



Programs – Overview and Responsibilities

Summary

[Programs](#) helps advance the Judiciary’s mission to provide fair, effective, and efficient justice for all by supporting court innovations and services statewide.

- Programs provides grant funding, subject matter expertise, judicial council committee support, grants management, and other services for courts and justice partners in the areas of:
 - 1) access to justice,
 - 2) juvenile and family services,
 - 3) mediation and conflict resolution,
 - 4) problem-solving courts, and
 - 5) research and analysis.
- Grant processes have been made more consistent and user friendly over time, and a new cloud-based grant’s management system was deployed for the fiscal year 2022 grants cycle.
- Programs provided a high-level of support for courts during the COVID-19 pandemic by maximizing use of remote technology and increasing contacts and coordination with stakeholders.

Information on areas of responsibility in each of the above-enumerated areas of Programs’ work follows.

Access to Justice

[Access to Justice](#) works to enhance meaningful participation for all in the Maryland courts; develops innovative tools, resources, practices and programs to address barriers to justice; and assist courts in providing fair, effective, and efficient justice in a diverse and changing world. Access to Justice summarizes its work each year in two annual publications – [Resources for Self-Represented Litigants in the Maryland Courts](#) and [Court Language Services](#) – which are posted on the Judiciary’s website. Access to Justice also publishes online a monthly Access to Justice [Impact Dashboard](#).

Responsibilities in Access to Justice include:

- [Language access](#) which includes management of the Court Interpreter Program, translation services, and support for a range of language access services and innovations
- Maryland Court Help Centers
- Maryland Court Help web content and resources for self-represented litigants
- [Guide & File](#) – guided interviews to help the public complete court forms
- Maryland Court Help App -- [Maryland Law Help](#)
- Video library and Court TV -- [My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland](#)
- Access to Justice grants
- Accessibility -- [Accommodations](#) page and [Court Accessibility Toolkit](#)
- Staffing Judicial Council committees, subcommittees, and work groups
- Complaint investigation and resolution
- Attorney Information System support including [pro bono reporting](#)

Juvenile and Family Services

[Juvenile and Family Services](#) provides subject matter expertise to support Judiciary leadership and Judicial Council Committees. Juvenile and Family Services is a major source of state and federal funding for courts and justice partners.

Responsibilities in Juvenile and Family Services include:

- Staffing Judicial Council committees, subcommittees, and work groups
- Juvenile and family services grants to circuit courts and justice partners
- Leveraging federal funds for child welfare and child support enforcement
- Child welfare court improvement plan implementation initiatives
- Child Abuse, Neglect, and Delinquency Options (CANDO) conference, Family Law University, Child Council training, Guardianship Mediation training, and other education
- Guardianship monitoring
- Family law video library, forms, and other resources for litigants

Mediation and Conflict Resolution

The [Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office](#) (MACRO) has expanded the availability, use and quality of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) through its work with the courts, ADR practitioner groups, community partners, and the public.

MACRO's responsibilities include:

- Staffing Judicial Council committees, subcommittees, and work groups
- Grants to support Court ADR, community mediation, and restorative justice
- Helping to advance the use of ADR in complex litigation
- Promoting mediator excellence
- Advancing ADR awareness
- Statewide roster of court ADR practitioners
- Evaluating court ADR programs
- Online Dispute Resolution experts
- Providing direct service within the courts upon request
- Conflict Resolution Public Policy Fellows Programs; 40-hour basic mediation trainings, and other educational initiatives
- Bookmark contest

Problem-Solving Courts

The [Office of Problem-Solving Courts](#) (OPSC) assists Maryland problem-solving courts in development, maintenance, and advancement of a collaborative therapeutic system on behalf of the Maryland Judiciary.

OPSC's responsibilities include:

- Judicial Council Committee support and subject matter expertise
- Grants to support problem-solving courts at the circuit court level
- Vetting District Court budget request for problem solving court programs
- Assisting with development of new problem-solving court programs
- Ongoing education and hands-on help for new and existing programs
- Annual symposium, monthly webinars, and other formal training programs
- Developing and monitoring performance measures
- Leveraging federal funds and other resources

Research and Analysis

[Research and Analysis](#) (R&A) provides valuable performance and management information to program directors, judges, and leadership including trial and appellate case processing performance, an interactive [data dashboard](#), and management reports. R&A assists in the development of specialized programs and differentiated case management plans by providing data and analysis. R&A provides staff support to several Judicial Council Committees, subcommittees, and work groups, including the Court Operations Committee and the Jury Operations Roundtable. R&A recommends data policies and supports data validity and consistency through the statewide Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) User Group and its associated work groups, and the Data Governance Subcommittee. R&A works closely with other departments in Programs to evaluate problem-solving courts, self-help centers, mediation, and a variety of projects and initiatives.

Research and Analysis' Responsibilities include:

- Producing a variety of regular reports to leadership and the General Assembly, including trial and appellate envelope processing numbers and trends, case processing performance, bail review statistics, wiretaps, reserved case reporting from all circuit court judges, and clerk and judgeship certifications
- Producing data and court workload statistics for the annual statistical abstract and in response to records requests
- Supporting uniform data policies and practices by supporting various MDEC court user groups
- Developing manuals, quick reference guides, and weekly communications to all MDEC Users
- Supporting Judicial Council committees, subcommittees, and work groups
- Writing fiscal impact notes each legislative session and supporting legislative implementation

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Homepage: www.courts.state.md.us/aoc/programs