



# THE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

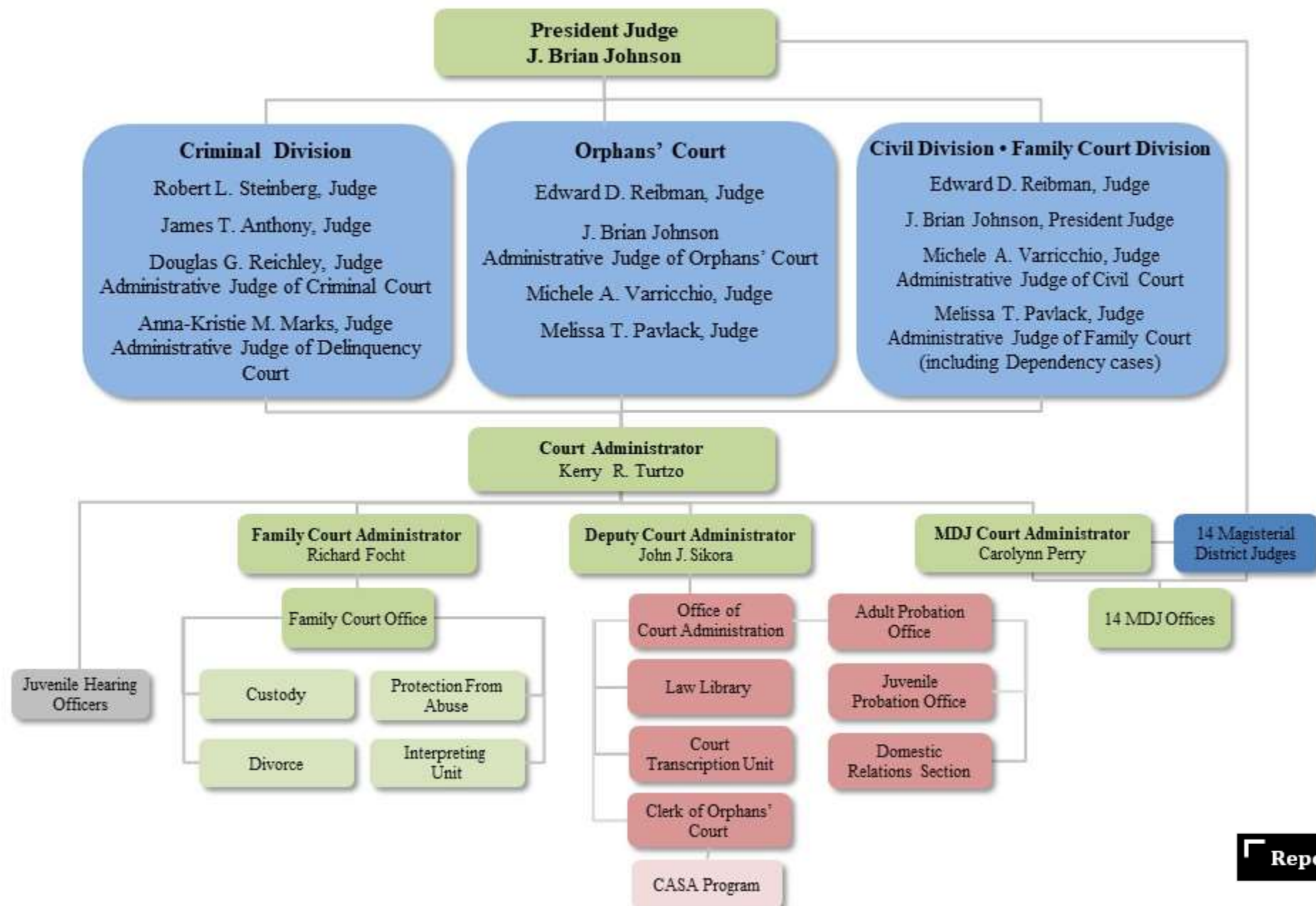
THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

**Judge Edward D. Reibman**  
**Judge Robert L. Steinberg**  
**President Judge J. Brian Johnson**  
**Judge James T. Anthony**  
**Judge Michele A. Varricchio**  
**Judge Douglas G. Reichley**  
**Judge Melissa T. Pavlack**  
**Judge Anna-Kristie M. Marks**  
**Senior Judge Carol K. McGinley**  
**Senior Judge Kelly L. Banach**



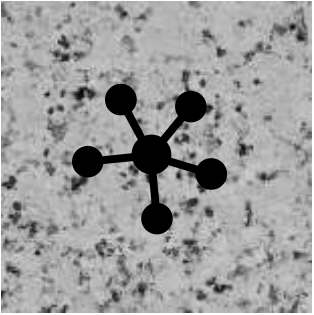
## The Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County in 2021

# 2021 Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas Organization



# The Year in Review 2021

## Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic Maze



### COVID-19

The Judicial Emergency declared in March of 2020 remained in effect well into 2021.



### Vaccines

2021 brought the availability of vaccines against the COVID-19 virus. Efforts supporting vaccination among court employees led to nearly 80% of Court employees to report they had been vaccinated by September 2021.



### Flexibility

Throughout 2021, the Court continued to navigate the COVID-19 maze and remained responsive and flexible to the ongoing pandemic. Employees used remote methods and worked at home when quarantined.



### Return to Office

Most Court employees returned to the office in mid-2020. Throughout 2021 Court offices remained fully open with partial staff and remote methods when possible and necessary.



### Jury Trials

While court events such as status conferences were conducted through remote methods when possible, in-person Jury Trials resumed June 1, 2021.



# Community Connection

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

The court's extensive website is indispensable in keeping Lehigh County Courts connected to users providing:

- COVID-19 policy updates
- Cancellations and calendar changes
- Self-Help and e-filing information
- Opinions
- Office updates and more



# Court Administration

Providing Management



# Office of the Court Administrator

## Managing Court Administrative Functions

- Complex modern courts require the delegation of administrative functions to the Court Administrator. The Office of the Court Administrator manages the non-judicial functions of the Court under the guidance of the President Judge, providing judges with more time for adjudication.
- In Lehigh County, Jury Management, the Court Transcription Unit, Library Information Services and the CASA program are considered components of Court Administration.
- In 2021, District Court Administrator, Kerry R. Turtzo and Deputy District Court Administrator, John J. Sikora, continued to serve in the positions to which they were appointed in 2016.

**Personnel**

**Fiscal  
Management**

**Calendar &  
Scheduling  
Management**

**Jury  
Management**

**Information  
Systems**

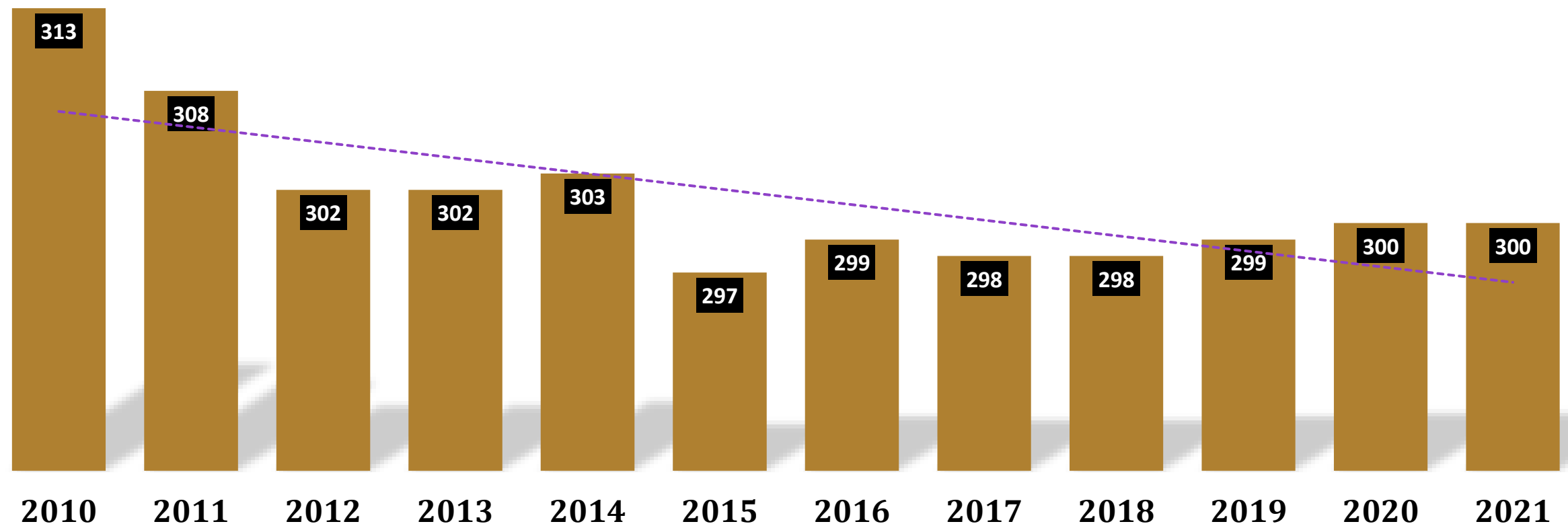
**Facilities  
Management**

**Equipment &  
Technology  
Management**

**Legal Resource  
Procurement**

**Records Control  
& Public  
Information**

# Full Time Judicial Personnel 2010 to 2021

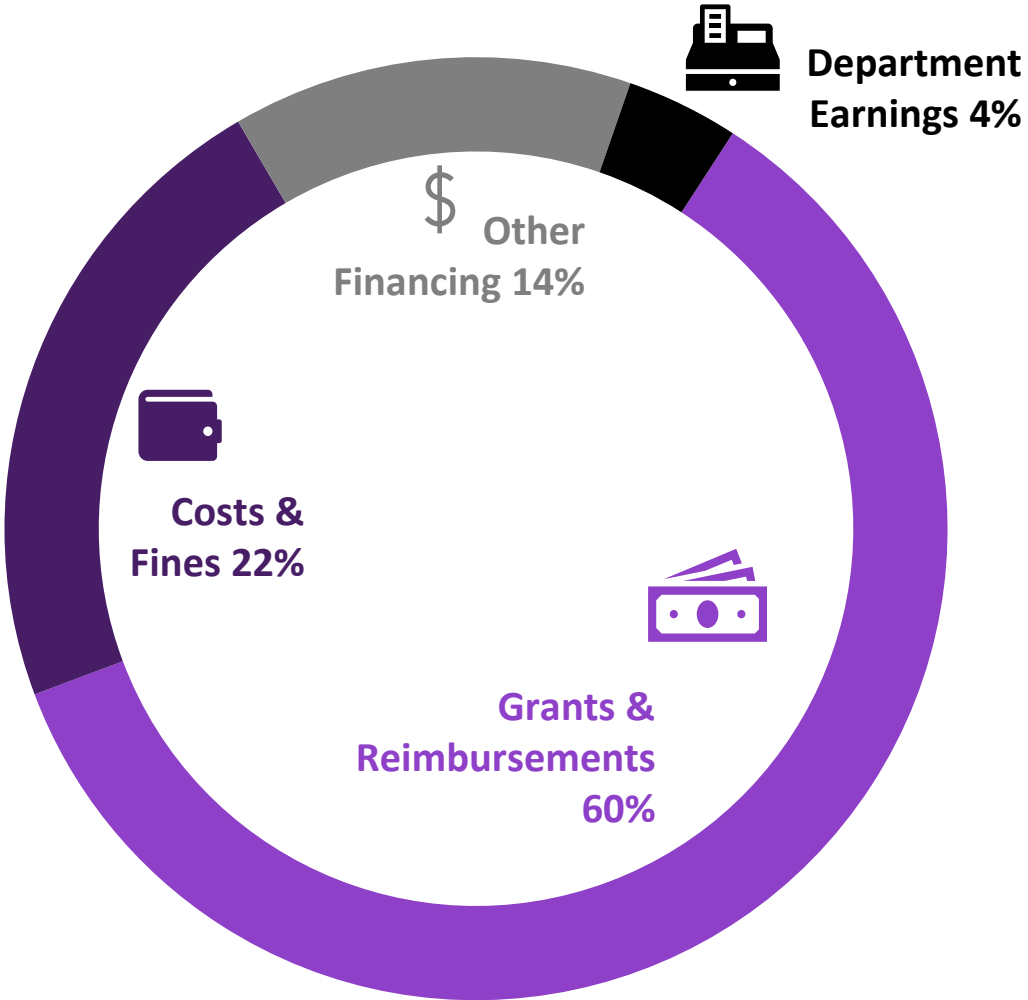
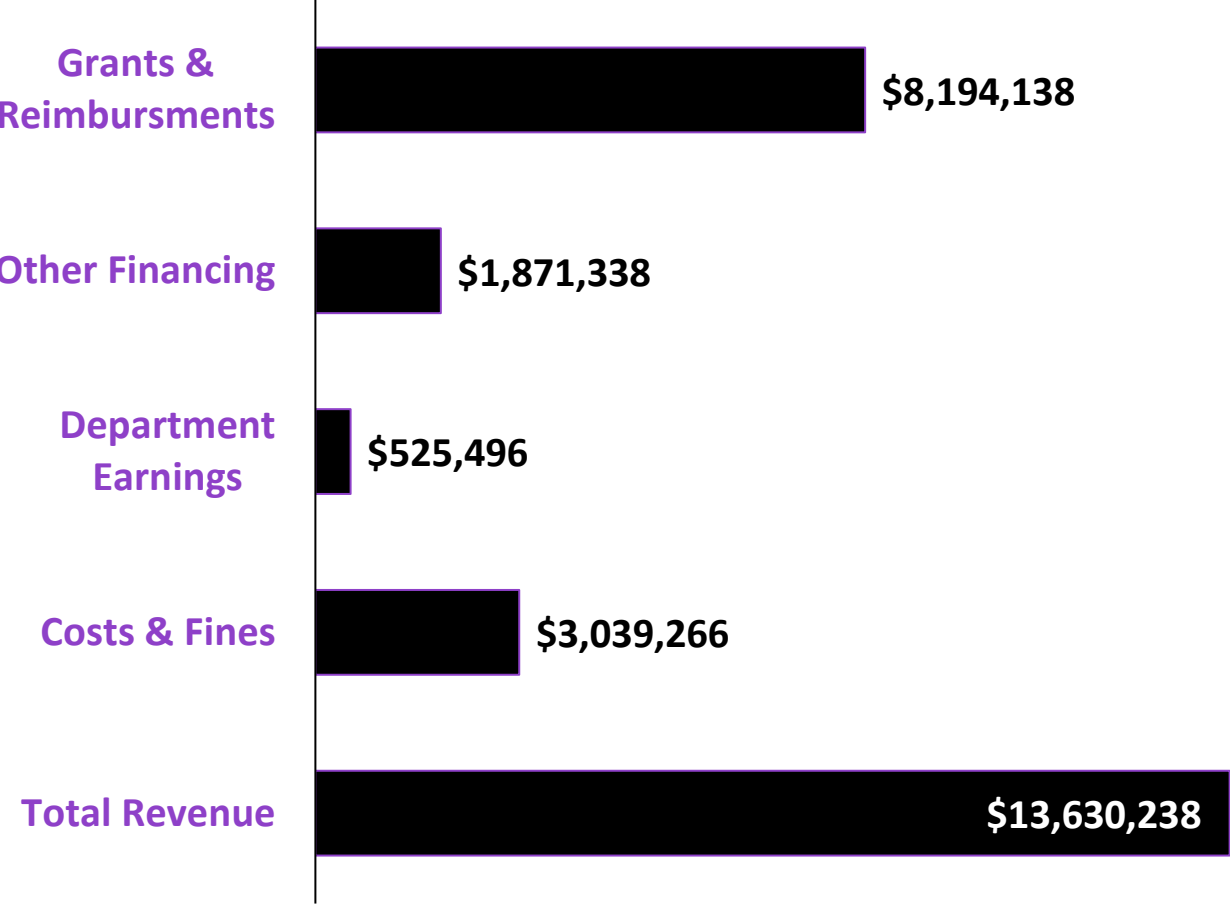




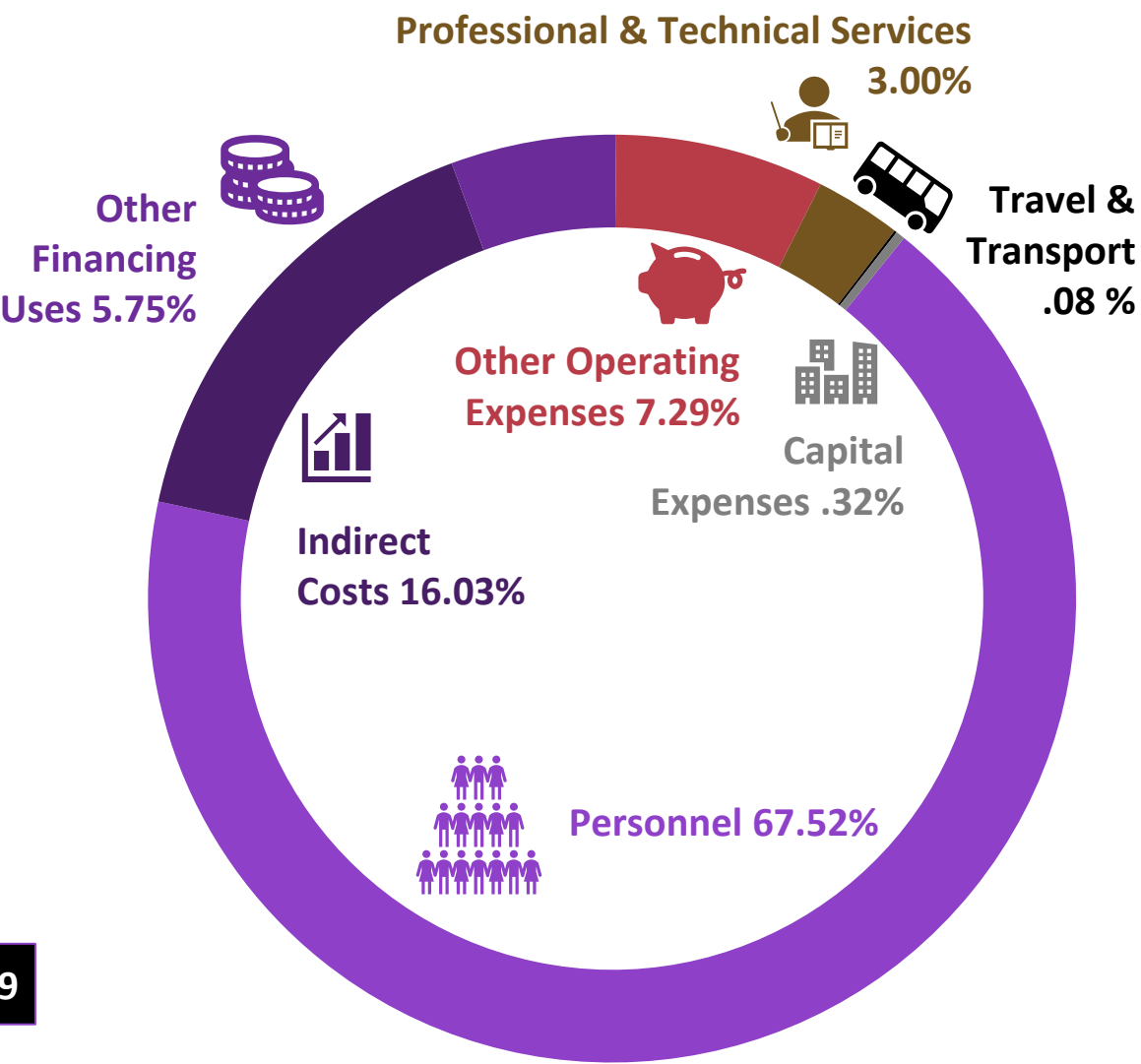
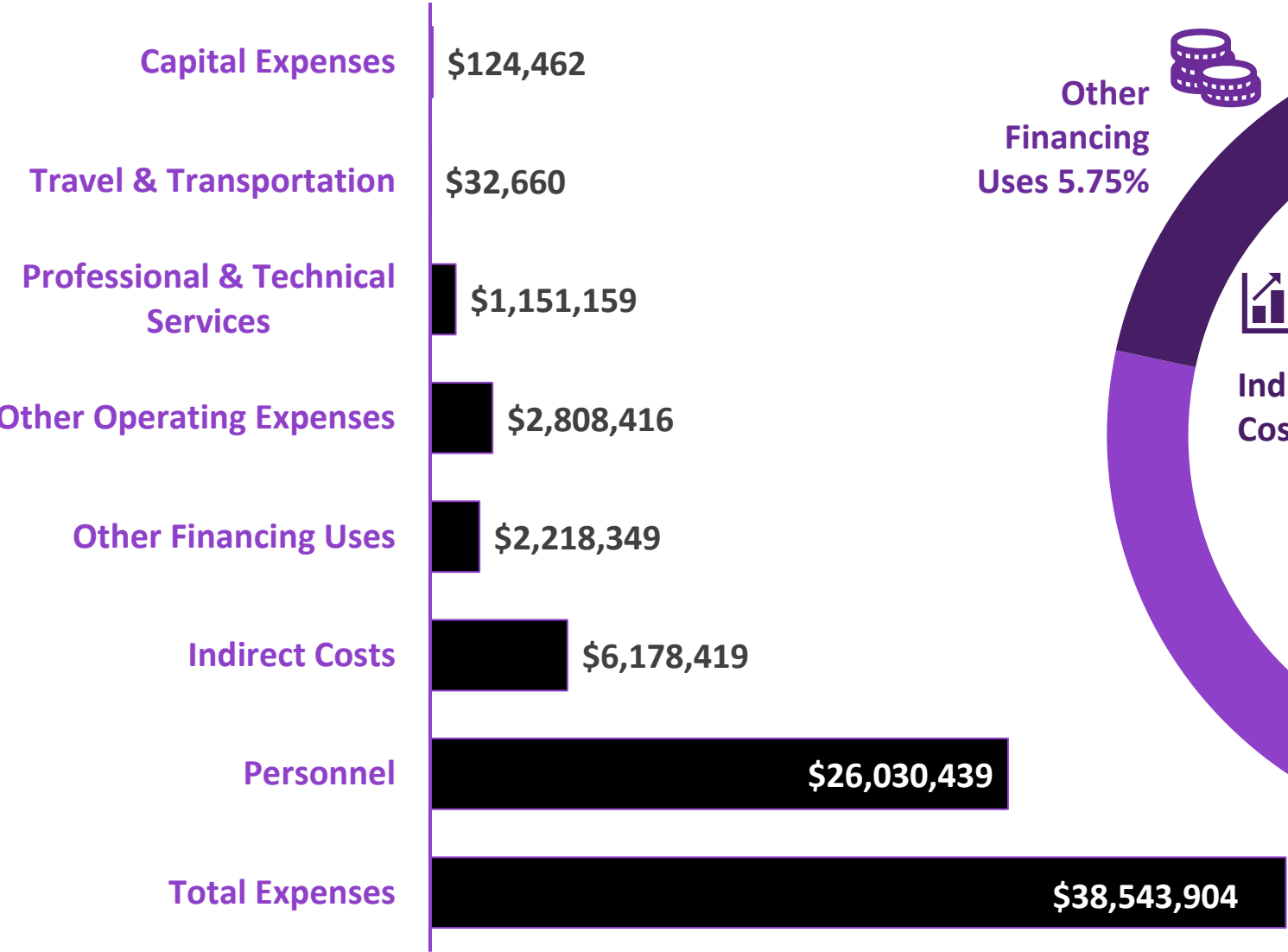
# Full Time Judicial Personnel by Department 2013 to 2021

YEAR	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
COURT ADMINISTRATION	83	83	76	76	75	75	75	75	75
ADULT PROBATION	50	50	52	54	54	54	54	55	55
JUVENILE PROBATION	49	49	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
ORPHANS' COURT	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
DOMESTIC RELATIONS	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62
DISTRICT JUDGE	51	51	51	51	51	51	52	52	52
LAW LIBRARY	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	302	303	297	299	298	298	299	300	300

# 2021 Court Revenue

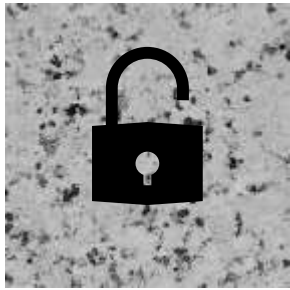


# 2021 Court Expenses



# Grant Funding

The Court of Common Pleas Pursues Federal and State Grants to Offset the Costs of Court 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

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.



## Juvenile Probation

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.



## Youth Placement

The Court is reimbursed in the form of services at state youth institutions and funding for some delinquent youth placement expenditures.



# 2021 Criminal Justice Board Grant Activities

ADULT PROBATION				
PROJECT TITLE	GRANT	GRANT \$	DEPARTMENT	STATUS
Adult Probation/ Drug/Alcohol Restrictive Intermediate Punishment	PCCD	\$660,000	SCA/ Adult Probation	Awarded
Grant-In-Aid Continuing Program for the Improvement of Adult Probation Services	PCCD	\$573,536	Adult Probation	Awarded
Bryne Justice Assistance Grant – Specialty Drug Court	PCCD	\$105,000	Adult Probation	Awarded
Specialty Drug Court Grant	AOPC	\$7,560	Adult Probation	Awarded

# 2021 Criminal Justice Board Grant Activities

JUVENILE PROBATION			
PROJECT TITLE	GRANT	GRANT \$	STATUS
Grant-In-Aid/Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy Implementation Plan	JCJC	\$467,389	Awarded
Juvenile Court Judges' Commission Training Grant	JCJC	\$17,496	Awarded

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 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 only keeps those jurors necessary. The selection and control of juries requires cooperation between jury management staff and courtroom staff. The web-based jury management system allows potential jurors to complete qualification questionnaires online. Correspondence to jurors about their status and reminders may be via text message and email reducing reliance on the U.S. Postal system.

# 2021 Jury Management

## Providing Selection and Control of Jurors



39,033

Jury Summonses  
Mailed



1,794

Jurors Sent to Voir  
Dire for Selection



2,201

Jurors Reporting for  
Duty



396

Jurors Empaneled  
or Sworn In





# CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocate

Providing “Eyes and Ears” for the Court



# 2021 Court Appointed Special Advocate

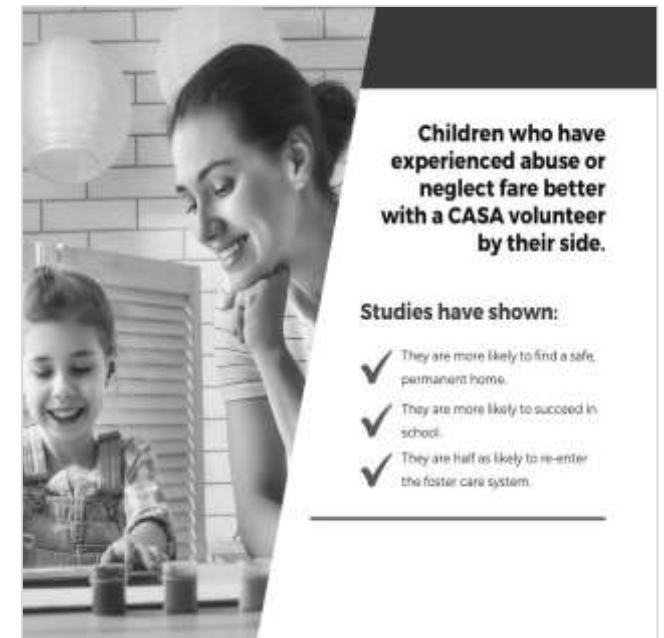
In 2021, 43 CASA Volunteers served 67 children.

Eight CASA volunteers also served as the educational decision maker for their assigned children.

**43 Active Volunteers**

**8 Educational  
Decision Makers**

**67 Abused & Neglected  
Children Served**



# 2021 CASA Permanent Homes

A CASA volunteer'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.



## Kinship Care

**1**

**Child was Placed  
with Relatives in a  
Kinship Care  
Solution**



## Reunited

**5**

**Children were  
Reunited with their  
Biological Family**



## Adopted

**4**

**Children were  
Expediently  
Adopted**



# Library Information Services

Founded in 1869, the Lehigh County Law Library provides the court and community with Pennsylvania and United States legal sources. Lorelei A. Broskey, M.L.S., Director, has overseen the three related missions of the Library Information Services department since 1989.



## Law Library Services

**Operating the Only Public Law Library in Lehigh County & Providing Self-help, Online & Print Resources**



## Legal Resources

**Providing Judges, Court, & County Employees with Essential Print and Electronic Legal Sources Necessary for Job Performance**

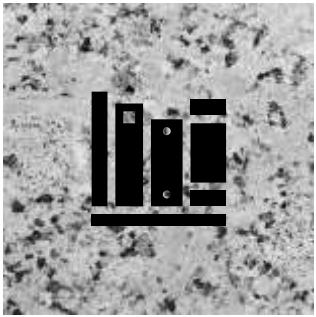


## Document Production

**Providing Website Support, Scanning, Color Printing, Brochure Development & Related Document Services to Library Patrons & Courthouse Offices**

# 2021 Library Information Services

During the continuing Judicial Emergency, the Law Library remained open to patrons on an appointment basis.



## \$424,356.76 Legal Resources

Cost of all online and print legal resources received and processed by the Lehigh County Law Library for the Law Library, Court and County offices. **753** invoices, many containing multiple items, were submitted for payment.



## \$3.99 Million Westlaw

Retail value of the **65,253** Westlaw research transactions performed by Court/County Employees at the job site or at home and usage by Law Library Patrons during **4000+** hours of research. Lexis transactions on all platforms totaled 1,567.



## 4,776 Patron Searches

The total of **3,950** Westlaw Public Access Program and **826** Lexis Advance Public Access Program searches meant **4,776** searches were performed by patrons in the public Lehigh County Law Library during 2021.



## Traditional Library Services

**3,055** pages of legal research were printed or photocopied by patrons in the public Law Library. **457** print book circulation transactions were handled by Lehigh County Law Library staff.



## 500+ Virtual Reference Services

Virtual reference service continued in 2021 and **453** total documents requested in the 500+ virtual service requests received by Law Library staff. Normal fees resumed in July, 2021.



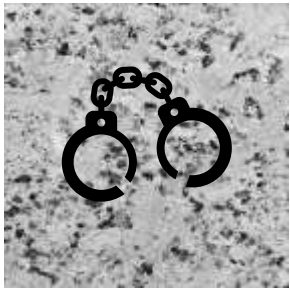


# The Court of Common Pleas

Providing Civil and Criminal Justice

# The Court Divisions

## The Three Main Divisions of the Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County



**Criminal/  
Juvenile Court  
Division**



**Criminal Court  
Juvenile Delinquency Court**



**Civil/Family  
Court Division**



**Civil Court  
Family Court  
Juvenile Dependency Court**



**Orphans'  
Court  
Division**



**The Orphans' Court  
Marriage License Bureau**

# Criminal/Juvenile Division Judges in 2021

**Robert L. Steinberg, Judge**

**James T. Anthony, Judge**

**Douglas G. Reichley, Judge**  
**Administrative Judge of**  
**Criminal Court**

**Anna-Kristie M. Marks, Judge**  
**Administrative Judge of**  
**Juvenile Delinquency Court**



# 2021 Criminal/Juvenile Court Division

## Adult Criminal Court

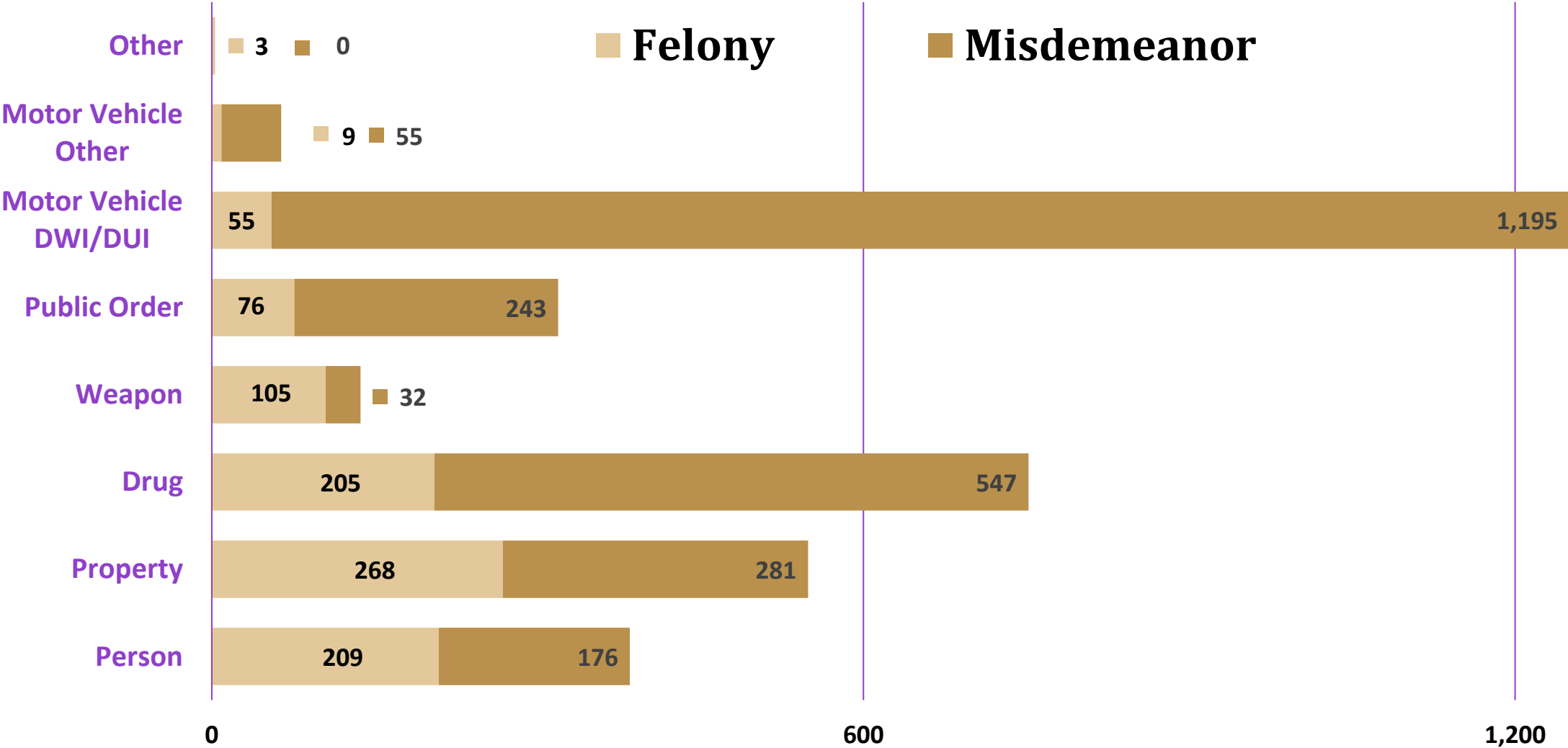
- The judges in the Criminal/Juvenile Court Division utilize an individual calendaring system. The assigned judge handles the case from formal arraignment through disposition.
- All probation and parole violations and any post-sentence motions are handled by the judge who sentenced the defendant.

## 2021 Criminal Filings and Dispositions

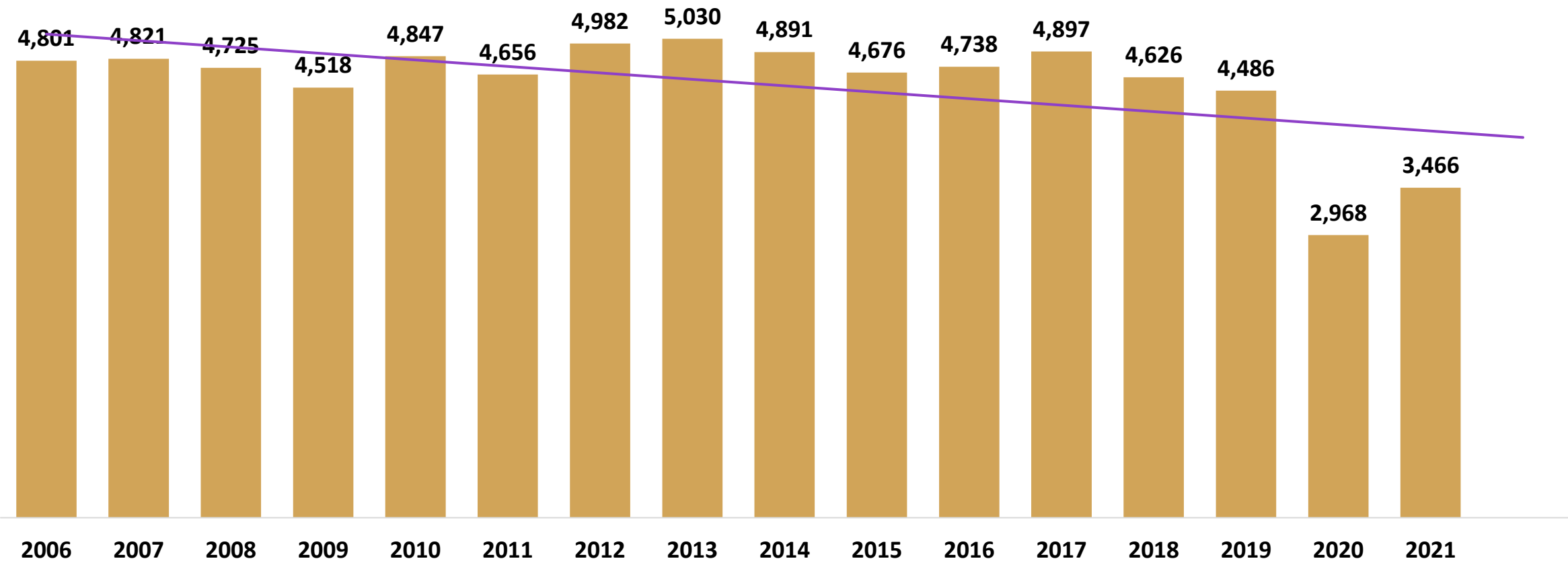
<b>Total Cases Processed</b>	<b>3,617</b>
New Cases	<b>3,466</b>
Reopened Cases	<b>203</b>
ARD	<b>1,067</b>
Dismissed/Withdrawn	<b>99</b>
Guilty Plea	<b>2,171</b>
Jury Trial	<b>25</b>
Non-Jury Trial	<b>25</b>
Inactive	<b>209</b>
Other	<b>21</b>



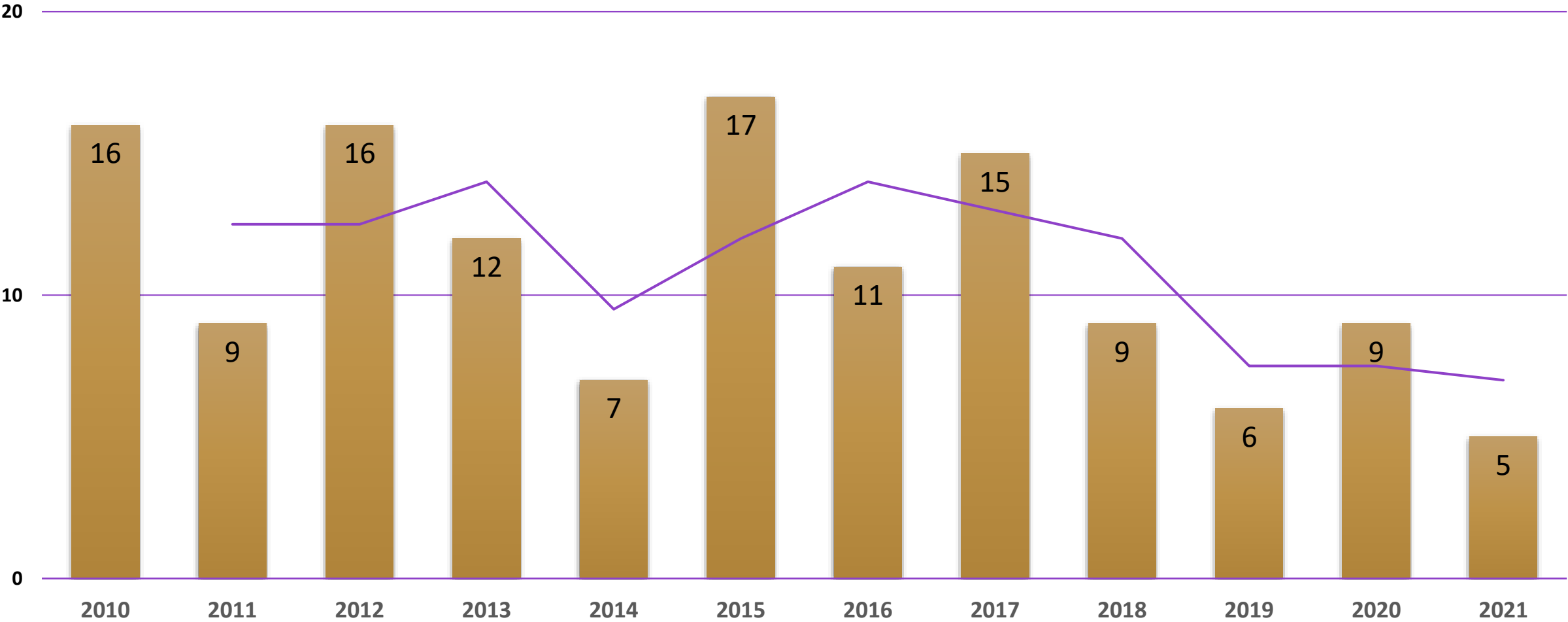
# 2021 Criminal Cases by Type



# New Criminal Cases Filed 2006 to 2021



# Homicide Filings with Moving Average 2010 to 2021



# 2021 Juvenile Justice in Lehigh County

In 2021, Juvenile Judges and Hearing Officers disposed of 117 delinquency cases and 214 dependency cases. There were 220 new delinquency filings in 2021.

## Juvenile Court

In 2021, Juvenile Court 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 is responsible for cases involving juvenile delinquency and juvenile dependency. The Juvenile Court judges are assisted by two full-time Juvenile Court Hearing Officers, Theresa M. Loder, Esquire and Jacquelyn C. Paradis, Esquire, who adjudicate both delinquency and dependency cases.

## Dependent Juveniles

Children who are, or who have been, subject to abuse or neglect may be dependent. 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 Court Division. Dependent juveniles may enter foster care, be reunited with family or placed for adoption.

## Delinquent Juveniles

Children under the age of 18 who are in violation of criminal law may be delinquent. Delinquency cases referred to a judge are handled by the Criminal/Juvenile Court Division. These juveniles may be referred to the Juvenile Probation Department. **Juveniles may be both delinquent and dependent.**

# 2021 Civil/Family Court Judges

**Edward D. Reibman, Judge**

**J. Brian Johnson,  
President Judge**

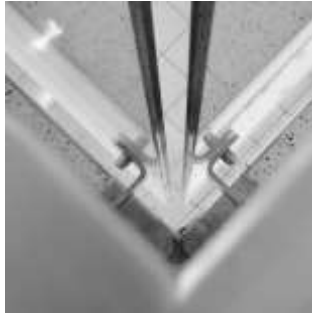
**Michele A. Varricchio, Judge  
Administrative Judge of  
Civil Court**

**Melissa T. Pavlack, Judge  
Administrative Judge of  
Family Court**

- The judges assigned to the Civil/Family Court 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 Court Jurisdictions



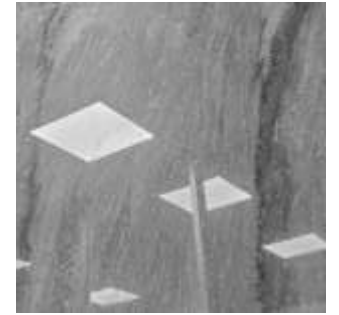
## Civil Actions

Tort Cases  
Professional  
Malpractice  
Contract & Debt Cases  
Real Property  
Statutory Appeals  
Miscellaneous  
Civil Cases



## Family Court

Child Custody  
Divorce  
Protection From Abuse  
Child & Spousal  
Support



## Orphans' Court

Parental Rights  
Adoptions  
Guardianships



# Civil Court Operations

## Civil Actions

- Civil actions involve the resolution of private conflicts between people or institutions. Civil cases include personal injury or personal property claims, matters of equity, products liability, malpractice, or commercial and contract disputes.
- License and Registration Suspension Appeals, Mortgage Foreclosures, Assessment Appeals, Quiet Title Actions, Zoning Appeals, Ejectment and Actions in Replevin are also in the civil category.
- Juvenile Dependency cases are also heard by the Civil/Family Division.

## 2021 Civil Operations Section

- In 2021, the Civil Operations section of the Court Administrator's Office, under the direction of Court Operations Officer Stephanie Szabo was responsible for scheduling and tracking all civil 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.
- There are approximately **2,907** civil cases pending in the Court's open inventory.



# 2021 Civil Court Synopsis



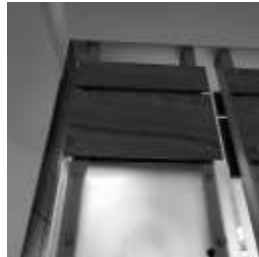
**2,920**

**Civil Cases  
Docketed**



**3,258**

**Civil Actions  
Processed**



**100**

**Mortgage  
Foreclosures**



**1,235**

**Credit Card &  
Debt Collection  
Cases**

# The Orphans' Court Division

## 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 a division 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 Clerk of the Orphans' Court is an appointed position held by Wendy A. W. Parr. Janet Thwaites, Esquire, serves as Orphans' Court Counsel.

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. In addition to the Orphans' Court Administrative Judge, J. Brian Johnson, other judges are assigned to the Orphans' Court Division.

## What is Orphans' Court?

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.



# Orphans' Court Jurisdiction

<b>THE ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION</b>	Oversees Trusts, Powers of Attorney & certain aspects of non-profit organizations	Reviews & 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, including will contests or contested letters of administration	All parental rights termination cases	Petitions for adult guardianships (incapacities)
	Disputes regarding administration/distribution in decedents' estates	Adoptions & 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 & issues certified copies of those records	Responds to requests for access to both identifying & non-identifying information from adoption files

# Orphans' Court Unique Challenges

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, (many cases involve more than one paternal parent) 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.



# 2021 Orphans' Court Synopsis

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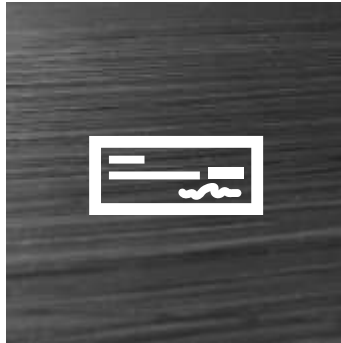
**Minor Guardian  
Cases**

70



**Adoptions  
Granted**

32



**Minors'  
Settlements  
Involving Lump  
Sum Payouts,  
Creation of  
Trusts, &  
Structured  
Settlements  
Approved**

108



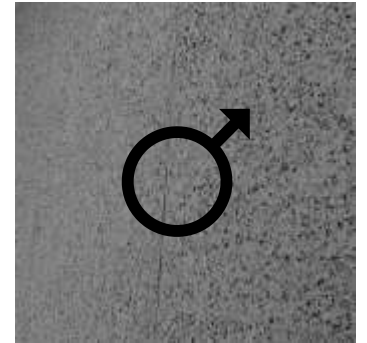
**Persons  
Adjudicated  
Incapacitated &  
Appointed  
Guardians for  
Their Persons  
and/or Estates**

20



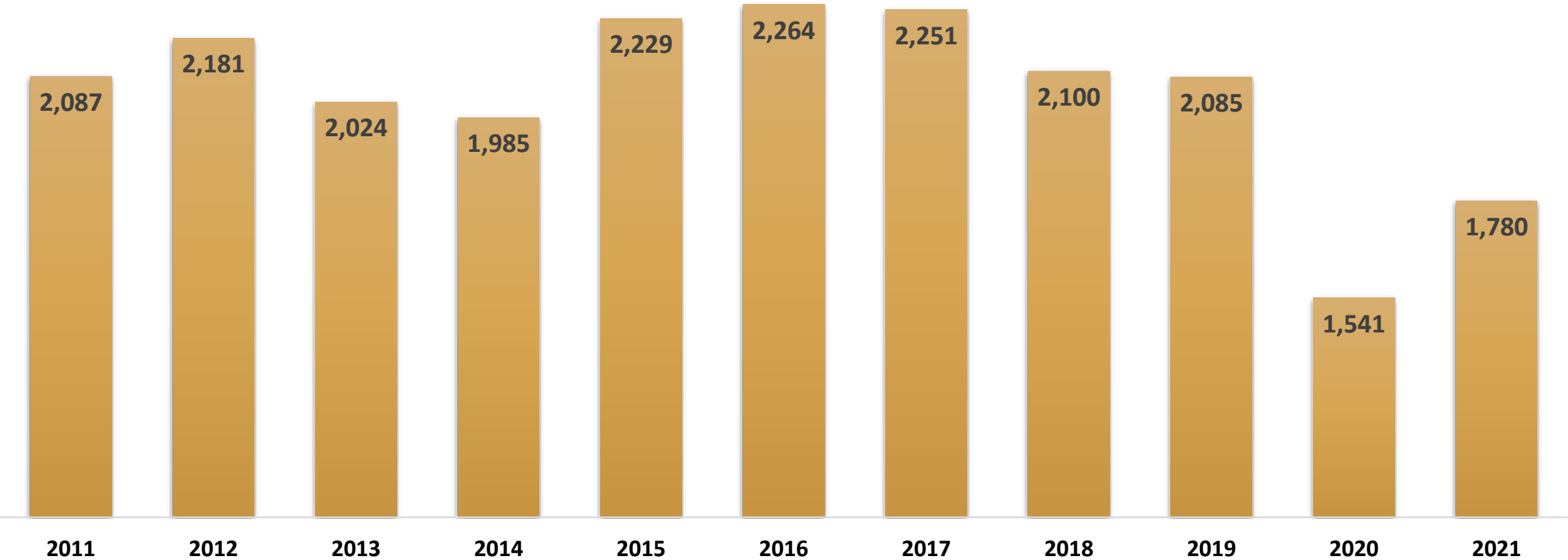
**Fiduciary  
Accountings  
Audited,  
Confirmed,  
& Adjudicated**

1



**Judicial Bypass  
Hearing  
Pursuant  
to the Abortion  
Control Act**

# Marriage Licenses Issued in Lehigh County 2011 to 2021



In May 2014, Pennsylvania Law changed to permit same-sex marriages.



# The Court Related Offices

Providing Operational Support to The Court of Common Pleas



## The Family Court Office

Custody  
Divorce  
Protection From Abuse  
Interpreting Unit



## The Domestic Relations Section

Paternity  
Child Support  
Spousal Support



## The Probation Offices

Adult Probation and  
Parole Office  
Juvenile Probation  
Office



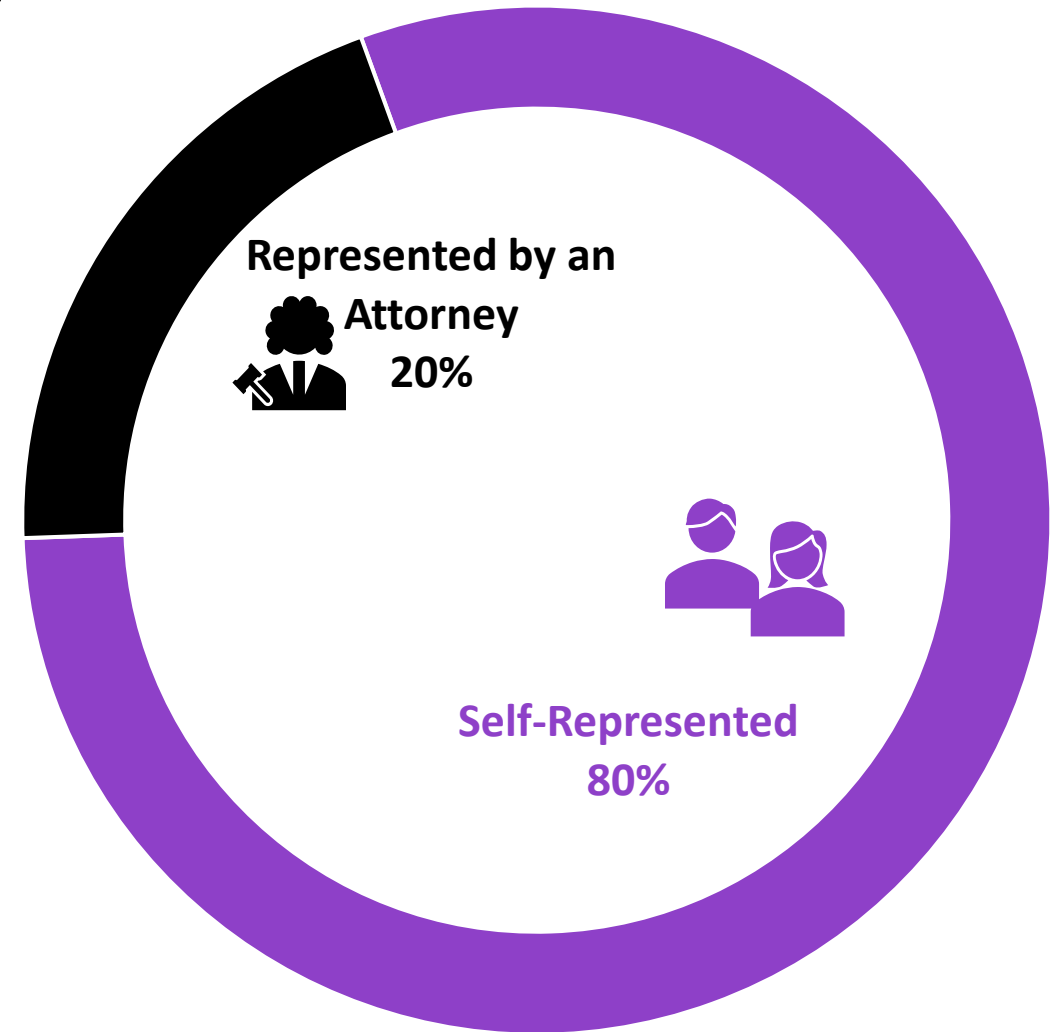
# The Family Court Office

Providing Family Related Court Services

# The Family Court Office: Child Custody

Most parties in custody cases are not represented by attorneys. This graphic illustrates an approximation of the ratio.

When a self-represented custody litigant comes to the Family Court Office, an intake employee asks questions to begin the assessment of whether the Lehigh County Court has jurisdiction to decide the custody issue. The necessary forms to start a custody lawsuit are available online and filings are now completed by e-filing (as of 1/1/2020). General instructions on completing the forms and filing and serving the pleadings are also available on the Court's website at [lccpa.org](http://lccpa.org).



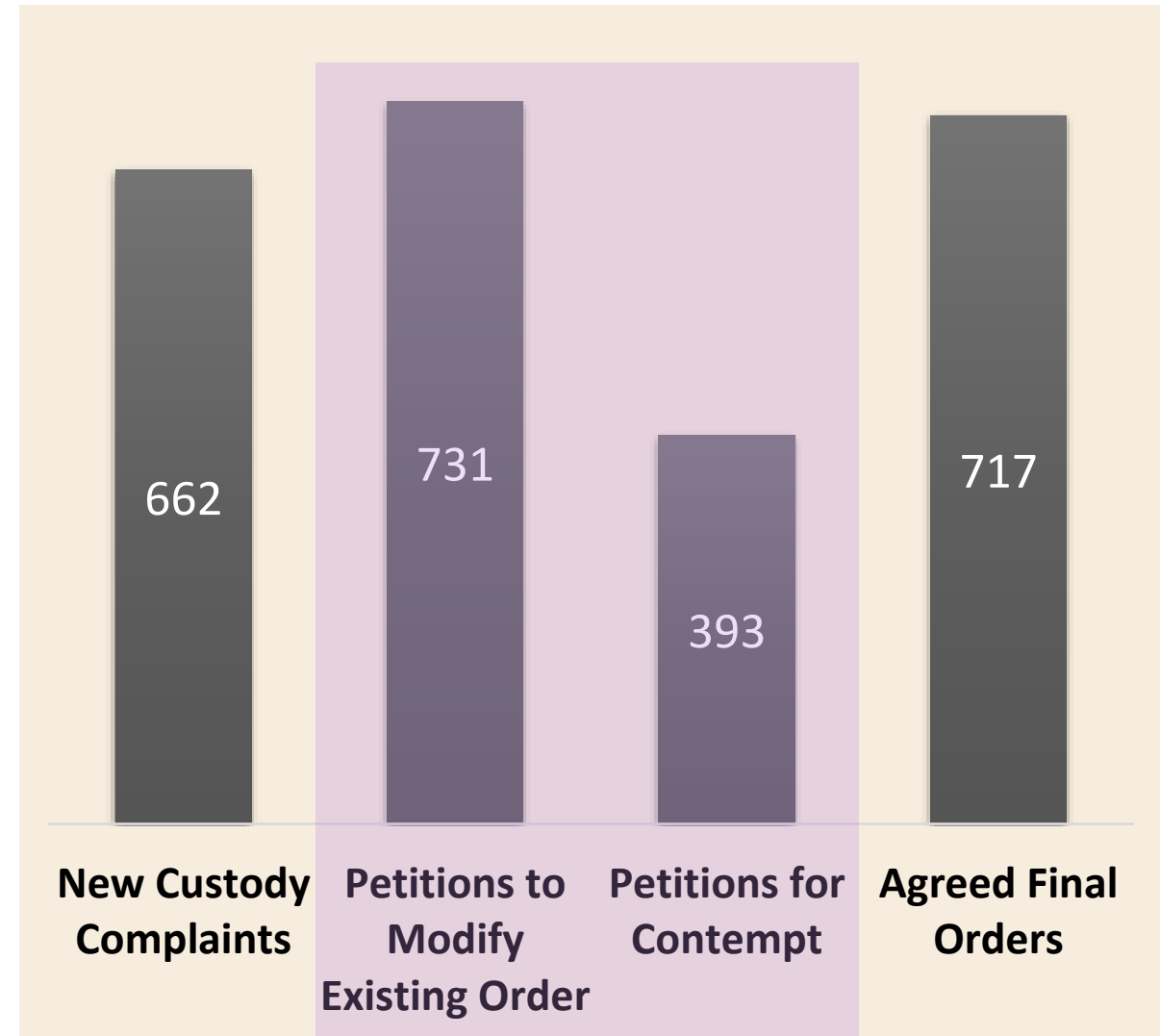


# The Family Court Office: 2021 Child Custody

After the filing of one or more pleadings, custody cases usually proceed to a mediation or conciliation conference where efforts are made to have the parties reach an agreement. Most cases are scheduled for conciliation conferences before a Custody Hearing Officer (CHO), unless the parties agree to mediate their case before a mediator. The CHO identifies the issues and helps the parties settle the case according to the best interests of the child. If a settlement is reached, the CHO prepares a Court Order that summarizes the custodial agreement. If the parties are unable to agree, the case proceeds to a trial on the merits before a Judge (most cases) or a CHO (only in cases involving solely partial physical custody).

In 2021, there were 662 new custody cases filed. In addition, 731 Petitions to Modify an Existing Order and 393 Petitions for Contempt were filed. Petitions to Modify and Petitions for Contempt are often filed at the same time.

Agreed final orders resulting from custody conferences before the CHO numbered 717 in 2021. Other custody cases were discontinued, transferred, withdrawn, dismissed by the court, resolved by stipulations of the parties, or went to trial before a judge or CHO.

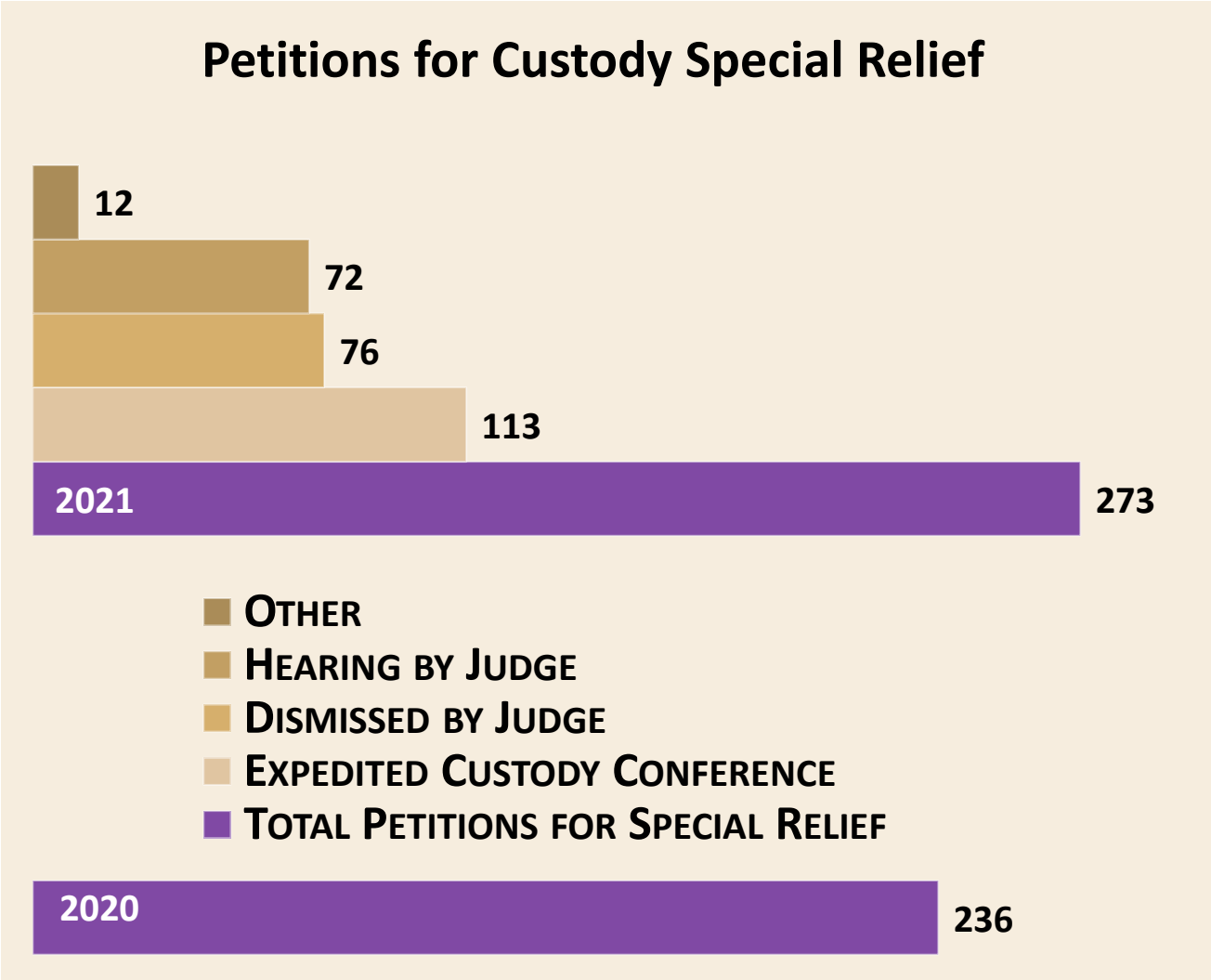


# The Family Court Office: Child Custody 2021

## Custody Special Relief

The Domestic Relations Code and the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure permit the filing of a Petition for Special Relief in instances where a litigant believes an emergency exists in a custody case. In 2021, the Family Court Office received 273 Petitions for Special Relief.

In 2021, of the 273 filings, 113 were ordered to proceed to an expedited custody conference before a Custody Hearing Officer, while 76 were summarily dismissed by a Judge. The Judges held 72 hearings on Petitions for Special Relief. Twelve cases were otherwise disposed.



# The Family Court Office: 2021 Divorce

Contested divorce cases are often resolved by the Master in Divorce, an attorney appointed by the Court. Following the filing of a motion by a divorce litigant to appoint the Master to a case, the Master conducts one or more settlement conferences with the litigants and attempts to resolve the issues. If those efforts are unsuccessful, the Master conducts hearings and prepares reports and recommended Orders subject to judicial review. Approximately 95% of cases before a Master are settled before a hearing.



**960**

**New Divorce  
Cases Filed**



**675**

**Uncontested  
Divorce Cases  
Filed**



**890**

**Divorce Decrees  
Entered**



**119**

**Contested  
Divorce Cases  
Filed**

# The Family Court: 2021 Protection From Abuse



**In 2021, approximately 33% of New Protection From Abuse Petitions resulted in Final Orders of Protection.**

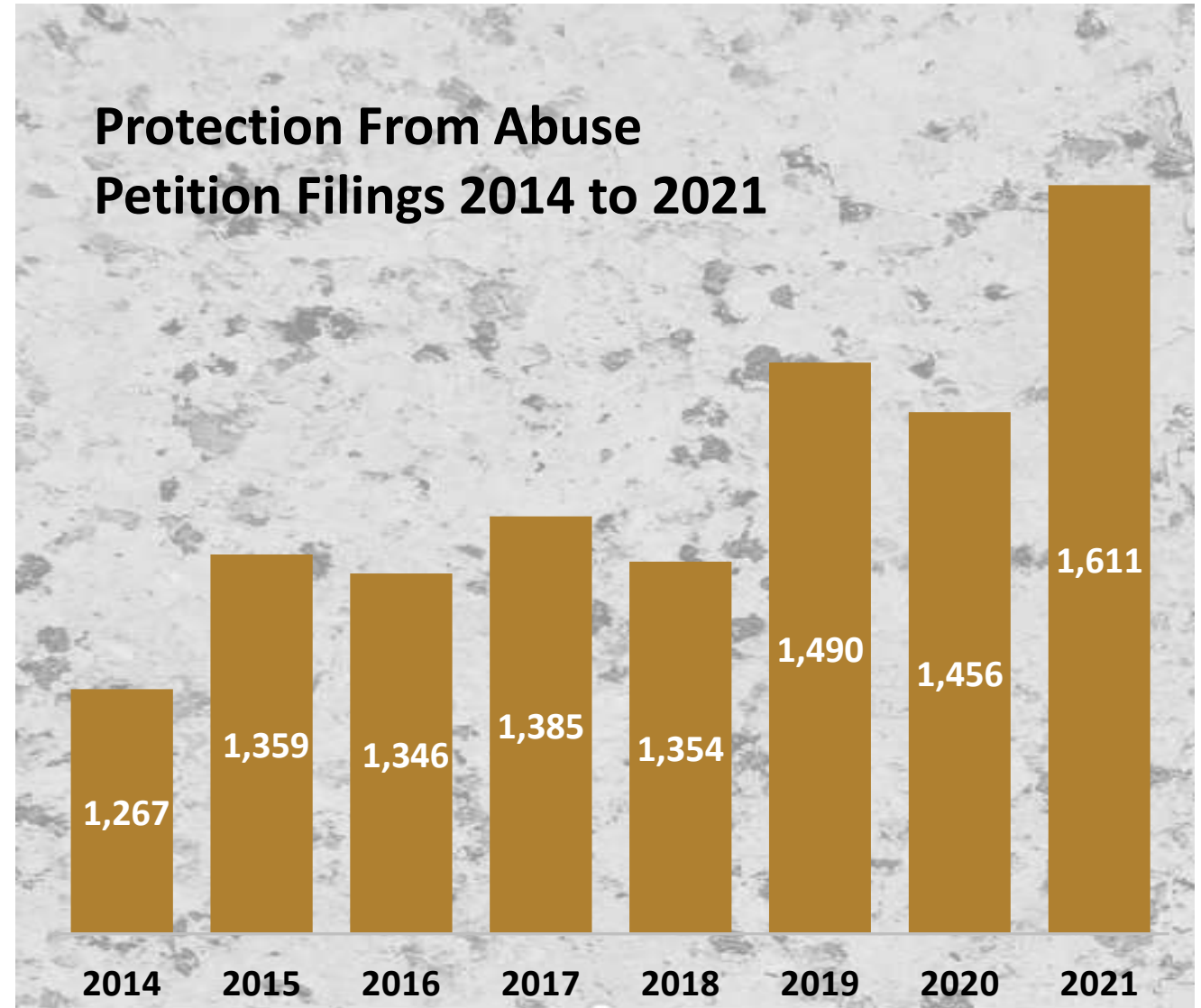
# The Family Court: 2021 Protection From Abuse

Pennsylvania law requires every court to assist victims of domestic violence who seek Protection From Abuse Orders. Individuals may seek a protection order on their own behalf and/or on behalf of their minor children.

Lehigh County Family Court staff provide private intake assistance during specific hours. Litigants appear before a Common Pleas Court Judge during a morning or afternoon session. Special security measures are taken in all cases, especially in cases where cross-petitions have been filed.

Emergency PFA relief is available during non-business hours through the Magisterial District Judges.

Refer to the Family Court Office webpage on [www.lccpa.org](http://www.lccpa.org) for specific PFA hours and more information.





# 2021 Protection From Sexual Violence and Intimidation



- 1 New Intimidation Case
- 4 New Sexual Violence Cases

The Protection From Sexual Violence and Intimidation Act became effective in Pennsylvania in July 2015. The Act protects victims of sexual violence and intimidation who may not be covered by the Protection From Abuse Act. A victim may seek a Sexual Violence Protection Order against a perpetrator where there is no family or personal relationship between them. A minor may obtain a Protection From Intimidation Order against an offender who is 18 or older for certain types of conduct. Assistance available from the Lehigh County Family Court Office is the same as that described in the Protection From Abuse information on the prior page.

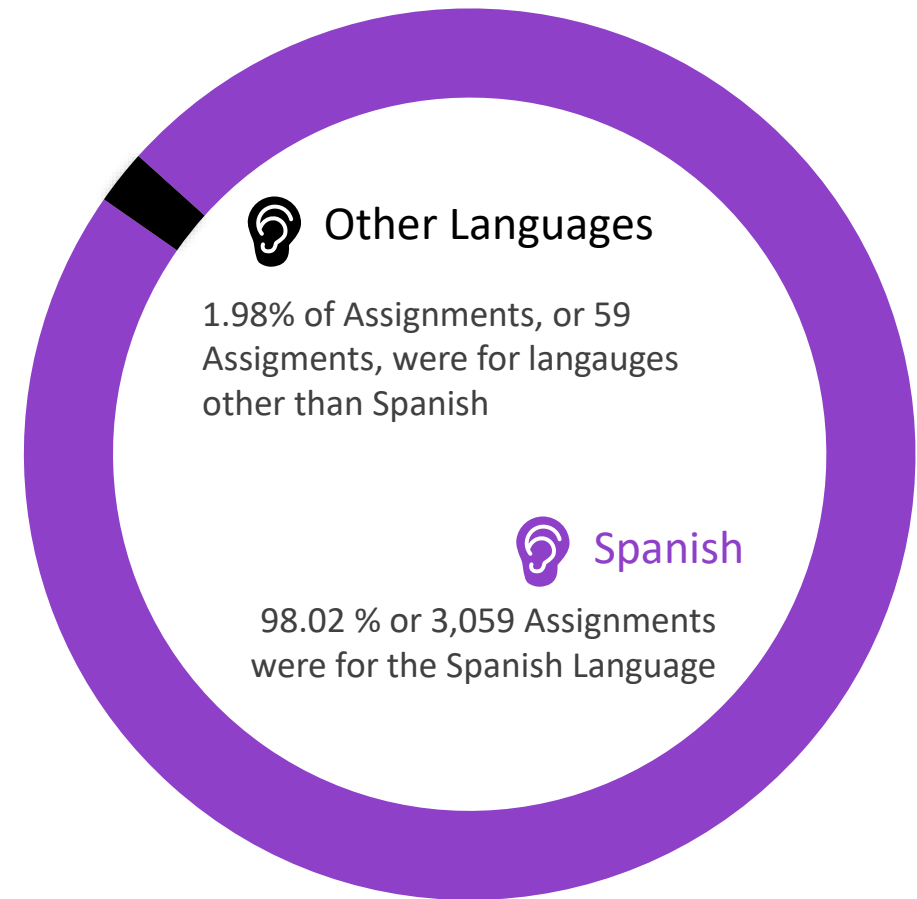
# The Family Court: 2021 Interpreting Unit

## Providing Foreign & Sign Language Interpretation

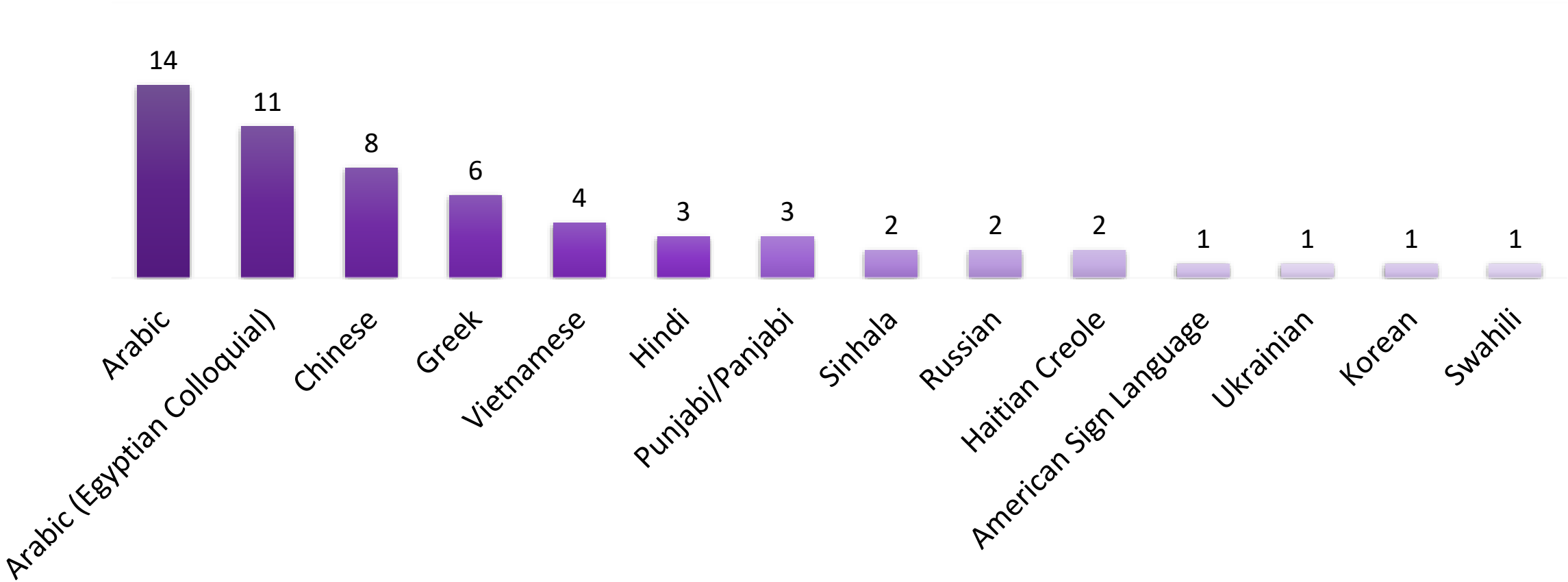
The Court provides interpreters in criminal and family court proceedings. The Interpreting Coordinator schedules a pool of 25 per diem contractors to carry out court interpreting assignments.

In 2021, there were 3,118 interpreter assignments, 3,059 of which were for Spanish. Telephone interpretation is used when needed. Translations of written documents are also provided by the Interpreting Unit.

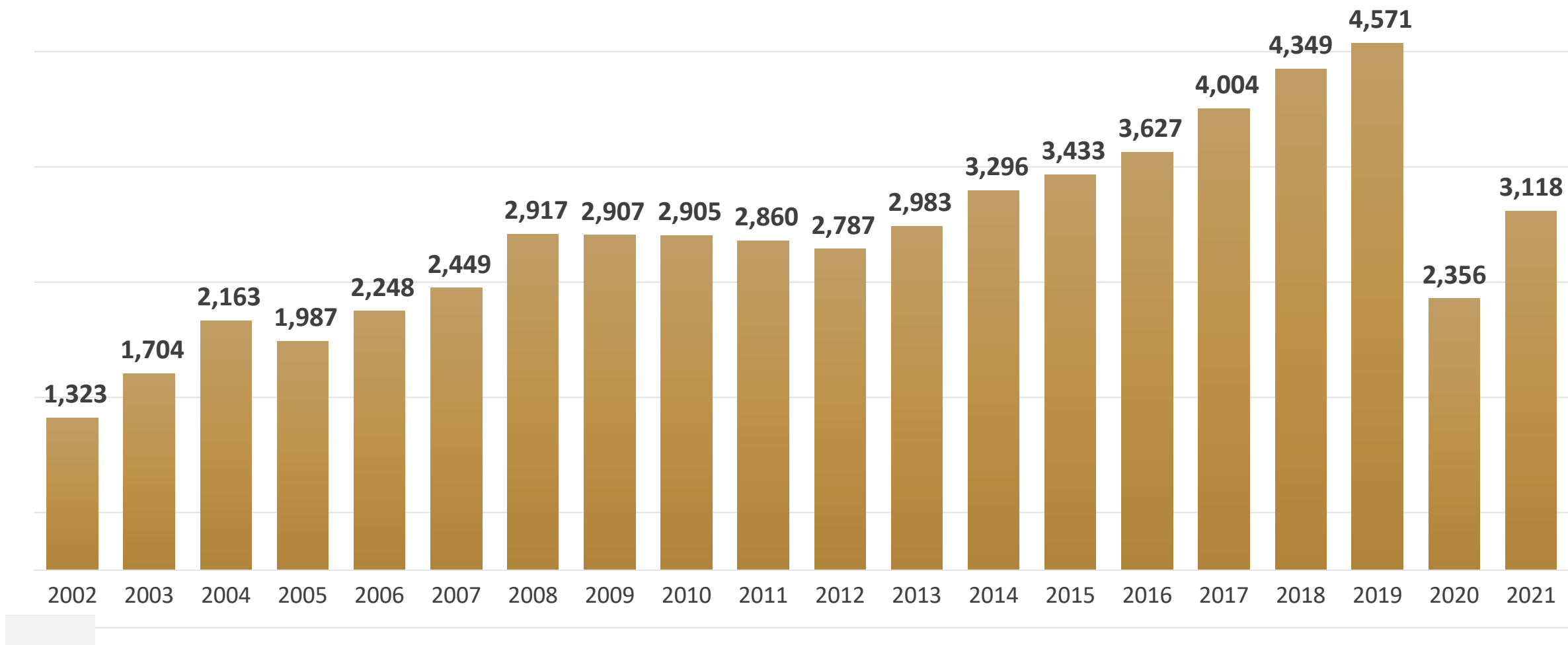
## 3,118 Total Interpretation Assignments



# 2021 Languages Excluding Spanish



# Annual Total Interpreter Assignments 2002 to 2021





# The Domestic Relations Section

Providing Child Support Services

# Services Provided by the Domestic Relations Section

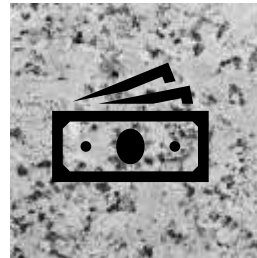
The Domestic Relations Section (DRS) is the provider of child support services for the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas under the federal Title IV-D child support program. Under the leadership of Director Julia Parker Greenwood, the DRS is responsible for providing services to dependent children and spouses through the establishment of paternity, location of absent parents, establishment of support orders, and enforcement of support orders.



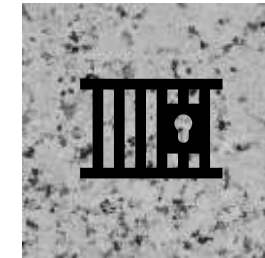
**Establishing  
Paternity**



**Locating Absent  
Parents**



**Establishing  
Support Orders**

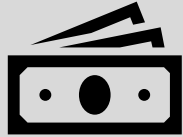


**Enforcing  
Support Orders**



# 2021 Domestic Relations Section Summary

The Lehigh County Domestic Relations Section conducted 3,970 conferences and hearings for the establishment and enforcement of support orders, and collected \$48.2 million in support payments in 2021.



**\$48.2**

Million in Support  
Payments Collected



**9,145**

Active Support  
Cases



**3,970**

Conferences &  
Hearings  
Conducted

## Staff

9 Managers

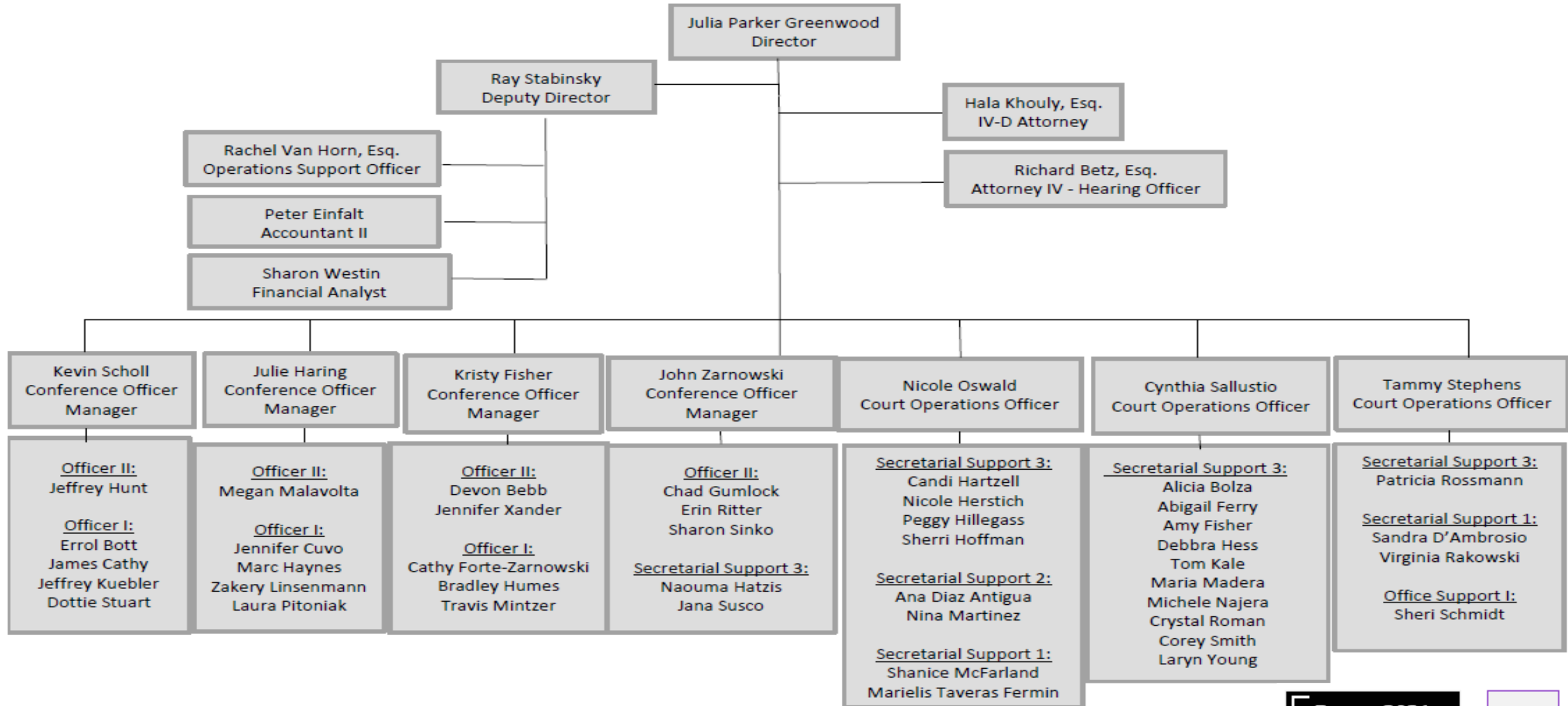
20 Conference  
Officers



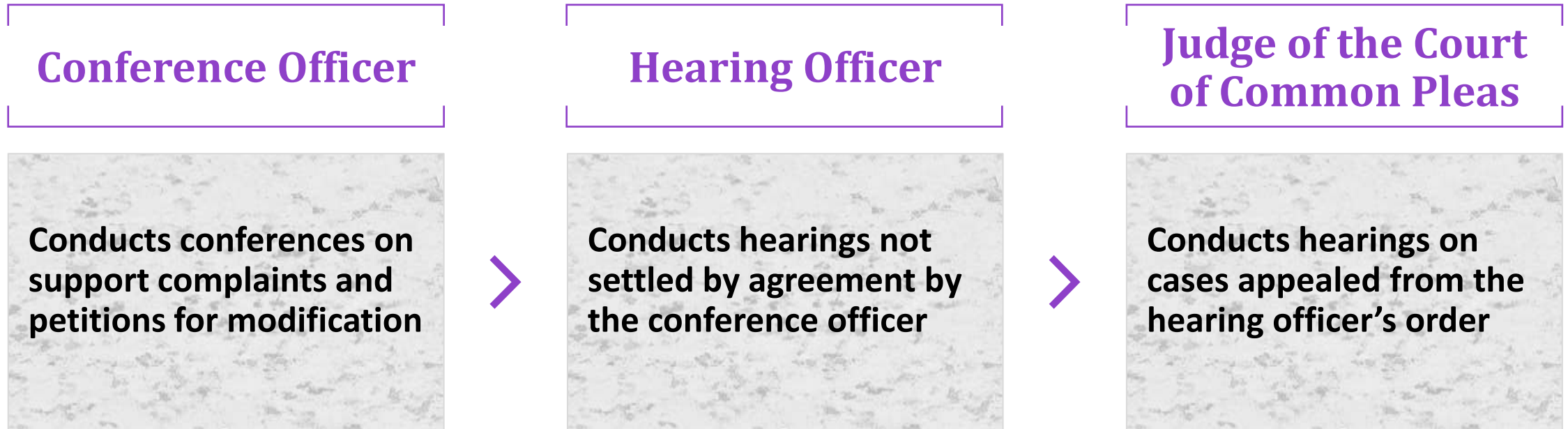
1 Hearing Officer

32 Secretarial  
Support Staff

# 2021 Domestic Relations Section Personnel

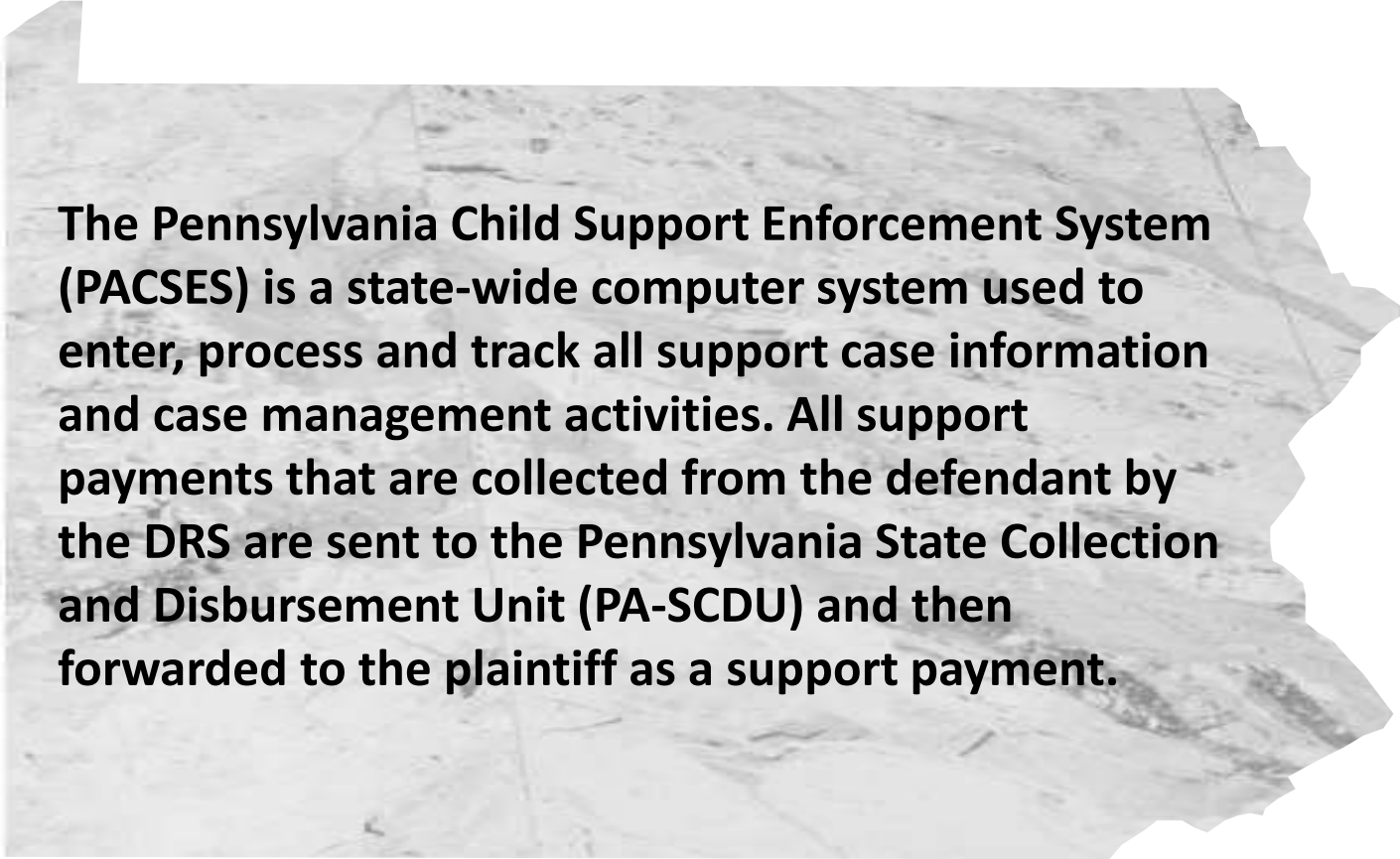


# Establishing Child & Spousal Support Orders



In Lehigh County, establishment of a support order progresses under a 3-tier system. A conference officer conducts conferences on support complaints and petitions for modification on existing support orders. If an agreement cannot be reached between the parties at the conference, a temporary or "interim" support order is entered and the case proceeds to a hearing before a hearing officer. The case will be scheduled for a hearing before a Judge of the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas if one of the parties does not agree and files "exceptions" to the support order entered by the hearing officer.

# PACSES and PA-SCDU



The Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement System (PACSES) is a state-wide computer system used to enter, process and track all support case information and case management activities. All support payments that are collected from the defendant by the DRS are sent to the Pennsylvania State Collection and Disbursement Unit (PA-SCDU) and then forwarded to the plaintiff as a support payment.

**The DRS Collected  
\$48,174,778  
in  
Support Payments  
in 2021**

# 2021 Case Management Teams

Conference officers and secretarial support staff are assigned to case management teams that are responsible for all case management activities of a support case from the establishment of a support order through the enforcement of a support order. In 2021, the Domestic Relations Section conducted 2,368 establishment conferences, 619 establishment hearings, and 983 contempt conferences/hearings.



2,368

**Establishment  
Conferences**

619

**Establishment  
Hearings**



983

**Contempt  
Conferences/  
Hearings**

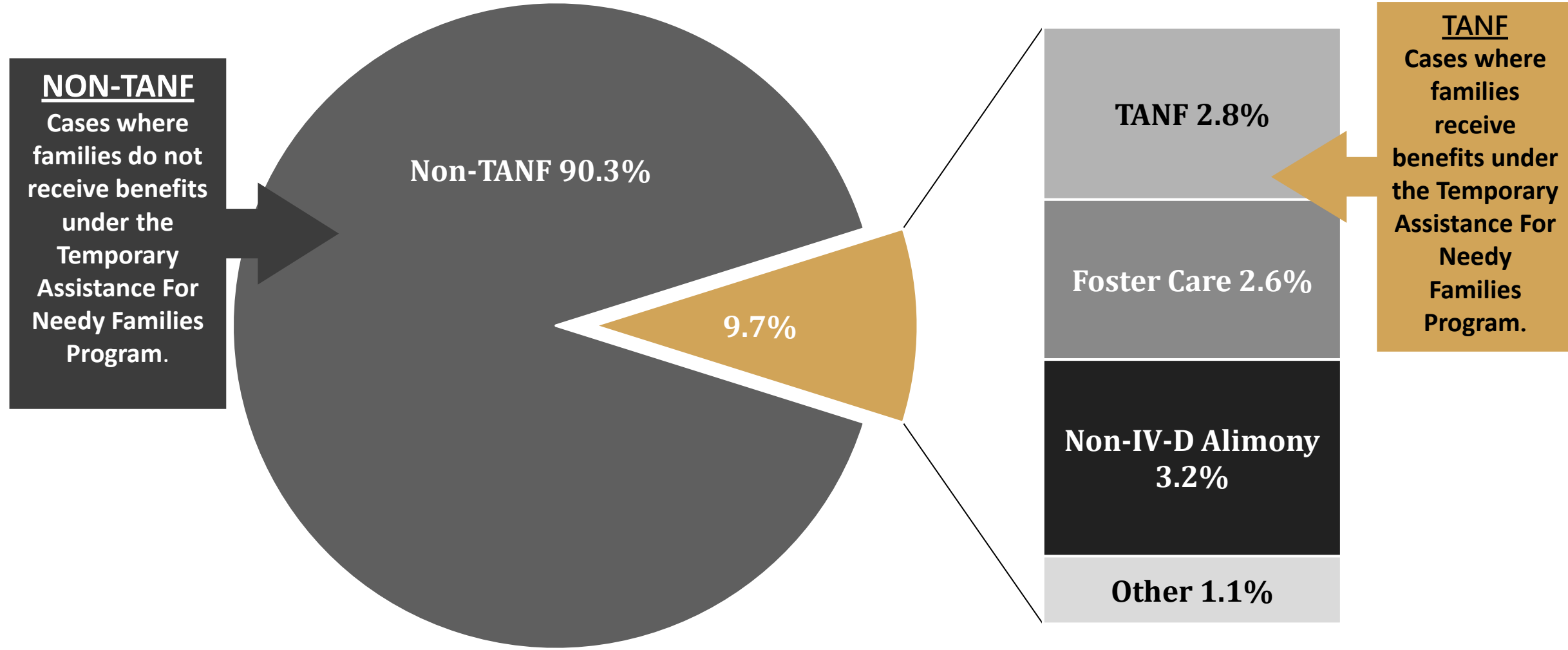


# 2021 Domestic Relations Section Filings

2021 NON-TANF SUPPORT CASE FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS	
New Cases	2,436
Cases Transferred In	40
TANF to Non-TANF	55
Judge	35
Hearing Officer	477
Conference Officer	2,052
Cases Transferred Out	42
Non-TANF to TANF	41
Cases Processed	2,674

2021 TANF SUPPORT CASE FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS	
New Cases	316
Cases Transferred In	17
Non-TANF to TANF	41
Judge	1
Hearing Officer	106
Conference Officer	262
Cases Transferred Out	23
TANF to Non-TANF	55
Cases Processed	447

# 2021 Support Cases by Case Type



# Federal Funding Requirements

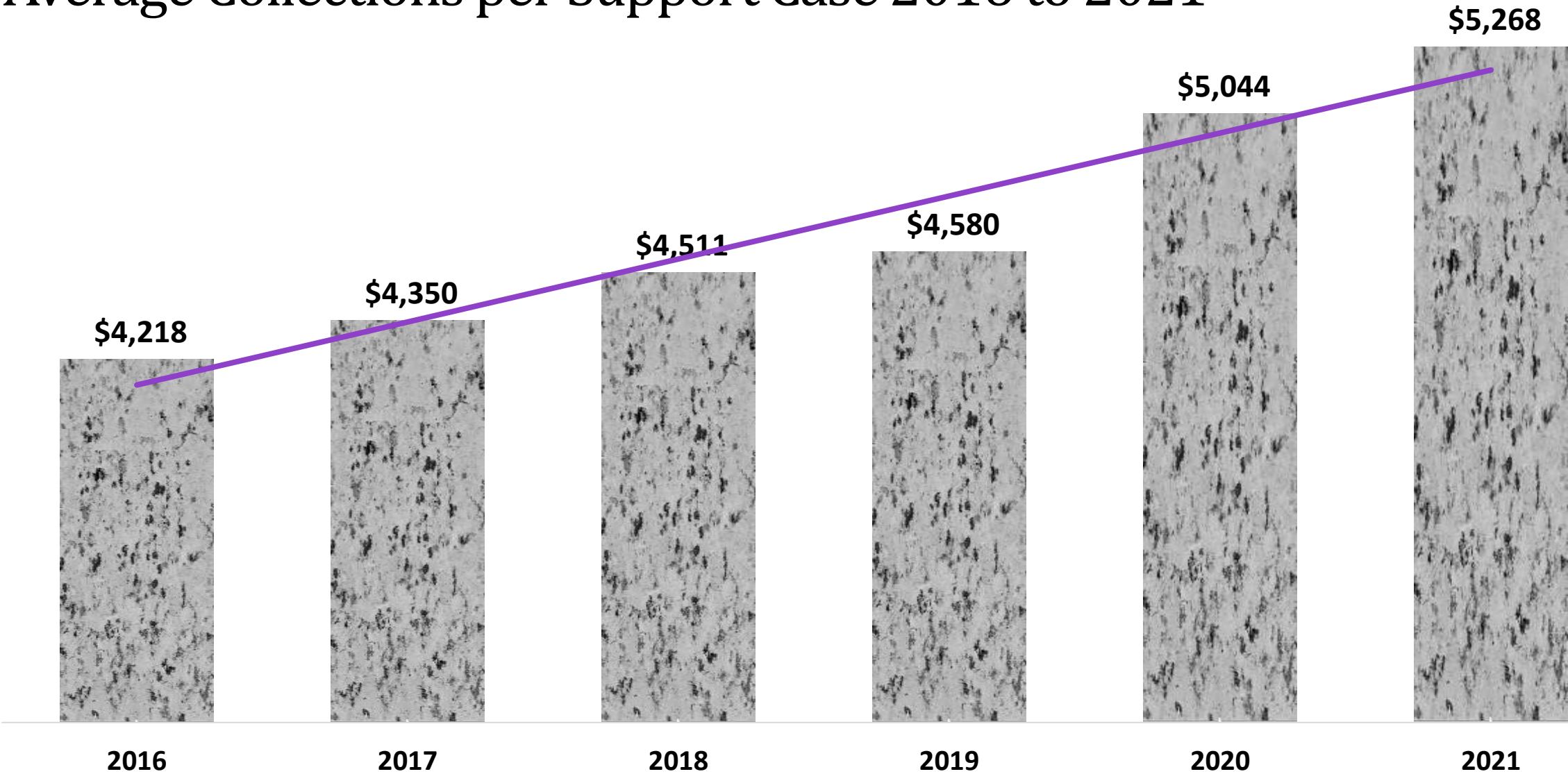
Through a Cooperative Agreement between the County of Lehigh and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Child Support Enforcement, the Domestic Relations Section is required to provide child support services as outlined in Title IV-D of the Social Security Act.

In order for the Domestic Relations Section to receive federal funding of 66% for all operating expenses, the child support services must be performed in accordance with the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure and the United States Code of Federal Regulations.

**In order to maximize federal incentive funding for Pennsylvania and Lehigh County, the Domestic Relations Section is required to meet federal performance standards of at least 80% in the following categories:**

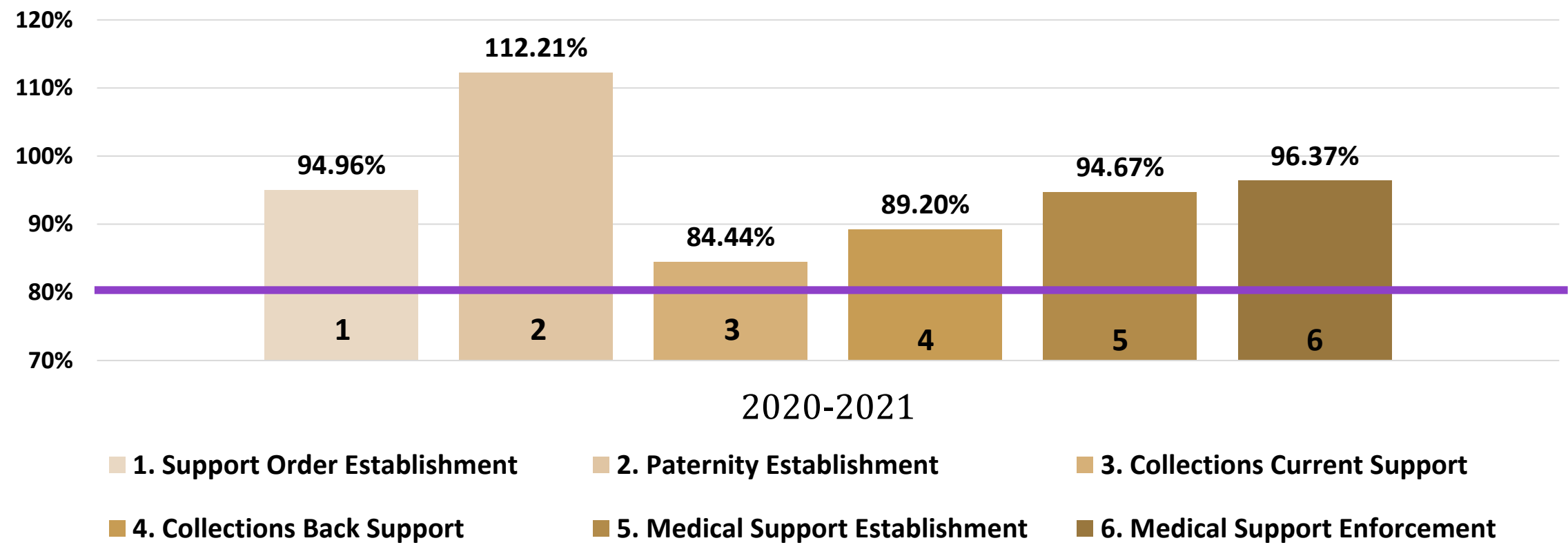
- Cases with support orders established
- Cases with paternity established
- Cases with full monthly collection of current support
- Cases with a payment on back support in the federal fiscal year
- Cases with medical support established (not tied to funding)
- Cases with medical support enforced (not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

# Average Collections per Support Case 2016 to 2021



# Federal Performance Indicators 2020 to 2021

For the 2021 Federal Fiscal Year, which ended on September 30, 2021, the Domestic Relations Section exceeded 80% in all the Federal Performance Standards. The DRS routinely exceeds ALL performance standards every year in each category.





# Judicial & Administrative Enforcement of Support Orders

Conference Officers are responsible for conducting contempt conferences with delinquent defendants in an effort to gain compliance with the support order.

If the defendant is habitually noncompliant with the support order, the defendant may be scheduled for a contempt hearing before a judge for consideration of incarceration or other appropriate sanctions.

In addition, the following judicial and administrative enforcement actions may be initiated:

- Federal and State Tax Refund Intercept
- Lottery Winnings Intercept
- Freeze/Seize of Financial Assets
- Real Property Liens
- Credit Bureau Reporting
- Passport Denial
- Driver's License Suspension
- Recreational License Suspension
- Professional/Occupational License Suspension
- Bench Warrants/Body Attachments
- Work Search Program
- Incarceration with Purge Conditions/ Work Release



# Adult Probation

Providing Community Protection  
Through Offender Supervision



# Adult Probation Mission, Philosophy, & Primary Goal

## Mission Statement

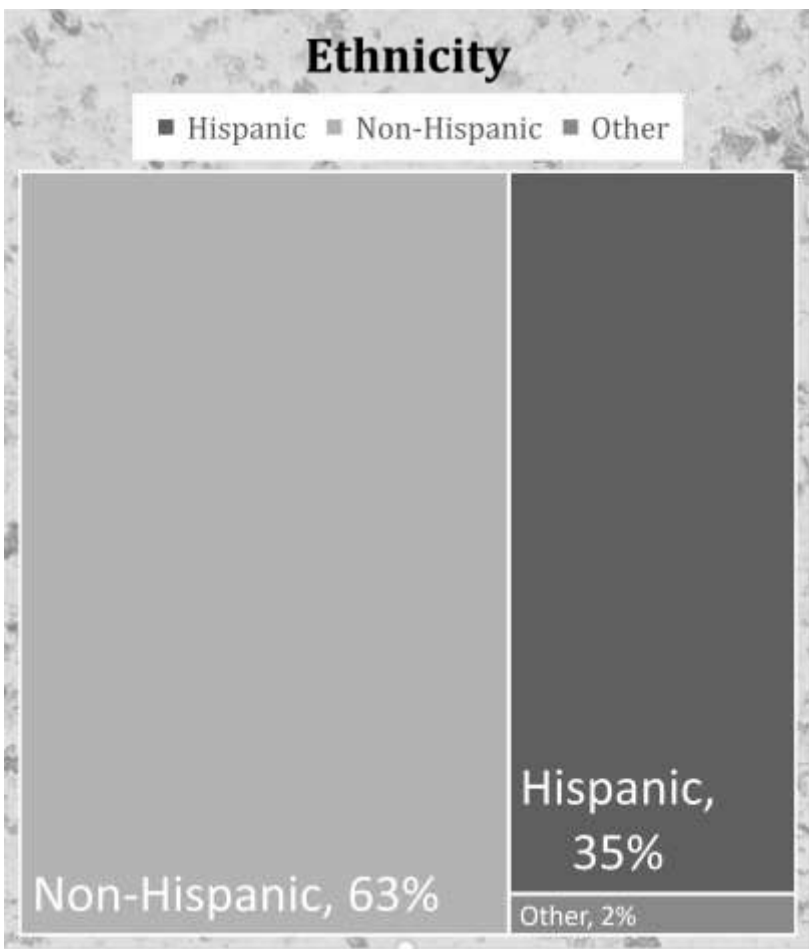
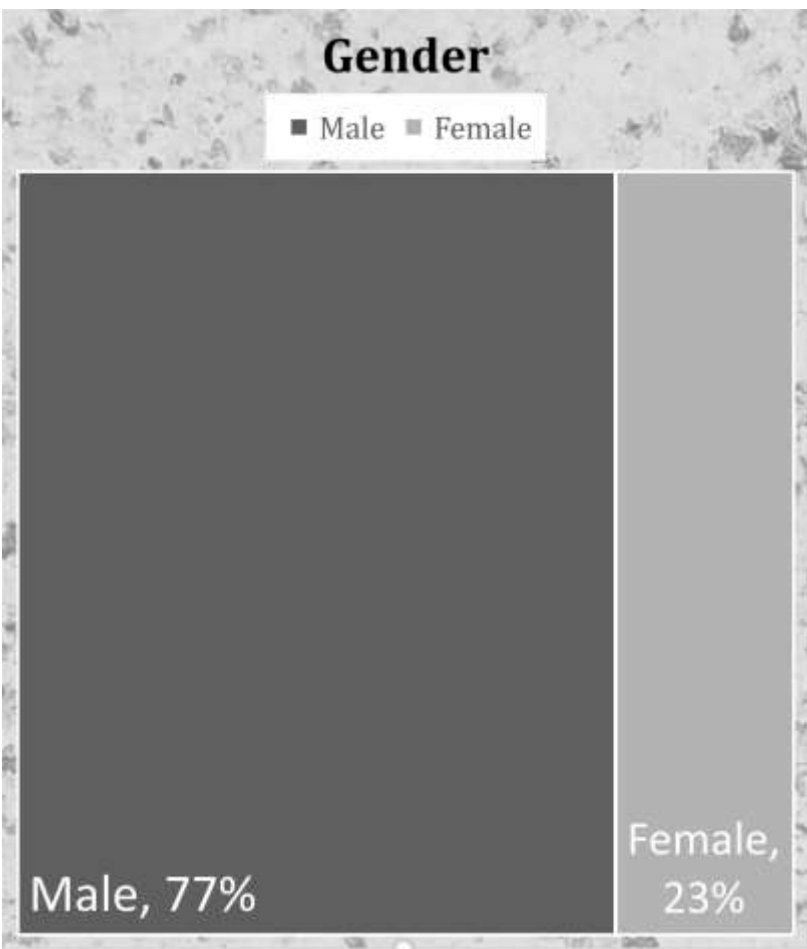
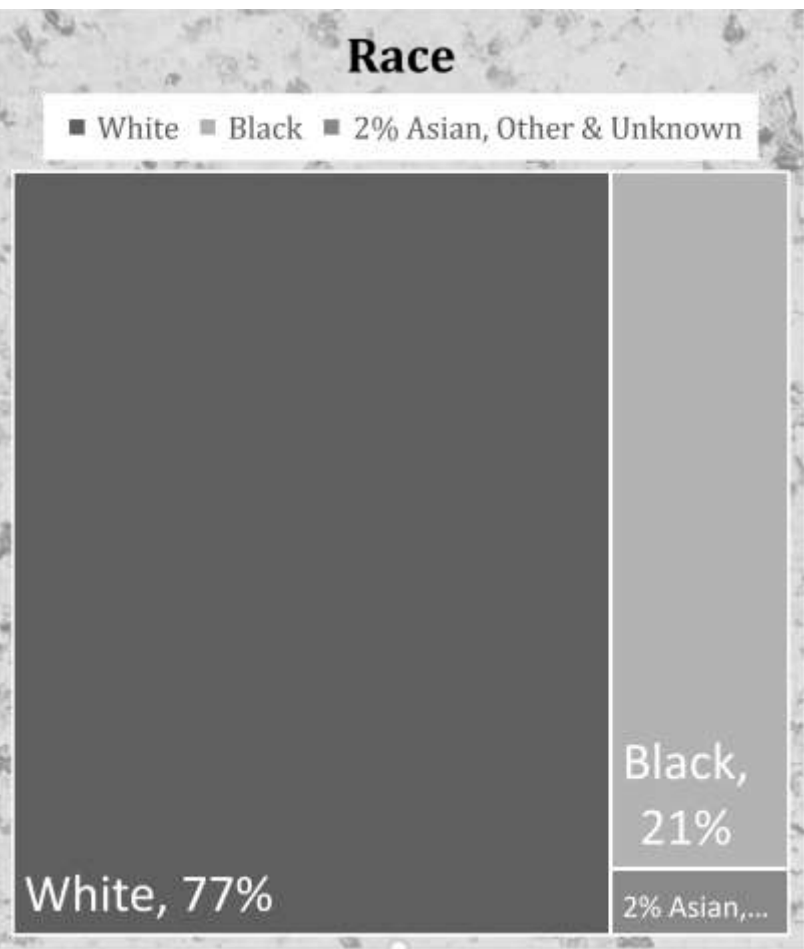
To aid in reducing the incidents of crime in the community through field-based supervision, treatment and rehabilitation of the offender, thus protecting the public from recurring criminal and antisocial behavior.

- The primary goal of the Lehigh County Adult Probation Department is to provide protection to the community. The Department, led by Chief Adult Probation Officer Mark Surovy, works to achieve its goal through appropriate and relevant supervision and treatment of offenders by trained probation officers.
- 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 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.

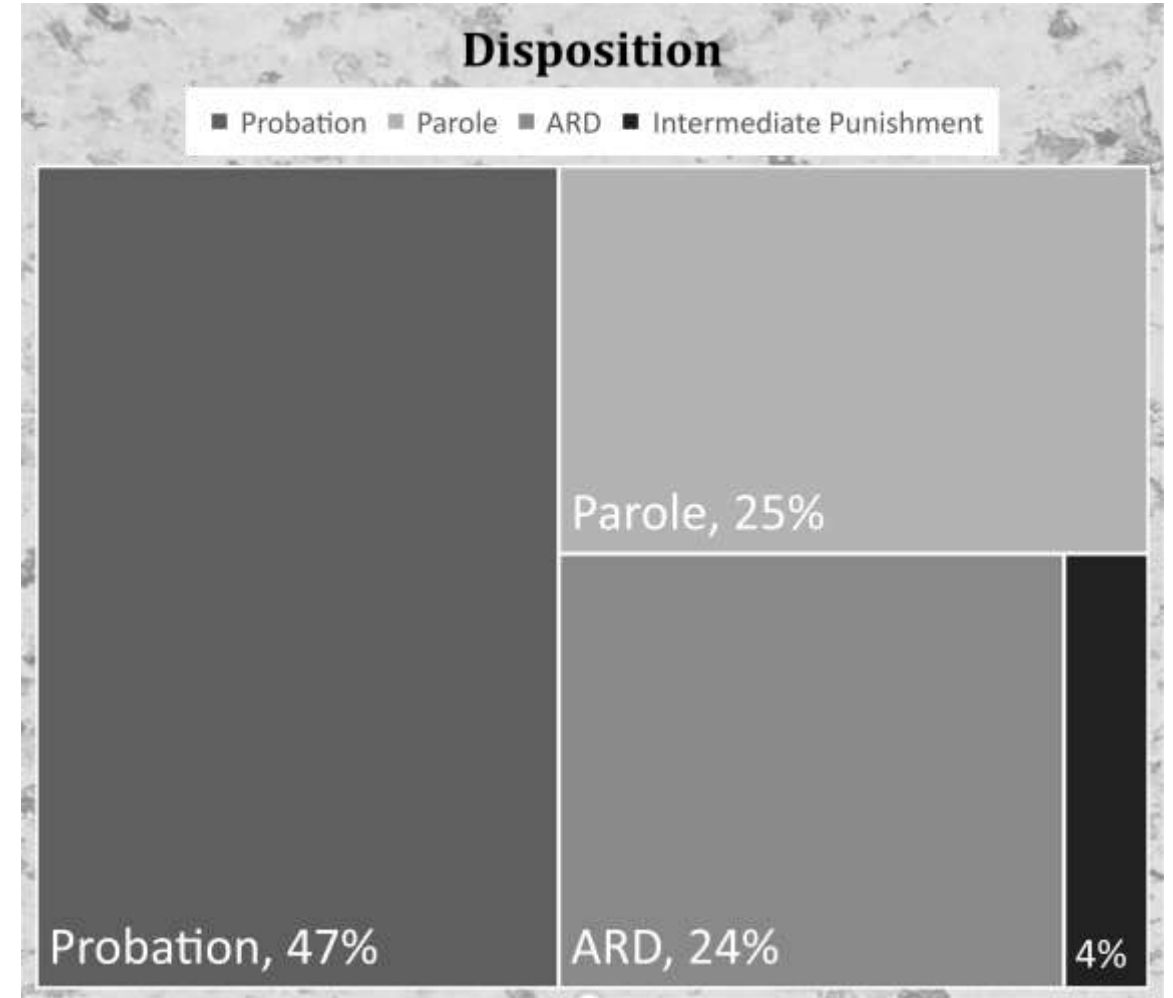
# 2021 Adult Probation Offender to Staff Comparison



# 2021 Adult Probation Client Profile

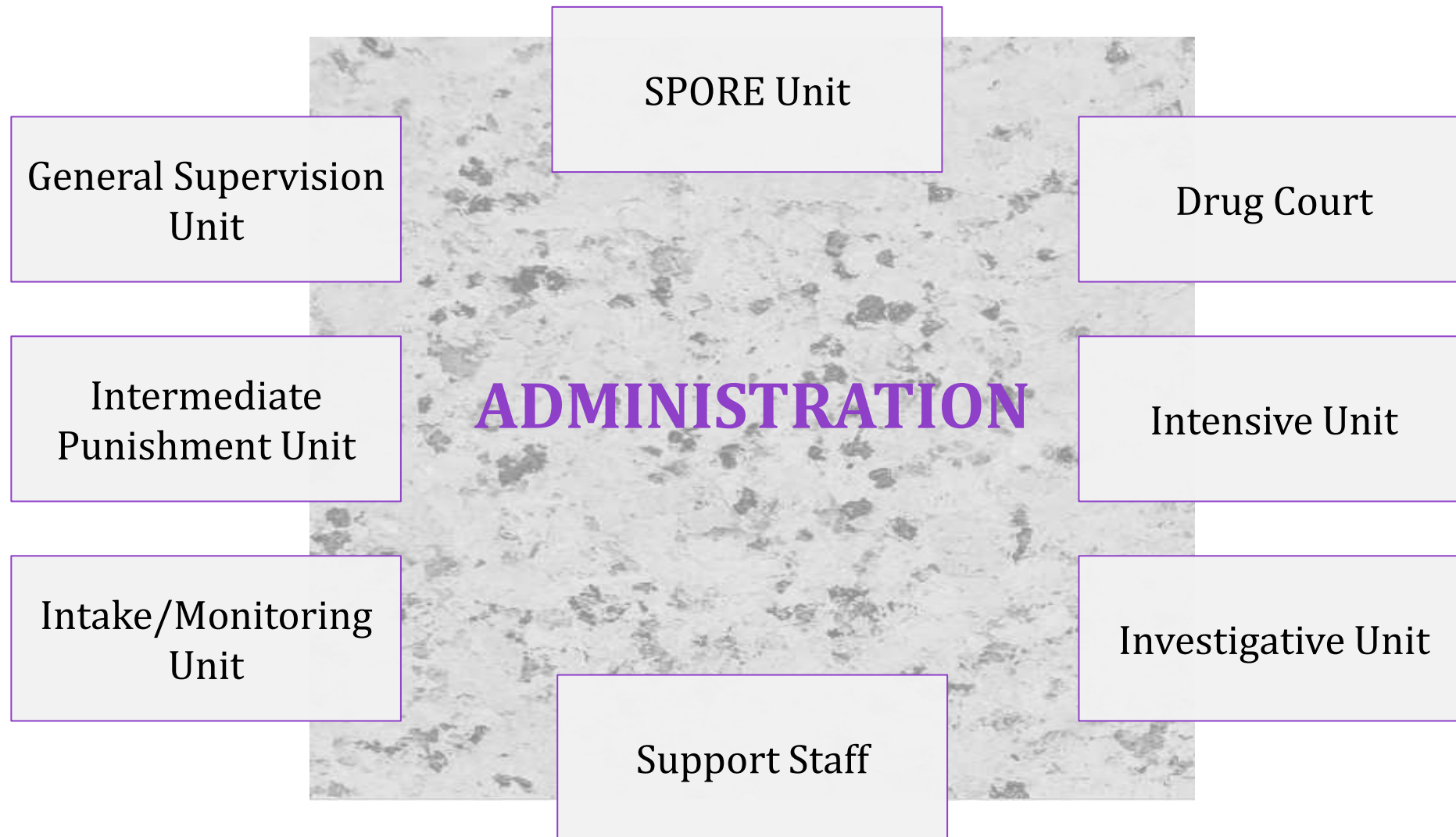


# 2021 Adult Probation Client Profile





# 2021 Adult Probation Functional Units

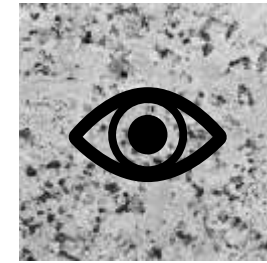


# 2021 Adult Probation Numbers



1,216

Court Reporting  
Network Evaluations  
Completed



726

Pre-Parole  
Investigations  
Completed



\*

Offenders  
Completing Alcohol  
Safe Driving School



273

Pre-Sentence  
Investigations  
Completed

\* Alcohol Safe Driving School Classes were placed on hold from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 due to COVID-19. Classes were completed online.

# 2021 Adult Probation Programs & Projects

**Specialty Drug  
Court**

**Competency/  
Accountability  
Programs**

**Community Work  
Service Project**

**SPORE**

**Intensive  
Supervision**

**In-House Drug  
Testing  
Program**

**Outmate**

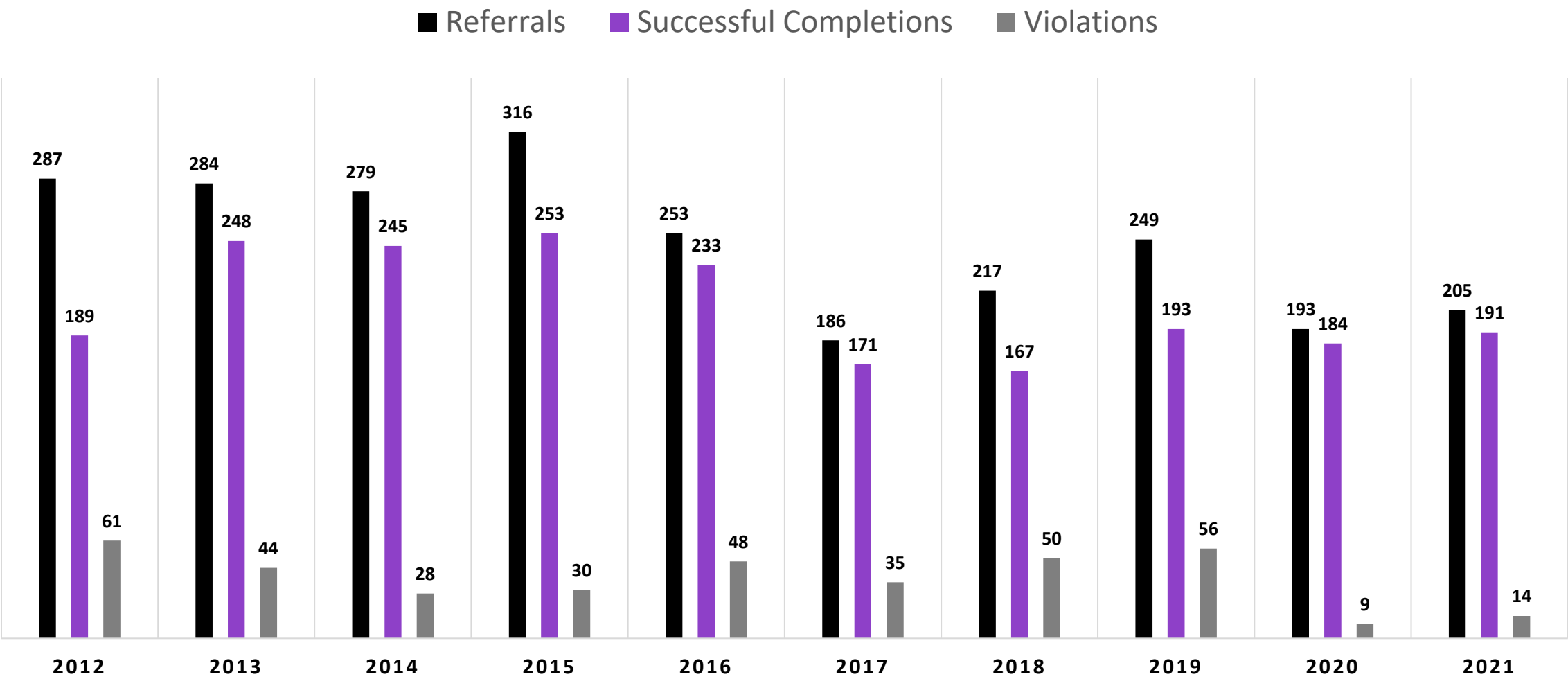
**Prevention  
Through Anti-  
Violence Education  
(PAVE)**

**Electronic  
Monitoring**

**Treatment  
Continuum  
Alternative Project  
(TCAP)**

**Alcohol Highway  
Safety Project**

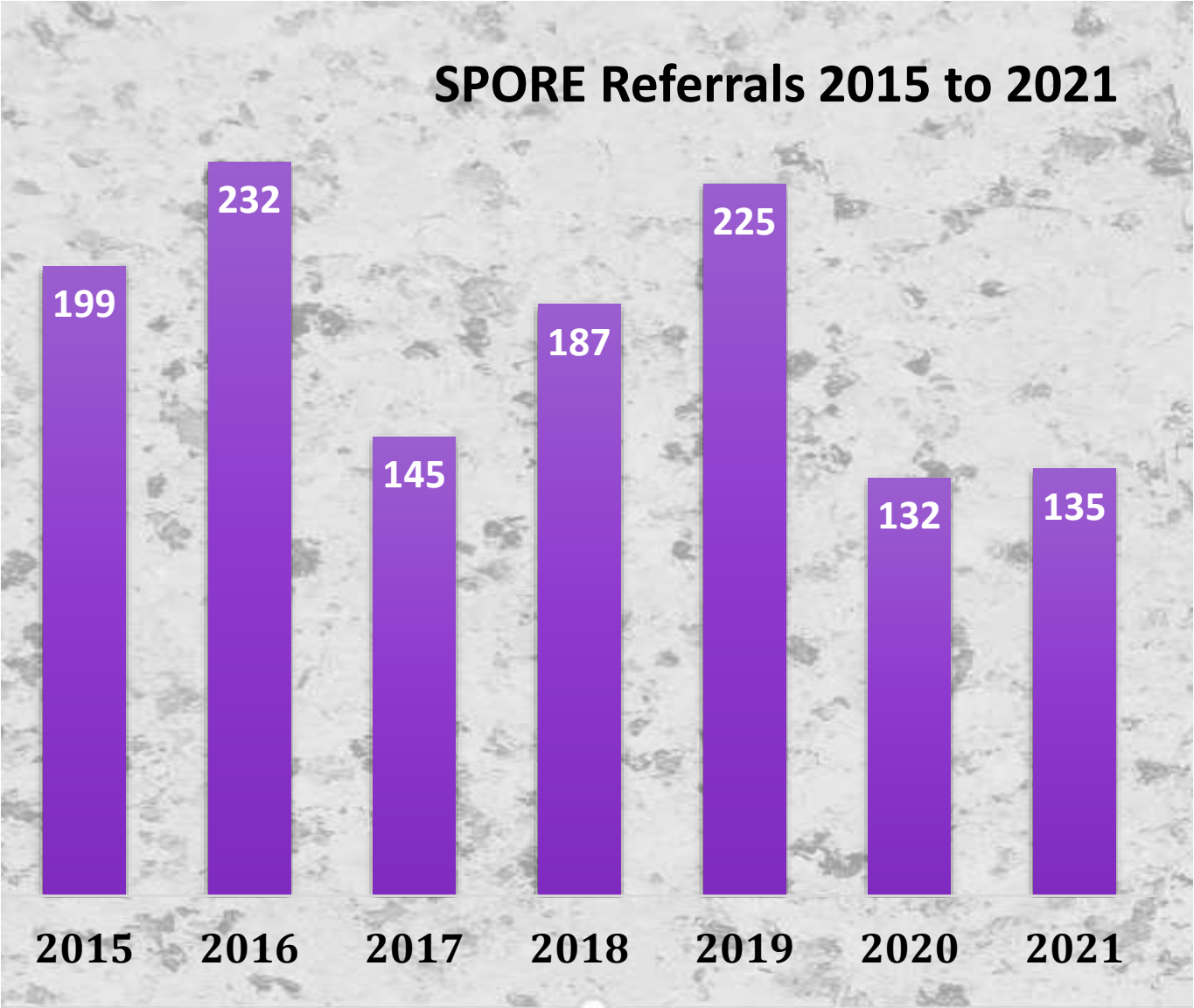
# Adult Probation Electronic Monitoring 2012 to 2021



# Adult Probation SPORE

Special Program for Offenders in Rehabilitation and Education (SPORE) provides services for mentally ill 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 2021, SPORE received 135 formal referrals and 59 evaluations were completed.







# Juvenile Probation

Providing a Balanced Approach to  
Juvenile Justice



# Juvenile Probation Mission

## 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 Kevin Miller, 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

## A 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

## Departmental Divisions

### ADMINISTRATION / MANAGEMENT

INTAKE UNIT (EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT)

COMMUNITY BASED SUPERVISION

SPORE (MENTAL HEALTH AND ID)

PLACEMENT/AFTERCARE UNIT

COMMUNITY SERVICES UNIT

VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

NON PAYMENT OF COSTS AND FINES UNIT

QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT

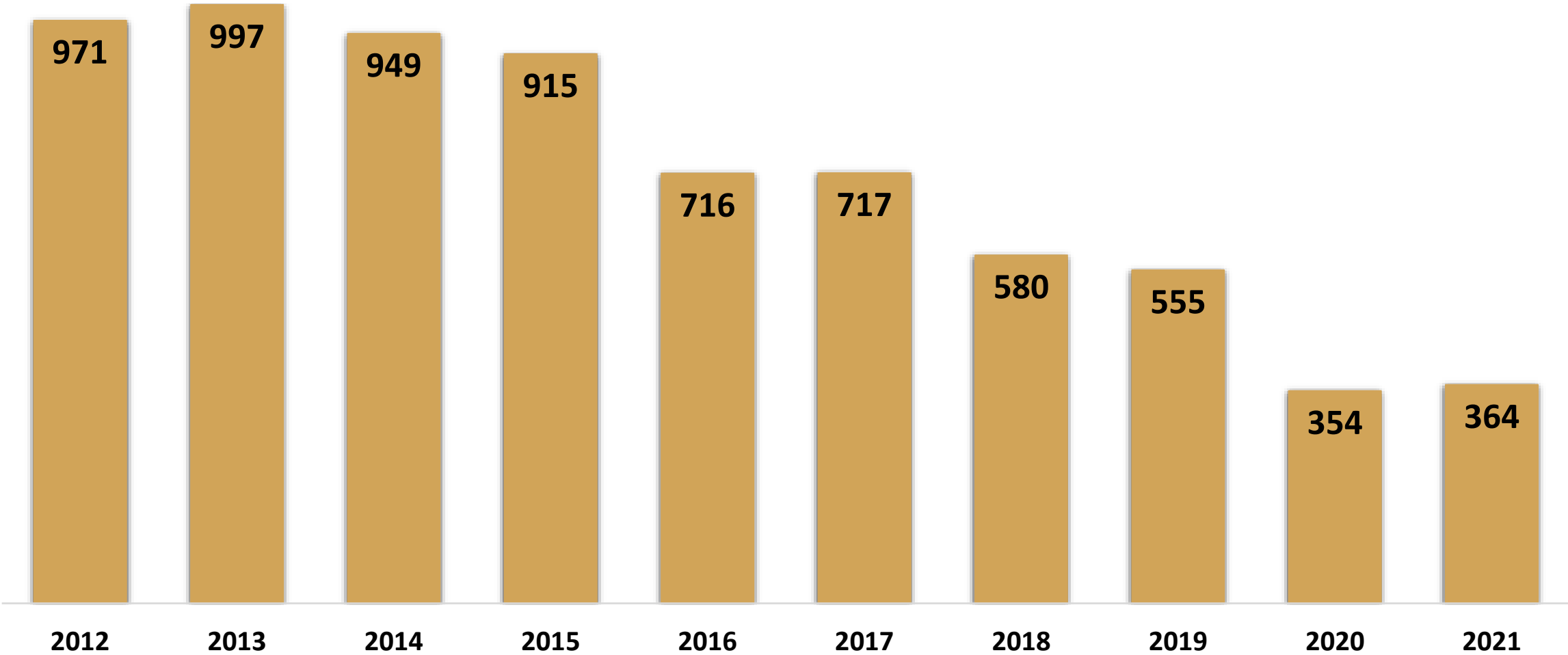
TRANSPORTATION UNIT

FISCAL UNIT

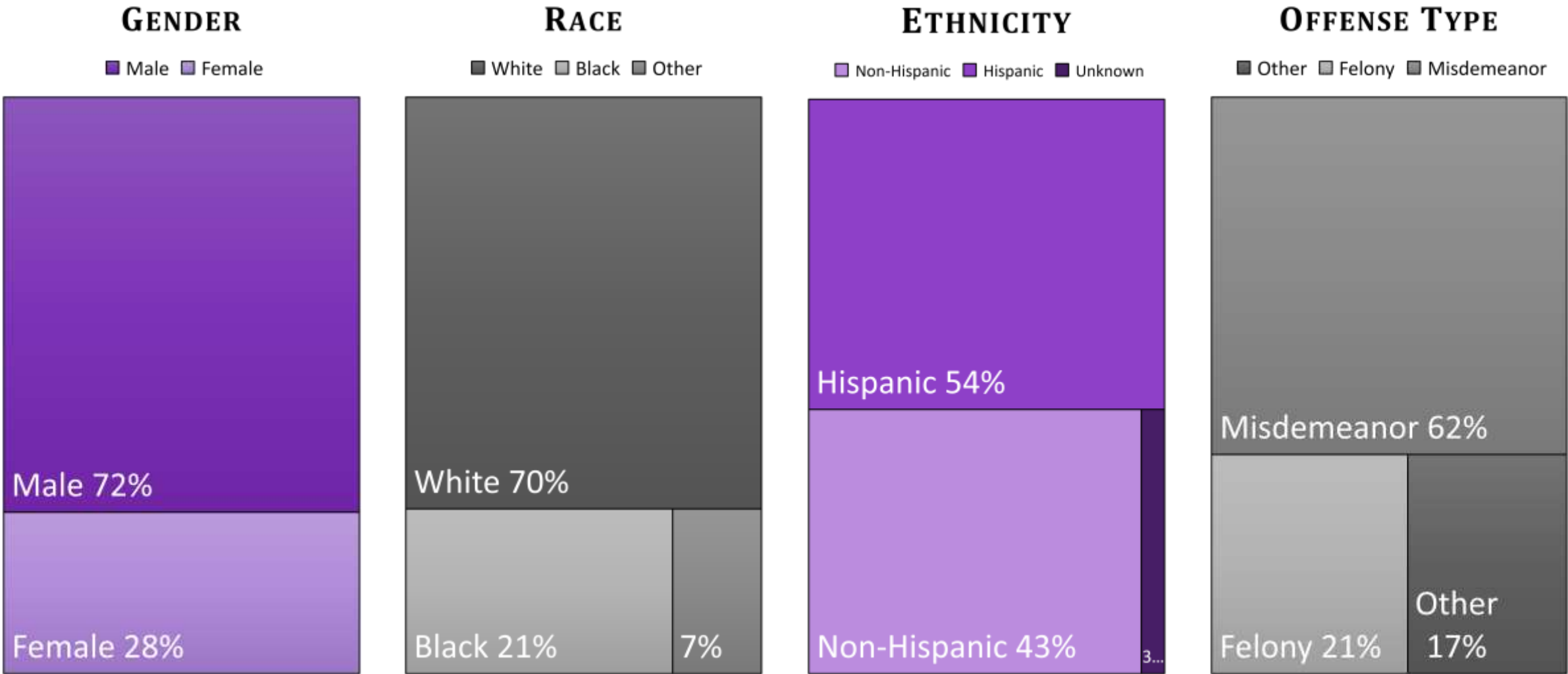
SUPPORT STAFF

MANAGEMENT UNIT

# Youth Under Supervision 2012 to 2021



# 2021 Juvenile Probation Client Profile



# 2021 Juvenile Probation

## ALLEGATIONS RECEIVED FROM:



When a police department makes an arrest of a juvenile and the District Attorney’s office approves the charges, the Juvenile Probation department receives a referral delineating the allegations faced by the juvenile. This graph shows the sources of such referrals.



# Juvenile Probation Primary Dispositions 2012 to 2021

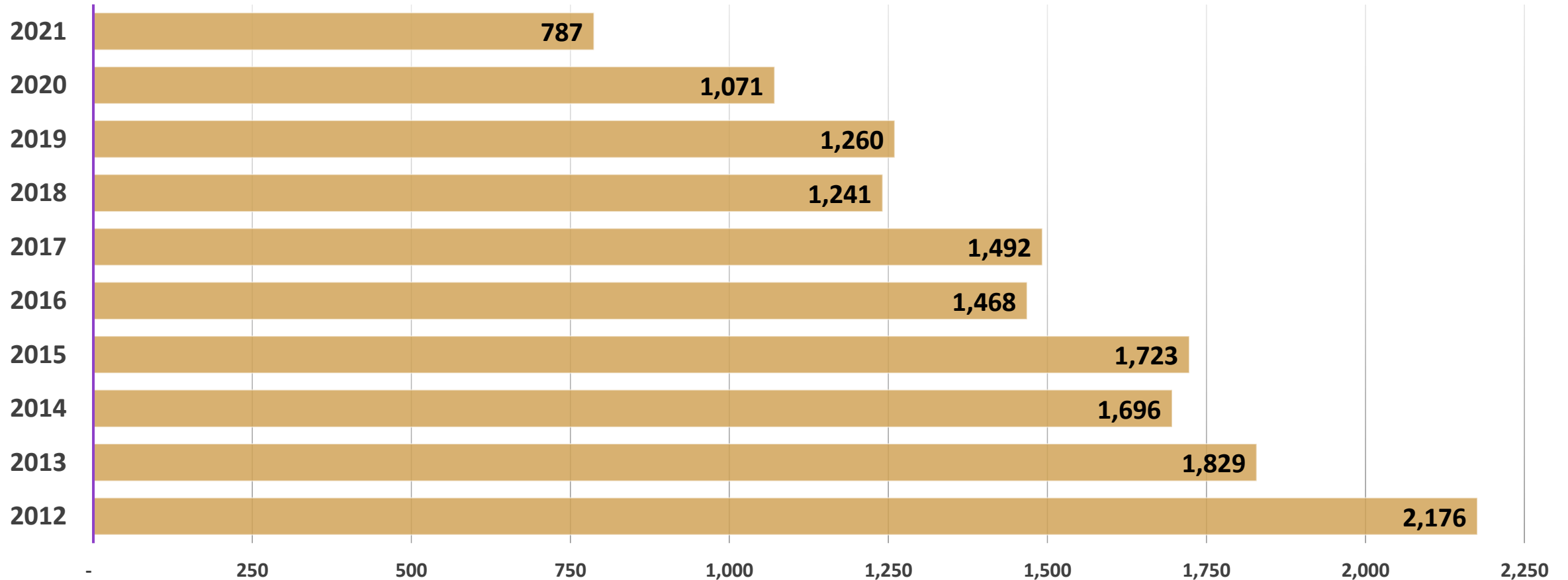
Each referral/written allegation may include multiple “cases” which may result in multiple dispositions per allegation. The numbers reflected here include our most frequent dispositions, but are not reflective of all our dispositions.

- 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.

\*Starting with 2015, the Placement data does not include Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health placements that were not court commitments.

Year	Referrals/ Written Allegations	Informal Adjustment	Consent Decree	Probation	Placement
2021	321	16	54	66	39
2020	428	15	97	109	54
2019	839	28	125	162	78
2018	798	28	124	157	77
2017	958	29	160	231	86
2016	967	49	140	319	96
2015*	1,268	62	160	325	118
2014	1,293	78	148	338	190
2013	1,175	61	175	305	221
2012	1,239	161	189	393	214

# Number of Juvenile Cases Disposed 2012 to 2021



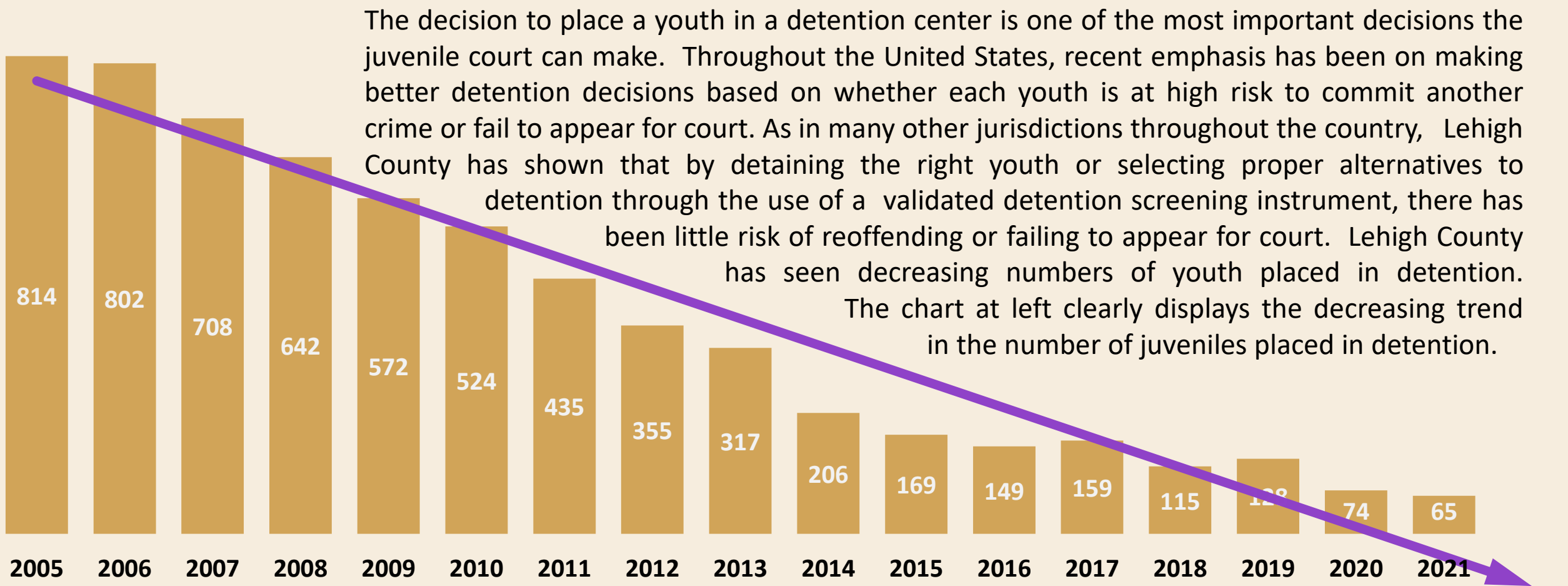
Probation and placement dispositions can be counted more than once for the same juvenile as they represent each “case.”

# Juvenile Probation Incarcerated Youth 2014 to Present

	Total	Sentenced in Adult Court	De- Certified	Other/ Pending
Direct File Youth	57	43	12	5
Youth Transferred to Adult Court	11			

- This chart reflects the number of youth that were direct filed or transferred to adult court since 2014.
- Direct filed cases include offenses that are not included in the definition of a “delinquent act.” Offenses such as murder, and other severe offenses (for juveniles 15 years or older) are included.
  - In these instances, youth can be automatically charged as an adult per section 42 Pa.C.S.A. § 6302 of the Juvenile Act.
- Youth transferred to adult court are cases petitioned to juvenile court; however, the court finds that the juvenile system is not appropriate for the particular case.
  - Youth must be 14 or older at the time of the offense and the court must find that a felony crime occurred. Furthermore, there must be reasonable grounds to believe the public interest would be best served by having the case sent to criminal court.
  - A youth can also request that the case be transferred to criminal court.

# Juvenile Probation Detention Trends 2005 to 2021



# Outcomes on 213 Juvenile Probation Cases Closed in 2021

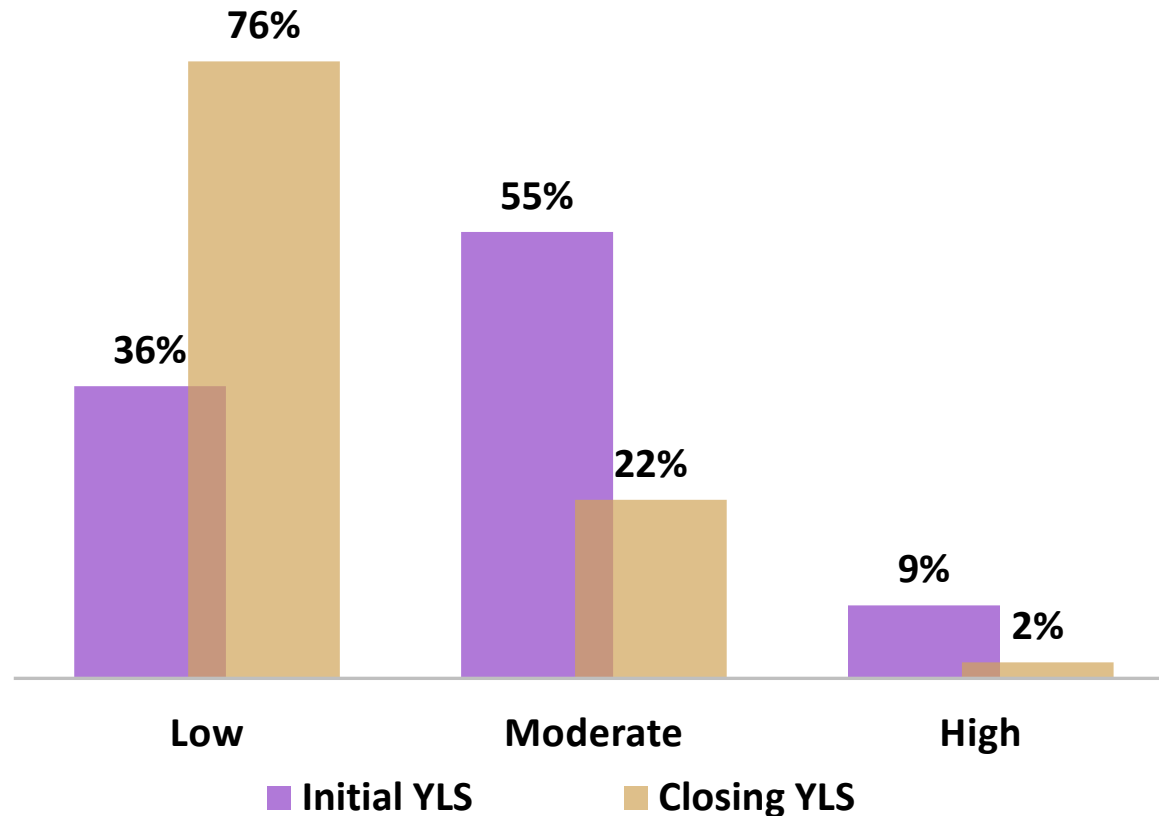
Probation officers are required to report outcome measures whenever they release a juvenile from probation supervision.

These outcomes measure activities while under supervision.

Juveniles who completed a community service obligation in full	<b>96%</b>
Juveniles in school or employed at case closing	<b>93.8%</b>
Juveniles who paid their restitution in full	<b>76.6%</b>
Juveniles who successfully completed supervision without a new offense resulting in a Consent Decree, Adjudication of Delinquency, ARD, Nolo Contendere, or finding of guilt in a criminal proceeding	<b>90.7%</b>
Juveniles with no judicial finding of technical violations of probation while under supervision	<b>89.9%</b>
Juveniles committed to placement (28 days or longer)	<b>16.8%</b>
Completion rate of juveniles ordered to Victim Awareness Curriculum	<b>100%</b>

# 2021 Juvenile Probation Risk/Needs Assessment

## Initial YLS Assessments vs. Closing YLS Assessments

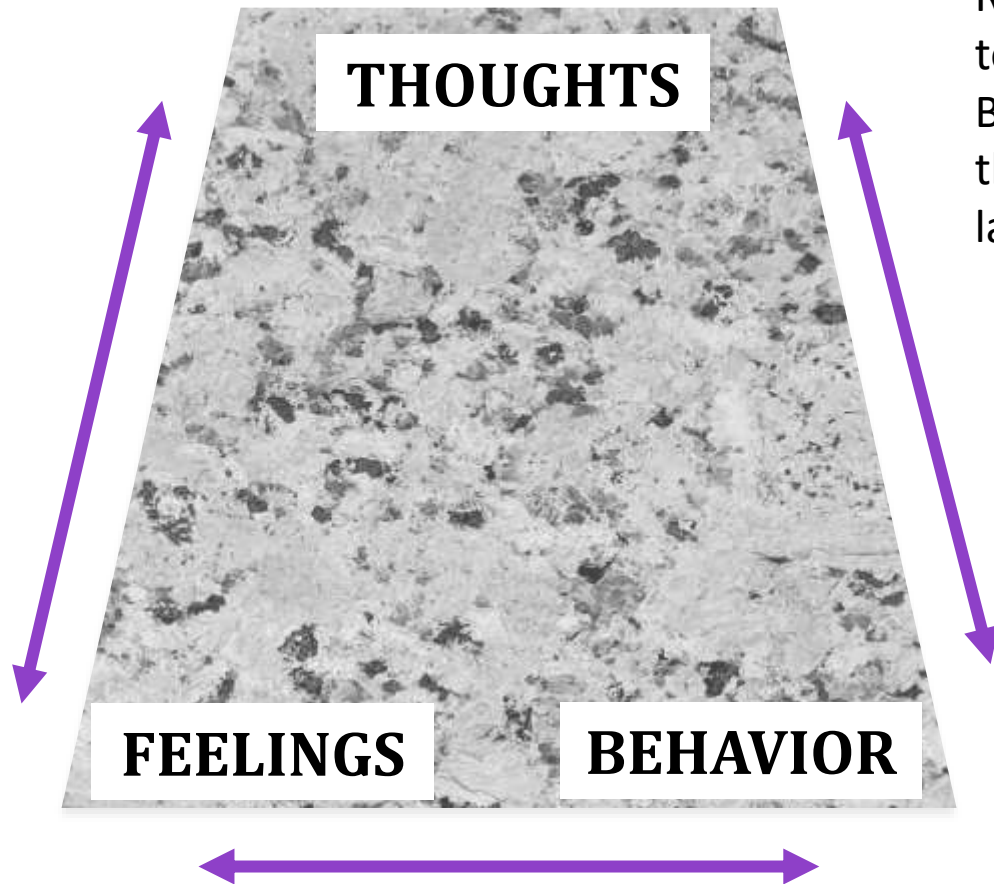


The Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory 2.0 (YLS/CMI 2.0™) is a gender and culturally informed, strengths-based risk/needs assessment tool that reliably and accurately classifies and predicts **re-offending** within juvenile populations. The juvenile probation department has administered the YLS since 2009.

The chart at left compares the initial YLS assessments to the assessments done at time of case closing. This information shows the change in risk level from the onset of supervision to the time supervision ends. As can be seen, in 2021, the percentage of youth who scored low at the time of case closing increased from 36% to 76%.



# Juvenile Probation Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions



Research is clear that the most effective interventions in reducing risk to reoffend are cognitive-behavioral interventions. Cognitive-Behavioral interventions assist to identify and restructure negative thinking patterns, and help build, practice, and utilize previously lacked skills that are linked to re-offending behavior.

Lehigh County utilizes a wide range of both cognitive-behavioral and educational interventions to tailor an individual plan for each juvenile under supervision.

These programs and initiatives are listed on the next page.

# Juvenile Probation Programs & Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Initiatives

**Crossroads**

**Young  
Offenders  
Program**

**Girls Circle**

**College  
Mentoring**

**Community  
Work Service  
Program**

**Case Planning**

**Motivational  
Interviewing**

**CHOICES**

**Family  
Engagement**

**Retail Theft &  
Underage  
Drinking  
Programs**

**Young Artist  
Program**

**Thinking for a  
Change**

**Effective  
Practices in  
Community  
Supervision  
(EPICS)**

**YLS/CMI &  
Other  
Screening &  
Assessments**

**Skill Building &  
Cognitive  
Based  
Interventions**

**Drug  
Awareness &  
Prevention  
Program  
(DAPP)**

**Aggression  
Replacement  
Training**

**Forward  
Thinking  
Journaling**

**Victim  
Awareness  
Curriculum**

**Graduated  
Responses**

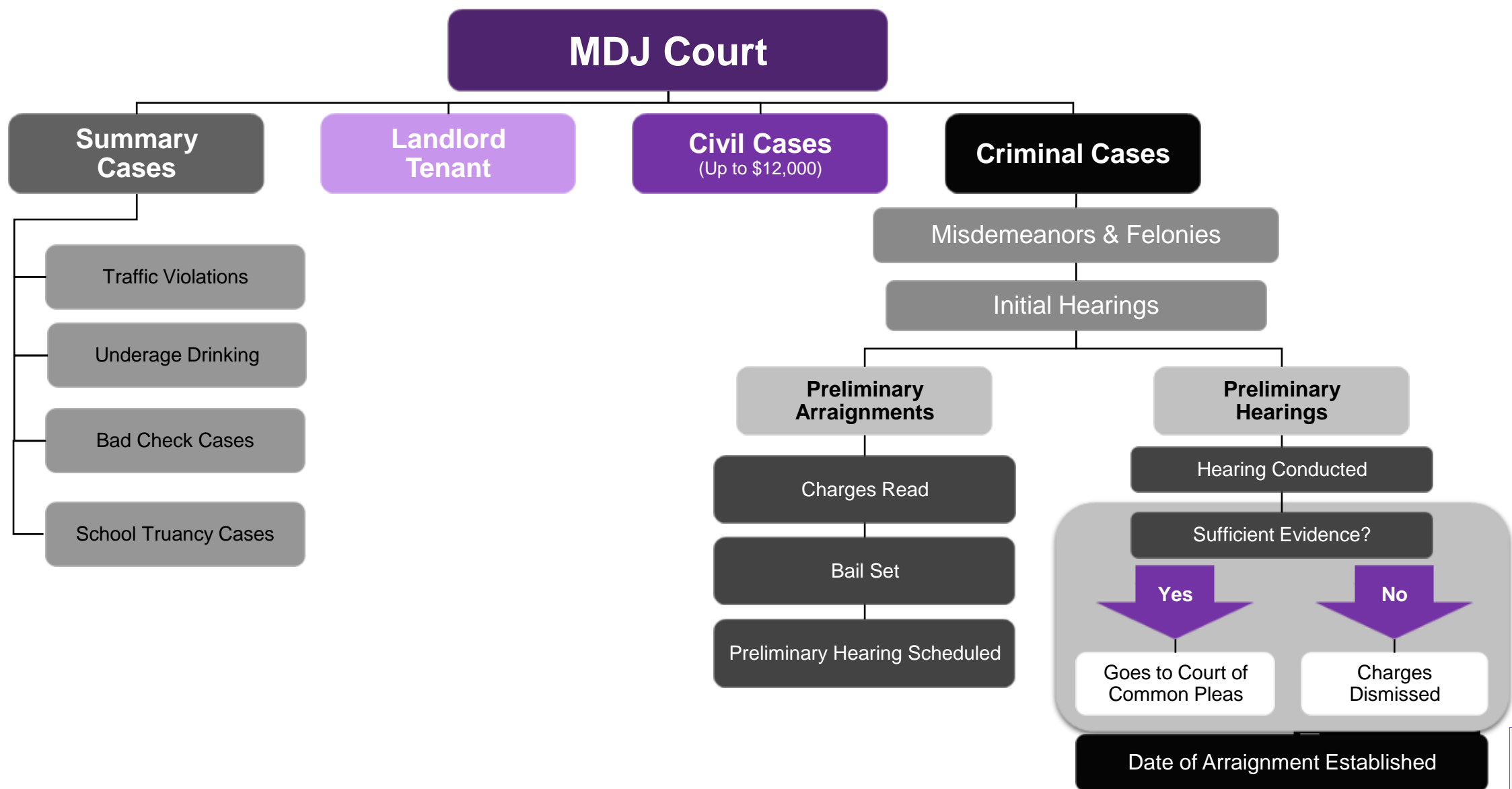




# Magisterial District Court

Providing the First Level of  
Pennsylvania's Judiciary

# Jurisdiction of the MDJ Court





# 2021 Magisterial District Judges

The Lehigh County Magisterial District Court consists of 14 District Court offices, Night Court and Central Court. The supervision of each District Court is the responsibility of the elected Magisterial District Judge, a state employee. Other Magisterial District Court office employees are Lehigh County judicial employees.

The personnel and administrative functions for the Magisterial District Courts are the responsibility of District Judge Administrator, Carolynn Perry.

○ 31-1-01	Patricia M. Engler
○ 31-1-02	Rashid O. Santiago
○ 31-1-03	Ronald S. Manescu
○ 31-1-04	David M. Howells, Jr.
○ 31-1-05	Michael D. D'Amore
○ 31-1-06	Vacant
○ 31-1-07	Todd P. Heffelfinger
○ 31-1-08	Michael J. Pochron
○ 31-2-01	Karen C. Devine
○ 31-2-02	Jacob E. Hammond
○ 31-2-03	Vacant
○ 31-3-01	Thomas Creighton
○ 31-3-02	Michael J. Faulkner
○ 31-3-03	Daniel C. Trexler



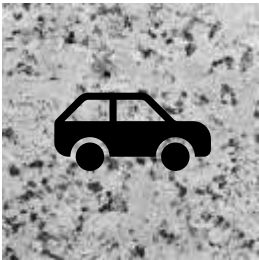
# 2021 MDJ Court Filings



**4,820**  
**Criminal Cases**



**8,337**  
**Civil Cases &  
Landlord/Tenant  
Cases**



**76,540**  
**Summary Traffic  
Cases**



**4,670**  
**Summary Non-  
Traffic Cases**



# Special MDJ Courts



## Central Court

- Preliminary Hearings for all Incarcerated Defendants
- Located within the Lehigh County Courthouse
- 14 MDJs preside on a rotating schedule
- DUI Court two days per month



## Night Court

- Preliminary Arraignments for Arrests made after Courthouse hours
- Bail Payments
- Emergency PFA Orders
- Constable Warrant Matters

# Contact Information

## Court Administration

Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County

455 W. Hamilton Street

Allentown, PA 18101

Telephone: 610-782-3014

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

