

# 46th District Court

2017

## Annual Report



26000 Evergreen Road

Southfield, MI 48076

[www.46thdistrictcourt.com](http://www.46thdistrictcourt.com)



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
46<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT COURT

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Dear Citizens:

We are very pleased submit to you the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court's 2017 *Annual Report*. This report, published annually since 1987, documents the activities and accomplishments of the Court during the past year and provides you with useful information about court operations in general. We understand our responsibility to be accountable to those we serve and have found our annual report to be an excellent way to improve the public's understanding of, and appreciation for, the administration of justice.

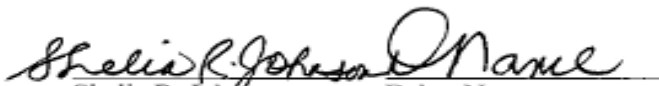
During difficult economic times, it is particularly important that we emphasize our commitment to using taxpayer dollars wisely. Over the years, the Judges and staff of the 46th District Court have focused on maintaining a high standard of public service by increasing productivity through internal operational and procedural improvements. These improvements have allowed us to handle fluctuations in caseload and workload over the years without increasing the number of judges and staff.

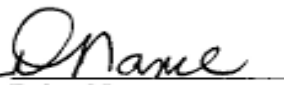
In terms of case flow management, the Court continues to operate in a highly efficient manner and is meeting or exceeding nearly all of the Michigan Supreme Court's case processing time guidelines. Our collections program, now in its fourteenth year, generated over \$660,000 from unpaid tickets in 2017, bringing the total collected since the program began to \$9,519,621. The Court has continued the successful income tax garnishment project to collect outstanding funds owed to the Court on civil infraction and misdemeanor cases. Over \$110,000 has been collected from garnishments issued in 2017, bringing the total collected since this program started in 2012 to nearly \$592,000. The Court continued its Amnesty program in 2017 allowing defendants to resolve old matters without paying late fees and warrant fees. Over \$103,000 in outstanding receivables was collected during the program.

As always, we extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the entire staff of the 46th District Court. Their commitment to public service, professionalism and teamwork has created an organizational culture that supports continuous improvements and allows us to function as a high-performing court.

We fully understand and accept our responsibility to uphold the highest standard of public service, ensure the efficient and effective use of public funds and increase the public's understanding and appreciation of the administration of justice. We look forward to working together for the continued fair, efficient and effective administration of justice in our community.

Very truly yours,

  
Shelia R. Johnson  
Chief Judge

  
Debra Nance  
District Judge

  
Cynthia M. Arvant  
District Judge

## Judges of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court



**The Honorable Cynthia Meagher Arvant** was appointed to the 46th District Court in July 2015 to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Chief Judge William Richards. She was elected to a six-year term in November 2016.

Judge Arvant worked at the 46th District Court for years before becoming one of its Judges. She was initially hired in 2009 by Judges Shelia Johnson, Susan Moiseev, and William Richards to serve as their Research Attorney, and those Judges promoted her to serve as Magistrate in 2010. In 2012, Judge Arvant was promoted to Court Administrator in charge of all operations, budget, staffing, and case management for the Court. She served in the dual roles of Court Administrator and Magistrate until her appointment to the bench in July 2015.

Judge Arvant's legal experience began in 1995 in Southfield as an Associate Attorney with the Mooney & Condino, P.C., where she represented many local families and businesses. Judge Arvant pursued a path of public service when then-Attorney General Jennifer Granholm appointed her to serve as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Michigan in 2000, and later as a Special Assistant Attorney General protecting the interests of at-risk children in the court system. Judge Arvant has been active in service to her community for many years, serving as a volunteer for the Women's Survival Center and clerking for Michigan Legal Services. She was also a Board Member and the Legislative Liaison for the Beverly Elementary PTA and Chairperson of the Beverly Hills Parks & Recreation Board. Judge Arvant is a member of the National Association of Women Judges, the Michigan District Judges Association, the Association of Black Judges of Michigan, the Oakland County District Judges Association, the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan/Oakland Women's Bar Association, the Wolverine Bar Association, the Oakland County Bar Association, and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Taskforce.

In 2016, Judge Arvant was awarded the Joan Young Judicial Excellence Award from the Women's Bar Association, recognizing her commitment to securing the rights of women in society, promoting equality and social justice for all, and demonstrating the highest caliber of judicial integrity.

Judge Arvant earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Science from Michigan State University in 1992, and her Juris Doctorate from the Michigan State University College of Law (formerly Detroit College of Law) in 1995. Judge Arvant and her husband, Peter, are longtime local residents and have two children.

## Judges of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court



**Chief Judge Shelia R. Johnson** was elected in November 2002 and is the first African American to serve as Judge in the 46th District Court and she currently serves as Chief Judge of the Court. In November 2014, she was re-elected for an unopposed third term. Judge Johnson was also selected as a 2012 Democratic nominee for candidacy for Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court. Prior to assuming the bench, Judge Johnson was an attorney with over 18 years of legal experience in both State and Federal Courts. Judge Johnson was in private practice in Southfield where she specialized in both civil and criminal litigation.

Among her many community and civic affiliations are: the Southern Oakland Chapter of the NAACP, where she served as an Executive Committee member; founding member, Southfield Community Foundation Women's Fund; First-Vice President, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Task Force, Inc.; and founding member, the National Congress of Black Women. Additionally, she is a member of Hope United Methodist Church where she has served as vice-chair and chair of the "Church and Society Ministry." She is a proud member of the Southfield Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Judge Johnson believes mentoring youth is of paramount importance and she has established a "Court in Schools" Program, where court sessions are held at local schools with the goal of deterring youth from criminal behavior and inspiring them toward positive career choices. She also works as a "Community Partner" with Southfield Schools.

Judge Johnson is the recipient of numerous professional and community service awards, including the 2014 "Justice Award" from the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Task Force, Inc.; 2013 "Women of Excellence" Award from the Michigan Chronicle Newspaper; 2013 "Trailblazer Award" from the D. Augustus Straker Bar Association; 2013 "Wings of Justice Award" from the Oakland County Democratic Party; 2005 Phenomenal Woman "Torch Award" for outstanding legal leadership and community service by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Southfield Alumnae Chapter; 2006 "Member of the Year Award" from the Southern Oakland County NAACP for her work as chair of the "Health Committee"; 2008 "Powerful Woman of Purpose Award" in the Legal Profession from the Rhonda Walker Foundation; and the 2009 "Mattie Belle Davis Award" from the National Association of Women Judges. She has also been recognized in Who's Who Publishing Company's volume of "Black Judges in America."

Judge Johnson is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, Michigan District Judges Association, Oakland County District Judges Association, Association of Black Judges of Michigan, D. Augustus Straker Bar Association, Wolverine Bar Association, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan and the National Bar Association. She currently serves as President of the Michigan District Judges Association (MDJA) and is the former editor of the MDJA newsletter, "Benchmarks." She currently serves as Recording Secretary of the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association and she is a member of the Judicial Council of the State Bar of Michigan. Judge Johnson has also served as a member of the Equal Access Initiative of the Committee on Justice Initiatives of the State Bar of Michigan. Judge Johnson is also a former President of the Association of Black Judges of Michigan and former Vice President of Publications and Board Member of the National Association of Women Judges, where she was editor of the national newsletter "Counterbalance."

Judge Johnson served as a law clerk to the Honorable Benjamin F. Gibson, United States District Court, Western District of Michigan. She is a graduate of Dartmouth College and the University of Michigan Law School, where she was the first African American elected President of the Law School Senate and delivered the commencement address to her graduating class. She has been a resident of Southfield for 30 years.

## Judges of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court



**Judge Debra Nance** was elected to the bench on November 6, 2012. She began a six-year term as Judge of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court on January 1, 2013. Judge Nance received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Detroit. She began her career as an Assistant Personnel Superintendent at the Hudson's Northland Store before serving as Personnel Superintendent for several other Hudson's Stores throughout Michigan. She has also worked in various Human Resource Management capacities in the automotive industry prior to launching her legal career.

Judge Nance began her career as an attorney after obtaining a law degree from Wayne State University Law School. She gained invaluable experience while working in the Oakland County Prosecutor's Domestic Violence Unit and the Wayne County Prosecutor's Child & Family Abuse Bureau as an intern. After graduating she worked on assignment to the Office of the General Counsel at Ford Motor Company. In 2001, she went into private practice at a mid-sized law firm where she developed a successful litigation practice in the areas of Civil Litigation, Probate Litigation, Juvenile & Family Litigation and Adoption Law.

In service to the community, Judge Nance has volunteered in numerous projects prior to taking the bench. She has volunteered at free legal aid clinics. She worked to educate our youth by participating in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Project in Southfield Public Schools. She has supported organizations such as the Women's Survival Center of Oakland County and Alternatives for Girls coming out of foster care. She worked as an "Election Protection Attorney" in a number of elections to ensure the fairness and integrity of the election process. Judge Nance has also worked as a Volunteer Attorney Mediator for small claims, consumer and commercial disputes, and landlord/tenant matters in District Court. Prior to taking the bench, Judge Nance served on the Michigan State Bar Character & Fitness Committee which reviews the suitability of law graduates seeking to obtain a license to practice in Michigan,

Since taking the bench, Judge Nance developed and presented *Careers in the Courtroom* to encourage elementary and high school students to encourage them to pursue careers as defense attorneys, prosecutors, civil attorneys and judges. The program also introduces students to the importance of jury service. In addition, for adults, Judge Nance has designed and presented *How to Prepare for Your Day in Court* and *Tips for Landlords and Tenants* which she has presented to neighborhood/condo associations, church groups and veterans groups. Judge Nance has visited churches, synagogue, schools, neighborhood/condo associations, and spoken on radio shows, scholarship programs and in graduations. In community forums and townhalls she has spoken on topics such as *Breaking the Cycle of Incarceration* and *Breaking the Silence on Domestic Violence*. Judge Nance conceived and coordinated the City of Southfield's first *Opioid Crisis Townhall* in cooperation with fire, police, and other elected officials. In addition, Judge Nance was instrumental in developing *From Expungement to Entrepreneurship: The Pipeline to Possibilities* to help returning citizens start small community based businesses. Judge Nance has been featured, proudly, as Alumni of the Month by the Wayne State University Law School.

Currently a member of the Michigan State Bar Association, the Michigan District Judges Association, the Oakland County District Judges Association, The Association of Black Judges of Michigan, the Wolverine Bar Association, the Straker Bar Association and the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan.

In service to the legal community, Judge Nance lectured to lawyers at the Institute of Continuing Legal Education, and new lawyers at the Oakland County Bar Association. She has also lectured to students at Cooley Law and the University of Michigan Law School. She served as a Board Member for the D. Augustus Straker Bar Association, served on the Oakland County Bar Association Judicial Candidates Committee, and was a long-serving member of the Adoption subcommittee of the Family Law Division of the Michigan State Bar Association. Judge Nance was elected by her peers to serve as President of the Association of Black Judges of Michigan for 2016-2017.

Judge Nance has lived in Southfield for over 30 years. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, and a parish member at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Church in Beverly Hills and Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Detroit. Judge Debra Nance remains active in the community and looks forward to a term of continuing service.

## Jurisdiction

**Geographical Jurisdiction** – The 46<sup>th</sup> District Court serves the Cities of Southfield and Lathrup Village, the Villages of Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms and Franklin and the Township of Southfield.

**Legal Jurisdiction** – District Courts were established by the Michigan Legislature in 1968 and are considered “Courts of Limited Jurisdiction.” The legal jurisdiction of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court is determined by statute and includes:

- **Civil** lawsuits in which the amount in controversy does not exceed \$25,000 (a civil lawsuit is a non-criminal case which involves the claim of one party against another).
- **Criminal misdemeanors** punishable by fine or imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both.
- **Arraignments**: the first court appearance in a criminal case where a defendant is advised of the charges and the potential penalties, bond is set with any applicable conditions, counsel is appointed if necessary, and future court hearings are scheduled.
- **Probable cause conferences and preliminary examinations** in all felony cases. A preliminary examination is a hearing at which the District Court Judge determines if there is probable cause to believe a crime has been committed and that the defendant committed the crime. If the Judge determines that there is probable cause, the case is “bound over” to the Circuit Court for trial. In certain cases, the Court has authority to accept guilty pleas in felony cases, which are then referred to Circuit Court for sentencing.
- **Traffic misdemeanors and civil infractions**, including parking violations.
- **Small claims** cases in which the amount claimed does not exceed \$6,000.
- **Landlord-tenant disputes**, land contract and mortgage forfeitures and eviction proceedings.



## **Programs and Services**

Please visit us on the web at [www.46thdistrictcourt.com](http://www.46thdistrictcourt.com).

**Mediation Program** – The Court continues to utilize the services of the Oakland Mediation Center as a method of resolving cases. In 2017, the Oakland Mediation Center mediated 230 small claims cases and resolved 119 of them for a resolution rate of 52%. In addition, 167 general civil cases were mediated; of those 67 were resolved for a resolution rate of 40%.

**Community Work Program** – The Work Program provides the Judges with a sentencing alternative, whereby low-risk misdemeanor offenders may perform manual labor as an alternative to incarceration. The offenders pay the Court’s cost for supervision and are assigned to work projects in the City of Southfield’s Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments. Specific work projects include collecting trash on our community’s streets and highways, cleaning parks and general maintenance projects. Fifty-five defendants participated in the Work Program in 2017, completing 1,672 hours of work.

**Community Service Program** – This sentencing alternative provides Judges with the opportunity to order offenders to work in the community as part of their sentence or in lieu of fines and costs, if they are indigent. Placements are found in governmental or community non-profit agencies and are supervised by the Probation Department. In 2017, 390 probationers completed 23,782 hours of community service.

**Community Education Program** – The Court encourages the community to learn more about its operation and jurisdiction through special educational tours and visits. Visiting groups receive an orientation on local court operations, take a tour of the facility, observe courtroom proceedings and meet with the Judges, if time allows. Numerous community groups have visited the Court, including local students from grade school through high school, several local college programs, and various community and civic organizations. For more information on court visits, please call Administration at (248)796-5800.

## Caseload/Workload Overview

### Pending and Disposed Cases:

	Beginning Pending	New Filings	Reopened Cases	Disposed Cases	Pending at Year End
Total Caseload	7,435	38,060	2,789	42,131	6,153

**Filings:** Following is a summary of new cases filed in 2017, by case type:

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1 Year Change		5-Year Change	
						# of Filings	%	# of Filings	%
Felonies									
Criminal	464	378	339	397	402	5	1%	-62	-13%
Traffic	26	26	20	20	36	16	80%	10	38%
Drunk Driving	25	33	28	26	20	-6	-23%	-5	-20%
Total	515	437	387	443	458	15	3%	-57	-11%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1 Year Change		5-Year Change	
						# of Filings	%	# of Filings	%
Misdemeanors									
Criminal	1,121	1,022	871	828	780	-48	-5%	-341	-30%
Traffic	2,898	2,950	2,924	2,550	2116	-434	-13%	-782	-27%
Drunk Driving	275	381	356	236	210	-26	-34%	-65	-24%
Total	4,294	4,353	4,151	3,614	3,106	-508	-14%	-1188	-28%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1 Year Change		5-Year Change	
						# of Filings	%	# of Filings	%
Civil Infractions									
Traffic	19,410	18,723	18,815	16,290	12,321	-3969	-24%	-7,089	-37%
Non-Traffic	1,486	1,299	1,445	1,112	967	-145	-13%	-519	-35%
Total	20,896	20,022	20,260	17,402	13,288	-4114	-24%	-7,608	-36%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1 Year Change		5-Year Change	
						# of Filings	%	# of Filings	%
Parking									
Parking	17,869	15,721	13,562	11,335	10,175	-1160	-10%	-7,694	-43%
Total	17,869	15,721	13,562	11,335	10,175	-1160	-10%	-7,694	-43%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1 Year Change		5-Year Change	
						# of Filings	%	# of Filings	%
Civil									
General Civil and Miscellaneous	5,629	4,806	4,890	5,240	4,942	-298	-6%	-687	-12%
Landlord Tenant/ Land Contract	7,221	6,296	5,780	5,501	5,386	-115	-2%	-1835	-25%
Small Claims	869	735	651	719	644	-75	-10%	-225	-26%
Total	13,719	11,837	11,321	11,460	10,972	-488	-4%	-2747	-20%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1 Year Change		5-Year Change	
						# of Filings	%	# of Filings	%
Grand Total									
Total	57,293	52,370	49,681	44,254	37,999	-6,255	-14%	-19,294	-34%

## Probation Caseload/Workload Overview

A summary of the Probation Department's 2017 activity is provided below.

Probation Caseload and Workload Overview	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1 Year Change		5-Year Change	
						# of Filings	%	# of Filings	%
Cases Pending	866	884	893	740	577	-163	-22%	-289	-33%
Number of Probation Officers*	3	3	3	3	3	0	0%	0	0%
Average Caseload per PO	289	295	298	247**	192	-54	-22%	-97	-34%
New Cases	934	866	970	778	731	-47	-6%	-203	-22%
Investigative Reports	309	312	404	277	206	-71	-26%	-103	-33%
Appointments	9297	8900	9196	8755	6941	-1814	-21%	-2356	-25%
VOP's Conducted	742	777	811	803	622	-181	-23%	-120	-16%

\*There are two probation officers who carry full-time caseloads and two probation officers who carry part-time caseloads, roughly the equivalent of three full-time probation officers.

\*\*2016 data corrected to 247 cases per PO

## Innovative Programs and Projects

The Judges, Administration and Staff of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court welcome the opportunity to explore and participate in innovative programs and projects that allow the Court to operate efficiently and effectively. A summary is listed below:

**Southfield Job Fair 2017** – for the first time in April 2017, the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court sent representatives to Southfield High School's job fair to provide information on job opportunities and brief interviews to graduating high school students. From this fair, the Court hired a part-time file clerk who has been able to complete her studies while learning valuable skills in a real life work environment.

**Amnesty 2017** – The 46<sup>th</sup> District Court conducted an amnesty program for 4 weeks in May 2017. The program provided individuals with delinquent cases the opportunity to pay eligible violations without late fees and warrant fees. The program was designed to assist individuals in clearing up their old tickets and warrants without fear of arrest or additional financial penalties. In addition, the Court was able to clear a backlog of cases without the need for additional resources. The Court collected over \$103,000 during the 2017 amnesty program.

**Court Innovations** – The Court has continued its online initiative to expand access to justice, allowing court users a method to resolve violations online. Parties can resolve civil infractions and some warrants for failure to appear or failure to pay online. This program is a collaboration with local law enforcement agencies to allow respondents an opportunity to resolve certain types of pending matters without having to come to the Court building.

**Judicial Information System's Electronic Ticket Payment Program** – This program provides citizens with a convenient and efficient method for paying tickets on-line so they do not have to come to court. It also provides the Court with a more efficient processing alternative for several reasons; Payments are automatically posted to the Court's case management system, Judicial Information Systems (JIS); Driver license suspensions are cleared electronically and the case is automatically disposed.

In addition, the Court uses various software programs to upload parking violations issued by Southfield’s Parking Enforcement division and citations issued by Michigan State Police, eliminating the need for staff to manually enter the data.

**Tax Garnishment Project** – This is an ongoing effort to collect outstanding funds owed to the Court through the issuance of tax garnishment writs. Over 2,700 garnishments were filed in 2017, and to date \$110,000 has been collected. The tax garnishment project was undertaken with minimal cost to the court, no additional staff, and no overtime expenses.

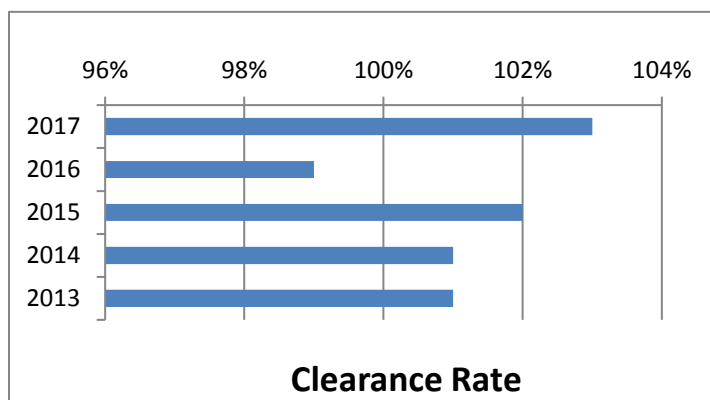
**GarnIT** – Once again in 2017 the Court in conjunction with SCAO, served as a pilot for the GarnIT program, an automated system for issuing Request and Writ for Garnishment (Income Tax Refund/Credit). For the period of January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017 the Court issued a total of 9,163 writs. Of those, 1,210 were issued through GarnIT, simplifying the process for plaintiffs and reducing the amount of staff time needed to process the writs.

**Intensive Domestic Violence Probation Program** – In response to concerns about the increasing number of domestic violence cases in the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court, and recognizing the unique risk of harm posed by such cases, the Court started an intensive domestic violence probation program in May of 2012. This 52-week program, called the H.E.A.L. program (“Helping Explore Accountable Lifestyles”), is a partnership with our Probation Department and private practitioners. One probation officer is assigned to handle all domestic violence probationers, and the cases are subject to regular review by the assigned Judge. In 2017 there were 44 active participants in the program. It is hoped this intensive program of supervision and education will help break the cycle of violence.

**COLLECT Program** – In 2003, the Court launched the COLLECT program in an effort to increase our collection rates. Reminder notices are regularly sent to individuals with outstanding fines and costs owing on parking, traffic and civil infraction matters. The program has been extremely successful. In 2017, a total of \$661,696.60 was collected through this program. This brings the total amount collected since the program’s inception in 2003 to \$9,519,621.20.

### **Case Flow Management**

- **Efficient Case Processing** – Clearance rates measure a court’s case flow management performance and efficiency. It indicates the degree a court is able to keep up with incoming caseload. A clearance rate of less than 100% means that more cases were filed than disposed and a clearance rate of more than 100% means that more cases were disposed than filed. In 2017, the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court’s clearance rate was over 103% with 48,849 new and reopened cases and 42,131 disposed cases.



- **Timely Case Scheduling** – Most traffic and criminal cases are scheduled for hearing and held within three weeks. Informal and formal hearings and civil infraction conferences are scheduled two to three weeks from the date a hearing is requested. Pre-trials are scheduled within three weeks of arraignment, unless the defendant is in custody. If the defendant is in custody, an expedited pretrial is scheduled within three to five days.

Civil cases are also scheduled in a timely manner. Landlord tenant cases are scheduled within three weeks of the case being filed; small claims trials are scheduled within two to three weeks of mediation and general civil pre-trials are scheduled within 30 days of the answer being filed.

**Timely Case Disposition** – The State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) sets timelines for adjudication of cases. The 46<sup>th</sup> District Court is substantially meeting or exceeding nearly all of the guidelines specified by SCAO. In 2017, the Court performed within the following guidelines:

**46<sup>th</sup> District Court Michigan Supreme Court Time Guidelines**

85%	90% of General Civil cases adjudicated within 273 days of filing
100%	98% of General Civil Cases adjudicated within 455 days of filing
95%	95% of Summary Civil cases without jury demand adjudicated within 126 days from case filing
93%	65% of Summary Civil cases with jury demand adjudicated within 154 days from case filing
93%	90% of Civil Infraction cases adjudicated within 35 days from case filing
99%	98% of Civil Infraction cases adjudicated within 84 days of filing
93%	85% of Misdemeanor cases adjudicated within 63 days of first appearance
98%	95% of Misdemeanor cases adjudicated within 126 days of first appearance
43%	60% of preliminary examinations held within 14 days of arraignment
67%	75% of preliminary examinations held within 28 days of arraignment [Note: The Guidelines do not take into consideration that a substantial number of defendants waive the 14-day rule because defense attorneys need more time for discovery.]

- **Outstanding Performance in Secretary of State Conviction Reporting** - The 46<sup>th</sup> District Court continues to have an exemplary record in this area. Over the past five years, the Court processed and reported 48,443 abstracts of conviction to the Secretary of State, of which 47,931 or 99% have been timely received within 10 days. This demonstrates the Court’s ability to process an extremely high volume of cases with a high degree of accuracy and timeliness.

	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2014</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
# Abstracts Reported	11,658	10,748	10,658	8,949	6,430	48,443
# Abstracts Reported Timely	11,532	10,598	10,525	8,879	6,397	47,931
Percent Timely	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%

## Revenues, Distributions and Expenditures

Most citizens are not familiar with the court system. As a result, there are many widely-held misconceptions about the operation of the courts, particularly regarding court revenues and budgets. To maintain the public’s trust and confidence in our system of justice, it is important to address the most common misunderstandings.

- ***Courts are not businesses*** – The purpose of our court system is to provide a forum for the resolution of disputes in a “fair, efficient, effective, timely, unbiased and convenient manner.” The judicial branch of government, like all branches of government, exists to maintain order, provide necessary services and to serve the public; not to make a profit.
- ***Courts do not keep the revenue they generate*** – Courts are prohibited by law from keeping and using the money they collect from fines, costs and fees. All monies collected are distributed to either the state, the county or local units of government, according to statutory requirements. In addition, judges are full-time salaried officials. Their compensation is not linked to fines that are assessed or monies that are collected.
- ***The legislative branch of government approves court budgets*** – All monies received by courts to maintain their operations are reviewed and approved through a budget process and are authorized by the courts’ funding unit.

The following is a summary of the 46<sup>th</sup> District Court’s revenues, distributions, and budgeted expenditures for the past two years:

<b>REVENUE</b>	2016	2017
Gross Fines, Costs, Fees Collected	7,005,111	6,054,941
(-) Escrow, Restitution, Bonds	(1,001,024)	(978,449)
(+/-) Processing Cost, Interest, Misc	19,483	6,909
<b>Net Fines, Costs, Fees Distributed</b>	<b>6,023,570</b>	<b>5,083,401</b>

<b>DISTRIBUTIONS<sup>1</sup></b>		
	2016	2017
State of Michigan	1,622,141	1,446,138
County of Oakland	142,479	118,616
City of Southfield	4,053,538	3,324,459
City of Lathrup Village	84,434	61,232
Village of Beverly Hills	62,424	69,358
Village of Bingham Farms	46,598	47,139
Village of Franklin	11,957	16,459
Township of Southfield	-	-
<b>Total Distributions</b>	<b>6,023,570</b>	<b>5,083,401</b>

<b>BUDGETED EXPENDITURES<sup>2</sup></b>		
	2016	2017
For Direct Operational Costs	3,449,581	3,636,550

<sup>1</sup> Formula is established by state law. These figures reflect how monies collected by the Court were distributed between the various governmental agencies and may not reflect exact disbursements for the periods indicated.

<sup>2</sup> Based on budgeted expenditures for fiscal years ending in 2016 and 2017. Budgeted expenditures do not represent the total cost of the Court. Costs incurred by the City of Southfield, the Court’s funding unit, for debt service, facility charges, insurance, telephone, printing and postage, etc., are not included.

