



# 2022 Annual Report

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS**

*OPEN TO ALL, TRUSTED BY ALL, JUSTICE FOR ALL*

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# MESSAGE FROM CHIEF JUDGE ANNA BLACKBURNE-RIGSBY



The District of Columbia Courts remained open and agile in the delivery of services to the public throughout 2022. While still maintaining health and safety protocols for employees and court users to gain access to court buildings and satellite facilities, innovative practices were integrated to accommodate flexible operational status levels.

Public counters in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals remained open, with nearly 1,000 new filings recorded in 2022, an increase of 9% over the previous period. Judges and employees of the Court of Appeals continued to work hard to resolve appeals. While in-person oral arguments resumed in the Fall, with the expansion of location-preferred participation, court users were offered options, including in-person, hybrid (some participants in-person, some remote) or fully remote services, in which to present oral arguments, initiate filings, or engage in other business. The District of Columbia Court of Appeals continued to livestream all oral arguments on its YouTube channel to ensure public access. In addition, appellate mediations were held in-person, via telephone conference or remote video conference. The Committee on Admissions administered in-person bar examinations for over 2,400 applicants and processed nearly 3,700 motions applicants, with a record 5,187 individuals admitted to the practice of law.

I commend our judges, employees and justice partners for their commitment to public service. I look forward to the Courts' continued efforts to achieve our vision of, *Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All*.

Anna E. Blackburne Rigsby  
Chief Judge, District of Columbia Court of Appeals



# MESSAGE FROM CHIEF JUDGE ANITA JOSEY-HERRING



In 2022, the Superior Court remained committed to ensuring access to justice for the residents of the District as the city began to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. Superior Court judges and employees worked diligently to identify operational functions that could be enhanced to better serve the public.

Services provided at the Moultrie Courthouse and other Superior Court buildings were expanded to accommodate in-person, remote and hybrid user participation. Clerk's Offices remained open, while adhering to health and safety requirements. Courtrooms were configured to hold both in-person and remote proceedings. Specialty courts returned to in-person hearings, while mediations continued to be held remotely. Self-Help Centers operated both remotely and in-person. Moreover, remote hearing sites were made available in various locations in the community to enable persons who do not have computers or internet service at home to participate in court hearings remotely. Overall in 2022, new case filings increased by 41%, to nearly 44,000 filings.

I am delighted with the progress made this year to ensure that the Superior Court remained open and enhanced services to the public as we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our judicial officers, court employees, and many agency and legal service partners all worked collaboratively to ensure the effective administration of justice for District residents.

Anita Josey -Herring  
Chief Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS



The District of Columbia Courts worked diligently to identify and implement pioneering practices to ensure access to justice for all court users. This report highlights court operations and initiatives implemented post-pandemic, as well as the final year of accomplishments for the Courts' 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All.

The "Reimagining the DC Courts" initiative was launched to incorporate innovative business practices and lessons learned from the pandemic to best serve the public and enhance efficiency moving forward. The public can now obtain many court services or participate in most court proceedings in-person at our courthouses, on-line, or for those who may not have internet access or the ability to travel to the courthouse, there is an option to participate remotely from one of several community-based service centers offering on-line access to the DC Courts. The DC Courts facilities were regularly monitored to address any safety and health concerns. As more court personnel returned on-site, the Courts implemented a hybrid workplace where both on-site and remote work options are available to maximize services to the public and to support employee well-being. In addition, specifically targeted projects were designed and implemented to more effectively assist individuals most affected by the pandemic. For example, the Court of Appeals moved to a paperless model where all business can be done electronically if preferred or self-represented parties can visit the public office to submit paper files. Superior Court launched an Elder Justice Initiative to assess the status of the adult guardianship system in the District of Columbia, with a focus on the fairness, safety, and integrity of the adult guardianship process from petition to court proceeding, appointment, monitoring, and termination. More information about the Reimagining Initiative and specialized projects are included in the report.


I am excited about the new initiatives and programs implemented to better serve the public. I look forward to the continued collaboration with the judiciary, court staff and justice system partners to ensure that all District residents have access to justice.

Cheryl R. Bailey  
Acting Executive Officer  
District of Columbia Courts



# GOVERNANCE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

The Joint Committee on Judicial Administration (Joint Committee) governs the District of Columbia Courts, as designated in the District of Columbia Court Reform and Criminal Procedure Act of 1970. The Joint Committee sets policy for the Courts and is responsible for administrative and financial activities, including capital projects to maintain safe and functional courthouse facilities; budget submissions; acquisition, spending and auditing; grant administration; general personnel policies; information management; statistical reporting; and performance monitoring. Five judges serve on the Joint Committee. The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals serves as Chair; other members include the Chief Judge of the Superior Court and three other judicial members, one elected by the Court of Appeals and two elected by judges of the Superior Court. The Executive Officer, who is responsible for administrative management of the District of Columbia Courts, serves as Secretary to the Joint Committee.



***The Joint Committee governs the District of Columbia Courts, as designated in the District of Columbia Court Reform and Criminal Procedure Act of 1970.***

# ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

The District of Columbia Courts comprise the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government. The Court of Appeals, an appellate court of last resort, is the highest court of the District of Columbia. The Superior Court is a trial court, and the Court System includes the administrative offices of the DC Courts. The DC Courts are a unified court system, which means that there is one level of trial court in which all cases are filed. Uniquely among state-level courts, the DC Courts' judges are nominated by the President of the United States and confirmed by the United States Senate. They serve 15-year terms and are eligible to be re-appointed. Magistrate judges are appointed by the Chief Judge of the Superior Court with the approval of the Board of Judges. The DC Courts are financed by the Federal Government. The Courts' budget is submitted to the U.S. Office of Management and Budget for the President's recommendation and then forwarded to the United States Congress for final consideration.

The **Court of Appeals** is the District of Columbia's highest court. Unlike many states, DC does not have an intermediate appellate court, so the Court of Appeals hears all appeals from the Superior Court. The Court of Appeals also reviews decisions of DC Government agencies. Final judgments of the Court of Appeals are reviewable by the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court of Appeals manages the admission of attorneys to the DC Bar, which is among the largest unified bars in the United States, with over 100,000 members. The Court handles attorney discipline through the Board on Professional Responsibility. In addition to the Chief Judge, eight associate judges serve on the Court of Appeals. Senior judges, who are retired, also serve the Court on a part-time basis. Most cases are heard in three-judge panels, except in circumstances when the entire court sits to hear a case (called an *en banc* hearing). The administrative functions and day-to-day operations are managed by the Clerk of the Court of Appeals.

The **Superior Court** is the trial court of general jurisdiction, which means that the Superior Court hears virtually all local legal matters, other than administrative adjudications. The Superior Court is comprised of divisions and offices that handle civil, criminal, domestic violence, family, probate and tax cases; juvenile pretrial and probation supervision; alternative dispute resolution services; and crime victims' compensation. In addition to the Chief Judge, 61 associate judges serve on the Superior Court. Senior judges serve on a part-time basis. Twenty-six magistrate judges also serve in Superior Court, hearing criminal arraignments and presentments; child welfare, child support and new juvenile cases; DC misdemeanor and traffic cases; small claims; temporary protection orders; and other cases. The associate judges of the Superior Court rotate assignments in all divisions based on assignments made by the Chief Judge. The administrative functions and day-to-day operations are managed by the Clerk of the Superior Court.

The **Court System** provides services to both the Court of Appeals and the Superior Court. The Court System consists of a variety of administrative divisions that provide technical and support services, including contracting and procurement, legal counsel, capital projects, facilities management, budget and finance, human resources, training, strategic management, information technology and court reporting.



# REIMAGINING THE DC COURTS

At the start of 2021, the Courts launched a “Reimagining the DC Courts” effort to reimagine the Courts’ operations in light of lessons learned during the pandemic. The Courts conducted surveys and focus groups with internal and external stakeholders to gather information about what worked well during the pandemic, what challenges were encountered, and what could be implemented in a post-pandemic environment to enhance the administration of justice. The Courts shared its reimagined vision for court operations in early 2022. The reimagining plan detailed standard practices for the Court of Appeals, the Superior Court, and the Court System related to in-person, hybrid, and remote proceedings and services.

## The Court of Appeals

The Court of Appeals resumed in-person oral arguments in September 2022 and continued to conduct hybrid or fully remote oral arguments when needed. Oral arguments are held in-person unless a party files a motion to appear remotely and shows good cause. Unless otherwise prohibited, regardless of location, all oral arguments continue to be livestreamed on the DC Court of Appeals YouTube channel to provide public access. All previously livestreamed oral arguments are archived on the DC Court of Appeals YouTube channel.

The Court of Appeals moved to a paperless model where all business can be done electronically. However, if an individual needs help, they can visit the public office in-person and self-represented parties can submit paper files. Additionally, parties’ briefs and court orders in civil cases were made publicly available on August 1, 2022.

Appellate mediations may be held in-person or via telephone conference or remote video conference at the discretion of the mediation program coordinator. Appellate Mediation Program staff notify eligible parties about the protocol and procedures to conduct appellate mediations.

The Committee on Admissions is open to the public. Applications and payment are completed fully online, including pro hac vice. Swearing-in ceremonies and other activities may be completed remotely. Bar exams continue to be in-person.

## Superior Court

The Superior Court continues to conduct in-person, remote, and hybrid proceedings as defined below:

- In-person Hearing – The judge and all court participants appear in-person inside the courtroom.
- Remote Hearing – The judge conducts the hearing from the courtroom. Court participants may appear by video or telephone outside of the courtroom. If a court participant appears in-person in the courtroom the judge may proceed with the hybrid hearing or the court participant can use the onsite remote hearing room.
- Hybrid Hearing – The judge conducts the hearing from the courtroom. Court participants may appear virtually via video or telephone outside of the courtroom or in-person in the courtroom.
- Virtual Offsite Hearing – The judge conducts the hearing virtually and court participants appear virtually via video or telephone. If a court participant appears in-person for the virtual offsite hearing, they can use the onsite remote hearing room.

Each Superior Court division developed a detailed plan for which proceedings are held virtually and which are held in-person by default. Jury trials, non-jury trials, and other evidentiary proceedings (where witnesses are called to testify and are cross-examined) are conducted in-person to provide maximum accessibility of all evidence to judges, attorneys, parties, witnesses, and jurors. Notwithstanding, based on requests of the parties, a judge may decide that unique circumstances in a case warrant converting an evidentiary proceeding to a virtual or hybrid hearing. Mediations are held remotely by default.

Parties can request to change their method of participation in a proceeding by following guidelines provided by each Superior Court division. Generally, the guidelines include filing a motion or a written notice. A court participant who appears in-person for a remote hearing can participate in-person in the courtroom or at a remote location in the courthouse. A motion or notice is not required for a court participant who appears in-person for a remote hearing.



A court participant is not required to pay a fee for filing a notice to change their participation from remote to in-person. If a notice or motion is filed, the requesting court participant should send notice to the non-requesting court participant. The court sends notice if required by the rules. Litigants required to participate in hearings virtually who otherwise lack internet access or a computer, may participate in court hearings at one of the Court's designated remote sites or in court buildings.

When permitted by law, members of the public may have real-time access to remote court proceedings. For criminal jury trials, members of the public must appear in-person to view the proceeding in the designated courtroom or remotely from another courtroom.

All clerk's offices in each division of the Superior Court are open for both in-person filings and electronic filings. Inquiries may be made to the clerk's offices by telephone and email or through online chats for some divisions.

## Court System

The Court System continues to operate in-person and remotely to support the operational needs of the appellate and trial courts and the public.

The Courts will continue to assess its reimagining plan to ensure access to justice for all. A formal evaluation is expected to begin in 2023.





# 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

The DC Courts' 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, entitled Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All, identifies five strategic goals which are essential to fulfilling our mission: Access to Justice for All, Fair and Timely Case Resolution, A Professional and Engaged Workforce, Resilient and Responsive Technology, and Effective Court Management and Administration. The judiciary and court personnel continued to work hard to implement over 35 strategies contained in the Plan.

For 2022, the Plan identified the following key results to be accomplished. Below is a brief update on these key results.

## Access to Justice for All.

**The percentage of indigent persons with legal representation and the availability of limited-scope representation will increase.**

**Status:** The Courts have advanced several initiatives that provide civil legal assistance to litigants without attorneys, including:

- The Court of Appeals has trained over 50 mediators as part of its pro bono appellate mediation program.
- The Superior Court has established a pro bono Domestic Relations panel of attorneys and law firms.
- Students from area law schools have been trained to provide litigant assistance, including support for probate summary hearings, the probate self-help center, and the Justice Service Project at the George Washington University Family Justice clinic that offers service of process assistance in Superior Court domestic relations cases.

**Self-represented parties will be able to file cases electronically.**

**Status:** Self-represented litigants are now able to file cases electronically in both the Court of Appeals and Superior Court.

**Mobile applications will provide public access to court information and services online.**

**Status:** The Courts' mobile application for public access to court information and services went live in 2021 in both Apple and Android platforms. The application has also been enhanced to provide information in multiple languages.

**Integrated court services will be provided to elderly court users and other groups with special needs.**

**Status:** The Courts have received a grant to assess and identify ways to enhance the fairness, safety, and integrity of the adult guardianship system in the District.

## Fair and Timely Case Resolution.

**More trials will begin on the first day scheduled and be completed on consecutive days.**

**Status:** Emerging from a pandemic that disrupted the scheduling and conduct of trials, the Courts will continue to assess ways to optimize the administration of trials and hearings to promote both efficiency and fairness.

**Innovative uses of alternative dispute resolution, enhanced case screening and administrative processing of appropriate matters will be piloted.**

**Status:** The Courts have enhanced alternative dispute resolution and the administration and processing of cases through various innovations, including:

- The Courts have greatly expanded the use of remote and hybrid court proceedings, mediations, and services. Remote hearing sites have also been established in the community that provide online access to court proceedings.
- The Court of Appeals has launched an automated appellate voting system that promotes timely decisions on motions and petitions and helps panel judges collaborate on cases.

- The Superior Court has augmented its mediation services offered through the Multi-Door Division, including a new early mediation track for landlord and tenant cases, a foreclosure facilitation program, an online tax mediation program, and a permanency mediation program for family cases.
- The Criminal Division in Superior Court has implemented the Electronic Evidence Project that allows for the electronic submission, availability, and Court of Appeals transferral of trial exhibits and the Warrant Exchange Program that provides communication in near real time with the Metropolitan Police Department about misdemeanor bench warrants and civil protection orders.
- The Court Reporting Division has expanded the use of real time court reporting that provides instantaneous speech-to-text translation of court proceedings.
- The Special Operations Division in Superior Court has established an Interpreter Registry to improve interpreter processing.

## Professional and Engaged Workforce.

### Performance management practices will be strengthened at the Courts.

**Status:** The Superior Court has initiated processes and workgroups to standardize performance plans and position descriptions for court employees across the divisions, including both supervisors and frontline staff.

### An increased number of personnel will participate in flexible work.

**Status:** The Courts have expanded flexible work options for employees through its Flexplace Program that has allowed for more flexplace days and more categories of eligible employees.

## Resilient and Responsive Technology.

### More historic court records will be converted to digital files.

**Status:** The Court of Appeals is in the process of digitizing court records, and the Criminal Division, Family Court Operations Division, Probate Division, and Tax Division in Superior Court have completed records digitization.

### The Courts' IT Division will achieve compliance with Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) standards.

**Status:** The Courts have achieved compliance with FISMA standards.

## Effective Court Management and Administration.

### All court divisions will develop/expand strategic partnerships with critical community stakeholders.

**Status:** The Courts have expanded multiple partnerships with community stakeholders in recent years, including:

- The Court of Appeals has partnered with local law schools to hold oral arguments in the community at area law schools, giving students and the community the opportunity to see court proceedings.
- Family Court obtained a Court Improvement Program (CIP) grant for improving legal representation of parents with children in the neglect system. The CIP has partnered with the Child and Family Services Agency, the Office of Attorney General, and other stakeholders to develop a multi-disciplinary representation program providing additional dedicated social work expertise.
- Court Social Services in Superior Court has expanded multiple partnerships that include the Office of Neighborhood Engagement Services and the SBP Consulting Corporation that provides training on Therapeutic Aggression Control Techniques.
- The Probate Division in Superior Court established a partnership with the George Washington University to provide access to justice for probate customers.

### The Moultrie Courthouse expansion and Building A and B renovations will be completed (pending full funding).

**Status:** The expansion of the Moultrie Courthouse is now nearly complete. Building A and B renovations were funded.



## GOAL 1

# ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL

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The Courts have a responsibility to eliminate barriers to meaningful participation in the justice system and to accessing court services.

Such barriers may include a lack of legal representation, limited literacy or limited English language skills, limited financial resources, and physical or mental disability. In collaboration with justice and community partners, the Courts will work to ensure full access to the justice system and court services.





# ACCESS TO JUSTICE SERVICES FOR COURT PARTICIPANTS

## Court Services for Self-Represented Litigants.

Court participants often face challenges when engaging in the court process, including a lack of knowledge and information about the law and processes of the court, difficulties in preparing forms and pleadings, and lack of funds for an attorney. The DC Courts provide a myriad of programs and services aimed at reducing these barriers to access to justice, including the Family Self-Help Center, the Probate Self-Help Center, the Court Navigator Program, and the Remote Hearing Sites.

### Family Self Help Center

- **6,141** served in-person and by telephone
- Type of assistance provided:
  - General legal information about D.C. family law matters such as divorce, custody, visitation, and child support
  - Information on legal rights and obligations
  - Descriptions of legal options
  - Assistance in completing forms

### Probate Self Help Center

- **1,302** served in-person and **2,679** served remotely
- Type of assistance provided:
  - General legal information about probate matters and assistance with completing forms
- Remote opportunities included live chat, email, videoconferencing services, breakout room options for meetings with small estate specialists, and forms assistance

### Court Navigator Program & Remote Hearing Sites

- **111** appointments held at the remote hearing sites
- Type of assistance provided:
  - Scheduling at the remote hearing sites
  - Hands-on support with logging-in to remote hearings
  - General information about court processes
  - Connections to accommodations and language services
- **2** additional navigators were hired to assist with the eviction diversion initiative
- Expansion of the Court Navigator Program is planned for 2023

## Expanded Electronic Filings.

Court users were given more options for electronic filing in the Court of Appeals. The Pro Hac Vice application for temporary bar admission of an attorney licensed in another jurisdiction to represent a party in a particular case was integrated into the Court of Appeals online application database. All application categories are now electronic.

## Electronic Payment Options.

Electronic payment options were expanded across court functions. In the Criminal Division, a new platform allows the public to make online payments for court ordered financial obligations, including the payment of bonds.

## Public Document Access.

New options were introduced to make it easier for court users to access case documents. On August 1, 2022, the Court of Appeals went live with public access to briefs and orders issued in civil cases. All redacted briefs and orders filed in civil appeals cases since August 1, 2021, are available through the Court of Appeals' eFiling/Public Access portal on the court's website. Access to documents is currently limited to civil appeals; however, the court may choose to make documents from other case types available in the future.

## Video and Self Guided Materials.

A set of YouTube videos were created for the public about filing cases and obtaining services in the Probate Division.





# SUPPORT SERVICES FOR COURT PARTICIPANTS

The Courts offer a variety of support services for court participants, ranging from language assistance to on-site child-care, interactive electronic court forms, assistance for persons with disabilities, and the like.

- More than **30,000** customers were served by the Information Center which provides general information about court operations.
- **53,421** customers were provided general information about Family Court matters via the Family Court Call Center.
- **16,781** interviews were initiated and **10,873** forms were generated through Forms Help Online in 2022. The program populates court forms using responses to a series of questions answered by court participants. A total of **41** forms are now available for matters in the Court of Appeals, the Civil, Probate, Domestic Violence, Tax, and Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Divisions, the Family Court, and the Crime Victims Compensation Program. A total of **36** interviews are also available in Spanish. In 2022, the Family Court prepared a new interview for litigants who are seeking appointed counsel in their Abuse and Neglect matters. Once the interview is completed, the Child Abuse and Neglect (CCAN) office reviews eligibility and the court appoints counsel for those that qualify.



## Access for Persons with Disabilities.

To ensure participation in the justice system for persons with disabilities, including jurors, the DC Courts routinely accommodate court users and provide training on disability issues to new judges and to court staff. The Courts continued to remove barriers or provide programmatic access through accommodations such as scheduling or timing of events, appearance by telephone or computer, Assistive Listening Devices, wheelchairs, readers for blind persons, mobile devices in the courthouse, digital desktop and glass handheld magnifiers for court users with vision impairments, Braille, large print, navigation assistance, alternative security screening procedures, and service animals.

## Child Care Center.

The Court's on-site child care center located in the Moultrie Courthouse continued to follow the guidance and recommendations of the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the DC Courts' epidemiologist and industrial hygienist to ensure the health and safety of staff, children, and parents/caregivers.

## Communication Access Realtime Translation.

CART services allow hard of hearing litigants, attorneys, jurors, and witnesses to fully participate in court proceedings and mediations. In-person CART services were provided **7** times in 2022.

## Eviction Diversion Initiative Program.

In June, the DC Courts launched an Eviction Diversion Initiative (EDI) Program in the Civil Division. Funded by a grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation to the National Center for State Courts' Eviction Diversion Initiative, the DC Courts were one of eight states to receive an award to strengthen eviction diversion efforts and improve housing stability due to the pandemic in the District. The DC Courts' EDI Program will work collaboratively with internal and external

stakeholders to expedite and enhance eviction-related services to District residents impacted by the pandemic. Over the next four years, the EDI Program will implement a new case triage and management system for Landlord and Tenant cases, divert cases to early mediation, expand the use of court navigators to assist litigants and connect them earlier in the court process to needed legal and social services cases, and partner with the Greater Washington Urban League to execute a comprehensive public outreach education campaign, including public service announcements and a landing page on the court's website to further expedite service and resource delivery.

### Interpreter Registry.

The DC Courts' Interpreter Registry included over **160** certified and qualified freelance interpreters representing over 50 spoken and signed languages in 2022. The Courts offered 2 Orientation Workshops in a live virtual format and fully onboarded **12** new interpreters.

### Language Assistance on the DC Courts' Mobile App.

A critical component of providing access to justice for all is ensuring language access for Limited English Proficient (LEP) and deaf/hard-of-hearing court users. In 2022, the Courts provided interpreting services and translations for court users, administered testing and training services for interpreters, judges, and staff, and created new language access resources for judges, staff, and the public.

- Provided interpreters **6,462** times for **5,315** unique events in **51** languages for both in-person and remote proceedings
- **8** top languages served by interpreters – Spanish, American Sign Language, Amharic, French, Arabic, Mandarin, Tigrinya, and Vietnamese.

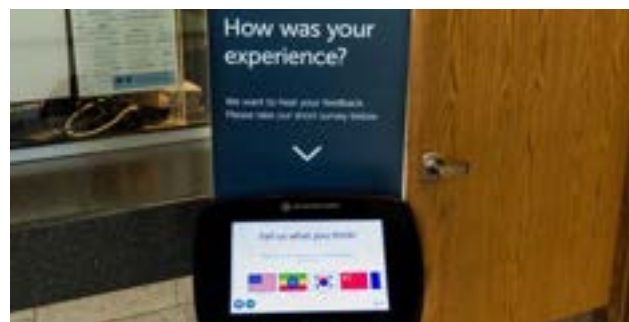


- **28** designated bilingual (English-Spanish) positions maintained throughout the Courts.
- **621** documents such as court orders, notices, summonses, handbooks, forms, and tip sheets were translated into another language for court users. Spanish translations accounted for **72%** of all translation requests.

### Language Access Resources.

The Office of Court Interpreting Services (OCIS) updated and widely disseminated language access resources that help all court employees and court users understand the availability of language access services and how to access them.

- A dedicated Language Access page on the DC Courts' website was published. This resource informs the public about the comprehensive language access services available at the Courts and is designed to provide access to key language access tools as well as targeted information for the public, attorneys, and interpreters.
- The OCIS Language Access Toolkit was published on the Courts' intranet for employees. This resource provides judicial officers, law clerks, and other court personnel information on the Language Access Program and the tools for obtaining language access services.
- Two dedicated rooms for video remote interpretation (VRI) for interpreters working onsite were established. The VRI rooms are equipped with all necessary technology and equipment for optimum delivery of services, including additional support equipment to enhance ASL interpretation. The VRI rooms provide privacy to safeguard the confidential nature of certain proceedings and minimize distractions both to interpreters and to court users.
- New brochures that describe the Courts' language access services and how to obtain such services are now available court-wide in English, Spanish, and Amharic for members of the public. Bench Cards with similar information were provided to Judicial Officers and are located in courtrooms while Desk Cards were provided to clerks and are located at key public counters.
- Signs in multiple languages were posted throughout the court campus informing court users of their right to an interpreter at no cost, and language identification cards were made available at public counters for court users to identify the language they are most comfortable using. Signage court-wide is posted in English and Spanish.



## Library Upgrades.

**Court of Appeals.** The Library worked to digitize D.C. Council legislative history, which has limited availability elsewhere. Through the library card catalog, judges and court staff can now remotely access this information, which is often needed to understand the Council's intent. The online collection dates to Council Period 1. To facilitate judicial decision making, the Librarian continued to publish a monthly newsletter highlighting lesser-known sources and research tips, update an internet page with information and links to online research sources, and host Zoom reference hours to support teleworking staff. The Law Library handled **1,154** reference and research requests in 2022.

**Superior Court Library.** The Superior Court Library was physically closed to the public throughout 2022 due to renovation of the space and the review and reorganization of all legal materials in the Library's collection. During this time, collection materials were updated and indexed in an online public access catalog (OPAC) allowing internal and external users to search for materials. The online catalog also provided on-demand access to certain digital materials, including about **900** legislative history files dating back to the mid-1970s and DC Superior Court Administrative Orders spanning **10+** years. A new DC Courts Libraries internet page was created to improve the public's knowledge of onsite and digital resources and to provide users the opportunity to launch their legal research using credible, curated sources of information. The increased societal demand for virtual reference and the Superior Court Library's commitment to providing access to information contributed to the creation of the Ask a Librarian portal, launched on the Courts' website, especially aimed at providing legal reference service to external customers.







# TARGETED SERVICES FOR COURT PARTICIPANTS

The Courts offer targeted services to individuals who may face barriers in accessing the judicial system, such as adults under guardianship, persons with mental health issues, juveniles, crime victims and victims of domestic violence.

## Domestic Violence Intake Centers.

Located at the Moultrie Courthouse and in Southeast D.C., the Courts' Domestic Violence Intake Centers served customers remotely and in-person. The Intake Centers collaborated with community partners to ensure 24/7 remote access to services through DC SAFE's response line. Over the last three years the Court has served over **15,000** victims most of whom used the response line as an entry point. Since the Clerk's Offices re-opened in July 2021 the intake center has served over **700** victims in-person. In December 2022, the Southeast satellite office moved to a new and larger location on Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE. The Domestic Violence Division worked closely with partner organizations to plan and prepare for the opening of the center. Grant funds totaling \$550,000 from the Office on Violence Against Women's Justice for Families Program will be used to host criminal justice agencies and domestic violence advocates and to coordinate improvements that will reduce wait times and expedite case processing.

## Guardianship Assistance Program.

The Guardianship Assistance Program in the Probate Division provides support to guardians, adults under guardianship, care providers and the public through training, referrals to community resources, and information regarding guardianship and alternatives to guardianship. The Probate Division received a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living to assess the status of the adult guardianship system in the District of Columbia, with a focus on the fairness, safety, and integrity of the adult guardianship process from petition to court proceeding, appointment, monitoring, and termination. In 2022, the Probate Division reviewed **3,236** semi-annual reports of guardians and met the time standard for these reviews at a rate of **99.4%**

## Mental Habilitation Advocates.

The Mental Habilitation Advocate Program provides advocates for District residents with intellectual disabilities. Advocates review petitions and pleadings on behalf of the disabled person and ensure that constitutional rights of the individual are protected. Recruitment initiatives and 7 remote training classes in 2022 yielded **3** new advocate applications and Continuing Education Credits for **25** current advocates who served on **36** cases.

## Mental Health Initiatives.

The DC Courts continued engagement with community behavioral health partners and the court-based Urgent Care Clinic to ensure that many court participants with mental health issues are identified, assessed, and linked with appropriate services.

- **131** court participants were served by the Urgent Care Clinic. The Clinic provides mental health and substance use assessments for individuals who exhibit symptoms of mental illness during court appearances.



## Services for Crime Victims.

Victims of violent crime received **\$5,262,688** in compensation for financial losses related to the crime, in compliance with federal standards. The Court received **2,223** claims eligible for compensation. To enhance awareness and accessibility of the Crime Victims Compensation Program, a Program Awareness Team participated in several outreach events, including the H Street Festival, Delta Sigma Theta Community Day, gun violence events, and more. Team members were available to speak about accessing services and to accept applications as needed. The Crime Victims Compensation Advisory Commission (CVCAC) brings together key organizations in the District's victim assistance network, including the U.S. Attorney's Office, D.C. Office of the Attorney General, Metropolitan Police Department, D.C. SAFE, mental health providers, and hospitals, among others, to provide a unified voice and a coordinated response for all crime victims.

## Services for Juveniles.

The Family Court was awarded another five-year Court Improvement Program (CIP) grant covering the period 2022 through 2026. A substantial portion of grant funds will be devoted to improving legal representation for parents with children in the neglect system, including a multi-disciplinary representation program providing additional dedicated social work expertise to more fully support parents as they make efforts to comply with services. The CIP received additional grant funding to address challenges experienced by families in the neglect system created by the pandemic. Laptops are provided to Family Treatment Court participants to enable them to better participate in hearings, meetings, and other virtual case-related events. Additionally, a program is underway to provide opportunities in the community for parents and others to use laptop computers located in various community collaboratives to better enable parents and others to attend hearings and access services.

To enhance public safety and address the needs of the District's youth under pre-trial or probation supervision, the Courts' Social Services Division continued to offer an array of pro-social innovative services in collaboration with local juvenile and criminal justice, child welfare, health, behavioral health and education stakeholders, such as the after school drop-in program at the BARJ Centers, mentoring, counseling, meals, etc.

## Succeeding in Our Academic Responsibilities (SOARS).

In 2022, designated CSSD staff worked in tandem with the Chief Judge and Clerk of the Court to develop and launch an intensive, 90-day tutoring and mentoring initiative aimed to reduce truancy and enhance literacy among targeted CSSD youth. Succeeding in Our Academic Responsibilities (SOARS) offers designated youth services and programming that addresses barriers to attendance and participation in school including intensive tutoring, group dynamic book reading, engaged discussions, and nutritious meals at the BARJ Vocation Center. Participating youth are also assigned a mentor from a pool of DC Courts personnel to model a healthy relationship, provide support outside of the "system", and increase self-esteem and self-efficacy. While initially the program only focused on a small number of male youths, the program will be expanded next year to include a female cohort in the fall of 2023.







# COURT-BASED CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES

## Civil Legal Services.

The Courts partnered with local legal services organizations to facilitate court-based projects that make free or low-cost legal services more readily accessible to court users. These organizations provide legal information, and in some instances legal representation, to litigants without attorneys in civil cases. Throughout 2022, civil legal services providers continued to expand upon innovative approaches to connect with court users, including coordinated entry points for individuals, new and expanded outreach efforts, and the provision of immediate assistance to litigants during remote court hearings, as needed.

The assistance provided involved a range of legal help – legal information, advice, brief service, limited representation, or full representation – provided at the time the litigant was at court or participating in a remote court hearing or following an initial meeting at court. In some cases, a civil legal services organization might provide support through partnerships with volunteer pro bono attorneys. This data only includes legal matters in which a litigant connected to the legal services organization through a court-based project. Accordingly, it only represents a subset of the important work DC civil legal services organizations perform every day in and outside of the court setting to support the legal needs of District residents. As these legal services organizations continued to reimagine service delivery post-pandemic, the following information provides details about the variety of civil legal assistance offered through court-based projects in 2022.

## Consumer, Debt Collection, and Small Claims.

**The DC Bar Pro Bono Center** operates the Consumer Law Resource Center (CLRC), which provided legal information to **174** individuals remotely in 2022.

**Neighborhood Legal Services Program** operates the Small Claims Resource Center and assisted **455** individuals remotely in 2022.

**The D.C. Debt Collection Defense Hotline** is operated and answered live by **Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** and **Tzedek DC**, in collaboration with **Catholic Charities Legal Network**, the **D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center**, **Legal Counsel for the Elderly**, and **Neighborhood Legal Services Program**. The hotline, which provides legal information, advice, and representation in consumer debt and related matters, received **262** calls in 2022. The Debt Collection Defense Hotline is printed on all hearing notices issued by the Superior Court in debt collection cases. In conjunction with operating the hotline, and to facilitate connections to free legal services for unrepresented defendants, attorneys from **Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** and **Tzedek DC** maintained a regular presence in the virtual courtroom during the call of the remote small claims debt collection, civil action debt collection, and subrogation calendars.

## Domestic Violence.

**Bread for the City** and **Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** advised and represented petitioners in civil protection order (CPO) proceedings referred through the Domestic Violence Intake Center (DVIC) at both the Moultrie Courthouse and a satellite site in Southeast DC. **DC Volunteer Lawyers Project (DCVLP)** provided free legal services to low-income domestic violence victims through its work in the DVIC and the Domestic Violence Protection Order court-based clinic. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, **DC SAFE** set up an electronic filing assistance referral system to connect petitioners with these legal service providers to get help filing petitions for CPOs and other related pleadings with the Court. These providers often assist individuals identified through these court-based offices and the electronic filing referral system in related legal matters, such as child support and child custody.



Through these court-based offices and referral system, **Bread for the City** assisted petitioners with approximately **55** legal matters, **Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** assisted petitioners with approximately **548** legal matters, and **DCVLP** assisted petitioners with approximately **274** legal matters.

In a separate court-based project, **Rising for Justice** assisted **74** respondents.

### Family Court.

**DC Affordable Law Firm, D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center,** and **Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** jointly staff the **Family Law Assistance Network (FLAN)** to provide rapid-response, limited-scope legal services to low-income, unrepresented DC residents seeking legal assistance. In 2022, FLAN received a total of **628** referrals from litigants seeking assistance. Since FLAN's inception in March 2020 through the end of 2022, it had served **1,977** litigants. FLAN maintains a single-stream telephone number and email address for intakes and receives referrals Monday-Friday, 9:00 am-3:00 pm. Community members are directed to FLAN through referrals from judicial officers, via court orders advertising FLAN's services, the Family Court Self-Help Center, the Custody Assessment Unit, other legal service providers, community-based organizations, DC government agencies, and direct contact with community callers.

The Court also relied on several legal services organizations to accept guardian ad litem court appointments in domestic relations cases. **Children's Law Center** provided support in **221** of these matters through its own staff or volunteer pro bono attorneys in 2022, with **54** of those matters newly placed in 2022.

**DC Volunteer Lawyers Project** provided support in **104** of these matters in 2022 through its own staff or volunteer pro bono attorneys.

Through its legal helpline and weekly walk-in court clinic, **DC Kincare Alliance** provided brief legal advice and information to **120** relative caregivers raising at-risk DC children in family law and related legal matters in 2022.

### Parentage and Child Support.

**Bread for the City** and **Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** helped staff a court-based office, the Child Support Resource Center (CSRC), in the Parentage and Child Support Branch to help custodial and noncustodial parents in child support and paternity matters. While in-person services were suspended due to the pandemic for two years, **Bread for the City** and **Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** jointly staffed the **Child Support Resource Center Hotline** and returned to the court-based office in mid-2022. A total of **199** individuals were assisted through the hotline and court-based office in 2022.

A range of services were provided, including advice, brief services, and representation. Additionally, an estimated **187** self-represented litigants were provided non-legal assistance, such as help accessing the remote courtroom via WebEx through the CSRC Hotline.

### Landlord and Tenant.

**Bread for the City, D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center, Legal Aid of the District of Columbia, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Neighborhood Legal Services Program,** and **Rising for Justice** jointly staffed the remote **Landlord Tenant Legal Assistance Network (LTLAN)**. In 2022, LTLAN helped **2,425** individuals, including **768** small landlords (through the Pro Bono Center's Landlord Tenant Resource Center only) and **1,657** tenants. In late 2022, Rising for Justice and Legal Aid began staffing courthouse offices again. While the Landlord Tenant Branch remained almost entirely virtual, some tenants were coming to the courthouse for their presumptively remote hearings and being assisted in-person by attorneys from these organizations.

Providers sent outreach letters to **2,012** tenants with open cases to provide information about their legal rights and how to access free legal assistance. The biggest change to outreach was through the Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC) project. In June 2022, the LTLAN partners began working with five community-based organizations to target canvassing efforts toward tenants who either were scheduled for eviction or had a pending case. Those tenants were referred to LTLAN for connection with a legal services organization.

## Tax and Foreclosure.

**Legal Aid of the District of Columbia** and **Legal Counsel for the Elderly** assisted individuals in foreclosure cases who are at risk of losing their homes. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, legal services attorneys were physically present in and around the courtroom during the call of the weekly mortgage foreclosure calendars to conduct outreach and assist unrepresented litigants participating in those hearings, as needed. During the pandemic, most foreclosure cases were put on hold due to the District's foreclosure moratorium. Up until October 2022, the court held a limited number of mortgage foreclosure hearings due to ongoing foreclosure protections. The foreclosure calendar resumed scheduling most cases in October 2022. Attorneys from these organizations have maintained a regular presence in the virtual courtroom during the call of the limited, remote foreclosure calendar to facilitate connections to free legal services for unrepresented litigants.

In 2022, these providers connected with **19** individuals to provide legal information, advice, or representation in mortgage foreclosure matters through their virtual court-based Foreclosure Prevention Project. Legal Counsel for the Elderly assisted approximately **9** additional individuals with tax foreclosure matters through its tax foreclosure court-based project.

## Pro Bono Representation.

In partnership with the DC Access to Justice Commission and the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center, the DC Courts annually recognize attorneys who each contributed at least 50 hours of legal services for the good of the public with the Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll. The 2022 Honor Roll included **4,714** attorneys, **2,712** of whom were recognized with high honors for providing 100 or more hours of service. The list of honored attorneys reflected **162** law firms and solo practices and numerous corporations, government agencies, law schools, associations, and nonprofit organizations.

The Courts' Appellate Mediation program enlisted the support of pro bono volunteers so that parties not represented by counsel may participate in mediation. Attorneys, with the informed consent of the client as to the objectives and scope of the representation, entered a limited appearance for the purpose of mediation.





## GOAL 2

# FAIR AND TIMELY CASE RESOLUTION

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The Courts are committed to resolving legal matters in a fair and timely manner while providing due process and equal protection of the law, giving individual attention to each case, and applying the law consistently in all cases.





# INNOVATIONS IN CASE MANAGEMENT

The Courts strive to resolve cases fairly and efficiently by optimizing case management practices and court operations. In 2022, various innovations were introduced that will promote fair and timely case resolution. These innovations include:

## Child Support Conciliation Program.

The Parentage and Support Branch of the Family Court collaborated with the D.C. Office of the Attorney General's Child Support Services Division to launch Phase I of the Child Support Conciliation Program in April 2022. This program allowed participants to adjudicate parentage of minor children before attending court hearings. Since implementation, the Court has entered **71** parentage adjudications.

## Clearance of Search Warrants and Misdemeanor Cases.

The Criminal Division's Special Proceedings Branch worked with the Metropolitan Police Department and the United States Attorney's Office to clear about **1,800** unexecuted search warrants that were pending action by law enforcement. The Criminal Division also commenced a special project with the United States Attorney's Office to dismiss around **300** old misdemeanor cases. Resolution of these matters will enhance the efficiency of case management in criminal cases.

## Court of Appeals Legal Division Highlights.

Although the number of new appeals remains below pre-pandemic levels, the workload of matters for motions panels supported by the Legal Division remained constant. Motions panels considered **607** matters and resolved **405** appeals. Examples of matters include the following:

- Appeals for compassionate release (CR) from incarceration due to the COVID-19 Pandemic: **135** appeals resolved. In addition, two opinions were issued addressing the impact of a defendant's vaccination status (during this time a number of CR appeals were stayed awaiting the decisions) and an appeal on the issue of whether the government can appeal the grant of CR was argued in September and is awaiting a decision.
- Bar Matters: Motions panels addressed and resolved **59** bar matters.
- Other emergency matters: **20**, including numerous election appeals that had to be completed very quickly to meet the ballot printing timeline. The court held expedited hearings for two of these appeals.

## Crime Victims Program Enhancements.

The Crime Victims Compensation Program created new internal processes that shortened the turnaround time in which claimants and providers receive compensation and reimbursement. These processes will help the program resolve claims more efficiently and better assist crime victims in the District of Columbia.

## Electronic Payment Platform.

The Criminal Division, collaborating with the Information Technology and Budget and Finance Divisions, successfully implemented an electronic payment platform that allows the public to make online payments for court-ordered financial obligations, including the payment of bonds.

## Juror Compensation.

In May 2022, juror compensation was increased to **\$57** daily (**\$50** juror fee plus **\$7** travel stipend) to match the juror fee schedule in federal courts. Additionally, jury fees are now paid beginning on the first day of service, regardless of whether the juror is selected to serve on a trial.

## Juror Office Enhancements.

The Juror Office of the Special Operations Division implemented a chatbot system to increase the availability of information to prospective jurors without the need for a live agent. The Juror Office also permanently incorporated a hybrid method of grand jury enrollment that utilizes both virtual and onsite locations, which was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic.





# MEDIATION

Mediation in appellate and trial court proceedings helped to timely and amicably resolve legal matters. In 2022, the Courts continued to offer a mix of in-person and virtual mediation options and enhanced various aspects of the mediation process.

## Appellate Court Mediation Program.

- Mediated **44** matters in 2022.
- Hosted online training sessions that featured guest speakers along with members of the Court of Appeals mediation roster and pro bono mediation counsel.
- Co-hosted joint training with Multi-Door Division on online dispute resolution during Mediation Week. Training sessions for current mediators included “A Framework for Success: Preparing for the Mediation Session,” “Racial Reckoning: Challenges for Facilitated Practices,” and “After awareness comes action: What do we do after we uncover our implicit biases?” For the public, the program hosted a virtual open house to explore trial and appellate mediation.
- Launched a legal internship program in January 2022. Students will gain experience working with pro bono mediation counsel and observing mediation sections, and they can obtain academic credit through their law schools for assisting counsel with mediation preparation. In February 2022, The Catholic University Columbus School of Law highlighted its students’ participation in the pro bono initiative in an article entitled “The Catholic Law Community Finds Opportunity through the DCCA Mediation Program.”



## Superior Court Multi-Door Division.

- Continued to offer mediation services in a full range of civil cases. In 2022, mediations were held in **2,372** cases involving civil action, landlord and tenant, small claim, probate, tax, and other matters.
- Augmented the options for mediation in 2022 by implementing a new early mediation track in landlord and tenant cases, restarting a foreclosure facilitation program, and expanding an online tax mediation program.



# PROBLEM SOLVING COURTS

Problem-solving courts are central to fair and efficient resolution of cases. These courts hold criminal defendants accountable while providing resources for overcoming causes of criminal behavior, improving quality of life in the community, and administering justice.

**Community Courts** work with local organizations to provide social services to offenders and help them give back through community service. In 2022, approximately **798** defendants successfully completed community service through the program.

Serving nonviolent, substance-abusing defendants, the Drug Court employed intensive substance abuse treatment, drug testing, community supervision, graduated sanctions, and accountability to reduce recidivism. **35** court participants successfully completed the program in 2022.

**Family Treatment Court** is a treatment option for families in the District of Columbia dealing with substance use disorders. The program is completing the first year of a three-year grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The grant allows the Family Treatment Court to offer specialized services including trauma and domestic violence groups, as well as opioid and fentanyl trainings. The grant also offers more parental support by providing additional staff including peer mentors. A virtual commencement ceremony honoring nine families who successfully completed the program, reunified with their children, and had their cases closed, was held in December.

**Fathering Court** facilitated a virtual graduation in April 2022 honoring **7** graduates. The Fathering Court continued to work with the Office of Attorney General, successfully mediating at least **75%** of its cases and facilitating positive communication among the custodial and non-custodial parents. The Fathering Court worked closely with the Alternative Solution Center to refer fathers to employment and other vocational training programs. Working with the Mayor's Service Liaison Office, fathers were referred to services including housing, mental health, and substance abuse, and to the Department of Employment Services' Project Empowerment Program.

The **Mental Health Community Court** served court participants challenged by mental illness and helped them access community resources and treatment. In 2022, **45** court participants completed the program.

The Family Court continued **HOPE**, "Here Opportunities Prepare You for Excellence" Court, in 2022. The program helped address the multiple needs of court-involved youth who are suspected of being, confirmed to be, or at risk of becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation. In 2022, **18** youth participated in the problem-solving court and **4** youth completed their services.





## GOAL 3

# PROFESSIONAL AND ENGAGED WORKFORCE

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The DC Courts will ensure a professional, engaged workforce that consistently achieves excellence and is agile to meet the demands of a changing environment. The Courts will continue to invest in education, training, and other development opportunities to enhance the knowledge and skills of its workforce. To advance our long-standing commitment to being a great place to work, the Courts strive to create a flexible and high-performing work environment where all personnel are positively engaged.



# DC COURTS' WORKFORCE

The DC Courts are committed to being a workplace of choice by employing a diverse, highly qualified, and engaged workforce. While the Courts moved to remote operations in March 2020, as pandemic conditions improved, in-person operations were gradually expanded. All public offices in DC Courts were open for in-person services as of July 2022. Additionally, the Courts continued many of the innovations that emerged from the pandemic. These innovations not only ensured access to justice for all but helped promote a committed and engaged workforce. Court personnel continued to perform work both in-person and remotely, depending on the operational needs of the Courts and the public. During the year, the Human Resources Division successfully processed **225** new hires, **54** retirements and **102** promotions, and also conducted **29** new hire orientations and **12** PIV-I card trainings.

DC Courts continued to employ a diverse workforce, with females and minorities comprising **66%** and **72%** of the workforce, respectively.

## DC Courts' Diverse Workforce

66%	76%	72%
Female	JS-12 and below	Minorities

In addition to being diverse, the Courts' workforce maintained high levels of employee engagement as measured by the Employee Viewpoint Survey, developed and administered by the Office of Personnel Management. This survey included questions that measure the organizational conditions that lead to high engagement behaviors, which then lead to optimum organizational performance.

Figure 1. Employee Engagement



The Courts' efforts to promote diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging continued this year with several events hosted by the Black History Month Committee and the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Committee in collaboration with the Racial Equity Working Group. In February, the Black History Month Committee presented on the theme of Black History and Wellness and included the following activities: African American Bingo, an informative nutrition and fitness webinar entitled Be Fit & Eat Well: A Healthier You in 2022!, and the Third Annual African American Impact Awards. For May's Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, the AAPI Committee hosted Arun G. Rao, Deputy Assistant Attorney General of U.S. Department of Justice as the keynote speaker for a presentation on "AAPI's in Public Service". Two other AAPI events included a cultural presentation and a cooking demonstration.



# FLEXIBLE WORK ENVIRONMENT

*To create a flexible work environment, DC Courts will offer programs and initiatives to enhance the well being of the workforce and develop/expand flexible work processes and programs.*

As operations expanded, the Courts remained agile utilizing flexible work schedules, including the use of maxi-flex schedules, while maximizing technology to ensure continuing court operations. Realizing that remote work and virtual operations are advantageous to employee well-being and for court efficiency, the Courts continued implementation of a court-wide initiative titled “Reimagining the Courts.” A major outcome of this initiative was revision to Policy No. 220 – Hours of Work and Flexplace Work. During 2022 over **1,259** employees teleworked. In the biennial Employee Viewpoint Survey administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), **80%** of employees reported needing expanded telework and the Courts made this available to them. Similarly, **66%** of employees reported needing and having available expanded workplace flexibilities. Employees expressed appreciation for the flexibility, with **65%** of employees believing the Courts had made their health and safety a top priority in developing return to on-site work plans.

## **Employees who reported needing and having available to them**

**Expanded Telework.....80%**  
**Expanded Work Flexibilities.....66%**

The pandemic and the many changes in court operations and business practices instituted to ensure delivery of services to the public over the past three years have significantly challenged court personnel. To support our workforce, the Courts continued to undertake efforts to provide greater support for employees and to ensure that court managers “lead with empathy” by recognizing the personal and professional stresses, losses, and challenges many people have and continue to experience. Moreover, the Courts continued its mental health initiative under

the Working on Wellness (WOW) umbrella to promote employee mental health, mental disability awareness and to foster a positive mental health culture. A publication was dedicated to the awareness of the roles that supervisors and managers have in shaping an employee’s experience at work and fostering mental health which included encouragement to: 1) check-in with individuals on your team with five key questions; 2) provide tips on how to diversify your communication style; 3) promote inclusive decision-making, when appropriate; 4) encourage rest, relaxation and breaks for high performance; and 5) cultivate the part of the culture that you control for a healthy work-life balance. In 2022, the Human Resources Division encouraged wellness checks, when appropriate, and promoted ongoing Employee Assistance Program information. Further, the Courts’ Center for Education and Training offered a myriad of relevant classes such as *Adapting to a Telework Environment*, *Microsoft Teams*, *Creating Podcasts*, *Managing in a Virtual Environment*, and *Virtual Meeting Best Practices*. With training having changed so much in the last 2-3 years, distance or virtual learning models have worked very well for the Courts.







# VALUES BASED WORKPLACE

*The DC Courts will promote a values-based workplace focused on high ethical standards and professionalism.*

The Courts continued to stress the importance of alignment with the Strategic Plan's organizational values of accountability, excellence, fairness, integrity, respect, and transparency. The training and organizational development initiative, Living Our Values, continued to build and to integrate the values and employee behaviors into the day-to-day operations and culture of the Courts, along with the leadership principles. Divisions provided effective leadership in this initiative by developing action plans, forming Values Teams, and participating in Values Pulse Checks. Pulse Check courtwide surveys indicated significant progress in values awareness and commitment to living the values. All six values showed progress since the 2020 survey administration.

The Courts also track Employee Viewpoint Survey results that relate to the Courts' value of fairness. Forty-eight percent of employees responded positively to a series of questions measuring fairness in the organization. This represented the highest score for DC Courts in the past ten years and is steadily increasing. To address employee perceptions of fairness within the hiring process, the HR Division developed and facilitated six training sessions to employees on the recruitment process and how to apply for positions at DC Courts and two "Hiring the Best Candidate" training sessions.

To further transparency and communication within the organization, the Executive Team, consisting of the Executive Officer, Deputy Executive Officer, Clerk of the Court of Appeals and Clerk of the Superior Court, hosted several roundtables for new employees and a myriad of town hall meetings and virtual employee forums. Both series were hosted to address employee questions about on-site and remote operations, work-related issues, and concerns, and to offer suggestions.





# TRAINING AND EDUCATION

## *The DC Courts will provide professional development opportunities for judges and court employees.*

The Courts' Center for Education and Training (CET) provided comprehensive workforce planning and flexible training opportunities for the D.C. Courts' judicial officers, employees and professional community. Strategic offerings support and sustain the organizational values and leadership principles of our evolving court system indicative of a professional work environment that operates with high ethical standards.

The pandemic offered the opportunity to create and "think outside the box". CET offered classes through a self-paced learning management system (SkillPort) which was available to employees working on-site and remotely.

***Total Training Hours Provided by CET***

218	8,212	13,098
Employee Classes Offered	Employee Training Hours	Total hours of professional development for employees and judicial officers

CET trainings were generally positioned into four "buckets" or skill development areas: Business and IT Skills; Court Matters; Leadership, Management and Supervision Skills; and, Workplace and People Skills. CET offered a full and plentiful complement of all classes that reflect this business model, and specific courses offered in each area are highlighted below.

### **Business and IT Skills.**

CET offered numerous courses designed to improve the business and IT skills of employees and judicial staff. These offerings included Captivate, Camtasia, Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification Prep, Adobe Suite, MS Office Suite, Professional Writing Skills series, Web Page Creation and Design, and Prezi Presentation software. Many Court employees participated in these technology advancement courses and earned certifications in Project Management Professional (PMP), Excel and CompTIA A+ along with the other technology courses.

### **Court Matters.**

CET continued to offer orientation classes for new employees covering topics such as personnel policies, ethics, diversity, equity and inclusion, active shooter training and court security. New employees also received a mentor that allowed them to be engaged from their first day on the job. Additional judicial trainings were conducted in both the Court of Appeals and Superior Court which focused on topics such as diversity, equity, and inclusion, when to consider retirement, ethics, evidence, jury peremptory challenges, compassionate release cases and mental health challenges to members of the bench. Judicial officers were further versed in the very latest technology, scientific, constitutional, social science and legal trends, to provide a meaningful judicial process for our citizens, including offering virtual hearings in many cases.

### **Leadership, Management and Supervision Skills.**

Training is even more critical to ensuring that our next generation of supervisors, managers and leaders are well-prepared for succession. This requires a workforce adept at training virtually and offering hybrid models of learning to move into the next millennium. Classes included completion of the Quick Start series for all court leadership, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management series for all new supervisors,

Performance Management and Corrective Actions, and Employee Engagement. **13** new supervisors completed the Quick Start program for new supervisors in July 2022. Through the Courts' Management Training Program (MTP), Leadership, Management and Supervision classes were offered to address the need for better development and retention of talented employees. Scheduled every other year, the MTP offered a very successful 12-month series of classes taught by nationally recognized experts and in-house leaders. The MTP Class of 2021-22 graduated **19** employees in September 2022 in its second virtual graduation ceremony. Many graduates received promotions and increased responsibilities to the highest levels of court management. The Courts take seriously the importance of succession planning and continue to move in a proactive direction toward recruiting and retaining high-performing employees. A new Management Training Program class will begin in September 2023.

### Workplace and People Skills.

CET continued to offer many classes in its mandatory new employee classes incorporating Implicit Bias and Procedural Fairness, Language Access, and Sexual Harassment into its core classes. Classes are offered quarterly prior to an employee's probation expiring. All employees are welcome to take the classes. *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging* trainings are also offered several times per year to new and seasoned employees, as well as judicial officers, and have been incorporated into the new judge training for incoming judicial officers. Workplace and People Skills Classes include classes covering strategizing, leading from the middle, proper communication, etiquette and professional presence in a virtual setting, handling stress and de-escalation, language access needs and aiding those in need, conflict management, excellent customer service, emotional intelligence, organizational change, and values.

CET provided training programs and conferences for judges in the Court of Appeals and the Superior Court to address current case law, societal trends, technological advances, and a myriad of complicated issues that must be understood to make good judicial decisions. The annual conference held in May was virtual and titled "Systems Rebooted and Lessons Learned: Forging Forward in the COVID Pandemic". Approximately thirty judicial officers participated in the District of Columbia Superior Court Judicial Coaching Program.

***125** judicial officers in the Court of Appeals and Superior Court (including Senior Judges and Magistrate Judges) completed **4,886** hours of continuing judicial education.*

In addition to training offered by CET, some divisions sponsored training specific to their mission and the needs of their staff.

**Office of Court Interpreting Services:** A total of **11** exams and assessments for contract interpreters, court personnel, and CJA attorneys and **31** training events for contract interpreters, judicial officers, and court personnel were facilitated in 2022.

- Registry Interpreters are required to pass an examination to join the registry and complete 12 hours of continuing education every two years to remain in good standing. In 2022, OCIS facilitated **23** workshops and six exams for Interpreter Registry members including four Amharic Court Certification exams.
- The Office of Court Interpreting Services administered the Amharic Court Interpreter Certification Examination which was developed by the DC Courts in collaboration with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) in 2020 and was partially funded by a grant from the State Justice Institute. The Amharic Court Interpreter Certification Examination is the first such examination for Amharic interpreters in the United States and will ensure that Amharic interpreters are fully qualified to interpret in a court setting. In June 2022, the Office of Court Interpreting Services administered the Amharic Court Interpreter Certification Exam to **4** registered candidates. Additionally, the Office of Court Interpreting Services facilitated **12**-hour skills-building workshop over two days for Amharic interpreters with a declared interest in sitting for the Amharic Court Interpreter Certification Exam to become certified Amharic court interpreters. Participants received continuing education credits for attending the workshop.

- The Courts' Language Access Coordinator provided numerous trainings for new judges and new employees as well as other staff members that regularly work directly with the public. For example, **3** presentations were provided to new judges during their on-boarding session, which included an overview of the Language Access Program and best practices for working with interpreters, and **2** training sessions were conducted for new employees during their on-boarding process on Identifying Language Needs and Providing Language Assistance Services in a Court Setting, which provided an overview of the Courts' Language Access Program, the role of an interpreter, best practices for working with an interpreter in-person or remotely, and how to coordinate interpretation services. Additionally, three trainings were provided for the Information Desk, the Family Court Central Intake Center, and the Domestic Violence Intake Office on providing language access services to the public.
- CJA and CCAN attorneys who wish to join the Spanish attorney panels must first pass a language proficiency test. The Office of Court Interpreting Services (OCIS) administered three CJA Spanish attorney panel tests.
- A multi-media training module was created for the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division on best practices for working with interpreters at mediations, and language proficiency assessments were provided to **2** staff members.

**Mediator Training:** Multi-Door conducted **35** trainings for mediators to reinforce skills through realistic scenarios grounded in ethics and the new dynamics of remote mediation. Multi-Door also conducted two trainings to successfully train and onboarded **29** new family mediators to its roster. These trainings included the first Family Basic Mediation Training conducted entirely remotely and onboarded Family mediators to Multi-Door through a self-paced orientation and live training. Other trainings included various technical and programmatic segments on Zoom features, enhancing the mediator's ability to operate remotely. Mediators can also access **34** recorded trainings through the Online Training Library.







# RACIAL EQUITY INITIATIVE

On January 19, 2022, the DC Courts published a newsletter entitled “Calling all Candlelighters” to share information on the DC Courts’ racial equity initiative, including: approach to racial equity, R.A.C.E. principles, transformative work zone – institutional implicit bias; racial advisory working group; and racial equity information sessions. The newsletter outlined key leaders in various roles who were active in the Racial Equity Initiative proposal from the Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration. The purpose of the R.A.C.E. principles were explained to: 1) explicitly name race as an unfortunate predictor of success; 2) address this concern by utilizing tools to remove barriers to racial equity; and 3) set expectations that the Courts’ racial equity work should be prioritized and intensified. The Courts’ transformative work zone envisioned a focus on rules, policies, procedures and norms internally and externally with stakeholders to implement transformation. Five key communication messages were centered around the themes of: equal justice is who we are; we are a values-led organization; how equity leads to procedural fairness; how racial equity is not about shaming, blaming or making any person feel guilty; and how race can predict one’s success on any and all indicators of success.

Between January and March, several racial equity information sessions were held for court employees, through a virtual format. Nearly **100** individuals attended collectively. The information sessions provided a deeper explanation of why the Racial Equity Initiative is needed and established a comprehensive strategy and next steps to assess our processes, policies and procedures through a racial equity lens. A racial equity initiative intranet page was launched to normalize race conversations and to promote awareness including: the four-pronged approach; a series of core and supporting messages; structural racism and outcome gaps; race and racism facts and myths; bias infographics; promoting racially and culturally inclusive language; data infographics; and content regarding courageous conversations. By August, the DC Courts’ webpage launched which defined the terms diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, and explained the racial equity initiative to the public.

The Standing Committee on Fairness and Access finalized survey questions proposed by the racial equity consultant. In April and July, respectively, the DC Courts’ Racial Equity and DEIB surveys were launched including an employee survey (**452** participants) and stakeholder survey (**400** participants). By the end of 2022, the Courts received DEIB survey results that indicated that the Courts have made progress in significant areas and also identified areas for growth. The survey instruments were the Courts’ first comprehensive survey into racial equity and fairness and DEIB topics.

The workforce was invited to a webinar series on jury diversity hosted by the National Center for State Courts. In July, members of the Jury Management Committee, the Standing Committee on Fairness and Access and the Racial Equity Working Group gathered for a discussion based on the five-part series which included: “Jury Diversity and its Role in Promoting Confidence in the Court System”; “The Path to a Diverse Jury Panel”; “Criminal History Exclusions”; “Implicit Bias and Juror Decision-Making”, and “Jury Selection: Beyond Intentional Racial Bias”. Two nationwide emerging areas were identified that may increase diversity: 1) statutory reform regarding citizenship and the ability to read, write and understand English and 2) the limitation or elimination of peremptory challenges.



## GOAL 4

# RESILIENT AND RESPONSIVE TECHNOLOGY

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The Courts will continue to enhance information technology capabilities to provide the highest level of service to the public and state-of-the-art technology tools to its workforce. The Courts will develop, manage, and maintain an information technology infrastructure and services that are effective, efficient, and resilient in supporting the Courts' mission. The Plan focuses on providing exceptional customer service by expanding access to court information and services, enhancing technology capabilities, and ensuring optimal security for court data and information assets.



# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS

## **Appellate Voting Solution.**

The Court of Appeals decides cases and most related motions by vote of the entire court or by a panel of three judges. To enhance efficiency in tracking votes on certain motions in a case and petitions for the Court to rehear a case, the Courts' first cloud-based Microsoft Power Apps solution was built in-house in February. The system helps to ensure that judges take timely actions on motions and petitions filed in appellate cases. Also, the system enabled centralized history of past votes on motions and petitions, as well as facilitated collaboration among panel judges on various aspects of the decision-making process.

## **Automated Attorney Payment.**

The Court of Appeals continued to work with the Information Technology Division to adapt the Web Voucher System to appellate business processes and improve service to court-appointed attorneys for indigent persons and families.

## **Box Pilot.**

The Criminal Division launched a pilot program to share documents electronically among justice agency partners using Box.Com. Six courtrooms were designated to participate in the pilot. The project was well received because it provided a more efficient and secure way to transmit documents. Full implementation of the project is expected next year.

## **Courtroom Upgrade and Technology.**

In September, the Information Technology Division completed a one-year courtroom audio equipment reconfiguration process to improve audio quality. Courtrooms were upgraded to serve the following purposes:

- Function in a hybrid, onsite, or virtual-only manner.
- Support assistive listening devices to accommodate bench conferences and privileged communication.

- Enable jurors to be heard remotely and or within the assistive listening device system during the jury selection process in the courtroom.
- Equip with a second monitor in jury trials for evidence presentation purposes.
- Leverage bench laptops to allow judges to be seen clearly in WebEx virtual hearings in all active courtrooms.
- Return all courtrooms previously designated as jury rooms (9) or press/overflow rooms to fully functional hybrid courtrooms.
- The Court of Appeals courtrooms were fully configured for hybrid oral arguments and the Court held its first hybrid oral argument.

## **Electronic Case Initiation and Delivery.**

Family Court continued electronic case initiation in all case types using a variety of methods, including: Box.com, CaseFileXpress, or for mental health emergencies through email and initiation in CourtView by the Central Intake Center. Box.com is also used to securely exchange confidential documents with agency partners and the public. Family Court continued certifying and delivering documents to the public electronically and in-person.

## **Electronic Payment Platform Launch.**

The Criminal Division, in collaboration with the Information Technology and Budget and Finance Divisions, successfully implemented an electronic payment platform that allowed the public to make online payments for court-ordered financial obligations, including the payment of bonds.

### Grants Administration and Reporting System.

In January, the Information Technology Division implemented a cloud-based grants portfolio and interactive dashboard solution. The solution provided the Courts' Budget and Finance Division with financial management and reporting on grants with more accuracy and ease of maintenance and accessibility. This new solution replaced an antiquated system and resulted in a highly secure system with more workflow controls, flexibility, and robust reporting capabilities.

### Odyssey - New Superior Court Case Management System.

The Superior Court continued implementation of the Odyssey case management system (CMS). Phase I divisions, including the Civil, Probate, Tax, and Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Divisions, as well as the Office of the Auditor Master, completed activities involving configuration, future state documentation, solution validation/user acceptance testing, enterprise custom reports, eLearning and training, and court-led interfaces/integrations in preparation for the go-live on October 31. Phase 2 divisions, including the Criminal and Domestic Violence Divisions, and the Family Court, began implementation activities in preparation for user testing, training and go-live milestones anticipated in 2023.

Other division-specific related activities included:

- Budget and Finance Division ensured the successful transition of the Web Voucher System as it interfaces with the new CMS.

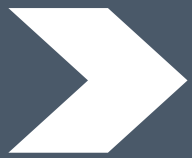
- Court of Appeals and the Court Reporting Division worked together on the submission of the Superior Court transcripts through the new CMS as opposed to paper transcripts or transcripts sent by email.
- Information Technology Division conducted user acceptance testing to prepare the interface between the Web Transcript Tracking System and the new CMS.

### Trial and Appellate Case Management System Interface.

The Court of Appeals began testing an interface with the new trial court case management system that will facilitate and expedite transfer of case data, documents, and evidence between the two courts.







# ENHANCED ACCESS TO INFORMATION

## Appellate Case Management System.

The Court of Appeals initiated a project to gather requirements and conduct market research for the next appellate case management system. The Courts of Appeals examined all areas of its operations to identify necessary features of a new system and processes that lend themselves to automation. To prepare for this project, standard operating procedures were updated. A Request for Proposal to solicit a vendor for the project will be released early next year.

## Chatbot for Juror Office.

In February, the Juror Office implemented a chatbot system to increase the availability of information to prospective jurors without the need for a live agent. The Juror Office also continued to collaborate with subject matter experts on the Superior Court Odyssey CMS project to develop a hearing flag system to replace emailed requests for jury panels, as well as an interface to display case information in the Clearview jury management system. The Juror Office incorporated into its permanent business processes the hybrid method of grand jury enrollment that utilizes both virtual and onsite locations, which was developed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Digitization Project.

In 2022, the Courts digitized over **370,000** pages for the Office of General Counsel as well as over **12,000** architectural drawings and **79,000** binder pages for the Capital Projects and Facilities Management Division. These efforts not only helped free physical space in offices throughout the Courts, but also ensured that critical data is more secure and available.

## Dashboards and Data Use.

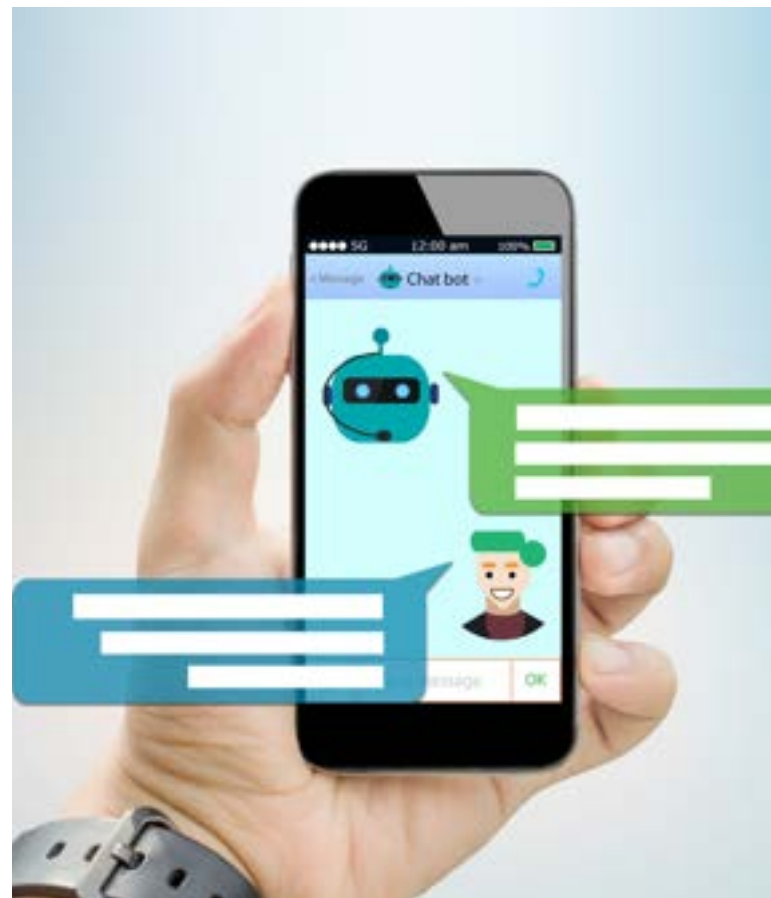
The Courts' Business Intelligence initiative has developed initial dashboards for the Court of Appeals to facilitate data review and use to guide decision making. The Court of Appeals also participated in a DC Courts initiative to identify performance metrics that will strengthen data-based decision making and public accountability.

## Data Sharing Portal.

The Information Technology Division implemented a data sharing portal solution which streamlined data sharing/display needs that support digital signage projects and helped support data sharing between the Courts and other partner agencies.

## Hybrid Oral Arguments at the DC Court of Appeals.

In September, the Court of Appeals and the Information Technology Division began to host hybrid oral arguments broadcasting from the Court of Appeals Historic Courthouse and streaming live on YouTube. Judges and litigants can be onsite in the courtroom or teleconference remotely from another location. The public can access all Court of Appeals oral arguments from the Courts' website.



## **Interactive Forms Interviews for Self-Represented Litigants.**

The Court completed five additional interviews in 2022 and made them available on the Forms Help Online portal: CCAN Appointment for Counsel, Crime Victims Compensation, Writ Motion for Exemption, Confidential Information Form, and Moderator Assessment of Safety Issues and Concerns (MASIC) Interview for internal use, created to help litigants without attorneys and solo law practitioners complete necessary court forms electronically.

## **Public Access to Appellate Documents.**

In August, the Court of Appeals and the Information Technology Division went live with the Court of Appeals' Public Access to documents pilot. This pilot provided public access to redacted briefs and orders through the Court of Appeals' eFiling/public access portal. Currently, access to documents is limited to civil appeals, with the possibility of expansion to other case types.





# INFORMATION SECURITY



## **Court Security Officers (CSO) Security Incident Response System.**

In July, the Information Technology Division implemented the CSO Security Incident Response System to streamline the incident reporting process for the CSOs. They currently follow a manual paper process and do not have analytical insights into various incidents in various locations of the Courts' buildings. The CSO Security Incident Response System can support supervisors in analyzing trends in various incidents and ensure appropriate decision making

## **Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) Compliance.**

In January, the Courts completed and achieved FISMA compliance, which resulted in a comprehensive System Security Plan and Security Assessment Report.





## GOAL 5

# EFFECTIVE COURT MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

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Effective management and operation of the justice system for the District of Columbia requires a team of knowledgeable professionals with a common mission and shared resources, collaborating to achieve results that best serve the public. The Courts are committed to fiscal accountability with respect to all Courts' resources. Confidence in the judicial system necessitates that each case management function – trial and appellate – understands the individual responsibilities and unique role of the other while leveraging opportunities for shared approaches to administrative functions.





# ENHANCING COURT FACILITIES

## **C Street Addition.**

With the support of appropriators, partners in the District of Columbia's building and construction agencies, and as a result of the diligent efforts of the contractual staff and personnel from the Courts' Capital Projects and Facilities Management Division, the vision of the Family Court Act of 2001 has been realized. The Moultrie Courthouse C Street Addition project has provided the DC Courts with planned office space for several court divisions, including the consolidation of the Family Court's Social Services Division (CSSD), a notable milestone. As part of this effort, six large new trial courtrooms are now operational for civil and criminal case matters and six associate judges' chambers have been completed. The consolidation of the Family Court, as well as the addition of new judges' chambers and office space enabled the Courts to relocate some of the staff from its Gallery Place location, thus facilitating a reduction and savings in the use of leased space. The C Street Addition project added and renovated approximately 175,000 gross square feet of space to accommodate the Courts' growing needs. The C Street Addition is near to completion, which is anticipated in 2024.

## **Modernization of Buildings A and B.**

The interior reconfiguration of Buildings A and B will ultimately enable the relocation of staff from leased space back to government owned buildings on the Courts' campus. Building A, located at 515 5th Street NW, and Building B, located at 510 4th Street NW, require modernizations to accommodate the returning divisions which will include redesign of office spaces as well as updating electrical and mechanical systems.

## **Recorder of Deeds Restoration.**

The Courts have received funding to stabilize and restore the historic Recorder of Deeds building to meet space requirements and enable the establishment of a Justice Resource Center. The building, which contains culturally significant murals, has deteriorated considerably since it was vacated by the District

Government in 2008. The Courts are currently in the process of preparing the building for stabilization and renovation. A contract has been executed to begin hazardous material survey within the building and a facilities condition assessment is anticipated upon the completion of the survey. Close proximity to the courthouse will allow the DC Courts to provide greater "access to justice for all" in the D.C. community by co-locating the Courts and community partners who deliver vital services in one easily accessible location.

## **Renovation of Magistrate Judges' Suite.**

This long-awaited project was planned to better accommodate the increased number of Magistrate Judges. The completion of this project will enable the Courts to reconfigure the Magistrate Judges' Suite to provide better circulation, updated square footages, improve egress, improve air distribution and enable the Courts to address life safety issues by adding sprinklers, for example.





# COURTS IN THE COMMUNITY

## Adoption Day.

The Superior Court and the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) hosted the 36th Annual Adoption Day in November with a virtual ceremony. The ceremony was designed to celebrate the joys of adoption and encourage area residents to consider adopting or fostering a child in the D.C. welfare system. One hundred and seventy-four children were adopted in the District of Columbia in 2022. Former NBC4 anchor Barbara Harrison, who has presided over every adoption ceremony since 1987, interviewed the families and shared their stories with the audience.

## Bar Regulation System.

The Court of Appeals regulates the activities of attorneys licensed to practice law in the District of Columbia and is assisted in this function by committees of attorneys and the public who generously volunteer their time. The Committees on Admissions and the Unauthorized Practice of Law worked to ensure that the public can trust that attorneys providing legal services in the District of Columbia are qualified and held to the highest standards of professional conduct. The Board on Professional Responsibility administered the attorney discipline system, which protects the public and the judicial system from attorney misconduct and preserves the integrity of the legal profession.

## Committee on Admissions.

The Committee on Admissions processes applications for admittance to the D.C. Bar. This year, committee highlights included an increase in admissions, a return to in-person testing, the acceptance of concurrent applications, and a fully paperless process:

- The Committee on Admissions returned to in-person administration of the bar exam in February, and **314** of the 665 applicants were successful on the exam. Applicants and staff at the exam were required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination status or present a negative COVID-19 test. Additional COVID-19 protocols included a mask mandate, social distancing and cleaning protocols in between testing sessions. In July, an in-person exam was administered to **1,622** applicants, with **1,165** successful examinees.

- The Committee on Admissions certified **5,560** applicants for admission to the bar, and a total of **5,187** individuals completed the admission process and were licensed to practice law. This represents an increase of **12%** in attorney admissions.
- For the first time, the Committee on Admissions accepted concurrent applications from individuals sitting for the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) in other jurisdictions to facilitate admission based on UBE Score transfer. The District of Columbia was the only jurisdiction in the country to offer a concurrent application for bar exam applicants.
- The number of Pro Hac Vice applications for temporary admission of attorneys licensed in other jurisdictions to represent parties in particular cases increased in 2022 after the court automated the application late in 2021. The transition to a “paperless process” has served to increase the efficiency of COA and boost all attorney admissions.
- The virtual swearing in ceremony continued to be popular with successful bar exam takers and motion applicants, with nearly **1,000** individuals participating in the January and July ceremonies live streamed on the Court of Appeals YouTube channel, which allowed unlimited friends and family to attend as well.
- Committee on Admissions outreach to the public consisted of presentations at law schools located within and outside of D.C. to assist students planning to sit for the bar exam in the District of Columbia.

## Community Outreach.

The Crime Victims Compensation Program created a Program Awareness Team that participated in several outreach events. Employees attended events including the H Street Festival, Delta Sigma Theta Community Day, gun violence events, etc. Participation in these events provided the public with more information about the program to help foster access to justice. Representatives from the program attended events and were able to speak about the services provided and take applications, if needed.

The Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division's Family Branch conducted a presentation for the Howard University Law School Family Clinic regarding family mediation. Additionally, at the invitation of the D.C. Bar Family Case Handlers, a presentation was conducted to members of the D.C. Bar for Superior Court's parent education seminar, Program for Agreement and Cooperation in Contested Custody Cases (PAC).

### **Court Orders in Abuse and Neglect Proceedings.**

Working with stakeholders, including the Office of the Attorney General, the Children's Law Center, CASA, and members of the CCAN bar, Family Court overhauled all court orders used in Abuse and Neglect proceedings. The orders are now more readable and user friendly for court participants.

### **Elder Justice Initiative.**

In September, the Probate Division was awarded a three-year grant from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration For Community Living, to implement a focused initiative to assess the current status of the adult guardianship system in the District of Columbia. The goal of the project is to assess the fairness, safety, and integrity of the adult guardianship process from petition to court proceeding, appointment, monitoring, and termination. The majority of funds will be used to hire a contractor to develop a web-based system to produce capacity assessment reports and a consultant who will convene a working group to conduct an assessment of the District's adult guardianship system.

### **Training Outreach.**

The Family Court hosted the 20th Annual Family Court Interdisciplinary Conference, entitled "Fatherhood: Fully Present and Fully Engaged", on October 14, 2022. The virtual conference featured the author of "Memoirs of an American Dad, Courts, Kids Co-parenting: How to Navigate the Judicial System for Child Custody, Visitation, and Child Support" and panel discussions regarding Fathering Court, as well as resources and referrals for Fathers. The speakers shared important information about the Family Court's Fathering Court as well as the various resources available to fathers involved in court proceedings.







# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

## **Appellate Business Process Review.**

To streamline processes, enhance efficiency, and strengthen service to the public, the Court of Appeals initiated an interdisciplinary working group to examine its operations and practices. The working group led to multiple initiatives, including online access to case documents and the Appellate Voting System.

## **Community Partnerships.**

CSSD maintained and expanded its collaborative partnerships by serving on a wide array of committees and task forces targeting truancy, violence interruption, exploitation and human trafficking prevention, summer safety, and enhanced literacy among adolescents. Some of the expanded community partnerships included the Office of Neighborhood Engagement Services (ONES) (violence intervention, pathways, etc.) and Dr. Steve B. Parese, SBP Consulting Corporation (to provide national training and certification program on Therapeutic Aggression Control Techniques).

## **Meetings with International Groups.**

The Center for Education & Training Division hosted numerous in-person and virtual visitors from area law schools, international groups and small local groups. International visitors represented the countries of Nigeria, the Republic of Georgia, Mongolia, Tunisia, Paraguay, China, Egypt and the Philippines.

The Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division met with international groups from the Ministry of Egypt and the Namibia Minister of Justice to discuss Multi-Door's ADR Programs, referral to the mediation process, case management, and the recruiting and training of mediators.

## **New 2023-2027 Strategic Plan Development.**

In collaboration with the Strategic Planning Leadership Council (SPLC), the Strategic Management Division conducted outreach to internal and external stakeholders, facilitated meetings with the SPLC to assess stakeholder input, and developed the Courts' 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.





