



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

2025 JUDGES OF THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

PRESIDENT JUDGE J. BRIAN JOHNSON

JUDGE ROBERT L. STEINBERG

JUDGE JAMES T. ANTHONY

JUDGE MICHELE A. VARRICCHIO

JUDGE DOUGLAS G. REICHLEY

JUDGE MELISSA T. PAVLACK

JUDGE ANNA-KRISTIE M. MARKS

JUDGE THOMAS M. CAFFREY

JUDGE THOMAS A. CAPEHART

JUDGE ZACHARY J. COHEN

SENIOR JUDGE CAROL K. MCGINLEY

SENIOR JUDGE EDWARD D. REIBMAN



2025
LEHIGH COUNTY
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

**President Judge
J. Brian Johnson**

Criminal Division

Robert L. Steinberg, Judge
James T. Anthony, Judge
Anna-Kristie M. Marks, Judge
Administrative Judge of Criminal Division &
Administrative Judge of Juvenile Delinquency
Thomas M. Caffrey, Judge
Supervisory Judge for Grand Jury

Orphans' Court

J. Brian Johnson, President Judge
Michele A. Varricchio, Judge
Douglas G. Reichley, Judge
Melissa T. Pavlack, Judge
Thomas A. Capehart, Judge
Administrative Judge of Orphans' Court Division
Zachary J. Cohen, Judge

Civil Division • Family Court Division

J. Brian Johnson, President Judge
Michele A. Varricchio, Judge
Administrative Judge of Civil Division and
Supervisory Judge for Arbitration &
Mortgage Foreclosure
Douglas G. Reichley, Judge
Supervisory Judge for Boards of View
Melissa T. Pavlack, Judge
Administrative Judge of Family Division
Thomas A. Capehart, Judge
Zachary J. Cohen, Judge
Administrative Judge of Juvenile Dependency

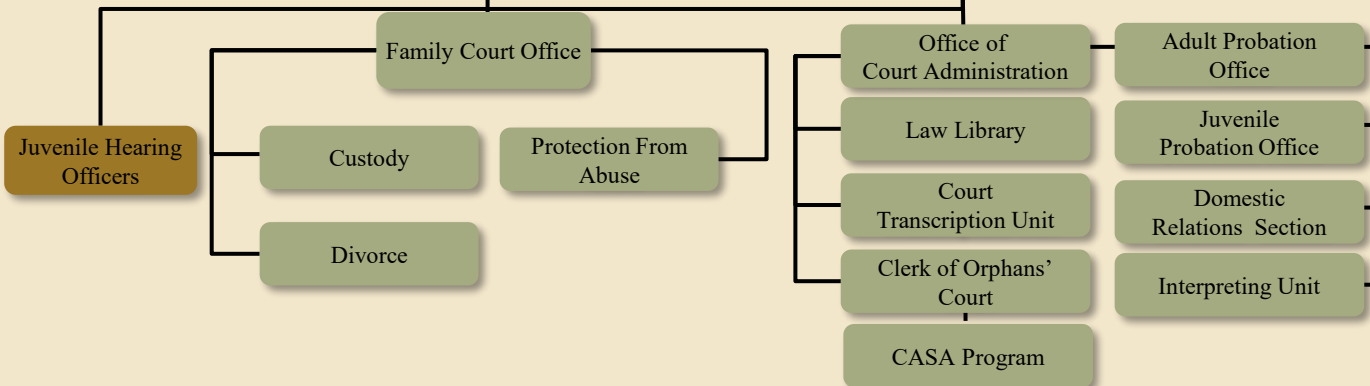
**Court Administrator
Kerry R. Turtzo**

**Family Court Administrator
Richard Focht**

**Deputy Court Administrator
Stephanie L. Szabo**

**MDJ Court Administrator
Carolynn Perry**

14 Magisterial
District Judges



Effective:
April 7, 2025

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS DIVISIONS

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



2025
CRIMINAL/JUVENILE
COURT DIVISION

2025 CRIMINAL/JUVENILE COURT JUDGES

ROBERT L. STEINBERG, JUDGE

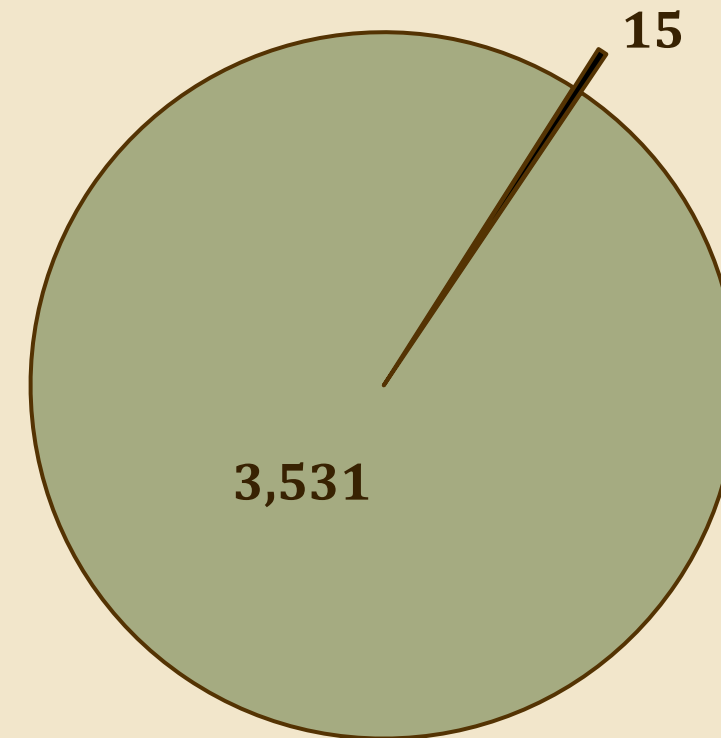
JAMES T. ANTHONY, JUDGE

ANNA-KRISTIE M. MARKS, JUDGE

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF CRIMINAL COURT &
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY COURT

THOMAS M. CAFFREY, JUDGE

SUPERVISORY JUDGE FOR GRAND JURY



■ New Adult Criminal Cases ■ New Homicide Cases

2025 CRIMINAL/JUVENILE COURT DIVISION

ADULT CRIMINAL COURT

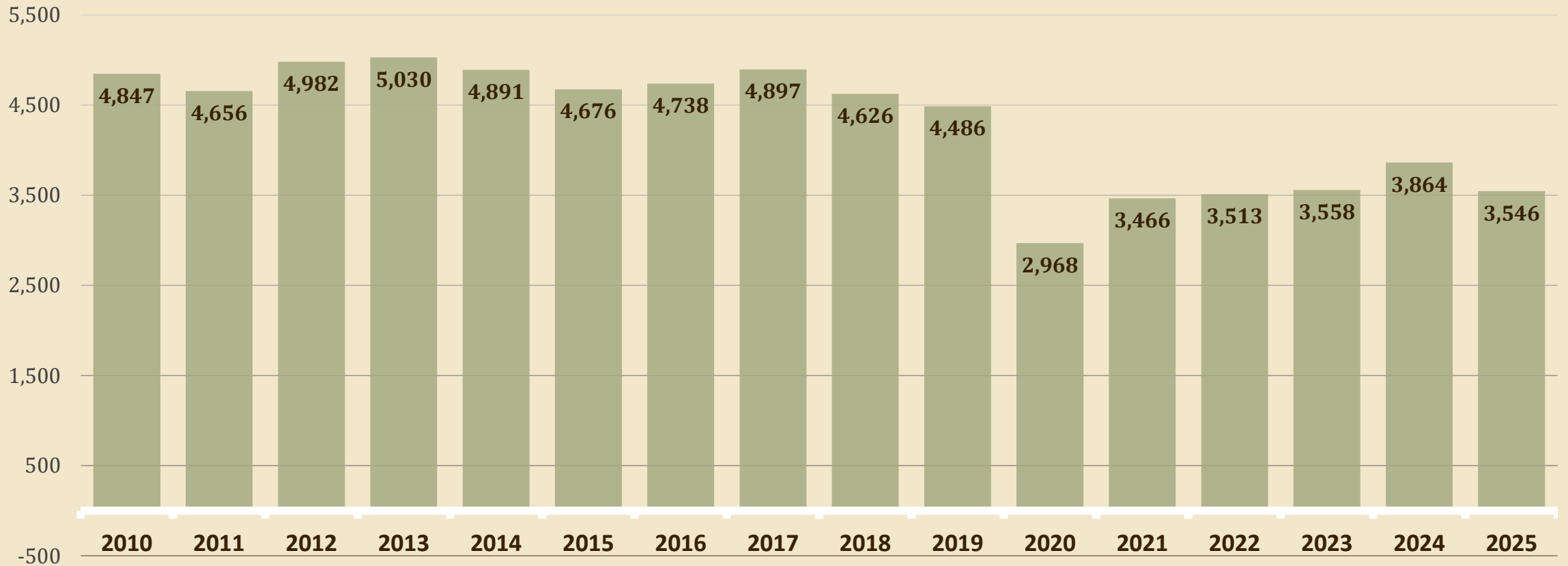
The Judges in the Criminal/Juvenile Court Division utilize an individual calendaring system.

The assigned Judge handles the case from formal arraignment through disposition.

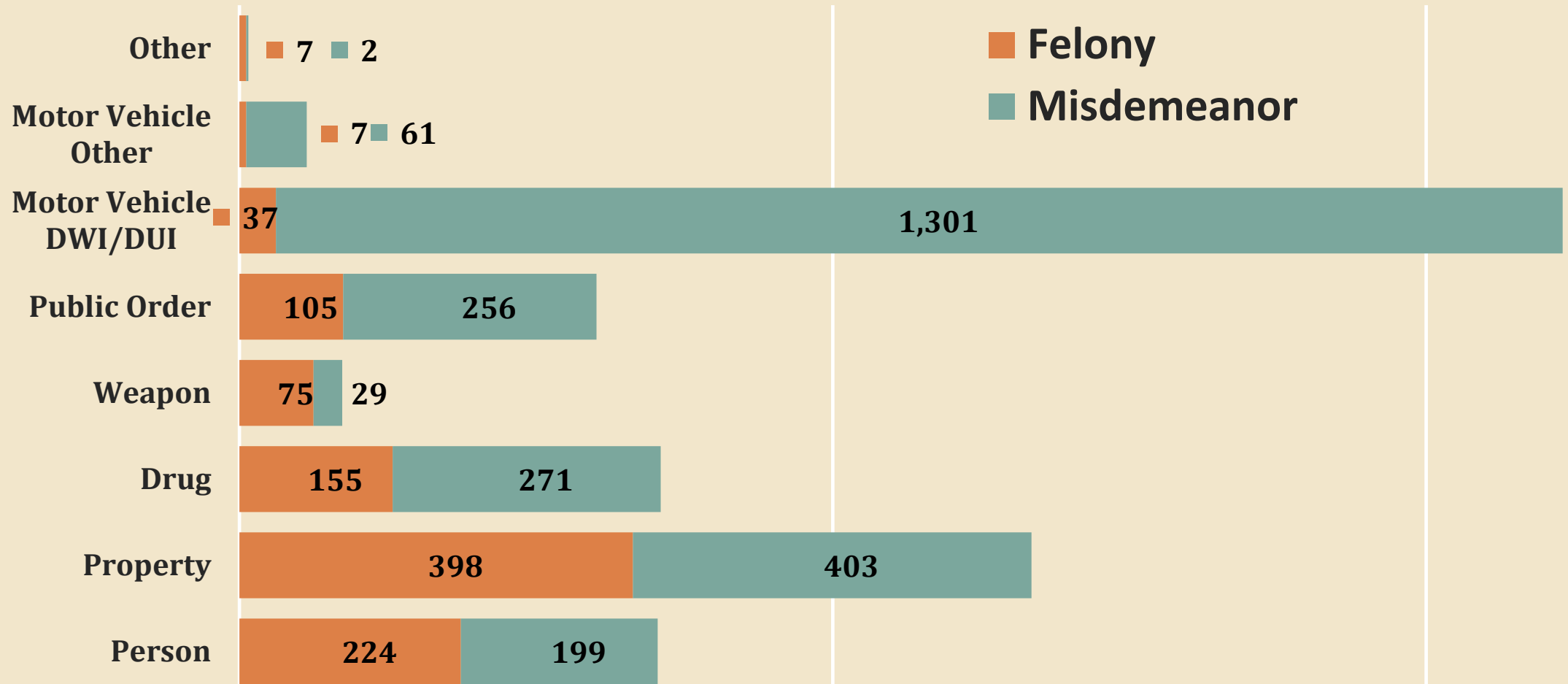
All probation and parole violations and any post-sentence motions are handled by the Judge who sentenced the defendant.

Total Cases Processed		3,754
<u>2025 CRIMINAL FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS</u>		
New Cases		3,546
Reopened Cases		172
ARD		1,323
Dismissed/Withdrawn		173
Guilty Plea		2,044
Jury Trial		27
Non-Jury Trial		18
Inactive		169
Other		27

NEW CRIMINAL CASES FILED 2010 TO 2025



2025 LEHIGH COUNTY CRIMINAL CASES BY TYPE



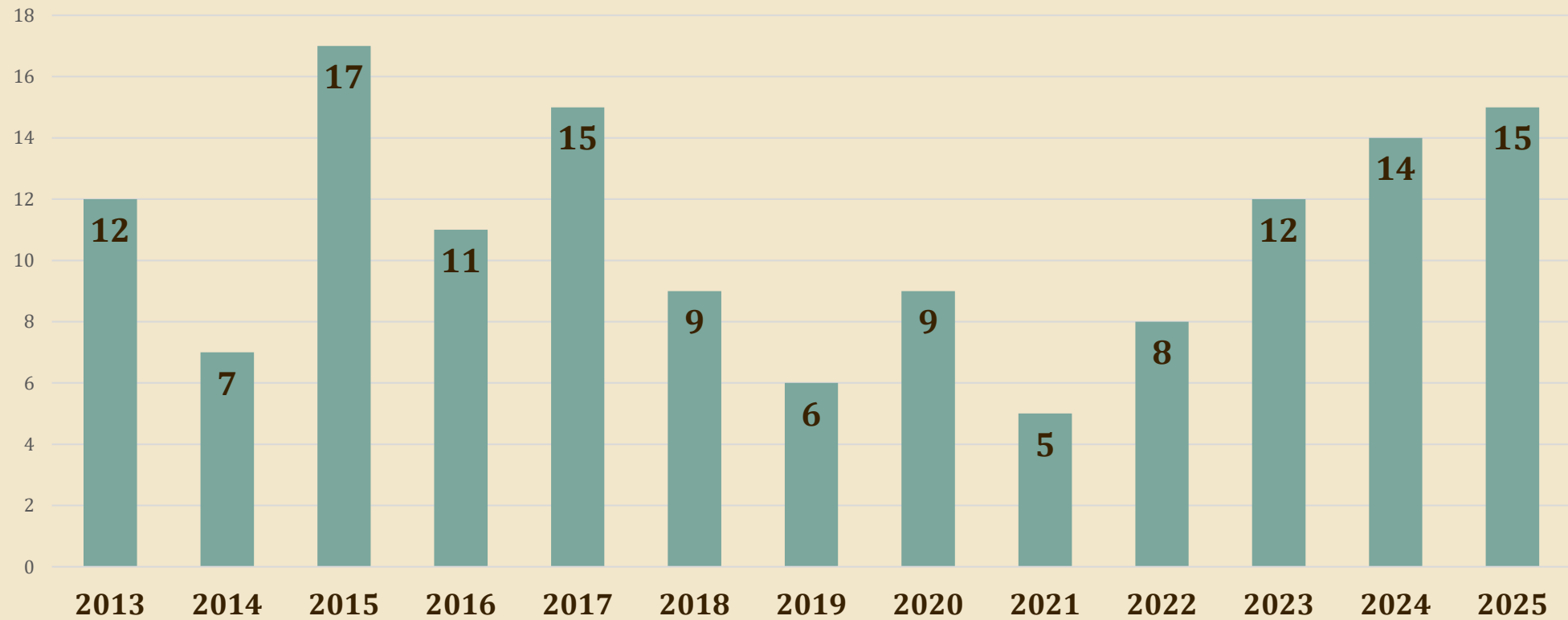
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600

1,200

10

LEHIGH COUNTY HOMICIDE FILINGS 2013 TO 2025



2025

JUVENILE JUSTICE IN LEHIGH COUNTY

JUVENILE COURT

In 2025, the Juvenile Court fell under both the authority of the Administrative Judge of the Criminal/Juvenile Division and the Administrative Judge of Juvenile Dependency. The Juvenile Court Division is responsible for cases involving juvenile delinquency and juvenile dependency.

During 2025, the Juvenile Court Judges were assisted by Juvenile Court Hearing Officers, Theresa M. Loder, Esquire, and Lisa Cipoletti, Esquire, who adjudicate both delinquency and dependency cases.

Juveniles may be either or both delinquent and dependent.

In 2025, Juvenile Judges and Hearing Officers disposed of 227 delinquency cases and 143 dependency cases. There were 581 new delinquency filings and 152 new dependency filings.

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.

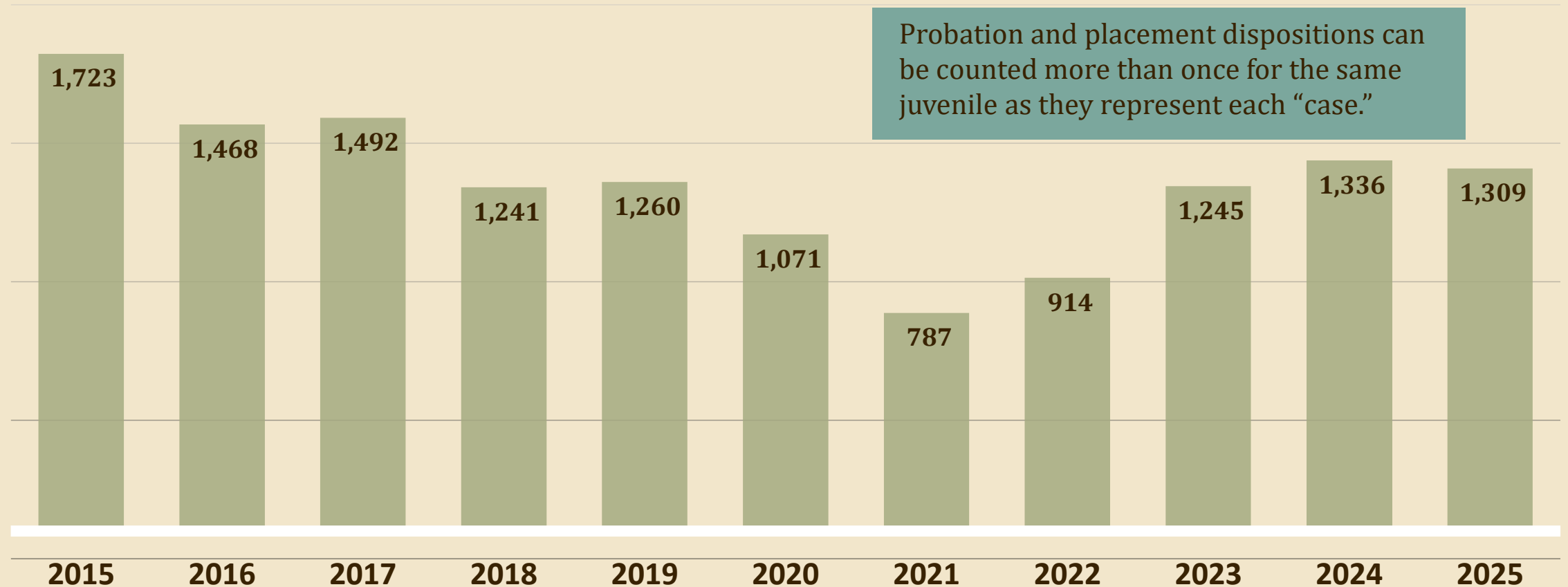
Dependent juveniles may enter foster care, be reunited with family or placed for adoption.

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.

NUMBER OF JUVENILE CASES DISPOSED 2015 TO 2025



PRIMARY JUVENILE PROBATION DISPOSITIONS



Each referral/written allegation received by Lehigh County Juvenile Probation may include multiple “cases” resulting in multiple dispositions per allegation. Complex issues within cases require collaboration with partners and heightened attention to the dynamics of each case.

Heightened attention is also required for sex offender supervision. The use of drugs and gang activity remain a concern and require an increased level of supervision. The number of youth with a mental health diagnosis continues to increase. These youth require special attention and interventions.

The numbers on the following slide include Lehigh County Juvenile Probation’s most frequent dispositions, but are not reflective of all dispositions

PRIMARY DISPOSITIONS

JUVENILE PROBATION 2020-2025

YEAR	Referrals/Written Allegations (Includes Non-Payment)	Diversion				Probation	Placement
		Informal Adjustment	Consent Decree	Counsel and Release	Non-Payments		
2025	779	59	145	52	120	127	56
2024	683	49	147	21	120	151	54
2023	705	53	148	9	123	139	53
2022	588	25	115	4	82	115	47
2021	321	16	54	2	71	66	39
2020	428	15	97	3	93	109	54

JUVENILE PROBATION PRIMARY DISPOSITIONS (FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025)

DIVERSION PRIOR TO ANY REFERRAL BY JUVENILE PROBATION

	Community Justice Panel (CJP)	School Justice Panel (SJP) Urban	School Justice Panel (SJP) Suburban	Totals
Referred	338	72	74	484
Ineligible/Rejected or Chose Court	76 (30%)	15 (21%)	10 (16%)	101 (26%)
Successful	213 (81%)	32 (56%)	48 (75%)	293 (77%)
Unsuccessful	49 (19%)	25 (44%)	16 (25%)	90 (23%)

Pre-adjudication diversion is defined as providing opportunities for youth who would otherwise face formal processing in the court system so that they can avoid an adjudication of delinquency or conviction for a summary offense, instead directing them into an alternative program, including treatment when appropriate. The Impact Project has worked with Lehigh County in developing and running panels as a diversion since 1999.

JUVENILE PROBATION: PRE-ADJUDICATION DIVERSION

COMMUNITY JUSTICE PANELS

- The Community Justice Panel Program is a youth aid panel diversion program designed to utilize trained community volunteers to effectively handle first-time juvenile offenders charged with summary and misdemeanor offenses.

SCHOOL JUSTICE PANELS

- A pre-adjudicatory, school-based mental health diversion program. Using clinical assessment and screening tools, SJP clinicians provide the information and have the means to assess underlying mental health issues that the schools often lack the resources to investigate.
- Urban Panels are made up of Allentown and Whitehall.
- Suburban Panels are made up of all other districts in Lehigh County.



2025
CIVIL/FAMILY
COURT DIVISION

CIVIL/FAMILY COURT JURISDICTIONS

Civil Actions

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

Orphans' Court

- Termination of Parental Rights
- Adoptions
- Guardianships
- Fiduciary Accounts
- Appeals from Register of Wills

Family Court

- Child Custody
- Divorce
- Protection From Abuse
- Child & Spousal Support

**J. BRIAN JOHNSON,
PRESIDENT JUDGE**

MICHELE A. VARRICCHIO, JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF CIVIL COURT
&
SUPERVISORY JUDGE FOR ARBITRATION AND MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE

DOUGLAS G. REICHLEY, JUDGE
SUPERVISORY JUDGE FOR BOARDS OF VIEW

MELISSA T. PAVLACK, JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF FAMILY COURT

THOMAS A. CAPEHART, JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION

ZACHARY J. COHEN, JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF JUVENILE DEPENDENCY COURT

**2025
CIVIL/ FAMILY
COURT
DIVISION
JUDGES**



CIVIL COURT OPERATIONS

CIVIL ACTIONS

Civil actions involve the resolution of private conflicts between people or organizations.

Civil cases include personal injury or personal property claims, matters of equity, product 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 Court Division.

2025 CIVIL OPERATIONS SECTION

In 2025, the Civil Operations Section of the Court Administrator's Office, under the direction of Civil Operations Officer Paige White, 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 Court Division work with the Civil Operations staff to proactively manage the civil caseload.

2025 CIVIL COURT DIVISION

CIVIL FILINGS BY TYPE

New Civil Filings Total	4,152
Contract	3,100
Professional Liability	48
Tort	676
Civil Appeals- Administrative Agencies	619
Miscellaneous	81
Real Property	532

2025 CIVIL DISPOSITIONS

Civil Dispositions Total	4,780
Default Judgments	1,242
Arbitrations Held	381
Dispositive Motions	30
Settlements	1,411
Stayed	47
Transferred/Withdrawn	61
Dismissed/Discontinued	1,206
Administrative Purge	52
Other	327
Jury Trial	4
Non-Jury Trial	19



THE FAMILY COURT OFFICE

THE FAMILY COURT OFFICE: 2025 CHILD CUSTODY

PROVIDING FAMILY-RELATED COURT SERVICES

The vast majority of parties in custody cases are not represented by attorneys. 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.

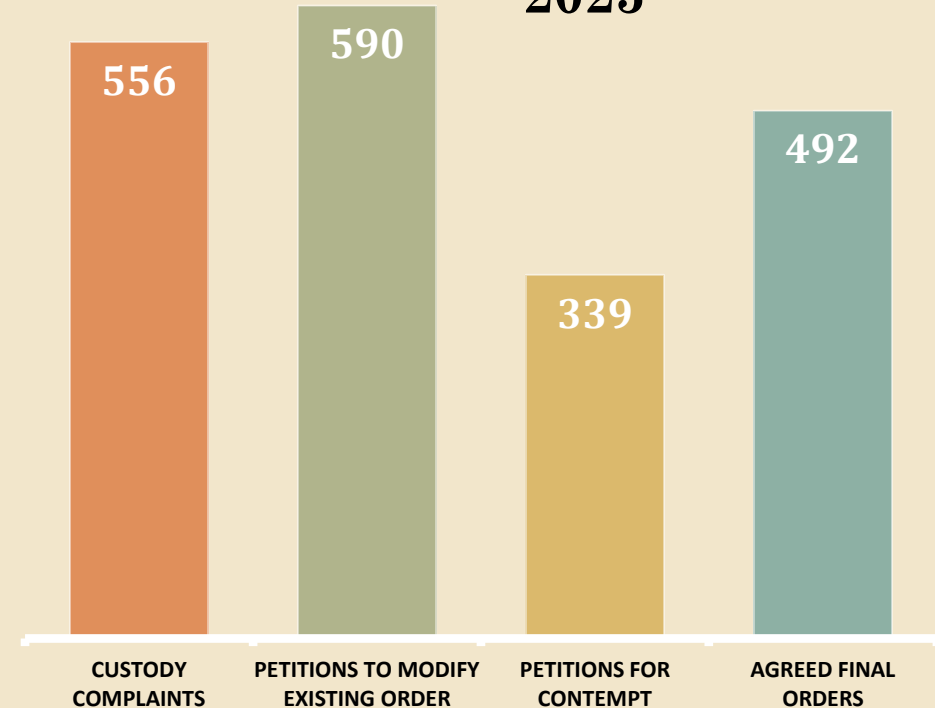
The necessary forms to start a custody lawsuit are available online, and filings are completed by e-filing. General instructions on completing the forms and filing and serving the pleadings are also available on the Court's website at lccpa.org.

After the filing of one or more pleadings, custody cases proceed to a conciliation conference where efforts are made to have the parties reach an agreement. A Custody Hearing Officer (CHO) conducts the conference and identifies the issues, helping 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 partial physical custody).

2025 CHILD CUSTODY

In 2025, 556 custody complaints were disposed of through the Family Court system. In addition, 590 Petitions to Modify an Existing Order and 339 Petitions for Contempt were resolved. 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 492 in 2025. 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 DISPOSITIONS 2025



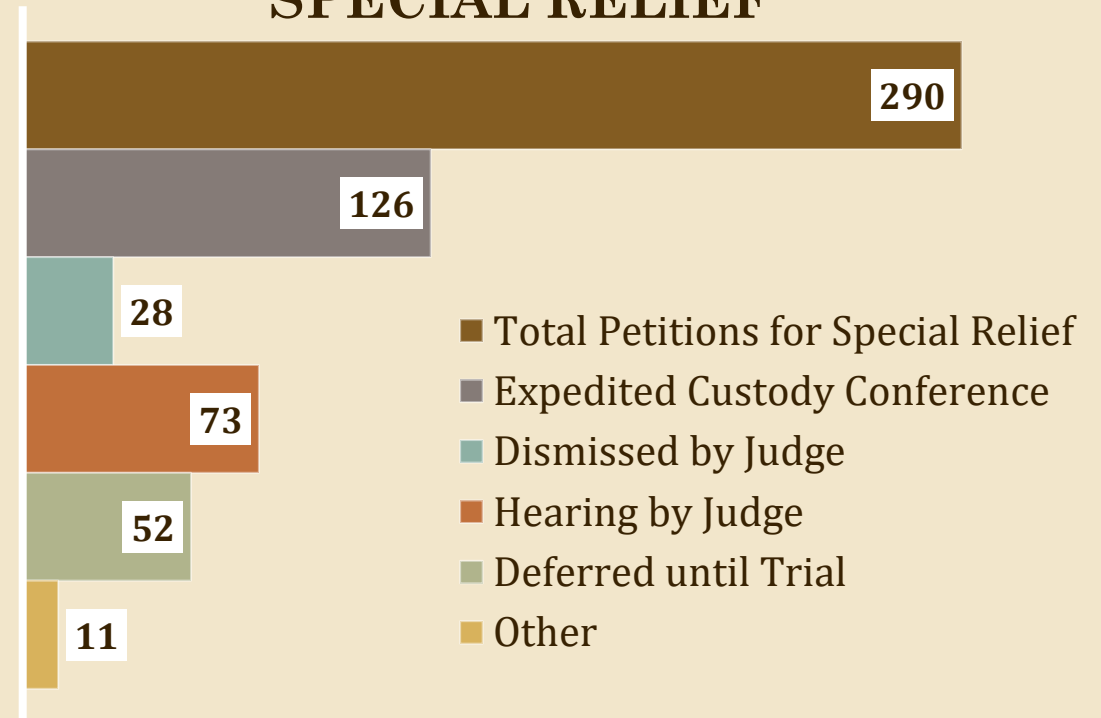
2025 CHILD CUSTODY

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 2025, the Family Court Office received 290 Petitions for Special Relief.

In 2025, of the 290 filings, 126 were ordered to proceed to an expedited custody conference before a Custody Hearing Officer, while 28 were summarily dismissed by a Judge. The Judges held 73 hearings on Petitions for Special Relief. Fifty-two Petitions were deferred until the trial. Eleven cases were otherwise addressed and resolved.

2025 PETITIONS FOR CUSTODY SPECIAL RELIEF



THE FAMILY COURT OFFICE: 2025 DIVORCE



Contested divorce cases are often resolved by the Hearing Officer in Divorce, an attorney appointed by the Court. Following the filing of a motion by a divorce litigant to appoint the Hearing Officer to a case, the Hearing Officer conducts one or more settlement conferences with the litigants and attempts to resolve the issues. If those efforts are unsuccessful, the Hearing Officer conducts hearings and prepares reports and recommended Orders subject to judicial review. Approximately 90-95% of cases before a Hearing Officer are settled before a hearing.

*As an uncontested divorce case may become a contested divorce during the pendency of the action over more than one year, these numbers do not sum to the total divorce cases filed in any given year.

THE FAMILY COURT OFFICE: 2025 PROTECTION FROM ABUSE

1,502

1,502 New Protection From Abuse Petitions were Filed in 2025.

532

532 Final PFA Orders were Entered in 2025. 215 were Granted and 317 were Stipulated.

In 2025, approximately 35% of new Protection From Abuse Petitions resulted in Final Orders of Protection.

-288

288 PFA Petitions were Withdrawn by Plaintiffs

-332

Plaintiff Did Not Appear at the Final PFA Hearing in 332 cases

-245

245 Temporary PFA Orders were Dismissed at the Final Hearing

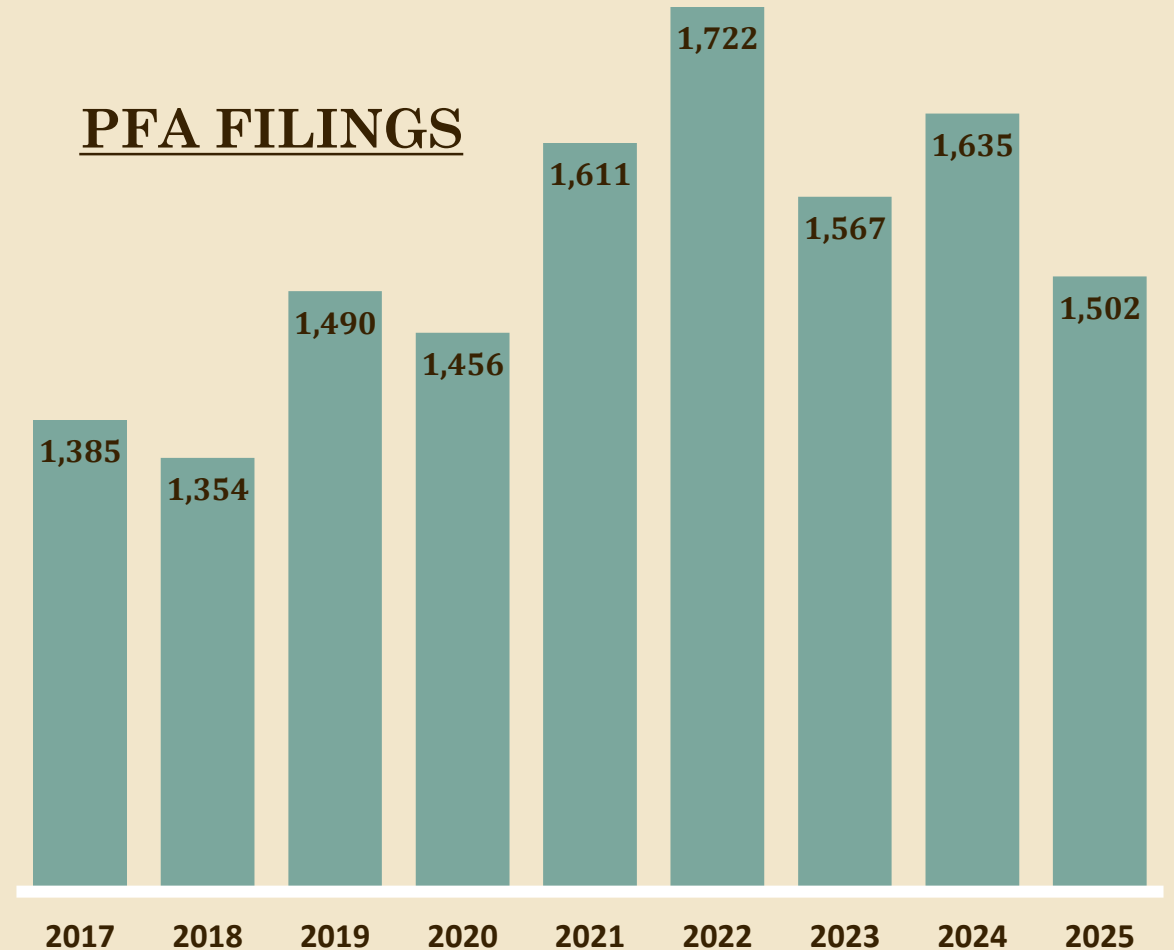
PROTECTION FROM ABUSE FILINGS 2017 to 2025

Pennsylvania law requires every court to assist domestic violence victims 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 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.

See the Family Court Office webpage on lccpa.org for PFA hours and more information.



THE FAMILY COURT OFFICE: 2025 PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE & INTIMIDATION

10

Sexual Violence
Cases

2

Intimidation
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 ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION

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

THE ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION...	Oversees Trusts, Powers of Attorney, and 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
THE ORPHANS' COURT HEARS...	Appeals from Register of Wills, including will contests or contested letters of administration	Cases requesting termination of parental rights due to abuse or neglect	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
THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF ORPHANS' COURT...	Issues marriage licenses upon "in person" application	Maintains marriage license records and issues certified copies of those records	Responds to requests for access to both identifying and non-identifying information from adoption files

ORPHANS' COURT 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 multiple children) and counsel for each child.

Effective June 11, 2024, state law requires courts to appoint legal counsel to represent any alleged or previously incapacitated person in any matter questioning personal competency.

Statutory prohibition on imposition of filing fee for Judicial Bypass Hearings.

THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE ORPHANS' COURT

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. Juan Rivera, Esquire, serves as Orphans' Court Counsel.

A full-time law clerk, four full-time assistant clerks and an assistant clerk/analyst, (who reviews all formally filed fiduciary accounts), comprise the staff of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court.

The Orphans' Court Administrative Judge in 2025 was Thomas A. Capehart, Judge. Five other Judges are assigned to the Orphans' Court Division.

2025 ORPHANS' COURT STATISTICS

79

Persons Adjudicated as
Incapacitated and
Appointed Guardians for
their Persons and/or
Estates

36

Adoptions Granted

40

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

15

Fiduciary Accountings
Audited, Confirmed, and
Adjudicated

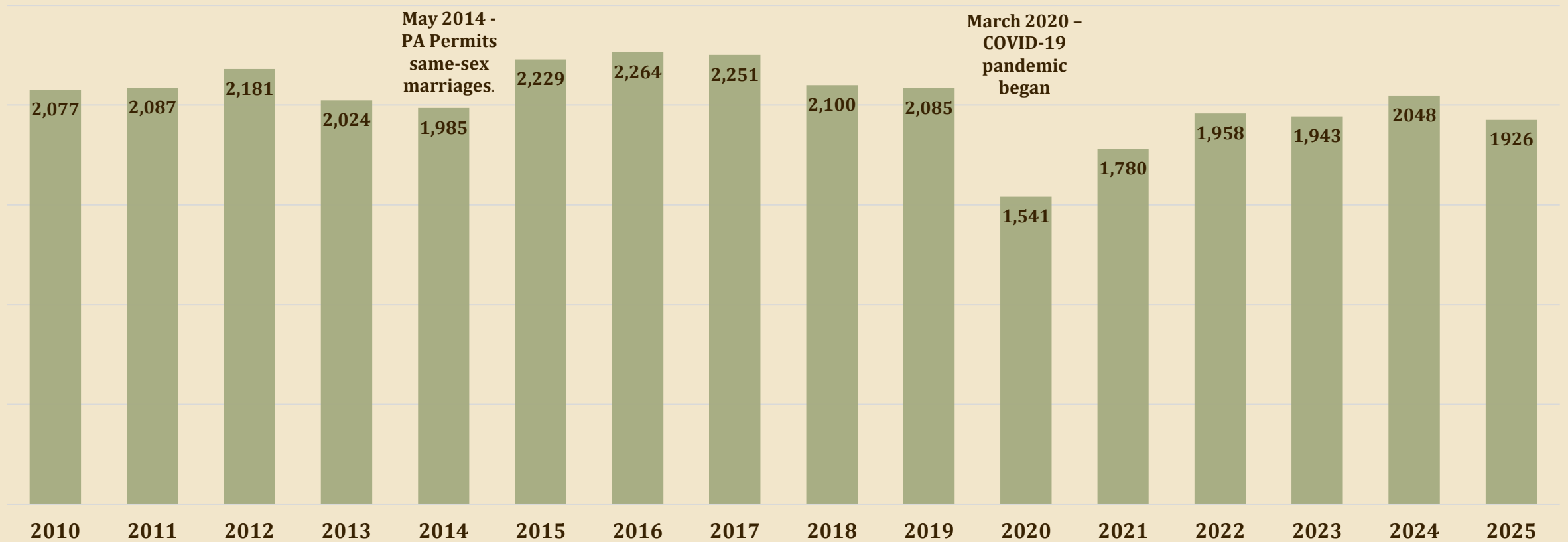
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Termination of Parental
Rights Orders

1

Judicial Bypass Hearing
Pursuant to the Abortion
Control Act

MARRIAGE LICENSES ISSUED 2010 TO 2025





COURT ADMINISTRATION

LEHIGH COUNTY COURT ADMINISTRATION

PROVIDING COURT MANAGEMENT

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.

2025 began with District Court Administrator Kerry R. Turtzo and Deputy District Court Administrator John J. Sikora responsible for supervision of all court-related departments of the Judiciary. In April, Stephanie L. Szabo was appointed as Deputy District Court Administrator due to John Sikora's retirement.

In Lehigh County, Jury Management, the Court Interpreting Unit, the Court Transcription Unit, Library Information Services and the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program are considered components of Court Administration.

OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

NON-JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS

Personnel
Management

Fiscal
Management

Jury
Management

Interpreting
Services

Records Control

Calendar and
Scheduling
Management

Information
Systems

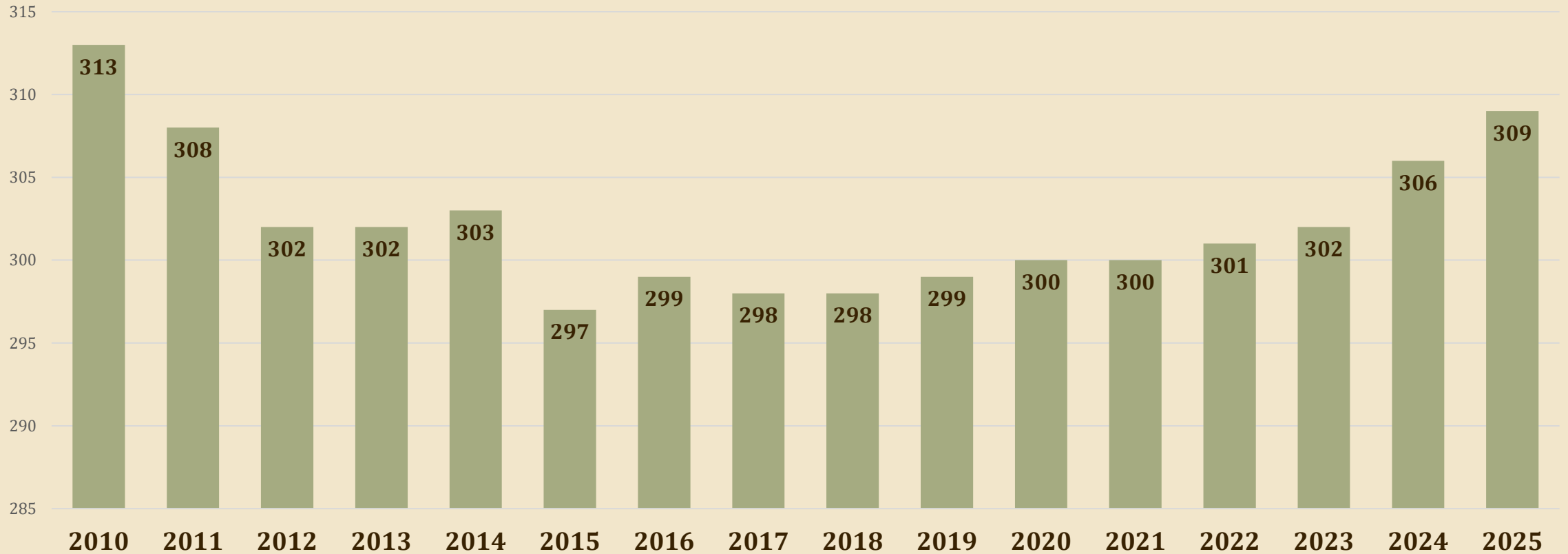
Public
Information

Legal Resource
Procurement

Equipment and
Technology
Management

Facilities
Management

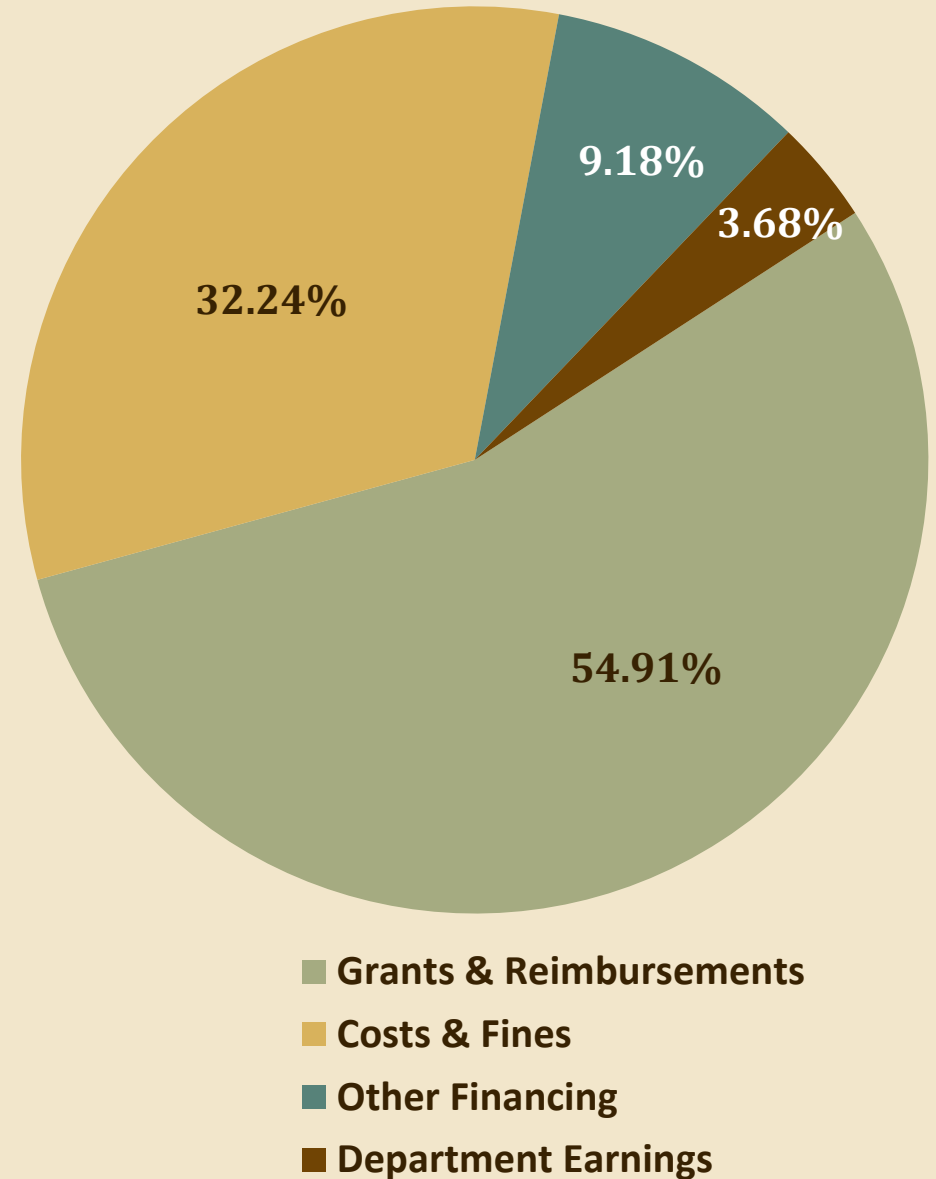
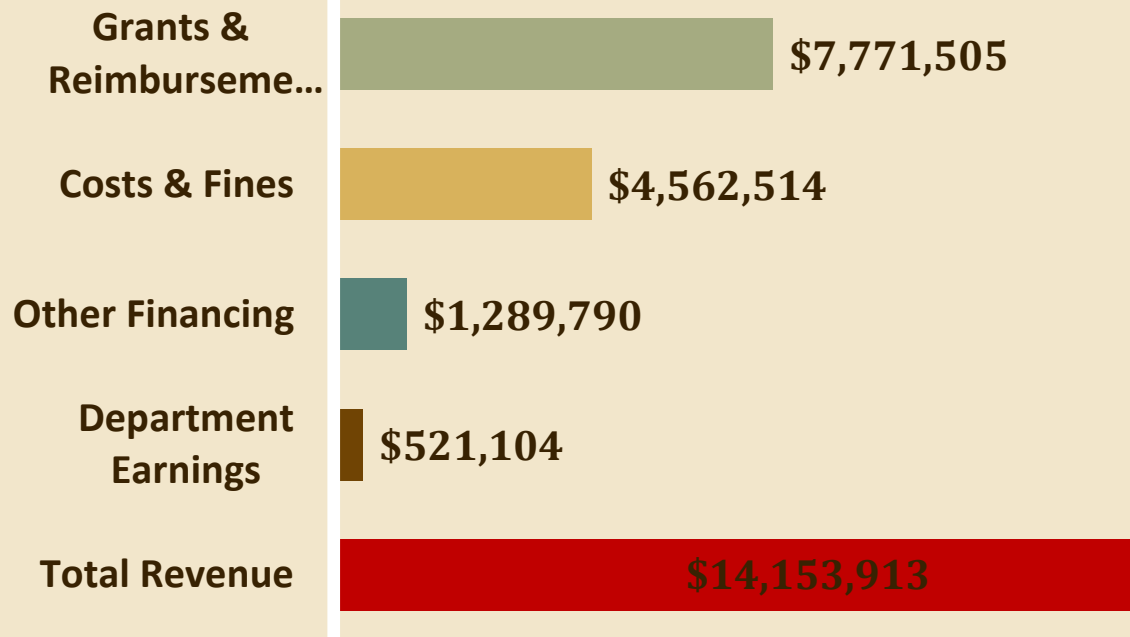
FULL-TIME JUDICIAL PERSONNEL 2010 to 2025



FULL-TIME JUDICIAL PERSONNEL BY DEPARTMENT 2015 to 2025

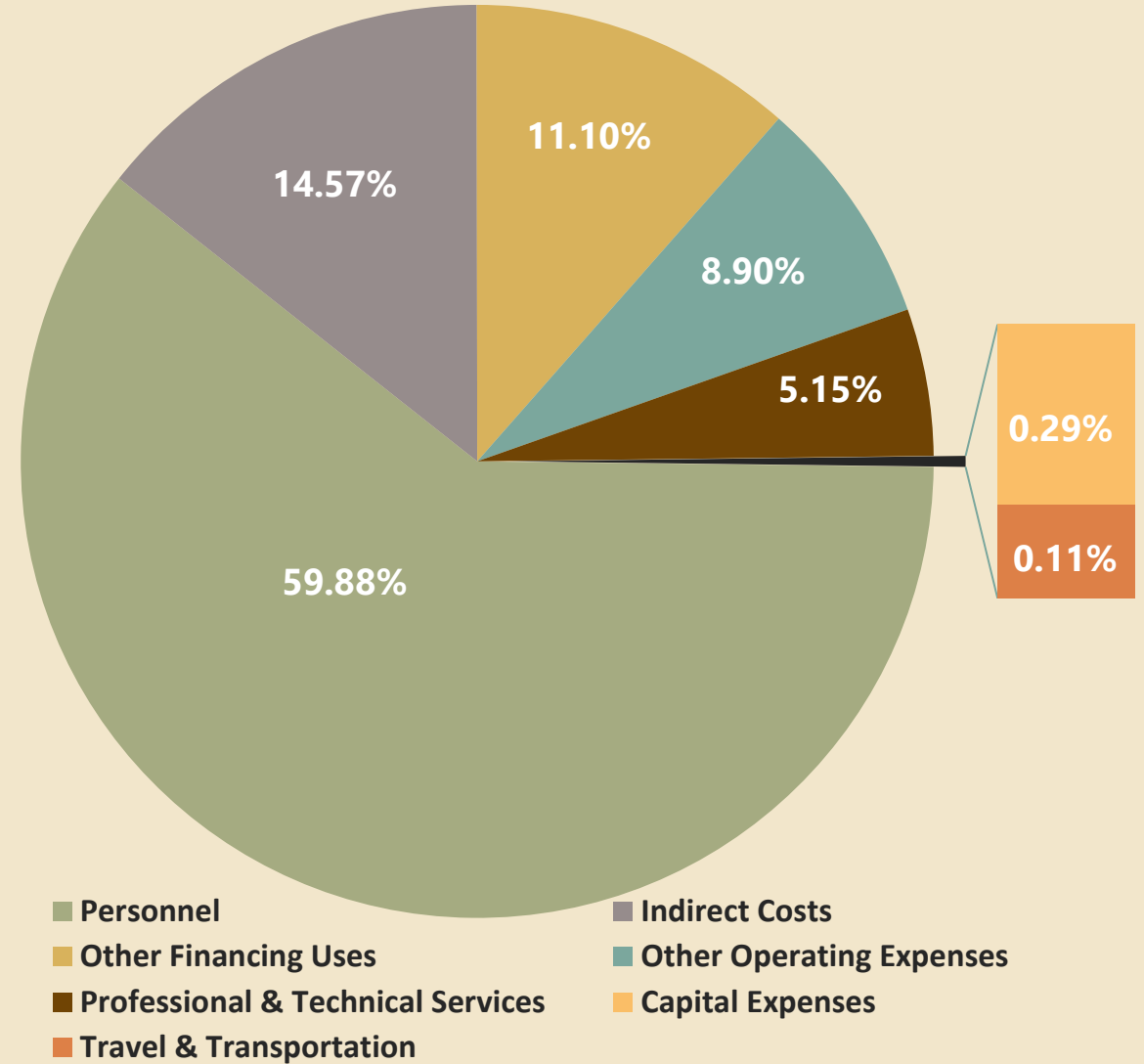
YEAR	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
COURT ADMINISTRATION	76	76	75	75	75	75	75	76	76	77	81
ADULT PROBATION	52	54	54	54	54	55	55	55	55	55	55
JUVENILE PROBATION	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
ORPHANS' COURT	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	8
DOMESTIC RELATIONS	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	61	60
DISTRICT JUDGES	51	51	51	51	52	52	52	52	53	57	56
LAW LIBRARY	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	297	299	298	298	299	300	300	301	302	306	309

2025 COURT REVENUE



2025 COURT EXPENSES

Travel & Transportation	\$52,810
Capital Expenses	\$140,877
Professional & Technical Services	\$2,501,703
Other Operating Expenses	\$4,327,507
Other Financing Uses	\$5,395,336
Indirect Costs	\$7,086,235
Personnel	\$29,114,934
Total Expenses	\$48,619,402



GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

ADULT PROBATION

Adult Probation receives state funding based on the supervision levels of individuals under supervision. Currently, the department receives the maximum level of state funding available to support probation and parole services and evidence-based programming.

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.

The Court of Common Pleas pursues federal and state grants to offset the costs of court programs.

2025 CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD GRANT ACTIVITIES

ADULT PROBATION GRANT AWARDS

<u>PROJECT TITLE</u>	<u>GRANT</u>	<u>GRANT \$</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>
Adult Probation/Drug/Alcohol Restrictive Intermediate Punishment	PCCD	\$660,000	SCA/ Adult Probation
Continuing County Adult Probation and Parole Grant	PCCD	\$483,000	Adult Probation
Problem Solving Courts Discretionary and Implementation Grant	AOPC	\$10,000	Adult Probation

2025 CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD GRANT ACTIVITIES

JUVENILE PROBATION GRANT AWARDS

<u>PROJECT TITLE</u>	<u>GRANT</u>	<u>GRANT \$</u>
Grant-In-Aid/Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy Implementation Plan	JCJC	\$467,389
Juvenile Court Judges' Commission Training Grant	JCJC	\$17,496
Youth Juvenile Advisory Board Grant	PCCD	\$94,173
Pennsylvania Academic Career Technical Training (PACTT)	PCCD	\$5,000

COURT ADMINISTRATION: JURY MANAGEMENT

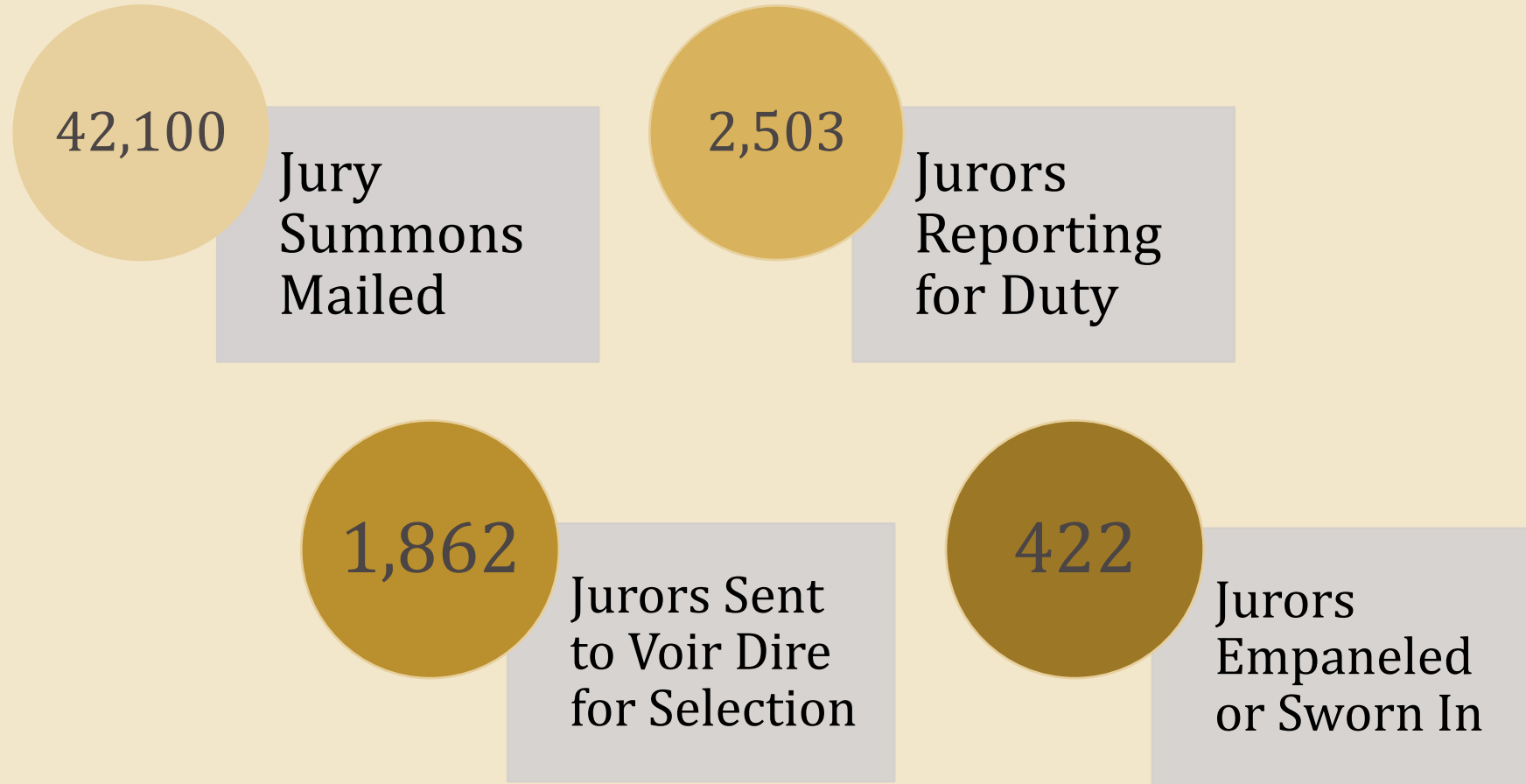
PROVIDING SELECTION AND CONTROL OF JURORS

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 who are necessary for trials.

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.

Prospective jurors who fail to appear for jury service are scheduled for hearings before the President Judge, who will make a determination if the juror is to be held in contempt of court pursuant to 42 Pa. C. S. § 4584. If found in contempt, the sanctions include a fine not to exceed \$500 or imprisoned for no more than 10 days or both. Although all hearings are scheduled on one date each year, the President Judge will hear each juror’s case individually.

2025 JURY MANAGEMENT

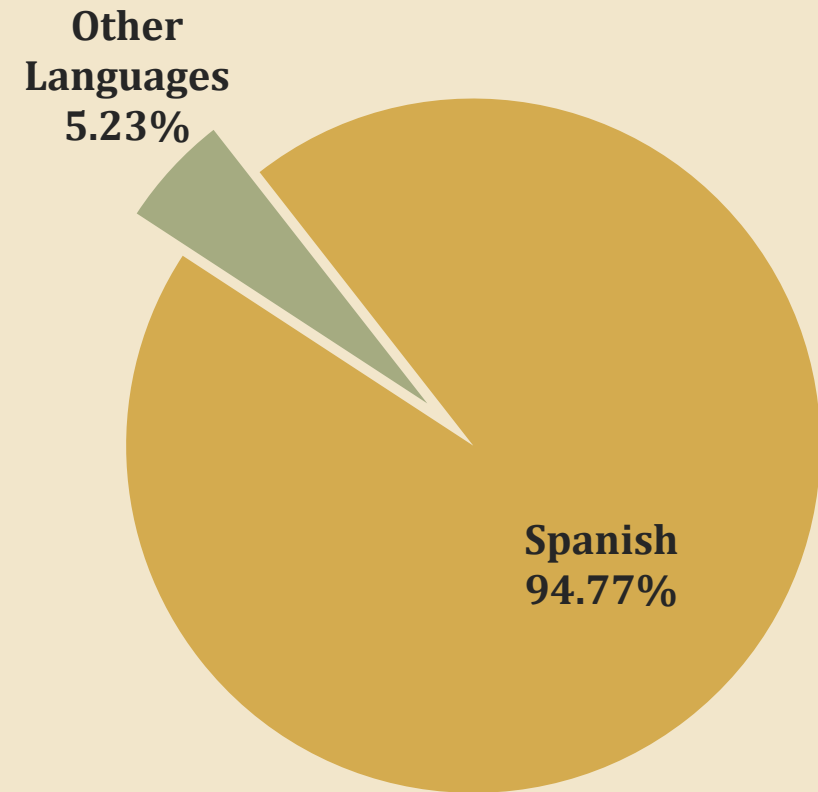


COURT ADMINISTRATION: 2025 INTERPRETING UNIT

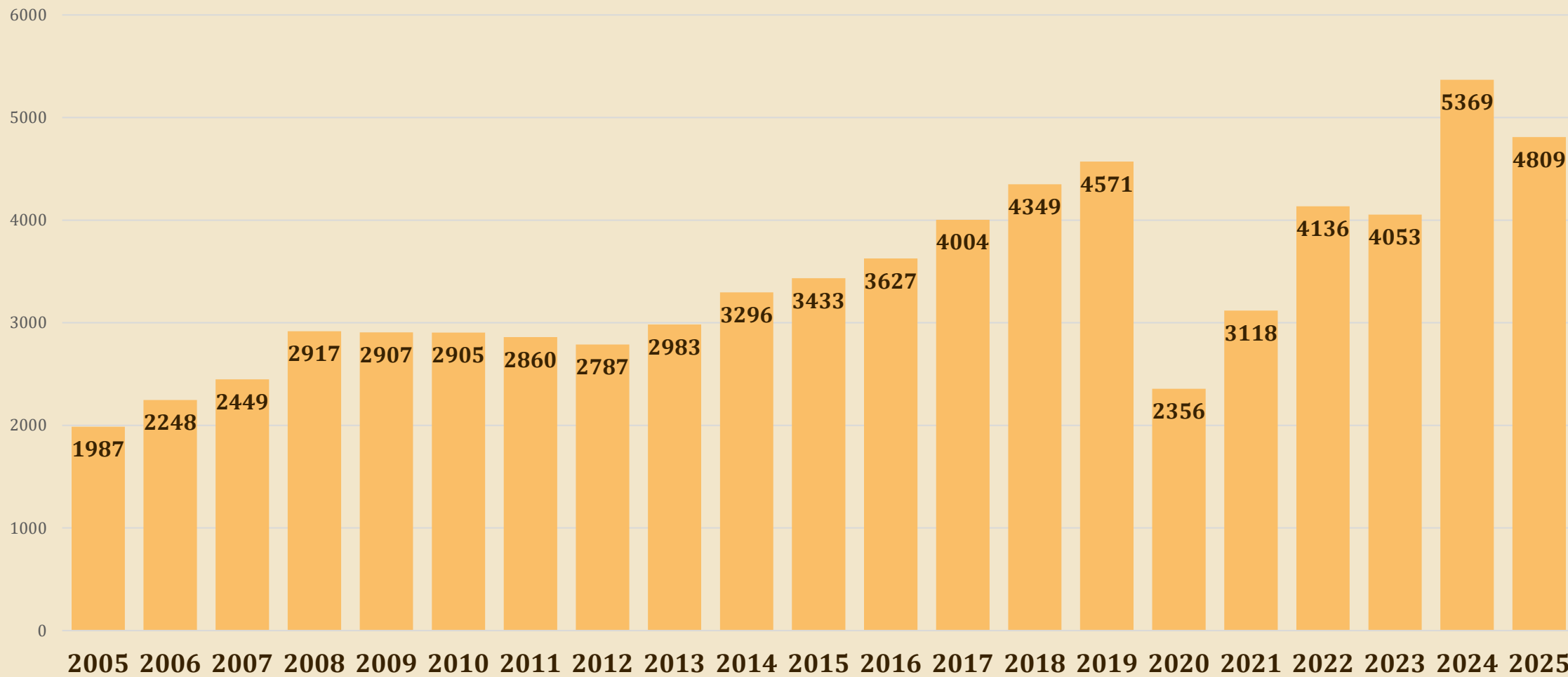
PROVIDING FOREIGN AND SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION

The Court provides interpreters in all court proceedings when requested. The Interpreting Coordinator schedules from a pool of both staff and contracted interpreters, as well as other interpreters by court order, to carry out court interpreting assignments.

In 2025, there were 4,809 interpreter assignments, 4,543 of which were for Spanish. Video or telephone interpretation is used when needed. Translations of written documents are also provided by the Interpreting Unit.



ANNUAL TOTAL INTERPRETER ASSIGNMENTS 2005 TO 2025



LEHIGH COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

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 3 related missions of the Library Information Services department since 1989.

LAW LIBRARY SERVICES

Operating the only public law library in Lehigh County by providing Self-Help and other legal resources to the Lehigh Valley community.

LEGAL RESOURCE PROCUREMENT

Providing Judges, court, and county employees with essential print and electronic legal sources necessary for work performance.

DOCUMENT PRODUCTION

Providing website support, scanning, color printing, brochure development and related document services to court offices.

2025 LAW LIBRARY SERVICES

\$489,766.77 IN LEGAL RESOURCES PROCURED AND PROCESSED

Cost of all legal and other resources received and processed by the Lehigh County Law Library for the Court, County offices, and the Law Library. 752 invoices, the majority containing multiple items, were submitted for payment.

101,074 WESTLAW SEARCHES WITH A RETAIL VALUE OF \$8.7 MILLION

Retail value of the 101,074 Westlaw research transactions performed by Court/County Employees and Law Library Patrons in 2025. 1,504 total Lexis transactions valued at \$38,009.50 were performed.

6,923 PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY PATRON SEARCHES

5,419 Westlaw Public Access Program and 1,504 Lexis Advance Public Access Program searches meant 6,923 online legal research searches were performed by or for patrons in the public Lehigh County Law Library during 2025.

TRADITIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES

2,120 pages of legal research were printed or photocopied for patrons in the public Law Library. Lehigh County Law Library staff handled 826 print book circulation transactions.

VIRTUAL REFERENCE SERVICE

Virtual reference service continued in 2025 with 200+ total documents requested in 120+ virtual service contacts received by Law Library staff by phone and email.

CASA: COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE

CASA VOLUNTEERS: PROVIDING “EYES AND EARS” FOR THE COURT

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 the children to whom they are assigned. CASA volunteers aid the court by submitting written reports making recommendations in the best interest of the child.



2025 LEHIGH COUNTY CASA VOLUNTEERS

22

ACTIVE CASA VOLUNTEERS

24

**ABUSED & NEGLECTED CHILDREN
SERVED**

5

**CASA VOLUNTEERS SERVED AS
EDUCATIONAL DECISION MAKERS FOR
THEIR ASSIGNED CHILDREN**





ADULT PROBATION

LEHIGH COUNTY ADULT PROBATION

PROVIDING COMMUNITY PROTECTION THROUGH SUPERVISION

MISSION STATEMENT

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

ADULT PROBATION: PHILOSOPHY AND PRIMARY GOALS

- 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 Pamela Sheffer in 2025, works to achieve this goal through appropriate and relevant treatment and supervision of individuals by trained probation officers.
- The Department recognizes that no individual can change if they are not intrinsically motivated to do so. It is the Department's responsibility to evoke this need for change within the individual, while providing the opportunities, treatment, and experiences that can positively influence their re-entry into society. Ultimately, the goal of the Department is to reduce the likelihood that an individual will reoffend.

ADULT PROBATION: PHILOSOPHY AND PRIMARY GOALS (cont.)

- Since 2020, the Department has utilized evidence-based practices into its standard of supervision. Use of evidence-based practices is a key factor in the establishment of safer communities, the reduction of recidivism, the enhancement of collaboration between agencies, and the reduction of costs. Using a validated risk assessment, officers target moderate to high-risk individuals, determine their criminogenic needs, and use programs to deliver cognitive-based treatment.
- The Department is audited annually by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and continues to be in compliance with standards promulgated by the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections.

2025 ADULT PROBATION STAFF COMPOSITION

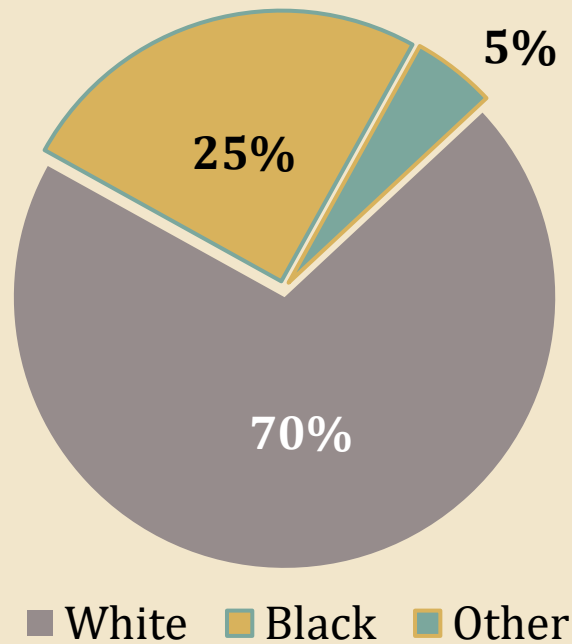
3,865
INDIVIDUALS ON ACTIVE SUPERVISION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025

The 3,865 Individuals on active supervision are supervised by:

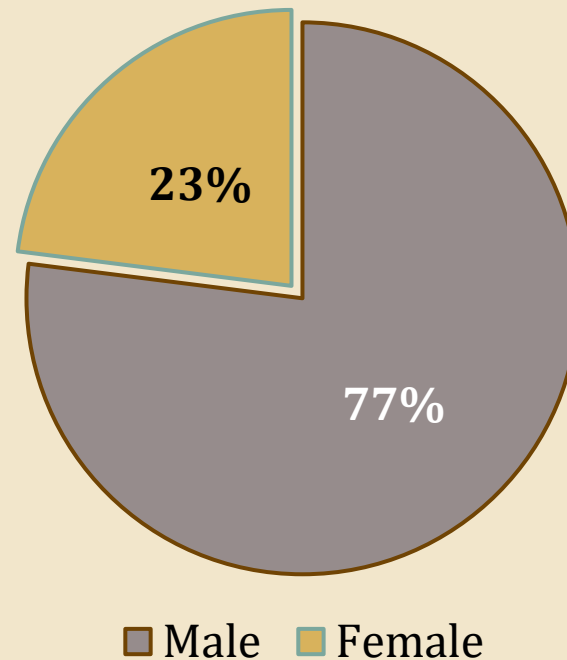
- ❖ 42 Full-time Probation Officers
- ❖ 6 Part-time Probation Officers
- ❖ 14 Full-time Probation Aides/Clerical Staff
- ❖ 1 Part-time Probation Aide

2025 LEHIGH COUNTY ADULT PROBATION CLIENT PROFILE

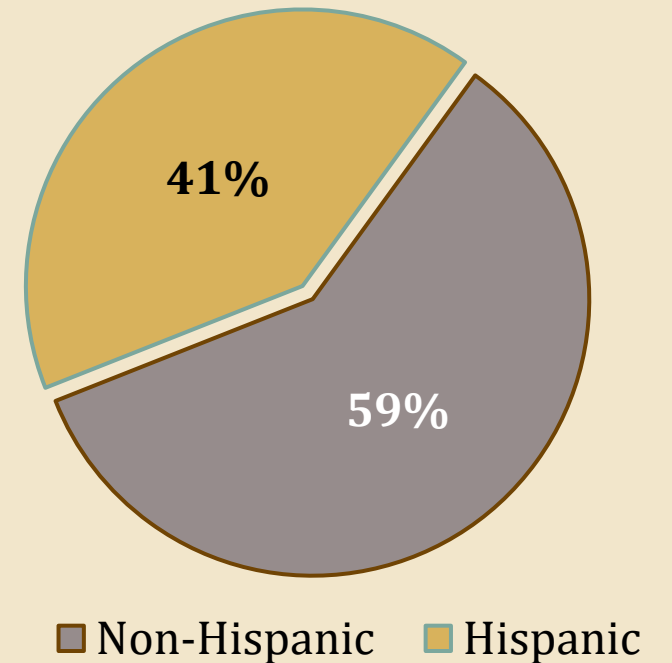
RACE



GENDER

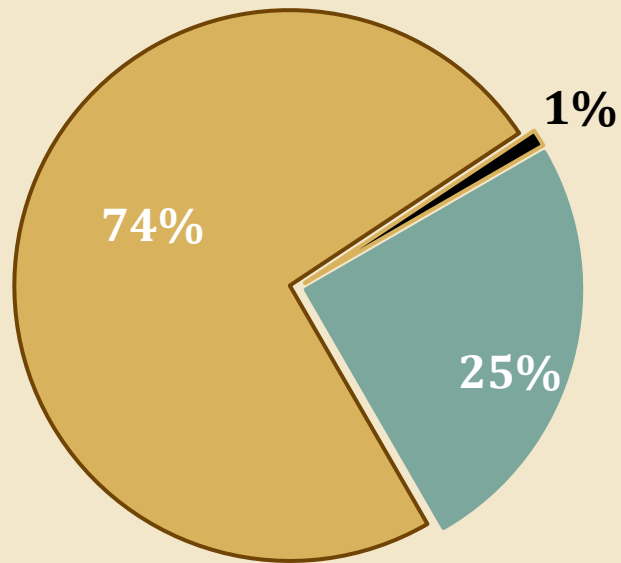


ETHNICITY



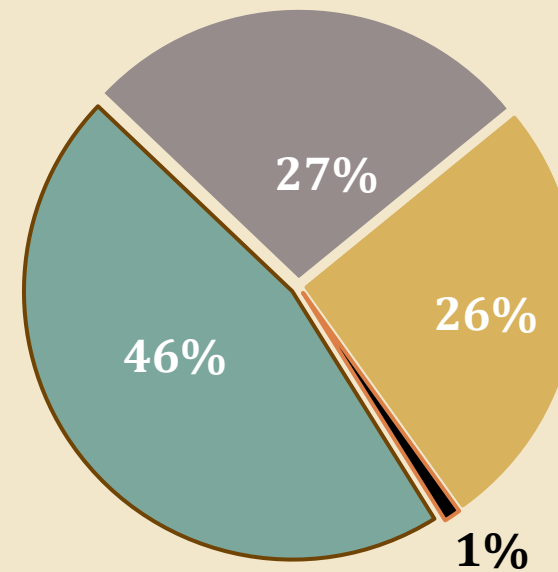
2025 LEHIGH COUNTY ADULT PROBATION CLIENT PROFILE

OFFENSE TYPE



■ Felony ■ Misdemeanor ■ Other

DISPOSITION



■ Probation ■ Parole ■ ARD ■ Other

LEHIGH COUNTY ADULT PROBATION

ADMINISTRATION

Safe Community Division

- Gang Intelligence Unit
- Sex Offender Unit
- High Risk/Domestic Violence Unit
- PAVE
- Electronic Monitoring
- Repeat Offender/DUI
- ARD/DUI

Behavioral Change Division

- General Supervision Unit/Drug Recovery Supervision
- Drug Treatment Court
- TCAP
- SPORE
- POWER (High Risk/High Needs Women)

Investigative Division

- Presentence Investigation Unit
- Pre-Parole/Re-Entry Unit

Intake/Monitoring Division

- Monitoring
- Intercounty/Interstate Transfers
- Intake

Office Support Division

In 2025, Adult Probation restructured its units to better utilize available resources and more effectively serve the Courts, the community, and individuals under supervision. This reorganization resulted in the creation of five divisions.

The Safe Community Division includes units supervising individuals identified as posing a higher risk to community safety. Within this division, a two-officer Sex Offender Unit was established to enhance supervision and strengthen collaboration with treatment providers. Units in this division primarily focus on surveillance, community protection, and ensuring compliance with Court-ordered conditions.

The Behavioral Change Division was developed to address the criminogenic needs of individuals assessed as moderate risk. This division also merged the General Supervision Unit with the former Intensive Drug Unit, maintaining a strong emphasis on substance use treatment and recovery for individuals diagnosed with substance use disorders. In addition, the division oversees Specialty Courts, including the Treatment Continuum Alternative Program (TCAP) and the Drug Treatment Court. The POWER Program was expanded into a two-officer unit. This program provides targeted supervision for high-risk, high-need women involved in the criminal justice system, recognizing that women often face unique challenges that require specialized approaches.

2025 LEHIGH COUNTY ADULT PROBATION

1,315

**Court Reporting
Network
Evaluations
Completed**

555

**Pre-parole
Investigations
Completed**

879

**Individuals
Completing
Alcohol Safe
Driving School**

212

**Pre-sentence
Investigations
Completed**

2025 ADULT PROBATION PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

Drug Treatment
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

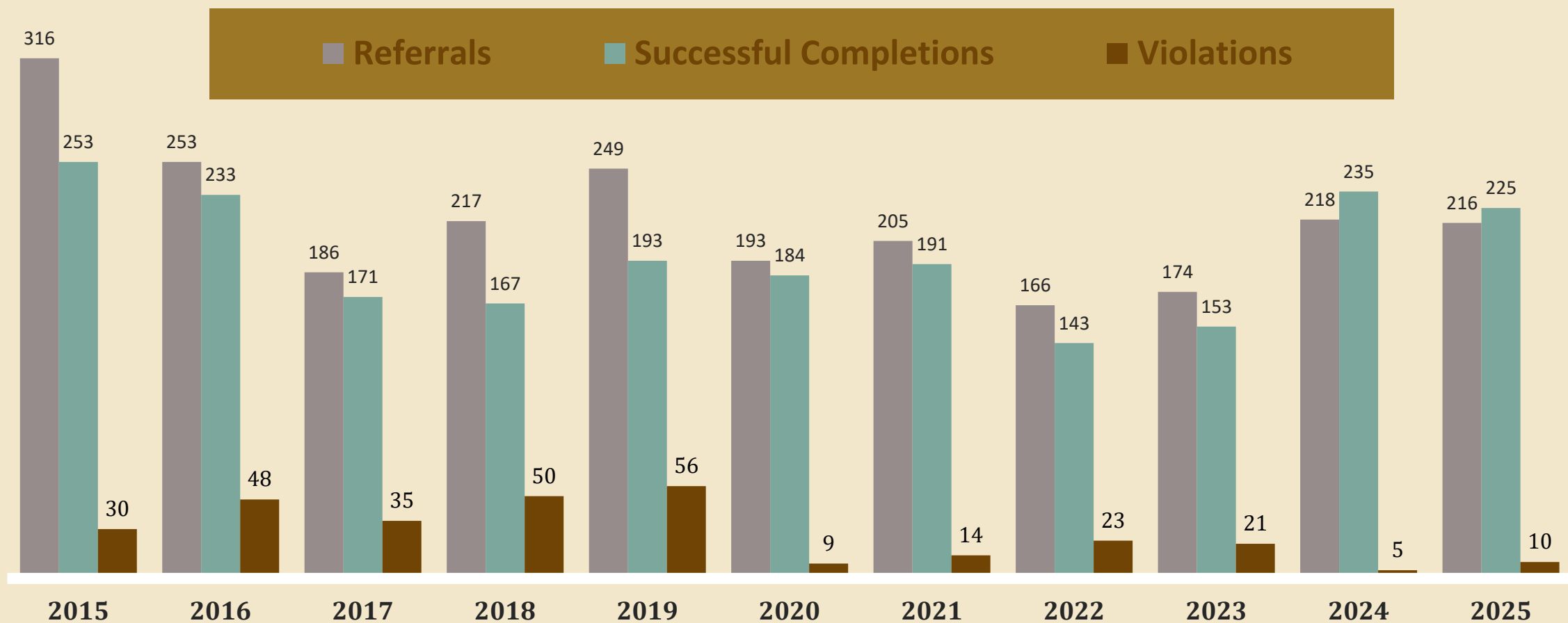
Treatment
Continuum
Alternative Project
(TCAP)

Alcohol Highway
Safety Project

Effective Corrections
Programs
B.I.T.S./Carey Guides

Program Offering
Women
Empowerment and
Reentry (POWER)

ADULT PROBATION ELECTRONIC MONITORING 2015 to 2025



2025 LEHIGH COUNTY ADULT PROBATION SPORE

- Special Program Offering Rehabilitation and Education (SPORE) provides services for mentally ill individuals.
- Adult Probation Officers and Mental Health Caseworkers jointly supervise individuals on intensive and maximum supervision levels.
- A psychiatrist and psychologist are available for evaluations.
- During 2025, SPORE received 81 formal referrals and 3 evaluations were completed.





JUVENILE PROBATION

LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION

PROVIDING A BALANCED APPROACH TO JUVENILE JUSTICE

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.

LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION

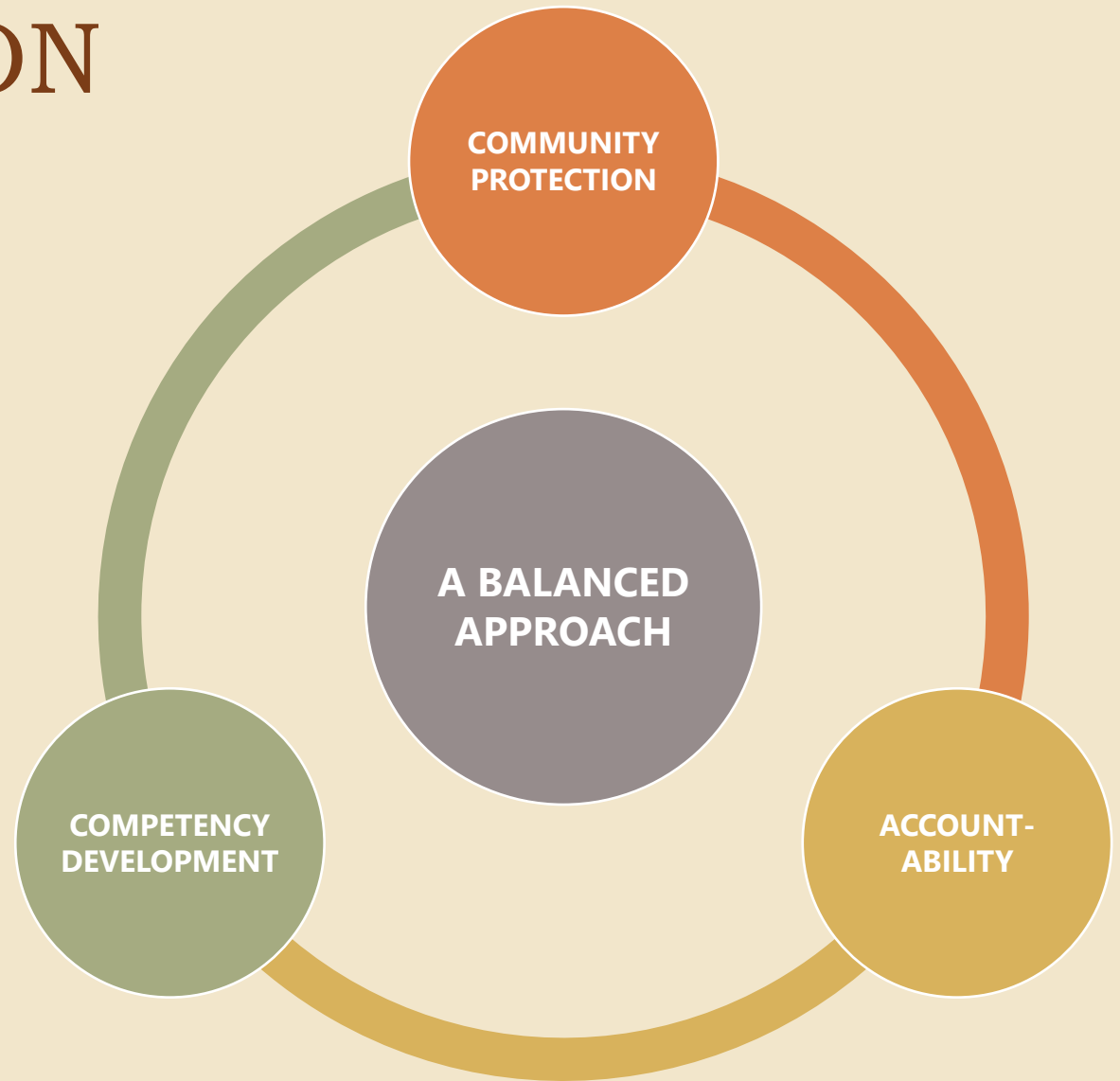
The Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department is a division of the Court of Common Pleas reporting to the Administrative Judge of Juvenile Delinquency.

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

- **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."



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

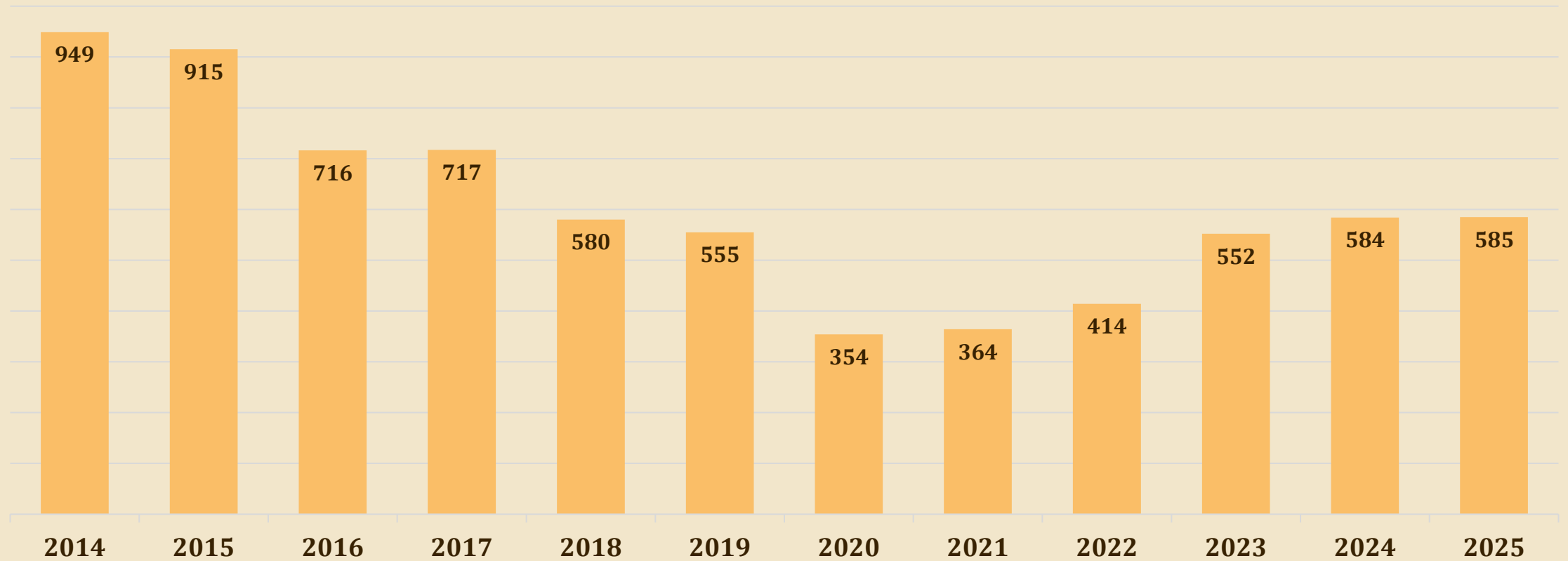
SUPPORT STAFF

MANAGEMENT UNIT

LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION

DEPARTMENTAL DIVISIONS

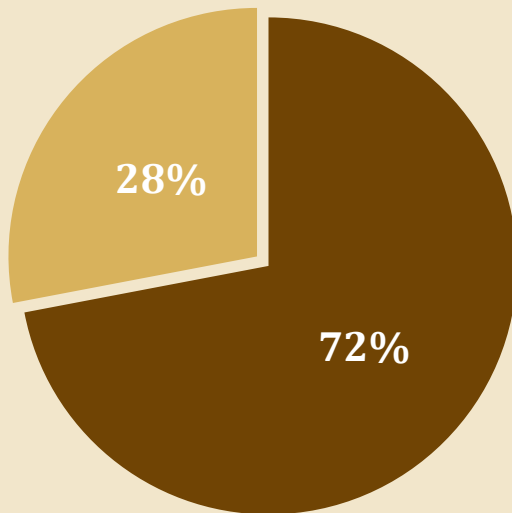
YOUTH UNDER SUPERVISION 2014 TO 2025



2025 LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION CLIENT PROFILE

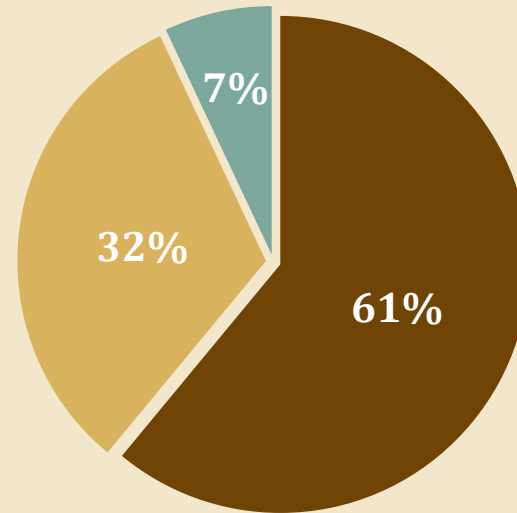
GENDER

- Male
- Female



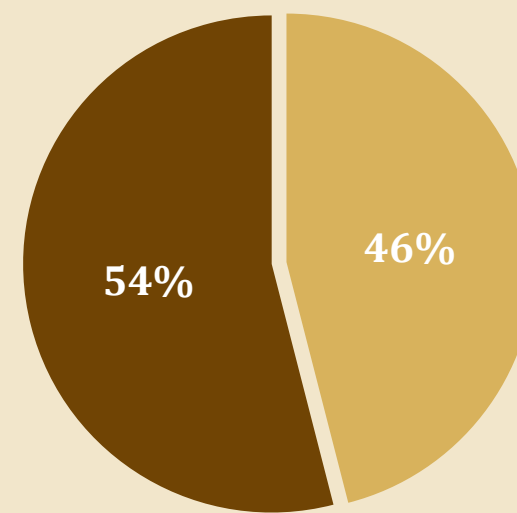
RACE

- White
- Black
- Other



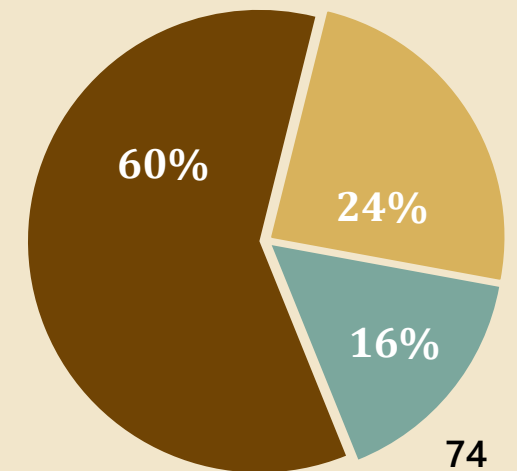
ETHNICITY

- Non-Hispanic
- Hispanic



OFFENSE TYPE

- Misdemeanor
- Felony
- Other



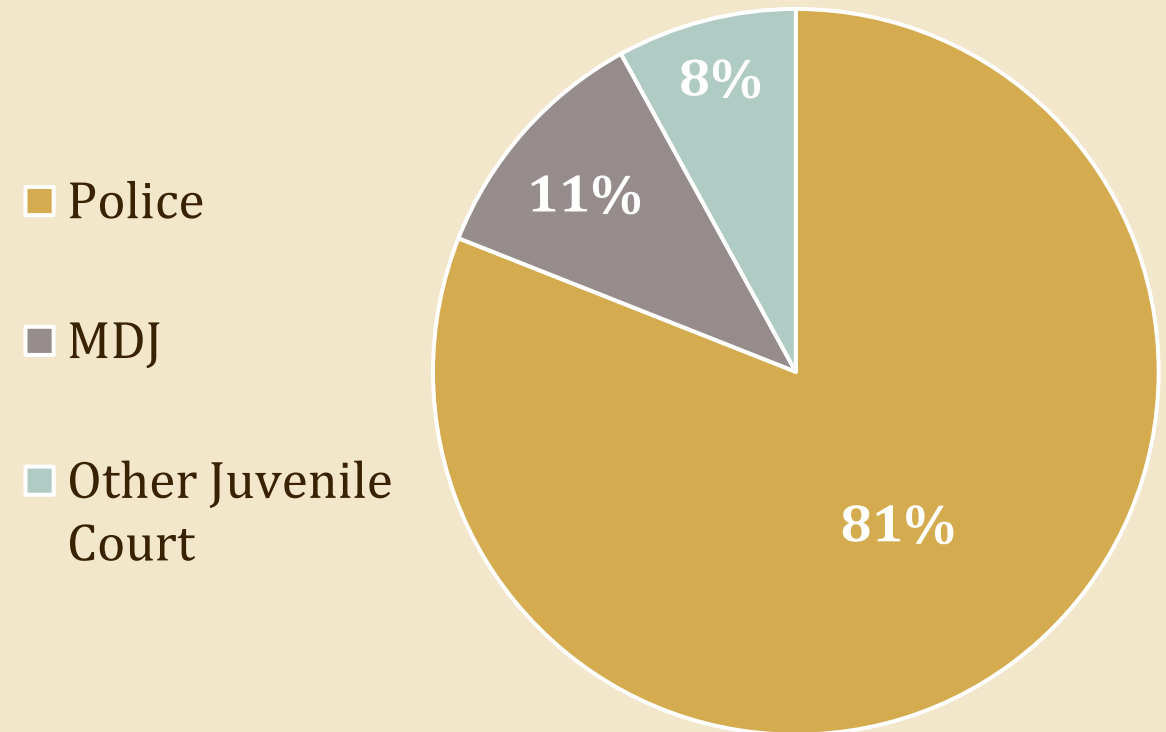
2025 LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION

SOURCES OF REFERRALS TO JUVENILE PROBATION

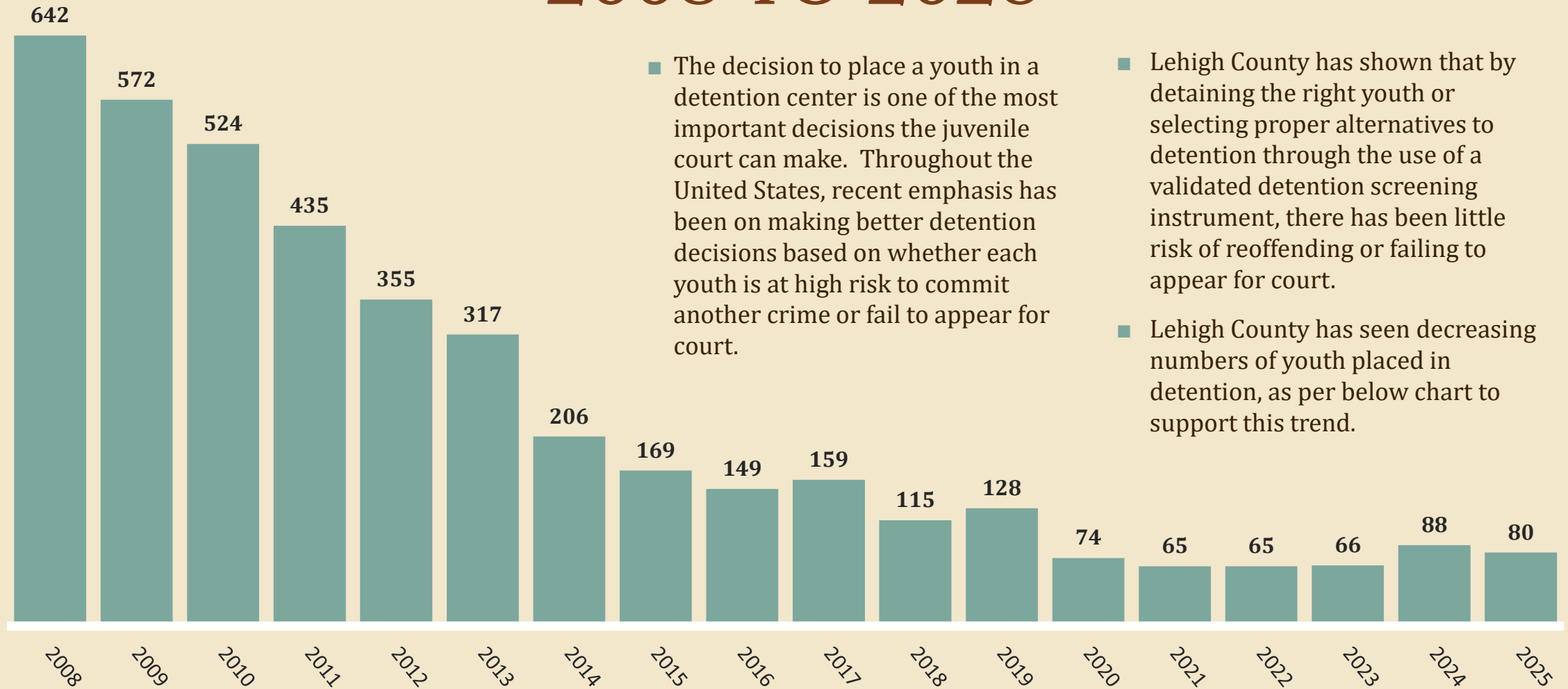
When a police department makes an arrest of a juvenile and the District Attorney's office approves the charges, the Juvenile Probation department receives a referral delineating the allegations faced by the juvenile.

The graph at right demonstrates the percent of total referrals received from originating sources which are the Police, Magisterial District Judges and other Juvenile Courts.

ALLEGATIONS RECEIVED FROM



JUVENILE PROBATION DETENTION TRENDS 2008 TO 2025



■ The decision to place a youth in a detention center is one of the most important decisions the juvenile court can make. Throughout the United States, recent emphasis has been on making better detention decisions based on whether each youth is at high risk to commit another crime or fail to appear for court.

- Lehigh County 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.
- Lehigh County has seen decreasing numbers of youth placed in detention, as per below chart to support this trend.

Juveniles who completed a community service obligation in full	99.4%
Juveniles in school or employed at case closing	97.7%
Juveniles who paid their restitution in full	69.4%
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	91.4%
Juveniles with no judicial finding of technical violations of probation while under supervision	92%
Juveniles committed to placement (28 days or longer)	10%
Completion rate of juveniles ordered to Victim Awareness Curriculum	98.2%

OUTCOMES ON 312 JUVENILES INVOLVED WITH LEHIGH COUNTY PROBATION SERVICES

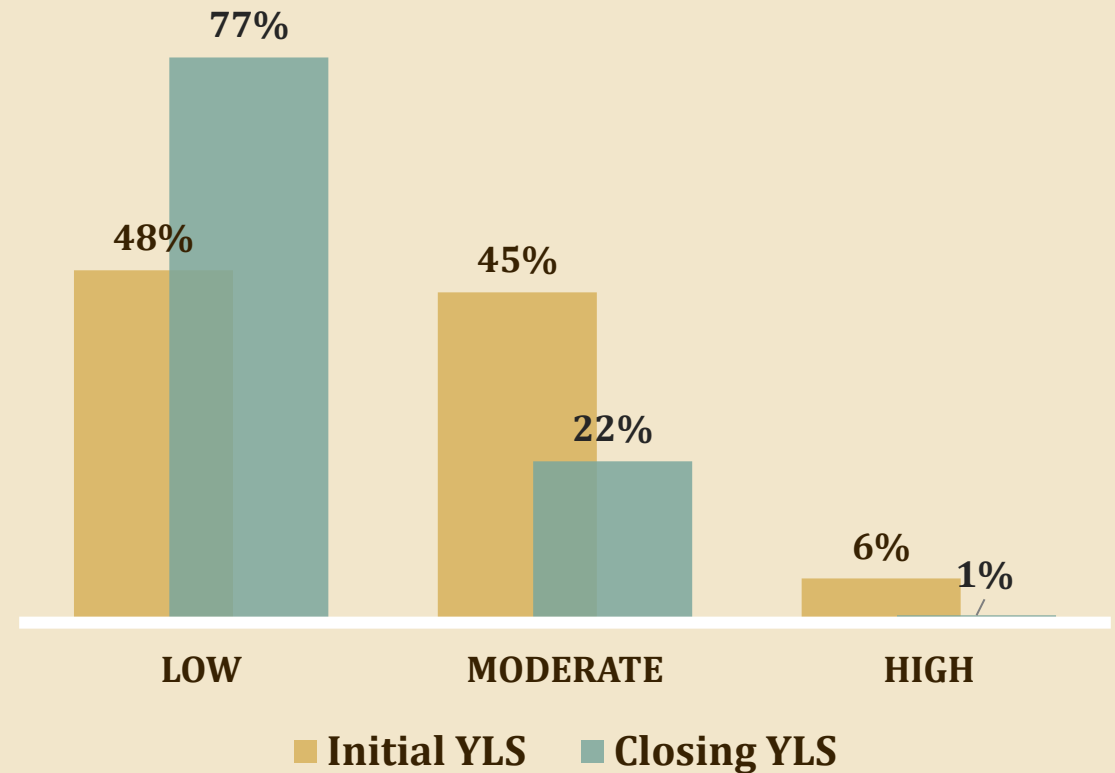
- Probation officers are required to report outcome measures whenever they release a juvenile from probation supervision.
- These outcomes measure activities while under supervision.

2025 JUVENILE PROBATION RISK/NEEDS ASSESSMENT

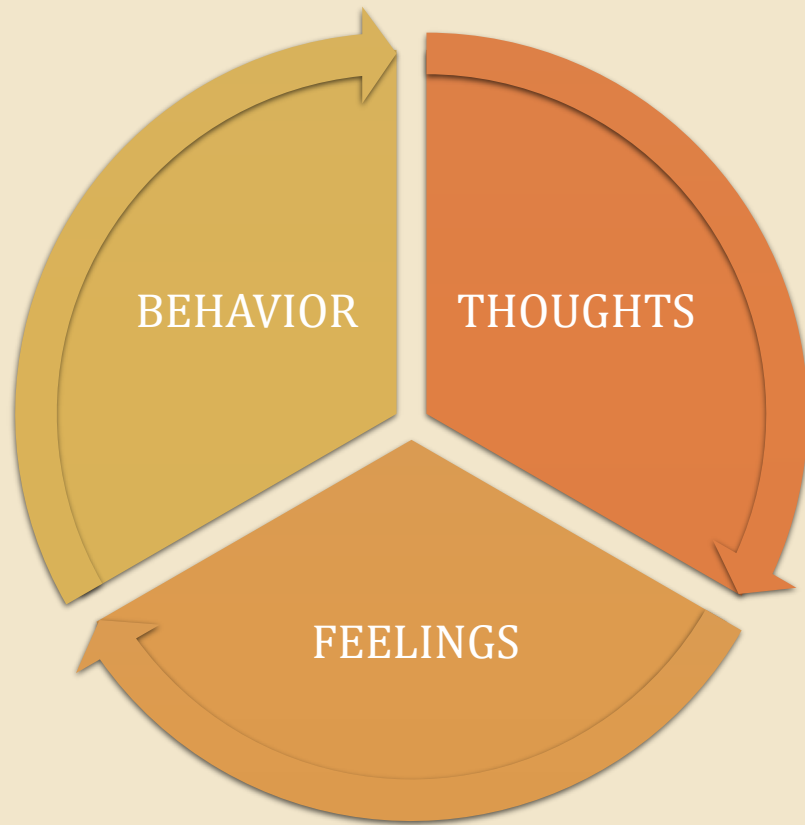
Initial YLS Assessments vs. Closing YLS Assessments

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 on the right compares the initial YLS assessments to the assessments done at time of case closing. This information illustrates the change in risk level from the onset of supervision to the time supervision ends. In 2025, the percentage of youth who scored low at the time of case closing increased to 77%.



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 Juvenile Probation 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

YLS/CMI &
Other Screening
& Assessments

Young Offenders
Program

Community
Work Service
Program

Case Planning

Motivational
Interviewing

Massachusetts
Youth Screening
Instrument

CHOICES

Family
Engagement

Young Artist
Program

Thinking for a
Change

Graduated
Responses

Skill Building &
Cognitive Based
Interventions

Drug Awareness
& Prevention
Program (DAPP)

Forward
Thinking
Journaling

Child Trauma
Screening

Girls Circle

Aggression
Replacement
Training

Retail Theft &
Underage
Drinking
Programs

Effective
Practices in
Community
Supervision
(EPICS)

Victim
Awareness
Curriculum



THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS SECTION

THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS SECTION

PROVIDING CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

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 Raymond T. Stabinsky, 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.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS SECTION SERVICES

**Establishing
Paternity**

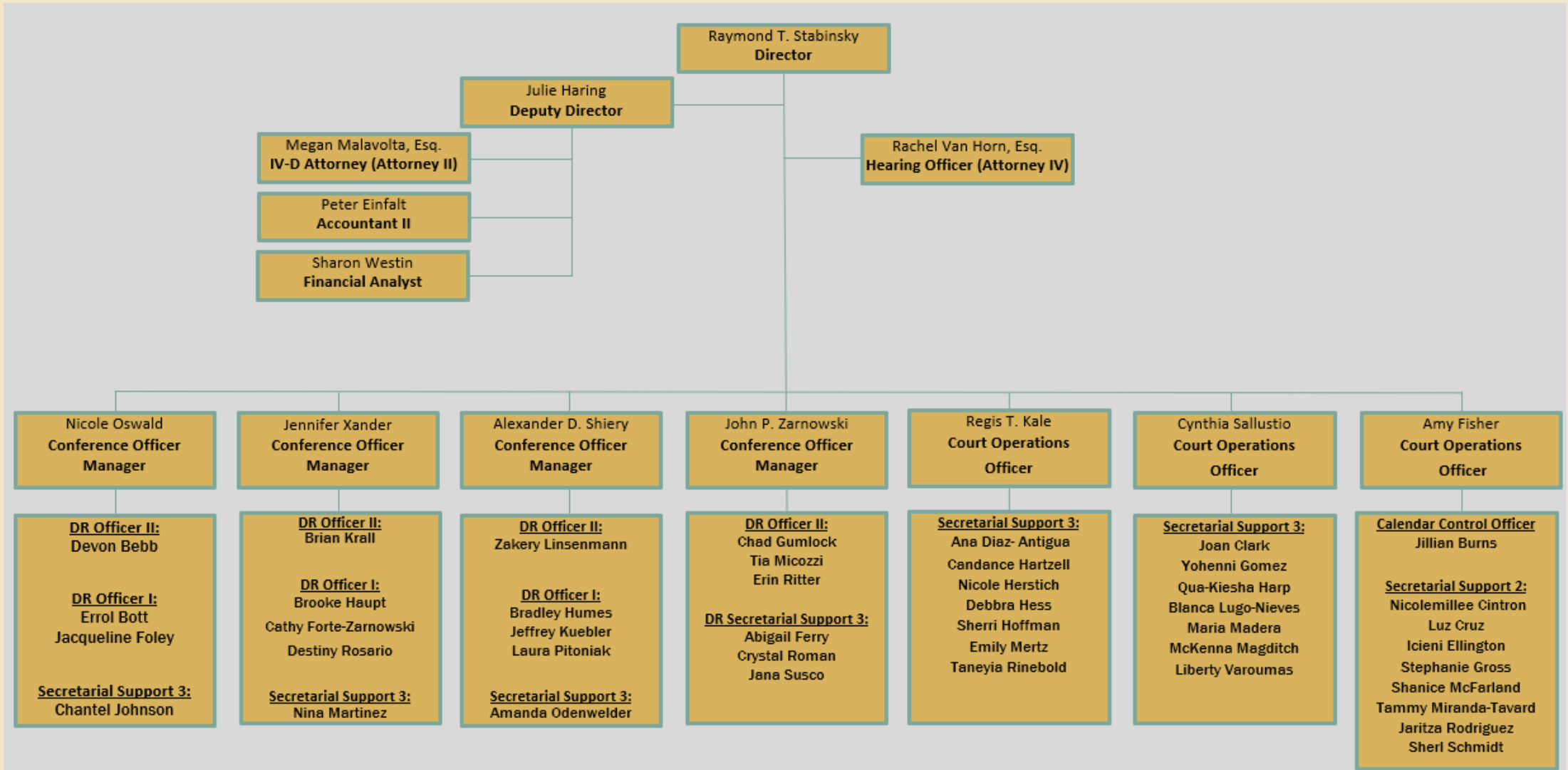
**Locating Absent
Parents**

**Establishing
Support Orders**

**Enforcing Support
Orders**

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

DOMESTIC RELATIONS SECTION



ESTABLISHING CHILD & SPOUSAL SUPPORT ORDERS

CONFERENCE OFFICER

Conducts conferences on support complaints and petitions for modification



HEARING OFFICER

Conducts hearings not settled by agreement by the conference officer



JUDGE OF THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

Conducts hearings on cases appealed from the hearing officer's order

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.

2025 CASE MANAGEMENT TEAM ACTIVITIES



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 2025, the Domestic Relations Section conducted 2,275 establishment conferences, 553 establishment hearings, and 1,486 contempt conferences/hearings.

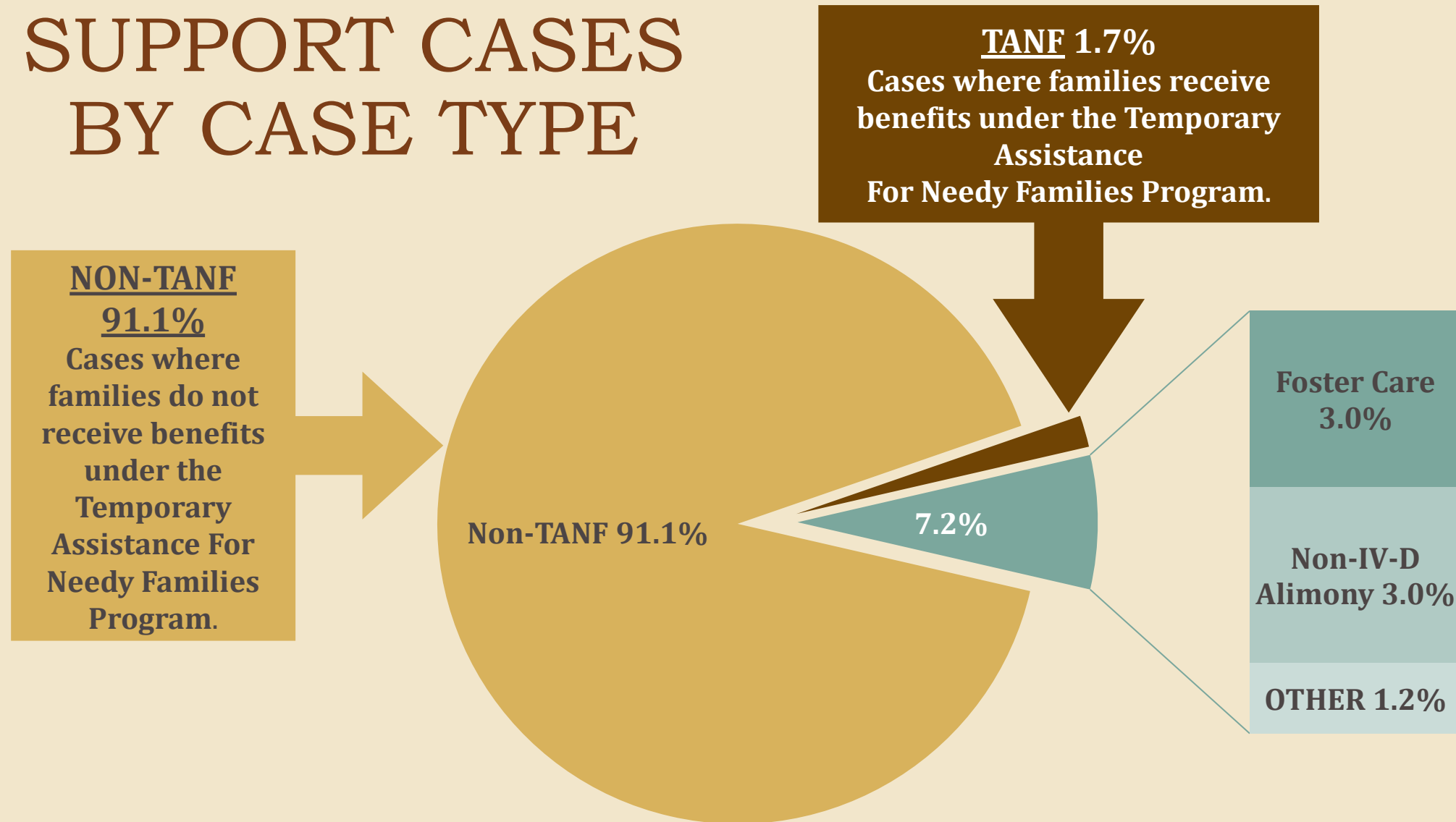
2025

DOMESTIC RELATIONS SECTION FILINGS

2025 NON-TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (NON-TANF) SUPPORT CASE FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS	
New Cases	2,603
Cases Transferred In	38
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to Non-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	31
Judge	45
Hearing Officer	437
Conference Officer	2,140
Cases Transferred Out	49
Non-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	77
Cases Processed	2,748

2025 TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) SUPPORT CASE FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS	
New Cases	237
Cases Transferred In	9
Non-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	77
Judge	2
Hearing Officer	69
Conference Officer	223
Cases Transferred Out	28
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to Non-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	31
Cases Processed	353

2025 SUPPORT CASES BY CASE TYPE



2025 DOMESTIC RELATIONS SECTION SUMMARY

**\$47 MILLION IN SUPPORT
PAYMENTS COLLECTED**

8,102 ACTIVE SUPPORT CASES

**4,314 CONFERENCES &
HEARINGS CONDUCTED**

**60 STAFF
MEMBERS**

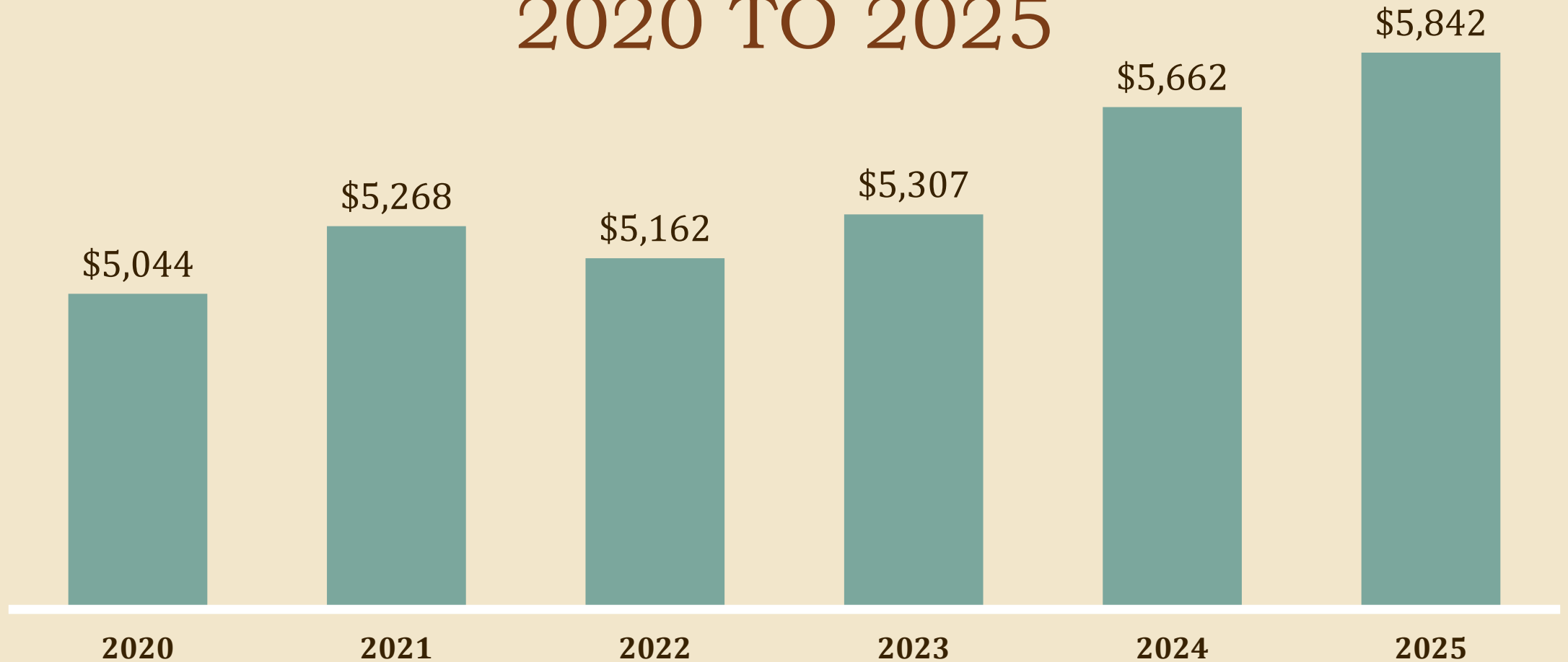
The Lehigh County Domestic Relations Section conducted 4,314 conferences and hearings for the establishment and enforcement of support orders and collected \$47 million in support payments in 2025.

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.

**LEHIGH COUNTY DRS
COLLECTED \$47,329,139 IN
SUPPORT PAYMENTS IN
2025**

AVERAGE COLLECTIONS PER SUPPORT CASE 2020 TO 2025



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.

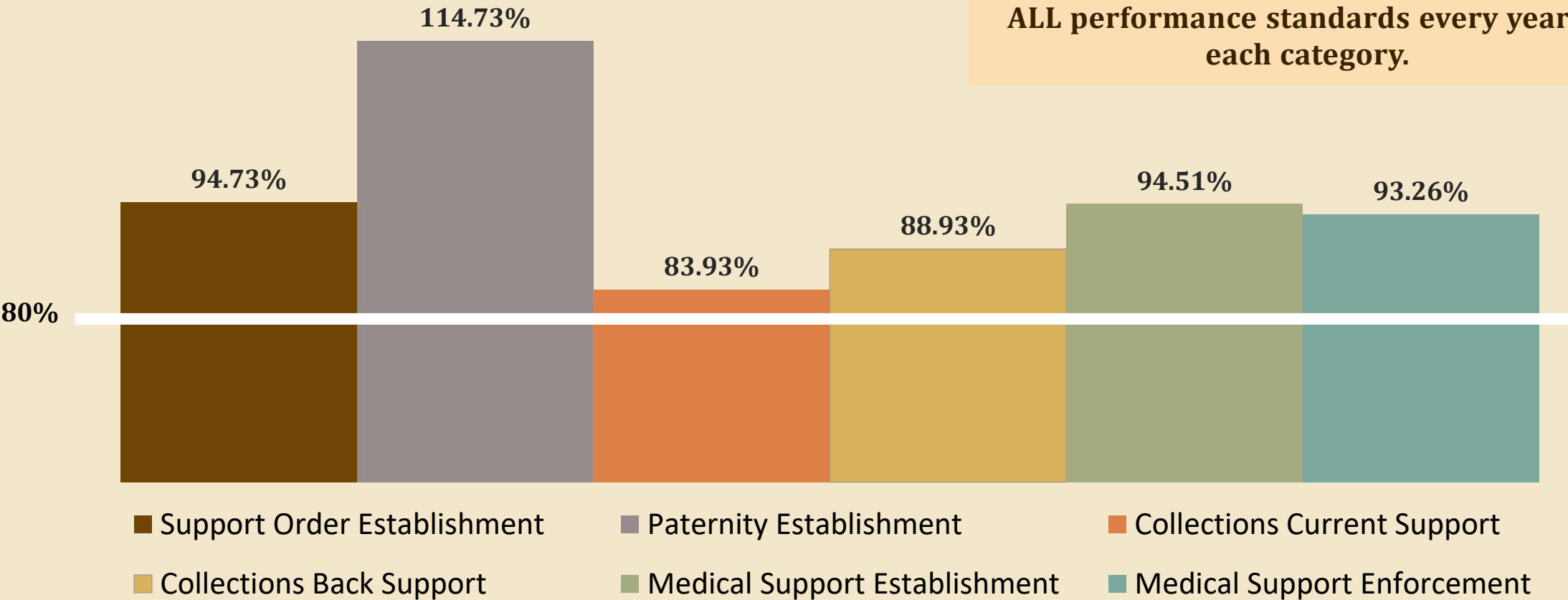
In order for the Domestic Relations Section to receive federal funding of 66% for all operating expenses, the child support services must be performed in accordance with the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure and the United States Code of Federal Regulations.

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)**

FEDERAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2024 TO 2025

For the 2025 Federal Fiscal Year, which ended on September 30, 2025, the Domestic Relations Section exceeded 80% in all the Federal Performance Standards. The Lehigh County DRS routinely exceeds ALL performance standards every year in each category.



JUDICIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT OF SUPPORT ORDERS

■ 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

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 judicial and administrative enforcement actions above may be initiated.



MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURTS

LEHIGH COUNTY MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURTS

PROVIDING THE FIRST LEVEL OF PENNSYLVANIA'S JUDICIARY

Magisterial District Courts handle traffic cases, minor criminal and summary cases, landlord/tenant cases, and civil cases involving amounts up to \$12,000.

In 2025, the Lehigh County Magisterial District Court consisted of 14 District Court offices, Night Court and Central Court.

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

2025 LEHIGH COUNTY MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT JUDGES

■ 31-1-01	Linda D. Vega	■ 31-1-08	Kyle B. Miller
■ 31-1-02	Rashid O. Santiago	■ 31-1-09	Mark A. McCants
■ 31-1-03	Ronald S. Manescu	■ 31-2-01	Karen C. Devine
■ 31-1-04	David M. Howells, Jr.	■ 31-2-02	Jacob E. Hammond
■ 31-1-05	Michael D. D'Amore	■ 31-3-01	Thomas Creighton
■ 31-1-06	Amy Zanelli	■ 31-3-02	Michael J. Faulkner
■ 31-1-07	Todd P. Heffelfinger	■ 31-3-03	Daniel C. Trexler

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.

2025 LEHIGH COUNTY MDJ COURT FILINGS

75,109

**Traffic
Cases**

5,133

**Non-
Traffic
Cases**

5,691

**Criminal
Cases**

5,702

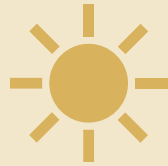
Civil Cases

6,677

**Landlord/
Tenant
Cases**

SPECIAL MDJ COURTS

CENTRAL COURT



- Preliminary Hearings for all Incarcerated Defendants
- Located within the Lehigh County Courthouse
- 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

MORE INFORMATION

- In-depth information about the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas is available at the Court's website at www.lccpa.org.
- This and prior annual reports and recent Criminal Justice Advisory Board Data Committee Reports are available in PDF at:
<https://www.lccpa.org/courtadmin/annualreports.nex>
- Information about careers with the Court is available at:
<https://www.lccpa.org/employment>





LOCATION & CONTACT



COURT ADMINISTRATION

Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County
455 W. Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101
Telephone: 610-782-3014
www.lccpa.org



THE HISTORIC LEHIGH COUNTY COURTHOUSE

501 W. Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101