



AOPC ANNUAL REPORT 2019

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF PENNSYLVANIA COURTS



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Message from the court administrator

I am pleased to present the 2019 annual report of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC).

The hard work and dedication of jurists and court staff, often in partnership with other state agencies and branches of government, advances access to justice for all Pennsylvanians.

The Unified Judicial System (UJS) continues to enhance the wide range of court programs and services offered throughout the state – including a renewed emphasis on rehabilitative justice through our problem-solving courts, further expanding access to justice for Pennsylvania’s elderly population and continuing to develop first-of-its-kind court technology.

These programs are among just a few of our court system’s many initiatives highlighted in this report, reflecting the judiciary’s commitment to the fair and efficient administration of justice across the Commonwealth.



Sincerely,

GEOFF MOULTON
Court Administrator of Pennsylvania

How the court system works

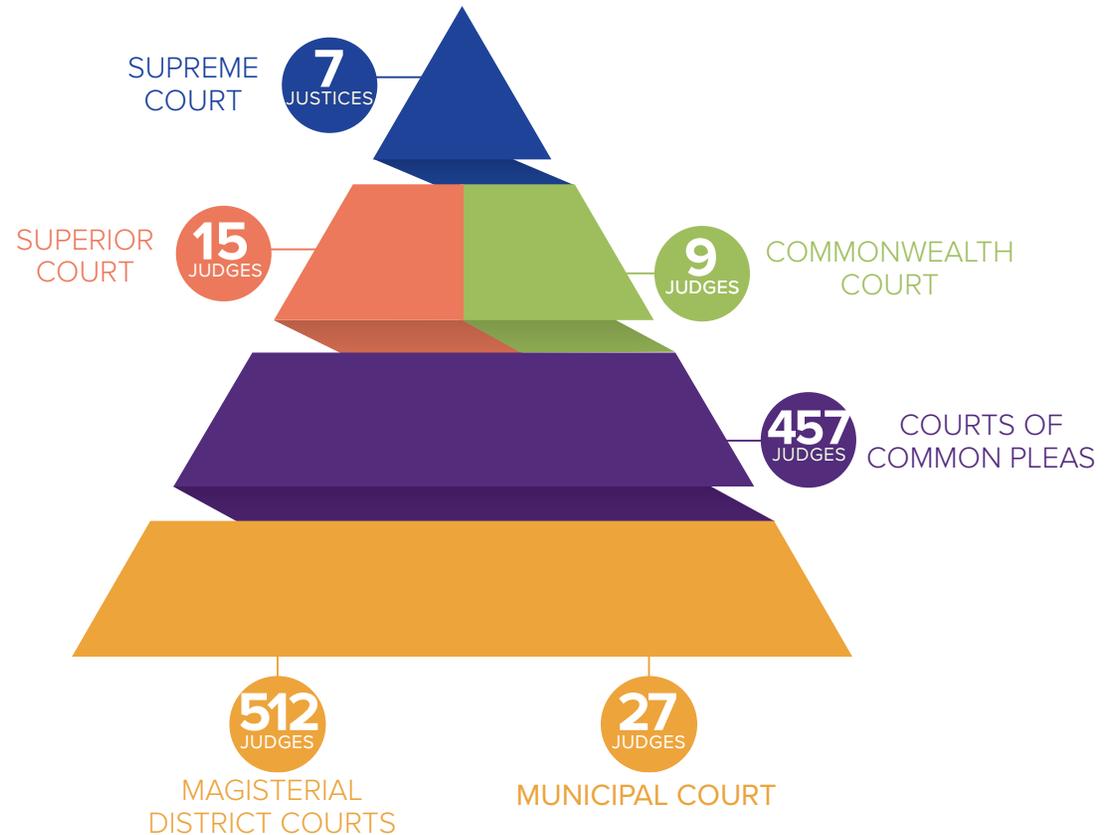
FACILITATING ACCESS TO JUSTICE IS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY OF PENNSYLVANIA'S COURTS.

We approach every day with this focus – to keep courts open, safe, accessible, fair, effective, responsive and accountable.

Pennsylvania continues to lead the nation in our use of technology to make the courts accessible and efficient. Our court data is used widely in government to help make informed policy decisions and to foster public safety.

Our programs provide opportunities for dramatic differences in peoples' lives and are proving to be cost-savers as well.

The Pennsylvania court system is structured like a pyramid, with the Supreme Court at the top. All courts fall under the umbrella of the judiciary headed by the Supreme



Court. In the interest of full transparency and accountability, Pennsylvania's judiciary provides comprehensive public access to court records online and upon request. [Learn more about Pennsylvania's Unified Judicial System.](#)

WHO WE ARE

Defining the AOPC

The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) is the administrative arm of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

Led by the Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, the Supreme Court supervises and administers Pennsylvania's judicial branch of government. The Supreme Court appoints the court administrator of Pennsylvania.

THE AOPC IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:



Representing the court system to the public and at all government levels, providing each with reliable information.



Developing and maintaining information technology resources, such as case, financial and administrative management systems.



Facilitating safe and accessible courts for all.



Providing legal services to system personnel.



Recommending **court system improvements** and program innovations.



Conducting **continuing education programs** for judges and staff.



Managing administrative functions including finance and human resources.



Educating the public about the courts' roles and functions, ensuring all court information is as transparent and publicly accessible as possible.



Assisting president judges and district court administrators in **management** of local courts.

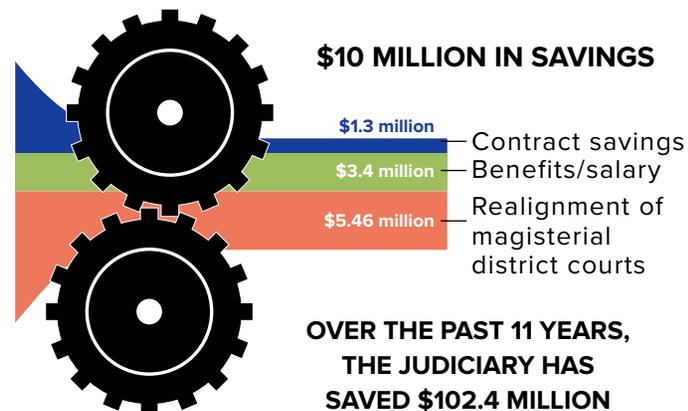
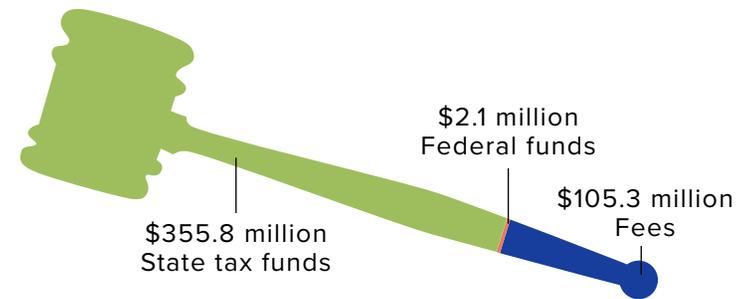
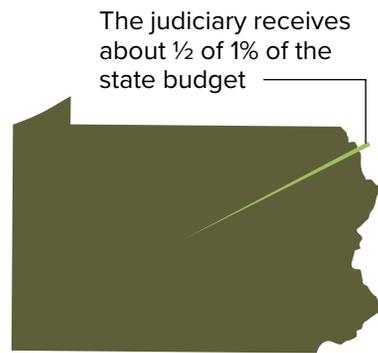
How the court system is funded

AOPC/Finance provides critical management of budget, accounting and payroll systems for the entire judiciary and serves as the primary resource for the organization on financial matters.

The Pennsylvania Constitution calls for justice to be administered without “sale, denial or delay.” That mandate shapes the core mission of the courts – delivering fair, timely and accessible justice for all. Adequate funding with an ongoing commitment to efficiency and the wise and transparent use of public funds allows the mission to be met.

The judiciary strives to use tax dollars wisely and efficiently. Over the last 11 years, reducing its personnel complement, renegotiating leases and contracts, containing benefit costs and limiting merit and cost-of-living increases has saved more than \$102 million.

2019-20 BUDGET



WHO WE ARE

By the numbers



Pennsylvania's problem-solving courts had a **66% combined successful graduation rate.**



Pennsylvania courts collected nearly **\$218 million** in fees, fines, costs and restitution.



30% of Pennsylvania's active judges were women.



2,230,764 million new cases were filed in magisterial district courts.



39,132 protection from abuse (PFA) orders were filed.



48% of children who were under court supervision and left the system were reunited with family or relatives.



133 million docket sheets were viewed for free on our website.



20,934 total dispositions representing **17,921 individual juveniles** were processed through juvenile courts.*



41,337 people served on a jury.



Facilitated **44,481** requests for interpreters.



More than **9,000 followers** on Twitter @PACourts.



Trial and appellate judges completed more than **34,000 hours** of continuing education.

For more numbers see the [AOPC's interactive data dashboards.](#)

*Provided by Juvenile Court Judges Commission (JCJC)

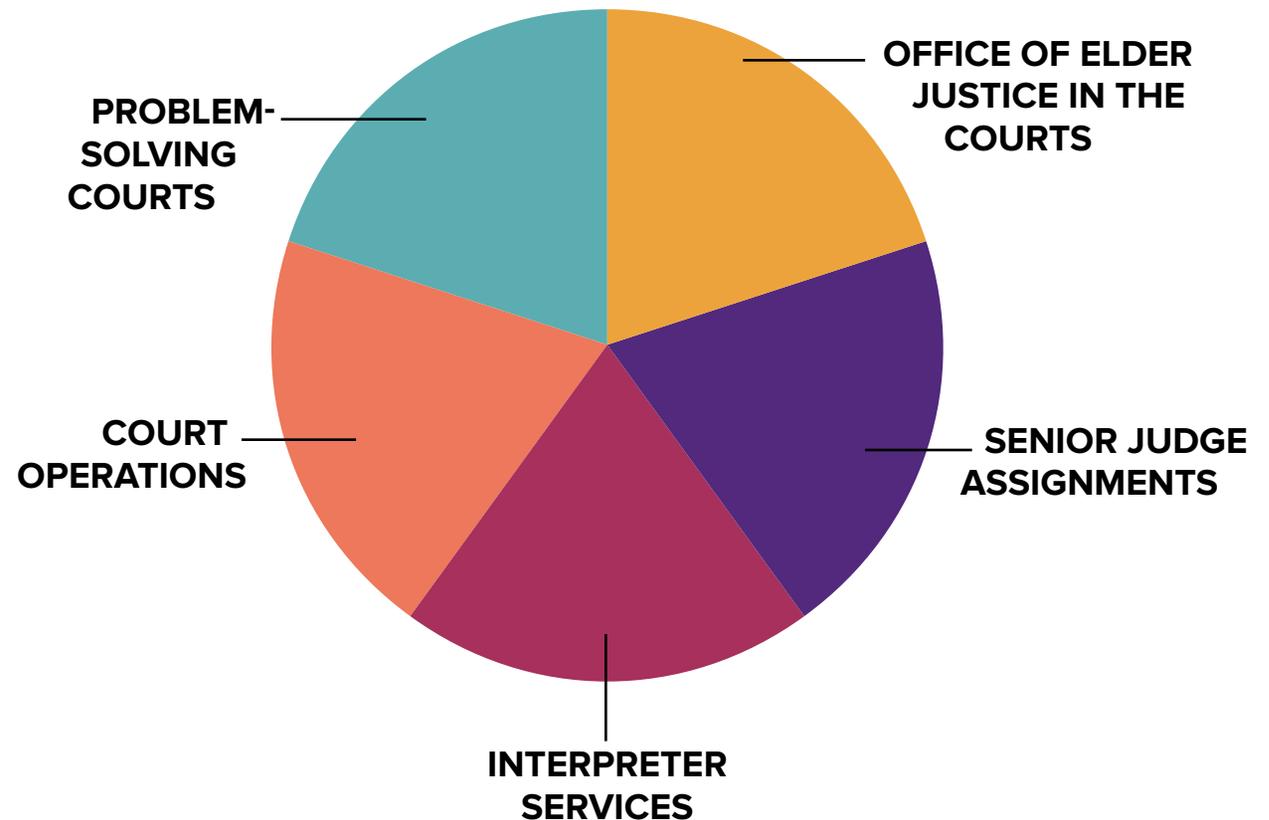
FACILITATING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Judicial operations

AOPC/[Judicial District Operations and Programs](#) department works closely with court administration at both the state and local level to support the efficient operation of magisterial district and trial courts and to promote equitable access to justice.

While funding for all AOPC operations comes mainly from appropriated state funds and also from fee funding, it receives a small amount of federal funds – including a STOP Grant (see page 15).

COMPONENTS OF JUDICIAL DISTRICT OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT:



FACILITATING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Problem-Solving Courts

More than 20 years ago, Pennsylvania established [problem-solving courts](#), in an effort to address a growing need in the community for those struggling with addiction. Since that time, the need for additional services and support to address major social policy issues has grown, and the role of the courts along with it.

As of Dec. 2019, more than 124 problem-solving courts were operational across the state, serving those with DUI offenses, veterans, those living with a mental illness and more. These specialized courts focus on behaviors and conditions that many times are linked to crime and social problems and have a major impact on the court system.

Rather than serve jail time, defendants may complete community service and are given access to counseling, treatment opportunities for addiction, educational assistance and healthcare support.

Completing the program and graduating opens doors to the future for these defendants, with many seeing their charges dismissed, sentences reduced or criminal records expunged.

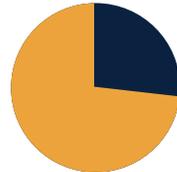
2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



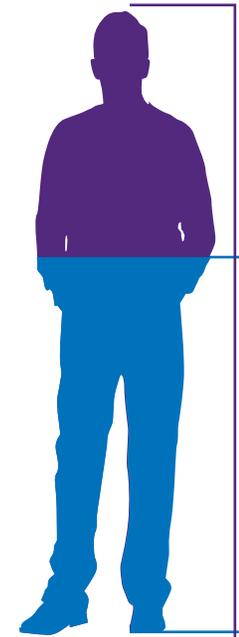
260 participants achieved an increase in education



522 participants who were unemployed found jobs



66% Average successful graduation rate



2,543 participants were admitted.

2,426 participants graduated successfully.

FACILITATING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Problem-Solving Courts

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:

Scholarships

- **Awarded 114 scholarships** to recipients including the:
 - National Association of Drug Court Professionals (40)
 - Pennsylvania DUI Association (38)
 - Pennsylvania Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference (27)
 - Forensic Rights and Treatment Conference (5)
 - National Judicial College's course on Drugs in America: *What Every Judge Needs to Know* (4)

Trainings

- Hosted a 1.5-day **Problem-Solving Court Coordinator Symposium** in Hershey
- Hosted a two-day **Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) Strategic Planning** Committee meeting in conjunction with the Center for Court Innovation in Harrisburg
- Co-sponsored a one-day event with Widener University Commonwealth Law School: **Making the Case for Veterans Courts**
- Held a two-day **VTC Mentor Boot Camp** with mentor-specific training provided by Justice for Vets
- Hosted a **Veterans Justice Outreach Workshop**

Successful graduation rates by court:



10 new problem-solving courts opened.



Two problem-solving courts received accreditation.



Three problem-solving courts had their accreditations renewed.



Accreditation is a thorough examination of the 10 key components and best practice standards, which were established by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, and renewal is a review of their progress and continued adherence to the components and standards.

Supporting Pennsylvania's elders

AOPC's [Office of Elder Justice in the Courts \(OEJC\)](#) assists the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and the Advisory Council on Elder Justice in the Courts in implementing the recommendations made by the Elder Law Task Force, while fostering collaborations with elder justice entities.

Through education, training programs and presentations, the OEJC promotes best practices in the areas of guardianship, elder abuse/neglect and access to justice for elders in the Commonwealth's courts. The OEJC also calls attention to the prevention of elder abuse.

2019 ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:



Worked with the Advisory Council on Elder Justice in the Courts to create and publish the **Pennsylvania Elder Abuse Bench Book** – the primary resource for judges facing issues involving elder abuse. The Bench Book was provided to 522 common pleas judges.



Provided **free training and resources to 120 family and lay guardians** about their powers, duties, responsibilities, ethics and liabilities.



Collaborated with Penn State University and its Dickinson School of Law on the Pennsylvania Adult-Fiduciary Education Project to **develop statewide online training for guardians and agents**.



Held **35 trainings, educational sessions and presentations** for various elder justice entities.



Assisted counties on matters involving the new statewide **Guardianship Tracking System (GTS)**. As of Dec. 2019, the GTS reported total assets under court supervision for guardianships were valued at \$1.4 billion. The American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging featured the GTS in the March/April 2019 edition of its journal, Bifocal.



Provided information and insights into how the U.S. responds to abuse and crimes against elders to a visiting legal scholar from Durham University in England.

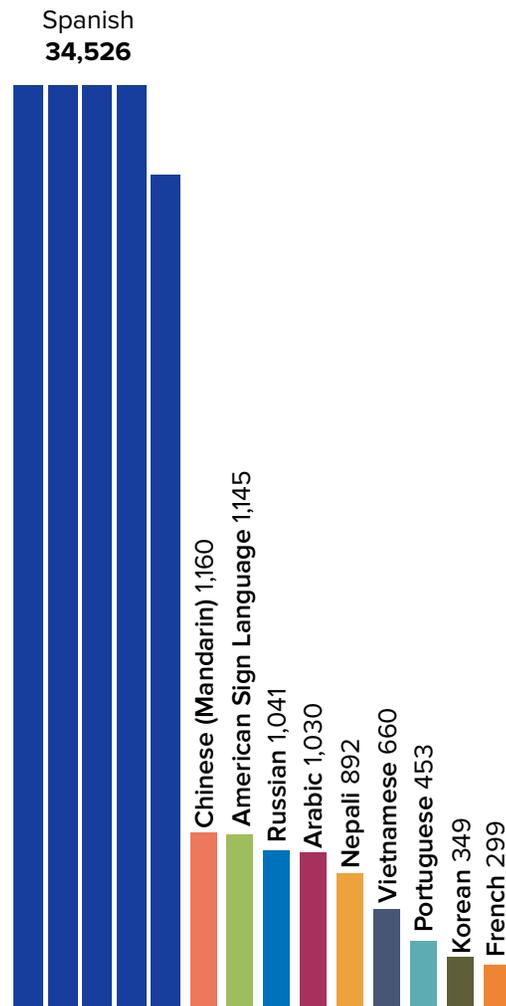
FACILITATING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Language access

Language services for individuals who speak limited English or are deaf or hard of hearing are essential to ensure that all Pennsylvanians are able to fully participate in judicial proceedings and court services, programs and activities in which their rights and interests are at stake.

One of the top priorities of the AOPC is to ensure that the Pennsylvania courts are accessible to everyone and the AOPC Language Access Team works hard to make this possible.

THE TOP 10 LANGUAGES REQUESTED IN 2019:



2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



Conducted **12 outreach and educational events** for judges, court staff and attorneys.



With National Center for State Courts, completed a **Translation Policies & Procedures Manual**, and disseminated to judicial district Language Access Coordinators (LAC).



Created and provided to districts a brief **video on language access**.



With AOPC/Communications, completed and shared with districts a **brochure on language access services**, in English and Spanish.



Created a **protected view page on the UJS website for judicial district LACs**, with resources, training materials and policy documents.

Recruiting and certifying court interpreters

The [Interpreter Certification Program \(ICP\)](#), holds four orientation workshops, and administers four written exams and five oral exams per year. It also conducts trainings for new judges and the Language Access Coordinators Annual Summit.

The ICP allows the Pennsylvania Courts to make the courts accessible to limited English speakers and promotes confidence in the courts by guaranteeing the rights of all citizens irrespective of the language they speak.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



Began **implementing an outreach plan** developed in cooperation with AOPC Communications



Launched a **social media campaign** with the aim of promoting the program, emphasizing the relevance of interpreting as a career path and attracting qualified candidates



Organized/participated in **six outreach events** including the Interpreter Career Pathway initiative in Philadelphia, the Berks County Bar Association test prep program, and the Allegheny County Courts judge and staff training on working with interpreters

KEEPING COURTS SAFE AND SECURE

Judicial District Security

AOPC's [Office of Judicial District Security](#) evaluates and assists in responding to emerging threats, in addition to implementing innovative protective measures and security protocols.

Staff reviews security policies and procedures, develops training and educational materials to enhance situational awareness and incident avoidance, and provides online and in-person seminars.

The office also evaluates security needs and requests for security enhancements in its administration of ongoing grant programs to provide courts with essential security equipment.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



733 security incidents reported for Common Pleas and Magisterial District Courts. Of those,



639 involved law enforcement.



88 incidents resulted in criminal charges.

TRAININGS:



Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) **10 Essential Security Features** for 512 courts.



Trained all MDJs in **Situational Awareness and Violence Avoidance**.

PROVIDING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

Protecting children

The judiciary's federally-funded [Office of Children and Families in the Courts \(OCFC\)](#), a program initiated by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, continues to have dramatic impacts on the lives of children while contributing savings to the state.

OCFC works with judicial leaders and child advocates to place neglected and abused children in permanent homes rather than in temporary foster care. This improves a child's opportunity to succeed and significantly reduces the cost of institutional care – a savings of hundreds of millions of dollars in the past decade.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



Published the first **Congregate Care Workgroup report** that focuses on the significant reduction/elimination of this placement option for abused/neglected children.



Released the third edition of the **Pennsylvania Dependency Benchbook**.



Hosted **2019 Children's Summit** for over 400 judicial officers, legal and child welfare professionals.

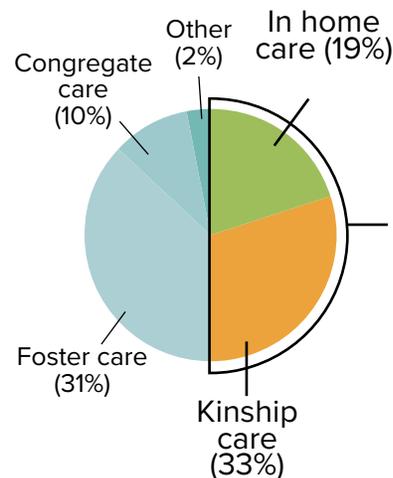


Created and launched a **Trauma-Responsive Court education session** for judges, hearing officers, attorneys and other courtroom staff.



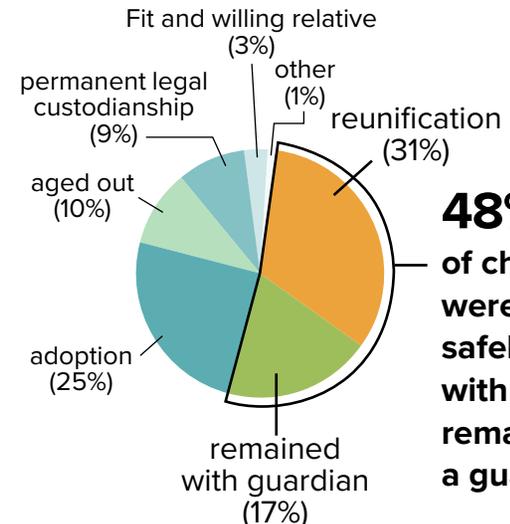
Added four new counties (Dauphin, Lehigh, Northumberland, and Philadelphia) to the Family Engagement Initiative. These additional counties bring the total children involved in the initiative to 40 percent of all children supervised by Pennsylvania's Dependency courts.

Kinship care placements nearly doubled over the past five years



52% of children remained safely in their home or were placed in kinship care in 2018.

Reasons court supervision ended in 2018



48% of children were either safely reunified with family or remained with a guardian

PROVIDING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

STOP Grant

Administered through the Office of Violence against Women (OVW), the STOP Formula Grant Program awards federal grant money annually to states and territories to help enhance their communities' efforts to combat violence against women.

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency distributes the grant – five percent of which goes to the judiciary.

The AOPC uses that funding to provide support and enhance court services available to victims of domestic and sexual violence, and offers local and national training opportunities tailored to Pennsylvania's jurists and court staff highlighting new research and best practices.

2019 PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY STOP:

Over 1,000 judges, court staff and other stakeholders were trained using STOP funds in 2019. STOP Grant funded the following programs:

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in the Courthouse Workplace - developed and delivered by Futures Without Violence to the Domestic Relations Association of Pennsylvania (DRAP).

Military and Veteran-Related Domestic Violence - two-part training developed and delivered by the Battered Women's Justice Project at the Pennsylvania Association of Drug Court Professionals Annual Conference.

Trauma, Self-Care and Court Reporters: How Processing Trauma Affects Reporters and What to Do About It – developed and delivered by Cross Cultural Communications at the PA Court Reporters Association annual conference.

Human Trafficking 101 - developed and delivered by the Crisis Shelter of Lawrence County at the PA Court Reporters Association mid-annual conference.

Enhancing Coordination and Collaboration Among Court Systems: Improving Responses to Intimate Partner Violence - developed and delivered by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges at the Pennsylvania Association of Court Management Mid-Annual Conference.

Human-Trafficking Program for CCP judges.

Transgender Competency in the Courts: What You Should Know about Transgender People and Domestic Violence - developed and delivered by Lambda Legal, to the Pennsylvania State Association of the Prothonotaries and Clerks of Courts and to the DRAP.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation: The Legal Perspective and Using Best Practices for A Trauma-Informed Judicial Practice - developed and delivered by The Villanova University Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation to jurists as part of the mandatory Minor Judiciary Education Board continuing education program.

Four webinars titled Trauma Informed Court Practices and Trafficking 101 - developed and delivered by The Villanova University Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation for front line magisterial district and trial court staff.

Scholarships for judges and court staff to attend national trainings and conferences.

PROVIDING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

STOP Grant

2019 RESOURCES FUNDED BY STOP (SERVICES, TRAINING, OFFICERS AND PROSECUTORS) GRANT:



Update statutorily-mandated changes to **update CCP and MDJ Protection from Abuse forms in 11 languages.**



Funded and collaborated with Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) to **create, publish and distribute three Relinquishment of Firearms judicial bench cards** relating to the Protection from Abuse Act and other domestic violence crimes.



Funded and collaborated with The Villanova University Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation to create a **Sex-Trafficking Benchcard** for CCP and MDJ judges.



Developed and funded a social media outreach program using Facebook, Instagram and Google in English and Spanish to **educate the public about how to file protection orders** with Pennsylvania courts.



Mailed informational materials about **trauma-informed interpreting** and **civil protection orders** to Pennsylvania court interpreters.

Leading in court innovations

[AOPC/Information Technology](#)

develops, maintains and updates statewide case management systems for all three levels of Pennsylvania's courts (Appellate, criminal and juvenile Common Pleas and Magisterial District courts). The systems are linked, allowing case data and information to be shared as cases move through the court system saving time and money.

Court technology helps make court information significantly more accessible, improves collection of fines, fees, costs and restitution, and creates administrative efficiencies for courts and other government agencies.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



2.68 million cases were docketed.



\$144.7 million in fines, fees, costs collected online through PAePay®.



133 million docket sheets were viewed on our website.



346,141 documents were e-filed statewide.



38,000 law enforcement and public safety officials used our case management systems to perform daily duties.

System design and development

Funded by fees and fines rather than taxpayer dollars, AOPC/IT provides general IT support for the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and AOPC, and performs all aspects of the software development lifecycle in designing systems – from writing the code and testing its functions, to implementing the technology, and providing all necessary training and help desk support.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



Act 56 of 2018 (Clean Slate) went into effect in June 2019 and is the first law in the nation to seal certain criminal records from public view through an automated process. AOPC/IT **built the automated process to gather Clean Slate eligible cases and charges**, and to generate orders granting the sealed status within the case management systems.



AOPC/IT designed and implemented an **Electronic Document Archival solution** that incorporates PDF/A (Portable Document Format Archival). The PDF/A solution solves many of the retention problems that county courts face with paper records.



AOPC/IT **created a dedicated cybersecurity team** with leaders across multiple operations and development teams to work in conjunction with representatives of both the FBI and Department of Homeland Security.



AOPC/IT was selected as a **two-time winner of the National Association for Court Management (NACM) and Court Information Technology Officers Consortium (CITOC) 2019 Technology Awards** for the Guardianship Tracking System (GTS) and the PDF/A solution.

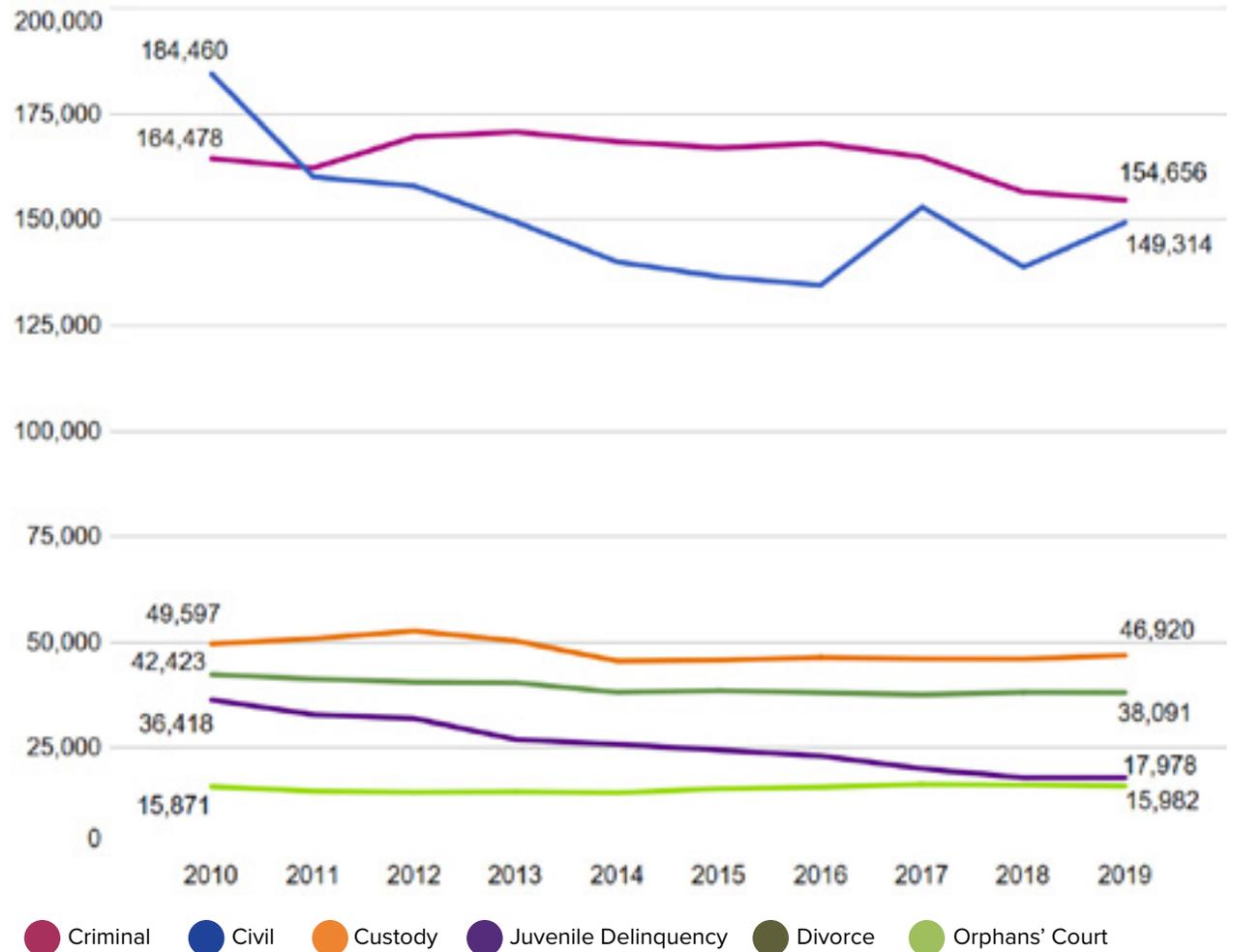
ASSEMBLING AND ANALYZING COURT DATA

Research and Statistics

[AOPC/Research and Statistics](#) collects and analyzes statewide court data, developing annual caseload statistics to help determine trends that inform policy and practice improvements.

In addition to providing data and analysis to the courts on topics related to case management, and court programs and operations, AOPC/Research and Statistics facilitates the public's access to this information by publishing data online via web-based reports and on the courts' interactive data dashboards.

STATEWIDE FILINGS FROM 2010-2019:



View the full collection of [2019 court data](#) from all levels of the court system.

Drafting and recommending rules

More than 180 appointed volunteers — most of whom are lawyers and judges — make up the various boards, committees and advisory groups that aid the Pennsylvania Supreme Court on a wide range of court matters.

More specifically, the rules committees assist the Court in establishing statewide rules governing procedures in cases. These committees study and draft rules before making recommendations to the Court.

Rule change proposals are published for public comment before being submitted to or adopted by the Supreme Court.

RULES COMMITTEES 2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



The **eight committees** are made up of **102 members** that met **24 times**.



28 proposed recommendations were published for public comment.



26 recommendations were submitted to the Court for consideration.



22 recommendations were adopted by the Court.

Rules Committees

- Appellate Court
- Criminal
- Civil
- Domestic Relations
- Orphans' Court
- Rules of Evidence
- Juvenile Court
- Minor Court

Read more about the [roles and functions of the different rules committees](#).

Regulating the practice of law

The following Supreme Court Boards are responsible for regulating lawyers and the practice of law throughout the commonwealth. Most of the boards are funded by fee revenue* – most of which comes from the **\$225 attorney registration fee** collected by the Disciplinary Board annually.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



The **Board of Law Examiners** is empowered to assess the competency, character and fitness of candidates seeking admission to the bar. It administers the bar exam to prospective lawyers twice every year and issues a certificate recommending admission to those that meet the requirements.

- **2,347 applications** were processed, most of which were for the bar exam.
- 2019 Pennsylvania Bar exam **pass rates**:
 - July **73.1%**
 - February **60.2%**



The **Interest on Lawyers Trust Account (IOLTA) Board** provides critical funding for civil legal aid to the poor and disadvantaged of Pennsylvania.

- More than **\$23.2 million** was awarded in total grants.
- **More than \$1.6 million** was awarded to Law School Clinical and Internship Programs.
- **281 grantee performance reports** submitted to and reviewed by the IOLTA Board.
- Processed an average of **14,441 IOLTA accounts** monthly.
- **2,735 attorneys** helped to achieve or maintain compliance with Pennsylvania's IOLTA requirements.



The **Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security Board** ensures clients will be reimbursed when lawyers misappropriate funds.

- During fiscal year 2019 the board's review of **208 claims** resulted in **107 awards** totaling **\$1,144,837**.



The **Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court** regulates attorney conduct in support of its mission to “protect the public, maintain the integrity of the profession and safeguard the reputation of the courts.”

- **4,353 cases were resolved in 2019**; of which, 211 matters involved the imposition of discipline.
- This is a **30 percent increase** over the number of matters in which discipline was imposed in 2019, as a result of the Board's goal to expeditiously move cases through the system.
- **437 attorneys** placed on administrative suspension for non-payment of registration fees, effective Sept. 13, 2019.
- Nearly 84 percent completed registration by the due date of July 1. As of July 16, the last day to register without penalty, nearly **97 percent of attorneys had completed their registration**.

Read more about the [specific functions of each board](#), and learn about the Court's different [advisory groups and independent entities](#).

* With the exception of the Minor Judiciary Education Board.

ASSISTING THE SUPREME COURT

Continuing education

Under order of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, all judges and lawyers in the state are required to complete continuing education requirements each year. Volunteers are appointed by the Court to make up the various boards that are responsible for overseeing these efforts.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



The **Minor Judiciary Education Board (MJEB)** administers certification and education programs for magisterial district judges and arraignment court magistrates.

- **601 judges** each attended **week-long sessions** of judicial education.
- Some 2019 MJEB session topics included:
 - How Being Trauma Informed Improves Judicial Decision Making
 - Evidentiary and Emoji Law
 - Human Trafficking



The **Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Board** regulates lawyer compliance with CLE requirements and accredits ongoing education programs for lawyers. 2019 was the initial year of a **three-year pro bono pilot program** that allows attorneys to receive one CLE credit for every five hours of pro bono service completed through accredited pro bono CLE providers. A maximum of three CLE credits per compliance period may be earned in this manner. More information on the pilot project and a list of participating organizations is available at <https://www.pacle.org/providers/pro-bono>

- **99.8 % of lawyers** met the requirements of the CLE Rules.
- **139 lawyers** were administratively suspended for failure to comply with CLE.
- **61,505 attorneys** participated in continuing legal education.
- **818,923 CLE credits** were taken.



The **Pennsylvania Continuing Judicial Education Board of Judges** oversees the continuing education program for trial and appellate judges in ethics, as well as as procedural and substantive law.

- Trial court judges completed a combined total of **13,649 hours** of continuing education.

Read more about the [specific functions of each board](#), and learn about the Court's different [advisory groups and independent entities](#).

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Educating jurists

AOPC/[Judicial Education](#) provides continuing education opportunities to Pennsylvania's jurists, working closely with various planning committees to address new and emerging areas of law or issues of importance to judges. A knowledgeable judiciary is essential to the fair and impartial administration of justice.

Judges serving the appellate courts, Courts of Common Pleas and the Philadelphia Municipal Court complete continuing judicial education (CJE) requirements to stay abreast of changes in law, procedure, behavioral science, technological advancement and legal circumstances unique to Pennsylvania.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



594 trial and appellate court judges were **100% compliant** with the 2019 CJE requirement.



Trial and appellate court judges recorded **13,649 hours** of continuing judicial education, an average of **23 hours per judge**.

Judges earned **2,536.50 hours** through programs developed by AOPC/Judicial Education. This accounts for nearly **20% of all CJE credits** recorded in 2019.



In addition to their support of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges (PCSTJ) Education Committee, **the Judicial Education Department offered 8 programs**, many developed through partnerships with law schools across the Commonwealth.

The courses were presented live in one location and simulcast to sites throughout the state - including Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, State College, Scranton, Dubois and Erie.



More than **300 judges** attended each biannual meeting of the PCSTJ. Judges recorded **5,189 CJE credit hours** earned at the PCSTJ meetings, accounting for **38% of all credits** recorded in 2019.



Eighty-seven judges recorded CJE credit hours for teaching or serving as faculty for **64 distinct courses**.

Working with state government partners

AOPC's [Office of Legislative Affairs](#)

represents the AOPC before the state's executive and legislative branches of government.

Legislative Affairs staff is responsible for coordinating all interaction with the legislature, subject to the guidance of the court administrator and the Chief Justice of Pennsylvania.

They provide legislative support to the judiciary including all courts, boards, advisory groups and the AOPC.

As an important result of the judiciary's commitment to working with their government partners, proposed legislation receives crucial input from AOPC's legislative staff regarding the effects it may have on relevant courts, as well as on Pennsylvania's judicial system as a whole.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



In Dec. 2019, Governor Tom Wolf, Chief Justice Thomas G. Saylor and leaders of the General Assembly from both houses and parties **jointly established the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force**. The goal of the task force is to deliver data-driven findings and recommendations in a final report that will serve as the **foundation for statutory, budgetary and administrative changes**.



Worked to identify appointees to the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee within the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), which was created as a part of Justice Reinvestment Initiative 2. Some duties of the advisory committee include reviewing grant applications for county intermediate punishment (CIP) programs, developing a funding plan for county adult probation and parole departments and advising on related issues, making recommendations/adopting standards for probation and parole personnel and assisting PCCD with the implementation of CIP.



Engaged with policymakers as work began on probation reform in concert with members of the Legislation Committee of the Conference of State Trial Judges. Judges participating in a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing expressed general support of trial judges for reforms, while cautioning that changes must be balanced against public safety concerns and preservation of judicial discretion to ensure defendants struggling with mental health issues and addiction are supervised in the appropriate manner. Legislative Affairs also **provided guidance on a proposal to create a Task Force on Technical Probation Violations**, focusing on probation violation probable cause hearings.



Provided subject matter and programmatic guidance to the legislative and executive branches as they looked to expand the expungement and "Clean Slate" laws by adding acquittals and pardons, respectively. If enacted, certain criminal history information regarding pardons will be automatically sealed using AOPC/IT's technological infrastructure. Additionally, and in concert with AOPC Communications and IT, Legislative Affairs **developed a Clean Slate informational page on the UJS website to provide guidance to the legislature and the public**.



Facilitated data requests that assisted the legislature in its crafting of legislation amending the Crimes Code, Transportation Code, Crime Victims Act and other statutes.

Public education and outreach

AOPC's [Office of Communications](#) manages media inquiries, social media accounts, website content, public information and educational opportunities to engage with the judicial branch.

By focusing on communication and outreach, the Office of Communications ensures that the public has access to information about the key court programs, services and support available to them.

From educational videos to monthly infographics and an increased focus on the use of social media channels, case information, data and general information about the courts is more readily available and accessible to the public.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:



By the end of 2019, the [@PACourts Twitter page](#) had nearly **9,000 followers** and generated nearly **250,000** tweet impressions.



Gained nearly 500 followers of [PA Courts Facebook page](#) in the first year.



Funded by STOP grant funds, AOPC ran a social media campaign on Facebook and Google to educate victims of abuse that protection orders are an option to help stop abuse. Campaign received **21,511 clicks**, generated **27,718 page views** and **2,384,900 impressions**.



Communications Office responded to **900 media calls** and **50 media data requests**.



PA Courts InfoShare is a monthly educational campaign explaining common legal terms and showcasing data collected by the UJS computer systems. For more visit <http://www.pacourts.us/news-and-statistics/media-resources>.

Public education and outreach

2019 HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED):



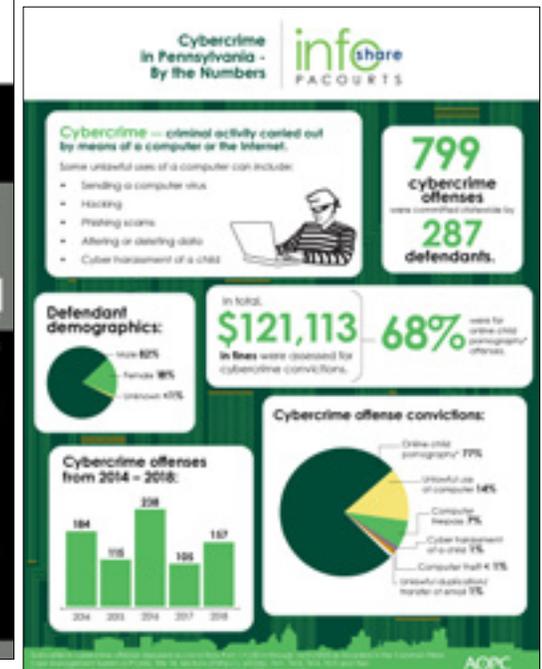
Produced a new, animated court education video – [Understanding the Pennsylvania Courts](#)



Developed [I Am Worth It](#) commercial for the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) encouraging community-based support for local children and families.



Developed monthly [infographics](#) on different court data topics





AOPC ANNUAL REPORT 2019

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF PENNSYLVANIA COURTS