

# COURT OF CHANCERY



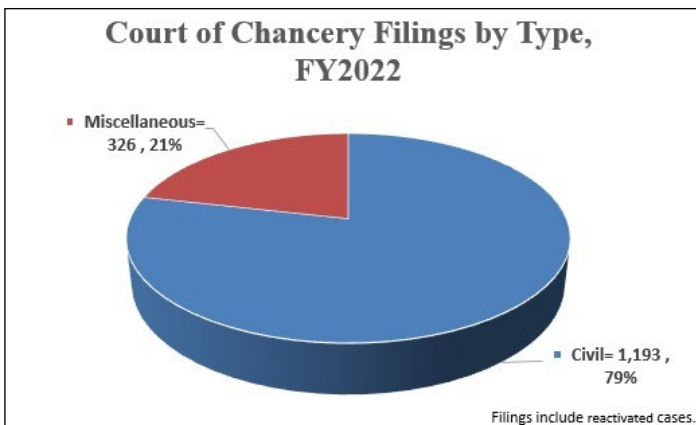
## CHANCELLOR KATHALEEN ST. J. MCCORMICK

The year 2022 marked the 230th anniversary of the Court of Chancery and the 70th anniversary of Chancellor Seitz’s landmark *Belton v. Gebhart* decision, in which the State of Delaware’s first attorney of color, Louis Redding, successfully argued that students of color who were denied admittance to white public schools were denied equal protection of the law. These anniversaries served as a powerful reminder of our judicial officers’ oaths –to respect the right of future generations to share in the rich heritage of our state – as well as the court’s mission – to render fair, prompt, and well-

reasoned decisions in all matters within our jurisdiction.

The year 2022 was as busy and challenging as ever for the Court of Chancery. The numbers speak to the court’s success. Case filings and dispositions remained as staggeringly high as those of 2021, with 1,136 new matters filed (compared to 1,138 in 2021). The court witnessed an increase in requests for expedition, with 36% of new cases being accompanied by a request for expedited treatment. All told, the court conducted over 1,200 hearings and issued over 300 opinions. Filings in our guardianships cases likewise remained at a high level in 2022, with 326 new cases filed compared to 329 in 2021.

The court accomplished this level of productivity while grappling, like so many other courts and the State in general, with staffing shortages and recruitment chal-



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lenges. Technology helped with the court's efficiency. Although the pandemic seems largely in our rearview, it has left a legacy on our work-a-day world: video streaming technology is now commonplace for our court. Judicial officers frequently conduct fully remote and hybrid hearings, not only to ensure the safety of court staff and litigants when warranted, but also where doing so is more convenient for court staff and litigants. It was, by all measures, a banner year.

The year was marked with transition. We celebrated the retirement of one of our veteran leaders. Vice Chancellor Joseph R. Slight's retired from the bench on June 1, 2022, after seventeen years with the State, including seven years with the Court of Chancery. Master Patricia Griffin retired from the bench on December 1, 2022, after serving over 29 years for the state, five of which were for the Court of Chancery.

We also welcomed new colleagues. To fill Vice Chancellor Slight's position, Nathan A. Cook, was sworn in on July 21, 2022. Prior to joining the court, Vice Chancellor Cook was the managing partner of Block & Leviton's Delaware office. His practice focused on trial and appellate litigation relating to Delaware corporations and alternative entities. Before entering private practice, Vice Chancellor Cook served as a law clerk to Vice Chancellor John W. Noble. To fill Master Griffin's position, Master Bonnie W. David joined the court

in early 2023. Master David joins the court from Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP where she served as a Litigation Associate for seven years and Counsel for two years. Before entering private practice, Master David served as a law clerk to Vice Chancellor Sam Glasscock III.

In addition, in December 2022, the court welcomed Loren Mitchell to a newly funded Master in Chancery position. Master Mitchell joined the court from the Department of Justice, where she was the Deputy Attorney General, General Counsel to the Department of Labor. Master Mitchell is currently an adjunct professor at both the University of Delaware, Professional & Continuing Studies, and Wilmington University.

For the second year, the court welcomed high school interns participating in the Delaware Department of State's Future Leaders Internship Initiative ("FLii"). We enjoyed the company and enthusiasm of our high school interns as well as the collaboration with our sister branch of government.

Other members of the Chancery team celebrated victories. The Court of Chancery is very proud to recognize two members of our elite court reporting staff, Juli LaBadia and Douglas Zweizig, who received awards for their transcription skills in competitions this summer held in the Netherlands and Florida, respectively. The Court of Chancery Court



*Chancellor Kathaleen St. J. McCormick administers the Oath of Office to Vice Chancellor Nathan A. Cook, as the Vice Chancellor's wife Christine holds the Bible in a ceremony on Sept. 28, 2022*

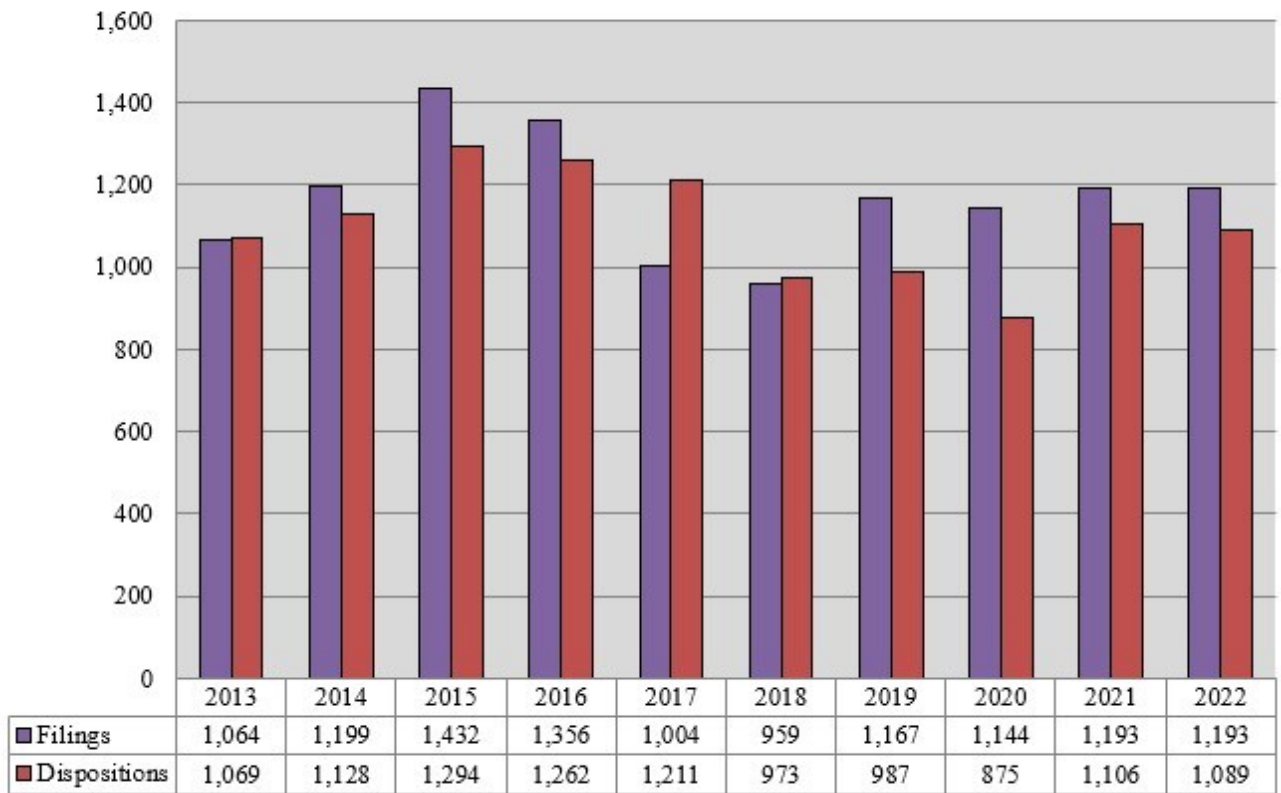
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Reporters are truly world class and vital to the court’s ability to swiftly administer justice.

It remains true today, as in years past, that the strength of the court is in its people. As we head into the new year, we continue to be grateful for the efforts of the court staff who work tirelessly to ensure that the court provides fair, prompt, and well-reasoned decisions in all causes in equity and other matters within the jurisdiction of this court. ♦



### Court of Chancery 10-Year Civil Caseload Trend



Fiscal Year Filings include reactivated cases.

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## Court of Chancery

***Standing left to right:***

Master in Chancery Loren Mitchell, Master in Chancery Patricia W. Griffin (retired 12/2022),  
Vice Chancellor Lori W. Will, Vice Chancellor Nathan A. Cook,  
Master in Chancery Selena E. Molina, Master in Chancery Bonnie W. David.

***Seated left to right:***

Vice Chancellor Morgan T. Zurn, Vice Chancellor J. Travis Laster,  
Chancellor Kathaleen St. J. McCormick,  
Vice Chancellor Sam Glasscock III, Vice Chancellor Paul A. Fioravanti.