

# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

## THIRTEENTH CIRCUIT COURT

328 WASHINGTON ST., SUITE 300  
TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684  
[WWW.13THCIRCUITCOURT.ORG](http://WWW.13THCIRCUITCOURT.ORG)



# HISTORY OF 13TH CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES

HON. KEVIN A. ELSENHEIMER	□	2017 - PRESENT
HON. THOMAS G. POWER		1993 - PRESENT
HON. PHILIP E. RODGERS, JR.		1991 - 2016
HON. CHARLES M. FORSTER		1975 - 1992
HON. WILLIAM R. BROWN		1973 - 1990
HON. JAMES M. FITZPATRICK		1969 - 1974
HON. CHARLES L. BROWN		1948 - 1972
HON. PARM C. GILBERT		1924 - 1947
HON. FREDERICK W. MAYNE		1899 - 1923
HON. ROSCOE L. CORBETT		1894 - 1898
HON. REUBEN HATCH, JR.		1875 - 1881
HON. JONATHAN G. RAMSDELL	□	1866 - 1875 & 1882 - 1893

Antrim County Courthouse  
203 E. Cayuga St.  
Bellaire, MI 49615

Grand Traverse County Courthouse  
328 Washington St.  
Traverse City, MI 49684

Leelanau County Courthouse  
8527 E. Government Center Dr.  
Suttons Bay, MI 49684



# INTRODUCTION

The Thirteenth Circuit Court for the State of Michigan is pleased to present to you our annual report for 2018. The report is distributed in hard copy to local stakeholders, elected officials, and the State Court Administrative Office. The report is available electronically on the court's website: [www.13thcircuitcourt.org](http://www.13thcircuitcourt.org). Those who review the report will have an understanding of the Court's finances, caseloads, Friend of the Court efforts, and Alternative Dispute Resolution during 2018. The report also notes important staff developments and matters involving the local bar.

During 2018, the Court was able to manage its caseload within the timeframes mandated by the Supreme Court. One reason for the Court's efficiency is the success of the Alternative Dispute Resolution program. In 2018, the Court's civil facilitative mediation process resolved 69% of the cases referred, saving litigants time and money. During that same year, facilitative mediation resolved 84% of the domestic relations matters referred.

The success of the facilitative mediation program is not a new development. What is new is that the Court is taking note of some of the partners who have led to that success over the years. The Court created an award this year honoring the mediator of the year. The inaugural recipient of the award is John Blakeslee, who has served as a mediator since 2000. The report provides more details on Mr. Blakeslee's service, along with local attorneys who have received other important honors from the local bar association.

We wish to thank those who have assisted our efforts to provide justice throughout 2018. The Court has many responsibilities that require the collaboration, consideration and support of our partners. We appreciate your assistance in helping us meet our obligations during 2018.

*Hon. Kevin A. Elsenheimer*

13th Circuit Court Judge

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*“All rise, court is  
now in session..”*

## CASE MANAGEMENT

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court serves Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties. The Circuit Court handles all civil cases with claims in excess of \$25,000, all felony criminal cases, requests for injunctive relief and domestic relations matters. Additionally, the Judges hear cases appealed from other trial courts or from administrative agencies. The Circuit Court Judges travel monthly to Bellaire and Suttons Bay to preside over matters in Antrim and Leelanau Counties. Judge Power and Judge Elsenheimer alternate as the Thirteenth Circuit Court's Chief Judge.

The Family Divisions of the Thirteenth Circuit Court handle all juvenile criminal cases, child abuse and neglect cases, guardianships of juveniles and adoption proceedings. The Probate Judge for each County is also the presiding Judge of the Family Division in the county where he or she was elected.

The Circuit Court follows the mandated timelines schedule as delineated in the Michigan Court Rules and Administrative Orders to efficiently manage and dispose of its cases. Once a new case has been opened, the Court issues a Scheduling Order providing time guidelines for the processing of the case and establishing dates when future actions should begin or be completed with regard to the case. The primary goal of the Court Administrator's staff is to ensure that cases are kept current and the docket remains up-to-date.

## CIVIL CASELOAD

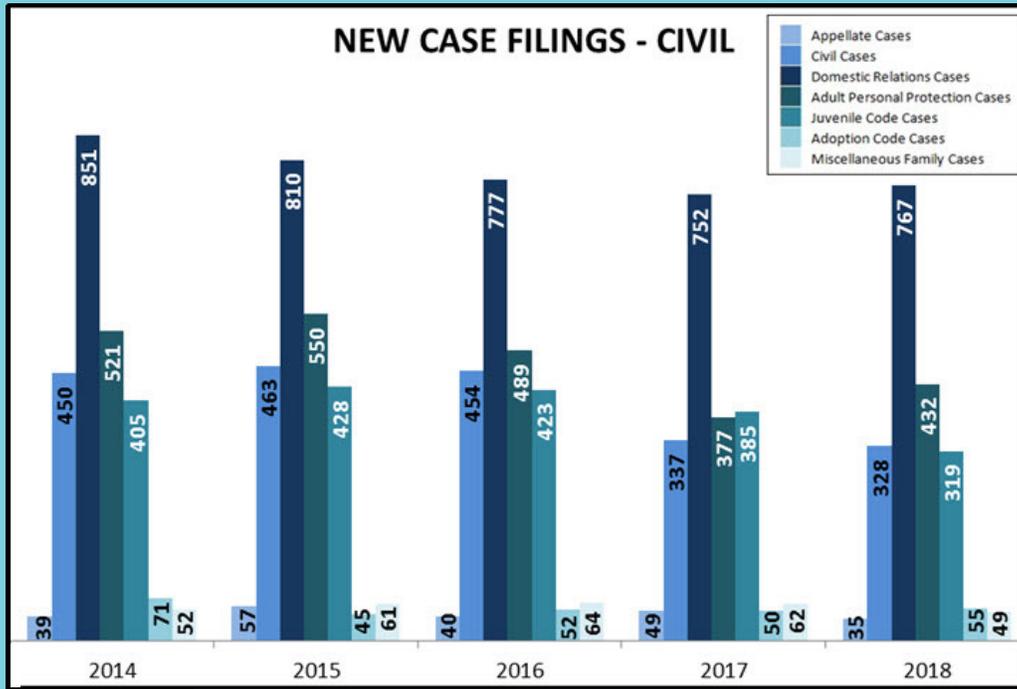
Circuit Court cases are separated into the following categories: Appellate, Civil, Domestic Relations, Adult Personal Protection, Proceedings Under the Juvenile Code, Proceedings Under the Adoption Code, Miscellaneous Family/Ancillary. The Appellate category includes Criminal Appeals, Civil Appeals, Agency Appeals (Administrative Agency, Employment Security Commission, Secretary of State, and Parole Board decisions), and Other Appeals (habeas corpus, superintending control and writs).

The Civil category includes General Civil (business claims, condemnation, employment discrimination, environments, forfeiture claims, housing & real estate, contracts, labor relations, antitrust/franchising/trade regulations, corporate receivership and general civil), Auto Negligence (property damage, no-fault insurance and personal injury), Other Civil Damage (medical malpractice, other professional malpractice, other personal injury, products liability, dramship act and other damage suits), and Other Civil (proceedings to restore/establish/correct records, claim & delivery, receivers in supplemental proceedings, supplemental proceedings and miscellaneous proceedings). The Domestic Relations category includes Divorce with Minor Children, Divorce Without Children, Paternity, UIFSA (assist with discovery and establishment), Support, and Other Domestic (custody and other domestic relations matters. The Adult Personal Protection category includes Domestic Relations and Non-Domestic Relations. The Juvenile Code category include Designated Juvenile Offenses, Delinquency Proceedings, Traffic and Local Ordinance, Child Protective Proceedings and Juvenile Personal Protection Actions. The Adoption Code category includes Petitions for Adoptions (adult, agency international, direct placement, relative, safe delivery of newborn, non-relative guardian, step-parent and other). The Miscellaneous Family/Ancillary category includes emancipation of a minor, infectious disease, safe delivery of newborn child, name change, young adult voluntary foster care, violation proceedings on out-of-county personal protection orders, adult conservatorship, minor conservatorship, developmental disability guardianship, adult guardianship, limited guardianship of adult, minor guardianship, limited guardianship of minor, protective orders, judicial admission and mental commitment.

# CIVIL CASELOAD

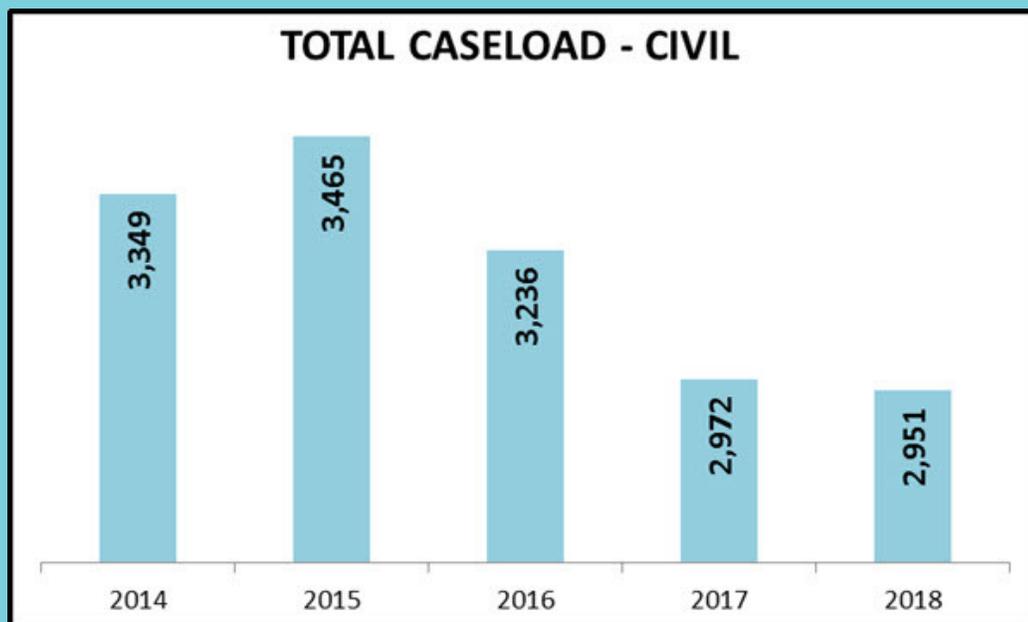
## NEW CIVIL CASE FILINGS

The following bar graph depicts the annual new civil filings for the Thirteenth Circuit Court over the previous five years.



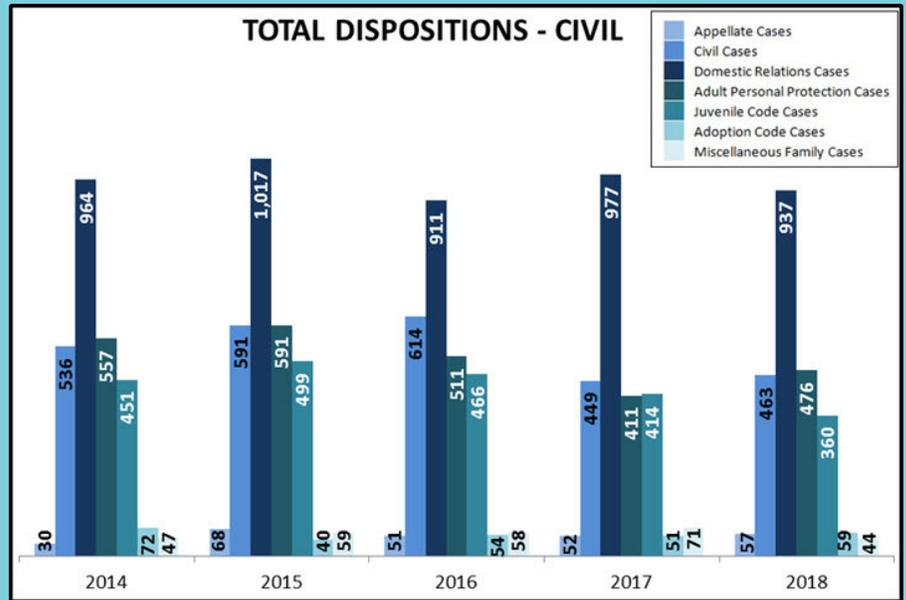
## TOTAL CIVIL CASELOAD

In 2018, there were a total of 1,985 new civil case filings in the Thirteenth Circuit Court. This is a decrease from the number of new civil cases filed in the previous year.

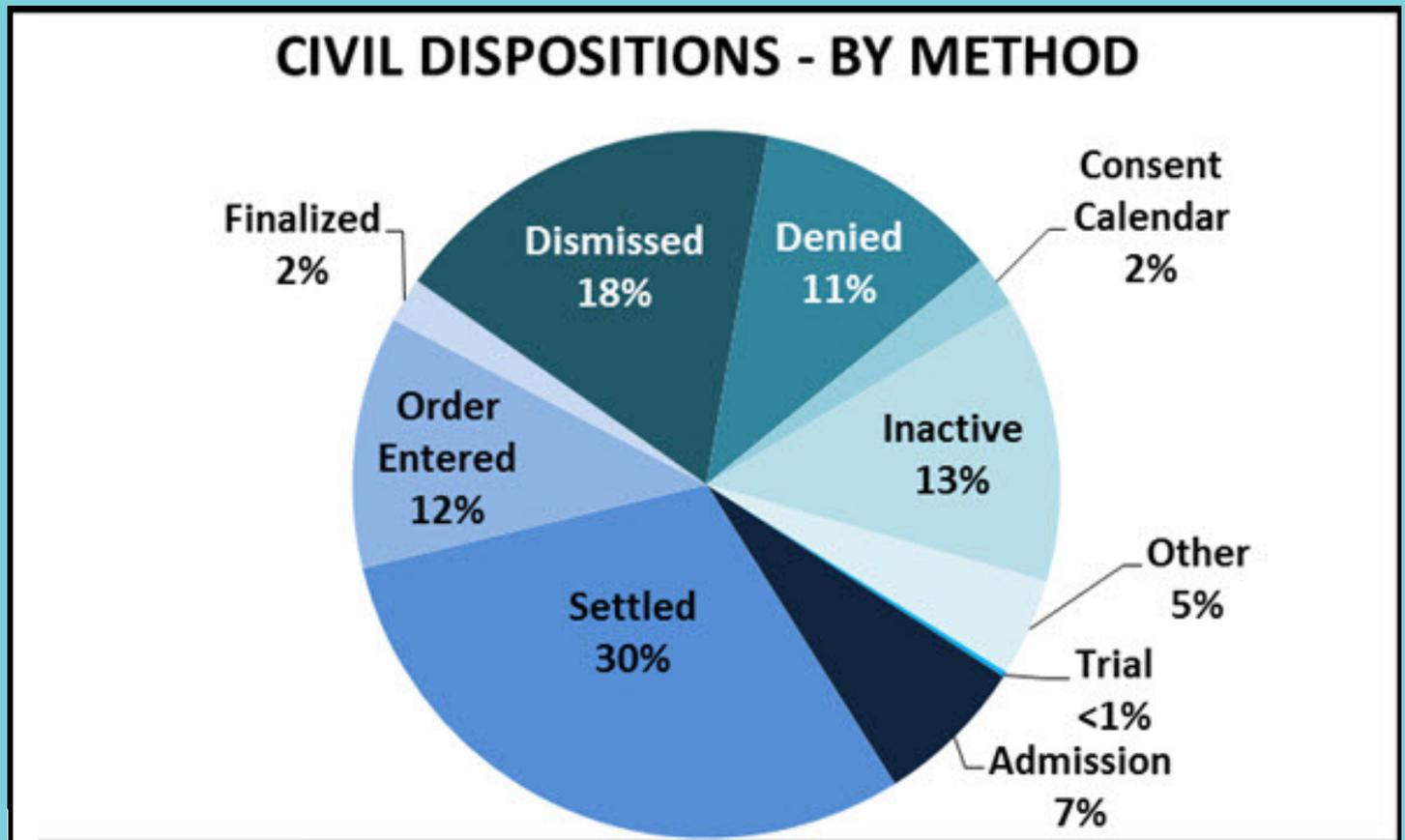


## CIVIL DISPOSITIONS

The following chart compares disposition methods for appellate, civil, domestic relations, adult personal protection orders, juvenile code, adoption code and miscellaneous family/ancillary cases in 2018. The term "Settled" includes cases that were defaulted, uncontested or settled. "Trial" includes both jury and bench trials. The term "Order Entered" includes cases where orders were entered ex parte, after a hearing and after a denial.



The term "Dismissed" includes cases that were dismissed or withdrawn by the party or dismissed by the Court. The term "Denied" includes cases where the request was denied either ex parte or after a hearing. Finally, the "Other" category includes cases that were transferred, withdrawn by the petitioner, not authorized, deferred, the case type was changed or the manner of disposition was not reported.

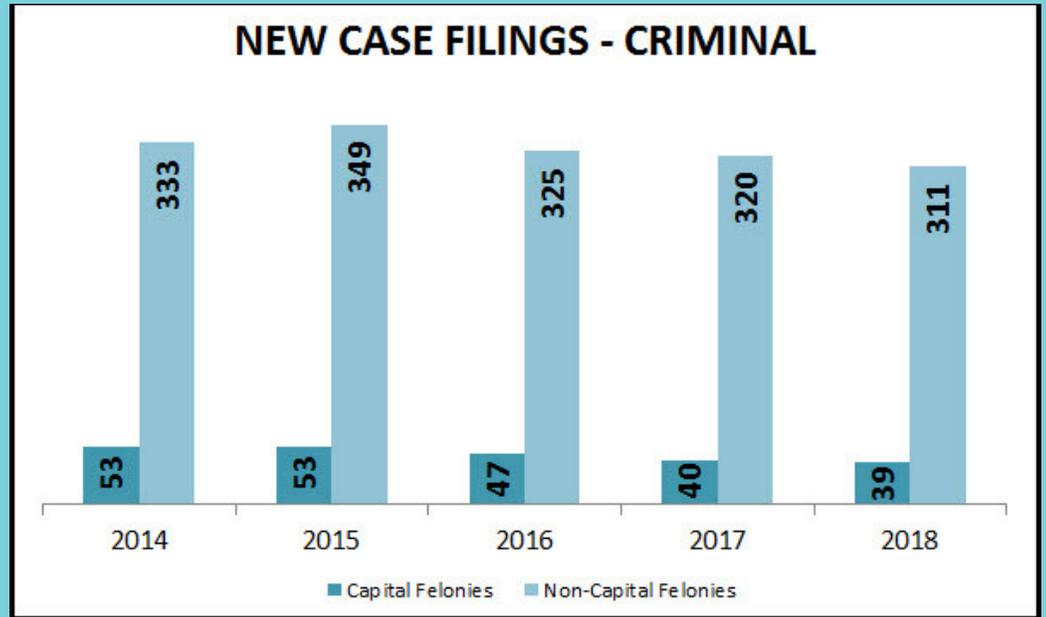


# CRIMINAL CASELOAD

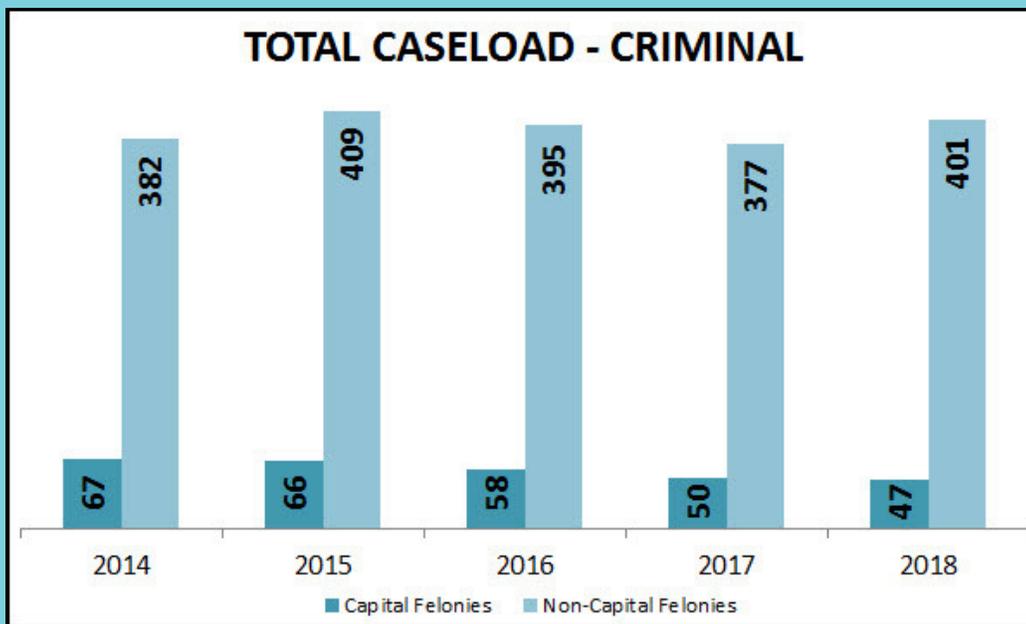
## NEW CRIMINAL FILINGS

Circuit Court criminal cases are separated into two categories: capital felonies and non-capital felonies. Capital felonies are cases in which a life sentence is possible and a larger number of preemptory jury challenges are provided during trial. In non-capital felony cases, a defendant is subject to prison time,

but generally for a period less than life. In 2018, the number of newly filed capital and non-capital felony cases decreased in the Thirteenth Circuit Court.



## TOTAL CRIMINAL CASELOAD



The Circuit Court's total caseload consists of cases that were still pending when the year began, cases that were re-opened, and all newly filed cases. In 2018, the Thirteenth Circuit Court's total criminal caseload for capital felonies decreased, while the total criminal caseload for non-capital felonies increased.

# CRIMINAL CASELOAD

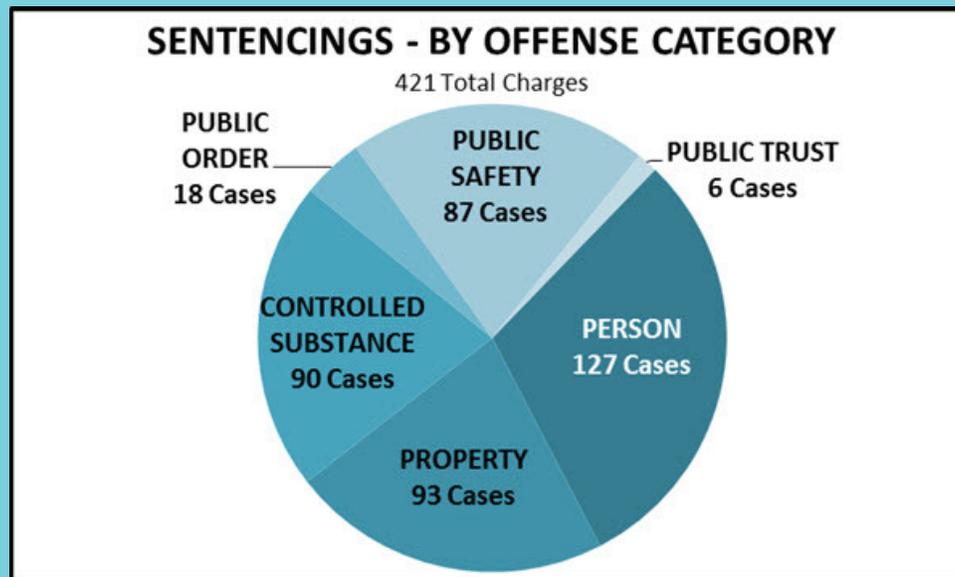
## CRIMINAL DISPOSITIONS

In 2018, the Court disposed of 419 criminal cases. Guilty pleas resulted in the greatest number of dispositions, with the Court receiving 44 guilty pleas in Antrim County, 211 in Grand Traverse County and 19 in Leelanau County.



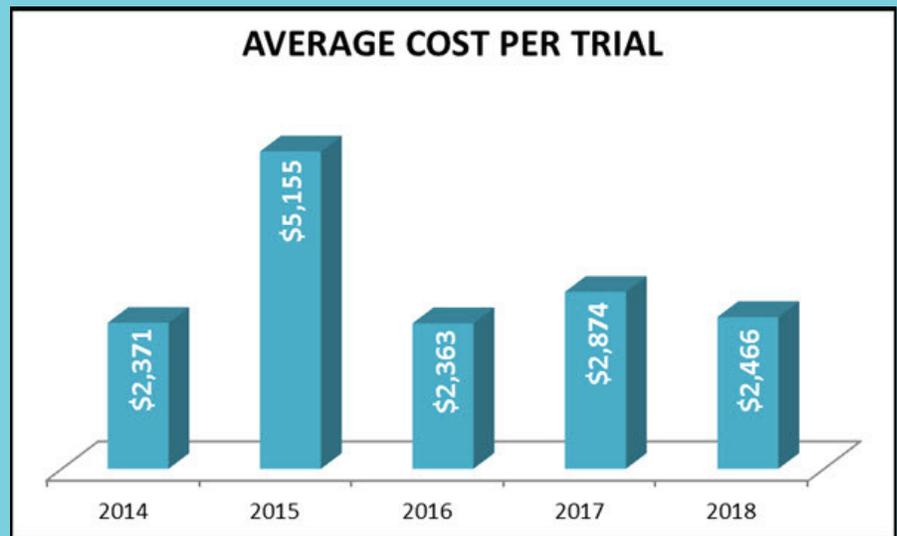
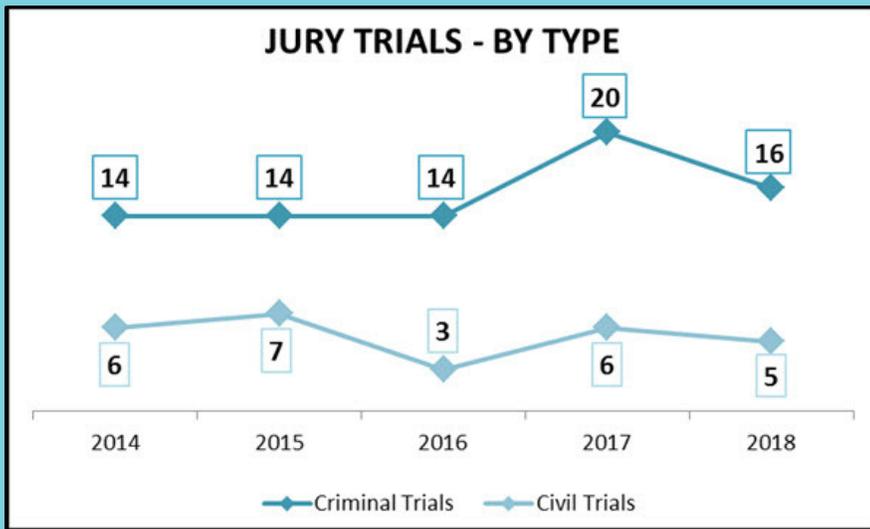
## CRIMINAL SENTENCINGS

In 2018, the Court sentenced 289 defendants, issuing sentences on 421 total counts in 310 cases. There were more total sentencings than total cases and/or defendants because certain defendants were charged with several counts in a single case and some defendants were charged in multiple cases. One defendant has cases in both Grand Traverse and Antrim Counties. The following charts display sentencings and re-sentencing dispositions by type and by offense category.



# JURY TRIALS

To qualify to serve as a juror, an individual must be a United States citizen, at least 18 years of age, a resident of the county issuing the summons, conversant in the English language, physically and mentally able to carry out the functions of a juror and cannot have committed a felony. Anyone with a valid Michigan Driver's license is a potential juror in the County where they reside. The process for selecting potential jurors begins with the Secretary of State providing a list of eligible jurors to the county jury board. Antrim, Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties each have individual 3-member jury boards, appointed by that County's Board of Commissioners, with members serving 6-year terms. The jury boards then send juror questionnaires to the prospective jurors in their respective counties. Once the questionnaires are returned, the jury board randomly selects prospective jurors for their Circuit Court, District Court and Probate Court cases.



“ I felt you ran a very good courtroom. You kept discipline and moved the case along. Your jury instructions were clear and at no time during deliberations did a juror indicate any confusion as to the meaning of your instructions. ”  
- Anonymous juror, Judge Thomas G. Power's December 3, 2018 trial

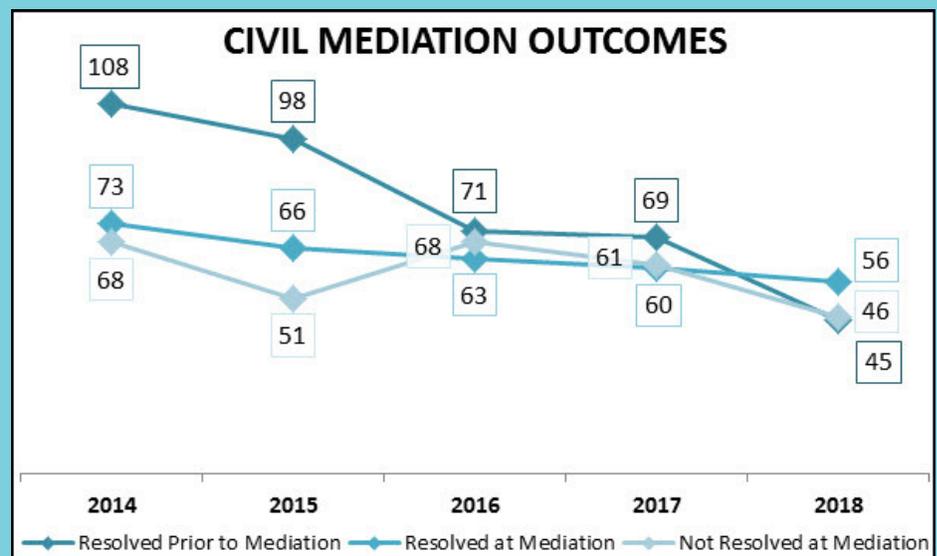
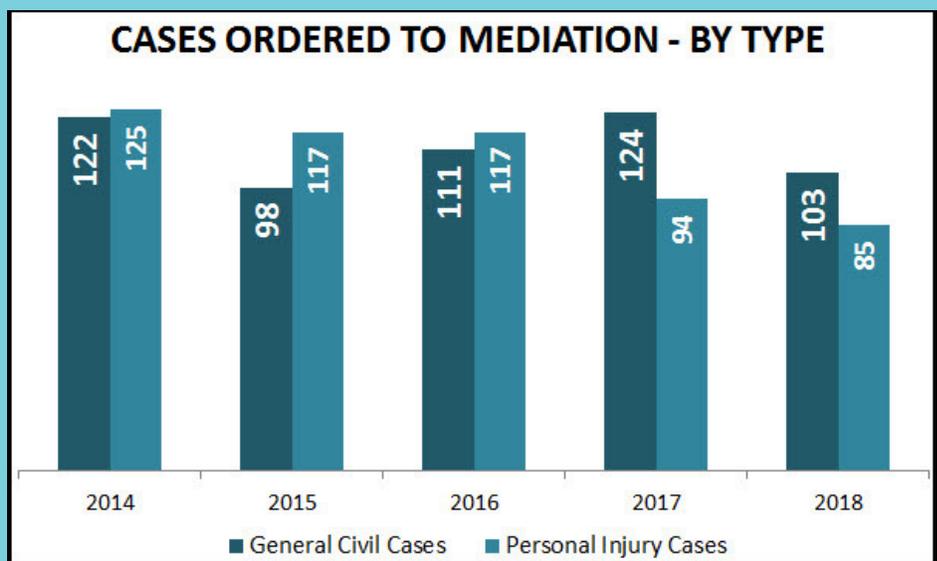
# ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), a process designed to resolve a legal dispute in the place of court adjudication, includes facilitative mediation, domestic relations mediation, and settlement conferences. ADR may also include case evaluation, a non-binding process in which a panel of experienced attorneys assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of the parties' legal positions and assign a value to the case. All civil cases are subject to the ADR process unless otherwise provided by statute or court rule. ADR helps reduce costs to taxpayers due to a reduction in the overall need for jurors, compensation for lay and expert witnesses and the need for additional judges and/or courtrooms.

## CIVIL FACILITATIVE MEDIATION

Facilitative mediation is an alternative dispute resolution process in which a neutral third party facilitates confidential communications between the parties in an attempt to help them reach a mutually agreeable resolution. In mediation, solutions are generated by the parties; whereas in litigation, the resolution of a conflict is imposed upon the parties by the Court. In 2018, 188 total cases were ordered into mediation, with 143 cases actually mediated. The Court selected a mediator in 9 cases.

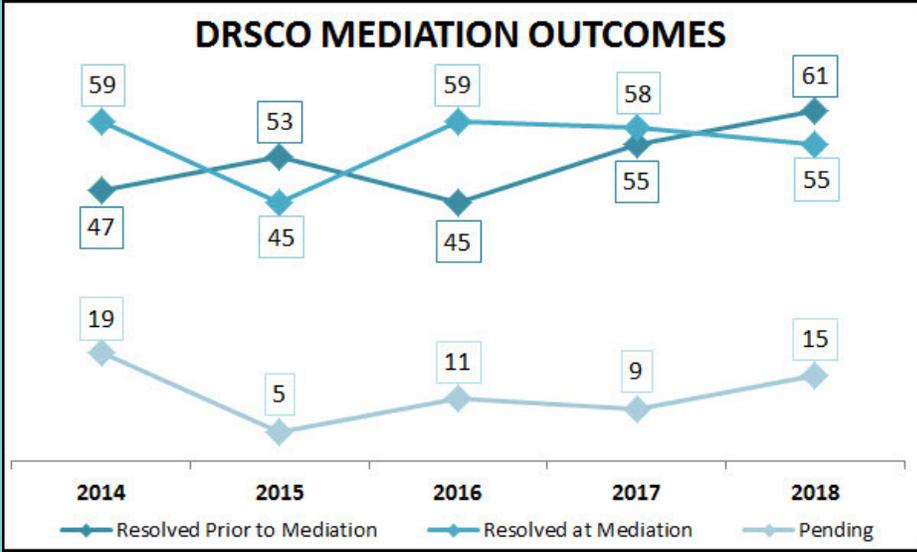
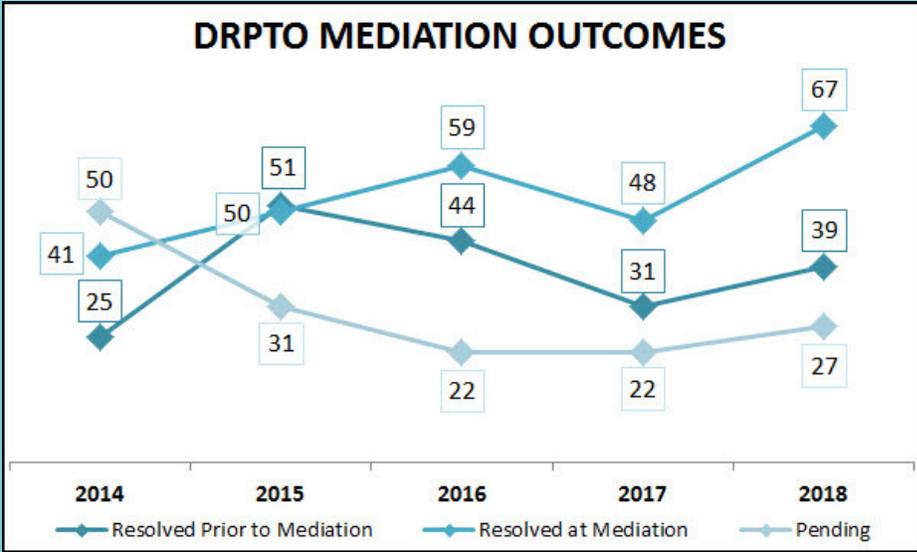
**IN 2018, 69% OF CIVIL CASES WERE RESOLVED BY THE END OF THE MEDIATION PROCESS**



# ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

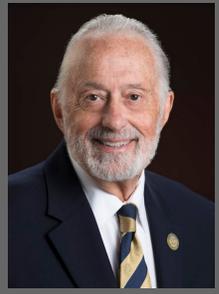
## DOMESTIC RELATIONS FACILITATIVE MEDIATION

In 2018, 365 cases were ordered to facilitative mediation via a Domestic Relations Scheduling Conference Order (DRSCO) or a Domestic Relations Pre-Trial Order (DRPTO). DRSCOs are generated by the Court when a divorce matter is filed, whereas DRPTOs can be generated either before or after a Judgment of Divorce has been entered when there are child related issues such as, paternity, support, custody and UIFSA registration. In 2018, the Court selected a mediator for the parties in 85 cases.



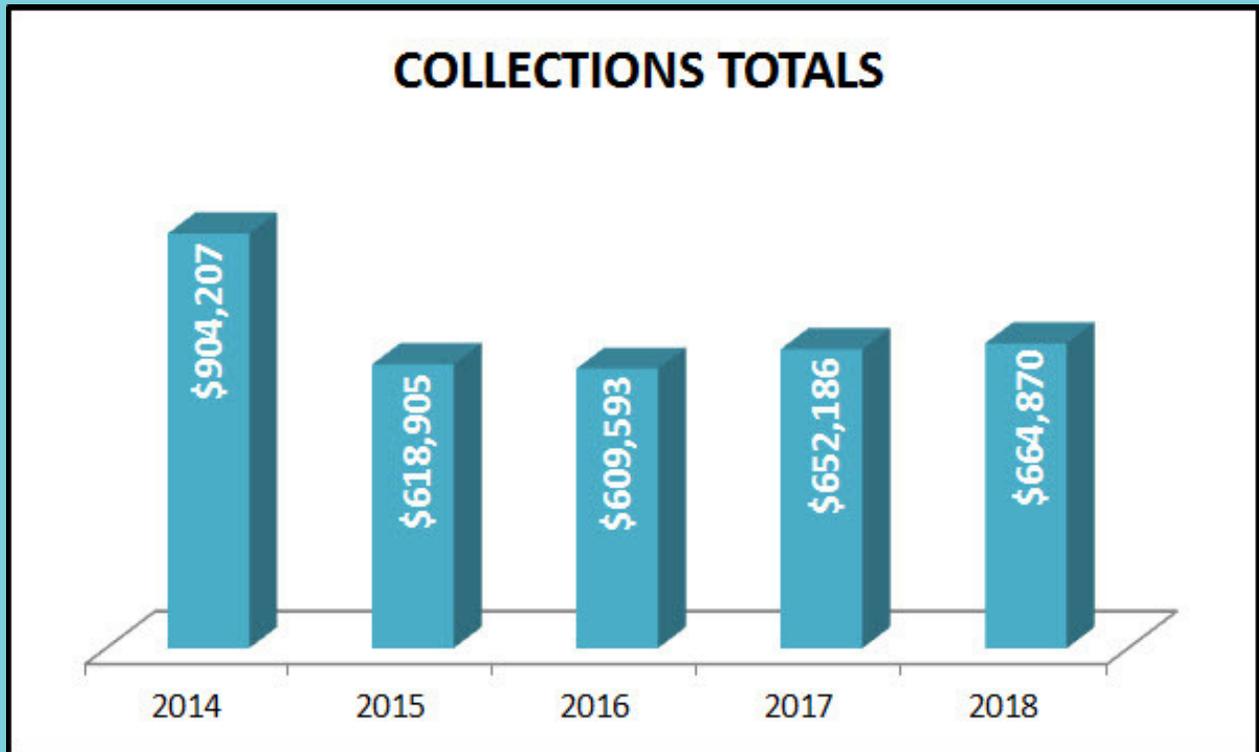
### MEDIATOR OF THE YEAR: JOHN R. BLAKESLEE

The Court created an award this year honoring the mediator of the year. The inaugural recipient of the award is John Blakeslee, who has served as a mediator since 2000 and has mediated approximation 500 cases for the 13th Circuit Court.



# COURT FINANCES

The Inter-County Operating Agreement allows financial and administrative responsibilities between the Counties and Courts amongst all three counties - Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau. Members of the joint Judicial Commission include the Circuit Court Judges, Court Administrator, Board Chairperson, Chairperson for the Finance/Ways and Means Committee, County Administrator/Coordinator and the Chief Administrative Fiscal Officers in Antrim, Grand Traverse, & Leelanau Counties.

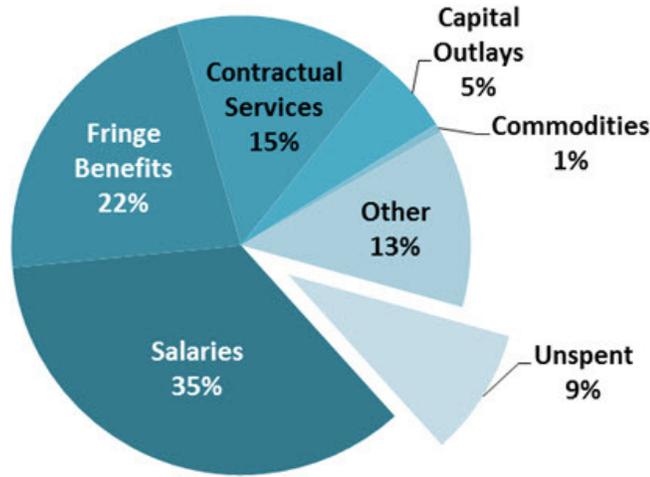


The Court collects fines, costs, court-appointed attorneys' fees, restitution, and crime victim fund payments from convicted felons. The funds collected are used to help support the public libraries, assist in defraying the costs of providing court-appointed counsel for indigent defendants and serve as reimbursement to crime victims for losses they may have suffered.

In 2018, the Thirteenth Circuit Court collected \$253,137 in criminal restitution for distribution to local crime victims.

# COURT FINANCES

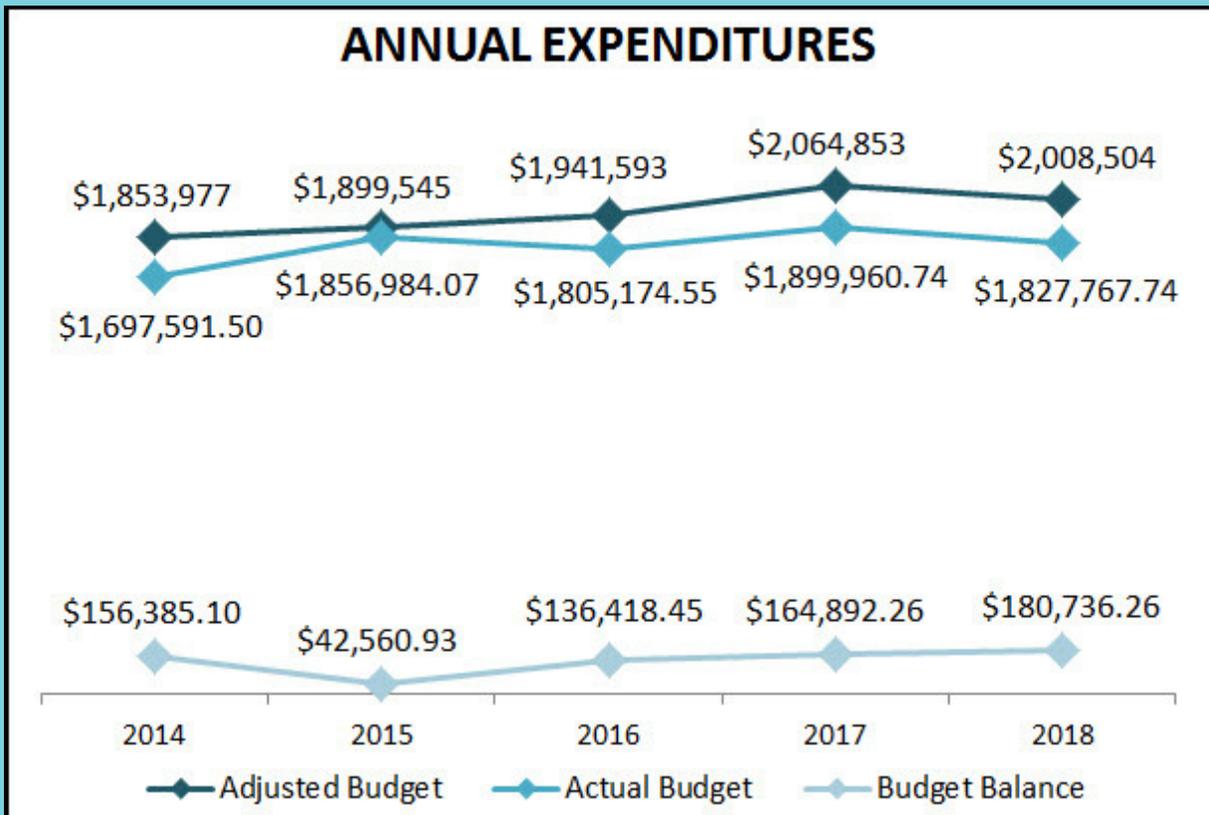
## EXPENDITURES - BY CATEGORY



Each county within the Thirteenth Circuit maintains its own budget and is responsible for the processing, auditing, verification and payment of operating expenses. Grand Traverse County oversees the Circuit Court Operating Fund, which pays for 'cost-shared' expenses, such as salaries, fringe benefits, office space, computer data processing, office supplies and other capital expenditures between all three counties. Each individual county separately pays its 'cost-direct' exp-

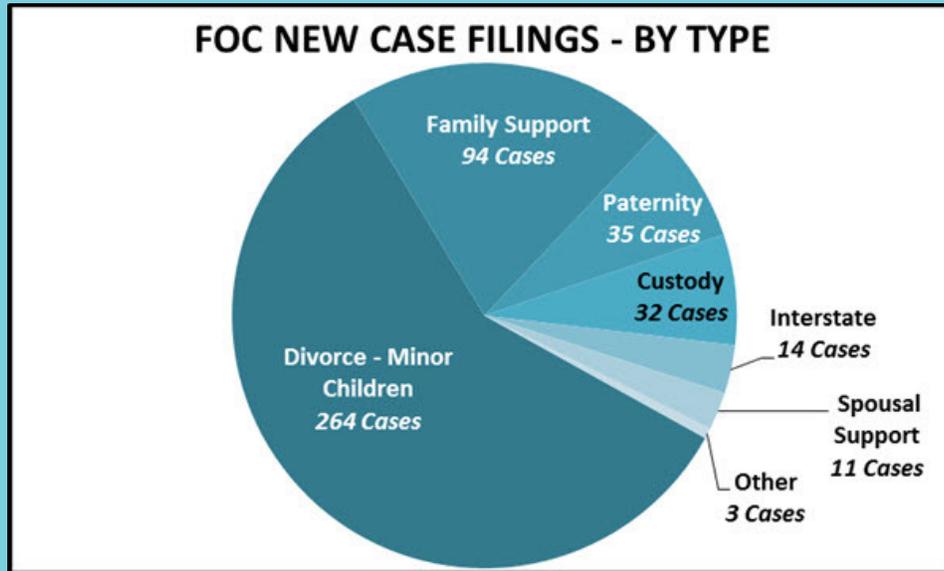
enses, like court-appointed attorneys' fees, jury fees, witness fees, transcript fees and courthouse security. Additional revenue comes from filing fees, and court costs assessed by the County Clerks' Offices and the State of Michigan. Expenditures are divided into 6 categories: (1) salaries for Judicial, Administrative and Friend of the Court staff; (2) fringe benefits for judicial and administrative staffs, including FICA; (3) contractual services, including payments for defense counsel, transcripts, juror compensation, juror mileage, interpreters, professional services and other items necessary for administration and operation of the Courts; (4) commodities such as postage and office supplies; (5) capital outlays including legal reference material, office equipment and office furniture; and (6) other expenses like equipment rentals, printing, utilities, law books, continuing education, and liability insurance.

## ANNUAL EXPENDITURES

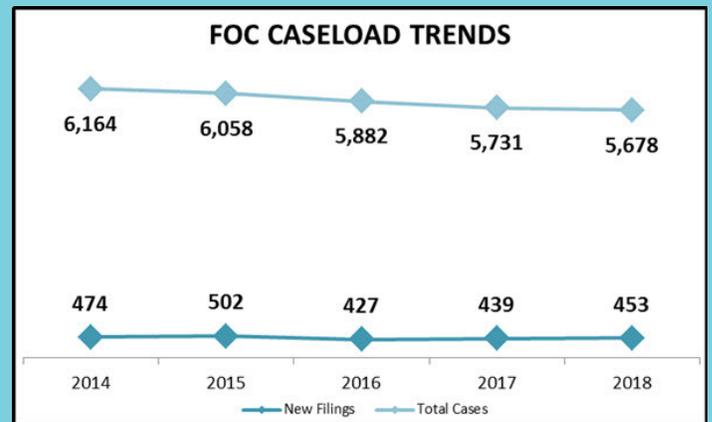
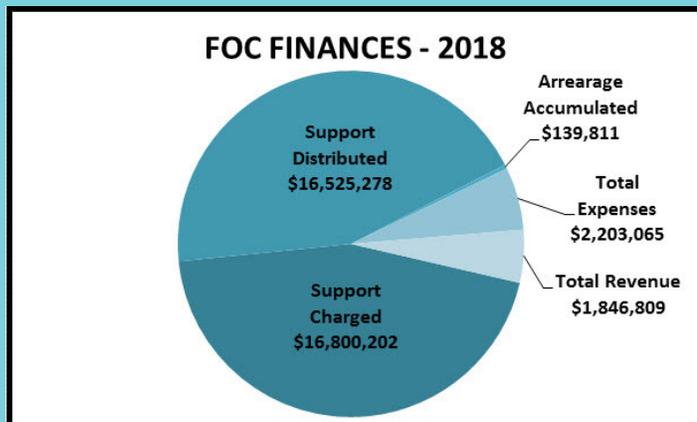


# FRIEND OF THE COURT

The Friend of the Court (FOC) assists the Circuit Court by providing enforcement of Court Orders relating to child support, health care, spousal support, and parenting time/custody and investigating, evaluating and submitting recommendations to the Court on contested domestic relations matters.



In 2018, the FOC office administered 5,754 open cases. Of the 453 new cases opened with FOC in 2018, 12% were from Antrim County, 79% were from Grand Traverse County and 9% were from Leelanau County. The preliminary custody orders generated by the FOC granted primary custody to the mother in 43% of cases, primary custody to the father in 2% of cases, shared custody in 31% of cases and split or third-party case in 24% of cases.



In 2018, the FOC issued: 5,125 income withholding notices; 973 enforcement notices; 834 warrants – 339 for failure to appear and 495 for failure to comply with a previously ordered payment plan. The FOC staff processed 100 complaints for reimbursement of children’s extraordinary medical expenses, generated 170 stipulated orders for clients, conducted 604 enforcement hearings and made recommendations for temporary orders in 430 cases.

# FRIEND OF THE COURT



**Back Row:** Steve Greenman [Case Manager/Family Support Court], Carol Bradway [Interstate Case Worker], Carol Rose [Accounting], Karen Sanchez [Case Manager], Jeremy Hogue [Friend of the Court], Angela Pelletier [Case Manager], Tracie Mullen [Enforcement Supervisor], Fran Boyle [Enforcement Specialist], Gretchen Osim [Accounting], Eric Salani [Case Manager] **Middle Row:** Amber Swift [Case Manager], Tammi Willoughby [Case Manager], Jeannie Binsfeld [Enforcement Specialist], Karen Grant [Interstate Case Worker], Julie Dubay [Case Manager], Danielle Rice [Front Desk] **Front Row:** Tina Braden [Enforcement Case Manager Assistant], Alisa Gallo [Office Manager], Jessica Schimpf [Case Manager], Jodi Simpson [Front Desk] **Not Pictured:** Martha Hornbaker [Case Manager], Devon Holmes [Case Manager], Olivia Adelaine [Front Desk], Hayden Howe [Front Desk], Sally Rath [Enforcement Specialist], Jayne Arnold [Case Manager Assistant], Jennifer Berryman [Case Manager], Jeanne Bredin [Front Desk]

The FOC's total revenue is composed of support judgment fees, custody and parenting time judgment fees, license reinstatement fees, support bench warrant fees, statutory service fees, grant funds, incentive payments, returns for IV-D services, program and non-program income. The total amount of support distributed includes child support, spousal support, extraordinary medical expenses and birthing costs.

*“I wanted to take a moment to let you know how impressed I was with FOC personnel during our first visit. They were kind, patient, helpful and understanding. And, during a time like this, those qualities are extremely appreciated. –FOC Client Abby P.”*



## **HONORABLE THOMAS G. POWER**

Judge Thomas Power was elected to the bench in 1992 and re-elected, after running unopposed, in 1998, 2004, 2010, and again in his last term - 2016. A Traverse City native, Judge Power attended Traverse City High School and received a degree in Economics, Phi Beta Kappa, from Carlton College. After attending the University of Michigan Law School, he received a Master's Degree in Taxation from New York University Law School before practicing law with the firm of Elhart & Power. He represented Leelanau, Grand Traverse and Kalkaska Counties in the Michigan State Legislature for 10 years and was a member of the Judiciary Committee. Judge Power previously served on the Grand Traverse-Leelanau Mental Health Board and was a member of the Traverse City School Board. Judge Power is a member of the Traverse City Rotary Club and is a pilot for the U.S. Coast Guard Air Auxiliary.

## **HONORABLE KEVIN A. ELSENHEIMER**

Judge Elsenheimer was appointed to the bench in 2017 and was elected to the bench in 2018 after running unopposed. He is a native of Traverse City and now owns the same East Bay Township farm where four generations of his family have lived. After receiving undergraduate degrees from Northwestern Michigan College and Michigan State University, the Judge attended law school at Wayne State University. He then served as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Antrim County before forming the firm of Young, Graham, Elsenheimer & Wendling, PC, based in Bellaire. While serving in the Michigan House of Representatives, Judge Elsenheimer was elected Assistant Speaker Pro Tem, Assistant Minority Leader, and Minority Leader. He chaired a standing Committee on Tort Reform and served on the Judiciary Committee. The Judge also served as Executive Director of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and Executive Director of the Michigan Worker's Compensation Agency.





## **HONORABLE NORMAN R. HAYES**

Judge Norman Hayes presides over all litigation involving guardianships, conservatorships, and estates in Antrim County. As Judge for the Family Division, he supervises all divorce actions, personal protection requests, juvenile delinquencies, and neglect and adoption proceedings. After earning his law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School in 1979, Judge Hayes served for 11 years as prosecutor and 10 years as a District Court Judge in Antrim, Ostego and Kalkaska Counties. Judge Hayes has served as a Director of the Michigan District Judges Association and a Director of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association. Judge Hayes has served as the Antrim County Probate and Family Court Judge since 2001.

## **HONORABLE LARRY J. NELSON**

Judge Larry Nelson oversees the Family/Probate Court for Leelanau County. The Judge presides over all litigation involving estates, guardianships, conservatorships and mental health commitments. In addition, he supervises all divorce actions, personal protection requests, juvenile delinquencies, and neglect and adoption proceedings. Judge Nelson received his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and his Juris Doctorate from the University of Toledo. Judge Nelson served as an assistant prosecutor in Oakland County and as a Leelanau County prosecutor. Prior to his election in 2010, Judge Nelson was a general practice attorney in Leland. He retired on December 31, 2018 after 8 years as Leelanau County Family Court Judge.



## **HONORABLE MELANIE D. STANTON**

Judge Melanie Stanton was elected to serve as the Probate Judge in 2012 and was assigned as the presiding Judge of the Circuit Court Family Division for Grand Traverse County. She was re-elected to the bench in 2018 after running unopposed. Judge Stanton presides over all probate cases and, as Family Court Judge, oversees cases involving abuse and neglect of children, juvenile delinquency, adoption, name changes, paternity and support, personal protection orders involving minors and divorces with minor children. Additionally, Judge Stanton presides over one specialty court; the Behavioral Treatment Court. Judge Stanton attended Henry Ford Hospital School of Nursing and received her undergraduate degree in nursing from Wayne State University. She earned her law degree from the University of Detroit School of Law in 1989.



# DOMESTIC RELATIONS JUVENILE REFEREES



*Kirsten Keilitz*

The Domestic Relations and Juvenile Referees for the Thirteenth Circuit Court are licensed attorneys who preside over abuse/neglect cases, juvenile criminal offenses, and all child-related issues in domestic relations cases in Antrim, Grand Traverse, & Leelanau Counties.

In 2018, the Referees conducted 46 custody hearings, 67 parenting time hearings and 38 child support hearings. Further, the Referees handled 59 other hearings including, but not limited to, change of domicile, change of residence, and Friend of the Court case closure.



*Stacey Truesdell*

## COURT REPORTERS



*Jessica Jaynes*

The Michigan Court Rules establish that each circuit court must have as many court reporters or certified court recorders as it has judges. Only certified reporters, recorders or voice writers may record or prepare transcripts of proceedings held in Michigan Courts or of depositions taken in Michigan. Certification is awarded after completing the testing process administered by the Court Reporting and Recoding Board of Review, with the assistance of the State Court Administrative Office.

Jessica Jaynes and Karen Copeland are the court reporters for the 13th Circuit Court and work in all three counties - Antrim, Grand Traverse, & Leelanau - to report judicial matters.



*Karen Copeland*

# CIRCUIT COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

The Circuit Court Administrator's Office is located in the historic Grand Traverse County Courthouse in downtown Traverse City covering Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau counties. Administrative team members have specific responsibilities and duties associated with their individual office positions, however, all staff members are cross-trained to assist the public if their colleagues are unavailable. The administrative staff members specialize in domestic relations and personal protection orders, domestic relations mediation, civil alternative dispute resolution, felony collections, and Circuit Court scheduling. The Court Administrator's staff have significant training and experience working for the state judicial system.



**From Left:** Brooke Bearup-DeBoer [Staff Attorney], Norma Sandelius [Circuit Court Specialist], Kayla Wagner [Circuit Court Specialist], Stacy Osborne [Circuit Court Specialist], Ariana Spafford [Circuit Court Specialist], Brandt Waldenmyer [Circuit Court Specialist], Jennifer Gurnoe [Circuit Court Specialist] **Seated:** Teri Quinn [Circuit Court Administrator], Trina Girardin [Deputy Circuit Court Administrator]



# CIRCUIT COURT DIVISIONS



**Front Row:** Sheryl Guy [County Clerk], Donna Rogers [Deputy Register], Melissa Titus [Deputy Clerk], Sandra Davids [Court Reporter/Judicial Secretary] **Back Row:** William Hefferan [Family Court Administrator], Todd Johnson [Security], Teresa Ankney [Probation Officer], Patricia Theobald [Probate Register], Kim Albert [Juvenile Register] **Seated:** Hon. Norman R. Hayes

## ANTRIM FAMILY DIVISION

In 2018, 112 new domestic relations cases were filed with the Antrim County Family Division. The total domestic relations caseload consisted of 157 cases, with the Court disposing of 105 cases. The total juvenile code caseload consisted of 40 cases. There were 34 new case filings: 26 delinquency cases and 14 child protective cases. The Court supervised one juvenile. In 2018, there were 19 children associated with new child protective filings. The Court served as the temporary legal guardian for one child. The Court finalized 17 adoptions, assisted with name changes for 9 individuals and processed 84 adult personal protection cases.



**From Left:** Joseph Povolo [Family Court Administrator and Volunteer Coordinator], Ryan Douglass [Substance Abuse Caseworker and Juvenile Probation Officer], Susan Richards [Probate Register], Cassidy Fisher [Youth Services Counselor], Josephine Lingaur [Juvenile Register], John Boonstra [Youth Services Counselor], Therese Larson [Juvenile Probation Officer] **Seated:** Hon. Larry J. Nelson

## LEELANAU FAMILY DIVISION

In 2018, 75 new domestic relations cases were filed with the Leelanau County Family Division. The total domestic relations caseload consisted of 110 cases, with the Court disposing of 83 cases. The total juvenile code caseload consisted of 59 cases. There were 55 new case filings: 52 delinquency cases and 3 child protective cases. The Court supervised 26 juveniles. In 2018, there were 4 children associated with new child protective filings. The Court served as the temporary legal guardian for 4 children. The Court finalized 2 adoptions, assisted with name changes for 3 individuals and processed 36 adult personal protection cases.

# CIRCUIT COURT DIVISIONS

## GRAND TRAVERSE FAMILY DIVISION

In 2018, 580 new domestic relations cases were filed with the Grand Traverse County Family Division. The total domestic relations caseload consisted of 978 cases, with the Court disposing of 749 cases. The total juvenile code caseload consisted of 295 cases. There were 230 new case filings: 158 delinquency cases, 5 traffic cases, 62 child protective cases and 5 personal protection actions. The Court supervised 70 juveniles. In 2018, there were 110 children associated with new child protective filings. The Court served as the permanent legal guardian for 21 children and the temporary legal guardian for 39 children. The Court finalized 30 adoptions, assisted with name changes for 26 individuals and processed 356 adult personal protection cases.

The Juvenile Probation Department made 2,068 probation contacts in 2018. These contacts included: conferences at the probation office, Juvenile Mental Health Court, Juvenile Drug Court, New Vision Academy, home and school visits, tether hookups, Wraparound and community meetings. The Juvenile Probation Department conducts a Risk Assessment for each youth to determine the level of service required to address his or her criminogenic needs – dynamic risk factors for delinquency.

Volunteer Services places community volunteers with children and adults who have come in contact with the Court for a variety of reasons. Programs provided by Volunteer Services include: Learning Partners, which matches adults as tutors/mentors with at-risk children; New Vision Academy, which keeps juvenile offenders busy and engaged during the summer by offering programs in art, drama, cooking and other areas; Citizen's Panel, which diverts first-time shoplifters from the Court, has volunteers monitor offenders and assist them in fulfilling a "Community Promise" over an 8-week period; transportation; guardianships and conservatorships.



**Back Row:** Janet Kronk [Neglect/Abuse], John Sabatini, Jr. [Probation Officer], Jeff Burdick [Probation Officer], Cheryl Goodwin [Chief Probation Officer], Kristyn Brendel [Judicial Assistant], Jennifer Weber [Program Manager], Matthew Ferguson [Probation Officer], Kris Randall [Family Division Administrator], Kelly Sarns [Juvenile Register]  
**Middle Row:** Jody Barton [Juvenile Administration], Kathy Nixon [Volunteer Services Administration], Holly Davison [Collections], Meghan Schuur [Volunteer Coordinator], Heather Prevo [Probation Officer] **Seated:** Bobbie Lynn Sherman [Scheduling], Hon. Melanie D. Stanton, Laura Shumate [Learning Partners Coordinator]

# CIRCUIT COURT DIVISIONS

## COURT-APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA)

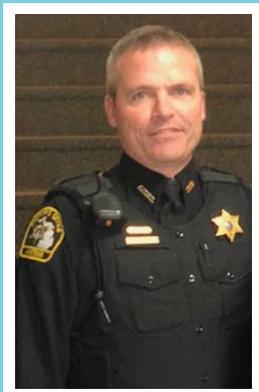
CASA volunteers (through Circuit Court Family Division) are advocates for children who have been removed from their home due to child abuse or neglect. These specially trained volunteers visit with the children, parents, family



members, teachers, agency workers, day care workers, therapists, attorneys, and anyone else who can share personal knowledge of the children. CASAs are the court's eyes and ears; they attend court hearings and submit reports with recommendations regarding permanency for the child(ren). This role requires an extensive training that takes place each spring.

## 13TH CIRCUIT COURTHOUSE SECURITY

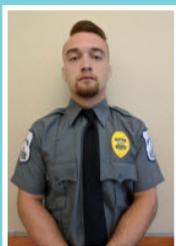
The three courthouses each have their own security. Antrim County Courthouse and Leelanau County Courthouse each contract an employee from the Sheriff's Department. Grand Traverse County Circuit Courthouse contracts with STT Security as of July 1, 2018.



ANTRIM: Todd Johnson



LEELANAU: Ken Lady



Matt Elliot



Dale Barker



Mark Rocheleau



Vickie Gleich



Kirr Guadagno



Jared Jensen



Lamart Burres

GRAND TRAVERSE: STT Security

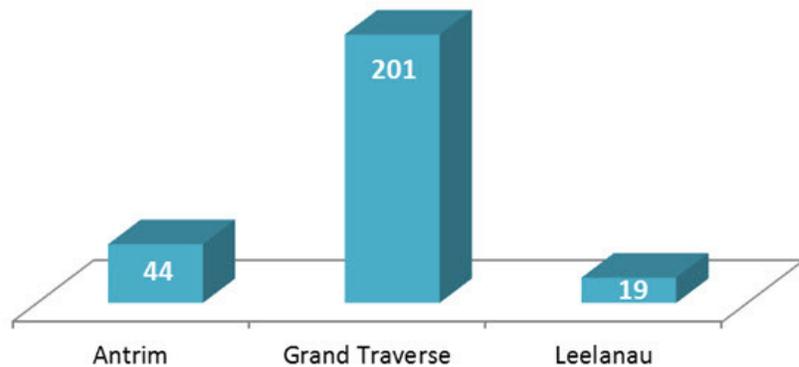
# CIRCUIT COURT DIVISIONS

## MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS PROBATION AND PAROLE

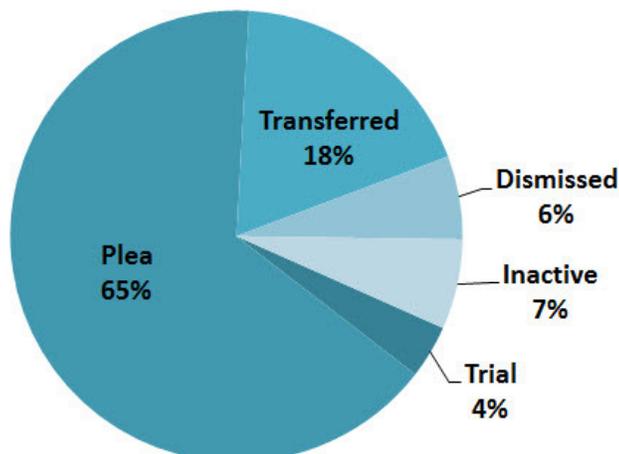
As employees of the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) assigned to local courts, staff supervise convicted offenders rising within the Thirteenth Circuit Court's jurisdiction. The probation/parole staff maintain close working relations with court personnel, law enforcement, Community Corrections, and many other areas partners to ensure offenders are well supervised and to assure public safety. In 2018, the MDOC was partially staffed with nine agents and two secretaries covering the tri-county court. The MDOC averaged a caseload of 450 cases per month between the three counties in 2018, specifically 68 cases in Antrim County, 342 cases in Grand Traverse County and 40 cases in Leelanau County. In addition to supervising MDOC clients, each probation/parole agent must complete a Pre-Sentence Investigation Report (PSIR) for every Circuit Court conviction as well as supplemental reports for follow ups. The PSIR includes the scoring from Sentencing Guidelines and a detailed summary of the individual's history which is then used by the Circuit Court Judges as a tool to assist in determining the appropriate sentence for the crime committed and the specific individual offender. In 2018, 264 new PSIRs were written for the Thirteenth Circuit Court.

**197 DEFENDANTS  
WERE DISCHARGED  
FROM SUPERVISION  
IN 2018**

**PSIRs COMPLETED - 2018**



**CRIMINAL DISPOSITIONS - BY METHOD**



**MDOC AVERAGED A  
CASELOAD OF 450  
CASES PER MONTH  
IN 2018**

# CIRCUIT COURT DIVISIONS

## MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS PROBATION AND PAROLE



**Back Row:** Cynthia Patrick [Grand Traverse County], Andrew Moeggenborg, [Grand Traverse County], Matt Koenig [Grand Traverse County], Chuck Welch [Field Supervisor], Chris Bearup [Antrim County] **Front Row:** Deanna Wilson [Grand Traverse County], James Monette [Grand Traverse County], Jo Meyers [Grand Traverse County & Leelanau County], Thomas Chapman [Grand Traverse County], Amanda Flynn [Grand Traverse County] **Inset:** Damon Herman [Grand Traverse County] **Not Pictured:** Christa Gaugler [Antrim County]

*My client completed the PRS program, then completed outpatient treatment and continues to attend AA meetings. The defendant was reduced to report to MDOC every other month and has been violation free since his return to the community. He has paid his balance in full towards all court costs and fines and continues to show success on supervision.*

*-Agent C. Bearup*

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

## RETIREMENTS



*Hon. Larry J. Nelson  
Retired after 8 years as Leelanau Family & Probate Judge*



*Martha Hornbaker  
Retired after 15 years with Friend of the Court*



*Patricia Theobald  
Retired after 35 years with Antrim Family Division*

## RECOGNITION



**On December 6, 2018, the Circuit Court Judges appointed Noelle Moeggenberg as the new Prosecuting Attorney for 2019. Noelle has been with the Grand Traverse County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for 20 years.**

**SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES**



35

*Patricia Theobald, Antrim Family Division*

30

*Joseph Porolo, Leelanau Family Division*

25

*Hon. Thomas G. Power, 13th Circuit Court*

20

*Jayne Arnold, Friend of the Court*

15

*Fran Boyle, Friend of the Court*  
*Jeremy Hogue, Friend of the Court*  
*Tracie Mullen, Friend of the Court*  
*Martha Hornbaker, Friend of the Court*

10

*Kathy Nixon, Grand Traverse Family Division*  
*Stacy Osborne, Circuit Court Administrator's Office*

5

*Amber Swift, Friend of the Court*  
*Amy Tulpa, Friend of the Court*  
*Jody Barton, Grand Traverse Family Division*  
*Brandt Waldenmyer, Circuit Court Administrator's Office*

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS



## **Madeleine Thomas Award**

The GTLA annually presents the Madeleine Thomas Award in recognition of a recipient's exemplary contributions to the cultural, economic and social betterment of the local community. The Award honors Madeleine Thomas, a local attorney who worked tirelessly for various social service agencies. Madeleine distinguished herself through her devotion to public service and as an advocate for women and children. The Award serves as a reminder that the practice of law and the pursuit of justice often require more than mere advocacy. The 2017 recipient of the Madeleine Thomas Award was

**BRENDA QUICK.**



## **Kimberly M. Cahill Bar Leadership Award**

The State Bar of Michigan presents this award to a recognized local or affinity bar association, program or leader for excellence in promoting the ideal of professionalism or equal justice for all, or in responding to a compelling legal need within the community. The Award was established in memory of Kimberly M. Cahill, a previous president of the State Bar of Michigan. These roles displayed her commitment to the highest ideals of professionalism and community service, focusing on equal access to justice for all. The 2017 recipient of the Kimberly M. Cahill Bar Leadership Award was the

**WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN.**



## **Jo Bullis Pro Bono Award**

In 2004, the Law Enhancement Access Project (L.E.A.P.) created a Pro Bono Award in an effort to recognize and promote the pro bono work performed by local attorneys. Since 2007, the GTLA has presented the Award, on behalf of L.E.A.P., at its Spring Dinner. In 2015, the Award was renamed the Jo Bullis Pro Bono Award, in honor of a local attorney who was actively involved in pro bono work and who established a partnership with Legal Services of Northern Michigan, the Family Court, the GTLA and the Women Lawyers Association to host free legal clinics. The 2018 recipient of the Jo Bullis Pro Bono Award was

**MICKI JANNAZZO.**

## MiFILE: 13TH CIRCUIT COURT CHOSEN AS PILOT COURT

The State Court Administrative Office and ImageSoft initiated efforts to transition five e-Filing pilot courts, the 13th Circuit Court being one, to the MiFILE system. To establish a framework for expanding MiFILE to all courts, SCAO recommended court rule amendments fundamental to the use of MiFILE and an e-Filing environment. These rules were adopted by the Supreme Court and are effective January 1, 2018.

2018 was our first full year under the new MiFILE e-filing system. The 13th Judicial Circuit Court e-Filing program transitioned to MiFILE, Michigan's statewide e-Filing program sponsored by the SCAO. MiFILE utilizes TrueFiling, a 24x7 web-based e-File and e-Service solution for courts, law firms, attorneys, and self-represented filers.

E-Filing is the technology that allows litigants to electronically file case documents, such as pleadings, motions, and petitions. Courts across the country who have adopted this technology have improved service to the public, made access to courts easier, provided flexibility to litigants, and become more efficient through electronic receipt, processing and storage. The purpose of this system is to provide litigants the means to electronically file documents in any Michigan court, 24 hours a day, without traveling to a courthouse and waiting in line. It also provides litigants a means to serve one another with documents and to electronically receive notifications and documents from the courts.



### Michigan's Statewide e-Filing Initiative

Sponsored by the State Court Administrative Office



THERE WERE 22,566 E-FILINGS IN THE 13TH CIRCUIT COURT IN 2018.



10,721 ATTORNEYS USED MiFILE IN THE 13TH CIRCUIT COURT IN 2018.



7 PRO SE LITIGANTS USED MiFILE IN THE 13TH CIRCUIT COURT IN 2018.



*Truefiling has self-amortized itself within the first three years with a 66% reduction in hard costs such as paper, toner, postage, labor and copying.*

*—Former 13th Circuit Court Judge Philip E. Rodgers, Jr., MiFILE Pilot Court*

