



# **The Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County**

**The 31st Judicial District Of Pennsylvania**

## **Annual Report 2014**

# Introduction



Message from the President Judge



Organization of the Court of Common Pleas



31st Judicial District Budget 2014



# A Message from President Judge Edward D. Reibman

The Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania's Thirty-First Judicial District, is pleased to provide the 2014 Annual Report. The report reflects the work of a very busy and well-run court.

Although the population of Lehigh County continues to grow, the workforce in the judiciary has not increased in many years. In fact, 2014 marked the fewest number of judicial employees in eight years even though custody filings increased 21% from the previous year and the number of adults on active supervision reached the highest number in five years. Our Domestic Relations Section, which deals with child support, met or exceeded Federal performance standards in all categories. As a result of more creative responses to criminal behavior, the number of juveniles under active supervision is the lowest in five years, the number of juveniles in detention is the lowest in fifteen years and criminal filings have remained constant.

As the county faces increasing budgetary constraints, the judiciary continues to search for ways to operate more efficiently. In 2014, the court implemented an electronic filing system for civil cases. As a result, attorneys are able to file legal documents from their office 24 hours a day. Furthermore, electronic images of court records are accessed quickly and easily by the Judges and court staff. Finally, through the implementation of an electronic filing system, the Clerk of Judicial Records (Civil Division) has been able to reduce their need for paper as well as storage space. In addition to the e-filing project, the court continued to increase the use of video-conferencing for various court proceedings. Consequently, the number and cost of transporting incarcerated defendants from out of county jails and state correctional institutions to the courthouse was substantially reduced.

The court is fortunate to have employees committed to improving the administration of justice in Lehigh County, and its success reflects their hard work.



# 2014 Common Pleas Judges

**President Judge Carol K. McGinley**

**Judge Edward D. Reibman**

**Judge William E. Ford**

**Judge Robert L. Steinberg**

**Judge J. Brian Johnson**

**Judge Kelly L Banach**

**Judge James T. Anthony**

**Judge Maria L. Dantos**

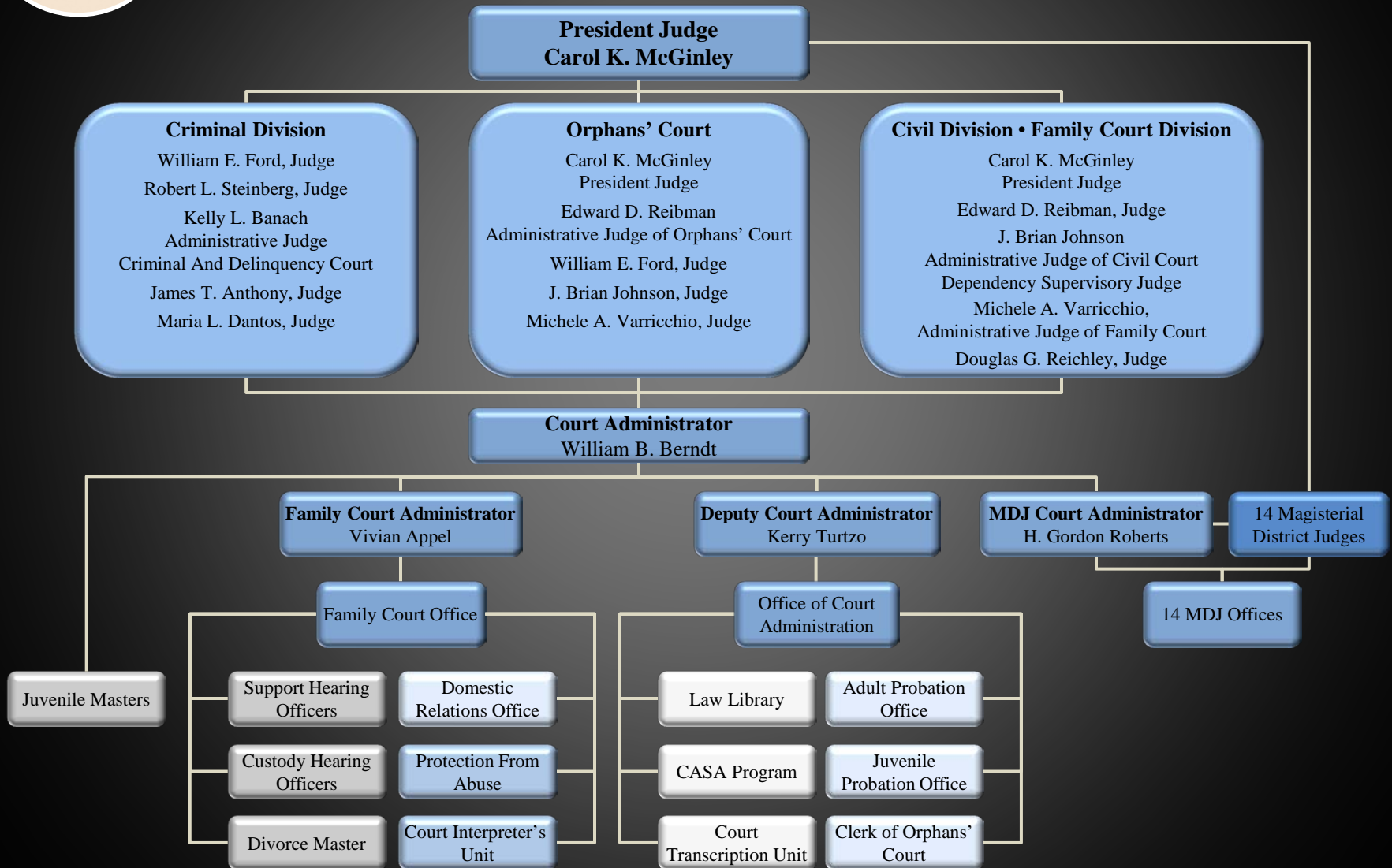
**Judge Michelle A. Varricchio**

**Judge Douglas G. Reichley**

**Senior Judge Lawrence J. Brenner**



# 2014 Court Organization

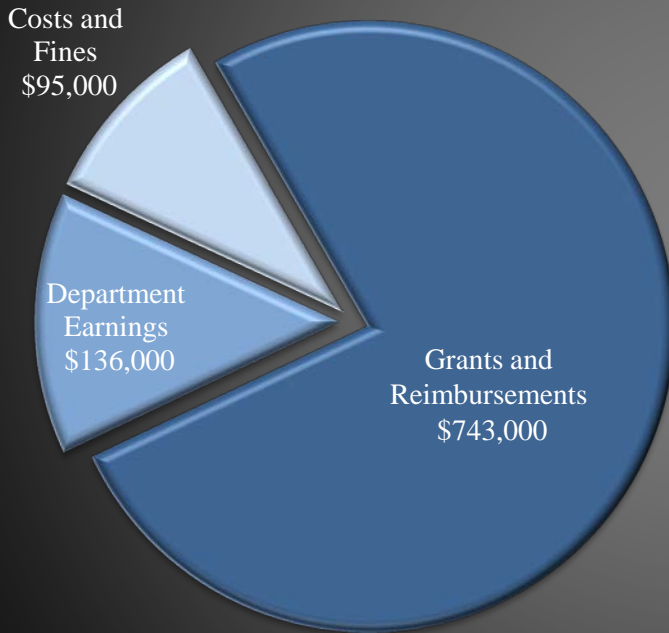




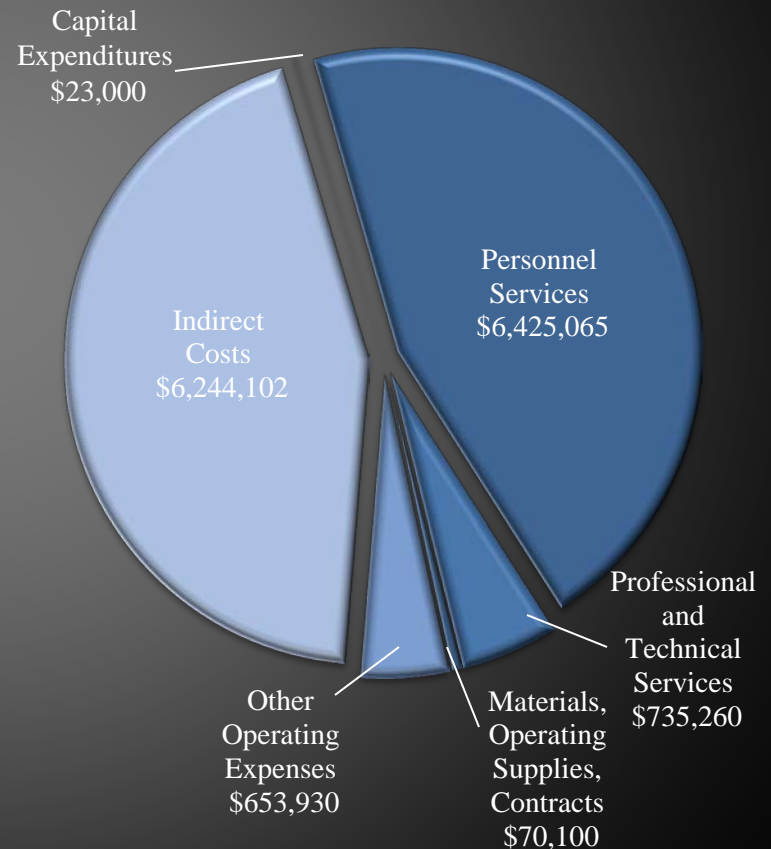


# 2014 Court Budget

## 2014 Budgeted Revenue



## 2014 Budgeted Expenses





# Grant Funding

The Court pursues federal and state grants to offset the costs of programs. Most grant funding is available in the areas of Adult and Juvenile Probation and is often earmarked for the creation of new programs. Adult Probation receives state funding based on the rate of compliance with state-wide standards for probation operations. Currently the Lehigh County Adult Probation Department receives the maximum in state funding. The Juvenile Probation Department works closely with the Lehigh County Office of Children and Youth to produce a “needs-based” budget maximizing state assistance to the Court. The Court is reimbursed in the form of services at state youth institutions and funding for some delinquent youth placement expenditures.

<b><u>2014 CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD GRANT ACTIVITIES</u></b>				
<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Status</b>
Drug/Alcohol Restrictive Intermediate Punishment/Adult Probation Intermediate Program Enhancement	PCCD	\$667,481	SCA/Adult Probation	Awarded
Grant-In-Aid Continuing Program for the Improvement of Adult Probation Services	PBPP	\$633,132	Adult Probation	Awarded
Grant-In-Aid/Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy Implementation Plan	JCJC	\$462,389	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (Mental Health PO)	PCCD	\$10,000	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Drug Testing Funding	JCJC	\$5,000	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy	PCCD	\$29,304	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Disproportionate Minority Contact	PCCD	\$35,248	Juvenile Probation	Awarded
Juvenile Court Judges' Commission Training Grant	JCJC	\$23,900	Juvenile Probation	Awarded

# The Administrative Offices



## Court Administration



Jury Management



Court Appointed Special Advocate



Library Information Services





# Court Administration

Functions of the Office of the Court Administrator include personnel and fiscal management, calendar and scheduling management, information systems, facilities, equipment and technology management, records control, and public information.

In 2014, District Court Administrator, William B. Berndt, and Deputy Court Administrator, Kerry R. Turtzo, were responsible for supervision of all court-related departments of the Judiciary. In Lehigh County, Jury Management, The Court Transcription Unit, Library Information Services and the CASA program are considered components of 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. The complexity of the modern court requires the delegation of administrative functions to the Court Administrator. The Court Administrator increases judges' time for adjudication by accomplishing the administrative functions of the Court.



# Judicial Employees

Judicial Employees By Department								
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Court Administration	85	87	86	85	84	83	83	83
Adult Probation	49	49	51	51	51	50	50	50
Juvenile Probation	40	40	40	40	38	49	49	49
Special Probation	11	11	11	11	11	0	0	0
Orphans' Court	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Domestic Relations	62	62	64	64	62	62	62	62
District Judge	53	53	53	53	53	51	51	51
Law Library	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1
Total	309	311	314	313	306	302	302	302



# Jury Management

Lehigh County has adopted the “one day, one trial” method of juror selection to increase the efficiency of the jury system while making a minimal imposition on 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 the trial. This method ensures juries are available to judges and keeps only those jurors necessary. The process of random juror selection is supervised by Court Operations Officer, Gayle Fisher. The reception and orientation of jurors, followed by selection and control of juries, requires cooperation between jury management staff and courtroom staff.

4506

Jurors  
Reporting For  
Jury Duty in  
2014

3033

Jurors  
Sent to  
Voir Dire for  
Selection

794

Jurors Selected  
to Serve on  
Empaneled Jury

17.6%

2014  
Juror Selection  
Rate



# Court Appointed Special Advocate

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 Pennsylvania Juvenile Act (Title 42 PA C. S. § 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

55  
Active CASAs  
in 2014

83  
Abused and Neglected  
Children Served



40  
Hours of  
CASA Training

21  
Years or Older  
18 Month Minimum  
Commitment





# Permanent Homes 2014

A CASA's objective is to assist the Court in making decisions that will provide safe, secure and permanent homes for at-risk children. A CASA representative attends every hearing for their children. CASA volunteers aid the court by submitting written reports making recommendations in the best interest of the child.

1



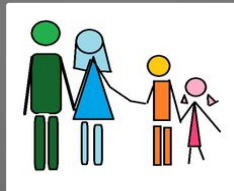
Child  
Aged Out of  
Foster Care

1



Child Placed  
in a Subsidized  
Permanent  
Legal  
Custodianship

2



Kinship Care  
Solutions  
Found

4



Children were  
Reunited with  
Biological  
Family

13

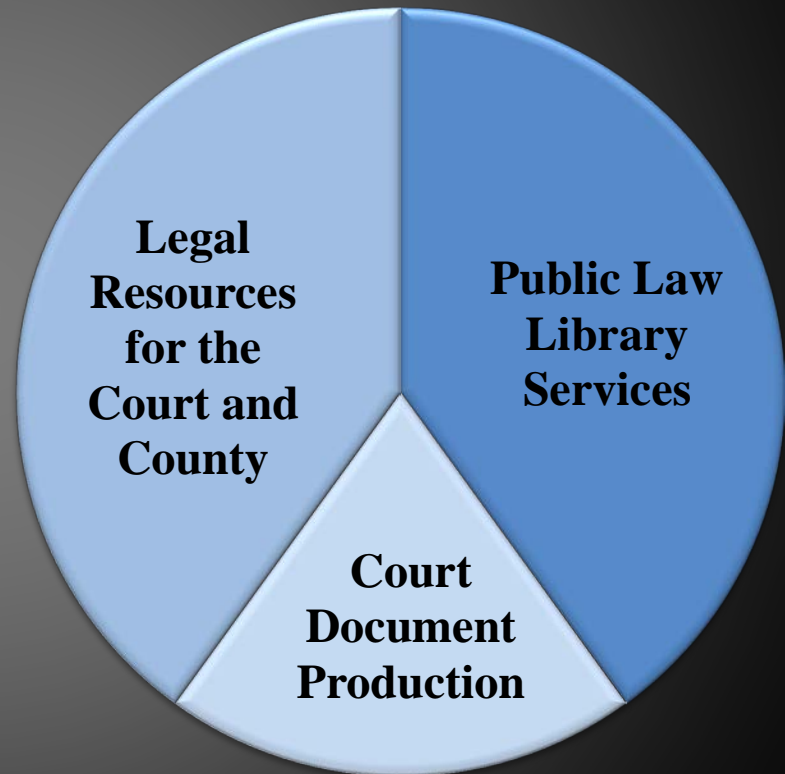


Children were  
Adopted



# Library Information Services

The Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County provides the only public law library in Lehigh County. Founded in 1869, 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 1997 and is known as the Judge Donald E. Wieand Law Library. The law library fills a critical niche in the community serving the public, the bar, county employees, and the court. Lorelei A. Broskey, M.L.S., Director, oversees the three related missions of the department of Library Information Services.





# Library Information Services

## 2014 Library Information Services Snapshot

11,962

Pages Printed  
from  
6 Public Access  
Legal  
Research  
Workstations

\$440,083

Books & Online  
Resources  
Processed &  
Delivered to  
Court, County  
Offices & Law  
Library

\$887

Overdue  
Law Library  
Book  
Fines  
Collected

1,248

Public Law  
Library Items  
Circulated &  
873 Items  
Renewed by  
Telephone

# The Court of Common Pleas


## Court Divisions



**Criminal/Juvenile Division**  
Juvenile Court



**Civil/Family Court Division**  
Civil Court Operations  
Mortgage Foreclosure Program



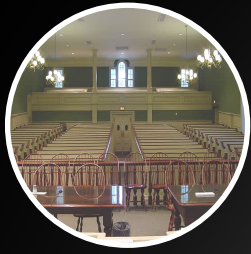
**Family Court Division**  
Child Custody  
Divorce  
Protection From Abuse  
Interpreting Unit



**Domestic Relations Section**



**Orphans' Court Division**

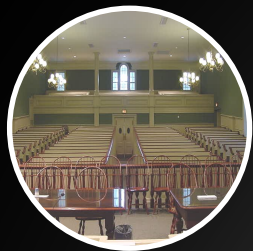


# Criminal/Juvenile Division

In 2014, the Court received 4,891 new adult criminal cases. Seven of those new adult cases were homicide filings.

The five judges assigned to the Criminal/Juvenile Division are responsible for handling a caseload comprised of adult criminal cases as well as juvenile delinquency matters. Furthermore, the judges in this division handle appeals of summary cases, forfeiture matters, contempt of Domestic Relations' court orders, and contempt of cost and fine orders.





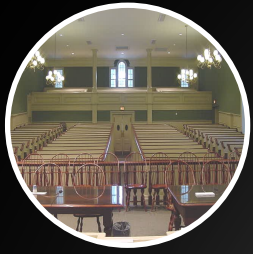
# Criminal/Juvenile Division

## Adult Criminal Court

The Court utilizes an individual calendaring system in the Criminal/Juvenile Division. The assigned judge handles the cases from formal arraignment through disposition. In addition, all probation and parole violations as well as post sentence motions are handled by the judge who sentenced the defendant.

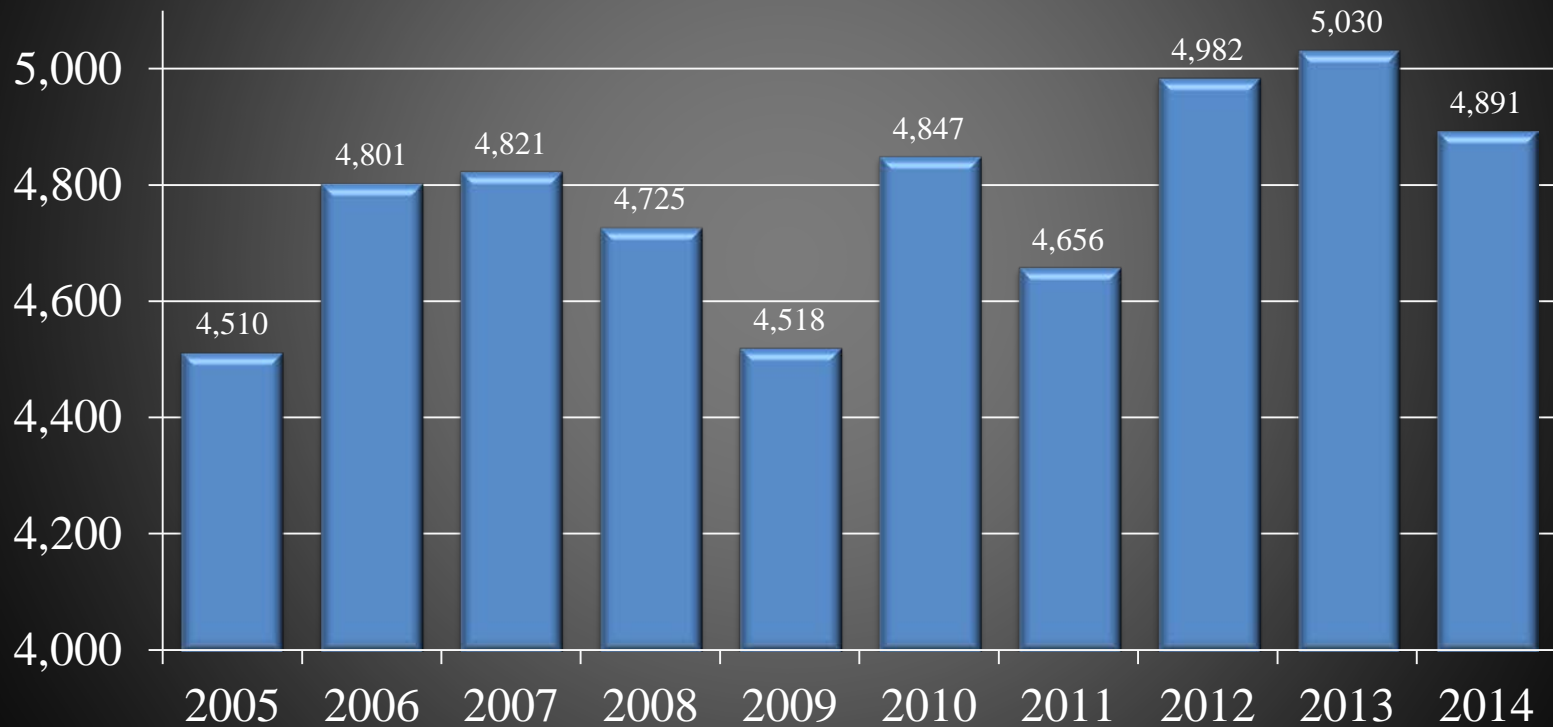
In 2014, the five judges of the Criminal/Juvenile Division disposed of 5,790 adult criminal cases.

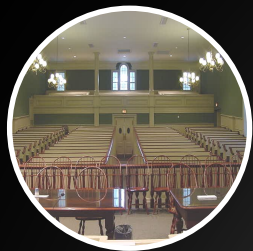
Criminal Filings and Dispositions for 2014	
New Cases	4891
Reopened Cases	800
ARD	1713
Dismissed	8
Rule 586	55
Withdrawn Nolle Prossed	76
Speedy Trial	0
Guilty Plea	3050
Nolo Plea	184
Nonjury Trial-Guilty	10
Nonjury Trial Not Guilty	7
Jury Trial Guilty	22
Jury Trial Not Guilty	9
Bench Warrant	649
Incompetent	2
Case Transferred	2
Remand MDJ	1
Transfer Juvenile Court	2
<b>Total Dispositions</b>	<b>5790</b>



# Criminal/Juvenile Division

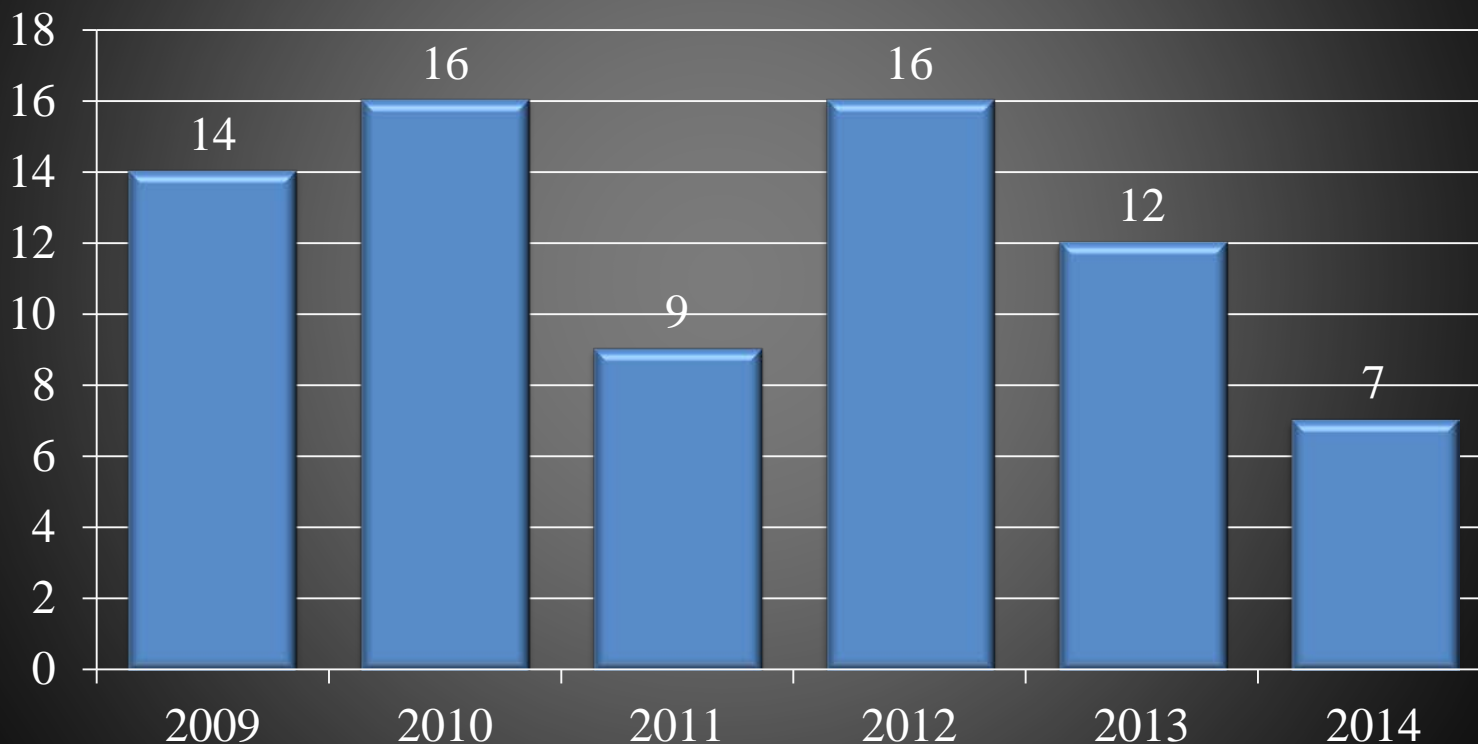
## New Criminal Cases Ten Year Trend 2004-2014

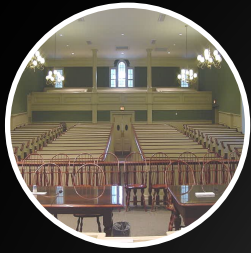




# Criminal/Juvenile Division

## Annual Homicide Filings 2009-2014





# Criminal/Juvenile Division

## Juvenile Court: Delinquency and Dependency

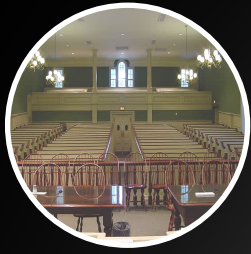
Juvenile Court, in 2014, fell under both the authority of the Administrative Judge of the Criminal/Juvenile Division and the Administrative Judge of the Civil Division. The Juvenile Court Division as a whole is responsible for cases involving juvenile delinquency and juvenile dependency. The Juvenile Court judges are assisted by two full-time Juvenile Masters who adjudicate both delinquency and dependency cases. Theresa M. Loder, Esquire and Jacquelyn C. Paradis, Esquire serve as full time Juvenile Masters. In 2014, these two masters disposed of 543 delinquency cases.

### Dependent Juveniles

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

### Delinquent Juveniles

- Those children 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.
- Juveniles may be both delinquent and dependent.
- There were **826** new delinquency filings in 2014.



# Civil/Family Court Division

The five judges assigned to the Civil/Family Division are responsible for a caseload comprised of various types of civil actions as well as divorce, custody, protection from abuse, and child and spousal support cases. The judges in this division also handle juvenile dependency cases and Orphans' Court cases regarding termination of parental rights, adoptions, and guardianships.

## Civil/Family Division

Civil Cases

Juvenile Dependency

### Family

Divorce

Custody

PFA

Child Support

Spousal Support

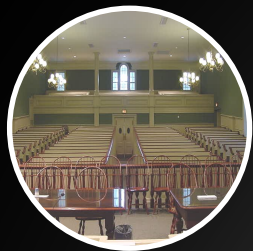
### Orphans' Court

Parental Rights

Adoptions

Guardianships





# Civil/Family Court Division

## 2014 Civil Court Snapshot

4,053

New  
Civil Cases  
filed in  
Lehigh County  
in 2014

1134

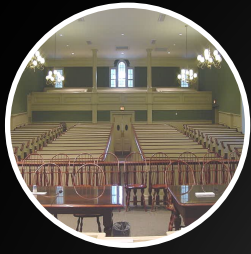
Mortgage  
Foreclosure  
Cases Filed  
in 2014

1108

Foreclosure  
Cases  
Diverted to the  
Mortgage  
Foreclosure  
Program

295

Mortgage Cases  
Settled  
with the  
Mortgage  
Company



# Civil/Family Court Division

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. Within the Civil Category are License and Registration Suspension Appeals, Mortgage Foreclosures, Assessment Appeals, Quiet Title Actions, Zoning Appeals, Ejectment and Actions in Replevin.

## **CIVIL COURT OPERATIONS**

The Civil Operations section of the Court Administrator's Office, under the direction of Court Operations Officer Toni Dries and Court Operations Director Linda Fritz, is responsible for scheduling and tracking all civil cases. There are approximately 1,700 civil cases pending in the Court's open inventory. With the pending cases, the staff of the Civil Operations section schedule and distribute notices for status conferences, arguments, hearings, settlement conferences, and trials. The staff is responsible for tracking the result of each court proceeding. The Judges of the Civil/Family Division work with the Civil Operations staff to proactively manage the civil caseload.



# Family Court Division

## Family Court Office

Divorce

Child Custody

Protection from Abuse

## Domestic Relations Section

Child Support

Spousal Support



# Family Court Division

## 2014 Divorce Case Snapshot

942

Divorce Cases  
Processed

915

New Divorce  
Cases Filed  
in 2014

128

Divorce Cases  
Assigned to the  
Divorce Master

176

Divorce Cases  
Initiated  
through  
Self-Help  
Website



# Family Court Division

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## 2014 Custody Trends

**+80%** of 2014 Lehigh County custody cases involved self-represented parties

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More cases are between parents who have never been married

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Grandparents may seek custody or partial custody in some cases

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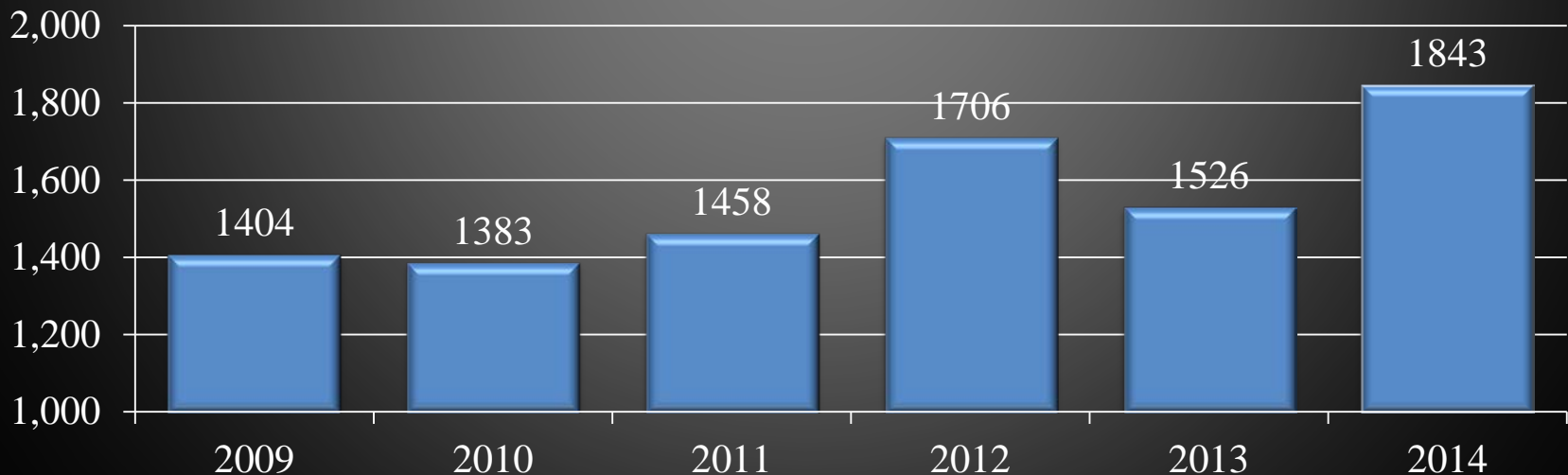


# Family Court Division

## Child Custody

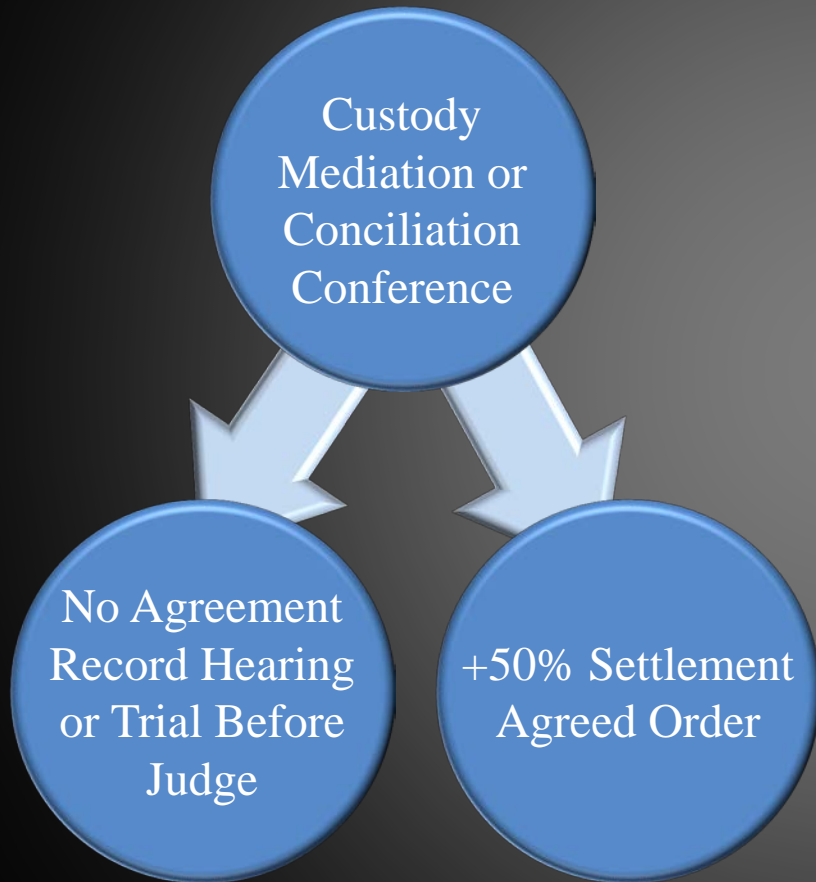
When a self-represented litigant comes to the Family Court office, an intake worker asks questions to determine if Lehigh County court has jurisdiction to decide a case. The intake worker provides the forms necessary to start a custody action, and gives instructions on completing the forms, and filing and serving the pleadings on the other parent. There were 1843 custody filings in 2014. This includes initial filings, modifications, and petitions for contempt.

## Total Custody Filings by Year





# Family Court Division



Custody cases start with a mediation or conciliation conference where efforts are made for agreements between the parties. Unless a party requests mediation, a settlement (conciliation) conference is scheduled before custody hearing officer. The hearing officer helps the parties focus on the child's needs, and attempts to settle the case.

When the parties fail to agree, the case is scheduled for hearing or trial. The hearing officer has the authority to receive testimony and make recommendations in partial custody cases. Cases involving legal custody, primary physical custody, or contempt of a court order are scheduled before a judge.

More than half the custody cases filed in 2014 were resolved by the hearing officers with agreed orders. An additional 20 percent of the cases were resolved through mediation or record hearings by a hearing officer.



# Family Court Division

## Protection from Abuse

Pennsylvania law requires every court to assist victims of domestic violence seeking protection from abuse orders. Individuals may seek a protection order on their own behalf or on behalf of their minor child.

Lehigh County Family Court staff provide private intake assistance and escorts applicants to court. Court assistance hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. daily, and litigants appear before a judge at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Special security measures are taken in all cases, especially in cases where cross-petitions have been filed. Emergency PFA relief is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through the Magisterial District Judges.

**1,267**

New Protection  
from Abuse Cases  
in 2014

**1,091**

Temporary  
PFA Orders  
Granted

**467**

Final  
PFA Orders  
Granted

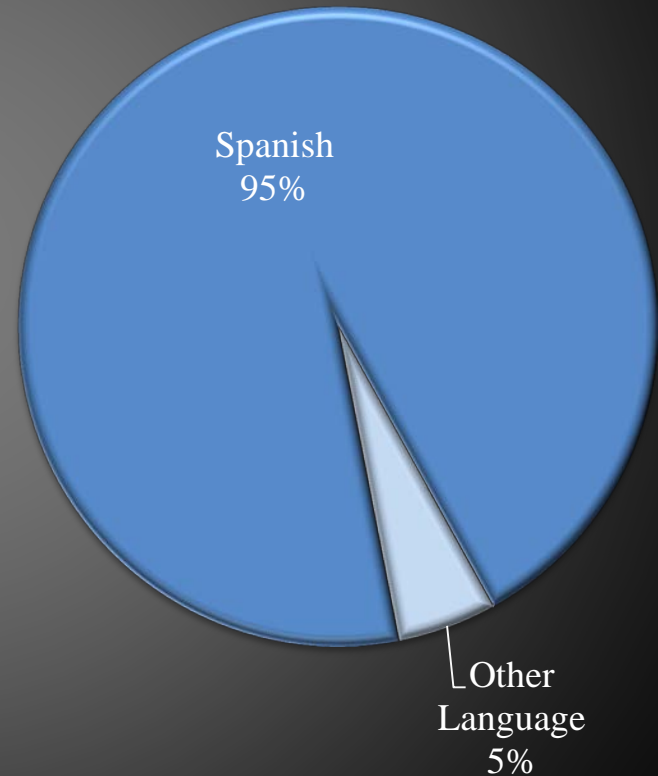


# Family Court Division

## Interpreting Unit: Foreign and Sign Language

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.

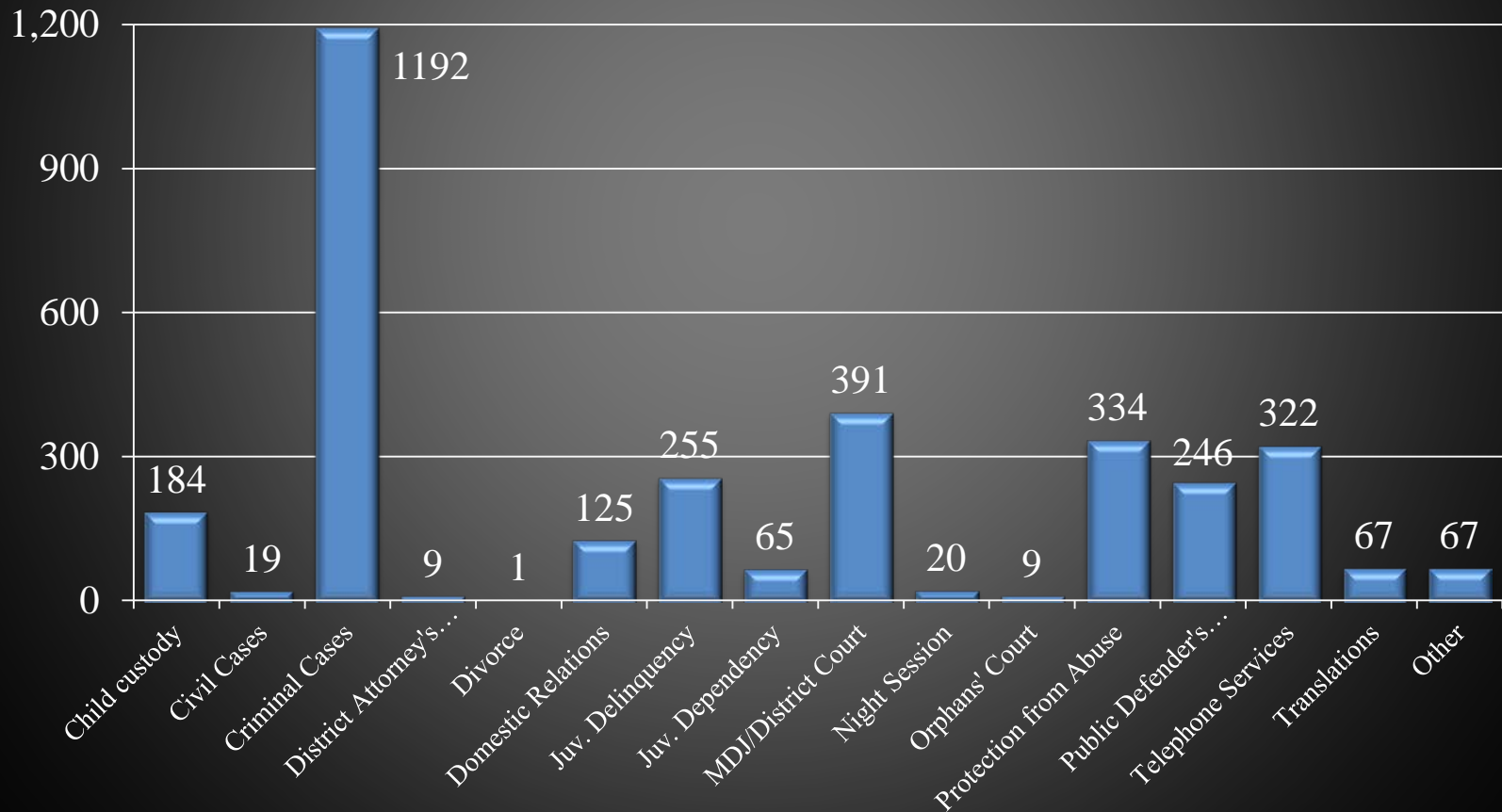
The numbers of individuals needing interpreting services increased in 2014, but the number of available interpreters did not. The challenge of allocating limited resources to increased demands was met by having Juvenile and Adult Probation Offices and District Courts use the telephone interpreting services.





# Family Court Division

## Total 2014 Interpreter Assignments per Case Type Divorce Case Snapshot







# Family Court Division

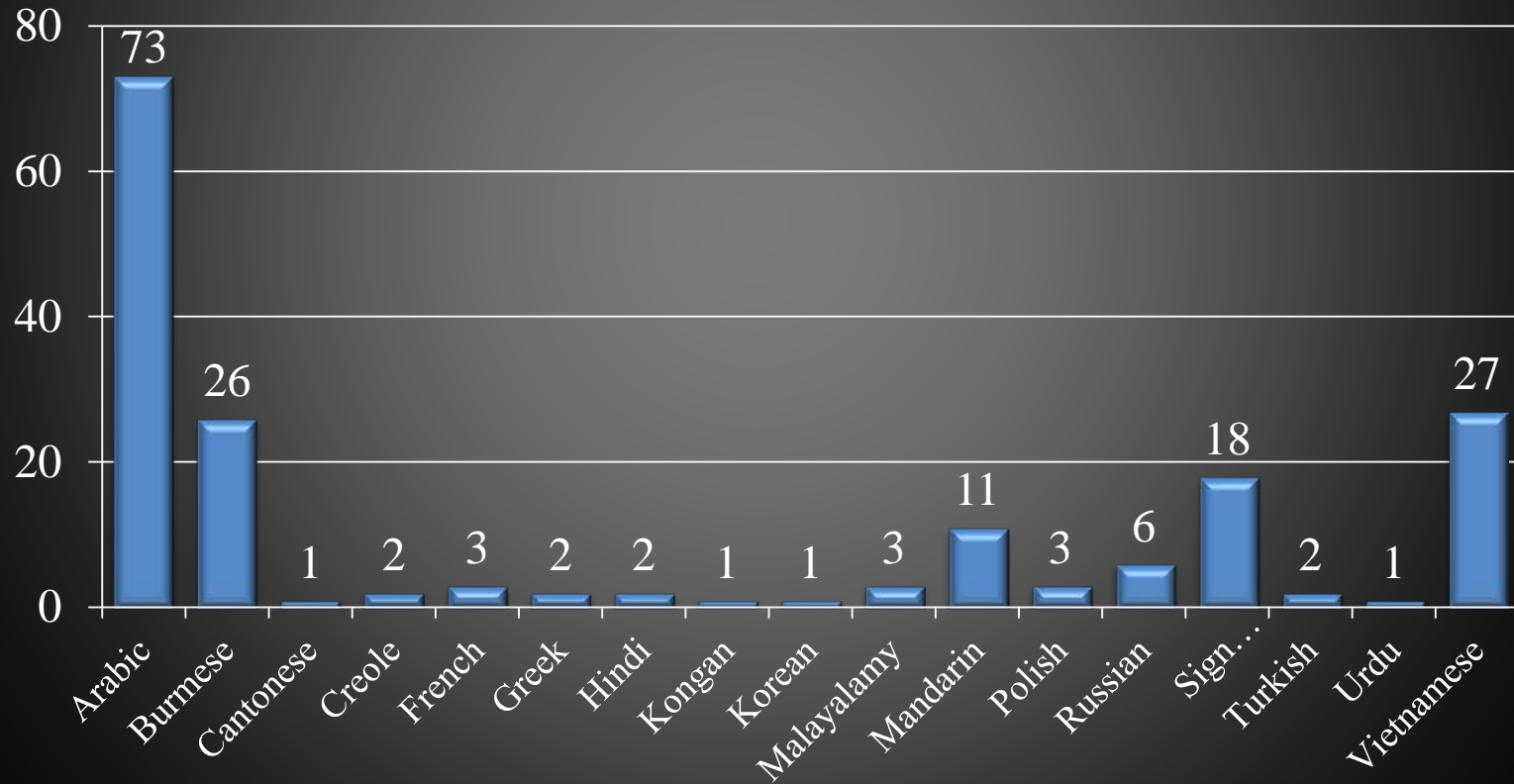
2014 Assignments Per Language Per Month

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Spanish	284	254	288	287	245	275	257	239	295	255	222	229	3130
Arabic	7	5	5	15	6	4	8	9	3	6	3	2	73
Burmese	3	3	1	5	0	2	0	0	1	7	0	4	26
Cantonese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Creole	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
French	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Greek	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Hindi	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Kongan	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Korean	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Malayalamy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
Mandarin	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	5	11
Polish	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Russian	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	6
Sign Language	2	0	4	2	1	2	3	1	1	0	2	0	18
Turkish	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Urdu	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Vietnamese	2	4	3	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	1	1	27
Total	298	269	305	311	254	291	270	257	306	275	232	244	3312



# Family Court Division

## 2014 Interpreter Assignments, Excluding Spanish





# Domestic Relations Section

**12,150**

**Number of  
active support  
cases in Lehigh  
County in  
2014**

**\$47,781,590**

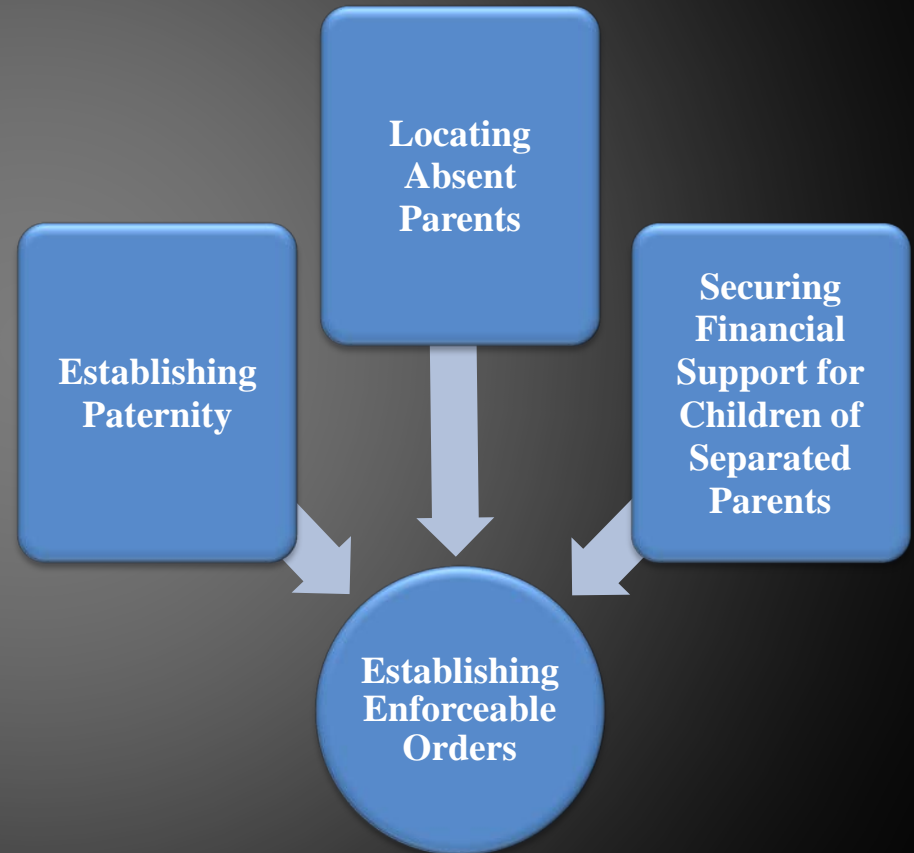
**Support  
collected and  
distributed by  
DRS in  
2014**



# Domestic Relations Section

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. Under the leadership of Director Julia Parker Greenwood, the Domestic Relations Section 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. In 2014, there were

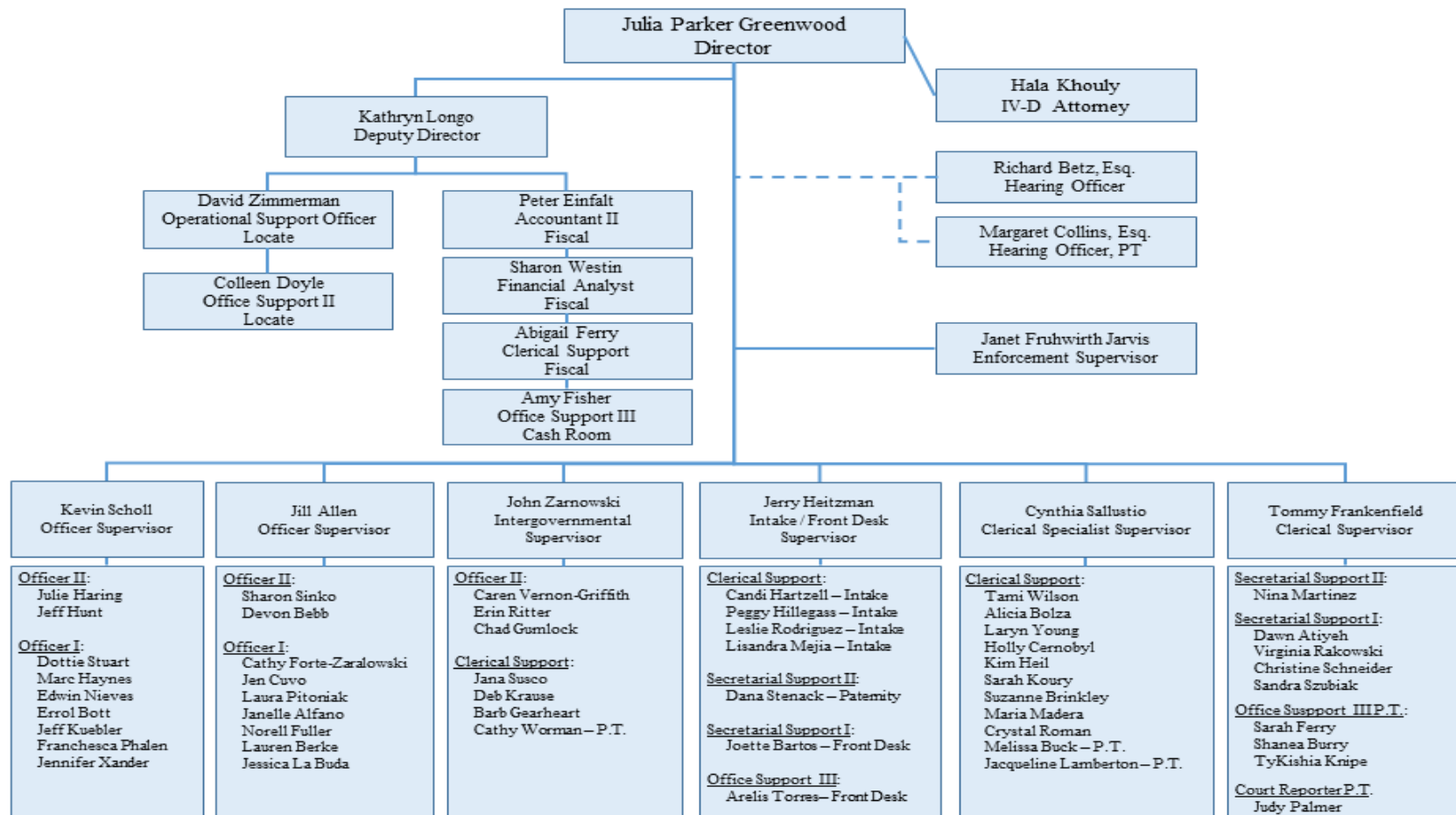
- 21 conference officers
- 1 full time hearing officer
- 1 part time hearing officer
- 9 managers
- 31 full support staff, and
- 6 part-time support staff.





# Domestic Relations Section

**DRS Organization Chart**







# Domestic Relations Section

## Case Management Teams

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 2014, Domestic Relations staff conducted 4,856 establishment conferences and 840 establishment hearings. In addition, 4,276 contempt hearings were conducted.

## PACSES and SCDU

The Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement System (PACSES) is a state-wide computer and check disbursement system 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 2014, that figure was \$47,781,590.



# Domestic Relations Section

## Establishing Child and Spousal Support Orders

Establishment of support in Lehigh County progresses under a 3-tier system. A Conference Officer handles initial complaints for support and petitions for modification. If no agreement can be reached at the conference level, a temporary or "interim" order is issued, and the case proceeds to a full hearing before a Hearing Officer. The support order entered by the Hearing Officer can be appealed before a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County.





# Domestic Relations Section

## 2014 TANF Support Case Filings & Dispositions

New Cases	433
Cases Transferred In	38
Non-TANF to TANF	335
Judge	0
Hearing Officer	41
Conference Officer	506
Cases Transferred Out	40
TANF to Non-TANF	233
Cases Processed	820

## 2014 Non-TANF Support Case Filings & Dispositions

New Cases	5142
Cases Transferred In	88
TANF to Non-TANF	233
Judge	47
Hearing Officer	544
Conference Officer	4451
Cases Transferred Out	87
Non-TANF to TANF	335
Cases Processed	5464

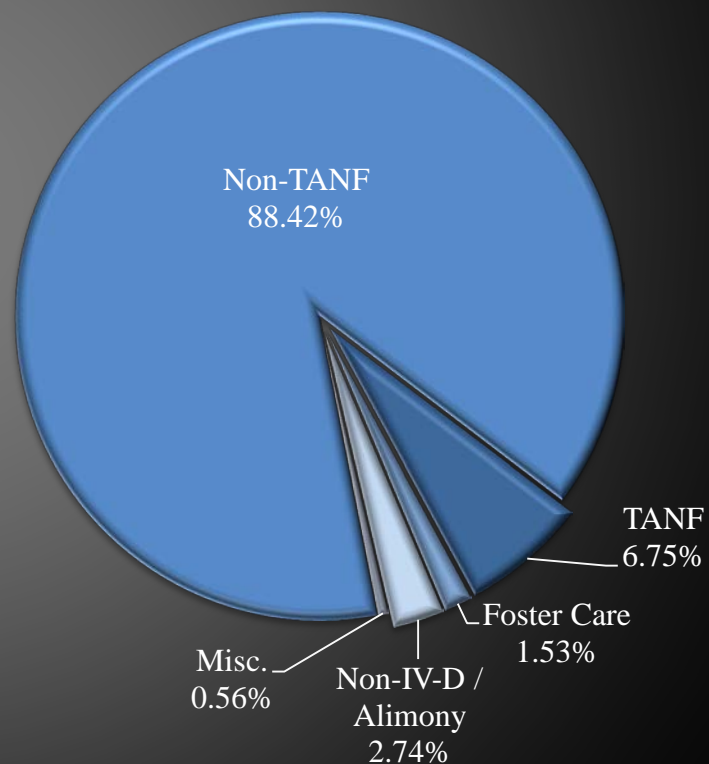


# Domestic Relations Section

**TANF** Cases involve children in families receiving aid under the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program.

**Non-TANF** cases are those with no such federal assistance.

**2014 Support Cases  
By Case Type**





# Domestic Relations Section

## **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.

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
- Cases with medical support enforced—not tied to funding

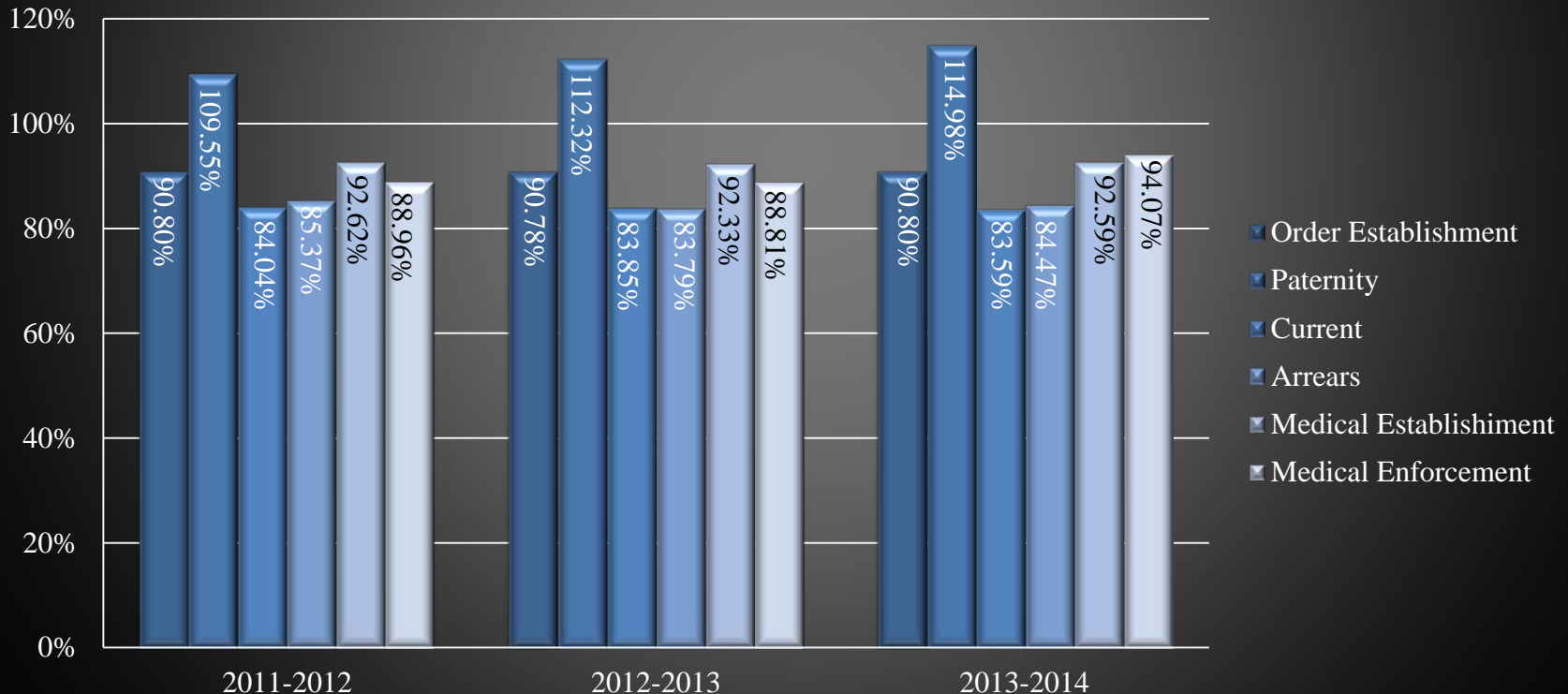




# Domestic Relations Section

## 2013-2014 Domestic Relations Section Federal Performance Indicators

**For Federal Fiscal year 2014, which ended on September 30, 2014, Lehigh County exceeded 80% in all the Federal Performance Standards.**





# Domestic Relations Section

## Judicial and Administrative Enforcement of Support Orders

Conference Officers are also responsible for ensuring compliance with 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 when necessary. The following enforcement tools are available.

**IRS Intercepts**

**Drivers License  
Suspensions**

**Real Estate Liens**

**Work Search  
Program**

**Professional License  
Suspensions**

**Lottery Intercepts**

**Credit Bureau  
Reporting**



# 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 is part of the Clerk of Judicial Records. All scheduling for Orphans' Court cases is done by the Office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court. The Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas is under the direction of the Director of Orphans' Court Operations, Janet Thwaites, Esquire, and the Clerk of the Orphans' Court, Wendy A. W. Parr. In addition, a full-time law clerk, three full-time assistant clerks and a full-time auditor, (who reviews all formally filed fiduciary accounts), comprise the staff of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court. 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

<b>The Orphans' Court Division</b>	Oversees Trusts, Powers of Attorney and certain aspects of non-profit organizations	Reviews and approves settlement of litigation/claims involving minors, incapacitated persons and/or decedents' estates	Audits all formal fiduciary accounts
<b>The Orphans' Court Hears</b>	Appeals from Register of Wills, most commonly, will contests, or contested letters of administration	All parental termination cases	Petitions for adult guardianships (incapacities)
	Disputes Regarding administration/distribution in decedents' estates	Adoptions and minors' guardianship cases	Judicial by-pass hearings required by the Abortion Control Act
<b>The Office of the Clerk of Orphans' Court</b>	Issues marriage licenses upon "in person" application	Maintains marriage license records and issues certified copies of those records	Responds to requests for access to both identifying and non-identifying information from adoption files.



# Orphans' Court Division

## Requirements Posing Unique Challenges 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 Division

1985

Marriage  
Licenses Issued

43

Children freed  
for adoption  
following the  
termination of  
the parental  
rights of their  
biological  
parents

59

Adoptions  
Granted

99

Persons  
adjudicated  
incapacitated and  
appointed  
guardians for  
their persons and  
or estates



# Orphans' Court Division

27

Guardians of the  
Person Appointed  
for minors

61

Minors'  
settlements  
involving lump  
sum payouts,  
creation of trusts,  
and structured  
settlement  
approved

54

Fiduciary  
accountings  
audited,  
confirmed and  
adjudicated

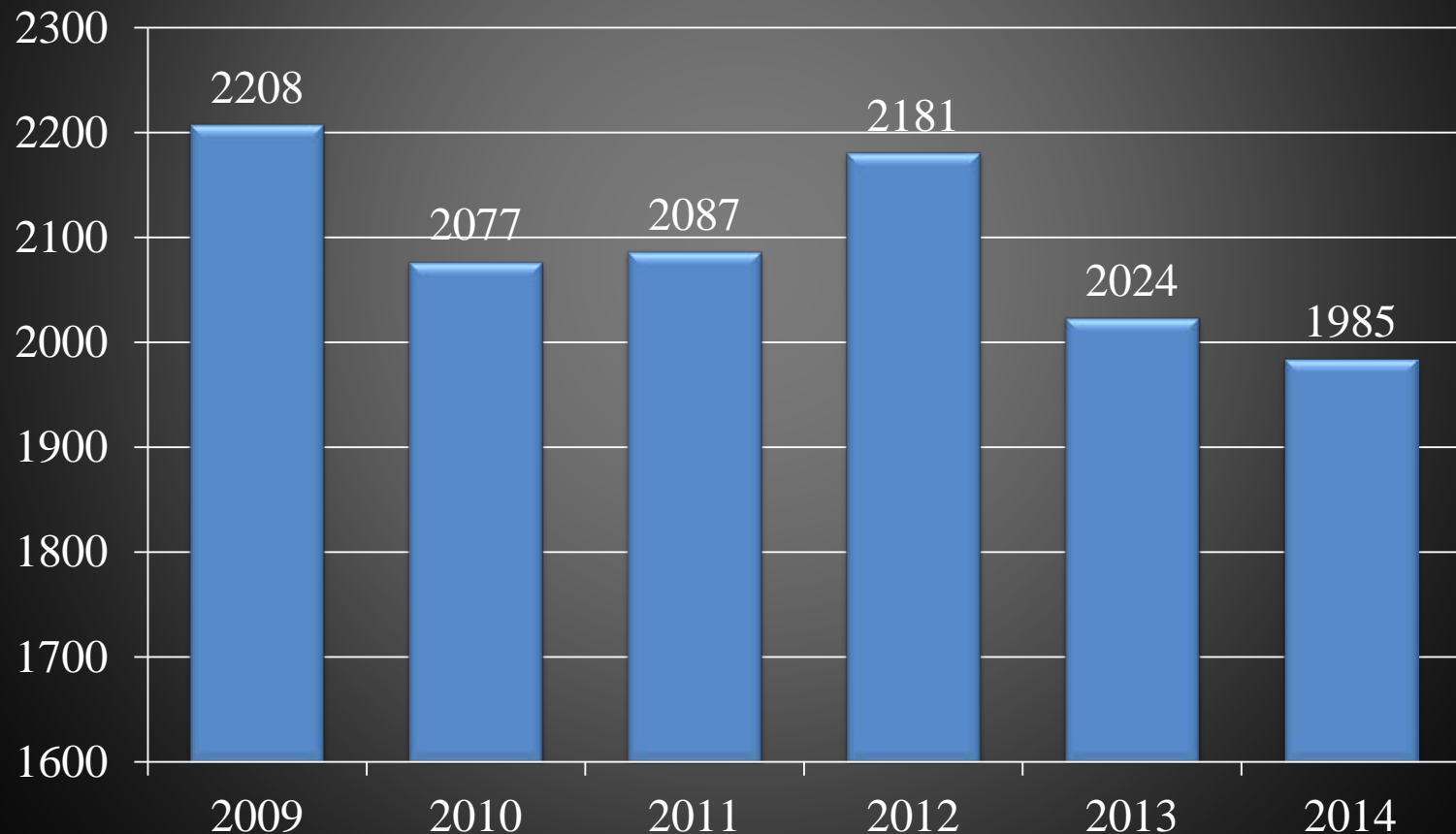
9

Judicial Bypass  
hearings pursuant  
to the Abortion  
Control Act Held



# Orphans' Court Division

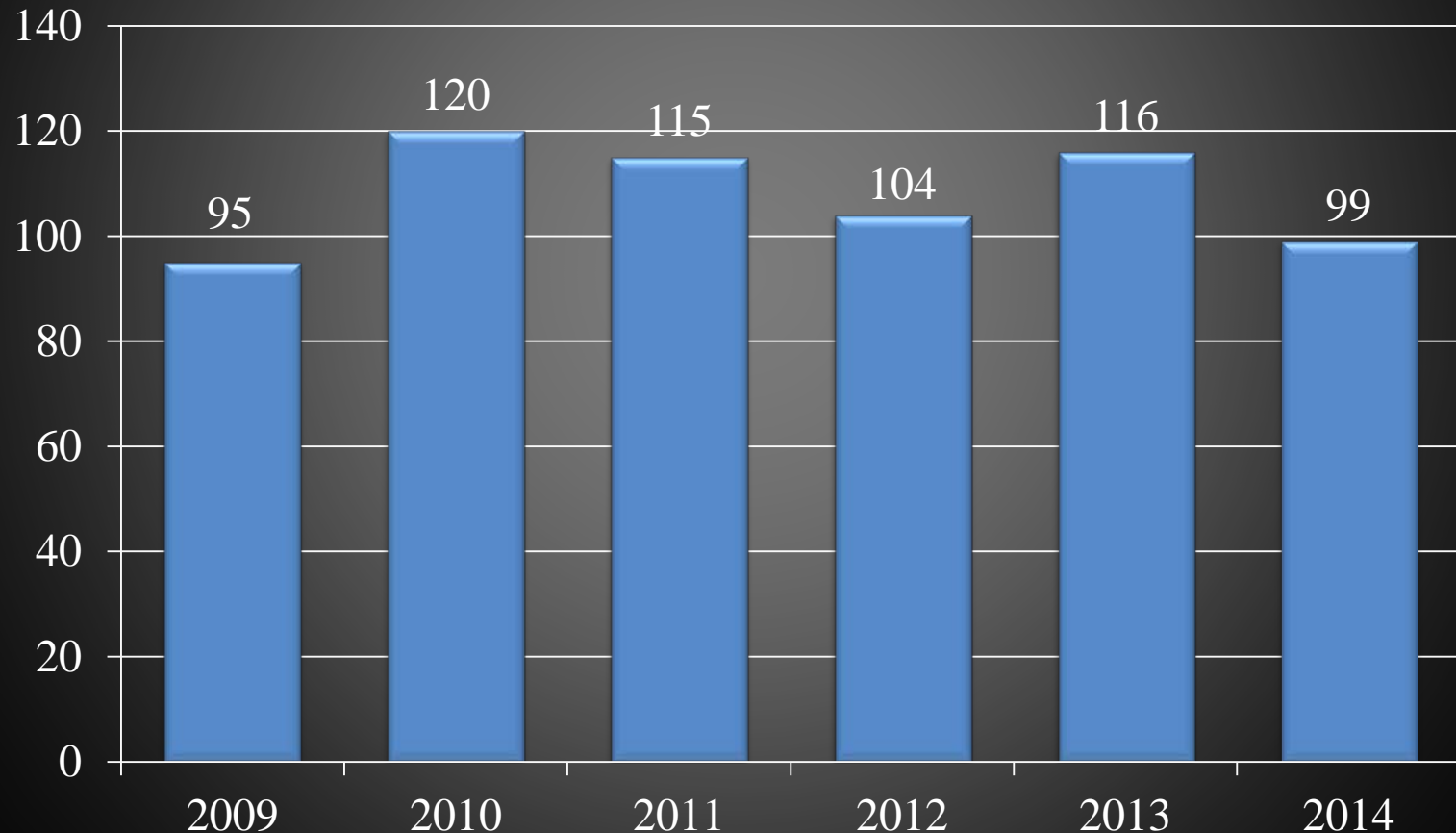
## Marriage Licenses 2009 to 2014





# Orphans' Court Division

## Incapacities 2009 to 2014



# Probation Departments



Adult Probation



Juvenile Probation



# Adult Probation

**38**

**Probation  
Officers**

**13**

**Probation  
Aides and  
Clerical  
Staff**

**6,127**

**Offenders  
on Active  
Supervision  
in 2014**





# 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.

## Philosophy and Primary Goal

The Department recognizes that offenders can change negative behavior patterns if they are afforded the appropriate supervision and restorative programs to help them in the rehabilitation process. The offender must, however, desire to change the inappropriate behavior and be willing to work with the probation officer to effectuate change. When an offender fails to comply with rules and conditions and where the community's safety is in jeopardy, the offender is removed from community supervision and remanded to jail.

The primary goal of the Lehigh County Adult Probation Department is to provide protection to the community. The Department attempts to achieve its goal through appropriate and relevant supervision and treatment of offenders by trained probation officers.

The Department is audited annually by the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole and continues to be in compliance with standards promulgated by the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections.



# Adult Probation

## Organizational Structure

Since the spring of 1996, the Department has been modeled after a Restorative Justice philosophy and paradigm, and since 2001, organized into seven functional units:

### **Administration**

**General Supervision Unit**  
(center city and suburban geographic locations)

### **The Intensive Unit**

**The Investigative Unit**  
(pre-sentence and pre-parole)

**The Intermediate Punishment Unit**  
(services to psychiatrically and psychologically impaired offenders, Competency/Accountability Program, Electronic Monitoring and Repeat Driving Under the Influence offenders)

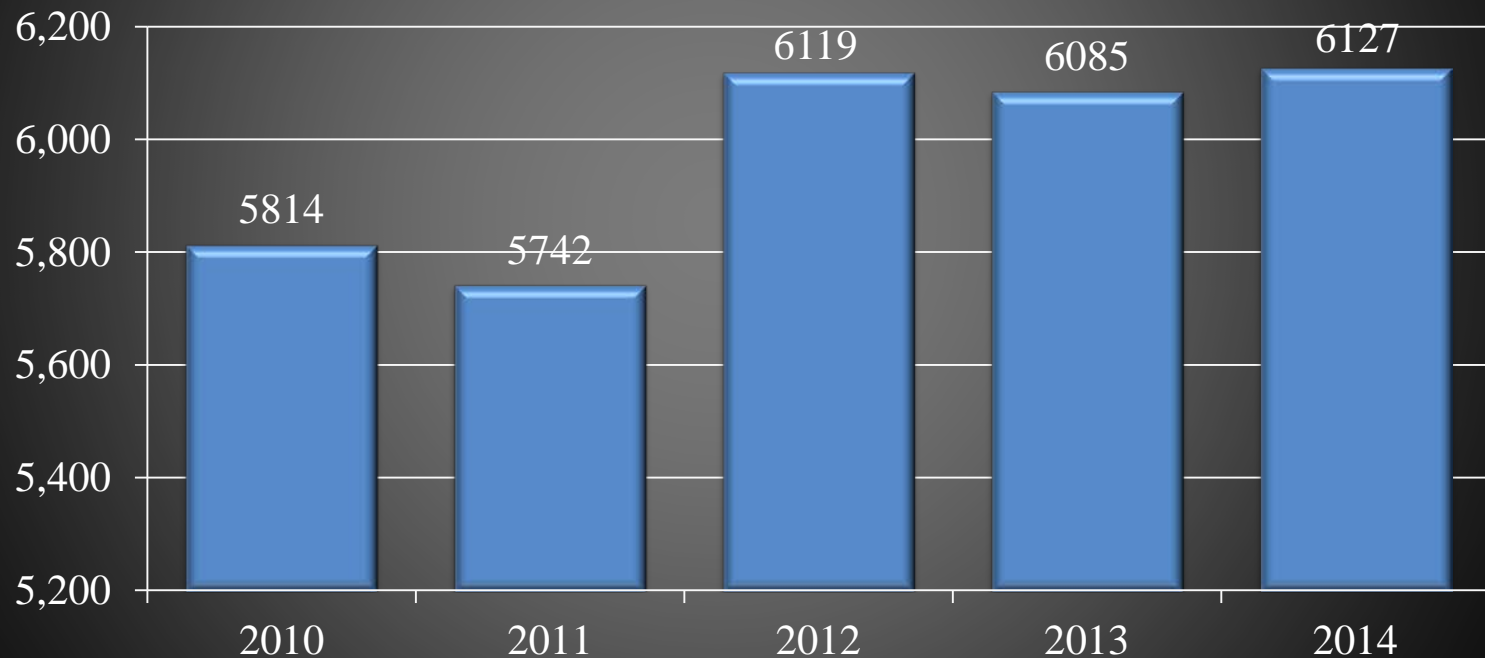
**The Monitoring/Intake Unit**  
(low risk offenders)

### **Support Staff**



# Adult Probation

## Number of Offenders on Active Supervision 2010-2014



As of December 31, 2014, there were 6,127 offenders on active supervision with the Department, an increase of 0.06% over the previous year.



# Adult Probation

## 2014 OFFENDER PROFILE

### Gender:

Male	74%
Female	26%

### Ethnicity:

Hispanic	23%
Non-Hispanic	75%
Unknown	2%

### Race:

White	81%
Black	17%
Asian	.5%
Other	1%
Unknown	.5%

### Disposition:

Probation	41%
Parole	28%
ARD	27%
I.P.	4%

### Offense Types:

Felony	23%
Misdemeanor	76%
Other	1%



# Adult Probation

## Five Year Budget Trends





# Adult Probation

**2,291**

**Pre-Parole  
Investigations  
Completed**

**521**

**Pre-Sentence  
Investigations  
Completed**

**1608**

**Court  
Reporting  
Network  
(CRN)  
Evaluations  
Completed**

**1133**

**Offenders  
Completing  
Alcohol  
Highway  
Safe-Driving  
School**





# Adult Probation

## Department Programs and Projects Active in 2014

Alcohol Highway  
Safety Project

Community  
Corrections Center

Community Work  
Service Project

Competency/  
Accountability  
Programs

Electronic  
Monitoring

Intensive Drug  
Supervision Unit

In-House Drug  
Testing Program

Special Program  
for Offenders in  
Rehabilitation  
and Education  
(SPORE)

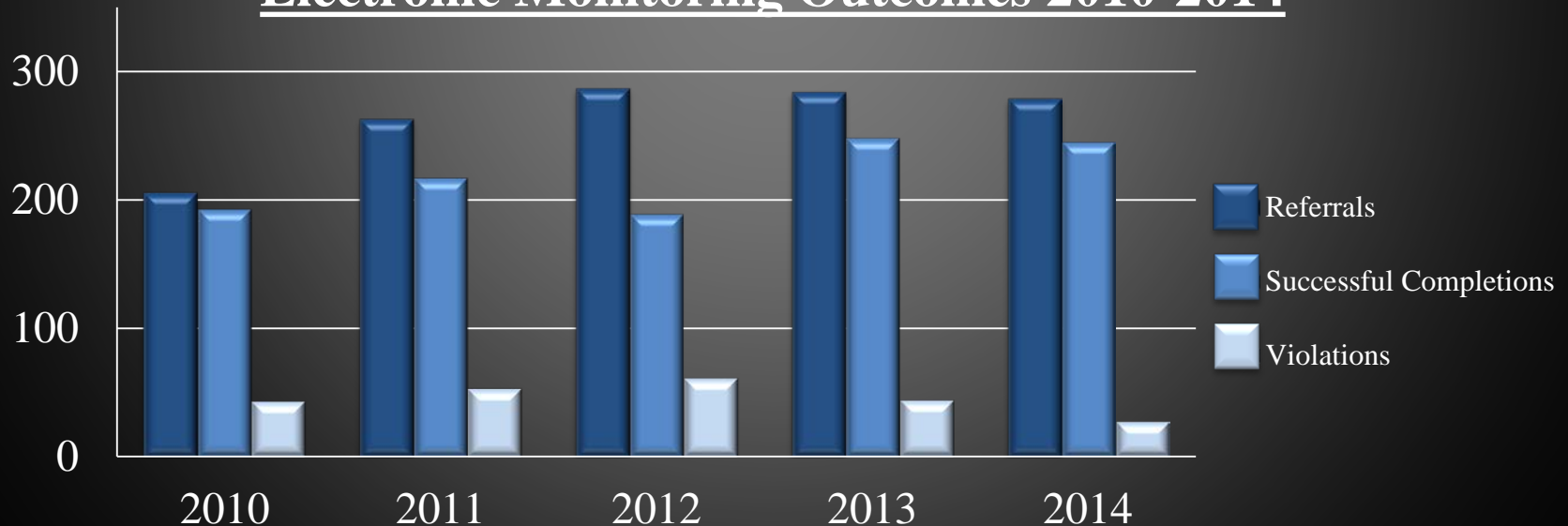
Treatment Continuum  
Alternative Project  
(TCAP)



# Adult Probation

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, 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, Global Positioning Satellite Tracking. The probation officer carries a paging device which alerts the officer of any violations.

## Electronic Monitoring Outcomes 2010-2014





# Adult Probation - SPORE

Special Program for Offenders in Rehabilitation and Education (SPORE) provide services for mentally ill and intellectually disabled offenders. Adult Probation Officers and Mental Health Caseworkers jointly supervise offenders on intensive and maximum supervision levels. A psychiatrist and psychologist are available for evaluations. During 2014, SPORE received 335 formal referrals, an increase of 18.0% from 2013 and 72 psychiatric evaluations were completed.

## 2014 SPORE Referrals





# Juvenile Probation

## Mission Statement

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

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. 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.



# Juvenile Probation

## The Balanced Approach



**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.

**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.

**Competency Development:** The department assesses each youth to determine how they can best become productive and responsible citizens. This is the 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."



# Juvenile Probation

## Administration / Management

Intake Unit (Evaluation and Assessment)

Community Based Supervision

SPORE (Mental Health and ID)

Placement/Aftercare Unit

Community Services Unit

Victim Services Unit

Low Risk Supervision Unit

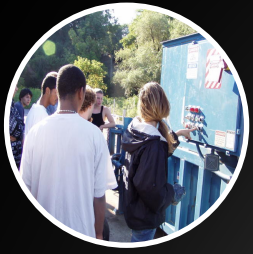
Non Payment of Costs and Fines Unit

Transportation Unit

Fiscal Unit

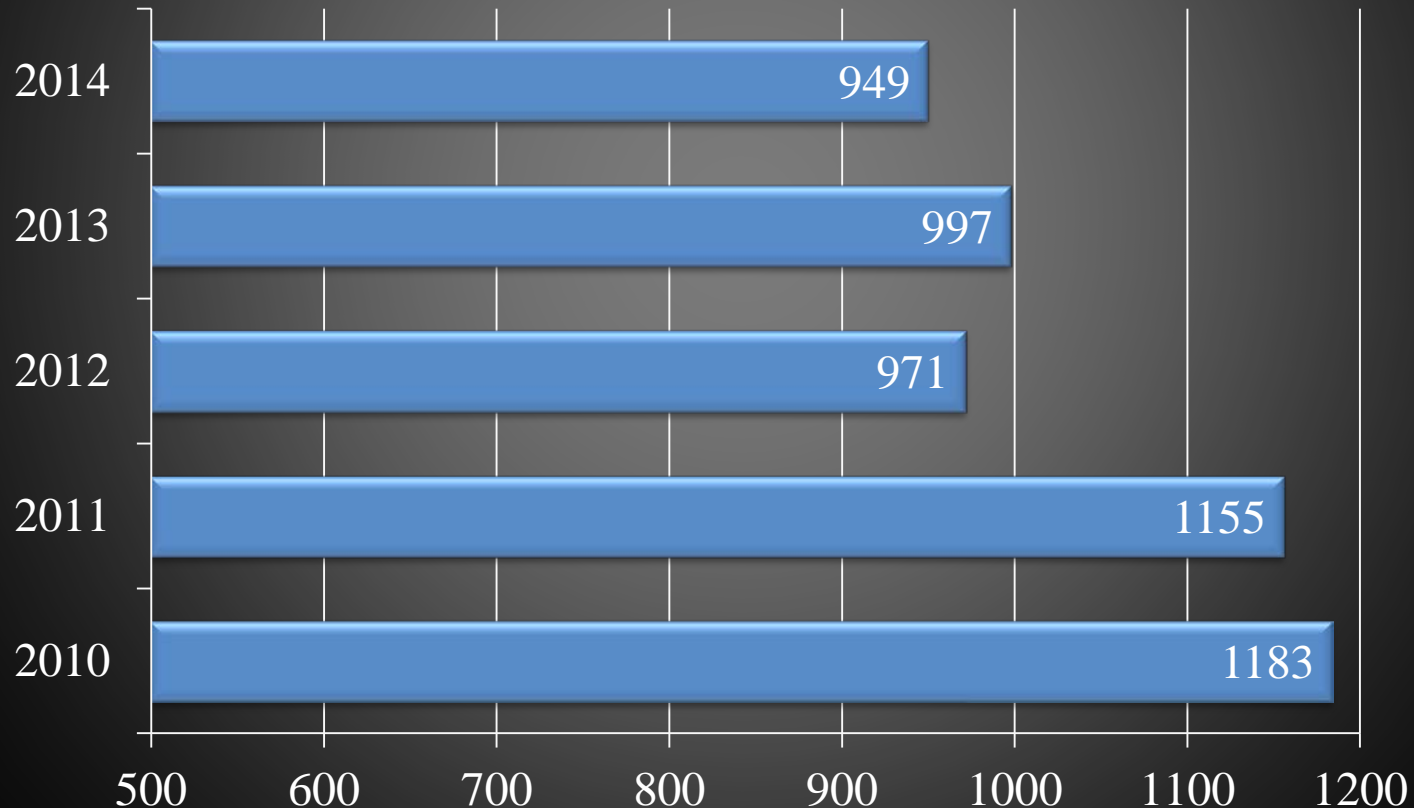
Support Staff





# Juvenile Probation

## Youth Under Supervision 2010-2014





# Juvenile Probation

## 2014 JUVENILE PROBATION: CLIENT PROFILE ON REFERRALS

### **Gender:**

Male	71%
Female	29%

### **Offense Type:**

Felony	21%
Misdemeanor	60%
Other	19%

### **Race:**

White	63%
Black	33%
Multiracial	4%

### **Ethnicity:**

Hispanic	50%
Non-Hispanic	49%
Unknown	1%

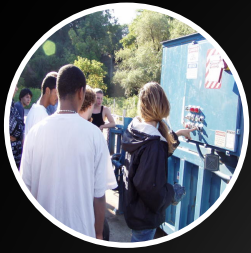


# Juvenile Probation

## Juvenile Probation Primary Dispositions

Year	Referrals	Informal Adjustment	Consent Decree	Probation	Placement
2014	1293	78	148	338	190
2013	1175	61	175	305	221
2012	1239	161	189	393	214
2011	1475	259	184	479	209
2010	1570	219	191	385	238

While referrals have been relatively flat for the past few years, complex issues within cases have increased significantly requiring more collaboration with system partners and heightened attention to the dynamics of the case. Heightened attention is also required for sex offender supervision. The use of drugs among youth, and gang activity, remain a concern for our probation officers and require an increased level of supervision. As has been the case for many years, the number of youth with a mental health diagnosis has continued to increase. These youth require special attention and interventions. **Probation and Placement dispositions can be counted more than once for the same juvenile as they represent each “case,” therefore the probation and placement numbers reflected above are inflated. Referral numbers include Nonpayment of Costs and Fines.**



# Juvenile Probation Risk/Need Status

<u>Juvenile Probation Risk Status</u>			
<u>Domain</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>High</u>
Prior and Current Offenses	70% (936)	24% (316)	6%
Family Circumstances / Parenting	72% (950)	24% (318)	5%
Education / Employment	30% (396)	55% (736)	15%
Peer Relations	41% (551)	41% (541)	18%
Substance Abuse	52% (687)	31% (407)	18%
Leisure / Recreation	34% (447)	28% (370)	38%
Personality / Behavior	30% (396)	59% (785)	11%
Attitudes / Orientation	59% (788)	39% (517)	2%
<b>Overall Risk Status</b>	<b>48% (642)</b>	<b>46% (605)</b>	<b>6%</b>

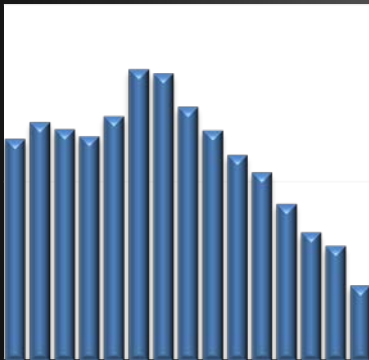
Research shows that to have the greatest impact on recidivism of delinquent behavior, the juvenile justice system must adhere to the principals of risk, need, and responsivity. In 2009, Lehigh County was one of the first 10 counties (now 66) in Pennsylvania to implement the Youth Level Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI). This instrument measures the youth's risk to reoffend, and helps prioritize the services necessary to affect change. This information is used to determine appropriate levels of supervision, develop case specific goals, and better allocate resources. This will hopefully produce better outcomes for youth and keep our communities safer.

In 2014 Juvenile Probation completed 1,329 assessment, showing that 48% of our youth were low risk, 46% moderate risk, and 6% high risk. Each of the domains listed here represent the percentage of risk within each overall risk level.



# Juvenile Probation

## Detention Trends 2000-2014

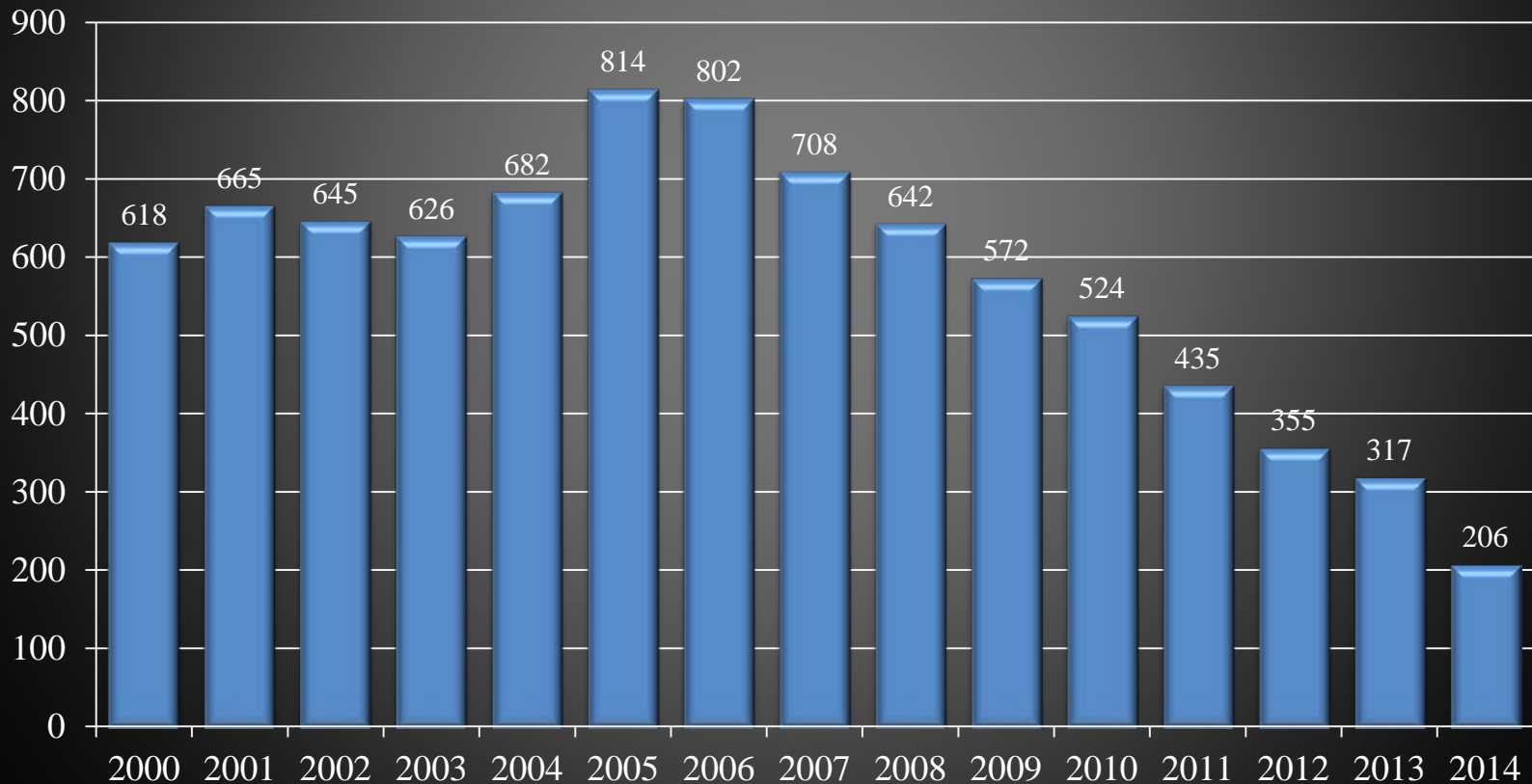


The decision to place a youth in a detention center is one of the most important decisions the juvenile court can make. Throughout the United States, recent emphasis has been on making better detention decisions based on whether each youth is at high risk to commit another crime or fail to appear for court. Lehigh County, as in many other jurisdictions throughout the country, has shown that by detaining the right youth, or selecting proper alternatives to detention, there has been little risk of reoffending or failing to appear for court. Lehigh County has seen decreasing numbers of youth placed in detention. The decreasing trend is displayed clearly on the following graph.



# Juvenile Probation

## Juveniles Placed in Detention 2000-2014







# Juvenile Probation

## Outcomes on 498 Juvenile Probation Cases Closed in 2014

Juveniles who completed a community service obligation in full	87.7%
Juveniles in school or employed at case closing	84.9%
Juveniles who paid their restitution in full	82.2%
Juveniles who re-offended while under supervision	18.5%
Juveniles with a technical violation of probation requiring further court action	17.0%
Juveniles committed to placement (28 days or longer)	19.1%
Completion rate of juveniles ordered to Victim Awareness Curriculum	97.2%
Juveniles who completed a Competency Development activity while under supervision	96.8%

**Probation officers are required to report outcome measures whenever they release a juvenile from probation supervision. These outcomes measure activities while under supervision.**



# Juvenile Probation Programs

Young Offenders  
Program

Evening Reporting  
Center

College Mentoring

Retail Theft Program

Underage Drinking  
Program

Young Artist Program

Marijuana Awareness  
Program

Aggression  
Replacement Training

Forward Thinking  
Journaling

Crossroads &  
Victim Awareness  
Curriculums

Thinking For a  
Change

Community Work  
Service Program



# **Magisterial District Court**

# Magisterial District Court



Jurisdiction & Filings



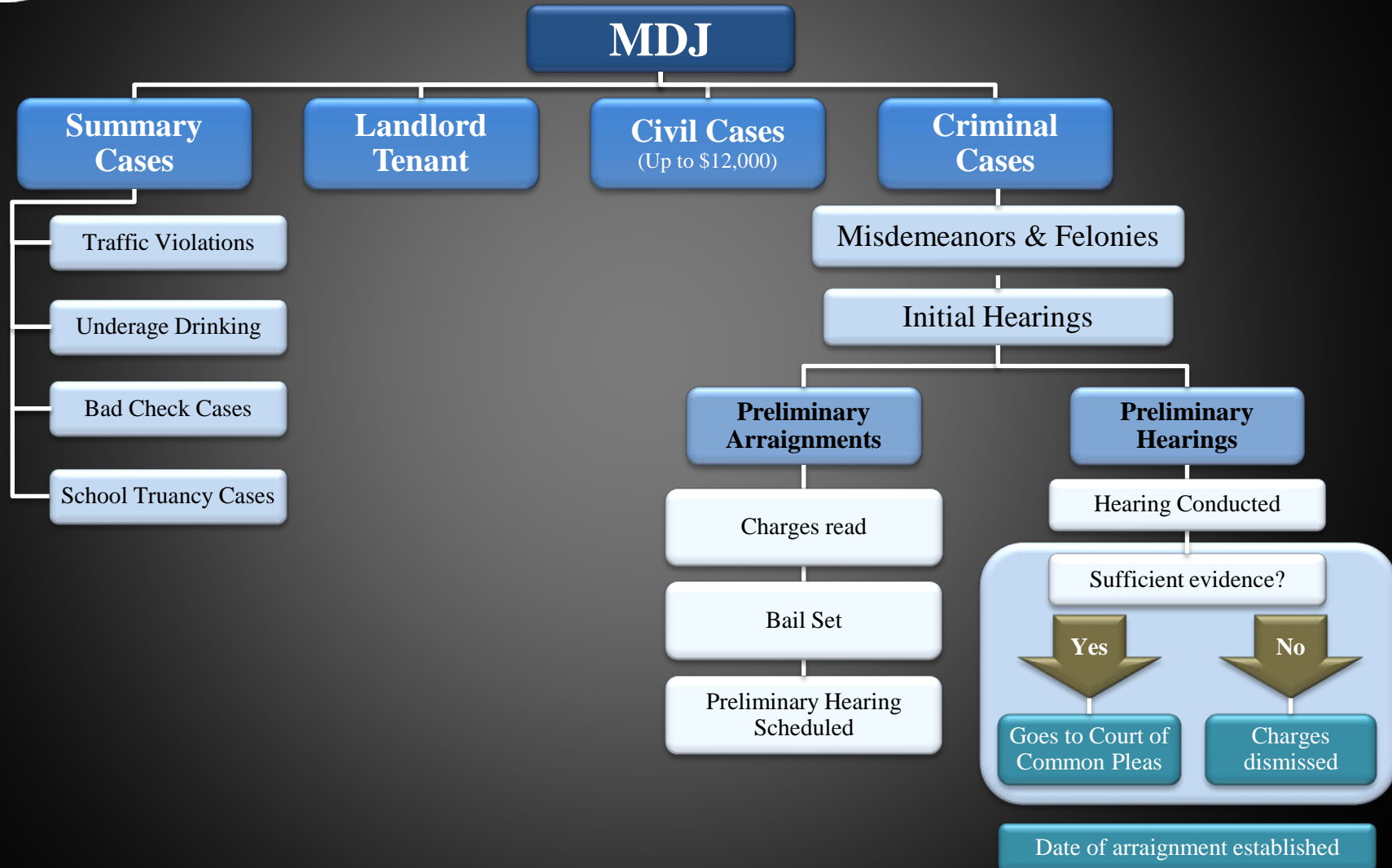
Magisterial District  
Judges



Night/Central Court



# Jurisdiction of the MDJ Courts





# Magisterial District Courts Filings

## 2014 MDJ Courts Snapshot

58,031

Summary  
Traffic  
Cases

12,002

Summary  
Non-  
Traffic  
Cases

9,375

Civil &  
Landlord/  
Tenant  
Cases

7,251

Criminal  
Cases





# 2014 Magisterial District Judges

The supervision of each District Court is the responsibility of the elected Magisterial District Judge, a state employee.

The employees within the specific office are County judicial employees and the personnel and administrative functions fall under the responsibility of the District Judge Administrator, H. Gordon Roberts.

<b>31-1-01</b>	<b>Patricia M. Engler</b>
<b>31-1-02</b>	<b>Rashid O. Santiago</b>
<b>31-1-03</b>	<b>Ronald S. Manescu</b>
<b>31-1-04</b>	<b>David M. Howells</b>
<b>31-1-05</b>	<b>Michael D. D'Amore</b>
<b>31-1-06</b>	<b>Wayne Maura</b>
<b>31-1-07</b>	<b>Robert C. Halal</b>
<b>31-1-08</b>	<b>Michael J. Pochron</b>
<b>31-2-01</b>	<b>Karen C. Devine</b>
<b>31-2-02</b>	<b>Jacob E. Hammond</b>
<b>31-2-03</b>	<b>Donna R. Butler</b>
<b>31-3-01</b>	<b>Rod R. Beck</b>
<b>31-3-02</b>	<b>Michael J. Faulkner</b>
<b>31-3-03</b>	<b>Daniel C. Trexler</b>



# Night Court and Central Court

Night

Preliminary Hearings  
for Arrests Made After  
Courthouse Hours

Bail Payments  
Emergency PFA Orders  
Constable Warrant  
Matters

Central

Preliminary Hearings  
for All Incarcerated  
Defendants

14 MDJs Preside at  
the Courthouse on a  
Rotating Schedule

Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas  
455 West Hamilton Street  
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101-1614

Court Administration

610-782-3014

[www.lccpa.org](http://www.lccpa.org)