

SUPERIOR COURT



PRESIDENT JUDGE JAN R. JURDEN



SUPERIOR COURT

“To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.” – Winston Churchill.

Introduction/Overview

It is through the hard work and dedication of our employees that the Superior Court remains true to its long-standing mission – *to serve the public by providing fair, prompt and well-reasoned decisions in all matters coming before the court.* Our team of judicial officers and staff continue to identify needed improvements in our processes and the delivery of services to the public, litigants and to the Delaware Bar. We are guided by the court’s core

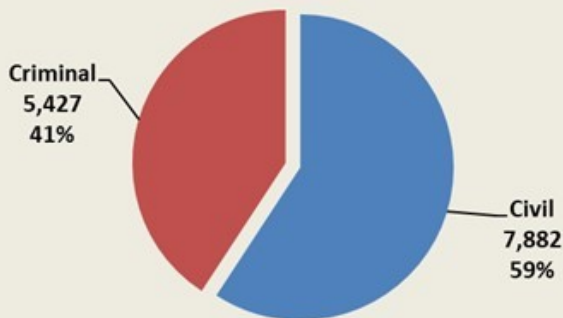
values – **“UNITED”** – *Unity, Neutrality, Integrity, Timeliness, Equality and Dedication.*

We welcomed two new judicial officers: Judge Patricia A. Winston (June 1, 2022) and Commissioner Martin B. O’Connor (November 1, 2021). We also welcomed back Colleen Redmond as our Prothonotary in New Castle County. Colleen has 30 years’ experience in this office.

Statistical Overview

Each year the Superior Court handles thousands of matters. In Fiscal Year 2022, we had 7,882 civil filings and 5,427 criminal filings. The court worked with its justice partners to efficiently schedule grand juries, case reviews, sentencing, motions, and trials to work through its pending case load. Due to electronic filing, the court was able to handle most of its civil filings without disruption despite the pandemic. The court continues to utilize technology to handle matters remotely. During FY 22, the court conducted 402 civil proceedings and 1427 criminal proceedings remotely.

**NUMBER OF SUPERIOR COURT FILINGS
BY TYPE, FISCAL YEAR 2022**



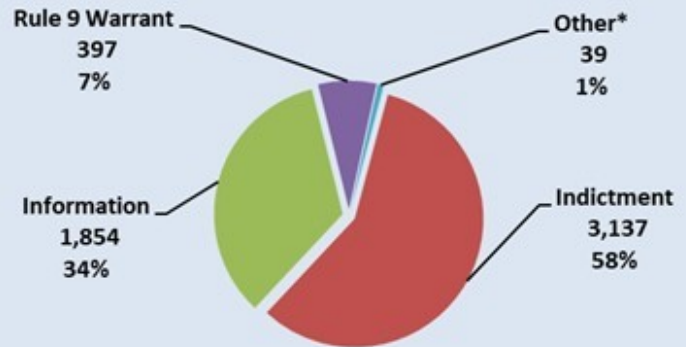
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From July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022, the court issued and posted on its website 384 civil opinions, 72 Complex Commercial Litigation Division (“CCLD”) opinions/orders and 214 criminal opinions/orders. The court is endeavoring to provide more information to the public via our webpage. Currently, the Court’s Administrative Directives, Administrative Orders, Rule Changes, and Standing Orders can be found on the webpage. Statistical information regarding permits to carry a deadly weapon and weapon relinquishment hearings were also added. The court’s webpage is routinely updated with new information in our effort to keep the Bar and the public informed and provides useful information on court processes, forms, schedules, and other material to aid in navigation of our court system.

The information received through our Bench and Bar Liaisons aided in the permanent implementation of remote processes and procedures introduced during the pandemic. The court continues to work closely with the Bar to solicit suggestions about how

NUMBER OF SUPERIOR COURT CRIMINAL FILINGS BY TYPE FISCAL YEAR 2022



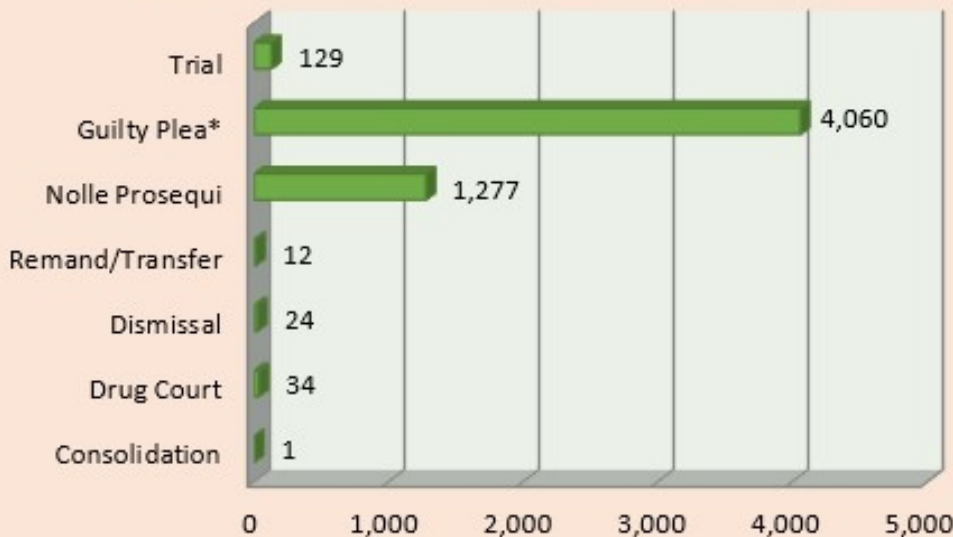
*Includes appeals, transfers, reinstatements, and severances.

to improve processes and best serve the Bar and justice partners.

Complex Commercial Litigation Division (CCLD)/Mass Torts/Asbestos

The CCLD caseload continues to grow. In FY22, there were 126 new cases filed. Due to the increased filings, Judge Meghan A. Adams was added to the CCLD panel on August 4, 2022, joining Judges Johnston, Davis, Wallace, and LeGrow. In addition to the CCLD cases, the court maintains a large docket of mass torts and asbestos cases handled by Judges Jones and Brennan. At the end of FY22 there were 2,589 CCLD cases, 474 mass tort cases, and 664 asbestos cases pending.

NUMBER OF SUPERIOR COURT CRIMINAL DISPOSITIONS BY METHOD FISCAL YEAR 2022



*Includes Probation Before Judgment & Guilty but Mentally Ill, First Offender Program & civil possession of marijuana.

Expungements

The court continues to work closely with its justice partners to implement the expungement statutes passed by the General Assembly and signed by

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the Governor. The Clean Slate Act, Senate Bill 111, 151st General Assembly, effective August 1, 2024, creates an automatic expungement process to address individuals eligible for a mandatory expungement and requires coordination between the court, Delaware Criminal Justice Information Systems (DELJIS) and State Bureau of Identification (SBI). This automatic expungement process will provide relief for eligible individuals without the requirement and expense of filing a petition. Additionally, in coordination with DELJIS and the Judicial Information Center (JIC), the court is working on a process to review potential errors in the criminal justice record keeping system which could negatively impact an individual from seeking an expungement. House Bill 447 implemented some of the recommendations of the African American Task Force Safety and Justice Subcommittee and requires cases or charges that meet a certain criterion to be treated as resolved in favor of the accused for purposes of expungement. Modifications to the court's current expungement processes and procedures are necessary to realize the General Assembly's intention "to protect persons from unwarranted damage which may occur when the existence of a criminal history continues indefinitely."

Notable

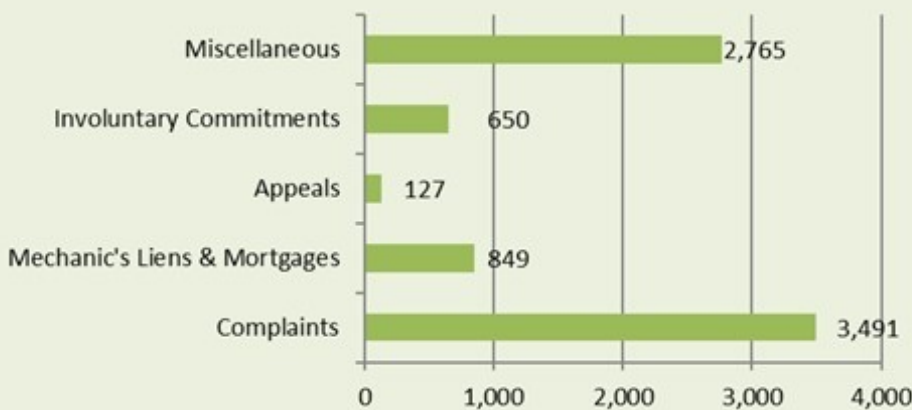
The Superior Court was saddened by the death of the Honorable Richard S. Gebelein on December

22, 2021, and the death of Marc Niedzielski on August 28, 2022. Judge Gebelein started his judicial career with the Superior Court on October 5, 1984, and retired on August 31, 2005 to become an international judge on the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr. Niedzielski served as the court's Asbestos Litigation Master beginning in 1987 for several years.

This past year, two of our employees received awards for their outstanding service. Cynthia Coleman was named Superior Court's Employee of the Year and the Judicial Branch Employee of the Year. She was also named one of the recipients of the 2021 Governor's Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service, an award designed to honor employees "who exemplify the highest standards of excellence and commitment in state service." Cynthia started with the Superior Court in 2003 as a casual/seasonal employee and worked her way up to her current position as Judicial Operations Manager. She was nominated because of her outstanding professionalism, management style and unfailing positive attitude. Cynthia's creativity, work attitude, and organizational skills were particularly useful during the pandemic as she and her team performed on-site and remotely to keep the civil filings moving forward.

Tracy Walls-Pulling was named the recipient of the 2022 Delaware State Bar Association's Myrna L. Rubenstein Professional Support Recognition Award. Judge Carpenter presented Tracy with the award during the Delaware State Bar Association's Law Day program on May 2, 2022. This award is given to a support person who has contributed in a "significant way . . . to the high ideals of the legal profession." Tracy has worked with the court as Judge Carpenter's Administrative Assistant for the past 37 years. In describing Tracy, President Judge

**NUMBER OF SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL FILINGS
BY TYPE FISCAL YEAR 2022**

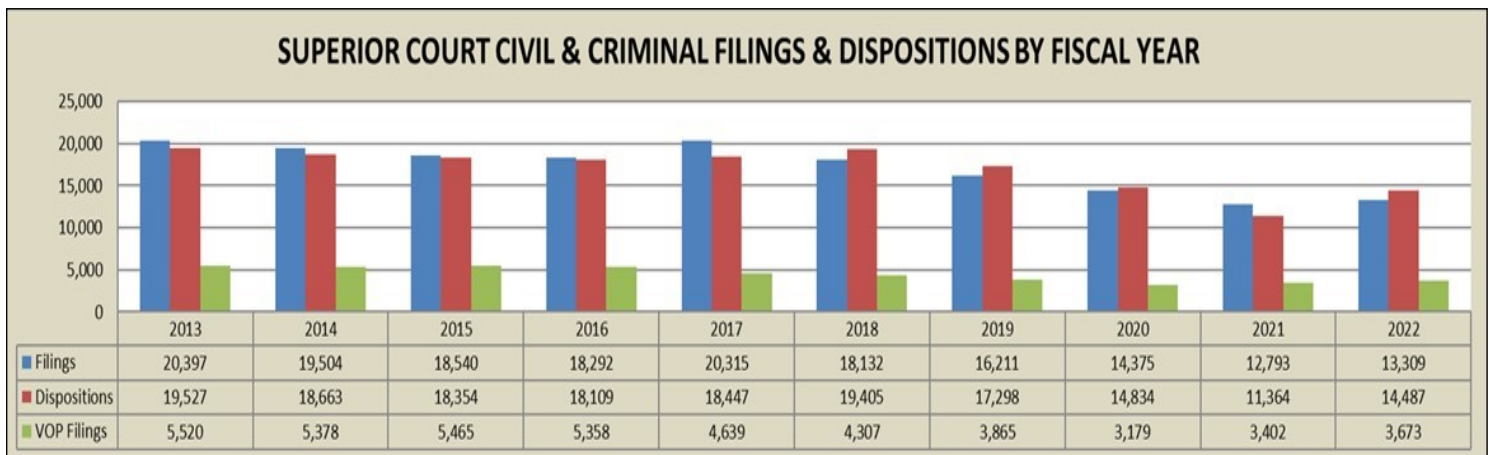
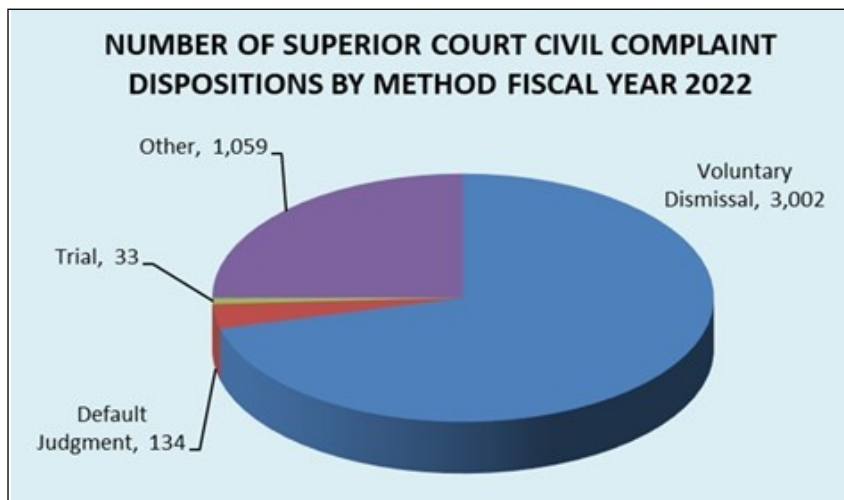
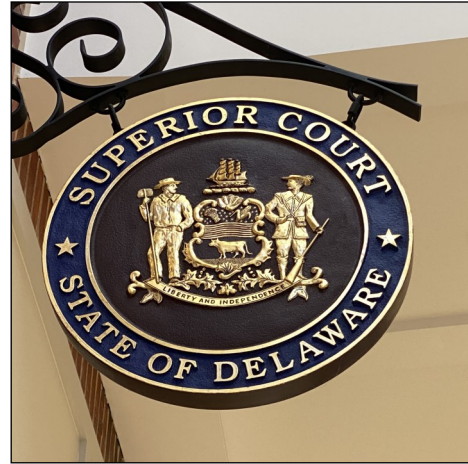


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Jurden and Judge Carpenter stated that she “is the standard by which all who support those who work or practice in our judicial branch should strive to achieve and represents the very best of those that serve our legal community.”

The Superior Court would like to recognize and thank all its staff for their tireless dedication and exemplary work ethic, particularly during these trying times. The Superior Court, along with all its employees, stands **UNITED** in our continuing efforts to improve and provide exemplary service to all those we are honored to serve. ♦



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SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES

Back Row (left to right): Judge Danielle J. Brennan, Judge Robert H. Robinson Jr., Judge Francis J. Jones Jr., Resident Judge Craig A. Karsnitz, Judge Sheldon K. Rennie, Judge Meghan A. Adams, Judge Mark H. Conner, Judge Reneta L. Green-Streett, Judge Patricia A. Winston.

Middle Row (left to right): Judge Abigail M. LeGrow, Judge Ferris W. Wharton, Judge Paul R. Wallace, Judge Eric M. Davis, Judge Vivian L. Medinilla, Resident Judge Jeffrey J. Clark, Judge Noel Eason Primos.

Front Row (left to right): Judge Mary J. Johnston, Judge William C. Carpenter Jr., President Judge Jan R. Jurden, Judge Calvin L. Scott, Resident Judge Charles E. Butler.

SUPERIOR COURT



SUPERIOR COURT COMMISSIONERS

Left to right: Commissioner Janine M. Salomone, Commissioner Alicia B. Howard, Commissioner Martin B. O'Connor, Commissioner Andrea M. Freud, Commissioner Lynne M. Parker.