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# 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

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## Kalamazoo County Courts

NINTH CIRCUIT COURT  
EIGHTH DISTRICT COURT  
KALAMAZOO COUNTY PROBATE COURT





**KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS  
2015 ANNUAL REPORT  
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STATE OF MICHIGAN



KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

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Chief Circuit/Probate Judge  
Probate Court  
1536 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
Phone: 269-383-8669  
Fax: 269-383-8685

Richard A. Santoni,  
Chief District Judge  
8th District Court  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
Phone: 269-383-8929  
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August 2016

Citizens of the State of Michigan and Kalamazoo County

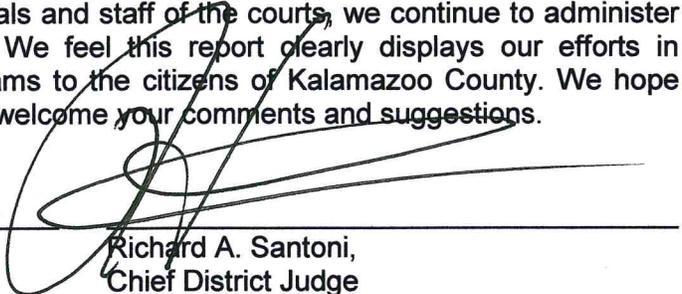
Michigan Supreme Court  
P.O. Box 30052  
Lansing, MI 48933

Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners  
201 West Kalamazoo Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

On behalf of our judges, administrators, and court staff, we are pleased to present the 2015 Annual Report of the Ninth Circuit Court, Eighth District Court and Kalamazoo Probate Court. The Annual Report is designed to show the organization of the courts, describe jurisdictions and caseloads, highlight accomplishments and challenges, and to provide statistical data to measure court activity. The Annual Report has been collaboratively produced by the three courts since 2001.

With the dedication of the elected officials and staff of the courts, we continue to administer justice through difficult budget times. We feel this report clearly displays our efforts in providing effective services and programs to the citizens of Kalamazoo County. We hope you find the information useful, and we welcome your comments and suggestions.

  
Curtis J. Bell,  
Chief Circuit/Probate Judge

  
Richard A. Santoni,  
Chief District Judge

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

## *Court Facilities*



**Michigan Avenue Courthouse**  
**227 W. Michigan Avenue**  
**Kalamazoo, MI 49007**  
**Circuit Court – Trial Division**  
**District Court – Criminal**



**Juvenile Home**  
**1424 Gull Road**  
**Kalamazoo, MI 49048**  
**Circuit Court – Juvenile Home**



**Gull Road Justice Complex**  
**1536 Gull Road**  
**Kalamazoo, MI 49048**  
**Circuit Court – Family Division**  
**Circuit Court – Friend of the Court**  
**Probate Court**



**Crosstown Center**  
**150 E. Crosstown Parkway**  
**Kalamazoo, MI 49001**  
**District Court – Civil, Traffic**

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

## *Jurisdiction of Courts*

### *Circuit Court Authority*

The Ninth Circuit Court is the trial court of general jurisdiction in Kalamazoo County and has county-wide jurisdiction over all actions except those given by state law to another court, including:

- criminal matters in which the potential sentence is incarceration of one year or more
- domestic relations matters
- personal protection orders
- juvenile matters pertaining to delinquency or criminal activity
- juvenile guardianships
- child protective proceedings
- parental consent waivers
- adoptions
- name changes
- emancipations
- infectious disease
- general civil actions involving claims of \$25,000 or more
- cases appealed from another court or by an administrative agency
- superintending control over other courts within the judicial circuit, subject to final superintending control of the Supreme Court
- final decisions of the Circuit Court may be appealed to the Court of Appeals

### *District Court Authority*

The District Court has exclusive jurisdiction of:

- misdemeanors where potential punishment does not exceed one year in jail
- arraignments, setting and acceptance of bail, and conducting preliminary examinations in felony cases
- traffic offenses
- civil litigation up to \$25,000
- garnishments
- eviction proceedings, land contract and mortgage foreclosures
- small claims for civil cases up to \$3,000 . . . litigants agree to waive their right to a jury, rules of evidence, representation by a lawyer, and the right to appeal the District judge's decision
- District Court decisions may be appealed to the Circuit Court

### *Probate Court Authority*

The Constitution of 1963 provided that “. . . the jurisdiction, powers and duties of the probate court and of the judges thereof shall be provided by law. They shall have original jurisdiction in all cases of juvenile delinquents and dependents, except as otherwise provided by law.” With the creation of the Family Division of the Circuit Court (January 1, 1998), many former Probate Court matters, such as juvenile delinquency, juvenile guardianships, child protective proceedings, parental consent waivers, adoptions, name changes and infectious disease, were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Circuit Court. Law currently provides that the Probate Court has jurisdiction over the administration of:

- decedents' estates and trusts
- guardianships
- conservatorships
- involuntary commitment of mentally ill persons
- final decisions resulting from a Probate Court hearing may be appealed to the Court of Appeals

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

## Judges

### *Judges Serving the Kalamazoo County Courts in 2015*



HONORABLE  
TIFFANY A. ANKLEY

Judge of Probate Court  
since 2015

Serving in District Court  
since 2015



HONORABLE  
CURTIS J. BELL

Judge of Probate Court since  
2005

Serving in Circuit Court Family  
Division 2005-2014

Serving in Probate Court since  
2014; Chief Judge of Circuit  
Court and Probate Court since  
2014



HONORABLE  
ANNE E. BLATCHFORD

Judge of District Court  
since 2004

Serving in District Court  
since 2004



HONORABLE  
PAUL J. BRIDENSTINE

Judge of District Court  
2000-2015

Judge of Circuit Court  
since 2015

Serving in Circuit Court  
Trial Division since 2015



HONORABLE  
GARY C. GIGUERE, JR.

Judge of Circuit Court  
since 2007

Serving in Circuit Court  
Trial Division since 2007

Chief Judge Pro-Tempore  
of Trial Division since 2012



HONORABLE  
STEPHEN D. GORSALITZ

Judge of Circuit Court  
since 1999

Serving in Circuit Court  
Family Division since 1999

Presiding Judge of Family  
Division since 2014



HONORABLE  
CHRISTOPHER T.  
HAENICKE, JR.

Judge of District Court  
since 2015

Serving in District Court  
since 2015



HONORABLE  
ROEBERT C. KROPF

Judge of District Court  
since 1991

Serving in District Court  
since 1991

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

## Judges

### *Judges Serving the Kalamazoo County Courts in 2015*

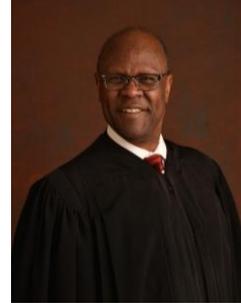


HONORABLE  
PAMELA L. LIGHTVOET

Judge of Circuit Court  
since 2007

Serving in Circuit Court  
Trial Division since 2007

Presiding Judge of the  
Trial Division since 2012



HONORABLE  
ALEXANDER C. LIPSEY

Judge of Circuit Court  
since 2007

Serving in Circuit Court  
Trial Division since 2007



HONORABLE  
JULIE K. PHILLIPS

Judge of District Court  
since 2009

Serving in Circuit Court  
Family Division since 2014



HONORABLE  
G. SCOTT PIERANGELI

Judge of Probate Court  
since 2013

Serving in Circuit Court  
Family Division since 2013



HONORABLE  
RICHARD A. SANTONI

Judge of District Court  
since 1997

Serving in District Court  
since 1997

Chief Judge of District  
Court since 2015



HONORABLE  
VINCENT C. WESTRA

Judge of District Court  
since 1992

Serving in District Court  
since 1992

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

## *Court Administrators, Referees, and Magistrates*

### *Court Administrators in 2015*



**Suzanne M. Darling**  
Circuit Court  
Administrator  
and Circuit  
Court Family  
Division Referee



**Tina L. Keifer**  
District Court  
Administrator



**Steven E. Burnham**  
Probate Court  
Administrator,  
Probate  
Register and  
Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Referee

### *Circuit Court Referees Serving the Courts in 2015*



**Rodney K. Budka**  
Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Referee



**Douglas S. Cameron**  
Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Referee



**Robin V. King**  
Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Referee



**Dori K. Leo**  
Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Referee



**Denise E. Noble**  
Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Referee



**Kate M. Procnier**  
Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Referee

### *District Court Magistrate Serving in 2015*



**Nicholas  
Schaberg**

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

## *Volunteer Programs*

### **4-H**

Participating Juvenile Home male youths are introduced to different facets of agriculture and farming. A facilitator meets with youths on a weekly basis, educating them about self substantiality and perseverance. The youths are also taught how to build radios, wind turbines, kinetic cars, and other projects.

### **Active Citizenship Program**

Western Michigan University School of Medicine collaborates with the Probate Court to send medical students into the community and to conduct reviews of guardianships of legally incapacitated individuals, minors and individuals with developmental disabilities. The students have the unique opportunity to “learn by doing” in actual real life settings.

### **Alternatives**

This program provides a safe environment for participating Juvenile Home females to discuss issues around positive relationships, self confidence, reproduction and abstinence.

### **CASA - Court Appointed Special Advocate**

CASA volunteers are matched with children who are under the court's jurisdiction as a result of neglect by family. The CASA volunteer maintains close contact with the child while advocating for the child's best interest.

### **CrossFit 269**

Participating Juvenile Home youths are allowed to workout at CrossFit weekly with individualized training. Youths learn about the importance of taking care of their bodies through proper exercise.

### **Dental Clinic**

Several dentists and dental hygienists from the Kalamazoo community provide “pro bono” dental care to our detained youthful offenders.

### **Dispute Resolution Services of Gryphon Place**

Probate Court and Dispute Resolution Services of Gryphon Place Center use mediators for guardianships and conservatorships. Eighth District Court uses mediators for general civil and landlord/tenant, as well as small claims matters.

### **Family Law Assistance Clinic**

Family law attorneys volunteer for the Family Law Assistance Clinic to assist and answer questions regarding family law matters.

### **Foster Care Review Board**

Volunteers, serving on the Foster Care Review Board, review the cases of neglected children in foster care and make recommendations to the court.

### **Genealogy Research**

Probate Court, in collaboration with volunteers from the Kalamazoo Valley Genealogy Society, assists individuals with researching ancestry.

### **Girl Scouts**

After participating in the Juvenile Home KEYS program, participating female youths are offered the opportunity to join an organization that will last beyond their KEYS involvement. Each girl in the program is considered an active member of Girl Scouts with the possibility of accessing additional resources. A facilitator meets with the girls on a biweekly basis.

### **Kalamazoo Lawyers Auxiliary**

This organization provides the Juvenile Home Late Show, annual Holiday Party, and monies for special needs. The ongoing commitment of the Kalamazoo Lawyers Auxiliary continues to provide a great service to many young people in our community.

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

## ***K.I.A. (Kalamazoo Institute of Art)***

The Juvenile in collaboration with the KIA connects local artist with participating Juvenile Home youths to introduce various forms of art. The youths are able to learn different techniques and skills which encourage patience and creativity.

## ***KYD Network (Kalamazoo Youth Development Network)***

This program provides KEYS staff with training to enhance participation and outcomes of the program. KYD also provides the program with assessment tools for both the youth and the overall program. All the information collected is used as a tool for professional development and to improve social emotional learning strategies.

## ***The Late Show***

The Kalamazoo Lawyers Auxiliary recruits community individuals who pledge their time to read face-to-face or through a microphone directly into the rooms of young offenders during sensitive bedtime hours. Comforting stories create a drowsy atmosphere for a good night's rest.

## ***Michigan Works!***

Staff from Michigan Works! provides weekly vocational and employment readiness skills to participating Juvenile Home male youths. Youths are able to write resumes and participate in mock interviewing with constructive feedback. They also learn about various career fields.

## ***Narcotics Anonymous***

Reformed substance users/abusers meet with older youths in the Juvenile Home facility and discuss the negative effects of drugs, via actual experience, and teach the value of inner strength that is needed to overcome the "street culture."

## ***Open Roads***

Participating Juvenile Home male youths meet off site weekly at Open Roads and receive hands-on work experience. Each youth is taught how to build and maintain a bike. Youths are also required to apply life skills taught by staff and model positive behavior. Each youth that completes the program receives a bike and is eligible for employment (summer internship) through Open Roads.

## ***R.A.W.K. (Read And Write Kalamazoo)***

This program provides weekly literacy programming to participating Juvenile Home male and female youths. Staff from R.A.W.K. work hands-on and on location with each youth in the program. Youths are given opportunities for self expression while learning literacy skills. Articles created by the youths are compiled in a book for each participant.

## ***Student Interns***

The Ninth Circuit Court annually collaborates with colleges and universities by providing field placements for student interns. Students gain a practical learning experience as well as serve as a resource to various departments in the system. The District, Circuit and Probate Courts use college interns in judicial offices, probation services and records offices.

## ***Youth for Christ***

Non-denominational spiritual guidance is offered to Juvenile Home residents by Youth for Christ. Services are held regularly, volunteers provide friendship to detained youths, and nationally known resources (musical bands, athletes and drama troupes) share the power of spiritual development.

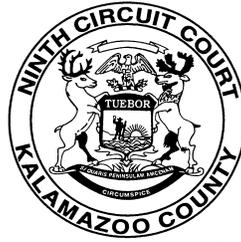
## ***Probate Clinic***

Probate attorneys volunteer for the Probate Clinic to assist and answer questions regarding probate law matters.

## ***YMCA***

Staff from the YMCA provides physical education to male and female youths in the Juvenile Home facility.

## *Vision and Mission*



### *Vision Statement*

The Ninth Judicial Circuit Court will be a leader among Michigan courts in the provision of justice, innovative programming, financial efficiency, service to people and protection of the public's safety.

### *Mission Statement*

The Ninth Judicial Circuit Court will provide timely, fair and cost effective disposition of all matters properly presented to any of its service units or courts. We subscribe to these guiding principles and values:

To serve the public and foster a friendly accessible environment, treating all individuals with dignity, respect, honesty and fairness.

To operate with a pro-active, innovative and progressive approach to program development and implementation, remaining open to suggestions for improvement.

To respect the interests of the taxpayers and our funding unit by continuously seeking greater efficiencies for improved service in coordination with elected officials, county departments and other units of government.

To provide the least restrictive alternative for offenders consistent with public safety while seeking to maximize restorative and therapeutic justice.

To comply with all Trial Court Performance Standards promulgated by the Michigan Supreme Court.

To encourage the spirit of teamwork among courts and service units to exemplify a unified Circuit Court.

To serve as an example worthy of emulation by other courts in Michigan and the United States.

# 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court

## Personnel

### 2015 CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

**Suzanne Darling**, Circuit Court Administrator

**Peter Holt**, Juvenile Home Administrator

**Ruth Gruizenga**, Automation & Technology Administrator

**Kathy Flack**, Family Division Administrator

**Ann Filkins**, Trial Division/Problem Solving Court Administrator

**Susan Sayles**, Finance Administrator

**Nigel Crum**, Friend of the Court

### RETIREMENTS IN 2015



**Rodney Budka** retired from Circuit Court-Family Division on July 10 after 39 years of service. He had a large vocabulary, a large wardrobe, and a large heart. Regardless of the accent he chose to use, his knowledge of the English language was out of this world. There does not exist a thesaurus large enough to rival him. He used that knowledge to fuel his sense of humor as he joked with the best of them. To top it off, his laugh was so contagious; one could not help but smile. Additionally, one might have noticed his keen fashion sense as the details of every suit were carefully chosen; including his socks, pocket squares, and ties. However, neither his passion for words nor his love of clothing compared to his heart for the people that came before him. In every instance, Rod was caring and understanding towards everyone he met. He was a charismatic, wise, unforgettable, incredible human being. Rod once said, "I am not here to control the lives of the families, but to guide them to make the right decisions for their own lives because ultimately, they just need a little guidance in the right direction."



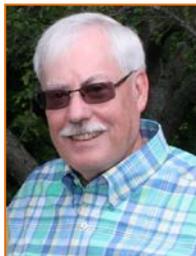
**Lynn Roth**, Court Services Specials II for Family Division, retired in February of 2015 after more than three decades with the court. During her many years with the Court, Lynn held positions in the Friend of the Court, Trial Division, and Lynn plans to be more involved with recreational sports, as well as enjoying life and more time with friends.



**Dennis Ladd** began his employment at the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home 4/13/1987 and worked as a Youth Specialist on the overnight shift until his retirement on 4/16/2015. His wisdom and experience was definitely a great influence on other staff.



**Delores Dickinson** retired from the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home on October 16, 2015. She started as a cook for the Juvenile Home beginning April 22, 1994, and she also served the Intensive Learning Center (ILC). Delores's smile and upbeat attitude was a positive influence for staff, residents, and students.



**Dr. Fenimore Johnson ("Doc")** retired from the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home on January 12, 2015. He served as Psychologist for 8 ½ years, beginning his employment September 30, 2006. Doc was much loved and respected by staff and residents and his guidance and sense of humor was greatly appreciated.

## Personnel

### CASA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR – 2015 KALAMAZOO AWARD WINNERS



On April 17, 2015, CASA Volunteer Lilly Amos was awarded the Kalamazoo Child Abuse and Neglect Council's Volunteer of the Year Award. Lilly has been a CASA volunteer since 2005. She is extremely dedicated to CASA and you can always find her at the court advocating for at least one CASA case, if not two. Lilly always goes above and beyond her call, advocating for the CASA children she is assigned to. She checks on them at school; follows up with their counseling appointments; has contact when appropriate with parents and is always in touch with the foster parents/placements. The children learn to trust her and are appreciative of the consistent role she plays in their lives. Lilly is an excellent example of devotion, dedication and advocacy.

### MICHIGAN JUVENILE DETENTION ASSOCIATION – 2015 AWARD WINNERS

#### TREATMENT WORKER OF THE YEAR



Bobby Hicks

#### YOUTH SPECIALIST OF THE YEAR



Lavita Washington

#### SUPPORT WORKER OF THE YEAR



Sandra Sherrod

## Major Events



### Youth Driven Video Project Event

Ten Youthful Offender Transition Program youth met regularly over the summer to create a video project that bravely showcased their experiences with the justice system, our community, and their personal journeys through the YOTP. Their video project was presented as a community event that included a photographic and audiovisual exhibit.

### Construction of the Gull Road Justice Complex

In 2014, Kalamazoo County acquired a vacant parcel of land adjacent to the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home with a vision to relocate the family related judicial services and improve operations through efficiencies in design and function. TowerPinkster architects and engineers worked closely with the HOK engineers to design a building that blends into the surrounding neighborhood. The building efforts continued through 2015 with plans for completion to take place in 2016. The Circuit Court-Family Division, Probate Court, and Friend of the Court will all be located in the new facility. Many hours were spent reviewing the design plans and making preparations for the grand opening and moving of the Circuit Court Family Division, Probate Court, and Friend of the Court to the new facility.



### Bike & Build Cycling Event Participation

Rick Dubert, Youth Specialist and founder of the Junior Chefs program, partnered with the Juvenile Home Foundation to organize and sponsor meals for the Bike & Build cycling event held on July 8, 2015. Along with the help of his junior chefs, Rick planned, prepared, and served twenty-five cyclists breakfast, lunch, and dinner before the Bike & Build participants set out the morning of July 9th for their next destination in South Bend, Indiana.

The bicyclists involved with the Bike & Build program travel across the nation, breaking to help build houses, help with landscaping and give presentations to communities. During many of their stops, the cyclists get the chance to network with different community organizations. The Bike & Build program is young adult

driven and participants believe that through engaging young adults as active citizens and inspiring them to help with affordable housing efforts, young adults will become more engaged in the community overall.

## Adoption Day



The adoptions of 9 children were finalized at the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Family Division as part of Michigan Adoption Day. This statewide event is planned in conjunction with the Michigan Supreme Court, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and the child Welfare Services Division of the State Court Administrative Office. This is the 15<sup>th</sup> year that the court opened the normally closed court process to the public and the media in the hope of inspiring others to adopt.



*\*Photos by Ellen Dykstra*



***This year's event saw the building filled with clowns, balloons, carnival games, food, and laughter.***



### ***Michigan Adoption Fast Facts:***

- In 2015 over 13,000 children were in the foster care system. The vast majority are victims of abuse and neglect.*
- There are about 2,400 children who have the goal of adoption.*
- More than 1,700 children were adopted through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and private adoption agencies in fiscal year 2014. Most were adopted by their foster parents or relatives.*

## *2015 Major Accomplishments*

- Construction of the new Gull Road Justice Complex began.
- State Judicial Institute grant funding received for a consultant to assist in planning for the future of the Circuit, District, and Probate Courts.
- Came in under budget for 2015.
- Child Care Grant approved.
- Over \$425,000 in grants for Drug Treatment Court Programs.
- Over \$62,000 in medical incentive payback.
- \$130,000 in grants for Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program.
- Collected/distributed \$24.6 million in support, including over \$7 million in back support.
- Received grant awarded funds of \$90,000 to create a Juvenile Mental Health Treatment & Recovery Court.
- Added 4 new court appointed Special Advocate volunteers.
- Raised over \$20,000 for the Juvenile Home Foundation to support programming.
- Moral Recognition Therapy program introduced in the Juvenile Home's On-Trac treatment unit.
- Female choir introduced in the ILC.
- Introduced K.E.Y.S. (Kalamazoo Empowering Youth for Success) Program.
- Implemented Gender Specific Programming.
- Introduced the Academic Accountability Center.
- Implemented Thinking for a Change Model.
- Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument.
- Scanners and laptops were purchased to enhance efficiencies.
- Upgraded courtrooms with audio visual system control panels.
- Added additional monitor to the witness stand for enhanced viewing.
- INFAX docket displays were purchased.
- Personal Protection documents from 2009 to present were made available electronically through Paper on Demand.
- Name change documents from 2012 to present were made available electronically through Paper on Demand.
- Implementation of electronic signatures.
- Introduction of electronic submission of monthly Crime Victim Rights Reports.
- Storage of juror questionnaire electronically.

## Technology

Circuit Court continues to enhance its technological resources in order to keep pace with ever-increasing daily functions. The court's technology unit, in conjunction with judges and staff, diligently strive toward effective technological advancements throughout the court.

### 2015 Technological Enhancements

- Scanners and laptops were purchased to enhance efficiencies.
- Upgraded courtrooms with audio visual system control panels.
- Added additional monitor to the witness stand for enhanced viewing.
- INFAX docket displays were purchased.
- Personal protection documents from 2009 to present were made available electronically through Paper on Demand.
- Name change documents from 2012 to present were made available electronically through Paper on Demand.
- Introduction of electronic submission of monthly Crime Victim Rights Reports.
- Storage of juror questionnaire electronically.
- Implementation of electronic signatures.
- Juvenile admissions and releases were made available electronically.

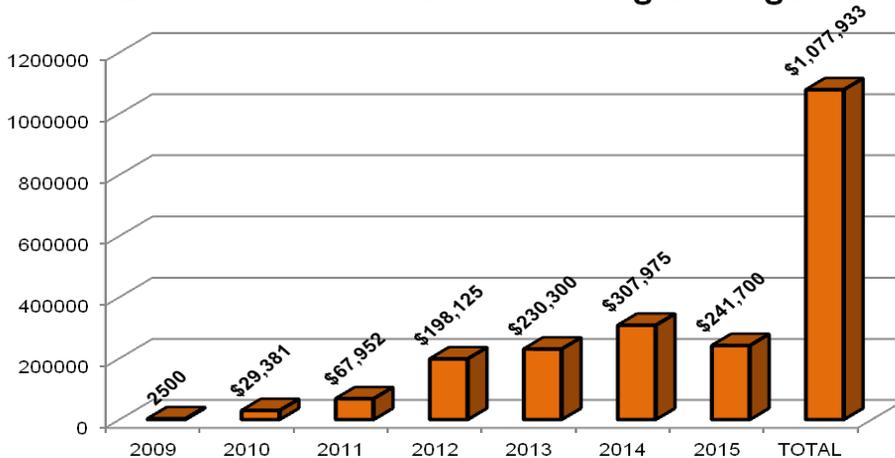
Numerous hours of planning and research are dedicated to technological advancements. In 2016 and beyond, many enhancements are being explored for implementation.

- Acquire Odyssey capability to enhance documents with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Level 3 and additional server.
- Implement conversion of adoption case files to Odyssey.
- Integrate Judge Edition with Odyssey.
- Continue implementation of electronic signatures for additional case types.
- Increase hot spot locations through court buildings.
- Purchase additional laptops to continue enhancing efficiencies.

As a result of opening the Gull Road Justice Complex in March 2016, the following technological enhancements were put into place for the new facility.

- Purchase and install additional scanners throughout the building.
- Installed JAVS Suite 7 across 10 courtrooms and hearing rooms in the building.
- Purchase and install Infax docket displays in the building.

### Estimated Video Conferencing Savings



Video conferencing yields cost savings for the County, State, attorneys, and taxpayers. Every Circuit courtroom and hearing room is equipped for video conferencing. The court continues to encourage expanded use of video conferencing.

## *Drug Treatment Courts*

The Drug Treatment Court Programs continue to be an effective alternative that diverts incarceration for non-violent felons and juvenile offenders with substance abuse problems. Program components include frequent drug testing, substance abuse and mental health treatment, intense court supervision, attendance at status review hearings and support groups, payment of restitution, community service, and education/employment requirements.



### Judges presiding over Drug Treatment Courts in 2015

**District Judge Robert C. Kropf**

*Men's Drug Treatment Court*

**District Judge Anne E. Blatchford**

*Women's Drug Treatment Court*

**Probate Judge G. Scott Pierangeli**

*Juvenile Drug Treatment Court*

**Circuit Judge Stephen D. Gorsalitz**

*Family Dependency Treatment Court*

**Circuit Judge Alexander C. Lipsey**

*Swift and Sure Sanctions Program*

### *Adult Men and Women's Drug Treatment Court*

The Men and Women's Drug Treatment Court Program diverts nonviolent felons, with substance abuse problems, from incarceration in jail and/or prison. Participants also include Department of Corrections' probationers who are sentenced to the program as a condition of probation or as a probation violation, and parole violators. Participants are given an opportunity to become involved in substance abuse treatment and to comply with other requirements such as attending bi-weekly court sessions, submitting random urinalysis samples, and reporting to program staff. They must also follow up on referrals made to other community agencies, which may include the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Housing Resources, Maternal Support Services, the YWCA Sexual and Domestic Assault Programs, the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research and others. In order for a defendant to participate in the Men's or Women's Drug Treatment Court Programs, the defendant must enter a guilty plea to the charge(s). The defendant is represented by counsel during the plea process and may file a motion to set aside and dismiss the plea upon successful completion of the program. Defendants may also be sentenced to the program for a new offense, or upon a probation or parole violation. The Women's Drug Treatment Court Program, one of the first in the nation, was implemented in 1992. The Men's Drug Treatment Court Program was implemented in 1997. To date, the programs have graduated over 870 clients.

## ***Family Dependency Treatment Court Program***

The Family Dependency Treatment Court Program is located at the Family Division of the 9th Circuit Court, 1536 Gull Road, Kalamazoo, MI 49048. The Family Dependency Treatment Court is a court devoted to cases of child abuse and neglect that involve substance abuse by the child's parents or other caregivers. Its purpose is to protect the safety and welfare of children while giving parents the tools they need to become sober, responsible caregivers. To accomplish this, the court draws together an interdisciplinary team that works collaboratively to assess the family's situation and to devise a comprehensive case plan that addresses the needs of both the children and the parents. In this way, the court team provides children with quick access to permanency and offers parents a viable chance to achieve sobriety, provide a safe and nurturing home, and hold their families together.



## ***Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program***

The Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program (SSSPP) is an intensive probation supervision program that targets high-risk felony offenders with a history of probation violations or failures. Governed by MCL 771A.1 et seq., SSSPP is modeled on Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (HOPE) Program, which studies have shown to be very successful in improving the rate of successful completion of probation among high-risk probationers. SSSPP participants are closely monitored, including being subjected to frequent random testing for drug and alcohol use and being required to attend frequent meetings with probation and/or case management staff. SSSPP aims to improve probationer success by promptly imposing graduated sanctions, including small amounts of jail time, for probation violations. The 9th Circuit Court implemented the SSSPP in May of 2013.

## ***Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Program***

The Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Program is a post-adjudication program for non-violent juvenile offenders who have been assessed with substance abuse problems contributing to delinquent behavior. Program components include frequent drug testing, substance abuse and mental health treatment, intense court supervision, attendance at bi-weekly status review hearings and support groups, payment of restitution, community service and education/employment requirements. Participants progress through four phases of incrementally reduced program requirements and supervision, as sobriety and engagement in drug free activities is maintained. The Juvenile Drug Treatment Court is a family focused program, which requires parental involvement in the juvenile's treatment and recovery. Sanctions and incentives are applied to encourage, motivate and support drug free and crime free behavior.

## *Family Law Assistance Clinic*



A joint effort of the 9th Circuit Court and the Kalamazoo County Bar Association to meet the needs of individuals who represent themselves in domestic matters has resulted in the Family Law Assistance Clinic, which began providing services in May of 2010 at the Ninth Circuit Court – Gull Road Courthouse.

Following the successful format of the clinic established in Probate Court, the Family Law Assistance Clinic is staffed by volunteer family law attorneys who are available the first, second, third and fourth Wednesdays of each month to assist and answer questions regarding family law matters. Appointments can be made by calling Gryphon Place at (269) 552-3434

Some of the issues that have been discussed at the clinic include: family issues, divorce, establishing visitation, custody, personal protection matters, child support, parenting time, and clarification of various forms used by the court. The attorneys are often able to assist at the half-hour meeting or may indicate that the matter would be best handled by retaining an attorney because of complicated issues.



Throughout 2015, several local attorneys donated time to serve over 400 individuals. Oftentimes people without attorneys ask judges or court employees for legal advice, which judges and employees are not allowed to give. The clinic offers a valuable resource to the community and has been well received by both the attorneys and the clients.

The 9th Circuit Court judges and staff extend their gratitude to all of the attorneys who served the Family Law Assistance Clinic in 2015. Their contributions of time and knowledge have made the Family Law Assistance Clinic a success.

## *Juvenile Services Update*



### Juvenile Mental Health Treatment & Recovery Court

A planning grant was received for the establishment of a Juvenile Mental Health Treatment & Recovery Court in the amount of \$36,000. Carol Cramer Brooks was hired to assist us in preparing for the full grant application. Meetings with stakeholders took place and policies, forms, a Local Administrative Order and a Memorandum of Understanding were created.

### YASI Assessment Tool

In November 2015 the YASI Assessment Tool was implemented and all probation officers were trained. Procedures for frequency of administering assessments and reporting results were evaluated and reviewed. This tool allowed management to assist staff in developing appropriate interventions for the juveniles who were served.

### K.E.Y.S. (Kalamazoo Empowering Youth for Success)

The K.E.Y.S. program became operational in October 2015. Three new Juvenile Probation Officers were hired and assigned to the program. The foundation of the program is a behavior treatment model called Thinking for a Change. All KEYS staff participated in a week long training provided by the University of Cincinnati in October of 2015. Several other probations officers, along with juvenile home staff, participated in the training as well.

K.E.Y.S. seeks to address many of the gaps in services identified by probation officers and hearing officials. These areas include gender specific, vocational, and educational programming along with after-hours reporting (juveniles report after school until 8:00 p.m.). Since becoming operational, K.E.Y.S. has worked with 4-H, Alternatives, CrossFit 269, Girl Scouts, K.I.A., KYD Network, Michigan Works!, Open Roads, and R.A.W.K.

# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## *Finances*

The Circuit Court continued to remain fiscally responsible in its actions for 2015. With the help of everyone in the court, the court operated within its 2015 budget. Expenses were closely monitored. New projects and grants were either started or continued, generating additional revenue. Grant funds and fundraisers included the following:

- **Gilmore Foundation:** \$22,396 for operation of the YOTP.
- **Kalamazoo Community Foundation:** \$64,942 for operation of the YOTP.
- **Harold and Grace Upjohn Foundation:** \$7,704 for YOTP.
- **DeGroot Family:** \$9,585 for YOTP.
- **Michigan Drug Court Grant through SCAO:** \$70,797 to be used for Men's Drug Treatment Court.
- **Byrne Men's Grant through SCAO:** \$139,662 for Men's Drug Treatment Court Program.
- **Kalamazoo Community Foundation:** \$80,931 towards the Men's Drug Treatment Court Program.
- **Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health:** \$47,911 for Men's Drug Treatment Court Program.
- **Byrne Women's Grant through SCAO:** \$139,364 for Women's Drug Treatment Court Program.
- **Michigan Drug Court Grant through SCAO:** \$4,004 for Women's Drug Treatment Court Program.
- **Kalamazoo Community Foundation:** \$127,737 towards the Women's Drug Treatment Court Program.
- **Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health:** \$24,988 for Women's Drug Treatment Court.
- **Swift and Sure Sanction Program through SCAO:** \$88,955.
- **Michigan Drug Court Grant through SCAO:** \$33,875 for Juvenile Drug Court and \$29,166 for Juvenile Mental Health Grant.
- **Kalamazoo Community Foundation:** \$20,454 for Juvenile Drug Court.
- **Michigan Drug Court Grant through SCAO:** \$55,719 towards Family Dependency Treatment Court.
- **Federal Incentives through the State of Michigan:** \$323,431 for Friend of the Court.
- **Medical Incentives through the State of Michigan:** \$62,755 for Friend of the Court.
- **IV-D Funding through the State of Michigan:** \$1,904,595 for Friend of the Court.
- **Deficit Reduction Act through the State of Michigan:** \$213,464 for Friend of the Court.
- **Access and Visitation Grant through SCAO:** \$19,335 for supervised parenting time.
- **Child Care Grant through the State of Michigan:** \$4,428,977 for Juvenile Home; In-Home Care; Child Placements.

# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

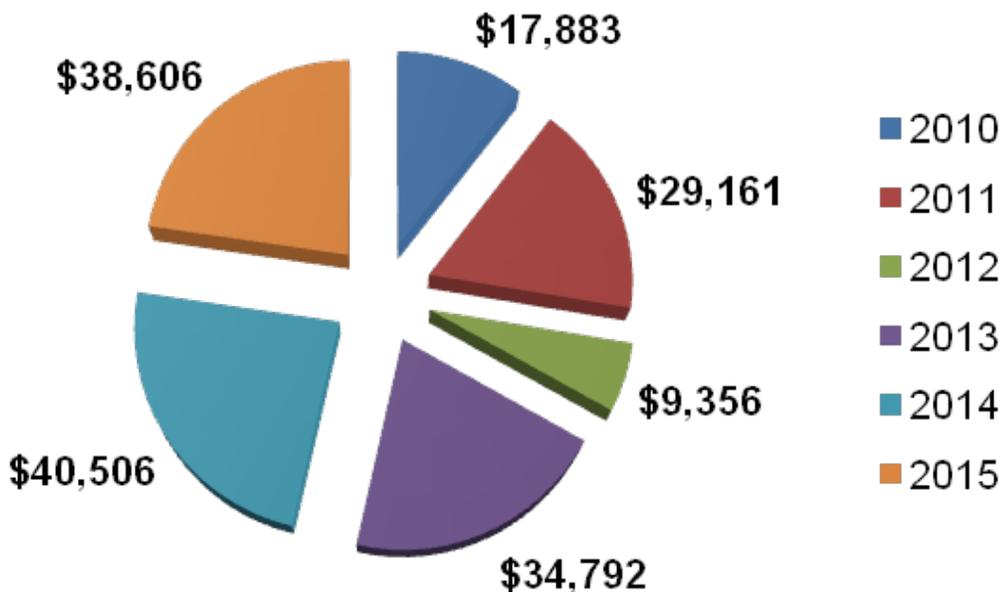
In addition to staff continuously exploring availability of new grants, the Circuit Court continued working on various strategies to increase collections of money owed to the court.

- The state tax interception program continued in 2015. The filing in November 2015 was the eighth year that tax interception was used and 1,202 cases were sent to the State of Michigan. The money from these filings will be received in 2016. In 2015, \$57,287 was received from the 2014 filings of 1,583 individuals.
- The court continued collecting from jail inmates' accounts for money owed the court. In 2015, the court received \$38,606 which was applied to restitution balances.
- In 2015 the court began collecting social security and reimbursements for child protective cases where the child(ren) resided outside the home. In 2015, \$146,159 was collected.

## State Tax Interception Program

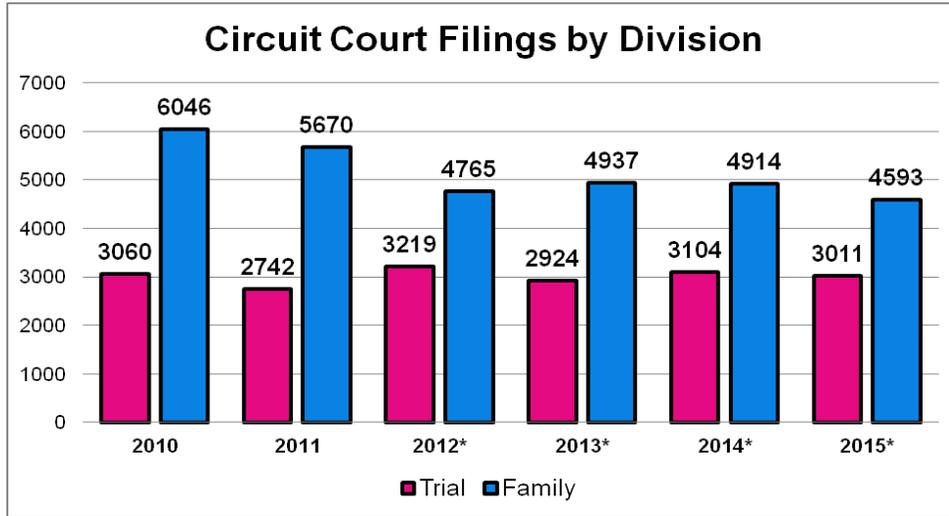
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
458 individuals	731 individuals	811 individuals	522 individuals	1,583 individuals	1,202 cases
\$33,834	\$44,893	\$29,078	\$29,598	\$57,287	To be received in 2016

## Restitution Collections Jail Inmate Accounts

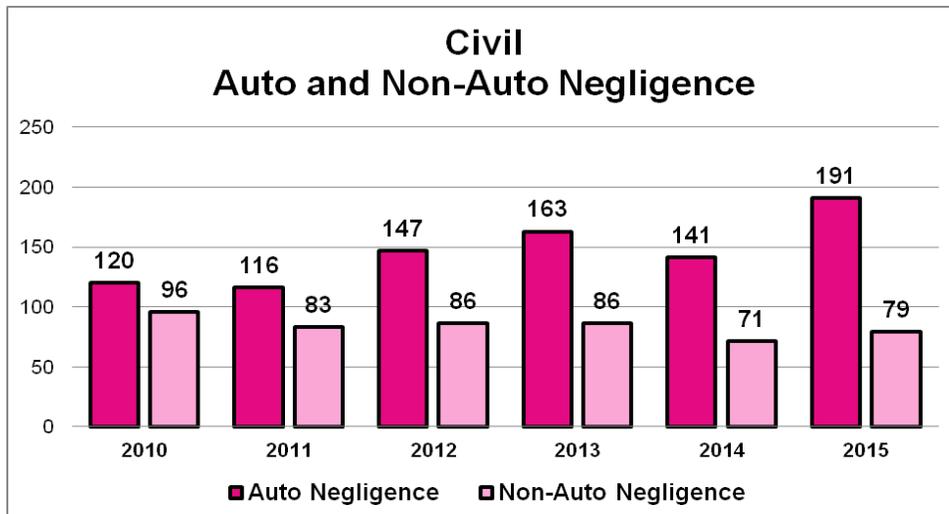
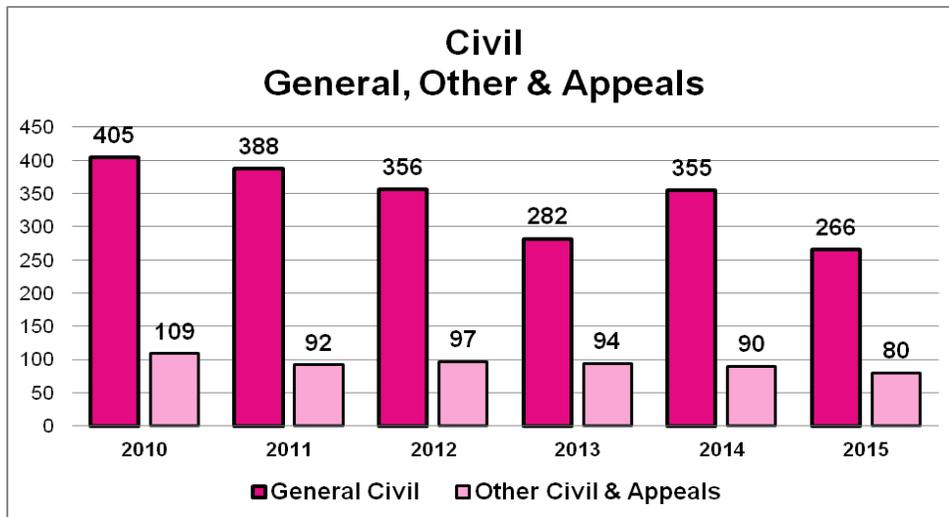


# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## Filings

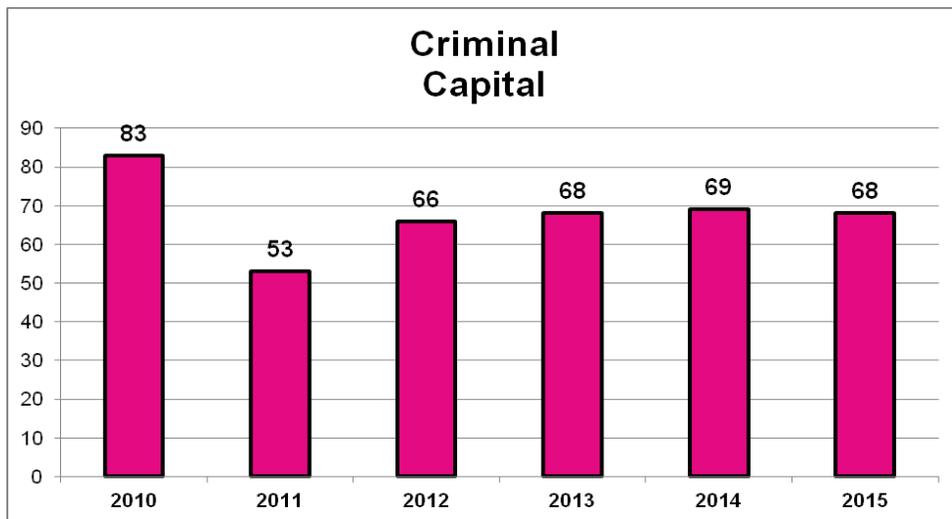
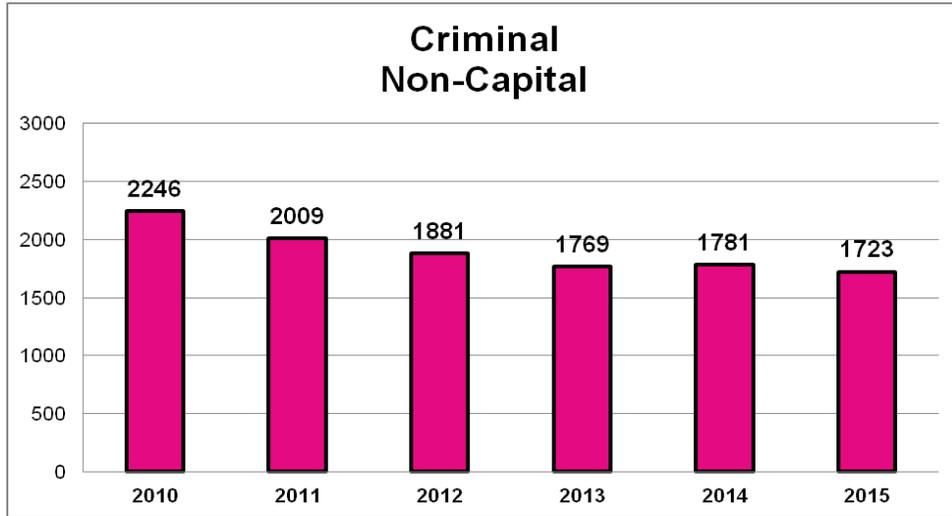


\*In 2012 Personal Protection Order Filings were moved from the Family Division to the Trial Division



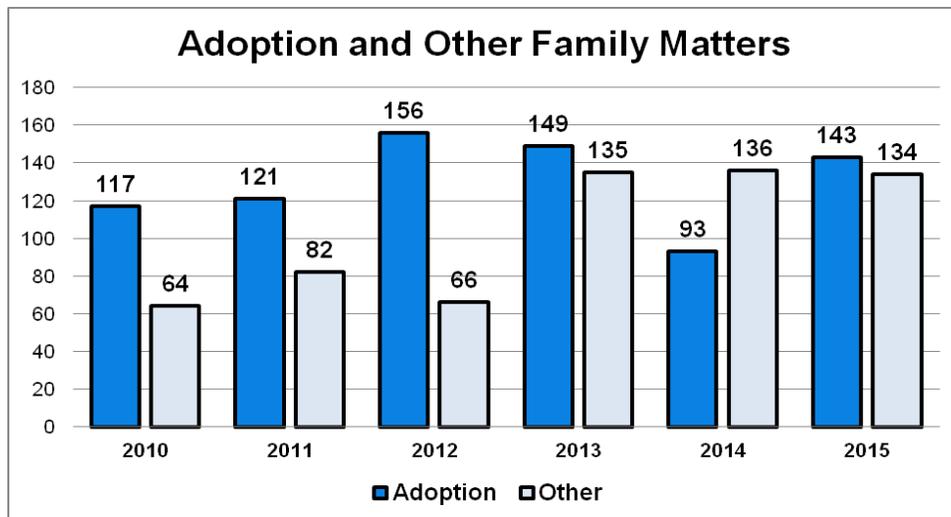
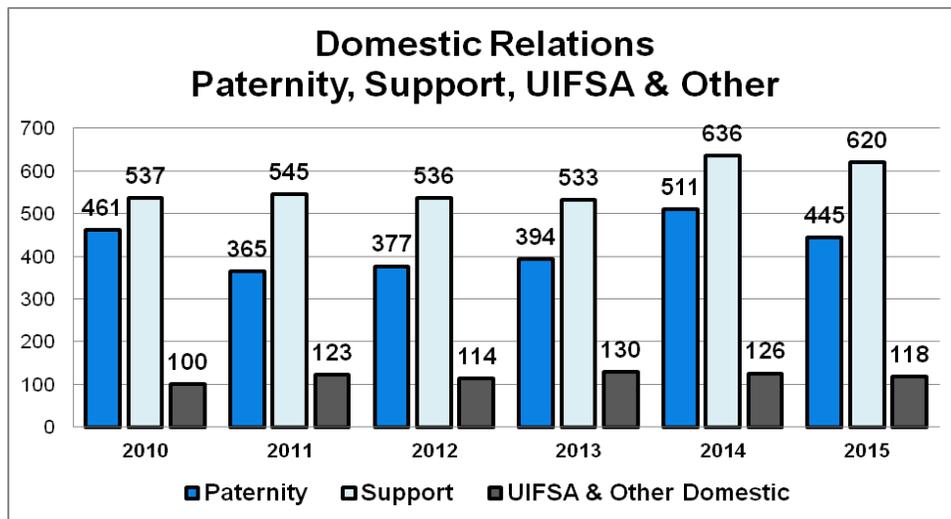
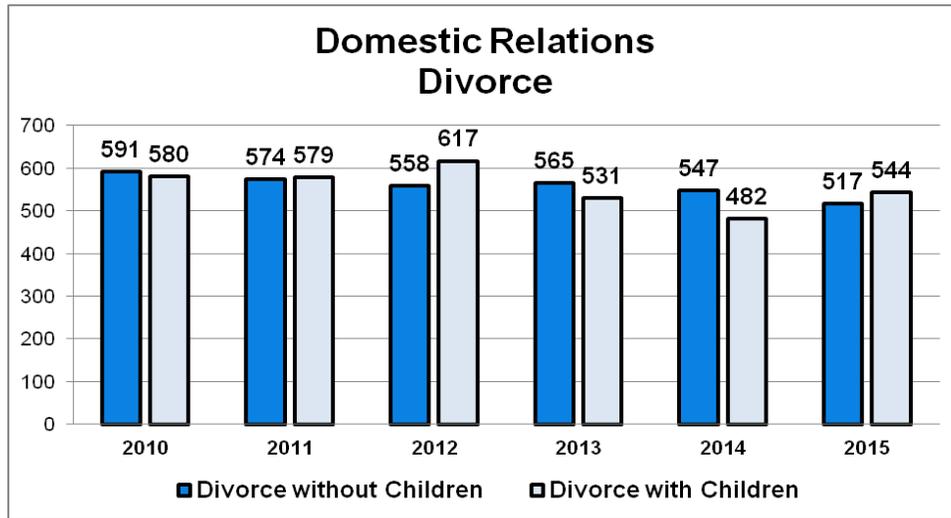
# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## Filings



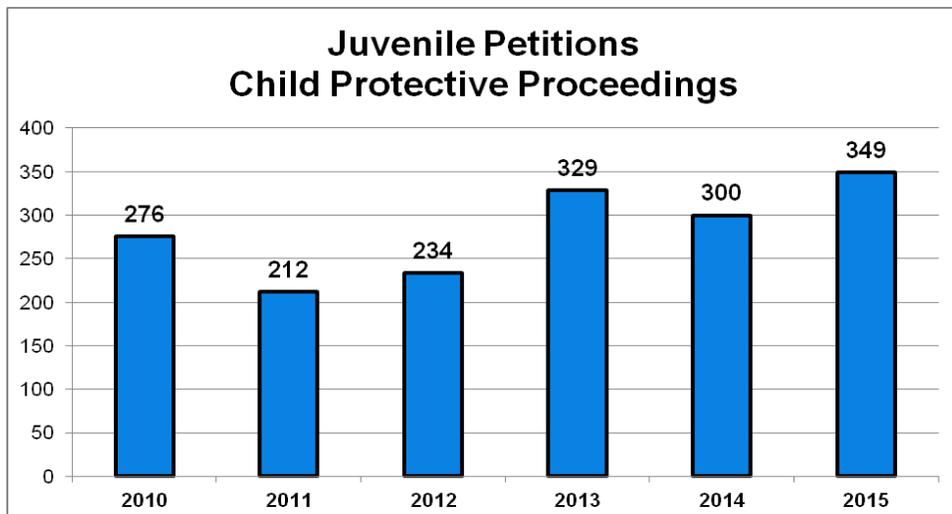
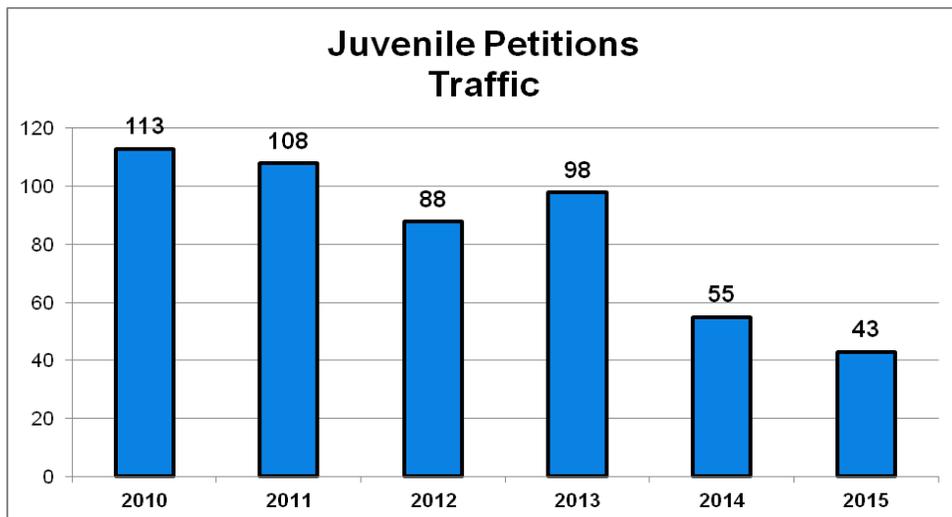
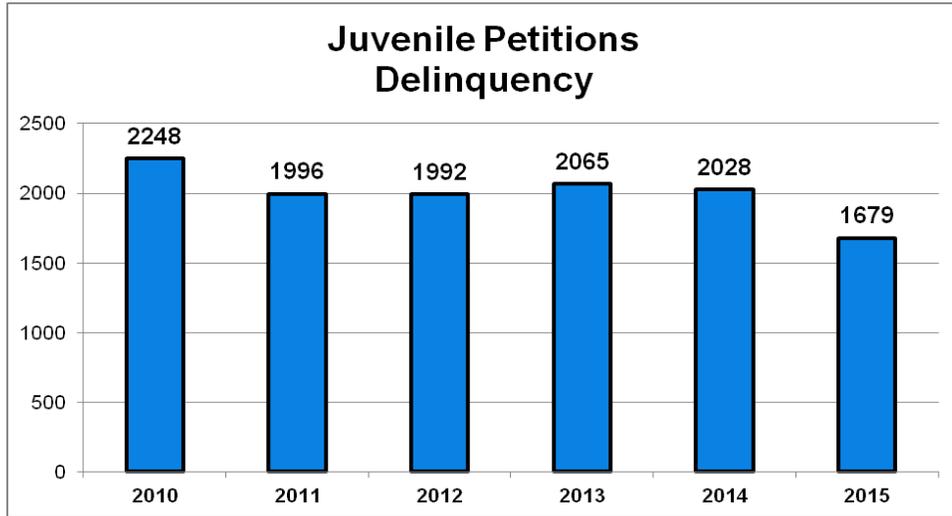
# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## Filings



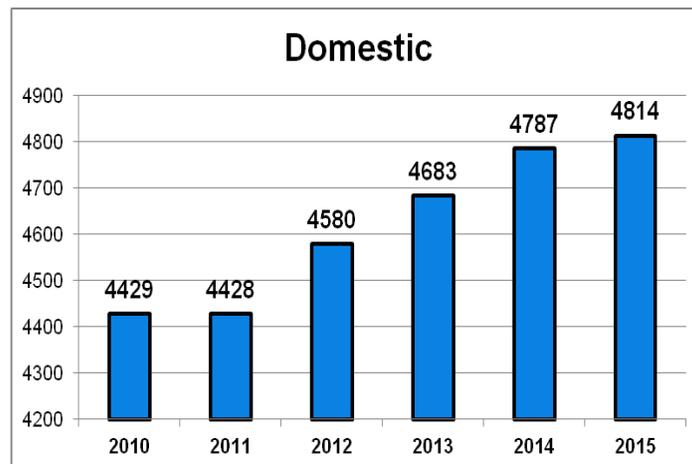
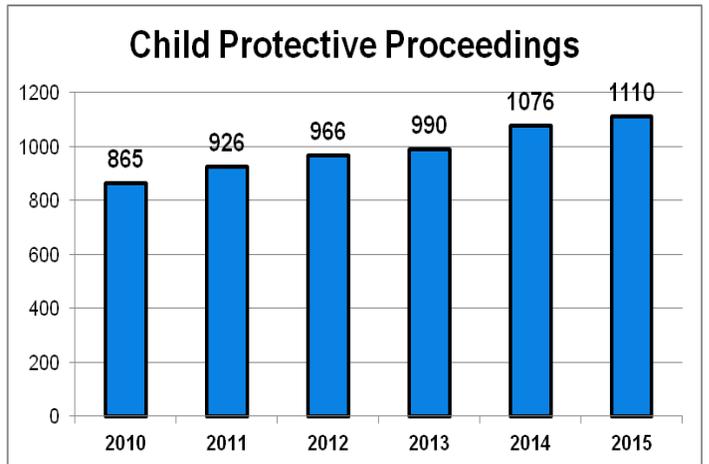
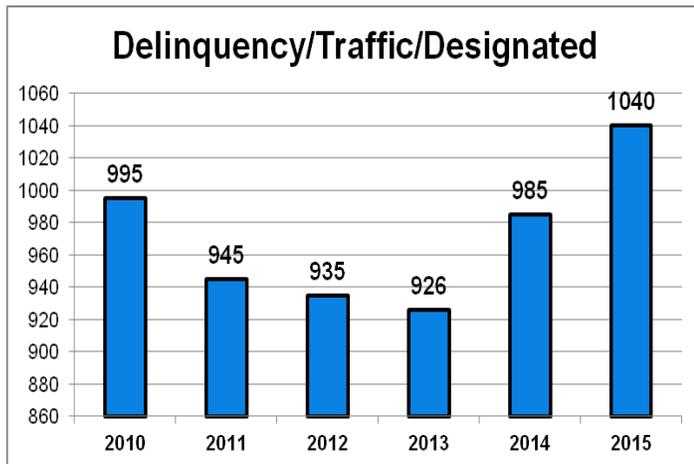
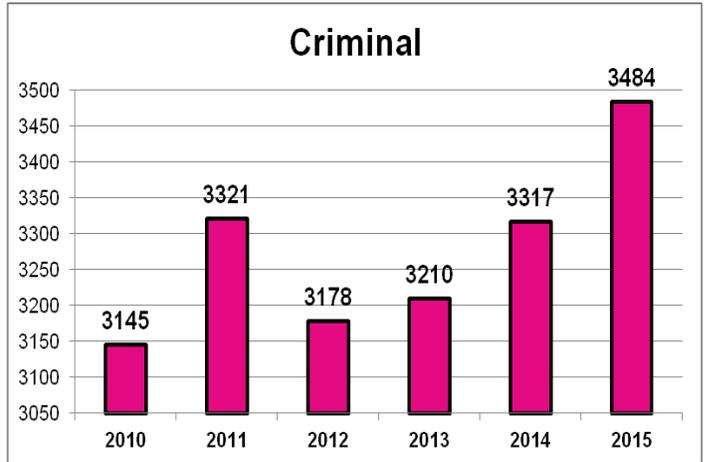
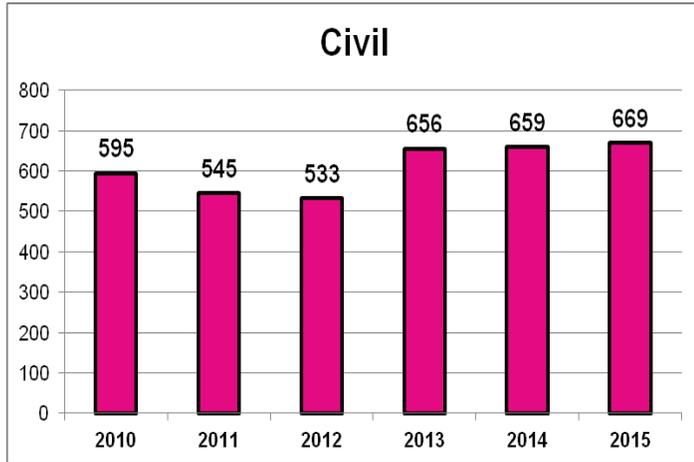
# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## Filings



# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## Post Judgment Activity



# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

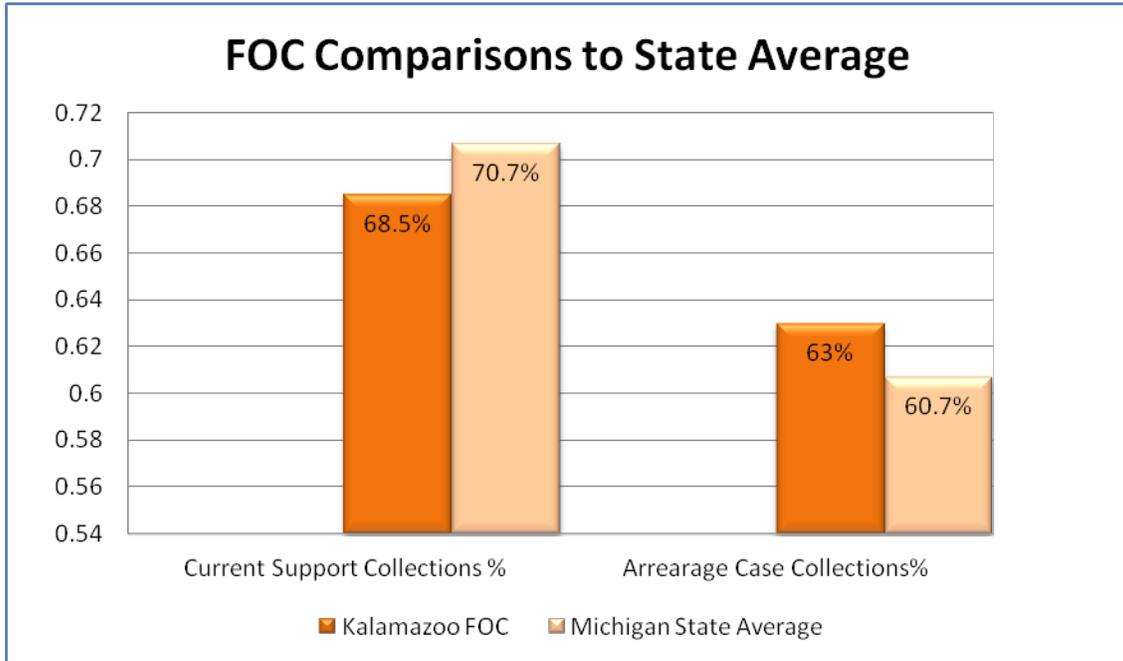
## Caseflow Management Compliance

Type of Case	Time Guideline	Compliance 2013	Compliance 2014	Compliance 2015
<b>Criminal (Felony)</b>	Adjudicate cases filed within days of bindover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% within 91 days</li> <li>85% within 154 days</li> <li>98% within 301 days</li> </ul>	96% 100% 100%	94% 99% 100%	92% 98% 100%
<b>Civil</b>	Adjudicate cases within days of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% within 364 Days</li> <li>95% within 728 days</li> </ul>	84% 99%	75% 95%	81% 98%
<b>Personal Protection Orders</b>	Process ex-parte petitions within hours of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% within 24 hours</li> </ul> Resolve petitions within days of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% within 14 days</li> </ul> Adjudicate petitions within days of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% within 21 days</li> </ul>	100% 100% 100%	100% 100% 100%	100% 100% 100%
<b>Appeals</b>	Adjudicate cases within days of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>98% within 182 days</li> </ul>	100%	100%	100%
<b>Domestic (With Children)</b>	Adjudicate cases within days of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>85% within 301</li> <li>95% within 364</li> </ul>	96% 100%	96% 99%	97% 99%
<b>Domestic (No Children)</b>	Adjudicate cases within days of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>85% within 182 days</li> <li>98% within 364 days</li> </ul>	91% 100%	93% 100%	84% 99%
<b>Domestic-Other (Non-support, Paternity, Misc)</b>	Adjudicate cases within days of filing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% within 147 days</li> <li>95% within 238 days</li> </ul>	85% 98%	82% 98%	90% 98%
<b>Juvenile Delinquency (In-Custody)</b>	Disposition of petitions within days of authorization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80% within 84 days</li> <li>90% within 98 days</li> </ul>	93% 97%	89% 97%	99% 99%
<b>Juvenile Delinquency (Not in Custody)</b>	Disposition of petitions within days of authorization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% within 119 days</li> <li>98% within 210 days</li> </ul>	91% 100%	94% 99%	99% 100%
<b>Child Protective Proceedings (Out-of-Home Placement)</b>	Disposition of petitions within days of authorization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% within 84 days</li> <li>85% within 98 days</li> </ul>	95% 97%	81% 87%	94% 100%
<b>Child Protective Proceedings (Not in Out-of-Home Placement)</b>	Disposition of petitions within days of authorization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% within 119 days</li> <li>95% within 210 days</li> </ul>	90% 100%	88% 100%	94% 100%
<b>Adoptions</b>	Petitions for Adoption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% within 287 days</li> <li>98% within 364 days</li> </ul>	95% 97%	100% 100%	100% 100%
<b>Name Changes</b>	Name Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% within 126 days</li> </ul>	99%	100%	100%

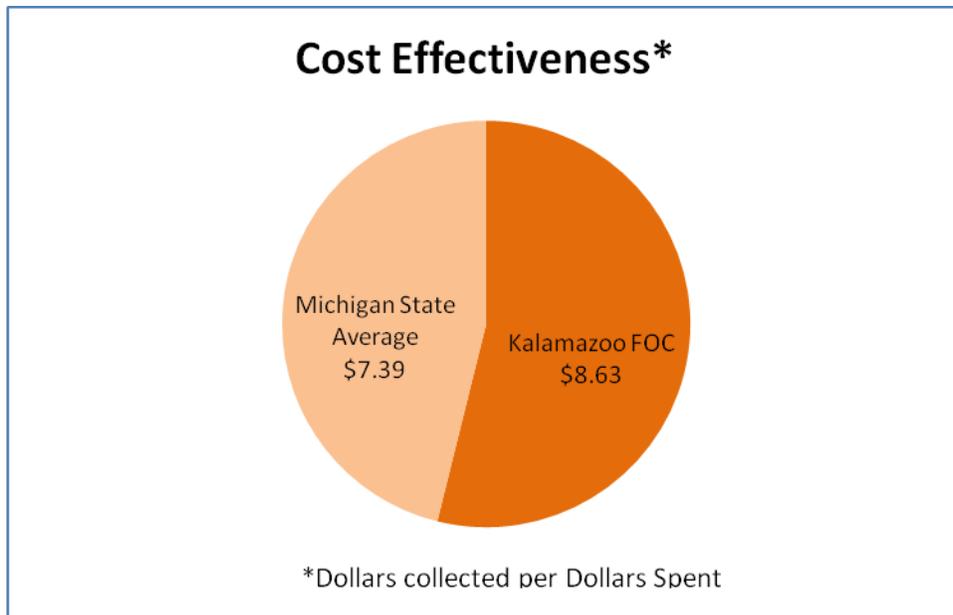
# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## Friend of the Court Collections

Current Support	\$27,512,924
Arrears	\$8,174,168
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$35,687,092</b>



Overall percentage of current support collected was 68.5%.  
This represents a 1.2 point improvement for Kalamazoo from 2014.



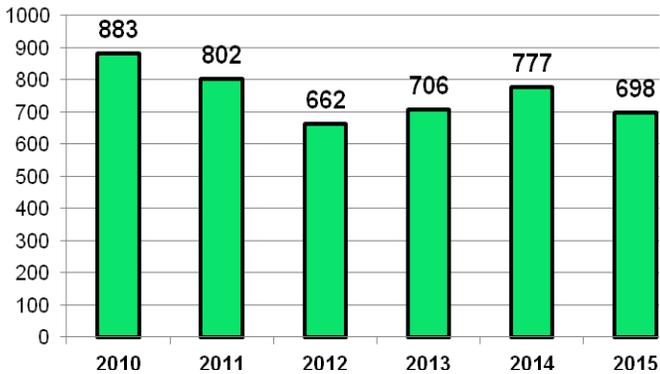
Cost effectiveness is reported in terms of dollars collected per dollar spent. In 2015 the FOC collected \$8.63 for every dollar spent. That is \$1.24 higher than the state average.

## Juvenile Home Admissions

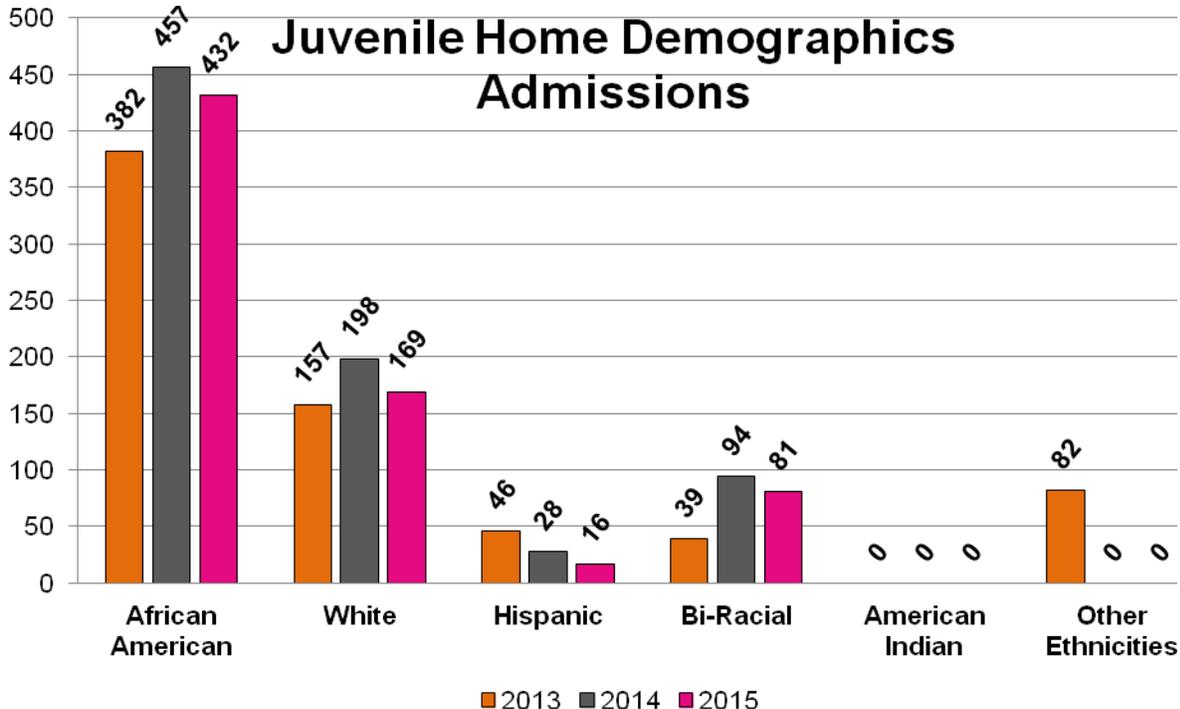
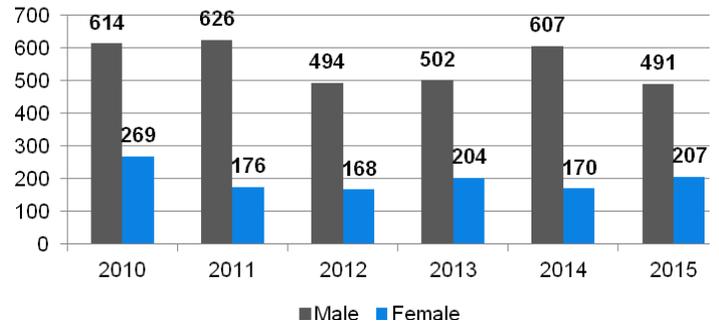
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Male Admissions	614	626	494	502	607	491
Female Admissions	269	176	168	204	170	207
African American Admissions	592	508	380	382	457	432
White Admissions	251	253	206	157	198	169
Hispanic Admissions	38	17	23	46	28	16
Bi-Racial Admissions	0	18	29	39	94	81
American Indian Admissions	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other Ethnic Admissions	2	5	24	82	0	0
<b>Total Number of Admissions</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>698</b>

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Child Care Days (detention)	12,751	11,248	11,945	14,340	14,766	12,090
Average Daily Population (detention)	36.4	30.8	32.7	35	40.45	43.9
Average Length of Stay (detention)	13.8	14.0	18.3	15	19	16.4

### Juvenile Home Total Admissions

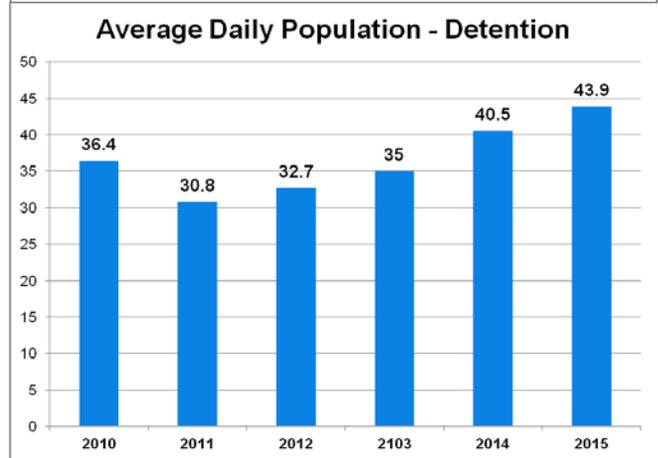
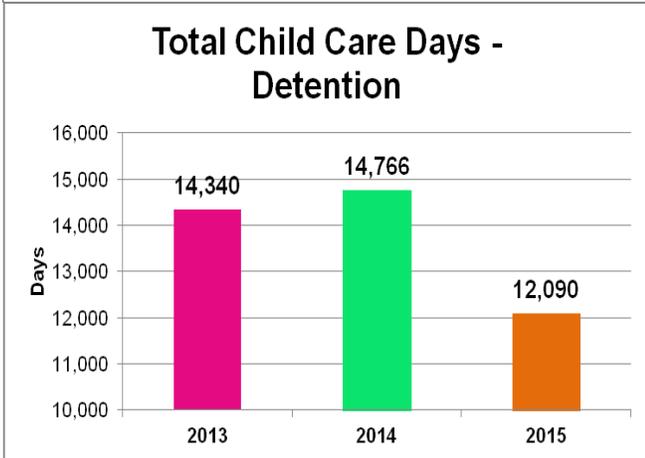
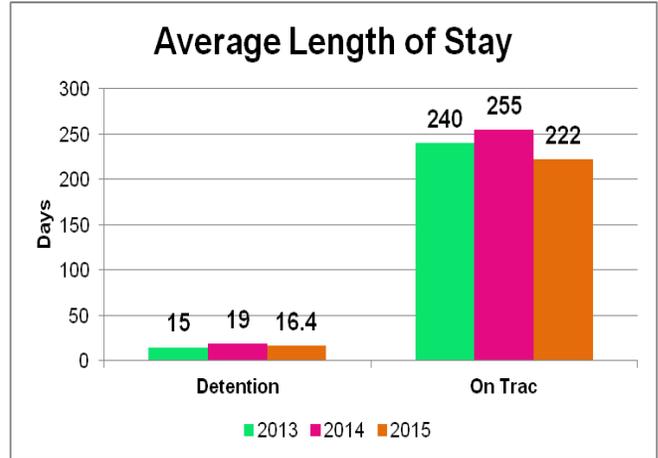
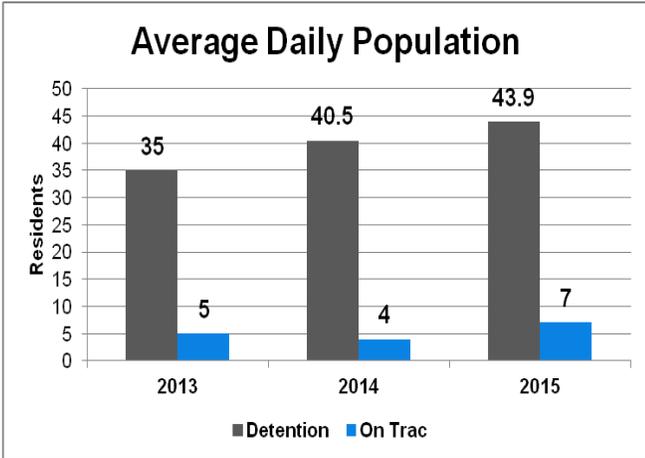


### Juvenile Home Demographics Admissions



# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## Juvenile Home



### ON TRAC RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PROGRAM

	2014	2015
Male Placement	6	7
Carry Over from previous year	3	6

	2014	2015
Average Daily Population (months)	4.0	7.0
Average Length of Stay (months)	8.5	7.3

	2014	2015
African American Admissions	8	10
White Admissions	0	1
Hispanic Admissions	0	2
American Indian Admissions	0	0
Other Ethnic Admissions	0	0
Bi-Racial Admissions	1	0
<b>Total # of youth served</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>



# 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT

## *Current Information and Key Contacts* (Updated to reflect 2016 changes)

### **Family Division**

Gull Road Justice Complex  
1536 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 385-6000 | F: (269) 385-8588

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### **Trial Division**

Michigan Avenue Courthouse  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 383-8837 | F: (269) 383-8647

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### **Friend of the Court Office**

Gull Road Justice Complex  
1536 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 384-8200 | F: (269) 383-8629

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### **Juvenile Home**

1424 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 385-8550 | F: (269) 385-8520

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### **Chief Circuit/Probate Judge**

Honorable Curtis J. Bell  
1536 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 383-8669

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### **Chief Circuit/Probate Judge Pro Tempore**

Honorable Alexander C. Lipsey  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 384-8190

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### **Circuit Court Administrator**

Suzanne M. Darling  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 383-8928

### **Family Division Administrator**

Katherine B. Flack  
1536 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 385-6039

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### **Trial Division Administrator**

Currently vacant  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 384-8253

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### **Automation & Technology Administrator**

Ruth A. Gruizenga  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 383-8839

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### **Finance Administrator**

Susan M. Sayles  
1536 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 383-6415

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### **Friend of the Court**

K. Nigel Crum  
1536 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 384-8172

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### **Juvenile Home Administrator**

Peter Holt  
1424 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
P: (269) 385-8577

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### **Circuit Court Web Site**

[www.kalcounty.com/courts](http://www.kalcounty.com/courts)

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

It is through the District Court that most citizens in the community come in contact with the judicial system such as: a defendant, witness or as a juror. It is from their experience in District Court that most people base their conclusions about the quality of justice in Kalamazoo. The 8<sup>th</sup> District Court is committed to providing quality service to the community and equal access to the court for all individuals.

## Court's Purpose and Function:

- To provide individual justice to individual cases.
- To provide speedy, equal resolution of conflict litigation.
- To ensure protection of individuals from harm of others.
- To enforce penalties for not complying with laws.
- To interpret the meaning of laws.
- To provide an impartial forum for the accused, the litigants and all other individuals who need our services.

## *Court Information*



**District Court – North**  
Michigan Avenue

The **Criminal Division** is located at the North Location; felony preliminary exams are heard and misdemeanor charges with a maximum penalty of 1 year in jail are adjudicated.

The District Court Probation Department is located at the North Location.

The **Civil Division** is located at the Crosstown Location; civil law suits are handled and civil marriages are performed.

The **Traffic Division** is located at the Crosstown Location; traffic and non-traffic civil infractions are handled.



**District Court – Crosstown**  
Crosstown Parkway

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## Information and Key Contacts

### District Court North

Michigan Avenue Courthouse  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 384-8171 | F: (269) 384-8047

### District Court Crosstown

Crosstown Courthouse  
150 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
P: (269) 384-8171 | F: (269) 383-8899

[www.kalcounty.com/courts/district](http://www.kalcounty.com/courts/district)



### District Court Judges

#### Honorable Richard A. Santoni

**Chief Judge**  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 383-8929

#### Honorable Anne E. Blatchford

**Chief Judge Pro Tempore**  
227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 383-8662

#### Honorable Tiffany A. Ankley

227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 384-8634

#### Honorable Christopher T. Haenicke

227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 384-8103

#### Honorable Robert C. Kropf

150 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
P: (269) 384-8203

#### Honorable Vincent C. Westra

150 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
P: (269) 383-8903

### Court Administrator

#### Ann E. Filkins

150 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
P: (269) 384-8024

(Tina L. Keifer – Retired 01/05/2016)

### Probation Services Director

#### Lynn Kirkpatrick

227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 383-8966

### Deputy Court Manager

#### Rebecca May

150 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
P: (269) 384-8082

### Deputy Court Manager

#### Margaret Bourgeois

150 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
P: (269) 384-8033

### Deputy Court Manager

#### Linda Garcia

227 W. Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
P: (269) 384-8075

### Financial Services Director

#### Susan Wright

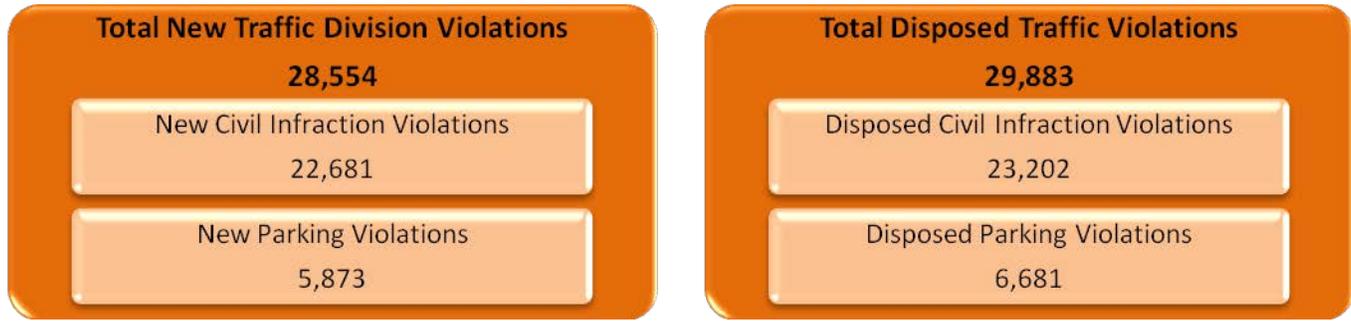
150 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
P: (269) 384-8012

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## DIVISIONS

### TRAFFIC

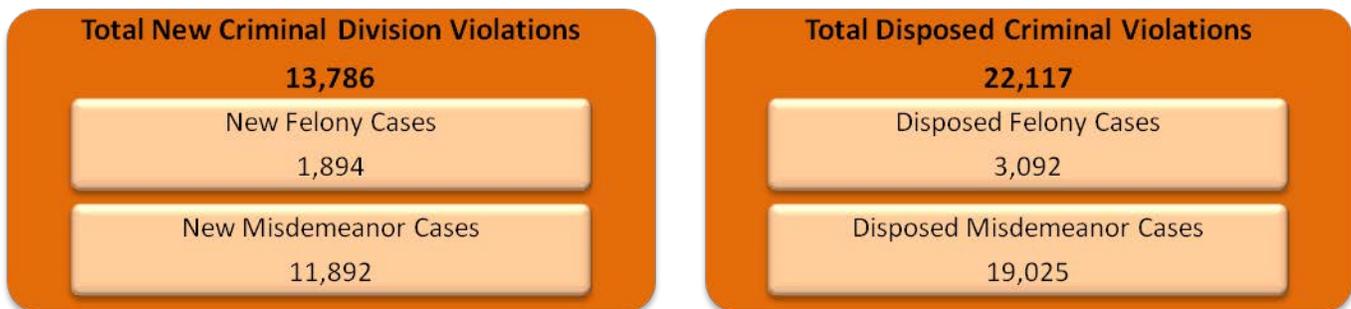
The Traffic Division in the 8<sup>th</sup> District Court processes a high volume of civil infraction violations and minor misdemeanor violations. The majority of these cases are violations of the Motor Vehicle Code; however, non-traffic civil infractions are also processed by the Traffic Division.



### CRIMINAL

The Criminal Division in the 8<sup>th</sup> District Court processes and adjudicates misdemeanors which have a maximum term of incarceration up to 365 days. Misdemeanor violations include serious violations of the Motor Vehicle Code such as Operating While Intoxicated, Driving While License Suspended, and Reckless Driving. Some examples of misdemeanor offenses are domestic assault, minor property damage and theft offenses.

The Criminal Division also receives all new felony charges. Felonies are violations of the laws of the State of Michigan that have maximum terms of imprisonment greater than one year. District Court Judges determine, by way of a preliminary examination, whether there is sufficient evidence to support the charge against the defendant. Felony matters are moved to Circuit Court for final adjudication if sufficient evidence is found at the preliminary examination to support the charge.



# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## DIVISIONS

### CIVIL

The Civil Division consists of four sub-divisions:

**General Civil** encompass all civil cases under a \$25,000 jurisdictional limit, civil cases removed from Circuit Court, limited claim and delivery civil actions, limited writ of attachment and garnishment, and forfeiture or seizure of certain property.

#### Year 2015

**6,085 New General Civil Cases Filed**

**6,180 General Civil Cases Disposed**

**Summary Proceedings** encompass cases generally brought by a landlord to recover possession of a dwelling when a tenant fails to pay the rent or when the landlord or owner wishes to regain possession of his/her property. Summary proceedings include land contract forfeitures that arise when a purchaser does not pay the amount agreed upon in a contract. A landlord may obtain an Order of Eviction to evict a tenant, or land contract vendee.

#### Year 2015

**5,766 Summary Proceeding Cases Filed**

**6,032 Summary Proceeding Cases Disposed**

**Small Claims** encompass cases with recoverable maximum monies up to \$5,000 (increased from \$3,000 on September 1, 2012). Actions are filed in the county in which the cause of action arose, or in which the defendant is established, resides or is employed. Small Claims litigants waive their right to a jury trial and cannot be represented by an attorney. Small Claims litigants also have the right to remove a case to General Civil.

#### Year 2015

**1,282 Small Claims Cases Filed**

**1,254 Small Claims Cases Disposed**

**Non-Monetary Claims** are also handled by the Civil Division. This includes coroner's inquests, claim and delivery without money judgment, drug forfeitures, and summary proceedings not relating to landlord-tenant and land contract, and proceedings under the public health code for testing for infectious disease.

#### Year 2015

**16 Non-Monetary Claim Cases Filed**

**21 Non-Monetary Claim Cases Disposed**

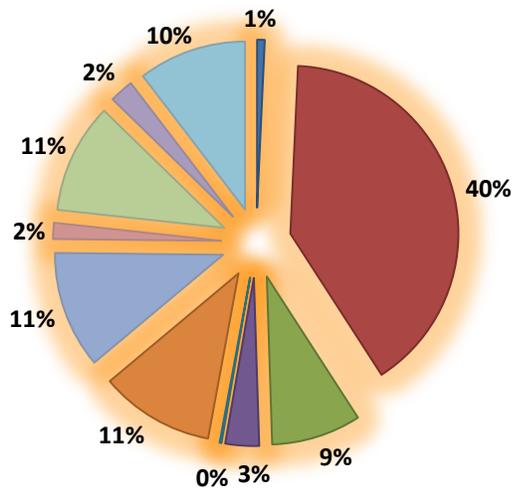
# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## FILINGS

Each year, the District Court prepares and files with the State Court Administrative Office a caseload report of all new cases filed, re-opened cases, warrants, and dispositions in the categories of traffic, criminal and civil cases. The court uploads these numbers to the State Court Administrative Office website.

### New Filings by Category

■ Civil Infraction Non-Traffic	403	■ Civil Infraction Traffic	22278
■ Felony and Misdemeanor Traffic	4781	■ Felony Non-Traffic	1796
■ Felony OUIL	98	■ General Civil	6101
■ Misdemeanor Non-Traffic	6256	■ Misdemeanor OUIL	856
■ Parking	5873	■ Small Claims	1282
■ Summary Proceedings	5766		



# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## Clearance Rates

Measuring the age of active pending and disposed cases is fundamental to promote access to justice by ensuring the Court is processing and disposing cases timely. The 8<sup>th</sup> District Court exceeded the case age guidelines set by the Michigan Supreme Court in nearly every category. Our Judges, management team and clerks continue to engage in process improvement to help ensure these guidelines are met while also giving appropriate consideration necessary to provide procedural and substantive due process in each individual case.

### **General Civil and Miscellaneous Civil Case Filing**

97% Adjudicated within 273 days from case filing (State Guideline is 90%)  
100% Adjudicated within 455 days from case filing (State Guideline is 98%)

### **Summary Civil cases without Jury Demand, including small claims, landlord/tenant, and land contract actions**

96% Adjudicated within 126 days from case filing (State Guideline is 65%)

### **Summary Civil cases with Jury Demand, including landlord/tenant and land contract actions**

94% Adjudicated within 154 days from case filing (State Guideline is 95%)

### **Statute and Ordinance Misdemeanor Cases, including misdemeanor drunk driving and misdemeanor traffic**

87% Adjudicated within 63 day from first appearance (State Guideline is 85%)  
98% Adjudicated within 126 days from first appearance (State Guideline is 95%)

### **Felony and Extradition/Detainer\* Cases**

64% Preliminary examinations held within 14 days of arraignment (State Guideline is 60%)  
81% Preliminary examinations held within 28 days of arraignment (State Guideline is 75%)

\*This percentage includes cases bound over to Circuit Court, reduced to a misdemeanor, or dismissed. Case age of Extradition/Detainer cases is measured from the time of arraignment to the time of the hearing or the time when the hearing was waived.

### **Civil Infraction Proceedings, including traffic, non-traffic, and parking cases**

91% Adjudicated within 35 days from case filing (State Guideline is 90%)  
99% Adjudicated within 84 days from case filing (State Guideline is 98%)

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## Clearance Rates

Clearance rates are one measure of caseload management and indicate the extent to which a court is keeping up with incoming caseload. Clearance rates are calculated by dividing the number of outgoing cases (cases disposed or made inactive) by the number of incoming cases (cases filed or re-opened) during a specific time period. Because there is a lag in time between when cases are filed and when they are disposed, clearance rates naturally fluctuate to a small extent above and below 100%.

**2012-2015 Clearance Rates by Case Type\***

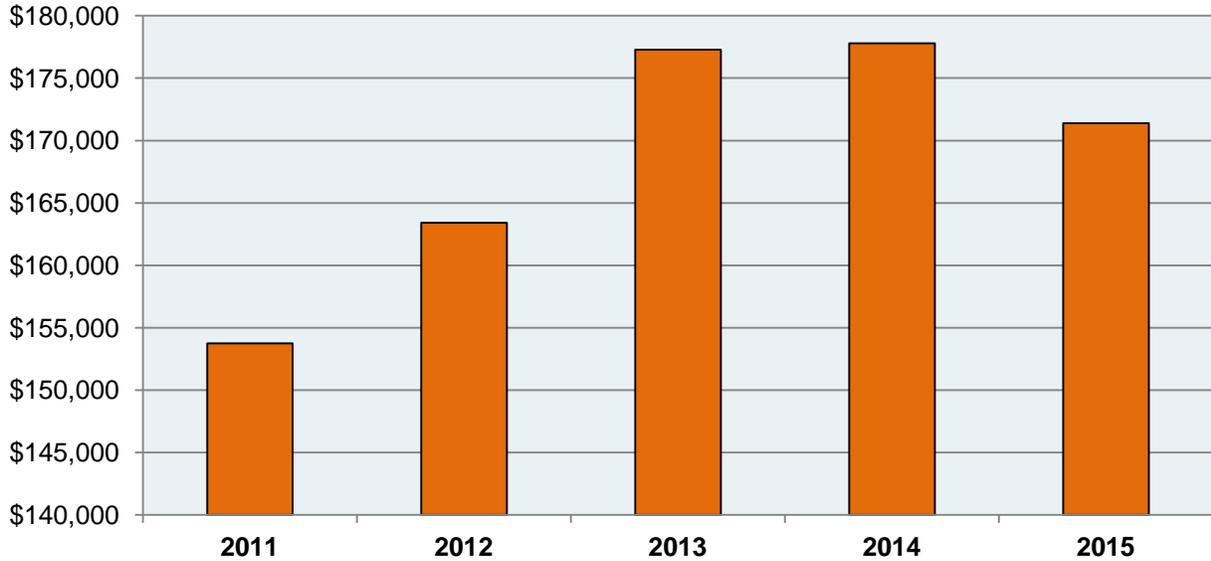
Case Type	2012	2013	2014	2015
Extradition/Detainer	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Felony Drunk Driving	101%	100%	96%	105%
Felony Traffic	99%	101%	99%	101%
Felony Criminal Cases	100%	100%	101%	99%
Ordinance Misdemeanor Drunk Driving	101%	101%	97%	98%
Statute Misdemeanor Drunk Driving	100%	101%	98%	102%
Ordinance Misdemeanor Criminal	98%	101%	100%	101%
Statute Misdemeanor Criminal Cases	99%	100%	100%	101%
Ordinance Misdemeanor Traffic	99%	102%	97%	101%
Statute Misdemeanor Traffic	98%	102%	101%	100%
Ordinance Civil Infraction Traffic	100%	100%	100%	100%
Statute Civil Infraction Traffic	100%	101%	101%	99%
Ordinance Civil Infraction Non-Traffic	101%	100%	101%	95%
Statute Civil Infractions Non-Traffic	100%	101%	101%	100%
Ordinance Parking	98%	109%	87%	111%
Statute Parking	98%	98%	100%	108%
General Civil	96%	110%	95%	100%
Miscellaneous Civil	86%	94%	100%	123%
Landlord/Tenant Summary Proceedings	102%	100%	100%	100%
Small Claims	99%	108%	97%	96%
Land Contract Summary Proceedings	100%	118%	93%	104%

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

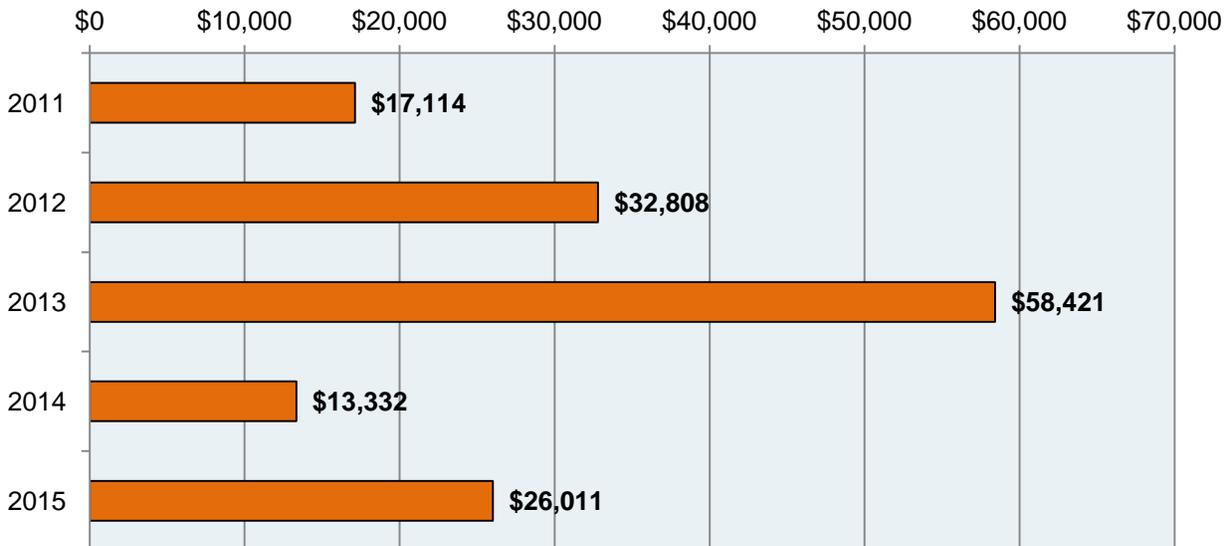
## RESTITUTION PAYMENTS

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$153,736.16	\$163,407.00	\$177,289.00	\$177,781.00	\$171,401.00

## RESTITUTION PAYMENTS



## RESTITUTION PAID BY TAX GARNISHMENT



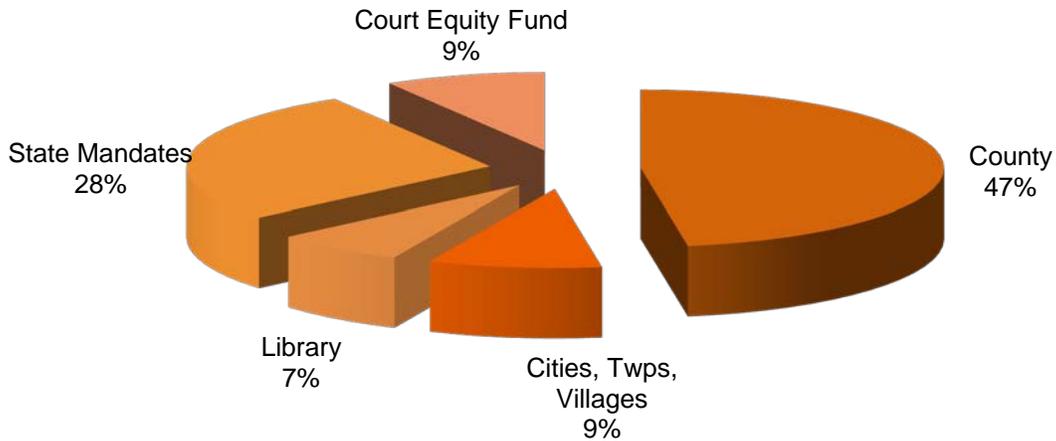
# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## Revenues

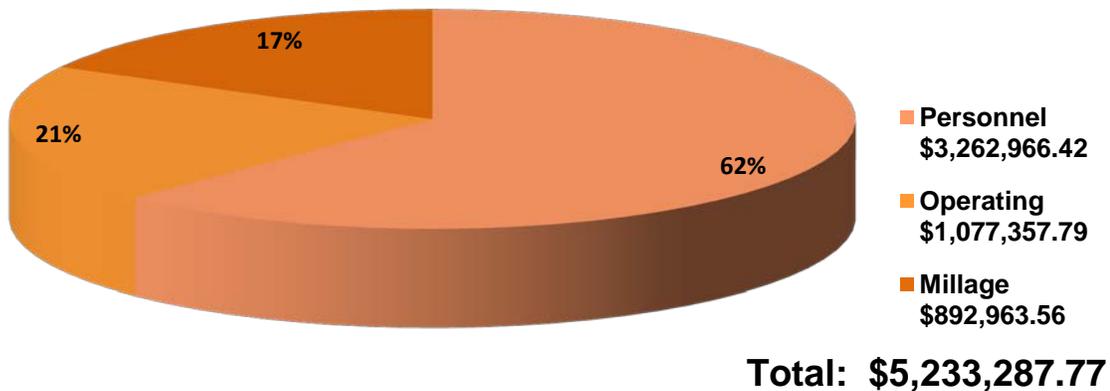
<b>Revenues:</b> .....	<b>\$ 7,080,019.10</b>
County.....	3,364,340.37
Cities, Twps., Villages .....	652,150.94
Library.....	495,895.35
State Mandates .....	1,960,969.44
Court Equity Fund .....	606,663.00*

\* Estimated District Court portion

### 2015 Revenues



### 2015 District Court Operating Costs



# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## COLLECTIONS

### *New Collections Initiatives*

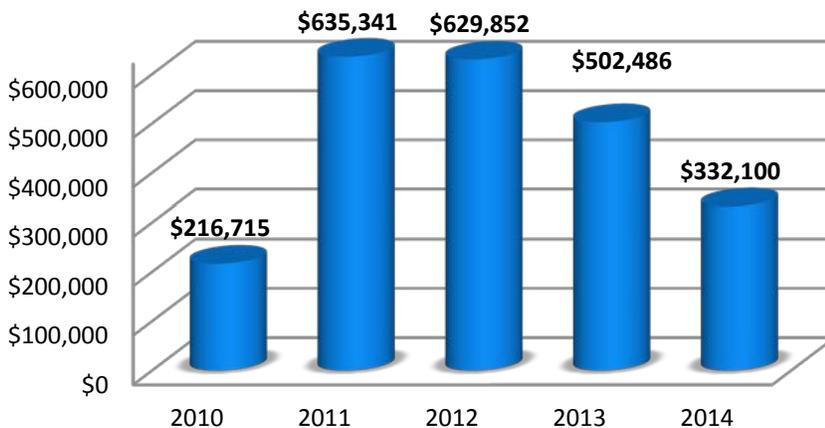
*The Collection Department continues to seek new ways to collect monies and improve upon methods of collecting outstanding debt. Late in 2015, District Court began to use social media as a source of information regarding outstanding bench warrant and parking tickets by creating a Facebook page. It is proven very popular; new postings generate thousands of views within a few hours of posting; promoting citizens to contact the court to begin to pay off their debt.*



### *Inmate Accounts*

*Working directly with the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office to collect funds from incarcerated defendants is another successful tool used by District Court Collections. Each day, the jail population is scanned for defendants who have outstanding debt and a review of their jail account is made. In 2015, almost \$26,690 was collected in this manner.*

### *State of Michigan Tax Garnishments*



### *Tax Garnishments*

*Intercepting defendants' State of Michigan Income Tax Refund continues to be our largest, single collection project. It has proven to be very successful over the past several years. Nearly 3000 writs of garnishment were filed with the State of Michigan in November 2014, resulting in payments directly to the Court in the amount of \$332,100 for tax year 2014.*

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## State Reimbursed Funds

### Drug Case Information Management Fund

The Drug Case Information Management Fund [MCL 257.323d; MSA 9.2023(4)] was created to promote the timely disposition and reporting of cases in which the defendant is charged with a violation of 333.7401 through 333.7461, and 333.17766a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to those sections. The State Court Administrative Office is responsible for disbursement of the funds collected under this Act. For the year 2015, the District Court received reimbursement funds in the amount of \$4,758.95.

### Jury Reimbursement Funds

The Jury Reimbursement Fund [MCL 600.151e] was established to reimburse the funding unit the added expense of the October 1, 2003 implementation of MCL 600.1344 which increased juror fees. With this new legislation, jurors are now compensated \$25.00 for their first day (\$12.50 for a half day) of jury service and \$40 for each subsequent day (\$20 for a half day) of jury service.

The reimbursement is semi-annual covering the periods October 1 – March 31 and April 1 – September 30. For the budget year 2015, the District Court received \$5,525.00.

### Drunk Driving Funds

1991 PA 98 (MCL 257.625h) created the drunk driving case flow assistance fund for the express purpose of defraying costs associated with the processing of drunk driving cases charged as violations under MCL 257.625 or 257.625m, 324.80176, 324.81134, 324.81135, or 324.82127 or substantially corresponding local ordinances.

This Act requires the State Court Administrative Office to distribute a portion of these funds to every District Court. The funds are not intended for any other general fund purpose and are not intended to supplant any portion of the District Court's current appropriation. For the year 2015, the District Court received reimbursed funds in the amount of \$66,203.87.

## Court Equity Funds

The Court Equity Fund, established by 1996 PA 374, is a state fund created to provide funding to trial court funding units. The fund creation was effective with the state fiscal year beginning October 1, 1996, and funds are distributed to county trial court funding units. The formula for distribution is primarily based on caseload, but includes a county's portion of state wide judgeships as a factor. For the state fiscal year 2015, the Kalamazoo County Funding Unit received a total of \$1,213,326. Trends in this funding for Kalamazoo County are listed below.

FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
\$1,442,926	\$1,301,184	\$1,268,712	\$1,226,541	\$1,233,092.28	\$1,253,579	\$1,201,457	\$1,213,326

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## *Probation*

### **SUPERVISION**

The Probation Department was assigned 1,986 new cases in 2015, with an average of 165 cases per month. Probationers are monitored at varying levels of supervision with some being placed into Sobriety/OWI Court, Mental Health Recovery Court, Domestic Violence Court Review (DVCR) program or the Young Adult Diversion Program (YADC). Nine Probation Officers supervise general probation cases, two supervise Sobriety/OWI Court, one supervises the DVCR and one supervises YADC programs.

The 8<sup>th</sup> District Court Probation Department is committed to the rehabilitation of misdemeanor offenders by overseeing compliance with court orders, as well as addressing individualized areas of improvement to assist the defendant in making permanent changes towards being a positive contributing member of the community.

### **ASSESSMENTS**

In 2015, 320 assessments were completed by the Probation Department. Substance abuse assessments/screenings are completed by Probation Officers. An assessment is required by statute on all OWI convictions and provides the sentencing judge with background information and a recommendation for treatment intervention. This assessment includes an individual interview with the offender and the collection of a variety of information (i.e. criminal history, current and past substance abuse issues, treatment history, family history, educational/employment histories as well as medical history). The risk and need levels of each offender are also assessed in the substance abuse assessment.

### **IN-HOUSE SCREENING SERVICES**

The Probation Department continues to offer services coordinated through local treatment providers and mental health clinicians who are available on-site on a weekly basis. Services include assessments for substance abuse or mental health issues. Often probationers can see counselors immediately, if needed. These services also allow for immediate feedback between the probation officer and therapist regarding the defendant's needs, progress and referrals for additional counseling.

### **DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING**

Drug and alcohol testing is required in most probation cases. Urinalysis testing is conducted at the Office of Community Corrections and KPEP as well as sites outside Kalamazoo County. Samples are sent to a lab where results are determined and reported back to the Court. Drug testing is done on a random basis.

Preliminary Breath Testing (PBT), when ordered, is done randomly or on a daily basis. PBT testing can be done in the Probation Office, Monday thru Friday, or at a variety of locations within Kalamazoo County.

### **IGNITION INTERLOCK**

Some individuals facing license suspension are eligible for an Ignition Interlock system on their vehicle. This unit requires an alcohol-free breath sample be given before the vehicle will operate. In-home PBT units are also available when court orders require multiple, daily testing.

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## *Specialty Courts*

### Sobriety Court

The Kalamazoo County Sobriety Court posted another successful year in 2015. Reports released by the State Court Administrative Office revealed that 75% of participants successfully completed the program during the year. Research data for OWI courts in Michigan shows a significant reduction in drinking and driving recidivism by two thirds from 12% for repeat offenders not treated in an OWI court to 4% for those who were.



### OWI Court

In June of 2015 the District Court implemented the OWI Court, presided over by Judge Tiffany A. Ankley. Sobriety Court and OWI Court operate with the same program requirements and procedures. Sobriety/OWI Courts admitted 91 participants over the past year, with 54 participants successfully graduating from the 2 year long program.

Kalamazoo County Sobriety/OWI Court participants are 12 times less likely to re-offend when compared to those defendants who have not participated in the program. The program averages 75-100 new participants each year, and during 2015 celebrated the graduation of its 430th participant.

Funding for the Sobriety/OWI Courts is primarily derived from participant fees. Participants are well over 90% compliant for payment of all fines, costs, and fees. Additional funding is provided by grants from the State Court Administrative Office and local PA2 funding. These grants help defray the costs of drug testing and treatment for participants in financial need and staff training. The Sobriety/OWI Courts continue to be staffed by Lynn Kirkpatrick, Probation Services Director, who oversees the program and Probation Officers Tamsie Haskell, Janet Alatalo and Janet Yeager.



### Mental Health Recovery Court

Recognizing that the criminal justice system has been unable to adequately respond to those who suffer from a serious and persistent mental illness after they have committed a crime, in 2008 the 8<sup>th</sup> District Court joined forces with Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services to develop a Mental Health Recovery Court (MHRC). Initially supported by state and federal grants, MHRC brings consistency, treatment and education together with understanding and accountability to the participants. Most of the participants have committed non-violent misdemeanors and/or felonies and the MHRC teams with many local support agencies to develop an individualized plan for recovery and help the participants cope with their mental illness, substance abuse and other significant personal problems.

A 2011 independent review concluded that MHRC is enrolling “hard to treat” people who are multiple system users (hospitals, police, jails), many of whom have co-occurring conditions (alcohol/substance abuse and mental illness) and have dysfunctional support systems. Despite these and other obstacles, the success rate is approximately 50%. The completing participants show a significantly reduced number of police contacts, jail days, emergency room visits and expensive psychiatric hospital admissions.

Currently, there are approximately forty active members in this two-phase, year-long program.

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## Specialty Courts



**Honorable Anne E. Blatchford presides over the Young Adult Diversion Court**



**There have been a total of 17 successful graduates from 2013 to present. In 2015, there were 7 successful graduates.**

### Young Adult Diversion Court (YADC)

The YADC Program is designed to be a problem solving court to address first time offenders, persons 17 through 20 years of age, who are sentenced to probation on a misdemeanor charge under a diversion statute, and who are at risk of losing the diversion status resulting in a conviction of the criminal charge and a criminal record.

This diversion program is radically different from traditional probation or any other specialty court programs, in that the 8<sup>th</sup> District Court is partnering within the County Government with other departments and with community based agencies to create an integrated and comprehensive court review program that focuses on the issues that have led these young adults into the justice system. This paradigm shift is from a traditional system-wide punitive format to a positive, self-actualization model that will address the individual's needs as a whole person.

The Funding for the YADC Program Assistant as well as programming needs are provided through grants from the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation and Dorothy U. Dalton Foundation.

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### **Domestic Violence Court Review (DVCR)**

DVCR is an intensive probation supervision and counseling program of domestic violence offenders. Conditions include participation in a 52 week domestic violence batterer intervention counseling program. Defendants are also required to address substance abuse issues and encouraged to complete education goals and achieve full-time employment. Participants are closely monitored by probation staff and are required to attend monthly court review sessions with the presiding judge, Honorable Anne E. Blatchford, throughout the term of probation.

### **Adult Drug Treatment Court**

The Men's and Women's Drug Treatment Courts of Kalamazoo County are presided over by Honorable Robert Kropf and the Honorable Anne Blatchford of the 8<sup>th</sup> District Court. The purpose of the felony drug treatment courts is to work intensively with the participants on recovery from drug and alcohol addictions with the goal to reduce recidivism in the legal system and return people to the status of "normal, ordinary, and responsible persons". Participants either opt into the program under a diversion or are sentenced to drug court as part of their probation requirements. The minimum length of time in the program is 9 months up to 5 years. The program includes bi-weekly court review sessions, drug treatment/counseling, support group meetings, education and employment. Successful completion of the drug treatment court program may result in a nolle of the criminal charge for the diversion participant and limited jail/prison time for the probationer.

# 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

## *Programs and Services*

### *Landlord/Tenant Legal Services Clinic*

District Court collaborates with Western Michigan Legal Services, the City of Kalamazoo and the Kalamazoo County Bar Association to sponsor a “Landlord/Tenant” Legal Services Clinic at the District Court Crosstown Location. The court provides office space for the Legal Aid attorneys to assist indigent clients involved in landlord/tenant disputes. Expansion to a fully developed clinic program that involves members of the Kalamazoo County Bar Association, as well as law students, remains a primary goal.

### *Kalamazoo County Eviction Diversion Partnership*

The Kalamazoo County Eviction Diversion Partnership (EDP) is a program matching people who are in need of assistance and are at risk of becoming homeless with funding from public and private sources.

EDP began with private charitable donations given to help the homeless. These donations were matched with federal stimulus funds. A few of the material elements needed before participants are eligible for rental assistance are:

1. not less than 3 months arrearage in rent;
2. sustainable income.

The target market is to help people, who are not frequently in arrears, but some unexpected event(s) threw them off track and they fell behind.

On every landlord/tenant docket day, the court has two Eviction Diversion Specialists from the Department of Human Services and one Eviction Diversion Specialist from Housing Resources, Inc. along with one attorney from Legal Aid of Western Michigan to address the availability of rental assistance and avoid eviction. The EDP has resolved 1,796 households facing eviction through 8<sup>th</sup> District Court in the past 5 years. This represents 5,689 individuals served, 2,619 were children and 3,070 were adults. The average cost for direct client assistance to resolve an eviction was \$1,096. Funding distributed directly to Landlords was \$1,664,276 over 5 years. Because of the increase in awareness and value of the EDP, the coalition of community partners expects to continue to save money for Kalamazoo County by keeping people in their homes instead of shelters.

### *Mediation Services*

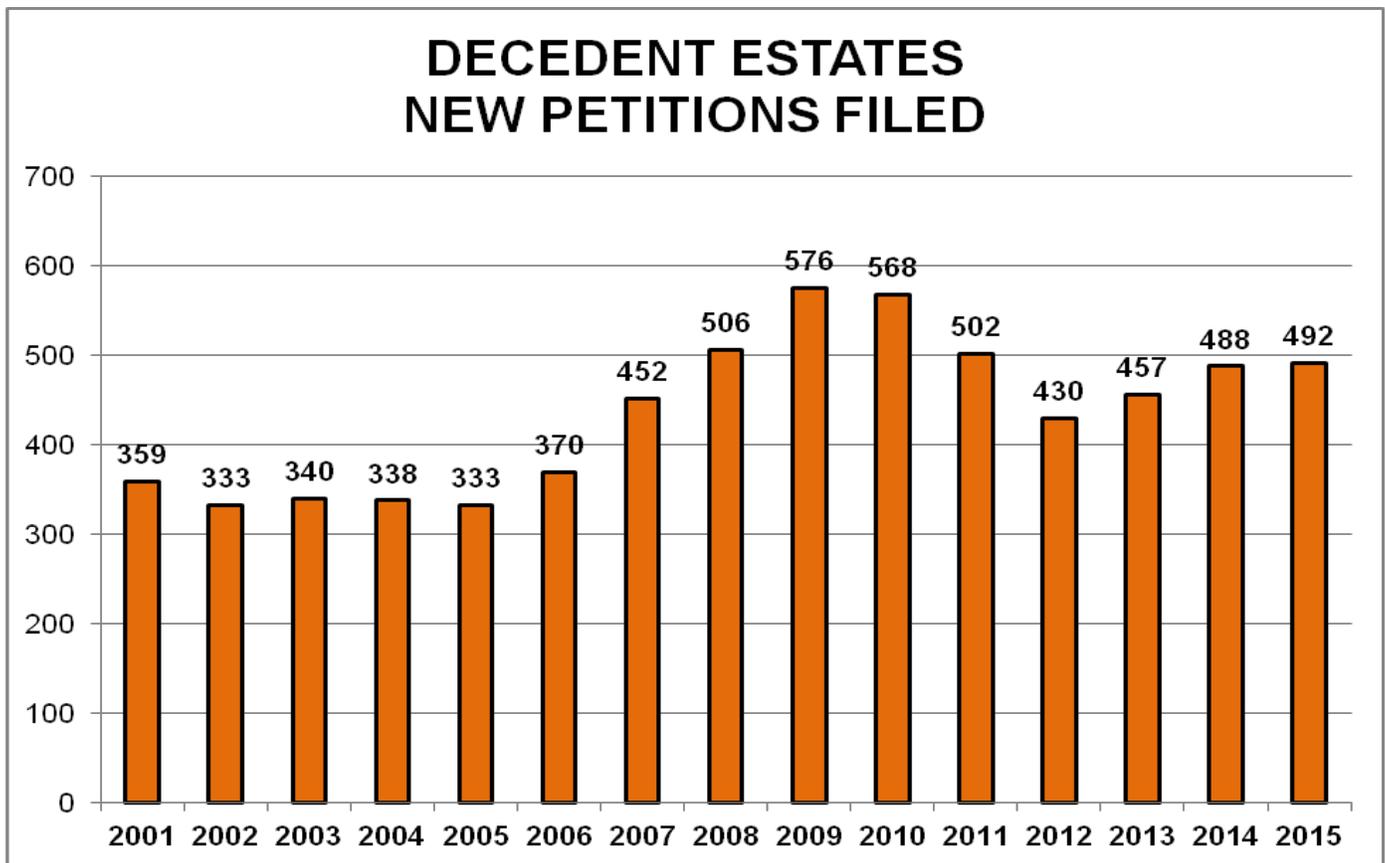
District Court and Dispute Resolution Services of Gryphon Place Center use mediators for general civil, landlord/tenant, and small claims matters. Appropriate cases are selected for referral to the volunteer mediator who then attempts to resolve disputes between litigants. Numerous hearings have been avoided through the use of volunteer mediators.

# PROBATE COURT

## *Decedent Estates*

The Probate Court has exclusive jurisdiction of matters regarding the settlement of the estate of a deceased person who was, at the time of death, domiciled either in the county or out of state leaving an estate within the county to be administered.

Prior to April 1, 2000 decedent's estates were administered pursuant to the Revised Probate Code (RPC). That changed on April 1, 2000 with the adoption of the Estates and Protected Individual's Code (EPIC), which now governs the administration of the estates of deceased individuals.



# PROBATE COURT

## Guardians of Legally Incapacitated Individuals

The court may appoint a guardian if it finds by clear and convincing evidence both that the individual for whom a guardian is sought is an incapacitated individual and that the appointment is necessary as a means of providing continuing care and supervision of the incapacitated individual. These cases are reviewed after the first year that a guardian is appointed and every three years thereafter. These on site reviews are conducted by a caseworker. The court also reviews the annual report on condition of ward that is filed by the guardian each year. As questions or concerns arise, the caseworker will investigate. The cases are reviewed by Western Michigan University medical students through the Active Citizenship Program when a caseworker is not required by statute to conduct a review.

<b><u>2015 Cases*</u></b>	
<b>2015 New Filings.....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Active Cases .....</b>	<b>278</b>

## Guardians of Minors

The court may appoint a guardian for a minor if the parental rights of both parents or the surviving parent are terminated or suspended by prior court order, by judgment of divorce or separate maintenance, by death, by judicial determination of mental incompetency, by disappearance, or by confinement in a place of detention, or if the parents permit the minor to reside with another person and do not provide legal authority for the other person for the minor's care and maintenance, or the minor's biological parents have never been married to one another and the minor's parent who has custody dies or is missing and the other parent has not been granted legal custody and the proposed guardian is related to the minor within the fifth degree. Investigations are completed by court caseworkers or Michigan Department of Health and Human Services workers for every minor guardianship. These cases are required to be reviewed by statute every year while the minor is under six years of age. The court continues to annually review these cases after the minors are over six years of age with the assistance of Western Michigan university medical students through the Active Citizenship Program.

<b><u>2015 Cases*</u></b>	
<b>2015 New Filings.....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Active Cases .....</b>	<b>367</b>

*\* These numbers do not reflect the total effort of the Probate Court in the areas of Guardianship and Conservatorship. A Probate Court Intake Specialist meets with potential filers to assist them with information. This results in over 600 matters each year being handled by the Intake Department and many are diverted to more appropriate community resources.*

# PROBATE COURT

## Guardians of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

The court may appoint a guardian for individuals with developmental disabilities only as is necessary to promote and protect the well-being of the individual. This includes protection from neglect, exploitation, and abuse; shall take into account the individual's abilities; shall be designed to encourage the development of maximum self-reliance and independence in the individual; and shall be ordered only to the extent necessitated by the individual's actual mental and adaptive behavior. These cases are not required to be reviewed by statute but are reviewed by Western Michigan University medical students through the Active Citizenship Program. The court also reviews all annual reports that are filed by the guardians. The caseworker of the court will investigate as questions or concerns arise.

<b><u>2015 Cases*</u></b>	
<b>2015 New Filings .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Active Cases .....</b>	<b>405</b>

## Conservators

The court may appoint a conservator for an individual if the court determines that the individual is unable to manage property and business affairs effectively for reasons of mental illness, mental deficiency, physical illness or disability, chronic use of drugs, chronic intoxication, confinement, detention by a foreign power or disappearance and the individual has property that will be wasted or dissipated unless proper management is provided, or money is needed for the individual's support, care and welfare or for those entitled to the individual's support, and that protection is necessary to obtain or provide money. The court may also appoint a conservator for an individual who is mentally competent but due to age or physical infirmity is unable to manage his or her property and affairs effectively or for a minor who owns money or property that requires management. Annual accounts are required to be filed in all conservatorships unless the assets are in a restricted account. A verification of funds on deposit is to be filed each year for assets in restricted accounts, which enables the court to verify assets.

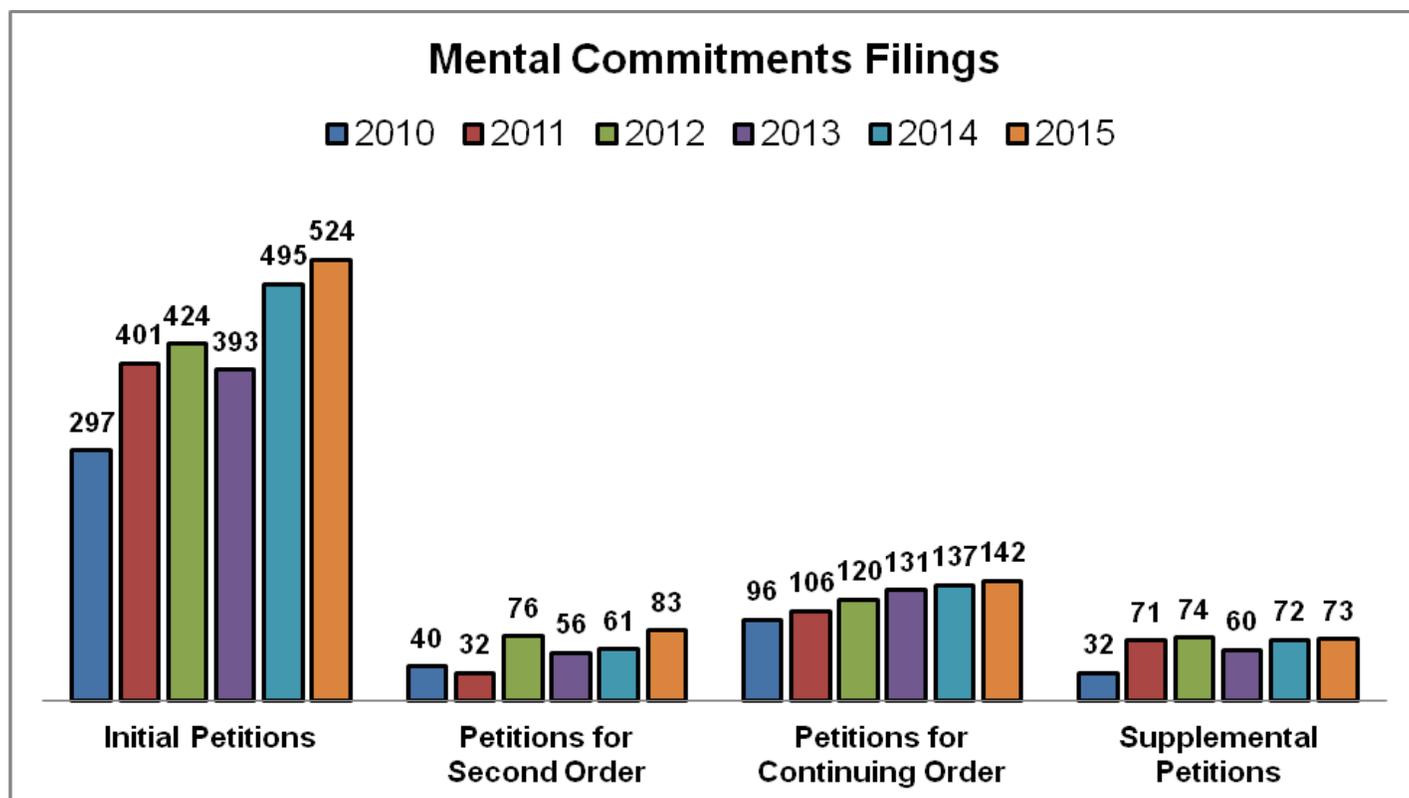
<b><u>2015 Cases*</u></b>	
<b>2015 New Filings .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Active Cases .....</b>	<b>227</b>

*\*These numbers do not reflect the total effort of the Probate Court in the areas of Guardianship and Conservatorship. A Probate Court Intake Specialist meets with potential filers to assist them with information. This results in over 600 matters each year being handled by the Intake Department and many are diverted to more appropriate community resources.*

# PROBATE COURT

## Mental Commitments

Proceedings under the Mental Health Code include involuntary hospitalization of minors, adults with a mental illness, and judicial admissions of individuals with developmental disabilities. The basis for the ability of the Court to order involuntary hospitalization is outlined in the Mental Health Code along with court rules. The treatment of the person could take place in a public institution, private hospital or in the community in an alternative treatment program.



### Additional Mental Commitment Numbers:

- 144 ▶ Notice of Non-Compliance filed in 2015.
- 071 ▶ Demands for Hearing filed in 2015.
- 183 ▶ Cases held by assignment for other counties at the Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital, Borgess Hospital, and Probate Court in 2015.

### ADDITIONAL FILINGS IN 2015

Wills .....	652
Delayed Registration of Foreign Birth .....	009

# PROBATE COURT

## *Probate Court Diversions*

A Court ordered guardianship is a process that takes away the rights of an individual and is only necessary if no other alternatives are available. The Court makes great efforts to divert unnecessary Court ordered guardianships. The Court has consistently and effectively accomplished this mandate through the diversion and educational programs the Court has developed.

This Court's diversionary efforts have reduced the number of Court ordered guardianships for minors and adults. Two primary mechanisms are in place to divert cases from the formal court action. Intake appointments are offered to any person in the community wishing to discuss concerns regarding guardianship, power of attorney, child custody, mental commitments, and accessing services for those with special needs. Over 600 intake appointments took place in the year 2015.

We only take those filing fees that are likely to result in appointments of guardianships. Consumers are receiving immediate attention from court staff without unnecessary filings and without the stress of appearing in a formal court proceeding. Many of these consumers receive referral services to help them access resources which are available but may be little known or utilized. Through contacting local agencies, the public schools, and other court ordered systems the court is able to align consumers with those resources which best meet their needs. Although we still consider our court to be one of last resort, our intake services are made available to anyone needing assistance.

The other mechanisms used to divert cases involves telephone calls seeking information, presenting emergency circumstances, and seeking input on current and possible future Probate Court matters, often resulting in matters being diverted.

Further, the Probate Court staff provided numerous trainings throughout the year to educate our community partners on court procedures.

The most important goal of the Probate Court is to efficiently meet the present needs of the public while anticipating future needs. This will continue to be the primary focus in 2016.

# PROBATE COURT

## *THE PROBATE CLINIC*

The Probate Clinic is a service that offers pro bono consultations with attorneys to the public regarding probate issues. In 2015 the clinic was staffed on the first and third Tuesday of each month and was held at the Crosstown Center. In 2016 and going forward the clinic will continue to be staffed on the first and third Tuesday of each month but will be held at the Probate Courts new location in the Gull Road Justice Complex.

During 2015, attorneys assisted with issues concerning guardianships and conservatorships, assignments, estates, real estate and many other probate issues. Valuable information was given to all participants in the clinic. The Probate Court will continue to publicize the clinic as a valuable resource to those in the community who need legal assistance regarding probate issues. Expansion of the program will be given consideration as the Court looks to future needs and trends.

The Court would like to give special thanks to the following attorneys who volunteered their time and expertise in 2015:

- Annelore Cannizzaro
- Ryan Conboy
- Michael A. Dombos
- William K. Kriekard
- William G. Maybee
- Catherine C. Metzler
- W. Joseph Mills
- Nelson E. Pelletier
- Kelly J. M. Quardokus
- Lowell M. Seyburn
- Alistair J.H. Smith
- Donald M. Thinschmidt

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## *PROBATE COURT AND WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP COLLABORATION*

Kalamazoo County Probate Court is very pleased to be one of the inaugural community partners with the Western Michigan University School of Medicine for its **ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP** program. The program is designed to place medical students in community programs to enhance their educational opportunities in a non-academic setting.

Historically, the Court was able to complete many of the non-mandated reviews of guardianships through the highly successful and productive Probate Advocate Program. The new Active Citizenship program will allow the Court to build on the principles and success of the Probate Advocate Program.

After appropriate training by Court staff, the five first year medical students assigned to the Court have taken on the task of going into the community and conducting reviews of guardianships of legally incapacitated individuals, minors, and of individuals with a developmental disability.

The reviews provide an invaluable service not only to the Court, but to those that are under guardianship. The students have the unique opportunity to “learn” by “doing” in actual real life settings – not simply in a classroom. A huge WIN-WIN for everyone.

# PROBATE COURT

## *Current Information and Key Contacts*

(Updated to reflect 2016 changes)

### **Probate Court Office**

1536 Gull Road, Kalamazoo, MI 49048

P: (269) 383-8666 | F: (269) 383-8685

**Website:** [www.kalcounty.com/courts/probate](http://www.kalcounty.com/courts/probate)

### **Probate Case Index:**

<http://www.kalcounty.com/courts/probate/courtrecords.htm>

**E-mail:** [kalamazooprobate@kalcounty.com](mailto:kalamazooprobate@kalcounty.com)

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### **Chief Circuit/Probate Judge**

Honorable Curtis J. Bell

P: (269) 383-8669 | F: (269) 383-8685

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### **Probate Judge Assigned to:**

#### ***8<sup>th</sup> District Court***

Honorable Tiffany A. Ankley

Located at: 227 W. Michigan Avenue

Kalamazoo, MI 49007

P: (269) 384-8171

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### **Probate Judge Assigned to:**

#### ***9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Family Division***

Honorable G. Scott Pierangeli

Located at: 1536 Gull Road

Kalamazoo, MI 49048

P: (269) 385-6001

### **Probate Court Administrator/Probate Register:**

Steven E. Burnham

P: (269) 383-8678 | F: (269) 383-8685

E-Mail: [SEBURN@kalcounty.com](mailto:SEBURN@kalcounty.com)

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### **Deputy Court Administrator/Chief Deputy Register:**

Mary Haskamp

P: (269) 383-8664 | F: (269) 383-8685

E-Mail: [MLHASK@kalcounty.com](mailto:MLHASK@kalcounty.com)

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### **Deputy Registers:**

Janai Gardner

Gloria LaForce

Andrea Lutz

Patty Musall

Linda Robinson

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### **Court Caseworker:**

Trish Koren

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E-Mail: [PAKORE@kalcounty.com](mailto:PAKORE@kalcounty.com)