

MARYLAND JUDICIARY 2019 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



**BUILDING
FOR THE FUTURE**

Greetings from Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera

January 2020

I am pleased to present the Maryland Judiciary 2019 Strategic Plan Update: “Building for the Future.”

The long history of the Maryland court system reaches back more than 350 years. It was an established component of the Maryland colony long before our Founding Fathers were born and firmly in place when our nation was in its infancy. We are proud of our history, but we are equally proud to be an active part of creating a new chapter.

Every day, the 4,300 public servants who are Maryland’s judicial branch of government work to fulfill the promise of equal justice under law. We strive, through good governance, to strengthen public trust and confidence in our Judiciary.

During this past year, the Maryland Judiciary has made achievements in myriad efforts on behalf of the people of Maryland: engaging in the fight against the opioid crisis; protecting the youngest, oldest, and most vulnerable among us; increasing access to justice; expanding services to self-represented litigants; improving efficiencies by updating operational processes and systems; modernizing case filing and management through the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) platform; educating and engaging partners in the justice system; and collaborating with community groups and justice partners to meet the changing needs of people who rely on Maryland’s courts and services. As we find new ways to advance juvenile justice reform, combat human trafficking, help children in the court system, expand alternative dispute resolution services, and improve our response to crime and addiction, we will continue to rely on our committed, dedicated, and hardworking staff and judges throughout the state.

The accomplishments detailed in this year’s Strategic Plan Update reflect the selfless and enduring efforts of the Judiciary’s judges, magistrates, clerks, administrators, commissioners, and staff. I hope you will join me in recognizing their efforts. By taking on demanding tasks and working behind the scenes every day, this dedicated group of professionals is building a better future for the courts and advancing the worthy mission to provide fair, efficient, and effective justice for all.



MARY ELLEN BARBERA
CHIEF JUDGE
COURT OF APPEALS OF MARYLAND

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.

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2019 paves the way for the Maryland Judiciary's efforts to build for the future

The Maryland Judiciary made history in 2019 when the Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County closed the doors to the oldest courthouse in the state and opened the doors to a new, state-of-the-art, all-electronic courthouse.

Nestled in the heart of historic downtown Centreville, the new circuit courthouse in Queen Anne's County, which is rich in architecture and technology, now faces the historical courthouse building that was once the oldest courthouse in continuous use in the state of Maryland and one of the oldest courthouses in continuous operation in the country.

When the courthouse was completed in 1792, George Washington was in his first term as president and the U.S. Constitution was five years old. The 13,000-square-foot historic courthouse was commissioned on June 1, 1796, and had a price tag of \$6,800.



The historic courthouse (pictured above, right) located at 100 Courthouse Square in Centreville sits just feet away from the new Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County, now located at 200 N. Commerce Street.

This rings true, not only in Queen Anne's County, but across the entire state of Maryland. This new chapter for the Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County is just one of the myriad of projects in 2019 that are contributing to the Judiciary's journey into the future.

Just as the construction phase ended in Queen Anne's County, construction crews broke ground for a new circuit courthouse in Howard County.

Howard County entered into a public-private partnership, known as a P3 model, to fund and manage the effort. It is the second courthouse in the United States to be financed and managed this way.



During the courthouse dedication on April 13, 2019, Queen Anne's County Administrator Todd Mohn described the historic courthouse's features, including the massive 750-watt incandescent bulbs that once illuminated the courtroom.

The original building was heated by a fireplace and had an outhouse as its lavatory. Throughout its history, communication systems included courier, telegraph, and rotary phones. Some of those features are long gone, while others have been preserved to maintain the historic nature of the building.

The illustrations featured on the front and back covers of this report, the Maryland Judiciary's 2019 Strategic Plan Update, reflect the vision that is necessary to create a 21st Century courthouse with rooms designed for accessibility, technology, and security in a rich historical context. This progression from historical to modern is symbolic of the Maryland Judiciary's efforts to improve its systems, processes, policies, and resources to provide for the prompt, efficient, and just resolution of cases and therefore, to serve the people of Maryland.



Above is a rendering of the new 238,000-square-foot courthouse in Howard County, slated to open in July 2021, which was designed to serve the community for generations to come.

“Building a new courthouse is a challenge that takes an entire community. It requires years of effort and close collaboration among the branches of government.”

Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera, Maryland Court of Appeals

In 2019, the Howard County Circuit Courthouse project earned three international awards recognizing it as one of the best public-private partnerships (P3) in the world.

The building is expected to receive a gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification, which is the second-highest rating for energy efficiency and environmental friendliness.

Throughout 2019, construction also continued for the new Catonsville District Courthouse in Baltimore County. The 130,000-square-foot facility, located on 5.9 acres in the Rolling Crossroads Professional Park, has eight courtrooms and houses four state agencies.



Above is a rendering of the new Catonsville District Courthouse in Baltimore County. The District Court in Baltimore County has one judge for every 63,000 residents and receives approximately 300,000 case filings each year.

Managed by the Maryland Department of General Services (DGS), the courthouse’s contemporary design features state-of-the-art technology and essential security upgrades to meet today’s environment. The building’s design is eco-friendly, with bio-retention and water quality features to protect the health of the Chesapeake Bay. It also boasts a “green roof,” a first for DGS. The building is energy efficient and will achieve, at a minimum, LEED Silver Certification.

“Our new Baltimore County District Courthouse will be a step forward in courthouse design, integrating best practices for security and technology within a facility that will be certified for its environmental responsibility,” said District Court of Maryland Chief Judge John P. Morrissey. “It reflects Maryland’s commitment to providing open, accessible, and customer-friendly design features at its courthouses.”

In late 2019, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and District Court Headquarters (DCHQ) began a new chapter by consolidating core services into a central office building in Annapolis and reducing 15 leases into one.

“The Judiciary is continuously reviewing processes and taking steps to increase services and efficiencies,” said State Court Administrator Pamela Harris. “By relocating staff and services into one space at the new Maryland Judicial Center, we are using resources more effectively and greatly enhancing productivity.”



As part of the consolidation, the Maryland Judiciary’s Judicial College now holds courses and events at the new location, the Maryland Judicial Center, at 187 Harry S. Truman Parkway in Annapolis. Ample parking and dedicated meeting and training space make it ideal for people attending conferences, meetings, and educational events.

“Transitioning divisions and services under one roof will promote communication, teamwork, and greater efficiency in our services,” said Chief Judge Barbera.

In addition to infrastructure, this report highlights expansion and growth in other areas. The Judiciary’s continuing efforts to strengthen services and build for the future will better serve those who come before the courts now and in the years to come.

View the Maryland Judiciary’s *2019 Strategic Plan Update* online at mdcourts.gov/update2019.



Provide Access
to Justice

The District Court in Prince George's County launched a day-of-trial alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program for failure-to-pay rent cases in Hyattsville, expanding ADR options to both county courthouses.

The Circuit Court for Dorchester County helped inmates in the county correctional facility access the Family Law Self-Help Center's resources. The court's family services coordinator regularly visited the detention center to meet with inmates, provide family court forms, and arrange for referrals to community partners as needed to expedite court matters and help them receive timely resolution in family cases.

The Circuit Court for Charles County opened the Legal Resource Center staffed by a part-time attorney to provide legal assistance to self-represented litigants.

When litigants come to the Circuit Court for Carroll County without representation, they can locate available legal resources through newly revamped brochures produced by the court's law library.

By moving its self-help center and family law clinic closer to the courthouse law library, the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County provided more privacy to people meeting with a clinic attorney and easier access to information and court forms.

The Circuit Court for Prince George's County deployed language line phones at nearly all counters in the clerk's office.

The District Court Self-Help Center in Dorchester County celebrated its first anniversary in October. The walk-in center served 300 individuals in 2019. Expungement of criminal records made up 34% of the case types served, followed by 32% for small and large claims cases, and 13% were housing related cases.

Video Remote Interpreting



What if an interpreter is needed in Snow Hill for a defendant's arraignment, but the interpreter lives in Baltimore? Now, technology can help, thanks to a new service being piloted on the Eastern Shore. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) connects court interpreters to the court electronically with an interactive video link so they can provide real-time interpreter services for brief court proceedings and emergency matters. VRI can be used when it is not feasible to secure an in-person interpreter, when interpreters of rare languages are not readily available, and to provide language services in rural jurisdictions where few interpreters are available. After a successful initial phase in 2019 in the Circuit Court for Wicomico County and the District Court in Worcester County, the pilot will expand to other courts in 2020.



The People's Law Library (PLL) launched a redesigned website that is easier to access and read, especially on mobile devices. There were more than 1.3 million PLL users and nearly 2.5 million pageviews in fiscal year 2019, an increase of 16% and 18%, respectively, over the previous year.

A Spanish language mediator is now dedicated to the Rockville location of the District Court in Montgomery County every Thursday to ensure mediation can proceed without interruption.

The Circuit Court for Baltimore City replaced outdated equipment and installed new audio-visual equipment in its five jury rooms, including televisions, microphones, and listening devices for people with hearing impairments.

The Circuit Court for Harford County relocated its law library and increased attorneys' online access to its Westlaw resources. The court also retained a certified paralegal to provide technical expertise to assist members of the public with online legal research.

A day-of-trial mediation pilot began in May in the District Court in Talbot County to screen and refer appropriate cases to Mid Shore Community Mediation Center.

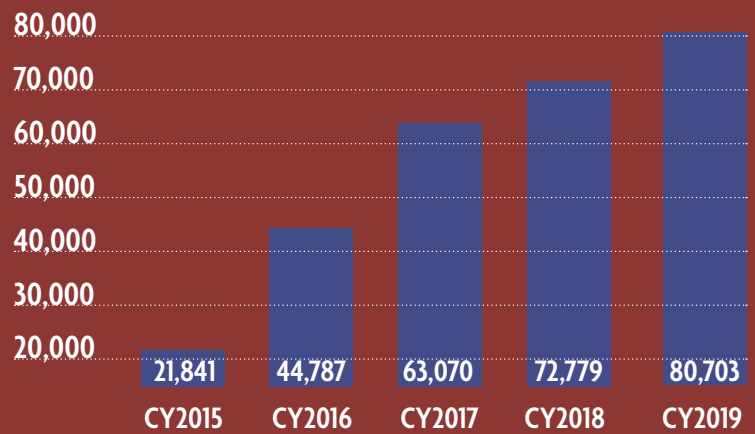
In collaboration with the local bar association, the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County rearranged law library space to add more computer stations and software to better meet the needs of attorneys and litigants.



The 2nd Annual Self-Help Center Provider Conference brought together 115 representatives from the Maryland Judiciary's network of programs for self-represented litigants. During the day-long program, staff, contract, and pro bono attorneys, as well as non-attorney staff, heard from national experts, reviewed best practices, and discussed methods to enhance the services they provide to self-represented litigants.

Maryland Courts Self-Help Centers

Remote Services by Calendar Year
Number of Litigants Assisted



The Maryland Judiciary has developed and grown other services to meet the needs of people who cannot visit in person. The Maryland Courts Self-Help Center in Annapolis launched phone and online chat services in 2011 to assist people representing themselves in civil matters in the circuit courts and District Court.

In 2019, the Circuit Court for Baltimore City enhanced its interpreter program, including improving equipment, creating designated interpreter check-in and waiting areas, and preparing for the rollout of the Judiciary's interpreter management software and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).

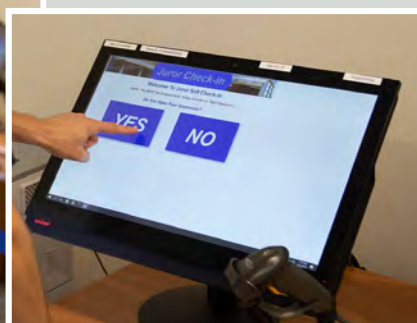
In December 2019, the Judiciary marked the 10th anniversary of the opening of the District Court Self-Help Resource Center in the Glen Burnie Courthouse. It is the Judiciary's first walk-in center for self-help services in civil matters in the District Court.

The newest self-help walk-in center located in Frederick celebrated its first anniversary in July 2019. Center staff assist litigants with both circuit and District Court matters in one convenient courthouse location. Staff provide, on average, more than 570 services each month.

In June, a videoconferencing pilot began in the Circuit Court for Howard County that offers the next level of online assistance to people representing themselves in civil matters. By using videoconferencing, litigants can for the first time scan and share documents with attorneys at the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center in Annapolis.



The Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County installed kiosks where jurors can check in for jury duty, which reduces the wait time during the jury service process.



Six new kiosks were installed in the jury area in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City's Mitchell Courthouse to make jury check-in more efficient.



Be Responsive
and Adaptable to
Changing
Community Needs

Community connections help make problem-solving courts a success

Lack of available career opportunities is a hurdle that can land drug offenders back in court. Allegany County's Adult Drug Court has been developing and maintaining solid working relationships with community organizations, such as Goodwill Industries. The result, measured in 2019, is that more than 90% of that program's participants have secured a job. Thanks to another partnership with Frostburg State University, one young drug court participant received a scholarship to help him pursue his career goals.

In turn, drug court participants have found opportunities to give back to their neighbors. In July, several program participants volunteered for a community food drive that fed 101 local families.

"Substance abuse is a huge issue, certainly for the court system," Allegany County Circuit Court Judge Jeffrey S. Getty (pictured right) said. "You're not going to be able to effectively deal with the community-wide problem unless you begin to focus on treatment and you begin to focus on recovery."

The public has taken notice. "Potomac Highlands Today," a local radio show, featured the program and the impact it is having across Allegany County. The same story was shared on Facebook; the post reached more than 15,600 individuals and was shared dozens of times.



A new simple question-and-answer sheet helps people move forward with alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in general civil, peace order, and failure-to-pay rent matters. The sheets were provided by the District Court of Maryland ADR Office as a pilot in Baltimore City and Carroll, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Washington counties.

A criminal justice coordinating council was implemented in the Circuit Court for Charles County to improve wrap-around services, alternative dispute resolution, pretrial services, and address racial and ethnic disparities.

In Somerset County, the circuit court and District Court partnered to launch a new Adult Recovery Drug Court in 2019, enrolling 15 participants in its first year.

The Circuit Court for Calvert County Adult Treatment Court purchased a new vehicle to transport drug court participants to and from treatments.

The District Court in Charles County started offering mediation during its weekly landlord and tenant docket in January 2019, with the exception of failure-to-pay rent filings. In all, 48 landlord-tenant dockets were covered, 24 cases were referred to mediation, and 12 cases reached a settlement agreement.

Two state-of-the-art courtrooms were built in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City's Mitchell Courthouse.

In its first year, the Circuit Court for Washington County received 36 referrals and enrolled 14 participants in its adult drug court.

A mental health court began in the District Court in Frederick County and, as a result, the time between an inpatient/outpatient competency evaluation and a participant receiving a placement in a state-run mental health program decreased by 20%.

Judges in Queen Anne's County presided over Teen Court, a diversion program for young people who have admitted guilt to minor infractions, with students acting as defense attorneys, prosecutors, and jurors.

Thanks to a new partnership with the Circuit Court for Talbot County and Mid-Shore Pro Bono, litigants filing for guardianship are receiving extra resources, including special organizational notebooks and additional clinic hours dedicated to guardianship issues.

The Circuit Court for Talbot County worked with Mid Shore Community Mediation Center to train mediators in guardianship actions.

In November, the Judiciary hosted an intensive training for mediators that focused on elder and adult guardianship mediation which helps parties reach an agreement about guardianship matters that may otherwise be contested.

A guardianship mediation stakeholder meeting was held in January 2019 to provide information and tools to help courts develop and enhance guardianship mediation processes. Attended by judges, court administrators, guardianship court staff, court and community mediation practitioners, private attorneys, and public agency staff, the program was held in collaboration with Administrative Office of the Court's Juvenile and Family Services and the Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office.

As part of ongoing efforts to protect the rights and interests of persons under guardianship and refine court processes, the Court of Appeals of Maryland adopted rules that clarify the role of attorneys representing a person suspected of needing a guardian, overhaul how courts monitor persons and property under guardianship, and protect the privacy of persons under guardianship.



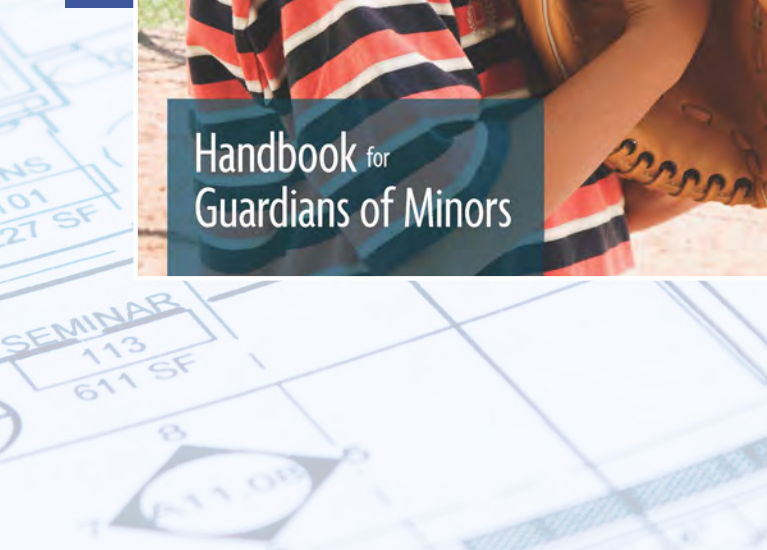
Seven proved to be a fortuitous number for the Baltimore City District Court Re-Entry Project (DCREP) in 2019. In October, DCREP celebrated its seventh, and largest, graduation when 28 participants were recognized for successfully completing the program. DCREP is a court-focused, criminal recidivism initiative that offers defendants an opportunity to participate in full-time job training and job placement programs as a condition of their probation or in lieu of incarceration. Approximately 150 participants have completed the program since it began in 2016. At the October graduation, Baltimore City District Court Judge Nicole Pastore (second from left) and District 1 Administrative Judge Barbara Baer Waxman (right) joined Anthony Levine, Sr., of the Baltimore Ravens (center) and attorney Heidi Kenny-Berman (left) to congratulate Baltimore City District Court Re-Entry Project graduate Maurice Way, who was presented with the Barbara Baer Waxman Perseverance Award.



Handbook for Guardians of Minors

A comprehensive Handbook for Guardians of Minors was developed and posted online to supplement training programs for guardians. Developed through the Maryland Judicial Council's Domestic Law Committee, the handbook provides information and resources to help guardians successfully perform their duties, access resources, and maintain records.

View the handbook at mdcourts.gov/guardianshandbook.



The Court of Appeals of Maryland adopted a new Rule that requires written parenting plans as an integral part of child custody decision-making in Maryland, a new focus that reframes custody around each partner's responsibilities and their child's unique needs and interests. The court ultimately decides if the plan is in the best interest of the child, and, by creating a written plan, parents will know what to expect and should have fewer conflicts.

View the handbook at mdcourts.gov/parentingplanbook.



Maryland Parenting Plan Instructions



MARYLAND PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS



Veterans in court benefit from creative program

Using dogs in a court program in the District Court in Baltimore City has brought positive results for veterans involved in the justice and now, Maryland's program is now getting national attention.

The Baltimore City Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) works with Warrior Canine Connection (WCC) to teach participants how to help train service dogs that are provided to fellow veterans. WCC brings the dogs to court each week, and the training sessions count toward each participant's community service requirements. In addition to providing a unique community service option, working with the dogs lends emotional support to participants and reinforces a sense of purpose while enabling them to give back to other veterans.

During the 2019 National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) Conference in July, Baltimore City District Court Judge Halee F. Weinstein presented the court's efforts to leaders from all models of treatment courts, the recovery community, law enforcement, veteran service organizations, legislators, and other key stakeholders.



“Whatever is bothering me when I first come in, I forget about it when I work with the dogs,” one VTC participant said. “I’m more optimistic now, the stress levels and anxiety levels have greatly diminished, my PTSD has diminished. It’s great.”

	Adult District Court Drug Court	Adult Circuit Court Drug Court	Juvenile Drug Court	Family/Dependency Drug Court	DUI/Drug Court	Circuit Court Mental Health Court	District Court Mental Health Court	Truancy Reduction Court	Re-Entry Court	Veterans Court	Back on Track
Allegany County		•									
Anne Arundel County	•	•			•					•	
Baltimore City	•	•		•		•	•			•	
Baltimore County			•	•							
Calvert County		•									
Caroline County		•									
Carroll County		•									
Cecil County		•									
Charles County				•							
Dorchester County	•							•		•	
Frederick County		•									
Garrett County											
Harford County	•	•		•			•	•			
Howard County	•				•						
Kent County								•			
Montgomery County		•				•	•				
Prince George's County	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•
Queen Anne's County											
St. Mary's County		•	•	•	•						
Somerset County		•						•		•	
Talbot County		•						•	•		
Washington County		•									
Wicomico County		•						•		•	
Worcester County	•	•						•		•	

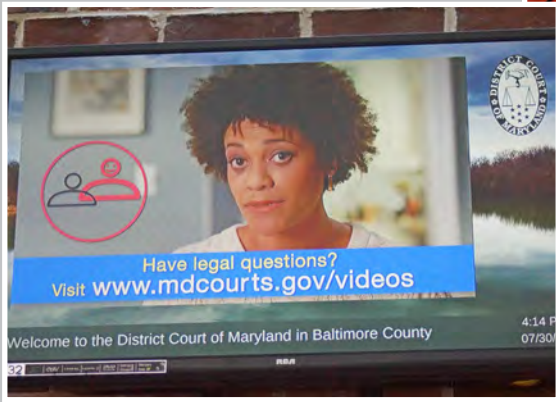
2019 marked the 30th anniversary of problem-solving courts in the United States. During National Drug Court Month in May, treatment courts across the state held special events to celebrate the month and the 30th anniversary. Drug courts and other problem-solving courts are considered the most effective strategy for reducing addiction, crime, and recidivism while saving taxpayer dollars and strengthening families and communities.

Over the past 25 years, the Baltimore City District Court Adult Drug Treatment Court (DTC) has worked with 1,413 participants and has hosted 54 graduation ceremonies to celebrate their successful completion of the program. The DTC observed its silver anniversary in December by graduating five participants and sharing its new motto, "Choose to Live."





Communicate Effectively with Stakeholders



In August, Maryland Judiciary's CourtTV began streaming content on 62 screens located in public areas of each courthouse in the state. CourtTV shares information about court resources and legal topics that cover child custody, expungement, rent court, and other updates relevant to courthouse visitors.

New marriage and business license brochures are now available at the Clerk's Office inside the Circuit Court for Carroll County. They are also distributed to community groups, schools, and local business associations.

A new program was installed on computers in the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County to provide easier access to Register of Wills Office and Orphans' Court forms and documents.

Attorneys now receive emails from the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County when a court order has been docketed in a case. The new process saves attorneys time by eliminating the need to call the clerk's office to check on the status of their cases.

The District Court in Harford County participated in the county's annual symposium to educate community and justice partners about addiction, recovery, and the role of problem-solving courts.

The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County Clerk's Office consolidated existing websites into one unified website for the court. The office also published a series of articles in the monthly bar association circulation to help attorneys with their electronic court filings.

The Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County added information about its full range of services on lobby display boards. In addition to daily dockets, visitors can now view courthouse directories, schedules, events, and activities happening in the building.



The 16th Annual Problem-Solving Court Symposium, featuring state and national experts, was held in November. Approximately 400 problem-solving court judges and staff, clinical providers, attorneys, local law enforcement officers, public safety personnel, and ancillary service organizations from across Maryland attended the symposium.

Welcoming judicial delegations from around the globe

In 2019, the Maryland Judiciary received many requests to meet with international delegations to share experience and expertise about innovative programs, services, and technology, including:

- A delegation from the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic visited the Administrative Office of the Courts for briefings about the Judiciary and its strategic plan, the use of data to improve court performance, and how to enforce judicial standards.
- Judges and court officials from Peru visited the circuit courts for Anne Arundel and Montgomery counties to learn about the use of court technology.
- An Afghani legal delegation visited the Administrative Office of the Courts for a briefing about mediation and domestic violence.
- The Court of Appeals of Maryland hosted a delegation of judges and officials of the Supreme Court of Pakistan to share information about legal research methods. The visit was arranged by the U.S. State Department to assist in the development of a new legal research center at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.
- The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County welcomed a judicial delegation from South Africa and shared expertise about judicial education, case management, jury service, and court technology.
- The Circuit Court for Montgomery County hosted several international delegations who visited judges and court leaders to learn about Maryland's courts and how they operate. Groups included members of China's Beijing High People's Court and judicial delegations from South and Central Asia, the Republic of Georgia, Thailand, and The Ukraine. The court also welcomed Russian citizens who visited to learn about challenges in the legal profession and laws designed to protect the LGBTQ community.



Delegation of the Ministry of Justice
of the Slovak Republic
March 14, 2019



Delegation of Thailand
September 25, 2019



Supreme Court of Pakistan
July 9, 2019



Delegation for Afghanistan
March 29, 2019



Delegation for South Africa
July 12, 2019

Students from juvenile facilities have their voices heard in the state's highest court

Students from Maryland Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS) facilities came to the Court of Appeals of Maryland to take part in the 25th Annual DJS Oratorical Contest. Court of Appeals Judge Clayton Greene, Jr. (Ret.) (pictured right), presided over the event this year for the seventh time. The students delivered short speeches inspired by "The Bridge Builder," a poem by Will Allen Dromgoole.



"This is a wonderful chance for these young people, who have gotten to know the justice system in unfortunate and unenviable ways, to have their voices heard at the highest level," Judge Greene said. "It provides each participant the opportunity for a positive interaction with the courts that also builds self-esteem. Through their speeches, they have displayed their ability to overcome obstacles in their lives and envision better futures for themselves."

The contest is sponsored by DJS and the Maryland State Department of Education.

Courts get creative to help students learn about the judicial system

Goldilocks goes on trial on a regular basis in the District Court in Harford County. It is all part of the court's efforts to inform younger students about the judicial system.

In April, the mock trial of the fairytale figure was the highlight of a visit to the court by local Girl Scout Troop 1362. Harford County Circuit Court Judge Diane Adkins Tobin (pictured center) presided, Harford County District Court Judge Mimi Raffel Cooper (pictured right) took the role of prosecutor, and members of the troop played the roles of Papa Bear, Mama Bear, Baby Bear, Goldilocks, bailiff, clerk, and jurors.

Local attorney Matthew Hurff (pictured left) represented the defendant Goldilocks.

After the event, the troop leader said the girls "really got to see how the judicial system works in such a fun and safe way," and thanked Judge Cooper and Judge Tobin, saying "the uplifting and empowering things you said to them afterwards were so meaningful for everyone."



2019 State of the Judiciary

“The state of the Maryland Judiciary is fundamentally sound.”

Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera
Maryland Court of Appeals



When Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera delivered the State of the Judiciary Address before a joint session of the Maryland General Assembly in February, it was the first since 2015 and the 22nd time in the history of Maryland. Chief Judge Barbera reminded legislators of the “heavy responsibility” judges carry.

“In each case, to the best of their skill and judgment, our trial judges honor their oath to uphold the Constitution and the laws of Maryland,” she said. “Fairly and without partiality, they listen, they assess, they make rulings and they decide . . . even when those decisions may be difficult or unpopular. I salute our trial judges for the important work they do every day to uphold the rule of law.”

The chief judge also discussed problem-solving courts, court technology, access to justice, human trafficking, the opioid crisis, juvenile justice, and guardianship.



Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera delivered her State of the Judiciary Address to a joint session of the Maryland General Assembly inside the chambers of the Maryland House of Delegates on February 6, 2019.



MARYLAND THURGOOD MARSHALL STATE LAW LIBRARY RENAMING CEREMONY: OCTOBER 17, 2019



Left to right: Retired Court of Appeals Chief Judge Robert M. Bell, Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera, Professor Larry Gibson, Maryland Delegate Ronald L. Watson, Court of Appeals Judge Michele D. Hotten, Maryland Senator Douglas J. J. Peters, and Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library Director Steven Anderson gather at the renaming ceremony.

In July, Maryland’s public law library received a new name: the Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library. The name honors the Maryland native who successfully argued landmark cases before the United States Supreme Court, including *Brown v. Board of Education*, before becoming that court’s first African-American justice.

The Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library is located on the first floor of the building that houses the state’s highest courts, the Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building in Annapolis. The library is open to the public, providing access to the law and legal information.

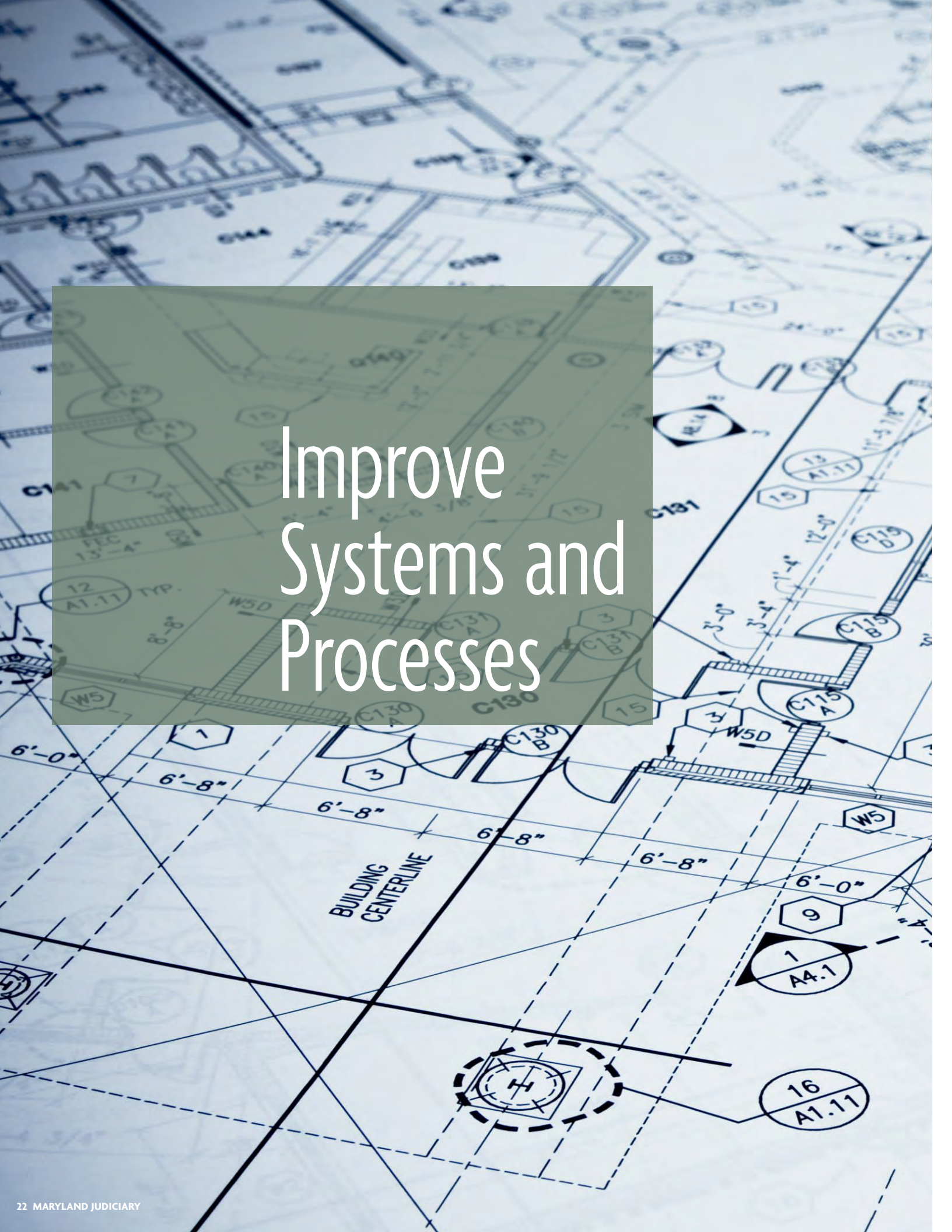
The Judiciary promoted the effort to rename the library, and the bill to do so was passed in 2019 by the Maryland General Assembly and signed into law by Gov. Larry Hogan. “The people’s law library . . . now and forever carries his name,” said Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera, “a sign that we in Maryland have embraced Justice Marshall’s charge that the doors of justice open wide to all.”



In 2019, the Thurgood Marshall statue was temporarily relocated from Lawyers’ Mall in Annapolis to the statuary plaza at the entrance of the Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building, located at 361 Rowe Boulevard in Annapolis.

“Justice Marshall showed us how. And now it is our turn, our duty to deliver the promise of equal justice.”

Chief Judge Barbera
Court of Appeals of Maryland



Improve Systems and Processes

A 30% increase in adult guardianship cases prompted the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County Clerk's Office to reorganize workflow to improve efficiency and customer service. Physical space was also renovated and updated to create a more inviting space for customers.

The District Court in Calvert County installed additional video conferencing equipment in its commissioner's office to improve efficiency.

By demolishing outdated holding cells and constructing new ones, the Circuit Court for Cecil County increased capacity and security for in-custody defendants and doubled attorney-client meeting space.

Renovations were completed in the Circuit Court for Wicomico County to add a sixth courtroom, enlarge the jury assembly area, relocate offices, and move daily dockets to an area with secured prisoner elevators and holding cells.

The Circuit Court for Washington County implemented the Crossover Youth Policy Initiative to coordinate services for youth and their families who are involved in Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) and juvenile delinquency systems.

Civil pretrial status conferences, initiated in the fall of 2018, continued through 2019 in the District Court in Anne Arundel County to help expedite cases identified as likely to require lengthy trial times. Judge-mediated settlement is often achieved, which eliminates the need for specially set trial dates and avoids a backlog of civil cases. If trial is necessary, discovery deadlines and specific trial dates are established, reducing postponements.



The Judiciary's 2019 Guardianship Symposium featured presentations on financial exploitation, less restrictive alternatives to guardianship, and ways to manage guardianship caseloads effectively while maximizing court resources. Teams from 21 circuit courts worked together to develop action plans to incorporate best practices.



The Circuit Court for Harford County created a new jury assembly room that improved capacity from 60 to more than 150 jurors and allowed for an increase from one jury trial per day to three jury trials per day. The jury room was modernized to include charging stations, USB ports, a kitchenette, and other features to accommodate jurors.

MDEC launches in Baltimore County

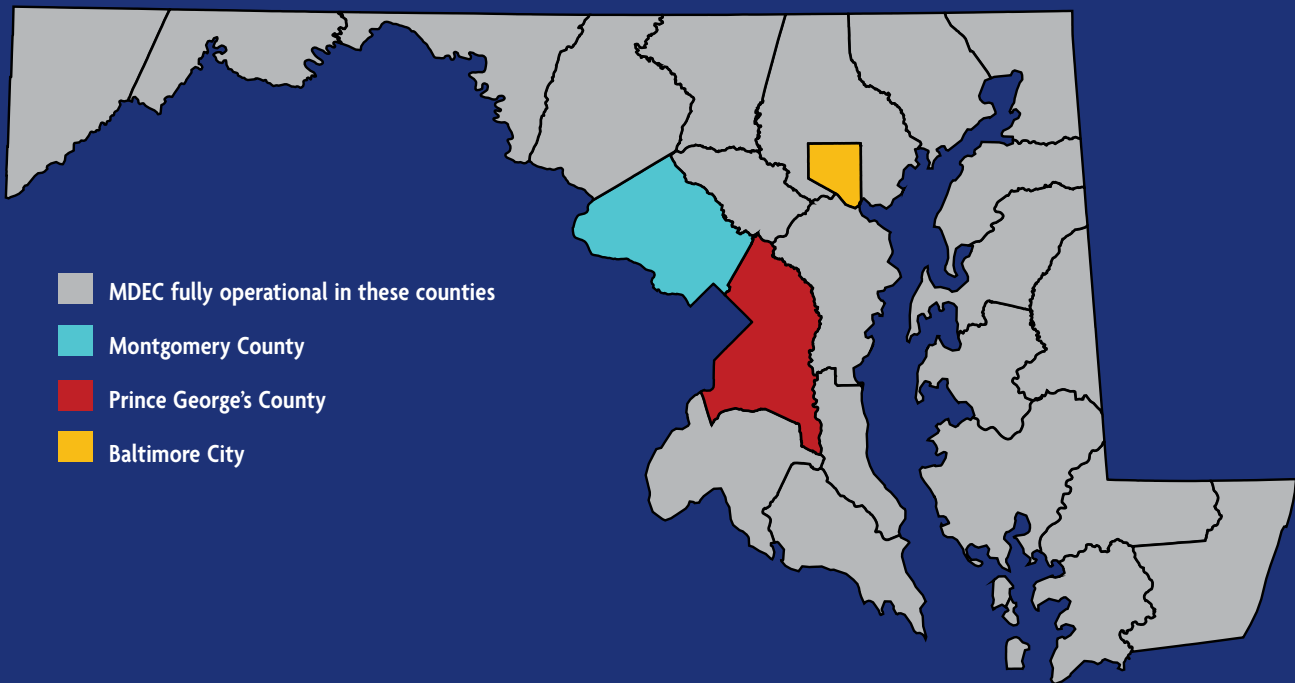


Intensive training and behind-the-scenes preparations set the stage for Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) to go live in Baltimore County in February 2019. It was the largest jurisdiction to date to implement the electronic case management system.

The remaining implementations include Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and Baltimore City.

With the successful launch of MDEC in Baltimore County, 21 of the 24 jurisdictions, the Court of Special Appeals of Maryland, and the Court of Appeals of Maryland are using MDEC. The statewide case management system is now operational in these counties:

Allegany	Charles	Queen Anne's
Anne Arundel	Dorchester	Somerset
Baltimore	Frederick	St. Mary's
Calvert	Garrett	Talbot
Caroline	Harford	Washington
Carroll	Howard	Wicomico
Cecil	Kent	Worcester



The MDEC Odyssey software platform was updated, requiring an upgrade to all MDEC user workstation machines. The new MDEC software platform provides improved navigation, a modern user interface, key word search functionality and hot keys, multiple screen and case view capability, the ability to view documents in a separate viewer, combined tasks and document queues, and the ability to edit task descriptions.

Other MDEC efforts in 2019 included:

- The Circuit Court for Baltimore City reorganized the workflow of communications across departments for criminal case collection and record-keeping in preparation for MDEC.
- After implementing MDEC in February, the District Court in Baltimore County appointed division chiefs for each of its three locations, which has unified court procedures and improved communications.
- Three new online webinars were created to train new law clerks on MDEC.
- In 2019, court law librarians completed detailed training on MDEC and are now able to provide local support to attorneys.



Be Accountable

The Circuit Court for Frederick County used a new grant fund liaison to monitor and assist with guardianship cases to ensure the well-being of people under guardianship, oversee the proper management of estates, and enforce the terms of guardianship orders.

The Administrative Office of the Courts created a work group to review and revise all procurement-related policies, procedures, agreements, and templates to ensure they are current and reflect best practices.

The Circuit Court for Harford County hired a part-time alternative dispute resolution coordinator to help identify appropriate cases to refer to mediation before hearings or trials are scheduled.

The Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office implemented a data collection and reporting system for courts to manage their alternative dispute resolution programs.

The Circuit Court for Montgomery County started using an automated intake form, conflicts check, and queuing system to expedite its intake. The new system streamlines the process, saves time, reduces errors, and provides real-time information to attorneys and evaluators. The resulting data can be used to inform and improve customer service.



The Maryland Judiciary received two Court Statistics Project (CSP) Reporting Excellence Awards from the Conference of State Court Administrators and the National Center for State Courts for its appellate data reporting. The Judiciary was recognized for improving data quality and comparability both in the Court of Appeals and the Court of Special Appeals. Maryland was one of only 10 states to report 100% of appellate data and was one of only four states to receive a CSP award. Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera (pictured left) presents the awards to Jamie L. Walter, Director of Research and Analysis, Administrative Office of the Courts (pictured right).



In 2019, the Judiciary achieved a 97% completion rate for Information Security training, an impressive increase over the previous year's 78% completion rate. The training includes quarterly components to help the Judiciary keep data and information systems secure. The Circuit Court for Allegany County earned top honors for 100% completion and an average test score of 97.8%.

The Court of Appeals of Maryland approved new rules for judicial discipline, misconduct, and disabilities that took effect July 1, 2019. The substantial changes represent years of work, broad inquiry, public hearings, and a review of many sources, including the Model Rules for Judicial Disciplinary Enforcement recommended by the American Bar Association, rules and statutes adopted in other states, best practices, and written and oral comments.

Twelve circuit courts participated in the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) pilot to serve court documents electronically to registered users and attorneys, increasing efficiency and timeliness of service.

Appellate courts go back to law school

For a few days in 2019, lawyers presented appellate arguments in a classroom converted into a courtroom when the Maryland Court of Special Appeals convened at the University of Baltimore School of Law and the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. For many law students, it was the first time seeing an appellate court in action.



“Our students can watch real, live lawyers argue real, live cases in front of real, live judges,” said University of Baltimore School of Law Dean Ronald Weich.

Under Maryland law, the Court of Special Appeals Chief Judge can set arguments at either of Maryland’s law schools. For the last several years, Maryland Court of Special Appeals judges, like Judge Andrea M. Leahy (pictured left), Chief Judge Matthew J. Fader (pictured center), and Judge Daniel A. Freedman (pictured right), have heard oral arguments in the spring and the fall at the law schools.

The State Board of Law Examiners updated its online electronic bar application to include results of the uniform bar examination (UBE), which can be used in certain circumstances by candidates from other jurisdictions applying for admission to the Maryland Bar. The board can also now track eligibility and satisfaction of admission requirements and transmit applicant information to the Attorney Information System (AIS).

The District Court of Maryland’s Executive Director of Commissioners Office designed and created a web portal to allow the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) to check eligibility decisions for their services. This allows the OPD to print certificates and check the status of applications in real time, eliminating the need for email notifications and additional scanning tasks.

Maryland Judiciary hosts orientation conference for new clerks of court



With excellent customer service as a key focus, the Administrative Office of the Courts offered the first New Clerk of Court Leadership and Orientation Conference to ten newly elected clerks of court. Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera and State Court Administrator Pamela Harris welcomed the clerks and provided an overview of the judicial branch of government, Maryland Judicial Council committee structure, and the Judiciary’s strategic plan. During the conference, clerks also received an overview of functions and services available through the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). Administrative judges and court administrators joined clerks on the first day to take part in leadership, management, and team-building work.

AIS

More than 40,000 attorneys practicing in Maryland registered with the Attorney Information System (AIS) in 2019. The comprehensive, secure database supports the Court of Appeals in its role of regulating the legal profession in Maryland, while providing a streamlined process for attorneys to meet mandatory annual compliance requirements.



Maryland attorneys can now use AIS to:

- Review and update contact information.
- Review status as a Maryland lawyer.
- Confirm Tax I.D. Number (TIN).
- Complete annual compliance requirements, including paying the Client Protection Fund assessment, filing the Pro Bono Legal Service Report, and filing the Lawyers Trust Account (IOLTA) Report.
- Review administrative and disciplinary actions taken by the Court of Appeals.

Attorneys are now required to register with AIS to receive email communications regarding their license to practice, and notifications about the annual Client Protection Fund assessment, file the Pro Bono Legal Service Report, and submit the Interest on Lawyers Trust Account (IOLTA) Report.

Data about pro bono service is used by the Maryland Judiciary to plan and promote pro bono activity. Interest generated from IOLTA accounts is used to fund civil legal aid programs in the state.

MARYLAND COURTS
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Attorney Information System (AIS)

Notice: Effective December 11, 2019 - Statewide Uniform Subpoena Forms will be made available in the Attorney Information System. Subpoena forms will be removed from the MDEC portal on TylerHost.net effective December 31, 2019.

Maryland Judiciary's comprehensive, secure information database for Maryland lawyers

- Register with AIS**
Find out more about the Attorney Information System (AIS) and register.
- Update Your Contact Information**
Requirements relating to maintaining current contact information.
- Log in**
Log in now with AIS to update your contact information or complete your annual compliance requirements.
- Complete Your Annual Compliance Requirements**
Pay your Client Protection Fund assessment and file pro bono and IOLTA reporting.
- Notices and Announcements**
Review the latest advisements and keep up to date with requirements.

99% of attorneys practicing in Maryland have now registered in AIS

mdcourts.gov/lawyers/ais

The background of the image is a detailed architectural blueprint, likely for a building's floor plan. It features various lines, circles, and text annotations. A prominent feature is a dashed line labeled "BUILDING CENTERLINE" that runs diagonally across the lower portion of the image. Other annotations include dimensions such as "6'-0\"", "6'-8\"", and "12'-0\"", as well as callouts like "W5D", "C130", "C135", "C136", "C137", "C138", "C139", "C140", "C141", "C142", "C143", "C144", "C145", "C146", "C147", "C148", "C149", "C150", "C151", "C152", "C153", "C154", "C155", "C156", "C157", "C158", "C159", "C160", "C161", "C162", "C163", "C164", "C165", "C166", "C167", "C168", "C169", "C170", "C171", "C172", "C173", "C174", "C175", "C176", "C177", "C178", "C179", "C180", "C181", "C182", "C183", "C184", "C185", "C186", "C187", "C188", "C189", "C190", "C191", "C192", "C193", "C194", "C195", "C196", "C197", "C198", "C199", "C200". There are also circular callouts with numbers and codes, such as "12 AT.11 TYP.", "13", "14", "15", "16 AT.11", "17", "18", "19", "20", "21", "22", "23", "24", "25", "26", "27", "28", "29", "30", "31", "32", "33", "34", "35", "36", "37", "38", "39", "40", "41", "42", "43", "44", "45", "46", "47", "48", "49", "50", "51", "52", "53", "54", "55", "56", "57", "58", "59", "60", "61", "62", "63", "64", "65", "66", "67", "68", "69", "70", "71", "72", "73", "74", "75", "76", "77", "78", "79", "80", "81", "82", "83", "84", "85", "86", "87", "88", "89", "90", "91", "92", "93", "94", "95", "96", "97", "98", "99", "100". The text "Assure the Highest Level of Service" is overlaid in a large, white, sans-serif font on a semi-transparent green rectangular background in the center of the image.

Assure the Highest Level of Service

Phase I of the Judiciary's required proficiency-based education initiative for commissioners, supervisors, managers, and judicial assistants launched in 2019. The training reviews the fundamental expertise of each position, targets skill gaps, and offers customized courses to enhance job performance.

The Judicial College provided judicial law clerks with access to all judicial online webinars and podcasts, enabling them to build their knowledge base and enhance their work-related research.

In November, the Judiciary hosted an intensive training for mediators that focused on elder and adult guardianship mediation, which can serve to avoid, limit, or terminate a guardianship.

A new electronic expungement manual was created for court clerks to help them expedite the process, complete with a checklist, definitions of key terms, and clear, concise, and up-to-date procedures for the expungement of case records.

Since 2017, all newly elected or appointed judges and magistrates have been required to complete a judicial ethics course. In 2019, the Maryland Judicial Council expanded that requirement to include all judges and magistrates. Designed by the Education Committee and provided by the Judicial College, the two-year judicial ethics course comprises eight quarterly modules followed by a mandatory refresher training.

The Judicial College launched a pilot program to offer support and financial aid to qualifying Institute for Court Management (ICM) graduates to enhance and build effective leadership in court administration as ICM Fellows.

Day-of-trial alternative dispute resolution (ADR) was expanded in Kent and Cecil counties with the addition of services through the District Court ADR office. It complements existing pretrial mediation programs that are offered in partnerships with Community Mediation of the Upper Shore and Cecil County Community Mediation.

The Maryland Judiciary's Office of Problem-Solving Courts, in collaboration with the National Center for State Courts, held a one-and-a-half-day Adult Drug Court Performance Measure Team Training in March for more than 160 adult drug court practitioners from 20 operational and planning teams. Performance measures use performance-related data to help program managers and staff enhance program outcomes.

Public librarians have learned more about how to respond to requests for legal information, thanks to a Judiciary initiative that expanded in 2019. In addition to augmenting online legal reference resources for public library staff, 23 of the 24 Maryland counties have received basic legal training, and advanced topic in-person trainings were developed in 2019.

The pilot phase for a judicial webinar series for judges and magistrates launched in 2019. It offers convenient learning opportunities and a reduction in costs for travel reimbursement.

The Circuit Court for Allegany County, in conjunction with the Administrative Office of the Courts, began developing manuals to provide a one-stop information resource for circuit court clerk staff on issues such as foreclosures, domestic violence cases, court fees, cost schedules, fee histories, and summary charts.



Approximately 300 Judiciary managers, supervisors, and lead workers honed their supervisory skills during the Judiciary's annual Leadership Conference in May. Topics covered included mental health in the work environment and emotional intelligence.



The Honorable William D. Missouri Civility Award

A new national award from the American Bar Association (ABA) Judicial Division was named in 2019 in honor and in memory of Judge William D. Missouri, (pictured left), who had been administrative judge of the Seventh Judicial Circuit and an active member of the ABA. The Honorable William D. Missouri Civility Award will be presented annually to an ABA member who exhibits exceptional qualities of civility, courtesy, and professionalism in their legal or judicial careers towards not only colleagues and litigants, but also the public at large.

Extra-mile effort

On a busy morning in early May at the District Court in Charles County security post, Lead Bailiff Robert "Beau" Singleton (pictured right) noticed that a young man who had passed through security was fidgeting with his necktie.

When questioned, the man said he was a defendant on the minor traffic docket and wanted to dress appropriately for court but did not know how to tie a necktie. Singleton offered his help and tied the man's necktie. By doing so, Singleton, who is described as consistently friendly, courteous, and professional, helped ease a stressful moment for the man. A colleague used his phone to capture the moment.



Special orientation

Judiciary leaders welcomed 22 new Orphans' Court judges during a specially organized orientation and training conference in February, with trial and appellate judges providing advice and expertise.

Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera, Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Karen C. Friedman, and Baltimore City District Court Judge Joyce Baylor-Thompson took part in discussions and presentations to help new Orphans' Court judges understand the processes and prepare for their responsibilities in their judicial role.



Strengthening security

The Judiciary rolled out its Security Series, a 12-month comprehensive and educational training initiative focused on strengthening workplace safety and security. The series helps provide each Judiciary employee with a more thorough understanding of what to do in emergencies. Maryland Judiciary Chief of Security Keith Bageant (pictured left) and then District Court Security Manager Michael Brady (pictured right) introduced the Security Series in a short video.

Training saves a life

A Judiciary security officer was recognized in 2019 for his life-saving efforts after a man was found unconscious and unresponsive behind the wheel of a car parked in a Judiciary office parking lot. Special Police Officer (SPO) Robert Holmes (pictured right) immediately began providing care while another Judiciary employee called 911. When Homes could no longer detect a pulse, he performed CPR until the young man began breathing again on his own. Paramedics arrived a few minutes later. It turned out the young man, who recovered, had overdosed.



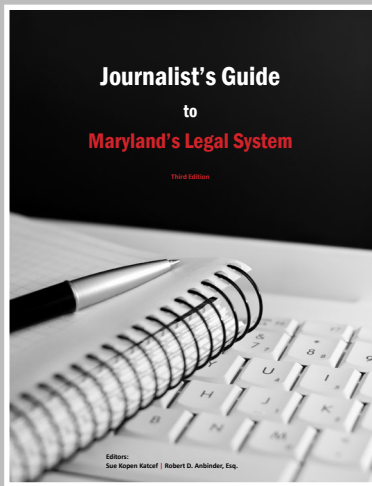
Earning highest certifications

In May, three members of the Maryland Judiciary successfully completed the National Center for State Courts' (NCSC) highest and most demanding certification, that of the Institute for Court Management (ICM) Fellows Program.

The graduation ceremony was held at the Supreme Court of the United States, where State Court Administrator Pamela Harris (left) and District Court of Maryland Chief Judge John P. Morrissey (right) congratulated new ICM Fellows Hon. Dawne Lindsey, Clerk of the Circuit Court for Allegany County; Latasha Nichols, Problem-Solving Courts Coordinator for the District Court in Dorchester County; and James Veals, District Court of Maryland District 2 Managing Commissioner (Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties).

The background of the entire page is a detailed architectural blueprint. It features various lines, circles, and text labels such as 'C130', 'W5D', 'A4.1', and 'A1.11'. A semi-transparent green rectangular box is centered over the blueprint, containing the text 'Build Partnerships' in white. The text is arranged in two lines: 'Build' on top and 'Partnerships' below it. The overall color scheme is a mix of blue, green, and white.

Build Partnerships



The Judiciary released the third edition of the *Journalist's Guide to Maryland's Legal System* on Law Day, May 1, 2019. More than three years in the making, the guide was thoroughly updated, rewritten, and reorganized under the guidance of the Maryland Judicial Council's Court Access and Community Relations Committee and its Community Relations Subcommittee, which enlisted the help and expertise of many attorneys and journalists in the community. The third edition of the Guide is offered exclusively online for easy access and updating.

View the Guide at mdcourts.gov/journalistsguide.

During the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce's annual Justice and Law Day in March, people from across the community visited courthouses to observe cases and learn about crime and addiction trends in the county. The courts, office of the state's attorney, sheriff's office, Westminster Police Department, public defender's office, and the detention center worked together to organize this event.

The Circuit Court for Harford County was the site for the Harford County's celebration of Law Day on May 1. Both the Circuit Court and District Court shared information with attendees about expungement, the Mental Health Diversion Program, and Opiate Recovery Court.

The Circuit Court for Somerset County worked with community organizations to develop a presentation to educate community members about Extreme Risk Protective Orders.

Staff of the Circuit Court for Dorchester County Clerk's Office helped the Rotary Club of Cambridge build a ramp for a senior citizen-in-need, served Thanksgiving dinner for the seniors at Delmarva Community Services, Inc., and helped with the Cambridge Christmas Tree Lighting.

The Circuit Court for Dorchester County expanded its truancy reduction court program by partnering with the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program of the Mid-Shore to better serve families and address root causes of truancy.

The 2019 Maryland Public Policy Conflict Resolution Fellows Program was held in November and brought together a diverse group of influential Marylanders to expand their negotiation, conflict resolution, and consensus building skills, build a statewide network of leaders armed with the tools needed to prevent and resolve complex public policy conflicts, and grow a more civil community. The innovative program is co-sponsored by the Maryland Judiciary, the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law.

The District Court in Cecil County welcomed a new partner, the newly created Cecil County Community Mediation Center, which began providing mediation services in July.

The Circuit Court for Talbot County organized a Mid-Shore domestic violence roundtable discussion group to bring together frontline people to collaborate, share ideas, and propose action items to make the court experience more comfortable and safer for families and victims of domestic violence. Representatives from the circuit courts and the District Court in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties and the local domestic violence advocacy group met three times in 2019.

A former storage space in the Circuit Court for Talbot County Clerk's Office was converted to provide a separate safe space where victims of domestic violence can complete paperwork in private and out of sight. The room opened in July.



Circuit Court for Worcester County

Courthouses go purple for National Recovery Month

The statistics are grim: According to the most recent data available from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Maryland ranks fifth in the nation for opioid overdose deaths. For the past several years, communities across Maryland have turned purple — sporting T-shirts, illuminating local businesses and courthouses in purple, and hosting events to spread awareness about substance abuse.

Again in 2019, Maryland Judiciary and court employees from several counties gathered with colleagues, neighbors, and friends to show support and share resources throughout September, National Recovery Month. The “Maryland Goes Purple” activities promote substance abuse education and public awareness through partnerships with county offices, local organizations, schools, and law enforcement.

A fledgling program to provide a problem-solving approach to address substance abuse after a court case is resolved grew in the District Court in Kent County. Three participants graduated from the approximately year-long Post Adjudication Supervision and Treatment (PAST) program in 2019.

The District Court in Montgomery County provided space in the Rockville courthouse for a new quarterly expungement clinic which began in July. The clinic is staffed and conducted by the Office of the Public Defender, Montgomery County Legal Aid, and the Office of the State’s Attorney.

In October, the eighth annual Conflict Resolution Day community event was held in the courtyard of the Circuit Court for Cecil County. The court sponsored the public education event with Family Support Services and Community Mediation Upper Shore to encourage and help people to resolve disputes peacefully.



The Circuit Court for Somerset County marked Child Abuse Awareness Month in April by creating a pinwheel garden to draw attention to the county’s efforts, which include participating in trainings with the Child Advocacy Center for Somerset County and Child First about the therapeutic needs of children and families.



The North Lawn of the State House was crowded with dignitaries, media, and supporters as Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera administered the oath of office to Gov. Larry Hogan and Lt. Gov. Boyd Rutherford during their inauguration on January 16.

Photo courtesy of the Governor's Office.

Lawyers volunteer to help review and update information on People's Law Library



The Review-a-Thon was hosted by the Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library, the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library, and the Anne Arundel County Local Pro Bono Committee.

More than a dozen law clerks and private attorneys spent lunchtime in the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County law library in October for the first People's Law Library Article "Review-a-Thon." Gathered in the law library conference room at the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, volunteers edited and updated articles about child support, texting while driving, and courtroom decorum. The award-winning People's Law Library is a legal information and self-help website maintained by the Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library and supported by Maryland's non-profit legal services providers, Maryland pro bono attorneys, and the legal academic community.

Courting Art Baltimore contest awards \$20,000 in scholarships to students

In 2019, the 4th Annual Courting Art Baltimore contest awarded \$20,000 in scholarships and showcased the creative work of high school students from 10 Baltimore City public schools.

The District Court in Baltimore City unveiled students' artwork at a reception in May. The scholarships toward art programs or post-high school degrees were donated by justice partners. The students' artwork is displayed long-term on courthouse walls in the Eastside District Court Building. Courting Art Baltimore 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. Baltimore City District Court Judge Halee F. Weinstein (pictured center) congratulated students who earned scholarships and whose artwork will be displayed in the courthouse.



Court of Appeals hosts Mock Trial State Championships

At the end of spirited arguments in the state's highest court, Montgomery County's Richard Montgomery High School was named champion of the 2019 Maryland State Bar Association Mock Trial Competition in April. Court of Appeals Judge Michele D. Hotten (top row, center) presided during the event, which brought Maryland's top high school mock trial teams together for the championship.

High school teams had argued this year's case in courtrooms throughout the state since January. Several hundred attorneys, judges, and magistrates volunteer for the program each year, which is organized by Maryland Youth & the Law (MYLaw) in partnership with the Maryland State Bar Association.





Schools in the Court program wraps up another successful year, begins a student awards program

Each year, hundreds of students from nearly every high school in Anne Arundel County visited the District Court in Anne Arundel County for the Schools in the Court program. Presided over by District Court Judge Shaem C. P. Spencer (pictured above right and lower center), the program is held four times a year to help students learn about the legal and financial consequences of poor decisions. In addition to hearing from people who have been involved with the legal system because of drunk driving, speeding, texting while driving, and other offenses, students observe actual court cases and have their questions answered by members of the Judiciary and justice partners.

Started in 2001 by Judge Vincent A. Mulieri (Ret.), the program has evolved over the years. During the first Schools in the Court program of the 2019-20 school year, the inaugural Schools in the Court: Better Choices-Better Tomorrow contest and The Honorable Vincent A. Mulieri/Kason Donato Annual Student Spotlight Awards were given to three students in Anne Arundel County high schools. The awards are named for the program's founder and Kason Donato, the victim of a fatal hit-and-run accident whose story is shared during the half-day program for high school students.

For the contest, students who had attended the program submitted a public service announcement, poem, music video, rap, or essay reflecting on their experience and inspiring other students to make the right choices.

To learn more about the program, visit mdcourts.gov/district/schools_in_court.



“We want them to get an understanding of how the court system works, but we especially want them to understand how making wrong choices about things such as speeding, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, drug use, and other crimes can deeply and adversely affect their lives.”

Judge Shaem C.P. Spencer

Adoption Day 2019



These pictures tell the stories of Adoption Day 2019. Giggles, hugs, and happy tears were on the dockets of several circuit courts during National Adoption Day celebrations in November. Circuit court judges in Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties presided over adoptions and celebrated with families during special events in their courtrooms.





Conflict Resolution Day 2019



What happens when thousands of students across Maryland share ideas on conflict resolution? It makes for a roomful of colorful bookmarks with messages of peaceful solutions to conflicts.

In December, more than 20 students from across the state made a stop in Annapolis to meet with Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera of the Court of Appeals of Maryland (pictured above), who presented them with awards for their artistic ideas for preventing and resolving conflicts during the Maryland Judiciary's Annual Conflict Resolution Day Bookmark Art Contest.

Ideas ranged from spreading kindness to accepting differences.

A record number of entries, 2,735, representing 12 jurisdictions, were submitted between September and October of 2019 by students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Winning bookmarks are printed and distributed across the state.

Helping students learn about their courts

During 2019, courts and judges hosted many visits and met with hundreds of students and community groups who were eager to learn about Maryland's court system. These are a few examples of the Judiciary's ongoing efforts throughout the year to educate and engage young people in citizenship and courts.

- In July, 26 middle schoolers and two teachers came from South Korea to the Circuit Court for Howard County as part of a cultural exchange program. The students met with Judge Timothy J. McCrone to learn about what it is like to be a judge and what happens in a circuit court in Maryland.
- Aspiring future lawyers from Barclay Middle School met with Harford County Circuit Court Judge Yolanda L. Curtin when they visited the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law in March to learn about what it's like to be a lawyer and a judge and how the courts work.
- District Court of Maryland Chief Judge John P. Morrissey met with students at Anne Arundel County's Tyler Heights Elementary School in the spring. The 75 fourth grade students in the English as a Second Language program were curious about courts, the law, what a judge does, and what it is like to have to send people to jail.
- Charles County Circuit Court Judge Donine M. Carrington Martin welcomed 12 second- and third-grade members of local Brownie Troop 12049, along with their parents and family members, in November.
- In the fall, Retired Court of Special Appeals Chief Judge Patrick Woodward met with graduating seniors from Landon School. Judge Woodward talked about his path to judgeship and the function and impact of the rule of law within society.
- In May, Maryland Court of Appeals Judge Michele D. Hotten visited Carole Highlands Elementary in Prince George's County for a career day at the school. She answered questions from students about what it is like to be a judge and listen to cases and told the students how lawyers, judges, and juries function in a courtroom.
- Fifth Judicial Circuit Administrative Judge Laura S. Ripken welcomed first graders from Howard County's Tarbiyah Academy to the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County in April. She helped students try on a judge's robe and led them through a brief mock trial.
- A local Scout troop toured the Circuit Court for Wicomico County in November, sat in on part of a drug court docket, and met with Judge S. James Sarbanes and his law clerk to learn about the court system and what it's like to be a lawyer and a judge.



Students from Korea
July 12, 2019
Howard County Circuit Court Judge Timothy J. McCrone



Tyler Heights Elementary
May 13, 2019
District Court of Maryland
Chief Judge John P. Morrissey



Brownie Troop 12049 of Charles County
November 12, 2019
Charles County Circuit Court Judge Donine M. Carrington Martin



Wicomico County Scout Troop
November 8, 2019
Wicomico County Circuit Court Judge S. James Sarbanes



Carole Highlands Elementary
May 30, 2019
Maryland Court of Appeals Judge Michele D. Hotten



Use Resources Wisely



The District Court in Anne Arundel County in Annapolis created a new courtroom by repurposing and renovating a conference room.

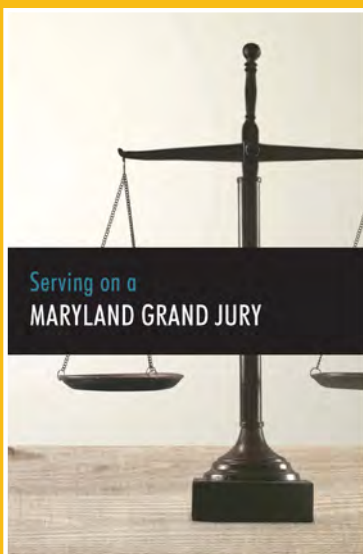
The Administrative Office of the Courts provided \$30.4 million in grants for fiscal year 2020 to support court innovations and services. These grants go to courts and justice partners for juvenile and family services, mediation and conflict resolution, research and evaluation, problem-solving court programs, and access to justice.

To meet disability requirements, the Circuit Court for Worcester County enlarged and renovated restrooms and increased capacity in its jury assembly area.

Several circuit courts and District Court locations formed security committees to assess the security needs of court staff and the public, set goals and plan for funding needs.

Security in and around the Circuit Court for Worcester County was enhanced in 2019. Outdated security cameras were replaced, staff and justice partners were trained for active shooter events, an emergency guide was written and distributed, and evacuation routes were posted on courthouse doors.

The District Court in Caroline County installed an identification card access system for restricted areas of the courthouse, which enhanced security throughout the building.



The Judiciary issued a newly updated and streamlined print and online grand jury brochure to guide citizens through their service. *Serving on a Maryland Grand Jury* was designed in 2019 and is a key component of the orientation for all new grand jurors by providing detailed information about what a grand jury does and what grand jurors can expect during their service. The 12-page brochure reinforces the main points of service for grand jurors, including how the grand jury functions, how it differs from trial juries, and the critical importance of grand jury secrecy.

Grand jurors can access the brochure online any time to get the answers they need. The brochure also can be used as a general educational resource for the public.

View the brochure at mdcourts.gov/grandjuryservice.

Through a joint agreement with the Dorchester County Health Department, the District Court in Dorchester County hired two full-time managers for the drug court and regional veterans court to help clients with medical, housing, and other referrals.

An updated security system was installed in the District Court in Baltimore County at the Essex and Towson locations, including new cameras, larger, better quality monitors, and upgraded computerized controls. Additionally, the courthouse's old keypad entry access system was replaced with a card-swipe keyless system to improve security.

District 10 (Carroll and Howard counties) completed needed maintenance, including the replacement of worn carpet in designated courtrooms and office areas. In the District Court in Carroll County, the office once occupied by the police liaison was returned to the court, allowing an office for alternative dispute resolution to be relocated to allow for more privacy.

The Circuit Court for Cecil County renovated a courtroom to improve ADA accessibility, resolve issues with HVAC and electrical wiring, and increase the safety of the entrance and exit by the judges to and from the courtroom.

A 50-year-old HVAC system was replaced on the first floor of the Circuit Court for Worcester County and hazardous materials remediation was completed to meet federal and state standards. New LED lights were installed to improve energy efficiency.

The Circuit Court for St. Mary's County renovated an old conference room to provide space for self-represented litigants to use while preparing their cases.

After the Register of Wills' Office in Washington County was relocated to a larger nearby office, the courthouse space was renovated to hold a new courtroom and judge's chambers for a sixth judge for the Circuit Court for Washington County. The new judgeship was approved in the 2019 session of the General Assembly to help with the court's increased caseload.

A sally port was built in the Circuit Court for Calvert County to increase security for inmates and the public during inmate transfer.

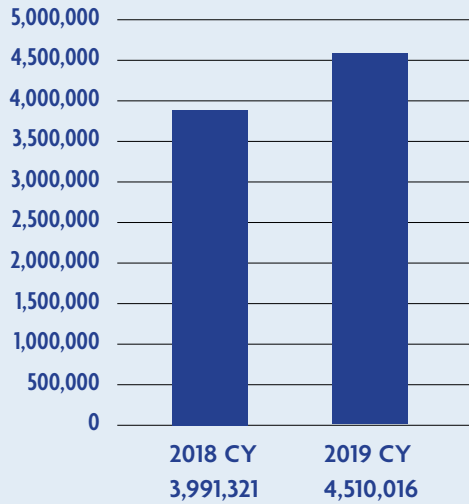
District Court locations in Allegany and Garrett Counties began conducting 100% security screening for everyone entering the courthouse to assure a safe environment for judges, staff, attorneys, and the public.



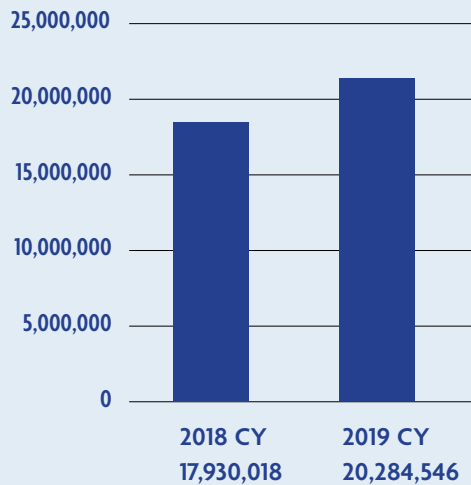
Thanks to a specially designed annual program, 137 new circuit and District Court law clerks learned about their jobs and duties from uniquely qualified experts: outgoing clerks and judges. The comprehensive orientation included “tips and tricks,” break-out sessions for small group discussions, networking opportunities, and court-specific agenda items. Incoming clerks praised the orientation as “very helpful” and “extremely informative and useful.”

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Number of people who visited mdcourts.gov



Number of pages viewed on mdcourts.gov



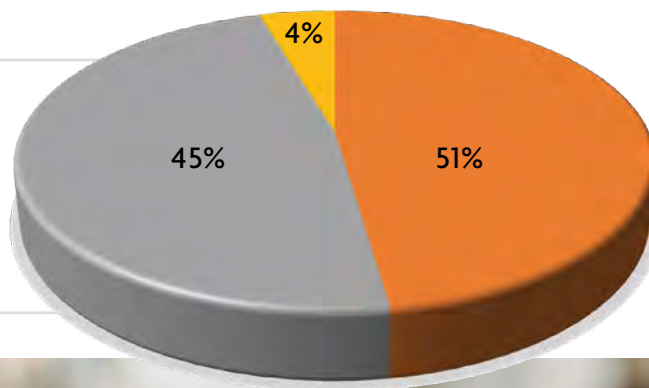
AT A GLANCE

Top 10 pages of 2019

1. Home Page
2. Court Records
3. Directory of Courts
4. District Court Home Page
5. Jury Service
6. Attorney List
7. Opinions
8. Court Forms
9. Closings and Delays
10. Careers

2019 CY Visitors

- Used desktop
- Used mobile phone
- Used tablet



MDCOURTS.GOV

CALENDAR YEAR 2019:

2.4 million visitors used a mobile device to access mdcourts.gov, an increase of 24% from the previous year

A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

Thanks to the selfless efforts of all who work for and with the courts, the Maryland Judiciary made impressive strides this past year to move justice forward through court operations, programs, projects, events, partnerships, and outreach. Looking to the future, the Judiciary is firmly committed to delivering the highest level of service to the thousands of people who rely on the courts each day and to providing fair and impartial decisions. We will continue to build on the Judiciary's clear and steady vision to be an efficient, innovative, and accessible court system and to serve the people with integrity and transparency. With those goals in mind, the following are a sampling of initiatives that will be undertaken in 2020:

- Expand the text notification system to include more case types so that more individuals associated with a matter before the courts have the opportunity to receive notification, via text messaging, of upcoming, cancelled, or rescheduled hearing dates.
- Implement Guide and File, a document assembly tool that assists self-represented litigants in selecting and completing the correct forms through an automated interview process.
- Roll out Remote Video Interpreting in the trial courts to provide interpretation services to individuals with limited English proficiency. This will be valuable with hard-to-find languages and in fast-paced dockets.
- Explore opportunities to expand self-help centers in the trial courts, including the opening of the new Self-Help Center in Catonsville.
- Institute the Landlord-Tenant Bulk Filing pilot for MDEC.
- Continue to roll out MDEC successfully to the three largest jurisdictions – Montgomery and Prince George's Counties and Baltimore City, completing the statewide implementation of a single, uniform case management system.



- Implement a comprehensive customer service program for the Judiciary.
- Continue to implement the 25 recommendations approved by the Judicial Council regarding guardianship matters in the courts.
- Explore ways to continue to enhance the learning experiences and educational opportunities for judges, magistrates, commissioners, and staff.
- Continue to promote awareness of workplace and cyber security through educational programs, webinars, and informational brochures for all users of Judiciary equipment.
- Continue to explore ways to collaborate with civil and criminal justice partners to better serve the people of Maryland.



PAMELA Q. HARRIS
STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR



HONORABLE JOHN P. MORRISSEY
CHIEF JUDGE
DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND

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 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 to serve the people of Maryland.

Maryland Judicial Council 2019

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

Matthew T. Barrett, Esq.
Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators
Court Administrator, Circuit Court for Cecil County

Melissa Batie
Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Administrators
Court Administrator, Circuit Court for Wicomico County

Honorable Keith Baynes
Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Judges
Circuit Court for Cecil County

Honorable Pamila J. Brown
District Court in Howard County

Honorable Matthew J. Fader *
Chief Judge, Court of Special Appeals

Markisha Gross
Administrative Clerk
District Court in Montgomery County

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

Honorable James A. Kenney III (Ret.)
Chair, Senior Judges Committee

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

Cheryl Miller
Administrative Clerk, District Court in Cecil County

Honorable Patricia L. Mitchell
District Court in Montgomery County

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

Charlene M. Notarcola
Acting Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks
Circuit Court for Cecil County

Honorable W. Michel Pierson
Circuit Court for Baltimore City

Honorable Gerald V. Purnell
District Court in Worcester County

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

Roberta Warnken
Chief Clerk, District Court of Maryland

Honorable Alan M. Wilner (Ret.)
Chair, Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure

Honorable Brett W. Wilson
Circuit Court for Dorchester County

Honorable Dorothy J. Wilson
District Court in Baltimore County

Vacant
Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Clerks

Faye D. Gaskin, Secretary
Deputy State Court Administrator

* Member of Executive Committee

2019 Committees

Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee

Honorable Mimi Cooper, Chair

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

Court Access and Community Relations Committee

Honorable Pamela J. White, 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. 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. Assist in the development of consistent statewide operations, policies, and best practices.

Court Technology Committee

Honorable Fred S. Hecker, Chair

Honorable Margaret M. 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 impact on judicial operations/functions.

District Court Chief Judge's Committee

Honorable John P. Morrissey, Chair

Chief Judge, District Court of Maryland

Advise the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals on the operation of the District Court in all its locations. Aid the Chief Judge of the District Court 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 judges and 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 Stacy A. Mayer, Vice-Chair

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

Major Projects Committee

Honorable John P. Morrissey and Pamela Harris, Co-Chairs

Address policy-related matters regarding the implementation and ongoing operation of new and existing technology projects, as well as the establishment of priorities for the implementation of those projects.

Senior Judges Committee

Honorable James A. Kenney III, Senior Judge, Chair

Honorable Deborah S. Eyler, 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

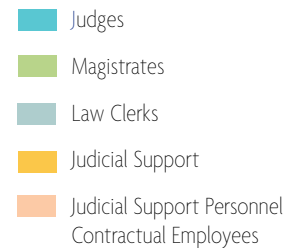
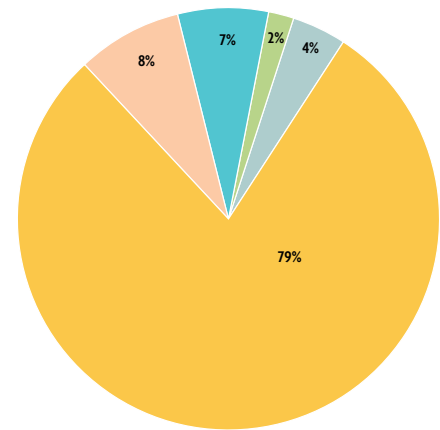
Honorable George Lipman, Vice-Chair

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 2019

JUDGES	
Court of Appeals	7
Court of Special Appeals	15
Circuit Court	173
District Court	118
Total Judges	313
MAGISTRATES	
Circuit Court Magistrates ¹	71
Total Magistrates	71
LAW CLERKS	
Law Clerks	180
Total Law Clerks	180
JUDICIAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL	
Court of Appeals	38.00
Court of Special Appeals	91.50
Circuit Court Clerks' Offices	1,465.50
District Court	1,446.50
Administrative Office of the Courts	385.25
Judicial Units ²	33.75
Total Judicial Support Personnel	3,460.50
Contractual Employees ³	346.00
Total State-Funded Judicial Branch Personnel	4,370.50
LOCALLY FUNDED JUDICIAL BRANCH PERSONNEL	
Orphans Court Judges ⁴	66
Circuit Court Personnel	971.60
TOTAL LOCALLY FUNDED JUDGES AND PERSONNEL	1,037.60



¹ Does not include two temporary magistrates.

² Judicial Units include the Commission on Judicial Disabilities, Rules Committee, State Board of Law Examiners, and Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library. The Attorney Grievance Commission and Client Protection Fund are also units of the Judiciary; however they are staffed through those entities.

³ Includes District Court bailiffs.

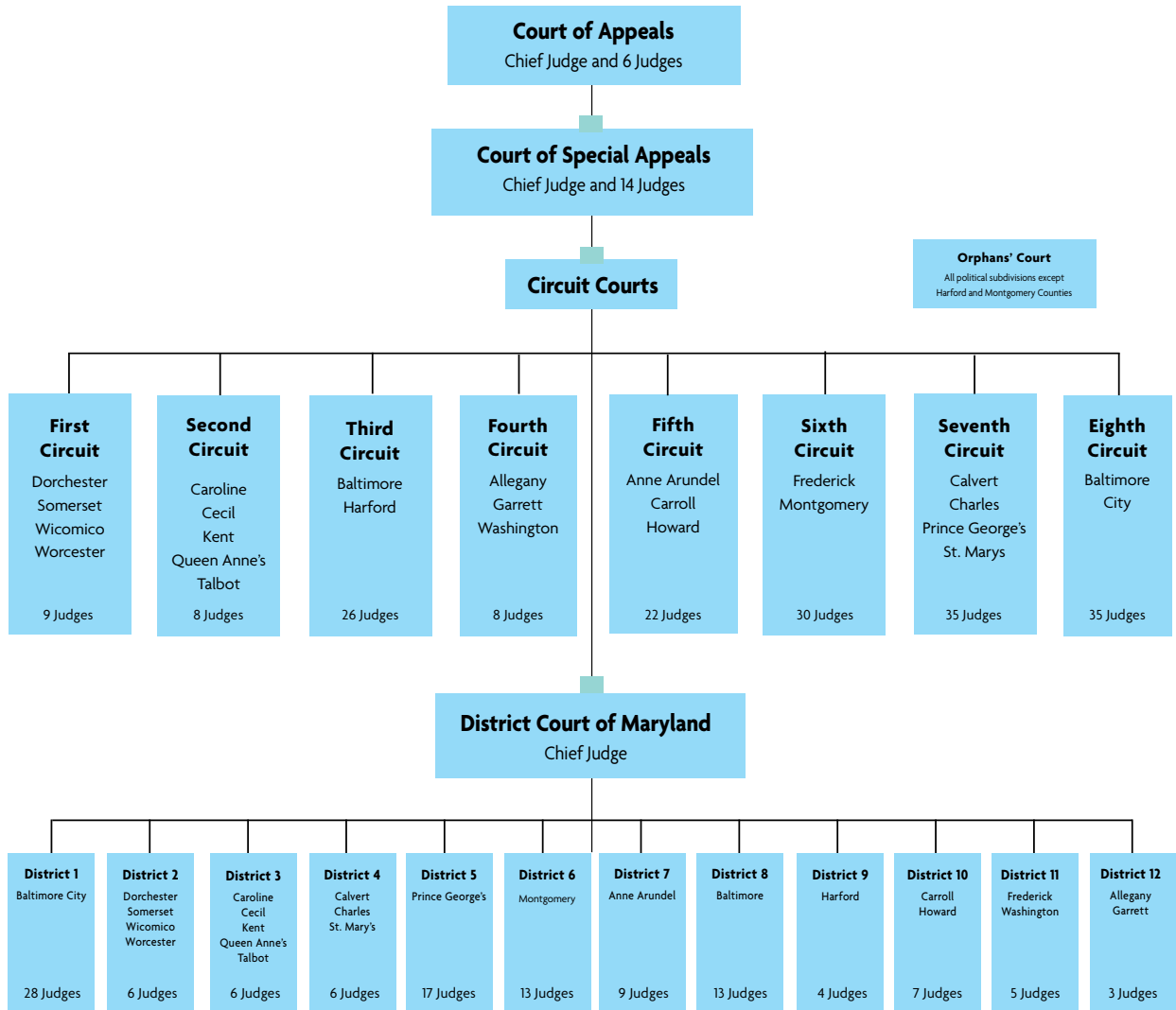
⁴ Three judges sit on the Orphans' Court in Baltimore City and each of the counties with the exception of Harford and Montgomery Counties in which circuit court judges sit as judges of the Orphans' Court.

JUDICIAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES * FISCAL YEAR 2019

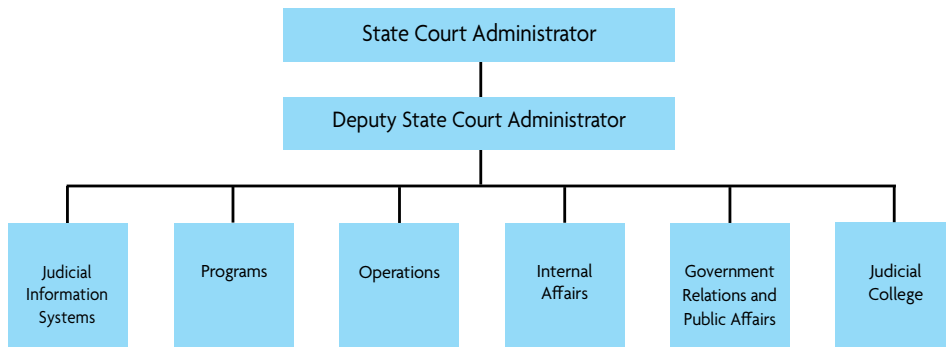
Revenues	\$479,820,954
Expenditures	\$566,675,031

* Revenues and expenditures include all fund types. Category includes revenues and expenditures associated with child support reimbursements for magistrates. Includes revenues and expenditures associated with Family Law.

MARYLAND JUDGES BY COURT, FISCAL YEAR 2019



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS



The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is the central support agency for the state judicial branch. It 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 2019

	Filings	Terminations
Court of Appeals	728	722
Court of Special Appeals	2,223	1,921
Circuit Courts	222,368	222,839
District Court	1,641,828	1,716,691
Totals	1,867,147	1,942,173

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 2019

	Filings	Dispositions
Regular Docket	79	84
Petitions for Certiorari	501	502
Attorney Grievance Proceedings	108	95
Bar Admission Proceedings	4	4
Certified Questions of Law	1	2
Miscellaneous Appeals	33	32
Judicial Disabilities	2	3
Totals	728	722

The Court of Appeals is Maryland's highest court. It hears matters 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 an appeal.

COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS FISCAL YEAR 2019

Appeals Filed	2,223
Appeals Disposed	1,921
Opinions Filed	1,088

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

CIRCUIT COURT STATEWIDE FILINGS AND TERMINATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2019

	Filings	Terminations
Total Civil General	58,171	61,631
Total Civil Family	93,417	88,464
Total Juvenile	12,382	14,835
Total Criminal	58,398	57,909
Totals	222,368	222,839

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. Cases 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 2019

	Filings	Terminations
Motor Vehicle ¹	559,129	592,083
Criminal ²	132,724	154,074
Civil ³	280,197	300,756
Landlord-Tenant	669,778	* 669,778
Totals	1,641,828	1,716,691

* 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.

¹ 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.

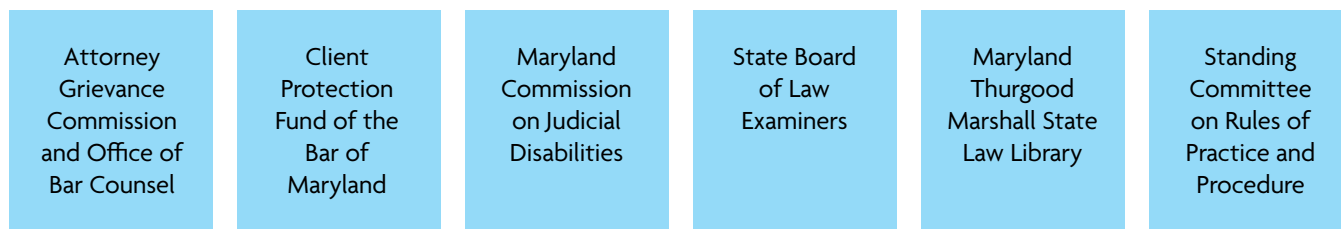
² Criminal filings include fugitive warrants.

³ 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.

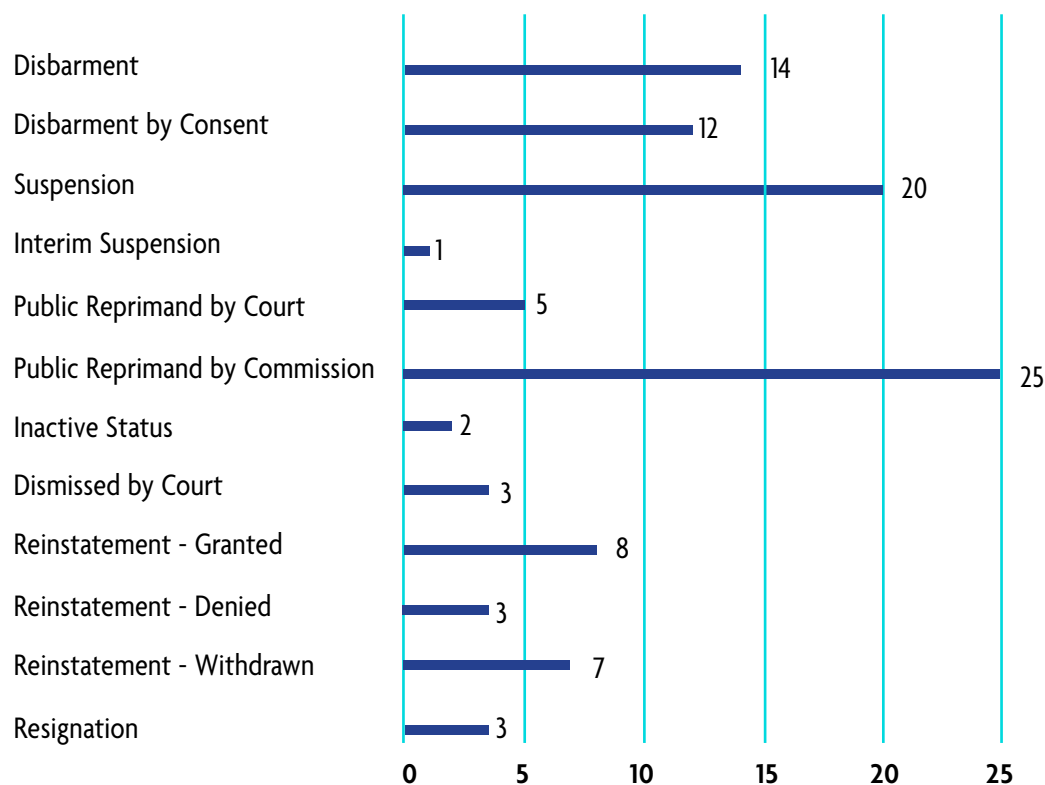
Note: Due to the transition to Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC), data on filings and terminations are obtained from multiple source systems, which may result in some differences in the comparability of data across jurisdictions and between reporting periods.

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 2019



ATTORNEY DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: TOTAL NUMBER: 103

The Attorney Grievance Commission oversees the conduct of both Maryland lawyers and non-members 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 2019

Claims	
Decided Claims	98
Claims Approved for Payment	33
Total Payment on Approved Claims	\$567,166
Revenue from Assessments	\$831,578

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 2019

Sources of All Complaints	
Attorneys	7
Investigative Counsel Initiated Inquiries	5
Inmates	28
Public	164
Total Verified Complaints	204
Complaints by Level of Court	
District Court Judges	63
Circuit Court Judges	136
Orphans’ Court Judges	1
Court of Special Appeals Judges	3
Court of Appeals Judges	1
Total	204
Disciplinary Actions *	
Filing of Charges by Investigative Counsel	5
Dismissal With Warning	5

* The majority of complaints in fiscal year 2019, as in prior years, were dismissed because the allegations set forth in the complaints were either found to be unsubstantiated, or the conduct complained about did not constitute sanctionable conduct.

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

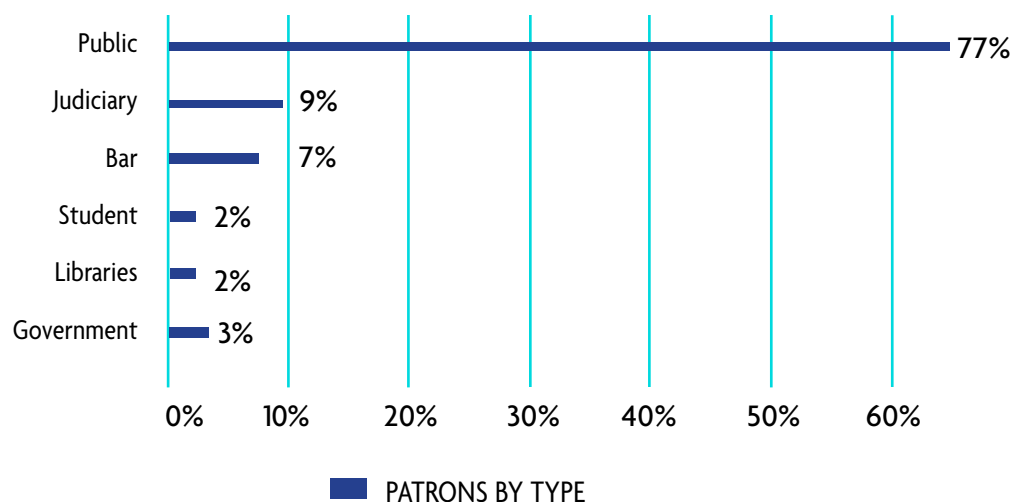
STATE BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS FISCAL YEAR 2019

	Applied	Sat	Passed	Cleared *
General Bar	1,184 *	1,084	582	574
Out of State Attorney Exam	127	119	109	104

* Applications for the July bar exam are filed in the prior fiscal year, but are counted in the fiscal year when the exam occurs. Applications are processed by the State Board of Law Examiners (SBLE) and investigated by the Character Committee regardless of whether the applicant actually sits for the exam. SBLE only “clears” applicants who are approved for character and passed the bar 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 THURGOOD MARSHALL STATE LAW LIBRARY FISCAL YEAR 2019



The Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library responds to requests for legal information through email, telephone, in-person visits, and traditional mail. The bulk of requests, 77%, came from members of the general public. More than half of requests, 55%, arrived through email, up from 47% in fiscal year 2018. Overall, reference staff recorded a total of 10,914 reference interactions in fiscal year 2019, an increase of 31% from fiscal year 2018.

The Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library is open to the public and 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 Thurgood Marshall 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 2019

Reports Published *	8
New Rules Proposed	46
New Appendices Proposed	1
Amended Rules Proposed	93
Amended Appendices Proposed	2
Deletion of Rules Proposed	11
Deletion of Appendices Proposed	1

* The 196th Report and two Supplemental Reports, the 197th Report, the 198th Report, the 199th Report and one Supplemental Report, and the 200th Report, totaling 797 pages. Topics addressed in these Reports include:

196th Report: Roles and Functions of Magistrates • Roles and Functions of Examiners • Roles and Functions of Auditors • Court Interpreters • Arrest Warrants • “Prisoner Mailbox” Rule • Commitment Orders • Probation Orders • Restitution Orders • Revocation of Probation Proceedings • MDEC Filing Fees • Legal Assistance by Law Student • Foreign Attorneys • MDEC Signatures • Deficient Submissions in MDEC • Discovery in Criminal Cases • Electronic Devices in the Jury Room

Supplement to 196th Report: Court Interpreters

Second Supplement to 196th Report: Proceedings for Revocation of Probation

197th Report: Special Authorization for Out-of-State Attorneys Affiliated with Programs Providing Legal Services to Low-Income Individuals

198th Report: Termination of Parental Rights • Attorney Information System • State Board of Law Examiners • Character Committee • Admission to the Bar • Standby Guardianship of the Person and/or Property of a Minor • Expedited hearings for Appointment of Guardian • Petitions for Guardianships of the Person or Property • Guardianship of Alleged Disabled Veterans • Fees associated with the Register of Wills • Address Confidentiality Program • Petition for Immediate Foreclosure Against Residential Property

199th Report: Judicial Disabilities and Discipline.

Supplement to 199th Report: Judicial Disabilities and Discipline

200th Report: Class Actions • Voluntary Dismissal • Discovery in Aid of Enforcement • Service of Process • Prosecution for Sexually Assaultive Behavior • Bases of an Expert’s Opinion Testimony • Problem Solving Court Programs • Discipline on Conviction of Crime • AIS Registration • MDEC Filer Definition • Administration of MDEC • MDEC Signatures • Requirements for Electronic Filing • Striking of Certain Non-compliant MDEC Submissions • MDEC Deficiency Notice • Record of Action Transferred Other than to an Appellate 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.

NOTES

MARYLAND



JUDICIARY



The Maryland Judiciary made history in 2019 when the Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County moved from the oldest courthouse in the state, built in 1791, into a new, state-of-the-art, all-electronic courthouse. The front cover shows the transition from the oldest to newest courtroom in Queen Anne's County. Above, in this blended photographic image, the exterior of the 228-year-old historic courthouse (left) blends into the new building (right). The historic courthouse still stands in the heart of Centreville, Maryland, just feet away from where the new courthouse was built in 2019.

Maryland Judicial Center
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mdcourts.gov

January 2020