



2011 ANNUAL REPORT

THE THIRTY-FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

Table of Contents

Organizational Chart 2011	2
Message from the President Judge and the Court Administrator	3
2011 Highlights and Accomplishments	5
Judges of the Court of Common Pleas.....	6
Court Administration	13
31st Judicial District Budget 2011	14
Court Revenue and Expenses.....	14
Grant Funding	15
Jury Administration	16
Court Transcription Unit.....	17
Court Appointed Special Advocate	18
Lehigh County Law Library	20
Court of Common Pleas.....	22
Civil Court Division.....	22
Civil Actions	22
Criminal/Juvenile Division	24
Adult Criminal Court	24
Juvenile Court	26
Family Court Division	28
Child Custody and Visitation.....	28
Divorce.....	31
Protection From Abuse	31
Interpreting Unit	32
Domestic Relations Section	34
Orphans' Court Division.....	37
Adult Probation Department	41
Juvenile Probation Department.....	46
Magisterial District Courts.....	52

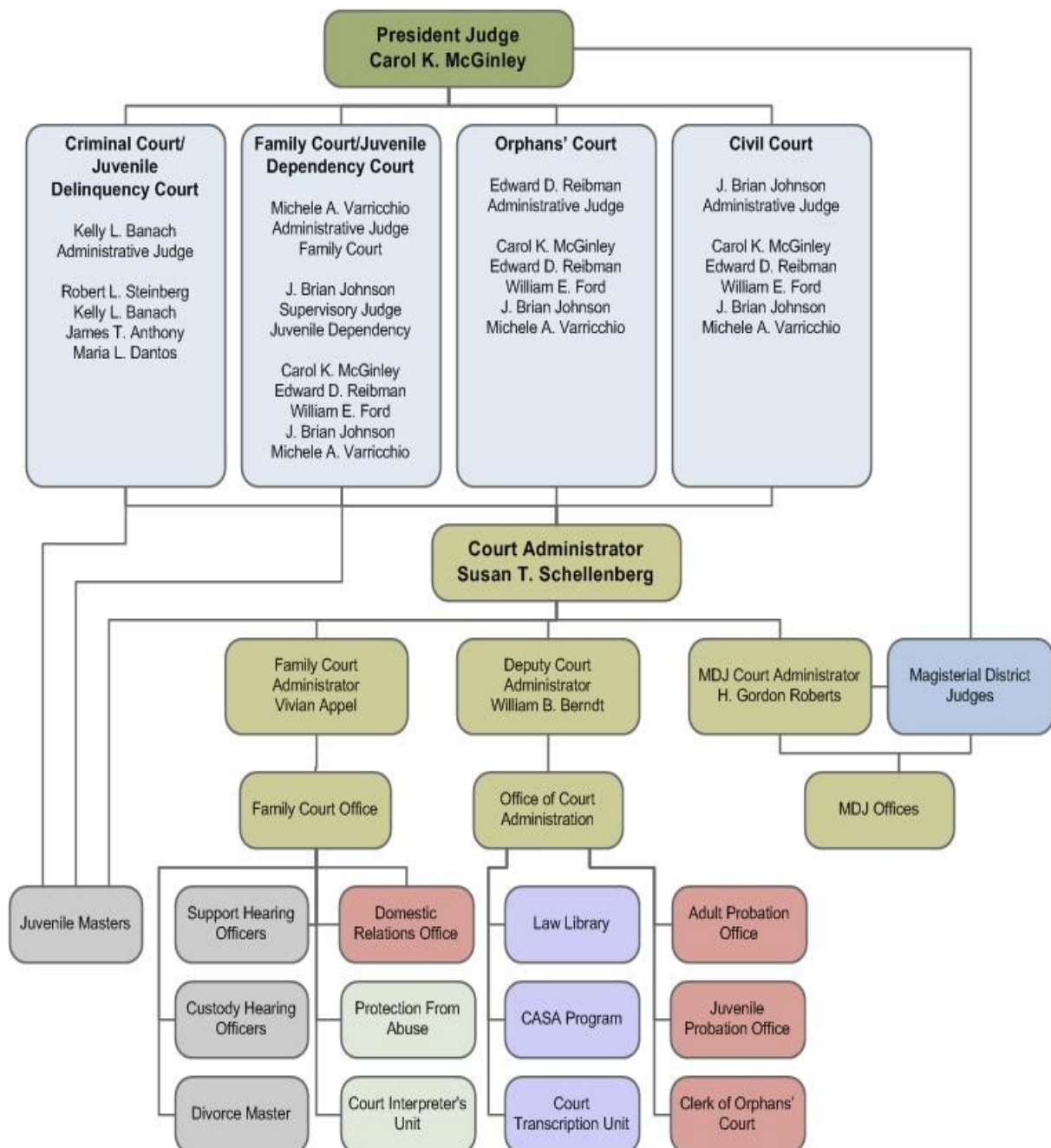


ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2011

The Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County, the 31st Judicial District, under the leadership of President Judge Carol K. McGinley, is staffed by ten judges.

In 2011, the Court was organized as follows:

2011 Court of Common Pleas





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT JUDGE AND THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

The Thirty-First Judicial District of Pennsylvania is pleased to provide the 2011 Annual Report. The report provides an overview of court services and accomplishments. Despite funding cuts and staff reductions, the judiciary will continue to focus on continuous improvement with regard to the programs and services that the judiciary provides. Our commitment to balancing the need to provide access to justice and fair and equitable decision-making with the need to keep our community safe remains strong.

Our Community Corrections Center, which provides support to those offenders who are ready to reenter the community, received additional grant funding during 2011. This funding is being used to provide much needed services, including programs that enhance educational and employment skills. The former inmates at the Community Corrections Center have a 78% employment rate. This is truly noteworthy, given the economic challenges that we continue to face.

During 2011, the District Attorney initiated a Veterans' Mentoring Program for veterans who are charged with criminal offenses. This voluntary program matches offenders with specially trained veteran volunteers who provide support to the offenders. The Court has created a Veterans' Assignment Court whereby veterans can be assigned and supervised by a specially designated judge who is familiar with the challenges of our veterans who are returning to civilian life.

We continue to make significant strides through collaboration. During 2011, our Children's Roundtable celebrated its fifth anniversary. Supreme Court Justice Max Baer and Sandy Moore, the Administrator of the Office of Children and Families in the Courts, celebrated with us as we highlighted our accomplishments. During 2011, our Children's Roundtable developed significant relationships with the school superintendents in Lehigh County, held trainings for educators regarding children in care and gang prevention, developed improved court policies and procedures for reducing delays in achieving permanency for children in care, and sponsored a providers' expo to assist human services professionals and consumers in identifying available services.

Our Criminal Justice Advisory Board continues to achieve much through collaboration. In 2011, our CJAB issued letters of support for various grant initiatives, many of which resulted in obtaining much-needed funds to support our programs. Great strides were made in enhancing data sharing among counties within

the southeast region, in refining data collection within Lehigh County, and in supporting programs such as the Veterans' Mentoring Program and Veterans' Assignment Court. Because our CJAB has been recognized for its best practices, including strategic planning, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency asked us to mentor other CJABs as they engage in the strategic planning process.

The judiciary celebrates the many accomplishments that have occurred as a result of the extraordinary commitment and dedication of the Court and its employees. However, there are a number of factors that have challenged the judiciary within the past year. Civil and Family Division caseloads have increased significantly. The Legislature and the Supreme Court have issued, through legislation and procedural rules, a significant number of unfunded mandates. These include laws and regulations designed to protect the rights of victims, public access to information, mandates with regard to custody hearings and numerous laws and rules designed to protect the rights of delinquent and dependent children. These mandates, while they have great merit, require additional resources that have not been provided.

As further budget reductions loom and demands for services increase, we continue to be challenged in our efforts to provide mandated services to the community. We have undergone a number of transitions, including experiencing a vacancy on our bench for an entire year. We are extremely grateful to Senior Judges Black and Brenner who provided their services to the Court. In November 2011, that vacancy was filled through the election of the Honorable Douglas G. Reichley. On behalf of the Thirty-First Judicial District, we pledge to engage in continuous improvement, through collaboration, innovation and the implementation of positive change.



Carol K. McGinley
President Judge



Susan T. Schellenberg
District Court Administrator

2011 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Implementation of the Final Phase of the Odyssey Case Management System



The Odyssey Case Management System permits users to readily access civil, family and other court docket information. This is the home screen of the public version of Odyssey.

- The Family Court in conjunction with our IT Department and Tyler Technologies, completed the final module of the civil/family case management system. This module provides the tools to manage effectively the Protection from Abuse cases that are filed in Lehigh County. This implementation facilitated the transfer of the PFA scheduling from Court Administration to the Family Court Office. This is part of an initiative to centralize all Family Court scheduling within the Family Court office.

Facilitation of Collaborative Criminal Justice Initiatives through the Lehigh County Criminal Justice Advisory Board

- Served as a significant collaborative partner in the DA's effort to develop and implement a Veteran's

Mentoring Program. This voluntary program assigns veteran mentors to veterans who have had involvement with the criminal justice system. The team, which assigns the mentors, also works with the veteran in obtaining appropriate services for that veteran.

- Developed several significant data sharing relationships with other criminal justice partners in southeastern Pennsylvania .

Facilitation of Collaborative Pennsylvania Permanency Initiatives through the Lehigh County Children's Roundtable

- Planned and held a special celebration acknowledging the accomplishments of our CRT since its inception five years ago. The ceremony was attended by Supreme Court Justice Max Baer and by Sandy Moore, the Administrator of the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC).
- Renegotiated the contracts with our dependency attorneys so that they can handle the cases through the TPR proceedings.
- Conducted a Providers' Expo to highlight for Human Services professionals and for the public the services available for dependent children.
- Conducted several in-service opportunities for school administrators and teachers to learn more about the child dependency system and to participate actively in resolving common issues regarding these children and youth.

JUDGES OF THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

PRESIDENT JUDGE CAROL K. MCGINLEY

Carol K. McGinley is the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, effective January 3, 2011. She has served on the court since January of 1986. Prior to her election, she practiced law for twelve years in the law firm now known as Gross McGinley, LLP. While on the court, she has served in all divisions: civil, criminal, family and juvenile. She has also served as Administrative Judge of the criminal and juvenile divisions.

Judge McGinley is a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center. She is the recipient of the James Madison First Amendment Award from the Greater Philadelphia Chapter, Society of Professional Journalists (June 2000) and the Distinguished Leadership Award from the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (2005, 2006).

She is a past President of the Pennsylvania Conference of Trial Judges, having served on its Educational Committee for many years prior to her becoming an officer of the conference. From 1993 to 1996, she was appointed Judge on the newly established Court of Judicial Discipline, which is the court responsible for the enforcement of judicial ethics.



The Jury's view of Courtroom 2A in the Lehigh County Courthouse.

By appointment of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, she sat as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners from April 1990 to April 1992. The Board of Law Examiners is responsible for the admission of attorneys to practice law in Pennsylvania.

She was a member of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission from 1991 to 2006, having been appointed in sequence by Governors Casey, Ridge and Rendell. She served as chairman of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission from July 2000 to July 2005. From 2001 to 2009, she was appointed to the Supreme Court Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee as Vice Chairman. She also served as a member of the Children's Cabinet of Pennsylvania.

Judge McGinley is married and has three grown children.

JUDGE EDWARD D. REIBMAN

Judge Edward D. Reibman graduated from Lafayette College in 1969 and earned a J.D. from Duke University School of Law in 1972. He served in the U.S. Army Reserves from 1969 to 1975. He was the Law Clerk to Honorable Bryan Simpson, U.S. Court of Appeals, 11th Circuit (formerly 5th Circuit), 1972 to 1973, and a trial attorney in the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice from 1973 to 1975. He served as a trustee of The Swain School and as President of Lehigh Valley Legal Services and Chairman of the Allentown Historical and Architectural Review Board. He currently serves as a member of the Executive Board of the Minsi Trails Council of the Boy Scouts of America and is a member of the Advisory Board of the Lehigh Valley campus of the Pennsylvania State University and the RJ Fellows Program at Muhlenberg College. He has served on the Judicial Ethics Committee of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges since 1994 and has been its chair since December 2009. He was elected Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in November 1991, and retained in November 2001.



The restored historic Judge's Bench and Witness Stand in Courtroom 1A in the Old Lehigh County Courthouse.

JUDGE WILLIAM E. FORD

Judge William E. Ford graduated with honors from DeSales University in 1972 and earned a J.D. from Dickinson School of Law in 1975. He served in the United States Marine Corps Reserve (JAG) from 1975 to 1979 and as an Assistant District Attorney for Lehigh County from 1979 to 1981 and 1983 to 1991. Judge Ford also was in private civil practice from 1981 to 1991. He was an adjunct member of the faculties of DeSales University and Chestnut Hill College. He was elected Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in November 1991, retained for a second ten-year term in November 2001, and retained for a third ten-year term in November 2011.

JUDGE ROBERT L. STEINBERG

Judge Robert L. Steinberg graduated from American University in 1973 and earned a J.D. from Western New England School of Law in 1976. Judge Steinberg served Lehigh County as an Assistant Public Defender from 1976 to 1978. He served in the District Attorney's Office as an Assistant from 1978 to 1983, as Deputy District Attorney from 1985 to 1988, and as First Assistant District Attorney from 1988 to 1991. He served as District Attorney for Lehigh County from 1991 to 1998. He is the recipient of a number of awards, including the Colonel John J. Schafer Award for excellence in law enforcement. He also has been a lecturer, a member of the faculty and an author of criminal law related articles for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute and other organizations. He was elected Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in November 1997, and retained for a ten-year term in 2007.

JUDGE J. BRIAN JOHNSON

Judge J. Brian Johnson graduated from Villanova University in 1977 and earned a J.D. from Temple University School of Law in 1981. He served Lehigh County as an Assistant Public Defender from 1981 to 1983, as Criminal Arraignment Master from 1984 to 1986, as Assistant County Solicitor from 1987 to 1989, and as Criminal Costs and Fines Master from 1990 to 1991. He taught Business Law at DeSales University 1986 to 1987. He was an associate with Lanshe, Lanshe and Lanshe from 1983 to 1986. He was in private practice as a sole practitioner and as a partner in the firms of Johnson & Ashcraft and Johnson, Ashcraft & Giordano from 1986 to 1996. Immediately prior to his election, he was Special Counsel to the Philadelphia-based national law firm of Duane Morris LLP from 1996 to 2003.

Judge Johnson has been a member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee since 2009. He has chaired the Lehigh County Children's Roundtable since 2006 and has served on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Leadership and State Roundtables since 2007. He chairs the Guiding Principles Committee of the Pennsylvania Children's Roundtable Initiative and is a member of the Initiative's Benchbook Committee and Children's Summit Committee. He has been a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association since 1984, a member of the Bar Association of Lehigh County since 1982, a member of its Board of Directors 1999 to 2000 and a member of the Donald E. Wieand Inn of Court 2000 to 2001 and a Team Leader 2002 to 2003. He was elected Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in November 2003. He is Administrative Judge of Juvenile Dependency cases.

JUDGE KELLY L. BANACH

Judge Kelly L. Banach received her undergraduate degree in Government from Cornell University in 1979 and her law degree from Villanova University School of Law in 1982. She served as Assistant Public Defender in Bucks County, Pennsylvania from February 1983 to November 1985. After a brief association with the Allentown Law Firm of Wiener and Wiener, Judge Banach started at the Office of the Lehigh County District Attorney in May 1987. She ultimately became Senior Chief Deputy District Attorney, Supervisor of the Special Offenses Unit, which handled Sex Crimes, Child Abuse, and Domestic Violence cases, and Director of Training and Public Education, developing the Protecting Kids from Cyber Crimes Program. Judge Banach served as an instructor for the Allentown Police Academy and the Pennsylvania District Attorney's Institute. She is a former board member of the Child Advocacy Center of Lehigh County, and was co-chair of the Lehigh County Death Review Team. She was elected to the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas in November of 2003 and presently serves as the Administrative Judge of the Criminal and Juvenile Divisions.

JUDGE JAMES T. ANTHONY

Judge James T. Anthony graduated from Saint Joseph's University in 1980 and earned a J.D. from Creighton University School of Law in 1983. Commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps Reserve in 1981, he retired at the rank of Colonel in 2009. During his military career he served in both active duty and reserve capacities, including service in Okinawa in 1984-1985, and service in Iraq in 2004-2005 and 2006-2007. He served as a full time Assistant District Attorney in York County in 1987 and as a part time Assistant District Attorney in Lehigh County from 1989 to 1999. After employment as staff counsel for two insurance companies, Judge Anthony went into the private practice of law where he remained for nineteen years. Judge Anthony is a member of the Lehigh County and Pennsylvania Bar Associations. He was elected Judge of the Court Of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in November 2007.

JUDGE MARIA L. DANTOS

Judge Maria L. Dantos received her undergraduate degree from Rutgers University in 1982 and her law degree from Syracuse University College of Law in 1985. Judge Dantos served Lehigh County as a Public Defender from 1986 to 1989. She began her service in the District Attorney's Office as an Assistant in 1989. She served as Deputy District Attorney, Chief Deputy District Attorney, and in 2001 was appointed First Assistant District Attorney. She was the supervising attorney for the Lehigh County Investigating Grand Jury and the Homicide Task Force. She has been an instructor for the Allentown Police Academy, the Pennsylvania District Attorney's Association, and the Pennsylvania Bar Institute. She is the recipient of the Colonel John J. Schafer Award for excellence in law enforcement. She was appointed by the Governor to fill a vacancy on the bench in June of 2007 and was elected Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in November 2007 and serves in the Criminal Division.

JUDGE MICHELE A. VARRICCHIO

Judge Michele A. Varricchio, a graduate of William Allen High School, Class of 1977, earned a B.A. at St. John's College, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and a J.D. from Antioch School of Law in Washington, D.C. She served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable James N. Diefenderfer from 1985-1987. She was Solicitor for the Lehigh County Domestic Relations Section from 1988-1992. From 1987 through 1992 she was in partnership with Frederick P. Rooney, Esq. She was appointed by Governor Casey in 1992, was elected in 1993, and served for fifteen years as a Magisterial District Judge in Lehigh County. Judge Varricchio was a

member of the Special Court Judges Association from 1992-2007. In the past she has served as the President and Treasurer of the Allentown YWCA. She has been a member of the Allentown Rotary Club since 2003. She served on the boards for 4H, Bikeworks, and the Human Services Advisory Board, and the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival at DeSales University. She is a member of the Lehigh Valley Arts Council and the National Association of Women Judges. Judge Varricchio attended the National Judicial College, General Jurisdiction, Reno, Nevada, October 2009. She was elected Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in November 2007 and assigned to the Civil Division. She currently serves as the Administrative Judge of the Family Division.



The view from the Judge's Bench in Courtroom 1B, Old Lehigh County Courthouse.

JUDGE DOUGLAS G. REICHLEY

Judge Douglas G. Reichley graduated from Lafayette College in 1983 with honors in Government and Law, and received his J.D. from the Dickinson School of Law in 1986. Judge Reichley served in the Lehigh County District Attorney's Office from 1989-2000, rising to the position of Deputy District Attorney for violent crime prosecutions. He also served in the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office from 2000-2001 in the Special Investigations Unit. Before his election to the bench, Judge Reichley served in the Pennsylvania State House from 2003-2011. During his five terms in office, he was appointed to the House Appropriations Committee as the Vice-Chairman, and also served on the Consumer Affairs, Health and Human Services, Judiciary, Professional Licensure, Transportation, and Urban Affairs committees. He was the recipient of several recognitions for his legislative service, including being named the State Public Official of the Year by PA Bio in 2010 and the Outstanding Legislator of the Year in 2010 by the Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees.

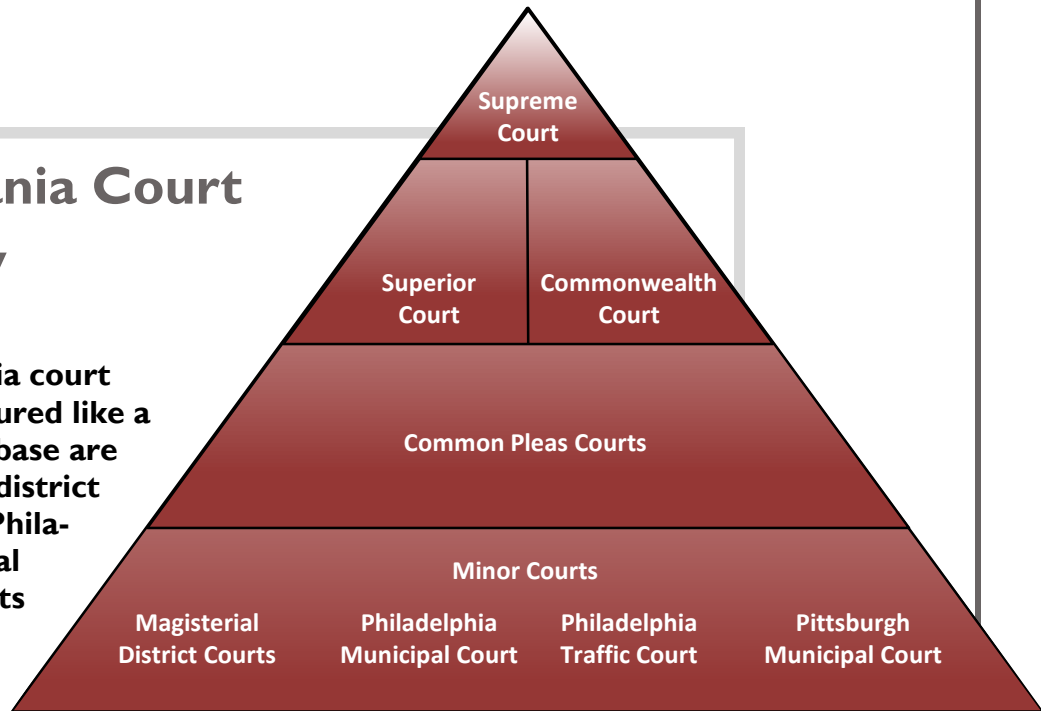
SENIOR JUDGES

The Court was further staffed by Senior Judges Lawrence J. Brenner and Alan M. Black, and such other Senior Judges as assigned from time to time by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Senior Judges may work a limited number of days each year in order to assist the Court. The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania determines the number of days each Senior Judge may preside during a given month.



Pennsylvania Court Hierarchy

The Pennsylvania court system is structured like a pyramid. At its base are the magisterial district judges and the Philadelphia Municipal and Traffic courts where cases involving small claims, minor crimes and traffic offenses are heard.



One step up on the pyramid are the Common Pleas courts, in 60 judicial districts around the state where trials are held in civil and criminal cases and disputes involving family and estate matters are litigated. As the 31st Judicial District of Pennsylvania, Lehigh County is one of the 60 Common Pleas courts, and also has 14 Magisterial District Judges.

Another step up are the intermediate appellate courts, the Superior Court, a general court of appeals with 15 judges, and the Commonwealth Court, a special court with nine judges which hears government-related matters. At the top of the pyramid is the highest court, the Supreme Court with seven justices. The Supreme Court has the power to review any case from the lower courts. It also has administrative authority over the entire Pennsylvania court system.

COURT ADMINISTRATION

The responsibility of the Court Administrator is to manage the non-judicial functions of the Court under the guidance of the President Judge. Judges are ultimately responsible for effective court management. However, the complexity of the modern court requires the delegation of administrative functions and responsibilities to the Court Administrator. The Court Administrator serves as an appointee of the entire Court but is subject to the supervision and direction of the President Judge. The Court Administrator must practice extensive managerial and administrative skills to serve effectively as the managerial arm of the Court. The Court Administrator serves the dual function of increasing judges' time for adjudication by accomplishing the administrative functions of the Court, and by bringing professional managerial expertise to the administrative problems of the judiciary.

Duties of the Court Administrator include personnel and fiscal management, calendar or scheduling management, information systems and space and equipment management, records control, public information, and jury management.

The District Court Administrator, Susan T. Schellenberg, and the Deputy Court Administrator, William B. Berndt, are responsible for supervision of all court-related departments of the Judiciary, to include Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, Domestic Relations, District Judge personnel, the Law Library, the Court Transcription Unit, and Court staff personnel. The Judiciary began 2011 with 308 full-time and part-time employees.

Judicial Employees By Department						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Court Administration	85	87	86	85	84	83
Adult Probation	49	49	51	51	51	50
Juvenile Probation	40	40	40	40	38	38
Special Probation	11	11	11	11	11	11
Orphans Court	6	6	6	6	6	6
Domestic Relations	62	62	64	64	62	62
District Judges	53	53	53	53	53	51
Law Library	3	3	3	3	3	1
Total	309	311	314	313	308	302

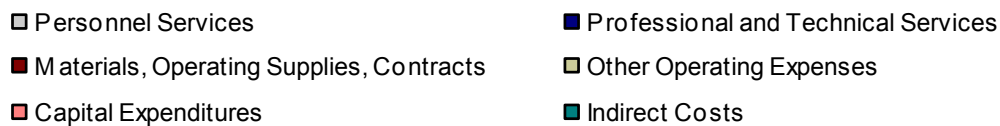
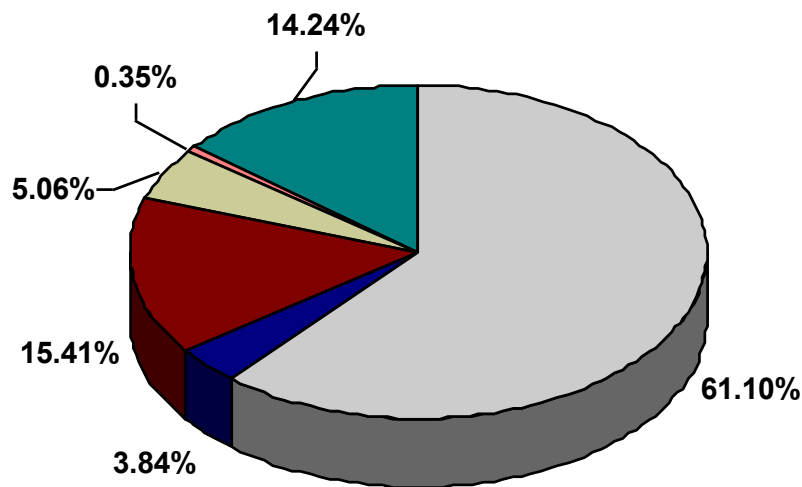
Court Technology

In 2000, a long term project was initiated to investigate improvements in the computer operating system used by the court, and this continued throughout 2005. The National Center for State Courts was chosen as the project manager for this endeavor and guided the court through the process needed to update the operating system and database. This project is a multi-year effort and will impact the capital budget for the next few years. The Business Process Review was completed in 2003 and the project was awarded to Tyler Technologies, Inc. In addition, Tyler is assisting with the implementation of Automon, a case management software for Adult Probation, and electronic filing for the civil courts. The State of Pennsylvania is implementing a Juvenile Case Management System (JCMS) which was projected to go on line in Lehigh County during 2011.

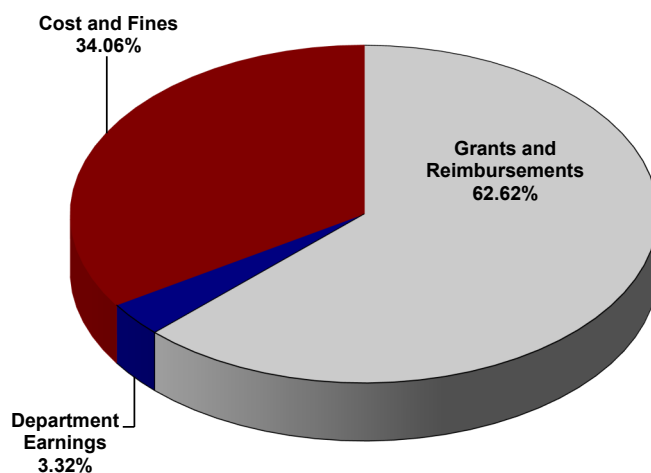
31ST JUDICIAL DISTRICT 2011 BUDGET

Court Revenue and Expenses

2011 Budgeted Expenses



2011 Budgeted Revenue



The adopted 2011 budget for the Court of Common Pleas consisted of total revenues of \$10,733,846 and total expenses of \$37,700,774.

Although it is not the function or mission of the Court of Common Pleas to generate revenue, the Court in 2011, nevertheless, produced significant revenue earning \$3,656,001 in Costs and Fines and \$356,010 in Department Earnings. Grants and Other Reimbursements totaled \$6,721,835.

Grant Funding

The Court places emphasis in pursuing federal and state grants in order to offset the costs of current or new programs. This grant funding is more available in the areas of Adult and Juvenile Probation, with concentration on creation of new programs and initiatives.

Adult Probation receives state funding based on the amount of compliance with state-wide standards for probation operations. Currently the Lehigh County Adult Probation Department receives the maximum in state funding for compliance at over the 90% level.

The Juvenile Probation Department works closely with the Lehigh County Office of Children and Youth to produce a “needs-based” budget that attempts to maximize state assistance to the Court, in the form of services at state youth institutions and a funding stream to reimburse the court for some delinquent youth placement expenditures.

2011 Criminal Justice Advisory Board Grant Activities

Project Title	Grant	Amount	Department	Status
Systems of Care	SAMHSA	\$200,000.00	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Technical Assistance	PCCD	\$1,400.00	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Lehigh Valley Evening Reporting Center	ARRA/Criminal Justice Improvement Programs	\$300,000.00	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Community Corrections Employment Enhancement	ARRA/Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program	\$155,583.00	Department of Corrections/Adult Probation	Awarded
Intermediate Punishment Program Enhancement	PCCD	\$617,078.00	Adult Probation	Awarded
TCAP	PCCD	\$23,780.00	SCA/Adult Probation	Pending
Grant-In-Aid Continuing Program for the Improvement of Adult Probation Services	PBPP	\$664,774.00	Adult Probation	Awarded

Jury Administration

The Office of the Court Administrator is responsible for the effective management of the jury system. The jury system operation is supervised by Court Operations Officer, Gayle Fisher, who coordinates the process of random juror selection and determines the number of jury panels needed each day.

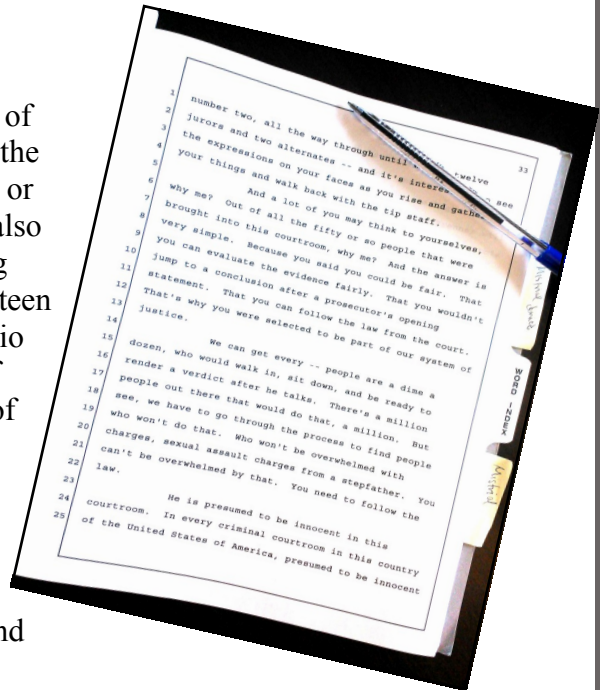
The reception and orientation of jurors, followed by selection and control of individual juries, is a process that requires continuing cooperation between the jury management staff and the judges' staff personnel. The emphasis is on making juries available to those judges who may require them and to keep available only those jurors necessary for the accomplishment of this task.

To this end, Lehigh County has adopted the "one day, one trial" method of selection to increase the efficiency of the jury system while making a minimal imposition in the lives of our residents. Citizens selected for jury duty will serve one day, or, if selected for a jury, will serve the duration of that trial.

2011 Lehigh County Jury Utilization Report	
Number of Jurors Reporting	5,656
Jurors Sent to Voir Dire	4,412
Jurors Selected	1,143
Juror Selection Rate	25.9%

Court Transcription Unit

The Court Transcription Unit, under the supervision of Supervisory Court Reporter Dolores M. Young, has the primary task of recording proceedings before judges or other fact finders appointed by the Court. This task also includes the transcription of those notes taken during proceedings when a transcript is requested. The thirteen employees in this unit use both stenography and audio recording to perform the assigned task. Members of the unit are assigned to specific judges for a period of one year. Those who are not assigned to a judge, serve in a pool. Pool members fill in for assigned reporters and monitors when needed and also provide support to senior and visiting judges. Since the adoption of this system, transcription backlogs have been substantially reduced and office morale and effectiveness have been improved.



From Shorthand to Computers

The Court Transcription Unit has employees that utilize two different types of equipment to take courtroom testimony. Court Monitors use digital audio devices to record the testimony, then transfer the audio to their personal computers and type out the testimony requested by participants to the case. Court Reporters use Stenograph writers to type the testimony onto digital

memory cards using Stenograph Case Catalyst software, which then can be transferred to a PC and printed for case participants after editing.



Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)

What is CASA?

The **Lehigh County Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)** Program provides consistent, credible and trained volunteers who advocate for Lehigh County's abused and neglected children in juvenile dependency court in accordance with the PA Juvenile Act (Title 42 Act PA C.S. Sec. 6301 et.seq.). These CASA volunteers serve as the "eyes and ears" of the Court and are appointed to the most complicated dependency cases.

CASA Volunteers

CASA volunteers are everyday citizens who are interested in the children of their community. They are 21 years of age or older and are selected through a rigorous application process, which includes three background checks. CASA volunteers must complete 40 hours of pre-service training and make a minimum of an eighteen-month commitment to the CASA program. These incredible CASA volunteers are supported by two staff members in the CASA office. These staff members are responsible for recruiting, training and supervising CASA volunteers. In 2011, the staff handled 145 inquiries about volunteering, screened 45 volunteer applicants and held two 40-hour trainings for sixteen new volunteers.



providers. In 2011, Lehigh County CASA had 61 active CASA volunteers who advocated for 134 abused and neglected children, making Lehigh County CASA the third largest CASA Program in the state.

**In 2011,
Lehigh County CASA
had 61 active CASA
volunteers who
advocated for 134
abused and neglected
children, making
Lehigh County CASA
the third largest
CASA Program in
the state.**

CASA volunteers are generally appointed to only one case at a time. Having only one allows a CASA volunteer to focus more time and attention on a case than a paid service provider with a large caseload. CASA volunteers meet with the children they work with approximately three hours each month. In addition they speak with everyone involved in the child's life, including parents, teachers, doctors, therapists and other service



Permanent Homes

A CASA volunteer's main objective is to assist the Court in making sound decisions that will provide safe, secure and permanent homes for these at-risk children. CASA volunteers aid the court by submitting written reports making recommendations in the best interest of the child. A CASA representative attended every hearing for their children and is often called on for their input by the Judge or Master. With the help of CASA volunteers in Lehigh County, 22 children found permanent homes in 2011; 15 were adopted and 7 were reunited with their biological family.

Over the past year, Paul Kane, a CASA volunteer, and his bull mastiff Moses, a certified therapy dog, have effectively worked with two children in the CASA program to help them achieve permanency. The first child had a fear of dogs and all of the families interested in adopting him were dog owners. Through weekly visitation from Paul and Moses, this child slowly became comfortable around dogs and was successfully placed in an adoptive home. The second child needed to improve his grades and was rewarded with visits from Moses when he did well in school. When a placement resource with a farm and several dogs was presented, Paul investigated the resource and determined that this was the right place for the child and the child would love to be surrounded by the animals there.



Certified therapy bull mastiff, Moses and his owner, Paul Kane.

In 2011, the Lehigh County CASA Program was recognized for its innovative use of a trained therapy dog to help children in foster care on both a statewide and national level. At the beginning of the year CASA staff was interviewed by National CASA about Paul Kane and his work with Moses. This interview resulted in an article on the National CASA website and Paul being nominated for CASA volunteer of the year. In June, Paul and Moses were invited to speak at the PA CASA State Conference. Their presentation was very well received and several other CASA Programs have started to use therapy dogs as a result of hearing Paul's presentation. In September, Moses and Paul again made the trip to Harrisburg to present at the PA CASA event to help illustrate the impact a CASA can have on a child's life.

Lehigh County Law Library

The Judge Donald E. Wieand Law Library

The Lehigh County Law Library was dedicated to the late Pennsylvania Superior Court and Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas Judge Donald E. Wieand in February of 1997. The Judge Donald E. Wieand Law Library is a county-funded public law library offering full library services to the public, the bar, county employees, and the court. In the absence of local law schools, the law library of the Thirty-First Judicial District stands alone in providing legal material in the county. Founded in 1869, the law library has been located in the Lehigh County Courthouse since 1963.

Library Activity Totals for 2011	
Card Holding Members	348
Law Books Checked Out	1524
Law Books Renewed	1133
Photocopies Made by Public	3177
Paid Pages Printed from Computers	12360
In House Pages Printed	2637
Total Pages Printed from Computers	14997

Library Information Services

The management of the Lehigh County Law Library is overseen by law librarian Lorelei A. Broskey, M.L.S., Director of Library Information Services, under the direction of the District Court Administrator. As well as manning the public law library, the Library Information Services staff functions as the centralized purchasing and distribution office for all books and online services procured for the Judges' chambers and for judicial and county offices. Book requisitioning, invoice processing, and book cataloging for more than 50 county and judicial offices are performed in the law library.

In 2011, the Library Information Services staff processed invoices and delivered products providing \$427,611.81 worth of print and online legal resources to the public law library, the judiciary, and county offices. The District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, the Clerk of Judicial Records and all other county offices are provided Westlaw through Law Library funded and administered Westlaw accounts. Library Information Services also provided computer technical support for many of the offices within the courthouse as well as serving as the primary coordination contact for design and content of the Court's Website at www.lccpa.org. JNET registrations and recordkeeping for the municipal police departments and county offices is also a function of library staff. In 2011, the Court technical support staff consisted of one full time employee dedicated to computer support for the other offices in the courthouse.

Lehigh County's Only Law Library

As the only public law library in Lehigh County, this important collection consists of more than 30,000 volumes in traditional print, electronic and microform formats. This comprehensive library of Pennsylvania, national, and federal casebooks, selected statutes and regulations, practice materials, treatises, and periodicals are supplemented by interlibrary loan with other institutions. The library offers online legal research through

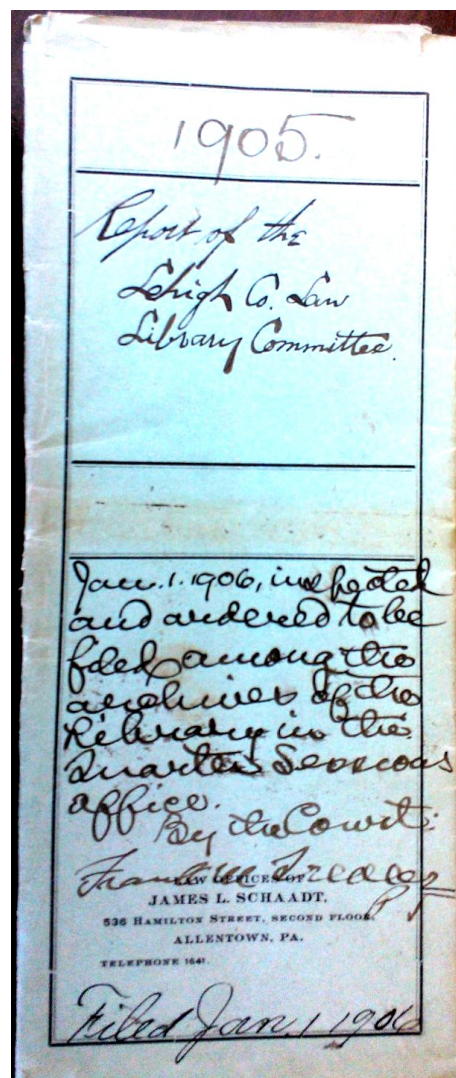
Westlaw, Shepard's Citations Online and Lexis. Through these services the law library may supply virtually any legal resource to patrons. The six computers in the law library are also available for employees and patrons to access and use court rules and dockets, the AOPC website, public records of Lehigh County offices, the Lehigh County Court and Lehigh County websites, Word, Elibrary, and many other resources.

Although Westlaw access for both the public workstations and the court employees is the method by which most primary law is now delivered, the law library remains a lending library. Since 2003, the book catalog records and patron library card records have been managed with LibraryWorld, a Windows based card catalog and circulation system. Catalog records are MARC format—the cataloging standard for libraries worldwide—and searching is now available by keyword, title, author and more. The online card catalog is available to the public on the computer workstations. Reference assistance continues to become more “virtual” with many questions answered and documents delivered by email, fax or telephone. Library staff members are on duty whenever the library is open.

Self Help and Access to Justice Initiatives

The Law Library serves as the primary point of access to the courts for many unrepresented litigants and those with limited English language skills. The Self Help Section of the Court's Website, Spanish language translations of library pathfinders and Legal Referral brochures are among many efforts to serve the growing number of law library patrons who are indigent, unrepresented, ESL speakers, or simply lack information on how to access the courts.

In 2011, the Self Help initiatives of the Law Library, including the Self Help section of the Court's Website, launched in 2009, were revised and updated. Filings of divorces using the forms available on the Self Help section of the website continue to increase. Visitors to the Website of the Court of Common Pleas come from more than 90 countries around the world. Future plans include continued expansion of the legal Self Help section of the court website and the addition of Spanish speaking staff members.



The Lehigh County Law Library has provided legal materials for the citizens of Lehigh County since 1869. This cover is from the 1905 annual law library report.

THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

CIVIL COURT DIVISION

The judges assigned to the Civil Division/Family Court Division, under the Administrative Judges of the Division, are responsible for the administration of civil and family law within the Court.

Civil Actions

Civil actions are those cases which, for the most part, involve the resolution of private conflicts between people or institutions. These cases may include personal injury or personal property claims, matters of equity, products liability, malpractice, or commercial and contract disputes.

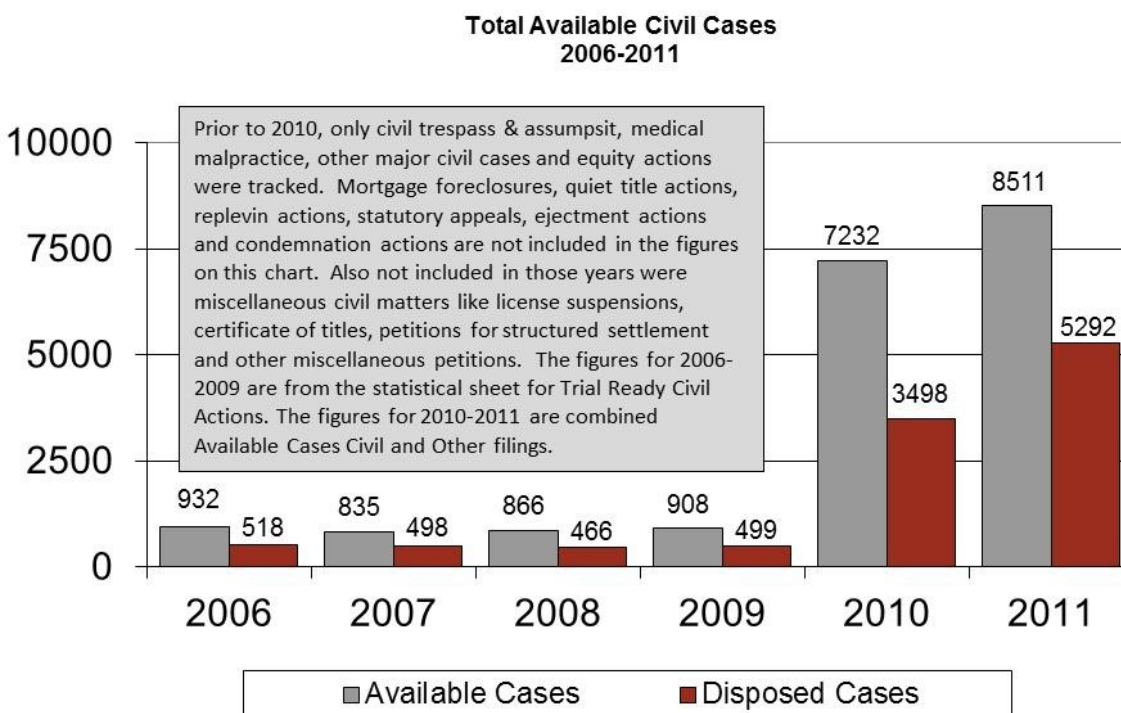
At the time a complaint is filed, civil actions are assigned to the judges in the division on an impartial rotational basis. The cases are managed on the individual calendar system, which means that the same judge schedules and handles all aspects of the case from its inception to its completion.

In 2010, the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts changed how data was to be reported to the AOPC. The court is now responsible for collecting data on all civil case filings from the time of filing. In 2011, there were 2794 newly filed civil cases, a 32% increase in civil filings over the prior year, and 1825 newly filed civil/other cases, an increase of 21% from 2010.

The Civil Operations section of the Court Administrator's office, under the supervision of Court Operations Officer Linda Fritz and Court Operations Director Kerry Turtzo, is responsible for scheduling, conferencing, and case management of all civil cases until trial begins. There are approximately 2000 civil cases pending, all requiring extensive and demanding preparation by the Civil Operations staff. After numerous pre-trial motions, arguments, and conferences, the case is termed "trial ready". Trial ready civil actions pending for court increased in 2011, as did the dispositions.

High disposition rates are indicative of very active participation by assigned judges through pre-trial settlement conferences, resulting in case resolution prior to trial date.

Annual Civil/Other Filings and Dispositions for 2011		
	Civil	Other
Pending Cases	2427	1307
Docketed Cases	2794	1825
Arbitration Appeals	57	9
Transferred In	13	1
Returned to Active	46	32
Total Available	5337	3174
Default Judgments	1042	700
Arbitration	314	100
Disposed of by motions	53	51
Settlements	884	349
Inactive	82	54
Transferred Withdrawn	411	365
Administrative Purge	67	1
Other	379	376
Jury Trial	28	0
Non-Jury Trial	25	11
Total Disposed	3285	2007



Mortgage Foreclosure Program

In response to a faltering economy and increase in foreclosure filings, the Court instituted, under the direction of the Honorable Edward D. Reibman, a Mortgage Foreclosure Program. This program is designed to assist individuals who are in danger of losing their homes through foreclosure. Mortgage foreclosure cases are scheduled for a conciliation conference before court-appointed Master Karl Friend. Individuals who wish to participate in the program are instructed to contact the housing counselor and to bring their financial materials to the conciliation conference. Along with the individuals who are in danger of losing their homes, representatives from the banks and the conciliation counselor attend the conferences. The goals are to open communication between the lender and the borrower and to come up with a plan that will allow the borrower to remain in the home.

During 2011, there were 1007 foreclosure cases filed, 931 were scheduled for the Mortgage Foreclosure Program. In 426 cases the party failed to appear for the conference and 114 cases otherwise left the program. Of those cases in the program, 122 worked out a settlement with the lender, 12 filed for bankruptcy, and 257 are still active in the program.

Civil Arbitration Program

The Arbitration Program is utilized to adjudicate those civil cases which involve an amount with a monetary total of \$ 50,000 or less. A panel of arbitrators, consisting of three attorneys, is appointed by the Court to conduct a hearing and rule on each arbitration case. Either opposing party, if not satisfied with the panel ruling, may appeal the decision to the Court of Common Pleas, where a new trial will be held. The Arbitration Program has proven to be a very effective method of alternative dispute resolution.

CRIMINAL/JUVENILE DIVISION

The judges assigned to the Criminal/Juvenile Division, under the Administrative Judge of the Division, are responsible for the administration of criminal and juvenile law within the court.

Adult Criminal Court

In 2011, there were 4,656 new adult criminal cases filed in the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas. Conversely, in 2011, the five Judges of the Criminal/Juvenile Division disposed of 5,257 adult criminal cases. In addition to handling adult criminal cases, the five Judges of the Criminal/Juvenile Division were responsible for juvenile delinquency cases, contempt of Domestic Relations' court orders, and appeals of summary cases. Furthermore, homicide cases were divided among the five judges. Finally, all probation and parole violations as well as post sentence motions were referred to the judge who initially sentenced the defendant.

In 2011, the Court, court-related departments and the Department of Corrections began to see positive results from the implementation of the community corrections program developed by the **Criminal Justice Advisory Board's Reentry Committee**. The number of technical probation violations was reduced significantly, which freed up prison bed space and reduced the number of probation violations that required scheduling before the Court.

Approximately 14% of male inmates and 39% of female inmates have a self-reported history of psychiatric issues and require psychotropic medications. Through the efforts of our CJAB's **Mental Illness/Substance Abuse Committee**, procedures have been implemented to identify these individuals early in the process so that they can receive appropriate treatment. Team MISA, a collaborative team comprised of representatives from the Department of Corrections, Pre-trial Services, MH/MR, Drug and Alcohol, Adult Probation, the District Attorney and the Public Defender develop treatment plans for those defendants who have serious mental health issues. Their efforts have resulted in significantly shorter prison stays for this challenging population.

Juvenile Court

Juvenile Court, in 2011, fell under both the authority of the Administrative Judge of the Criminal/Juvenile Division and the Administrative Judge of the Civil Division/Motion/Family Division.

Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Dependency

The Juvenile Court Division as a whole is responsible for cases involving juvenile delinquency and juvenile dependency.

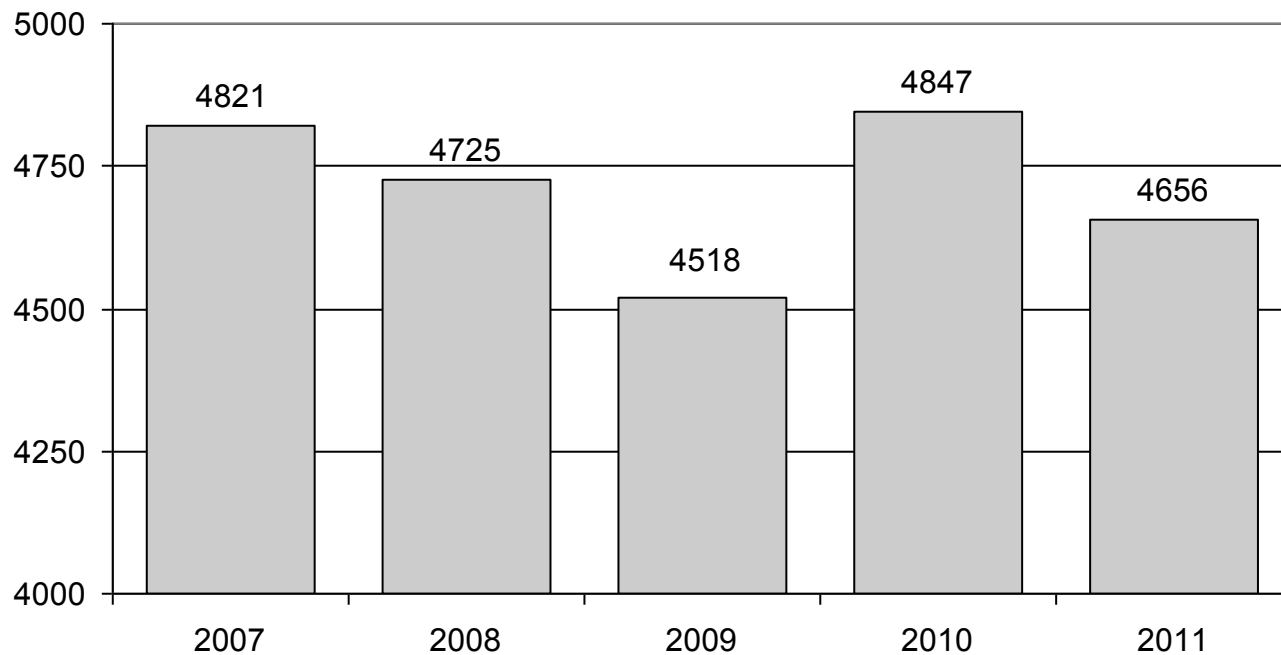
2011 Criminal Court and Juvenile Filings and Dispositions

Criminal Dispositions for 2011	
Beginning Pending	1569
New Cases	4656
Reopened Cases	569
Total Filed	5225
Total Available	6794
Total Disposed	5257
Ending Pending	1537
Dismissed	6
Withdrawn Nolle Prossed	87
Speedy Trial	1
Rule 600	0
Rule 586	53
ARD	1583
Guilty Pleas	2774
Nolo Pleas	130
Non-Jury Trials-Guilty	14
Non-Jury Trials-Not Guilty	10
Jury Trials Guilty	47
Jury Trials Not Guilty	5
Inactive	0
Bench Warrant	540
Incompetent	0
Case Transferred	2
Remand MDJ	2
Transfer Juvenile Court	3
Other	0
Clearance Rate	1.01
Backlog Index	0.3

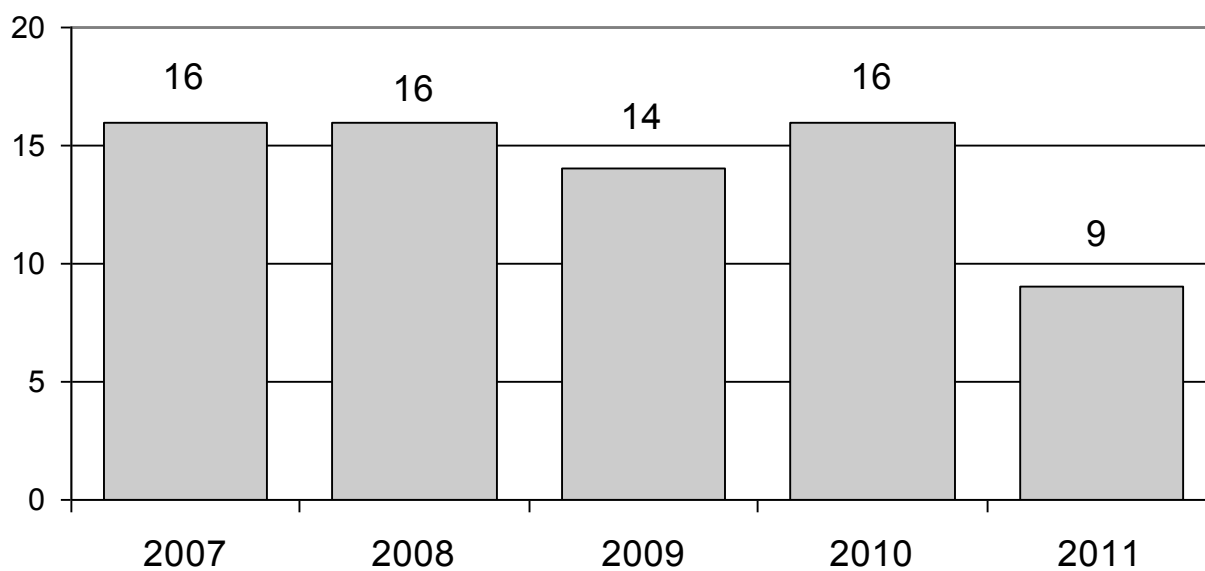
Juvenile Delinquency Filings and Dispositions	
Beginning Pending	233
New Cases	1136
Cases Available	1369
Judge	303
Non-Judicial Officer	509
Other	338
Cases Processed	1150
Ending Pending	219
Clearance Rate	1.01
Backlog Index	0.20

Juvenile Dependency Filings and Dispositions for 2011	
Beginning Pending	21
New Cases	141
Cases Available	162
Judge	27
Non-Judicial Officer	104
Other	3
Cases Processed	134
Ending Pending	28
Clearance Rate	0.95
Backlog Index	0.16

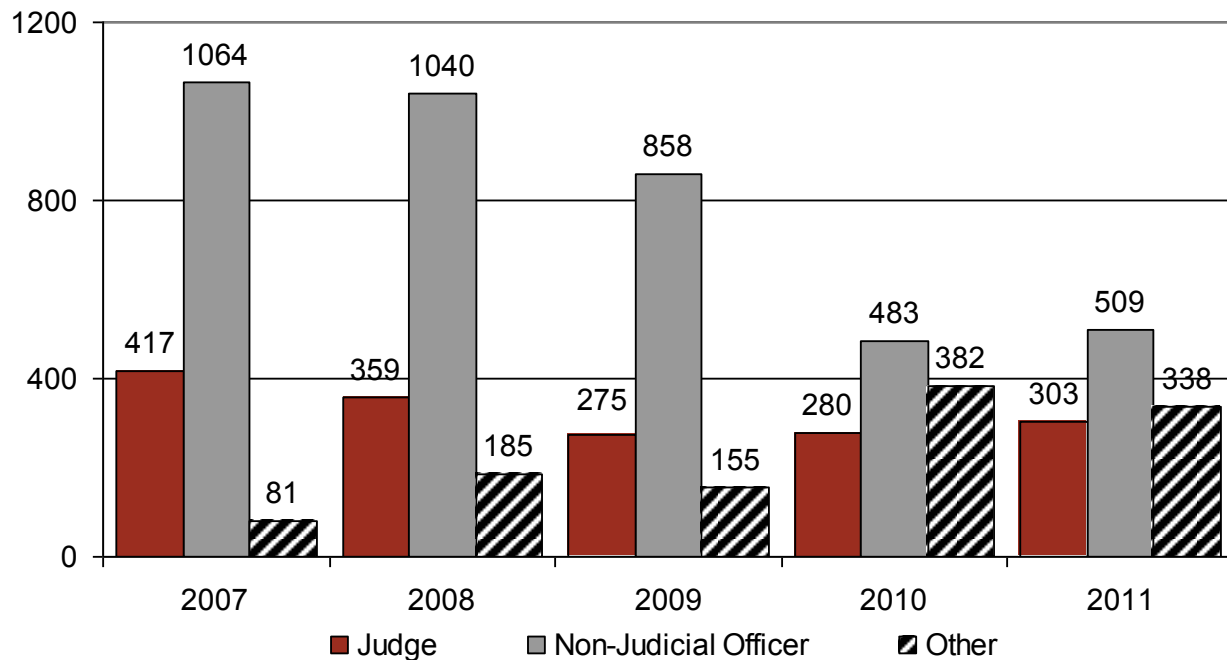
New Criminal Cases 2007-2011



Annual Homicide Filings 2007-2011



JUVENILE DELINQUENCY DISPOSITIONS 2007-2011



Delinquent juveniles are those under the age of 18 who are in violation of criminal law. Delinquency cases referred to a judge are handled by the Criminal/Juvenile Division. These juveniles may be referred to the Juvenile Probation Department.

Dependent juveniles are children who are, or who have been, subject to abuse or neglect. Action before the court is initiated by the Lehigh County Office of Children and Youth Services or the Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department. Dependency cases referred to a judge are handled by the Civil Division/Motion/Family Division. Dependent juveniles may enter the foster care system, be reunited with family or placed for adoption.

Juvenile Masters

The Juvenile Court judges are assisted by one full-time and two part-time Juvenile Masters who adjudicate both delinquency and dependency cases. Theresa M. Loder, Esquire, serves full time and Stephen A. Lanshe, Esquire and Jacquelyn Paradis, Esquire serve part time.

FAMILY COURT DIVISION

Legal actions ending family relationships, child custody, divorce, and protection from abuse (domestic violence), are managed by the Family Court Division. Child and spousal support are managed by the Domestic Relations Division, which, while part of the Family Court Division, has separate operations and a separate location.

The Family Court Office staff provides intake services for individuals seeking protection from abuse orders, as well as forms and filing instructions for people without an attorney who want to start a custody case. Divorce clients are referred to the Court's Self-Help website. Because of the nature of the cases, the office is equipped with private intake areas, conference rooms, hearing rooms, and sheriff's security.

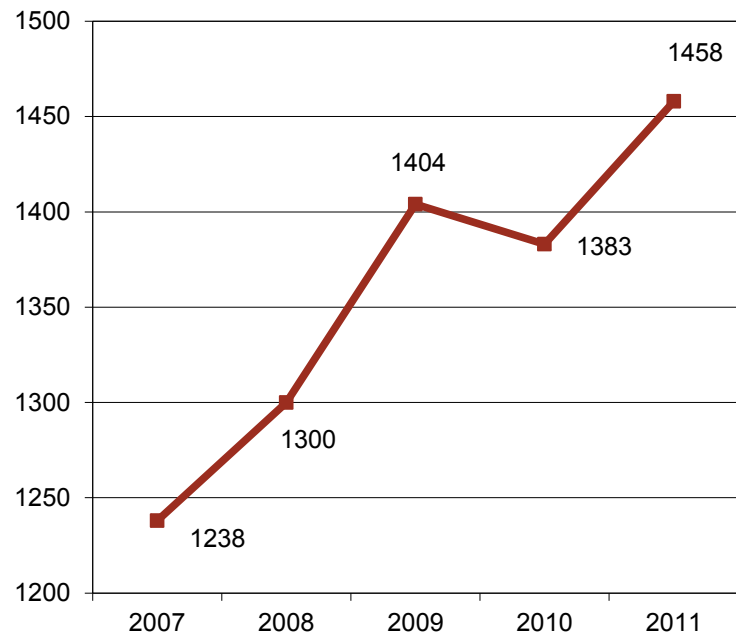
Child Custody and Visitation

All custody cases start with a mediation or conciliation conference where efforts are made to create agreements between the parties. If a party requests mediation, a court mediator assists the parties in identifying and resolving the issues. All other cases are scheduled with a custody hearing officer for a settlement (conciliation) conference.

In 2011, more than 80 percent of child custody cases in Lehigh County involved people who appear without attorneys (self-represented). Court staff cannot provide legal advice, but the staff can provide filing information. Family Court has created "Frequently Asked Questions" with standardized accurate information which is available on the Family Court website and in person.

When a self-represented litigant comes to the Family Court office, an intake worker asks questions to determine if Lehigh County court has jurisdiction to decide a case. In general, the county in which the child has resided for six months is the court where a case starts. In some circumstances, the court can accept emergency jurisdiction. The intake worker provides the forms necessary to start a custody action, and gives instructions on

**Custody Filings
2007-2011**



Kids Wait

Books, crayons, a sofa and bean bag chairs are not found in most courthouses, but they are found in Kids Wait, a waiting room for children and their parents. Located on the 4th floor next to the canteen, Kids Wait is a cooperative project of Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas, Lehigh County Office of Children and Youth Services, the Child Advocacy Center of Lehigh County and the Bar Association of Lehigh County.

Children come to court to testify in child custody, juvenile dependency, criminal and domestic violence hearings. In the past, they waited in hallways on chairs or benches, sitting quietly. Kids Wait provides a safe and friendly, and comfortable environment for children to wait with a parent or guardian. Kids Wait is not a day care or drop-off center.



completing the forms, and filing and serving the pleadings on the other parent. If the case involves a modification or contempt, the litigant must provide a copy of the existing court order.

While most cases are disputes between a mother and a father, some involve grandparents seeking custody or partial custody. In the past, custody cases typically involved divorcing parents. Consistent with national trends, more cases are now between “never marrieds.”

The conciliation conference may be the first opportunity since separating that the parties have met to discuss their child or children. It is an informal proceeding with a custody hearing officer in which the parties, and if represented, their attorneys, have the opportunity to present their case, and make their requests for legal and physical custody. The hearing officer helps the parties focus on the child’s needs, and attempts to settle the case. More than half the custody cases filed in 2011 were resolved by the hearing officers with agreed orders. An additional 20 percent of the cases were resolved with agreements through mediation or record hearings by a hearing officer.

When the parties fail to agree, the case is scheduled for hearing or trial. The Hearing Officer has the authority to determine partial custody cases. Cases involving legal custody, primary physical custody, or contempt of a court order are scheduled before a judge.

Family Court Division Filings 2011

Child Custody Case Filings & Dispositions	
Beginning Pending	281
New Cases	1458
Cases Available	1739
Judge	138
Non-Judicial Officer	800
Other	497
Cases Processed	1435
Ending Pending	304
Clearance Rate	0.98
Backlog Index	0.20

Divorce Case Filings & Dispositions	
Beginning Pending	1709
New Cases	1019
Cases Available	2728
Contested Judge	0
Contested Master	131
Uncontested	687
Other	175
Cases Processed	993
Ending Pending	1735
Clearance Rate	0.36
Backlog Index	1.03

PFA Case Filings & Dispositions	
Beginning Pending	35
New Cases	1348
Cases Available	1383
Temporary Order Denied	116
Temporary Order Dismissed	0
Final Order Denied	187
Final Order Granted	440
Failure of Plaintiff to Appear	232
Final Order Stipulation	123
Petition Withdrawn	202
Transferred/Other Jurisdiction	0
Deceased Party	0
Other	0
Cases Processed	1300
Ending Pending	83

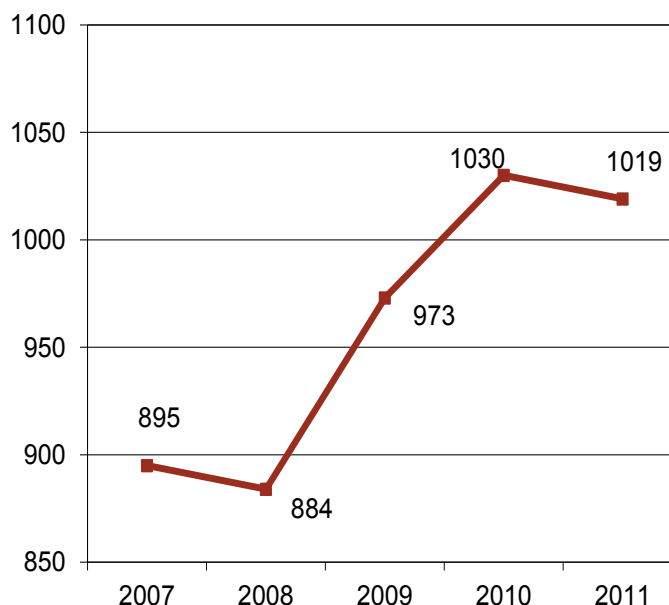
Divorce

The Family Court website provides detailed forms and instructions for the filing of simple, uncontested divorces. In 2011, more than 184 cases were initiated from the website, an increase of 40 percent from the prior year.

Cases where parties require division of marital assets are heard by the Divorce Master. The Master holds settlement conferences and conducts hearings in contested cases on economic issues relating to the dissolution of the marriage.

In 2011, the divorce master was assigned 153 cases. Most cases require multiple settlement conferences. Fewer than five percent of the cases require hearings.

**New Divorce Filings
2007-2011**

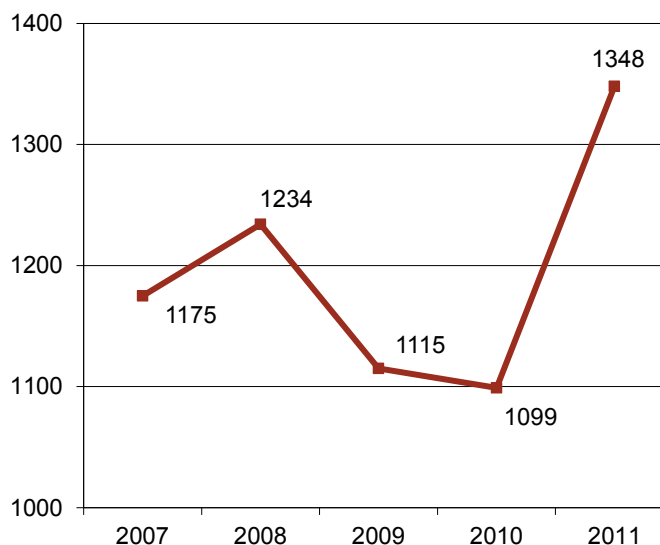


Protection From Abuse

Pennsylvania law requires every court to assist victims of domestic violence seeking protection from abuse order. In Lehigh County, the staff provides private intake assistance and twice daily escorts applicants to court. Special security measures are taken in all cases, but especially in cases where cross-petitions have been filed.

Individuals may seek a protection order on their own behalf or on behalf of their minor child. Court assistance hours are from 8 a.m. until 12:15 daily, and litigants appear before a judge at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. At other times, PFA relief is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through the magisterial district judges.

**Protection from Abuse Filings
2007-2011**

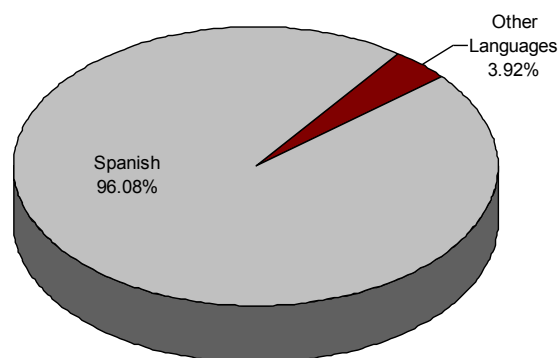


Interpreting Unit

The Court provides interpreters in criminal and family court proceedings. A staff interpreter is assisted by a pool of 25 per diem contractors, all of whom meet the professional standards set by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

The numbers of individuals needing interpreting services increased in 2011, but the number of available interpreters did not. The challenge of allocating limited resources to increased demands was met by having Juvenile and Adult Probation Offices and District Courts use the telephone interpreting services.

2011 Interpreting Assignments
Spanish in comparison with other languages



Assignments per Language per Month

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Arabic	3	3	1	1	2	2	3	4	9	3	7	4	44
Burmese	1	1								1			3
Cantonese			1	1			1						3
Greek	1												1
Hindi	2	1											3
Korean	1		1			1				1	2		6
Macedonian	2	1											3
Mandarin	1		1		1			1	1				5
Polish	1	1	1		1					4			4
Sign Language	1	5	2	2	2	1			2	4	3	1	24
Spanish	211	196	217	215	223	234	189	221	198	244	180	186	2748
Swahili		1											1
Tagalog						1							1
Vietnamese	2	1		2			1	2		1	2	3	14
Total	226	210	224	221	230	238	194	228	210	254	193	194	2860*

* The total number of assignments reflected herein does not include assignment for which telephonic interpreting services were utilized.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS SECTION

There are
12,809 active support cases
in Lehigh County.

In 2011,
\$48,625,033 was
collected and distributed.

The Lehigh County Domestic Relations Section, located at 14 North 6th Street, Allentown, is the Title IV-D agency responsible for the establishment and enforcement of child and spousal support for the Lehigh County Courts. The office is responsible for establishing paternity for children born out of wedlock; locating absent parents for support purposes; and securing financial support for minor children of separated parents.

Under the leadership of Director Julia Parker Greenwood, the Domestic Relations Section, which consists of 21 conference officers, 10 managers, and 43 full and part-time support staff, handles all aspects of a support case, with the goal of establishing enforceable orders of support to benefit the children for whom support is owed.

Establishing and Enforcing Child and Spousal Support Orders

The office is responsible for the establishment and enforcement of orders of child and spousal support for the court. This includes establishing paternity for children born out of wedlock, locating absent parents for support purposes and securing financial support for minor children of separated parents.

Once an application for support is filed, a hearing is held with a conference officer to gather information for the preparation of an agreed support order or a proposed support order, if no agreement can be reached. Support orders proposed by conference officers can be appealed to the court for a hearing before a master and then before a judge.

Conference Officers are also responsible for ensuring compliance with the support orders by holding contempt conferences to get payments back on track and by referring cases for a contempt hearing before a judge for failure to meet the support obligations.

Case Management Caseloads

Domestic Relations Officers and Clerical Staff are assigned to case management teams that are responsible for all aspects of a support case from establishment through enforcement with the goal of establishing enforceable orders of support to benefit the children for whom support is owed.

In 2011, Domestic Relations staff conducted 5,568 establishment conferences and 629 establishment hearings. In addition, 3,213 judicial contempt hearings were conducted.

PACSES and SCDU

The Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement System (PACSES) is a state-wide computer and check disbursement system which was implemented in 1998, and is used as the database for child support case information, support calculations and enforcement actions. Payments are made to and disbursed from the state level office, the Support Collection and Disbursement Unit (SCDU).

Domestic Relations is responsible for the collection of support funds from the defendant in the action and disbursement of those funds to the plaintiff. In 2010, the total amount collected and then disbursed to the plaintiffs was \$47,955,742. In 2011, that figure was \$48,625,033, an increase of almost \$670,000 over the previous year.

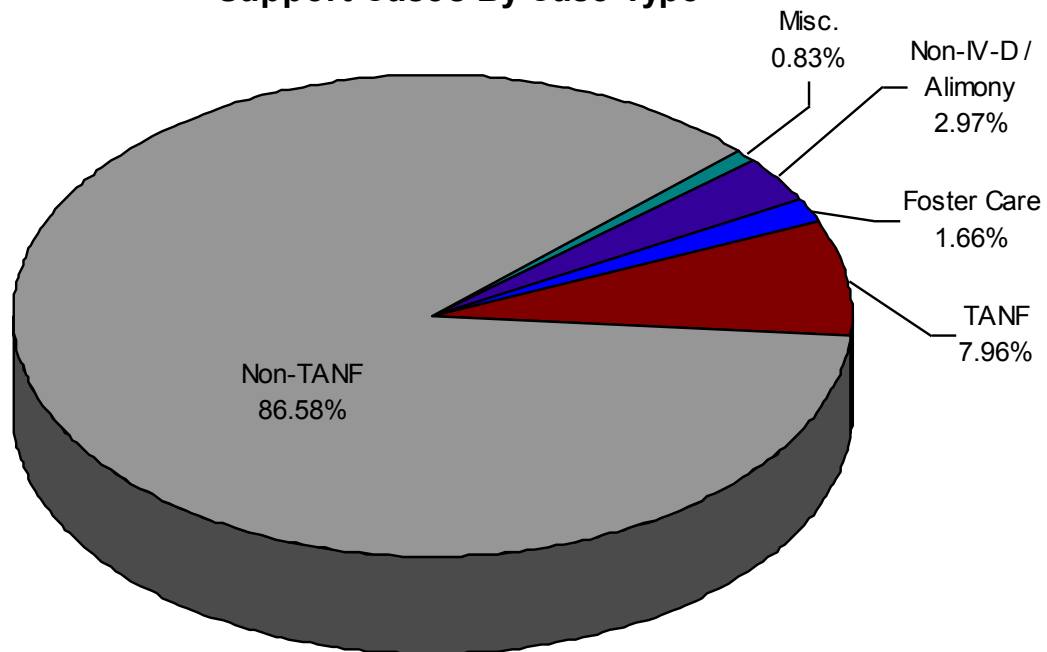
Federal Funding Requirements

The Lehigh County Domestic Relations Section, through a Cooperative Agreement between Lehigh County and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Child Support Enforcement, is required to provide child support services as outlined in Title IV-D of the Social Security Act in order to receive federal funding. These child support services must be performed in accordance with Federal Code of Regulations and Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure. As long as the DRS is performing as required, 66% of DRS operating expenses are reimbursed by the federal government.

In addition, as a IV-D agency, the DRS is required to meet federal performance standards. To maximize incentive funds for Pennsylvania and Lehigh County, the benchmark of 80% must be met in the following categories:

- Cases with active support orders
- Cases with paternity established
- Cases with full monthly collection of current support
- Cases with a payment on arrears (back support) during the federal fiscal year
- Cases with medical support established—not tied to funding in 2011
- Cases with medical support enforced—not tied to funding in 2011

Support Cases By Case Type



2011 Support Case Filings & Dispositions	
New *Non-TANF Cases	5702
Cases Transferred In	111
*TANF to Non-TANF	314
Judge	65
Hearing Officer	390
Conference Officer	5360
Cases Transferred Out	93
Non-TANF to TANF	508
Cases Processed	6416

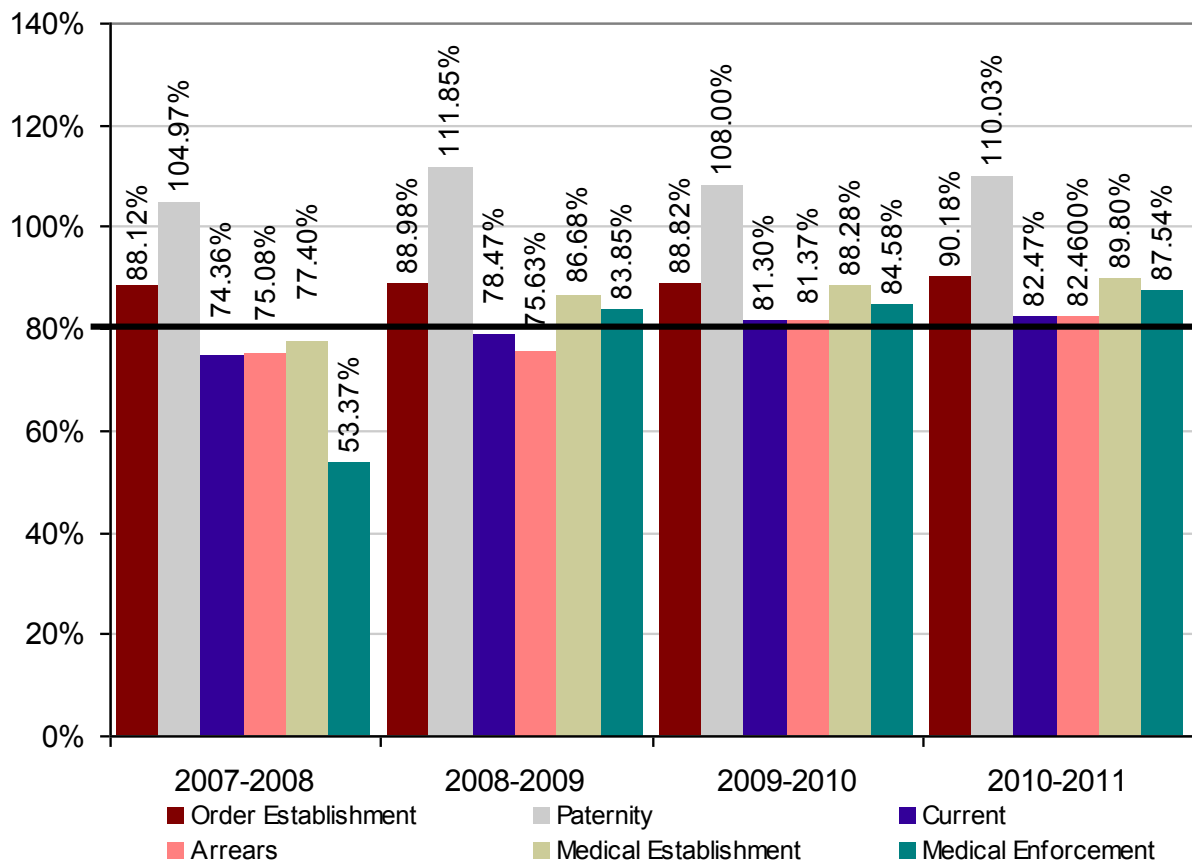
2011 TANF Support Case Filings & Dispositions	
New TANF Cases	562
Cases Transferred In	25
Non-TANF to TANF	508
Judge	7
Hearing Officer	21
Conference Officer	710
Cases Transferred Out	34
TANF to Non-TANF	314
Cases Processed	1086

***TANF cases involve children in families receiving aid under the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program. Non-TANF cases are those cases with no such assistance.**

2011 Domestic Relations Federal Performance Standards

Federal Fiscal Year 2011, which ended on September 30, 2011, Lehigh County Domestic Relations exceeded 80% in all the federal performance standards.

DRS Federal Performance Indicators



ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION

The name Orphans' Court is an anachronism derived from an era in which those persons who traditionally had no legal "voice" (minor children, widows, orphans, decedents) required an objective entity—the Orphans' Court—to "speak" for them and assure that their rights and interests were protected. Unlike the other divisions of the Court of Common Pleas, many of the matters that come before the Orphans' Court are non-adversarial.

The Office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court Division

The Office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court Division is a judicial office distinct from the Register of Wills, (which in Lehigh County is a division within the Office of the Clerk of Judicial Records). In addition, the scheduling of all Orphans' Court cases is done by the Office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court and not by the Court Administrator's Office. The Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas is under the direction of the Director of Orphans' Court Operations, Janet T. Woffindin, Esquire, and the Clerk of the Orphans' Court, Wendy A. W. Parr. There are three full-time assistant clerks and a full-time auditor who reviews all formally filed fiduciary accounts. There are currently five judges, including an Administrative Judge, assigned to the various matters within the jurisdiction of the Orphans' Court Division.

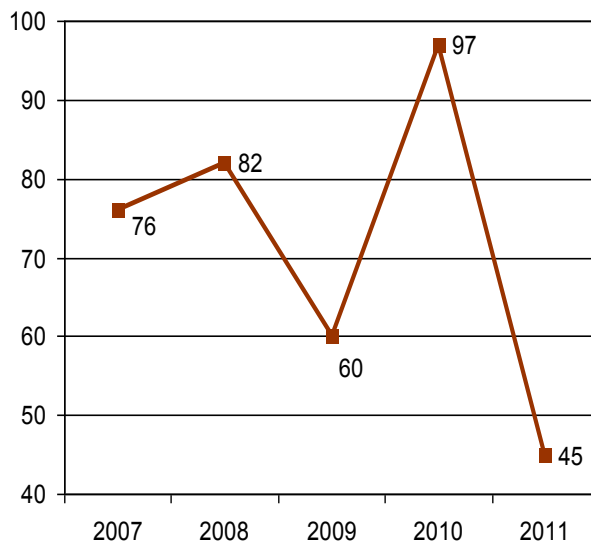
Orphans' Court Jurisdiction

After the grant of letters and payment of inheritance taxes (accomplished through the Register of Wills), all matters and/or disputes regarding wills and other aspects of the administration of decedents' estates are heard in the Orphans' Court Division. The Orphans' Court is also charged with the responsibility of overseeing the administration of both private and charitable inter vivos and testamentary trusts, powers of attorney and matters involving not-for-profit organizations. The Orphans' Court hears all parental termination cases, adoptions and minors' guardianship cases, as well as judicial by-pass hearings required by the Abortion Control Act, and responds to all requests for access to both identifying and non-identifying information from adoption files. In Lehigh County, settlement of lawsuits or claims involving minors, incapacitated persons and/or decedents' estates must be approved by the Orphans' Court Division to assure proper allocation of proceeds and preservation of monetary awards during minority. The Orphans' Court hears petitions for adjudication of incapacity and appointment of both guardians of the person and estate regarding those adults who cannot safely manage their own affairs. Finally, the Clerk of the Orphans' Court is responsible for issuing marriage licenses upon "in person" application by couples, maintaining marriage license records, and issuing certified copies thereof.

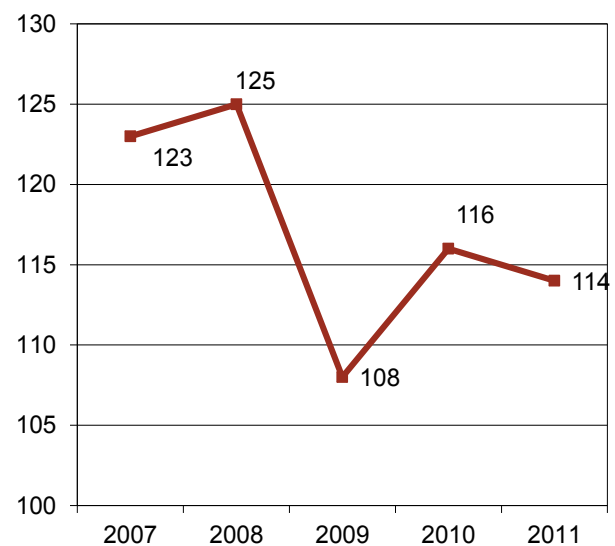
Challenges Unique to Orphans' Court

- Statutory requirement to appoint counsel to represent each indigent parent who contests the termination of his/her parental rights, (not uncommon for there to be more than one father involved in most cases), and counsel to represent the minor child.
- Necessity to appoint guardians ad litem and/or counsel in guardianship proceedings to protect the interests of AIP (alleged incapacitated person).
- Statutory prohibition on imposition of filing fee for Judicial Bypass Hearings.

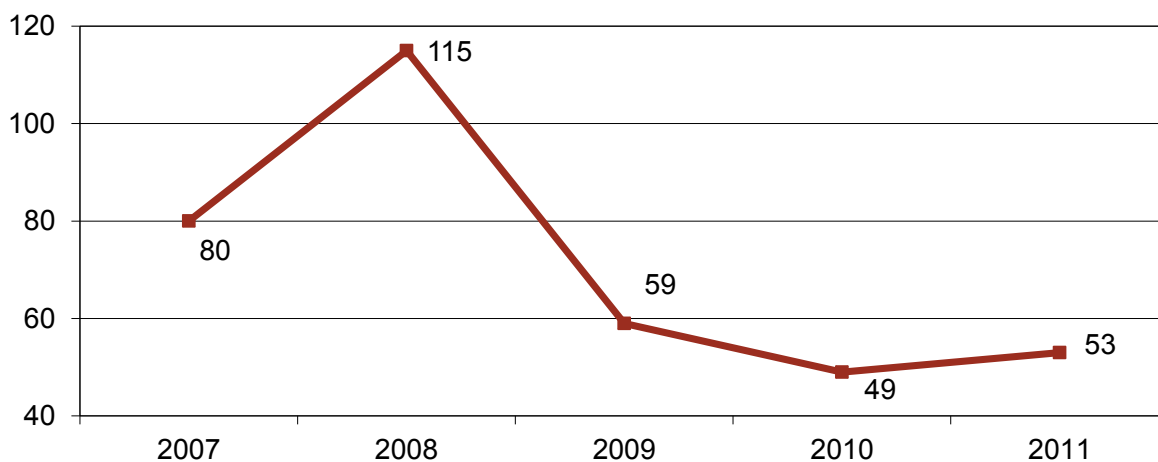
**Orphans' Court Adoptions Filed
2007-2011**



**Orphans' Court Guardianship Filings
2007-2011**



Orphans' Court Termination of Parental Rights Filings 2007-2011



Orphans Court Filings 2011

Filings & Dispositions for Orphans' Court Accounts	
Beginning Pending	26
New Cases	55
Cases Available	81
Contested Judge	17
Contested Master	0
Uncontested Dispositions	38
Other	1
Cases Processed	56
Ending Pending	25
Clearance Ratio	1.02
Backlog Index	0.46

Filings & Dispositions for Orphans' Court Guardianships	
Beginning Pending	40
New Cases	114
Cases Available	154
Contested Judge	28
Contested Master	0
Uncontested Dispositions	73
Other	14
Cases Processed	115
Ending Pending	39
Clearance Ratio	1.01
Backlog Index	0.35

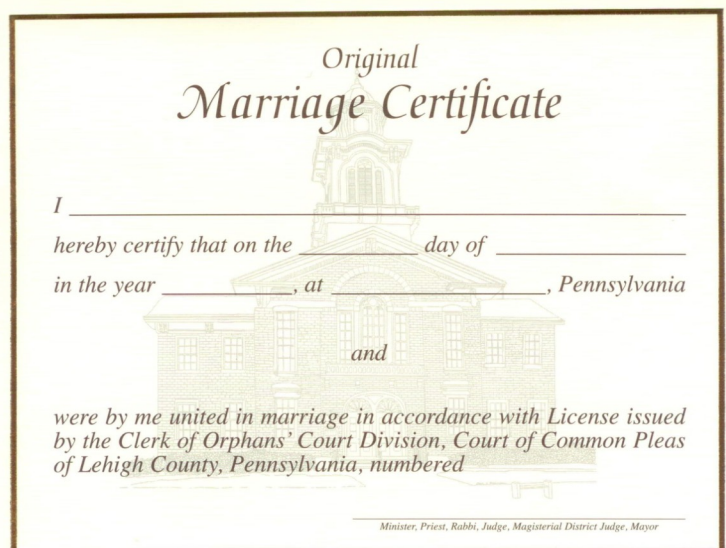
Filings & Dispositions for Orphans' Court Adoptions	
Beginning Pending	6
New Cases	45
Cases Available	51
Contested Judge	0
Contested Judge-Denied	3
Contested Master	0
Uncontested Dispositions	44
Other	3
Cases Processed	47
Ending Pending	4
Clearance Ratio	1.04
Backlog Index	0.13

Filings & Dispositions for Orphans' Court Terminations	
Beginning Pending	25
New Cases	53
Cases Available	78
Contested Judge	26
Contested Master	0
Uncontested Dispositions	16
Other	17
Cases Processed	59
Ending Pending	19
Clearance Ratio	1.11
Backlog Index	0.42

2011 Orphans' Court Division Highlights

In 2011, the Orphans Court:

- Issued 2,087 marriage licenses.
- Audited, confirmed and adjudicated 56 fiduciary accountings.
- Freed 59 children for adoption following the termination of the parental rights of their biological parents.
- Granted 47 adoptions.
- Appointed guardians of the person for 30 minors.
- Adjudicated 115 persons incapacitated and appointed guardians for their persons and/or estates.
- Held 25 judicial bypass hearings pursuant to the Abortion Control Act.
- Approved 72 minors' settlements involving lump sum payouts, creation of trusts, and structured settlements and in excess of a dozen death case settlements.
- Resolved petitions regarding contested wills, joint asset ownership problems, inheritance tax disputes, use of powers of attorney, either via hearing or court-assisted settlement.
- Responded to a steady number of requests by adoptees for information about their biological parents, and conducted adoption searches. These requests are expected to increase over time as 2011 amendments to the Adoption Act expanded the classes of person who can initiate an adoption search.



ADULT PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Primary Functions

- Supervision of adult offenders (age 18 and above) who are court ordered to probation, parole, ARD, and Intermediate Punishment.
- Completion of presentence investigations as an aid in sentencing.
- Completion and verification of preparole plans and investigations, in preparation for an offender's release from incarceration.
- Victim Services – victim impact statements, release notifications, enforcement of restitution orders.

Adult Probation Mission Statement

To aid in reducing the incidents of crime in the community through field-based supervision, treatment and rehabilitation of the offender, thus protecting the public from recurring criminal and antisocial behavior.

Community Corrections Policy – Restorative Justice

Although community protection through traditional community based casework and surveillance remains a high priority, offenders are also required to acquire specific skills through educational and job readiness programs. This approach also makes them accountable for the satisfaction of financial liabilities such as victim restitution, fines and program fees.

Supervision and Caseload Trends

As of December 31, 2011, there were 5,742 offenders on active supervision with the Department, a decrease of 1.2% over the previous year.

Adult Probation: Client Profile

• Sex		• Offense Type	
– Male	76.0%	– Felony	23.9%
– Female	24.0%	– Misdemeanor	72.2%
		– Other	3.8%
• Race		• Disposition	
– White	56.4%	– Probation	44.6%
– Black	17.2%	– Parole	30.1%
– Hispanic	24.3%	– ARD	22.5%
– Other	2.2%	– I.P.	2.8%

Pre-Sentence Investigation Trends

The Pre-Sentence Investigation Unit is responsible for interviewing offenders, verifying and evaluating information, contacting victims and police officers, preparation of sentencing guidelines, and making recommendations to the Court relative to an offender's sentence. In 2011, 615 pre-sentence investigations were completed, down 9.3% over 2010.

Pre-Parole Trends

The Court of Common Pleas is the paroling authority for all cases sentenced to a maximum term of imprisonment of less than two years. The Department is responsible for investigating parole plans and for recommendations to the paroling authority.

Pre-parole services include post-sentencing interviews with inmates, compliance with Acts 134 and 155 relative to victims, the calculation and utilization of the *Earned Time Program*, and verification of information submitted by inmates for parole plans. DNA registration and Megan's Law compliance are also ensured by this unit. In 2011, 1,374 parole plans were investigated, a decrease of 5.0% over 2010.

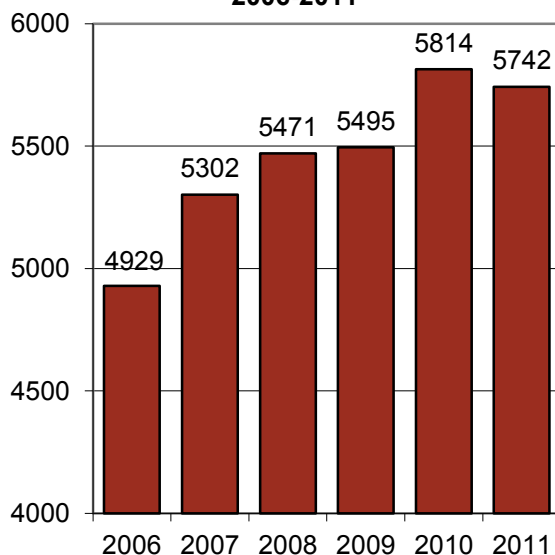
Standards and Accreditation

The Lehigh County Adult Probation Department continues to be in compliance with all standards relative to Commission on Accreditation for Corrections guidelines for probation and parole agencies. Standards audits and reports conducted by the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole reflect positively on the department's staff, goals and accomplishments.

Adult Probation Department Programs

The Alcohol Highway Safety Project is court-operated and administered by the department to deal with Driving Under the Influence offenders. The four components are: evaluation and screening via the Court Reporting Network Evaluation; operation of the Alcohol Highway Safe-Driving School; community information and education; and assistance to law enforcement, government and court-related agencies to improve techniques to identify and apprehend problem alcohol and drug abusers who drive in Lehigh County. The department continued in its efforts to alert the public to the dangers of drinking and driving through presentations at local community organizations, agencies and schools. This included lectures, displays and distribution of information. The department also coordinated efforts with area student organizations providing information to their fellow students.

**Supervision Trends (# offenders)
2006-2011**



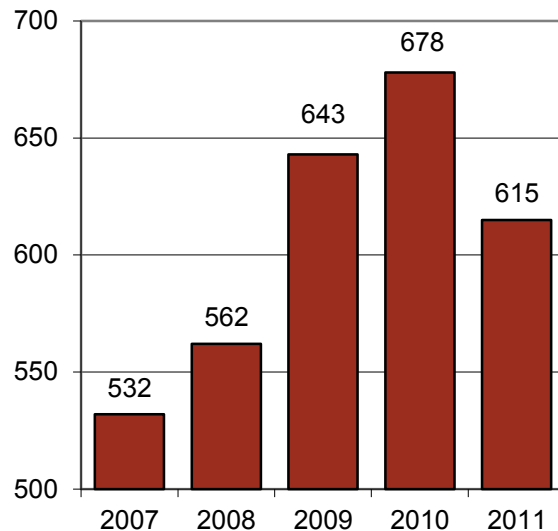
The Interlock Ignition Program involves the installation of a device on the vehicle, where detection of alcohol prohibits the vehicle from starting. Interlock is a main component of the DUI Repeat Offender Project, in which the department provides early and increased levels of treatment, education, supervision and surveillance of repeat Driving Under the Influence offenders. Included are classroom instruction, outpatient counseling, electronic monitoring and substance abuse testing.

The Community Corrections Center was established as an alternative to incarceration for technical violators of probation/parole/Intermediate Punishment. PCCD funding assisted in this project becoming operational in 2009. Administered by the Departments of Corrections, Adult Probation and Human Services, an array of services are provided to offenders on-site at the Men's Community Corrections Center to prepare for their re-entry back into the community. Programming includes: Substance Abuse Assessment, Intervention and Treatment; Employment and Vocational Training; Mental Health Group Services; Education/GED Preparation and Testing; and various life skills programs. In addition, valuable court time is saved by the administrative movement of offenders directly from the Adult Probation Department to the Community Corrections Center, as are bed days charged to the Department of Corrections. In 2011, 151 alleged technical violators were referred to the project.

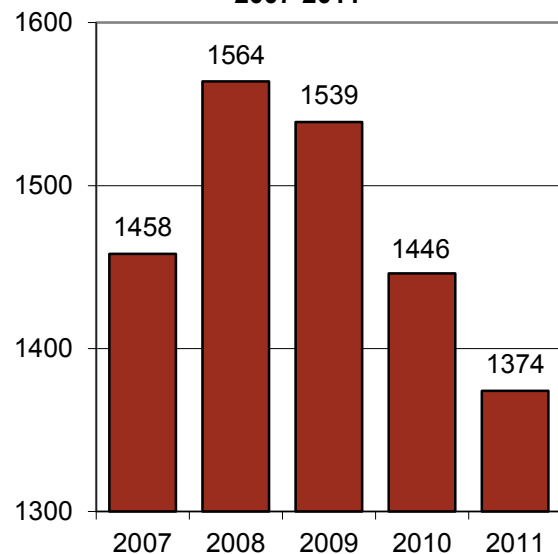
The Community Work Service Project allows offenders to provide volunteer services to agencies and organizations as a condition of probation, Intermediate Punishment, parole, ARD, or in lieu of fines.

The Department sustained **Competency/Accountability Programs** with the continuation of its interagency agreement in 2011 with the Center for Humanistic Change to provide off-site instruction to offenders, based on needs areas assessed upon their assignment to

**Pre-Sentence Investigation Trends
2007-2011**



**Pre-Parole Trends
2007-2011**



supervision. The main component of the Department's Intermediate Punishment Restorative Sanctions, the following services were made available to offenders: Financial Management; Health Education; Job Readiness Training; Life Skills; Retail Theft Rehabilitation; and Substance Abuse Education.

The Department has operated an **Intensive Drug Supervision Unit** since 1989. Supervision of clients who have severe substance-abuse problems on an intensive basis increases surveillance, thus adding to the safety and protection of the community. Clients benefit from the unit's services through identification and counseling/treatment.

The Department initiated an **In-House Drug Testing Program** in 1988 to detect possible illegal drug use by clients. The Department uses an on-site testing system, which is advantageous because clients know they can be tested by probation officers with immediate results in their presence.

The Special Program for Offenders in Rehabilitation and Education is more commonly known as S.P.O.R.E. This program continues to provide services for mentally ill offenders. Probation officers and mental health workers jointly supervise clients. A psychiatrist and psychologist are available for evaluations.

The Treatment Continuum Alternative Project is a grant-funded project which utilizes the resources of the Adult Probation Department and Treatment Trends, Inc. to administer a 34 month continuum of care to level 3 and 4 substance-abusing offenders. The continuum is comprised of four to six months of residential treatment at Keenan House, followed by two to four months in a local halfway home environment. Upon release, the offender receives intensive outpatient and outpatient treatment, and is electronically monitored by the Adult Probation Department. This is then followed by two months under intensive probation supervision. It is at this point that a decision is made relative to the remaining court-ordered 12 months of supervision and its intensity.

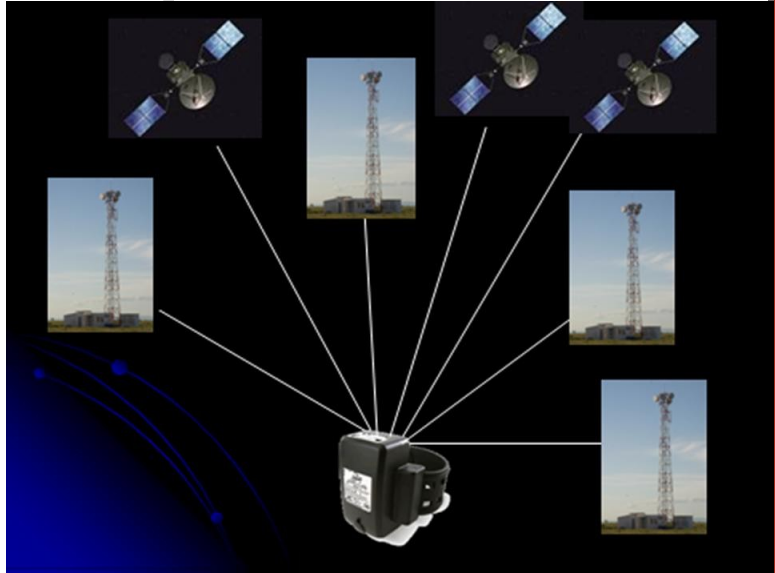


The Adult Probation Department continues to assist law enforcement in identifying and apprehending problem alcohol and drug abusers in Lehigh County.

Electronic Monitoring

The Adult Probation Department provides **Electronic Monitoring** supervision for offenders as an alternative to incarceration. Offenders may be ordered to the program as an intermediate punishment, as a condition of early release or furlough from prison, as an intermediate graduated sanction for violation of community supervision requirements, or on bail supervision.

Offenders are monitored by an active satellite system of surveillance called global positioning, which replaced the RF ankle bracelet system in 2005. The probation officer carries a pager, providing twenty-four hour coverage, including weekends. The pager notifies the officer of any violations (leave alerts). Field visits and surveillance are integral components of the program, as are random field testing and video-breath analysis.



Twenty-four hour, seven days a week, **Electronic Monitoring** of offenders is achieved through the use of satellite and cellular telephone links to the offender's ankle bracelet system seen below.



JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

The Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department is a division of the Court of Common Pleas, reporting to the Administrative Judge responsible for Juvenile Probation activities.

The department, under the supervision of Chief Juvenile Probation Officer Elizabeth Fritz, is responsible to the court and the community for delivering necessary and appropriate services to those juveniles referred to the department.

Mission Statement:

We are dedicated to working with juvenile offenders, their families, victims and the community by utilizing evidence based practices and balanced restorative justice principals, in order to build competencies, reduce risk to reoffend, restore victims, protect the community and assist in promoting long term behavior change.

Jurisdiction

The jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court and the Juvenile Probation Department extends to both “delinquent” and “dependent” children as defined in the Pennsylvania Juvenile Act, Section 6302. In light of the mandate of this Act, it is essential for the Department to have operational principles to guide its decision making and delivery of services. Accordingly, operational procedures have been formulated to coincide with “**The Balanced Approach**” principles:

1. **Community Protection:** Residents have a right to live in a safe and secure community. Probation Officer’s decisions must take into account the risk that each child poses and the degree of structure required to protect the community.
2. **Accountability:** Every juvenile offender is to be held accountable for his or her actions and behavior. When a juvenile commits an offense against a person or property, the juvenile incurs an obligation to the victim of that offense. Victims are to be compensated by the offender as a rehabilitative measure.
3. **Competency Development:** The Department assesses each youth to determine how they can best become productive and responsible citizens. This is that part of our mission “that seeks to tap the strengths of young people, their immense capacity for change and growth, in order to achieve transformations.”

Evidence Based Practice Effort Continues

Over the past several years the Juvenile Probation Department has undertaken some exciting initiatives in an effort to implement evidence based practices. **Evidence based practices are those documented, research based and proven methods of treatment and supervision that have been demonstrated to reduce juvenile reoffending.** In 2011, probation officers continued their efforts to improve quality assurance and inter-rater reliability as it pertains to the risk/need assessment (YLS/CM) that was implemented

in 2009. The use of a risk/need assessment determines the level of risk the youth poses to the community and intervention strategies to most effectively impact change. Research has demonstrated that youth who are low risk should have minimal involvement with the justice system. If these youth are supervised at the same level and in the same manner as more serious offenders, there is an increased risk of actually making those youth worse. In 2011, the Juvenile Probation Department restructured positions within the department to include a low risk probation officer.

In 2011, probation officers continued intensive training on Motivational Interviewing. MI, when successfully implemented creates an environment to encourage behavioral change among offenders. Solely focusing on compliance of conditions of probation typically does not create long term changes in behavior. Training has allowed probation officers to explore proven methods in communication strategies with juveniles. The new standardized case plan is near completion and will be yet another method of employing best practices for successful probation supervision.

Lehigh County continued to actively engage in the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy which focuses on utilizing the best practices for probation supervision of youthful offenders. The probation department continued efforts to improve data collection and to make data driven decisions.

2011 Juvenile Probation Highlights

In addition to the evidence based practice efforts within the Juvenile Probation Department, the department became part of the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI). In 2011, Pennsylvania became a JDAI site with four counties in the initial phase.



During the summer of 2011, Juvenile Probation clients worked on various improvement projects along the Delaware & Lehigh Canal Trail. Work was done in many locations from upgrading the trailhead sign in Cementon, left, to eradicating graffiti in the City of Bethlehem, right.

With continued research and evidence demonstrating the need to develop more appropriate alternatives to detention for certain youth, each county is gathering data on detention utilization. In addition the Annie Casey Foundation completed a system assessment to assist the department in evaluating areas in which improvement can be made. Jurisdictions throughout the country continue to see alternatives such as better shelter care options, increased use of electronic monitoring and other graduated responses.

2011 Juvenile Probation: Client Profile on Referrals

• Sex		• Offense Type	
– Male	73.0%	– Felony	17%
– Female	27.0%	– Misdemeanor	56%
		– Other	27%
• Race		• Ethnicity	
– White	66%	– Hispanic	45%
– Black	29%	– Non-Hispanic	54%
– Multi Racial	3%	– Unknown	1%
– Asian	1%		

With continued concern over gang activities within our community, the probation officers enhanced their focus on community safety by increasing community based supervision and regular communication with police departments. Of equal concern is the increased use of synthetic drugs by some of the youth under supervision. Probation Officers continue to explore training options to better equip them with assisting youth who engage in this destructive activity.



Juvenile Probation clients bake dozens of dog biscuits.

This year brought to a closure the grant funded activity surrounding the Evening Reporting Center (ERC) and School Justice Panels (SJP). Due to the success of both initiatives, efforts were made to assure continuation of the programming through other means. It is anticipated that within the next year the ERC will be relocating to a location closer to center city. Although the program is currently used as an alternative to detention, we anticipate expanding the program to include youth as an alternative to placement, with the focus on treatment. In November 2011, the Juvenile Probation Department celebrated two years of successful implementation of the School Justice Panels. Stakeholders from various systems throughout the county were informed about number of youth who were successfully diverted from the juvenile system, yet still held accountable for their behavior through panel participation and opportunities for treatment.

The Juvenile Probation Department continued to refer youth to the Mentoring Program which matches youth to college students for tutoring and mentoring. Moravian, Muhlenberg, Cedar Crest and Lehigh Carbon Community College assist with this program. Truancy Panels continued in collaboration with the Allentown School District, Office of Children and Youth and the Juvenile Probation Department.



Ceramic art projects completed by Juvenile Probation clients in the Baum Art School Program.

The Juvenile Probation Department and the Office of Children and Youth continued to work closely together to enhance services for shared cases. These efforts have been instrumental in eliminating duplication of services and presenting a seamless treatment plan. The County of Lehigh which previously was chosen as a Systems of Care site continued to work on implementation of processes to guide the interactions of multisystem youth with mental health involvement.

The Juvenile Probation Department continues to lead collaborative partnerships by coordinating the Youth Crime and Violence Task Force and by participating in the Children's Roundtable and Criminal Justice Advisory Board.

Rule of Juvenile Court Procedure

2011 brought about a significantly large number of Supreme Court Juvenile Procedural Rule changes. These changes were expansive and resulted in changes with processes and practices at every level within the organization. Some rule changes were minor but others significant, such as requiring all adjudicated youth under supervision to have six month review hearings. Several months of intensive planning helped guide the staff and others to make a smooth transition to these changes.

Juvenile Probation Department Programs

In addition to the above noted cooperative efforts, the department operates a number of its own programs. These include the following: Retail Theft, Underage Drinking, Young Offenders, Community Alternative Work Service (CAWS) and Victim Awareness.

- The **Retail Theft and Underage Drinking programs** accept referrals from magisterial district judges and participants attend in lieu of fines.

- The **Young Offender program** is for youth between the ages 10 to 13. It includes classroom instruction that concentrates on the core principles of the Balanced Approach and Restorative Justice model.
- The **CAWS programs** are primarily responsible for providing community service opportunity to hold youth accountable for the delinquent offenses. It also provides an opportunity for the youth to repay their victims through revenue generated by the Allentown Recycling Center.
- The **Victim Awareness program** is a state curriculum that all of the probation officers have been trained to instruct. The curriculum teaches the youth the impact their crimes have had on their victims and the community with the hopes of increasing their empathy and understanding of the consequences of their actions.

Juvenile Probation Primary Dispositions

Juvenile Probation Primary Dispositions					
Year	Referrals	Informal Adjustment	Consent Decree	Probation	Placement
2011	1475	259	184	479	209
2010	1570	219	191	385	238
2009	1700	240	158	455	271

Records for the Department indicate that referrals have been relatively flat for the past three years. It should be noted that the number of referrals has been adjusted from previous reports to comprise only delinquency cases. Violation of probation cases, which were previously included, have been omitted. Last year it was reported that there was a spike in serious sexual offenses (59 allegations) received in 2010. These allegations returned to more normal levels in 2011. There were only 17 such allegations received by the department.

A new Rule of Juvenile Court Procedure requires that all juveniles who have been adjudicated delinquent and placed on probation must have their cases reviewed every six months. These review hearings did not occur until the second half of 2011, and yet there were 657 more hearings in 2011 compared to 2010. This represents a 28% increase from the previous year.

Outcomes on 688 Juvenile Probation Cases Completed in 2011	
Juveniles who completed a community service obligation in full	92%
Juveniles in school or employed at case closing	90%
Juveniles who paid their restitution in full	64%
Juveniles who re-offended while under supervision	21%
Juveniles with a technical violation of probation requiring further court action (This represents a decrease of 27% from the previous year.)	17%
Juveniles committed to placement (28 days or longer)	22%

Juvenile Probation Outcome Measures

Probation officers are required to report outcome measures whenever they release a juvenile from probation supervision. These outcomes only measure activities while under supervision and do not measure variables such as juveniles who reoffend after their case is closed. Probation officers did these outcomes on 33% more cases in 2011 compared to 2010. Again the substantial increase in review hearings most likely contributed to the significant increase in cases being closed.



Mountains of donated clothing and school supplies await distribution at the 2011 annual Back to School clothing event organized by Juvenile Probation employees. Many court and county employees donate to this event, one of several events that connect court employees to the wider community.

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURTS

Magisterial District Courts Jurisdiction

There are fourteen District Courts in the Thirty-First Judicial District that comprises Lehigh County. These are courts of limited jurisdiction and are not courts of record, but often are the courts with which the average citizen has the most contact. These courts hold trials on summary cases such as traffic violations, bad check cases, school truancy, underage drinking, and similar types of cases.

District Courts can enter dispositions graded up to a misdemeanor of the second degree for cases of Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol. In the area of civil law, District Courts can hold trials on civil disputes with a maximum monetary limit of \$12,000 and also disputes between landlords and tenants. These landlord cases can result in evictions of tenants from rental properties.

In the more serious criminal cases, higher level misdemeanors and felonies, District Courts conduct the initial hearings, including preliminary arraignments and preliminary hearings. All preliminary arraignments are conducted using **video technology**. The defendant is held in the secure environment of the **Central Booking Center** and the Magisterial District Judge presides over the hearing from their courtrooms.

At the preliminary arraignment, the criminal charges are read to the defendant, the bail amount is set, and the Magisterial District Judge schedules the preliminary hearing date.

2011 Lehigh County District Courts Case Filings	
Summary Traffic Cases	50,082
Summary Non-Traffic Cases	15,617
Civil Cases	11,421
Criminal Cases	7,020

At the preliminary hearing, the court conducts a hearing to determine if there is sufficient evidence for the case to proceed to trial. If so, the case is forwarded to the Court of Common Pleas, which is the court of general jurisdiction. If the evidence

2011 Magisterial District Judges	
District Court	Magisterial District Judges
31-1-01	Patricia M. Engler
31-1-02	Senior MDJ Assignments
31-1-03	Ronald S. Manescu
31-1-04	David M. Howells, Jr.
31-1-05	Carl L. Balliet
31-1-06	Wayne Maura
31-1-07	Robert C. Halal
31-1-08	Anthony G. Rapp
31-2-01	Karen C. Devine
31-2-02	Jacob E. Hammond
31-2-03	Donna R. Butler
31-3-01	Rod R. Beck
31-3-02	Charles H. Crawford
31-3-03	David B. Harding

presented at the preliminary hearing does not support the criminal charges, the charges will be dismissed. The date of arraignment in the Court of Common Pleas is established at the conclusion of the preliminary hearing.

Magisterial District Judges

The judges of the District Courts are referred to as **Magisterial District Judges**, and are elected officials serving six-year terms. A change in the title of these elected officials from District Justice to Magisterial District Judge occurred in 2005. The magisterial district judges are elected within magisterial districts, which comprise the geographic boundaries of their jurisdictions.

Night Court and Central Court

Lehigh County contains **fourteen magisterial districts**. In addition, the Lehigh County District Court System includes a **Central Court and a Night Court**. Central Court operates to schedule and preside over the preliminary hearings of all incarcerated defendants. The magisterial district judges of the fourteen individual districts are assigned to preside in Central Court utilizing a rotating daily schedule.

Night Court operates to handle the preliminary arraignments of all defendants who are arrested within the county after the normal operating hours of the courthouse. The assignment of a Magisterial District Judge is also completed based upon a rotating schedule of the fourteen District Judges of the individual districts. In addition, Night Court operates to facilitate the payment of bail for incarcerated defendants, preside over matters related to warrants served by Constables and issue **Protection from Abuse (PFA)** orders in matters of domestic violence.

The supervision of each District Court is the responsibility of the elected Magisterial District Judge, a state employee. The employees within the specific office, however, are County judicial employees and the personnel and administrative functions fall under the responsibility of the District Judge Administrator, H. Gordon Roberts.



Magisterial District Court 31-2-01 is located in the Old Lehigh County Courthouse, above. The other MDJ offices are located throughout Lehigh County.

Notes