



# ICM

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# Institute for Court Management Certification Program

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Maryland is part of a six-state consortium working in collaboration with the Institute for Court Management (ICM) of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). This four-year flagship program offered through Professional Development educates court leaders in the core competencies of court administration, as outlined by the National Association for Court Management (NACM). Participants who graduate from the Maryland Judiciary's ICM program earn the title of Certified Court Executive (CCE).

This program's 13 courses are part of the nationally preeminent and highly sought-after leadership credentialing program of the Institute for Court Management. As such, the Maryland Judiciary uses these courses to identify, develop, and nurture future judicial managers and leaders. This is an exciting and challenging opportunity intended to prove both personally and professionally rewarding.

The program offers three, multi-day, face-to-face courses each year. The class size is limited to a maximum of 30 participants who are required to meet eligibility criteria, as well as to adhere to program requirements that are articulated later in this document.

This national course of study requires a serious commitment on the part of selected participants and their respective courts and offices. This outlay of time and energy is a worthwhile investment.

## Eligibility Criteria

**All Judiciary staff are eligible for admittance to the program under the following requirements:**

- Applicants shall be state or locally-funded Judiciary employees.
- Applicants shall be managers, supervisors, lead workers (e.g., responsible for managing a program, providing staff orientation and training responsibilities, etc.), or graduates of both the Court Professional Certificate (CPC) program and the Court Supervisor/Manager Certificate (CS/MC) program.
- Applicants must have completed two years of service as a full-time, regular employee of the Maryland Judiciary as of the application deadline date. An exception will be made for those on the state's senior pay scale (e.g., clerk of court, administrative clerk, administrative commissioner, AOC assistant state court administrator, DCHQ executive director) and locally-funded Judiciary employees with the titles of court administrator and deputy court administrator.
- Applicants shall presently be in good standing with their respective court or office. Applicants who are currently the subject of any performance or disciplinary actions must provide a short explanation of the circumstances and upload it along with the application.

## Application Requirements

**Applicants shall submit the following:**

- A fully-completed application.
- A résumé.
- A signed essay of no more than 1,400 words is to be attached to the application explaining:
  - (a) why the applicant should be selected for the program;
  - (b) how the applicant believes their unique perspective and experience will contribute to the diversity of the program;
  - (c) what single professional accomplishment has been a source of personal fulfillment and why, and
  - (d) how the applicant intends to make full use of such an opportunity.
- A formal letter of recommendation to be attached to the application from the administrative head of either the applicant's court or office (e.g., clerk of court, administrative clerk, administrative commissioner, AOC assistant state court administrator, DCHQ executive director).

**Note:** *The administrative head may email the letter of recommendation to [ICM@mdcourts.gov](mailto:ICM@mdcourts.gov) with a subject line that includes the applicant's name and reference to the ICM application process. For example, "Jane Doe, ICM recommendation." The letter of recommendation must be received on or before the application deadline date.*

## Expectations

**Program participants are required to adhere to the following:**

- Attend all workshops in their entirety. No workshop or any portion of a workshop may be missed.
- Be punctual and professional.
- Adhere to all directions provided by the faculty.
- Actively participate in all courses.
- Demonstrate individual learning by satisfactorily completing an assignment for each course, to be determined by the faculty.

## Application Deadlines

Applications are submitted electronically through the ICM application portal on CourtNet. Applications for the Class of 2030 will be accepted in the fall of 2026.

## Application Review Panel

An application review panel will strive to select applicants representing different geographical sections, offices, and courts of the state based on the strength of their application package. The selection of candidates is not grievable.

The application review panel is composed of a representative from each of the following classifications: Circuit Court; District Court; court administrator; commissioner; Appellate Court or court-related agency; and the AOC.

# Institute for Court Management Certification Program Curriculum

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## *ICM Curriculum and Certification*

The Certified Court Manager (CCM) is the first level of certification and requires the completion of the six courses outlined below. The Certified Court Executive (CCE ) is the next level of certification and requires the successful completion of seven additional courses, also outlined below. **Note:** *ICM Fellows is the final level of certification. Acceptance into the Fellows program is through the National Center for State Courts and is open to CCE certified graduates.*

### **Certified Court Manager (CCM)**

- Purposes and Responsibilities of Courts
- Budget and Fiscal Management
- Caseflow and Workflow Management
- Project Management
- Workforce Management
- Accountability and Court Performance

### **Certified Court Executive (CCE)**

- Leadership
- Educational Development and Public Relations
- Visioning and Strategic Planning
- Operations Management
- Modern Court Governance
- Executive Decision Making

## *Course Offerings*

Current ICM course offerings and class information is posted on CourtNet here:

<https://mdcourts.gov/professionaldev/icm>

For additional information, please contact [ICM@mdcourts.gov](mailto:ICM@mdcourts.gov) or call the Judicial College at 410-260-3660 and ask to speak to a staff member in Professional Development.



# ICM Courses

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## Accountability & Court Performance

This course provides court managers with tools they can use to analyze court performance, implement improvements, and achieve performance goals. Court leaders and managers will learn how to collect, understand, and use data to guide decision making. Participants will also improve their skills in communicating effectively with court leaders about how their court's data can be used to improve court performance.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Identify tools that can be used to measure and manage performance, including CourTools.
- Discuss how to collect, evaluate, and analyze court data.
- Demonstrate how measures can be used to assess performance as related to performance targets, such as time standards.
- Discuss how performance measures can be used to guide management, planning, and leadership decisions.
- Develop an action plan for court improvement that incorporates the purposes and responsibilities of courts, performance measurement, the principles of caseload management, and elements of the High Performance Court Framework.

## Caseload & Workflow Management

This course examines known and proven elements of caseload management (case processing protocols and actions) and workflow management (management of the people, procedures, and resources supporting caseload management activities). Participants will analyze the effectiveness of their court's current caseload management system and practices and learn how to apply best practices of caseload and workflow management to their court.

The course helps court professionals understand what is affecting caseload positively or negatively in their court, and provides practical tools to improve their court's caseload and workflow.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Assess the effectiveness of your court's caseload management system.
- Identify steps to reduce the size and age of your court's pending case inventory and streamline caseload processes.
- Identify variations in caseload type and complexity and assess implications for caseload and workflow processes.
- Discuss challenges that influence the ability to change caseload management processes.
- Develop a system that ensures timely disposition of all cases in collaboration with stakeholders.

## Budget & Fiscal Management

Designed for court professionals with varying levels of involvement with the court's budget, this course defines the building blocks of finance and explains how to plan, prepare, review, present, execute, and monitor a budget. Participants

will review practical steps courts can take during difficult fiscal times, including maintaining open communication both within the court and with justice partners. In addition, the course explores the relationship between a court's strategic plan and budgeting.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Discuss the building blocks of budgeting and fiscal management, including Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenses.
- Explain the basics of financial reporting.
- Discuss the perspective of the funding authority and how to compete for budget resources.
- Discuss the financial implications of facilities management.
- Identify the steps involved in planning, preparing, reviewing, presenting, and monitoring a budget.

## Project Management

Project management is an essential skill set for the courts, especially with respect to managing the integration of technology into all aspects of court operations. This course takes participants through the steps of project management, from initial planning to the closing of projects. Participants will learn how to work on all phases of projects, with technology-related projects providing the context for most of the course. Managers at all levels will find value in this course as they manage projects of all sizes. Court technology professionals will find the course helpful in increasing their understanding of court functions and operations.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- List the component parts of project management, using terminology recognized by practitioners in the professional project management field.
- Identify the planning steps necessary for a successful project.
- Examine project management tools, such as Work Breakdown Structures, GANTT Charts, and Critical Path Analysis, that help keep a project within budget and on schedule.
- Discuss general requirements for monitoring and controlling a project during its execution.
- Identify the elements of a project closing, and explain why each element is essential to the process.

## Purposes & Responsibilities of Courts

In this course participants explore the foundations of the third branch of government through an overview of colonial history, the rule of law, and other important historical and current-day events and practices. This course is an opportunity for participants to consider how and why courts often conduct their business differently from each other, despite sharing the same principles. Throughout the course, participants will reflect on whether the performance, structure, operations, and processes of their courts align with the purposes and responsibilities of courts.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Discuss the purposes and responsibilities of courts and how they have changed over time.
- Discuss key legal concepts, such as due process of law, and their relationship to the purposes and responsibilities of courts.
- Explain the role of the courts as a third branch of government.
- Identify various ways courts are managed and structured as a response to societal expectations and challenges.
- Analyze court governance structures, court organization, and essential functions of courts as they relate to court administration and management.

### Workforce Management

Workforce management helps an organization achieve its mission and goals by acquiring and maintaining a productive workforce. In this course participants will learn how workforce practices, policies, and procedures can either help a court comply with employment laws or expose the court to significant legal consequences. In addition, participants will learn recruitment, selection, and retention procedures, and performance management principles that encourage a high-performance work environment. Participants will also explore how to develop strong employee relations and the intricacies of interacting with employee interest groups and organized labor. Further, participants will learn the importance of organizational development in a diverse world and the importance of career development, mentoring, and succession planning.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Identify sound workforce management policies, procedures, and practices for the courthouse work environment.
- Identify and discuss key federal employment laws that impact the courthouse work environment.
- Identify and apply effective recruitment and selection principles, as well as orientation.
- Articulate effective workforce performance management techniques, including workforce development, mentoring, and succession planning.
- Identify and apply employee relations principles, including discipline.

### Educational Development

This course is designed to equip participants with the information necessary to develop, implement, sustain, evaluate and improve education for and development of court staff. Participants will learn the fundamentals of adult education and instructional design and will explore the unique educational environment of the courts. Throughout the course, participants will assess current educational efforts at their own courts and learn how to employ education to enhance daily operations as well as to achieve their court's mission or strategic plan.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Describe the unique educational environment of the courts and determine how education can promote improvements in court operations.

- Identify resources that can support education and describe effective approaches to obtaining those resources.
- Identify ways to evaluate the short and long-term outcomes of education.
- Describe how court administrators can use education to support new and promoted employees, enhance staff performance at different career points, and serve as an effective intervention to address gaps in knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Create an action plan for implementing education in their own court.

### Executive Decision-Making

The Executive Decision-Making course provides court leaders with tools they can use to enhance a court's effectiveness, efficiency, fairness, and accessibility. The course teaches court leaders to: evaluate data; be a knowledgeable consumer of research studies; diagnose court operations challenges; and create and communicate proposed solutions.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Describe how leadership styles, court culture and governance structures impact executive decision-making.
- Apply leadership frameworks such as loosely coupled systems, productive pairs and servant leadership, to enhance executive decision making in their own court.
- Create strategies to apply data-driven principles, evidence-based practices, national standards and best practices to address local court challenges and strategic priorities.
- Implement strategies to adapt to the changing environment, including leveraging "big data," using artificial intelligence, incorporating visual data displays, and using business intelligence and analytic tools.
- Examine the ethical considerations inherent in the challenges of executive decision-making.

### Leadership

Leaders in the 21st century must inspire, communicate a vision, and master the workforce and work environment. In this course, participants will become familiar with the major theories and practices of leadership, including what it takes to exercise leadership as an individual, as the leader of teams, and as the leader of an organization that must work effectively with other branches of government and stakeholders.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Identify traits, activities, and models of leadership.
- Explore the differences between leadership and management and the value each brings to an organization.
- Demonstrate personal and organizational legitimacy through transparency and accountability in leadership.
- Discuss the relationships and connections needed for leaders to be effective in an interdependent judicial system.
- Advocate for a governance structure that promotes effective communication, collaborative decision-making, and teamwork.



### Modern Court Governance

Court governance refers to the policies, procedures, and traditions that determine how courts are administered, how court administration decisions are made, and who has decision-making authority. Effective court governance is the foundation for ensuring that courts function in a predictable and consistent manner that supports fundamental principles, such as access to justice and due process of law. A court governance structure should provide guidance to court managers and supervisors about how policies and practices are decided and implemented. The purpose of the Modern Court Governance course is to provide court leaders with tools they can use to preserve and enhance governance mechanisms used by the court.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Identify key court governance principles.
- Examine federal, state, and local court governance models.
- Assess benefits and challenges associated with court governance models and identify potential areas for change in their own court.
- Explore the use of court governance principles to guide management, planning, and leadership decisions.
- Discuss the role of court managers in fostering a system of responsive and effective modern court governance.

### Operations Management

In this course, participants will examine programs and services that support the adjudication of cases, but that may or may not be under the direct control of the court. Whether or not the court has direct control over the management of essential programs and services, court leaders must understand the needs, nature, and impact of court-related programs to help ensure that these activities contribute to effective court administration and the overall quality of justice. Examples of operations discussed in the course include COOP plans, records management, managing problem-solving courts, and specialty dockets.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Identify operations that are court-related, but not under complete control of court administration.
- Discuss how each of these operations fits into the court organization.
- Discuss how various operations support the role and values of the court as an institution.
- Identify ways to collaborate with stakeholders to improve the management and effectiveness of operations using technology and appropriate service delivery methods.
- Develop performance and evaluation criteria for these services and programs so that efficiency promotes the overall effectiveness of the court as an institution.

### Public Relations

The Public Relations course provides participants with tools they can use to promote community engagement and increase public trust and confidence, while fulfilling their duty to provide administrative and case-related information to the media and the public via electronic, written, and verbal communications. The course teaches court leaders and managers how to craft and deliver messages about court activities and performance, as well as to educate staff about walking the fine line between providing legal advice vs. legal information. Participants will also improve their skills in communicating effectively with the media and consider requirements for communicating in a crisis.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Discuss how sources of information about the courts influence public perceptions.
- Identify how public relations can have a positive impact on public trust and confidence in the courts.
- Examine the roles of customer service, community engagement programs, communication strategies, and public information programs in promoting public trust and confidence in the courts.
- Identify best practices for how the courts should manage media relations.
- Demonstrate skills and techniques that can be used to help the public understand and support the courts.

### Visioning & Strategic Planning

The Visioning & Strategic Planning course gives court leaders and managers the tools they need to develop a vision and achieve goals using strategic planning. Court leaders often assume that the vision and mission of a court is self-evident and that the process of achieving consensus for a vision is a waste of time. This course demonstrates that having a vision and a strategic plan is an effective way to define priorities and allocate limited court resources.

**As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:**

- Examine court performance issues from a strategic perspective.
- Discuss the importance of encouraging strategic thinking and decision making at every level of the organization.
- Apply the techniques involved in strategic planning, including developing mission and vision statements, and goals and action plans.
- Discuss the leadership, teamwork, and organizational foundations that are required to create and implement a strategic plan.
- Draft a plan for implementing a visioning and strategic planning process in their own court.

# ICM Frequently Asked Questions

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## What is ICM?

ICM stands for the Institute for Court Management. It is the educational arm of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC).

## What is the length of the Maryland Judiciary's ICM program?

The ICM program will take four years to complete, if all courses are taken with your cohort. Three courses are offered each year.

## How many courses comprise the program?

There are 13 courses. Each one is three days in length.\*

*\*Courses are scheduled to be in-person learning events at the Maryland Judicial Center (MJC) in Annapolis from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. In the event a course is required to shift to an instructor-led distance learning format, remote classes will be four days in length and held from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to avoid Zoom fatigue.*

## Are state and locally funded employees of the Judiciary eligible to apply?

Yes. All courses offered by Professional Development are open to state and locally-funded Judiciary employees.

## Who will be the instructors?

Instructors are Maryland Judiciary employees or retired employees who are ICM certified, guest speakers, or certified consortium partners.

## Must I attend each course?

In order to graduate, all courses must be completed in their entirety.

## What if I miss a day?

If you miss part of a day, a full day, or the entire three-day course, you must make up the entire course the next time it is offered.

## Do I have to pass an assessment after each course?

There is not a pass/fail assessment. However, learners must complete an assignment during or after each course.

## What is the application deadline?

All applicant materials (application form, essay, résumé, and letter of recommendation) must be submitted through the ICM application portal on or before the close of business on the date the application deadline. **Note:** *If an administrative official would prefer, they may send the letter of recommendation directly to Professional Development at [ICM@mdcourts.gov](mailto:ICM@mdcourts.gov).*

## May I mail, fax, or e-mail my application?

No. Applications must be submitted through the ICM web page.

## Where do I find the application form and instructions?

During the period when applications are being accepted, the application form and further instructions can be found on the ICM web page in CourtNet: <https://mdcourts.gov/professionaldev/icm>

## Do I have to type my essay?

It is preferred that you type and sign your essay.

## What are some of the benefits of taking these courses?

There are many benefits, including:

- Meeting and learning from subject matter experts from across the Maryland Judiciary.
- Broadening your knowledge of our justice system, thereby helping you spot opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of court services.
- Networking with fellow classmates.
- Positioning yourself for greater opportunities for advancement.
- Taking advantage of opportunities for both professional and personal growth.

## Will obtaining this certification help me get a promotion?

Many factors are considered when filling available positions. One of those factors may be your graduation from this program. Job postings may include graduation from this program as a preferred qualification.

## When will I receive notification of a decision?

Following the application panel review, all applicants will be notified of the decisions by late November or early December.

## Who should I contact if I have more questions?

Contact the Judicial College and ask to speak to a staff member in Professional Development at (410) 260-3660 or at [ICM@mdcourts.gov](mailto:ICM@mdcourts.gov).