

New Jersey COURTS



Annual Report
2008-2009

Independence Integrity Fairness Quality Service



TABLE OF CONTENTS

REPORT OF THE NEW JERSEY COURTS 2008-2009

The State of New Jersey
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Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

David P. Anderson
Director, Office of Professional and Governmental
Services

Winifred M. Comfort
Director, Office of Communications and Community
Relations

Shelly R. Webster
Director, Office of Management and Administrative
Services

Robert W. Smith
Director, Trial Court Services

James R. Rebo
Chief Information Officer

60th Anniversary of the Modern Judiciary.....	3
Letter from Chief Justice Stuart Rabner.....	5
Letter from Acting Administrative Director Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.	6
Supreme Court	7
Appellate Division of Superior Court.....	10
Leadership Transitions.....	12
News and Celebrations	15
Family Division	16
Criminal Division	17
Civil Division	19
Probation	21
Tax Court.....	24
Municipal Court	25
Conclusion.....	26
Statistical Summary.....	29
Vicinages	30
Judges and Justices of the N.J. Judiciary	31
N.J. Judicial Council	back cover

60th Anniversary of the Modern Judiciary

Ordinary citizens come to our courts when they believe they have been wronged, when they seek to vindicate their rights. They're entitled to, and we believe they receive, genuine respect and courtesy from the judges and staff that handle their matters; careful, thorough, and prompt review of the legal issues that are presented; and an honest, impartial, and wise decision that focuses only on the facts and law of the case, not the parties and their backgrounds.

—Chief Justice Stuart Rabner



Arthur T. Vanderbilt II, grandson of Chief Justice Arthur T. Vanderbilt, the first chief justice to serve under the 1947 constitution, addresses the Supreme Court at the 60th anniversary celebration.

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner and a host of distinguished guests, including Gov. Jon S. Corzine, marked the 60th anniversary of the modern New Jersey Judiciary in a special ceremony on Sept. 10, 2008 at the R. J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton.

The celebration was an opportunity to learn about the steep opposition the framers of the new constitution faced in trying to bring about the monumental changes necessary to overhaul the court system. Those most vocal in their opposition worried about how those changes would affect their power and their position, but the framers wanted to create a system focused on the needs of the public for fair, independent and timely justice. The new system was designed to protect the rights of New Jersey residents, to uphold the rule of law and to

eliminate inefficiencies that had kept some cases on the docket for more than 15 years.

The modern Judiciary was created in the 1947 constitution, and the Supreme Court held its first session under that constitution on Sept. 15, 1948. The 1947 constitution consolidated 17 courts into five, abolished overlapping and conflicting jurisdictions and streamlined a redundant appeals process. Judges, who are nominated by the governor and confirmed by the legislature, can be renominated for tenure after an initial term and can remain on the bench until the mandatory retirement age of 70. The 1947

Since the signing of the previous constitution in 1844, the need for reform grew more imperative as New Jersey's rapidly growing population became more industrialized. Under the new constitution, the restructured court system eliminated backlogs and dramatically reduced the time to disposition in every court.

In the first year of operation, the new court system eliminated its 9,000-case backlog and dramatically reduced the time to disposition for new cases. In subsequent years, the Judiciary has sought opportunities to increase efficiency, improve services, maintain consistency and safeguard its independence. Over time the Judiciary has earned a reputation for excellence in delivering high quality justice in every venue, from the Supreme Court to the municipal courts.

This report summarizes some of the improvements accomplished in the 2008-2009 court year.



The celebration brought together retired Associate Justice Alan B. Handler, retired Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz and Philip S. Carchman, appellate judge and former administrative director of the courts.

constitution also gave the Supreme Court sole authority over the administration of the state's courts, admission to the practice of law and attorney discipline. It laid out the appellate process, the prerequisites for becoming a judge and the position of administrative director of the courts.





A Letter from CHIEF JUSTICE **Stuart Rabner**

On behalf of the New Jersey Judiciary, I am pleased to present to you our annual report for court year 2009. This report reflects the hard work and dedication of the more than 400 jurists and 9,000 staff members who comprise the New Jersey state court system.

We have made progress toward a number of goals this year, including the development and implementation of a statewide foreclosure mediation program, the introduction of a pilot program to assist veterans, the expansion of our drug court program and intensive supervision program, and our designation as a model site for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. All of those initiatives reflect a "problem solving" approach to court management by addressing the needs of the public in ways that go beyond traditional adjudication or sentencing processes. An added bonus is that all of those programs provide significant cost savings to the taxpayers.

Like many other states, our Law Day observances this year included a celebration of the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth. In preparing for Law Day, I was reminded of Lincoln's renown as an attorney. I was also reminded of his admonishment to young attorneys to encourage settlement and compromise among neighbors and friends whenever the opportunity arose. One of Lincoln's greatest attributes was his willingness to seek an alternative resolution when he felt it would bring about the best outcome.

Our efforts to find alternative ways to meet the needs of our litigants are guided by a similar principle. Our system of justice is by nature adversarial, but often a better resolution can be found by helping the parties reach common ground or find the resources they need to avoid litigation. As Lincoln said, there will be business enough, even if we encourage the parties to avoid court disputes.

Indeed, there is business enough. In fact, one of the fastest growing caseloads has led to one of our most promising initiatives. Our foreclosure mediation program was developed to help address the steep increase in foreclosure cases that have been filed in the past two years. The program refers homeowners facing foreclosure to trained housing counselors to help them propose alternative repayment plans on their mortgages. More than 700 attorneys and mediators have taken the required training and volunteered to help homeowners and lenders agree on new terms that satisfy both parties. The program is helping families, neighborhoods and banks at a critical time.

The veteran's assistance initiative, now being piloted in four counties, was also developed to address a growth area: the number of returning military personnel whose run-ins with the legal system often are the result of financial hardship, substance abuse and mental health issues. The program does not divert them from litigation, but it does help find existing services already in place to address their real personal issues.

As we move forward into court year 2010, we will continue to seek innovation and new efficiencies to keep our caseload current and to provide courteous and timely service to the public. I thank all of the members of the Judiciary for their extraordinary efforts this past year, and I thank them in advance for tackling the challenges that lie ahead in the coming year.



A Letter from
ACTING
ADMINISTRATIVE
DIRECTOR

Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.

Every day, we see and hear about the great difficulties confronting our communities, our state and our nation. Much of the concern stems from the economic crisis that now reaches around the globe. Families and communities are reeling from the effects of job loss, credit shortages, shrinking assets and reductions in government services.

For the Judiciary, the financial crisis has produced significant challenges as we seek to resolve our growing caseloads with diminishing resources. In court year 2009, more than 1.13 million cases were added to our Superior Court dockets. During the same period, the Judiciary closed state courts and court offices for two days, on May 22 and June 29. All of our staff were required to forgo two days' pay, and while our judges cannot be required to accept any diminishment in pay according to the New Jersey constitution, I am grateful that the overwhelming number of them chose to participate in the furloughs as well. I am not happy that the furloughs were needed, but I am glad to say that they enabled us to avoid the long-term problems that permanent layoffs would have caused.

Less apparent to the public is the fact that we have lost, through attrition and an early retirement initiative, 300 staff positions in the past court year. As a unified, statewide court system, we were able to manage this loss of personnel with minimal disruption to our services. The Judiciary uses staffing ratios to determine, as equitably as possible, the level of human resources for each office in every vicinage and at the Administrative Office of the Courts. Still, the loss of staff has certainly been felt by those who continue to work tirelessly to ensure the smooth operation of our courts. I want to commend our judges and staff for their professional and dedicated service during these difficult days.

While the current fiscal situation may be grim, it also presents us with opportunities to improve our operations. We have found cost savings in a number of places, and we have identified critical needs that can be addressed with existing resources.

We have expanded our efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle Judiciary resources as much as possible. Greater reliance on electronic distribution lets us reduce hard-copy distributions of memos, reports and other communications. Extending replacement cycles for computers and related equipment, reducing inter-state travel to meetings and conferences, and relying on videoconferencing also have helped us trim our budget.

Technology has been critical to our efforts to improve our efficiency. JEFIS, our electronic filing system, is gradually expanding into a mandatory statewide program for all special civil cases. JEFIS has enabled us to improve our efficiency in resolving the more than 600,000 special civil cases filed in the New Jersey courts each year. NJMCDirect, our statewide municipal court ticket payment system, has improved our efficiency in those courts. A number of other technology initiatives, including statewide systems for filing electronic criminal complaints and temporary restraining orders, continue to ease workloads and improve efficiency.

As we work together to see ourselves and our court users through this crisis, we will continue to find new and better ways of doing business. I am proud of all of our judges and staff who have contributed to our success.

SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court is New Jersey's highest court. Its seven members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate to serve an initial seven-year term, at which time they may be renominated and reconfirmed with tenure until the mandatory retirement age of 70.



	Oath	Reappointment	Mandatory Retirement
Chief Justice Stuart Rabner	June 29, 2007	June 29, 2014	June 30, 2030
Associate Justice Virginia A. Long	Sept. 1, 1999	June 19, 2006	March 1, 2012
Associate Justice Jaynee LaVecchia	Feb. 1, 2000	Dec. 14, 2006	Oct. 9, 2024
Associate Justice Barry T. Albin	Sept. 18, 2002	June 22, 2009	July 7, 2022
Associate Justice John E. Wallace Jr.	May 20, 2003	May 20, 2010	March 13, 2012
Associate Justice Roberto A. Rivera-Soto	Sept. 1, 2004	Sept. 1, 2011	Nov. 10, 2023
Associate Justice Helen E. Hoens	Oct. 26, 2006	Oct. 26, 2013	July 31, 2024

There are two ways that cases may come before the Supreme Court. First, any case in which a panel of judges from the Appellate Division of Superior Court has disagreed may be appealed to the Supreme Court as of right. Second, the Court may grant a petition of certification on an appeal if the legal question to be considered is of great public importance or if it has been the subject of separate but apparently conflicting opinions in the Appellate Division. For every case, the Supreme Court issues a written opinion. On occasion, one or more justices may issue a dissenting opinion if they disagree with the decision of the majority.

The Supreme Court oversees not only the New Jersey court system but also oversees all aspects of the legal system, including admission to the Bar and the attorney discipline process. Through the Board of Bar Examiners, the Supreme Court admitted 2,812 new attorneys in court year 2009.

The attorney discipline system includes the Office of Attorney Ethics (OAE) and the Disciplinary Review Board (DRB). The OAE oversees the state's 18 district ethics committees and 17 district fee arbitration committees in addition to conducting its own investigations into allegations of attorney misconduct. The OAE may recommend emergent action against an attorney to protect the public while a disciplinary case is pending. Its recommendations for final discipline are forwarded to the DRB for a second investigation, hearing and review.

The DRB offers an appellate-type review of all disciplinary matters originating with the district ethics committees and the OAE. DRB decisions are final, with a few exceptions. Attorneys facing disbarment may have a hearing before the Supreme Court. The Court also may file an order to show cause, either on its own motion or in response to a petition for review filed by the attorney.

The Lawyers Fund for Client Protection (LFCP) also operates under the auspices of the Supreme Court. Funded by the state's attorneys and judge, the LFCP provides reimbursement to victims of attorneys who have been suspended or disbarred for misappropriation. The LFCP awarded \$2,813,014.06 to clients for losses caused by 38 lawyers during court year 2009.

Supreme Court

July 2008 through
June 2009

Appeals added	265
Appeals decided	113
Petitions for certification filed	1301
Petitions decided	1248
Motions added	1508
Motions decided	1521
Opinions issued	113

Retirement of Stephen W. Townsend, *Clerk of the New Jersey Supreme Court*

After nearly 38 years with the Judiciary, and nearly 31 as clerk of the Supreme Court, Stephen W. Townsend retired on May 1, 2009. He served as clerk under seven of the eight chief justices and 24 of the 34 associate justices since the 1947 state constitution established the modern Supreme Court.



As clerk, Townsend oversaw the management of cases before the Court and assisted the Court with its administrative duties, including oversight of the legal system, admission of attorneys to the bar, the attorney discipline system and the judicial discipline system.

Townsend also was a participant in the court's history, witnessing groundbreaking decisions involving the right to die, affordable housing and public school funding. He left an indelible mark on thousands of lawyers who have been admitted to practice law in New Jersey: his signature appears on their law licenses, including those of Chief Justice Stuart Rabner and former Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz.



Appointment of Supreme Court Clerk Mark Neary

Mark Neary was named clerk of the Supreme Court effective May 1, 2009. A graduate of Princeton University and Rutgers School of Law – Newark, Neary worked in private practice before joining the staff of the Casino Control Commission. He joined the Supreme Court Clerk's Office in 1991 as a staff attorney.

As clerk, Neary will oversee the day-to-day processing of thousands of motions and petitions for certification presented to the Court, as well as attorney and judicial disciplinary matters before the Court, bar admissions matters, attorney certifications and other applications and petitions for review presented to the Court. He will oversee the Board of Bar Examiners, the Committee on Character and the Board on Attorney Certification. He will supervise the director of the Office of Attorney Ethics, the chief counsel to the Disciplinary Review Board and the executive director of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection.

Sitting In Camden

On March 9, 2009, the Supreme Court traveled to Camden to hear oral argument in the new moot courtroom at Rutgers School of Law-Camden. The Court was invited by the law school to help celebrate the completion of a \$37 million renovation completed in 2008. The renovations included the construction of a new moot court courtroom that could accommodate not only a three-judge appellate panel, but also the seven justices of the Supreme Court.

The justices heard four cases before a packed audience comprising students, attorneys, journalists and members of the public. The arguments presented a special opportunity to observe first-hand a unique aspect of the courts. Supreme Court arguments are viewable via Webcast on the Judiciary Web site and, through the collaboration of Rutgers and the courts, the arguments could be seen live on the Internet just as any oral argument held in Trenton. They remain available on the Internet along with all other archived Supreme Court Webcasts.

After the arguments, the Court participated in a lively question-and-answer session with law students, who posed a host of questions regarding court procedures, the legal profession and the law.

Photo by Robert J. Laramie (courtesy of Rutgers Law School-Camden)



Supreme Court Changes Court Rule to Allow Greater Access to Court Records



The Supreme Court amended Court Rule 1:38, which governs public access to court records in New Jersey. Associate Justice Barry T. Albin chaired the special committee that recommended the amendments. Formed in February 2006, the Special Committee on Public Access to Court Records was asked to perform the first comprehensive review of the court rule in more than 30 years. The rule amendments will facilitate the public's access to court records in the electronic age while safeguarding legitimate privacy interests.

The revised Rule 1:38, now called "Public Access to Court Records and Administrative Records," supports the Judiciary's commitment to transparency and a longstanding commitment to openness. It includes a comprehensive listing of records excluded from public access and a process for appealing decisions denying access to a court record.

The committee's report included detailed reasons for the recommended changes, such as providing greater protection for children in families going through divorce or custody disputes. The committee also recommended that the Judiciary make more court records available at public access computer terminals in courthouses across the state; post on the Internet information about every civil case filed, as well as information about all criminal convictions; create a permanent advisory committee on public access; launch a public education effort on issues related to open court records; address the availability of electronic records and other public access issues; and continue to address public access issues as circumstances change. The amended court rule and the committee's other recommendations will be implemented starting Sept. 1, 2009.

Appellate Division

of Superior Court

The Appellate Division is the state's intermediate appellate court. In addition to hearing appeals from the trial courts, it hears appeals and interlocutory motions from the Tax Court and the state's administrative agencies.

The 33 judges in the Appellate Division are chosen by the Chief Justice to serve on one of eight parts, each of which has statewide jurisdiction. Each case is heard by a panel of two or three judges who issue an opinion in every case. Opinions that set legal precedent are "published" as case law for reference in future cases. Both published and unpublished opinions are posted on the Judiciary Web site, where they remain for two weeks. A link from the opinions page leads users to a searchable archive of published and unpublished opinions on the Web site of Rutgers Law School-Camden.

Appeals are argued in various locations around the state, including courtrooms in Trenton, Hackensack, Morristown, Mount Holly, New Brunswick and Atlantic City. The Appellate Division actively seeks to hold oral arguments in additional locations, including Rutgers Law School-Newark and Rutgers Law School-Camden, making the appellate process more accessible for litigants, lawyers, students and members of the public.

Administration of the division is centralized through the presiding judge for administration and the Appellate Division Clerk's Office to facilitate efficient court operations. Research, disposition, records, and case management are overseen through Appellate Division offices in Trenton. During court year 2009, the Appellate Division received 6,642 appeals and 7,460 motions. The Division resolved 6,471 appeals, issuing 3,401 opinions, with approximately 250 approved for publication.



Retirement of
John M. Chacko,
Clerk of the Appellate
Division of Superior
Court

In December 2008, John M. Chacko retired after a 37-year career with the Judiciary. He served as clerk of the Appellate Division since January 2006.

A graduate of Rutgers University and a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, Mr. Chacko began his career with the Judiciary as assignment clerk in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in Middlesex County. He was named criminal division manager for the Middlesex Vicinage in 1986, and served in that role until being named clerk.

Joseph H. Orlando Appointed Clerk of the Appellate Division

Joseph H. Orlando succeeded John Chacko as clerk of the Appellate Division on January 2, 2009. Orlando graduated from Rutgers University with a bachelor's degree, and from the Rutgers School of Law – Newark with a Juris Doctor degree. After law school, he worked in private practice from 1989 to 1995. He was named the business administrator for Marlboro Township in 1996, and he served in that capacity until 2001. In 2001, Orlando joined the Judiciary as the chief of labor and employee relations, where he was responsible for labor relations, negotiations, discipline, performance management, contract administration, training and counseling regarding labor, disability law and related litigation.



As clerk of the division, Orlando's responsibilities include managing the central office operations of the Appellate Division as well as providing support for Appellate Division judges and their staff located in chambers both in the Justice Complex in Trenton and around the state. The Appellate Division's central office operations also include court reporting, maintenance of the court's automated systems, including the automated docketing system, and overseeing the video conferencing network that connects courts with various court users around the state and sometimes across the nation.

Pilot Program Provides Representation for Indigent Criminal Defendants

In September 2008, the Judiciary launched a pilot program to afford private attorneys throughout the state the opportunity to gain valuable experience arguing appellate cases on behalf of indigent criminal defendants who are represented by the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender. Although the public defender remains the attorney-of-record and reviews the briefs before filing, volunteer attorneys prepare and sign the appellate brief to the court. To provide even greater opportunity to gain appellate experience, the Appellate Division will grant all requests for oral argument submitted by private attorneys participating in the program. Costs for transcripts and copying are covered by the Office of the Public Defender.

The program provides the public defender's office with critical support as

it strives to maintain high quality representation with limited resources. It also provides a unique opportunity to private attorneys seeking additional appellate experience. Further, the program will help expedite the resolution of cases through the courts. Thus far, 16 cases have been resolved with the assistance of volunteer attorneys. The pilot program will be expanded in the coming months.

New Digital Audio Recording

One of the most important elements of the appeals process is the production of the trial court transcript. In an effort to improve the quality and reliability of Superior Court transcripts, the Appellate Division Clerk's Office has begun upgrading the recording technology available in Superior Court. The state-of-the-art digital recording system replaces obsolete analog tape systems to provide better sound quality

and a cleaner record. The digital files are stored on servers, which eliminates the risk of lost recordings. The files are accessible to multiple users. Court transcribers are able to locate and transcribe requested court events in less time, with fewer errors. An automated back-up system runs from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. to ensure that every court matter is recorded, regardless of human error or equipment failure. The back-up is secured from improper access to safeguard attorney-client privilege. The system, which was first installed in family courtrooms and hearing officer rooms, will soon be placed in civil and criminal courtrooms as well.



THE TRIAL COURTS

Vicinage Leadership Transitions

Each of the Superior Court's 15 vicinages is overseen by an assignment judge who works with a trial court administrator to ensure smooth operation of the courts. Assignment judges play a key role in the administration of the Judiciary through their participation on the statewide Judicial Council.



In Memoriam: Assignment Judge Sybil R. Moses

Bergen Vicinage Assignment Judge Sybil R. Moses, who retired on Oct. 1, 2008, was the first woman to be named assignment judge in New Jersey. Judge Moses earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland and a master's degree in international relations from the University of Pennsylvania before earning a law degree from Rutgers School of Law-Newark. She started her legal career as an assistant prosecutor and then served as an administrative law judge. Appointed to the Superior Court bench in 1987, she served in every division of the

Superior Court, including as presiding judge of the criminal division and of general equity, before being named assignment judge in 1997. Judge Moses chaired the Judicial Council's Budget and Planning Committee and also served on the Supreme Court's Civil Practice Committee and the Committee on Model Jury Charges. As assignment judge, Judge Moses opened the first courthouse childcare center for litigants to drop off their children while they tend to court business. The courthouse law library also received a major overhaul under Judge Moses' leadership. Judge Moses died on Jan. 23, 2009.



Appointment of Assignment Judge Peter E. Doyne

Superior Court Judge Peter E. Doyne was named assignment judge of the Bergen Vicinage upon Judge Moses' retirement. Judge Doyne took the oath of judicial office on Feb. 16, 1993 and was reappointed

on Feb. 28, 2000. Judge Doyne served first in the civil division, and he was named presiding judge of the division on April 1, 1997. He was assigned to the general equity division on June 1, 2004 and was named general equity presiding judge on Feb. 26, 2006. Judge Doyne had been the designated acting assignment judge in the Bergen Vicinage since 2006. The acting assignment judge oversees the administration of vicinage operations during the occasional absence of the assignment judge. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy from Lafayette College and a law degree from Rutgers Law School – Newark. He worked in private practice until his appointment to the bench.

Retirement of Assignment Judge Walter R. Barisonek

Union Vicinage Assignment Judge Walter R. Barisonek retired on Feb. 1, 2009. A graduate of Marist College and Seton Hall Law School, Judge Barisonek began his legal career in private practice and was appointed to the bench in 1984. He served in the family, civil and criminal divisions of the Union Vicinage Superior Court, and as presiding judge of the family division and then the criminal division before his appointment as assignment judge. As a member of the Judicial Council, Judge Barisonek served on the Labor Relations and Personnel Committee before serving on the Management and Operations Committee.



Appointment of Assignment Judge Karen M. Cassidy

Superior Court Judge Karen M. Cassidy was named to succeed Judge Barisonek as assignment judge of the Union Vicinage. She was appointed to the bench in April 2000 by then-Gov. Christie Whitman. She has served in the Union Vicinage since her appointment, first in the family division, then in the civil division from September 2002 until September 2005, when she returned to the family division to serve as presiding judge. Judge Cassidy holds a bachelor's degree from American University and a law degree from George Washington University. She began her legal career in 1984 as a law clerk to Judge Edward W. Beglin Jr. when he was assignment judge in Union County. She then worked in private practice until her appointment to the bench.

AOC Leadership Transitions



Shelley R. Webster
*Director of Management and
Administrative Services*

Shelley Webster was named the director of management and administrative services on Oct. 21, 2008. She joined the court system in 2000 as chief of the financial services unit and was promoted to administrator of the unit in 2002. In July 2003, she was named assistant director for management services. Prior to joining the Judiciary, Webster worked for the New Jersey Department of Labor and in the Department of the Treasury. A certified public accountant, Webster holds a bachelor's degree from Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey) and an MBA from Rider College (now Rider University).

As director, she oversees the development and implementation of standards, policies and procedures for human resources and for financial and support services, both critically important areas of court management for the statewide Judiciary.

Robert W. Smith
*Director of Trial
Court Services*

Robert W. Smith was named the new director of trial court services on April 3, 2009. A long-time Judiciary employee, Smith joined the Judiciary in 1975, working in the mail room of the Middlesex County Superior Court while attending high school. He joined the AOC in 1986 as an information technology analyst. In 1988, he was named assistant chief of the court automation section in the Municipal Court Services Division, and was named chief of the automated traffic system/automated complaint system (ATS/ACS) support unit in 1999. As manager of the ATC/ACS support unit, Smith led the courts' efforts to create NJMCDirect, the statewide online ticket payment system that remains a national leader in providing fast and convenient service to court users. In 2003, he was named assistant director of Municipal Court Services and served in that role until being named director. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1980 from Rutgers University and in 1996 earned a designation as a certified public manager.



Smith oversees the Judiciary's five case management divisions in addition to the automated trial court services and the programs and procedures units. He plays a critical role in strategic planning and project implementation and monitoring for the Judiciary.

Trial Court News and Celebrations

National Adoption Day

National Adoption Day is an annual event in which courts and communities in all 50 states finalize thousands of adoptions and celebrate with families who have opened their hearts and homes to children. In November, courthouses around the state hosted Adoption Day events to finalize and celebrate adoptions and to raise awareness of the thousands of children in foster care who hope to be adopted into loving, permanent families. Participating vicinages scheduled several adoption proceedings together. Then judges, court staff and community members celebrated with the children and their "forever families." In court year 2009, the courts finalized 2,293 adoptions. Although adoption proceedings were closed, the celebrations that followed were a moving reminder to all who attended of the need for more happy endings for the children still hoping for a permanent home.



Kimberly Ricketts, commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Judge Frederic S. Kessler, and Union Vicinage Assignment Judge Karen M. Cassidy.

Law Day

On May 1, the New Jersey courts celebrated Law Day and the 200th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's birth. In courthouses around the state, celebrations and observances included



speeches, music, art and poetry contests, mock trials, and educational programming. The Administrative Office of the Courts in Trenton held its own celebration, with Chief

Justice Stuart Rabner presiding over a naturalization ceremony and congratulating the winners of the New Jersey State Bar Association Lincoln video contest.

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner's annual Law Day address focused on Lincoln's distinguished legal career and his dedication to upholding the rule of law. Chief Justice Rabner said, "Above all, Lincoln devoted himself to the legal principles upon which our country was founded . . . As attorneys and judges, as students and teachers, we play a critical role in safeguarding Lincoln's legacy of freedom."

Mock Trial Competitions

Every year, judges from around the state participate in the New Jersey Bar Foundation's Statewide Mock Trial Program for high school students. The judges, who preside over the local, regional and statewide competitions, volunteer their time as a way to expand the students' understanding of the legal system and to encourage them to consider careers in the law. During court year 2009, more than 80 Superior, Tax, Appellate and Supreme Court judges and justices participated in mock trial programs for high school students.

Family Division

In November 2008, the Annie E. Casey Foundation announced that New Jersey will serve as the first state model site in the country for jurisdictions participating in the Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

JDAI is a collaborative effort between the courts, the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) and other state and county agencies to find ways to safely reduce the number of youth housed in secure facilities as they await the adjudication of their juvenile cases. The goal is to find effective alternatives to detention for juveniles that will allow them to remain in the community and within their support network without posing a danger to others. A pilot program was implemented in 2004 in Atlantic, Camden, Essex, Hudson and Monmouth counties. In 2006 the program was expanded to include Bergen, Burlington, Mercer, Ocean and Union counties. JDAI has reduced the average daily population and average monthly admissions in all sites.

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative

Original Counties	ADP 2003	ADP 2009	AMA 2003	AMA 2009
Atlantic	34.1	12.1	39	20.3
Camden	94.6	45.2	138.4	46.7
Essex	243.6	111.6	205	115.3
Hudson	86.7	72	101.8	57.3
Monmouth	40	24	42.3	23.3

Expansion Counties	ADP 2005	ADP 2009	AMA 2005	AMA 2009
Bergen	20.3	9.4	20.5	12.3
Burlington	20.4	19.6	23.7	27.3
Mercer	60	28.1	71.9	37.3
Ocean	23.7	16.6	20.2	13.7
Union	39.2	24.5	45	30

The Supreme Court approved an objective risk screening tool (RST) to standardize intake for youth into detention centers to be held pending the disposition of their delinquency case. The RST keeps the focus on objective data in determinations regarding detention. The tool consists of a series of questions with objective criteria that, when completed, will indicate a standard outcome for placing the youth in

detention or in a community-based alternative, or at home based upon statutory factors such as flight risk and threat to the community. The RST is used in the five original counties and will be used in the expansion counties beginning in 2010. The Supreme Court approved the rollout of the RST with the expansion of JDAI into the remaining counties, starting with Somerset and Passaic counties in 2009.

New Guidelines for Co-occurring Child Abuse and Domestic Violence

In May 2009, the Judiciary adopted new guidelines for court staff and judges to respond to incidents of violence directed toward adult partners in homes where children are present. The occurrence of family violence directed at children, on the one hand, and adult partners, on the other, is characterized differently by the legal and social service systems. Those systems are designed to respond either to "child abuse" or to "domestic violence," but not to both. When both domestic violence and child abuse occur together, the difference in approaches of the two kinds of behavior may fail to address the needs of the victims effectively. Often, the children are removed from the care of the non-offending parent, which further victimizes the abused parent and traumatizes the child.

The new guidelines recommend several actions that will minimize further harm to the victim and the children in the home. Any cases involving children who are already under court supervision will be overseen by the original judge to ensure continuity of information and a resolution consistent with previous court determinations. Judicial considerations will focus on ensuring the safety and stability of the children as well as the victim, and, depending on the victim's willingness and ability to protect the children from emotional abuse caused by the domestic violence, will strive to keep the children and the victim together.

The guidelines were developed by the Conference of Family Presiding Judges and reviewed by a joint task force of the Judiciary and the New Jersey Department of Children and Families in response to recommendations by the Family Violence Department of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

TRIAL COURTS

Criminal Division

The criminal division of Superior Court resolves serious criminal cases such as murder, robbery, and drug trafficking. Many cases are resolved through plea bargains, in which defendants admit guilt without a trial in exchange for lesser sentences. If a defendant requests a trial the case is decided by a panel of 12 jurors. The division also screens cases to determine if they are eligible for diversionary programs like the Pre-trial Intervention Program and the Drug Court Program.

Drug Court

In court year 2009, the New Jersey Drug Court program began implementation of an expansion project to increase the number of new admissions by one third.

Drug Court is a diversionary program in which non-violent drug-addicted criminal defendants receive treatment and rehabilitation under close court supervision. Participants can avoid incarceration by adhering to the program's strict regimen of substance abuse treatment, regular drug testing, frequent contact with probation officers, treatment specialists and the judge, verified employment and faithful payment of fines, fees and other financial obligations.

Expansion of the Drug Court program is the result of new legislation that gives prosecutors more flexibility in determining who is eligible for drug court. Another amendment allows the court to order clinically appropriate treatment rather than requiring in-patient treatment for all school-zone cases which, under New Jersey law, carry a mandatory prison sentence. An early-discharge option now allows judges to offer early release from the program as an incentive for participants to adhere to all requirements; it also opens another opportunity to admit someone else. Finally, the legislation includes funding for two additional Drug Court judgeships.

Drug Court offers many social benefits, including the significant savings in the cost of providing treatment versus the cost of incarceration. Since the expansion, Drug Court has already accepted hundreds of new offenders into the program, all of whom would have otherwise cost the state tens of thousands of dollars yearly for incarceration. The program is a successful and cost-effective alternative to incarceration, directing tax dollars toward treatment programs instead of prison costs, allowing offenders to maintain support networks in their own communities, reuniting families torn apart by drug addiction and encouraging self-reliance rather than dependency on public services. New Jersey remains committed to drug court not only because of its proven success in breaking the cycle of drug abuse and crime, but because it saves money.

During the past decade Drug Court has had more than 1,000 graduates. Statistics also show that graduates of the program have a much lower rearrest rate than those released from prison.

Since 2002, the Drug Court program had graduated 1,518 participants. Another 3,636 participants remain in the program and working toward their recovery.

Veteran's Assistance Project

In December 2009, the Judiciary launched a pilot program in municipal and criminal courts in Atlantic County to assist military veterans who enter the court system. The goal of the Judiciary's component of this multi-agency collaborative project is to identify veterans involved in the courts and to provide referrals to a local Veterans Services Officer, who then may connect the veterans to existing community services as well as to mentors.

Some veterans return from military service with physical, mental or personal issues and may turn to drugs or alcohol in an attempt to manage the stress of returning to civilian life. With the cooperation of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) and the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health Services, veterans who are voluntarily referred can get an assessment of their needs and access to services that will help them address their problems.

The program seeks to identify veterans early on in the criminal justice process and ensure that all veterans are given the opportunity to access the services to which they are entitled. Defendants in criminal and municipal court are asked if they are veterans when they are arrested, when they are remanded to the county jail and when they make their initial court appearance.

DMAVA may also assign an active or retired military person to mentor the veteran during and after the conclusion of the court case. Mentors help see to it that veterans receive the assistance and support they need. They also try to help the veteran steer clear of behaviors that might result in future contact with the courts.

This pilot program has been expanded to Union, Cape May and Burlington counties, and it has been expanded to include veterans in some types of family cases, such as child support, and some types of civil cases, such as landlord/tenant and special civil cases.

While other jurisdictions have implemented court programs for veterans, New Jersey is unique in developing a program that relies on existing services and avoids duplicate services and unnecessary costs. The program will be expanded statewide in the coming months.

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Criminal and Family Division Judges Receive Training in Substance Abuse Issues

Criminal and family division judges across the state gathered in June 2009 to participate in a one-day educational program on substance abuse. Substance abuse is a major factor in criminal and family court, as it often manifests itself in criminal behavior, domestic violence or juvenile delinquency. The judges spent the day learning about best practices for dealing with defendants and litigants when substance abuse is a factor in their cases. The program supported the Judiciary's mission of providing a fair and just resolution of disputes by increasing the judges' ability to understand the motivations of the individuals who appear before them and to enhance the effectiveness of the justice system. Led by doctors and treatment specialists, the sessions provided a wealth of information for judges in both divisions. The program was developed by the Judiciary and the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Addiction Services, with a grant from Gov. Corzine's Safe Streets and Neighborhoods Program.

TRIAL COURTS

Civil Division

Judiciary Electronic Filing and Imaging System Becomes Mandatory

In March 2009, the Judiciary announced a two-phase plan to require attorneys to file electronically all court papers in contract and collection cases involving up to \$15,000 using "JEFIS," the Judiciary Electronic Filing/Imaging System.

Those cases, known as "special civil" cases, comprise the single largest category of court cases filed each year in New Jersey's Superior Courts. In court year 2009, they accounted for more than one third of the total 1.1 million cases filed.

In phase one of the plan, attorneys who had filed 1,000 or more of the qualifying cases in court year 2008 will be required to file all of their cases using JEFIS by May 2010. Combined, the 32 law firms in the high-volume category filed the vast majority of the total cases filed in 2009.

The Judiciary has been operating JEFIS statewide as a voluntary e-filing program since November 2000. About 54 percent of the special civil cases filed annually are filed using JEFIS. When the mandatory filing program becomes effective, it is anticipated that nearly 80 percent of

those cases will be filed electronically using JEFIS.

During the implementation phase leading up to the May 2010 deadline, the staff from the Administrative Office of the Courts is offering direct assistance to the attorneys and law firms that will be required to file court papers using JEFIS. Court staff will conduct an initial consultation with the law firm's information technology specialists; help the firm register with the Superior Court Clerk's Office; help establish the law firm's user ID and password for each attorney in a law firm; and help the law firm download the JEFIS e-filing software. The software and the services of court staff will be provided at no cost to the attorneys. The Judiciary will provide other services to attorneys who participate in JEFIS, including remote access from attorneys' offices to the electronic case jackets for their cases, automation of the monthly statements for the accounts used by attorneys to pay filing fees and online access to real-time balances in these accounts.

The second phase of mandatory JEFIS implementation will focus on the remaining 4,000 attorneys and law firms who file fewer special civil contract and collections cases. That phase will begin in 2010.

Business-related Trial Court Decisions Now Online

The Judiciary now posts business-related trial court decisions online to provide attorneys, litigants and the public convenient access to the body of trial court opinions in the business realm. Not all of the opinions are "published," meaning that they set precedent and cannot be cited as published opinions. However, the online collection is a convenient and helpful resource for the commercial litigation bar, law students, litigants and others who previously would not have had access to this collection.

General Equity

Foreclosure Mediation Program Assists Homeowners at Risk of Losing Their Homes

Foreclosure filings more than doubled in 2009 from two years prior. In court year 2009, 56,289 residential foreclosures were filed, compared to 43,002 in court year 2008 and 28,182 in court year 2007.

The dramatic increase in foreclosure filings led the Judiciary to implement a foreclosure mediation program to assist homeowners in foreclosure actions. Implemented statewide in January 2009, the program provides mediators to help homeowners and lenders negotiate with one another and try to work out agreements to avoid foreclosures.

The program preserves the courts' neutrality while providing a forum for homeowners facing foreclosure and lenders burdened with unpaid mortgages to meet at the negotiating table and work out mutually beneficial repayment plans.

Under the program, which was developed in the Middlesex Vicinage before expanding statewide, the courts require mediation in all cases in which homeowners contest owner-occupied foreclosure actions. Trained mediators meet

with eligible homeowners and their lenders in an effort to resolve foreclosure actions and renegotiate the terms of mortgage agreements.

In uncontested actions, where the homeowner has failed to respond to a foreclosure complaint, the courts make an effort to notify the homeowner of the mediation program and encourage participation. If the homeowner fails to respond and a default judgment is entered, mediation will remain an option before the matter proceeds to a sheriff's sale.

The program preserves the courts' neutrality while providing a forum for homeowners facing foreclosure and lenders burdened with unpaid mortgages to meet at the negotiating table and work out mutually beneficial repayment plans.

The program has generated great interest and cooperation from the courts, lenders, borrowers and the bar, all of whom have committed to ensuring the success of the program. More than 700 attorneys and mediators have undergone the free mortgage mediation training provided by the courts in cooperation with the New Jersey Office of Dispute Resolution.

Through June 30, 2009, 1,416 mediation sessions were scheduled and 739 were conducted, resulting in 316 homeowners resolving foreclosure actions through the court's program.

TRIAL COURTS

Probation

The Probation Division enforces court orders in a number of areas, including the supervision of nonviolent adult and juvenile offenders, intensive supervision for a court-approved group of incarcerated adults and certain juvenile offenders, the collection of court-ordered fines and restitution, the performance of court-ordered community service and the collection of child support payments from non-custodial parents.

Adult Supervision Program Emphasizes Technology and Training

In October, 2008, the Judiciary began using the Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System to share information on the interstate movement of criminal offenders. The system facilitates a wide range of probation operations, including supervision transfer requests to and from other states, reporting instructions, violation of probation reports and responses to violations, progress reports and other case management information. By reducing redundancies in paperwork and data entry, the system helps all of the participating states and territories keep accurate information about each offender's residence, employment, violations of court orders and other case information.

Intensive Supervision Program

Under the Intensive Supervision Program (ISP), a carefully selected group of non-violent state prisoners is rehabilitated back into the community under the supervision of specially trained probation officers. ISP requires strict adherence to a number of rules, such as a curfew, employment and the payment of fines and restitution, intended to help participants lead responsible lives and avoid future criminal behavior.

More than 16,100 inmates have been released to ISP since 1983. The cost to supervise an ISP participant is approximately \$9,400, compared to approximately \$37,000 for incarceration. ISP maintains low recidivism rates, with about 11.3 percent of ISP graduates re-convicted of an indictable offense within three years of release, compared to a 43 percent re-conviction rate for those released from prison without ISP.

In response to a recommendation by the Government Efficiency and Reform Commission, ISP was expanded in court year 2009 to accommodate an additional 200 participants. There are now 1,425 participants in the program, up from 1,218 in 2008.

Juvenile Supervision

Juvenile Probation Services provides community supervision for adjudicated youth, typically for a 1-year term. In addition to youth ordered to a term of supervision, Probation also monitors youth placed on a deferred status, and the original complaint is dismissed if the client complies with special conditions. In June, 2009, Juvenile Probation Services was supervising and monitoring 10,049 clients statewide.

Rehabilitation is a top priority for juvenile probation. Probation officers must address the clients' school needs and employment readiness in addition to enforcing the standard and special conditions ordered by the court. Probation officers work with parents to maximize the effectiveness of the interventions both during the term of supervision or monitoring and after the term is completed.

During court year 2009, the Juvenile Probation Managers Committee undertook a review of local parent orientation programs and will develop a standardized program that can be adapted by each county to provide families with information about probation services and other local agencies that can assist them. The orientation program improves the probation officer's ability to work with the family and the family's ability to advocate for the child.

Juvenile Probation Services was recently awarded a federal grant to integrate a risk and needs assessment instrument with our case processing system. This research-validated instrument will allow probation officers to identify a client's needs, select local services, and track perform-



Juveniles competing in statewide Juvenile Olympics.

ance using Web-based technology. In addition to the efficiencies of automation, this enhancement will also allow probation to identify gaps in local services and to evaluate the effectiveness of those services.

Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program

Since 1993, the Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program (JISP) has offered a more demanding and restrictive form of probation for juveniles considered at risk for re-offending. The program stresses accountability and restitution, provides a backdrop for positive social engagement and helps ensure community safety through graduated sanctions for participants who do not comply with court orders. The families of JISP participants must participate and fulfill their responsibilities in assisting youth to comply with the program. JISP helps steer juveniles away from delinquent behavior and helps them avoid future run-ins with law enforcement.

The cost of JISP is approximately \$17,000 per year, compared to about \$45,000 per year in a traditional detention setting. In court year 2009, JISP provided service to an average of 147 juveniles per month.

Comprehensive Enforcement Program

The comprehensive enforcement program (CEP) oversees the collection of court-ordered payments such as fines, penalties, restitution and Superior Court judgments. CEP also enforces compliance with community service orders by the Superior or municipal courts. CEP participants who do not comply with those orders may be assigned to labor assistance duties or additional community service programs. Incarceration remains a possibility for those who willfully disregard court orders. Other possible sanctions include the suspension of driving privileges, additional fines, state income tax refund offsets, civil judgments, bench warrants, income withholding and weekly reporting requirements. CEP hearings may be held for those who ignore a jury summons and for attorneys who owe restitution for ethical violations.

In court year 2009, approximately \$23.4 million of the \$33.3 million in total probation collections was received after strategies for comprehensive enforcement were implemented. Approximately half of the money collected by probation goes to victims of crime as direct restitution or reimbursement to the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency.

On June 30, 2009, the program included 44,283 adult and juvenile participants.

Child Support Enforcement

Within the Probation Division, the child support enforcement unit monitors and enforces the collection of court-ordered child support and spousal support. For the approximately 311,000 cases enforced during court year 2009, collections totaled \$1,237,320,286, a 4.1 percent increase from the previous year.

During the year, the Judiciary, the Department of Human Services and the Office of Information Technology continued development and began implementation of NJKiDS, a web-based application that will allow agencies in both branches of government to store, retrieve and manage information on the state's child support cases. The new system was piloted in Ocean County in October 2008, expanded to eight additional counties in March 2009 and then to ten additional counties in July 2009. Statewide expansion will be completed in the coming months.

NJKiDS is a significant upgrade in technology. Most notably, NJKiDS is interfaced with the family automated case tracking system (FACTS) and provides for seamless data interchange between the statewide family and child support systems. The system will streamline the court processes that affect Probation Child Support, the Family Division, the Finance Division and county welfare agencies, where many child support cases originate.

The Judiciary and the Department of Human Services continue to operate a pilot child support call center to serve Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset vicinages. Customers can call the center to resolve issues during normal business hours. Nearly 75 percent of the calls can be resolved by call center staff, with the remaining calls being referred to vicinage staff for further action. In calendar year 2009, the call center received 132,496 calls, an average of approximately 534 calls per day.

Nearly 97 percent of all child support payments are distributed electronically, either through direct deposits to their personal bank accounts or through state-issued debit cards. Electronic transfers help keep the funds secure, in addition to making the money available more quickly. Custodial parents in transitional housing can access the funds without worrying that they went to the wrong home address. In addition, electronic transfers saves the courts significant costs in printing and postage.

An important measure of success in child support collections is the percentage of child support monies due that are being paid on time. New Jersey ranks 14th in the nation in this area, with more than 65 percent of all payments considered to be current. In addition, New Jersey ranks second for the highest dollar amount of collections per case.

Tax Court



Retirement of Presiding Judge Joseph C. Small

After serving 18 years on the Tax Court, including nine years as presiding judge, Joseph C. Small announced his retirement effective Oct. 1, 2009. He is a graduate of Williams College in Williamstown, Mass. and of Columbia University Law School. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Small practiced law privately and held various positions in the Division of Taxation and as a deputy attorney general in the Department of Law and Public Safety. Judge Small has authored more than 69 published opinions and is a former chair of the National Conference of State Tax Judges.

Seated (left to right): Judge Peter D. Pizzuto; Presiding Judge Joseph C. Small; Judge Harold A. Kuskin.
Standing (left to right): Judge Gail L. Menyuk; Judge Raymond A. Hayser; Judge Vito L. Bianco; Judge Patrick DeAlmeida.

Appointment of Presiding Judge Patrick DeAlmeida

Judge Patrick DeAlmeida was named to succeed Judge Small as presiding judge of the Tax Court. A graduate of New York University and Fordham University School of Law, Judge DeAlmeida taught legal writing and worked in private practice before joining the Division of Law in the Department of Law and Public Safety in 1993. He was named section chief of the treasury section and in 2001 was named deputy attorney general in charge of appeals. He was appointed to the Tax Court by Gov. Jon Corzine in January 2008.



Created in 1979 as the successor to the Division of Tax Appeals, the Tax Court resolves disputes between taxpayers and local and state taxing agencies. It hears appeals from decisions made by county boards of taxation and from decisions made by the director of the Division of Taxation, principally concerning state income tax, sales and business taxes, and homestead rebates. The objectives of the Tax Court are:

- To provide expeditious, convenient, equitable and effective judicial review of state and local tax assessments.
- To create a consistent, uniform body of tax law for the guidance of taxpayers and tax administrators, in order to promote predictability in tax law and its application.
- To make decisions of the court readily available to taxpayers, tax administrators and tax professionals.
- To promote the development of a qualified and informed state and local tax bar.

In court year 2009, 16,016 cases were filed in the Tax Court of New Jersey, a 36 percent increase over the prior year. On June 30, 2009, there were 25,893 cases pending, a number greater than any year-end inventory in the 30-year history of the court.

The increase in filings is due to the significant decline in real property values. In fact, in court year 2009, the Tax Court received more filings than in any other year except court year 1992, when a similar decline in real property values occurred.



Municipal Court

The 526 municipal courts in New Jersey resolve more than 6 million cases annually. Cases resolved in municipal court include traffic and parking matters, driving while intoxicated, local ordinance violations and disorderly persons offenses.

Municipal courts are supported by vicinage personnel, including a municipal division manager and a vicinage presiding judge of the municipal courts.

Municipal Courts Reduce Backlog

The state's municipal courts have reduced the overall backlog of municipal court cases by 14 percent in court year 2009. In the past 10 years, the municipal courts have reduced the backlog by more than 2 million cases, from 2,494,021 cases on June 30, 1999 to 405,799 cases on June 30, 2009.

Court Staff and Judges Receive Additional Training

New Jersey law requires that all municipal court administrators be certified through the Municipal Court Administrator Certification Board. The training includes 21 full days covering the principles of municipal court administration, a series of written and oral exams and a final court improvement project. Principles range from basic court management to making available public records, court security and even staff motivation. Municipal court personnel who have completed all levels of training still have the option of reviewing any aspects of the training in the future. For example, court administrators might opt to attend a standalone refresher course on bail procedures, or court security, without reviewing the entire curriculum.

In court year 2009, training was delivered to 544 municipal court employees. As of June 30, 2009, 534 municipal court administrators around the state were certified by the board.

Conclusion

It has been possible to manage the challenges the Judiciary has faced during the past year because of the extraordinary vision of Chief Justice Arthur Vanderbuilt and others who recognized the need for an independent Judiciary organized around core values and a sound administrative structure. Because of the work done more than 60 years ago, today's leaders of the New Jersey Judiciary were positioned to

not only deliver, but to improve services during a period of shrinking budgets and reduced staff.

The final piece of the Judiciary's reform occurred in 1995, when funding for the statewide court system moved from the counties to the state. With statewide funding came an equalization of resources in every vicinage and the implementation of statewide policies and procedures to ensure

equal justice throughout the state. Developing alongside of the new court system was a management infrastructure of statewide committees, including the Judicial Council, to help steer the policies and plans of the state courts.

The 1947 constitution empowered the modern Judiciary to face the challenges and pursue the opportunities that have arisen in the past 60 years. It drives the courts' unique identity as a national leader in the administration of justice and an organization that will continue to serve the residents of New Jersey well in the coming years.

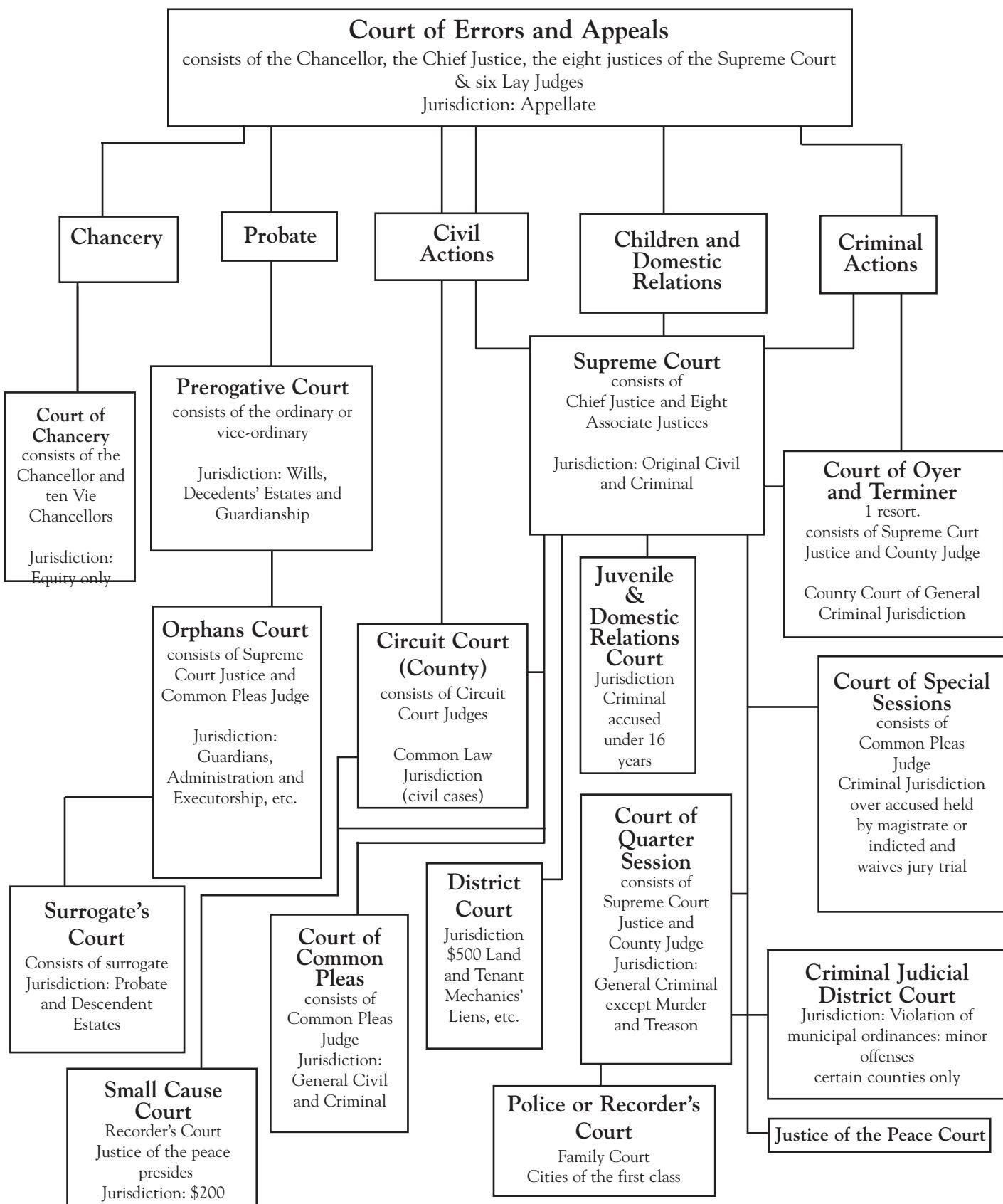
In the past 60 years, the New Jersey court system has undergone a complete transformation, from a confusing system of local courts and competing appellate jurisdictions to a streamlined statewide system. The modern Judiciary reduced case backlogs, implemented best practices for court management and developed a management structure that seeks continuous improvement in the delivery of justice. As it has for the past 60 years, the court system will continue to find ways to accommodate the changing needs of the public during the current economic crisis and well into the future.

Litigants have every right to walk out of this and every courtroom in our State disagreeing with a decision, but we hope that they will walk out with the sense that they've received a fair hearing, a fair shake.

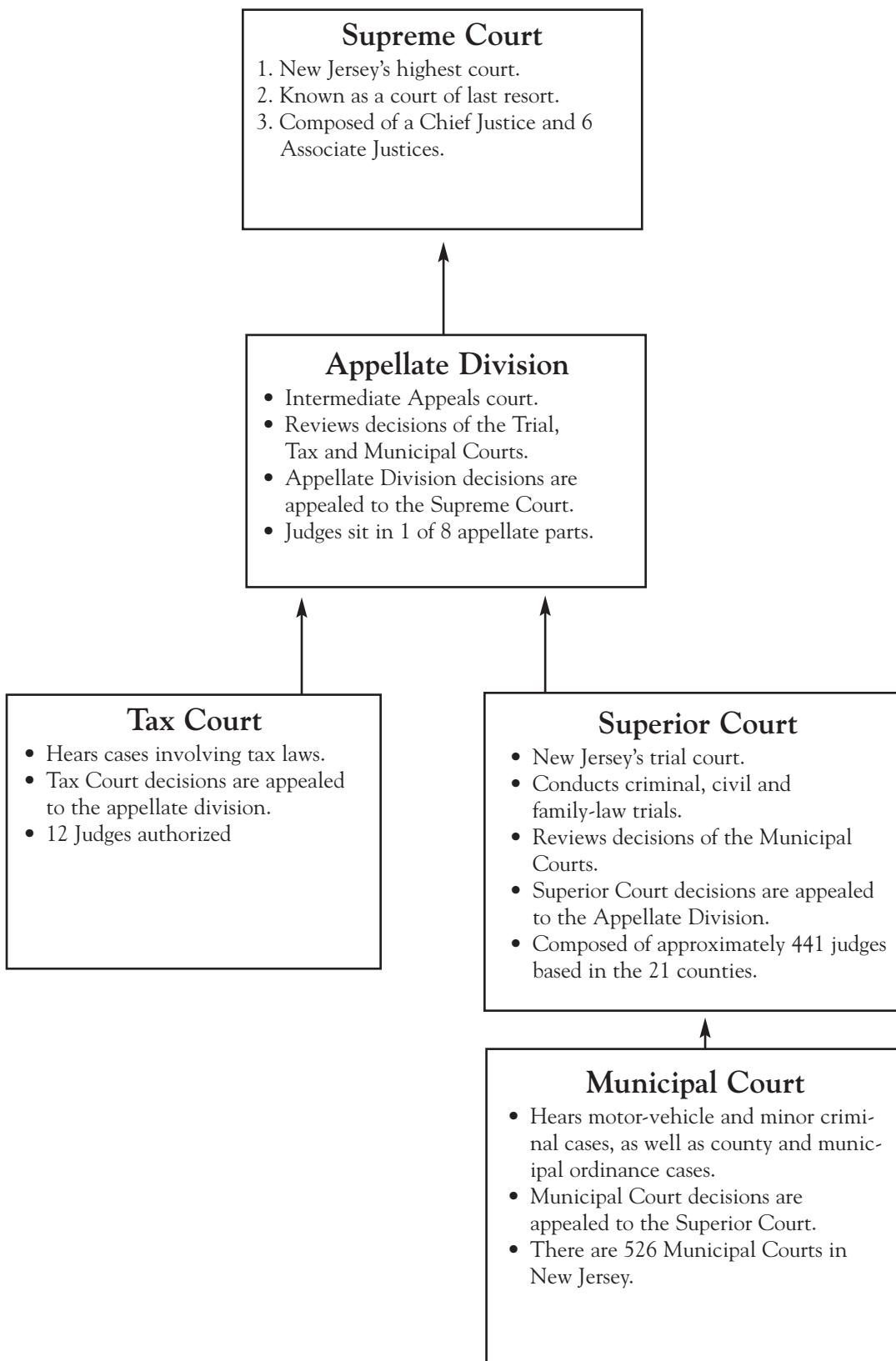
That is the ultimate benchmark in any system of justice – today, or in 1948. It is a measure that we strive to attain in each case, in every courthouse throughout the State, each and every day.

— Chief Justice Stuart Rabner

New Jersey Courts Before 1948



New Jersey Courts Today



TRIAL COURT FILINGS, RESOLUTIONS AND BACKLOG

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BY DIVISION

	Filings			Resolutions			Inventory (Active Cases Pending Within Time Goals)			Backlog (Active Cases Pending Over Time Goals)		
	July 2007 to June 2008	July 2008 to June 2009	percent change	July 2007 to June 2008	July 2008 to June 2009	percent change	June 2008	June 2009	percent change	June 2008	June 2009	percent change
Criminal Division												
Indictable Cases	54,416	54,769	1%	55,722	54,681	-2%	9,371	9,780	4%	6,246	7,252	16%
Municipal Appeals	1,253	1,367	9%	1,293	1,338	3%	297	307	3%	191	208	9%
Post-Conviction Relief	832	801	-4%	822	862	5%	196	165	-16%	642	601	-6%
General Equity	5,574	5,526	-1%	5,286	5,832	10%	2,245	1,946	-13%	301	366	22%
Civil Division												
Civil	94,539	98,618	4%	108,752	99,794	-8%	77,571	77,014	-1%	15,372	15,015	-2%
Special Civil	607,880	605,315	0%	601,109	601,536	0%	56,257	60,404	7%	950	718	-24%
Probate	6,583	6,510	-1%	6,503	6,690	3%	1,684	1,545	-8%	139	155	12%
Family Division												
Dissolution	67,989	67,387	-1%	67,890	66,895	-1%	17,278	17,458	1%	949	1,195	26%
Delinquency	63,811	56,865	-11%	64,348	57,297	-11%	4,824	4,372	-9%	285	296	4%
Non-Dissolution	161,517	158,587	-2%	160,696	158,178	-2%	11,848	11,402	-4%	452	1,093	142%
Domestic Violence	55,460	55,677	0%	55,331	55,622	1%	1,547	1,573	2%	64	100	56%
Abuse/Neglect	4,319	4,371	1%	4,263	4,365	2%	5,174	5,119	-1%	28	79	182%
Adoption	2,412	2,329	-3%	2,406	2,293	-5%	462	499	8%			
Child Placement Review	5,208	5,035	-3%	5,887	5,713	-3%	9,746	9,042	-7%	28	84	200%
Juvenile/Family Crisis	919	632	-31%	903	637	-29%	26	18	-31%	2	5	150%
Term of Parental Rights	1,258	1,182	-6%	1,206	1,167	-3%	498	455	-9%	189	247	31%
Criminal/Quasi-Criminal	9,593	9,094	-5%	9,669	8,953	-7%	803	918	14%	43	71	65%
Kinship	905	878	-3%	897	907	1%	138	104	-25%	11	16	45%
Total	1,144,468	1,134,943	-1%	1,152,983	1,132,760	-2%	199,965	202,121	1%	25,892	27,501	6%

TRIAL COURT FILINGS, RESOLUTIONS AND BACKLOG

BY COUNTY

	Filings			Resolutions			Inventory (Active Cases Pending Within Time Goals)			Backlog (Active Cases Pending Over Time Goals)		
	July 2007 to June 2008	July 2008 to June 2009	percent change	July 2007 to June 2008	July 2008 to June 2009	percent change	June 2008	June 2009	percent change	June 2008	June 2009	percent change
Atlantic	52,134	51,470	-1%	64,429	53,712	-17%	11,057	9,415	-15%	2,341	1,684	-28%
Bergen	86,228	86,373	0%	84,263	87,448	4%	16,347	15,208	-7%	1,474	1,488	1%
Burlington	51,471	52,710	2%	52,202	51,994	0%	8,453	9,212	9%	1,267	1,286	1%
Camden	82,089	81,583	-1%	82,429	81,107	-2%	13,840	14,452	4%	1,375	1,401	2%
Cape May	15,259	15,683	3%	15,149	15,323	1%	2,303	2,471	7%	261	427	64%
Cumberland	31,278	31,724	1%	31,223	31,766	2%	4,354	4,423	2%	795	732	-8%
Essex	158,101	151,204	-4%	159,240	152,611	-4%	27,694	26,922	-3%	3,305	3,359	2%
Gloucester	35,153	34,832	-1%	34,597	34,479	0%	5,770	6,076	5%	746	779	4%
Hudson	99,839	99,276	-1%	99,043	98,885	0%	15,635	16,282	4%	1,222	1,196	-2%
Hunterdon	8,042	8,686	8%	7,897	8,515	8%	1,465	1,561	7%	199	256	29%
Mercer	50,436	49,317	-2%	50,268	49,381	-2%	8,639	8,425	-2%	1,656	1,977	19%
Middlesex	90,776	92,588	2%	90,685	91,064	0%	19,473	19,707	1%	2,806	4,076	45%
Monmouth	72,894	69,745	-4%	72,763	69,833	-4%	12,752	13,159	3%	2,481	2,151	-13%
Morris	36,718	37,495	2%	36,053	36,624	2%	6,720	7,633	14%	955	1,000	5%
Ocean	61,287	62,900	3%	59,894	62,601	5%	11,134	11,367	2%	1,253	1,306	4%
Passaic	73,039	70,296	-4%	73,051	69,792	-4%	12,143	12,428	2%	1,330	1,717	29%
Salem	12,685	12,228	-4%	12,861	12,272	-5%	1,550	1,532	-1%	107	132	23%
Somerset	27,520	27,830	1%	27,306	27,260	0%	4,539	4,932	9%	720	838	16%
Sussex	14,920	15,620	5%	14,837	15,223	3%	2,165	2,585	19%	304	298	-2%
Union	72,340	70,875	-2%	72,505	70,600	-3%	12,232	12,426	2%	1,145	1,205	5%
Warren	12,259	12,508	2%	12,288	12,270	0%	1,700	1,905	12%	150	193	29%
Total	1,144,468	1,134,943	-1%	1,152,983	1,132,760	-2%	199,965	202,121	1%	25,892	27,501	6%

Vicinages

Assignment Judges and Trial Court Administrators
Court Year 2009

Vicinage 1 Atlantic County Cape May County

Assignment Judge Valerie H. Armstrong
Trial Court Administrator Howard H. Berchtold Jr.

Vicinage 10 Morris County Sussex County

Assignment Judge B. Theodore Bozonelis
Trial Court Administrator Michael J. Arnold

Vicinage 2 Bergen County

Assignment Judge Peter E. Doyne
Trial Court Administrator Jon Goodman

Vicinage 11 Passaic County

Assignment Judge Donald J. Volkert Jr.
Trial Court Administrator Kirk L. Nixon

Vicinage 3 Burlington County

Assignment Judge Ronald E. Bookbinder
Trial Court Administrator Jude Del Preore

Vicinage 4 Camden County

Assignment Judge Francis J. Orlando Jr.
Trial Court Administrator Michael O'Brien

Vicinage 13 Hunterdon County Somerset County Warren County

Assignment Judge Yolanda Ciccone
Trial Court Administrator Eugene T. Farkas

Vicinage 5 Essex County

Assignment Judge Patricia K. Costello
Trial Court Administrator Collins E. Ijoma

Vicinage 6 Hudson County

Assignment Judge Maurice J. Gallipoli
Trial Court Administrator Joseph F. Davis

Vicinage 14 Ocean County

Assignment Judge Vincent J. Grasso
Trial Court Administrator Richard D. Prifold

Vicinage 7 Mercer County

Assignment Judge Linda R. Feinberg
Trial Court Administrator Sue Regan

Vicinage 15 Cumberland County Gloucester County Salem County

Assignment Judge Georgia M. Curio
Trial Court Administrator Mark Srock

Vicinage 8 Middlesex County

Assignment Judge Travis L. Francis
Trial Court Administrator Gregory Edwards

Vicinage 9 Monmouth County

Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson
Trial Court Administrator Marsi Perkins

Judges and Justices of the NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY

as of June 20, 2009

Supreme COURT

Stuart Rabner, *Chief Justice*

Barry T. Albin
Helen E. Hoens
Jaynee LaVecchia
Virginia A. Long
Roberto A. Rivera-Soto
John E. Wallace

Allison Accurso
Roberto Alcazar
Christine Allen-Jackson
John A. Almeida
Carmen H. Alvarez*
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New Jersey Judicial Council March 26, 2009

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