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24

ANNUAL REPORT

THE DELAWARE JUDICIARY



LEONARD L. WILLIAMS JUSTICE CENTER

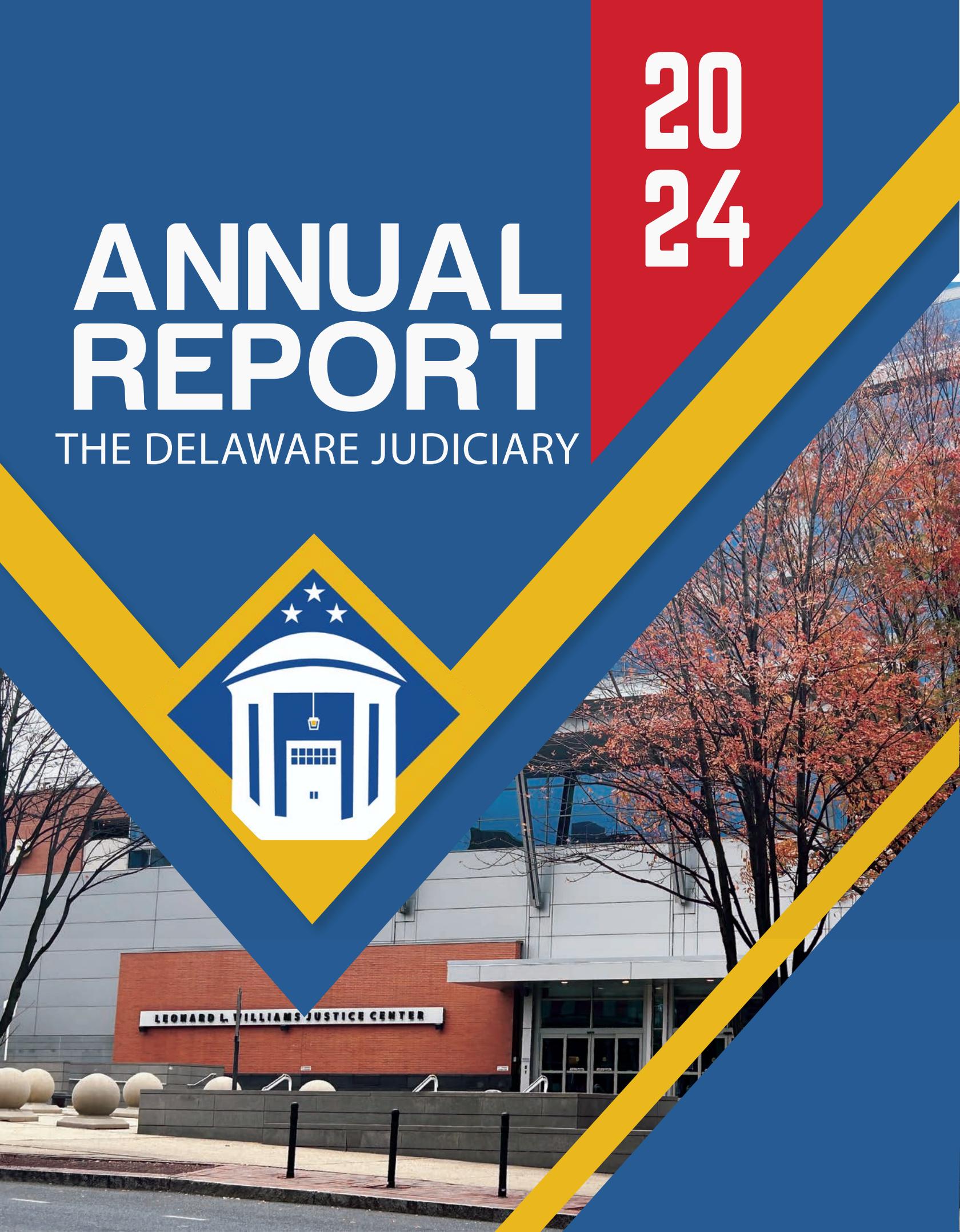




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VISION

Equal justice through transparency, integrity, innovation, and judicial branch independence.

MISSION

To provide access to fair and effective justice in a safe and transparent environment through a diverse, inclusive, and dedicated workforce.





MESSAGE FROM
**Chief Justice
Collins J. Seitz, Jr.**

On behalf of the Court, I am pleased to present our 2024 Annual Report. You will notice that we have a new format for the report this year, one that is more accessible and informative and better explains what the Delaware Judiciary does every day. It highlights the extraordinary work of Judicial Branch judges and employees who are responsible for keeping the wheels of justice turning for the citizens of Delaware and beyond.

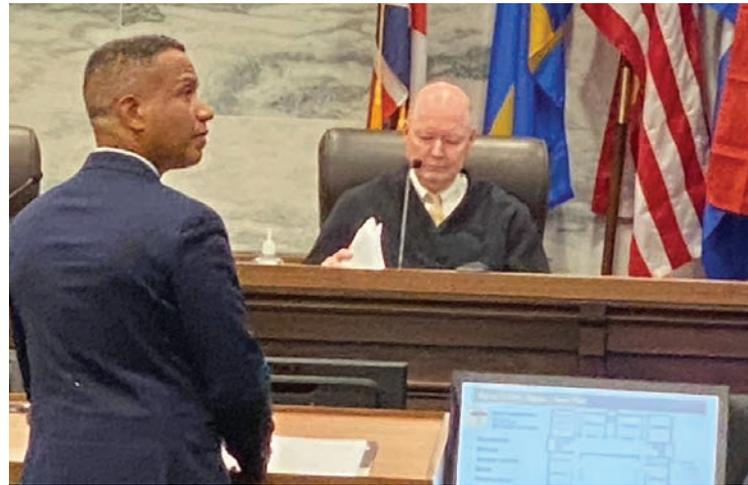
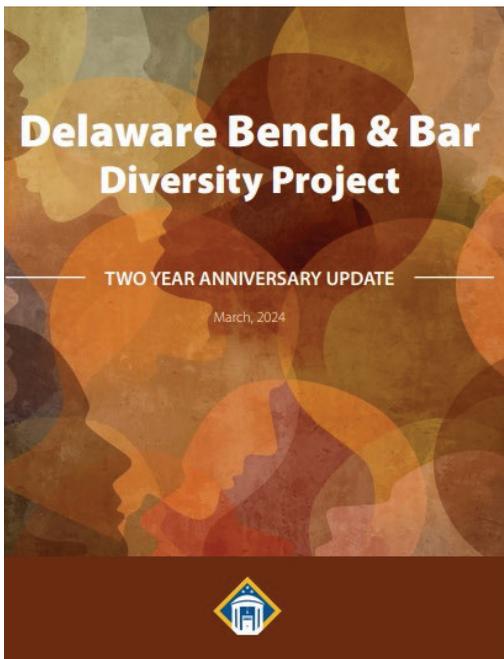
A Few Highlights from 2024:

- Released a two-year update showing the great strides made to implement the recommendations from the 2022 Delaware Bench and Bar Diversity Project.
- Improved outreach and engagement with elementary and high school students through the Delaware Law Related Education Center (DELREC).
- Adopted the pilot cell phone policy, permanently allowing the public to bring their personal electronic devices into our courthouses.
- Enhanced and continued summer internship programs in the courts for Delaware students.
- Instituted a February administration of the Delaware Bar examination.
- Expanded the Supreme Court “on the road” to include holding oral arguments at Delaware Technical Community College in Sussex County in addition to our traditional visit to Delaware Law School.
- Celebrated the 70th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board* decision with several events, including a reenactment of a part of a Delaware case that was central to the landmark ruling.
- Launched the CASCADE Initiative to bring electronic case filing and management to all courts.
- Continued construction on two new Family Court Courthouses and started on the Custom House renovation and expansion.

I am honored to serve the courts and the State as your Chief Justice. We’ve started so many great projects. Let’s continue our work to realize our goal to provide equal justice to all.

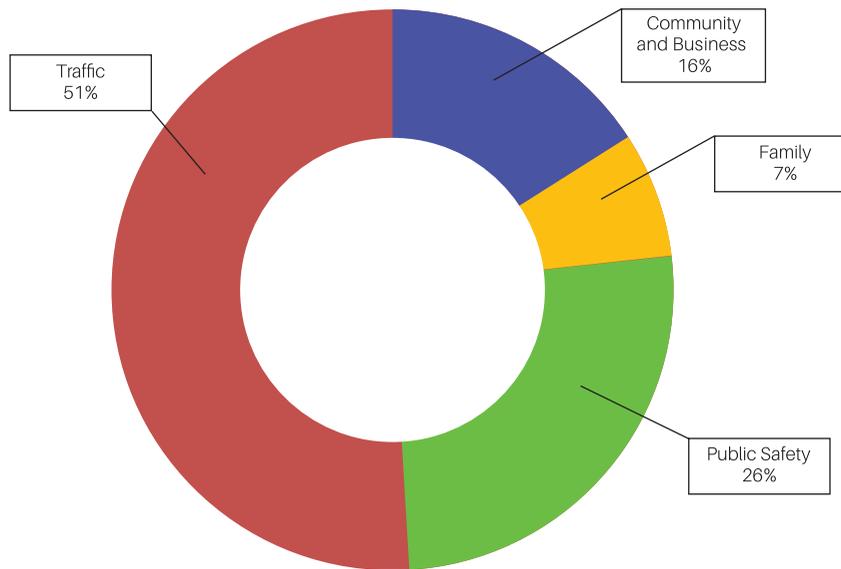
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Collins J. Seitz Jr". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Collins J. Seitz, Jr.
Chief Justice of Delaware



THE DELAWARE COURT SYSTEM

Case Type as a Share of All Court Filings Fiscal Year 2023



Legislation

The Judiciary’s legislative team brings together representatives of the Courts and the Administrative Office of the Courts to enhance the effectiveness of the Judicial Branch’s relationship with the General Assembly by serving as the main Judicial Branch contact for legislative matters and by monitoring and analyzing legislation for impact on the Judiciary. The following legislation supported by the Judicial Branch was passed during FY 24 by the 152nd General Assembly:

Bill Number	Description
HB 86	This Act establishes a right to counsel for indigent parents in DSCYF custody proceedings. Parent representation will primarily be provided by a legal services entity contracted with the Family Court, but may also be provided by the Office of Defense Services or a private attorney appointed by the Court.
SS 1 for SB 174	This Act adds Justices of the Peace, Commissioners in Superior Court, Family Court, Court of Common Pleas, and Magistrates in Chancery to the State Judicial Pension Plan.
SB 282	<i>Fees and fines reform.</i> This Act repeals the Senior Trust Fund Fee, the Interstate Compact Fee, and the Substance Abuse, Rehabilitation, Treatment, Education and Prevention (SARTEP) Fund Fee imposed on criminal defendants.
SB 283	<i>Fees and fines reform.</i> This Act repeals the DELJIS Fund fee imposed on criminal defendants.
SB 284	<i>Fees and fines reform.</i> This Act discharges balances owed by individuals ordered to pay a probation supervision fee under § 6504(14) of Title 11 of the Delaware Code or a Public Defender fee under § 4607 of Title 29 of the Delaware Code.
SB 285	This Act eliminates the requirement that Justice of the Peace Court constables reside within the State of Delaware.
SB 291	This Act removes the registration of trade names for sole proprietorships, partnerships, and associations in the Superior Court prothonotaries and places registration of such trade names with the Division of Revenue.

THE DELAWARE COURT SYSTEM

The Delaware Judicial Branch consists of the Supreme Court, the Court of Chancery, the Superior Court, the Family Court, the Court of Common Pleas, the Justice of the Peace Court, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and related non-judicial agencies.

Supreme Court

- Court of Last Resort
- Final appellate jurisdiction for most criminal cases, civil cases, certain orders of the Court of Chancery, the Superior Court, and Family Court
- Issuer of certain writs
- Jurisdiction over questions of law certified to the courts

Court of Chancery

- Equity Court
- Hears all cases in equity (typically corporate, trust, fiduciary matters, land sale, real estate, and commercial /contractual matters)
- Certain guardianship cases

Superior Court

- Law Court
- Original statewide jurisdiction over all criminal and civil cases (except equity)
- Exclusive jurisdiction over nearly all felonies and drug offenses
- Intermediate appellate court from Court of Common Pleas, Family Court (adult criminal) and various state agencies, boards and commissions

Family Court

- Legal and equitable jurisdiction over all domestic relations cases, including divorce, custody, guardianships, adoptions, visitation, child and spousal support and property division
- Jurisdiction over all juvenile offenses except certain serious offenses

Court of Common Pleas

- All criminal misdemeanors (except certain drug offenses) and motor vehicle offenses (except felonies)
- Responsible for preliminary hearings
- Statewide jurisdiction in civil actions that do not exceed \$75,000
- Appeals from the Justice of the Peace Court, Alderman's Court and Division of Motor Vehicles

Justice of the Peace Court

- Statewide jurisdiction over civil cases that do not exceed \$25,000
- Jurisdiction over certain misdemeanors and motor vehicle cases (except felonies)
- Jurisdiction over landlord/tenant (possession) cases
- Generally sets bail in most cases

FISCAL OVERVIEW



FISCAL OVERVIEW

Summary of Judicial Budget Fiscal Years 2023-2025 General Funds

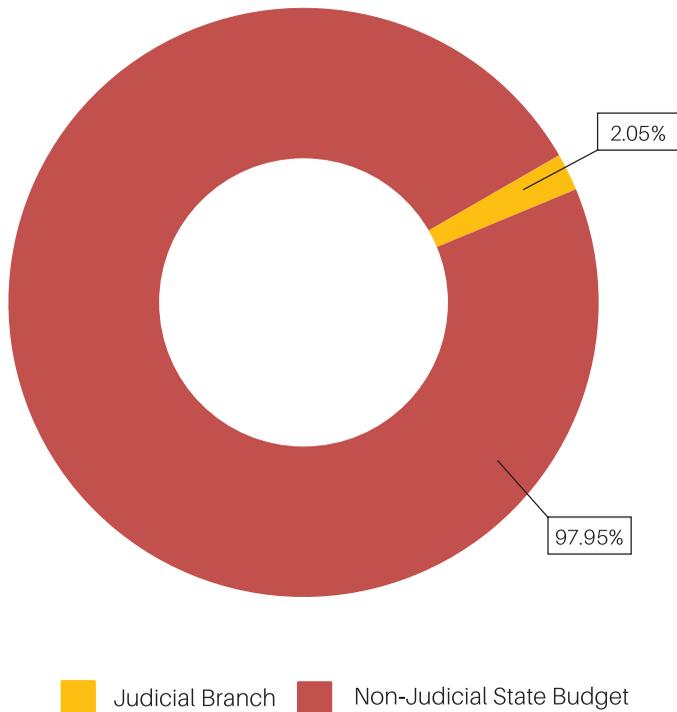
	FY 2023 Enacted Budget	FY 2024 Enacted Budget	FY 2025 Enacted Budget
Supreme Court	\$3,978,200	\$4,253,600	\$4,475,000
Court of Chancery	\$4,597,200	\$4,850,900	\$5,837,500
Superior Court	\$27,873,200	\$30,040,900	\$31,839,000
Family Court	\$22,284,400	\$23,276,600	\$25,268,200
Court of Common Pleas	\$11,389,400	\$12,069,800	\$13,032,300
Justice of the Peace Court	\$20,858,500	\$21,996,000	\$24,367,900
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)	\$4,482,400	\$4,777,100	\$5,040,100
AOC Custodial Pass Through Funds*	\$3,035,100	\$3,135,100	\$4,785,100
Office of State Court Collections Enforcement	\$633,800	\$670,300	\$721,100
Information Technology	\$4,059,800	\$4,426,500	\$4,625,400
Law Libraries	\$463,000	\$476,400	\$494,900
Office of the Public Guardian	\$820,900	\$858,000	\$914,000
Office of the Child Advocate	\$3,168,800	\$3,513,300	\$3,768,600
Maternal and Child Death Review Commission**	\$463,700	\$485,700	\$517,500
DE Nursing Home Residents Quality Assurance Commission	\$89,900	\$93,800	\$193,900
Total	\$108,198,300	\$114,924,000	\$125,880,500

* Pass Through programs are included in AOC funding: the Superior Court Appointed Attorney Program, Court Interpreter Program, Victim Offender Alternative Case Resolution (formerly Victim Offender Mediation Program), Elder Law Program, Law Related Education and other funds. In FY 25 a new pass through called "Right to Representation," was added. Technology Maintenance consists of pass-through funding to other state departments and vendors for equipment and services Branch-wide.

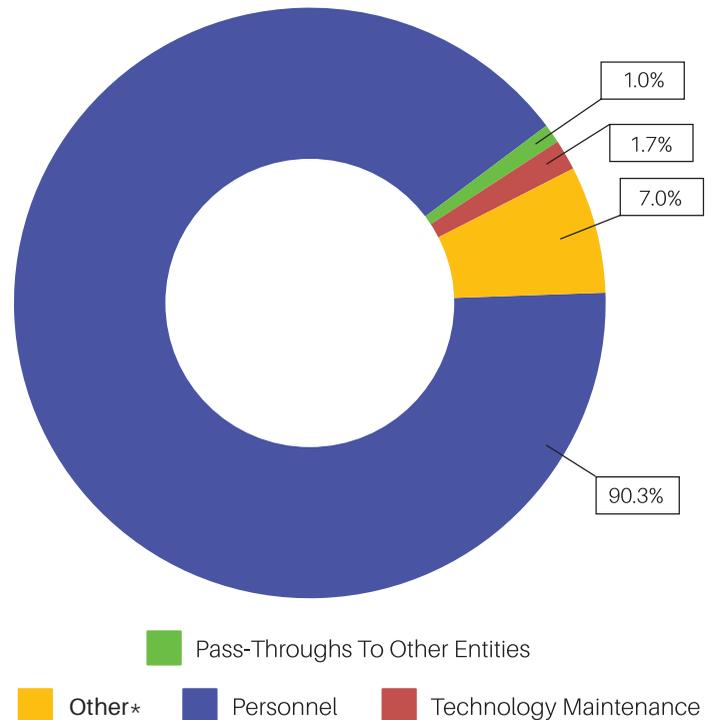
** The Child Death Review Commission was renamed the Maternal and Child Death Review Commission with the passage of HB 340 of the 151st General Assembly.

FISCAL OVERVIEW

**The Judiciary's Fiscal Year 2024
Appropriation is 2.05% of the State
General Fund Budget**



**Fiscal Year 2024
Judicial Budget Breakdown**



* Includes contracted services, supplies and materials, travel and other operational expenses.

State of Delaware - Fiscal Year 2024

Breakdown of General Fund Appropriations		
Public Education	\$ 1,985,539,400	35.41%
Health and Social Services	\$ 1,496,077,800	26.68%
Correction	\$ 395,640,100	7.06%
Higher Education	\$ 276,531,900	4.93%
Children, Youth and Their Families	\$ 210,445,100	3.75%
Safety and Homeland Security	\$ 180,192,700	3.21%
Judicial Branch	\$114,924,000	2.05%
All Other	\$ 947,365,700	16.90%
Total	\$ 5,606,716,700	100.00%*

* Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

FISCAL OVERVIEW

Judicial Branch Appropriations - Fiscal Year 2024

General Funds By Court Or Unit		
Supreme Court	\$ 4,253,600	3.70%
Court of Chancery	\$4,850,900	4.22%
Superior Court	\$ 30,040,900	26.14%
Family Court	\$ 23,276,600	20.25%
Court of Common Pleas	\$ 12,069,800	10.50%
Justice of the Peace Court	\$ 21,996,000	19.14%
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)	\$ 4,777,100	4.16%
AOC Pass Through Funds*	\$ 3,135,100	2.73%
Office of State Court Collections Enforcement	\$ 670,300	0.58%
Information Technology	\$ 4,426,500	3.85%
Law Libraries	\$ 476,400	0.41%
Other**	\$ 4,950,800	4.31%
Total***	\$ 114,924,000	100.00%

*AOC Pass Through Funds consist of Appointed Attorneys/Involuntary Commitment, Court Interpreters, Victim Offender Alternative Case Resolution (formerly known as Victim Offender Mediation Program), Elder Law Program, Technology Maintenance, Law Related Education and other funds.

** Other: Office of the Public Guardian, Office of the Child Advocate, Maternal and Child Death Review Commission, and Delaware Nursing Home Residents Quality Assurance Commission.

*** Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

FISCAL OVERVIEW

Court Generated Revenue* - Fiscal Year 2024 Submitted to the General Fund

	Fees and Costs	Fines	Interest***	Miscellaneous	Total
Supreme Court	\$103,756	—	—	—	\$ 103,756
Court of Chancery	\$1,145,813	—	—	—	\$ 1,145,813
Superior Court	\$2,776,178	\$114,631	\$ 8,146	\$58,109	\$ 2,957,064
Family Court	\$74,874	\$12,994	—	\$8,249	\$ 96,117
Court of Common Pleas	\$1,224,837	\$280,017	—	\$15,900	\$ 1,520,754
Justice of the Peace Court	\$1,750,357	\$1,535,664	—	\$ 30,872	\$ 3,316,893
Office of State Court Collections - DOC fees**	\$ 348,179	—	—	—	\$ 348,179
State Total	\$7,423,994	\$1,943,306	\$8,146	\$ 113,130	\$9,488,576

Submitted to Counties and Municipalities

Counties and Municipalities	Fees and Costs	Fines	Interest** *	Miscellaneous	Total
Superior Court	\$54,744	\$19,827	—	—	\$ 74,571
Family Court	—	\$1,113	—	—	\$ 1,113
Court of Common Pleas	—	\$157,022	—	—	\$ 157,022
Justice of the Peace Court	—	\$2,038,608	—	—	\$ 2,038,608
Counties and Municipalities Total	\$54,744	\$2,216,570	—	—	\$ 2,271,314
Grand Total	\$7,478,738	\$4,159,876	\$8,146	\$113,130	\$11,759,890

* Figures represent revenue actually received, not the total amount of fines and costs assessed. Figures include funds authorized in the Budget Act for the Court of Common Pleas and the FY 24 Fee Increase Spending Plan (HB 195, Sections 41 and 48). Court-generated revenue for this table does not include most criminal statutory assessments collected by the Courts on behalf of other agencies or entities, such as the Fund to Combat Violent Crime or the Videophone Fund.

** The Office of State Court Collections (OSCCE) collected probationary fees on behalf of the Department of Correction (DOC). The assessment of DOC Supervision Fees was eliminated in April 2023 with the implementation of HB 244 with HA 2 of the 151st General Assembly and the discharge of outstanding balances was authorized by SB 284 of the 152nd General Assembly effective August 2024.

*** From bail bond deposits.

FISCAL OVERVIEW

Statutory Assessments Collected by the Courts

Criminal Only	
Court Security Fee*	\$ 1,179,723
Drug Diversion Fee	\$ 7,431
Drug Ed/Rehab SARTEP* *	\$ 19,532
DELJIS	\$ 117,284
Fund to Combat Violent Crime (State)	\$ 857,059
Fund to Combat Violent Crime (Local)	\$ 855,594
Senior Trust Fund* *	\$ 11,171
Voluntary Ambulance Fund	\$ 1,089,948
Victim Compensation	\$ 1,204,794
Victim Rights Fund	\$ 21,614
Video Phone Fee	\$ 105,945
Transportation Trust Fund	\$ 1,978,305
Civil Red Light	\$ 16,372
Statutory Transfers from Court Fees to DeIDOT	
Inspection and Maintenance	\$ 2,430,217
DMVT Fund***	\$ 36,770

* Revenue from Court Security totals \$1,609,972 when civil collections are included with the criminal collections. Figures are rounded to the nearest dollar.

** SARTEP is the Substance Rehabilitation, Treatment Coordination Prevention and Education Fund. This fee - along with the Senior Trust Fund fee- was eliminated with the passage of SB 282 in the 152nd General Assembly.

*** Title 21, section 2118, motor vehicle insurance requirement.

FISCAL OVERVIEW

General Funds and Appropriated Special Funds Percent of Budget from Criminal Fees and Fines	
Judicial GF FY 24 Budget	\$ 114,924,000
Judicial ASF FY 24 Budget	\$ 13,684,900
Total GF + ASF FY 24 Budget	\$ 128,608,900
Authority from Criminal Fees and Fines *	\$ 1,242,272
Criminal Fees and Fines as a Percent of the total Judicial Branch Budget	0.97%

* Criminal only. Includes only those collections which are retained by the Judicial Branch.

Appropriated Special Funds (ASF) are derived from fees that are collected and designated for a specific purpose. Most court collections listed in the table on page 13 support programs outside of the Judicial Branch.

There are additional ASF revenues which are indirectly associated with fines and fees, primarily civil. Specifically, there is an ASF line called "Judicial Services" for \$2,050,000 in FY 2024, which was appropriated in connection with a previous increase in fees. Most of those fees were Civil, although there is one fee which can be either Civil or Criminal.

Section 1 and Section 41 of the FY 2024 Budget Act (HB 195 of the 152nd General Assembly) appropriated ASF funds to the Court of Chancery and the Court of Common Pleas through the budget process, which is tied to nonspecific fees. The Court of Chancery fines and fees are civil, and the Court of Common Pleas fines and fees may be civil or criminal. These funds are not included in the table above as they are not directly tied to any criminal collections.

FISCAL OVERVIEW

Total Criminal Collections by Type and Recipient Fiscal Year 2024

Recipient of Collections	Fines	Fees and Costs	Assessments	Restitution	Total	Total Criminal: Recipient Breakdown
Courts	—	\$ 62,549	\$ 1,179,723	—	\$ 1,242,272	6.99%
State General Fund	\$ 2,324,665	\$ 903,340	—	—	\$ 3,228,005	18.15%
Counties/Municipalities Including Statutory Funds	\$ 2,198,800	\$ 51,066	\$ 1,945,541	—	\$ 4,195,407	23.59%
Statutory Fund	\$ 4,777	\$ 2,423,981	\$ 4,339,508	—	\$ 6,768,266	38.06%
Victims	—	—	—	\$ 2,347,879	\$ 2,347,879	13.20%
Total	\$ 4,528,243	\$ 3,440,937	\$ 7,464,772	\$ 2,347,879	\$ 17,781,831	100.00%

The above represents the criminal court collections from our criminal courts: Superior Court, Family Court, Court of Common Pleas, and the Justice of the Peace Court. Much of the above is not defined as court revenue, but rather as court collections which is technically revenue for the State or other entities. Definitions are not intended to be all inclusive.

Fines: Includes state fines, town fines, criminal fines, DUI fines, and forensic fines.

Fees and Costs: Includes court costs, extradition, kiosks Public Defender (PD) fees, and drug diversion fees and capias. Certain fees, such as the PD fee, and Voluntary Assessment Center late fees and e-payment fees were eliminated in April 2023 with the implementation of HB 244 with HA 2 of the 151st General Assembly.

Assessments: Includes Court Security, Senior Trust Fund, Victim Rights, Victim Compensation, Drug Ed/Rehab Substance Abuse (SARTEP), Civil Penalty/Drug Diversion, Transportation Trust Fund Surcharge, Voluntary Ambulance Fund, the DELJIS Fund, the Videophone Fund, and the Fund to Combat Violent Crime. The Senior Trust Fund fee and the SARTEP fee were eliminated with the passage of SB 282 of the 152nd General Assembly.

Revenues for the Volunteer Ambulance Company Fund and the Fund to Combat Violent Crimes (Local) are pass throughs from State agencies or commissions to municipalities or local entities. They are reported under "Counties/Municipalities including Statutory Funds."

FISCAL OVERVIEW

Collections Assistance by the Office of State Court Collections Enforcement on Behalf of Courts and Agencies*

Superior Court	\$ 1,126,882
Family Court	\$ 175,027
Court of Common Pleas	\$ 142,286
Justice of the Peace Court	\$ 79,101
OSCCE Receivables	\$ 948,279
DOC	\$ 348,179
Court of Chancery	\$ 2,921
Child Support	\$ 101,654
OSCCE Assistance Total	\$ 2,924,329

* The figures represent all efforts made by the Office of State Court Collections (OSCCE) on behalf of the Delaware Judicial Branch. These figures, in large part, overlap with the amounts collected by the various courts and agencies, and should not be considered additional. Figures are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Court Generated Revenue - Fiscal Year 2024 Restitution*

	Assessed	Collected	Disbursed
Superior Court	\$ 5,458,869	\$ 845,154	\$ 974,317
Family Court	\$ 150,922	\$ 72,940	\$ 72,375
Court of Common Pleas	\$ 1,171,211	\$ 464,402	\$ 461,462
Justice of the Peace Court	\$ 14,987	\$ 19,351	\$ 17,598
Office of State Court Collections Enforcement	—	\$ 946,033	\$ 864,039
Restitution Total	\$ 6,795,989	\$ 2,347,880	\$ 2,389,791

* Figures are rounded to the nearest dollar.

DELAWARE JUDICIARY HIGHLIGHTS

WHITE HOUSE PHOTO



- Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. (center) with President Joseph R. Biden and First Lady Jill Biden at the White House where he accepted the Presidential Citizens Medal on behalf of his late father, former Chancellor Collins J. Seitz Sr., 1/02/25.



Full Portrait

- Portrait of the Hon. Leonard L. Williams unveiled at the Leonard L. Williams Justice Center, 5/13/24.



- Delaware hosts 48 teams from across the country in the 2024 National High School Mock Trial competition, 5/6/24.



- Wilmington Charter School repeats as 2024 Delaware High School Mock Trial champions, 2/26/24.

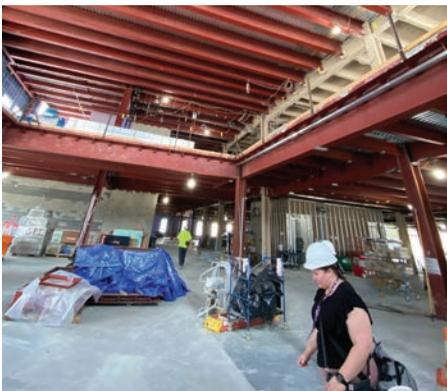


- Graduation of the second cohort in the Delaware Judicial Branch Supervisor Series, 5/28/2024.

SUSSEX COUNTY FAMILY COURT PROGRESS



Tevebaugh Rendering



Estimated Completion: Spring 2026

KENT COUNTY FAMILY COURT PROGRESS



Estimated Completion: Winter 2026

CUSTOM HOUSE PROGRESS



Drone images, and interiors and rendering of Custom House, Tevebaugh

Estimated Completion: Winter 2026

COURTHOUSE VISITORS



LEONARD L. WILLIAMS JUSTICE CENTER

452,252 Screened at Main Security Entrance



KENT COUNTY COURTHOUSE

97,568 Screened at Main Security Entrance



KENT COUNTY FAMILY COURT BUILDING

81,216 Screened at Main Security Entrance



DELAWARE SUPREME COURT

2,190 Screened at Main Security Entrance



SUSSEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE

81,380 Screened at Main Security Entrance



SUSSEX COUNTY FAMILY COURT BUILDING

79,867 Screened at Main Security Entrance



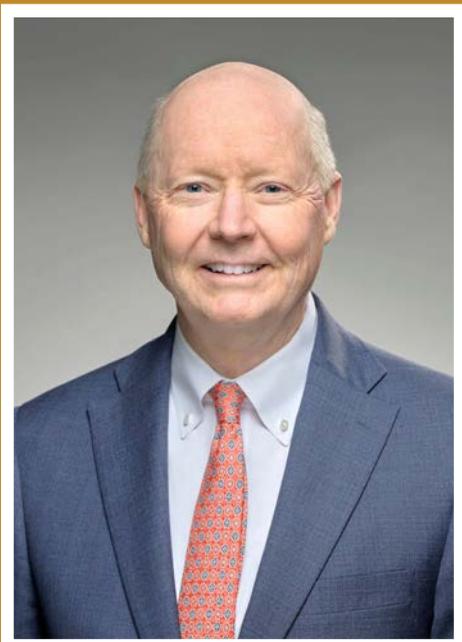
SUSSEX COUNTY COURT OF CHANCERY

6,736 Screened at Main Security Entrance

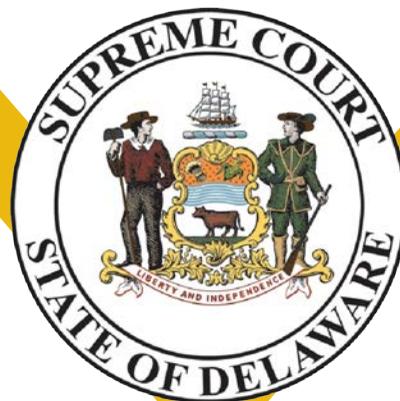


THE COURTS





The **Supreme Court** is the State's appellate court which receives direct appeals from the Court of Chancery, the Superior Court, and the Family Court. As administrative head of the courts, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in consultation with the other justices, sets administrative policy for the court system. The Supreme Court is created by the Constitution of Delaware, Article IV, Section 1. The Supreme Court sits in Dover.



Supreme Court

Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr.

By the Numbers



SUPREME COURT

- Justices - 5
- Court Staff - 28

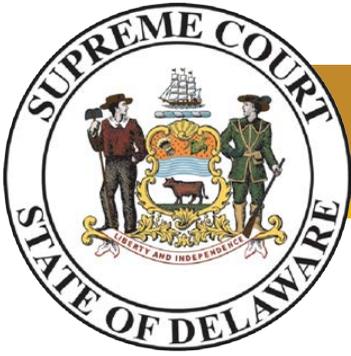
TOTAL: 33



ARMS OF THE COURT

- Full Time Staff - 10

TOTAL: 10



SUPREME COURT

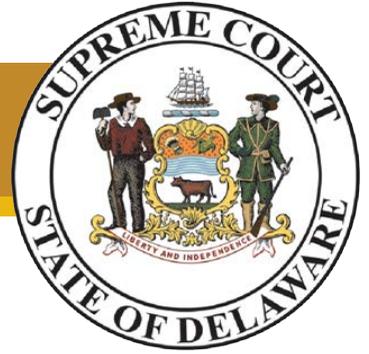


Supreme Court Justices

Left to Right:

Justice Abigail M. LeGrow • Justice Karen L. Valihura • Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. •
Justice Gary F. Traynor • Justice N. Christopher Griffiths

SUPREME COURT



Supreme Court

2024 Highlights

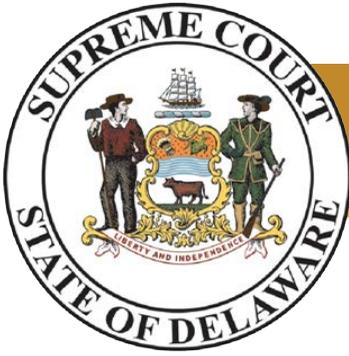
- Chief Disciplinary Counsel David White retired from the Office of Disciplinary Counsel effective November 2024. The court thanks him for his service and wishes him well on his next endeavor.
- Disciplinary Counsel Kathleen M. Vavala stepped down in May 2024 to accept her nomination to the Delaware Superior Court. The court thanks her for her service with the office.



- Justice Abigail LeGrow spoke to a class from the University of Delaware's Biden School of Public Policy on Oct. 1, 2024.

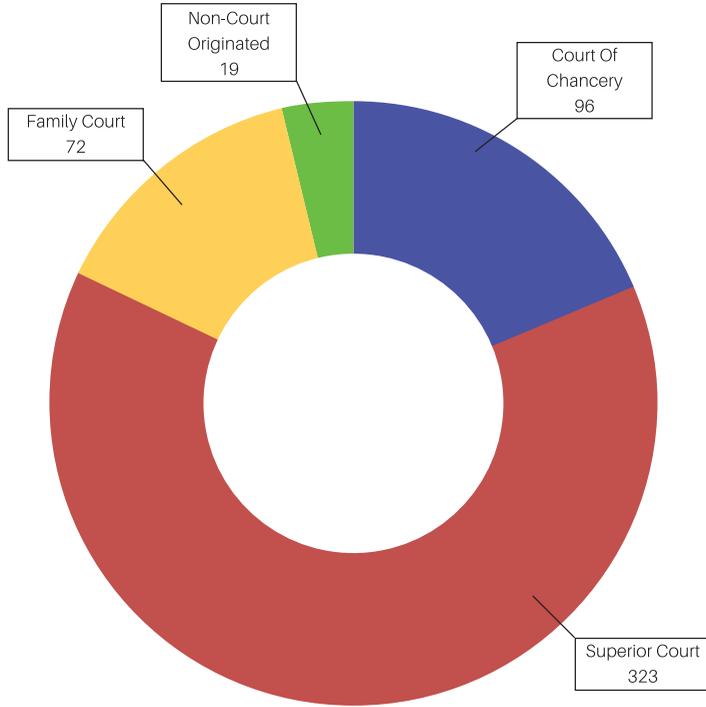


- The Delaware Supreme Court met for the first time in Sussex County on March 19, 2024 to hear oral arguments before an audience of high school and college students.

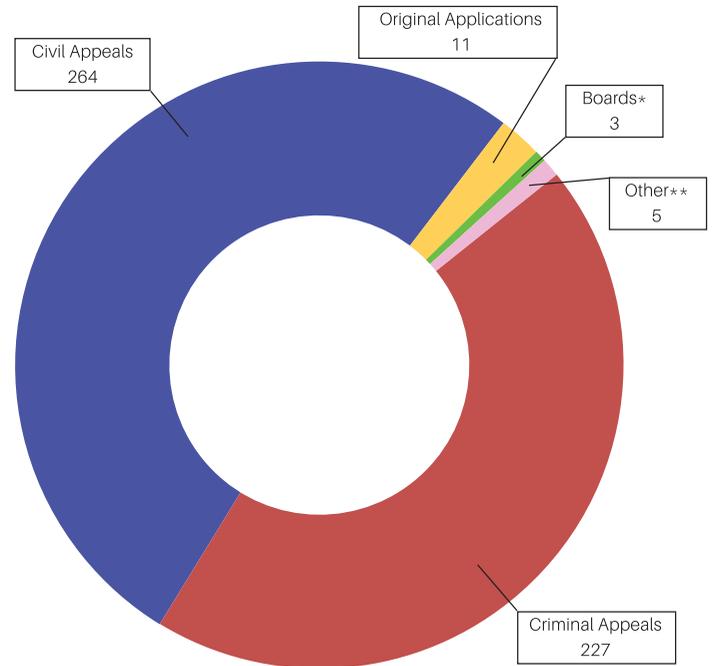


SUPREME COURT

Number of Supreme Court Filings by Court of Origination Fiscal Year 2024

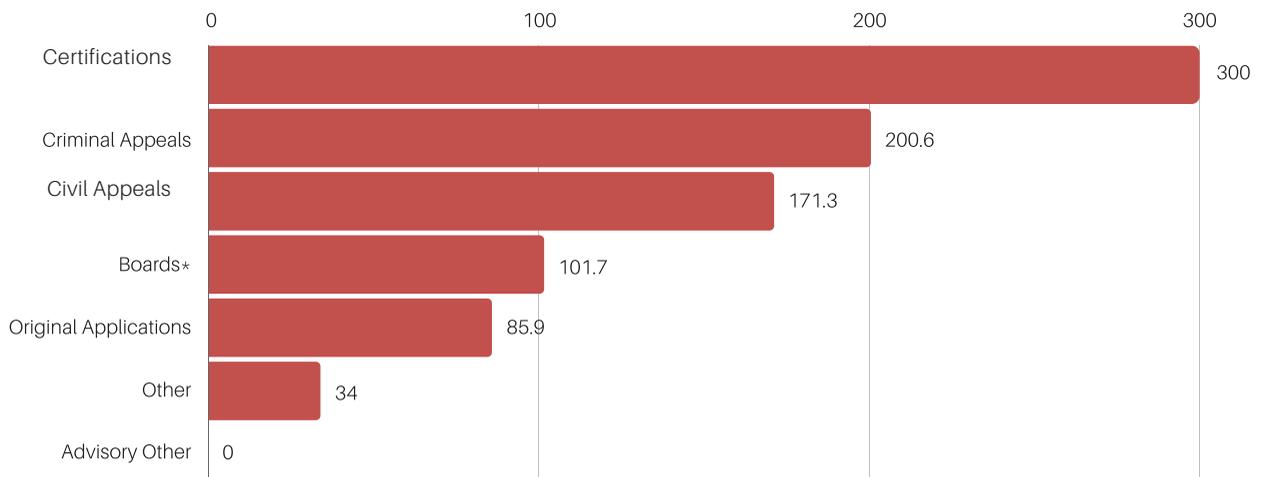


Number of Supreme Court Filings by Type Fiscal Year 2024



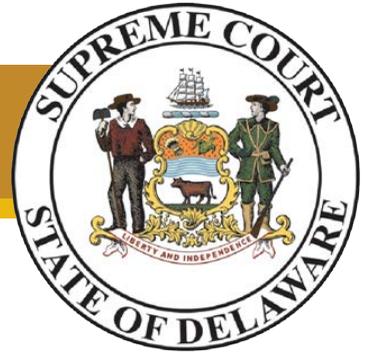
* Includes the Board on Professional Responsibility and the Board of Bar Examiners.
 ** Includes four certifications and one other.

**Supreme Court Fiscal Year 2024
Average Number of Days from Filing to Disposition by Case Type**

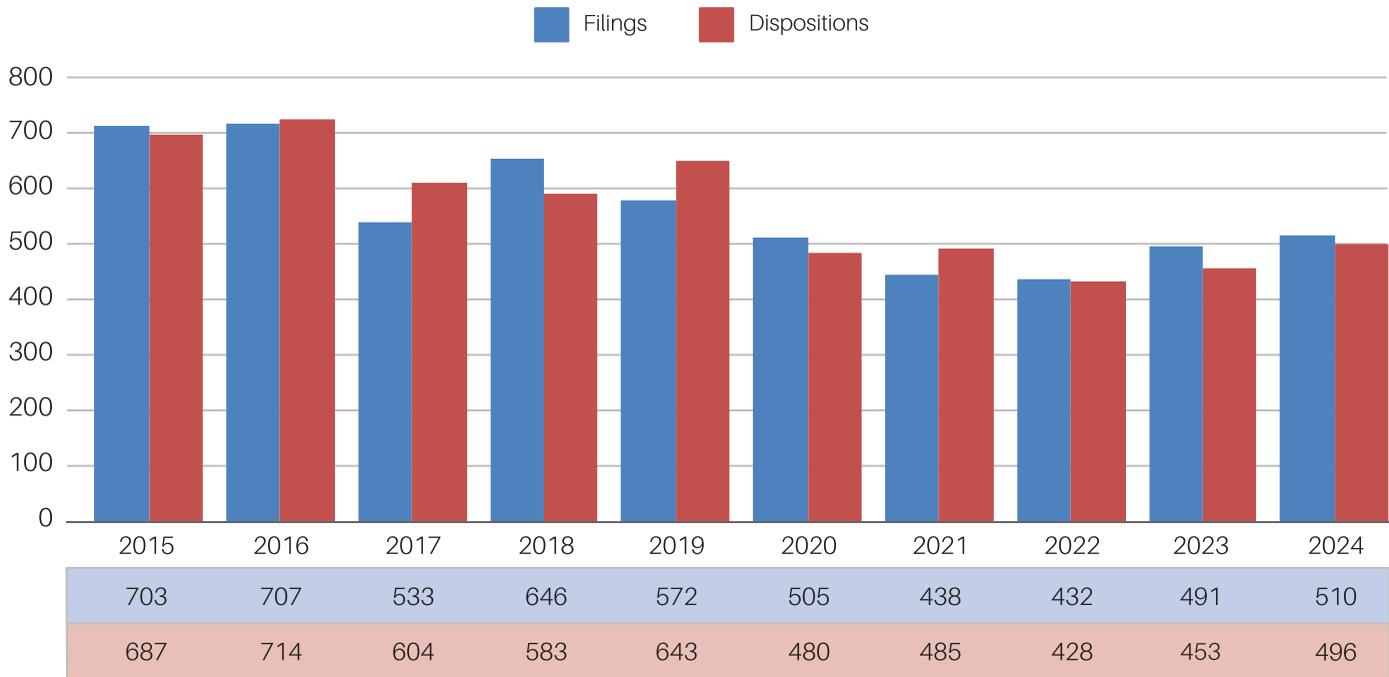


*Includes the Board on Professional Responsibility and the Board of Bar Examiners.

SUPREME COURT



Supreme Court Filings and Dispositions by Fiscal Year



COURT ON THE JUDICIARY

Delaware judges are governed by the highest standards of conduct in both their professional and personal capacities. The Court on the Judiciary is responsible for the receipt, investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and resolution of complaints alleging the ethical misconduct or disability of state judicial officers in Delaware. The judicial disciplinary process safeguards the integrity of, and thereby promotes public confidence in, the Judiciary and the judicial process.

**Docketed Complaints
FY 24**

24



**Complaints Dismissed
FY 24**

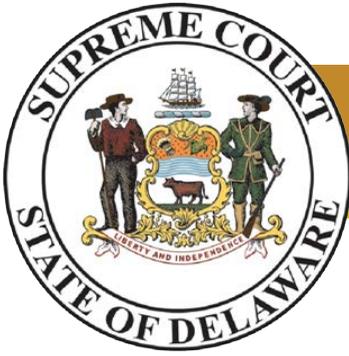
23



**Complaints Referred for
Investigation FY 24**

0





ARMS OF THE SUPREME COURT

Commission on Law and Technology

The commission develops and publishes guidelines and best practices regarding the use of technology and the practice of law. The commission was created by order of the Supreme Court on July 1, 2013, and became effective on Sept. 15, 2013.

The Delaware Supreme Court then re-established and re-focused the commission by order on Nov. 27, 2023. The commission is composed of members who are appointed by the Court and serve three year terms.



Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection

The Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection is a fund created by the Delaware Supreme Court to provide monetary relief to clients who have suffered financial losses as a result of the dishonest conduct of lawyers. While acts of

attorney dishonesty are the exceptions and not the rule, the fund was established to show the good faith of all members of the Delaware Bar.



Commission on Continuing Legal Education (CLE)

The commission regulates legal education compliance for members of the Delaware State Bar. In addition, the commission reviews and processes CLE providers' applications for program approval.

**CLE Transcripts
Processed FY 24**

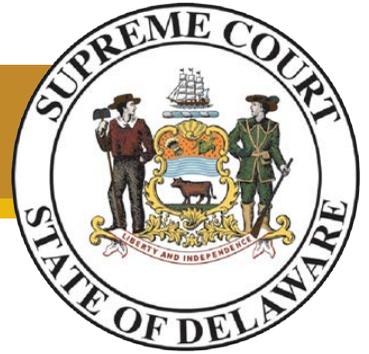
6,440

**CLE Programs
Evaluated FY 24**

6,670



ARMS OF THE SUPREME COURT



Board of Bar Examiners

The board considers applications for admission and results of examinations for admissions to the Delaware State Bar. The Delaware Bar Examination consists of the Multistate Bar Examination, two Multistate Performance Tests and four essay questions. In addition applicants must also pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination.

**Bar Exam Applicants
July 2023**

262

**Bar Exam Applicants
February 2024**

110

**Admitted to the Bar in
Fiscal Year 2024***

201

* Does not reflect number who passed the Bar Exam

Office of Disciplinary Counsel

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) assists the Supreme Court in regulating the practice of law. In this capacity, the ODC is charged with evaluating, investigating, and, if warranted, prosecuting lawyer misconduct. All complaints regarding a Delaware lawyer's conduct should be directed to the ODC.

**Disciplinary
Complaints Opened
FY 24**

218



**Disciplinary
Complaints Resolved
FY 24**

193



**CLE Presentations
by ODC FY 24**

31



**Ethics Hotline
Inquiries FY 24**

160



**Unauthorized Practice of Law
Complaints Opened FY 24**

16



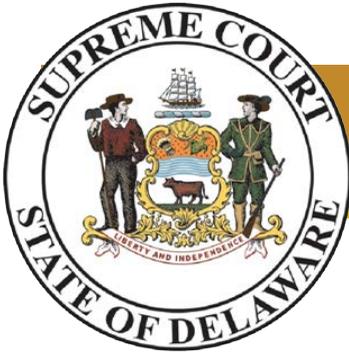
**Unauthorized Practice of Law
Complaints Resolved FY 24**

9



The Delaware Bar as of March 2024

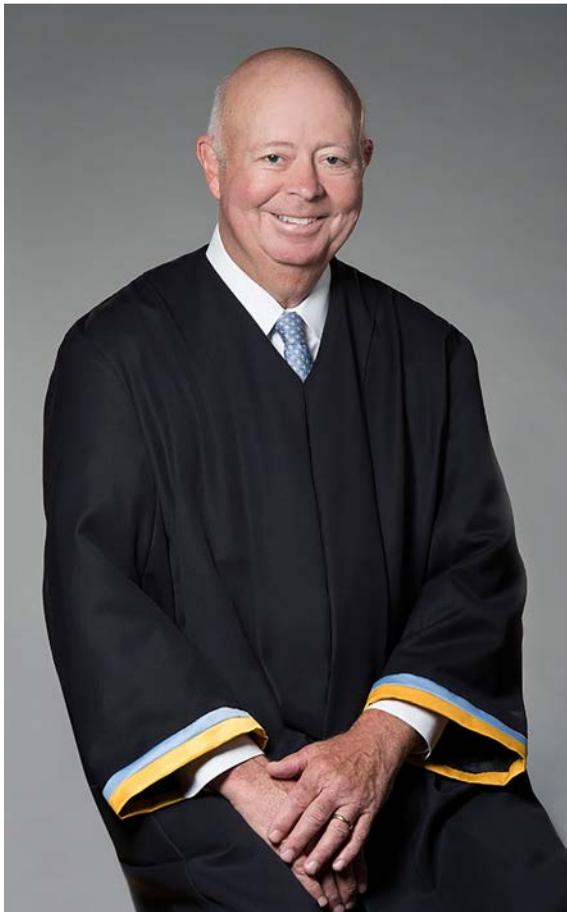
Active Lawyers	3,959
Inactive Lawyers	766
Emeritus Lawyers	151
Total Lawyers	4,876



SUPREME COURT

In Memoriam

Justice James T. Vaughn, Jr.



The Delaware Judiciary mourned the passing of retired Supreme Court Justice James T. Vaughn, Jr. on October 10, 2024.

“When he retired less than two years ago, I said the Court would miss Justice Vaughn’s hard work, steady hand and unflappable nature. That has proven to be true. Justice Vaughn has left an indelible mark on Delaware’s legal landscape. The Delaware Supreme Court and Superior Court are grateful for his long service to the citizens of Delaware,” said Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr.

Justice Vaughn, 75, first joined the bench in 1998 as the Resident Judge for Kent County Superior Court. He was later

elevated to the position of President Judge of Superior Court in 2004. Governor Jack Markell then appointed him to the Supreme Court in October 2014 and he retired from the bench in May 2023.

In his letter to the governor stating his intention to step down, he wrote, in his typically understated style, **“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve ... I will always appreciate the memories of working with my colleagues on the bench and with court staff in our efforts to maintain the rule of law in this state. I leave with a sense of satisfaction that I have done my best to discharge the duties of the judicial offices I have held.”**



The **Court of Chancery** has jurisdiction to hear all matters relating to equity. The litigation in this tribunal deals largely with corporate issues, trusts, estates, other fiduciary matters, disputes involving the purchase of land and questions of title to real estate as well as commercial and contractual matters. The Court of Chancery has a national reputation in the business community and is responsible for developing the case law in Delaware on corporate matters. Appeals from the Court of Chancery may be taken to the Supreme Court.



Court of Chancery

Chancellor Kathaleen St. J. McCormick

By the Numbers

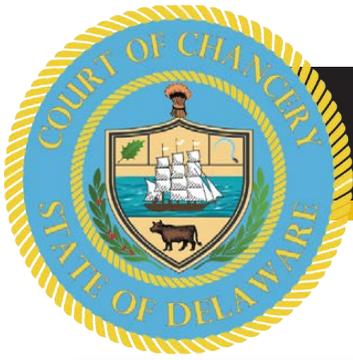


COURT OF CHANCERY

- Judges - 7
- Magistrates - 3.5*
- Court Staff - 56

TOTAL: 66.5

** The .5 represents a part-time magistrate*



COURT OF CHANCERY



Court of Chancery

Seated, Front Row (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, Jr.

Standing, Second Row (left to right):

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

Not Pictured:

Magistrate in Chancery Christian Douglas Wright • Magistrate in Chancery Danielle Gibbs

COURT OF CHANCERY



Court of Chancery

2024 Highlights

- Title of “Master in Chancery” was changed to “Magistrate in Chancery” through SB 179 signed on 7/17/23.
- Publication of redacted opinions resolving guardianship petitions, to provide guidance and promote transparency on how guardianships are handled by the court, began on 8/4/23.
- Nora McDonough Crawford received the Annual Award for Attorney Ad Litem Service to the Court on 12/5/23.
- The Court of Chancery held its second annual student Legal History Art Contest. The winners, announced 4/22/24 were Amaurie Yip, 16, of Middletown High School, who won the \$500 first-place prize for her work, “Torn Remembrance,” Nevaeh Rumbley, 16, of Dover High School who won the \$300 second-place prize for her work, “The Law of Equity,” and Josie Petrak, 18, of Brandywine High School who won the \$200 third-place prize for her work, “Segregation in School.”
- Second tranche of Rule amendments to update, modernize and improve court rules, specifically Rules 1 - 6, 8 - 9, 11 - 15, 23, 23.1, 79, 79.1, 79.2, and 174, became effective 6/14/24.
- For the fourth year, the court welcomed high school interns participating in the Delaware Department of State’s Future Leaders Internship Initiative (“FLii”).
- Two new Magistrate in Chancery positions were added in 2024. Magistrate Christian Douglas Wright was named to fill one of the two positions on 11/4/24 and Magistrate Danielle Gibbs was named to the second position on 12/2/24.



Hon. Danielle Gibbs



Hon. Christian Douglas Wright



Nora McDonough
Crawford



“Torn Remembrance”

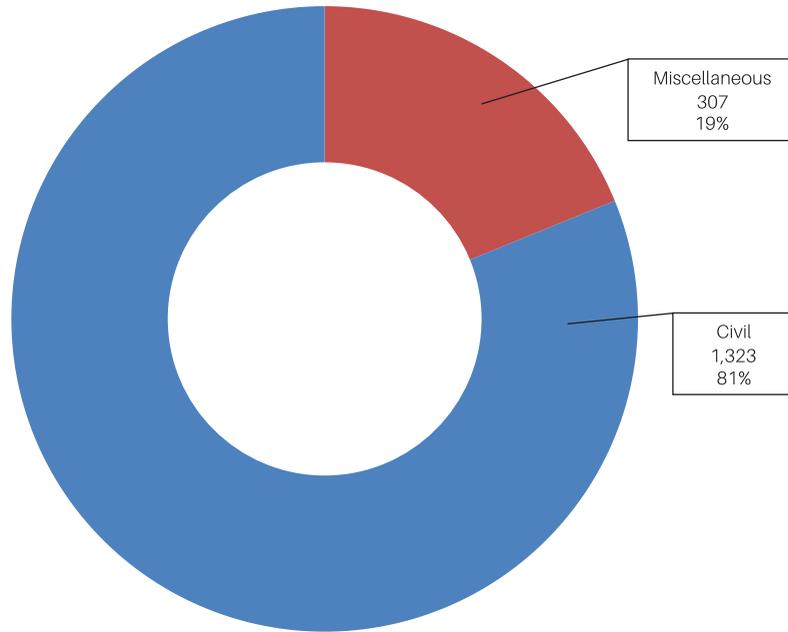


“The Law of Equity”



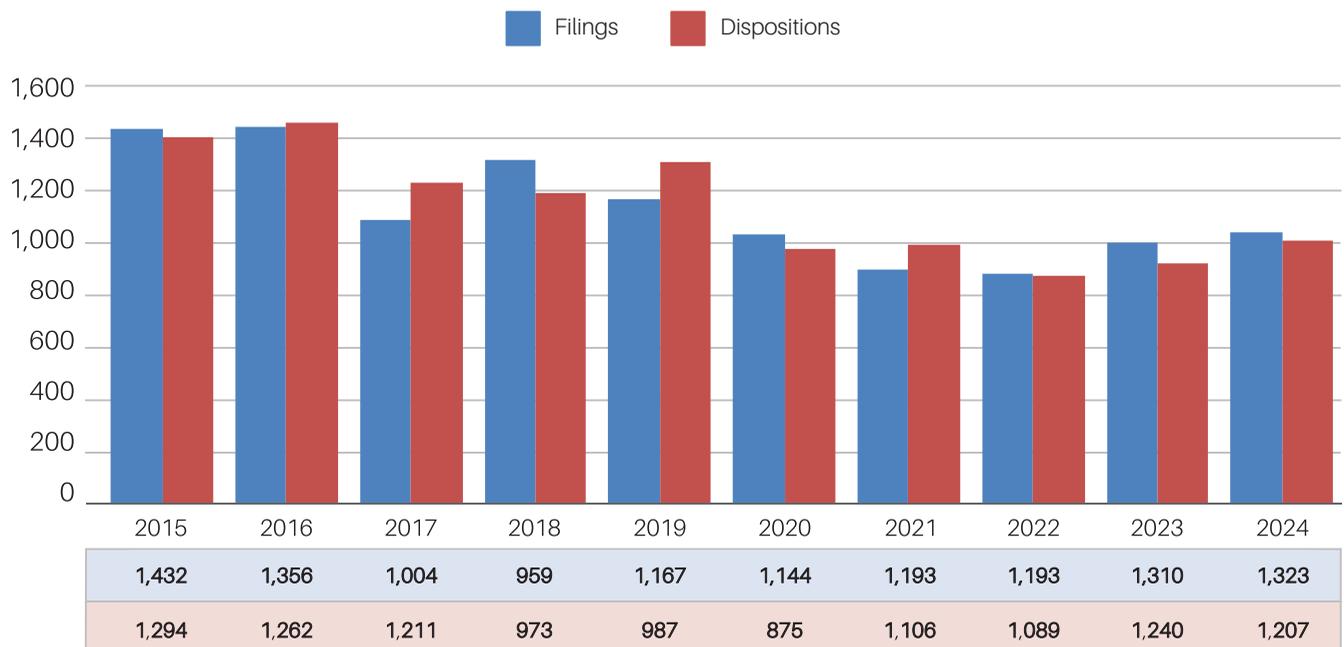
COURT OF CHANCERY

Court of Chancery Filings by Type Fiscal Year 2024



Before FY 23 reactivated cases were included in this count. Beginning FY 23 they were excluded. FY 24 saw 49 reactivated cases.

Court of Chancery Civil Caseload Trend By Fiscal Year



COURT OF CHANCERY



Thank You

Vice Chancellor Glasscock



The Honorable Sam Glasscock III retired from the Court of Chancery on January 7, 2025 after more than 25 years of service with the Court. He was first appointed as a Master in Chancery (now called Magistrate) in 1999 and was elevated to the position of Vice Chancellor in 2011.

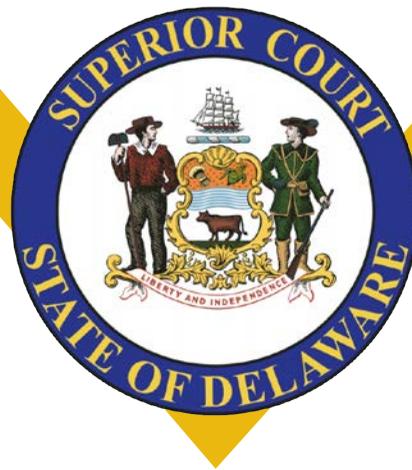
The Vice Chancellor had a varied career before joining the court, including working as a judicial law clerk, an associate at a well-respected Delaware firm, and as a Deputy Attorney General in the Appeals Unit of the Department of Justice. Vice Chancellor Glasscock spent most of his youth in Lewes, Delaware. He received a bachelor's degree in history and master's degree in marine policy from the University of Delaware, and a law degree from Duke University.

"We are losing an exceptional corporate mind from our ranks, as the Vice Chancellor's contributions to the development of our law are unmatched. The Vice Chancellor has approached his judicial service as he approaches life, with a powerful work ethic and potent sense of humor. It has been an absolute privilege and joy to serve beside him, and we all look forward to hearing about the many adventures he will enjoy in retirement."

-Chancellor Kathaleen McCormick



The **Superior Court**, the State's court of general jurisdiction, has original jurisdiction over criminal and civil cases except equity cases. The Court has exclusive jurisdiction over felonies and almost all drug offenses. In civil matters, the Court's authority to award damages is not subject to a monetary maximum. The Superior Court also serves as an intermediate appellate court by hearing appeals on the record from the Court of Common Pleas, the Family Court (in criminal cases), and a number of administrative agencies. Appeals from the Superior Court may be taken to the Supreme Court.



Superior Court

President Judge Jan R. Jurden

By the Numbers



SUPERIOR COURT

- Judges - 21
- Commissioners - 5
- Court Staff - 302

TOTAL: 328

SUPERIOR COURT



Superior Court Judges

Seated, Front Row (left to right):

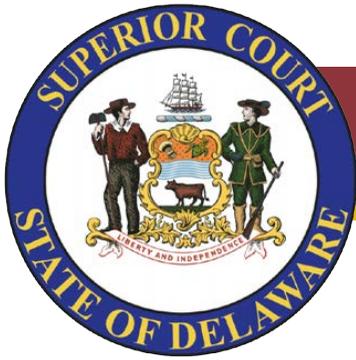
Judge Vivian L. Medinilla • Judge Eric M. Davis • Judge Calvin L. Scott, Jr. •
President Judge Jan R. Jurden • Resident Judge Charles E. Butler • Judge Paul R. Wallace •
Judge Ferris W. Wharton

Standing, Second Row (left to right):

Judge Francis J. Jones, Jr. • Resident Judge Craig A. Karsnitz • Judge Noel Eason Primos •
Resident Judge Jeffrey J. Clark • Judge Sheldon K. Rennie • Judge Meghan A. Adams •
Judge Mark H. Conner

Standing, Third Row (left to right):

Judge Kathleen M. Miller • Judge Patricia A. Winston • Judge Reneta L. Green-Streett •
Judge Robert H. Robinson, Jr. • Judge Danielle J. Brennan • Judge Sean P. Lugg •
Judge Kathleen M. Vavala



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

SUPERIOR COURT



Superior Court

2024 Highlights



FLii Intern Orientation

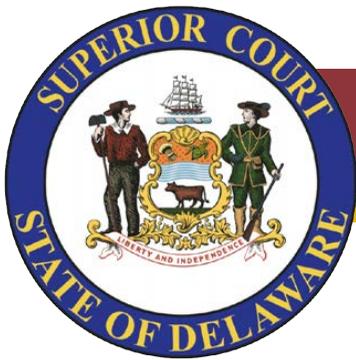


Digital Recording



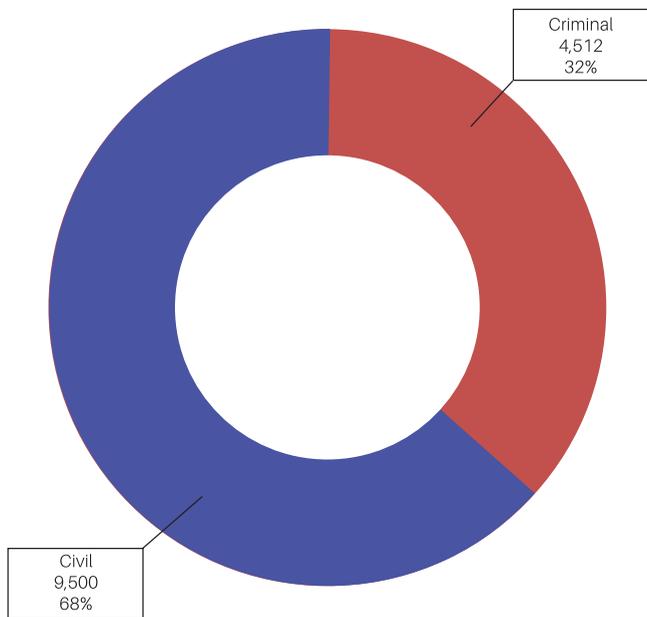
Officer Vinn

- Welcomed DELREC interns through the Delaware Department of State's Future Leaders Internship Initiative ("FLii").
- Celebrated our 3rd year hosting summer law clerks from the Judicial Clerkship Program sponsored by the Delaware State Bar's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee.
- Participated with Widener Law School and Wilmington University Law School internship programs to work with our judges in all 3 counties.
- Enacted cross-designation of Section 111 of the Delaware General Corporation Law that now includes Superior Court Complex Commercial Litigation (CCLD) Judges. This change increased the caseload for CCLD judges. Superior Court has now assigned 5 judges to CCLD.
- Expanded the use of digital recording for making the court's record by enacting Administrative Order 2024-3.
- Welcomed Officer Vinn, the courthouse facility dog, whose presence helps ease stress for adults and children during legal proceedings.
- Started work on moving the tradename registration process from the Judicial Branch to the Executive Branch as required by SB 291.

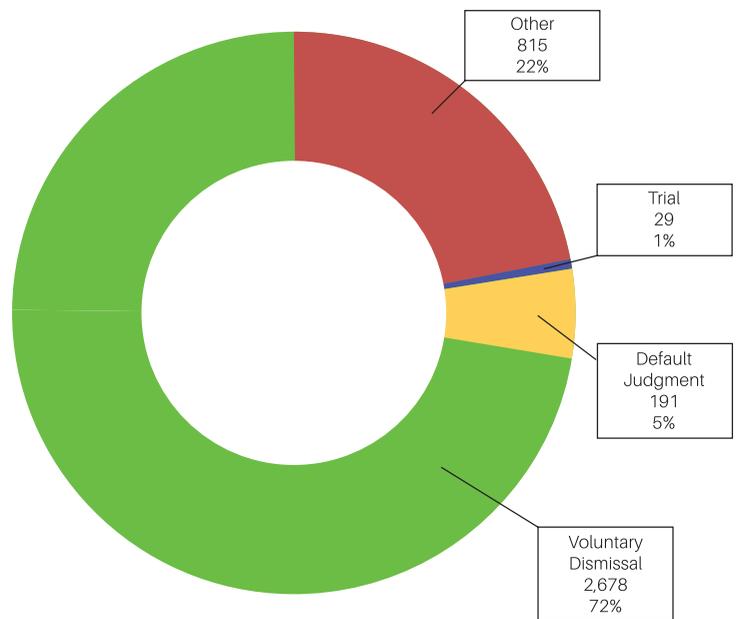


SUPERIOR COURT

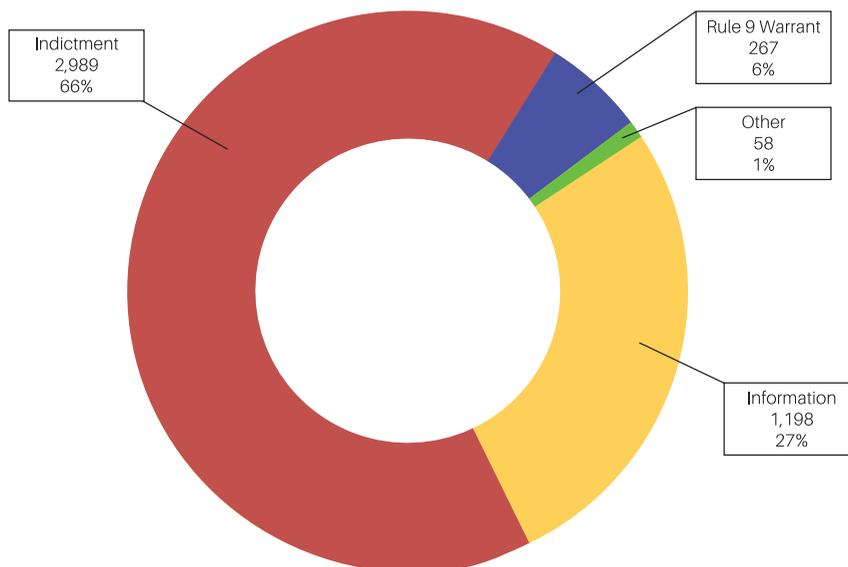
Number of Superior Court Filings by Type Fiscal Year 2024



Number of Superior Court Civil Complaint Dispositions by Method Fiscal Year 2024



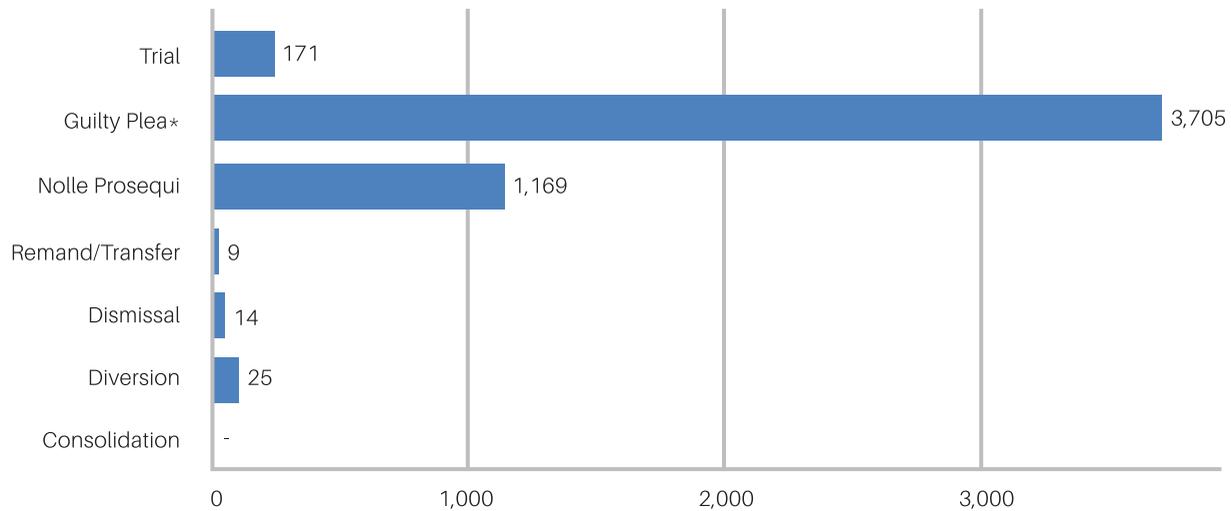
Number of Superior Court Criminal Filings by Type Fiscal Year 2024



SUPERIOR COURT

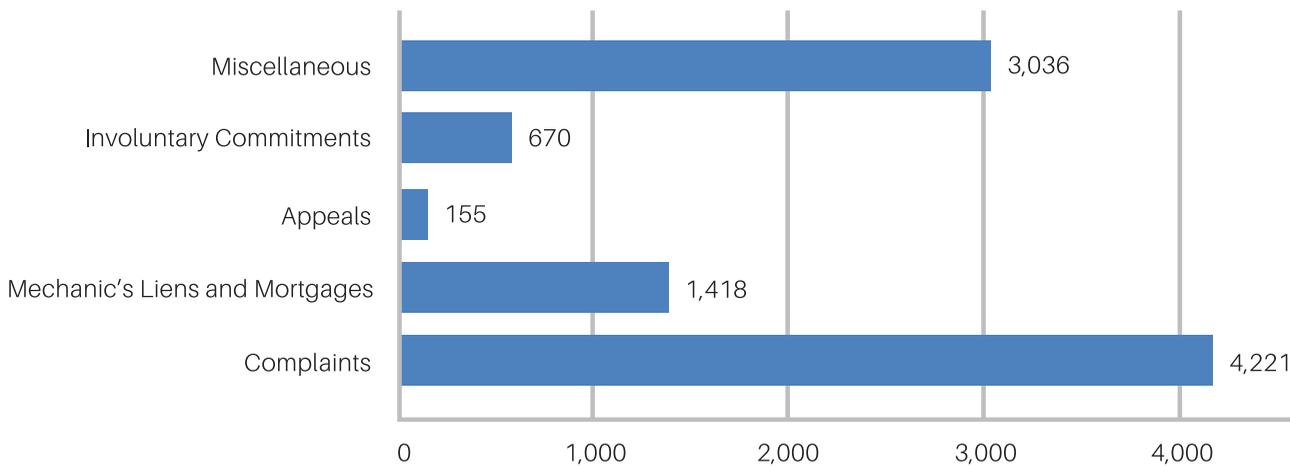


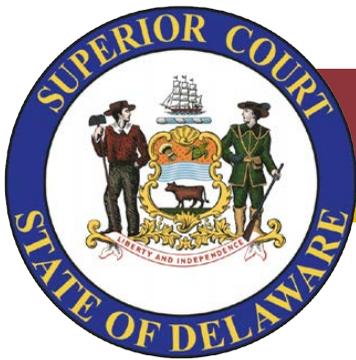
Dispositions by Method Fiscal Year 2024



*Includes Probation Before Judgment and Guilty but Mentally Ill, First Offender Program and Civil Possession of Marijuana.

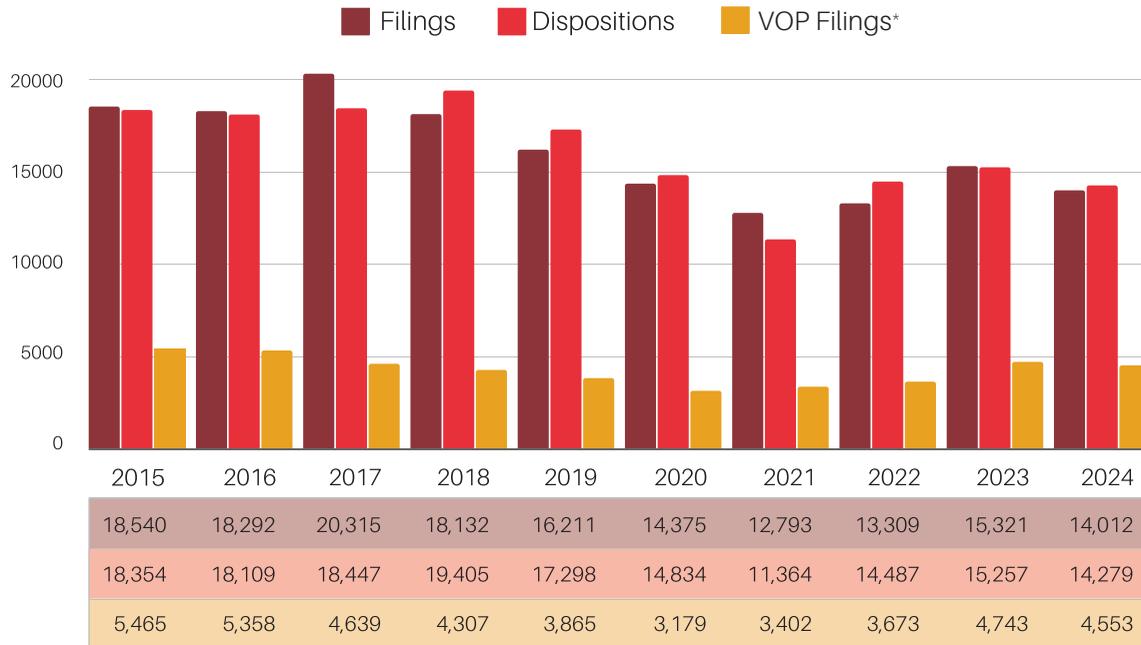
Number of Superior Court Civil Filings by Type Fiscal Year 2024





SUPERIOR COURT

Superior Court Civil and Criminal Filings and Dispositions by Fiscal Year



* Violation of Probation

JURY SERVICES

The Superior Court supplies jurors for civil and criminal Superior Court trials; for criminal Court of Common Pleas trials; and for landlord tenant trials in the Justice of the Peace Courts. The Superior Court also provides jurors for the Grand Jury process.

Summioned New Castle County	153,032	Jurors Brought In, New Castle County	24,187	New Castle County Jury Trials	152
Summioned Kent County	16,587	Jurors Brought In, Kent County	2,073	Kent County Jury Trials	16
Summioned Sussex County	24,096	Jurors Brought In, Sussex County	2,649	Sussex County Jury Trials	14
Total Summioned FY 24	193,175	Total Jurors FY 24	28,909	Total Jury Trials FY 24	182

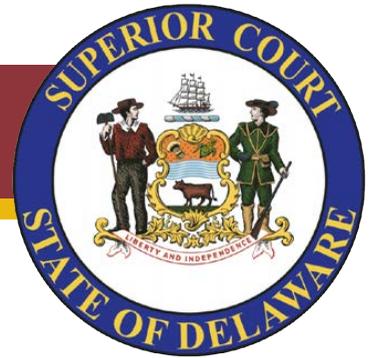
Grand Jury

Served in New Castle County FY 24
289

Served in Kent County FY 24
100

Served in Sussex County FY 24
135

SUPERIOR COURT



Thank You

Judge Jurden

Superior Court President Judge Jan R. Jurden retired from the bench effective Feb. 28, 2025. She first joined the court as a Superior Court Judge in May 2001 and was appointed President Judge in January 2015, becoming the first woman to hold that position. In her letter to Governor Carney signaling her intention to step down, President Judge Jurden wrote that it has been an honor and privilege to serve the people of Delaware.

"I could not have asked for better colleagues, or more dedicated, hardworking court staff. As much as I love the Court and my Superior Court family, I write to let you know I have decided it is time."

-President Judge Jan R. Jurden

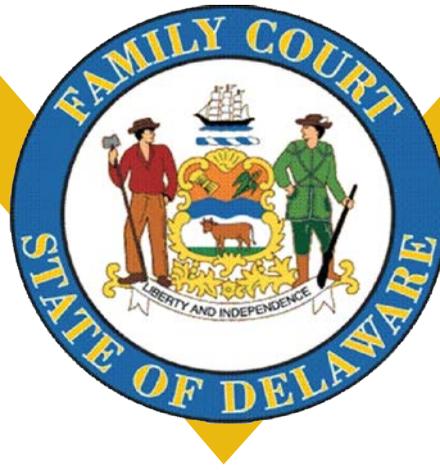


"A skilled leader in normal times, President Judge Jurden led the Superior Court through the COVID 19 pandemic with all the competence, care, and grace one would expect from a person of such great character and wisdom. The Delaware courts will miss her greatly, and we wish her well in her next chapter of life."

*Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice
-Collins J. Seitz, Jr.*



The **Family Court** has extensive jurisdiction over virtually all family and juvenile matters. All civil appeals, including those relating to juvenile delinquency, go directly to the Supreme Court while adult criminal cases are appealed to the Superior Court. The Constitution of Delaware, Article IV, Section 1, establishes the Family Court.



Family Court

Chief Judge Michael K. Newell

By the Numbers

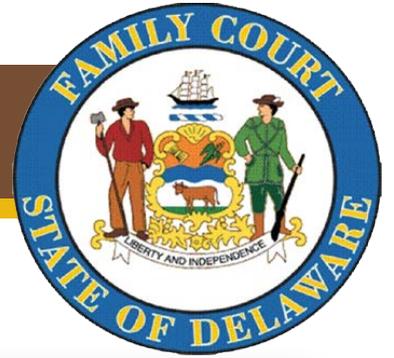


FAMILY COURT

- Judges - 17
- Commissioners - 16
- Court Staff - 307

TOTAL: 340

FAMILY COURT



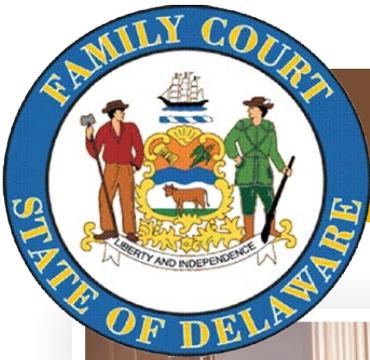
Family Court Judges

Seated, Front Row (seated left to right):

Judge Arlene Minus Coppadge • Judge Mardi F. Pyott • Judge Louann Vari •
Judge James G. McGiffin, Jr. • Judge Mary S. Much • Judge Janell S. Ostroski •
Judge Felice G. Kerr

Standing, Back Row (left to right):

Judge Paula T. Ryan • Judge Jennifer B. Ranji • Judge Peter B. Jones • Judge Theresa M. Hayes •
Chief Judge Michael K. Newell • Judge Joelle P. Hitch • Judge Michael W. Arrington •
Judge Natalie J. Haskins • Judge Mark D. Buckworth • Judge Eliza M. Hirst



FAMILY COURT



Family Court Commissioners

Seated, Front Row (left to right):

Commissioner Theresa A. Sedivec • Commissioner Sonja Truitt Wilson •
Commissioner Para K. Wolcott • Commissioner Kim DeBonte •
Commissioner Loretta Young • Commissioner Emily A. Farley

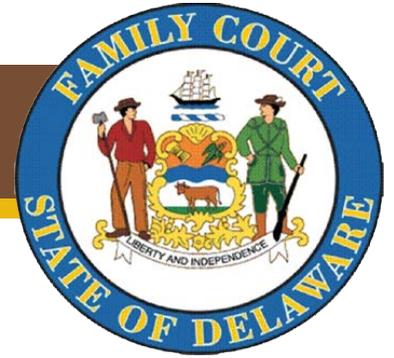
Standing, Back Row (left to right):

Commissioner Jennifer L. Mayo • Commissioner James J. Maxwell •
Commissioner Danielle S. Blount • Commissioner Andrew K. Southmayd •
Chief Judge Michael K. Newell • Commissioner Francis E. Mieczkowski, III •
Commissioner M. DeSales Haley • Commissioner Jessica B. Markowski-Kelly •
Commissioner Gretchen C. Gilchrist

Not Pictured:

Commissioner Craig R. Fitzgerald • Commissioner Candace E. Holmes

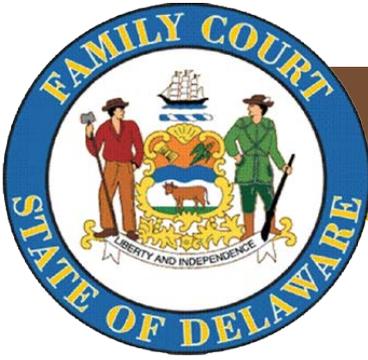
FAMILY COURT



Family Court

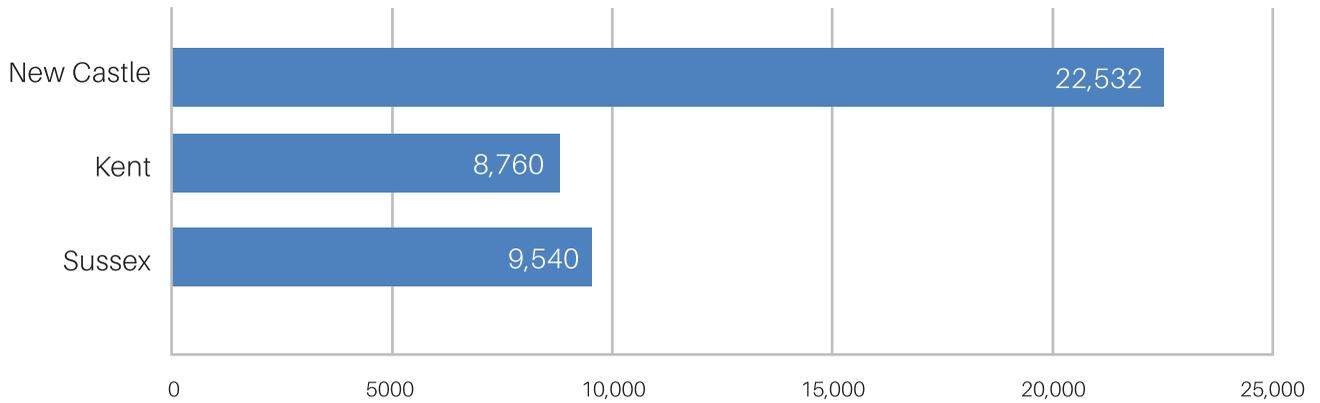
2024 Highlights

- Family Court welcomed new Judge, Eliza Hirst, who took the bench after longtime Judge, Robert Coonin, retired.
- Family Court also welcomed two new Commissioners, Jessica Markowski-Kelly in New Castle County and Candace Holmes in Kent County.
- Work continued on modernizing internal security policies and procedures to improve safety.
- Updates were made to the process of issuing writs as well as e-delivery of petitions to respondents who appear remotely in protection from abuse (PFA) cases.
- The court expanded the use of Special Process Servers, to provide a more speedy resolution to a case for petitioners who choose this option.
- New Castle County created a child waiting area in the Family Court Resource Center. This space provides child-friendly amenities while parents complete forms or conduct other business in the Resource Center or intake areas. As a part of this effort, the Wilmington Library donated books for the "Kids Corner".
- The court focused on improving supervisory training, with several employees graduating or actively participating in the Judicial Branch Supervisor Series Certificate Program.
- The court continued to work on recruitment. This produced an unprecedented number of new staff and supervisors joining the court, which has allowed the court to improve processing times for civil cases.
- The court partnered with the Department of Justice and Office of Defense Services to hold "blitz" calendars to successfully address a backlog of arraignments and support arrears cases
- The court implemented a compliance calendar for PFA cases and continues to work on improving the completion rate for parties who have been ordered to Domestic Violence Treatment.
- The court continues to work with construction teams on completion of, and transition to, the new Family Court courthouses for Kent and Sussex Counties.

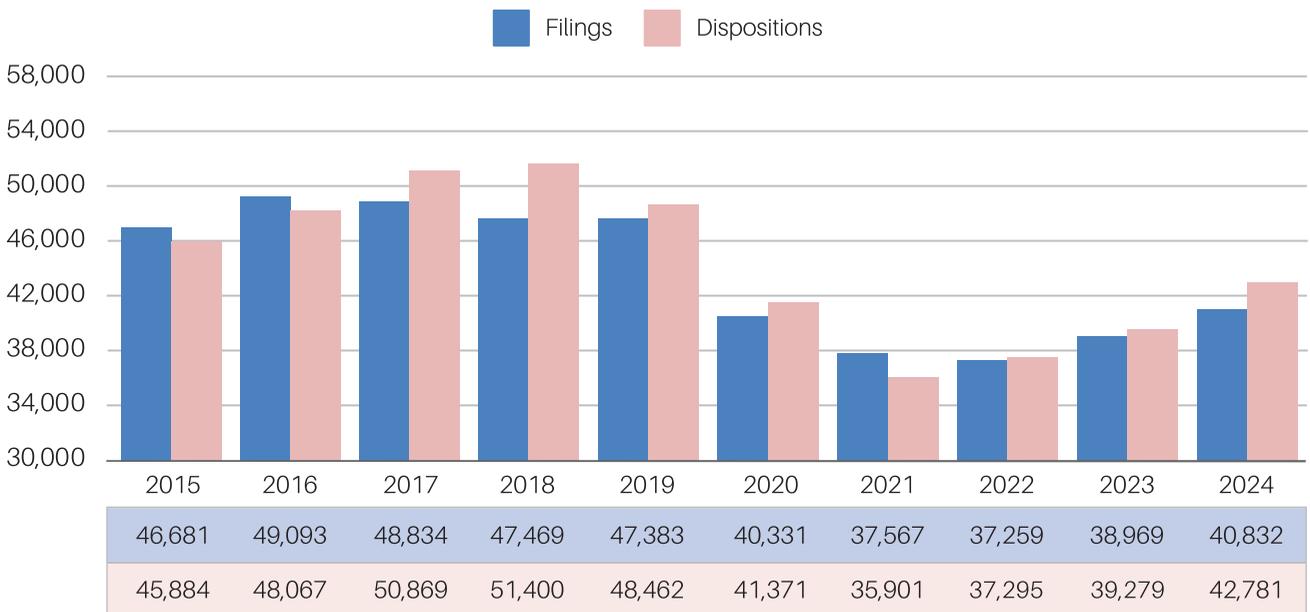


FAMILY COURT

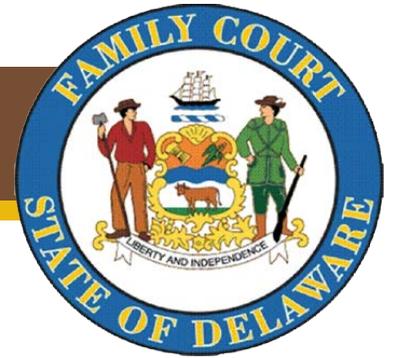
Family Court Filings by County Fiscal Year 2024



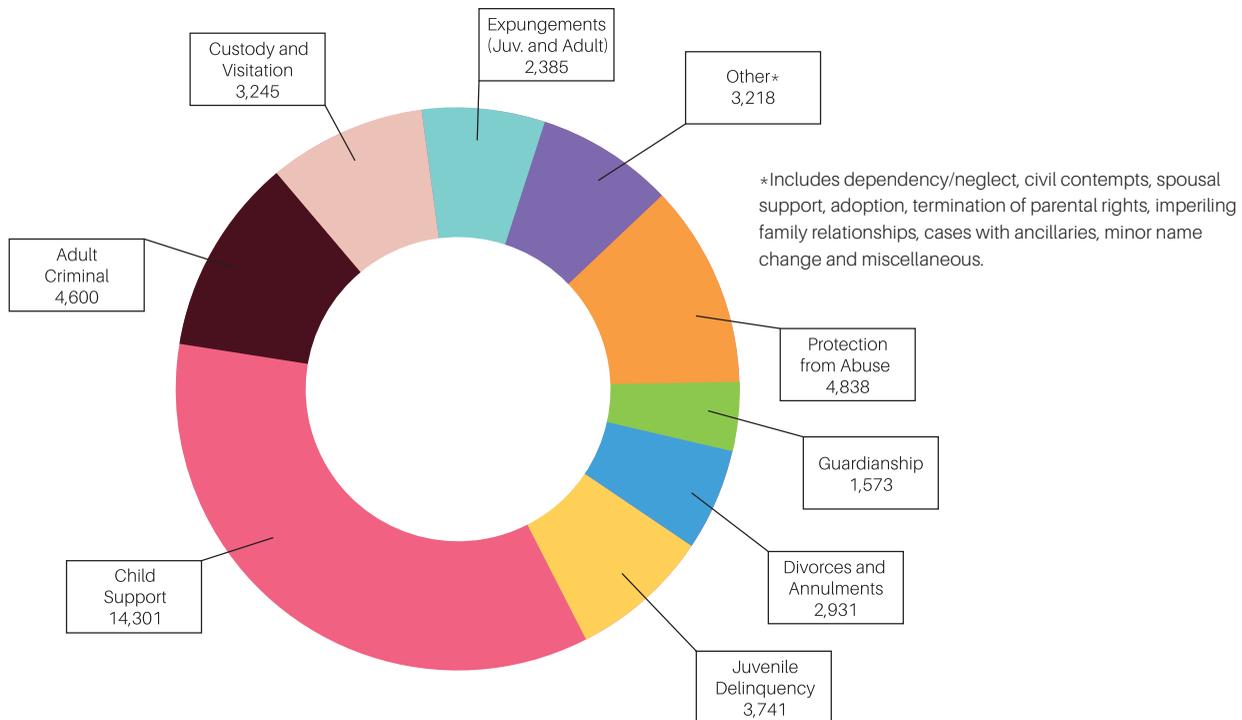
Family Court Civil and Criminal Filings and Dispositions by Fiscal Year



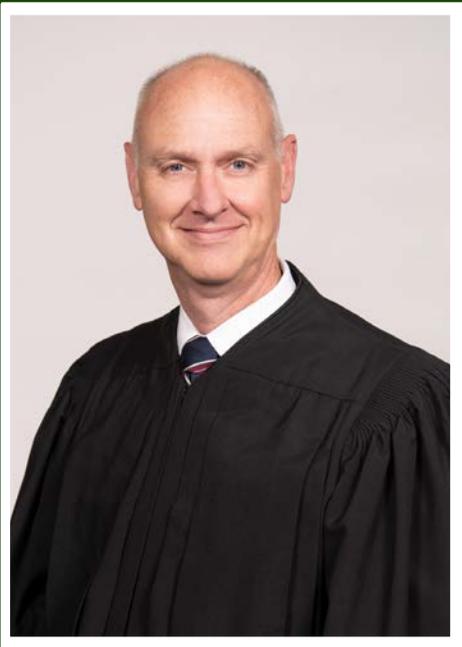
FAMILY COURT



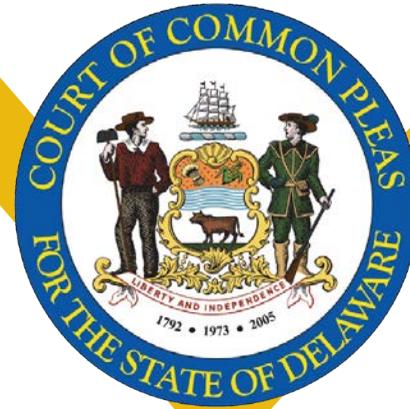
Number of Family Court Filings by Type Fiscal Year 2024



Family Court Chief Judge Michael Newell (left) and Family Court Judge James McGiffin (right) participated in the Delaware Judiciary's annual reenactment of the courtroom scene from *Miracle on 34th Street* for elementary school students at courthouses across the state. This year marked the 20th year for the performance that has entertained more than 30,000 students in grades 3, 4 and 5.



The **Court of Common Pleas** has jurisdiction in civil cases where the amount in controversy, exclusive of interest, does not exceed \$75,000. In criminal cases, the Court of Common Pleas handles all misdemeanors occurring in the State except certain drug-related offenses and traffic offenses. The Court is also responsible for all preliminary hearings in felony cases.



Court of Common Pleas

Chief Judge Carl C. Danberg

By the Numbers

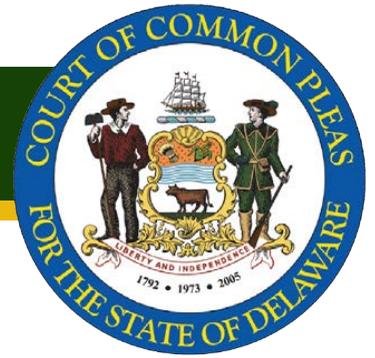


COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

- Judges - 9
- Commissioners - 3
- Court Staff - 137

TOTAL: 149

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS



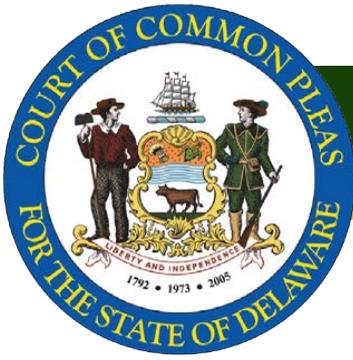
Court of Common Pleas Judges

Front Row (left to right):

Judge Monica A. Horton • Judge Kathleen K. Amalfitano • Judge Katharine L. Mayer

Back Row (left to right):

Judge Rae M. Mims • Judge Robert H. Surles • Judge Anne E. Hartnett •
Chief Judge Carl C. Danberg • Judge Kenneth S. Clark, Jr. (retired May 2024) •
Judge Bradley V. Manning



COURT OF COMMON PLEAS



Court of Common Pleas Commissioners

Left to Right:

Commissioner Gregory R. Babowal • Commissioner Donald R. Bucklin •
Commissioner Emily Ferrell

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS



Court Of Common Pleas

2024 Highlights

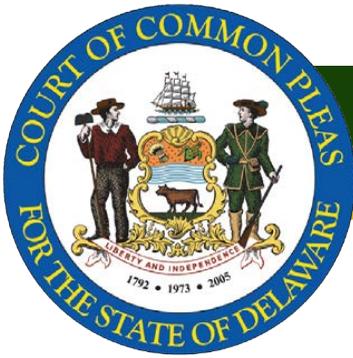
- The Court said farewell to Judge Kenneth S. Clark, Jr. who retired after completing two terms on the bench and 24 years of dedicated service to the Court of Common Pleas and the people of Delaware. He joined the court in 2000 and his final day was May 31, 2024. The Court wishes him well on his retirement.
- The Court welcomed Judge Thomas Pedersen who was sworn in to office in a private ceremony on June 30, 2024, and is based in Sussex County. He replaces Judge Clark. Prior to joining the Court, Judge Pedersen was a solo practitioner in Georgetown, where he focused on criminal defense. He spent 23 years in private practice, as well as working as a conflict attorney, representing criminal cases with the Office of the Public Defender. Prior to that Judge Pedersen worked as a prosecutor in the Criminal Division of the Delaware Department of Justice. He earned his undergraduate degree from West Chester University and his law degree from Widener University School of Law.



Judge Kenneth S. Clark, Jr.

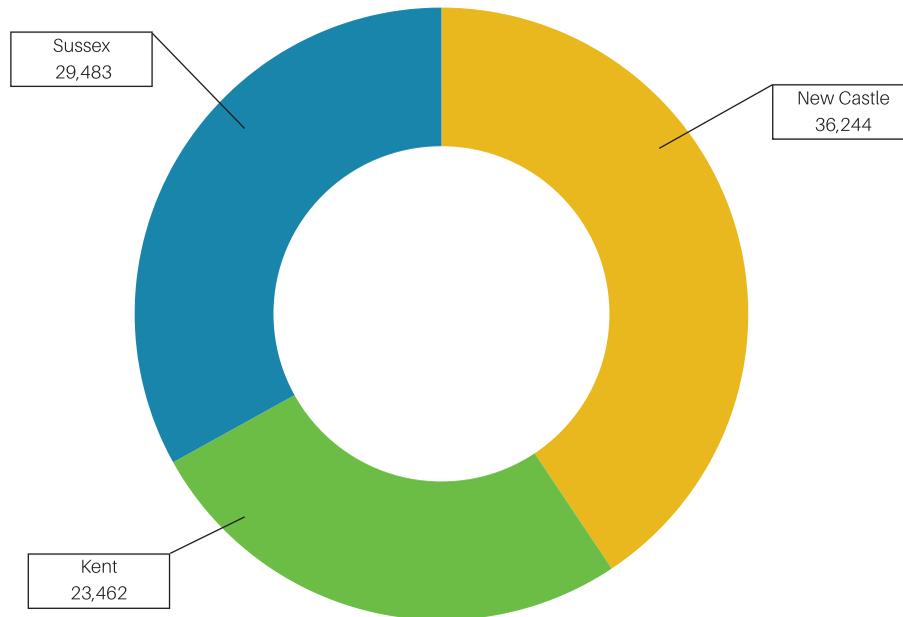


Judge Thomas Pedersen

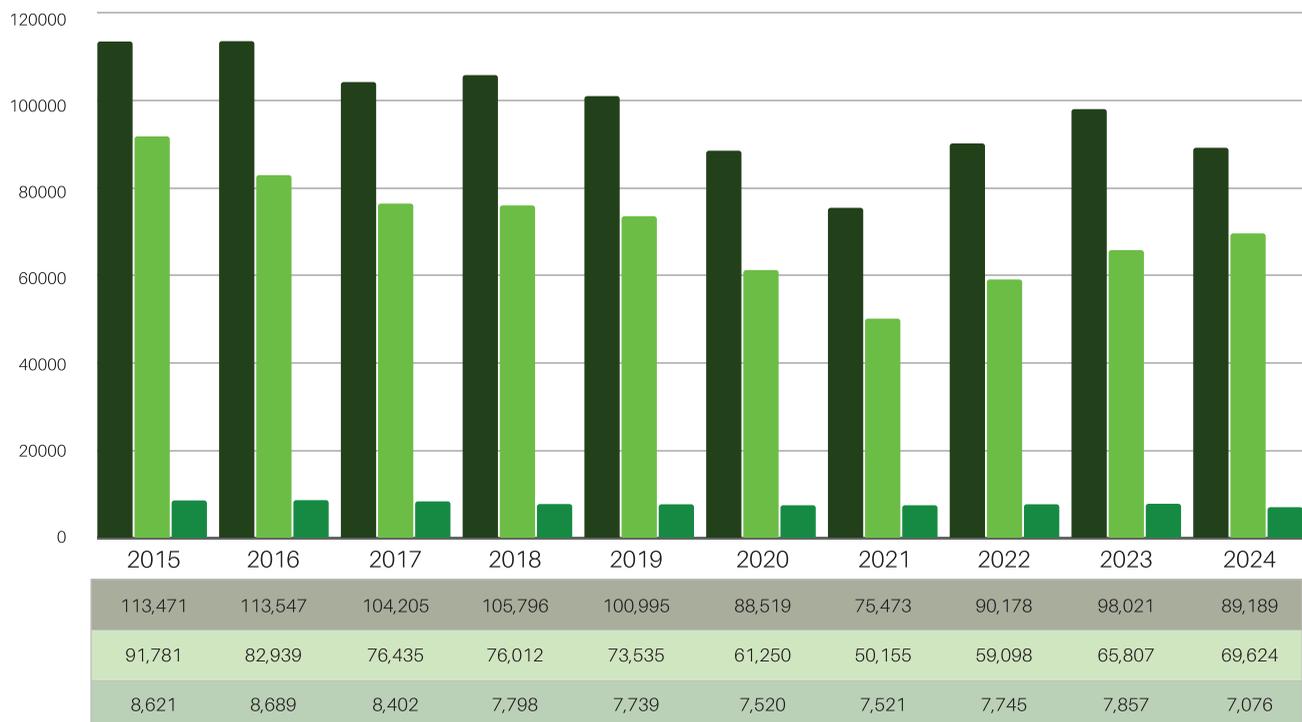


COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

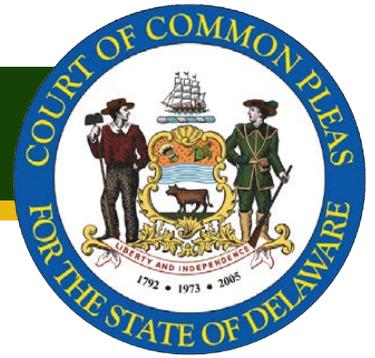
Court of Common Pleas Civil and Criminal Filings by County Fiscal Year 2024



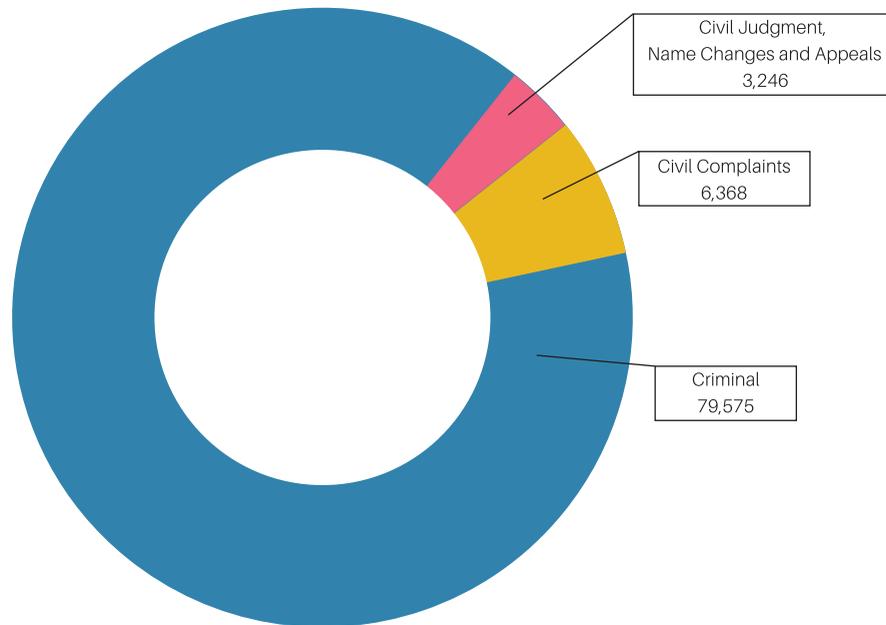
Court of Common Pleas Criminal Caseload Trend by Fiscal Year



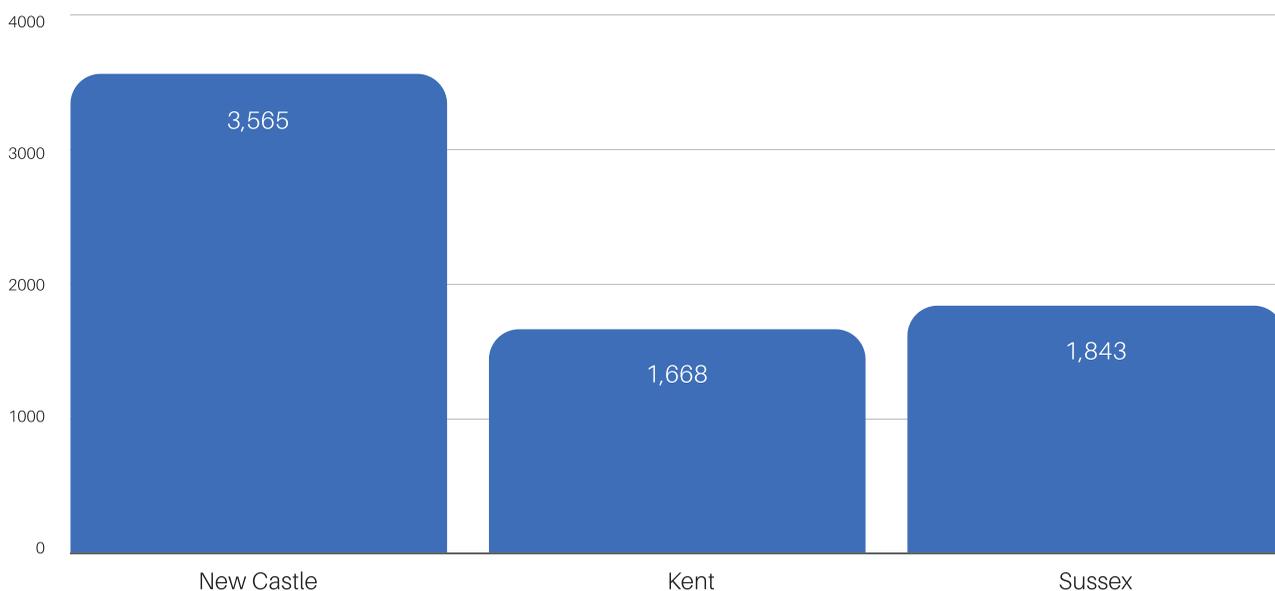
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS



**Court of Common Pleas Number of Filings
by Type Fiscal Year 2024**



**Court of Common Pleas Preliminary Hearings
by County Fiscal Year 2024**





The **Justice of the Peace Court** has jurisdiction over civil cases involving debt, trespass and replevin in which the amount in controversy does not exceed \$25,000. The Justice of the Peace Court has jurisdiction over all landlord/tenant summary possession proceedings. Justice of the Peace Court is authorized to hear certain misdemeanors and most motor vehicle cases (excluding felonies) and may act as Committing magistrates for all crimes.



Justice of the Peace Court

Chief Magistrate Alan G. Davis

By the Numbers



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT

- Judicial Officers - 61
- Court Staff - 227

TOTAL: 288

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT



Kent County Judges

Seated, Front Row (left to right):

Nicole Alston-Jackson • Jamie Hicks • Deputy Chief Magistrate Kevin Wilson •
Chief Magistrate Alan G. Davis • James Murray • Judy Smith

Standing, Back Row (left to right):

D. Kenneth Cox • W.G. Edmanson, II • Michael Green

Not Pictured:

Dwight Dillard • Alexander Montano • Michael Sherlock • Dana Tracy



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT



Sussex County Judges

Seated, Front Row (left to right):

Leah Chandler • Maria Castro • Candace Whitelock • Deputy Chief Magistrate Deborah Keenan •
Chief Magistrate Alan G. Davis • John Hudson • Mirta Collazo • Amber Welch • Terri Davis

Standing, Back Row (left to right):

Matthew Tingle • Richard D. Comly, Jr. * • William Patrick Wood • Bethany Crowley •
Christopher Bradley • Catherine Hester • Kristine Kellenbenz • John Adams • Scott Willey •
Brett Graves

Not Pictured:

Stephani Adams • Jennifer Sammons

* Retired, sitting by designation

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT



New Castle County Judges

Seated, Front Row (left to right):

Michelle Michini-Adam • Shelley Losito • Nina Bawa • Earl MacFarlane • David Skelley •
Chief Magistrate Alan G. Davis • Deputy Chief Magistrate Sean McCormick • Marie Page •
Shameka Booker • Kerry Kowal • Cheryl McCabe-Stroman

Standing, Back Row (left to right):

Rodney Vodery • Bobby Hoof • James Hanby, Sr. • Alex Peterson, III • Maria Perez-Chambers •
John Potts • Gerald Ross, III • Shanaya Eyong • Lisa Emerson • Walter Newton • Nicholas Brock

Not Pictured:

Peter Burcat • Bracy Dixon, Jr. • Beatrice Freel • Amanda Moyer • Mary Ellen Naugle •
Christopher Portante • Katharine Ross • Susan Goldsman

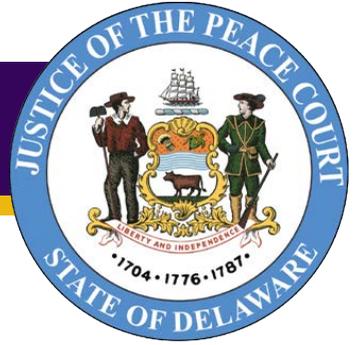


JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT

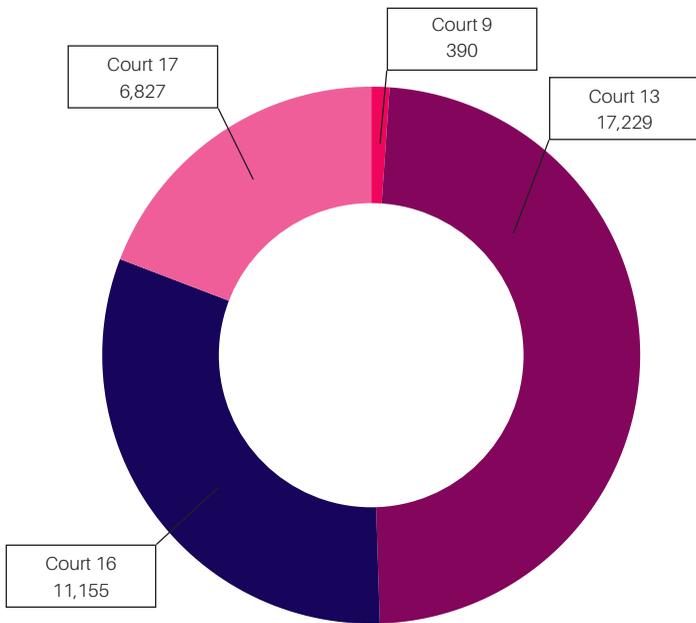
Justice Of The Peace Court 2024 Highlights

- The JP Court has partnered with several schools and organizations to offer internship opportunities for students in high school and college. Internship partners include New Castle County Summer Youth Employment; LYTE/FLii; University of Delaware College of Political Science and University of Delaware LP3 - Law Prep Program through the College of Arts and Sciences; Al Du Pont High School; Caesar Rodney High School and Sussex Technical High School's Workforce Preparation Program. All the students who were provided opportunities qualified for financial assistance or were from under-represented communities.
- An employee survey was conducted in Spring 2024 to gather information to guide the court's employee engagement program as part of our goal to improve retention. The results indicated that employees were interested in improving the overall court safety program. As a result of the survey, training was offered to all employees on Narcan use, CPR/AED, violent intruder and CRASE (Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events) training with assistance from partners such as Hero Help, DSP, NCC and KC EMS. Last fall, our Chief of Uniformed Services and our training team conducted individual court location drills, walked staff through what to expect from security and local police should a crisis arise and provided updated additional procedures for staff to reference. Additional training will be ongoing.
- The Mediation Unit was created to implement the Eviction Diversion program established by SS1 for SB1 to help landlords and tenants communicate with each other to come to agreeable solutions to prevent evictions. The JP Court continues to utilize its Online Dispute Resolution platform as a tool to assist the parties in communicating with one another and, once a mediator is assigned to a case, as a way for mediation to occur without parties having to take time to attend an in-person meeting.
- The Voluntary Assessment and Information Center was expanded to accept calls for the JP Court Civil locations and Tax Intercepts. The reduction in calls to the civil locations assists the staff at those locations so they can work on the increased volume of filings, and it allows time to provide a higher level of customer service to court users.
- A pilot to reduce the JP Court 24-hour footprint in the state is underway. In April, the operating hours at Court 3 in Sussex County were reduced to 6:00 a.m. to midnight every day. The Court has maintained open communication with impacted agencies to determine the impact of the reduced hours on them and court users.

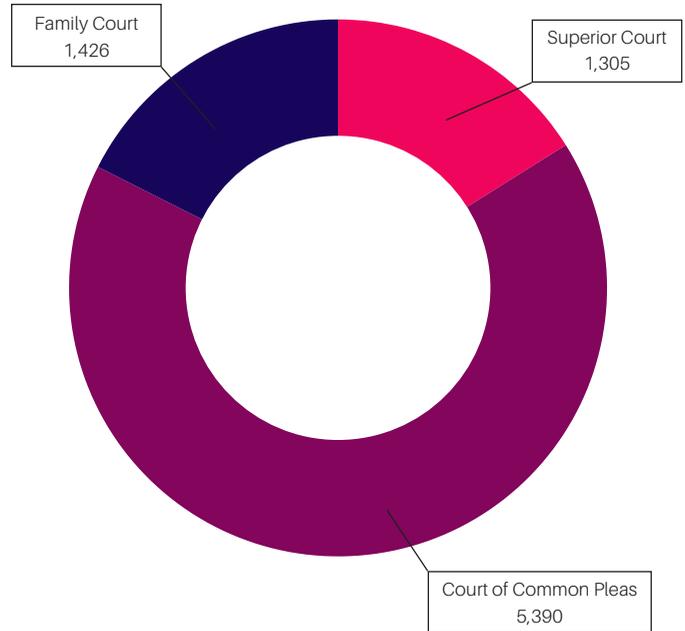
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT



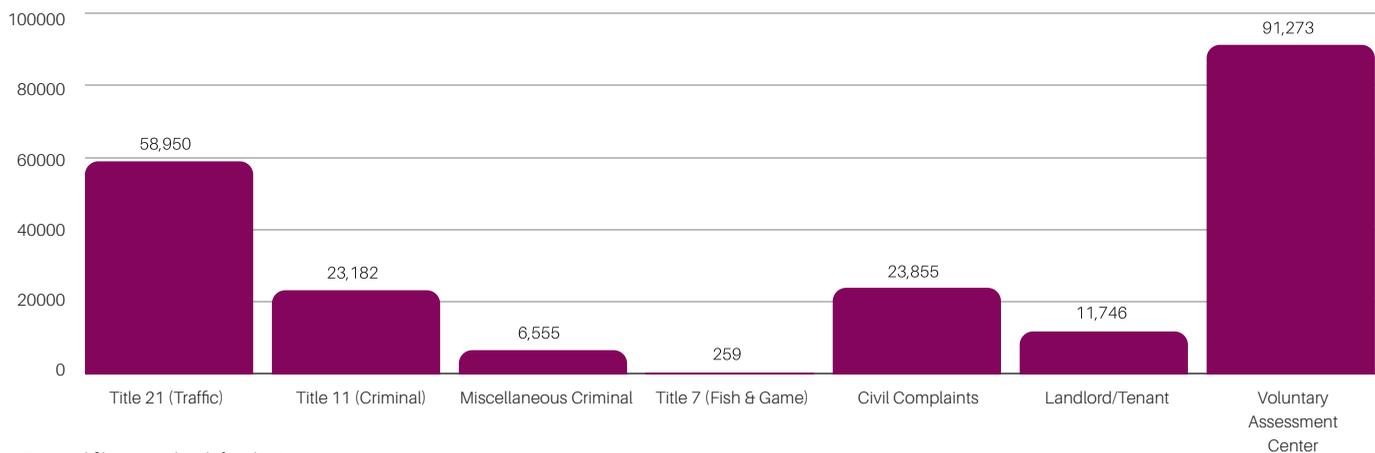
Total Justice of the Peace Civil Cases Filed by Court Fiscal Year 2024



Arrest Warrants Cleared by Justice of the Peace Court for Other Courts Fiscal Year 2024



Number of Justice of the Peace Court Filings by Type* Fiscal Year 2024

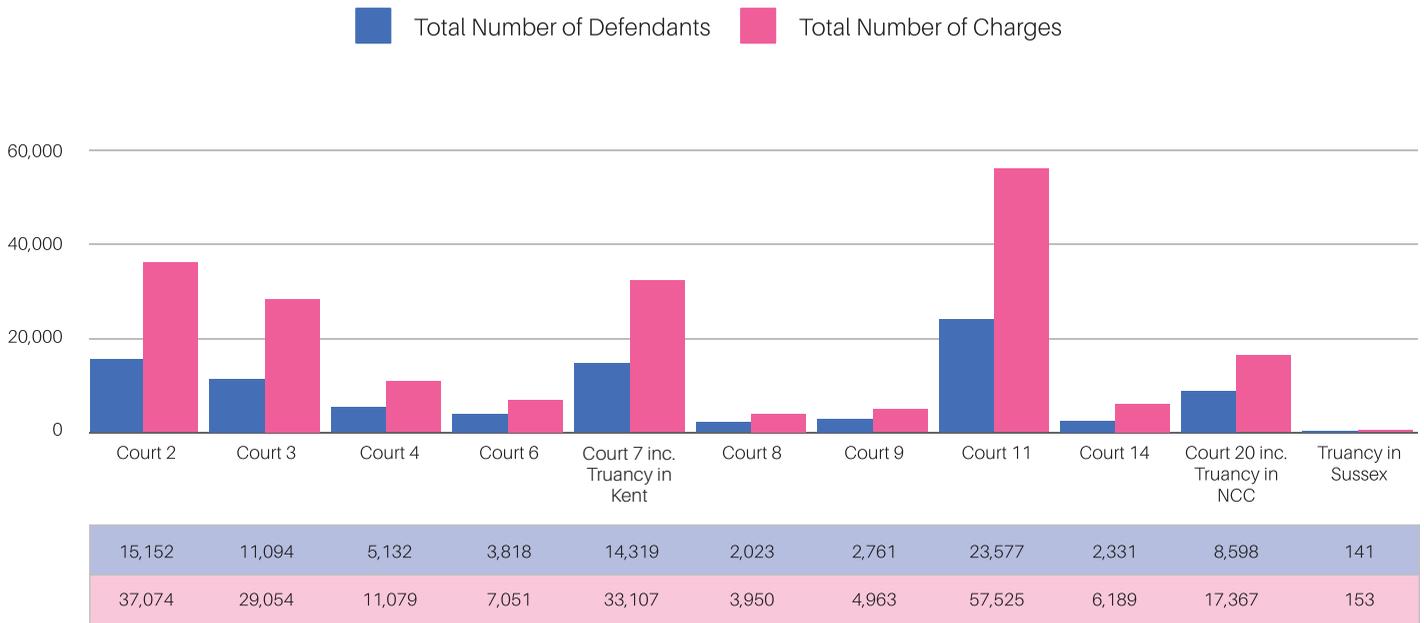


* Criminal filings are by defendant



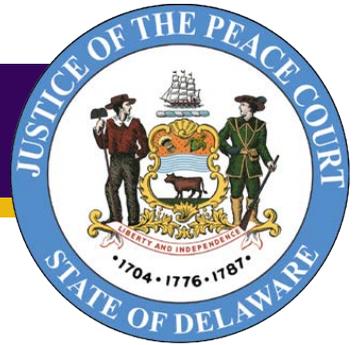
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT

Justice of the Peace Court Criminal and Traffic Charges



JP Court 10 has been closed (merging with Court 20) prior to this Fiscal Year. As a result it has been removed from any charts.

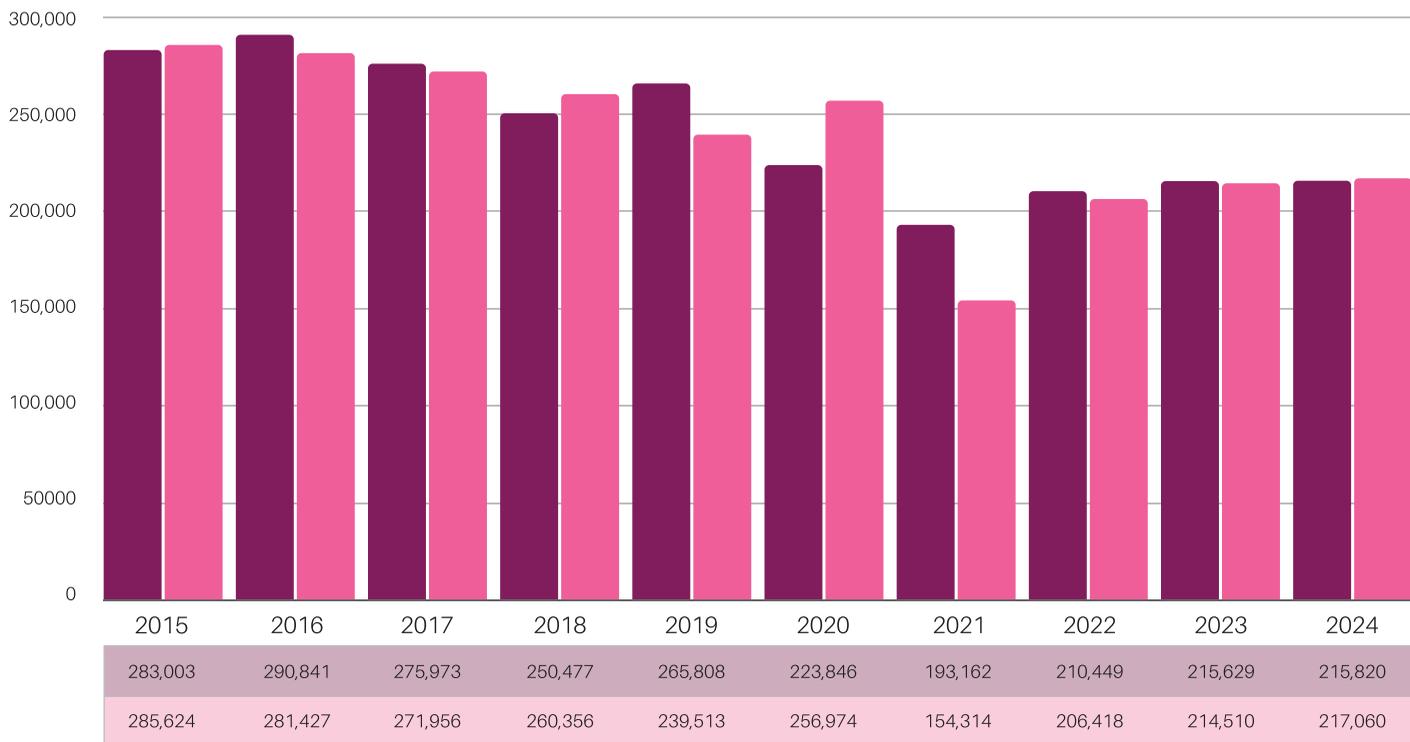
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT



Justice of the Peace Court Civil and Criminal/Traffic Filings and Dispositions by Fiscal Year*

Number of Defendants

Filings Dispositions



*Criminal filings and disposition information is by defendant.



THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS





The **Administrative Office of the Courts** (AOC) is the administrative arm of the State of Delaware Supreme Court. Established in 1971, the AOC provides a broad range of support services to the Delaware Courts in operations, information technology, legal, government relations, financial, administration and programs consistent with the statewide policies and goals established by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.



Administrative Office of the Courts

State Court Administrator Gayle P. Lafferty

By the Numbers



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

- Full Time Staff - 36
- Judicial Information Center - 39
- Law Library - 3
- Court Collections - 9

TOTAL: 87



NON-JUDICIAL AGENCIES

- Full Time Staff - 52

TOTAL: 52



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

Community Court

The Wilmington Community Court initiative is an innovative effort by the Delaware Judiciary to break the cycle of crime before it starts by focusing on treatment and solving problems while ensuring public safety. Defendants are held accountable for their actions, but rather than using only incarceration or fines, community court looks to address the underlying issues that drive low-level, non-violent criminal behavior like drug addiction, mental health issues or unemployment and connects defendants with needed services.

The mission of Community Court is to reduce crime and recidivism by addressing the quality-of-life issues facing its communities utilizing a restorative justice approach, by forging meaningful partnerships, and improving public trust and confidence in the justice system.



Total Participation 2019-2024

- 616 people enrolled in the Community Court program
- 511 people graduated or completed the program



Fiscal Year 2024 Participation

- 49 people enrolled in the Community Court program
- 104 people graduated or completed the program



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS



Law Libraries

The Law Libraries have been serving the Delaware Judiciary Since 1911.

The primary purpose of the law library is to provide comprehensive and responsive legal research and information assistance to the Delaware Judiciary by providing the optimum balance of current technology, legal tools, and information training. The law libraries also lend assistance to surrounding state agencies and members of the legal community. Additionally, the libraries provide support to the general public, legal scholars, and those representing themselves in the Delaware Court system.



Limited Legal Assistance Program

Volunteer attorneys meet with eligible self-represented litigants for a one-time, fifteen-minute meeting. The attorney will not meet with the self-represented litigant outside of the program, nor will the attorney represent the litigant in court.

There is no income eligibility for this service. Instead, to be eligible, people seeking assistance must not have received previous legal assistance regarding the same issue and their question must be one that can be asked and answered within the fifteen-minute time frame. People using the service will be directed to legal service providers and reference materials for further assistance.

Limited Legal Assistance Program

Fiscal Year	Litigants Served
22	172
23	161
24	187



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

OSCCE: Office of State Court Collections Enforcement

The Office of State Court Collections Enforcement (OSCCE) pursues the collection of court-ordered financial assessments through a variety of state and private sector sanctions to ensure the enforcement of judicial branch orders. These orders may include, but are not limited to, restitution, statutory surcharges, fines and court costs.

Fee Reform Efforts

Senate Bill 282 repealed the \$100 Senior Trust Fund Fee; the \$50 Interstate Compact Fee; and the Substance Abuse Rehabilitation, Treatment, Education and Prevention Fund Fee (SARTEP), which is assessed at 15% of all fines, penalties and forfeitures collected by the courts for an applicable criminal offense.

Senate Bill 283 repealed the \$1 DELJIS Fund Fee collected from every adult criminal or traffic defendant and delinquent juvenile.

Senate Bill 284 discharged the outstanding balances of anyone ordered to pay a probation supervision fee before it was repealed in 2021, including approximately \$14.4 million still owed from nearly 70,000 accounts as of January 2023.





Judicial Information Center

The mission of the Judicial Information Center is to provide strategic IT vision, leadership, and enterprise solutions to the Judicial Branch and its customers, ensuring efficient operations and secure, reliable, and timely access to information.

The Judicial Information Center (JIC) consists of the following units:

- A/V Telecom Team
- Business Solutions and Training Team
- Development Team
- Helpdesk/Technical Support Group
- Information Security
- Operations Team



The Delaware Judicial Branch has kicked off a major initiative to modernize multiple disparate technology platforms. This initiative will centralize the E-Filing, Case Management, Document Management and Reporting solutions employed across the Branch. Through this modernization, we will achieve more efficient operations, greater public access to data, elimination of paper process and a significant expansion to the E-Filing program.





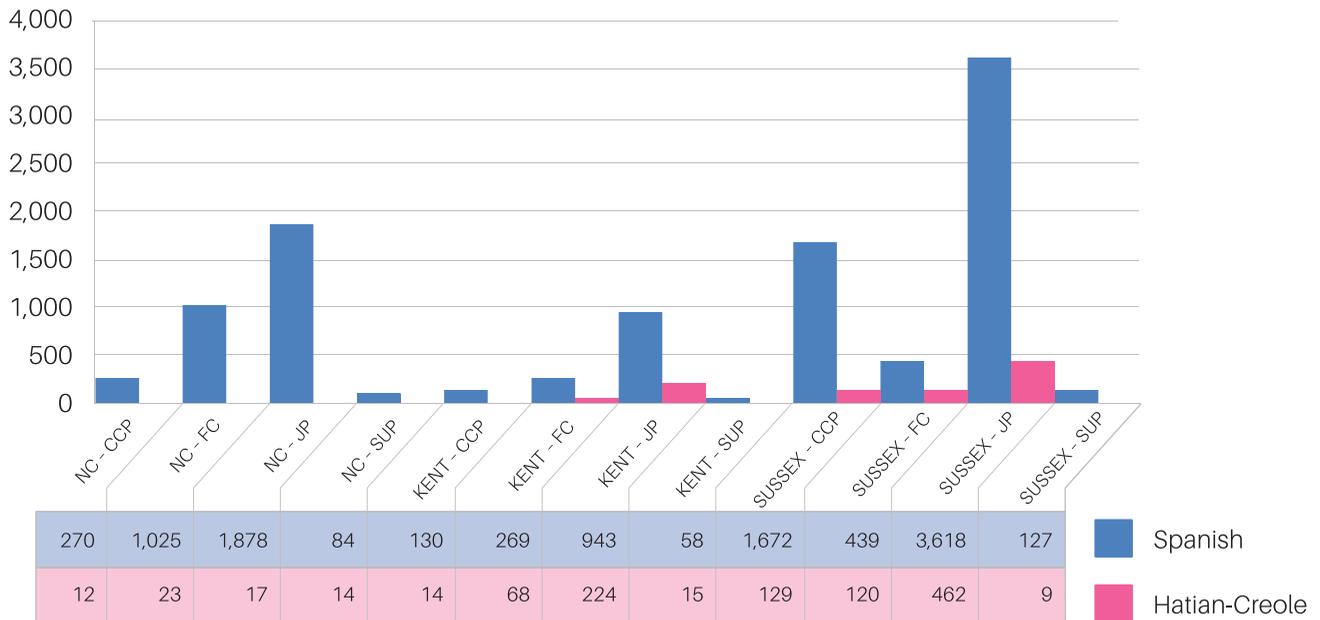
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

Interpreter Services

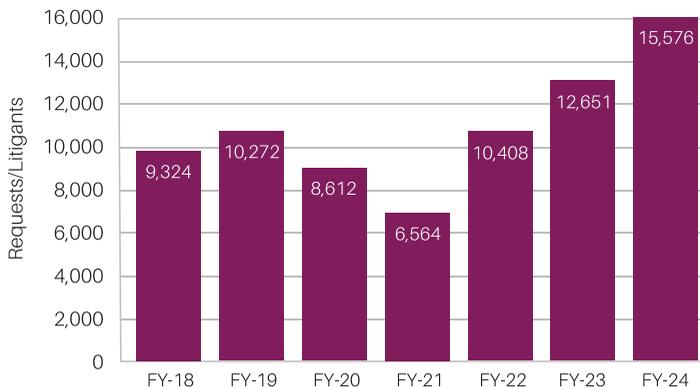


The Delaware Judiciary provides language access to those with limited English proficiency and members of the Deaf and hard of hearing community. The Court Interpreter Program is managed by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) under the direction of the Court Interpreter Advisory Board. Below are several charts detailing the demand for interpretation services.

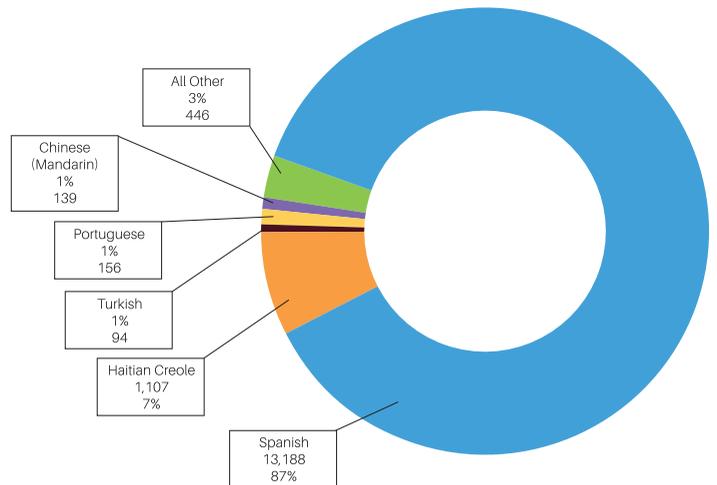
Fiscal Year 2024 Top Two Languages Requested by Court/County



Program Requests/Number of Litigants Statewide



Fiscal Year 2024 Requests for Spoken Language Interpreter Services by Litigants



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS



JUDICIAL BRANCH EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED

Charlotte Walsh, Justice of the Peace Court Management Analyst III



Charlotte Walsh, a Justice of the Peace Court Management Analyst III, was named the Judicial Branch Employee of the Year for 2023.

Charlotte, who has been with the Justice of the Peace Court for more than 34 years, started as a clerk in 1989, worked her way up through the ranks to Judicial Case Processor – where she oversaw the clerical staff – and then to Management Analyst III. During that time Charlotte established herself as an expert on court operations and systems, allowing her to lead cross-functional teams and improve a variety of court processes.

She is also well known for her love of data. “When the court has a process that needs to be developed, or a programming issue, Charlotte is usually the first one to know there is something that needs to be fixed and she moves to fix it,” wrote her nominator. This was particularly helpful during the COVID pandemic as the court had to be nimble in the way it was conducting business to keep all involved safe. “She makes system changes just ‘happen’...she makes sure that the court is producing quality work and she is always creative in finding solutions,” wrote her nominator.

OTHER NOMINEES

MaryPat Fitzpatrick, MaryPat Fitzpatrick, Superior Court (former) Chief Deputy Prothonotary (who has since become Human Resources Advisor II). MaryPat is described by her co-workers as “a breath of fresh air who always brightens everyone’s day.”

MaryJarrell Little, Court of Common Pleas Human Resources Manager I. MaryJarrell, who has been with the Court of Common Pleas since 2007, is the longest serving Lead Human Resources Professional in the Delaware Judiciary with over 16 ½ years of consecutive service.

Ramona Monsen, Court of Chancery Deputy Court Administrator. For nearly 50 years, Ramona has served the State of Delaware, starting with Superior Court in June of 1974, before moving to the Court of Chancery in 1998 as a Judicial Secretary, then an Administrative Officer in 2005, and was named to her current post in 2020.

Debbie Grossman, Administrative Office of the Courts Office Manager. Debbie is always going above and beyond for the employees at the Administrative Office of the Courts and the public. One co-worker commented, “I do not know what I would do without Debbie,” while another added, “She is the contact that I always put on my Out of Office when I am going to be out.”

Karen Stokes-Minus, Family Court Civil Judicial Operations Manager. Karen began her career with Family Court in 1990 in New Castle County as a Clerk of Court. She was later promoted to a Judicial Case Processing Supervisor, and she has been the Civil Judicial Operations Manager in New Castle County since 2011. Family Court benefits daily from Karen’s wealth of institutional knowledge of the intricacies of more than a dozen case types that are processed by her unit.



DELAWARE COURTS

JUDICIAL BRANCH

Many thanks to the Presiding Judges, Court Administrators, court staff and others in the courts, and the Administrative Office of the Courts for their efforts in preparing this Annual Report.

<http://courts.delaware.gov> (Delaware Judiciary)

<http://courts.delaware.gov/AOC/AnnualReports/FY24>
2024 Annual Report, Statistical Report of the Delaware Judiciary and
additional Delaware Courts background information

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All photographs (except judicial officers) by AOC Chief of Community
Relations Sean O' Sullivan, unless otherwise noted.