



Good afternoon Commissioners and thank you for the opportunity to present the 2015 Annual Report for the 20th Circuit Court and the Ottawa County Probate Court. As Court Administrator I have the privilege of working with a remarkable group of dedicated public servants, including judges, a great leadership team, managers and frontline staff, as well as competent attorneys and collaborating agencies throughout the County. Together, we have provided another year of excellent service to the citizens of Ottawa County.

The Court and SCAO websites, provide much more detail on statistics and performance measures – so in the short time available, I will simply provide some highlights and respond to any questions you may have. If you have specific questions, I will certainly make myself available to meet at your convenience and you may also view court details at <http://www.miottawa.org/Courts/> and <http://courts.mi.gov/education/stats/pages/default.aspx>

EFFECTIVE COURT LEADERSHIP

- Chief Judges
 - Hon. Ed Post, 20th Circuit Court
 - Hon. Mark Feyen, Probate Court
- Circuit Judges
 - Hon. Jon Van Allsburg, Pro Tem
 - Hon. Jon Hulsing
 - Hon. Kent Engle



Of course, Courts can only provide optimal performance for the community when there is strong, inspirational leadership and this is exactly what our Chief Judges Ed Post and Mark Feyen provide.

John Quincy Adams was once quoted as saying, “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

Here in Ottawa County we are fortunate to have this type of judicial leadership.

In addition to Chief Judge Post, who handles criminal and civil cases, and Chief Judge Feyen, who handles probate, juvenile, neglect/abuse, and drug court cases, we have an outstanding group of talented circuit judges who work extremely well together.

Jon Van Allsburg – handles appeals and domestic cases; as well as being our Business Court judge

Jon Hulsing – handles a busy criminal and civil docket, and

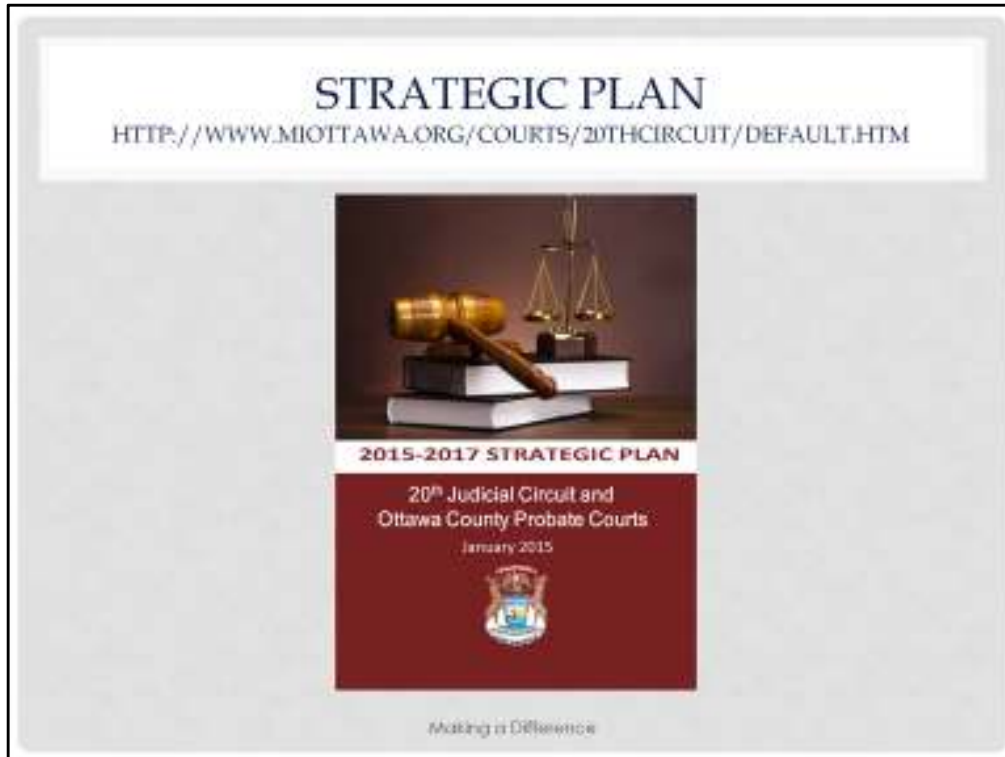
Kent Engle – is our “roving judge” – spending 3 days per week in Grand Haven and 2 days per week in West Olive handling domestic, juvenile and neglect/abuse cases.

ANNUAL REPORT 2015 “MAKING A DIFFERENCE”



Making a Difference

Each year, the Courts provide some context for the Annual Report by including a “theme”. In 2014 and 2015, our theme was “Making a Difference”. In recent years we used the Courts’ strategic planning process to re-engineer policies, better align staff structures and improve business process. During 2014 and 2015 we turned our focus to “Making a Difference” as part of a collaborative process among court staff, the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), and the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). Our renewed focus on performance measures and public accountability, as well as the County’s 4-C’s Initiative, helps us provide better service to the public, be better partners in the justice system, and further evolve as a high performing court.



Much of our work in the Circuit and Probate Courts is organized around the strategic focus areas identified in our Strategic Plan. The link is provided so you can review the Plan at your leisure.



Our dynamic strategic planning process has resulted in a clear Mission that is understood by our judges and court staff, while helping to achieve justice and providing exemplary public service. The Board and County Administration have certainly heard me talk about the Courts' Plan on several occasions, so I wanted to take a few minutes today to let you hear directly from some Court staff regarding how the Strategic Plan comes to life every day...

MISSION OF THE COURT THE EMPLOYEES PERSPECTIVE

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6kgLYzolDI&feature=youtu.be> (6 min 50 sec)

Making a Difference

Watch the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6kgLYzolDI&feature=youtu.be>

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015



- Circuit and Probate met or exceeded most SCAO performance measures
- FOC met or exceeded Office of Child Support performance measures
- Juvenile Detention received high marks in ACA accreditation process
- Trial Division felony collections exceeded \$1M for 5th year

Making a Difference

Based on the Courts' continuous strategic thinking and execution, supported by County financial resources, we were able to achieve great results in 2015. The next two slides highlight a few of many Court accomplishments achieved as a direct result of hard work performed by our judges and court employees.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015

- Probate staff received recognition for exemplary customer service
- FOC continues as a state leader in child support collection and effective use of mediation
- Juvenile Services implemented more evidence based practices (YLS, EPICS, ART, TFC) and developed a divisional Strategic Plan
- Many examples of successful community outreach



Making a Difference

YLS – Youth Level of Service (criminogenic risk/needs assessment)
EPICS – Effective Practices in Community Supervision
ART – Aggression Replacement Therapy
TFC – Thinking for a Change

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Published at <http://courts.mi.gov/>

- Public Satisfaction
- Timeliness
- Recidivism Related to Problem Solving Courts
- Child Support Rates
- Clearance Rates

Additional Measures

- Collection Rates
- ADA Compliance
- Timely Completion of Opinions



Making a Difference

Many of the prior Highlights are based on high achievement related to performance measures. As you know, several Court Performance Measures are monitored by the State Court Administrative Office and detailed results are available at the website noted on the slide.

PUBLIC SATISFACTION SURVEY

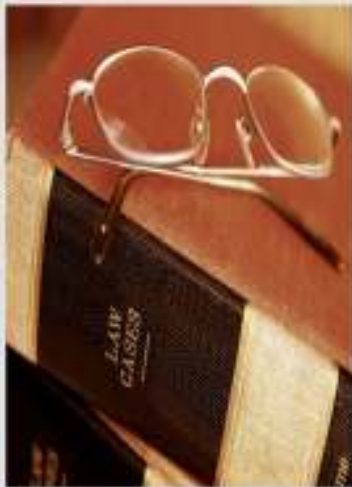
- 1) I was able to get my court business done in a reasonable amount of time today. **86%**
- 2) I was treated with courtesy and respect by court staff. **93%**
- 3) The way the case was handled was fair. **82%**
- 4) The judge/referee treated everyone with courtesy and respect. **89%**
- 5) The outcome in my case was favorable to me. **66%**

<http://courts.mi.gov/education/stats/performance-measures/Documents/2014PSSResults/OttawaCounty.pdf>

Making a Difference

Here is one specific example related to public satisfaction and our relentless efforts to provide excellent customer service.

SCAO REQUIRED REPORTS

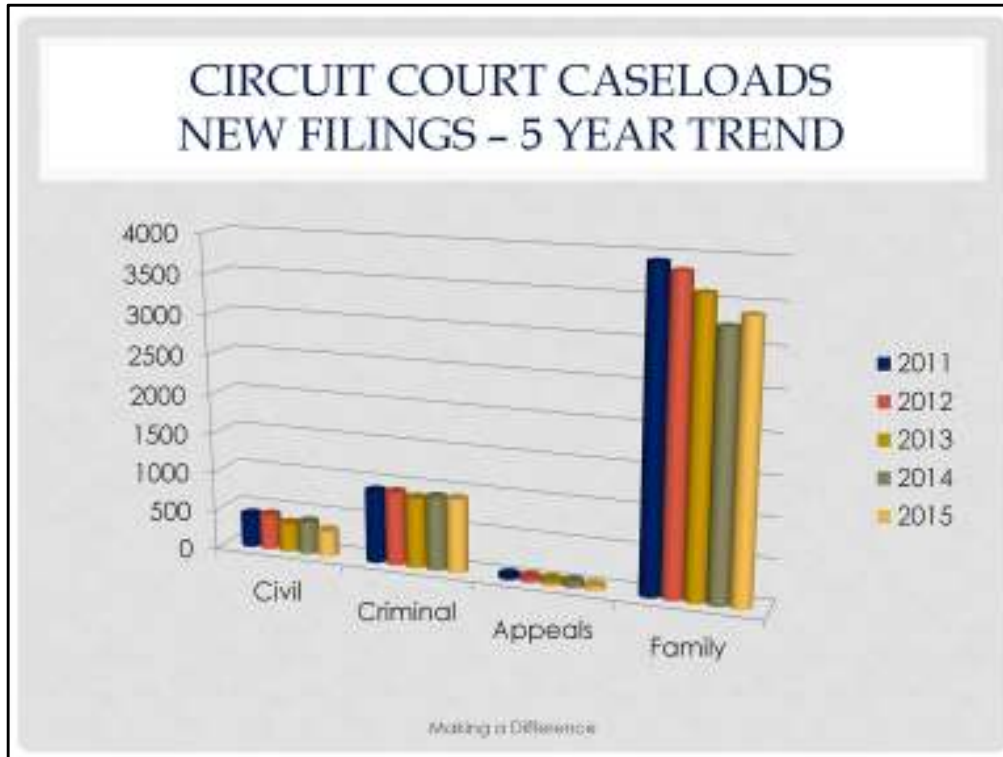


- Circuit Court N = 26
- Probate Court N = 15

[http://courts.mi.gov/administration/scao/resources/documents/other/reporting%20materials/required%20reports%20from%20circuit%20courts%20and%20judges.pdf#search="required reports"](http://courts.mi.gov/administration/scao/resources/documents/other/reporting%20materials/required%20reports%20from%20circuit%20courts%20and%20judges.pdf#search='required%20reports')

Making a Difference

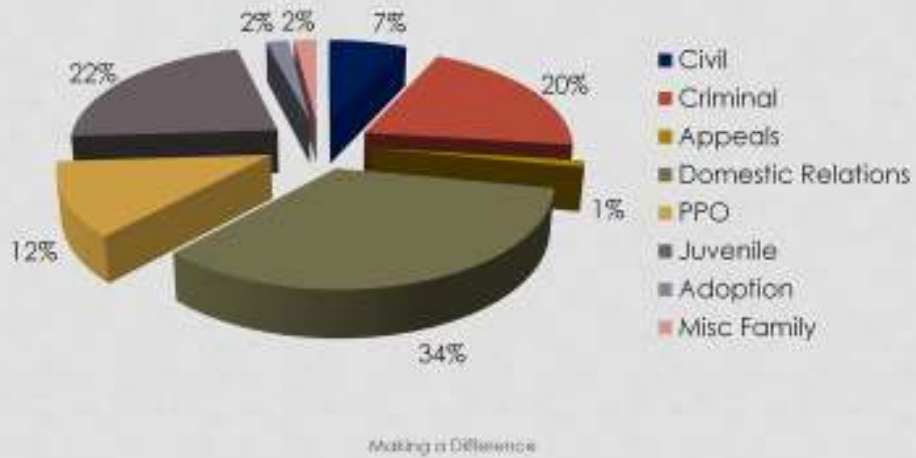
Much of the data used to evaluate Michigan trial courts can be attributed to various reports required by the SCAO. As noted here, there are at least 26 Circuit Court reports and 15 Probate Court reports that are completed and submitted on a regular basis to monitor activity and compliance. See website link for report details.



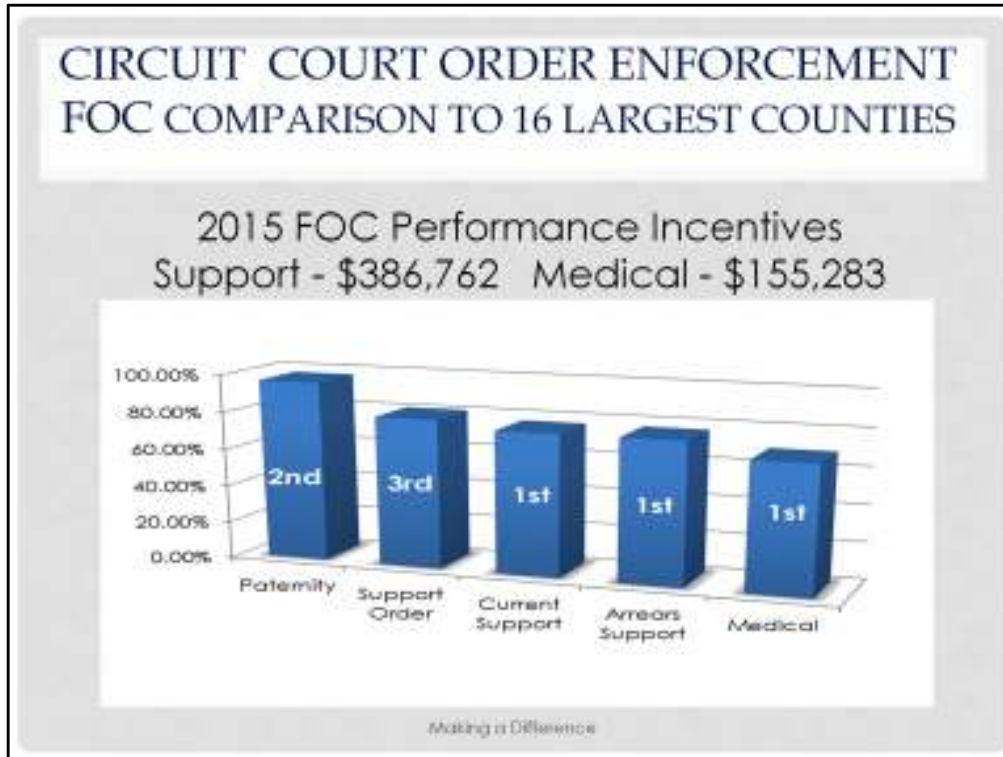
The following caseload slides highlight the fact that judges and court staff are effectively “doing justice – one case at a time” while nearly 5000 new Circuit cases and 1000 new Probate cases are being filed every year. With so many cases being opened, effective caseflow management is a critical component of our daily operations – so we can meet the litigants needs and comply with the Michigan Supreme Court case processing time standards. One of the interesting trends depicted in this slide is that family related cases consistently make up at least 2/3 of the circuit court caseload.

CIRCUIT COURT CASE DISTRIBUTION NEW FILINGS

20th Circuit Court - 2015 Case Distribution



This slide provides more detailed data regarding the composition of new filings and demonstrates why the judges are assigned to diverse caseloads. It should be noted that in addition to new case filings, each judge handles numerous reopened cases each year.



Child support collection falls under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. The Friend of the Court office operates as a Title IV-D agency and a large part of the expense of operating the office (approximately 66%) is reimbursed by Federal funds through a State Cooperative Reimbursement Contract.

The Friend of the Court office also defrays operating costs by earning incentive dollars based on performance. As set forth in the 1998 Child Support Performance and Incentive Act, the performance of each IV-D agency is measured in five key areas. State child support enforcement programs across the country are measured in Paternity Establishment, Support Order Establishment, Collections on Current Support, Collections on Arrears, and Cost Effectiveness. Medical support establishment/enforcement is also measured and incentives are earned on this factor alone at a rate of 15% of medical support collections. 2015 was the first year that medical incentives were paid to the State of Michigan and Ottawa County received \$155,283.

When the Friend of the Court office in Ottawa County measures itself against the sixteen (16) largest counties in Michigan, its performance is notable in all areas. This high performance not only helps secure child support for families and children in Ottawa County, but results in earned incentive dollars that reduce the amount of Ottawa County general fund dollars needed to fund the program. In 2015, the total Federal incentive dollars earned was \$386,762 plus an additional medical incentive of \$155,283 (\$542,045 overall). Performance on four of the five factors improved by the following percentages in 2015: support order establishment +3.3%, current support collections +1.4%, paternity

establishment +6.3% and medical support +1.3%.

CIRCUIT COURT FOC COST EFFECTIVENESS RATIO

- Collections of \$11.14 for every \$1.00 spent

FOC Cost Effectiveness



Making a Difference

In addition to the federal incentive payments, the Friend of the Court's cost effectiveness rate was measured at an overall collection rate of \$11.14 for every \$1.00 spent.

CIRCUIT COURT JUVENILE COMMUNITY REPORT CARD

- 1102 Petitions
- 573 Juveniles
- 87% No New Offenses While Under Supervision
- 4373 Hours of Community Service (\$31,705 value @ \$7.25/hr)
- 62% Paid Restitution in Full
- 92% Successful Discharge from Supervision

2014 Circuit Court, Family Division, Juvenile Court
2015 Community Report Card
Selected Benchmark Outcomes

2014	2015 ¹	
109	573	Separate juveniles petitioned to court
200 ²	264 ²	Number of cases closed
88.2%	87.2%	Percentage of juveniles who had no adjudication or convictions for offenses while under supervision
88.6%	88.4%	Percentage of juveniles who had no positive drug tests while under supervision
6,124	4,800	Number of community service hours ordered
3,881	4,321	Number of community service hours completed
75.5%	82.1%	Percentage of juveniles who paid their restitution in full
281 ²	60 ²	Number of juveniles who participated in at least one remedial/developmental program
97.2%	96.8%	Percentage of juveniles who successfully completed at least one remedial/developmental program
97.7%	89.8%	Percentage of juveniles enrolled in school at time of release
94.2%	92.1%	Percentage of juveniles discharged from supervision as successful
81	83	Number of juveniles placed in a diversion program
96.4%	86.7%	Percentage of juveniles in a diversion program who did not re-offend

¹ The reduction in these areas is the result of the addition of "chronic" case processing for some types of offenses.
² Data adjusted for improved data collection methods and accuracy of data.

Making it Different

In addition to the domestic relations docket, the Family Division includes the Juvenile Court. It was a busy year with more than 1100 new petitions files and 573 youth and families to assist. Due to the great work of our juvenile court officers and deputy sheriffs assigned to the Court, 87% of all youth under supervision had no new offenses. Our youth also “paid back” to the community with nearly \$32K worth of service work and 62% paid all of the court ordered restitution. Perhaps most important is that 92% of our youth were successfully discharged from supervision.

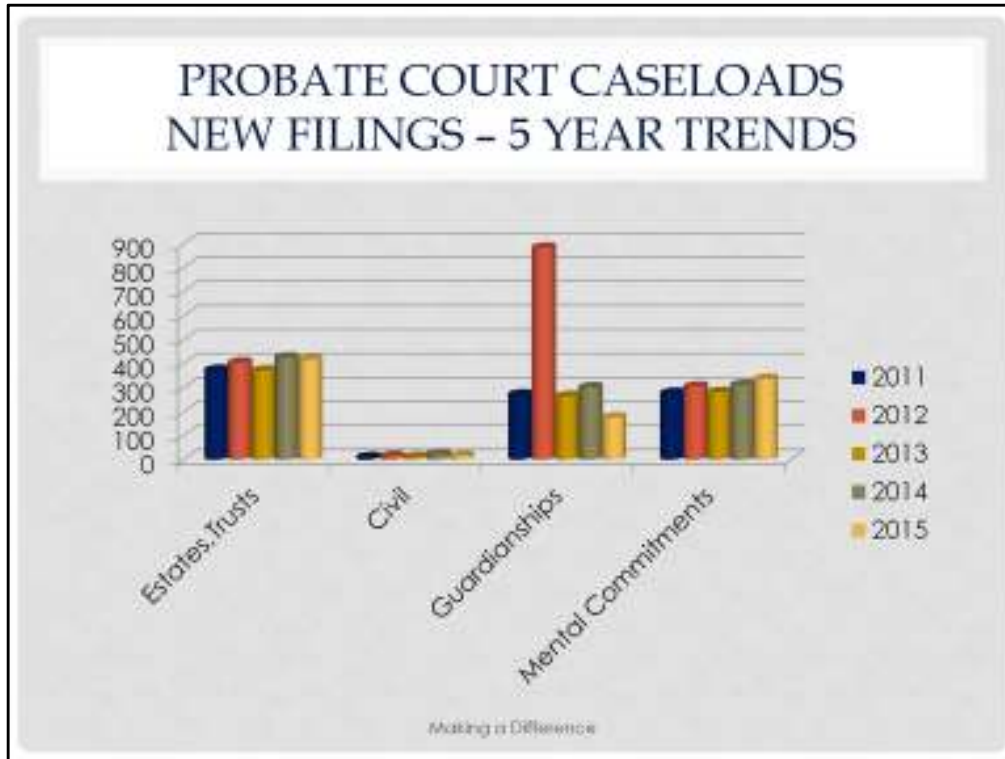
CIRCUIT COURT JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER



- Only ACA Accredited juvenile detention facility in Michigan
- 40 Beds (5 pods of 8) – includes female specific residential (Lighthouse Program) and substance abuse treatment pod
- Full educational program with OAISD
- 19 Participating Counties with bed rental contracts
- Bed rental revenue - \$493,945 (budgeted @ \$400K)

Making a Difference

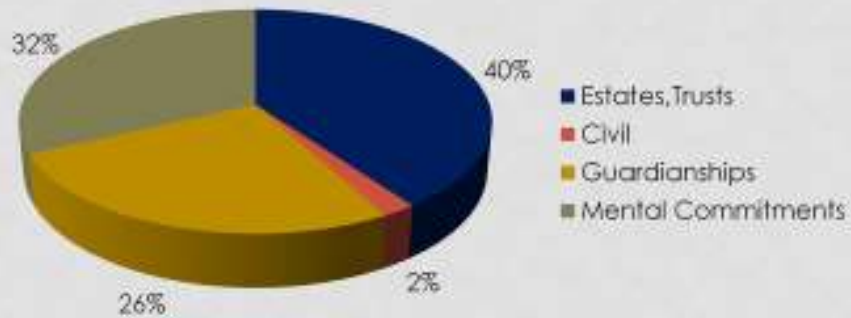
The Ottawa County Juvenile Detention Center is recognized as one of the leading juvenile centers and the only center that is fully accredited by the American Corrections Association. ACA audits ensure we are following evidence based practices and providing a safe environment for the youth entrusted to our supervision. Due to the Center's excellent reputation, we have 19 participating counties with bed rental contracts. Related revenue in 2015 was \$493,945.



Annual SCAO caseload reports reflect an average of 1000 new Probate cases filings per year. When added to a partial Circuit Court docket, including juvenile, child welfare and adult drug treatment court cases, this ensures a substantial workload for Chief Judge Feyen and the Probate Court staff.

PROBATE COURT CASE DISTRIBUTION NEW FILINGS

Probate Court - 2015 Case Distribution



Making a Difference

The Probate Court case distribution has been stable for several years. The guardianships, conservatorships and mental commitments are the most labor intensive and account for nearly 60% of the total caseload. Estates and Trusts make up the remaining 40%, with few civil cases filed each year. To assist with guardianship cases where no family member is available to serve, the Court is seeking resources to begin a volunteer guardian program.

2015-2017 STRATEGIC PLAN STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

1. Resources and Infrastructure
2. Access, Services, and Programs
3. Timely Resolution and Efficient Operations
4. Community Relations and Collaboration with Partners
5. Employee Development and Innovative Work Culture



Making a Difference

In addition to the Courts' case related work, there are many issues we must address to ensure high performance. Through our planning process, judges and court staff have identified five strategic focus areas that help us improve operations. The following five slides (provided only for reference) detail projects that Court staff work on related to these strategic focus areas.

TEAM 1: RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

2015 Priority Projects:

1. Conduct facility assessment at Fillmore
2. Collection Team to develop court-wide methodology
3. Assess/expand internship program
4. Identify/research grant opportunities
5. Research/evaluate use of "cloud" technology
6. Update emergency site plans – each location



The following five Strategic Focus Area team slides are included to provide some details about 2015 projects that were identified as priorities. Some projects have been completed and others have continued in 2016. For further information, please contact the Court Administrator.

TEAM 2: ACCESS, SERVICES, AND PROGRAMS

2015 Priority Projects:

1. Research/implement digital check-in technology
2. Improve/maintain court pages on County website
3. Assess feasibility of expanding programs/services to county/court locations
4. Improve juror experience through use of technology
5. Develop Court 101 resources to help navigate the court



TEAM 3: TIMELY RESOLUTION AND EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

2015 Priority Projects:

1. Identify and develop non-judicial/administrative methods of resolving cases
2. Study and improve the timeliness of hearings and length of time it takes to get a hearing date
3. Enhance implementation of video conference technology
4. Develop a plan to digitize records and move to a paperless court
5. Identify/share best practices on delay reduction
6. Conduct annual public satisfaction survey



TEAM 4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS

2015 Priority Projects:

1. Establish a court volunteer program
2. Conduct a needs assessment for a Court Public Information Officer position
3. Conduct a Court/employer summit to identify common issues and improve relations
4. Develop/implement a targeted social media strategy for the Court
5. Develop an inventory of staff members with community connections



TEAM 5: EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE WORK CULTURE

2015 Priority Projects:

1. Evaluate and develop recommendations to improve the BBS Program
2. Develop an employee orientation manual
3. Plan and launch a manager/supervisor training program
4. Generate team building options for staff to implement in divisions
5. Conduct employee satisfaction survey



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

1. Annual Bench/Bar Meeting
2. Annual Law Day/Law Week Activities
3. Co-sponsor Katty Shack/Walk in support of crime victims
4. Annual Domestic Law Summit
5. Annual PACK Mtg (Professionals Advocating and Caring for Kids)
6. Annual Adoption Day Celebration



Making a Difference

In addition to the Courts' focus on effective caseflow management, we strive to be positive community leaders by actively participating in and sponsoring a variety of annual events. These activities help educate the community about court operations and help build strong community relationships.



In the spirit of transparency, questions are always welcome. Feel free to contact the Court whenever a new question arises.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



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Thank you!

Making a Difference

In summary, the 20th Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts are proud of our strong tradition of excellent public service. We are also aware of the need for transparency, continuous improvement, and public accountability. The Courts appreciate the continuing support provided by the Board of Commissioners and we look forward to continuing our strong partnership in public service.

REFERENCE MATERIALS



- Presentation Slides
- SCAO Performance Measures
 - <http://courts.mi.gov/education/stat/performance-measures/Pages/default.aspx>
- Purposes of Courts
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ar006E1NacQ>
- Michigan Courts Reference Guide
 - <http://courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/educator-resources/curriculum/pages/michigan-court-system.aspx>
- Strategic Thinking and Execution
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94w1T136S4>

Making a Difference

Additional reference materials for your individual use.