interpreter services.
- The Anne Arundel County Circuit Court updated its docket display system with a bilingual directory and implemented interpreter tracking through the life of cases.
- The District Court expanded translations for forms and brochures to include Russian and French.

technology  
assisted listening  
self-help videos  
People's Law Library

The Maryland Law Help app is available free of charge for Apple and Android devices, including smartphones and tablets. It can be downloaded from the App Store for Apple devices and Google Play for Android. Links to download the app are available online at <http://MarylandLawHelp.mobapp.at>

## Improving processes



Online payment system

- Expanded electronic filing (e-filing), which has been in place for civil cases filed in Anne Arundel County since October 14, 2014, for all levels of court, to include criminal and traffic cases on August 3, 2015. (Failure to pay rent cases, filed under Maryland Code, Real Property, §8-401, are exempt from mandatory e-filing at this time.)
- Adopted rules that can improve access to justice in Maryland's courts, including simplifying requests for court interpreters and permitting attorneys to offer their services on a limited scope or "unbundled" basis.
- Amended rules and implemented several procedural changes to streamline and improve the handling of fee waiver requests from people who are unable to pay court fees.
- Designated a point of contact within the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Access to Justice Department to handle and track court users' complaints and concerns.
- The Baltimore County Circuit Court revised its arraignment process to add status hearings for unrepresented defendants.
- The Howard County Circuit Court developed a resource manual for litigants to access online information.
- The Prince George's County Circuit Court began offering an online payment service for litigants in family law cases for payment of referral services, such as custody investigations and mediation.
- The Maryland State Law Library tracks the number of library users and maintained anonymous data on reference questions to provide better service to library users and to help the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center respond to inquiries.

Case Search is used between  
1.2 – 1.8 million times each day  
([casesearch.courts.state.md.us](http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us))



## 2. Be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs

### Youth



Updated child welfare court orders

- Held the CANDO (Child Abuse, Neglect, and Delinquency Options) Conference 2015, which focused on the latest findings in adolescent brain science and the implications on juvenile court jurisdiction, risk assessment, and human trafficking.
- Planned and conducted an LGBTQ foster youth summit, an educational stability summit, two child welfare Judicial Institute courses, developed a Bench to Counsel review tool, and revised and updated the child welfare court orders.
- The Chief Judge approved a Maryland Judicial Council resolution against the presumptive shackling of children when they appear in juvenile court, following the principles of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.
- The Allegany County Circuit Court began a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program to speak up for the best interests of children who are under the protection of the courts.
- The Baltimore County Circuit Court reduced failure-to-appear rates by implementing a respondent notification project in delinquency cases.
- The Calvert County Circuit Court held monthly truancy courts in conjunction with the State's Attorney, Office of the Public Defender, and Board of Education, resulting in a 52 percent improvement in school attendance.
- The Prince George's County Circuit Court created the Juvenile Support Unit within the Family Division to facilitate the adjudication of delinquency cases. The unit collaborates with the juvenile coordinating judge and the Department of Juvenile Services to establish an integrated network of juvenile services and create programs to benefit delinquent youth.

### Older Marylanders



Attention to financial abuse

- Began developing recommendations and best practices to meet the needs of older people who access our courts. Focusing initially upon financial abuse, court-appointed guardianship, and post-appointment monitoring to achieve the goal of developing an accessible guardianship process that serves our older citizens and protects their rights.
- Worked with Circuit Courts to provide adult guardianship coordinators and in-house evaluative researchers where needed.



Co-parenting education



Family recovery courts

- The Howard County Circuit Court offered guardianship training, including a review of required annual accounting forms, decision making as a guardian, and working with agencies when a guardianship is obtained. The court referred guardians to this semi-annual workshop, and required attendance in the majority of cases.
- The Montgomery County Circuit Court implemented an Adult Guardianship Assistant Program for guardians of disabled adults and expanded Family Law Self-Help Center services to include assistance with guardianship filings.

## Families

- Awarded \$14 million in fiscal year 2015 grants to local Circuit Courts and justice partners for family support services.
- The Anne Arundel County Circuit Court continues to operate an online co-parenting education program for families involved in custody cases.
- The Caroline County Circuit Court launched an online parenting seminar to accommodate parents unable to attend the in-person program.
- The Baltimore County Circuit Court added a family law status hearing docket.
- The Caroline County Circuit Court started a program for children of parents involved in divorce or custody disputes.
- The Dorchester County Circuit Court continues to operate a family access center to facilitate safe visitation in custody cases.
- The Howard County Circuit Court developed a Family Law Self-Help Workshop, conducted by court staff, to assist litigants in domestic cases. The workshop is offered at a local library after work hours to assist those who cannot come to the courthouse to obtain assistance during the day.
- The Prince George's County Circuit Court prepared for the opening of its Family Justice Center in early 2016.

Family law self-help walk-in centers serve approximately 40,000 people per year



## Solving problems

Maryland has 37 drug treatment courts, consisting of adult, juvenile, family recovery, and DUI courts. There are also two re-entry courts, three mental health courts, 10 truancy reduction courts, and two veterans court programs.



Added specialty dockets

- Provided more than \$3.5 million in grants for problem-solving courts statewide.
- Received a three-year federal Department of Justice grant of nearly \$200,000 to develop a statewide set of benchmarks and standards for Maryland's 22 drug courts serving adult offenders.
- Completed a technical assistance project with the National Drug Court Institute to assess best practices among the four operational Family Recovery Courts.
- Created the Specialty Courts and Dockets Committee to oversee the financial support for problem-solving courts and to develop and enforce programmatic guidelines to create a statewide management information system.
- The Anne Arundel County Circuit Court received an Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Grant and Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP) grant to assist with drug court operations.
- Launched court programs for veterans in Baltimore City District Court and Prince George's County Circuit Court.
- Began and expanded a new adult drug court in Calvert County Circuit Court.
- The Caroline County Circuit Court 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.
- The Caroline County Circuit Court joined its justice partners to identify challenges and alleviate barriers to mental health services and treatment, following a "mapping" exercise that identified all points of entry for individuals in need of services.
- Began a new truancy court in Kent County Circuit Court.
- The Montgomery County Circuit Court introduced a new screening and assessment process to accept high-need drug court participants who pose a higher risk of recidivism.

Problem-solving courts respond to the underlying problems that bring people into court, such as drug or alcohol addiction, mental illness, and/or family or personal issues. They combine ongoing judicial oversight with intensive treatment, services, and supervision and are a collaborative effort among the Judiciary, prosecutors, community corrections agencies, treatment providers, and other community support groups.

National research shows drug treatment courts are successful and cost effective for dealing with drug-addicted offenders in the criminal justice system and are nationally recognized as a proven tool for improving public health and public safety.



Alternatives to court

**More than 86,600 drug and alcohol test specimens were submitted by drug court participants in fiscal year 2015.**

- The Prince George's County Circuit Court launched a re-entry docket to help prevent recidivism and provide tools to help people succeed upon their return to their communities after incarceration.
- The Talbot County Circuit Court planned an alumni association of problem-solving courts graduates to help mentor participants.
- The Talbot County Circuit Court began exploring the development of a re-entry docket for people who are returning to the community following incarceration.

### Offer alternatives

- Promoted the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) processes throughout the courts. Benefits include early case resolution.
- Began a review of Maryland statutes, rules, and standards of conduct to recommend revisions to optimize the availability, use and quality of ADR.
- Awarded nearly \$2 million in fiscal year 2015 to courts and justice partners for mediation and conflict resolution.
- The Carroll County Circuit Court implemented a criminal pretrial program.
- The Garrett County Circuit Court began a pretrial settlement conference program.
- The District Court completed a successful pilot and then transitioned to the Montgomery County Municipal Infraction Mediation Program, a program for municipal infraction cases in the District Court in Montgomery County (Rockville).
- The District Court expanded offerings of alternatives to trial through a pilot initiative, the Baltimore City Rent Court ADR Program, which began in May 2015, for failure-to-pay rent cases in the District Court in Baltimore City.
- The District Court expanded ADR programs to include day-of-trial mediation services to litigants in the District Court in Essex, Baltimore County, and the Eastern Shore.

## 3. Communicate effectively with stakeholders



Developed a mobile app

### Increase awareness

- Strengthened public awareness of Judiciary programs, projects, services, and initiatives through a variety of communication methods such as print, website, videos, and personal interaction.
- Welcomed visitors from other courts, other nations, local school groups, and community groups at all four levels of courts.
- Provided educational materials about Circuit Courts and District Court for distribution to guests and visitors.
- Developed educational materials about specialty dockets.
- Developed, completed and distributed statewide a video about Generous Juror programs that return donated juror stipends to communities through local social services departments.

### Outreach

- Courts and judges throughout the Judiciary volunteered time and resources for mock trial competition events throughout much of the school year, culminating in the statewide championship at the Court of Appeals.
- Held an annual statewide art contest for grade school students to help develop skills in peacemaking and conflict resolution, receiving approximately 2,000 entries annually from children throughout Maryland.
- The Court of Appeals hosted the 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 Baltimore County Circuit Court participated in the Citizens' Academy, an annual training program for community volunteers sponsored by the Baltimore County Police Department.
- The Prince George's County Circuit Court honored local veterans at its annual Veterans Appreciation and Muster Ceremony.
- The District Court expanded conflict resolution awareness activities to a month-long series of workshops held throughout October to promote the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) to litigants and court staff in 12 District Court locations.

**The District Court more than doubled community mediation center partnerships since 2006, from six to 15, to assist in providing day-of-trial mediation services at no cost to District Court litigants.**

## Inform and help

[mdcourts.gov](http://mdcourts.gov)

### Top 10 webpages on the Maryland Judiciary website

1. Case Search
2. Judiciary Jobs
3. Courts Directory
4. District Court Home Page
5. Juror Qualification Form
6. Family Forms
7. Appellate Opinions
8. Traffic Ticket Information
9. Case Search FAQs
10. Jury Service

- Provided information through online videos, brochures, and legal help webpages to the public about court records: what information is included; what is accessible; and how to access court records.
- Created brochures, tip sheets, videos, and other guides to help self-represented litigants.
- Circuit Court law libraries created free, open forums for the public and courthouse staff on topics relating to “everyday law.”
- 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 Maryland State Bar Association, provided presentations to public libraries.
- The Baltimore County Circuit Court held an orientation program to assist newly appointed guardians.
- The Baltimore County Circuit Court implemented periodic town hall meetings with the domestic bar, magistrates, court clerks, and family division staff.
- The Washington County Circuit Court held regular bench meetings with judges and magistrates open to advocacy groups, charitable organizations, and members of the public.
- The District Court delivered high-quality continuing education, skill-building content, and materials that included two teleconferences, an advanced mediation skills training, four volunteer orientations, and a full-day conference with nine workshops for active alternative dispute resolution (ADR) practitioners.



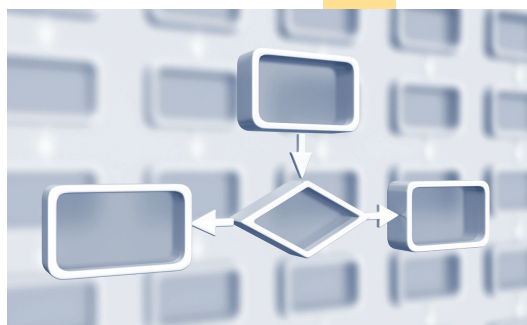
Open forums

**outreach**  
**public access**  
**bar associations**  
**mobile app**  
**stakeholders**

## 4. Improve systems and processes

### Plan, implement

- Implemented the criminal caseload component of the electronic case management system, Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC), in Anne Arundel County to improve efficiency, streamline processes, modernize records management, and increase the convenience of filing cases in our courts, including e-filing, a welcome tool for attorneys and self-represented litigants who wish to streamline filing.
- Completed implementation of the Revenue Collection System (RCS) in all District Court locations, a major milestone in efforts to replace obsolete cashing systems.
- Began preparations for the rollout of MDEC on the Eastern Shore.
- Worked with government partners to launch a land records e-recording pilot in Baltimore County to provide a more convenient system for electronic recordation of land record documents, with plans to expand e-recording services to all other Circuit Courts.
- The Caroline County Circuit Court participated with Mid-Shore Pro Bono in a long-range strategic planning exercise to increase civil litigants' access to attorneys.
- Completed the rollout of a modernized statewide jury management system.



Strategic planning



Streamline processes

### Internal efficiencies

- Improved GEARS, a modern integrated accounting system that coordinates procurement, budget, expenses, revenue, and grants functions.
- Prepared for the January 2016 launch of the CONNECT system, an electronic-based, integrated human resources system that replaces antiquated systems, including paper time sheets.
- Increased effective and efficient electronic communication with the implementation of SharePoint technology for the Judicial Council and its committees as a central document repository.
- Created a statewide subpoena form available online.





Records, forms, and processes

- The District Court provided Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) specialists to help with Anne Arundel County's rollout and to provide leadership in future rollouts.
- The District Court created a resource manual for mental health and substance abuse forms and convened a forms committee featuring a mark-up day to standardize and improve joint form development.

## Update and revise

- A joint Circuit Court and District Court committee held a legislative implementation meeting to evaluate necessary changes to forms, programs and website information, due to newly-enacted legislation.
- Improved processes for procurement, contracts, and grants administration to be more efficient and consistent.
- Coordinated facilities management functions to streamline processes and be more efficient and cost-effective in identifying, planning, and completing maintenance, upgrades, and improvement projects.
- The District Court developed and implemented procedures and system changes for the Maryland Second Chance Act.
- The District Court developed and implemented procedures and system changes for the HB 120, Criminal Procedure - Failure to Appear - Rescheduling, allowing the voluntary posting of a bond to recall bench warrants issued by the court.
- The District Court served as the premier pilot site for the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) Evaluation and Support System (ADRESS), initiating the reporting function to provide quantitative and qualitative reports on ADR programs statewide.
- A judges' focus group and the Legal Affairs Department reviewed 215 District Court forms and brochures and 40 Circuit Court forms for legal sufficiency and to simplify complex legal language to make them more accessible to the public.
- A judges' focus group reviewed extant administrative orders and made recommendations to the Chief Judge, who issued seven administrative orders in 2015 related to the review.

## 5. Be accountable



Continuous improvement

### Improve information

- Began posting unreported opinions from the Court of Special Appeals online.
- Created a digital collection of administrative orders from the Court of Appeals dating back to 1955.
- Created new videos about how to request a filing fee waiver, how to request fee waivers at the appellate level, how to use mediation as an alternative to court, expungement, foreclosures, and foreclosure mediation.
- Earned a national excellence award from the National Center for State Courts and Conference of State Court Administrators in the area of court statistical reporting for expanding the scope and enhancing the quality of data reported.
- The District Court concluded two research projects on the impact and effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in District Court day-of-trial ADR programs, the results of which will be used to promote the benefits that participants experience in court-connected ADR processes and refine and expand continuing education programming and best practices guidelines to be shared with judges, administrators, court staff, community partners, and day-of-trial ADR practitioners.

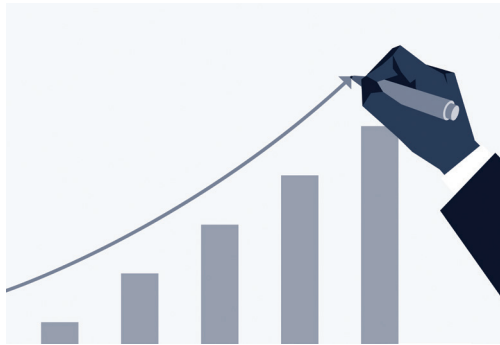
### Best practices

- Adopted several of the “CourTools” of the National Center for State Court as best practices. These tools provide court performance measures for local court leaders to improve performance and enhance accountability.
- Continued to develop and hone best practices for promptly identifying and referring cases that can benefit from appropriate ADR.
- Measured performance against established case time standards in all trial and appellate courts.

best practices  
statistics  
NCSC  
performance  
awards

## Case management

- Began establishing case management guides for the trial courts.
- The Court of Special Appeals disposed of 87 percent of its combined criminal and civil appeal cases within nine months in fiscal year 2015; the case time standard of 80 percent had become effective in fiscal year 2014.
- The Baltimore County Circuit Court revised its family law differentiated case management plan.
- The Charles County Circuit Court implemented a differentiated case management system.
- The Carroll County Circuit Court met case time standards in all case types.
- The Carroll County Circuit Court prepared a new criminal differentiated case management (DCM) plan and revised the civil and family DCM plans.
- The Harford County Circuit Court restructured its calendar and dockets to increase scheduling and resolution of cases.



Developing, tracking key indicators

## Accountable management

- The District Court hired a regional alternative dispute resolution (ADR) programs director to ensure accountability on the Eastern Shore of Maryland providing support and ADR programs development and expansion (where programs exist) to all nine counties.
- 50 dockets staffed weekly in courts across 19 counties provided an opportunity for referral to settlement conference or mediation on the trial date.

case management  
time standards  
dockets  
scheduling

---

**There were approximately 14,000 filings per District Court judge and more than 1,600 filings per Circuit Court judge in fiscal year 2015.**



## 6. Assure the highest level of service

Because a dedicated and professional workforce is essential to providing quality service to all, the Maryland Judiciary trains, develops, and supports a professional and skilled workforce.



Promote staff training and education

### Ongoing education

- Developed standards for operating an effective educational system.
- Promoted the Judiciary's educational assistance program statewide to encourage Judiciary employees to improve their professional skills through courses towards college degrees or professional certifications.
- Provided, through the Judicial Institute, educational development for judges and magistrates in 50 courses and two webinars.
- The Office of Professional Development offered 51 courses, 14 webinars, and eight online courses for 1,172 Judiciary employees.
- Judiciary technology training included 30 courses and 10 online courses that were attended by 5,500 participants from throughout the state court system.
- Created and launched the Maryland Resource and Online Communication Center for Child Welfare Matters to provide timely and accessible information to judges handling child welfare cases.
- The Orphans' Court Conference established three committees: the Education Committee to help the Judicial Institute with formal training of Orphans' Court judges; the Legislative Committee to help monitor legislation that could affect the Orphans' Court; and the Policies, Rules and Forms Committee to recommend revisions to policies, rules, and/or forms, and to be a liaison between the Orphans' Court Conference and Maryland Judicial Conference committees.

Thanks to the volunteer services of 199 judges, 84 attorneys, and 34 subject matter experts, the Judicial Institute was able to provide educational development expertise for judges throughout the state in fiscal year 2015.



Enhancing human resources



Suggesting improvements

## Leadership engagement

- The Chief Judge and the State Court Administrator routinely shared information about key issues, developments, and programs with all Judiciary employees via Judiciary-wide email blasts.
- Developed a database to track training proposal requests and evaluate efficacy of training and educational events.
- Launched an “online suggestion box” to encourage employees to suggest improvements to processes and procedures in the workplace.
- Created monthly technology and customer service tip sheets for Judiciary employees.
- Reorganized the Department of Human Resources to best use skills and improve efficiency.
- Began revamping a program to recognize employees who achieve exceptional levels of work performance or expertise.
- Created a bench book for Orphans’ Court judges and distributed to all new judges and all Orphans’ Court judges in each jurisdiction.

## Employer of choice

- Initiated a detailed employee classification and compensation review as a part of ongoing efforts to ensure that the Judiciary is an employer of choice among public service organizations in Maryland.
- Adopted a living wage standard as the minimum that all Judiciary employees who are compensated by the state shall be paid.
- Adjusted compensation for employees at the lowest end of the salary spectrum to meet the living wage standard.

- The Montgomery County Circuit Court developed free/low-cost wellness programs for staff.
- The Prince George's County Circuit Court held its first annual Employee Appreciation Cookout.
- The Clerk of the Prince George's County Circuit Court sponsored an employee event to show appreciation for their professionalism and hard work.

## Skills development

- The Caroline County Circuit Court partnered with Mid-Shore Pro Bono to implement the Anne B. Gallagher Children's Advocacy Project to enable attorneys to receive monetary support to attend trainings to improve their advocacy skills when representing children.
- The Prince George's County Circuit Court held an Everyday Law Series to inform employees on issues related to the court such as family law, constitutional law, civics, and government (one-hour sessions facilitated by judges, magistrates, and attorneys).



Well trained and responsive workforce

### Most popular 2015 Judicial Institute courses for Judges

- Historical Trials
- Evidence in Criminal Cases
- Evidence Tampering in the Age of Photoshop

## 7. Build partnerships

### Working together



Working with the General Assembly

- Analyzed 2,234 bills introduced during the 2015 legislative session; 643 bills were deemed relevant to judicial interests; the Judiciary took positions on 220 bills, provided information to members of the General Assembly by testifying before committees, sending written correspondence, and meeting with leadership and others.
- Advised the General Assembly's Department of Legislative Services on the effects of legislation on the judicial branch's operations, resulting in 391 fiscal notes.
- The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals signed a joint letter with the Governor, the Attorney General, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Delegates, which culminated in the group's successful effort to bring the Justice Reinvestment Initiative to Maryland; Judiciary leaders engaged in discussions with leaders from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Public Defender, and members of the Maryland General Assembly regarding possible ways to reduce incarceration among non-violent drug offenders and to decrease recidivism.
- The Anne Arundel County Circuit Court partnered with the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) to co-sponsor an in-house foreclosure alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program.
- The Calvert County Circuit Court created a citizens' advisory council for its treatment court.
- The Calvert County Circuit Court began discussions with the county regarding the creation of a criminal coordinating council with justice partners.
- The Dorchester County Circuit Court participated in the Dorchester County Criminal Justice Treatment Network and Substance Abuse Council and the Juvenile Coordinating Council, composed of appropriate justice partners in the juvenile justice and child welfare areas.
- The Talbot County Circuit Court participated on the local drug and alcohol advisory board and the Talbot County Blue Ribbon Commission for Drugs and Alcohol.



Provided mediation training



- The District Court increased the geographic diversity of its alternative dispute resolution (ADR) service provider partners to include two community mediation centers (Community Mediation Upper Shore and Mid Shore Community Mediation Center) and the Key Bridge Foundation (Prince George's County).
- The People's Law Library of Maryland website worked with the bar to develop and update information that was most sought after by self-represented litigants.

## Collaborating with partners

- Partnered with the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to make it easier for drivers to pay District Court traffic citation fines at five MVA locations when they renew their driver's licenses.
- Worked with the General Assembly and the Maryland State Bar Association to raise the filing fee in civil cases and extend the sunset on an existing surcharge to support the new Maryland Electronic Courts system (MDEC).
- Established a partnership with the Maryland Department of Human Resources to ensure statewide agency and court compliance with child welfare requirements.
- Partnered with the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law to provide mediation skills training for judges, magistrates, and court staff during fiscal year 2016.
- The Baltimore City Circuit Court collaborated with the Department of Juvenile Services on a number of endeavors, including providing opportunities for older children to learn life skills as they age out of the juvenile system and a community conferencing center to address conflicts without using overburdened court resources.
- The Dorchester County Circuit Court partnered with the Mid-Shore Pro Bono self-help clinics.
- The Montgomery County Circuit Court Law Library collaborated with county offices to improve the Maryland real estate form used to request the release of funds and Clerk's Office information packets.
- The Prince George's County Circuit Court collaborated with the Department of Corrections and the Health Department to secure grants totaling \$1.3 million for its re-entry court.
- The Montgomery County Circuit Court received grants from the Rockville Rotary Club and the Bar Association of Montgomery County for a drug court initiative aimed at sustaining and expanding the GED program and creating a career placement program for participants.



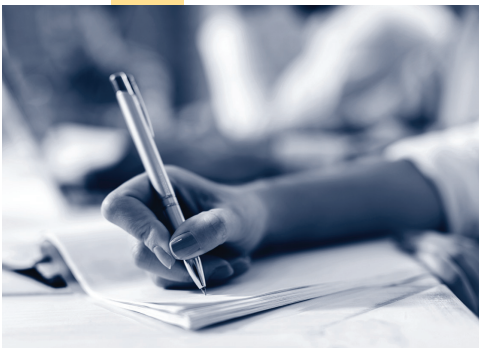
Collaborating with stakeholders



Improved ease of paying traffic tickets



Data sharing with justice partners



Fiscal notes for the General Assembly

**In fiscal year 2015, the Judiciary collected more than \$450 million in revenues for the state.**

- The District Court hosted the annual Local ADR Advisory Council (LAC) meetings in 13 District Court locations with stakeholders that included judges, administrators, supervisors, ADR practitioners, and community partners to assess local ADR programs, with LAC expansions expected in 2016 to Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore.

## Responding to needs

- Implemented a more efficient, effective means of data sharing with justice partners — Criminal Justice Information Service (CJIS), offices of the State’s Attorney, and the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration.
- The Judicial Ethics Committee responded to 45 requests for opinions or advice regarding compliance with, as applicable, the Maryland Code of Judicial Conduct, the Maryland Code of Conduct for Judicial Appointees, and the conflict of interest and financial disclosure provisions of the State Ethics Law. The committee issued three published opinions, eight unpublished opinions, and six unpublished letters of advice. The remaining requests are either pending or were withdrawn or resolved by a letter to the requesting official.
- The Judicial Ethics Committee responded to a request for comment from the Rules Committee regarding proposed changes to the Maryland Rules pertaining to the committee’s organization and functions. Committee counsel and the chair responded to requests from the Administrative Office of the Courts regarding proposed legislation affecting the functions of the committee during the 2015 Session of the General Assembly.
- Judicial Ethics Committee members have provided presentations in judicial ethics to the Judicial Conference and, under the aegis of the Judicial Institute, to newly-elected Orphans’ Court judges, and newly-appointed judges of the Circuit and District Courts.
- Expanded use of video conferencing between courts and justice partners, including video bail reviews, to enhance public safety.
- Implemented the Educational Stability Act to ensure that foster youth have stable educational placements and services.

## 8. Use resources wisely



Increased use of technology

equity  
technology  
standards  
budgeting  
databases

### Equitable distribution

- Created guidelines for ensuring the equitable distribution of resources across the Judiciary to ensure that all courts have access to similar programs and services.
- Captured courthouse equity information for consideration in grant award processes. Surveyed all Circuit Courts and examined grant data by county. Began the creation of a tiered analysis of what all Circuit Courts should have with regard to safety and security, access to justice, and programs and services.
- Provided training for completing grant applications and for administering grants.

### Update technology

- Developed a plan to purchase videoconferencing technology for all courthouses, with transfer of ownership to the courts.
- Continued creating video bail capabilities for courts, with 37 of 48 jurisdictions complete or in process as of December 2015.
- The Frederick County and Wicomico County Circuit Courts implemented video bail systems to improve efficiency and increase security, and the Washington County Circuit Court planned for the implementation of video bail review hearings.
- The Carroll County Circuit Court completed the construction of a new courtroom, replaced outdated audiovisual equipment, expanded guest access to Wi-Fi, installed a new phone system and video conferencing equipment in its courtrooms, and updated security equipment.
- The Worcester County Circuit Court installed video conferencing equipment in each of its courtrooms.
- The District Court designed and installed the wiring system for Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) in six courthouses.

## Safe, efficient facilities



Renovations



Child friendly waiting areas

- Improved security efforts, including hiring and training special police officers, drafting emergency evacuation plans, improving administrative processes, and installing security cameras as needed.
- Provided approximately \$240,000 in fiscal year 2015 security grants to local Circuit Courts to help cover the costs of safety improvements such as: X-ray machines and magnetometers at public entranceways; 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; and prisoner/sally port entrances at lock-up areas.
- The Baltimore City Circuit Court prepared for new courthouse facilities to replace decaying structures by allocating a portion of increased appearance fees to help fund the planning phase.
- The Calvert County Circuit Court undertook several projects to improve its facilities, including enlarging a courtroom witness box, creating an attorney lounge, elevating a judge's bench, and painting corridors.
- The Cecil County Circuit Court replaced the courthouse roof and constructed a prisoner/sally port.
- The Charles County Circuit Court completed renovation projects that included improvements to the Clerk's Office space and the relocation of its law library.
- The Frederick County Circuit Court completed courthouse improvement projects that included the renovation of the magistrate hearing room and the relocation of the law library and jury assembly room.
- The Harford County Circuit Court made plans to expand its jury assembly areas and relocate the Register of Wills office and a juvenile magistrate's office.
- The Montgomery County Circuit Court completed necessary renovations projects and created the Kids Spot Center, a waiting area for children whose families have business with the court.
- The Queen Anne's County Circuit Court completed the planning phase and began building a new courthouse.
- The Somerset County Circuit Court reconfigured the Clerk's Office space to improve efficiency.
- The Washington County Circuit Court planned for the 2016-17 relocation of the Register of Wills office to create space for an additional magistrate.



- The Wicomico County Circuit Court completed renovation projects, including a new non-jury courtroom, expanded jury assembly room and office space, and undertook the restoration of the historic courthouse.
- The Worcester County Circuit Court began the process of replacing the magnetometers in its courthouse.
- The District Court improved bailiff services, implemented a bailiff security bulletin, created and expanded training for bailiffs to include professionalism, obtained a statewide, state-of-the-art training facility, and improved interagency coordinated responses.
- The District Court worked with the Department of General Services and landlords to enhance and improve the workplace environment by providing security surveillance equipment, paint, carpet, workstations, and renovations as needed for enhanced productivity and business processes.
- The District Court replaced courtroom benches in three courthouses.
- The District Court installed glass-fronted transaction counters in four courthouses.
- The District Court installed video surveillance systems in six courthouses.
- The Office of Security Administration provided active shooter training for Baltimore County Circuit Court and various departments within the Administrative Office of the Courts.



Improved space planning



Designing for efficiencies and improvements

space planning  
cameras  
security measures  
renovations

## Looking to the future

The Maryland Judiciary's vision is to advance justice for all who come to Maryland's courts. This requires that we continue to be an efficient, innovative, and accessible court system, working collaboratively with justice partners to serve the people with integrity and transparency. Our priorities in the coming years will include:



- Continuing to monitor and respond to the changing needs of all Marylanders;
- Expanding self-help services and finding new ways to make sure people know what services are available for them;
- Fully implementing MDEC and capitalizing on the efficiencies created by it;
- Taking other steps to modernize operations and work smarter with current technology;
- Focusing our efforts to address the needs of juveniles by taking a more science-based approach to decisions about trying children as juveniles or adults, using risk assessments more consistently, and reducing the disproportionate representation of minority youths in the system;
- Increasing our understanding of human trafficking in Maryland and incorporating problem-solving approaches and treatment into our work with human trafficking victims who enter the justice system, while fully implementing the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014;
- Building services and increasing staff support for adult guardianship situations, while taking other steps to make our courts more accessible to older people who need to interact with the court system;
- Using research to improve ADR services, further increasing opportunities for people to save time and money and to make decisions for themselves while freeing up court resources for cases that require judicial intervention;
- Providing effective education for judges, family magistrates, leadership, and staff to better serve our fellow Marylanders;
- Strengthening public awareness and understanding of the Judiciary and its services, while speaking in a consistent and understandable voice as one Judiciary;
- Continuously reviewing and improving upon case time standards; and
- Working collaboratively with justice partners, other branches of government, and the public to fulfill the Judiciary's mission.

**Goals can be reached through dedication, diligent effort, focus, and commitment. Each member of the Judiciary is working together every day to provide fair, efficient, and equitable justice in Maryland.**

**Pamela Harris**  
State Court Administrator

# Judicial Council and committees

At the core of the Judiciary is the Maryland Judicial Council, which serves as the central governance body. The Council has been reorganized and streamlined to avoid duplication of efforts and to help the Judiciary fulfill its mission. The Council develops recommendations for the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals. The Council is the central hub for all policy changes, judicial reforms, legislative issues, and other developments both internally and externally.

The Judiciary's committees report to the Maryland Judicial Council. The committee structure has also been revamped to be more responsive and efficient. The committees are inclusive, recruiting talented professionals throughout the Judiciary to work together to accomplish key tasks that move the Judiciary forward. The committees are a vital part of a new, coordinated, interdisciplinary effort to fulfill the Judiciary's mission.

## 2015 Judicial Council

### Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera, Chair \*

Court of Appeals

### Judge Sheila R. Tillerson Adams

Prince George's County Circuit Court

### Judge Nathan Braverman

Baltimore City District Court

### Judge Kathleen Gallogly Cox

Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Judges

### Judge John W. Debelius, III \*

Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Judges

### Judge Thomas C. Groton, III

Worcester County Circuit Court

### Sharon L. Hancock

Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks

### Pamela Q. Harris \*

State Court Administrator

### Judge Susan H. Hazlett

Harford County District Court

### Judge Karen A. Murphy Jensen

Caroline County Circuit Court

### Jennifer R. Keiser

Vice Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators

### Carol Llwellyn-Jones

Administrative Clerk, District Court of Maryland District 2

### Judy Lohman

Administrative Clerk, District Court of Maryland District 6

### Judge James A. Kenney, III

Chair, Retired and Recalled Judges Committee

### Chief Judge Peter B. Krauser \*

Court of Special Appeals

### Judge Karen H. Mason

Prince George's County District Court

### Faye D. Matthews

Deputy State Court Administrator

### Chief Judge John P. Morrissey \*

District Court of Maryland

### Sally W. Rankin

Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators

### Wayne A. Robey

Vice Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks

### Roberta L. Warnken

Chief Clerk, District Court of Maryland

### Judge Barbara Baer Waxman

Baltimore City District Court

### Judge Alan M. Wilner, Ret.

Chair, Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure

### Judge Eugene Wolfe

Montgomery County District Court

\* Member of Executive Committee

## 2015 Council Committees

### Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee

Judge 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 alternative dispute resolution rules and standards of conduct.

### Court Access and Community Relations Committee

Judge 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

Judge 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

Judge Gary G. Everngam, Chair

Ensure 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

Chief Judge John P. Morrissey, Chair

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

### Domestic Law Committee

Judge 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

Judge Susan H. Hazlett, Chair

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

### Juvenile Law Committee

Judge 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

Judge Daniel M. Long, Chair

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

### Specialty Courts and Dockets Committee

Judge Nicholas E. Rattal, Chair

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

### Retired/Recalled Judges Committee

Judge James A. Kenney, III, Ret., Chair

Advise the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and other members of the Court on matters relevant to retired/recalled judges.

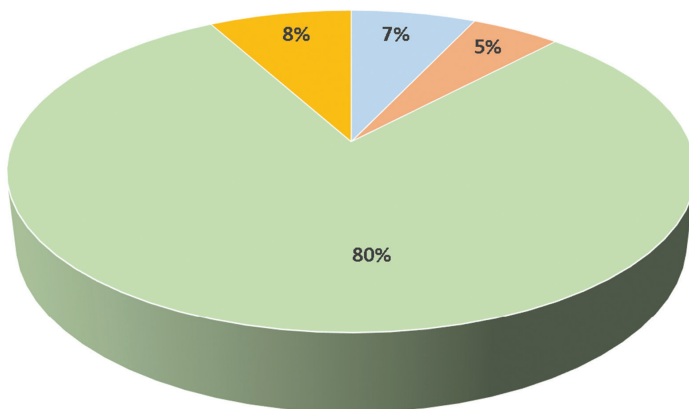


# Maryland Judiciary at a glance

## PERSONNEL PROFILE Fiscal Year 2015

Judges	
Court of Appeals	7
Court of Special Appeals	15
Circuit Court	162
District Court	116
Orphans' Court <sup>1</sup>	66
<b>Total Judges</b>	<b>366</b>
Circuit Court Magistrates	69
Circuit Court Law Clerks	163
<b>Total Circuit Court Magistrates and Law Clerks</b>	<b>232</b>
Judicial Support Personnel	
Court of Appeals	34.00
Court of Special Appeals	73.50
Circuit Court	1,400.50
District Court	1,326.50
Administrative Office of the Court	340.25
Court-Related Agencies	26.75
Circuit Courts - Local Funding	947.10
<b>Total Judicial Support Positions</b>	<b>4,148.60</b>
<b>Total Contractual Positions</b>	<b>430.00</b>
<b>Total Judicial Branch Personnel</b>	<b>5,176.60</b>

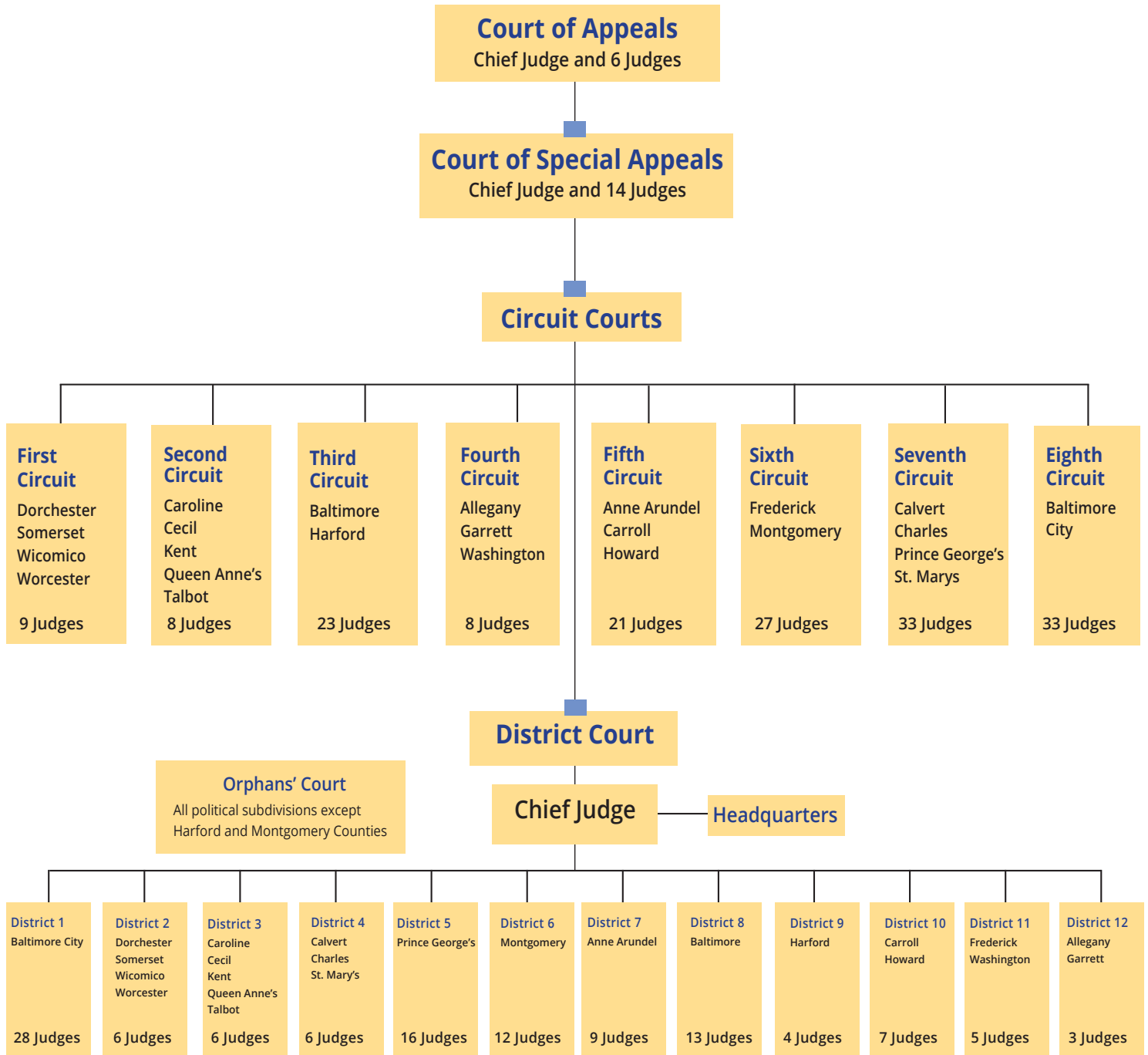
<sup>1</sup> Three judges sit on the Orphans' Court in Baltimore City and 21 of the counties. Circuit Court judges sit as judges of the Orphans' Court in Harford and Montgomery counties.



- Total Judges
- Total Circuit Court Magistrates and Law Clerks
- Total Judicial Support Positions
- Total Contractual Positions



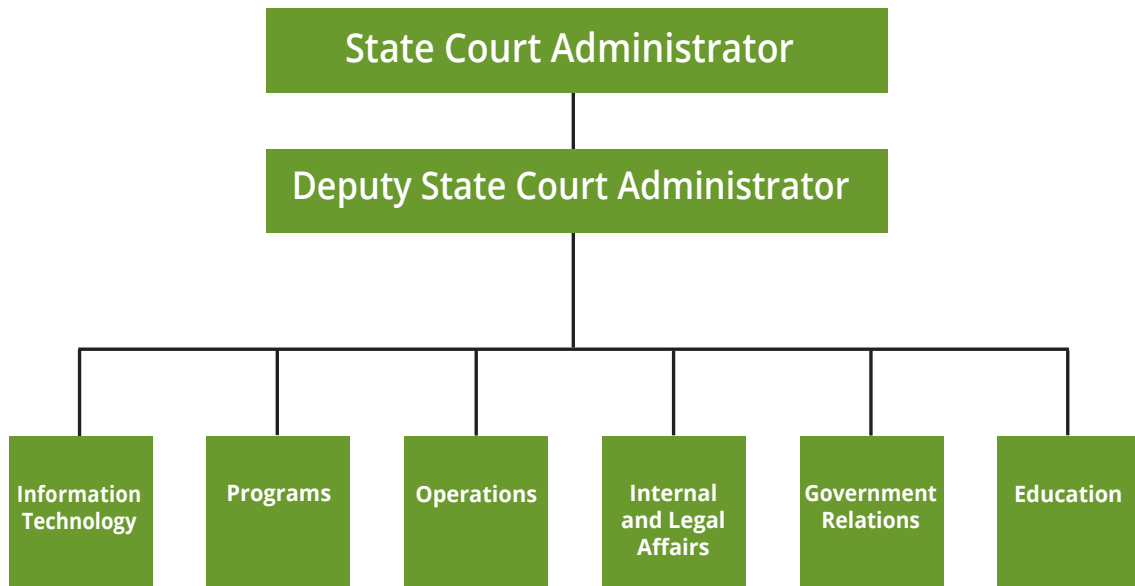
# MARYLAND JUDICIAL SYSTEM FISCAL YEAR 2015



.....



## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS (AOC)



The Administrative Office of the Courts (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 2015

	Filings	Terminations
Court of Appeals	949	1,011
Court of Special Appeals	1,937	2,117
Circuit Courts	267,261	278,703
District Court	1,676,439	1,879,148
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,946,586</b>	<b>2,160,979</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 2015

	Filings	Dispositions
Regular Docket	92	87
Petitions for Certiorari	692	738
Attorney Grievance Proceedings	114	133
Bar Admission Proceedings	2	4
Certified Questions of Law	3	4
Miscellaneous Appeals	46	45
<b>Totals</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>1,011</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 on the court along with six other judges to hear oral arguments in each case.

## COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

### FISCAL YEAR 2015

Appeals Filed	1,937
Appeals Disposed	2,117
Opinions Filed	1,583

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 2015

	Filings	Terminations
Total Civil General	74,227	76,774
Total Civil Family	92,471	96,071
Total Juvenile	22,973	22,906
Total Criminal	77,590	82,952
<b>Totals</b>	<b>267,261</b>	<b>278,703</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 2015

	Filings	Terminations
Motor Vehicle <sup>1</sup>	608,412	761,433
Criminal <sup>2</sup>	147,155	188,538
Civil <sup>3</sup>	291,219	299,524
Landlord-Tenant	629,653	*
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,676,439</b>	<b>** 1,879,148</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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Criminal filings include fugitive warrants.

<sup>3</sup> 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. Cases heard here include motor vehicle (traffic) and boating 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.

## JUDICIAL REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FISCAL YEAR 2015

**REVENUES \***                      **\$454,498,744**

**EXPENDITURES**                      **\$489,661,155**

\* court fines, filing fees, grants, recordation taxes, and business licenses

The Court of Special Appeals mediation program has a 70% settlement rate.

78% of domestic cases have at least one self-represented litigant at the time of trial.

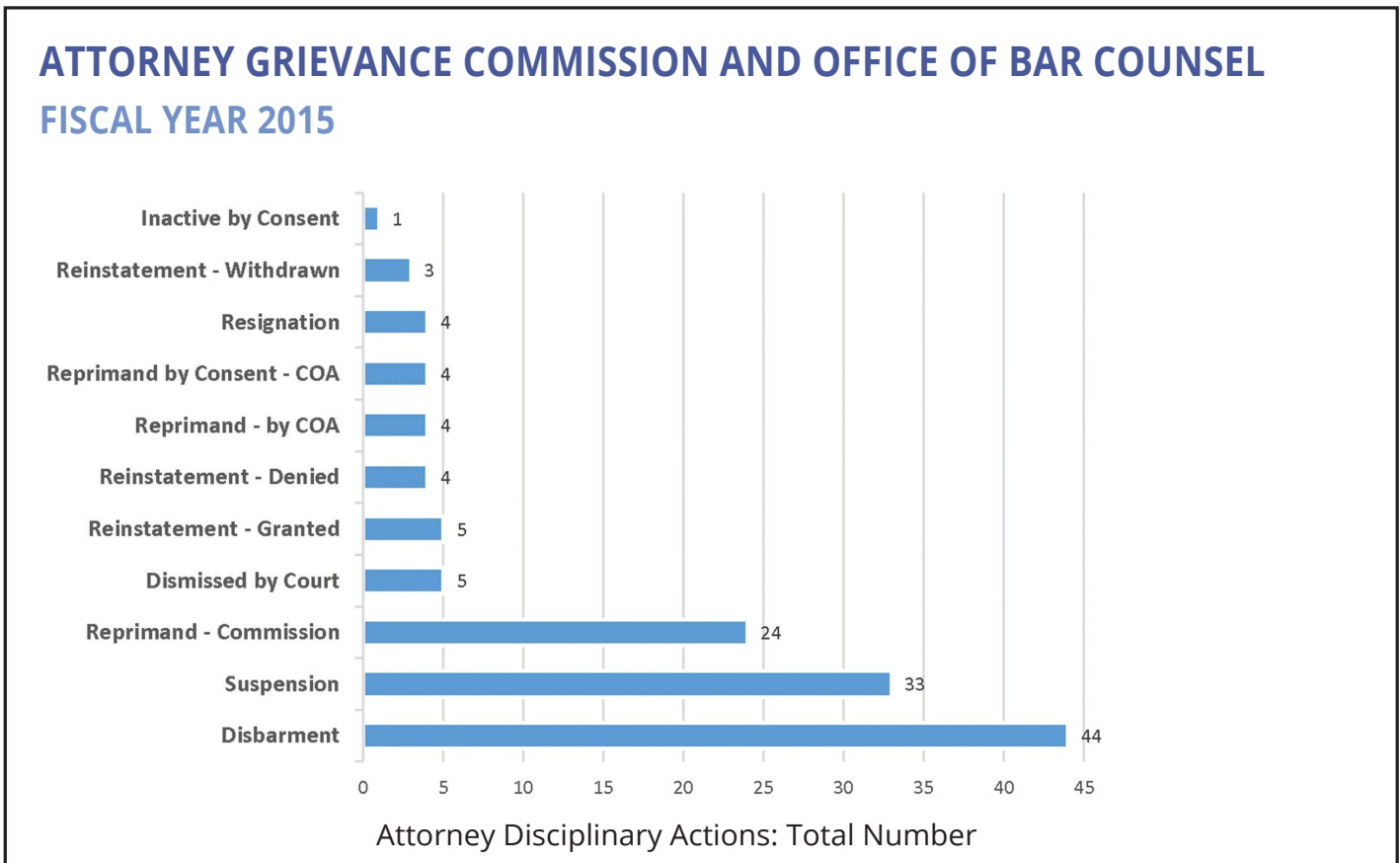
There is one Circuit Court judge for every 36,891 residents across the state.

176,352: Number of callers helped by the District Court's Traffic Processing Center.

There is one District Court judge for every 51,520 residents across the state.

3,000: Number of website visitors in the 15 minutes after the Judiciary posted the most recent Maryland Bar exam results on [mdcourts.gov](http://mdcourts.gov)

# Related judicial boards, committees, commissions, and entities



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 Lawyers' 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 2015****Claims**

Decided Claims	98
Approved Payment	48
Total Payment on Decided Claims	\$527,517

<b>Revenue from Assessments</b>	<b>\$800,920</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 theft of funds by members of the Maryland Bar, acting either as attorneys or as fiduciaries.

**MARYLAND COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES****FISCAL YEAR 2015****Sources of All Complaints**

Attorneys	8
Investigative Counsel Initiated Inquiries	9
Inmates	38
Judges	0
Public	103
<b>Total Verified Complaints</b>	<b>158</b>

**Complaints by Level of Court**

District Court Judges	46
Circuit Court Judges	107
Orphans' Court Judges	3
Court of Special Appeals Judges	2
Court of Appeals Judges	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>

**Disciplinary Actions \***

Agreement for Discipline by Consent, approved by Order of the Court of Appeals	1
Filing of Charges by Investigative Counsel	1
Private Reprimand	6
Dismissal with Warning	3
Cases Remaining Open	91

\* The vast majority of complaints in fiscal year 2015, 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.

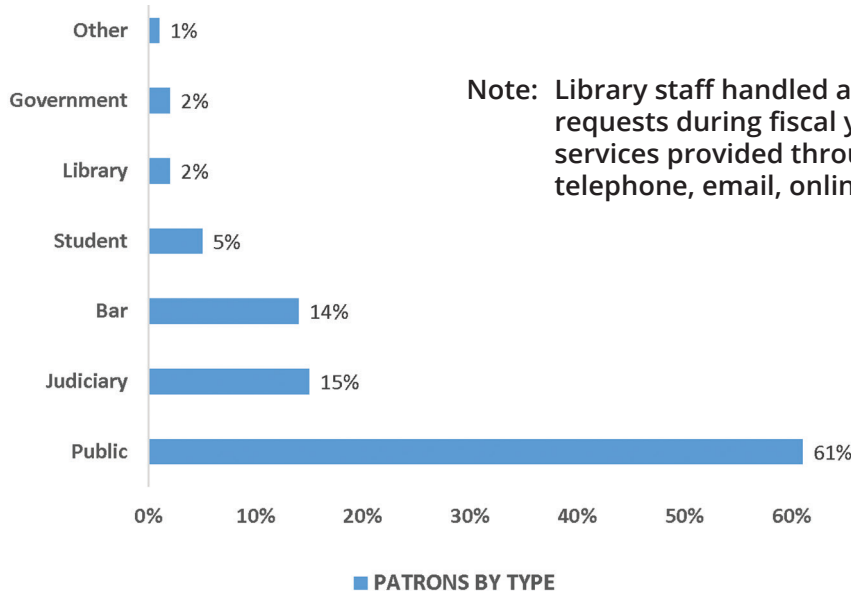
## STATE BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS CALENDAR YEAR 2015

	Applied	Sat	Passed	Cleared *
General Bar Exam	2,093	1,923	1,185	1,152
Out of State Attorney Exam	194	179	155	147

\* 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 2015



Note: Library staff handled a total of 9,818 information requests during fiscal year 2015. Reference services provided through in-person visits, telephone, email, online chat, and regular mail.

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 2015**

Reports Published *	4
New Rules Proposed	37
New Forms Proposed	3
Existing and Ending Rules Changes and Forms Proposed to be Amended	167
Proposed Deletion of Rules	3

\* Two general reports, one supplemental report and one special report containing an in-depth analysis of voir dire, all totaling 768 pages.

Topics addressed in these reports include:

**185th Report:** Voir dire **186th Report:** Implementation of MDEC (Maryland Electronic Courts) • Electronic transmission of applications for search warrants • Judicial review of Workers' Compensation Commission decisions • Communications from jurors • Timing issues pertaining to the filing of pleadings and the entry of judgments • Motions for summary judgment • Appellate mandates and motions for reconsideration • Limited scope representation • Collaborative law • Waiver of prepayment of court costs • Protective orders in domestic violence cases • Appointment of court interpreters • Issuance and service of subpoenas • Applicability of procurement and personnel standards and guidelines • Family law forms and magistrates **186th Report Supplement:** Access to court records **187th Report:** Attorney discipline • Appellate briefs • Pro bono practice by out-of-state attorneys • Temporary practice by military spouse attorneys • Specialization of attorneys • Permanent retirement of attorneys • Correction of the record of a lower court • Custody and visitation assessments • Oral argument in appellate cases • Probate and guardianship Rules and forms • Attorney trust accounts

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 PROFESSIONALISM CENTER, INC.****CALENDAR YEAR 2015****COURT OF APPEALS' MENTORING PROGRAM**

Date	Number of Mentor/Mentee Pairs
June 2014 - June 2015	34
June 2015 - December 2015	50
December 2015 - December 2016	79

**MARYLAND PROFESSIONALISM COURSE**

Date	Attendees
May 19 - May 20, 2015	431
November 30 - December 3, 2015	906

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,337</b>
--------------	--------------

The Maryland Professionalism Center supports and encourages members of the Judiciary to exhibit the highest levels of professionalism and supports and encourages lawyers to exercise the highest levels of professional integrity in their relationships with their clients, other lawyers, the courts, and the public to fulfill their obligations to improve the law and the legal system. The Center operates a mentoring program that matches newly admitted attorneys with experienced practitioners.

# **mdcourts.gov**

---

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

**2001 E/F Commerce Park Drive  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-260-1488  
communications@mdcourts.gov**

**1/2016**

The background consists of several overlapping squares in various shades of blue and green. The colors range from a dark, muted blue to a bright, vibrant lime green. The squares are arranged in a non-uniform, layered pattern, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text 'mdcourts.gov' is centered in the middle of the composition, overlaid on a light blue square.

**mdcourts.gov**