



# NEW JERSEY COURTS

annual report 2009-2010





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## A LETTER FROM CHIEF JUSTICE STUART RABNER

I am proud of the collective accomplishments achieved during the court year 2010, which are described in the pages of this report. Working together, we have implemented or expanded a number of programs that will help us serve the public better. We have leveraged our relationships with other government agencies and the bar to provide enhanced service. We have sought innovation and collaboration during a challenging budget climate, in a spirit of shared sacrifice and common goals.

I cannot praise our judges and staff highly enough for their fortitude and commitment to keep us true to our core values of independence, integrity, fairness and quality service. In spite of diminished financial support, they have not only maintained, but indeed exceeded, our record of excellence by developing partnerships and using technologies which make the most of our available resources.

One noteworthy partnership, our Veterans Assistance Project, has moved quickly from a pilot program into

more than half of the state. Now in 11 of our 21 counties, the program is a combined effort of the Judiciary, the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, and the New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health Services. The program is aimed at those veterans who return from military service with physical, mental or personal issues that might lead them toward the wrong side of the law. Using existing resources, including veterans who volunteer to serve as mentors, the program helps veterans receive assistance and mentoring service before and after their court cases are resolved.

Our foreclosure mediation program, the first statewide mandatory mediation program in the nation, has enabled homeowners and lenders to meet in a neutral forum to talk frankly and earnestly about how they might restructure a mortgage that will let homeowners remain in their homes. Since the program began in January 2009, more than 7,700 mediation sessions have been scheduled and more than 1,300 cases have been



settled, with homeowners remaining in their homes. Our partners in this effort include the Office of Dispute Resolution, Legal Services of New Jersey, the Office of the Attorney General, and the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.

Fugitive Safe Surrender is yet another example of successful collaboration, in this case between the courts, the U.S. Marshals Service, prosecutors, public defenders and various community groups. The program, which has been held in 17 cities around the country, allows fugitives who surrender peacefully to have their arrest warrants cleared in exchange for their cooperation in turning themselves in and moving their criminal cases forward. New Jersey has offered the program in Camden and most recently in Newark, using secular sites for all court matters.

Partnerships and collaboration have been the hallmark of many of our initiatives in recent years, and I believe that now, more than ever, we need to find more ways to foster those relationships not only in the Judiciary and in government, but in our communities. We offer the public a number of alternatives to litigation in an effort to help resolve disputes outside of court. From our civil mediation programs, in which certain case types are presumptively referred to mediation, to our matrimonial early settlement program, to our municipal court mediation program, we endeavor to help people work out their differences in a spirit of cooperation rather than adversity.

It is in that same spirit of cooperation that we regularly engage the community to help us examine the court system. Last summer, the Supreme Court Committee on Women

in the Courts published its findings on attorney perceptions of race and gender bias. This spring, we hosted the 2010 National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts, which brought together judges, lawyers, court staff and scholars to explore issues related to bias in the courts and in the community.

As we look to the future, we see the possibility of additional funding cuts, and we soberly consider what that might mean for us and our communities. Nevertheless, we are resolved to find efficiencies and opportunities that will allow us to continue the Judiciary's tradition of excellence. Thank you all for your ongoing, extraordinary efforts in that regard.

Stuart Rabner  
*Chief Justice*  
*June 30, 2010*



## A LETTER FROM JUDGE GLENN A. GRANT, ACTING ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COURTS

The annual report for court year 2010 underscores the commitment and hard work of judges, administrators and staff who work in the Judiciary. While we have accomplished much, we did so under significant staffing and resource challenges. Despite these obstacles, our court system remained committed to providing an opportunity for New Jersey residents to have a fair and independent forum for the resolution of their disputes.

Through the dedication, creativity and hard work of our staff we were able to meet and respond to the internal and external pressures on our court system. The needs of our community have changed due to this fiscal downturn. In response, we have sought new and innovative ways to carry out the mission of providing the fair and orderly resolution of disputes conveniently, economically and promptly. As members of the New Jersey Judiciary, we are part of an organization that is always striving for continuous improvement to enhance services for litigants and attorneys

who access our court system. We resolved more than 7 million cases in our Supreme Court, the appellate and trial divisions of our Superior Court, the Tax Court and our municipal courts, and we again made progress in reducing our backlog of old cases.

Those successes would not have been possible without the dedication and perseverance of the judges and court staff. Also critical to our success are the investments we have made in technology and innovations born of our unwavering commitment to provide excellent service. This year, we have undertaken many innovative programs and practices in an effort to maintain and expand services for court users. For example, the Judiciary Electronic Filing Information System – JEFIS – enabled the courts to resolve nearly half a million special civil cases last year. Ten years ago those cases would have been filed manually. JEFIS has now been expanded to include foreclosure cases to accommodate a 200 percent increase in foreclosure filings since 2005. Police now file tickets



electronically right from their police vehicles in many of the municipal courts. Judgments of conviction are created electronically throughout the state for criminal matters. Those projects and others like them are part of our continued effort to become an entirely paperless court system.

We have also continued our efforts to develop programs that focus on the overall quality of justice for our citizens by ensuring fairness and equal access. One example is the expansion of the Veterans Assistance Project, which is now in place in 11 vicinages. We have also seen an expansion in our Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI), which is now in place in 13 counties. We expect to add two more this year. Through this initiative we have developed trust and relationships across agencies that have produced significant results: saving taxpayers'

money, improving public safety, protecting communities and, more importantly, saving children at risk of being lost to a future life of crime.

Another example is the implementation of a specialized mental health caseload in our probation division, which will enable us to better serve clients with mental health issues. Meanwhile, our probation division continues to provide vital direct services to hundreds of thousands of citizens through our adult and juvenile probation supervision programs, child support enforcement, drug courts and many other programs.

The Judiciary continues to partner with the executive branch on programs such as the statewide implementation of NJKiDS. The extraordinary effort and diligence of our family court judges, child support and family division staff and our partners at the Department of Human Services has resulted in the successful statewide implementation of a child support system that sets a new foundation for better serving the children of New Jersey.

Several new initiatives were implemented this court year to

enhance access and fairness for both our employees and court users. Those efforts were predicated upon our strong technological infrastructure and expanded use of various forms of social media that enable us to provide information to a diverse and ever-increasing technologically savvy audience. In addition to distributing court news and information online, we have begun using Twitter, Short Message Service (SMS) feeds and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds to disseminate information such as press releases, unscheduled court closings, and significant Supreme Court decisions. These tools are available to anyone who signs up for the services. We also provide additional training and knowledge to our staff and the public by producing an ongoing series of short, educational YouTube videos called *Court Clips*. And to stay further connected, we have established a Facebook page.

We have assisted in the production of a new version of our educational video, *You, the Juror*, which is shown in every courthouse to explain the legal process to prospective jurors. Nearly a million and a half New Jersey residents who are

summoned for jury duty each year will view that video.

On the topic of diversity, this Judiciary has a long-standing tradition of celebrating the different cultures and ethnic groups that comprise the workforce of our Judiciary. New Jersey has one of the most diverse populations in the nation, and in almost every vicinage we hold events celebrating the different backgrounds of our judges and staff. We have included some information about those events in this annual report to give you a sense of our commitment to access and fairness, not only in our Judiciary family, but in our community.

These pages reflect our dedication and commitment to ensure equal access and fairness to the people of our state. I am confident that you will find that the information contained in this year's annual report reflects the excellence of the New Jersey Judiciary.

Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.  
*Acting Administrative Director*  
June 30, 2010



# AN OPEN DOOR TO JUSTICE

## Enhancing Access and Fairness in the Courts

### JUDICIARY HOSTS NATIONAL CONSORTIUM ON FAIRNESS

The New Jersey Judiciary hosted the 22nd conference and annual meeting of the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts from April 28 through May 1 in New Brunswick. Organized by the Supreme Court Committee on Minority Concerns, the conference addressed the ongoing need for every judiciary to seek opportunities to improve access and fairness and to build public trust and confidence in the court system.

The conference, “Transformative Tools for Delivering Justice in the 21st Century,” drew participants from more than 30 court jurisdictions to share ideas and practical information to help promote the delivery of fairness and equity in the courts.

Topics included minority participation in the judicial process; minority access to the courts; juvenile justice, welfare and the family; criminal justice and the minority defendant; education, outreach, and court-community partnerships; administration and programming; theory, research



and policymaking; and the use of technology as a vehicle for expanding access to justice. Speakers included Chief Justice Stuart Rabner as well as prominent judges, attorneys, court managers and legal scholars from around the nation.

The New Jersey Judiciary, one of the four founding members of the consortium, also hosted the annual conference in 1990 and in 2000. As host of the 2010 conference, New Jersey carried on its tradition of continuous improvement in the fairness and accessibility of the courts.

## NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY HARNESSES SOCIAL MEDIA TO SHARE COURT NEWS AND INFORMATION

One of the first states to develop a statewide website for its Judiciary, New Jersey remains a frontrunner in embracing technologies that allow broader and faster access to court news and information. In 2009, the courts adopted several social media to keep court users informed of the latest court news and information.

Court users can sign up on the Judiciary website for breaking news alerts via Short Message Service (SMS) text alerts on their cell phones. The service announces unscheduled court closings and other high priority information so that users who are not in the office or at home in front of their computers will receive the information in real time on their cell phones. Court users also can sign up at njcourts.com to receive short “tweets” about breaking court news.

Users also can add one of three Judiciary Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds to their home pages. They can choose to receive the news release feed, notices to the bar, or Supreme

and Appellate Court opinions, or all three options, by clicking on the RSS icon on the Judiciary home page. The site links directly to a sign-up page that allows users to have the feeds sent to their personal start page on Google, Yahoo or another Web-based personal site. When a new item is posted to the Judiciary website in one of those categories, the information will be available immediately on the personal start page.

Facebook users can join the group “New Jersey Courts” to see press releases, court information and photos of court events. The Judiciary’s Facebook page is updated daily and the links can be shared with others who are not currently members of the group.

Finally, the Judiciary has posted a series of videos on YouTube for court users to learn more about the courts. The Court Clips series, available at youtube.com/njcourts, includes videos about the Judiciary’s mortgage foreclosure mediation program and the Veteran’s Assistance Project. Future



videos will address help available for self-represented litigants and volunteer opportunities.

As reliance on new media technologies expands, the Judiciary will continue to seek new and better ways of reaching out to litigants, attorneys, students and members of the public to maximize opportunities to keep the public informed and educated about the work of the courts.

## STATEWIDE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM REACHES FIVE-YEAR MARK

Court year 2010 marks the fifth year of the statewide ombudsman program. Going to court can be daunting, particularly for first-time litigants and for those who seek to represent themselves in court. Through the ombudsman program, each vicinage offers a dedicated customer service manager to help the public navigate the courts.

The ombudsmen assist litigants and other members of the public by explaining court procedures, programs and services. They help self-represented litigants find forms and instructions for representing themselves in court. Visitors can seek help from the ombudsmen to find the appropriate

offices and court staff. The ombudsmen work with the various divisions to resolve customer complaints. They refer customers to relevant social service agencies or other local agencies that can assist them. They also play a critical role in bridging the court-community gap and building public trust and confidence by developing public education programs, distributing brochures and informational material and developing court tours and community outreach programs such as public education workshops and speakers' bureaus.

Although ombudsmen cannot offer legal advice, they can to provide contact information to lawyer referral services in each county.



The ombudsman program began in 1996 as a pilot in the Camden Vicinage and soon was adopted by the Essex Vicinage and, later, by the Hudson Vicinage. The program was implemented statewide as a result of guidelines issued by the Judiciary in May 2005, making New Jersey the first court system in the nation with a statewide ombudsman program.

## COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE COURTS RELEASES SURVEY RESULTS

The Supreme Court Committee on Women in the Courts published the findings of its survey on attorney perceptions of race and gender bias in the New Jersey Courts in July 2009. The online survey, conducted in the fall of 2007, asked attorneys and judges their opinions on the impact of race and gender bias in the courthouse, on law clerk opportunities and on judicial appointments.

The majority of the 851 respondents said that attorneys are treated about the same in court, regardless of race and gender. When those results are broken out by race and gender, however, the results show that female attorneys and attorneys of color are more likely to perceive bias. A similar disparity between the respondents was found regarding opportunities for law clerk appointments and judgeships.

The most common suggestion that respondents made to ensure bias-free courts was more training for judges, court staff, attorneys and court security personnel. The Committee on Women in the Courts regularly conducts training programs for judges, attorneys and law students. The committee has begun to develop additional programs



*Panel members (left to right): John McGill III, assistant ethics counsel, Office of Attorney Ethics; Professor Susan Sturm, George M. Jaffin Professor of Law and Social Responsibility, Columbia Law School; Lynn Hecht Schafraan, Senior Vice President and Director of the National Judicial Education Program, Legal Momentum; Chief Justice Stuart Rabner; Paulette Brown, Partner and Chief Diversity Officer, Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP; Janine Matton, Deputy Attorney General and co-chair, Subcommittee on Women of Color; Professor Esther Canty-Barnes, Rutgers School of Law–Newark, and co-chair, Subcommittee on Women of Color.*

to continue its work to eliminate bias in the courts.

More than 150 attorneys and judges attended a panel discussion on issues raised by the survey report. Hosted by the Judiciary and by Rutgers School of Law–Newark, the event brought together judges, attorneys and legal scholars to discuss race and gender bias in the courts and the community. The evening was an important opportunity for the legal community to ponder the complexity of unexamined biases, and it underscored the courts' efforts at analysis and improvement.

## CELEBRATIONS HIGHLIGHT INTERDEPENDENCE OF COURTS AND COMMUNITIES

Equal access and fairness are the cornerstones of any justice system. In the resolution of more than 7 million cases per year, the New Jersey Judiciary affects the lives of millions of court users, including litigants, families, businesses, attorneys, witnesses and jurors. Each and every court user expects and deserves to be treated fairly, respectfully and courteously. New Jersey, one of the most diverse states in the nation, enjoys the benefits of a widely diverse workforce. The Judiciary values that diversity, both in the community and in its employees. Those who deliver justice to the public must not only respect, but also reflect, the diverse communities that they serve. Only then will the courts gain the respect and trust of the public that are necessary to uphold the rule of law.

On occasion, the courts take the opportunity to remind themselves and the community of their important role in upholding the rule of law. Public education programs, diversity events and other celebrations help bridge the gap between the courts and the community and bring about a renewed commitment to ensuring access and fairness to all court users, while also helping the public better understand court programs, procedures and policies that reflect those commitments.

Such events encourage dialogue, expand mutual understanding and build trust and confidence.





# SUPREME COURT

The New Jersey Supreme Court is the state's highest court. The seven justices are appointed to an initial seven-year term, after which they can be reappointed with tenure until age 70, the mandatory retirement age for all New Jersey court judges.

The cases that are heard by the court are appeals from the Appellate Division of Superior Court. If an appellate panel is divided on an appeal, the parties have an automatic right to Supreme Court review. If the appellate panel is unanimous, the losing party must file a petition for certification to have the court hear the case. The court grants certification in cases involving constitutional issues, cases in which there have been conflicting rulings in the past and, in certain instances, in cases of great public importance.

From July 2009 through June 2010, the Supreme Court received 1,248 petitions for certification. It granted 91 petitions for certification, heard 89 oral arguments and issued 79 written opinions.

In addition to its judicial responsibilities, the Supreme Court oversees all aspects of Judiciary administration as well as the legal system itself. The court administers bar admissions through the Board of Bar Examiners. During court year

2010, the court admitted 2,974 new attorneys to the New Jersey bar, a 2.2 percent increase from court year 2009.

The court oversees the attorney discipline system, including the Office of Attorney Ethics (OAE) and the Disciplinary Review Board (DRB). The OAE investigates allegations of attorney misconduct and coordinates the work of the state's 18 district ethics committees and 17 fee arbitration committees to help ensure the integrity of the legal profession. Its recommendations for final discipline are reviewed by the DRB, which conducts a second investigation, hearing and review. Recommendations for disbarment are reviewed by the Supreme Court, which issues an order to show cause and offers each attorney in danger of disbarment the opportunity for oral argument. DRB decisions for lesser sanctions are usually final, except in cases where an attorney requests Supreme Court review.

The Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection, supported by annual payments from the state's lawyers and judges, provides reimbursement to victims of attorneys who have been suspended or disbarred for knowing misappropriation of client funds. During court year 2010, the Fund awarded \$1,349,242 to clients for losses caused by 23 lawyers.

## ASSOCIATE JUSTICE JOHN E. WALLACE JR. LEAVES THE COURT AFTER A 26-YEAR JUDICIAL CAREER

Associate Justice John E. Wallace Jr. left the Supreme Court on May 20, 2010 after seven years on the Supreme Court and 26 years as a jurist in the New Jersey Judiciary. Justice Wallace was named to the Superior Court in 1984 by Gov. Thomas H. Kean and was elevated to the Appellate Division in 1992.

A graduate of the University of Delaware and of Harvard Law School, Justice Wallace worked in private practice before his appointment to the Superior Court bench. He also

served as a municipal court judge in Washington Township, in Gloucester County, which means that he has served on the bench at every level of the New Jersey Judiciary.

Justice Wallace authored 1,307 opinions as an appellate judge and 121 opinions as an associate justice, including 91 majority opinions. His work has shaped New Jersey case law in many areas, including search and seizure, criminal confessions and child support.



## SUPREME COURT MANDATES CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION FOR NEW JERSEY'S ATTORNEYS

As of Jan. 1, 2010, every New Jersey attorney is required by the Supreme Court to take professional development courses in order to practice law. Attorneys must earn 24 hours of continuing legal education every two years, including at least four hours on topics related to ethics or professionalism. Continuing legal education is required for all New Jersey attorneys, including judges, law clerks and in-house counsel. Prior to the adoption of Court Rule 1:42, only new attorneys and those seeking designation

as certified attorneys in specific areas of practice were required to take coursework beyond law school.

Attorneys are responsible for verifying that they have met the requirements for continuing their legal education. A random audit system helps to ensure compliance. The new requirement will help maintain the high quality of the legal profession in New Jersey by ensuring that all attorneys remain informed and knowledgeable about new developments



in the law, strategies that will improve their skills and abilities and help them better serve their clients.

## SUPREME COURT SITTING IN NEWARK

The Supreme Court traveled to Newark on Feb. 2, 2010 to hear oral argument in three cases in the renovated appellate courtroom at Veteran's Courthouse. The court's visit to Newark marked the completion of 11 newly constructed appellate chambers in the LeRoy F. Smith Jr. Public Safety Building and the dedication of the refurbished courtroom.

The Supreme Court invited students from Rutgers School of Law—Newark and Seton Hall University School of Law to attend the arguments, providing a unique opportunity for them to observe Supreme Court arguments in person. An overflow room on the first floor allowed attorneys, the public and additional students to watch the arguments live. The court met with law



students for a question-and-answer session after the arguments.

The event marked the second time in recent court history that the Supreme Court heard oral argument outside of Trenton. In March 2009, the Supreme Court heard oral argument in the new

moot courtroom at Rutgers School of Law—Camden, which was designed with the intention of accommodating the seven Supreme Court justices.



## APPELLATE DIVISION of Superior Court

The 33 judges of the Appellate Division hear appeals from New Jersey's trial courts, the Tax Court, and administrative agencies. Judges are named to the Appellate Division by the Chief Justice. The judges are divided into eight parts. Each part has statewide jurisdiction. Cases are decided by a panel of two or three judges on a given part, with every decision delivered as a written opinion. Precedent-setting cases are published as case law. All opinions are available on the Judiciary website and archived on the website of Rutgers School of Law—Camden. The presiding judge for administration of the Appellate Division is Edwin H. Stern.

The courts utilize five courtrooms around the state, as well as hearing arguments at Rutgers School of Law in Newark and in Camden. Administration is centralized through the Appellate Division Clerk's Office in Trenton. The clerk's office includes research, disposition, records and case management functions.

The Appellate Division received 6,341 appeals and 878 interlocutory motions in Court year 2010. During the year, 6,380 appeals and 7,342 motions were decided. Approximately 220 opinions were approved for publication.



## NEW APPELLATE CHAMBERS AND REFURBISHED COURT ROOM EXPAND APPELLATE PRESENCE IN NEW JERSEY'S LARGEST CITY

In January 2010, the Appellate Division moved into the newly refurbished LeRoy F. Smith Public Safety Building in Newark. The move consolidated chambers and library resources for 11 judges who had chambers in Hackensack and Springfield. The consolidation provided significant operational savings. Formerly the Essex County Jail, the building sat empty for several years before undergoing a \$25 million renovation to accommodate the Judiciary and several Essex County administrative offices. The move allowed the Appellate Division to consolidate operations and to take advantage of the building's close proximity to Veteran's Courthouse



and a newly refurbished appellate courtroom, providing better service and accessibility to the North Jersey legal community. The first appellate arguments in the new appellate courtroom were held on Feb. 3, 2010.

## APPELLATE DIVISION ROLLS OUT NEW TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE CASE PROCESSING

The Appellate Division finished court year 2010 with a new, web-enabled case management system. Completed in June 2010, the windows-based system has the division poised to begin electronic filing and case management. The new system offers vastly improved electronic access to appellate case information because court users can now view appellate case information from public terminals in each vicinage.

Electronic case management is particularly important in the Appellate Division. All of the division's 33 judges maintain individual chambers, travel around the state to hear oral arguments and work together in panels to decide cases and issue written opinions. Instead of relying on hard copies and email to share documents, drafts and information, everyone involved in the resolution of motions and cases in the

appellate courts will be able to send, retrieve and store documents, drafts, and case notes electronically. The goal is to develop a fully paperless appellate court system, where attorneys, judges, law clerks, secretaries and staff will have easy online access to documents and information to resolve appeals as efficiently and promptly as possible.

## JUDICIARY IMPLEMENTS COURTSMART TO ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF COURT RECORDINGS

An accurate record of Superior Court proceedings can be a critical component of an appeal. The New Jersey Judiciary has adopted digital recording technology that will help ensure an accurate record for every court event. Introduced in 2007, CourtSmart uses a secondary back-up recording to capture court proceedings even when the primary recording system fails due to operator error or equipment malfunction. The system runs automatically during regular court hours and captures the entire

days' worth of court proceedings. This back-up recording, which is stored securely within the courthouse, is not considered an official court record, but it remains available if needed. According to protocols approved by the Supreme Court, access to the back-up recording is strictly limited and must be approved by the assignment judge in each vicinage solely to reconstruct the parts of a court record that have been lost on the primary recording.

Court users, attorneys and members of the public will benefit from court proceedings that are recorded consistently and accurately in every courtroom. As of June 30, 2010, CourtSmart was installed in 292 courtrooms, with the remaining 134 courtrooms in the state scheduled for installation in the coming months. New Jersey will be one of the first states in the nation to achieve statewide implementation of this critical technology.





## THE TRIAL COURTS

The Superior Court of New Jersey is organized into 15 vicinages, some of which include multiple counties. Together, the Superior Courts resolve more than 1 million cases annually in the family division, the criminal division, the civil division and the general equity part.

A critical performance measure in the Superior Court is the percentage of cases in backlog. Backlog refers to cases that remain open beyond the Judiciary's self-imposed time goals for resolution. By reducing backlog, the Judiciary helps to improve the quality of justice for court users without sacrificing the fairness and integrity of

the judicial process. In court year 2010, the Judiciary reduced its backlog in the Superior Court by 1 percent, leaving 88 percent of all Superior Court cases within time goals for resolution. Over the years, the Judiciary has continued its trend of backlog reduction by adopting best practice standards that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of court operations. On June 30, 2010, 225,839 cases were pending in Superior Court, including 27,197 cases in backlog. As a percentage of caseload, about 78 percent of active pending cases were current on June 30, 2000. Ten years later, 88 percent of active pending cases are current.



# FAMILY DIVISION

## NEW COURT POLICY PROTECTS ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN

The New Jersey Judiciary has made a number of important changes during the past 10 years in the oversight of cases involving abused and neglected children. In March 2010, the Supreme Court adopted a policy recommended by the conference of family presiding judges and managers that gives judges full responsibility for monitoring children removed from their homes by the state's Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) due to allegations of abuse and neglect.

Judges will be supported in this work by the state's Child Placement Review (CPR) boards. CPR boards are committees of volunteers in each county who review every new case within 45 days to gather information vital to obtaining a permanent home for the child. CPR boards also will conduct new and periodic reviews for cases in which children have been placed voluntarily with DYFS by their parents and guardians without any allegations of abuse or neglect.

The new policy gives the courts exclusive oversight of each case in which parental rights have been terminated and the child remains in foster care. The courts will continue to monitor each case until the child has been placed in a permanent home.

The policy conforms to changes in federal law, including the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 and the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1982. The policy also eliminates redundancies in the oversight of cases involving children in foster care and provides vulnerable children with better opportunities to achieve permanency. Ultimately, children in out-of-home placements and those who are free for adoption after parents' rights were terminated will receive better service from this more efficient system of oversight.

## **BOOKLET FOR FAMILIES OF JUVENILES IN DELINQUENCY MATTERS MAKES COURT PROCESSES MORE ACCESSIBLE**

The Judiciary has released a guide for parents and guardians designed to assist families of juveniles with delinquency matters before the courts. The 12-page booklet provides parents and guardians with a concise but informative overview of the juvenile justice system to help them make informed decisions about how they can best help their children. The booklet answers questions about whether children in juvenile matters need attorneys, whether bail is available

for juveniles who have been detained, and what types of court events will be held to determine the resolution of a court case.

Juvenile delinquency involves violations of the law by youth under the age of 18. The courts determine how the case will proceed by weighing factors such as the age of the child, the seriousness of the offense, the history of prior offenses, and the willingness of the

parties to cooperate. Some cases are heard by judges, while others might be resolved by alternative means such as a juvenile referee or a juvenile conference committee. The booklet is available in all Superior Court courthouses and at [njcourts.com](http://njcourts.com), so that parents, guardians and youth will find a convenient resource to answer their questions about their day in court.

## **JUDICIARY IMPLEMENTS STATEWIDE CHILD WELFARE MEDIATION PROGRAM**

In November 2009, the Judiciary began statewide implementation of its child welfare mediation program for cases of abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights and kinship legal guardianship.

Child welfare mediation brings together all of the parties in a case to work with a trained mediator in a non-adversarial setting that fosters the exchange of information and ideas to identify and address the best interest of the child or children in the case. Mediation participants include parents and their attorneys, the child's appointed law guardian, a deputy attorney general to represent the state, a court-appointed special advocate, a DYFS case worker and supervisor, and resource family members or relatives.

Begun in 2005 in 10 vicinages, the program was evaluated carefully before being approved for statewide implementation. Early results show that mediation produces high settlement rates, helps parents understand their situation more clearly, permits parties to develop creative solutions, produces a higher rate of parental compliance with visitation and with accepting and participating in services and saves court time. Mediation gives the parties who are involved better access to the courts and a more effective method to provide the best possible outcome for the children.



# CRIMINAL DIVISION

## NEW JERSEYS DRUG COURTS IMPROVING LIVES AND COMMUNITIES

New Jersey's drug courts have transformed the lives of thousands of drug-addicted offenders by providing them with treatment rather than incarceration, intensive supervision and incentives to remake their lives. Drug courts reflect a societal shift toward therapeutic jurisprudence, with focus moved to the offender rather than the offense. Frequent attendance in court and personal interaction with the judge and other members of the drug court team has proven effective in coercing drug court participants to meet requirements along the road to recovery.

New Jersey's drug court program began in 1997 as pilot programs in Camden and Passaic counties, expanding into Essex, Union and Mercer counties in 1999. In 2004, legislative

appropriations made equal access to drug courts available statewide. New Jersey has been a national leader in implementing a statewide program available throughout every county.

In addition to improved rates of employment, health coverage and drivers licenses, drug court has improved the lives of participants' families. 186 babies have been born drug-free to female drug court participants, and 104 participants have regained custody of their minor children.

In court year 2010, drug courts accepted 1,374 new participants. 406 participants graduated during the court year, while 565 moved into the fourth and final stage of the program.

	Upon Entering	Upon Graduating
Employed	31%	87%
Health benefits	17%	53%
Drivers license	12%	54%

## **CRIMINAL DIVISION REDUCES BACKLOG**

The Judiciary has reduced the number of backlogged criminal cases by 13 percent during court year 2010.

Cases are considered to be in backlog when they remain open beyond the Judiciary's self-imposed time goal for resolution. The time goal for criminal cases, no matter the severity of the charges, is four months.

On June 30, 2009, the courts had 7,252 criminal cases in backlog, and 9,780 cases in inventory, for a total active pending caseload of 17,032 cases. On June 30 2010, the number of criminal cases in backlog was 6,289, with 9,200 cases in inventory, for a total active pending caseload of 15,489.

## **COMPREHENSIVE JUDICIARY ORIENTATION PROGRAM PREPARES JUDGES FOR CRIMINAL BENCH**

In court year 2010, the criminal division implemented a training program for judges newly assigned to the criminal bench. During two days of classroom instruction, judges receive information about courtroom control and demeanor as well as detailed substantive information on criminal law and court procedures. Topics range from significant case law and court rules affecting criminal proceedings to procedures for setting bail to the many forms filed at various points during a case.

Conducted by experienced judges, the instruction provides a consistent and comprehensive introduction to the criminal bench to give judges a strong foundation as they begin their new assignment. The classroom training is supplemented by 35 hours

spent observing experienced judges in criminal court proceedings. The judges watch other judges on the bench, learn about case processing teams and become familiar with staff roles and responsibilities in the division. They also receive an introduction to the various automated systems used in the resolution of criminal cases.

The comprehensive training program helps new criminal judges provide better service to the public by building their knowledge and awareness. The training will have lasting effects on the cases that appear before them, as well as on the people—the defendants, lawyers, witness, jurors and other court participants—whose court experiences are largely shaped by the judges who hear their cases.



## CIVIL DIVISION

### COMPREHENSIVE JUDICIAL ORIENTATION PROGRAM HELPS JUDGES TRANSITION TO THE CIVIL BENCH

In court year 2010, the civil division began providing newly assigned judges with a comprehensive introduction to the civil and special civil parts. The program includes two and one-half days of intensive classroom instruction provided regionally by a faculty of seasoned judges, an orientation provided to the civil judge in his or her own vicinage and a mentoring and observation program conducted by experienced civil and special civil judges for the new judge within his or her own vicinage. The judicial faculty for the program themselves participate in an orientation seminar to ensure that the orientation consistently delivers complete information for every new civil judge.

In addition to extensive coverage of civil statutes and Rules of Court, each new judge observes a variety of

court proceedings, from motions for summary judgment to jury selection, before sitting on the bench. Judges also receive training in “behind the scenes” court processes to gain an understanding of court administration, the step-by-step procedures followed by self-represented litigants, and other information that will allow them to comprehend the “big picture” of statewide and vicinage operations. The curriculum of the program was developed with significant input from experienced civil judges, who were asked to share the information they wished they had known when they first came to the division. The orientation program helps decrease the frustration and delays experienced by anyone in a new job. More importantly, it helps each new civil judge to serve the public as efficiently and effectively as possible.

## SPECIAL CIVIL PART REMAINS CURRENT DESPITE CASELOAD INCREASE

Special civil cases, which are landlord-tenant actions and cases valued at \$15,000 or less, are by far the largest caseload in the Superior Court. During Court year 2010, the courts received 609,648 special civil filings, a 1 percent increase from the previous year. Despite this increase, the backlog was reduced by 31 percent due, in part, to

JEFIS, the Judiciary's Electronic Filing and Imaging System.

With JEFIS, the courts are able to address the enormous caseload of special civil cases quickly and efficiently. Approximately 95 percent of the eligible special civil caseload is now filed and managed electronically.

Judges, attorneys and court staff have instant access to court documents and information that help move cases through each step in the resolution process without delay. Resolved cases can remain in electronic storage for easy retrieval without the cost of maintaining physical storage space.

## SELF-STUDY REVEALS SUCCESS OF BEST PRACTICES FOR ESTABLISHING TRIAL DATE CERTAINTY

A study completed in March 2010 shows that the civil division's best practices initiative, first begun more than ten years ago, has proven successful at reducing the backlog of civil cases and providing a high degree of trial date certainty for most civil cases.

After statewide unification was completed in 1995, the civil division developed best practice standards that would bring consistency and predictability to the civil divisions in the state's 21 counties. Trial date certainty was a priority in the reform efforts, as such certainty saves attorneys and litigants the time and money spent having to prepare for trials that are repeatedly adjourned. The new standards provided realistic discovery periods depending on the complexity of the case type and firm discovery end dates, which, once passed, could be extended only for extraordinary circumstances. Adjournment requests,

once routinely granted, are now less common and subject to greater scrutiny by the court. Today, attorneys, witnesses and litigants can realistically expect a trial to begin on the date it is scheduled.

The 2010 study shows that a number of factors continue to influence the court's ability to assure trial date certainty. Interpreting needs must be identified and accommodated, expert witnesses are not always amenable to the trial schedule, and the number of cases settling before trial all can affect the trial calendar. Overall, however, the civil visitation program, in which judges and managers visit each county to gauge the effectiveness of the civil justice system, confirms that a high degree of trial date certainty has been achieved in most counties to the greater satisfaction of attorneys and litigants.



# GENERAL EQUITY

## MEDIATION PROGRAM HELPS HOMEOWNERS DURING FORECLOSURE CRISIS

The number of foreclosure cases filed in the New Jersey Courts has risen sharply in recent years. While 29,851 foreclosure cases were filed in court year 2007, that figure increased to 45,117 cases in court year 2008, 60,107 cases in court year 2009 and 65,222 cases in court year 2010.

Almost 95 percent of residential foreclosures go through to the sheriff's sale uncontested. The foreclosure mediation program, implemented in January 2009, provides mediators to work together with homeowners and mortgage lenders to try to develop a solution to avoid foreclosure. It is particularly helpful for homeowners seeking to stay in their homes for a few more months so that, for example, a child can finish out the school year without having to move or for those whose circumstances will allow them to continue paying a mortgage if the terms of the loan can be modified to make payments more affordable.

Homeowners are provided with notice of the availability of free mediation

at several points in the foreclosure process. Free housing counselors, trained and provided by the New Jersey Home Mortgage Finance Agency, will meet with homeowners prior to mediation to determine their ability to pay a modified mortgage. Once they have their financial information in order, homeowners can participate in mediation with specially trained mediators and representatives from their mortgage lenders to try to work out an agreement.

During court year 2010, 4,348 homeowners requested mediation, and 2,253 cases were completed, with settlement achieved in 1,189 of those cases. Even homeowners who are unable to work out a new mortgage agreement may find the mediation process helpful in negotiating an exit plan in which the lender provides a cash incentive to the homeowners in exchange for the deed on a mutually agreed upon date. As lenders deal with a growing inventory of foreclosed homes, the agreement allows both parties to find a mutually beneficial end to their relationship.



# TAX COURT

The Tax Court of New Jersey is a statewide trial court that resolves disputes between taxpayers and local and state taxing agencies. Tax Court judges hear appeals directly from decisions of local tax assessors and the decisions of county boards of taxation, which hear property tax disputes involving taxpayers and municipalities.

They also hear appeals from decisions of the director of the Division of Taxation, on such matters as income tax, sales tax and business tax as well as homestead rebate appeals.

The Tax Court was created in 1979 as a convenient and effective forum for reviewing state and local tax assessments. Through the Tax Court, the New Jersey Judiciary has created a consistent and uniform body of tax law to guide taxpayers and taxing authorities.



*Patrick De Almeida  
Presiding Judge of the Tax Court*

During court year 2010, the Tax Court saw a 31 percent increase in filings compared to court year 2009, which was a record-breaking year for tax appeals. From July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, the Tax Court received 18,426 new cases. On June 3, 2010, the Tax Court had 31,390 cases pending.



## PROBATION

The probation division oversees a number of functions, including adult and juvenile supervision, the Intensive Supervision Program (ISP) for a carefully selected group of incarcerated adults approved by a panel of judges for early release, the Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program (JISP), the collection of criminal fines and restitution and the collection of child support.

### INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROGRAM PROVIDES SAVINGS AND HELPS REINTEGRATE INCARCERATED OFFENDERS

The Intensive Supervision Program (ISP) provides an opportunity for nonviolent inmates to serve the remainder of their prison term in the community, under strict supervision by specially trained probation officers. Both rigorous and highly structured, ISP emphasizes control, monitoring, surveillance and addiction and mental health treatment as needed. ISP has proven successful in assisting participants to re-enter the community and avoid criminal behaviors that often lead to re-incarceration. Because participants are required to work and

to support themselves, each participant who enters the program represents thousands of dollars saved in prison costs. More than 16,900 participants have been released into ISP since 1983.

As of June 30, 2010, 1,434 active participants were under ISP. More than \$2 million in court-required payments were disbursed during the court year, including nearly \$1 million in restitution. The program also collected more than \$150,000 in child support payments from ISP participants.

## JUVENILE SUPERVISION PILOTS PROGRAMS TO ENHANCE ACCESS AND FAIRNESS

In addition to supervising adjudicated youth, juvenile probation services also monitors youth placed on a deferred status, with the original complaint being dismissed after a period of time if the client complies with special conditions. On June 30, 2010, the program was supervising and monitoring 9,014 clients statewide.

The primary goal of juvenile probation is rehabilitation. To that end, juvenile probation officers address developmental issues and family circumstances of adjudicated youth, including treatment, education and employment readiness, while enforcing the standard and special conditions ordered by the court. Probation officers work with parents and guardians to ensure that interventions introduced are effective. In court year 2010, an orientation program was developed for statewide implementation. The program helps families understand how probation services can assist their children and provides information about local agencies that can offer

additional assistance. Implementation has been completed in six vicinages. Full implementation is anticipated in the coming months.

Juvenile probation services provides support to the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative by seeking to use appropriate detention alternatives wherever possible and to minimize the number of youth placed in detention for technical violations of the conditions of their probation such as breaking curfew or missing school. A survey that asked juvenile probation officers and managers to rate the seriousness of various types of non-compliant behavior was conducted and will also be administered to public defenders, assistant prosecutors and family court judges who work with juveniles. The information will be used to establish consistent statewide policies on the use of interventions, intermediate sanctions and compliance incentives to help ensure systemic fairness.

## ADULT SUPERVISION ENHANCES SERVICES WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM



Probation services supervises more than 62,000 offenders in generalized caseloads as well as specialized caseloads such as sex offenders and the drug court program. A new specialized caseload for probationers with mental health issues was implemented as a pilot program during the court year. With a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the probation division trained a select group of 30 probation officers to provide supervision services for individuals whom mental health

professionals have diagnosed with mental health disorders, with the goal of assisting them to successfully complete their term of probation.

In court year 2010, the probation division worked with the National Institute for Corrections (NIC) to review and revalidate the division's risk assessment instrument. Together with the division's outcome-based supervision standards, the risk instrument provides a proven and objective means of determining appropriate supervision levels for adult probationers. The instrument measures the likelihood that a probationer will re-offend while under supervision based on factors such as age when first offense occurred, employment and drug and alcohol dependency. The NIC revalidation confirms the instrument's adherence to the latest standards devised by criminal justice professionals to assess risk.



## CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT ROLLS OUT NJKIDS TO BETTER SERVE NEW JERSEY'S FAMILIES

Within the probation division, child support enforcement monitors and enforces the collection of court-ordered child support and spousal support. On June 30, 2010, a total of 319,535 cases were being enforced. Collections totaled \$1.3 billion in 2010, a 4.7 percent increase over court year 2009. Nearly all child support payments are distributed electronically through direct deposits to personal bank accounts or through state-issued debit cards. Electronic transfers keep the funds secure and make the money available more quickly. For example, custodial parents in transitional housing can access funds without worrying that they were mailed to the wrong address. Electronic transfers save significant printing and postage costs.

In court year 2010, the Judiciary worked closely with the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the New Jersey Office of Information Technology to complete the implementation of NJKiDS, a web-based application that allows the Judicial and Executive branches of government to store, retrieve and manage information on the state's child support cases. NJKiDS is a real-

time system that can interface with the Judiciary's Family Automated Case Tracking System to provide for seamless data interchange between the two systems. NJKiDS streamlines court processes that affect probation child support, the family and finance divisions, 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. The majority of calls are resolved by call center representatives. The remaining calls are referred to vicinage staff for further action. In court year 2010, the call center received 115,117 calls, averaging approximately 462 calls per day.



## JUVENILE INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROGRAM REHABILITATES YOUTH AT SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS

From its inception in 1993, the Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program (JISP) has served as an alternative to incarceration for juvenile delinquents who are at risk of reoffending. JISP offers significant savings over the cost of detention and provides youth offenders the opportunity to remain in their communities as they attempt to restructure their lives.

More rigorous than standard juvenile probation, JISP requires frequent contact by probation officers who

spend almost all of their time in the field. Officers average 13 direct contacts per month with each participant. It also utilizes community mentors and other volunteer role models who assist in the rehabilitation of the participants. Clients must adhere to strict regulations regarding curfew compliance, school attendance, employment when appropriate and any court-ordered community service requirements. Participants also must attend mental health and substance abuse treatment programs if they are

ordered by the court. The payment of restitution and fines also is required to help instill a sense of accountability and to make amends with the victims. JISP encourages positive social engagement by providing a continuum of rewards and sanctions to help clients in their rehabilitation, but it makes community safety a priority. Juveniles charged with serious offenses involving sex, violence, arson or first degree offenses are ineligible to apply for JISP.

## COMPREHENSIVE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF COMPLIANCE ENFORCEMENT

The Comprehensive Enforcement Program (CEP), which celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2010, enforces compliance of court-ordered restitution, fines, penalties, assessments, surcharges and judgments in Superior Court. CEP also enforces compliance of court-ordered community service in Superior and Municipal courts. Enforcement of court orders means that victims receive compensation for their losses and that funding will be available for special programs such as drug education, drug testing, equipping municipal police officers and assisting victims of

sexual assault and domestic violence. Just as important, CEP enforcement maintains the respect of the public for the rule of law and the credibility of the judicial process.

Individuals who do not comply can be sanctioned with an assignment to a labor assistance program or forced community service program. Willful noncompliance can result in the loss of driving privileges, additional fines, state income tax refund offsets, civil judgments, income withholding, weekly reporting requirements, bench

warrants and jail time. CEP holds hearings for those who fail to return a jury questionnaire or who fail to attend when they have been assigned to jury duty. CEP also enforces judgments and restitution entered in favor of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection.

On June 30, 2010, CEP was monitoring the compliance of more than 41,000 adults and juveniles. Approximately \$23 million of the \$33 million in total probation collections for court year 2010 were received after the imposition of CEP strategies.



# MUNICIPAL COURT

New Jersey's municipal courts resolved more than 6 million cases in court year 2010. Their limited jurisdiction includes traffic and parking matters, DWI cases, local ordinance violations, fish and game violations and disorderly persons offenses.

New Jersey's court system includes the 530 municipal courts around the state. The municipal courts share a statewide technology infrastructure that includes NJMCDirect, the statewide online traffic ticket payment website, as well

as the Judiciary's municipal automated complaint system, which connects the Administrative Office of the Courts, the municipal courts, local police departments, the New Jersey State Police and the Motor Vehicle Commission. Statewide consistency in policy and procedure is achieved through training for municipal court judges and municipal court administrators and through vicinage support from presiding judges of municipal courts and municipal division managers.

## JUDICIARY LAUNCHES STATEWIDE ELECTRONIC TICKETING PROGRAM

In court year 2010 the Judiciary, along with the New Jersey State Police and the Office of the Attorney General, developed a standard technology system to allow law enforcement agencies around the state to generate and file traffic and parking tickets electronically.

The e-Ticket system allows officers to create, validate and print tickets for parking and traffic violations electronically. E-Ticketing can be done wirelessly from a police vehicle or remotely at authorized computers in a participating law enforcement agency. Paper printouts of e-Tickets can be produced instantly.

E-Ticketing provides significant benefits to law enforcement. Officers no longer have to fill out the current uniform traffic ticket form or file a hard copy of the ticket with the municipal court. Another important advantage is the elimination of ticket control procedures for assigning and maintaining ticket book inventory records.

Each e-Ticket automatically updates the Judiciary's automated traffic system (ATS), which is used not

only by the courts but also connects with NJMCDirect and is shared by executive branch agencies such as the Motor Vehicle Commission and the New Jersey State Police. The statewide integration of e-Tickets with ATS promotes efficiency, improves data quality and improves service to the state's drivers.

By using technology developed for e-Ticketing, the Judiciary also is able to support the Red Light Camera initiative. Through this initiative, municipalities contract individually with vendors who mount cameras at selected intersections to capture vehicle data on drivers who do not stop at red lights. Both e-Ticketing and the Red Light Camera program have enormous potential to improve safety on New Jersey's roadways. More than 9,000 e-Tickets have been issued since implementation began in September 2009. The Red Light Program, which has been operating in Newark since December 2009, has resulted in more than 70,000 tickets issued.

## JUDICIARY ASSISTS MUNICIPALITIES IN COURT CONSOLIDATION EFFORTS

In response to declining state aid and increased operating expenses, a growing number of municipalities are seeking to reduce costs by merging their municipal courts into joint courts or shared courts.

Joint courts allow two or more municipalities to form one new, larger court. All cases are commingled and the court's jurisdiction covers the entire geographic area of the

participating municipalities. Shared municipal courts allow two or more municipalities to share resources such as court facilities, staff and supplies. In contrast to joint courts, each shared court maintains its unique identity and jurisdiction. New Jersey has 21 joint municipal courts serving 59 municipalities as well as 83 municipal courts with sharing arrangements.

Although the ultimate decision to form a joint or shared court rests with municipal governments, the Judiciary works closely with local leaders to provide support and oversight in the creation of those courts. Through advice, technical assistance and statewide standards for court operations, the Judiciary helps to ensure that every municipal court in New Jersey serves the needs of the public.

## MUNICIPAL COURT ADMINISTRATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The municipal court system in New Jersey has led the nation in efforts to create a highly trained, professional work force to manage the work of local courts of limited jurisdiction. Legislation in 1993 set the stage for the Supreme Court to create a certification program for municipal court administrators. The program has become a national model and the designation CMCA, for certified municipal court administrator, is a badge of honor for more than 580 court administrators around the state.

The intensive training program to reach certification typically takes a number of years to complete. Candidates must complete course work, pass written and oral examinations and develop a practical court improvement project for their local court. Once certified, court administrators must complete 45 hours of continuing education every three years in order to maintain certification.

In May 2006 the highly successful program became permanent with the signing of a law to make certification

a requirement for municipal court administrators. The new law laid out the details of a time table for achieving certification and other fine points, but the message was clear. The certification of court administrators is critical to provide professional, efficient and well-informed service to the public in New Jersey's municipal courts.

## **MUNICIPAL COURTS DATABASE OVERHAULED TO HARNESS LATEST WEB TECHNOLOGIES**

In May 2010 the Judiciary began implementation of the new municipal automated complaint system (MACS). This multi-phase, multi-year project was made possible through 2004 legislation that added a \$3 fee onto traffic and parking tickets to create a dedicated modernization fund for the municipal courts database. MACS replaces the previous database with a system designed not only to store and retrieve data

on every criminal complaint filed in the municipal courts, but to make the information available as a convenient, windows-based system that incorporates all traffic and parking violations information into a single statewide database. By adopting Web technologies, the new system will ensure the integrity of municipal court information while also improving the courts' efficiency and accessibility.

## **PRINCIPLES OF MUNICIPAL COURT ADMINISTRATION**

The centerpiece of municipal court training is POMCA, the Principles of Municipal Court Administration program. POMCA is a comprehensive 24-day program organized into four levels: orientation, designed to impart a basic understanding of the role of the judiciary and its employees; fundamentals of working in a municipal court; fundamentals of managing a municipal court and the management and leadership program.

In addition to providing the initial phases of training to become certified,

POMCA also provides professional development opportunities for municipal court employees as well as other judiciary employees who want to improve their skills and gain a better understanding of the work of municipal courts.

During court year 2010, about 500 municipal court professionals enrolled in the POMCA, a reflection of the commitment of municipal court administrators and staff to improve the delivery of justice to the public.

**TRIAL COURT FILINGS, RESOLUTIONS, AND BACKLOG - BY DIVISION**

	Filings			Resolutions			Inventory (Active Cases Pending Within Time Goals)			Backlog (Active Cases Pending Over Time Goals)		
	July 2008 to June 2009	July 2009 to June 2010	percent change	July 2008 to June 2009	July 2009 to June 2010	percent change	June 2009	June 2010	percent change	June 2009	June 2010	percent change
<b>Criminal Division</b>												
Indictable Cases	54,769	51,200	-7%	54,681	54,339	-1%	9,780	9,200	-6%	7,252	6,289	-13%
Municipal Appeals	1,367	1,317	-4%	1,338	1,321	-1%	307	306	-0%	208	202	-3%
Post-Conviction Relief	801	907	13%	862	826	-4%	165	199	21%	601	651	8%
<b>General Equity</b>												
	5,526	7,239	31%	5,832	6,333	9%	1,946	2,609	34%	366	685	87%
<b>Civil Division</b>												
Civil	98,618	103,728	5%	99,794	101,380	2%	77,014	78,678	2%	15,015	16,460	10%
Special Civil	605,315	609,648	1%	601,536	614,744	2%	60,404	55,637	-8%	718	497	-31%
Probate	6,510	6,182	-5%	6,690	6,253	-7%	1,545	1,509	-2%	155	158	2%
<b>Family Division</b>												
Dissolution	67,387	67,624	0%	66,895	66,884	-0%	17,458	18,302	5%	1,195	1,079	-10%
Delinquency	56,865	51,361	-10%	57,297	51,808	-10%	4,372	4,032	-8%	296	191	-35%
Non-Dissolution	158,587	148,649	-6%	158,178	149,183	-6%	11,402	11,282	-1%	1,093	397	-64%
Domestic Violence	55,677	57,208	3%	55,622	57,132	3%	1,573	1,738	10%	100	48	-52%
Abuse/Neglect	4,371	4,195	-4%	4,365	4,282	-2%	5,119	4,991	-3%	79	116	47%
Adoption	2,329	2,084	-11%	2,293	2,109	-8%	499	453	-9%			
Child Placement Review	5,035	4,876	-3%	5,713	5,579	-2%	9,042	8,328	-8%	84	112	33%
Juvenile/Family Crisis	632	511	-19%	637	508	-20%	18	22	22%	5	4	-20%
Term of Parental Rights	1,182	1,050	-11%	1,167	1,071	-8%	455	434	-5%	247	248	0%
Criminal/Quasi-Criminal	9,094	9,218	1%	8,953	9,355	4%	918	822	-10%	71	40	-44%
Kinship	878	766	-13%	907	765	-16%	104	100	-4%	16	20	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,134,943</b>	<b>1,127,763</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>1,132,760</b>	<b>1,133,872</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>202,121</b>	<b>198,642</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>27,501</b>	<b>27,197</b>	<b>-1%</b>

**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 2008 to June 2009	July 2009 to June 2010	percent change	July 2008 to June 2009	July 2009 to June 2010	percent change	June 2009	June 2010	percent change	June 2009	June 2010	percent change
Atlantic	51,470	52,659	2%	53,712	51,918	-3%	9,415	9,875	5%	1,684	1,977	17%
Bergen	86,373	92,442	7%	87,448	93,188	7%	15,208	15,432	1%	1,488	1,156	-22%
Burlington	52,710	51,614	-2%	51,994	51,954	-0%	9,212	9,171	-0%	1,286	1,021	-21%
Camden	81,583	77,892	-5%	81,107	78,191	-4%	14,452	14,418	-0%	1,401	1,395	-0%
Cape May	15,683	14,735	-6%	15,323	14,905	-3%	2,471	2,414	-2%	427	313	-27%
Cumberland	31,724	29,230	-8%	31,766	29,921	-6%	4,423	3,943	-11%	732	578	-21%
Essex	151,204	150,371	-1%	152,611	152,602	-0%	26,922	25,512	-5%	3,359	3,347	-0%
Gloucester	34,832	34,466	-1%	34,479	34,694	1%	6,076	5,868	-3%	779	752	-3%
Hudson	99,276	95,880	-3%	98,885	96,429	-2%	16,282	15,782	-3%	1,196	1,302	9%
Hunterdon	8,686	8,831	2%	8,515	8,768	3%	1,561	1,626	4%	256	227	-11%
Mercer	49,317	48,457	-2%	49,381	49,135	-0%	8,425	8,146	-3%	1,977	1,584	-20%
Middlesex	92,588	89,042	-4%	91,064	89,334	-2%	19,707	18,613	-6%	4,076	4,882	20%
Monmouth	69,745	71,493	3%	69,833	71,660	3%	13,159	13,035	-1%	2,151	2,199	2%
Morris	37,495	38,407	2%	36,624	38,753	6%	7,633	7,352	-4%	1,000	1,057	6%
Ocean	62,900	64,444	2%	62,601	64,414	3%	11,367	11,348	-0%	1,306	1,267	-3%
Passaic	70,296	70,099	-0%	69,792	71,101	2%	12,428	12,222	-2%	1,717	1,217	-29%
Salem	12,228	11,573	-5%	12,272	11,415	-7%	1,532	1,736	13%	132	125	-5%
Somerset	27,830	26,889	-3%	27,260	26,883	-1%	4,932	4,808	-3%	838	898	7%
Sussex	15,620	15,759	1%	15,223	15,686	3%	2,585	2,631	2%	298	317	6%
Union	70,875	71,255	1%	70,600	70,657	0%	12,426	12,890	4%	1,205	1,315	9%
Warren	12,508	12,225	-2%	12,270	12,264	-0%	1,905	1,820	-4%	193	268	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,134,943</b>	<b>1,127,763</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>1,132,760</b>	<b>1,133,872</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>202,121</b>	<b>198,642</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>27,501</b>	<b>27,197</b>	<b>-1%</b>

## **ASSIGNMENT JUDGES AND TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATORS (COURT YEAR 2009)**

### **Vicinage 1 - Atlantic County / Cape May County**

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

### **Vicinage 2 - Bergen County**

Peter E. Doyne / *Assignment Judge*     Jon Goodman / *Trial Court Administrator*

### **Vicinage 3 - Burlington County**

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

### **Vicinage 4 - Camden County**

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

### **Vicinage 5 - Essex County**

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

### **Vicinage 6 - Hudson County**

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

### **Vicinage 7 - Mercer County**

Linda R. Feinberg / *Assignment Judge*     Sue Regan / *Trial Court Administrator*

### **Vicinage 8 - Middlesex County**

Travis L. Francis / *Assignment Judge*     Gregory Edwards / *Trial Court Administrator*

### **Vicinage 9 - Monmouth County**

Lawrence M. Lawson / *Assignment Judge*     Marsi Perkins / *Trial Court Administrator*

### **Vicinage 10 - Morris County / Sussex County**

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

### **Vicinage 11 - Passaic County**

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

### **Vicinage 12 - Union County**

Karen M. Cassidy / *Assignment Judge*     Elizabeth Domingo / *Trial Court Administrator*

### **Vicinage 13 - Hunterdon County / Somerset County / Warren County**

Yolanda Ciccone / *Assignment Judge*     Eugene T. Farkas / *Trial Court Administrator*

### **Vicinage 14 - Ocean County**

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

### **Vicinage 15 - Cumberland County / Gloucester County / Salem County**

Georgia M. Curio / *Assignment Judge*     Mark Sprock / *Trial Court Administrator*

## JUDGES AND JUSTICES OF THE NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY (AS OF JUNE 30, 2010)

### SUPREME COURT

Stuart Rabner, Chief Justice  
Barry T. Albin  
Helen E. Hoens  
Jaynee LaVecchia  
Virginia A. Long  
Roberto A. Rivera-Soto

### SUPERIOR COURT

Allison Accurso  
Roberto Alcazar  
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