

Annual Report

THE 31ST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Court of Common
Pleas of Lehigh County

2019

2019 Judges of the Court of Common Pleas

PRESIDENT JUDGE EDWARD D. REIBMAN

JUDGE ROBERT L. STEINBERG

JUDGE J. BRIAN JOHNSON

JUDGE KELLY L. BANACH

JUDGE JAMES T. ANTHONY

JUDGE MARIA L. DANTOS

JUDGE MICHELE A. VARRICCHIO

JUDGE DOUGLAS G. REICHLEY

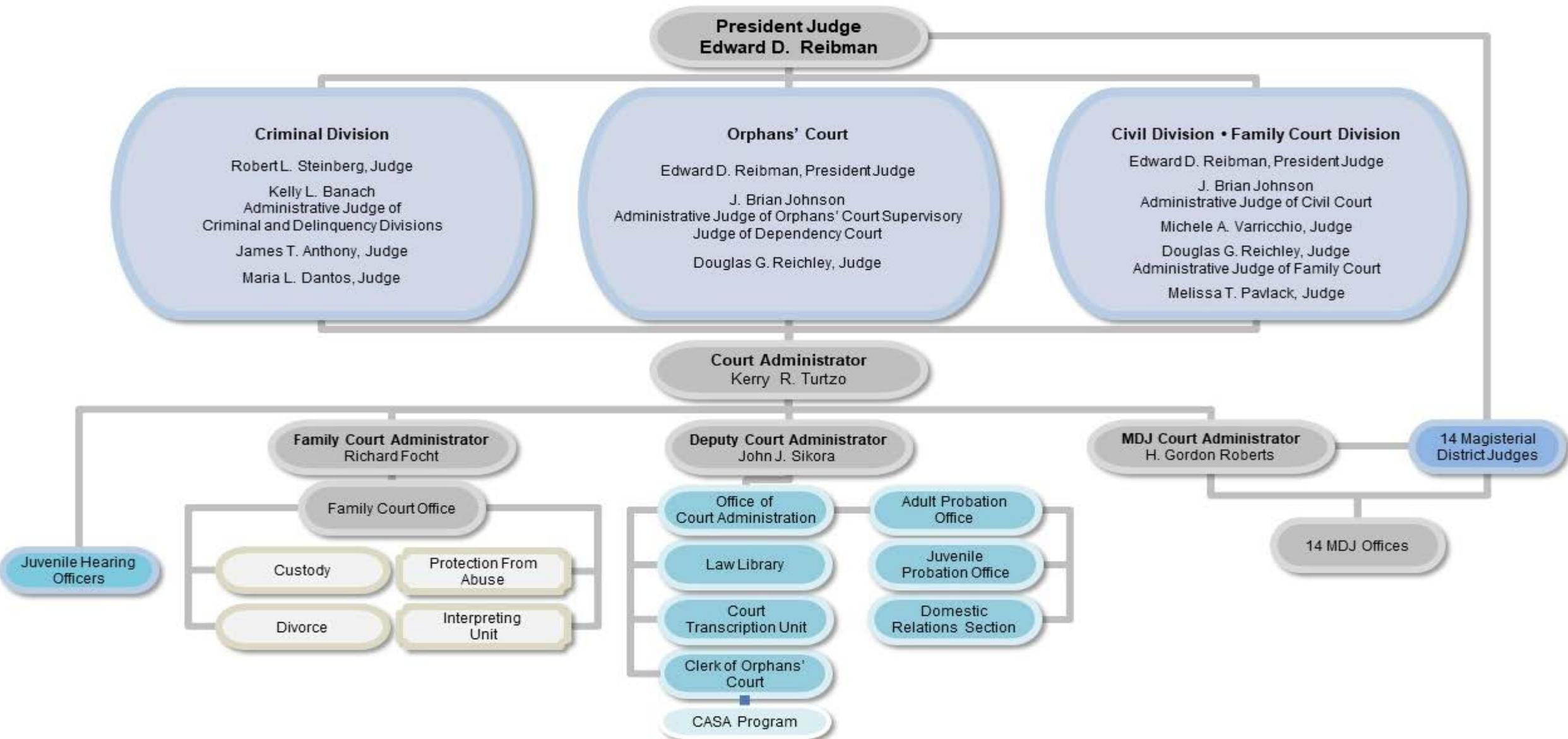
JUDGE MELISSA T. PAVLACK

JUDGE ANNA-KRISTIE M. MARKS

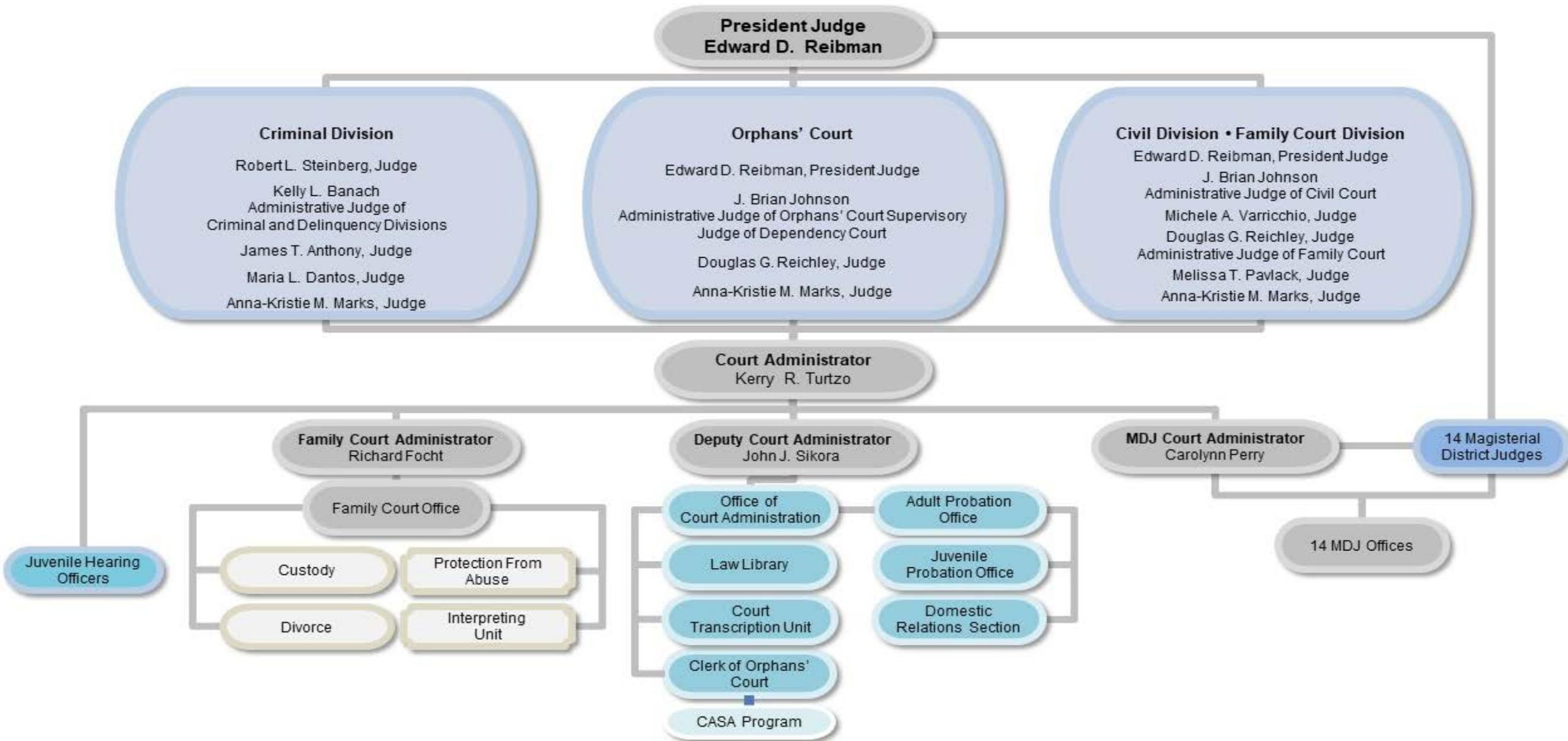
SENIOR JUDGE CAROL K. MCGINLEY



Court Organization Prior to July 27, 2019



Court Organization After July 27, 2019





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 2019, 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

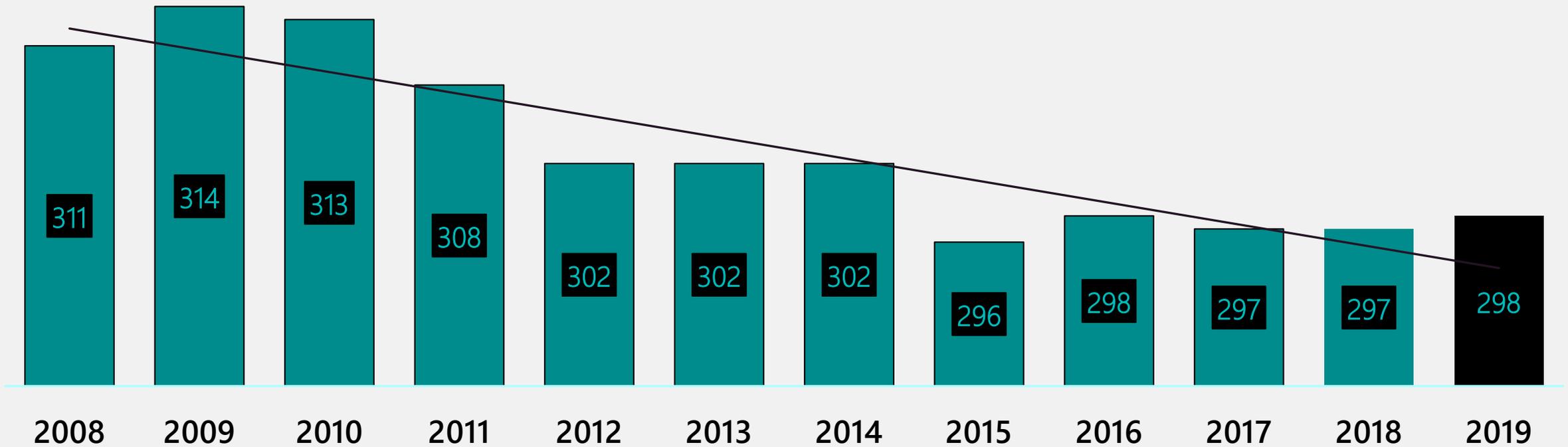
Equipment &
Technology
Management

Legal
Resource
Procurement

Records
Control

Public
Information

Full Time Judicial Personnel

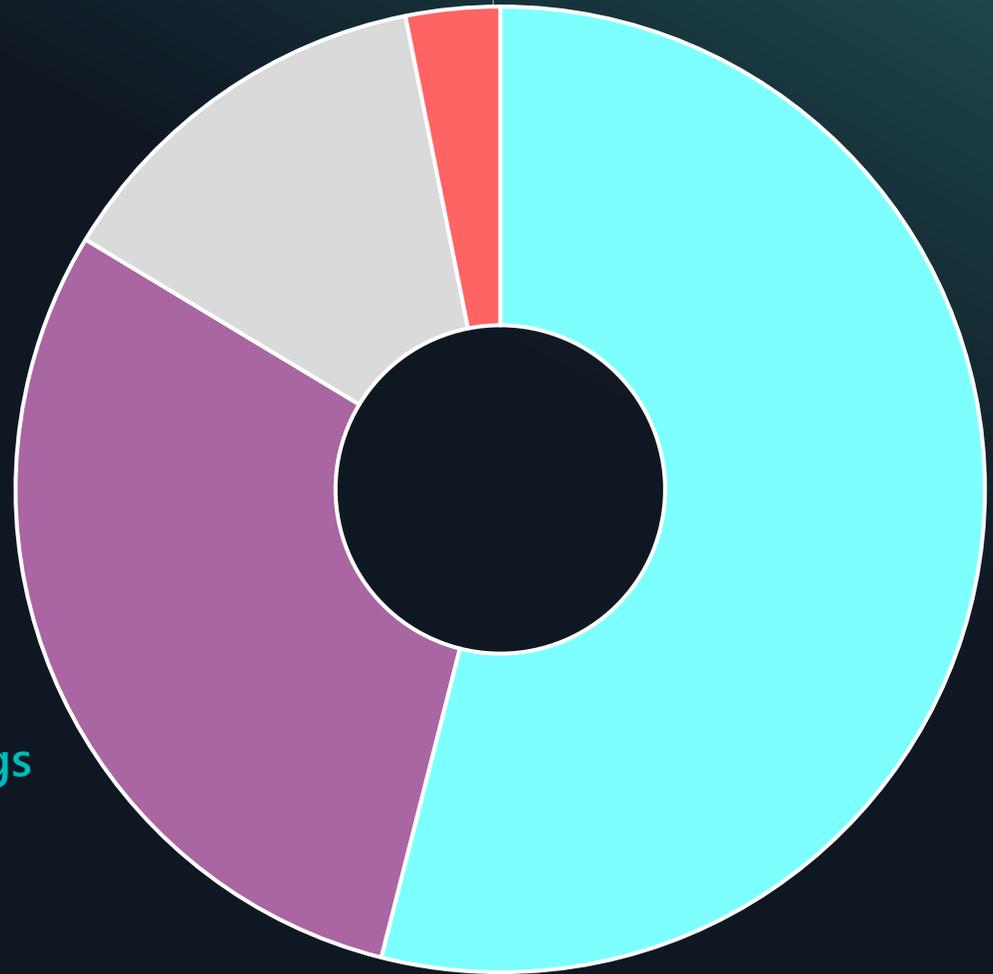


Judicial Personnel by Department

YEAR	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
COURT ADMINISTRATION	83	83	83	76	76	75	75	75
ADULT PROBATION	50	50	50	52	54	54	54	54
JUVENILE PROBATION	49	49	49	48	48	48	48	48
ORPHANS' COURT	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
DOMESTIC RELATIONS	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62
DISTRICT JUDGE	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	52
LAW LIBRARY	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	302	302	302	296	298	297	297	298

Court Revenue

2019



\$7,166,094
Grants & Reimbursements

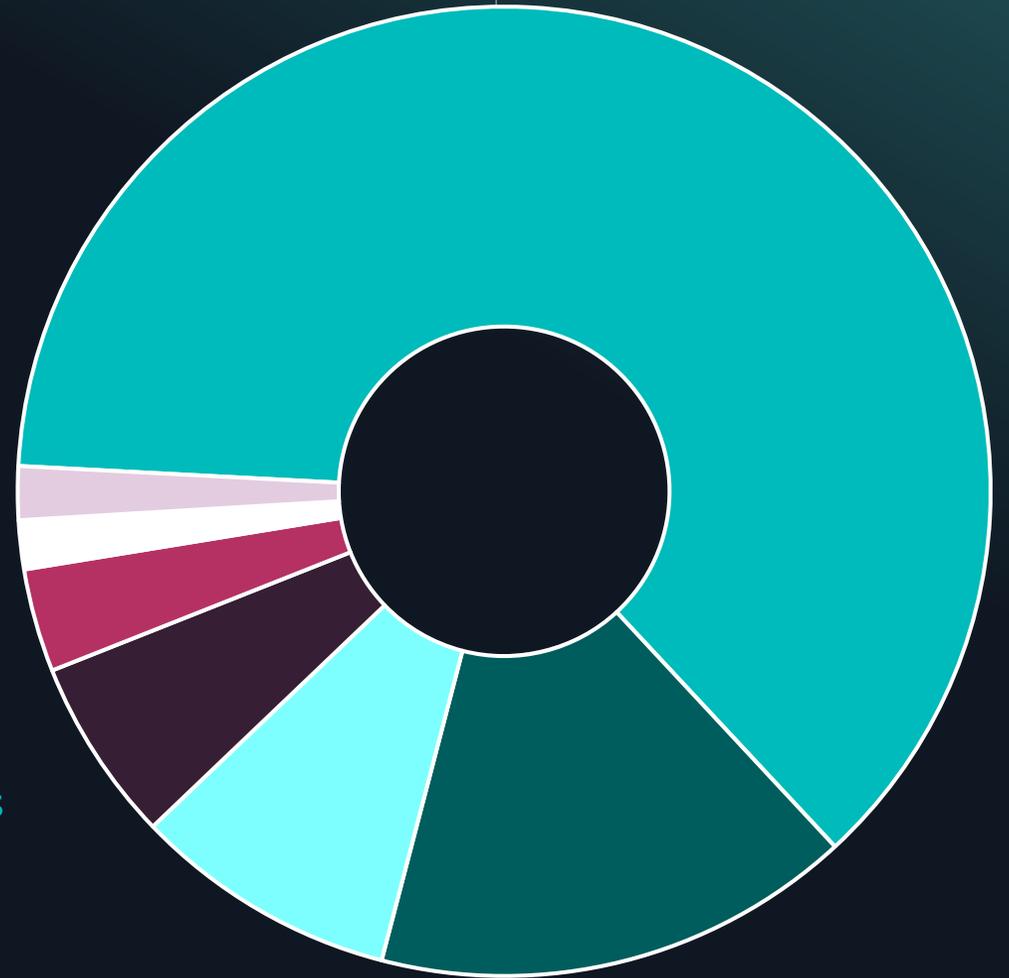
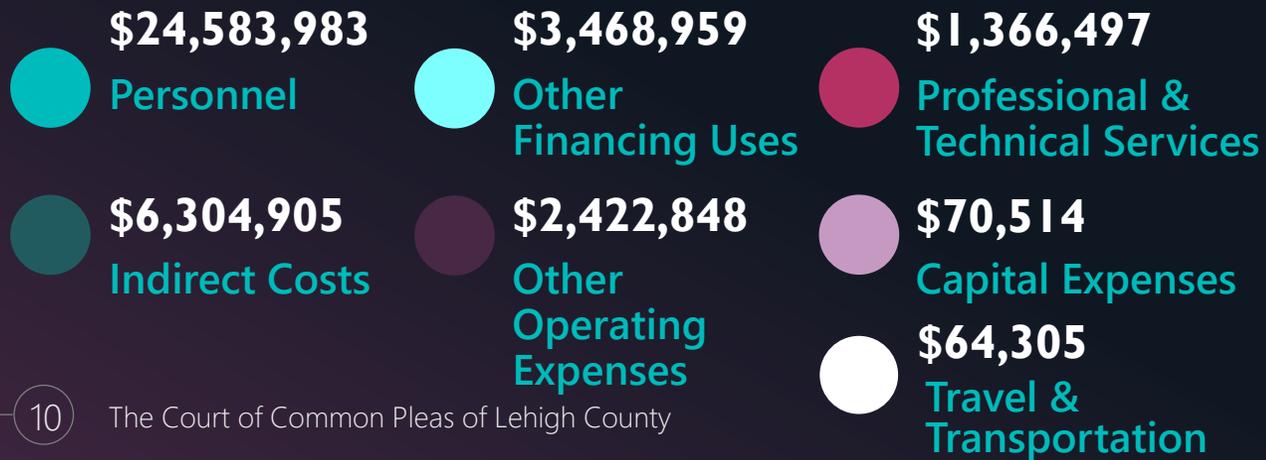
\$416,875
Department Earnings

\$3,945,574
Costs & Fines

\$1,753,905
Other Financing

Court Expenses

2019





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.

2019 Criminal Justice Board Grant Activities

ADULT PROBATION					JUVENILE PROBATION			
PROJECT TITLE	GRANT	GRANT \$	DEPARTMENT	STATUS	PROJECT TITLE	GRANT	GRANT \$	STATUS
Adult Probation/ Drug/Alcohol Restrictive Intermediate Punishment	PCCD	\$650,669	SCA/ Adult Probation	Awarded	Second Chance Act Grant- Violence Prevention Program	OJJDP	\$333,948	Active
Grant-In-Aid Continuing Program for the Improvement of Adult Probation Services	PBPP	\$571,488	Adult Probation	Awarded	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.

32,350

**JURY
SUMMONSES
MAILED**

2,848

**JURORS
REPORTING
FOR DUTY**

1,969

**JURORS SENT TO
VOIR DIRE FOR
SELECTION**

560

**JURORS
EMPANELED OR
SWORN IN**

Jury Management

Selection & Control of Jurors

Juror selection was supervised by Court Operations Officer, Gayle Fisher in 2019. 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.



CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocate Program

Providing “Eyes and Ears” for the Court

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 Program 2019

Pennsylvania's 3rd
Largest CASA Program



43

CASA Volunteers

43 Active CASA
Volunteers in 2019



70

Children

70 Abused and
Neglected Children
Served



13

Decision Makers

13 CASA Volunteers
appointed as
Educational Decision
Makers

CASA Permanent Homes 2019

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.



2

Kinship Care

2 Kinship Care
Solutions were found



2

Reunited

2 Children were
Reunited with their
Biological Family



6

Adopted

6 Children were
Expediently
Adopted

Library Information Services

Founded in 1869, the Lehigh County Law Library fills an essential role for the court and community by providing access to Pennsylvania and United States legal sources.

Lorelei A. Broskey, M.L.S., Director, oversees the three related missions of the Library Information Services department.



Public Law Library Services

Self-Help, Online & Print Resources

Operating the only public law library in Lehigh County



Legal Resources for Court & County

Resources for Employees

Providing judges, court, and county employees with essential legal sources necessary for job performance



Court Document Services

Document Production & Related Services

Providing scanning, color printing, brochure development and related document services to library patrons & courthouse offices



Library Information Services

Providing Access to Legal Resources Since 1869

\$5.81 Million



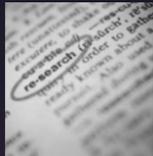
Retail value of the **71,278** Westlaw online research transactions performed by the Court, County Employees and Law Library Patrons during 5,500+ hours of research.

10,914



Total of 5,822 Westlaw Public Access Program and 5,092 Lexis Advance Public Access Program searches performed by or for patrons in the public Lehigh County Law Library.

\$466,772



Actual cost of all online and print legal resources received, processed and delivered to the Lehigh County Law Library, court and county offices on 848 invoices most representing multiple print volumes.

8,858 & 1,358

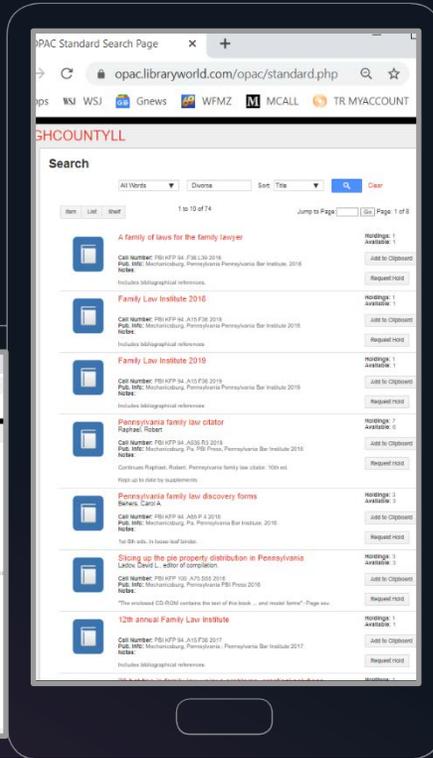
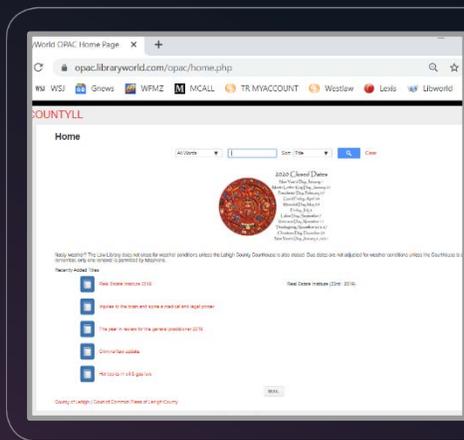


Pages of legal research printed and photocopies made by patrons in the public Law Library and Book circulation transactions handled by Lehigh County Law Library staff.



Lehigh County Law Library Internet Based Catalog

See the Law Library Department page on the Court's Website for the link to the Law Library Catalog





The Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County

Providing Civil & Criminal Justice



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 Division

Civil Court
Family Court
Juvenile Dependency Court



Orphans' Court Division

The Orphans' Court
Marriage License Bureau



The judges assigned to the Criminal/Juvenile Court Division are responsible for handling adult criminal cases as well as juvenile delinquency matters.

4,486
New Adult Criminal Cases

6
Cases were Homicides

Criminal/Juvenile Court Judges 2019

ROBERT L. STEINBERG, JUDGE

KELLY L. BANACH, JUDGE

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF
CRIMINAL AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY DIVISIONS

JAMES T. ANTHONY, JUDGE

MARIA L. DANTOS, JUDGE

ANNA-KRISTIE M. MARKS, JUDGE



Criminal/Juvenile Court Division

Adult Criminal Court

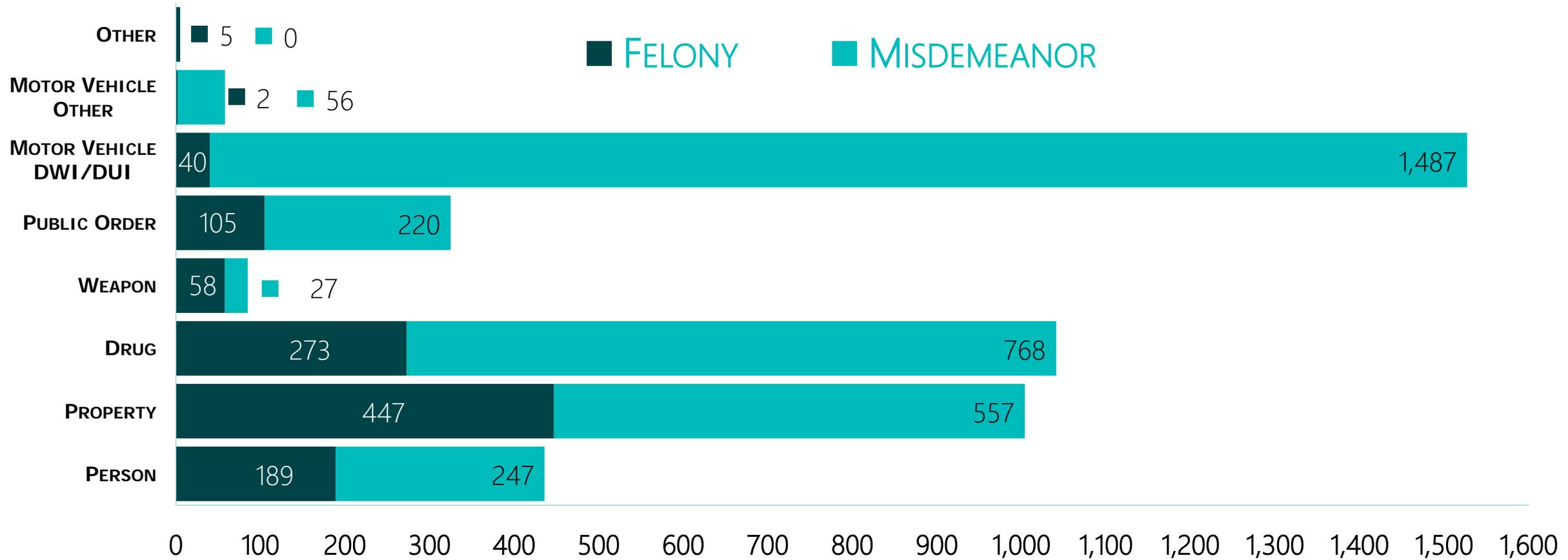
The judges in the Criminal/Juvenile Court Division utilize an individual calendaring system. The assigned judge handles the case from formal arraignment through disposition.

All probation and parole violations and any post-sentence motions are handled by the judge who sentenced the defendant.

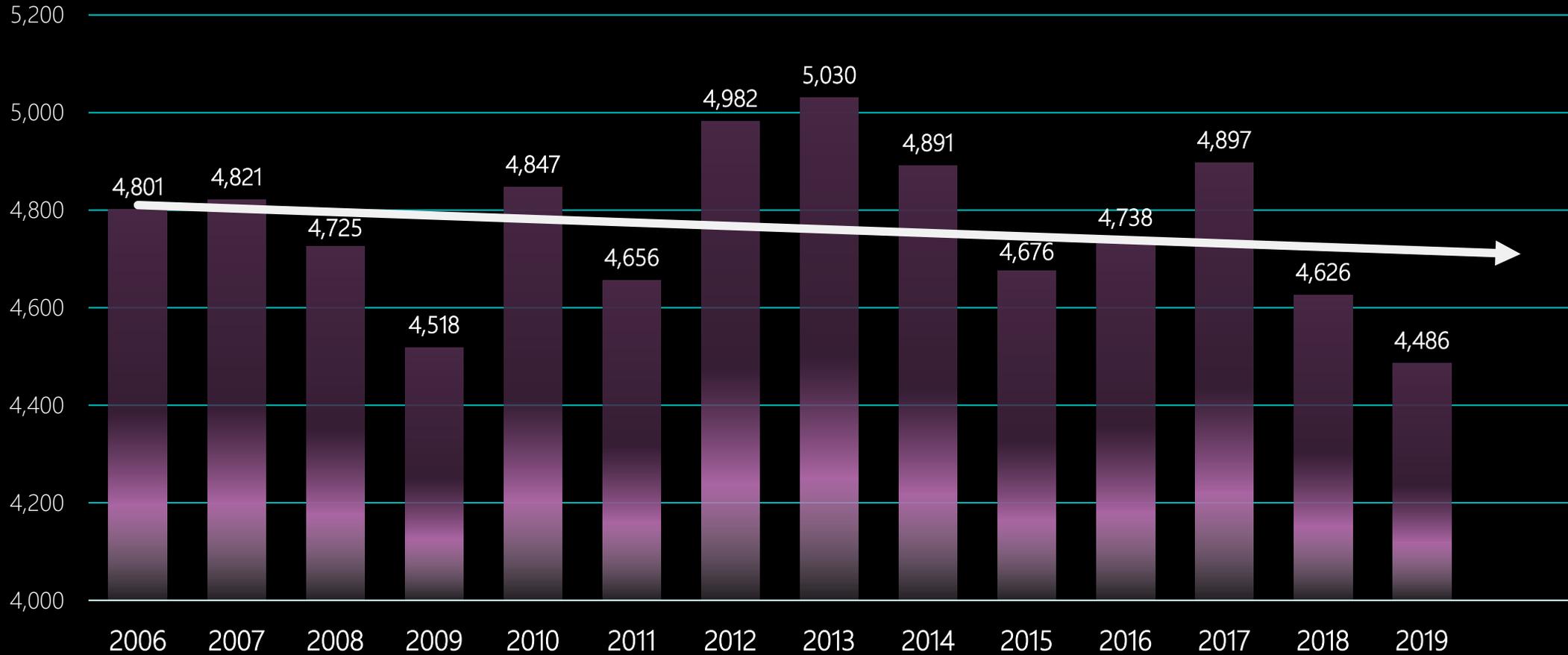
Criminal Filings and Dispositions 2019

Total Cases Processed	4,830
New Cases	4,486
Reopened Cases	223
ARD	1,680
Dismissed/Withdrawn	118
Guilty Plea	2,763
Jury Trial	21
Non-Jury Trial	21
Inactive	218
Other	9

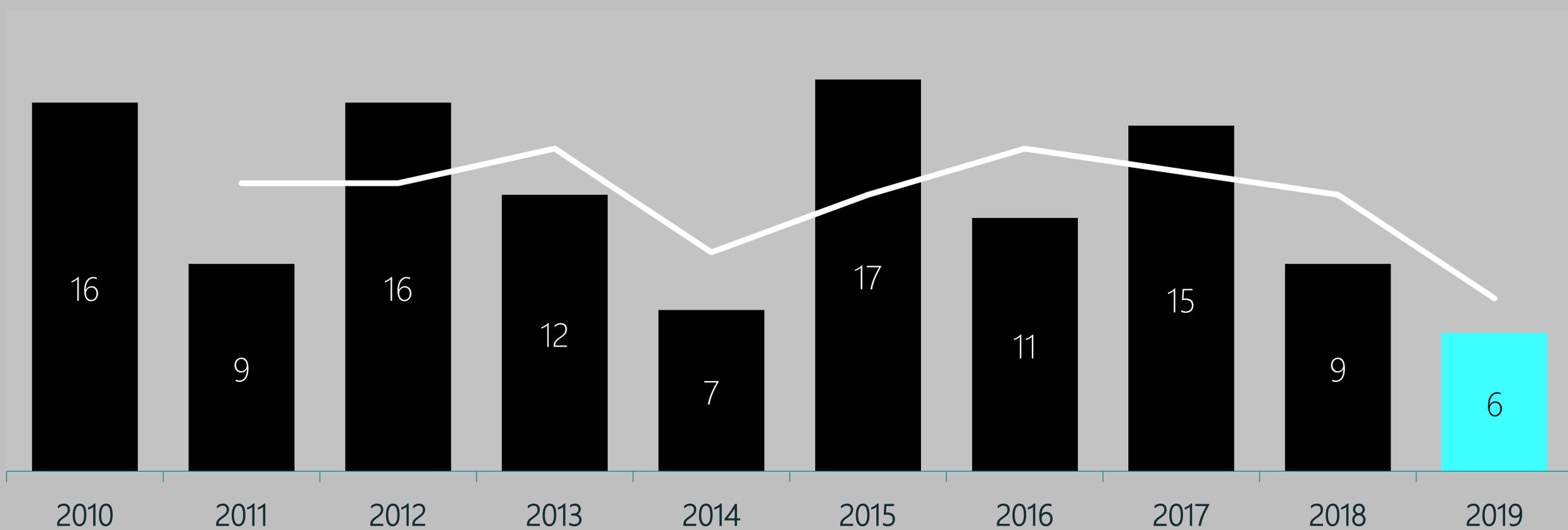
Criminal Cases by Type 2019



New Criminal Cases Filed 2006-2019



Annual Homicide Filings with Moving Average





Juvenile Justice in Lehigh County

1

Juvenile Court

Juvenile Court, in 2019, 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.

In 2019, Juvenile Judges and Hearing Officers disposed of 611 delinquency cases and 371 dependency petitions.

2

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.

3

Delinquent Juveniles

Those 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.

There were 557 new delinquency filings in 2019.



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.

Civil/Family Court Division

Civil Court Operations

Civil Operations Section

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 1,800 civil cases pending in the Court's open inventory.

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.

**ORPHANS'
COURT**

**Parental Rights
Adoptions
Guardianships**

**FAMILY
COURT**

**Divorce
Custody
PFA
Child & Spousal
Support**

**CIVIL
CASES**

**JUVENILE
DEPENDENCY**

Civil/Family Court

Jurisdictions

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 Judges 2019

EDWARD D. REIBMAN, PRESIDENT JUDGE

J. BRIAN JOHNSON, JUDGE

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF CIVIL AND ORPHANS' COURT
SUPERVISORY JUDGE OF DEPENDENCY COURT

MICHELE A. VARRICCHIO, JUDGE

DOUGLAS G. REICHLEY, JUDGE

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF FAMILY COURT

MELISSA T. PAVLACK, JUDGE

ANNA-KRISTIE M. MARKS, JUDGE



3,764

Civil Cases
Docketed

3,362

Civil Actions
Processed

617

Mortgage
Foreclosures

823

Credit Card Debt
Collection Cases
Docketed

Civil Court Synopsis

2019



WHY ORPHANS?

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 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.

Orphans' Court Jurisdiction

<p>THE ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION</p>	<p>Oversees Trusts, Powers of Attorney & certain aspects of non-profit organizations</p>	<p>Reviews & approves settlement of litigation/claims involving minors, incapacitated persons and/or decedents' estates</p>	<p>Audits all formal fiduciary accounts</p>
<p>THE ORPHANS' COURT HEARS</p>	<p>Appeals from Register of Wills, including will contests or contested letters of administration</p>	<p>All parental rights termination cases</p>	<p>Petitions for adult guardianships (incapacities)</p>
	<p>Disputes regarding administration/distribution in decedents' estates</p>	<p>Adoptions & minors' guardianship cases</p>	<p>Judicial by-pass hearings required by the Abortion Control Act</p>
<p>THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF ORPHANS' COURT</p>	<p>Issues marriage licenses upon "in person" application</p>	<p>Maintains marriage license records & issues certified copies of those records</p>	<p>Responds to requests for access to both identifying & non-identifying information from adoption files</p>

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.



Orphans' Court Synopsis

2019

11

Minor Guardian Cases

50

Adoptions Granted

39

Fiduciary Accountings Audited, Confirmed, & Adjudicated

48

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

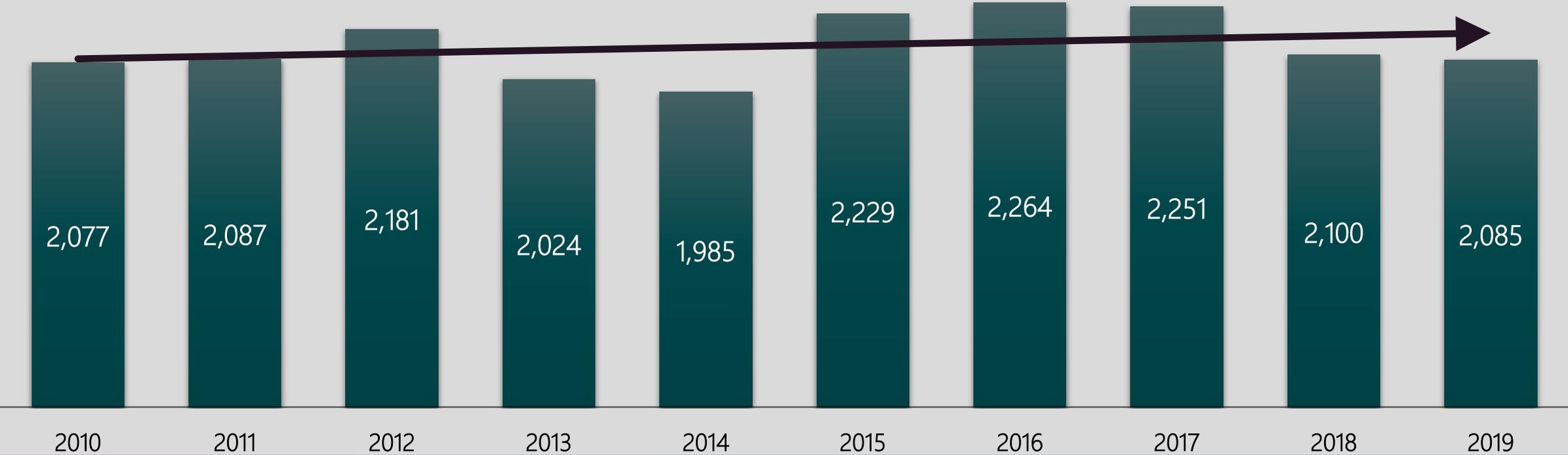
3

Judicial Bypass Hearings Pursuant to the Abortion Control Act

101

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

Marriage Licenses Issued in Lehigh County



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



Court Related Offices

Providing Operational Support
to the Court

Court Related Offices



Family Court Office

Custody

Divorce

Protection From Abuse

Interpreting Unit



Domestic Relations Section

Paternity

Child Support

Spousal Support



Probation

Adult Probation and Parole Office

Juvenile Probation Office

Family Court: Child Custody



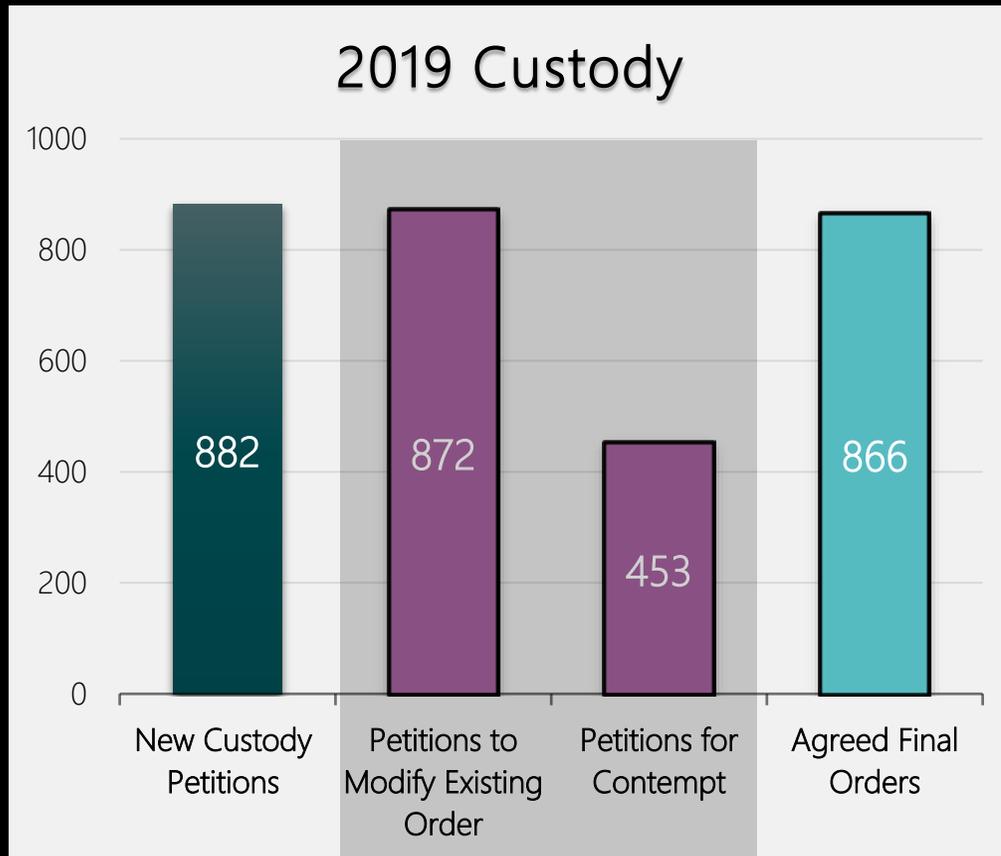
Most parties in custody cases are not represented by attorneys. This graphic illustrates an approximation of the ratio.

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 instruction on completing the forms and filing and serving the pleadings are also available on the Court's website at lccpa.org.

SELF-REPRESENTED, 80%

**REPRESENTED BY
ATTORNEY, 20%**

Family Court: 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.)

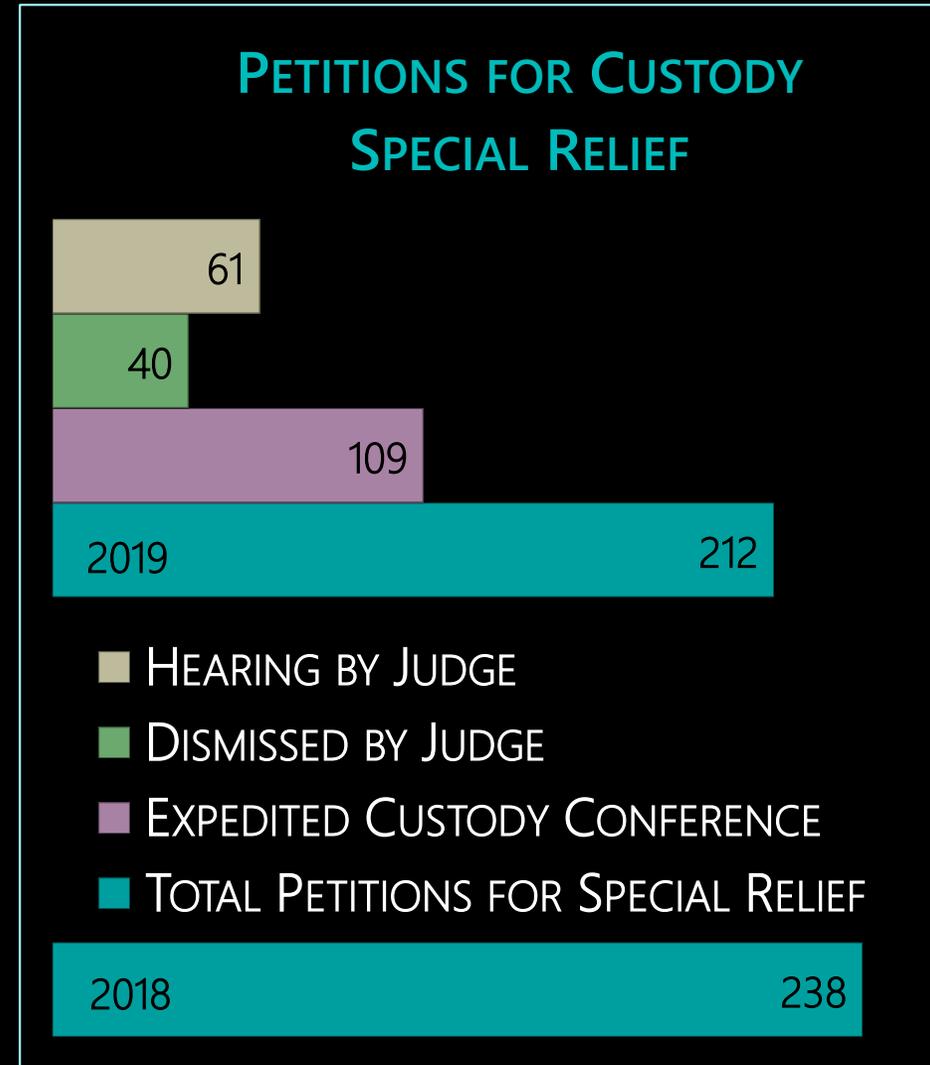
In 2019, there were 882 new custody cases filed. In addition, 872 Petitions to Modify an Existing Order and 453 Petitions for Contempt were filed. Petitions to Modify and Petitions for Contempt are often filed at the same time.

Agreed final orders resulting from custody conferences before the CHO numbered 866 in 2019. 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.

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 2018, the Family Court Office received 238 Petitions for Special Relief. In 2019, the number of filings decreased slightly to 212.

In 2019, of the 212 filings, 109 were ordered to proceed to an expedited custody conference before a Custody Hearing Officer, while 40 were summarily dismissed by a Judge. The Judges held 61 hearings on Petitions for Special Relief. Two cases were otherwise disposed.





2019

937

**New Divorce
Cases Filed**

653

**Uncontested
Divorce Cases
Filed**

106

**Contested
Divorce Cases
Filed**

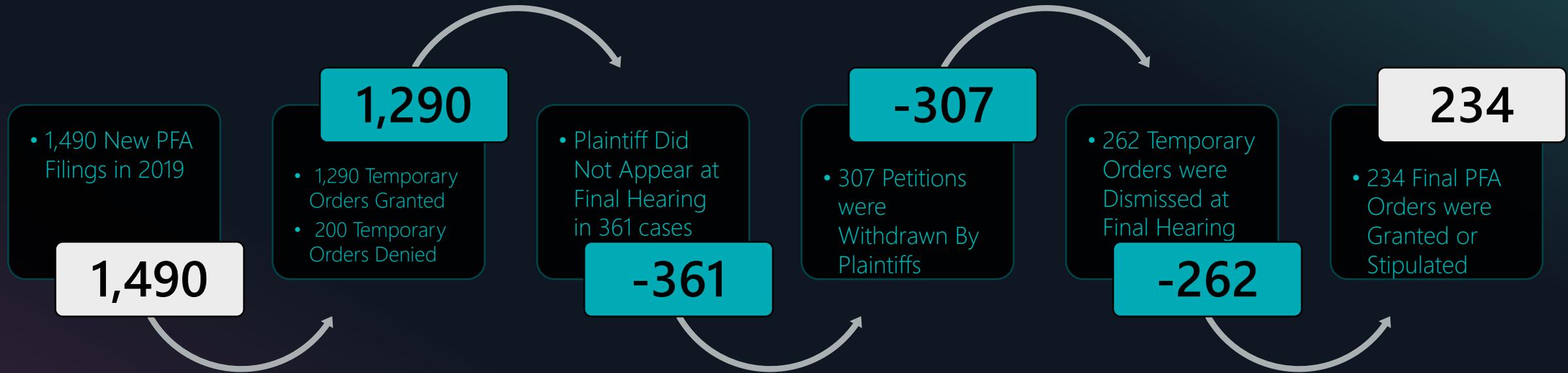
782

**Divorce Decrees
Entered**

Divorce Synopsis

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.

Family Court: Protection From Abuse



In 2019, Approximately **16%** of New Protection From Abuse Petitions Resulted in Final Orders of Protection.



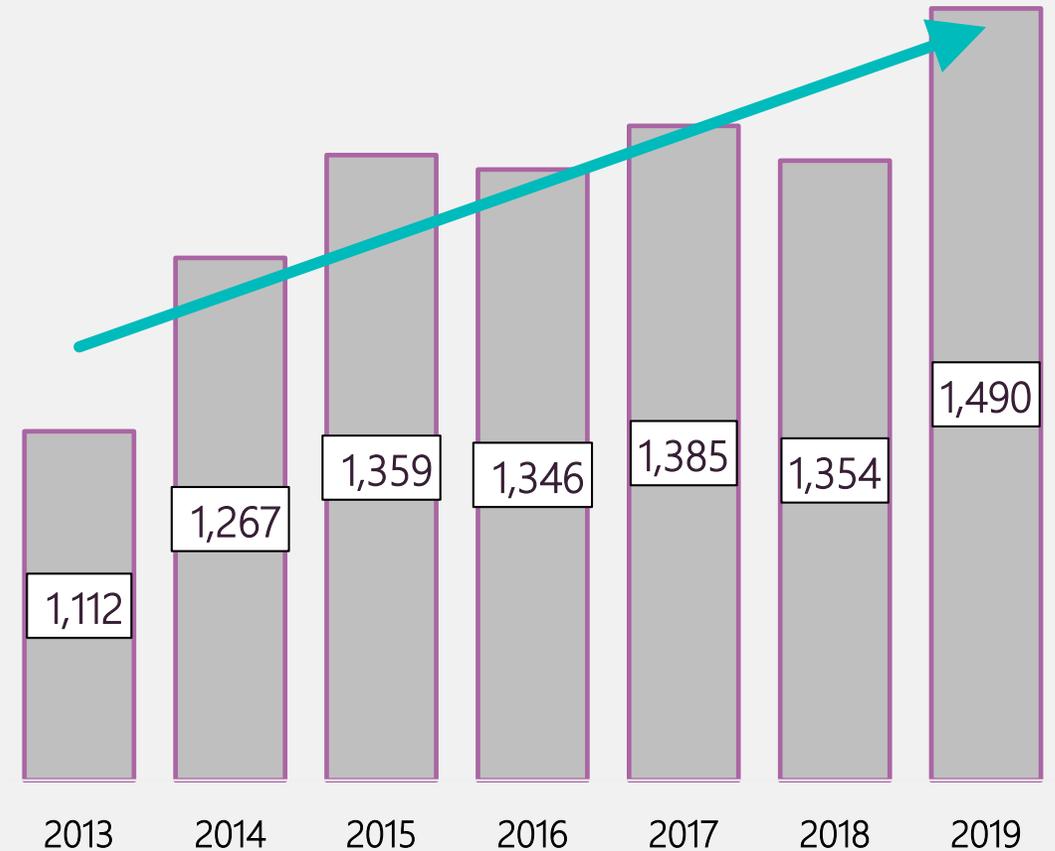
Protection From Abuse

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 provides private intake assistance. Court assistance hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. daily. Litigants appear before a judge at 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, litigants appear at 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. Special security measures are taken in all cases, especially in cases where cross-petitions have been filed.

Emergency PFA relief is available after 2:00 p.m. through the Magisterial District Judges.

PFA PETITION FILINGS



6
**NEW INTIMIDATION
CASES**

10
**NEW SEXUAL
VIOLENCE CASES**

5
**TEMPORARY
INTIMIDATION
ORDERS GRANTED**

3
**FINAL INTIMIDATION
ORDERS GRANTED**

10
**TEMPORARY SEXUAL
VIOLENCE
ORDERS GRANTED**

7
**FINAL SEXUAL
VIOLENCE
ORDERS GRANTED**

Protection From Sexual Violence & Intimidation

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.

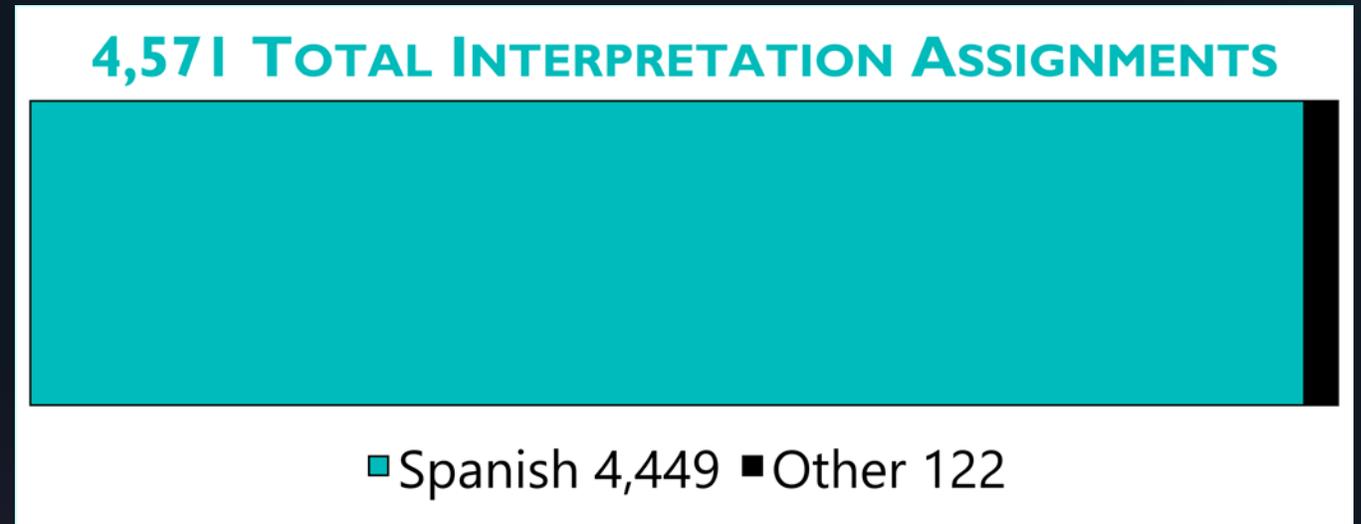
Assistance available from the Lehigh County Family Court Office is the same as that described in the Protection From Abuse information on the prior page.

Family Court: Interpreting Unit

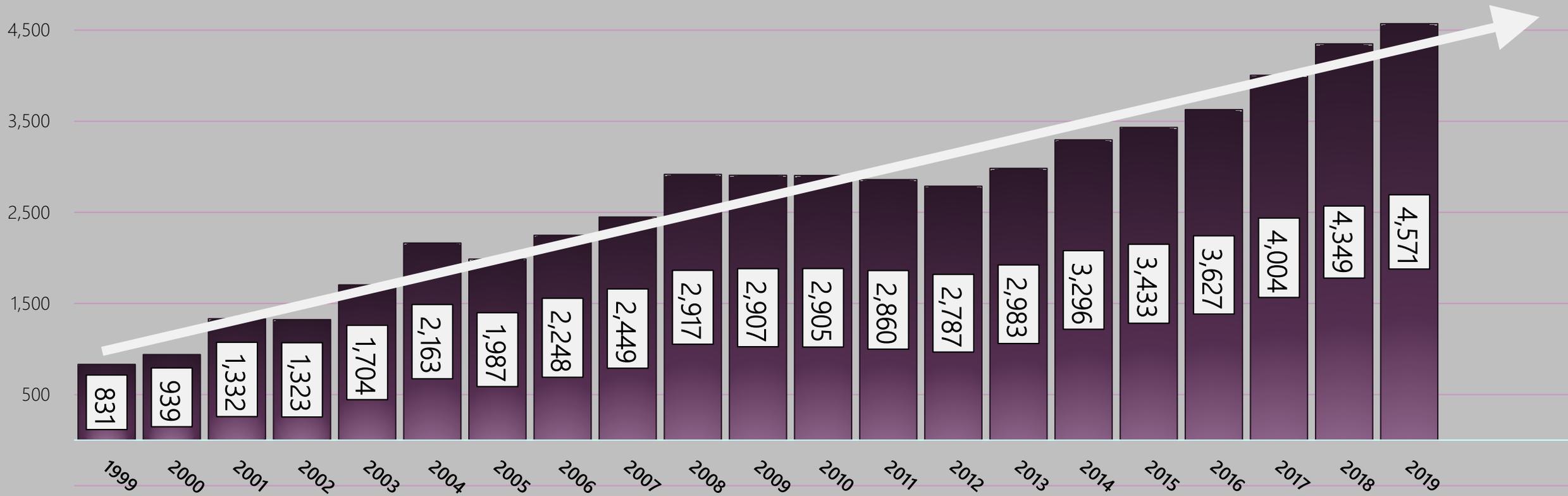
Providing Foreign And Sign
Language Interpretation

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.

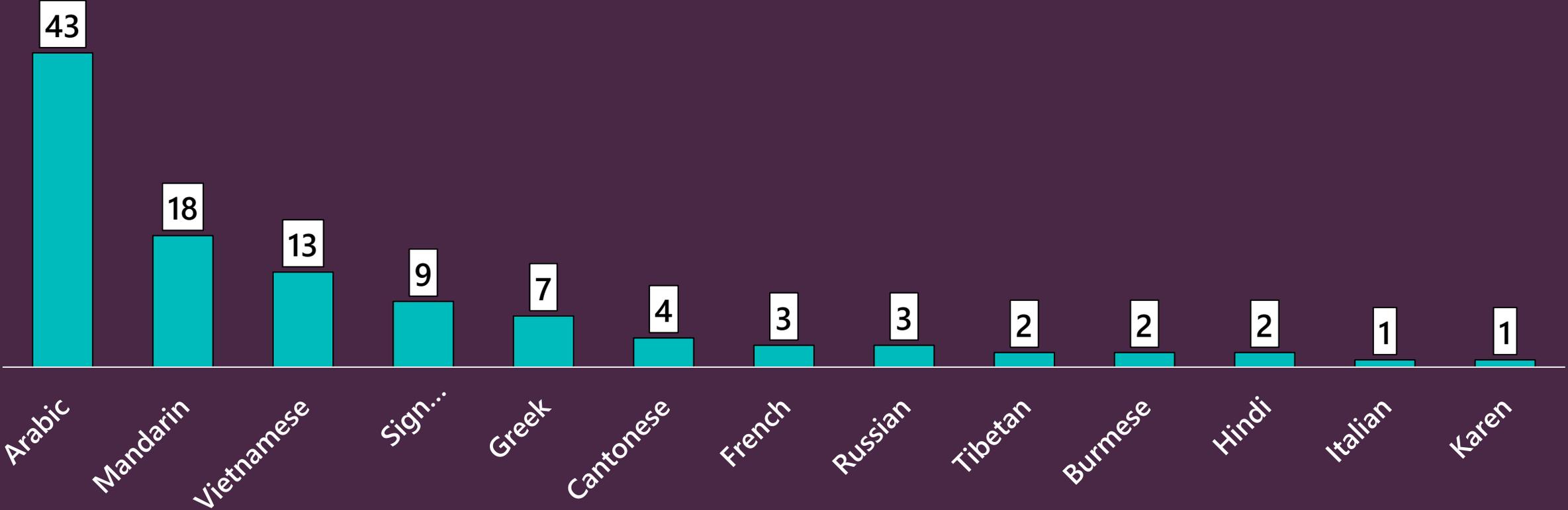
In 2019, there were 4,571 interpreter assignments, 4,449 of which were for Spanish. Telephone interpretation is used when needed. Translations of written documents are also provided by the Interpreting Unit. Overall, interpreter assignments increased 5.1% in 2019.



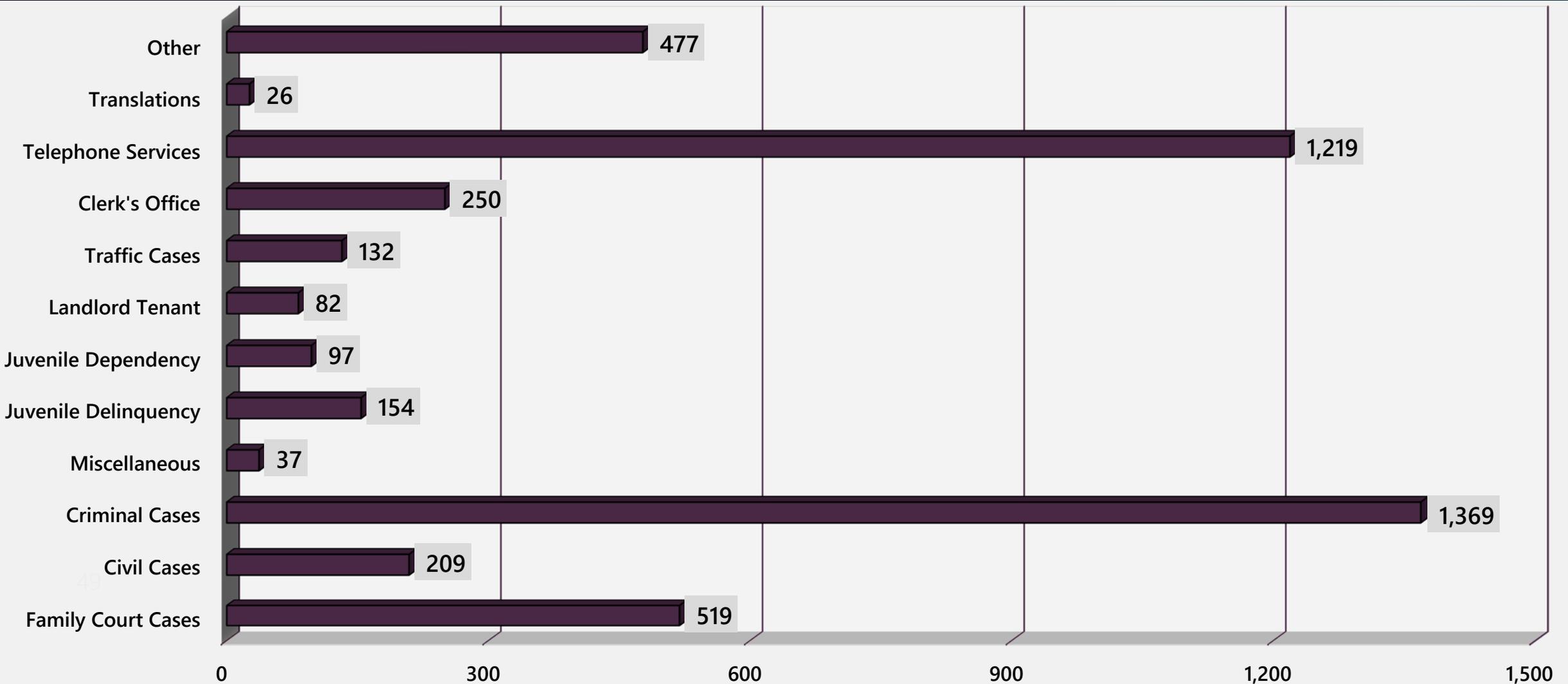
Annual Total Interpreter Assignments 1999 - 2019



Top 15 Languages Excluding Spanish in 2019



2019 Interpreting Assignments by Case Type





Domestic Relations Section

Providing Child and Spousal
Support

Domestic Relations Section

2019 Summary

6,481

Conferences
& Hearings
Held

ACTIVE

10,166

Support
Cases

MILLION

\$47.9

Collected &
Distributed

In 2019, Lehigh County Domestic Relations Section employees held 6,481 conferences and hearings for the establishment of Support Orders and for contempt of existing Support Orders.

Domestic Relations Section

Establishing Enforceable Orders

1 Establishing Paternity

2 Locating Absent Parents

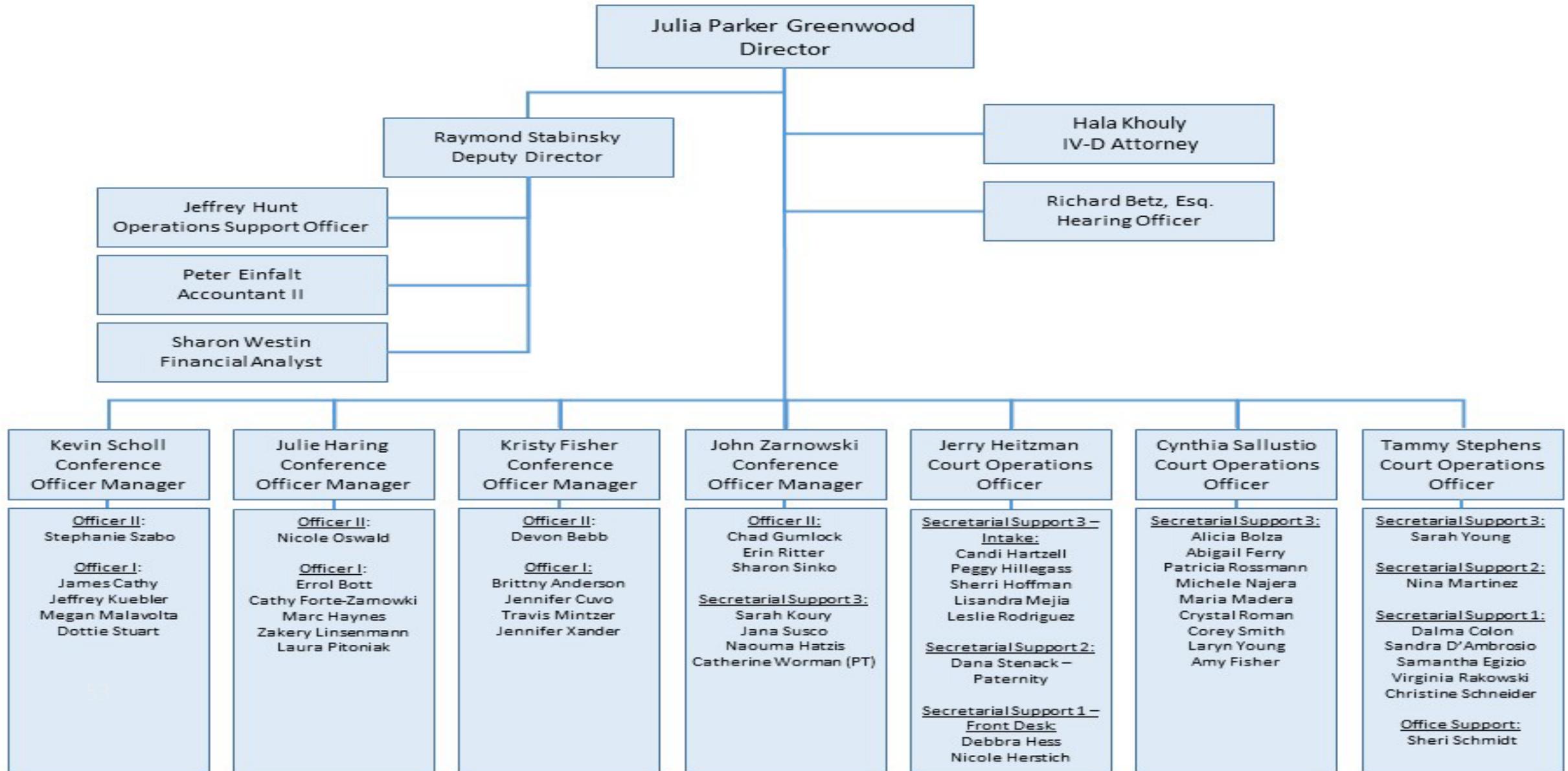
3 Securing Financial Support for Children of Separated Parents

The Domestic Relations Section 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 2019, there were:

- 21 conference officers**
- 1 full-time hearing officer**
- 9 managers**
- 31 full-time support staff**
- 2 part-time support staff**

Domestic Relations Section Personnel 2019



Establishing Child & 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.

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.

**LEHIGH COUNTY
COLLECTED &
DISBURSED
\$47,904,140
IN
SUPPORT FUNDS
IN 2019.**



DRS Case Management Teams

Domestic Relations Officers and Secretarial 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 2019, Domestic Relations staff conducted 3,193 establishment conferences and 603 establishment hearings. In addition, 2,685 contempt hearings were conducted.

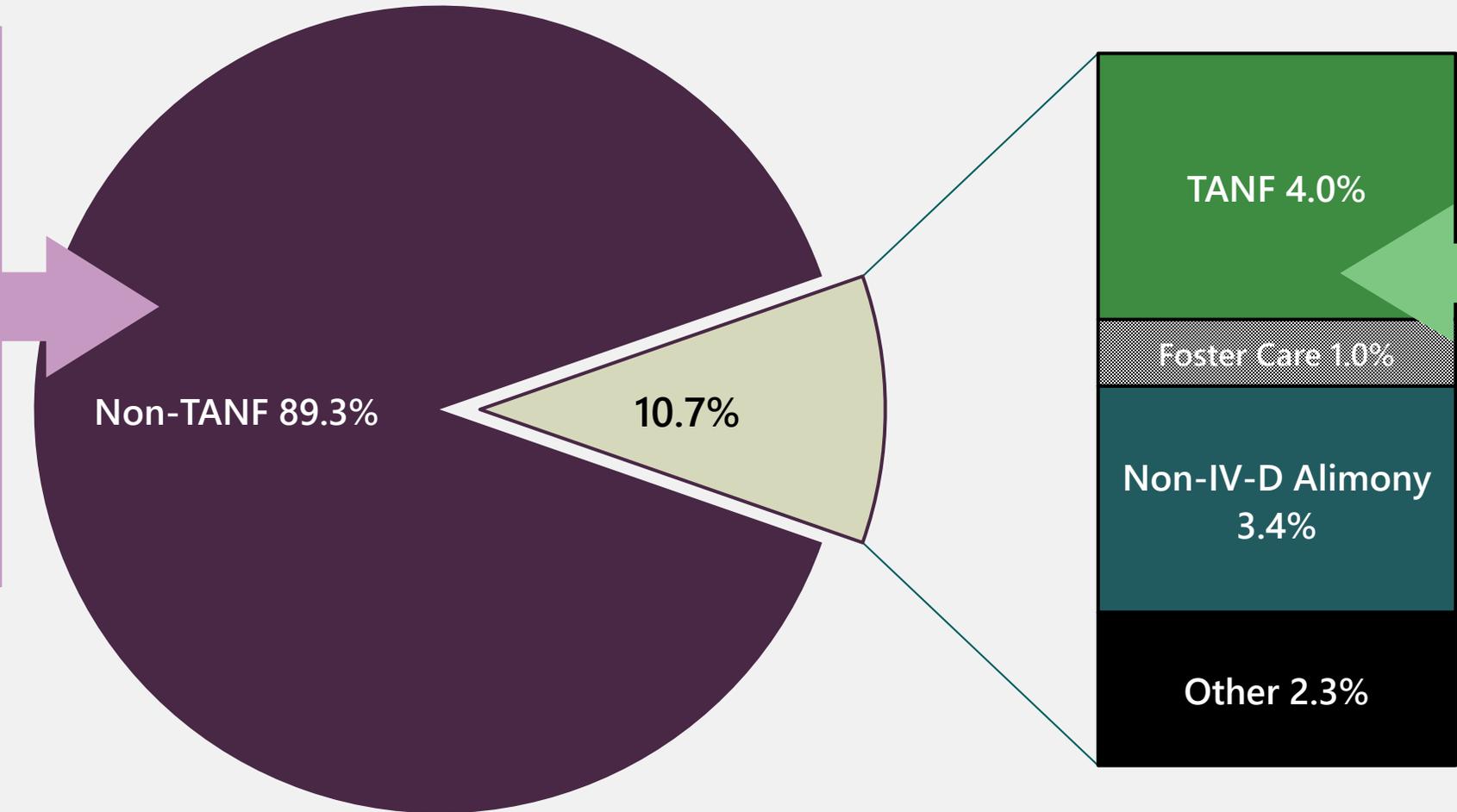
Domestic Relations Section Filings

2019 TANF SUPPORT CASE FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS	
New Cases	328
Cases Transferred In	25
Non-TANF to TANF	169
Judge	2
Hearing Officer	104
Conference Officer	327
Cases Transferred Out	37
TANF to Non-TANF	136
Cases Processed	606

2019 NON-TANF SUPPORT CASE FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS	
New Cases	3,532
Cases Transferred In	101
TANF to Non-TANF	136
Judge	46
Hearing Officer	451
Conference Officer	3,047
Cases Transferred Out	84
Non-TANF to TANF	169
Cases Processed	3,797

2019 Support Cases by Case Type

Non-TANF
CASES INVOLVE FAMILIES THAT DO NOT RECEIVE AID UNDER THE FEDERAL TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES PROGRAM.



TANF CASES
INVOLVE CHILDREN IN FAMILIES RECEIVING AID UNDER THE FEDERAL TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES PROGRAM.

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 United States Code of Federal Regulations and Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure. When the DRS is performing as required, 66% of DRS operating expenses are reimbursed by the United States government.

As a IV-D agency, the Domestic Relations Section 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:

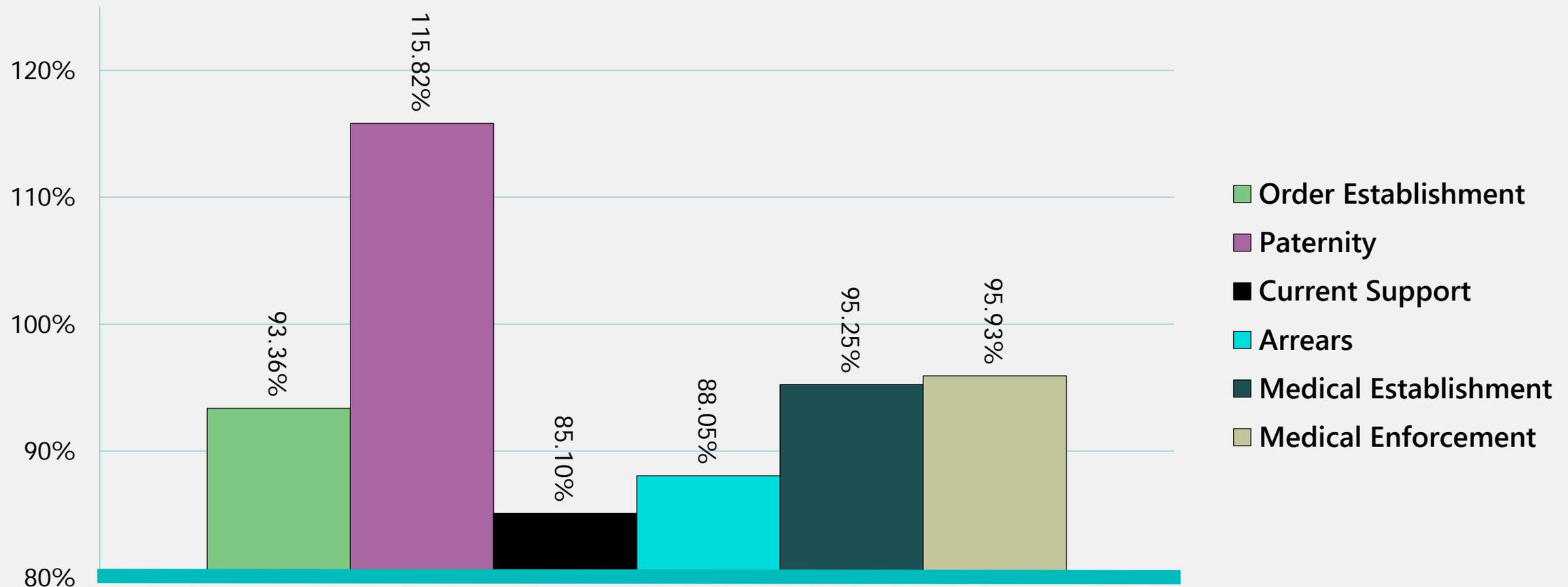
- Cases with active support orders
- Cases with paternity established
- Cases with full monthly collection of current support
- Cases with a payment on arrears (back support) during the federal fiscal year
- Cases with medical support established—not tied to funding
- Cases with medical support enforced—not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

Average Collections per Support Case



2018-2019 DRS Federal Performance Indicators

For Federal Fiscal Year 2019, which ended on September 30, 2019, Lehigh County exceeded 80% in all the Federal Performance Standards. Lehigh County routinely exceeds these standards.



Judicial & Administrative Enforcement of Support Orders

Domestic Relations Officers are responsible for conducting contempt conferences with delinquent defendants in an attempt to gain compliance with the support order. When necessary, the case may be scheduled for a contempt hearing before a judge when a defendant fails to comply with the support obligation.

The enforcement remedies listed here are available:

Real Estate Liens

Credit Bureau Reporting

Work Search Program

Drivers License Suspensions

IRS Intercepts

Lottery Intercepts

Professional License Suspensions

Passport Denial

Incarceration with Purge Conditions/Work Release

Recreational License Suspensions

Bench Warrants



Adult Probation

Providing Community Protection
Through Offender Supervision

Adult Probation

4,576

4,576 OFFENDERS ON ACTIVE SUPERVISION

STAFF

41

PROBATION OFFICERS
(5 PART TIME PROBATION OFFICERS)

14

PROBATION AIDES & CLERICAL STAFF



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.

Mission, Philosophy & Primary Goal

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.

Adult Probation Client Profile 2019

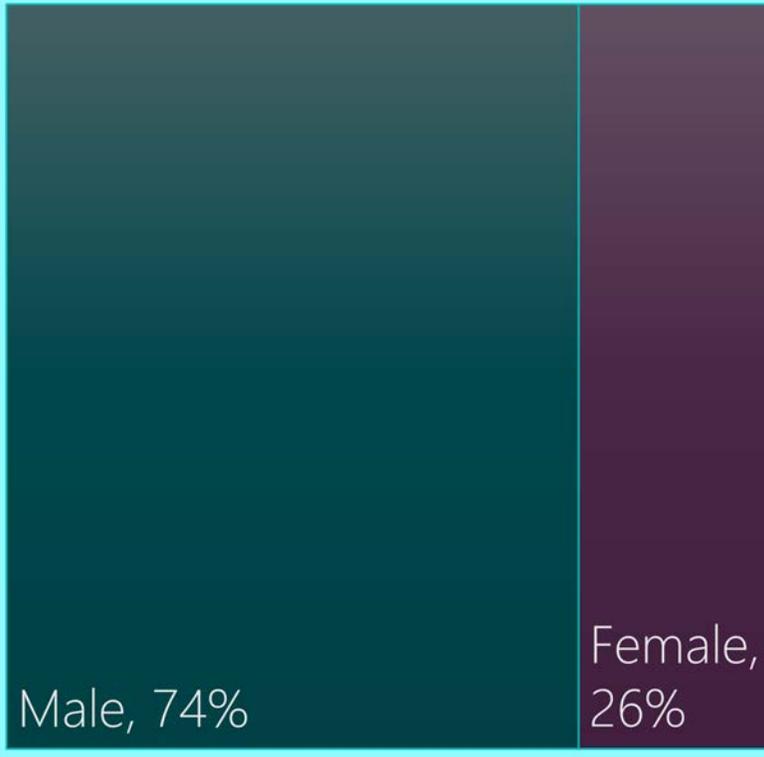
Race

■ White ■ Black ■ Asian, Other & Unknown



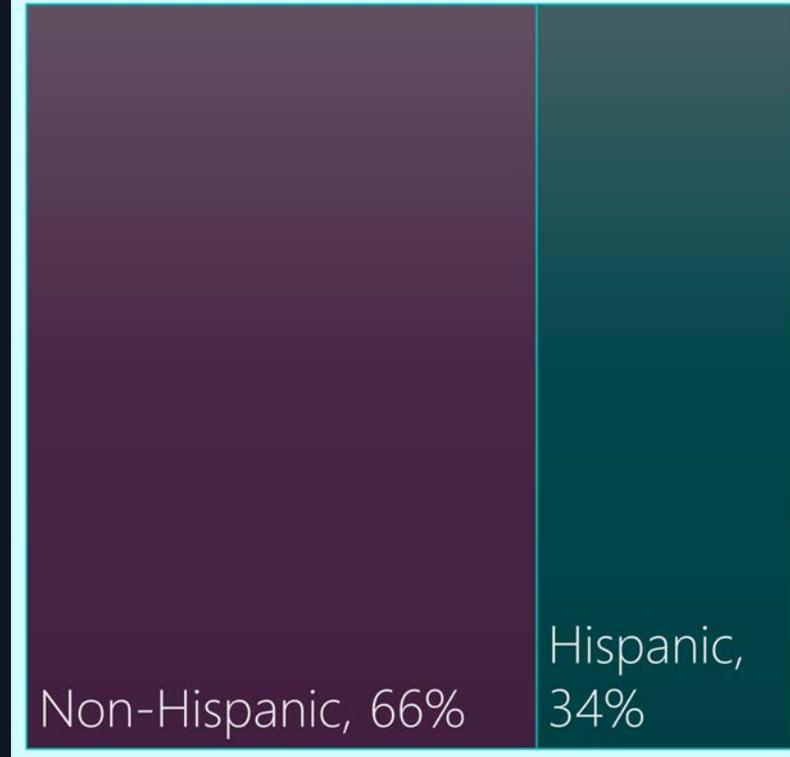
Gender

■ Male ■ Female

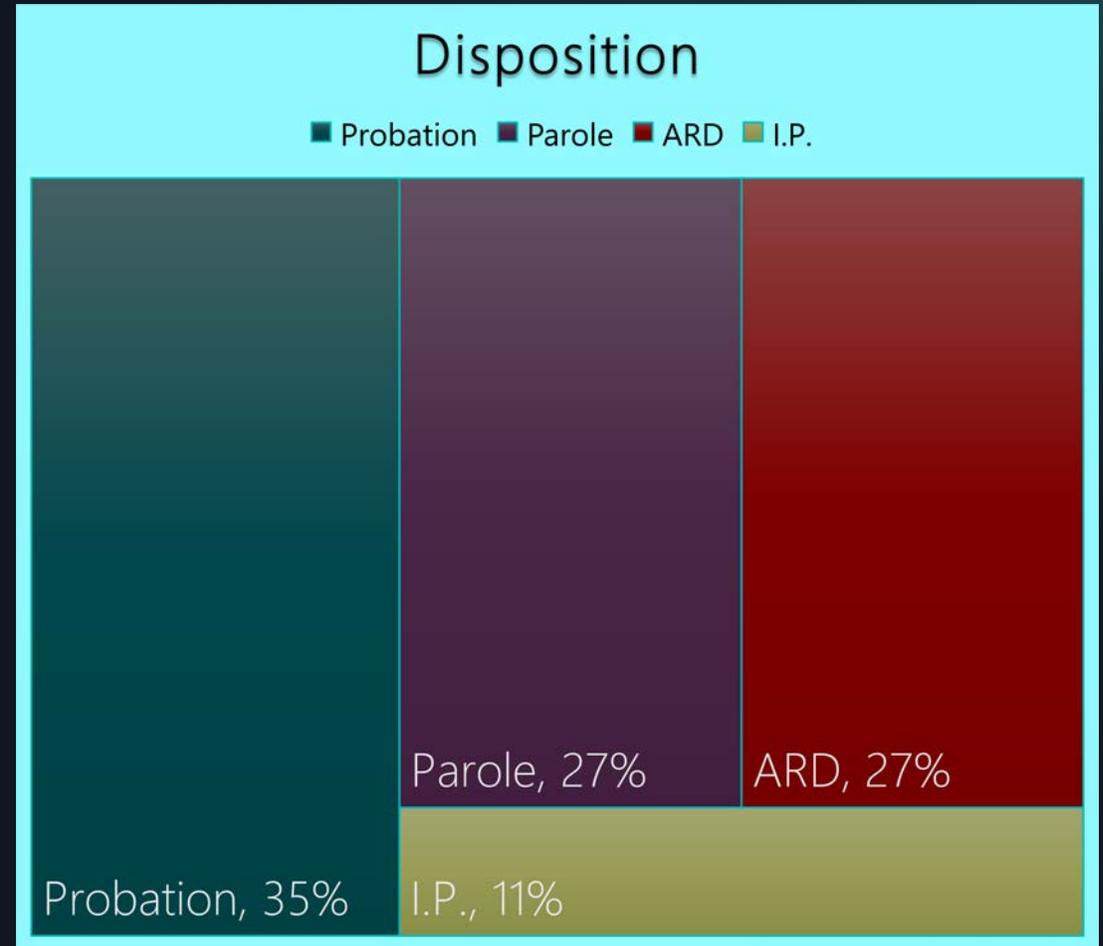
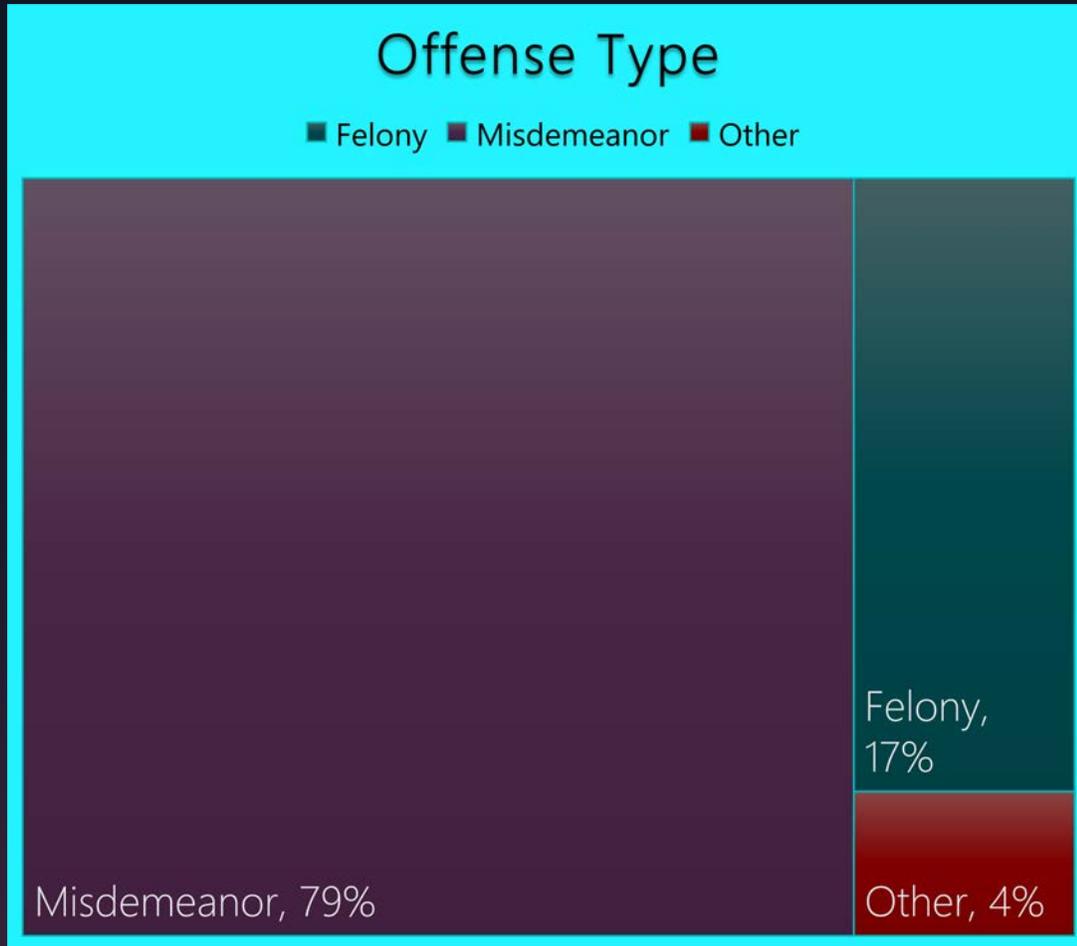


Ethnicity

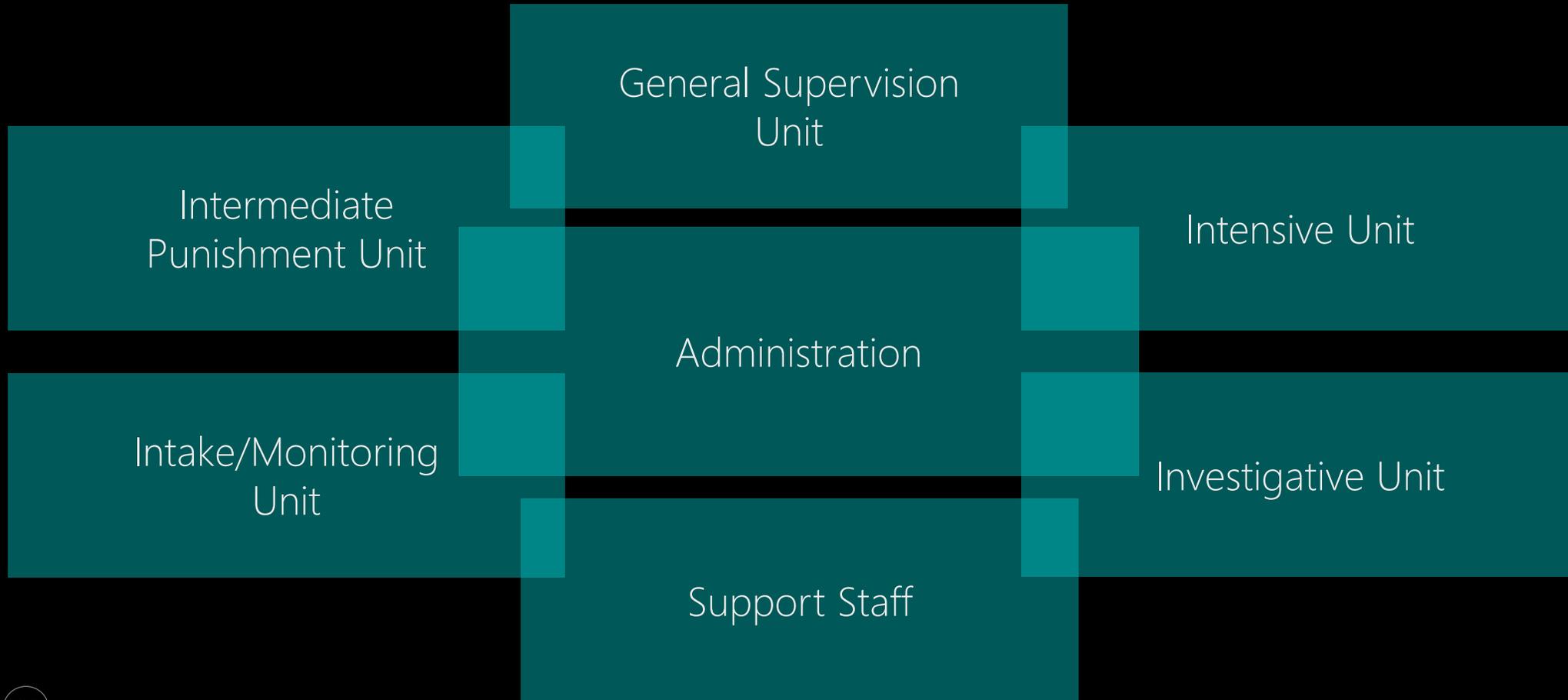
■ Hispanic ■ Non-Hispanic



Adult Probation Client Profile 2019



Adult Probation Functional Units 2019





1,461

Pre-Parole
Investigations
Completed

Adult Probation

2019

385

Pre-Sentence
Investigations
Completed

1,707

Court Reporting
Network Evaluations
Completed

1,275

Offenders Completing
Alcohol Safe Driving
School

Adult Probation Programs & Projects 2019

SPORE

Intensive
Supervision

In-House Drug
Testing
Program

Outmate

Competency/
Accountability
Programs

Prevention
Through Anti-
Violence Education
(PAVE)

Electronic
Monitoring

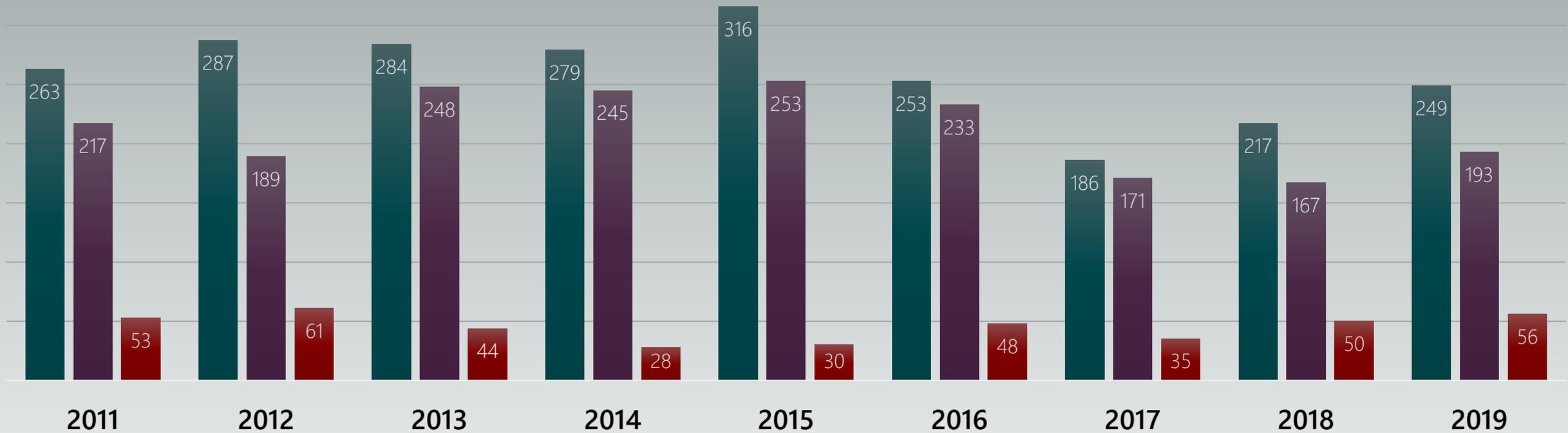
Treatment
Continuum
Alternative Project
(TCAP)

Alcohol Highway
Safety Project

Community Work
Service Project

Adult Probation Electronic Monitoring

■ Referrals ■ Successful Completions ■ Violations



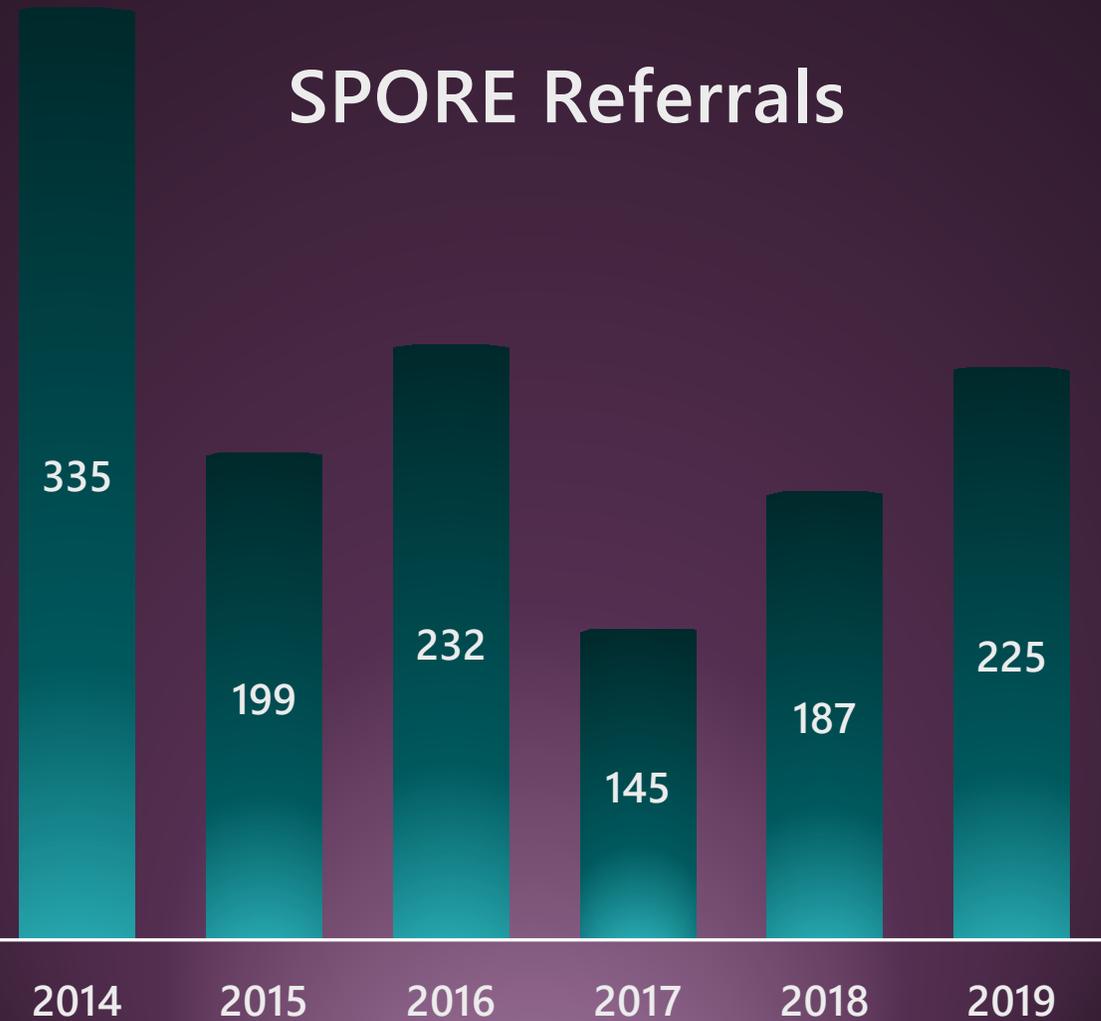


Adult Probation SPORE

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 2019, SPORE received 225 formal referrals and 77 evaluations were completed.

SPORE Referrals





Juvenile Probation

Providing a Balanced Approach to
Juvenile Justice

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

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

LOW RISK OFFICER

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

NON PAYMENT OF COSTS AND FINES UNIT

QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT

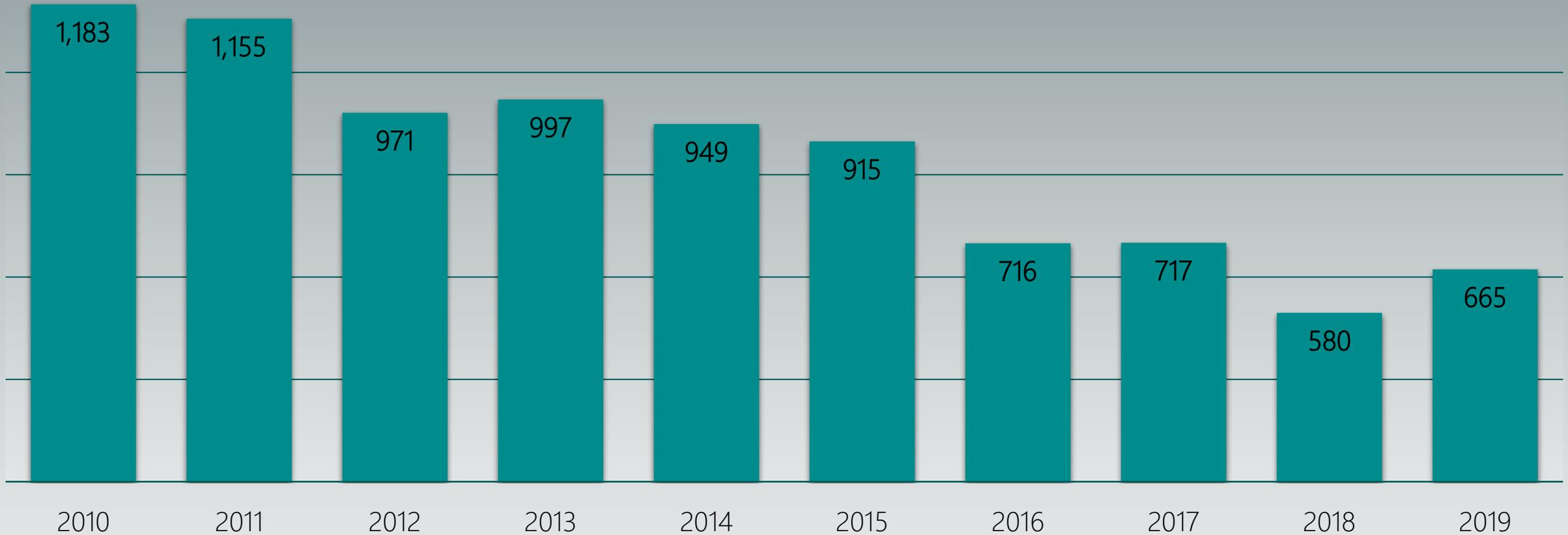
TRANSPORTATION UNIT

FISCAL UNIT

SUPPORT STAFF

MANAGEMENT UNIT

Youth Under Supervision 2010 to 2019



Juvenile Probation Client Profile 2019

GENDER, ETHNICITY, RACE

■ Male ■ Female

Male 71%

Female 29%

■ Non-Hispanic ■ Hispanic

Non-Hispanic,
51%

Hispanic, 49%

■ White ■ Black ■ Multiracial

White 64%

Black 29%

Multiracial 7%

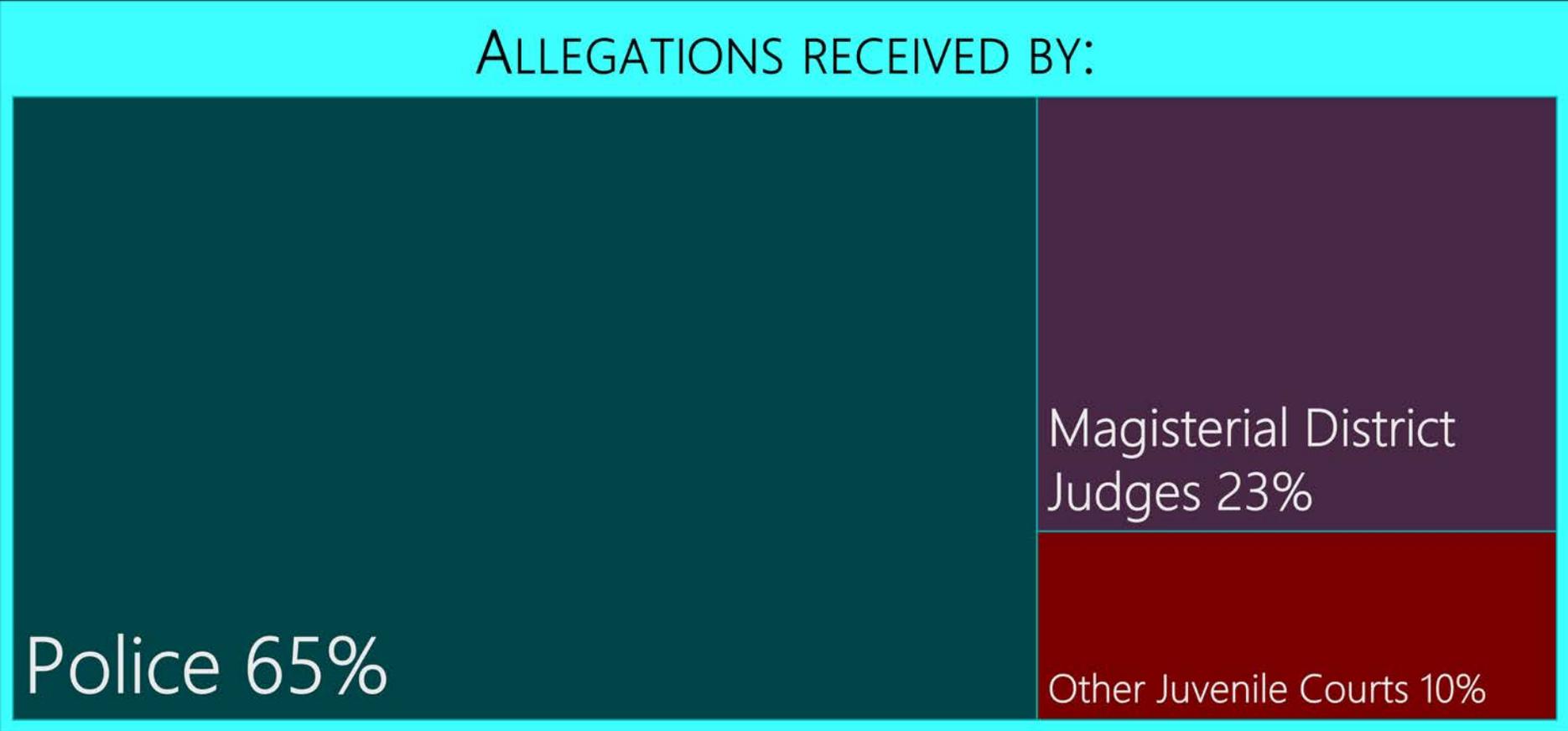
OFFENSE TYPE

Misdemeanor 65%

Other 18%

Felony 16.5%

Juvenile Probation



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.

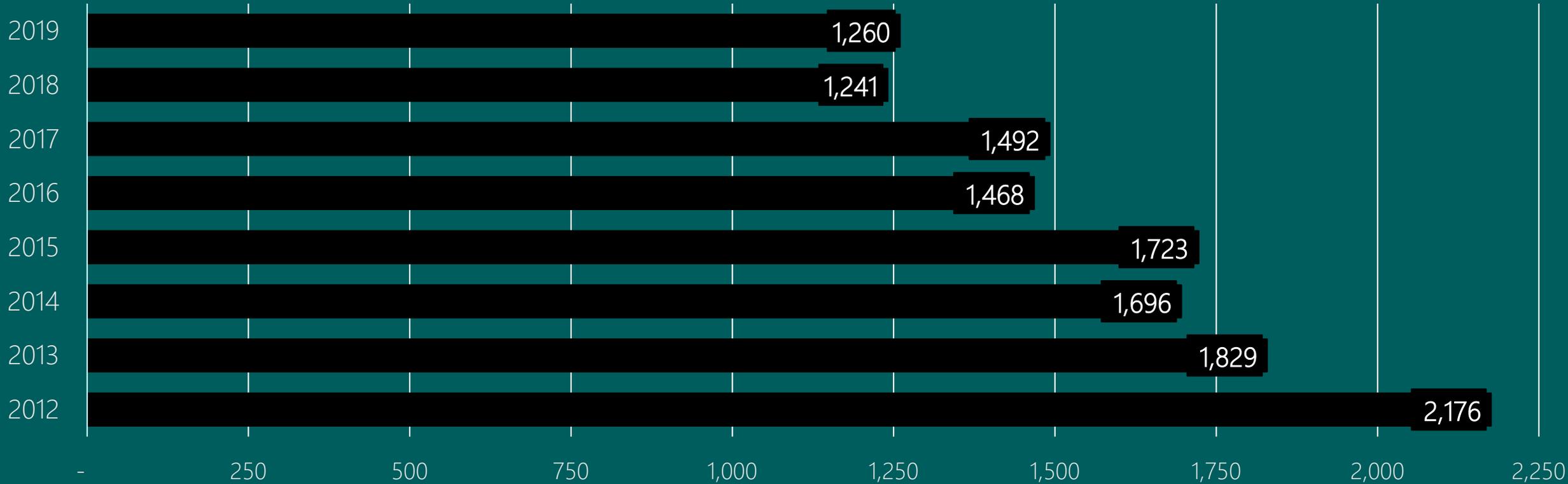
Juvenile Probation Primary Dispositions

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.

Year	Referrals/ Written Allegations	Informal Adjustment	Consent Decree	Probation	Placement
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
2011	1,475	259	184	479	209

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

Number of Juvenile Cases Disposed



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	46	31	8	1
Youth Transferred to Adult Court	9			

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.

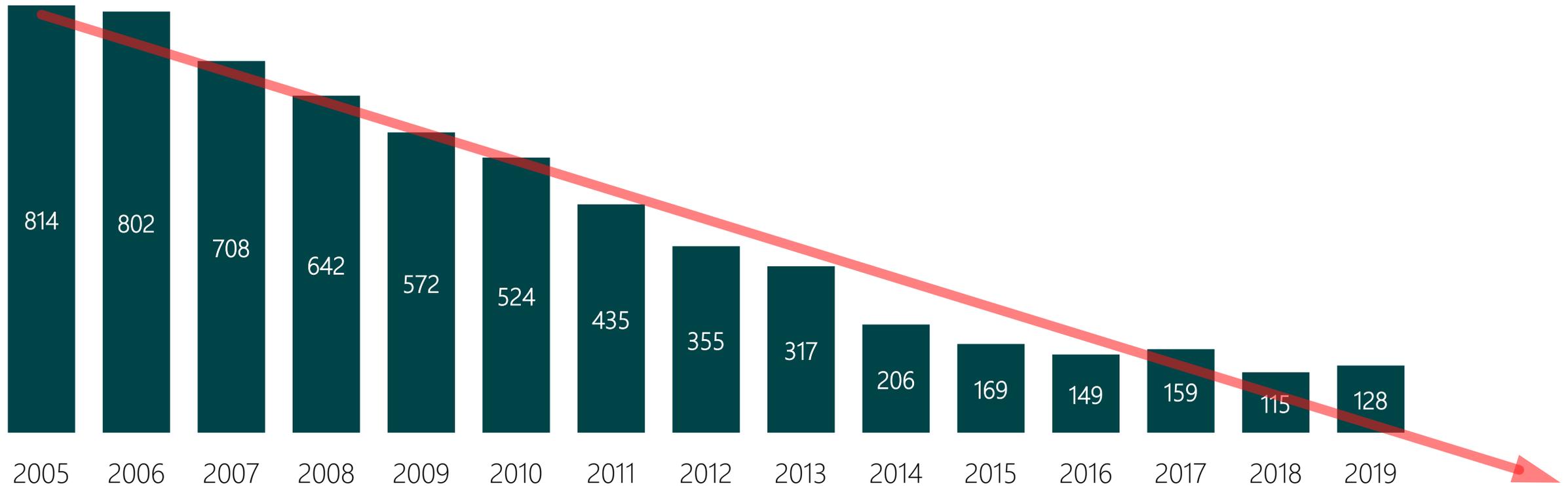
Juvenile Probation Detention Trends



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.

As in many other jurisdictions throughout the country, Lehigh County has shown that by detaining the right youth or selecting proper alternatives to detention through the use of a validated detention screening instrument, there has been little risk of reoffending or failing to appear for court. As the chart on the next slide illustrates, over the past 15 years, Lehigh County has seen a significant decrease in the average number of youth placed in detention.

Juveniles Placed in Detention 2005-2019





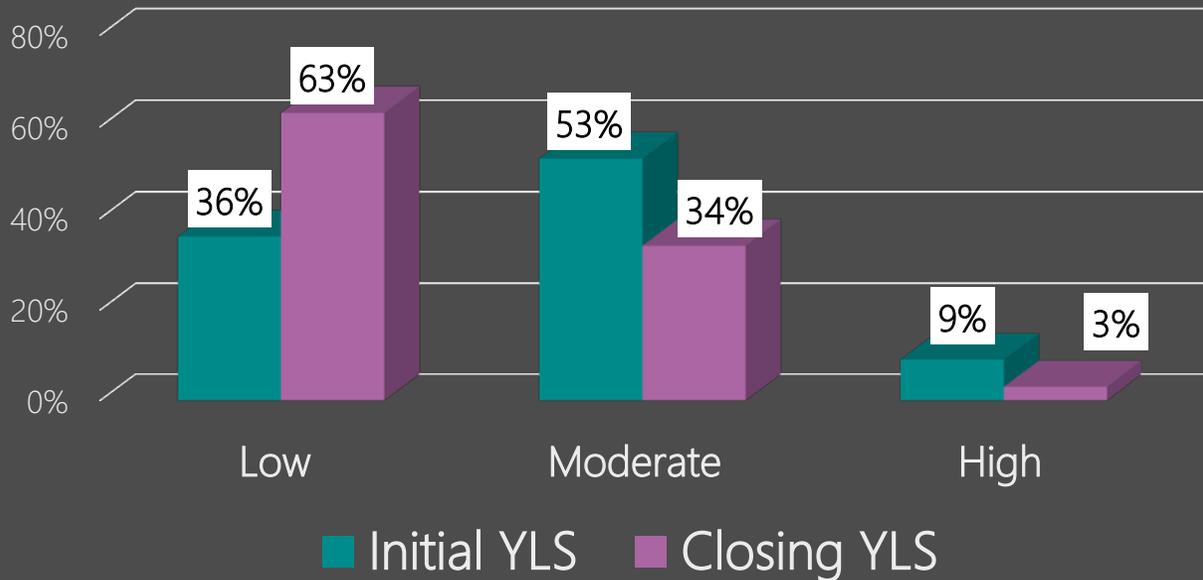
OUTCOMES ON 283 JUVENILE PROBATION CASES CLOSED IN 2019

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	95.3%
Juveniles in school or employed at case closing	93.3%
Juveniles who paid their restitution in full	82.1%
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	84.1%
Juveniles with no judicial finding of technical violations of probation while under supervision	82.3%
Juveniles committed to placement (28 days or longer)	22.6%
Completion rate of juveniles ordered to Victim Awareness Curriculum	99.3%

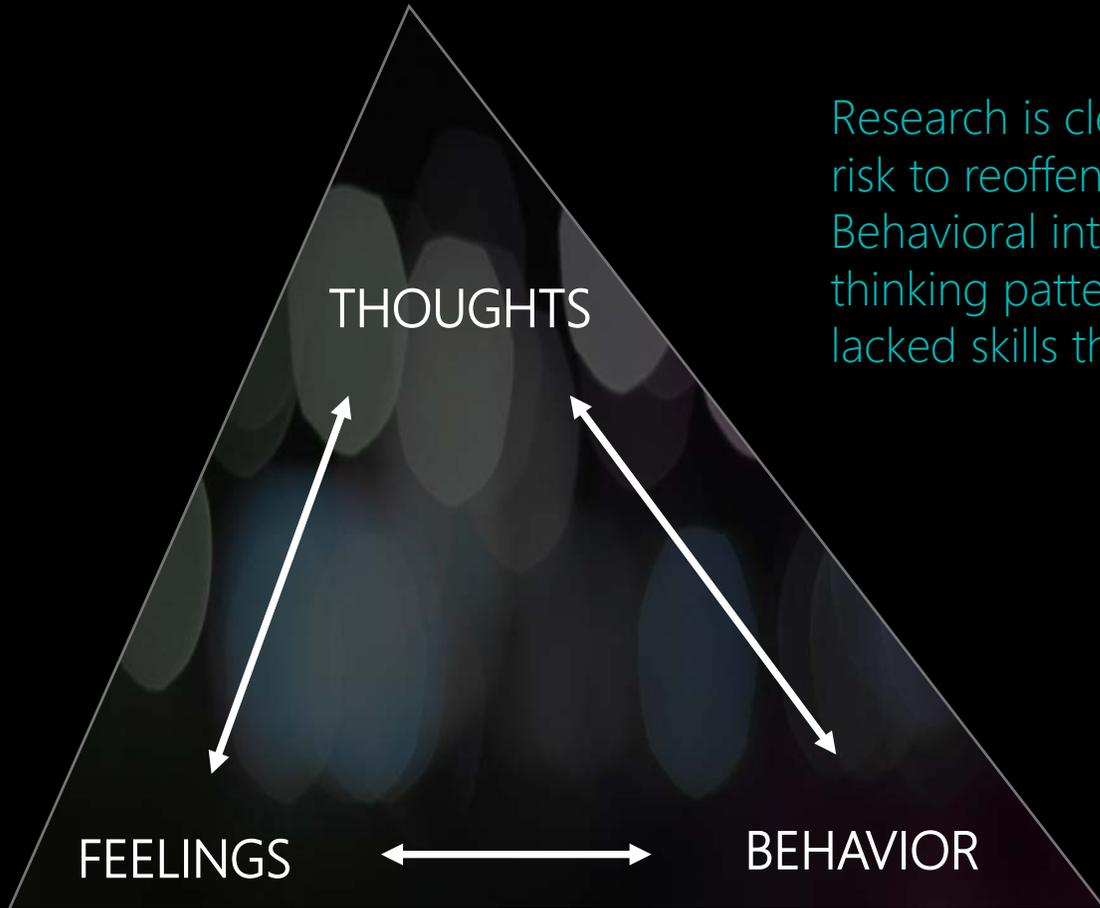
Juvenile Probation: Risk/Needs Assessment

INITIAL YLS ASSESMENTS VS CLOSING YLS ASSESMENTS IN 2019



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 2019, the percentage of youth who scored low at the time of case closing increased from 36% to 63%.

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	Evening Reporting Center	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

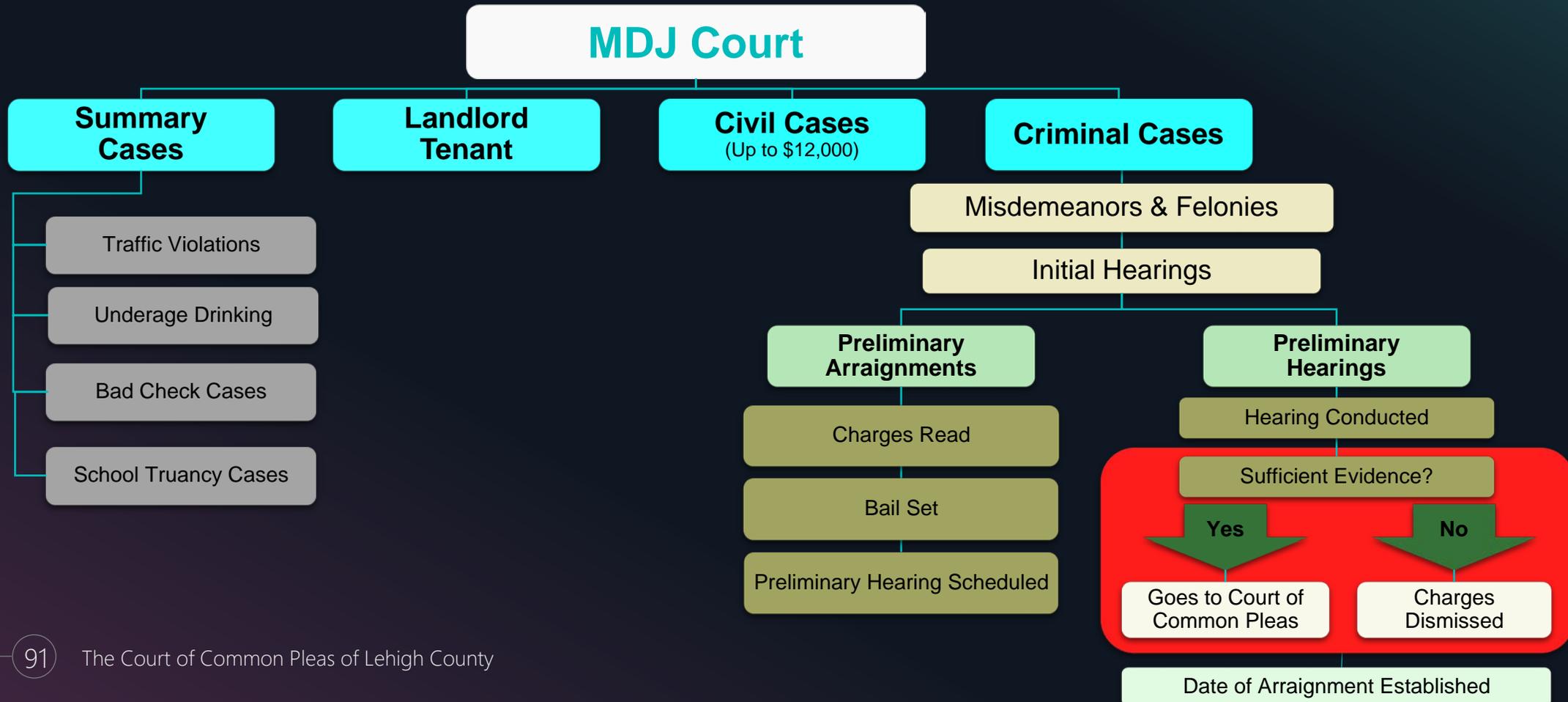
The Lehigh County Magisterial District Court consists of 14 District Court offices, Night Court and Central Court. The supervision of each District Court is the responsibility of the elected Magisterial District Judge, a state employee. Other Magisterial District Court office employees are Lehigh County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

In 2019, the personnel and administrative functions for the Magisterial District Courts fell under the responsibility of District Judge Administrator, H. Gordon Roberts until his retirement.Carolynn Perry began her tenure in the position of District Judge Administrator in July 2019.

Magisterial District Judges 2019

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	Wayne Maura
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	Donna R. Butler
31-3-01	Thomas Creighton
31-3-02	Michael J. Faulkner
31-3-03	Daniel C. Trexler

Jurisdiction of the MDJ Court



MDJ Court Filings

2019

55,759



Summary Traffic Cases

11,195



Civil Cases & Landlord/Tenant Cases

6,445



Criminal Cases

6,538



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



www.lccpa.org

Visit the Court's Website for more information

- This and prior Annual Reports are available on the Court's Website under the Department of Court Administration.
- A Searchable Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas Opinion Database
- The Lehigh County Local Court Rules
- Court Calendars by Date and Judge
- Emergencies, Closings and Other Announcements
- MDJ Search by Address Feature
- Self-Help Section for Pro-Se court users
- Forms and Applications Approved by the Court

