

2017

17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT &
KENT COUNTY PROBATE COURT



ANNUAL REPORT



STATE OF MICHIGAN
17TH CIRCUIT COURT

DONALD A. JOHNSTON
CHIEF JUDGE

SUITE 11500 D
180 OTTAWA AVENUE NW
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503-2751

To the Citizens of Kent County:

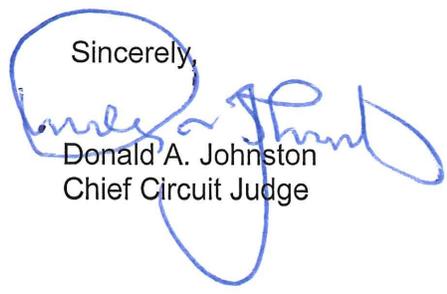
On behalf of the judges and staff of the 17th Circuit Court, I am pleased to submit our Annual Report for 2017. It is intended to acquaint you with the organization, activity and accomplishments of this Court, and some of the many people responsible for its efficient operation. I wish to extend my personal gratitude all of our dedicated personnel, whether named in this Report or not, for the important work they perform every day.

As the long shadow cast by recession of the aughts continues to recede, Kent County has begun to recover financially, and the string of budget cuts which have become an unpleasant hallmark of my tenure as Chief Judge seems to be nearing an end. Adjusted for inflation our budget is still lower than it was several years ago, but at least it is no longer being reduced, for which we are grateful. Still, the funds allocated to operate this Court are not sufficient to meet the increased cost of salaries and benefits for our employees, so continued sacrifice and creativity is required of our judges, administrators, and staff to keep the Court functioning with the least possible disruption during what remain challenging fiscal circumstances.

We welcomed two new judges during the year: Judge Joseph J. Rossi, who replaced Judge George S. Buth upon the latter's retirement, and Judge Deborah L. McNabb, who was elected to fill our newly created 11th judgeship. Judge Rossi has been assigned to our Civil/Criminal Division, with a mixed docket consisting of civil, criminal and specialized business docket cases. Judge McNabb, the first woman ever elected to a circuit judgeship in Kent County, has been assigned to the Family Division, where she was well-known already, having served there with distinction for many years as a Referee. The new judges are fitting in well, and we anticipate that they will enjoy long and successful careers with us.

This will be my last Chief Judge letter; inasmuch as I will be retiring at the end of 2018, I will be stepping down as Chief Judge at the end of 2017. At that time Judge Mark A. Trusock, who has served ably as my Chief Judge Pro Tempore for several years, will move into this position. It has been my distinct honor and pleasure to have served as a judge of this Court for 30 years, and to have served as its Chief Judge for 8 of those years. I am confident that Judge Trusock will be a capable leader, and that everyone associated with the Court will continue to put forth their maximum effort every day to provide our citizens with the fair, user-friendly, and efficient general jurisdiction trial court which they deserve and have come to expect.

Sincerely,


Donald A. Johnston
Chief Circuit Judge

CIRCUIT COURT

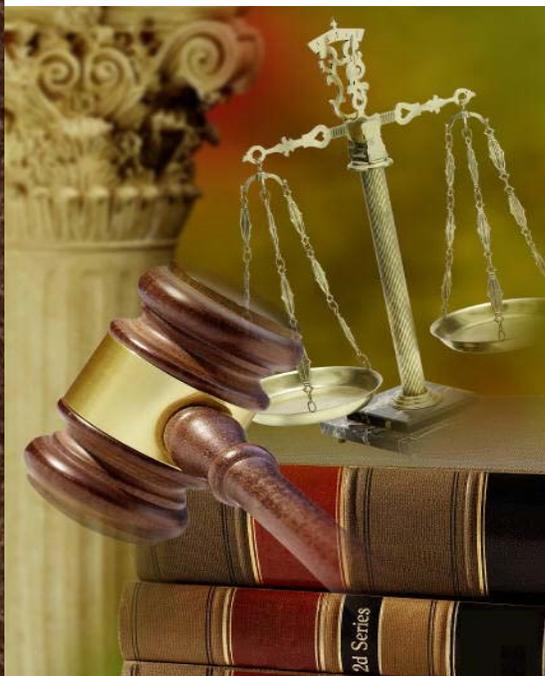
VISION STATEMENT:

The 17th Circuit Court will achieve excellence and be recognized as a leader by providing an accessible, effective, efficient, and innovative court operation.



MISSION STATEMENT:

The 17th Circuit Court will provide a system of justice that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of matters brought before the Court.



CIRCUIT COURT

CIRCUIT COURT AUTHORITY/ADMINISTRATION:

The 17th Circuit Court is the trial court of general jurisdiction in Kent County and has county-wide jurisdiction over all actions except those given by state law to another court, including:

- Criminal matters in which the potential sentence is incarceration of more than one year
- Domestic relations matters
- Personal protection orders
- Juvenile matters pertaining to delinquency or criminal activity
- Child protective proceedings
- Parental consent waivers
- Adoptions
- Emancipations
- General civil actions involving claims of \$25,000 or more
- Cases appealed from another court by an administrative agency
- Superintending control over other courts within the judicial circuit, subject to final superintending control of the Supreme Court
- Final decisions of the Circuit Court may be appealed to the Court of Appeals

Administratively, each multi-judge circuit has a chief judge appointed by the Michigan Supreme Court. The chief judge is the presiding officer and director of administration for the court. With the assistance of the Court Administrator, the chief judge develops and implements policies of the court; supervises caseload management; directs assignment of the court's business; supervises performance of the court's personnel; manages the court's finances; effects compliance with court rules and provisions of law.

Court Administrator

CIRCUIT COURT LOCATIONS:

Andrew Thalhammer

COURTHOUSE
180 Ottawa Avenue NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

FRIEND OF THE COURT
82 Ionia Avenue NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

JUVENILE CENTER / DETENTION
1501 Cedar Street NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Court Website
www.accesskent.com

JUDGES

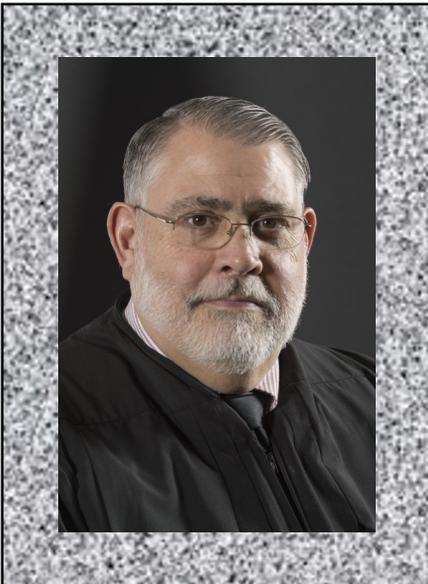


DONALD A. JOHNSTON CHIEF JUDGE

Judge Johnston obtained his undergraduate education at the University of Virginia, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1966. Thereafter, he attended Wayne State University Law School, from which he obtained his Juris Doctor degree, Cum Laude and with Silver Key, in 1969. Upon graduating from law school, Judge Johnston took a position with the Kent County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, where he worked his way up from law clerk to Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney. On February 19, 1979, he was appointed Judge of the 61st District Court in Grand Rapids by Governor William G. Milliken, and was subsequently elected to six year terms on that Court in 1980 and 1986. His colleagues on the Court elected him Chief Judge Pro Tempore in 1979, and Chief Judge in 1981, 1982-3, 1984-5, 1986-7 and 1988-9. In 1988, Judge Johnston was elected Judge of the Kent County Circuit Court. On January 1, 2010 Judge Johnston became the Chief Judge of the 17th Circuit Court by appointment from the Michigan Supreme Court and re-appointed for two year terms in 2012 and 2014.

Court Clerk - Karen Reid
Court Clerk - Keri Abraham
Court Reporter - Becky Miner
Law Clerk - Alana Burke

Phone (616) 632-5032
Fax (616) 632-5036



MARK A. TRUSOCK CHIEF JUDGE PRO TEMPORE

Judge Trusock graduated from Michigan Technological University (MTU) in 1974. After college, Judge Trusock worked for a large insurance company from 1975 to 1984. In 1983 he obtained a Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU) from the American College in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. In 1985 Judge Trusock graduated from the Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan. For the next 21 years, he worked for the partnership of Lannen and Trusock. At Lannen and Trusock he worked with civil, criminal, family, juvenile and appellate cases in courts throughout the state of Michigan. Judge Trusock was elected in November of 2006 to fill a new judicial position. Judge Trusock is assigned to the Civil-Criminal Division of the Circuit Court.

Court Clerk - Renee Pegg
Court Clerk - Tracy Kniffen-Oates
Law Clerk - Matt Swiontek

Phone (616) 632-5008
Fax (616) 632-5023



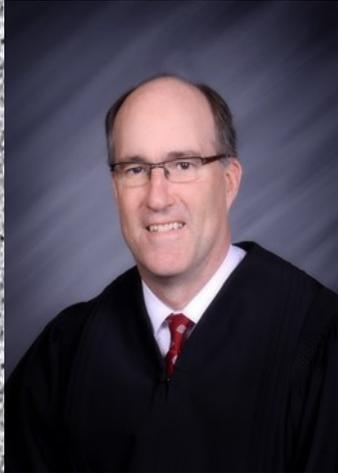
KATHLEEN A. FEENEY PRESIDING JUDGE-FAMILY DIVISION

Judge Feeney graduated with high honors from Michigan State University's Honors College and received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Illinois College of Law where she was recognized as an Outstanding Woman Law Graduate. Judge Feeney began her practice with the Lansing firm of Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C., where she specialized in no-fault litigation as well as labor and employment law. Judge Feeney joined the Grand Rapids firm of Mika, Meyers, Beckett & Jones in May 1990 with her practice concentrating in the areas of domestic relations, condemnation, and personal injury law. In January 1993, Judge Feeney accepted a position with the Michigan Court of Appeals' Research Division and was shortly thereafter retained by the Honorable Jane E. Markey as Judge Markey's judicial counsel on the Court of Appeals. Governor John Engler appointed Judge Feeney to the Kent County Circuit Court on March 15, 2000. She was subsequently elected to fill the seat in November 2000 and has continually served Kent County residents in the Family Division. In 2016, Judge Feeney received the Justice Marilyn J. Kelly Award for Outstanding Judicial Service from the State Bar of Michigan Family Law Section. Judge Feeney also received recognition as a 2018 Leader in the Law from Michigan Lawyers Weekly.

Court Clerk - Ronnell Fogg
Court Clerk - Elizabeth Shearer

Phone (616) 632-5087
Fax (616) 632-5096

JUDGES



Terence J. "T.J." Ackert

Judge Terence J. "T.J." Ackert took the bench on September 1, 2015. A graduate of the University of Michigan and University of Toledo College of Law, he served clients throughout Michigan and the Midwest for thirty one years. He was affiliated as a Shareholder with the firm Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, P.C. from 1984 to 2007, and then as a Member of Miller Johnson Snell & Cummiskey, PLLC from 2007 until 2015. For most of his private practice, Judge Ackert served as a business counsel and trial attorney advising closely held and family owned businesses in both transactional and litigation matters involving an array of industries including manufacturing, construction, technology, and start-ups. He received the distinction of being listed in Best Lawyers in America® for Business Organizations, Closely Held Companies and Family Business Law, Corporate Law and Mergers and Acquisitions Law. Judge Ackert has served on numerous business, civic and charitable boards, including President of the Grand Rapids Bar Association in 2013. Judge Ackert currently serves on the Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum. Judge Ackert is assigned to the Family Division of the Circuit Court.

Court Clerk - Sue DeYoung
Court Clerk - Courtney Bryant

Phone (616) 632-5091
Fax (616) 632-5092



PAUL J. DENENFELD

Judge Denenfeld took the bench on August 10, 2009. He received his BA degree from Western Michigan University and his JD from the University of Cincinnati. Before taking the bench, Judge Denenfeld was a partner in the law firm Yates, LaGrand & Denenfeld, PLLC. Prior to that, he was the senior litigator with the Federal Public Defender office in Grand Rapids, and was the chief of the special litigation division of the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia. For nearly 10 years, he was a civil rights and civil liberties attorney in Detroit. Judge Denenfeld has also spent considerable time working on the rule of law in several former Soviet republics. Judge Denenfeld is assigned to the Family Division of the Circuit Court.

Court Clerk - Anna Blackford
Court Clerk - Deb Morris

Phone (616) 632-5214
Fax (616) 632-5212



PATRICIA D. GARDNER

Judge Gardner received her B.A. from the University of Michigan in 1980. Thereafter, she attended University of Michigan Law School, graduating with a Juris Doctor Degree in 1983. Judge Gardner practiced general civil litigation from 1983-1988. Judge Gardner was a partner in a law firm, specializing in probate practice and family law from 1989-1996. She was appointed by Governor Engler to the Kent County Probate Court in January of 1997. In 21016 served as Presiding Judge of the Family Division of the Circuit Court and Chief Judge Pro Tem of the Probate Court. Judge Gardner is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, Grand Rapids Bar Association, Probate Judges Association, and Women Lawyers Association. Judge Gardner is active in the community serving on a number of non-profit boards.

Court Clerk - Shelley Lilly
Court Clerk - Renee Marzean

Phone (616) 632-5070
Fax (616) 632-5074

JUDGES

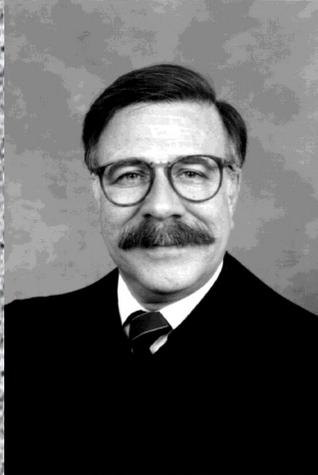


G. PATRICK HILLARY

Judge Hillary was elected in November of 2000 to fill the judicial position vacated by the retirement of Judge John P. Steketee, and started on the bench in January of 2001. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration in 1979 and his Juris Doctorate in 1983. Judge Hillary practiced law since 1983 and was a sole practitioner prior to being elected Probate Judge. Judge Hillary's private practice included experience in the area of business, corporate, real estate, wills/trusts, estate planning and family law. He served as presiding judge of the Circuit Court Family Division from 2004-2009. Judge Hillary has served on numerous boards in the community and created the Parents and Children Section of the Grand Rapids Bar Association. He also taught as Adjunct Professor at Davenport College and Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Judge Hillary participated as a member of the National Child Welfare Advisory Board in Washington D.C. which assisted in the enactment of laws to protect children brought into the United States without any adult supervision.

Court Clerk - Kristie Byrnes
Court Clerk - Dianne Hill
Court Recorder - Nicole Ludge

Phone (616) 632-5206
Fax (616) 632-5084



DENNIS B. LEIBER

Judge Leiber attended Aquinas College, where he graduated in 1969 with a double major in political science and history. From there he enrolled at Wayne State University Law School, where he won national recognition for oral advocacy and was awarded the degree of Juris Doctor in 1972. His work experience includes Grand Rapids, Michigan Assistant City Attorney 1973-1975, sole practitioner 1975-1977, and Assistant Kent County Prosecutor 1977-1988. He was first elected to the Kent County Circuit Court in 1988, and has been re-elected, unopposed, in 1994, 2000, 2006 and 2012. Judge Leiber was the first to be assigned to the newly created Family Division of Circuit Court and performed those duties for three years. He is assigned to the Civil/Criminal Division of the Circuit Court.

Court Clerk - Nicole Greenberg
Court Clerk - Lisa Gibson
Court Reporter - Bobbi Jo Huey
Law Clerk - Danny Boocher

Phone (616) 632-5012
Fax (616) 632-5016



DEBORAH L. MCNABB

Judge McNabb was elected on November 1, 2016 to fill a new judicial position. She is the first woman to join the Kent County Circuit Court as the result of an election. Judge McNabb took the bench on January 1, 2017. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Alma College in 1984 and her Juris Doctor from DePaul University College of Law in 1987. Before taking the bench, Judge McNabb served as a Circuit Court Referee in the Family Division of the Kent County Circuit Court for over 25 years, including serving as Chief Referee from 2012-2016. Judge McNabb is assigned to the Family Division of the Circuit Court and was named Presiding Judge of the Family Division in January 2018. Judge McNabb serves on the Michigan Judicial Institute's Academic Advisory Committee and the Michigan Judge's Association Family Division Committee. She also is a governing council member of the State Bar of Michigan Children's Law Section.

Court Clerk - Gina Artale
Court Clerk - Dort Maurice

Phone (616) 632-5219
Fax (616) 632-5105

JUDGES

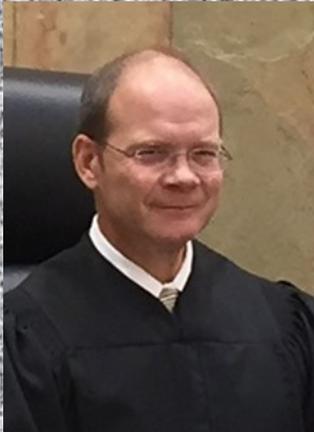


GEORGE J. QUIST

Judge Quist took the bench on January 23, 2012. He received his BA from Hope College and his JD from George Washington University. Before taking the bench, Judge Quist was a magistrate and administrative law judge with the State of Michigan. In addition to 12 years experience as an adjudicator before taking the bench, Judge Quist was a civil litigator for 9 years. From January 2012 through May 2015, Judge Quist was assigned to the Family Division of the Circuit Court. As of June 1, 2015, Judge Quist is assigned to the Civil/Criminal Division of the Circuit Court.

Court Clerk - Stacy Dilworth
Court Clerk - Deb Berkstresser
Law Clerk - Maggie Richards

Phone (616) 632-5099
Fax (616) 632-5016



J. JOSEPH ROSSI

Judge Rossi was elected in November of 2016 and began judicial service on January 1, 2017. Judge Rossi attended the University of Notre Dame where he obtained a degree in English in 1988 and a Juris Doctorate in 1995. Between his undergraduate years and law school, Joe served as an infantry officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, including combat service in Operation Desert Storm and as a Special Operations instructor. Prior to his election he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for eight years in Grand Rapids, as well as working at the private law firms Smith Haughey Rice and Roegge and Drew Cooper and Anding. His legal experience includes appearances in many Michigan Courts, as well as Federal Courts in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana. Joe also continued to serve in the Marine Corps Reserve, where he was called to active duty twice in 2004 and 2007. His final tour was on the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, where he worked under the Director of Global Special Operations and Counter-terrorism. Joe retired from military service in 2012 at the rank of lieutenant colonel. Joe's community service includes his parish finance council and several veterans and military support organizations. Joe serves in the Circuit Court's Specialized Business docket and in the Court's Civil-Criminal division.

Court Clerk - Marlene Gould
Court Clerk - Denise Lange
Law Clerk - Jeff Wells
Law Clerk - Rob Dordan

Phone (616) 632-5020
Fax (616) 632-5074



PAUL J. SULLIVAN

A native of New Hampshire, Judge Sullivan received his undergraduate degree in Government from Georgetown University in 1969 and his JD from The Catholic University of America in 1972. In 1988 he was elected to the 61st District Court in Grand Rapids, serving as Chief Judge from January 1994 until his appointment to the circuit bench by Governor John Engler in March 1995. He served as Chief Circuit Judge for 6 years commencing January 1, 2004, and in the dual capacity of Chief Circuit and Probate Judge from July 2006 thru December 2007. Before taking the bench, Judge Sullivan was an Assistant District Attorney in Philadelphia PA and in private practice for 14 years with the firm of Roach, Twohey, Maggini & Brady. He is assigned to the Civil/Criminal Division of Circuit Court.

Court Clerk - Wendy White
Court Clerk - Conni Mutchler
Court Recorder - Ginny Post
Law Clerk - Rob Dordan

Phone (616) 632-5099
Fax (616) 632-5016

JUDGES



CHRISTOPHER P. YATES

Judge Yates took the bench on April 22, 2008. He received his BA from Kalamazoo College and his JD and MBA from the University of Illinois. Before taking the bench, Judge Yates served as a law clerk to a federal trial judge and a federal court of appeals judge, then as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, then in the Office of Legal Counsel at the U.S. Department of Justice, and as the Chief Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Michigan. Most recently, he worked in private practice as a partner in two Grand Rapids law firms, Willey, Chamberlain & Yates and then Yates, LaGrand & Denenfeld. Judge Yates is assigned to the Court's Specialized Business Docket.

Court Clerk - Molly Norton
Court Clerk - Bryan Ensing
Law Clerk - Andrea Snyder

Phone (616) 632-5026
Fax (616) 632-5096



DANIEL V. ZEMAITIS

Judge Daniel V. Zemaitis was elected November 2002 to fill one of the vacant Judgeships for Kent County. He started on the bench on January 1, 2003. Judge Zemaitis has lived on the Northwest side of Grand Rapids most of his life. He received his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in History from Marquette University. He received his Juris Doctor degree from Case Western University in 1977. Judge Zemaitis was the magistrate for the 59th District Court from 1990 to 2002, and in 1995 became Michigan's first Multi-District Court Magistrate by joining the 62A District Court. Judge Zemaitis was a Visiting Professor of History/Law at Grace Bible College from 1995 to 1997 and 1999 to 2002. He has served as an adjunct professor at Thomas M. Cooley School of Law by teaching Family Law. Judge Zemaitis is a member of many community organizations. Judge Zemaitis is assigned to the Family Division of Circuit Court.

Court Clerk - Kristen Brink
Court Clerk - Tiffany Simpson

Phone (616) 632-5203
Fax (616) 632-5212

REFEREES

ADAM C. KOMAR
Clerk - Kiersten Chulski
Phone (616) 632-5170

LYNN PERRY
Clerk - Kelli Klein
Phone (616) 632-5148

MARIE E. KESSLER
Clerk - Echo Matson
(616) 632-5165

CRAIG FREDERICK
Clerk - Brooke Alt
Phone (616) 632-5104

JOHN D. KMETZ
Clerk - Suzanne Kaldenberg
Phone (616) 632-5150

ARTHUR P. WINTHER
Clerk - Marie Bolen
Phone (616) 632-5147

MAUREEN GOTTLIEB
Clerk - Brenna Weber
Phone (616) 632-5251

FINANCIAL REVIEW

CIRCUIT COURT BUDGET

UNAUDITED

	Appropriated	Expended	Increase over 2016
PERSONNEL COSTS	\$31,717,677	\$30,502,005	\$1,700,134
OPERATION COSTS	18,490,758	17,356,030	-555,281
CAPITAL OUTLAY	166,624	165,997	-42,905
TOTAL	\$50,375,059	\$48,024,032	

2017 REVENUES COLLECTED BY THE CIRCUIT COURT AND ITS DIVISIONS

State Grants	16,740,747
Federal Grants	115,416
Other Grants	332,705
Medical & Medicaid	181,079
Board & Care	387,859
Court Costs	1,442,911
Service Fees	481,902
Filing Fees	350,928
Certified Copy Fees	0
Name Search and Motion Fees	931,732
Other Fees	231,999
Overseeing Fees	27,273
Jury Fees	119,296
Collection Fees	120,062
Bond Forfeitures	-44,290
Other Reimbursements	266,725
Penal Fines	14,438
Refunds/Rebates	4,629
Total Revenues Collected	\$21,705,411
Total 2016 County Contributions	\$26,318,621
GRAND TOTAL	\$48,024,032

STATE COURT EQUITY FUND

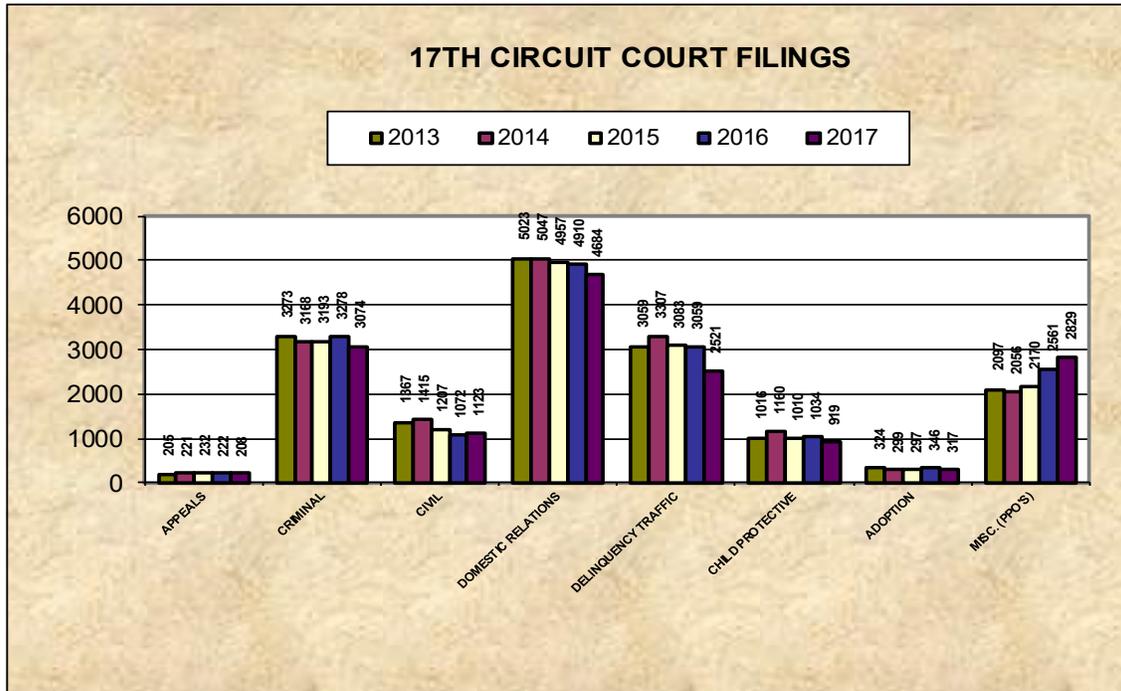
In addition to the above revenues, Kent County received \$2,880,749 during State Fiscal year 2016-2017 in Court Equity Fund monies. Pursuant to MCL 600.151(a) these funds are to be used for the operational expenses of the trial courts (Circuit, District, and Probate) and indigent legal assistance.

ADMINISTERING COLLECTION OF PASS-THROUGH PAYMENTS

It should be noted that the 17th Circuit Court collects and accounts for victims' restitution. During the calendar year 2017, the Court collected \$1,887,841 in restitution. In addition to restitution, the Court assesses fines which, by law, are used to support local libraries. During the 2017 calendar year \$280,425 was collected. The Court also assesses Crime Victim Rights fees. These fees are collected for the State to help compensate and support victims of crime. In 2017, the Court collected \$222,877 in CVR Fees. The Court also collects State Minimum Costs which help the State with the costs of operating the Courts in the State of Michigan. During the calendar year the Court collected \$210,610 in State Minimum Costs.

CIRCUIT COURT

FILINGS



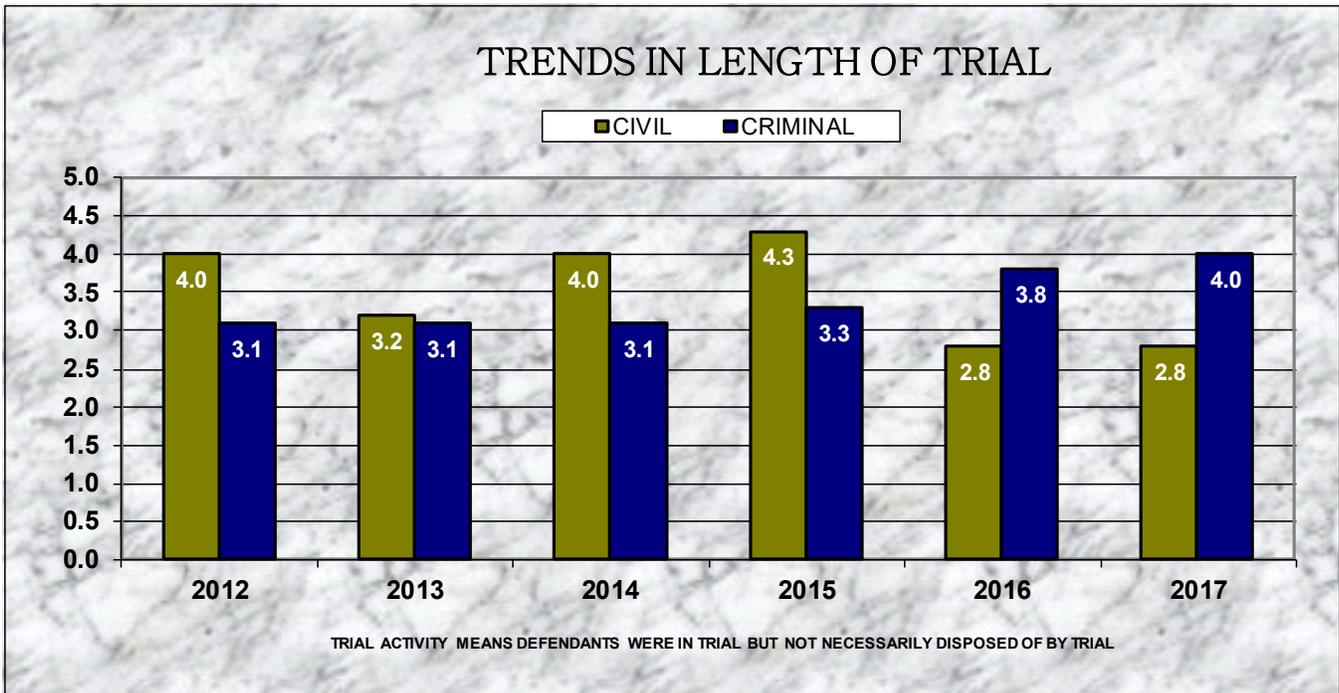
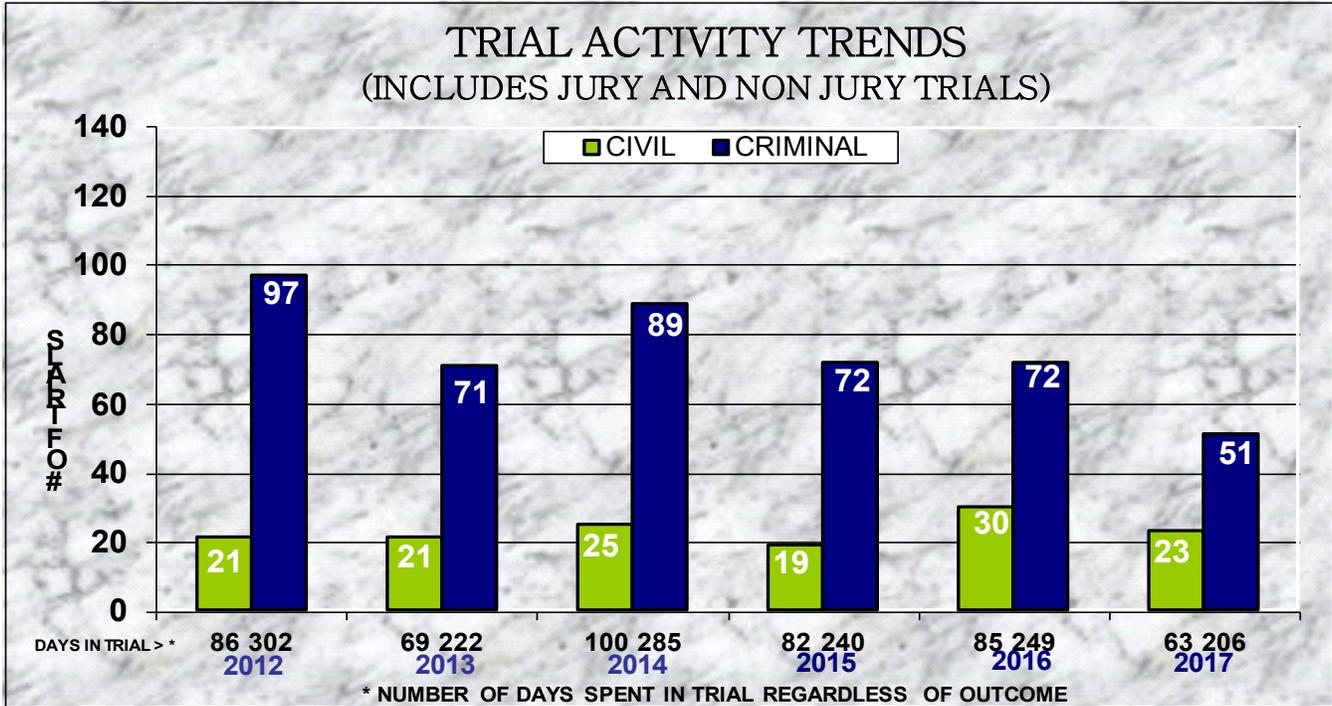
TOTALS: 2013 (16,364) 2014 (16,673) 2015 (16,149) 2016 (16,206) 2017 (15,467)

***Miscellaneous represent: PPO's, emancipations, infectious diseases, safe deliveries, name changes, parental Waivers, out-of-county PPO's**



CIRCUIT COURT

TRENDS



CIRCUIT COURT

NEW FILINGS

CIRCUIT COURT CRIMINAL FILINGS						
CASE TYPE	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
NON-CAPITAL OFFENSES	3087	3037	2971	2972	3054	2886
CAPITAL OFFENSES	177	189	157	183	171	134
FELONY JUVENILE	8	0	0	0	0	1
EXTRADITION	55	47	40	38	53	53
TOTAL OFFENSES	3327	3273	3168	3168	3278	3074

CIRCUIT COURT CIVIL FILINGS						
CASE TYPE CATEGORIES	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
CIVIL DAMAGE SUITS	447	471	551	486	474	469
OTHER CIVIL SUITS	965	896	864	721	598	654
TOTAL	1412	1367	1415	1207	1072	1123

CIRCUIT COURT APPEALS						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
APPEALS	212	205	221	232	222	208

FAMILY DIVISION FILINGS						
Case Type Categories	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Divorce w/o Children	1264	1307	1296	1290	1244	1297
Divorce w/ Children	1380	1438	1319	1318	1276	1258
Paternity	941	940	1024	973	739	767
Uniform Interstate Family Support Act	51	60	54	55	66	85
Support	840	911	949	916	832	908
PPOs/Stalking	538	512	543	595	815	699
PPOs/Domestic Relations	1321	1443	1371	1426	1723	1707
Other Domestic*	397	263	404	404	401	369
Adoptions	338	324	299	297	346	317
Miscellaneous Family**	270	115	116	112	352	388
Delinquency	3285	2995	3227	2971	2699	2441
Designated	13	8	10	8	3	7
Traffic	107	64	70	85	85	73
Child Protective	796	1016	1160	1009	1034	919
Personal Protection Order involving minor	41	27	26	37	23	35
Totals	11,582	11,423	11,868	11,496	11,634	11,270

* domestic-in-custody filings

** Miscellaneous family filings consist of name change, safe delivery, emancipation of minor, infectious disease, parental waiver, voluntary foster care, juvenile guardianships and violations of out-of-county PPOs

Other
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CIRCUIT COURT

SPECIALIZED BUSINESS DOCKET

The Kent County Specialized Business Docket (“SBD”), which has been operating for more than five years, now handles cases under the permanent authority of Public Act 333 of 2012. Since its inception, the SBD has been run by Judge Christopher P. Yates, but in 2017, Judge George “Jay” Quist handled SBD cases to complete a temporary appointment by the Michigan Supreme Court to serve as a second SBD judge in Kent County. On January 1, 2017, Judge J. Joseph Rossi took office on the Kent County Circuit Court and assumed responsibility for one-third of the SBD cases filed in 2017. In an effort to balance dockets among the judges on the Kent County Circuit Court, Chief Judge Mark A. Trusock recently reassigned all SBD cases to Judge Yates. Chief Judge Trusock and Judge Yates are profoundly grateful to Judge Quist and Judge Rossi for their invaluable assistance in handling SBD cases during a busy period in the SBD’s existence.

In 2017, the Kent County SBD accepted 237 new cases and closed 231 cases, resulting in an overall clearance rate of 97 percent. Judge Yates took on 154 of the new cases and closed 192 cases for a clearance rate of 124 percent, and he published 60 opinions on the SBD website, which can be found at accesskent.com. The SBD closed 96 percent of its complex cases within the two-year time guidelines established by the State Court Administrative Office.

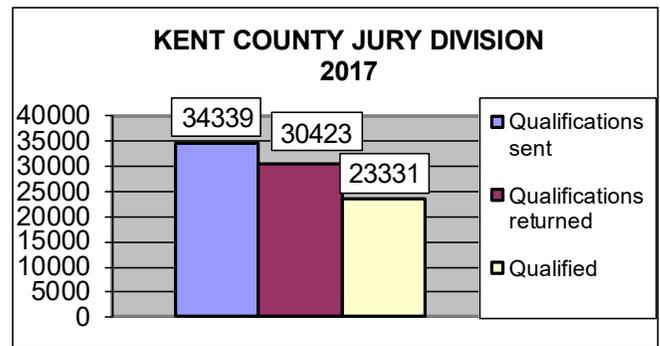
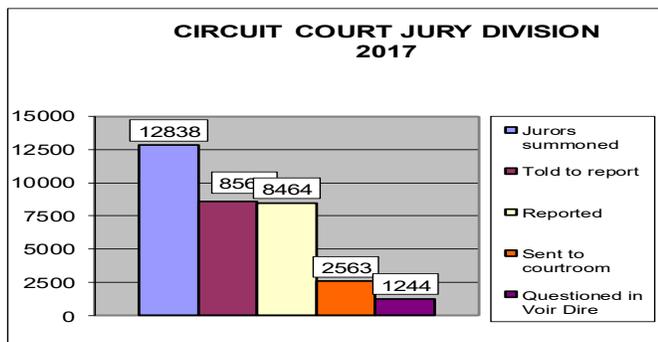
The Kent County SBD routinely seeks input on its performance. Comments and suggestions can be offered to Chief Judge Trusock, Judge Yates, or the attorneys who serve on the SBD advisory committee. By appointment of Chief Judge Trusock, those attorneys are David Gass, Esq., of Miller Johnson and Patrick Geary, Esq., of Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge.



CASE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

JURY MANAGEMENT

Jury Service is one of the most important duties that members of a free society are called upon to perform. The jury is an expression of the democratic idea that authority can be exercised most equitably only if people participate. The Jury Division of the Circuit Court plays an important role in this process by summoning and qualifying prospective jurors for Kent County. In addition, all other aspects of the Circuit Court's jury system are handled through this division. Jurors summoned and qualified for Circuit Court jury service are on-call for a week, or for one trial. Jurors may go to the County website (www.accesskent.com) or call the Jury Information Line (866-215-3884) to determine whether or not they must serve on the week they are on call.



ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) offers the parties a timely and affordable alternative to settle disputes and, thereby, avoid costly litigation. Kent County started a formalized ADR program in 1990 with Civil Case Mediation, which later became known as Case Evaluation. Court rules allow for parties to be ordered into facilitative mediation. Kent County implemented its court-ordered domestic relations mediation and civil mediation programs in 2004.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- 60% of divorce mediations held will settle or settle in part.
- 60% of civil mediations held will settle or settle in part.
- 70% of those completing a mediation evaluation form will indicate satisfaction with the mediation process.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 79% of divorce mediations settled or settled in part.
- 55% of civil mediations settled or settled in part.
- 93% of those completing the divorce evaluation form indicated satisfaction with the process.
- 81% of those completing the civil evaluation form indicated satisfaction with the process.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 402 domestic mediations were held.
 - 121 civil mediations were held.
 - 201 case evaluation hearings were held. 48 cases had all parties accepting the award for a 23.9% settlement rate.
- The Case Management Department reviews pending civil and domestic relations cases and sends a no progress

CASEFLOW MANAGEMENT

dismissal notice to the attorneys and parties when the matter languishes for more than 91 days. If the parties take no action, the judge may enter an Order of Dismissal on the action.

COURT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

GOAL: To assist the local Criminal Justice System by providing alternatives to incarceration.

PRETRIAL SUPERVISED RELEASE

Pretrial supervised release is the supervision of defendants out on bond pending their court hearing. This also includes Maximum Supervision (electronic monitoring) of selected defendants.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- 85% of all defendants placed on pretrial supervised release will successfully complete program requirements.
- 80% of all defendants placed on Maximum Supervision will successfully complete program requirements.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 83% of the defendants placed on pretrial supervised release successfully completed program requirements.
- 91% of the defendants placed on Maximum Supervision successfully completed program requirements.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 1726 defendants were placed on pretrial supervision.
- Approximately 120,000 jail bed days were saved by the use of pretrial supervision.
- 90 defendants were placed on Maximum Supervision.
- Approximately 8673 jail bed days were saved by the use of Maximum Supervision.

COMMUNITY SERVICE—ADULT/JUVENILE

Adult Community Service provides a community-based sentencing option in lieu of incarceration for the District and Circuit Courts of Kent County. The Juvenile Community Service Program provides a means for delinquent youth to make a form of reparation to the community for damages or injury inflicted as a result of their delinquency.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- 80% of all offenders placed on adult community service will successfully complete program requirements.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 77% of the offenders placed on adult community service successfully completed program requirements.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 2337 offenders were placed on adult community service.
- 159,000 hours of community service were performed by adult offenders.

COURT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WORK CREW

Work Crew is a structured, labor-intensive form of community service for the more habitual, problematic adult offender, and participants are supervised by Court Services staff and perform group work projects primarily at Comp Renew.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 70% of all offenders placed on Work Crew will successfully complete program requirements.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 72% of the offenders placed on Work Crew successfully completed program requirements.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 538 offenders were placed on Work Crew.
- Offenders performed 34,000 Work Crew hours.

DIVERSION

The Diversion Program provides case management and supervision services for offenders who are referred from the Kent County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Upon successful completion of the Program, an offender will have the original charge dismissed.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 85% of all defendants placed on the Diversion Program will successfully complete program requirements.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 87% of the defendants placed on the Diversion Program successfully completed the program requirements.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 77 defendants were placed on the Diversion Program.
- \$15,000 was paid by defendants for restitution that was disbursed to victims.

The Electronic Home Monitoring Program allows certain select juvenile offenders to be confined in their own home

JUVENILE ELECTRONIC HOME MONITORING

rather than in an out-of-home placement, by the use of electronic equipment such as a "tether anklet".

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 60% of juvenile offenders placed on Electronic Home Monitoring will successfully complete the program requirements.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 54% of the juvenile offenders placed on Electronic Home Monitoring successfully completed program requirements.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 180 juveniles were placed on Electronic Home Monitoring.

COURT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PRETRIAL SCREENING / INVESTIGATION

In 2017, the Court Services Department continued to provide valuable information to the judiciary relative to release prior to the defendant's first court appearance. This information allows the judges to set a bond based on verified information about the defendant, while addressing important issues regarding risk of flight, safety to the community, prudent use of jail space, and early intervention concerning the problems of the defendant. During 2017, 4,900 bond reports were generated by the Pretrial Intake Investigation Unit.

In 2017, the Court Services Department generated and distributed approximately 400 jail bed reports to Court Judges,

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

State Probation/Parole, the Office of Community Corrections, the Kent County Correctional Facility, and the Grand Rapids Police Department. The dissemination of accurate information to the criminal justice system is essential, both to prevent cases from becoming "lost" in a very complex system, and to assist in the management of jail beds available to the Courts.

Public Act 511, the Community Corrections Act, was passed in 1988 primarily to divert eligible non-violent/low-risk

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

GOAL: To support and expand the use of community sanctions in order to provide rehabilitation opportunities for Kent County felony offenders, to promote the efficient use of jail/prison beds while protecting the community, and to examine the causes of repeated criminal behavior while facilitating collaboration among stakeholders and service providers.

offenders from prison by placing them in community programs which provide the courts with a continuum of sentencing options. A secondary goal is to divert offenders from jail in order to free up jail space for the more serious offenders diverted from prison. Kent County first received P.A. 511 funding in 1990 and administers these funds through the Kent County Community Corrections Advisory Board. Additionally, the Community Corrections Advisory Board, through the Office of Community Corrections, is responsible for the development and implementation of the local community corrections plan.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- Expend 100% of the Community Corrections grant.
- Maintain an overall program enrollment rate of 95% or greater.
- Maintain a 70% successful termination rate for all O.C.C. enrollees.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- Program enrollment rate was 117%.
- 65% of enrollees successfully completed their program.
- 99% of the Community Corrections grant was expended.

2017 SUMMARY:

- The OCC secured approximately \$1,198,385 in revenue through the County Jail Reimbursement Program.
- 1,678 offenders were served.

PERMANENCY PLANNING

Children under 18 years of age who are suspected of being abused by their parents are referred to the Family Division of the Circuit Court by the Child Protective Services Unit of the Kent County Department of Human Services (DHS). Protective Services investigates all complaints of abuse and/or neglect in the County and determines which cases require court action.

The Court's role in the child welfare system in Kent County is to provide the judicial authority necessary for legal wardship and treatment, and to provide leadership to ensure that the service delivery system continues to function well. Children found by the Court to be neglected or abused are usually made temporary wards of the Court and placed under the general supervision of the Kent County DHS. Direct casework services for neglected children and their families are provided by the DHS or one of the private agencies under contract with the DHS. The judges assess the progress of each case at regular review hearings, an integral part of the case management system.

The Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA) is a program using carefully screened and specially

CASA PROGRAM

GOAL: CASA of Kent County provides highly-trained volunteers to advocate in the best interest of abused and neglected children in family court proceedings.

trained volunteers appointed by the Judge to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in child protective proceedings. The role of the CASA volunteer as an independent voice for the children is to investigate, facilitate, monitor and advocate on behalf of children until they are in a safe, permanent home. The CASA volunteer has only one case at a time and remains with the children throughout the case until it is discharged by the Court. In 2017, 98 CASA Volunteers advocated on behalf of 209 abused and neglected children living in foster care.

*Individuals who are interested in becoming a CASA volunteer are encouraged to call
or visit our website:
(616) 632-5311
www.casakentco.org*

ADOPTION

ADOPTION DEPARTMENT

GOAL: To facilitate the legal process for children who need a permanent home and to streamline the adoption process for children and families.

The Adoption Department serves a diverse group of families and children who are in the process of an adoption or are seeking support and information concerning a completed adoption. Most of the children involved in these adoptions are either permanent wards of the court or are voluntarily released by their biological parents. Additional services are provided for adult adoptions and for children adopted in another country.

ADOPTIONS FINALIZED	2015	2016	2017
Adult Adoptions	15	23	23
Agency International Adoptions	4	5	4
Direct Placement Adoptions (voluntary consent to a specific family)	24	15	26
Relative Adoptions	15	17	12
Safe Delivery of Newborn Adoptions	1	0	9
Permanent Ward Adoptions	189	197	157
Non-Relative Guardian Adoptions	7	3	2
Agency Other Adoptions (voluntary release to private adoption agency)	6	5	6
Step-Parent Adoptions	37	41	66
Delayed Registration-Foreign Adoptions	37	25	27
TOTAL ADOPTIONS	335	331	332

DELINQUENCY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

INTAKE DEPARTMENT

The Intake Department plays a major role in the delinquency division of the Court. Intake decisions are the result of a process of assessment and information gathering. The Intake Department acquires its investigative authority from Section 11 of the Juvenile Code.

The intake process begins with a referral sent by a police agency to the Prosecutor's Office or City Attorney's Office. An assistant prosecuting attorney reviews the complaint for legal sufficiency, determines the precise charge, and then refers it to the Intake Department. The Intake Supervisor screens certain cases with subsequent diversion to other counties and to other agencies and programs that deal with certain types of delinquent activity, such as shoplifting, alcohol abuse, and family problems. Other cases receive a letter of warning from the Court. The majority of cases are assigned to Intake probation officers who contact the youth and parents for a preliminary inquiry and decide what type of response should be made to the referral. Intake probation officers assess the seriousness of the offense and the youth's prior court and/or police record. They review prior or present community agency involvement. A special emphasis is placed on evaluating home behavior, parental control and parent/child relationships. School matters such as performance and behavior are evaluated. On certain offenses, the Prosecutor's Office is contacted for case input. In addition, Intake probation officers evaluate damage and loss, and an appropriate court response to the victim of the law violation.

If formal court involvement is not necessary or required by law, the Intake probation officer has a number of options. A case may be diverted for counseling or special services related to the specific law violation (e.g. shoplifting, alcohol or drug use, or family problems). A case may be held in order to monitor the situation and reassess it at a later date. Certain stipulations may be required such as paying restitution to a victim or successfully completing a certain number of community service hours in the Court Work Program. The Intake probation officer may determine, after the preliminary inquiry, that the presenting problem of the law violation has been handled appropriately and no other services are necessary. These cases are termed "adjusted". A petition is authorized if the Intake probation officer determines that formal court action is necessary, or if specific intake guidelines or Michigan laws require it. The case is then transferred to the Probation Unit for assessment and intervention purposes, in preparation for a formal court hearing.

INTAKE STATISTICS	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Juveniles Referred	2059	2064	2047	1888	1689
-Cases assigned to intake staff	1136	1214	1046	881	936
-Cases adjusted	653	506	472	554	393
-Cases to community probation	449	465	446	407	469
-Cases to consent calendar	140	144	147	115	107
-Cases transferred to county of residence	123	150	131	141	140
-Cases dismissed by prosecutor	36	54	62	55	79
-Diverted by Intake Supervisor	701	717	672	631	512
-Petitions received from other counties	118	102	77	86	75
Restitution Collected	\$5570	\$10,030	\$12,665	\$14,939	\$10,218

DELINQUENCY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM

GOAL: To prevent status offenders from being held in Detention without a court order, and to reduce the number of status offenders or youth involved in minor law violations from becoming court wards.

The Crisis Intervention Program is a short-term family counseling program for families with youth between the ages of 12-17 who have runaway from home, are truant from school or have other related school problems, are experiencing family conflicts due to adolescent development issues, are beyond parental control, and/or commit minor law violations. The Crisis Intervention Program also provides assistance in the filing of petitions for the emancipation of minors.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- 90% of all status offenders admitted to Detention without a court order will be released within 6 hours of admission.
- 85% of all status offenders or juveniles involved in minor law violations who receive Crisis Intervention services will be diverted from formal court wardship for at least 120 days.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 100% of all status offenders admitted to Detention without a court order were released from Detention within 6 hours of admission.
- 89% of all status offenders or juveniles involved with minor law violations who received Crisis Intervention services were diverted from court wardship for at least 120 days.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 282 juveniles and their families were served by the Crisis Intervention Program.
- 109 juveniles were released from Detention after Crisis Intervention involvement.
- 74 status offenders were diverted from formal court involvement.
- 3 status offender petitions were authorized for formal court involvement.

The Young Delinquent Intervention Program is a home based service (including counseling, mentoring, and pro-social activities)

YOUNG DELINQUENT INTERVENTION PROGRAM (YDIP)

GOAL: To prevent further delinquency by intervening early with very young offenders.

to children and their parents of young offenders 11 years and younger who have broken the law. This program operates under the reality that the best indicator for future delinquent behavior is the age of onset for delinquency, and that the earlier the intervention in the lives of high-risk youth, then the greater the potential for preventing further acts of delinquency. The court contracts for the provision of these services with D.A. Blodgett for Children.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- 75% of all young offenders in treatment will successfully complete their treatment objectives.
- Less than 10% of all young offenders will have a new law violation while in treatment.
- Less than 5% of all young offenders who successfully complete treatment objectives will have a new law violation within 12 months of discharge from court wardship.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 84% of all the young offenders in treatment successfully completed their treatment objectives.
- 10% of the young offenders in treatment had a new law violation while in treatment.
- 10% of all young offenders who successfully completed treatment objectives had a new law violation within 12 months of discharge from court wardship.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 34 young offenders were served.
- 100% of the families involved in the program indicate on their Parent Satisfaction Survey that they were satisfied with the services provided by the program, the workers involved, and the progress their child made while in the program.

DELINQUENCY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

TRAFFIC UNIT

The Traffic Unit handles misdemeanor traffic violations by juveniles. Depending upon the type of violation and court history, each juvenile must either respond in person or by mail to the violation(s). The Traffic Referee typically requests a suspension of driving privileges for juveniles who fail to respond. In 2016, the Traffic Unit received 100 tickets and collected \$10,293 in fines.

CONSENT CALENDAR

GOAL: To reduce recidivism by diverting low risk juvenile offenders from the formal court docket.

The Consent Calendar is a diversion program provided by court rule that allows for the informal processing of appropriate cases. Consent calendar cases are typically placed under informal supervision of the Court for approximately 90 days. No case may be placed on the Consent Calendar unless the juvenile and the parent agrees to this decision. Failure to comply with the requirements of the Consent Calendar or subsequent law violations most often result in the juvenile's transfer to the formal calendar. If the juvenile successfully completes the Consent Calendar, the court may then destroy all records of the proceedings.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 80% of all juveniles placed on the Consent Calendar will successfully complete the requirements of the program.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 92% of all the juveniles placed on the Consent Calendar successfully completed the requirements of the program.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 107 juveniles and families were served.
- Juveniles were on the Consent Calendar an average of 132 days.
- \$2,450 was collected from juveniles on the Consent Calendar and paid directly to victims.

The Adolescent Sex Offender Treatment Program provides assessment and treatment services to juvenile sex

ADOLESCENT SEX OFFENDER TREATMENT PROGRAM (ASOTP)

GOAL: To prevent further sexual victimization

offenders, ages 8-17.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- 75% of all the juvenile sex offenders in treatment will complete treatment objectives.
- Less than 10% of all the juvenile sex offenders in treatment will re-offend sexually while in treatment.
- Less than 5 juvenile offenders who complete their treatment objectives will re-offend sexually within one year of treatment completion.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 96% of the juvenile sex offenders accepted into treatment completed their treatment objectives.
- 0 juvenile sex offenders re-offended sexually while in treatment.
- 0 juvenile sex offenders re-offended sexually within 1 year of completion of their treatment objectives.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 80 juvenile sex offenders were referred to the program.
- 77 assessments were completed.
- 47 juvenile sex offenders completed treatment.

DELINQUENCY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY PROBATION

GOAL: To reduce further delinquency.

Community Probation is a unique and non-traditional way of providing decentralized and personalized supervision to juveniles and their families. Community Probation places much emphasis on developing cooperative and coordinated relationships with law enforcement, and on providing services and treatment plans that enhance the balanced and restorative justice concept (community safety, competency development, and accountability).

Community probation officers are assigned to specific neighborhood areas and only receive cases from these areas. They also have established offices within these geographical assignments. Probation officers are expected to have at least weekly personal contact with the youth assigned to them and are required to work a certain number of non-traditional hours each month (i.e. nights and weekends).

Surveillance monitoring is an intensive supervision option available to probation officers for juveniles who need such monitoring. The surveillance officer assists the probation officer by supporting the parents and school officials with holding the youth accountable while residing in the community. The surveillance officer typically has random contact with the juvenile on a daily basis.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- Less than 10% of the cases assigned to community probation will be referred by the police for a new felony law violation while on community probation.
- Less than 15% of cases that are discharged successfully from community probation will commit a new law violation and again be referred to the court.
- 80% of parents surveyed immediately after their child is discharged from community probation will indicate satisfaction with the work of the probation officer assigned.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 8% of the juveniles assigned to community probation were involved with a new felony law violation while on community probation.
- 8% of the cases discharged successfully from community probation committed a new law violation and were again referred to the court.
- 91% of the parents surveyed after discharge from community probation indicated satisfaction with the work of the probation officer assigned to their child.

2017 SUMMARY:

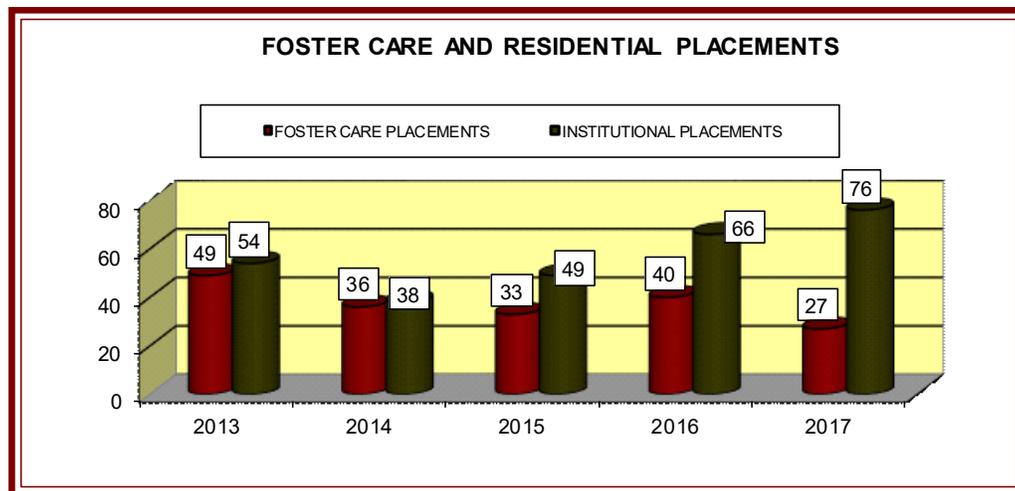
- 454 juveniles were placed on community probation.
- 817 juveniles were served by community probation.
- 20,010 face-to-face contacts were completed by probation officers with juveniles on community probation.
- 5,110 night and weekend hours were worked by probation officers.
- Over 1,680 contacts were made by probation officers with their community police officers.
- 365 juveniles placed on probation were discharged.

DELINQUENCY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT

FOSTER CARE AND INSTITUTIONAL PLACEMENT

Even though the Court places a high priority on working with juvenile offenders in their own homes, some situations require the Court to order the juvenile placed in either foster care or residential institutional placement. Foster care more closely reflects a family home setting, while institutional placement is more restrictive and provides a specific type of treatment modality. The average per diem cost of foster care is approximately \$85. Institutional placement is much more expensive and depending on the type of institution averages about \$200 per day.



DELINQUENCY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY

GOAL: To provide a safe and secure environment for juveniles admitted to Detention.

The function of Detention is to provide temporary care for youth requiring secure custody pending court evaluation and disposition, or pending transfer to another jurisdiction or agency. Detained youth are those whose offenses are so serious that release would endanger public safety or the welfare of the child.

The Detention Facility, which has a bed capacity of 69, currently employs 102 staff (includes school, medical, mental health personnel, etc.) with the majority of that workforce being Youth Specialists.

The Facility's staff training/orientation program is extensive in its coverage of training issues and, in addition to its own staff, offers training to other court staff and County employees. The State's Division of Child Welfare Licensing mandates training in 9 specific areas, and requires at least 24 hours of training annually for each Detention youth specialist employee. Kent County Juvenile Detention met these requirements in 2017.

The Detention Center provides a cognitive behavioral training (CBT) concept for its behavioral management for our residents. This cognitive learning model is designed to change adolescents value and belief systems by getting them to examine their thinking before making choices. The goal is to help reduce recidivism by teaching residents to make rational choices, and maintain this thinking ability after the leave Detention.

Although Detention is not a treatment facility, one of the six units within this facility is utilized as a short-term residential program for Kent County residents who have been ordered to an institutional placement. This four month treatment program, known as the Delta Program, is staffed by the Detention youth specialists and provides services offered to the Detention residents, as well as off-site activities with the primary focus of productive reintegration into their community.

The facility continues to offer a year-round school program. The Lighthouse Academy provides classes Monday through Thursday. Community consultants as well as Detention staff provide Friday classes which include topic areas such as Youth Empowerment, Therapeutic Communication, Physical Education, Yoga, Art Therapy, Health Education (public topics and AIDS, safety, sexual awareness), Life and Social Skills. These Friday classes offer residents a chance to deal with issues that contributed to their coming to the facility, as well as teaching them skills that will help them make better decisions.

DELINQUENCY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY

DETENTION FACILITY STATISTICS									
	Males			Females			Totals		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Admissions	918	712	749	364	303	362	1282	1015	1111
Releases	928	709	741	368	301	369	1296	1010	1110

DAYS OF CARE PROVIDED						
	Days of Care			Average Daily Census		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Totals	21,515	21,613	21,569	55	56	59

PER DIEM COST OF CARE		
2015	2016	2017
\$239	\$280	\$307



FRIEND OF THE COURT

FRIEND OF THE COURT— DAN FOJTIK

MISSION: TO SERVE THE COURT AND THE FAMILIES OF KENT COUNTY TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARE SUPPORTED, BOTH FINANCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY.

As set forth in the 1998 Child Support Performance and Incentive Act, state child support enforcement programs are measured in five key areas: Collections on Arrears, Total Collections, Paternity Establishment, Cost Effectiveness and Order Establishment. The following rankings represent how the Kent County Friend of the Court measured in 2017 against the eleven (11) largest counties in Michigan, excluding Wayne County. Those factors, and Kent's rankings, are as follows:

	<u>KENT COUNTY RANKING</u>
• COLECTIONS ON ARREARS	#1
• COLLECTIONS ON CURRENT	#2
• PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT *	#2
• ORDER ESTABLISHMENT *	#8

* Performance in these two areas is not controlled by the Kent County Friend of the Court office.

The Friend of the Court (FOC) employs a wide range of enforcement remedies and innovative strategies to improve the reliability of child support payments. Emphasis is placed on having realistic child support orders, reducing

COLLECTION ON CURRENT SUPPORT (Child, Spousal, Medical and Birthing Expenses):

unpayable child support debt and intervening early when parents begin to struggle to make payments.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- Collect 80% of total court ordered child support that was charged.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 77% of court ordered child support charged was collected.

2017 SUMMARY:

- \$77,258,641 (Total current support distributed)
- \$99,814,408 (Total support charged)
- \$100,824,908 (Total collections including current and arrears)

FRIEND OF THE COURT

INCOME WITHHOLDING

With income withholding, payments are deducted from the payer's check and sent to the Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU) in Lansing. When a payer changes jobs and/or fails to advise the FOC of new employment, the computer system checks the state Data Warehouse and automatically sends an Income Withholding Notice (IWN) to the source of income.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- Collect 75% of child support collections by withholding order.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 76% was collected via income withholding order.

2017 SUMMARY:

- \$76,365,132 was collected via income withholding.

SHOW-CAUSE HEARINGS AND BENCH WARRANTS

When payments are not made regularly and the payer does not work with us to make payments or remedy his or her inability to pay, we may schedule a show cause contempt hearing. At the hearing, case managers attempt to resolve the non-payment or present the case before the Court for a determination of contempt. If a person does not appear for the hearing, a Bench Warrant may issue.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 70% of those ordered to jail as a result of a contempt hearing will pay out within two weeks.
- 85% of the bench warrants handled by FOC deputies will be resolved without arrest.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 82% of those who were ordered to jail as a result of a contempt hearing paid and were released within two weeks.
- 96% of the bench warrants handled by FOC deputies were resolved without arrest.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 74 payers were found in contempt and ordered to jail.
- 619 warrants were resolved without arrest.

TAX OFFSET

A commonly used enforcement remedy is the interception of a payer's state and federal tax refunds.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 90% of cases qualifying for a tax offset are submitted.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 100% of cases qualified for a tax intercept were submitted.

2017 SUMMARY:

- \$4,101,714 was collected from the Federal tax offset program.
- \$366,338 was collected from the State tax offset program.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

LICENSE SUSPENSION

The FOC may petition to suspend a payer's driver, occupational, and/or recreational (hunting/fishing) license(s). Suspension of driver license is automatic if a payer fails to appear for a scheduled show cause hearing. Our goal in suspending licenses is to encourage the payer of support to resolve the non-payment that led to the suspension, and to obtain a conditional order to encourage future payments.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 75% of the court ordered amount will be collected on conditional license suspension orders.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 89% of the court ordered amount was collected on conditional license suspension orders.

2017 SUMMARY:

- \$21,044,698 was collected on cases with a conditional license suspension order.

LEINS AND GARNISHMENTS

The law allows the FOC to place a lien against property owned by the payer of support when an arrearage has accrued. Garnishments may also be served against a delinquent payer's inheritance.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 80% of cases submitted for a lien or garnishment are ordered or perfected.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 100% of cases submitted for a lien or garnishment received one.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 2 real estate liens was placed for a potential future collection.
- 16 liens/garnishments were placed against inheritances and \$73,187 was collected.
- 1 claim was filed against decedent obligor's estate with \$15,767 collected.

ASSET SEIZURE

The FOC is authorized to pursue asset seizure and/or vehicle booting when a payer is delinquent on child support.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 50% of cases that have this remedy applied received a payment within 90 days due to the specific remedy.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 50% of cases received a payment within 90 days due to the specific remedy.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 11 asset seizure orders were entered resulting in a collection of \$11,624.37.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

HEALTH CARE

The Health Care Unit has two main objectives. One is to enforce court orders to maintain health care insurance. The other is to enforce court orders related to uninsured health care expenses.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

- 65% of cases have orders with health care provisions.
- 90% of cases with health care reimbursement accounts received payment.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES-2017:

- 83% of cases with orders have health care provisions.
- 97% of cases with health care reimbursement accounts received payment.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 21,561 orders have a health care provision included.
- 4,339 requests for reimbursement for uninsured health care expense claims were processed.

The primary function and statutory duty of the Parenting Time Unit is to secure compliance with parenting time and

PARENTING TIME

physical custody orders. This is accomplished through education, assisting parents with modification of their orders, or helping in other ways to prevent future violations. Also, the FOC continues to manage the Access and Visitation Grant that allows payment for supervised parenting time and for therapeutic reintroduction on specific cases through the contract agencies.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 90% of parenting time complaints resolved prior to a contempt hearing.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 86% of parenting time complaints were resolved prior to a contempt hearing.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 2,453 formal written parenting time complaints were filed.
- 78 hearings were scheduled on parenting time violations.
- 21 families were afforded parenting time through the Access and Visitation Grant.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

SUPPORT REVIEW

Support reviews are commenced when a client submits a written request and is eligible for a review (every three years or if there has been a significant change in circumstances), by court order or upon FOC's own initiative. Friend of the Court is statutorily required to complete support reviews within 120 days after notice of the review is sent, but it is Kent County's goal to complete all support reviews within 90 days.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 90% of all support reviews will be completed within 90 days.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 80% of all support reviews were completed in 90 days.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 2,904 support reviews were completed.

RESPONSIBLE PARENT PROGRAM

The Responsible Parent Program was established in 2016. Case managers in this program actively partner with potential employers and placement agencies to assist payers who need a job. They also conduct outreaches within the community to help payers who are often reluctant to engage with the Friend of the Court. Once a payer is referred to the program, the case manager schedules an appointment with the payer to identify any barriers that make it difficult to comply with the child support order. Once identified, the case manager can make appropriate referrals for job placements and searches, determine whether a case qualifies for a support review to ensure that charges are based on ability to pay, and/or provide information about parenting time issues and services.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 90% of the eligible payers who are referred to the program will be scheduled for a first appointment within 14 days.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 81% were scheduled for a first appointment within 14 days of the referral.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 215 payers were scheduled for a first appointment within 14 days of the referral.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

EARLY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Early Engagement Program was created in June of 2017. The goal of this program is to provide information about the Friend of the Court to clients who have not had contact with the office previously to:

- A. Break down barriers to communication.
- B. Provide accurate information and clarify expectations.
- C. Provide early access to the Responsible Parent Program.
- D. Provide information about the availability of facilitated parenting time when appropriate.
- E. Ensure that all provisions of the support order are understood.

We do this by reaching out to parents with a new case at the Friend of the Court by phone within two weeks of processing the initial order. We review the order prior to contacting them and answer any questions they may have about their order or the information that was included in the new case packet. If we are not able to reach the clients by phone, we send an email or letter providing information on ways to contact the Friend of the Court office to let them know we are available to answer questions they may have.

Because this program is very new, no statistics are available at this time.

CLIENT COMMUNICATION

It is important that clients are able to communicate effectively with us. During 2017, we received 86,616 phone calls, of which 90% were resolved at first contact without transferring callers. We also received 161,357 letters, faxes and emails. The State of Michigan maintains a website that is easily accessed 24 hours a day by cell phone, computer or other device to find case information including payments and balances. Case managers are also available for walk-in clients, two days a week, as well as by appointment.

It is also important to provide clients with important case information and to anticipate questions. With this in mind, we email clients reminders about court dates and provide information about updated processes. We also email quarterly newsletters and inform our clients of job opportunities and other events in the community. In 2017, we emailed our newsletter to 65,263 clients and sent 83,250 other emails.

We provide the parties in all new cases basic information about the Friend of the Court. This information includes contact information and general information about child support, parenting time and health care. In 2017, we

EDUCATION

partnered with Grand Valley State University and Grand Rapids Public Schools to develop a series of entertaining orientation videos to help our clients understand the Friend of the Court processes better. We also maintain forms and other information on our website and in our lobby.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

CUSTODY/PARENTING TIME EVALUATIONS

Custody and parenting time evaluations are initiated after a written order is received from the Court. The purpose of an evaluation is to gather information regarding the best interests of the children as defined in the (12) best interest factors of the Michigan Child Custody Act and to complete a written report and recommendation for the Court.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 90% of all Court requested custody and parenting time evaluations will be completed within 90 days from the date the Court ordered the referral.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 85% of all Court requested custody and parenting time evaluations were completed within 90 days of the date the Court ordered the referral.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 710 total evaluations completed in 2017.

Mediations are conducted on request of the parties or by court order. The mediator assists the parents in reaching

MEDIATION AND CONCILIATIONS

agreements on the issues of custody and parenting time. If the parties reach an agreement during mediation, they may sign an agreement prepared by the mediator, which is then entered as an order by the Court. Conciliations are conducted on the request of either party for the purpose of creating a temporary order regarding custody, parenting time and child support while a case is pending. If the parties reach an agreement regarding these issues, they may sign a stipulated order prepared by the conciliator. If the parties do not reach an agreement, the conciliator may issue a proposed order to the Court.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

- 85% of mediations and conciliations will be scheduled within 60 days of being requested.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME-2017:

- 95% of mediations and conciliations were scheduled within 60 days.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 394 total mediations and conciliations scheduled in 2017.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

GRIEVANCES

In an effort to assure that the FOC is responsive to the concerns of clients, the FOC Act provides a grievance procedure for complaints about FOC operations or employees. A grievance may not be used to change or object to a FOC recommendation, or to disagree with a referee's recommendation or a judge's decision. Once a grievance has been received, the FOC must investigate and respond within 30 days or issue a statement explaining why a response is not possible within that timeframe. The Kent County FOC has always been receptive of these types of formal complaints. Rather than being considered a negative reflection of office performance, it is a good way to measure customer satisfaction and help improve services where necessary.

2017 SUMMARY:

- 18 grievances were received in 2017.
- 100% were responded to within 30 days of receipt.

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was created by the legislature to assist citizens and the FOC office with issues concerning office operations and employees. Although having a CAC was initially mandatory, the legislature eliminated this requirement and currently only two counties statewide have one, Macomb and Kent. Minutes from its meetings are submitted to the County Board, while sub-committees review actual grievances. There were no grievances filed directly with the CAC in 2017; however, all 18 grievances received by the FOC were forwarded to the CAC for their review. Of note, the CAC agreed fully with the response of the FOC on 17 grievances and partially agreed with the FOC on one response.

CLERK'S OFFICE / CIRCUIT COURT DIVISION



LISA POSTHUMUS LYONS - COUNTY CLERK, CLERK OF THE COURT
MARTHA IRWIN - CHIEF DEPUTY CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

The Circuit Court Division of the Kent County Clerk's Office is located on the 2nd floor of the Courthouse. With a staff of 22, the office opens, maintains, tracks and stores all cases filed in the civil, criminal and family divisions of the Circuit Court. Court files are open to the public and may be viewed in the Clerk's Office between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Our office collects and distributes state mandated costs, court-ordered fines, cost, restitution, crime victim rights fee, and other assessments. In 2017, we collected over \$3,900,000 for Kent County. In addition, the Clerk's Office handles bonds posted in criminal cases, which often can be applied against court-ordered assessments at the conclusion of the case, thereby increasing the Clerk's collection activities.

Throughout 2017 the Clerk's Office managed the receipt and filing of 11,743 new cases. Additionally, all formal juvenile delinquency and neglect/abuse cases are processed through this office. In 2017, the Clerk's Office continued to provide e-filing in lieu of traditional mail or hand delivery to the Clerk's Office for cases assigned to the Court's Specialized Business Docket. The Community Archive Center (CARC) continues to provide much needed storage space for approximately 40+ years' worth of the Circuit Court's oldest civil, domestic, and criminal case files. This offsite storage includes microfilm duplicates, steno notes and docket books from as far back as the 1800's. The most recent files reside within the Kent County Courthouse.

The County Clerk remains committed to providing access for the public and attorneys to these records and services through a technology initiative that began with the Register of Deeds and Vital Records Divisions in 2003. The Clerk's Office Courtside currently offers online services to request certified divorce decrees and motion calendars for scheduling pro confesso hearings with referees and motion hearings with all judges. As part of MiFILE, the statewide e-filing system sponsored by the State Court Administrative Office, the 17th Circuit Court is slated for its e-filing launch in 2018.

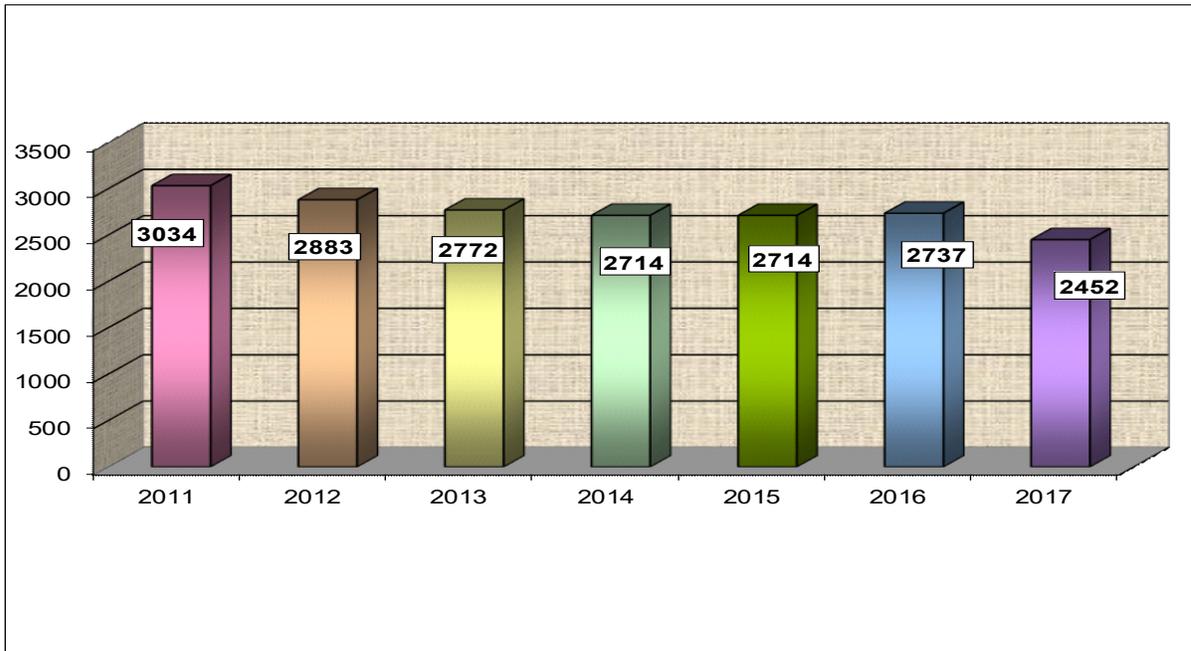
On January 1, 2017 Lisa Posthumus Lyons began serving the residents of Kent County as the County Clerk/ Register of Deeds. As the Clerk/Register, she is committed to continually updating office technologies and procedures so that services can be most efficiently and accurately provided.

CIRCUIT COURT PROBATION

Donald Martin, Area Manager
Rita Dooley, Program Manager

Kent County Circuit Court Probation is the second largest Probation Office in the State of Michigan. The office is located at 82 Ionia Avenue, Suite 100. Supervising the 2,512 probationers in Kent County are 40 probation agents. In addition to the agents, three supervisors and seven support staff ensure that the needs of the Court are met. Agents are responsible for providing presentence investigations to the Court, supervising probationers in the community, referring probations to appropriate programing, providing the Court with information regarding the probationer's progress and making certain that the financial obligations to the Court and victims are met by the probationer.

PRESENTENCE REPORTS COMPLETED



The chart shows the number of presentence investigation reports completed each year from 2010 through 2017. The Probation Office has several specialized caseloads and while being supervised, probationers may be assigned to a substance abuse, sex offender, electronic monitoring, SAI, veteran, TASC (Treatment and Support Court), low risk reporting or interstate caseloads. Probationers must comply with their conditions of probation. To monitor this, agents have ongoing contact with probationers' family members, employers, teachers, and counselors. Through referrals to a variety of programs such as substance abuse treatment, vocational and educational programs, electronic monitoring, psychological counseling, and community service/work crew, probationers are provided the necessary tools with which to make positive changes in their lives and become responsible, contributing members of the community.



STATE OF MICHIGAN
KENT COUNTY PROBATE COURT

DAVID M. MURKOWSKI
CHIEF JUDGE

SUITE 9500 C
180 OTTAWA AVENUE NW
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503-2751

To the Citizens of Kent County:

On behalf of the administrators and employees of the Kent County Probate Court, I am proud to submit for your review our annual report for 2017. The report contains pertinent information regarding the jurisdiction, responsibilities, performance and achievements of the Probate Court. With this report, we take the opportunity to examine our collective work in the last year and to identify our needs and plan our strategic goals for the next year.

Our successes and accomplishments are rooted in our skilled and dedicated employees who continue to maintain, improve, and deliver quality services to the public in the face of continued docket growth and limited resources. We will continue to measure performance to improve efficiency, harness technological advances to increase public access, and re-engineer court operations as prudent stewards of our public resources.

At the end of 2017, Probate Register and Court Administrator Susan Flakne announced her retirement. Ms. Flakne has served this court and the larger community with grace and distinction for more than a decade. She will leave a legacy of innovation, personalized customer service, diligence and collaboration. Through her effort and the engagement of community partners, the Kent County Guardianship Program was retooled structurally and financially to more effectively serve the needs of our Kent County community. Her institutional knowledge will be sorely missed, and we wish her nothing but the best in retirement.

It has been an honor serving you as the chief judge of the Kent County Probate Court for the last ten years. We pledge to you our best effort to deliver services to you efficiently and in a person-centered venue. I thank you, the citizens of Kent County, for your trust and confidence. It remains an honor to serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David M. Murkowski".

David M. Murkowski
Chief Judge, Kent County Probate Court

DMM:ajc

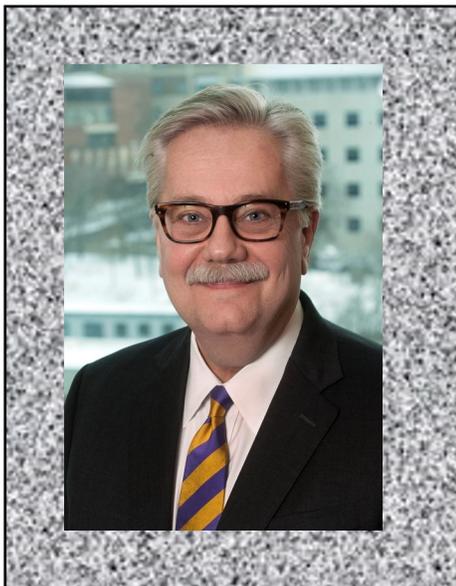
PROBATE COURT

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Kent County Probate Court is to provide an accessible, efficient, and person-centered venue to secure the peaceful and sound resolution of matters, where every individual is treated with dignity and respect.

The Probate Court is a trial court of statutory jurisdiction in Michigan. It has exclusive jurisdiction over matters relating to: the estates of decedents; trusts; guardianships of developmentally disabled persons, legally incapacitated adults, and minors; conservatorships for protected adults and minors, protective orders; accounts of other fiduciaries; and petitions for hospitalization of mentally ill persons. The Probate Court also has jurisdiction over a myriad of other types of civil actions, in particular where an estate, trust, fiduciary or ward is a party. By the nature of the matters within its jurisdiction, the Probate Court is primarily concerned with the protection of incapacitated individuals and their assets and the proper transfer of assets at death.

JUDGE DAVID M. MURKOWSKI



was born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 1979 he graduated cum laude from Marquette University, where he was awarded the university's Outstanding Student Service Award and the Polanki College Achievement Scholarship. In 1979 Judge Murkowski was also inducted into the National Jesuit Honor Society. He attended Western Michigan University's Thomas M. Cooley Law School and was an honor roll graduate in 1983. Judge Murkowski served as law clerk to the Michigan House of Representatives Civil Rights Committee and worked as a solo practitioner in Grand Rapids until 1993, when he joined the law firm of Dilley & Dilley. He specialized in criminal defense, juvenile neglect and delinquency and probate law, and served as managing partner of Dilley, Dilley, Murkowski & Goller until 2006 when he was appointed to the Kent County Probate bench to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of the Honorable Janet A. Haynes. In December of 2007, the Michigan Supreme Court appointed Judge Murkowski to serve as the Chief Judge of the Kent County Probate Court commencing January 1, 2008. Judge Murkowski currently serves as the Immediate past President of the Michigan Probate Judges Association and as a member of the Judicial Council of the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Michigan. He has previously served as council member of the Probate and Estate Planning Section of the State Bar of Michigan and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Kent County Family and Children's Coordinating Council. Judge Murkowski has lectured for the Michigan Judicial Institute, ICLE's Probate and Estate Planning Institute, the Michigan Probate Judges Association and the Grand Rapids Bar Association. Judge Murkowski is a chapter author of *Michigan Probate Litigation: A Guide to Contested Litigation, 2nd Ed.*, a contributor to the *Michigan Probate Benchbook*, associate editor of *Inter-Com*, a journal publication of the Michigan Probate Judges Association, and was a contributor to the drafting of the Michigan Trust Code. In 2014, Judge Murkowski was the recipient of the Judicial Contributions in Law and Aging Award by Elder Law of Michigan, was selected as a Leader in the Law by Michigan Lawyers Weekly, and was elected as a Fellow of the Michigan State Bar Foundation.

PROBATE COURT

CASELOAD AND CASEFLOW

The number of new filings in the Kent County Probate Court held steady in 2017 as compared to 2016, but maintained a 6% increase in case filings as compared to 2015.

NEW FILINGS	2015	2016	2017
Unsupervised Estates	821	784	840
Supervised Estates	0	1	1
Small Estates	402	344	381
Trusts	72	78	79
Guardianships – Legally Incapacitated Adult	478	469	505
Guardianships - Minor	189	221	233
Guardianships – Developmentally Disabled Person	149	160	193
Conservatorships – Legally Incapacitated Adult	179	183	183
Conservatorships - Minor	68	46	46
Mentally Ill – Petitions for Hospitalization	2184	2183	2250
Mentally Ill – Petitions for Transport for Exam	255	270	292
Mentally Ill Cases for Other Counties	1484	1484	1745
Civil and Other	1566	1523	1614
Total:	7847	7746	8362

The nature of many probate cases is such that they often continue for many years. While administration of most estates of deceased persons is completed within a year, guardianships and conservatorships for minors often continue until the child is 18 years old, and the vast majority of guardianships and conservatorships for adults continue for the lifetime of the protected individual. Thus, a fluctuation in the number of new filings does not necessarily equate to a commensurate decline in the number of active matters requiring ongoing Court monitoring and supervision.

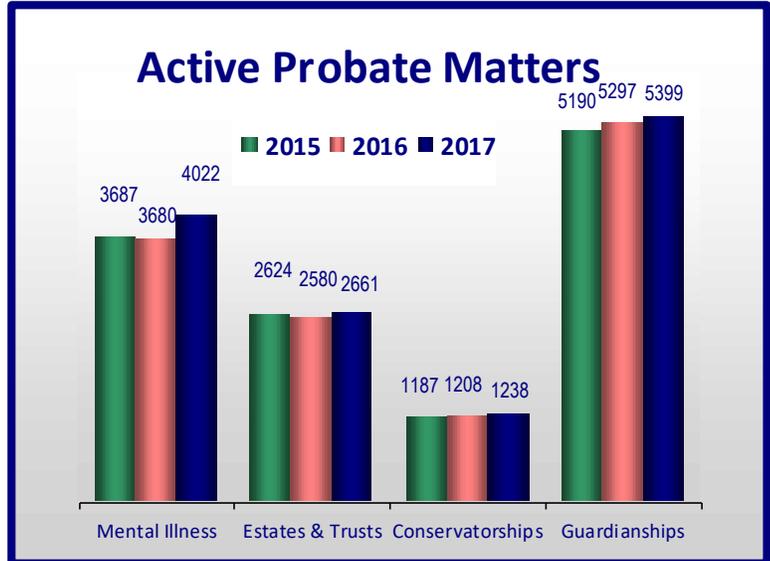
ACTIVE CASES	2015	2016	2017
Estates and Trusts	2624	2580	2261
Guardianships – Legally Incapacitated Adult	2276	2357	2425
Guardianships – Minor	1258	1233	1168
Guardianships – Developmentally Disabled Person	1656	1707	1806
Conservatorships – Legally Incapacitated Adult	824	863	883
Conservatorships - Minor	363	345	355
Mentally Ill	2200	2196	2277
Mentally Ill Cases for Other Counties	1487	1484	1745
Civil and Other	1576	1529	1627
Total:	14,261	14,294	14,947

Cases involving the in-hospitalization of mentally ill persons are a significant portion of the docket of the Probate Court. Until 3/4/14, Judge Murkowski and his court recorder, as well as a Kent County assistant prosecutor, traveled twice each week to our three local psychiatric facilities- St. Mary’s Pine Rest, Forest View, and St. Mary’s Psychiatric Medical Unit (PMU), for hearings on petitions for involuntary hospitalization. Effective 3/4/14, these hearings are conducted via videoconferencing, thus saving the time and expense of travel. Because Kent County has developed into a regional psychiatric treatment center providing over 293 adult inpatient beds, residents of other counties are frequently hospitalized here and the Kent County Probate Court arranges for and conducts the necessary hearings. This involves a significant dedication of judicial and staff time and resources.

PROBATE COURT

CASELOAD AND CASEFLOW

The State Court Administrator's Office sets guidelines for how long probate matters should take to resolve. In 2017 the Kent County Probate Court met or exceeded those state time guidelines for disposition of all contested matters. In particular, 99.3% of all mental illness proceedings were disposed within 14 days (guidelines call for 90% within that time). Those few cases which took more than 14 days usually involved demands for jury trials or independent psychological evaluations by the respondents. Guidelines call for 75% of all guardianship, conservatorship and protective order proceedings to be disposed of within 90 days, and the Kent County Probate Court achieved a disposition rate of 99% of those cases within 90 days.



GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM

A large portion of the caseload of the Court involves guardianships and conservatorships for legally incapacitated or developmentally disabled adults. In the majority of these cases, a family member or friend is appointed to act as guardian or conservator for the ward. However, in many cases there is no family member or friend who is suitable and willing to serve. In those cases it is often in the ward's best interest that a professional be appointed. In Kent County we are fortunate to have the Kent County Guardianship Program, developed by the Kent County Department of Health & Human Services and Probate Court to provide guardianship and conservatorship services for adult Kent County residents who have no one else to serve them. For more than 25 years the Program had been operated by DHHS and managed by employees of DHHS. However in recent years state DHHS administration (not local DHHS) has been increasingly unwilling to devote staff time to operation the Program, and staff time to manage the Program was drastically reduced in 2015. Fortunately, Mercy Health St. Mary's and Spectrum Health, frequent users of the Program for patients at their hospitals, had approached the Probate Court to see if they could assist the Program so as to make professional guardians more readily available. Effective 10/1/15, Kent County took over the Guardianship Program from DHHS, with placement of the Program at the Probate Court, and the two hospitals each agreed to provide funding of \$50,000 per year for 3 years to pay for more guardian fees for indigent cases and also the services of the Guardian Monitor to manage the Program. Where the ward is indigent and has no other means to pay the fee of the guardian, the Program pays a modest monthly fee (currently \$55) for the services of a professional guardian. Funding to pay for the Program and these fees currently comes from 4 sources: Kent County (approximately \$160,000 per year), the Kent County Senior Millage (approximately \$120,000 per year – wards must be over the age of 60 and meet residency and income requirements), the State of Michigan (approximately \$43,000 per year) and Mercy Health St. Mary's and Spectrum Health (approximately \$30,000 per year after payment of \$70,000 for cost of Guardian Monitor). This funding permits the Program to pay for guardians for a maximum of 480 indigent wards for a year. As of the end of December, 2017 there were 42 guardians in the program serving a total of 939 wards. It is anticipated that the revitalized Program will be able to grow and meet the increasing need for professional guardians for vulnerable adults in our community. We are grateful for the steadfast support of Kent County and all of our community partners in keeping this Program alive and strong.

PROBATE COURT

ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY

**KENT COUNTY COURTHOUSE
180 OTTAWA AVE NW, SUITE 2500
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503**

Judge

Suite 9500C

Chief Judge David M. Murkowski	- Fax	(616) 632-5074
Secretary/Clerk - Jeana Stillwagon	- Phone	(616) 632-5428
Court Recorder - Aimee Cory	- Phone	(616) 632-5428
	- Phone	(616) 632-5424

Probate Register

Suite 4400

Probate Register - Martha Irwin	- Fax	(616) 632-5152
	- Phone	(616) 632-5422

Probate Court Clerk

General

Probate Manager - Debora Sanchez	- Fax	(616) 632-5430
Erna Ingram	- Phone	(616) 632-5440
Lorah Edmondson	- Phone	(616) 632-5417
Rhonda Brown	- Phone	(616) 632-5420
Catherine Waters	- Phone	(616) 632-5418
Sandy Rickert	- Phone	(616) 632-5421
Ashley Zander	- Phone	(616) 632-5433
Andrew Oeffner	- Phone	(616) 632-5423
	- Phone	(616) 632-5432
	- Phone	(616) 632-5434

Mental Health Division

Karen Noorman	- Phone	(616) 632-5425
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Guardianship Specialist

Kalee Redder	- Phone	(616) 632-5416
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2017

17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT &
KENT COUNTY PROBATE COURT



ANNUAL REPORT