



CHANCELLOR WILLIAM B. CHANDLER, III

Since 1792 the Court of Chancery has been an indispensable component of Delaware's legal culture. The Court's preeminence in American business law has long been established. Two of the ingredients that have enabled the Court to achieve its stature within the national and international legal community are its expertise in its jurisdiction as evidenced in its extensive case law and its ability to deal with matters in a timely fashion. In FY 2010 the Court took steps to continue its tradition of excellence.

The e-filing effort first launched in 2003 continues to produce outcomes consistent with the project's original goals and objectives. To capitalize on that effort, the Court is working with the developers of COTS to secure the efficiencies realized to date and maximize the potential of e-filing throughout the entirety of the Court's caseload. With this expansion under COTS the Court is also focused on the development of a viable case management system that can provide measures of the Court's performance against established benchmarks.

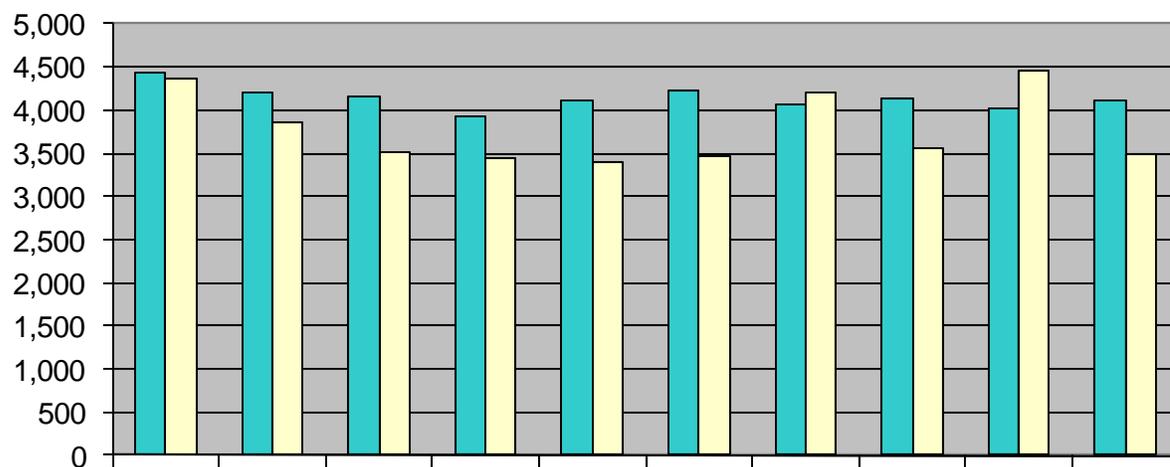
Part of the plan to continue the Court's tradition of excellence is to take advantage of the opportunities presented with the legislation that established the statewide Register in Chancery Office. Thanks to e-filing and the resultant elimination of many paper intensive tasks, the Court has benefited from the reallocation of resources within the Register's Office.

With the graying of the population, the number of persons seeking guardianships is expected to grow significantly. It is anticipated that there is a potential for this burgeoning population to need assistance in managing their personal and financial affairs. Having materials and procedures that are user friendly and that can guide citizens is important to providing the public with the access it deserves. To determine how the Court's services might be improved in this category of cases, the Court enlisted the National Guardianship Association to perform a study of the Court's guardianship rules and procedures. The NGA's report will assist the Court in efforts to improve its handling and disposition of guardianship matters.

The Court has also been given additional statutory jurisdiction, in the form of authority to handle arbitration matters filed with the Court. Once again the Court is being called upon to provide an expedited solution to large business and commercial disputes. In a similar view, the Court's Rules were amended to permit the Court to hold arguments, conferences and hearings via videoconferencing, thus enabling counsel and parties to have access to the Court from distant locations. These steps were taken to further the Court's reputation for providing efficient access and prompt decision-making to those who choose to incorporate in Delaware or who choose Delaware law to apply to their disputes.

COURT OF CHANCERY

**COURT OF CHANCERY FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS
BY FISCAL YEAR**



Filings	4,442	4,197	4,159	3,935	4,122	4,221	4,057	4,142	4,027	4,122
Dispositions	4,367	3,868	3,525	3,452	3,391	3,457	4,200	3,567	4,457	3,500

LEGAL AUTHORIZATION

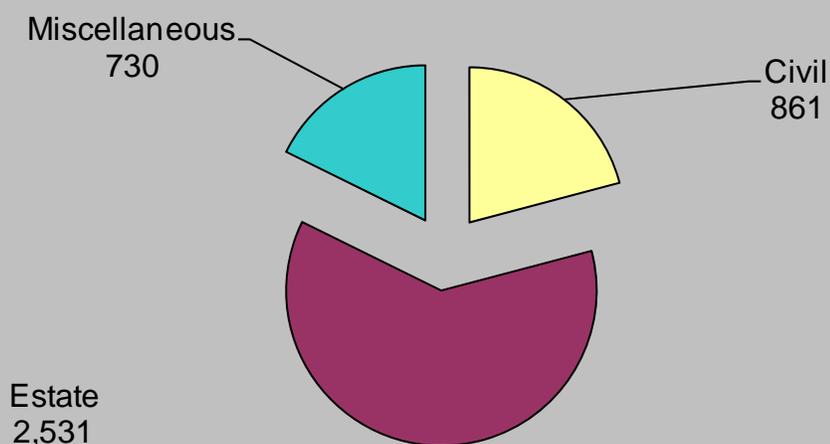
The Constitution of Delaware, Article IV, Section 1, authorizes the Court of Chancery.

COURT HISTORY

The Court of Chancery came into existence as a separate court under the Delaware Constitution of 1792. Its creation contradicted an his-

torical trend in eighteenth century America away from chancery courts. The Court consisted solely of a chancellor until 1939 when the position of vice chancellor was added. The increase of the Court's workload since then has led to further expansions to its present complement of a chancellor and four vice chancellors, with the addition of the fourth vice chancellor occurring in 1989.

NUMBER OF COURT OF CHANCERY FILINGS BY TYPE FY 2009



LEGAL JURISDICTION

The Court of Chancery has jurisdiction to hear and determine all matters and causes in equity. The general equity jurisdiction of the Court is measured in terms of the general equity jurisdiction of the High Court of Chancery of Great Britain as it existed prior to the separation of the American colonies. The General Assembly may confer upon the Court of Chancery additional statutory jurisdiction.

In today's practice, litigation in the Court of Chancery consists largely of corporate matters, trusts, estates, and other fiduciary matters, disputes involving the purchase and sale of land, questions of title to real estate, and commercial and contractual matters in general. When issues of fact to be tried by a jury arise, the Court of Chancery may order such facts to trial by issues at the Bar of the Superior Court (10 *Del.C.* § 369).

COURT OF CHANCERY



Court of Chancery (*left to right*)

Vice Chancellor Donald F. Parsons, Jr.

Vice Chancellor Leo E. Strine, Jr.

Chancellor William B. Chandler, III

Vice Chancellor John W. Noble

Vice Chancellor J. Travis Laster (*Sworn in October 9, 2009*)

Not Pictured:

Vice Chancellor Stephen P. Lamb (*Retired on July 29, 2009*)

Photography by Steve Theis
Theis Photography, Ltd.