



2016

62B District Court Annual Report



*Caring For and Serving the
Community with Justice*

April 3, 2017

Dear Mayor Kepley, City Commissioners and City of Kentwood,

As we celebrate Kentwood's 50th anniversary, it is my pleasure to present to you the 62B District Court's Annual Report for 2016. When Kentwood became a city in 1967, Ray Blett was the Justice of the Peace. From 1968 to 1978, we had a Municipal Court; since 1979, Kentwood has been served by a full-time District Court. Throughout Kentwood's history, the court and the Kentwood Police Department have shared facilities and have worked closely together to be efficient.

The collage on the front cover shows that the 62B District Court is made up of the people and the courthouse in which we work. The courthouse was built in 2002 and this year the bond was paid off entirely.

In 2016, we started 13,645 cases, a decrease of 3,255 (19.3 percent) compared to our peak year, 2014. Most of the decrease was in traffic civil infractions, 3,153 fewer (37.3 percent). Traffic tickets generate significant revenues for the city. Not counting traffic tickets and parking tickets, the court started 6,453 cases last year. This volume has remained constant over the last five years, varying between 6,299 in 2015 to 6,694 in 2012. We turned over \$1,432,663 in revenue to the City of Kentwood in FY 2015-16.

In 2016, one of our busiest years, we disposed of 1,826 cases in the courtroom. Of those cases, 97 percent were concluded within 18 weeks of arraignment.

We hold offenders accountable by aggressively collecting all fines and costs. Acceptance of credit-card payments over the phone has helped to increase our collection rate. We accept credit-card payments on our website and last year 11.8 percent of the payments to the court were made on the website and 2.2 percent of the payments were made on the automated Point & Pay telephone system, reducing staff time.

We appreciate the financial support of the City of Kentwood as we continue to meet the needs of our community and the challenges before the court.

Very truly yours,

William G. Kelly, District Judge

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Court Mission

The 62B District Court will strive to earn the public's trust and confidence by serving the community with the highest standards of justice. The court will do this by:

- *providing a fair and just forum for the resolution of civil and criminal disputes;*
 - *providing these services in a professional, timely, and efficient manner with respect and courtesy;*
 - *educating and providing these services in an understandable and user-friendly fashion;*
 - *being accountable for the resources invested in the court; and*
 - *recognizing the changing needs of the judicial system and the people it serves.*
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Meet the Court Staff

Patricia Baker

Deputy Clerk

Patricia is a Deputy Clerk. She has been with the court since August 2004. Patricia specializes in the General Civil Division. She provides backup for Small Claims and Cashiering. In addition, Patricia is a Certified Court Electronic Operator and has an Associate of Science degree from Davenport College of Business. She worked for five years as a legal secretary for the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office. She is married to Scott and has two children. She enjoys scrapbooking, reading, watching her children participate in sports and spending time with her family.

Marilyn Baldry

Volunteer

Marilyn worked for 15 years with Kent County Mental Health as support staff, 10 years at a local bank and then with Kelly Services. She devoted most of her time to being a wife and mom. She has volunteered for many organizations, including the Kentwood Activity Center, the Kentwood Police Department, along with Godwin Heights elementary schools and Kentwood's Townline Elementary, where she helped children with reading. She enjoys knitting, sewing, reading, and making wedding cakes.

James Bastiaanse

Probation Officer

James is a graduate of Grand Valley State University with a major in Criminal Justice. Before joining the court in March 2000, he worked as a Correctional Probation Officer in Fort Myers, FL. He enjoys computers, sports, spending time with his son, Elliott and traveling.

Jennifer Boston-Petryk

Deputy Clerk

Jennifer has been a Deputy Clerk since 1993. She specializes in landlord-tenant actions and has the joy of coordinating weddings. In addition, Jennifer is a Certified Court Electronic Recorder and is a member of MECRA. She is the mother of two and grandmother of one. She enjoys spending time with family, volunteer work, reading, traveling, and working out.

Sharon Brinks

Attorney Magistrate, Part-Time

Sharon is a part-time Attorney Magistrate for the Court. She is a longtime resident of Kentwood and left her City Commission seat in 2015 to join the court staff. Sharon grew up in West Michigan, attending South Christian High and Calvin College. She graduated from Wayne State Law School and has been in private practice for over three decades, representing small businesses and individuals from her office in Kentwood near the court. Sharon is active in her church, Forest Hills Presbyterian. She is the North American coordinator for CCDH Nicaragua, a partnership of attorneys in pursuit of justice, and travels extensively.

Rick Castillo

Bailiff

Rick is one of six part-time bailiffs for the 62B District Court. He is a retired Jail Sergeant from Kent County. Rick retired from Kent County after 28 years of service. Rick is fluent in English and Spanish. He enjoys spending time with his family and reconnecting with old work buddies.

Lisa Claus

Bailiff

Lisa is one of the six part-time bailiffs for the 62B District Court. She is a graduate of Lake Superior State University. Lisa retired from the Kent County Sheriff's Department in 2014 after 26 years of combined jail and court service. She continues to also work part-time for KCSD as a Security Enforcement Officer. Lisa lives in Cascade Township with her partner Sue and their two dogs.

Bruce DeVries

Bailiff

Bruce is one of six part-time bailiffs for the 62B District Court. He retired from Kent County after serving for 32 years as a Deputy Sheriff. Bruce enjoys spending time with his family and boating.

Paula Ellis

Bailiff

Paula is one of the six part-time bailiffs for the 62B District Court and a graduate of Grand Valley State University. Paula retired from the Kent County Sheriff's Department, where she worked for 27 years in the jail and in the court system. She is a mother of four and a grandmother of nine. When she's not working at the court, she travels.

Teresa Griffin

Deputy Clerk

Teresa is the Secretary in the probation department. She has a certificate from Olympia University as an Administrative Medical Assistant. She also worked in the Education Department. She has an associate degree from Grand Rapids Community College and a bachelor's degree in business administration from Northwood University. She enjoys helping people and walking.

Stephanie Josey

Deputy Clerk

Stephanie started working for the 62B District Court in September 2016. She works part-time in Court Administration and part time in the Probation Department. Before joining the court, she worked as a Criminal Disposition Clerk for the 8th District Court in Kalamazoo. She is a graduate of Central Michigan University with a major in sociology with a concentration in criminal justice. In her free time she enjoys playing cards with her family and friends.

Kathryn Kehl

Volunteer

Kathryn is a volunteer with the Volunteers in Police Service program with the Kentwood Police Department. She retired after 25 years in the banking profession, the last 11 in Private Client Services with JP Morgan Chase. She is a single mother of three grown sons. She is a graduate of the Grand Rapids Citizens Police Academy, after which she served on the Police Chief Advisory Committee under Chief Harry Dolan. She has volunteered with the Heritage Hill Association where she was a block captain, Habitat for Humanity where she helped build houses, Kent County Search and Rescue where she is an on-scene coordinator, and on the board of her condo association. In her free time she loves anything outdoors, daily walks, hiking, tent camping, gardening, and traveling. She hiked Denali National Park three years ago, and has visited 10 national parks.

William G. Kelly

Judge

Judge Kelly has served as the 62B District Judge since January 1979. He is a graduate of the University of Detroit (U-D) and the U-D School of Law. He served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ghana from 1970-72. He is a member of the faculty of the Michigan Judicial Institute and of the National Judicial College. He served as faculty for a number of other programs. He is a past chair of the National Conference of the Special Court Judges of the American Bar Association, a past chair of the Judicial Conference of the State Bar of Michigan, and a past president of the Michigan District Judges Association. He served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Center for State Courts from 1994-2000. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the GR Bar Association. He is now serving in his seventh and final six-year term as the 62B District Court Judge. He has five children and three grandchildren.

You Can't Make This Up

The City Attorney asked a witness about a loud party complaint over the Memorial Day weekend, "Were you having a party?" The witness replied, "No, it was not a party, it was a Memorial gathering." The city attorney asked, "What is the difference between a party and a gathering?" The witness replied, "A party has balloons, a gathering does not."

Latisha Lee

Deputy Clerk

Latisha is a Deputy Court Clerk. She is also a seasoned multitasker. She works tirelessly to perfect her role at court as well as her role as a mother of four beautiful children and loving wife. Latisha is a member of City of Pentecost where she enjoys volunteering for the Outreach Department and their E. C. D Renal Food bank in her spare time. She loves adventurous activities with her husband and kids.

Jennifer Lindsey

Deputy Clerk

Jennifer is a Deputy Clerk. She began working in the court in 2015. Jennifer is in the Criminal Division and specializes in dispositions. She is a Trustee for the Village of Caledonia. She graduated from Olympic College in Bremerton, Wash., with degree in legal studies while she served in the U.S. Navy. Jennifer is married to Bill and has two children. Jennifer enjoys spending time with her family and reading in her spare time.

Matt Maxwell

Probation Officer

Matt is a Probation Officer. He graduated from Central Michigan University in May 2015 with a bachelor's degree in sociology with a social and criminal justice concentration. Before joining the court in October 2015, he worked as the Court Compliance Officer for the 55th District Court in Ingham County. In his free time, Matt enjoys snowmobiling, hunting, and working on computers.

Nancy Morford

Court Recorder/Judicial Secretary

Nancy is the Court Recorder, Jury Clerk and Secretary to Judge Kelly. She has been with the court since October 1984. Nancy served four years as President of the Michigan Electronic Court Reporters Association (MECRA) and two years as the Immediate Past President of the Michigan Electronic Court Reporters Association. Nancy is married to Wayne. She has six children, 14 vibrant grandchildren, two great-granddaughters, and three great-grandsons. She enjoys shopping and spending time with her family.

Melissa Murray

Sobriety Court Deputy Clerk

Melissa is the Sobriety Court Deputy Clerk and started with the court in September 2016. She graduated from Saginaw Valley State University in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in behavioral sciences, with a concentration in criminal justice. In 2015, she graduated from Grand Valley State University with a master's degree in criminal justice. Melissa spent some time working for the 61st District Court Drug Lab, and has a great deal of experience in working with at-risk youth through her former employment at Pine Rest and Heritage Homes. Melissa is active in her church, Forest Hills Presbyterian. She enjoys spending time with family and her son, Caleb, and watching crime shows on the Investigation Discovery Channel.

Mark Morton

Bailiff

Mark is one of the six part-time bailiffs. He moved to Kentwood in 1983 when he began working as a Corrections Deputy for the Kent County Sheriff's Department. Mark served for 10 years on the Executive Board of the Kent County Deputy Sheriff's Association with nine years as vice president. He retired in 2011 after 28 years spent specializing in conflict resolution. Mark enjoys working in Kentwood, serving the community in which he lives.

Pam Schichtel

Volunteer

Pam is a clerical court volunteer. She volunteers with the Kentwood Police Department and was the Interim Volunteer Coordinator until Vicki Highland was hired. She also volunteers with ArtPrize and LaughFest. During a 40-year career in the market research industry, she served as president of Data Track, Inc., a division of Kennedy Research, Inc. in Grand Rapids, and for 21 years traveled extensively throughout the United States and Europe as owner of Schichtel's Field and Consulting Services. Pam and her husband of 48 years, Ray, moved to Kentwood in 1972 to raise their family. They have a daughter, a son, and a grandson who graduated from East Kentwood High School. Pam enjoys anything to do with horses. She also enjoys helping her daughter with her cupcake business, reading, jewelry-making and gardening, among many other interests.

Jodi Simpson

Deputy Clerk

Jodi has been a Criminal Clerk since 1993, serving the 61st District Court in Grand Rapids and the Superior Court in Washington, D.C. She thrives on cooking, gardening, adventures with her grandchildren, and spending good times with her family. She enjoys foreign films, historical fiction, interior design, and writing.

Charlisse Smith

Probation Officer

Charlisse is a Probation Officer. She started with the court in March 2016. She was recognized as the court's Employee of the Year. Before joining the court, she worked as a secretary in the Kentwood Police Department Detective Bureau. Before that, she worked as a Deputy Court Clerk in the 54B District Court in East Lansing. Charlisse graduated from Michigan State University in 2012 with a degree in sociology in hopes of a career in either the legal or social work field. Charlisse is originally from Detroit but plans to stay in the greater Grand Rapids area and pursue opportunities in the legal field. In her free time, she enjoys playing with her 5-year-old Yorkie and cooking different meals.

C. Lynn Smith

Director of Probation Services

Lynn is the Director of Probation Services. She has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Grand Valley State University. Lynn started working with the 62B District Court in July 1991.

Paul Spetoskey

Bailiff

Paul is one of the six part-time bailiffs and works for Ottawa County Sheriff Department full time. He is a graduate of Grand Rapids Community College. He has been married to Roxanne for 24 years and they have a 19-year-old daughter, Marisa. Paul enjoys spending time with family and friends, playing golf, and working out.

Annette Whitby

Deputy Clerk

Annette is a Deputy Clerk. She is a cashier and specializes in collections. She attended GRCC in the early '80s and majored in criminal justice and interned at the Grand Rapids Police Department. She is a graduate of the Davenport College of Business with major in accounting. Her accounting career spans 20-plus years. She is married and has one son. She enjoys sewing and traveling.

Michele White

Court Administrator & Magistrate

Michele is the Court Administrator, Non-Attorney Magistrate, Language Access Coordinator, ADA Coordinator, LEIN Terminal Agency Coordinator, and trainer with the court. She is married to David and has a son, Andrew. She is a summa cum laude graduate of Cornerstone University with a bachelor's degree in business management and an associate degree in business. She is a member of the National Association for Court Management, the Michigan State Association for Court Management, and the Michigan State Association for Magistrates, and a graduate of the Davenport Career Center in Healthcare. She has worked for the court since December 1998. She is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church. She enjoys spending time with her family, camping, gardening, and drawing.

Janel Yoder

Deputy Clerk

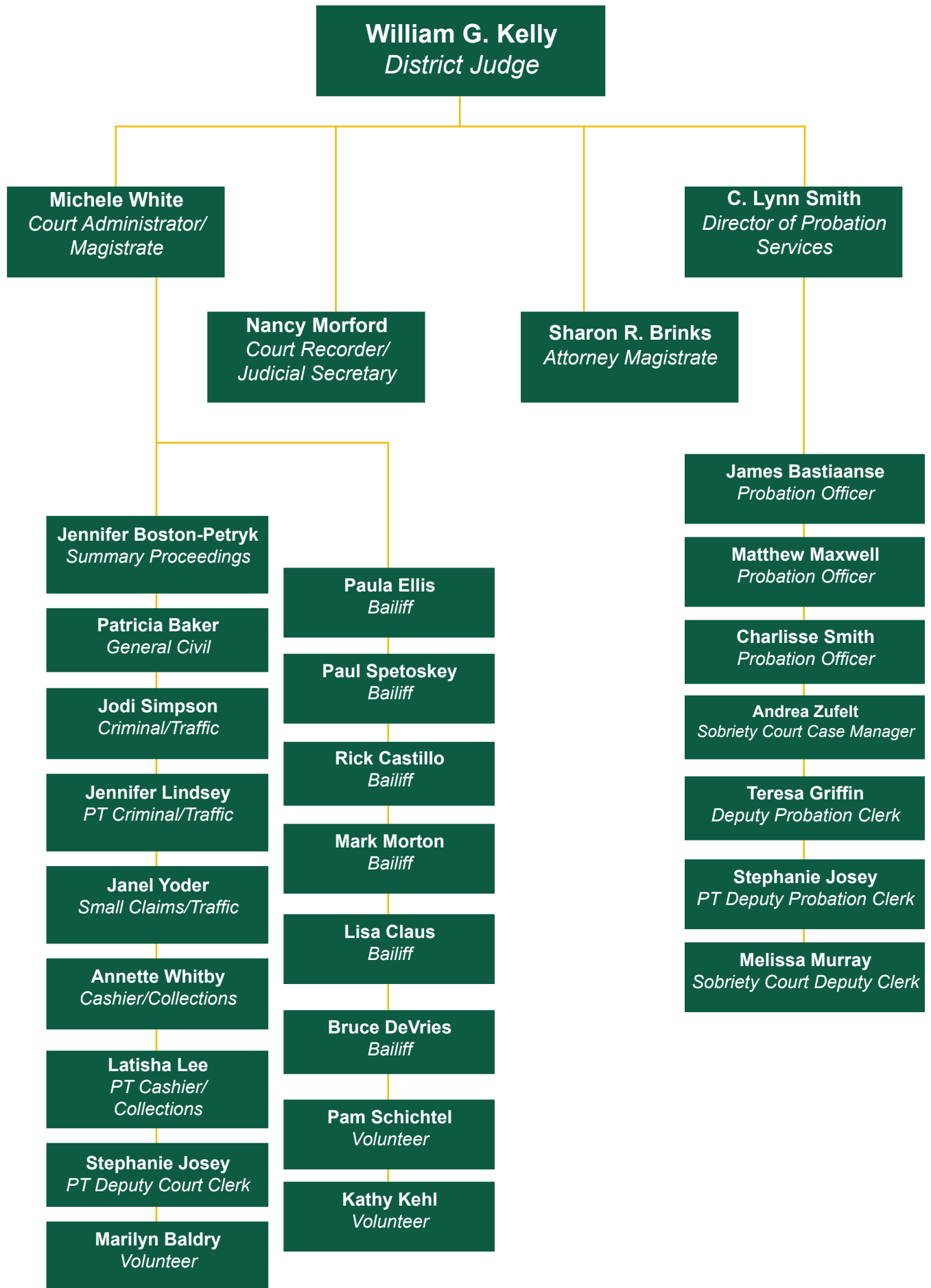
Janel is a Deputy Clerk working with Small Claims and Traffic Hearings. She also assists in the Landlord Tenant, General Civil, and Collections divisions. A former restaurant manager and pastry chef, she received a kidney and pancreas transplant seven years ago. She returned to school after the transplant, receiving a post-baccalaureate degree in paralegal studies from Davenport University. She helps organize DU's mock trials here at Kentwood District Court. She is a dedicated Pinky Pal at the nonprofit Alzheimer's charity shop, Pinky's Place, where she regularly demonstrates her love of crafting, antiquing, and baking.

Andrea Zufelt

Sobriety Court Case Manager

Andrea is the Case Manager and Coordinator for the 62B Regional Sobriety Court Program and started working with the court in July 2007. She has an associate degree in youth services from GRCC and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Ferris State University and a graduate certificate in alcohol and substance abuse from Western Michigan University. She is also a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. She is currently attending Aspen University's online graduate program for psychology with an emphasis in addiction studies. She lives in Grand Rapids with her husband, Ron, their two dogs and five cats. She enjoys spending time running, movies, and relaxing.

Court Organizational Chart



2016 62B District Court Caseload

	Non-Traffic			Traffic			Civil				Total
	Felony	Misd.	Mun Civ Inf	Misd	Traf CI	OUIL/DWI	General Civil	Small Claims	Summary Proceeding	Parking	
Beginning	20	87	7	223	413	12	372	35	27	149	1,345
New Filings	320	911	142	1,518	5,302	98	1,302	360	1,801	1,891	13,645
Reopened	102	239	0	314	26	9	6	10	2	0	708
Total Caseload	442	1,237	149	2,055	5,741	119	1,680	405	1,830	2,040	15,698
Jury Verdict	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Bench Verdict	0	7	0	197	463	1	8	33	10	0	719
Verdict at Hearing	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	16
Guilty Plea/ Admission/Waiver	52	774	0	1,084	3,508	95	0	0	0	0	5,513
Admission/Waiver	0	0	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,302	1,382
Uncontested/ Default/Settled	0	0	0	0	0	0	791	162	854	0	1,807
Bindover/Transfer	243	0	0	0	0	4	4	17	0	0	268
Dismissed by Party	20	81	4	237	306	1	238	90	847	27	1,851
Dismissed by Court	0	1	0	0	2	0	201	30	15	0	249
Default	0	0	58	0	1,169	0	0	0	0	487	1,714
Inactive Status	114	296	0	337	1	7	14	1	0	0	770
Other Dispositions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Case Type Change	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total Dispositions	429	1,165	144	1,856	5,450	108	1,256	333	1,726	1,830	14,297
Ending	13	72	5	199	291	11	424	72	104	210	1,401

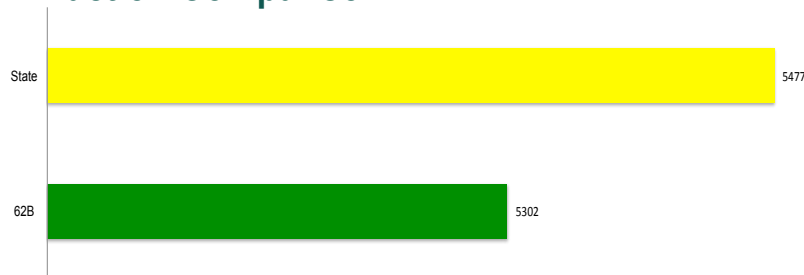
Comparison with Average Judicial Caseload

The 2016 caseload, excluding parking tickets, for the 62B District Court judge was 19.2 percent greater than the average judge's caseload in 2015, the last year available (statewide totals divided by 250) and 44 percent greater if parking tickets and traffic civil infractions are excluded. Different types of cases require different amounts of judicial involvement. The state assigns different weights to different types of cases. The court's weighted caseload was 25.4 percent higher than the state average for a judge without taking into account the Sobriety Court. The caseload was greater than the average judge's in every category except Civil Infractions and Drunk Driving.

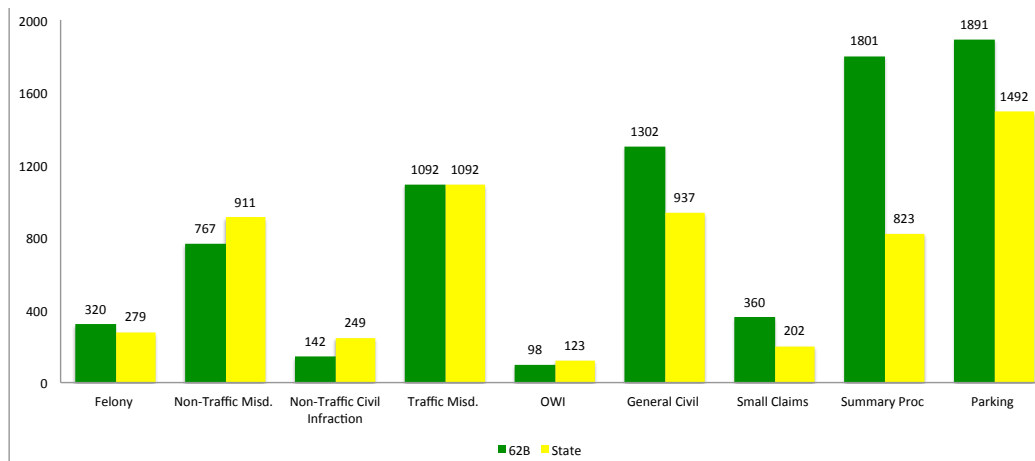
Sharon Brinks is the court's Attorney Magistrate and Michele White is the court's Non-Attorney Magistrate. They are able to preside over informal hearings and conduct arraignments, sign arrest warrants and sign search warrants. As an Attorney Magistrate Sharon Brinks is available to conduct Small Claims trials.

The state's Judicial Resource report released in 2015 found that the 62B District Court had a need for 1.04 judges and 1.20 judicial officers. Our staff of judicial officers is appropriate for our current judicial need.

Traffic Civil Infraction Comparison



Comparisons



Weighted Caseload

	Felony	Non-Traf Misd	Non-Traf Civ Inf	Traffic Misd	Traffic Civ Inf	DWI Misd	DWI Fel	Sob Ct	Gen Civil	Small Claims	Summary Proceedings	Total
Weights	46.0	28.3	4.0	9.0	1.3	46.1	34.1	70.0	9.0	12.0	6.0	
62B	14,720	25,781	568	13,662	6,893	4,333	136		11,718	4,320	10,806	92,938
State	12,834	21,706	996	9,828	7,120	5,428	425		8,433	2,424	4,938	74,132
Percent. (%)	114.7	118.8	57.0	139.0	96.8	79.8	31.1		139.0	178.0	218.8	125.4

Five-Year Trends

New Filings by Case Type 2012-2016

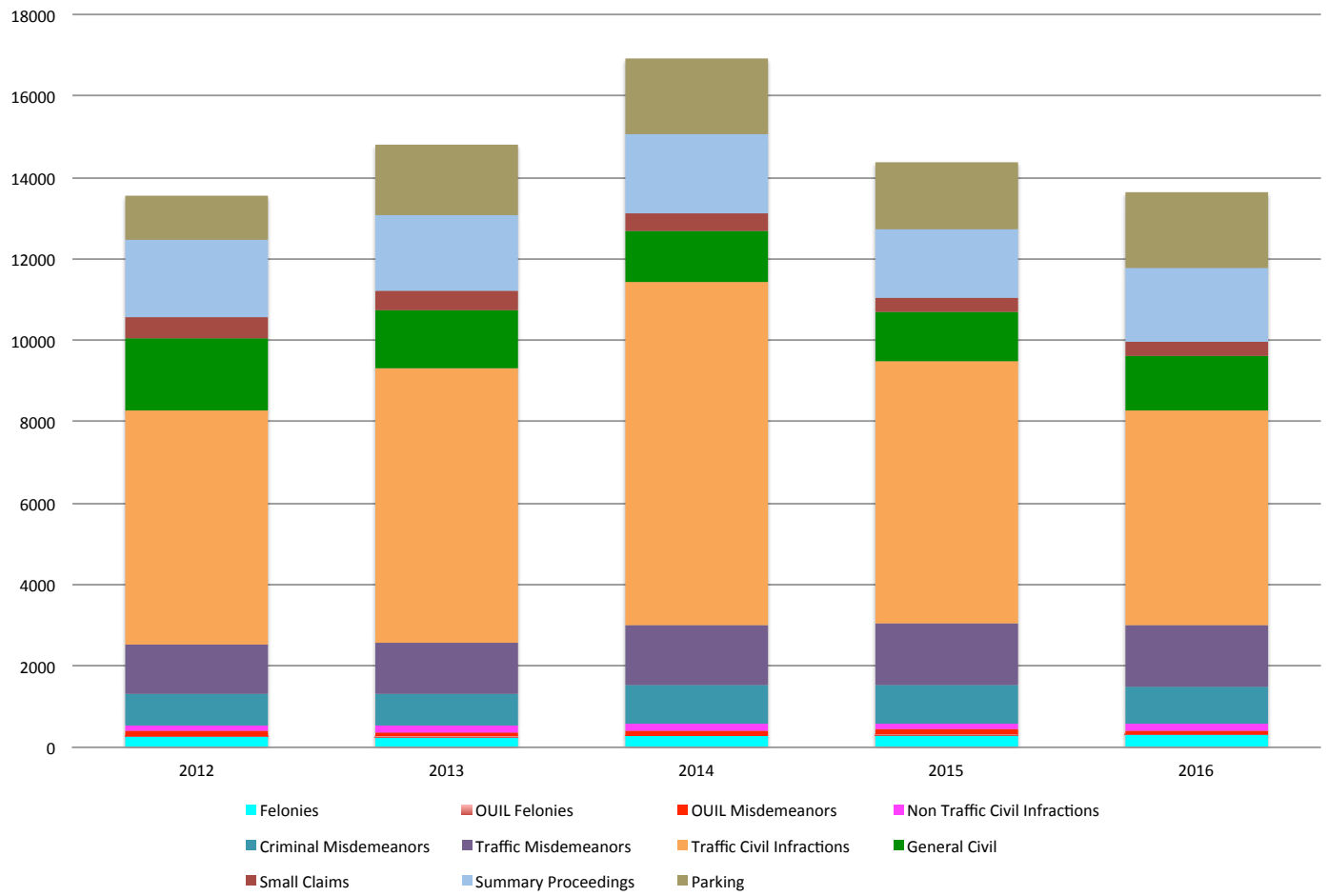
Our new case filings in 2016 were 5.2 percent less than our new filings in 2015 (a decrease of 744 cases) and 19.3 percent less than our new case filings in 2014, our peak year (a decrease of 3,255 cases). The decrease was primarily in civil infractions and parking tickets. We started 3,153 fewer traffic civil infractions than in 2014, our peak year. Traffic civil infractions and parking tickets take little judicial time but are the main sources of revenue for the court. The rest of the caseload increased by 2.4 percent (153 cases) from 2015 and decreased by 0.2 percent (133 cases) from the caseload in our peak year, 2014.

Without counting parking tickets or traffic civil infractions, over the last 10 years our caseload has been fairly consistent between 6,300 and 6,700 new cases.

In 2016, we concluded 1,826 cases in the courtroom either through a plea, a trial, a bench warrant, or a dismissal. This was the third highest number ever.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Felonies	273	250	278	299	320
OUIL Felonies	11	10	14	21	4
OUIL Misdemeanors	107	98	114	131	94
Non-Traffic Civil Infractions	150	159	175	129	142
Criminal Misdemeanors	792	781	970	950	911
Traffic Misdemeanors	1,201	1,270	1,437	1,507	1,518
Traffic Civil Infractions	5,754	6,762	8,455	6,441	5,302
General Civil	1,770	1,401	1,234	1,211	1,302
Small Claims	501	479	424	342	360
Summary Proceedings	1,889	1,853	1,939	1,709	1,801
Parking	1,117	1,749	1,860	1,649	1,891
Totals including Parking	13,565	14,812	16,900	14,389	13,645
Total minus Parking	12,448	13,063	15,040	12,740	11,754
Total minus parking and Traffic Civil Infractions	6,694	6,301	6,585	6,299	6,452

Trend of New Filings 2012 - 2016



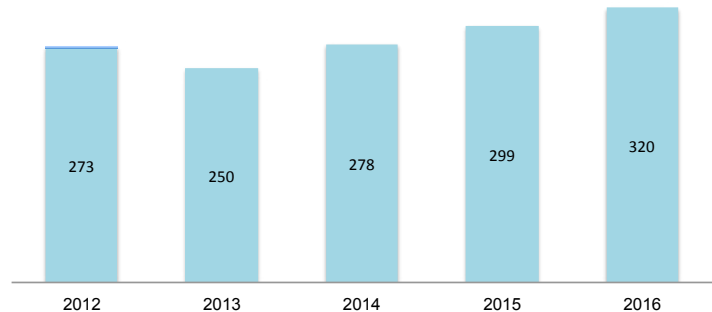
Criminal Cases 2012 - 2016

Felonies

Felonies are offenses punishable by more than a year in prison. Felonies begin in the District Court with the signing of a complaint, an arraignment, a probable cause conference, and a preliminary examination to establish probable cause that a felony was committed and probable cause that the defendant committed the offense. Most defendants waive the preliminary examination because the defendant and prosecution agree on a plea offer.

If a defendant waives his or her right to a preliminary examination, this court prepares a copy of any plea offer, which is signed by the defendant and the attorneys.

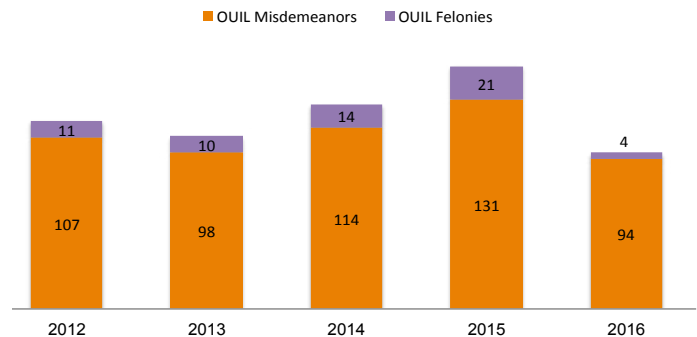
The probable cause conferences are a result of a new law. The purpose is to reduce the number of witnesses who are subpoenaed to court to testify at a preliminary exam.



Drunk Driving

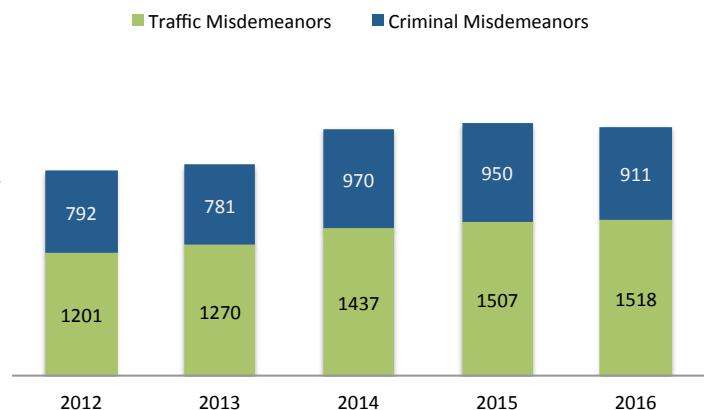
The court places most of the people convicted of drunk driving in the 62B District Court on probation, with a requirement to obtain counseling and to abstain from alcohol and drugs.

Our Regional Sobriety Court supervises probationers who have been convicted of drunk driving twice and are alcohol dependent. Probationers come from this court, Circuit Court, or the district courts in Grandville, Walker, Wyoming, and Kent County. We also supervise people who live in Kent County and were convicted outside of Kent County. Sobriety Courts reduce recidivism significantly. This will mean safer roads. Currently, about 55 people are participating in the Sobriety Court. Almost all are maintaining sobriety. Only one has been arrested for a new offense.



Misdemeanors

The number of misdemeanors has increased in the past five years, especially the past three years. Many traffic offenses carry a "Driver Responsibility Fee" (DRF) for which the defendants must pay \$500 or \$1,000 to the state to balance the state budget. The DRF is being phased out and will no longer be assessed after October 1, 2019, due to the efforts of Judge Kelly and the Michigan District Judges Association. The DRF makes it more difficult for us to collect the court fines and costs. The state has also imposed a \$75 victim fee and \$50 judgment fee on all misdemeanors. Part of the victim fee pays for emergency trauma programs. These must be paid before any court costs for the city can be collected.

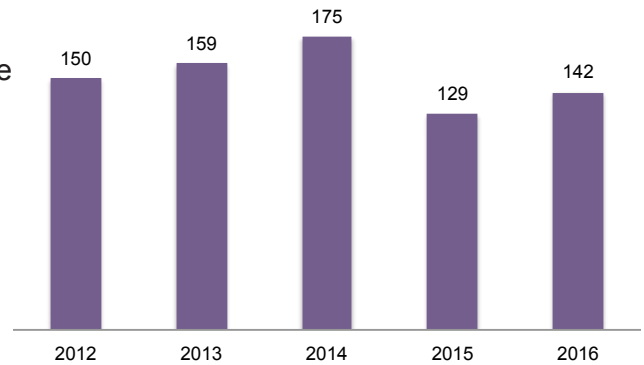


Civil Infractions 2012 - 2016

Non-Traffic Civil Infractions

Most of the non-traffic civil infractions written by the City Inspectors are paid in the Treasurer's Office. The City has stepped up enforcement of the code the last few years.

The advantage of using a civil infraction is that the burden of proof at the hearing is by a preponderance of the evidence and there is no right to a trial by jury. The disadvantage is that an offender cannot be sent to jail.

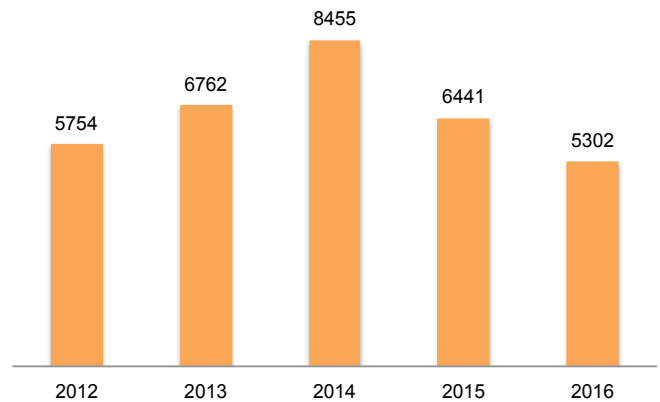


Traffic Civil Infractions

In 2016 we started fewer traffic civil infractions than in 2015 and 3,153 fewer traffic civil infractions than in 2014, the peak year. Traffic tickets are primarily to enforce traffic laws designated to keep the community safe.

Secondarily, the traffic tickets generate revenue. In 2016, the magistrates conducted 254 informal hearings and answered many letters of explanation.

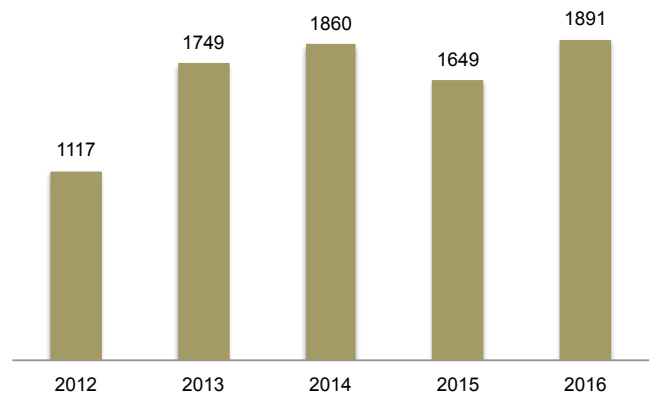
The e-citation system from Iyetek saves time for the court and police support staff, reduces errors and improves service by promptly loading new cases into the system. People can pay their tickets on our websites, over the phone using the court's Point N Pay System, or by contacting the court directly.



Parking Tickets

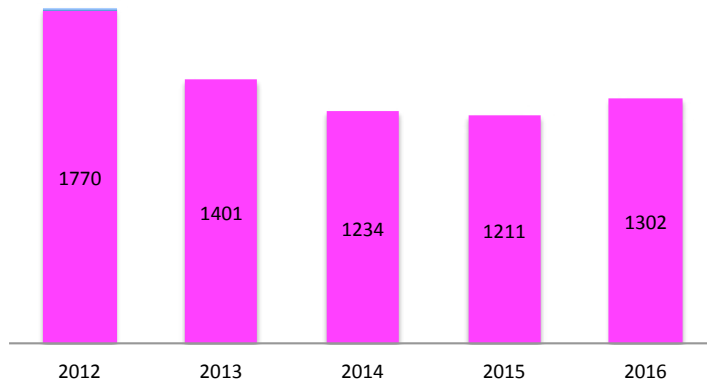
The City has established a bureau of senior citizen volunteers to patrol the city for handicapped parking and fire lane violations. Police officers write parking tickets for many types of parking tickets, such as, parking on the street during snow removal times. The parking tickets are manually entered into the court's case management system.

Many people who receive a parking ticket write a letter of explanation to the magistrate or request a hearing therefore these tickets require some judicial involvement as well as work by the court staff to collect the fines.



Civil Cases 2012 - 2016

General Civil

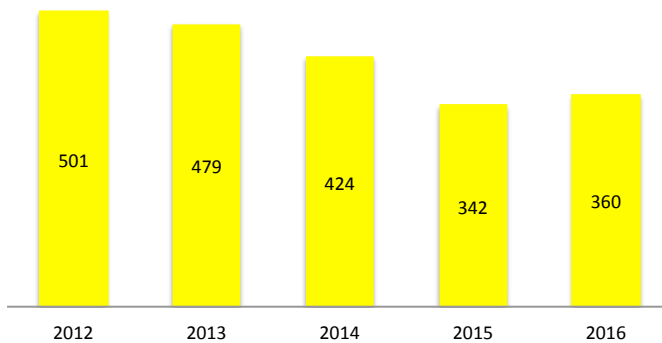


In 2016, we started 1,302 General Civil cases. The court's jurisdiction is up to \$25,000 in damages. Many of the cases are to collect unpaid credit-card debt. The Supreme Court's standards state that 98 percent of General Civil cases are to be disposed of within 18 months. As of January 31, 2017, we only had one case that had been pending more than nine months. In 2016, none of these cases took more than 18 months.

matter is scheduled for trial about three months after the pretrial date. We email the pretrial summary and notices to the attorneys who appear by telephone.

In 2016, we held 108 pretrial conferences. Discovery time guidelines are set and the

Small Claims

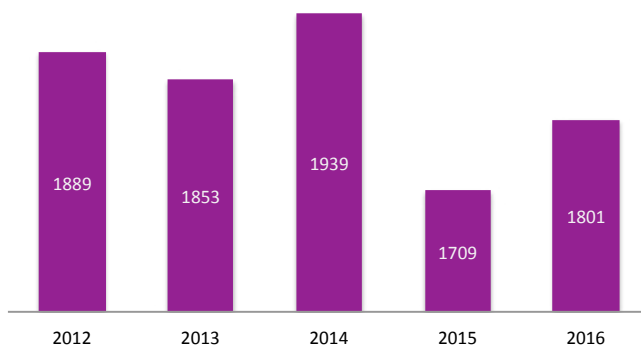


On most days that Small Claims cases are scheduled, the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) is available to mediate with the parties. Many cases have been successfully mediated. Other courts are following the model that was started in this court.

In 2016, we started 360 Small Claims cases. The court tried 23 Small Claims trials in 2016. Attorney Magistrate Sharon Brinks hears the Small Claims trials. The parties can appeal her decision and have a new trial in front of the judge.

Judge Kelly teaches Small Claims courses at the National Judicial College both in person and in a distance-learning class.

Summary Proceedings



These are, for the most part, landlord-tenant matters. The judge in Kentwood handles twice the number of summary proceedings cases than the average judge in Michigan. The court sets a hearing about 7-10 days after the case is filed and the tenant is allowed 10 days to pay the rent or move.

DHHS and the Salvation Army are at the court on the days we hear the majority of our landlord-tenant cases to screen people for eligibility, in order to prevent judgments against tenants and to prevent homelessness. As a result of this Eviction Diversion program, Kentwood tenants

(and landlords) receive more emergency aid than they would have if we did not have this program.

Case Flow Management

In 2003, the Michigan Supreme Court set aspirational time guidelines. In 2014, the Michigan Supreme Court provided time standards for case processing as goals for administration of court caseloads. The Time Standards for District Courts provide, as follows:

Civil Proceedings

The 62B District Court has been following these guidelines since the original guidelines were published in 1991. This year, we can report that we are meeting and exceeding the time standards set by the Supreme Court.

General Civil Case Flow

From filing	State Standard	62B Performance
Within 273 days	90%	95.6%
Within 455 days	98%	98.8%

Small Claims and Landlord Tenant Case Flow

The time standards provide that 95 percent of small claims, landlord-tenant and land contract cases should be adjudicated within 126 days from the date of case filing if there is no jury demand.

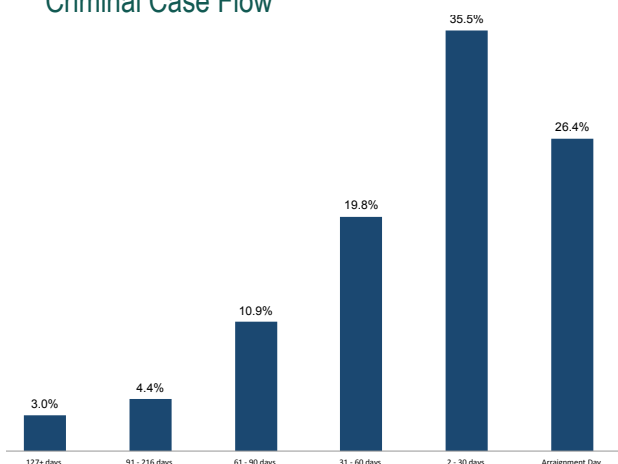
In 2015, we adjudicated 97.8 percent of these actions within 126 days. The other 2.2 percent were delayed due to a lack of service or adjourned to allow the defendant time to pay.

From Filing	State Standard	62B Performance
63 days	95%	97.8%

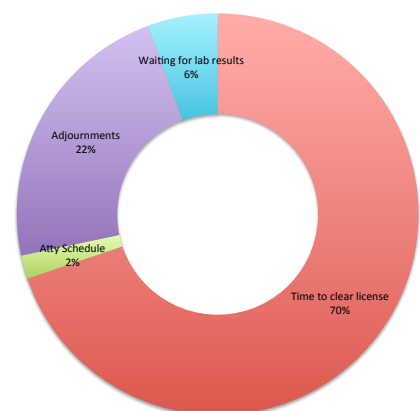
Criminal Cases Case Flow

From Arraignment	State Standard	62B Performance
Within 63 days	85.0%	81.8%
Within 126 days	95.0%	97.0%

Criminal Case Flow



Reasons for Delay on Criminal Case

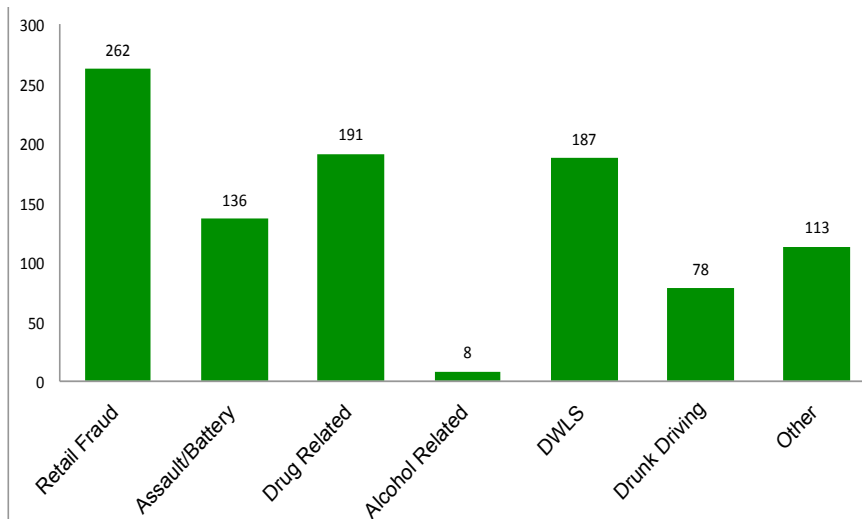


Probation

Last year, the probation department started 975 new cases. About 27 percent of the probationers were convicted of Retail Fraud (262 cases), and 19.2 percent (187 cases) were convicted of Driving While License Suspended (DWLS). The court has ordered these defendants to clear up their licenses. We find that many people convicted of DWLS have other serious problems, such as substance abuse and lack of employment.

The Probation Department conducted 413 breath tests and 2,170 drug tests to enforce the court's orders for probationers to abstain from alcohol and drugs. The drug test room that was built in the Probation Department has facilitated the drug tests immensely. There were 140 positive tests for marijuana (about 21 percent of the 679 tests for marijuana). Overall, 215 tests were positive for drugs or alcohol, about 8.3 percent of all the tests.

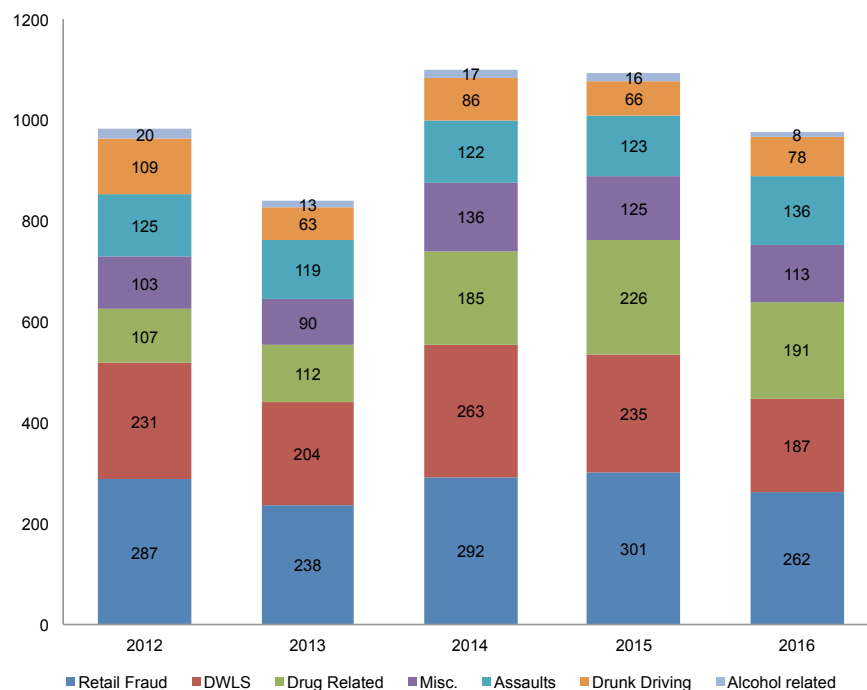
Probation Cases by Type



You Can't Make This Up

A defendant paying a criminal fine asked our collections clerk if the court would accept his card. Looking at it, the clerk said, "No, the court does not accept Bridge cards for court fines."

Probation Cases 2012 - 2106



Here are five of the people placed on probation in this court who have made significant positive changes in their lives due to the intervention of the probation officers and the court.

Alan

Alan was placed on probation for Use of Marijuana for eight months under MCL 333.7411. This statute provides that if a person successfully completes probation, the criminal record will not be public. When he started reporting, he said that he had dropped out of high school with three credits remaining and that he was working full time at a grocery store. As part of his probation, he was ordered to attend school along with abstaining from drugs. As he continued on probation, he reported that he was taking GED classes and that he had accepted a promotion at his store.

After six months of probation, completion of a Prevention/Diversion Marijuana class, and negative drug tests, Alan was successfully discharged from probation and his case was dismissed.

A couple of months after completing probation, Alan reported to his probation officer that he had accepted a new position at a competing grocery store for a raise and had completed a High School Diploma Completion Program in Grand Rapids and that he hoped to go to community college to study business. Alan took the opportunities/privilege afforded to him by being placed on probation to better himself and to accomplish some of his goals.

Roberto

This story is about a male from another country who has been in the United States approximately four to five years. He is single and lives alone. He has family no this area. This young man is respectful and is compliant with probation. However, alcohol is a major problem in his life. He was placed on probation for 12 months for the offense of Operating While Intoxicated 1st in 2015. When he was placed on probation, he completed the Alcohol Highway Safety Program, enrolled in the Victim Impact Panel and was attending substance-abuse counseling.

Everything appeared to be going well until his counselor notified the probation officer that he had begun to miss his counseling appointments. He began to miss probation appointments. Then the defendant called reporting that he was ill with pancreatitis. In May 2016 defendant reported for a probation appointment. When he was in my office, a strong odor of alcohol was coming from the defendant. This officer administered a PBT and he blew .138 at 11:30 a.m. This defendant was then placed in lockup and a probation violation hearing was held. He pleaded guilty to consuming alcohol and was placed in jail for 10 days along with 60 days on the Sober Link once he was released from jail. His probation was extended to July 20, 2017.

He had never served time in jail prior to the violation. He completed the 60 days on the Sober Link Unit. He returned to counseling and is now in Intensive Outpatient Counseling, and going to AA. The success here is that he has admitted that he is an alcoholic and that he cannot consume alcohol. He has taken on a whole new attitude about his recovery and his self-esteem has improved.

Success in probation is not just completing the requirements set by the court. It is acknowledging, accepting and being willing to make changes. Probation is and can be a way for defendants to make a change in their lives for themselves and the community.

Anthony

Anthony successfully completed his eight-month term of probation. He originally faced a Felony Drug Charge but, partly due to the fact that he had no prior convictions, Anthony's charge was reduced to a Misdemeanor for Possession of Marijuana. He was granted a lesser sentence and a chance to have the case dismissed after successful completion of probation. Anthony took advantage of his second chance and changed his life. He stopped using drugs and provided clean drug tests at every appointment. Anthony paid his fines in full a month ahead of schedule with no late payments. Anthony completed his GED requirements and obtained his GED, despite failing and retaking multiple tests. He persevered and never let a failed test stop him! Anthony was punctual at all of his appointments and never missed a meeting despite his health concerns and recent painful kidney stones. Anthony has cleared all but one of the suspensions on his driving record, including his driver's responsibility fees. He has a hearing scheduled to take care of the last ticket so that he can finally apply for a license since he has never had one.

Anthony was truly an ideal candidate for probation and I believe his experience has helped him for the better as he navigates life with a new and sober outlook.

Sarah

Sarah was placed on probation for eight months for Use of Marijuana. At the time of her sentence, she had been a daily marijuana user for 10 years. She admits to being brought up in a family and friends culture of regular marijuana use. She described how marijuana was frequently smoked in her home by her parents, and her extended family also used the drug at holidays and other celebrations. It was a regular part of her life.

Sarah was initially resistant to probation and substance abuse counseling but was subsequently referred for a one-day educational class on marijuana and its effects. The information presented in class was a revelation for Sarah. Her perspective on marijuana changed, and she realized that she was more than just a social user. Sarah followed up her initial class with subsequent counseling with the same agency to address addiction issues. Sarah completed her probation successfully, and proudly states that she will choose to abstain from marijuana and other illegal drugs in the future. She states that probation was ultimately "a good thing" that happened to her.

Thomas

Thomas entered the Regional Sobriety Court Program after receiving his second drinking and driving case. He was an over-the-road truck driver who swerved his semi-truck off the road and rolled it on the highway. He had a BAC of .11 about nine hours after he had stopped drinking.

When Thomas entered the program he also had a pending family domestic assault case in another court. This case was also alcohol-related. Thomas lost his Commercial Driver's License as a result of this drunk driving case and was also pending a divorce from his wife due to his years of drinking. Thomas knew he needed to do something to change his life.

He was successful in his intensive outpatient sessions and was a positive role model to others in the group. He obtained a full-time job through a temporary agency, and was hired in permanently after eight months. Thomas even started his own business on the side with his son. At the time of his program graduation, Thomas had lost about 50 pounds, no longer needed glasses, and his medications either were decreased, or in some cases, ceased altogether. Thomas was able to be a more positive role model to his children, and learned that while drinking caused many disruptions in his life, sobriety has offered many opportunities.

Other Activities

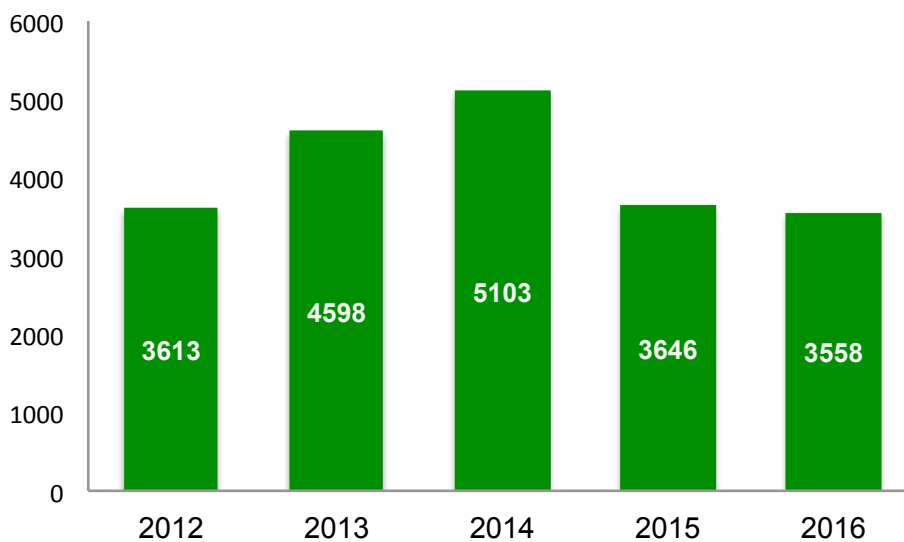
The judge and magistrates signed 198 search warrants, including 37 for blood tests in drunk-driving cases. The judge and magistrates are on call 24/7 for drunk-driving blood tests.

We made 185 calls to Language Lines Services for interpreters in 16 different languages plus certified and qualified interpreters present in the court.

In 2016, the judge solemnized 91 weddings and the magistrates solemnized 47 weddings. Couples are required to attend a 4-hour premarital class.

In 2015, the law was changed to make wage garnishments last until the judgment is paid in full or until the court orders otherwise. This resulted in a decrease of garnishments.

Garnishments



Movie Filmed

Bear Fruit Films approached the court and asked to use our courthouse to shoot a film, "In Stranger Company." One of the lead actors, Danny Trejo, was here for the filming and took pictures with the staff. They filmed September 30, 2016 and the movie is expected to be released in 2017.

While actor Danny Trejo was filming, Judge Kelly handed him a Snickers bar and said, "Here, Danny, have a Snickers. I want to see you change into Marcia like you did in the Snickers commercial with the Brady Bunch which aired during the Super Bowl."

Revenues and Expenses

	<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Revenues</i>
FY 2012	\$1,355,847	\$1,176,326
FY 2013	1,400,500	1,123,445
FY 2014	1,471,800	1,369,546
FY 2015	1,485,312	1,413,810
FY 2016	1,643,118	1,435,827

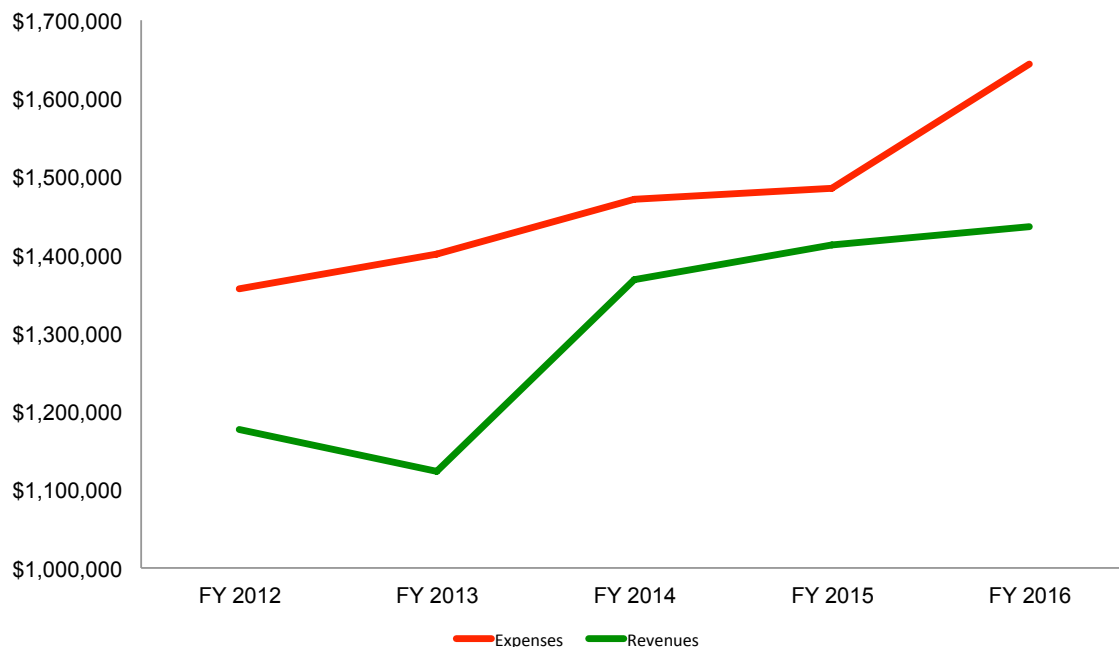
Our revenues last year increased slightly from the prior year. The amount of revenues depends on the number of traffic tickets issued. Our expenses also increased due to Sobriety Court.

Expenses District Court	\$1,514,924
Expenses Sobriety Court	\$128,194
Total Expenses	\$1,643,118
Revenue District Court	
Fines, costs and fees	\$1,256,435
Judicial Salary	\$45,724
State Reimbursements	\$12,066
Total District Court Revenue	\$1,314,225
Revenue - Sobriety Court Grant (October through July)	\$96,782
Program Fees	\$24,820
Total Revenue to Sobriety Court	\$121,602
Total Revenue to City	\$1,435,827

Sentencing is to punish, deter, rehabilitate, and/or incapacitate an offender. The amount of fines and costs is determined by the severity of the offense and the defendant's ability to pay. Revenue to the city is a by-product of the punishment imposed by the court. The court is concerned that its orders are complied with and that convicted offenders are held accountable and exerts considerable energy in collecting the fines and costs due.

You Can't Make This Up

Two female employees at a local fried chicken shop got into a brawl that involved a fistfight and screaming, shouting, and shoving, causing one to nearly go into the deep-fryer. All because one refused to pass the other butter.

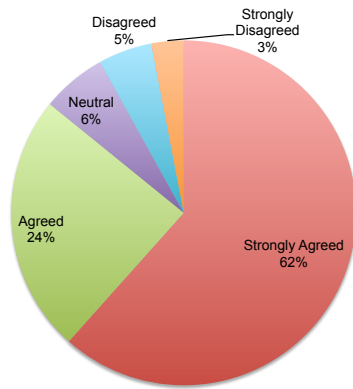


Measurement of Performance

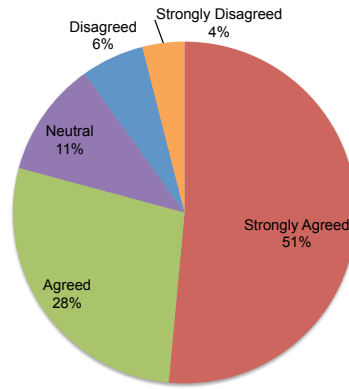
Satisfaction Survey

The Michigan Supreme Court has asked courts to survey people who come to court about how they were treated. When asked if they were treated with courtesy and respect by the court staff, 85 percent of the people strongly agreed or agreed; 80 percent strongly agreed or agreed that they were treated with courtesy and respect by the judge or magistrate. When asked if the way the case was handled was fair, 73 percent strongly agreed or agreed.

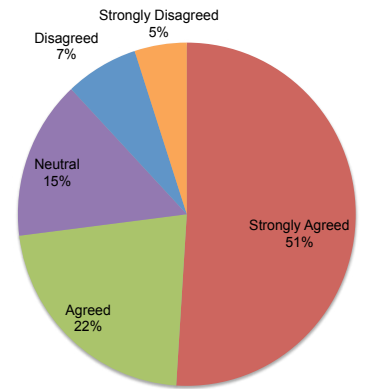
I was treated fairly and with respect by the court staff



I was treated fairly and with respect by the judge or magistrate

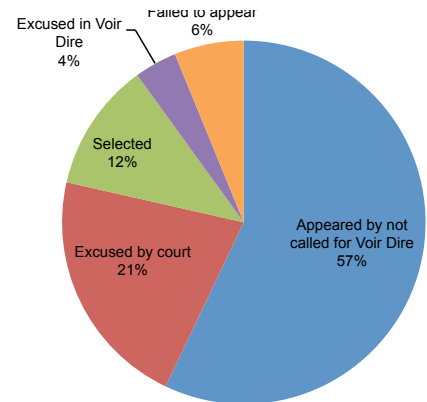


The case was handled fairly



Jury Utilization

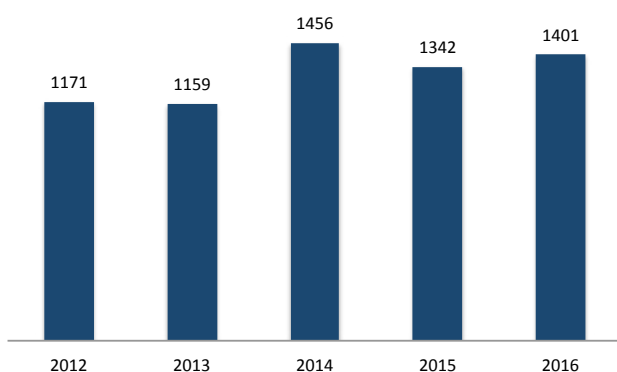
This court requires jurors to attend court only one day or for one trial. We summon about 15 people every other week. They call the night before their date of service to find out if they need to appear. In 2016, 129 jurors were told they did not have to appear because the cases were settled. Only 341 jurors appeared in court and 54 were selected to hear the nine jury trials held.



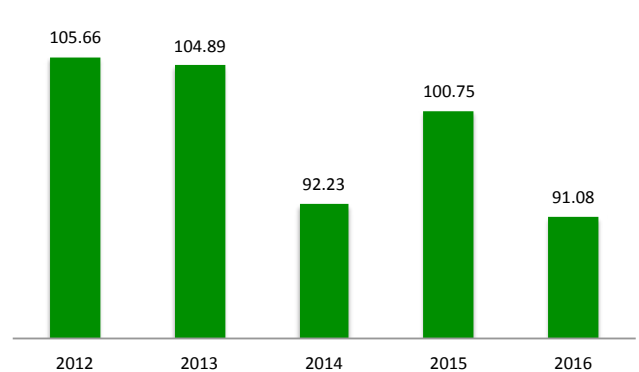
Case Dispositions

The court cleared slightly fewer cases than were started in 2016.

Number of Cases Pending at the End of the Year



Court Dispositions Rates



Improvements

Regional OWI Court

In September, our Sobriety Court team went for training. As a result, our very good OWI (Operating While Intoxicated) Court will be even better. Our program at one point had 74 participants and we had to close admission. We have changed the admission requirements to focus on the high-risk and high-needs participants and expanded our team. We also have added some requirements to each of the four phases of the program and increased drug testing. So far about 35 participants have graduated. Only one has been rearrested. All have been very grateful for the program.

Program Changes

In an effort to make sure those who are accepted into the program will benefit, and to filter out individuals whom are not in need of the intensity of such a program, the 62B District RDWI Sobriety Court Program has made some process changes.

All applicants are given a Risk and Needs Assessment to determine the potential risk of re-offending and what issues, or “needs” are in their lives that would contribute to the possibility of re-offending. All applicants are given a review of the program requirements so they fully understand that their decision to enter the program, if accepted, will be an intense but rewarding commitment.

All applicants are interviewed by the Sobriety Court team to determine not only if they meet the legal requirements, but also if they are in need of this program. While we wish that we could offer a program such as this to all individuals who feel they need it, unfortunately there are some constraints that limit this ability. For this reason the team is taking an approach to ensure the program will be available to those in most dire need of it so they do not continue their risky behavior.

Aftercare Plans

Participants have all been enrolled in treatment. Many program participants have chosen to continue treatment services even after being successfully discharged from treatment while still in the program. Many participants come into the program having never been to or not currently enrolled in treatment. Having a treatment team here for them to talk to outside of treatment services helps. Many participants have really risen to become positive individuals within their treatment groups.

We are focusing on reviewing aftercare plans and discussing further plans with participants prior to discharge to make sure there are no other services that we can provide. This is a new action that is being implemented and will be more fully utilized in the next 12 months. However, maintaining aftercare with treatment and with the case manager are always discussed, and many participants have been receptive.

Payment Station

We installed a payment station in the lobby to allow people to access our court’s website and pay their tickets without going through court security and standing in line.

Hearing Aid Loops

We added a wireless RF Hearing Assist Transmitter. The transmitter comes with a hands-free neck loop, ear speakers, and a transmitter that plugs into the court recording system. With the neck loop, the court’s Attorney Magistrate or customers are able to wear the listening device with their personal hearing devices for improved voice clarity. Ear speakers are available for the court’s customers who are hearing impaired and do not have their own hearing device. The system can be used in either courtroom.

Criminal History Reporting

The court hired a temporary project assistant for a six-month cleanup of offenders' criminal histories with the Michigan State Police. When the the project started, we had more than 10,000 records to be reviewed and finalized. By June 30, 2016, the records were down to approximately 2 percent left to review and finalize with the Michigan State Police. This project was a success, resulting in new procedures locally as well as statewide.

Court Activities

All work and no play make the court a dull place indeed. In 2016, the staff enjoyed a Whitecaps game together. The court administrator hosted a fabulous pool party at her home in July.

Other activities included cookouts, ice cream socials, and a miniature mini-golf tournament in the court's break room.

To wrap up the year, the court had a delicious Christmas luncheon at Brann's Steakhouse, hosted by Judge Kelly.