

**MARYLAND JUDICIARY**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**Update**

**December 2017**

# GREETINGS FROM CHIEF JUDGE MARY ELLEN BARBERA



December 2017

I am pleased to share this Strategic Plan Update, which details the work of the Maryland Judiciary over the past year to achieve its strategic goals. Adopted in 2014, the Judiciary's 2015 to 2020 strategic plan includes goals guided by our mission to provide fair, efficient, and effective justice for all:

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

The Maryland Judiciary made significant progress in 2017. We expanded electronic case filing and management to 70 percent of the state's jurisdictions, effectively transitioning from paper-based transactions to the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) platform. We are on pace to achieve our goal to bring MDEC to every court by 2021. We achieved meaningful progress for Maryland's youth, seniors, veterans, non-English speakers, crime victims, lower-income Marylanders, and the many others who rely on the Judiciary for resolution of legal matters. And, in 2017, our problem-solving courts helped Maryland communities to grow safer and stronger through collaboration with justice partners, social workers, treatment providers, and court personnel. Together, we were able to assist approximately 3,500 Marylanders who are struggling with addiction and other conditions.

The accomplishments detailed in this year's report reflect the more than two million cases that were handled by the Maryland Judiciary in fiscal year 2017 and are the result of the hard work and commitment of the judges, magistrates, clerks, administrators, and staff who work for the Judiciary. This report lists a variety of achievements; just as important, it marks our dedication to the work ahead to fulfill the mission of the Judiciary in serving the people of Maryland.

**MARY ELLEN BARBERA**  
**CHIEF JUDGE**  
**COURT OF APPEALS OF MARYLAND**



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## *Mission*

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

## *Vision*

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

## *Goals*

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

# MAJOR TRENDS, EFFORTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2017

## Provide access to justice.

During fiscal year 2017, Judiciary self-help centers served more than 121,000 litigants via phone, live chat, email, and walk-in visits, providing free limited legal help and information for people representing themselves in civil cases. A new District Court walk-in self-help center, the fourth in the state, opened in the Baltimore City District Court in September. The American Bar Association honored the Judiciary's network of self-help services with "Meritorious Recognition" through its 2017 Louis M. Brown Award.

## Be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs.

Problem-solving courts continued to address the needs of people whose struggles with addiction and mental health issues have brought them into the justice system. By addressing the unique needs of these defendants and combining essential services with supervision and oversight, the courts helped build safer communities. In 2017, a new mental health court in Baltimore City was approved by the Court of Appeals.



## Communicate effectively with stakeholders.

The Judiciary connected Marylanders to court information and services through its website, videos, public information, speakers' bureau, media relations, employee outreach, social media, advertising, online resources, and events.

## Improve systems and processes.

More than 70 percent of Maryland's courts are now operating with a modern case management system that moves the courts away from cumbersome and time-consuming paper processes, expedites the movement of records among courts, and allows 24-hour electronic filing. Also, the Judiciary made a significant investment to improve the internal management of attorney records with the launch of the Attorney Information System (AIS), a unified database of information about Maryland attorneys that is maintained by the court-related agencies that support the Court of Appeals in its role of regulating the legal profession in Maryland. The Judiciary was honored by the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management for its electronic land records recording system, which provides a convenient, efficient alternative to the burdensome paper-based filing process.





## Be accountable.

Trial courts throughout the state completed new and updated case management plans using a standardized template developed for the Judiciary by outside experts under the oversight of a work group comprised of judges and Judiciary staff. For the fourth consecutive year, Maryland's Court of Appeals met its standard of issuing rulings on all cases during the same term in which the cases are heard. The Court of Special Appeals and the trial courts continued to make progress toward meeting their case-processing time standards.

## Assure the highest level of service.

Human Resources policies and other administrative policies and procedures were thoroughly reviewed and updated, and a searchable online employee handbook was created for use by employees. An online Judiciary career center was established to facilitate job applications as well as highlight the benefits of choosing a career with the Maryland Judiciary with the result that the Judiciary's vacancy rate dropped considerably. Proficiency-based educational programs were established in order to support a new paradigm for training a professional workforce to serve the public more efficiently and effectively. The orientation program for new trial judges, which has been presented for more than 20 years, was redesigned and refocused.

## Build partnerships.

The Judiciary worked with justice partners to implement new rules concerning bail reform, which prevent people from being held in jails because of inability to pay. Judges are also increasingly using e-warrants to support night and weekend requests from law enforcement. The Baltimore City District Court Re-Entry Project (DCREP), which works to reduce criminal recidivism in Baltimore, celebrated its second graduation ceremony. With the participation and support of Baltimore City District Court judges, the DCREP partners with local organizations that train participants for the workforce in a variety of fields; the program has garnered the collaboration of members of the Office of the State's Attorney, the Public Defender's Office, private defense counsel bar, the Division of Parole and Probation, pre-trial supervision, and specialty court programs, such as mental health, drug, and veterans courts.

## Use resources wisely.

The Judiciary ensured that baseline safety, and security measures and improvements were put in place in courts throughout the state and set priorities for ongoing maintenance, testing, and equipment replacement. Baltimore County celebrated the groundbreaking for a new District courthouse, and construction continued on a new Circuit courthouse in Queen Anne's County, the first in that county since the existing courthouse was built during George Washington's presidency. Both facilities will include state-of-the-art technology and essential security upgrades.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
MEETING OUR GOALS

*ONE*

PROVIDE ACCESS  
TO JUSTICE

## Expanding Help for the Self-Represented

- During fiscal year 2017, Judiciary self-help centers and services served more than 121,000 litigants via phone, live chat, email, and walk-in visits:
  - » The Maryland Courts Self-Help Center assisted 55,121 people during fiscal year 2017, which was an increase of 77 percent over 2016. The program helped 45,740 people by phone, 8,430 by live online chat, and 951 by email.
  - » The District Court Self-Help Centers, which provide walk-in assistance with civil cases in the District Court for people who are not represented by a lawyer, served 13,383 people in fiscal year 2017 (6,764 people in Upper Marlboro, 4,570 people in Glen Burnie, and 2,049 people in Salisbury), a 33 percent increase over the previous year.
  - » Family law centers in Circuit Courts assisted 53,163 people in fiscal year 2017.
- Expanded services for self-represented litigants by establishing a new District Court Self-Help Resource Center in Baltimore City and increasing services at the statewide center in Annapolis and court-based centers in Glen Burnie, Salisbury, and Upper Marlboro.
- Planning began for a new District Court Self-Help Resource Center in the Washington County District Court.
- Statewide, the District Court installed and upgraded public access computer terminals for visitors to use for case searches and printing.
- The Judiciary's Access to Justice Department continued offering free webinars for self-represented litigants, including "Filing for Absolute Divorce in Maryland," "Filing Your Case in the District Court of Maryland," "Filing a Failure to Pay Rent Case," and "Facing Eviction for Failure to Pay Rent."
- The Circuit Court for Frederick County received additional grant funding for its family services program to increase the hours of the self-help clinic and provide free public family-law seminars.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County conducted workshops to assist self-represented litigants involved in domestic cases.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County created and posted to the court's website samples of commonly needed petitions to assist self-represented guardians.
- The District Court in Baltimore City launched a rent court navigator pilot program in partnership with the University of Baltimore to help unrepresented tenants with limited knowledge of the court system prepare for their court hearings.
- The Baltimore City District Court's rent work group reviewed rent court issues and current procedures in landlord-tenant cases across the state and made recommendations for changes in judicial policy, procedures, legislation, and local government programs to adjudicate fairly and effectively the rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants.

**More than 30,000 unique visitors accessed self-help pages on the Maryland Courts website during fiscal year 2017.**

- The District Court in Baltimore City hosted “Just Advice” during each school semester. The legal clinic, operated by University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law students and volunteer attorneys, provides free legal advice on civil legal matters to people in the community.
- The District Court in Caroline County partnered with Mid-Shore Pro Bono to plan for the implementation of a consumer protection clinic in the District Court.
- The District Court in Wicomico County provided office space at the court for staff members from the Life Crisis Center to help people complete peace and protective order forms and answer questions.
- The District Court in Wicomico County celebrated the one-year anniversary of the opening of the District Court Self-Help Center in the Salisbury courthouse, which has greatly expanded access to justice for people in a region that is largely rural with limited public transportation services.
- With the goal of providing a centralized, convenient service to handle public inquiries, an advisory work group studied the feasibility and logistical considerations of setting up a statewide call center to answer frequently asked questions and handle inquiries about court business. A preliminary study was conducted of telecommunications systems in use at various court locations to determine if those systems could be integrated to build a statewide call center.
- In an effort to improve accessibility to growing immigrant communities, the District Court provided all courtrooms and clerks’ offices with laminated language identification cards to help judges and court staff identify people’s language preference when using the language line.
- The District Court Operations Division answered approximately 160,000 calls, entered approximately 120,000 manual traffic citations and 56,000 failure to pay rent cases, and prepared more than 300 transcripts.

## Removing Barriers and Improving Processes

- Circuit Courts added the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center chat button to their local court websites to improve visibility and accessibility.
- The Maryland General Assembly passed a bill requiring that determinations of indigency for the purposes of qualifying individuals for representation by the Office of the Public Defender be made by the Judiciary. The Judiciary worked closely with the Office of the Public Defender, the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, and the Office of the Comptroller to facilitate a smooth transition.
- 70 of the District Court’s most-requested forms were translated, the majority of them into five different languages: Chinese, French, Korean, Russian, and Spanish.
- In order to meet the needs of Maryland’s limited English-speaking population, the Access to Justice Department provided trial courts with dual-headset phone adapters to make telephonic interpreter service at the counter more user friendly.
- The Access to Justice Department provided laptops for clerks’ counters and commissioner stations to enable remote video American Sign Language services.

- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City added “docket on the web” technology to the court’s website to become the first court in Maryland to provide docket information in real-time on the web.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County provided guardianship training to the public on obtaining guardianships and the legal responsibilities of guardians once appointed.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County hosted a number of training opportunities for attorneys, including guidance regarding co-parenting classes and parenting plans; mediators working with litigants involved in contested custody disputes; and special considerations that may be necessary when working with families dealing with autism.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County redesigned the court’s website to make it easier for users to navigate and to provide ADA-accessible forms.
- The Circuit Court for Somerset County made enhancements to its courthouse annex, including improved accessibility for disabled persons and utilization of an unoccupied office by the Child Support Division of the State’s Attorney’s Office to meet with clients to review any changes that affect the child support guidelines in an effort to expedite child support dockets.
- The Circuit Court for St. Mary’s County Circuit Court upgraded its hearing-assist system.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County expanded services to self-represented litigants by providing the use of electronic tablets to track information while in the courthouse.
- The Circuit Court for Worcester County expanded and updated the court’s website to include hyperlinks to free legal counsel in civil cases, the court’s case management plans, and access to justice materials for self-represented individuals.

**The court interpreter program has 750 interpreters in its registry of certified, non-certified, and eligible interpreters available for in-court service and for court-related processes such as mediation and parent coordination.**

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
MEETING OUR GOALS

*TWO*

**BE RESPONSIVE AND  
ADAPTABLE  
TO CHANGING  
COMMUNITY NEEDS**

## Youth

- Worked with the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor to amend the definition of “sexual abuse” in the Children in Need of Assistance statute to include sex trafficking.
- Organized and hosted the 19th annual Child Abuse, Neglect, and Delinquency Options conference, which brings together local, state, and national experts to share knowledge on life experiences and their impact on child welfare and juvenile justice, raises awareness of best practices within Judiciary programs, and makes effective use of federal and state Foster Care Court Improvement funds.
- Awarded 12 child welfare program grants through the Judiciary’s Foster Care Court Improvement Program (FCCIP) to help courts and other child welfare agencies improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for abused and neglected children in the child welfare system.
- Continued partnering with state agencies on a multifaceted approach to addressing human trafficking and, through a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, held the Maryland Human Trafficking Awareness Conference in December 2017. The Judiciary conducted two programs about human trafficking issues for judges and continued to work on additional courses and educational materials.
- The Juvenile Justice Subcommittee of the Judicial Council’s Juvenile Law Committee is planning initiatives to assist with the implementation of the Resolution Regarding Imposition of Court Costs, Fines, and Fees on Juveniles in Juvenile Justice Proceedings, which was approved by the Judicial Council.
- After developing a new manual for juvenile record expungements, the Juvenile Law Committee’s Juvenile Record Expungement Work Group is finalizing juvenile record expungement forms, distributing the manual, and planning informational sessions for Circuit Courts. Information on the Judiciary’s website and People’s Law Library website is being updated and revised to comply with the new manual.
- The Juvenile Justice Subcommittee is collecting and reviewing materials from national organizations and state courts to identify needs and begin drafting Maryland juvenile bench cards and tools.
- The Child Welfare Education Work Group continued to update, review, and revise the Child Welfare Bench Book.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City implemented LGBTQ bench cards that provide guidelines for judges on topics such as fair treatment, appropriate service and support, and appropriate placement and permanency in juvenile cases.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City’s Juvenile Court, together with the Department of Juvenile Services, hosted the 11th annual Baltimore City Adolescent Resource Fair at the Juvenile Justice Center.
- The Circuit Court for Dorchester County partnered with Talbot County and other local stakeholders to offer free seminars for self-represented family litigants.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County developed a database to improve the management of special immigration juvenile status cases.

## Seniors

- New videos about senior legal issues were developed in collaboration with the Adult Guardianship Work Group of the Domestic Law Committee. “Introduction to Adult Guardianship,” “Guardianship of the Person,” and “Guardianship of the Property” were added to the Judiciary’s library of self-help videos.
- The Guardianship Work Group worked with the Rules Committee to propose amendments to Title 10 of the Maryland Rules, which are related to the training and eligibility of court-appointed attorneys and guardians, bond, and disqualifying offenses. The work group continues to develop training and resources for guardians and the courts, and it is developing resources for guardianships of minors and new guardianship forms.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County conducted training for family guardians and provided newly-appointed guardians with additional support services.
- The Circuit Court for Allegany County is compiling a list of psychologists to serve in the capacity of parent coordinator to assist families in crisis as they navigate the legal system.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City’s Juvenile Division and ADR program collaborated on a new mediation program and protocols for cases in which a juvenile has been arrested and the parents refuse to take the child home.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City Juvenile Court Services’ LINKS Program launched a parent support group – Nurturing the Seed – to assist parents with gaining a full understanding about the social, physical, and emotional barriers children and adolescents may experience during various phases of development as a result of life-altering events.
- The Circuit Court for Carroll County worked with the Judiciary’s Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO) to expand its family mediation program to include guardianship mediation and to improve its evaluation process to help ensure high-quality mediation services.

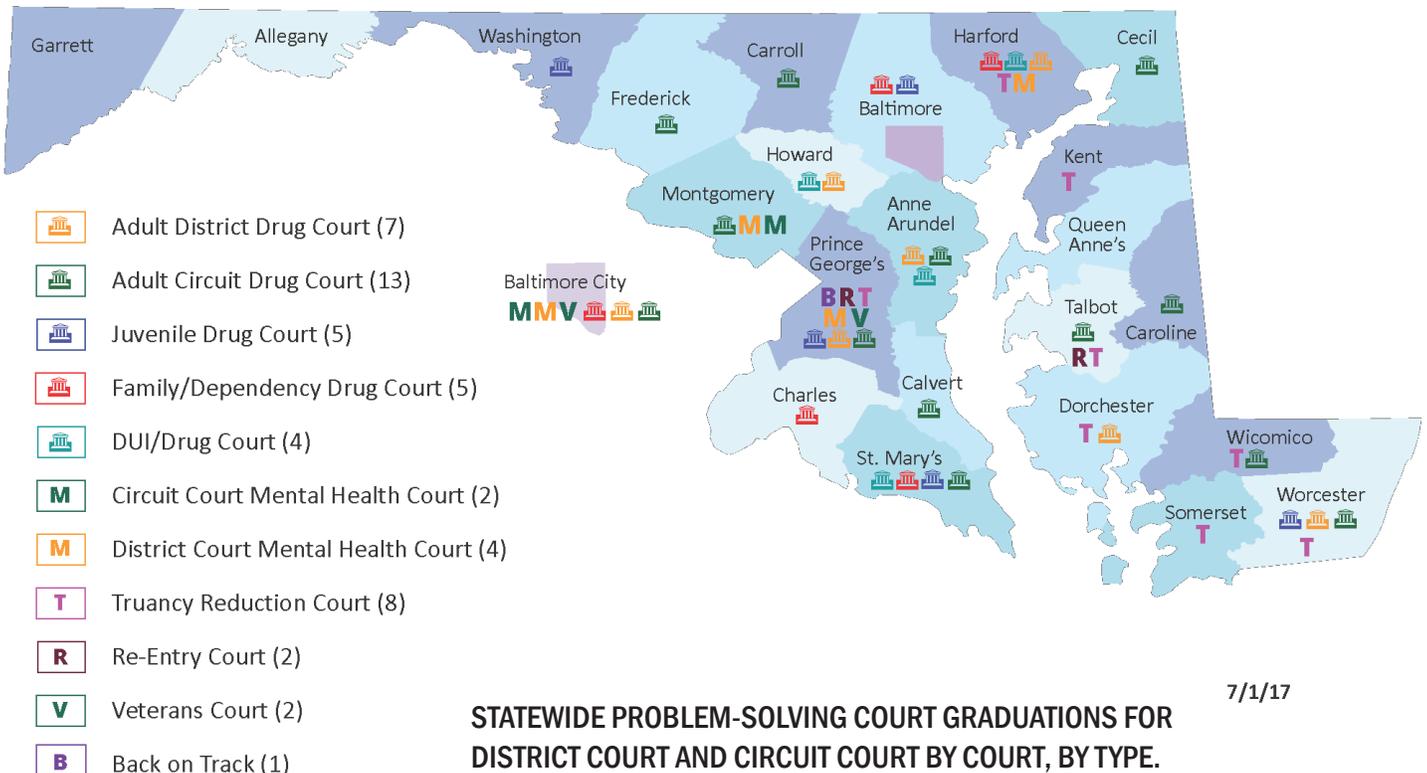
## Families

- The Judiciary awarded approximately \$17 million in fiscal year 2018 grants to Circuit Courts and justice partners for family support services.
- The Court Process Work Group finalized a report with recommendations on parenting plans that was approved by the Judicial Council. The report includes a tool and instructions for parents to work together and develop their own parenting plan, a Maryland Rule 9-207-type form to help courts identify and understand on what custody-related issues parents are unable to reach an agreement, and recommendations for a parenting plan court process.
- The Circuit Court for Frederick County received supplemental grant funding to increase the hours of its in-house family mediation program and offer mediation at no cost to eligible parties.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County initiated an extensive review of the Family Law Self-Help Center to determine ways to improve service, which resulted in evening hours.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George’s County’s Family Justice Center introduced its “Stay in Touch” program, a self-empowering support group for survivors of domestic violence.

- The Circuit Court for Somerset County collected thousands of dollars in court costs by bringing parties in for show cause contempt hearings and requiring them to complete fee waivers.
- The District Court in Cecil County launched a parent-focused truancy reduction program in January 2017 in partnership with Cecil County Public Schools and Community Mediation Upper Shore.
- The District Court in Frederick County has been developing a presentation about “Speak up, Save a Life” – a presentation to be given at schools and places of worship regarding the opioid epidemic, substance abuse and addiction warning signs, and how to help. The court is collaborating with the State’s Attorney’s Office.
- In the second year of a three-year, \$200,000 U.S. Department of Justice grant, the Judiciary continued to partner with the National Center for State Courts to establish and train on best practices for adult drug courts. Performance measures and a detailed manual are expected to be completed by January 2018, after which training will begin for drug treatment court personnel to help them use the performance measures to manage their programs.
- The Court of Appeals, with the recommendation of the Judicial Council’s Specialty Courts and Dockets Committee and the Office of Problem-Solving Courts, approved the Baltimore City Circuit Court Mental Health Court as the state’s newest problem-solving court, which has the goal of humanely and effectively addressing the needs of individuals with mental health disorders who enter Baltimore’s criminal justice system by focusing resources, training, and expertise on the unique needs of these individuals.

## Problem-Solving Courts

- The Judiciary provided nearly \$5 million in fiscal year 2018 grants to support problem-solving courts statewide.



- The Circuit Court for Allegany County is moving to transition its Adult Drug Treatment Court from a pilot to a permanent program.
- The Circuit Court for Caroline County expanded problem-solving courts to expedite entry for appropriate participants.
- The Circuit Court for Frederick County received additional grant funding for its drug treatment court program to serve more individuals.
- The Circuit Court for Frederick County Drug Treatment Court purchased a drug analyzer, enabling more accurate and immediate results of random urinalysis required of participants.
- The Circuit Court for Kent County implemented P.A.S.T. (Post Adjudication, Supervision, and Treatment), where appropriate cases are deferred from criminal court to a plan geared to treatment for substance abuse disorder and mental health issues.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County expanded the drug court docket from two hours to an entire day.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County held its first combined problem-solving courts graduation to include the adult drug court, reentry court, and veterans court.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County worked to provide more integrated drug counseling and mental health services for problem-solving court participants.
- The Baltimore City District Court Adult Drug Court program placed six individuals in transitional housing, assisted 23 participants in obtaining vital documents required to obtain employment or educational opportunities, and increased funding for other support services.
- Thirty-nine Baltimore City District Court Mental Health Court program participants were involved in employment services and eight were engaged in GED/educational services. Other program milestones: a trauma specialist was hired to provide services to participants; a care package system (toiletries, personal care items) program was implemented to assist defendants in their transition to the community from jail or the hospital; the program's recidivism rate remained at 3 percent; and positive urinalysis rates dropped from 9 percent to 5 percent.
- The Baltimore City District Court Veterans Treatment Court continued to have a zero percent recidivism rate for people who successfully completed the program. The program received several awards from community and professional organizations, including the Veterans Affairs and Military Law Section of the Maryland State Bar Association and the American Legion Department of Maryland.
- The Baltimore City District Court Reentry Program was expanded to accept individuals on a referral basis, and, as of June 2017, more than 200 participants had been referred to the program. The program received a grant through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention to help meet staffing needs.

**Between 2007 and 2017, an average of 98 percent of all drug tests conducted on Maryland drug court participants were negative for drugs.**

- Having launched its mental health court at the end of 2016, the District Court in Montgomery County has been receiving referrals daily and is quickly reaching its current capacity of 50 participants. Given the demand, and with additional resources, the number of participants is estimated to increase to approximately 100 by the end of fiscal year 2018.

## Dispute Resolution Alternatives

- The Judiciary provided close to \$2.4 million in grants to support court-based alternative dispute resolution programs, community mediation centers, and community conferencing services.
- The Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee promoted ADR programs when appropriate to provide better outcomes with less cost to litigants, while using court resources more appropriately. These efforts included developing the ADR section of the Maryland Custody and Divorce Notebook in cooperation with the People's Law Library, providing information to new judges during their orientation, and organizing and hosting the Maryland Mediators Convention.
- District Court expanded ADR programs for peace order, rent court, and day-of-trial, including pilots in Cecil and Montgomery counties that moved to full implementation after they proved to be successful. The District Court in Carroll County continued to provide day-of-trial mediation for all civil dockets. The District Court in Howard County continued its landlord-tenant day-of-trial alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program.
- District Court ADR Office hosted annual local alternative dispute resolution (ADR) stakeholder meetings in ten District Court locations to assess local ADR programs. Stakeholders included judges, administrators, supervisors, ADR practitioners, and community partners.
- The District Court added ADR programs in three additional District Court locations after having increased the number of District Court locations with ADR programs from 20 in 2014 to 27 in 2016.
- Created new Agreement to Participate in ADR forms that distinguish more clearly the differences between mediation and settlement conference so that the public will better understand the practitioner's role and the ADR process being used.
- MACRO provided grants and technical assistance to community justice partners, such as community mediation centers and community conferencing programs, which are important community resources for the courts. In 2017, these programs received over 2,000 referrals from trial courts statewide, and provided mediation or conferencing services in more than 1,000 cases. These programs can be particularly helpful to low income and self-represented litigants.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City launched a voluntary mediation pilot program to improve access to justice for litigants involved in criminal misdemeanor cases. A collaborative effort that includes Community Mediation Baltimore, the Office of the Public Defender, and the State's Attorney's Office, this program is primarily for cases in which a District Court defendant has requested a jury trial at the Circuit Court level.
- After a successful pilot, the Baltimore City District Court Rent Court ADR program transitioned to a permanent program, providing alternative dispute resolution for landlords and tenants with rent disputes.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
MEETING OUR GOALS

*THREE*

COMMUNICATE  
EFFECTIVELY WITH  
STAKEHOLDERS

## Increase Awareness

- In order to communicate effectively with the public on a variety of platforms, the Judiciary launched a YouTube channel, started a Twitter account, and began using LinkedIn for communicating with and recruiting prospective employees.
- Prepared and launched a redesigned website that features an updated content management system, which allows authorized users to update web content more quickly and easily, saving time and improving accuracy and timeliness of online content information.
- The Court of Special Appeals celebrated its 50th Anniversary in a ceremony held in the House Chamber of the Maryland State House. As part of the commemoration, the Maryland State Bar Association's spring journal featured articles written by the Chief Judge, Judges, and Clerk of the Court of Special Appeals highlighting appellate practice in Maryland.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County created a monthly external newsletter that is distributed electronically to justice partners and members of the community.
- The Baltimore City District Court Self-Help Center held a grand opening in September to share information about the services available to people in the community.
- The Maryland State Law Library launched Judiciary-wide access to Maryland treatises on the LexisNexis Digital Library.
- The Maryland State Law Library scanned its print collection of Legislative Council Reports to provide online access via the Library's Digital Collections page.

## Outreach

- All four levels of Maryland's courts welcomed hundreds of visitors from local schools, community groups, out-of-state courts, and members of multiple international justice systems.
- The Judiciary received more than 2,000 entries from students throughout Maryland during the 11th annual Conflict Resolution Bookmark Contest. The popular contest promotes peacemaking and encourages young people to explore and use positive methods to resolve conflicts.
- The Court of Special Appeals continued its tradition of sitting in the Maryland Law Schools for oral arguments in the spring (University of Baltimore School of Law) and fall (University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law).
- The Court Access and Community Relations Committee worked to invigorate the Speakers Bureau, which is an effective vehicle for the Judiciary to communicate openly with community groups, including civic organizations, professional associations, and schools, and created a central resources page and Speakers Bureau Guide for judges who volunteer to speak to community groups.
- The Court of Appeals hosted the annual mock trial high school state championship. Since the competition began in 1983, more than 54,000 students from nearly all of the counties in Maryland and Baltimore City have participated.
- Local courts and judges from across the state volunteered time, space, and resources to hold mock trial competition events throughout the school year, helping students learn about the law and the legal system.

- The Court of Appeals hosted a one-day Law and Order Youth Leadership Conference for the General George G. Meade, Military Order of the World Wars, which teaches high school students the importance of national security, patriotism, good citizenship, and service to country.
- The Court of Appeals hosted Naval Academy midshipmen as part of their coursework for a U.S. Government and Constitutional Development class.
- The Circuit Court for Calvert County collaborated with the Calvert Arts Council to display the work of local artists in the courthouse.
- The Circuit Court for Charles County organized and hosted five Family Law for the People seminars.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County held its eighth annual Veterans Appreciation and Muster Ceremony.
- The Circuit Court for Wicomico County's drug court judge and staff participated in community outreach events, including National Night Out and an appearance on a local talk show.
- The District Court in Anne Arundel County hosted District Administrative Judges during a Schools in the Court program in spring 2017. The program is held four times each school year. Students from local county schools come to the court to learn about court procedures as well as the legal, financial, and personal consequences of their decisions and being involved in a criminal case.
- The District Court in Baltimore City celebrated the second annual Courting Arts Baltimore art contest in April 2017, which awarded more than \$12,500 in scholarships from local donors to contest winners and provided a \$50 gift card

and art supplies to each participant. The program promotes the city's youth and their artwork, connects the legal community with local Baltimore communities, and strives to reduce stress and anxiety for litigants and visitors by beautifying local courthouses.

- The District Court in Frederick County hosted approximately 165 local students in April during its annual Law Day event. Students observed court proceedings, then met with judges for a presentation and a question-and-answer session.

## Inform and Help

- The Judiciary hosted site visits for General Assembly members and staff to learn more about the Judiciary and issues facing specific courts throughout the state. For example, the entire House Judiciary Committee visited the District Court in Annapolis to observe bail reviews.
- A campaign of ads on buses, trains, and bus shelters throughout Baltimore was launched to inform the public about the new District Court Self-Help Resource Center in Baltimore City.
- A new video was developed to help people with limited English find out how to request and work with an interpreter. "Need an Interpreter?" was released in English, and a Spanish version is in production.
- The People's Law Library reached a new record of 239,699 page views in August 2017, which was its highest volume since being established.
- The People's Law Library completed a custody and divorce self-help workbook with the help of the Department of Juvenile and Family Services.

- The People's Law Library added 20 pages to its website on several topics, including: Access to court records: Requests and motions; Legal issues when your child turns 18; Proving a fact in court; Subpoenas: do I need one and how can I use one under Maryland law?; Proving a fact in court; and Time limit for filing a will with the Register of Wills in a Maryland county.
- More than 15 percent of the articles on the People's Law Library are now also available in Spanish.
- The Maryland State Law Library made a loan of its collection of Daily Record microfilms to the Newspaper Archive, a historic database of newspapers, for scanning into that database.
- The County Circuit Court for St. Mary's County opened a kiosk allowing jurors to check themselves in for service. The kiosk is more convenient and time-effective for jurors and improves the juror service experience. Kiosks are scheduled to launch in other jurisdictions as needed; the Circuit Courts for Baltimore City and Prince George's County plan to open juror self-check-in services in April 2018.

**The Procurement, Contract and Grant Administration Office processed the agreements and created and dispatched the related purchase orders for approximately 160 grant awards for fiscal year 2018 funding.**

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
MEETING OUR GOALS

*FOUR*

IMPROVE SYSTEMS  
AND PROCESSES

## Identify, Plan, and Implement

- The Judiciary launched MDEC in Southern Maryland on June 16, 2017, and in Western Maryland on October 16, 2017. The statewide case management system is now operational in Allegany, Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, and Worcester counties. More than 70 percent of jurisdictions in Maryland have launched the modern electronic case management system.
- Following the preparation schedule and plan executed by other counties that have already launched MDEC, District and Circuit Courts in North Central Maryland (Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties) began the training, courtroom and facilities modifications and technical updating needed to prepare for MDEC in their locations; rollout in those jurisdictions will take place in April 2018.
- The Judiciary received the John Neufeld Court Achievement Award from the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management for the statewide land records e-recording project, which allows customers to record land record documents electronically. E-recording provides a convenient alternative to the current cumbersome and time-consuming paper filing process. Working in partnership with county finance offices and townships, e-recording for land records is available in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, Howard, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, Talbot, and Washington counties. Plans are underway to implement e-recording in other jurisdictions.
- The Judiciary also implemented the Attorney Information System (AIS), a secure, web-enabled database shared by court-related agencies supporting the Court of Appeals in its role regulating the legal profession. Enhancements to AIS, which now include allowing attorneys to view and update their profiles and pay Client Protection Fund fees online, continue to be implemented.
- Supported Circuit Courts statewide to develop and enhance program components related to court access, safety and security, and programs and services, pursuant to recommendations made by the Judicial Council's Courthouse Equity Subcommittee.
- The Hospitalized Adults Work Group was created to discuss and make recommendations to the Rules Committee for a court process that will help facilitate the discharge of patients who lack capacity to participate in the discharge process and for whom there is no person authorized to make decisions or apply for benefits on their behalf. A proposal for a new expedited and temporary guardianship process was sent to the Rules Committee for consideration.

**MDEC Registered users (as of the first 11 months of 2017): 22,427**

**Filings (as of the first 11 months of 2017): 1,162,644**

**2016: 554,679 filings**

**2015: 311,475 filings**

**2014: 26,079 filings**

- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County Clerk's Office launched a scanning initiative for marriage license applications and returns into the Marriage in Maryland program.
- The Circuit Courts for Calvert County and St. Mary's County installed electronic docket boards.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County became the first courtroom on the Eastern Shore to have a system for displaying trial exhibits electronically.
- A program for video-remote interpreter services was developed that will pilot in the District Court in Washington County in 2018. If the pilot is successful, the program will be expanded to other jurisdictions to help meet the challenge of providing interpreter services throughout the state's courts.
- Reorganized the District Court Operations division to create a core team of analysts, each assigned to different districts. This new structure allows for a faster and more responsive approach in solving issues that arise in each court location.
- District Court completed the centralized archiving of court recordings to provide greater security and better management.
- JIS completed a successful pilot of ShareFile for secure, efficient file sharing and mobility. This technology is used for the e-warrants initiative in addition to other purposes.
- The Circuit Court for Cecil County hired a court researcher with the support of grant funds from the Judiciary. The researcher serves the entire Second Judicial Circuit.
- The Circuit Court for Cecil County reallocated personnel to address staffing issues.

## Internal Efficiencies

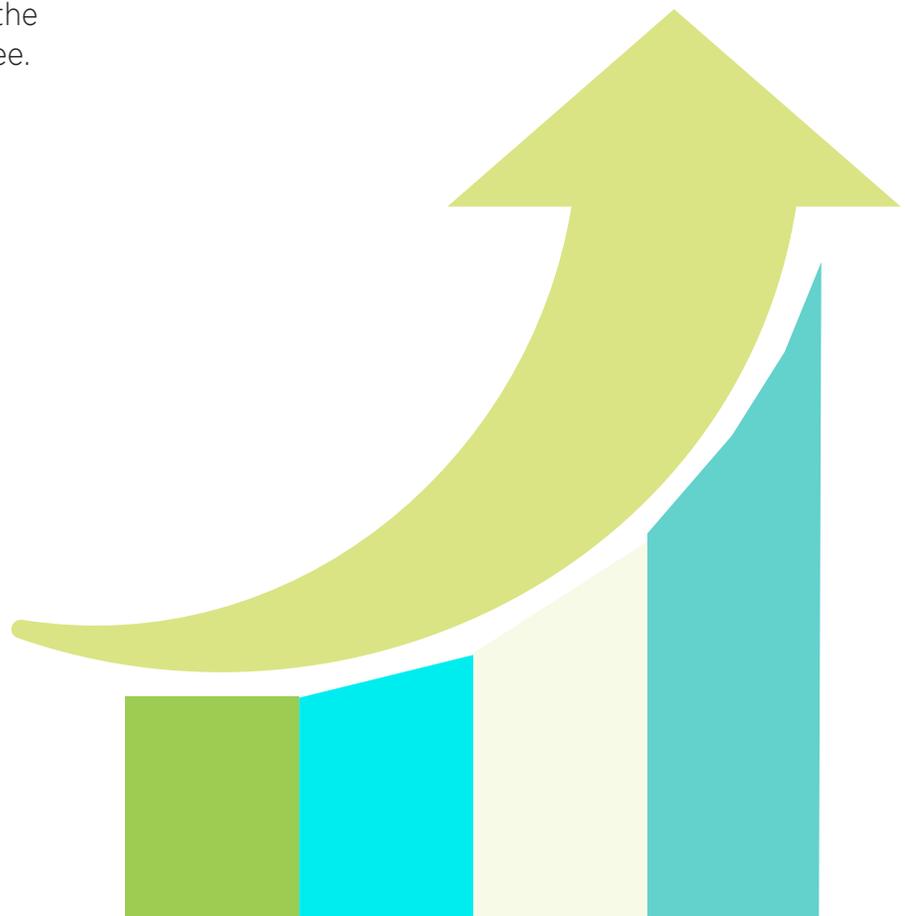
- The Court of Appeals adopted the 192nd, 193rd, and 194th Reports submitted by the Rules Committee, and issued the corresponding Rules Orders.
- Implemented ServiceNow, a web-based IT help desk, for problem reporting, service requests, and asset management. ServiceNow helps improve information security, workflow, and staff efficiency.
- Judicial Information Systems (JIS) is working to automate workflow processes associated with the 'onboarding' of new Judiciary employees and AOC facilities work requests.
- The Circuit Court for Charles County centralized all ADR programs under the management of court administration.
- The Circuit Court for Dorchester County assumed responsibility for management of the First Judicial Circuit truancy reduction program.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County hired a guardianship manager to manage all guardianship cases and to assist the trust clerk and staff attorney.

**The Procurement, Contract and Grant Administration Office created, processed, and distributed approximately 75 memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with partners across the state. Approximately 40 MOUs required purchase orders to be created and dispatched.**

- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County initiated activities to begin early preparation for the court's transition to MDEC.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County modified its business license renewal process by staggering the mailing of renewal notices, which provides more time for staff to verify license information before mailing the notices.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County completed hardware upgrades for its file location system which allows users to locate files quickly, conduct audits, and track files.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County directed strategic planning through each division.
- The District Court in Prince George's County improved workflow and efficiency and developed a more usable work space by reorganizing workflows, reassigning responsibilities, and condensing storage.
- District Court Administrative Services reorganized to carry out the work of the Judicial Council's Forms Subcommittee.

## Update and Reinforce

- Maryland was one of four states to win the Court Statistics Project 2017 Reporting Excellence Award from the Conference of State Court Administrators. The Judiciary was recognized for improving data quality and comparability, for forming a CSP work group, and for dramatically improving criminal reporting in both general and limited jurisdiction courts with 2015 data. Consistent and comparable data improve the management of state courts and enhance the understanding of the work of the judicial branch.
- The Judicial Information Systems Data Center was completely renovated to include state-of-the-art cooling, fire suppression, and cabling techniques. The Data Center supports the statewide Judiciary community with bandwidth and data storage.
- Expanded the use of e-warrants to support law enforcement and improve efficiencies in the justice system.



- Improved the Judiciary's electronic accounting system, GEARS, to allow direct payment of interpreter services by courts. The update improves administrative efficiency and can be used to collect accurate data to do more sophisticated analyses of court interpreter usage throughout the state.
- With the continued implementation of MDEC, Circuit Courts are using new forms that require specialized review and oversight. Two new work groups of Circuit Court judges and clerks were created to oversee these new forms and assure their quality and effectiveness.
- The Trial Court Clerks Workload Study Advisory Work Group worked with the National Center for State Courts on a staffing model to help determine required trial court clerk staffing levels across the state.
- Worked with National Center for State Courts to develop an updated Judicial Needs Certification model based on a comprehensive analysis of judicial time spent on case- and non-case-related activities.
- The Judicial Compensation Committee worked on and submitted detailed analysis to the Judicial Compensation Commission to support judicial pay increases in Maryland based on national data.
- The Expungement Work Group updated the expungement manual to incorporate new expungement laws, with the goal of ensuring that clerks have the resources and most up-to-date information needed to handle petitions for expungements and to process those granted by the court.
- The Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure continues to engage in an ongoing dialogue with legislators and members of the news media regarding the appropriate use of online, publicly accessible court records.
- A joint Circuit and District Court workshop evaluated legislative changes to ensure that the necessary forms, website content, and programmatic changes were up-to-date, correctly reflected the changes in the law, and were comprehensive and complete.
- E-warrant protocols were updated to conform to current practices, as well as to support the expanded use of e-warrants across the state.
- The Procurement, Contract and Grant Administration Office reviewed and revised all procurement, grant, and memorandum of understand (MOU) templates in collaboration with Legal Affairs.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City made a number of enhancements to its juvenile case management system to assist courtroom clerks when preparing orders involving competency cases and to provide immediate notification via messaging to select individuals.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County improved the special assignment process for its complex civil cases.
- The Circuit Court for Carroll County replaced its analog cameras with digital cameras in all courtrooms.
- The Circuit Court for Garrett County upgraded its digital recording system.
- The Circuit Court for Harford County monitors the jury selection process for conformance with state laws and to provide a satisfactory and meaningful experience for jurors.
- The Circuit Court for Washington County began accepting credit cards for payment of court costs in the Clerk's Office.

# STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS: MEETING OUR GOALS

*FIVE*

**BE ACCOUNTABLE**

## Improve Information and Incorporate Best Practices

- The Judiciary launched the Maryland Judiciary Data Dashboard, an interactive, online, user-friendly compilation of trial and appellate courts caseload and performance data. Users can access data about total incoming and outgoing cases, clearance rates, active caseload volumes, and case processing performance measures. Data are available county-by-county and statewide.
- The Judiciary built a web-based application for non-MDEC courts, in response to the Justice Reinvestment Act, to capture effectively required information.
- The Forms Subcommittee reviews all new forms and form revisions. In order to maximize efficiency and quality, the Forms Subcommittee conducted a comprehensive assessment of the forms review process, then established guidelines for substantive reviews, reviewed and streamlined the revision process, and created work groups to speed up and improve the review process. A total of 175 new or revised form drafts were created and distributed through the approval process.
- District Court's ADR Office is developing best practices for pretrial mediation programs to streamline resources, maximize efforts to screen and refer cases, collect data, and provide services.
- The Jury Use and Management Subcommittee completed a draft manual for jury commissioners and jury offices. The manual, which provides a summary of applicable law and policies as well as suggestions on best practices, will be presented to the Judicial Council for approval.
- To promote efficiency and optimal internal controls over the handling of juror pay funds, a new work group of the Court Operations Committee has begun reviewing how jury offices across the state handle juror stipends. The work group is consulting with the Judiciary's internal auditors in this effort.
- The Circuit Court for Caroline County began holding scheduling conferences at the outset of felony and serious misdemeanor criminal cases to reduce postponements and identify potential problems.
- The District Court in Baltimore City continued to hold debtor-creditor roundtables to review and assess the court's affidavit judgment docket.
- The Court Technology Committee continued to address data access issues to CaseSearch and the MDEC portal, including a determination of limitations on access based on statutes or rules and the ramifications of such limitations.
- The Court Technology Committee participated in the design of a business process to implement and maintain remote access to case data for governmental agencies as permitted by amendments to Title 16 and Title 20 of the Maryland Rules.
- The Court Technology Committee worked with Judicial Information Systems to develop a preliminary plan to rewrite CaseSearch to accommodate appropriate multiple levels of access to Judiciary data.
- The Court Reporting Work Group worked on developing a set of policies for court reporters in Circuit Courts and is creating a manual for court reporters.
- The Domestic Law Committee developed a best practices domestic violence resource for judges that includes recent changes to rules and statutes, as well as available resources.

- The Circuit Court for Dorchester County is overseeing a circuit-wide uniformity project for the First Judicial Circuit, creating standard forms, streamlining policies and procedures, and working on improved collaboration and communication with stakeholders.
- The District Court in Prince George's County scheduled approximately 21,600 cases on its debt resolution docket, where self-represented litigants can elect to be assisted by lawyers from the Pro Bono Resource Center and engage in a conference to achieve pre-trial resolution of collection cases, resulting in more efficient calendaring of contested matters.
- With the goal of improving case-time standards and improving users' court experience, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee reviewed and provided technical support regarding the ADR components of case management plans and developed case disposition information sheets for civil cases, peace orders, and failure-to-pay rent cases.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City implemented a number of initiatives to improve the management of asbestos cases, including a systematic review of cases that have not been scheduled for trial to determine their status and evaluate the appropriate course for resolution.

## Case Management

- The Judiciary supported trial courts to finalize case management plans for District Court and Circuit Courts, which will help provide clear expectations to attorneys and parties regarding how their cases will flow through the judicial process.
- District Court Operations completed more than 190 system modification and change requests to allow for better and more efficient use of the case management system.
- The Specialty Courts and Dockets Committee has undertaken a multi-year effort to evaluate the existing Business and Technology Case Management Program, develop recommendations for improvements to the program, select and train a new cadre of business and technology judges, and promote the program to the business community. The Business and Technology Case Management Program was established in 2003 to handle complex business and technology law cases in the Maryland Circuit Courts.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore County implemented next-day scheduling of criminal cases in which a District Court defendant has requested a jury trial at the circuit court level.
- Having successfully transitioned to MDEC, the Circuit Court for Dorchester County improved the management of cases in which parties have up to 10 days to correct deficiency orders.
- The Circuit Court for Garrett County continued to utilize a pretrial settlement conference program.
- The Circuit Court for Harford County restructured calendar management and docket assignments to improve scheduling and resolution of cases.
- The District Court in Harford County made significant improvements toward meeting several case-time standards.
- In order to improve trial date certainty, the District Court in Towson began providing new trial dates in the courtroom in serious criminal and traffic cases when postponements are granted.

# STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS: MEETING OUR GOALS

*SIX*

**ASSURE THE HIGHEST  
LEVEL OF SERVICE**

## Ongoing Education and Skills Development

- The Judicial College’s proficiency-based education and training effort, which began in 2016, progressed throughout 2017. Six work groups have been formed, covering approximately 70 percent of the employee classifications at the Judiciary: administrative judges, commissioners, supervisors and managers, judiciary clerks, courtroom clerks, and judicial assistants. Two of the six work groups have begun the development of course creation and the first classes under the system will be offered for commissioners, supervisors, and managers in 2018.
- The Judicial College began developing online course content for supervisor and manager proficiency-based training and the online foundational training for new commissioners.
- The 2017 Judicial Conference, held in Hunt Valley, Maryland, provided an opportunity for judges at all four levels of Maryland courts to share information, provide peer-to-peer learning, and facilitate in-depth exploration of trends in justice reforms, including bail reform and the Justice Reinvestment Act.
- In August 2017, the Judiciary, in collaboration with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, conducted a Justice Reinvestment Act “train the trainers” seminar for administrative judges and representatives from all trial courts, in preparation for the October 1 effective date. The training focused on the various aspects of JRA, including graduated sanctions for probationers, technical violations and sentence caps, and the impact on problem-solving courts.
- Overall, 60 employees throughout the state took part in Judiciary-sponsored professional and management certification programs in 2017, including 22 employees who successfully completed the Court Professional Certificate program, a three-year program that helps the Judiciary better serve court customers by enabling participants to gain expertise in court systems management and supervisory functions. The Judiciary began accepting applications for the next program to begin in 2018.
- E-warrant training was completed for all judges, providing the tools necessary to enable them to receive, execute, and return applications, warrants, and related documents electronically.
- The Domestic Violence and Peace Order Subcommittee held two sessions for judges to enhance judicial skills in domestic violence cases.
- The Mental Health Subcommittee began preparing specific, practical education presentations for judges on competency determinations and, as applicable, Health General Article 8-507.
- Tools were developed by the Judicial College to assist judges and magistrates, including adding an “on demand” podcast library to the Judicial College’s digital library and providing an information card showing how to access the digital library.
- The Judicial College’s Department of Technology Education (DTE) developed a training plan and began providing MDEC training for new employees and refresher training for existing employees. DTE continues to offer MDEC training for judges and magistrates.
- Customer service webinars were incorporated into the standing professional development course catalog.

- DTE began a series of self-directed learning videos to help employees learn about the HR platform CONNECT, the Judiciary's Attorney Information System (AIS), the electronic IT help desk ServiceNow, Office 365, SharePoint, and other software applications.
- As part of MDEC rollouts, District Court taught 60 consistent court practice (CCP) sessions, completed configuration worksheets, and assisted in training and supporting staff in counties where MDEC launched in 2017, helping to ensure successful rollouts.
- MACRO supported judges, court staff, and mediators who implement ADR programs and deliver services by providing continuing education opportunities, co-hosting a mid-Atlantic ADR conference, and conducting a 40-hour basic mediation training for court staff and administrators. The District Court ADR Office and MACRO also partnered to conduct 40-hour basic mediation training for judges and court staff.
- District Court ADR Office conducted mediation awareness workshops at several District Court locations for courtroom clerks, clerk's office staff, bailiffs, and commissioners.
- The Circuit Court for Allegany County provides continual training for judges and administrative assistants in the use of Jury Plus, its jury management system.
- The Circuit Court for Carroll County continued the expansion of training programs for county-funded staff.
- The Circuit Court for Charles County created an MDEC video learning laboratory in its training room as a private learning environment, conducive to uninterrupted participation in the foundational training for MDEC.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County trained courthouse staff on project management principles.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County offered free projector training to attorneys and their staff, self-represented litigants, and other courthouse employees. Projectors are used in 40 percent of all trials.
- The Circuit Court for Somerset County created an MDEC chambers-work tutorial for active and senior judges.
- The Circuit Court for Wicomico County's family services division offered training on human trafficking for courts, attorneys in child welfare and delinquency cases, and child-serving agencies in the First and Second Circuits.

## Service Excellence and Employee Engagement

- The Judicial College of Maryland, in addition to providing classes, programs, and education-based projects, worked on the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for its central office and each of its departments.
- The Judiciary began to use online networking tools for recruitment purposes, with excellent results in attracting qualified candidates for career opportunities.
- Judiciary Human Resources recruitment efforts reduced the position vacancy rate from 6.32 percent to 2.87 percent in the last fiscal year.
- Judiciary Human Resources worked to implement online benefit enrollments and changes for employees in partnership with the Department of Budget and Management's Employee Benefits Division.

- The Judicial College partnered with Judiciary Human Resources to develop an online new-employee orientation program.
- The Chief Judge and State Court Administrator consistently shared information about key issues, developments, and programs with all Judiciary employees via regular email communications and intranet messages, as well as a quarterly e-newsletter for judges and a quarterly Judiciary-wide e-newsletter.
- Continued an online employee suggestion box program and conducted a three-week Bright Ideas Campaign, generating suggestions on the theme of customer service from more than 200 employees.
- Began a formal program to recognize the efforts of judges who volunteer to serve as faculty in the Judicial Education program or mentor new judges. Efforts included a faculty and mentor event and a two-day “train the trainers” program.
- Held a series of trial court leadership sessions, bringing together Circuit and District Court leaders in each jurisdiction to work on court culture, communications, and management.
- The Education Committee improved the orientation process for new trial judges and magistrates.
- In addition to a quarterly newsletter, a dedicated collaboration page was created to provide timely information on various topics of interest to senior judges (formerly known as recalled judges).
- Hands-on preparations and team-building efforts helped make MDEC implementations seamless. Team meetings and training sessions, tee-shirts, and worksite lunch events were part of each court’s successful strategy to create a positive experience, facilitate learning, and foster enthusiasm for the work involved in launching the system.
- Many District Court bailiffs were recognized for exemplary service by the Chief Judge of the District Court during the annual bailiffs’ conference in May. Various security measures were strengthened and improved upon to promote public and personnel safety, including bailiff training programs and randomized security screening days.
- The Judicial College and the Office of Security Administration offered CPR and AED classes to Judiciary employees in highly attended training sessions.
- A work group comprising judges, ADR staff, and representatives from the four major practitioner groups in Maryland, is drafting a set of revised and updated standards of conduct for mediators, a major initiative with the goal of having one set of standards of conduct for all mediators in Maryland.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County created a telework policy for court administration personnel and updated the judicial leave policy.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George’s County held two mandatory training workshops for employees: Emotional Intelligence and Enhancing Your Professional Image.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George’s County conducted its annual comprehensive law clerk orientation, one day per week during the month of September, which included presentations on Circuit Court operations and tours of the County Detention Center and Cheltenham Youth Facility.
- The District Court’s ADR Office oriented 53 new day-of-trial ADR practitioners through six new volunteer orientations.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
MEETING OUR GOALS

*SEVEN*

**BUILD PARTNERSHIPS**

## Working Together

- Analyzed more than 2,800 bills during the 2017 Session of the Maryland General Assembly, offered positions on 232 bills, and submitted 480 fiscal impact statements to the Maryland Department of Legislative Services.
- Worked closely with the Maryland General Assembly, the Governor's Office, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, and Maryland Department of Health to implement the Justice Reinvestment Act, with the goal of reforming the criminal justice system and emphasizing treatment and rehabilitation over incarceration.
- The Court of Appeals and the Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure worked with the Office of the Attorney General, legislators, states attorneys, public defenders and members of the bail industry to address issues regarding pretrial release and the use of bail. Maryland Rule 4-216.1 regarding pretrial procedures went into effect July 1, 2017.
- The District Court created a final legislative summary for court personnel and organized a Legislative Implementation Meeting for personnel from many court departments to review and summarize passed legislation and its impact on the District Court.
- The Judiciary worked with the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor to amend the statutory residence requirement to allow District Court Commissioners to work in counties contiguous to the counties in which they live.
- The Domestic Violence Subcommittee and the Governor's Family Violence Council's Gun Removal Implementation Action

Work Group worked together to devise a solution to the complicated issue of informing defendants that their conviction disqualifies them from possessing firearms. This new notification initiative was implemented in both the Circuit Courts and District Court.

- The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County developed guidelines to comply with legislation regarding the use of service therapy dogs in court proceedings.
- The District Court in Prince George's County continued to hold and participate in events and meetings to engage with the local community, including the District Court Open House, Round Table Symposium, Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, Sheriff's Office's "Light the Night" event, Prince George's County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, and annual and monthly meetings with various stakeholders.

## Collaborating With Partners and Responding to Needs

- The Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee co-hosted the Conflict Resolution Fellows Program with the Center for Dispute Resolution at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, bringing together influential Maryland leaders to help them expand their skills in negotiation, conflict resolution, and consensus building.
- Members of the Subcommittee on Mental Health Alcoholism and Addictions represented the Judiciary on the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene-Behavioral Health Administration Advisory Council, which includes representatives from several state agencies, the Office of the Public Defender, and treatment

provider representatives, to explore issues related to admission and residential treatment relevant to Health General Article 8-507.

- Representatives of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County (two judges and the court administrator) were invited to participate on the Anne Arundel County and City of Annapolis Opioid Intervention team.
- In cooperation with the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services began a pilot program to provide mindfulness and meditation sessions for youth detained at the Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center as part of the department's efforts to assist youth to make positive changes in their lives and avoid re-committing offenses in the future.
- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City worked with the Baltimore City Health Department to train drug court participants to recognize and respond to opioid-related overdoses.
- The Circuit Court for Dorchester County served as a resource to local stakeholders to help establish a teen court for the county.
- The Circuit Court for Harford County works with its justice partners to ensure litigants' needs are met and gaps in services are addressed.
- The Circuit Court for Kent County meets regularly with stakeholders to address the growing opiate problem in the county.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County participated in Project SEARCH Montgomery, the county's 30-week transition-to-work program, to provide job opportunities and community readiness education for young adults with developmental disabilities.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County served as part of a multidisciplinary team on a national initiative, Pathways Project, to curb the school to prison pipeline.
- The Circuit Court for Prince George's County collaborated with justice partners and stakeholders on the No Excuses for Dating Abuse: Running Teen Domestic Violence Out of our Community event.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County partnered with Mid-Shore Pro Bono, Inc., on the Purple Notebook Project, which helps self-represented litigants in divorce and custody cases navigate the judicial process from case initiation to disposition. The litigants are provided notebooks that contain resource materials and a place to keep documents together. Mid-Shore provides clinic hours to assist self-represented litigants as they decide whether to retain private counsel, represent themselves, or utilize the services of an attorney through Mid-Shore.
- The Circuit Court for Washington County works with the Sheriff's Office to identify defendants who may benefit from being ordered to the Day Reporting Center, which is a collaborative effort between stakeholders to reduce the population in the detention center while attempting to have a positive impact of the opioid drug problem in Washington County.
- The Circuit Court for Wicomico County hosted interagency security training for local law enforcement and first responders.
- The District Court in Allegany County continued judge involvement with the county coalition, which includes the Allegany County Health Department, local law enforcement, Parole and Probation, the Allegany County State's Attorney Office, and the Public Defender's Office.

- The District Court in Anne Arundel County held a warrant reduction program in June 2017 in an effort to reduce the number of failure-to-appear (FTA) warrants in the county. People with outstanding misdemeanor FTA warrants originating in Anne Arundel County were encouraged to appear voluntarily at the Annapolis District Court and, in many cases, the State's Attorney and Public Defender reached plea deals in court, which reduced the number of scheduled trials.
- The District Court in Baltimore City in partnership with the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law launched a second chance program for people with FTA warrants. The program encourages people with outstanding warrants who may have missed court dates for nonviolent misdemeanor offenses to apply to have these matters resolved. Approximately 46 individuals participated the program.
- Judges in the District Court in Carroll County participated in mock trials as training for the Maryland State Police, Maryland Police, and Correctional Training Commissions.
- In September 2017, the District Court in Kent County collaborated with the Kent County Detention Center to launch a pre-trial supervision program, which includes supervision, drug and alcohol testing, electronic monitoring, and drug treatment, and uses a risk assessment tool to assess the appropriate level of supervision.
- The District Court in Queen Anne's County worked with the Queen Anne's County Department of Corrections, police, the Department of Social Services, and the State's Attorney's Office to move forward with implementing a pre-trial release program, which will screen and release defendants under four levels of supervision.



STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS:  
MEETING OUR GOALS

*EIGHT*

**USE RESOURCES WISELY**

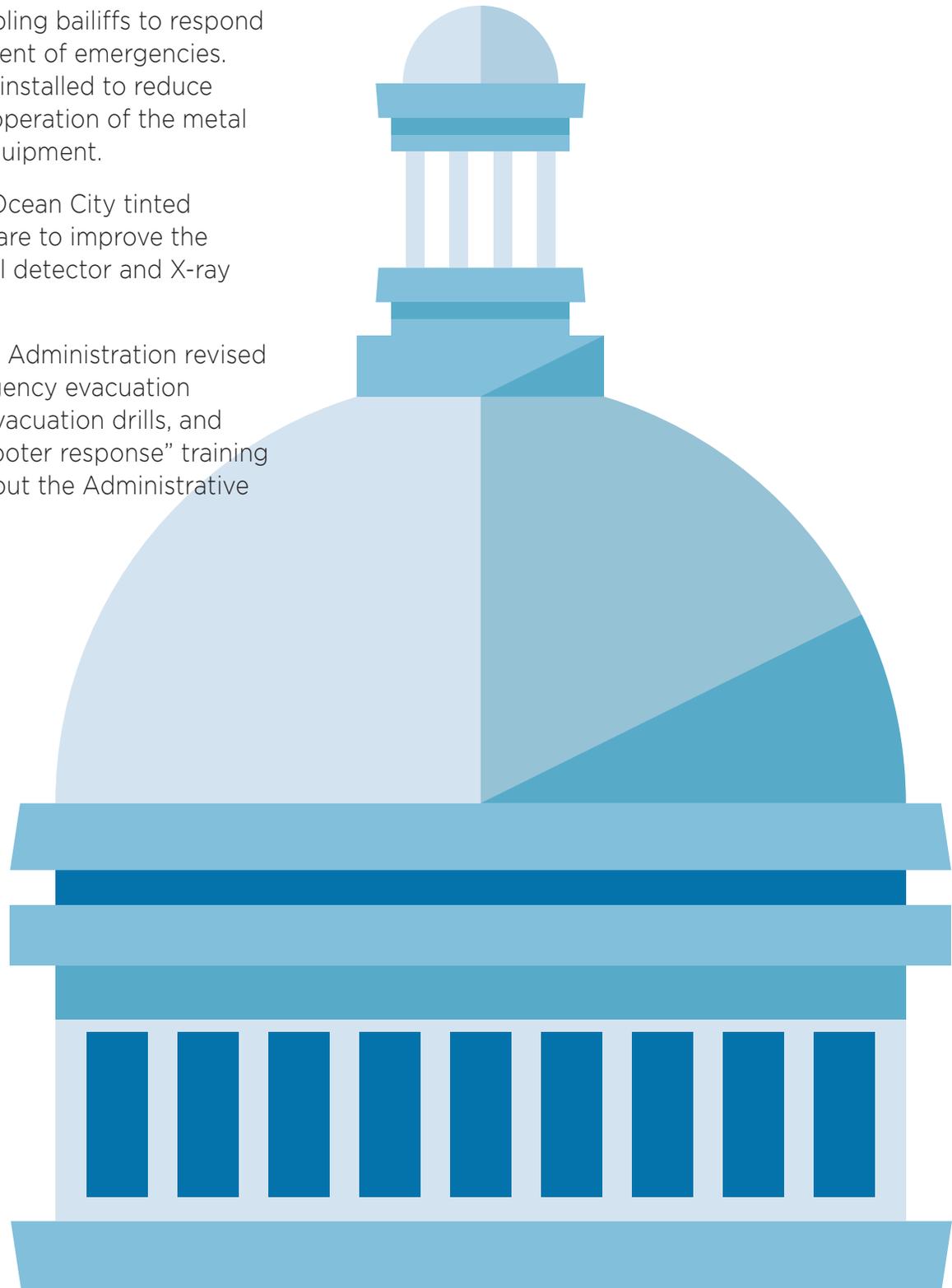
## Continuous Improvement

- Scheduled maintenance and renovation projects, such as replacing carpeting, painting, and repairs were undertaken in courthouse public spaces, offices and courtrooms, to maintain a professional appearance and atmosphere. Other projects included the following:
- The Circuit Court for Allegany County repurposed space to accommodate the drug court coordinator by relocating law clerks to the law library.
- The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County retrofitted courthouse space to create an additional courtroom and hearing room, installed a new phone system, renovated space, and relocated the Public Defender's Office to a satellite office within the courthouse.
- The Circuit Court for Charles County renovated space to create a hearing room and office for senior judges, expanded law clerks' offices, several staff offices, an extended jury box, increased employee work space, and a secure central public service counter.
- The Circuit Court for Frederick County reconfigured storage space to address office space issues in the courthouse and began a feasibility study for courthouse space and future needs.
- The Circuit Court for Howard County completed the courthouse signage project.
- The Circuit Court for St. Mary's County reorganized its law library.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County upgraded and replaced items in its children's waiting area.
- The Circuit Court for Talbot County installed an elevator to serve the courtroom, Clerk's Office, and Orphans' Court courtroom.
- The Circuit Court for Washington County relocated the Register of Wills' office to create space for an additional judge.
- The Circuit Court for Wicomico County began renovation efforts to create a new non-jury courtroom, an expanded jury assembly room, and office space, and completed a number of improvements to the historic courthouse, including a new roof, landscaping, and improved exterior lighting.
- The District Court in Calvert County converted an old accounting area into an office and employee space and a conference room into a training room with laptops, tables, chairs, projector, printer, and training materials.
- The District Court in Dorchester County renovated space on the lower level of the courthouse that had been occupied by the county health department to create training and conference rooms and court offices for the problem-solving court coordinator, regional director for mediation, and crime victims' organization. The renovations also provided vital storage space and relocated the bailiffs' office.
- As part of the necessary technical updates for the 2017 rollout of MDEC in Allegany, Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Garrett, St. Mary's, and Washington counties, Wi-Fi was installed in courts; building wiring and computer equipment was updated as needed.
- The Courthouse Equity Subcommittee began examining ways to examine funding equity and began studying the feasibility of a conceptual sliding scale grant model that considers various factors and a local jurisdiction's ability to pay.

## Safe and Effective Facilities

- Construction began for a new courthouse for Baltimore County District Court, a 130,000-square-foot facility that will have eight courtrooms and space for justice partners in an environmentally sustainable facility. In addition to ample parking and improved convenience for citizens, the new courthouse will include state-of-the-art technology and essential security upgrades.
- The Judiciary implemented safety and security measures and improvements in courts throughout the state and set priorities for ongoing maintenance and testing, as well as budgeting for equipment replacement. Among the ongoing security enhancements that were done in several Maryland courts in 2017 to ensure public and personnel safety were the planning, installation, and upgrading of video bail review equipment; installation and upgrading of security cameras in facilities and courtrooms; enhanced security in designated parking areas; security reviews; and security trainings, including active shooter and bomb threat training. In addition to these measures that were made in several courts, other security highlights included the following:
  - The Circuit Court for Baltimore City installed panic buttons on all judges' and magistrates' telephones in courtrooms and hearing rooms, as well as the telephones of administrative assistants, the information kiosks receptionist, and the instant paternity lab technician.
  - The Circuit Court for Calvert County installed an updated secured entry system.
  - The Circuit Court for Cecil County received funding from the local funding authority to renovate its prisoner holding cell area.
  - The Circuit Court for Frederick County installed additional proximity card readers and security glass at the Assignment Office counter.
  - The Circuit Court for Howard County installed ballistic barriers in all courtrooms and in an area of the Clerk's Office.
  - The Circuit Court for Montgomery County installed additional panic buttons and updated the access control system and audio visual intercom in several judges' chambers.
  - The Circuit Court for Prince George's County upgraded duress buttons to wireless technology and upgraded security cells in the Marbury Wing to digital cameras.
  - The Circuit Court for St. Mary's County received grant funding to implement a number of security enhancements, including additional cameras, a bullet resistant glass partition in the security foyer, and upgraded monitors for security staff to enlarge the view of video recordings.
  - The Circuit Court for Talbot County added additional security to its visitation center, and staff participated in a mental health first aid training program.
  - The Circuit Court for Wicomico County added a canine officer assigned to the court.
  - The Circuit Court for Worcester County had new X-ray machines installed at the entrances to the courthouse.

- The District Court in Talbot County began planning the relocation of the commissioners' office to the Talbot County Detention Center to create a central booking facility and provide commissioners with 24-hour security.
- The District Court in Salisbury relocated the bailiffs' office to be closer to courtrooms and the clerks' office, enabling bailiffs to respond more rapidly in the event of emergencies. Tinted windows were installed to reduce glare to improve the operation of the metal detector and X-ray equipment.
- The District Court in Ocean City tinted windows to reduce glare to improve the operation of the metal detector and X-ray equipment.
- The Office of Security Administration revised and completed emergency evacuation training, conducted evacuation drills, and conducted "active shooter response" training to personnel throughout the Administrative Office of the Courts.



# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

## Moving justice forward through innovation

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

## Priorities for the coming year:

- Providing excellent customer service throughout the Judicial Branch.
- Modernizing and improving court technologies, including network and system security, to protect and preserve official court records and access to public information.
- Expanding access to justice services and support to build on Maryland's fourth place ranking in the national Justice Index.
- Continuing to respond to the evolving needs of communities by offering additional problem-solving court services to align Marylanders with the help they need to overcome drug addiction and other underlying issues causing them to enter the justice system.
- Continuing to work with the Maryland General Assembly and Governor's Office to ensure that the Judiciary has sufficient resources to support services provided in Circuit and District Courts.
- Continuing to recruit and retain a professional workforce through fair compensation, recognition, and training of Judiciary employees while fostering the sharing of ideas and best practices at courthouses and court offices statewide.
- Exploring options within existing systems to notify individuals of their court date by text message and email.



**PAMELA HARRIS**  
**STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR**



**HONORABLE JOHN P. MORRISSEY**  
**CHIEF JUDGE, DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND**

- Continuing the successful rollout of MDEC and expanding justice partners' access to information.
- Continuing to support Circuit Courts to develop components related to court access, safety and security, and programs and services, as outlined in the Courthouse Equity Subcommittee's recommendations to the Judicial Council.
- Continuing to examine phone systems, both internally and to the benefit of our users.
- Encouraging jurisdictions to adopt evidence-based pre-trial procedures.
- Further refining the orientation and educational regimen for both new and experienced judges and clerks.
- Completing the remaining phases of Attorney Information System implementation.
- Expanding the implementation of proficiency-based education for Judiciary employees.
- Refining the system for emergency notifications and closures
- Upgrading the ServiceNow system.
- Working on plans for a new Courts of Appeal building.

## Judicial Council and Committees

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

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

## Maryland Judicial Council 2017

**Honorable Mary Ellen Barbera, Chair \***  
Chief Judge, Court of Appeals

**Honorable Patrick L. Woodward \***  
Chief Judge, Court of Special Appeals

**Honorable Kathleen Gallogly Cox \***  
Chair, Conference of Circuit Judges  
Circuit Court for Baltimore County

**Honorable Laura S. Kiessling**  
Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Judges  
Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County

**Honorable James A. Kenney III**  
Chair, Senior Judges Committee

**Honorable Karen H. Mason**  
Circuit Court for Prince George's County

**Honorable W. Michel Pierson**  
Circuit Court for Baltimore City

**Honorable Brett W. Wilson**  
Circuit Court for Dorchester County

**Pamela Q. Harris \***  
State Court Administrator  
Administrative Office of the Courts

**Honorable Susan Braniecki**  
Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks  
Clerk, Circuit Court for Worcester County

**Honorable Amy J. Craig**  
Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks  
Clerk, Circuit Court for Dorchester County

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

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

**Honorable Pamila J. Brown**  
District Court, Howard County

**Honorable Susan H. Hazlett**  
District Court, Harford County

**Honorable Patricia L. Mitchell**  
District Court, Montgomery County

**Honorable Gerald V. Purnell**  
District Court, Worcester County

**Honorable Alan M. Wilner**  
Chair, Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure

**Roberta Warnken**  
Chief Clerk, District Court of Maryland

**Tamera Chester**  
Administrative Clerk, District Court, Anne Arundel County

**Robert Prender**  
Administrative Clerk, District Court, Prince George's County

**Douglas Hofstedt**  
Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators  
Court Administrator, Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County

**Timothy H. Sheridan**  
Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators  
Court Administrator, Circuit Court for Baltimore County

\* Member of Executive Committee

\*\* Honorable Peter B. Krauser was a member until his retirement on May 5, 2017; Honorable JoAnn Ellinghaus-Jones and Honorable Eugene Wolfe were members until their retirement on June 30, 2017.

## 2017 Committees

### Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee

*Honorable Thomas G. Ross, Chair*

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

### Court Access and Community Relations Committee

*Honorable Larnzell Martin, Jr., Senior Judge, Chair*

*Honorable Pamela J. White, Vice-Chair*

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

### Court Operations Committee

*Honorable E. Gregory Wells, Chair*

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

### Court Technology Committee

*Honorable Gary G. Everngam, Senior Judge, Chair*

*Honorable Margaret Schweitzer, Vice-Chair*

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

### District Court Chief Judge's Committee

*Honorable John P. Morrissey, Chief Judge,*

*District Court of Maryland, Chair*

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

### Domestic Law Committee

*Honorable Cynthia Callahan, Chair*

*Honorable Cathy H. Serrette, Vice-Chair*

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

### Education Committee

*Honorable Susan H. Hazlett, Chair*

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

### Juvenile Law Committee

*Honorable Michael J. Stamm, Chair*

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

### Legislative Committee

*Honorable W. Timothy Finan, Chair*

*Honorable Stacey Mayer, Vice-Chair*

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

### Senior Judges Committee

*Honorable James A. Kenney III, Senior Judge, Chair*

*Honorable Deborah S. Eyster, Vice-Chair*

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

### Specialty Courts and Dockets Committee

*Honorable Nicholas E. Rattal, Chair*

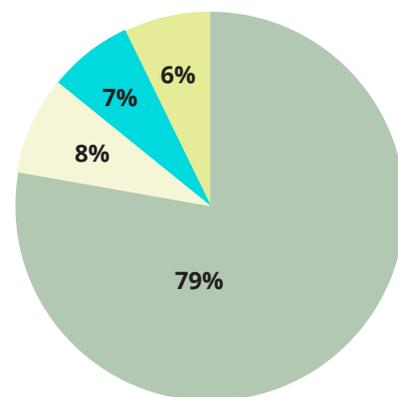
*Honorable George Lipman, Vice-Chair*

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

# MARYLAND JUDICIARY AT A GLANCE

## PERSONNEL PROFILE FISCAL YEAR 2017

<b>JUDGES</b>	
Court of Appeals	7
Court of Special Appeals	15
Circuit Court	173
District Court	118
Total Judges	313
<b>MAGISTRATES AND LAW CLERKS</b>	
Circuit Court Magistrates <sup>1</sup>	73
Law Clerks	180
Total Magistrates and Law Clerks	253
<b>JUDICIAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL</b>	
Court of Appeals	37.00
Court of Special Appeals	90.50
Circuit Court Clerks' Offices	1,443.00
District Court	1,404.50
Administrative Office of the Courts	375.75
Judicial Units	33.75
Total Judicial Support Personnel <sup>2</sup>	3,384.50
Judicial Support Contractual Employees	334.00
Total State-Funded Judicial Branch Personnel	4,284.50
<b>LOCALLY FUNDED JUDICIAL BRANCH PERSONNEL</b>	
Orphans Court Judges <sup>3</sup>	66
Circuit Court Personnel	966.92
Total Locally Funded Judges and Personnel	1,032.92



- Judges
- Judicial Support Personnel
- Magistrates and Law Clerks
- Judicial Support Contractual Employees

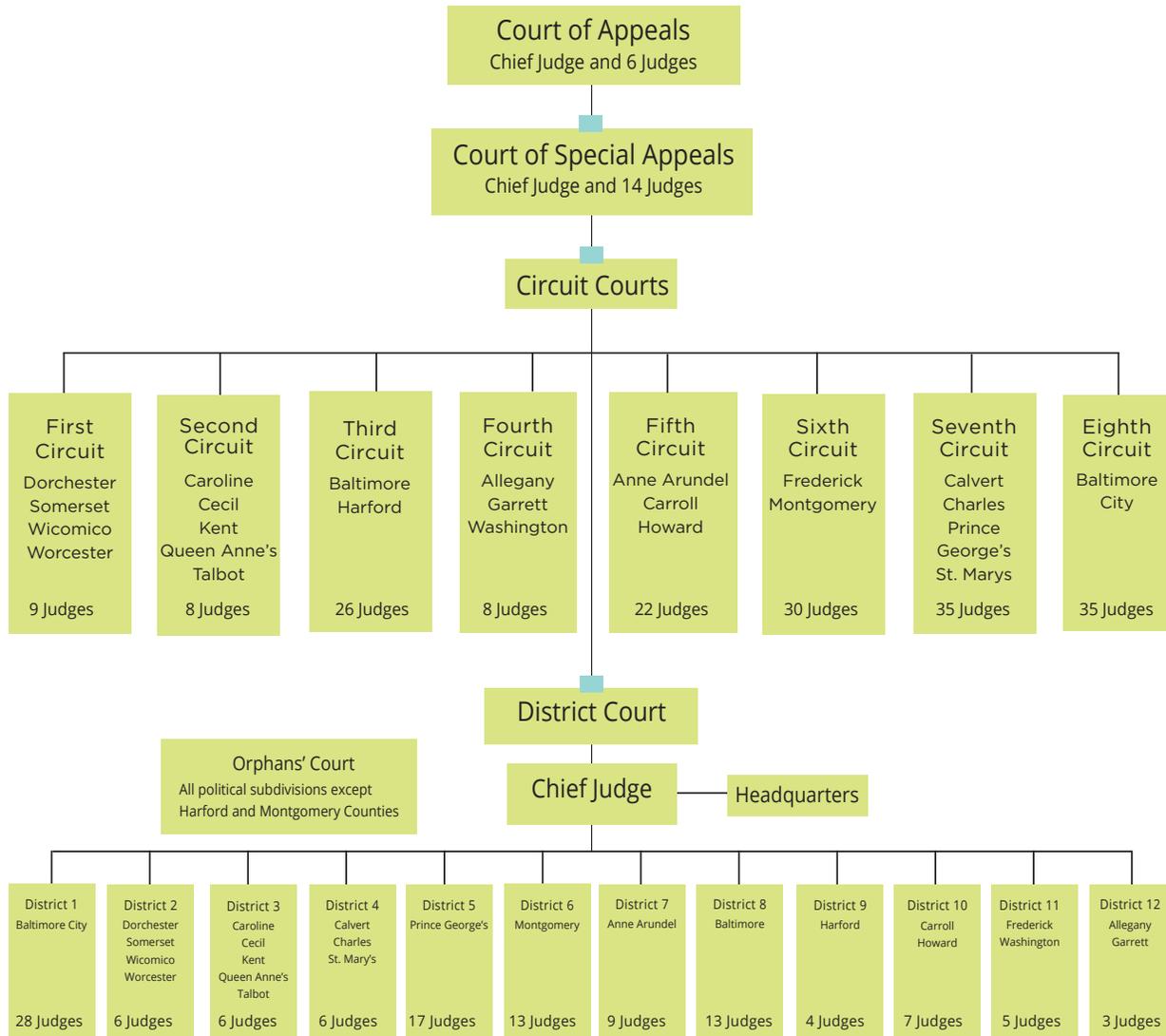
- 1 Includes one contractual Magistrate.
- 2 Excludes Judicial Support Contractual Employees
- 3 Three judges sit on the Orphans' Court in Baltimore City and each of the counties. Circuit Court judges sit as judges of the Orphans' court in Harford and Montgomery counties.

## JUDICIAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES \* FISCAL YEAR 2017

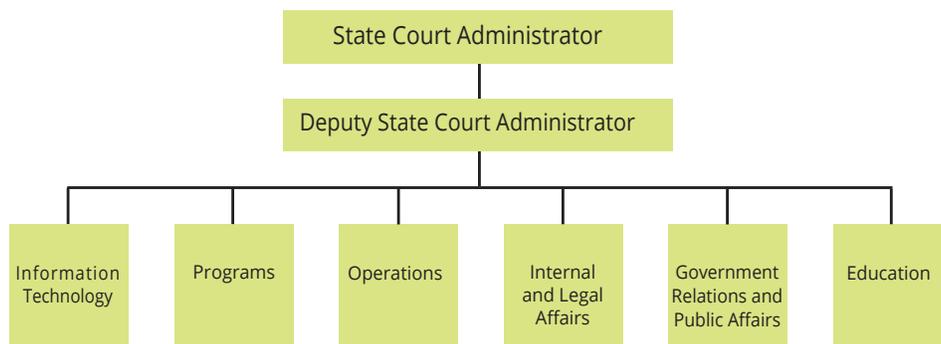
Revenues	\$519,133,919
Expenditures	\$536,880,859

\* Includes all fund types. The total revenues for Fiscal Year 2016 that were reported in last year's Strategic Plan Update were overstated by approximately \$15 million as a formula error in the spreadsheet resulted in the miscalculation.

# MARYLAND JUDICIAL SYSTEM FISCAL YEAR 2017



## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS



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

## MARYLAND JUDICIARY TOTAL FILINGS AND TERMINATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2017

	Filings	Terminations
Court of Appeals	871	877
Court of Special Appeals	1,931	2,052
Circuit Courts	239,134	231,083
District Court	1,646,877	1,796,622
Totals	1,888,813	2,030,634

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

## COURT OF APPEALS FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS FISCAL YEAR 2017

	Filings	Dispositions
Regular Docket	94	97
Petitions for Certiorari	596	624
Attorney Grievance Proceedings	126	106
Bar Admission Proceedings	4	4
Certified Questions of Law	3	1
Miscellaneous Appeals	48	45

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

## COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS FISCAL YEAR 2017

Appeals Filed	1,931
Appeals Disposed	2,052
Opinions Filed	1,341

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

## CIRCUIT COURT STATEWIDE FILINGS AND TERMINATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2017

	Filings	Terminations
Total Civil General	62,123	60,657
Total Civil Family	89,887	85,909
Total Juvenile	19,801	17,043
Total Criminal	67,323	67,474
Totals	239,134	231,083

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

## DISTRICT COURT STATEWIDE MOTOR VEHICLE, CRIMINAL, CIVIL, LANDLORD-TENANT FILINGS AND TERMINATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2017

	Filings	Terminations
Motor Vehicle <sup>1</sup>	568,360	646,724
Criminal <sup>2</sup>	136,732	198,855
Civil <sup>3</sup>	291,491	300,695
Landlord-Tenant	650,230	*
Totals	1,646,813	** 1,796,504

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

\*\* Includes landlord-tenant terminations.

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

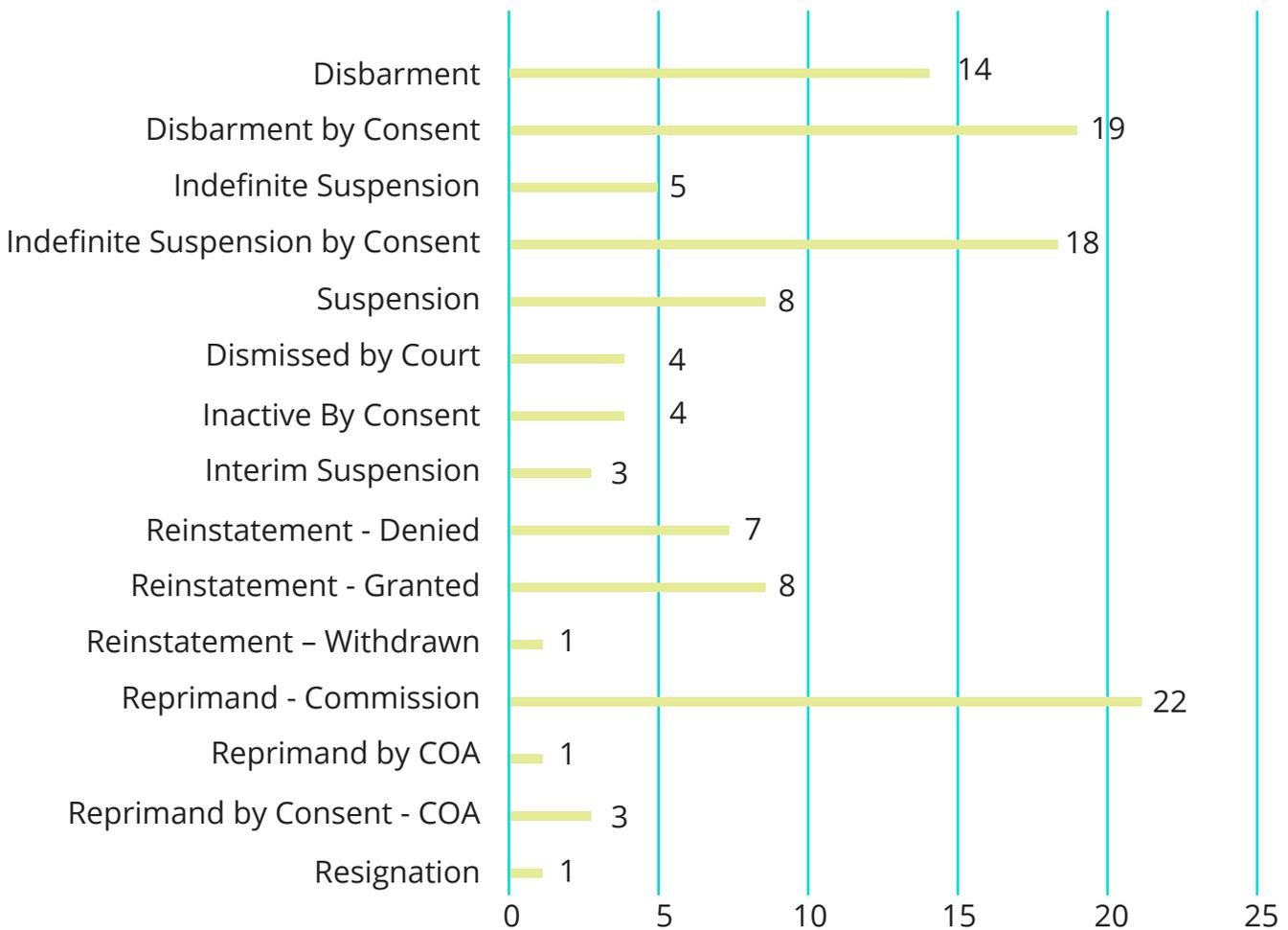
Note: Due to the transition to Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC), data on filings and terminations are obtained from multiple source systems, which may result in some differences in the comparability of data across jurisdictions and between reporting periods.

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

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



### ATTORNEY GRIEVANCE COMMISSION AND OFFICE OF BAR COUNSEL FISCAL YEAR 2017



■ ATTORNEY DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: TOTAL NUMBER: 118

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

## CLIENT PROTECTION FUND OF THE BAR OF MARYLAND FISCAL YEAR 2017

<b>Claims</b>	
Decided Claims	135
Approved Payment	73
Total Payment on Approved Claims	\$1,967,438
Revenue from Assessments	\$818,890

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

## MARYLAND COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES FISCAL YEAR 2017

<b>Sources of All Complaints</b>	
Attorneys	11
Investigative Counsel Initiated Inquiries	13
Inmates	32
Judges	10
Public	168
Total Verified Complaints	234
<b>Complaints by Level of Court</b>	
District Court Judges	68
Circuit Court Judges	152
Orphans’ Court Judges	11
Court of Special Appeals Judges	2
Court of Appeals Judges	1
Total	234
<b>Disciplinary Actions *</b>	
Filing of Charges by Investigative Counsel	3
Public Reprimand	1
Public Consent Order, Agreement for Extension and Modification of Probation	1
Deferred Discipline Agreement	1
Dismissal With Warning	3

\* The vast majority of complaints in fiscal year 2017, as in prior years, were dismissed because the allegations set forth in the complaints were either found to be unsubstantiated, or the conduct complained about did not constitute sanctionable conduct. One matter was dismissed by the Commission after the filing of charges.

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

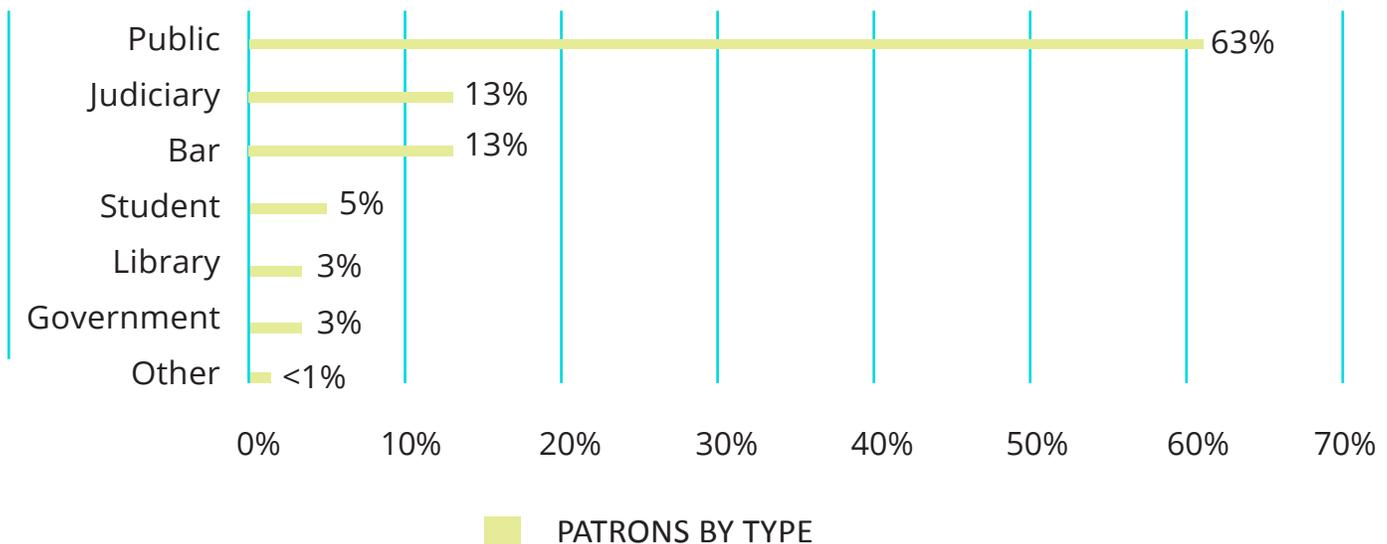
## STATE BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS FISCAL YEAR 2017

	Applied	Sat	Passed	Cleared *
General Bar	1,799	1,605	888	223 *
Out of State Attorney Exam	201	183	140	75 *

\* Applications are processed by SBLE and investigated by the Character Committees regardless of whether the applicant sat for or passed the exam. SBLE only “clears” those who are approved for character AND passed the exam. Information in the “cleared” column is current as of November 15, 2017 but does not include any candidates who passed the July 2017 General Bar Exam and Attorney Exam.

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

## MARYLAND STATE LAW LIBRARY FISCAL YEAR 2017



The Maryland State Law Library responded to almost 9,000 reference requests during fiscal year 2017 through in-person visits, telephone, email, online chat, and regular mail (email and chat sessions are not identified by patron type at this time). While the total number of requests declined from fiscal year 2016, the percentage of lengthier questions increased, meaning the staff devoted more time per question in fiscal year 2017 than in prior years. Of the total requests, 63 percent were asked by members of the general public, a continuation of the growth in percentage from prior years. Inquiries by telephone and in person continued to decline, while those received via email continued to increase, with almost half of all requests received by email.

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

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE FISCAL YEAR 2017

Reports Published *	6
New Rules Proposed	41
Existing and Pending Rules Changes and Forms Proposed to be Amended	171
Proposed Deletion of Rules	20

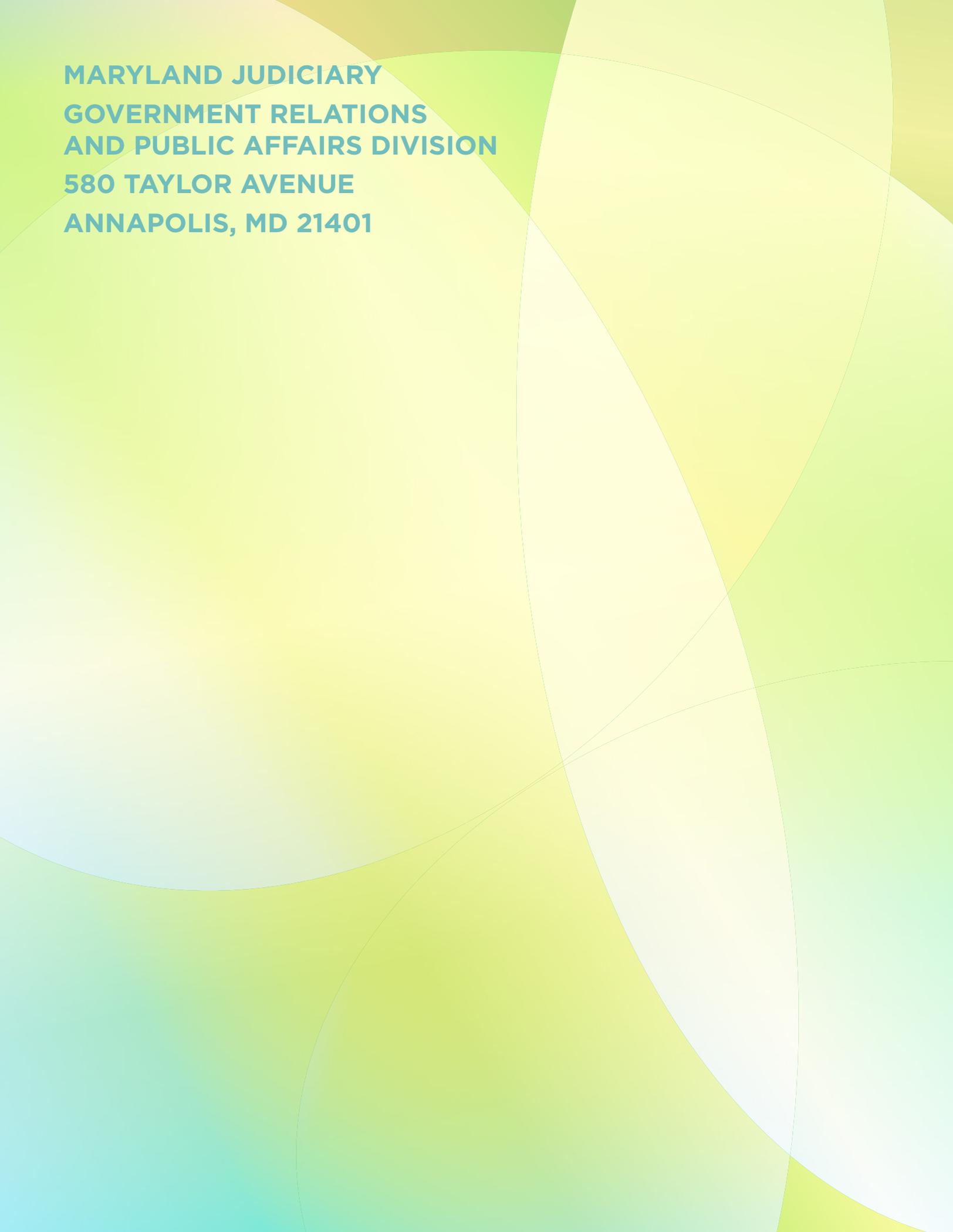
\* The 191st Report; the 192nd Report and two Supplemental Reports; and the 193rd Report and one Supplemental Report, all totaling 918 pages. Topics addressed in these reports include:

**191st Report:** Actions to quiet title to property • Advice to defendants in criminal actions • Assigned consumer debt collection actions • Attorneys' ethical obligations • Body cameras • Continuances and postponements • Deficiency judgments in foreclosure actions • Depositions and discovery • Electronic recording of proceedings before a District Court commissioner • Entry of appearances by attorneys • Impeachment evidence • In banc review • Inadvertent disclosure of privileged information • Judicial personnel policies and procedures • Judicial review of administrative agency decisions • Methods of notice in probate proceedings • Protection of the privacy of children • Rules governing the Commission on Judicial Disabilities • Search warrants, pen registers, and trap and trace devices • Structured settlement transfers • Waiver of costs • Waiver of counsel by defendants in criminal actions;

**192nd Report and Supplements:** Pretrial release procedures; and

**193rd Report and Supplement:** Access to court records • Attorney discipline and conservatorships • Custody evaluations • Extrajudicial activities of Orphans' Court judges • Forms for guardianships that terminate parental rights and adoptions • MDEC (Maryland Electronic Courts) • Methods of notice in probate proceedings • Senior judges • Terms of court.

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



**MARYLAND JUDICIARY  
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS  
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION  
580 TAYLOR AVENUE  
ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401**