

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT

The loss of critical administrative team members and seasoned judges over the last fiscal year and end-of-year adjustments to the baseline budget forced the Court to take more time to examine processes and re-tool in ways that resulted in cost savings and operational efficiencies. At the same time, the Court successfully met statutory mandates and took steps to give meaning to one of its core values – fair and just treatment for all. Among the accomplishments of the Court this year are: the development and implementation of a Risk Assessment Instrument for bail decisions, application of the principles of procedural fairness to judicial and staff interactions with the public, and improving processes for the delivery of better service at a lower long-term cost.



*Chief Magistrate
Alan G. Davis*

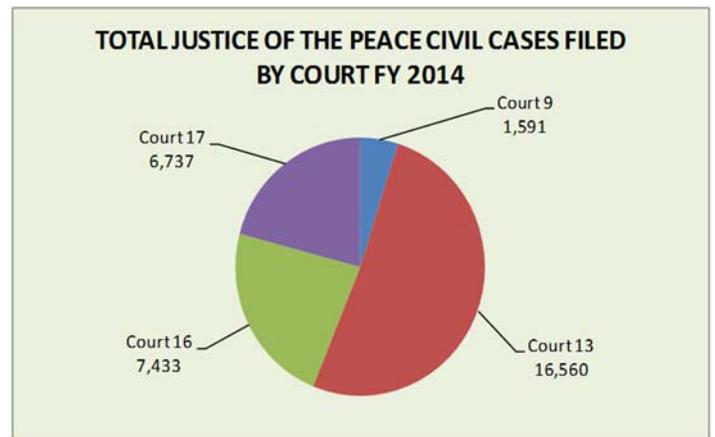
Risk Assessment Instrument

With the passage of Senate Bill 226 w/SA 1 in the 146th General Assembly, the legislature mandated that all bail decisions be made with the assistance of a risk assessment instrument. These instruments are intended to provide greater consistency in bail decisions and to ensure that information critical to making reasoned decisions about the risk of an alleged offender to appear in court and re-offend is available to a judge in one place. They are not intended to replace judicial discretion in bail decisions, but to provide an extra tool for the judge to use in reviewing objective criteria about the defendant's current situation and recent past.

The first part of the fiscal year was spent in preparation for implementation of the instrument. Development of the document itself and programming changes were already underway by the beginning of the fiscal year. Operational considerations and tweaking of the instrument dominated the efforts. Significant training followed for judges in particular.

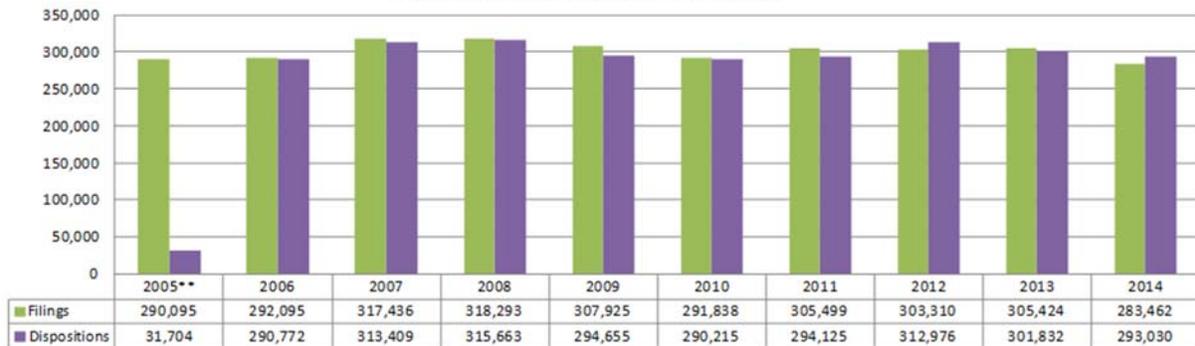
Actual implementation took place on December 31, 2013, and the hard work of preparation paid dividends in the form of very few technical glitches and wholesale adoption by the members of the Court. The remainder of the fiscal

year was spent assessing the first pieces of data and ensuring compliance. As we go forward, the instrument will need to be validated, to assure that the risks of flight and to community safety are being properly assessed by the instrument.



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JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT CIVIL & CRIMINAL/TRAFFIC FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS BY FISCAL YEAR*



*Criminal filings & dispositions are by defendant.
 **Criminal/Traffic dispositions are not available for FY 2005.

Procedural Fairness

On March 26, 2014, the Justice of the Peace Court held a training for judges, managers, and police officer liaisons on the topic of procedural justice. Entitled “Enhancing Procedural Fairness,” the program consisted of a one-day training including curriculum developed as a part of the Bureau of Justice Assistance’s (BJA) Improving Courtroom Communication Project (the “Project”). As a part of the Project, the BJA, the Center for Court Innovation, and the National Judicial College sought proposals from courts interested in receiving the training to help judges and court personnel enhance communication practices in order to improve perceptions of fairness by litigants. Three sites were selected nationally for the training, including the Delaware Justice of the Peace Court.

In conjunction with being selected as a site, the Justice of the Peace Court participated in several pre-training meetings with faculty in order to craft a program designed to meet the specific needs of the Justice of the Peace Court. In addition, all participants viewed a brief online training regarding the basics of procedural fairness prior to the full day program. The faculty included the Honorable Alex Calabrese, an acting Supreme Court Justice of the State of New York and the Presiding Judge of the Red Hook Community Justice Center; the Honorable Jeffrey Kremers, Chief Judge of the Milwaukee County Circuit Court; Kelly Tait, a judicial branch communication consultant; and the Honorable Chad

Schmucker, President of the National Judicial College. Emily Gold and Aubrey Fox from the Center for Court Innovation assisted in coordination, planning, and presentation.

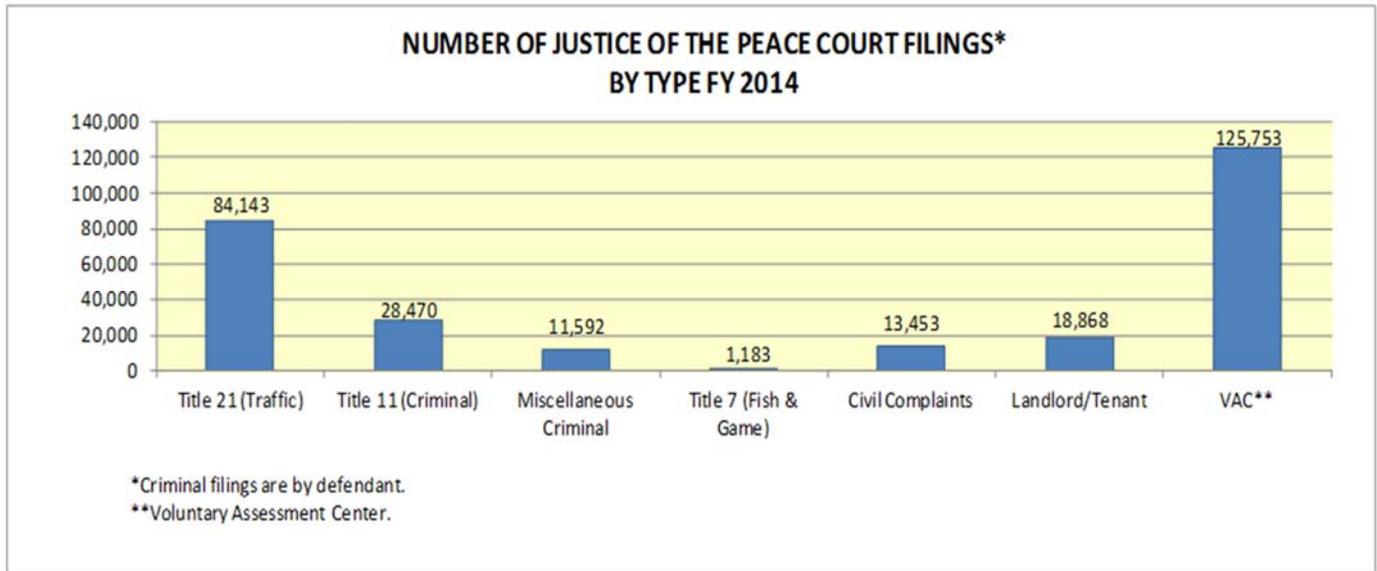
The curriculum included training on both verbal and non-verbal communication, considering special populations, first-hand experiences from the bench and the development of an action plan moving forward. Participants engaged in group exercises as well as lively discussions as they were encouraged to look at their physical court buildings and their interaction with the public in new and different ways. One of the most powerful exercises was making a video recording of one of the judges conducting an arraignment and then critiquing that judge’s performance based upon what had been learned throughout the day. Justice of the Peace Court judges conduct hundreds

CAPIASES CLEARED BY JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT FOR OTHER COURTS FY 2014



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of arraignments every week and the process can become very routine, which is dangerous from a procedural justice perspective. This was intended to be a starting point in an ongoing series of training in the area of procedural fairness. It is a subject that impacts every single case we have and touches every litigant that walks through our doors. These skills have the potential to impact not just the way people perceive the court, but compliance and recidivism as well.

Participants took a survey both before and several weeks after the training to gather data about the effect of the training upon their knowledge base and interactions with the public. In addition, the Justice of the Peace Court continues to work with the Center for Court Innovation on critiquing the training and making improvements for the other two sites that will receive the same curriculum. The Justice of the Peace Court, which is committed to having a procedural fairness component in every training for both judges and court staff, continued this work at the Fall Judicial Education Retreat. Jody Huber, Justice of the Peace Court Staff Attorney, is also conducting branch-wide trainings on the topic in each county.

Process Improvement

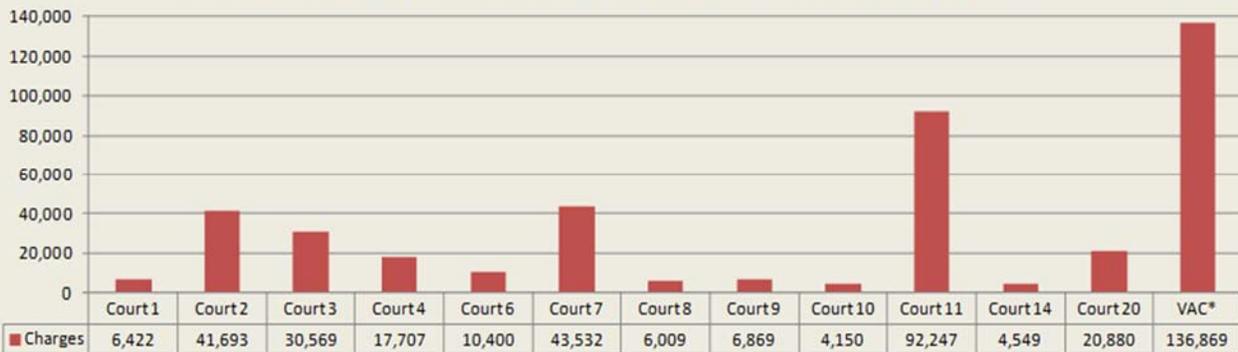
This year the Court also undertook a number of seemingly minor process changes that were geared toward long-term cost savings and better service to

the public. Below is an abbreviated list of changes the Court accomplished and the impact of each item.

- Provided Spanish translation of call of the calendar and traffic case written explanations. Translation of forms and informational literature, while not a new effort for the Court, is critical for our diverse clientele. These particular informational documents are among the most used in our arraignment processes.
- Combined both criminal and civil traffic offenses on one charging document. Prior to this change, civil offenses, such as cell phone violations, had to be written on a separate ticket to ensure proper transfer and appeal processes. This alteration followed authorizing legislation and has provided relief for police, court personnel and the public in general.
- Worked with DELJIS to create standard automated processes and documents for sealing of warrants. This was a fully manual process prior to implementation and the resulting changes mean that warrants approved for sealing cannot be inadvertently released by other court locations.
- Eliminated automatic printing of daily/monthly batch reports. While these reports are critical for the effective functioning of the individual court locations, this modification makes them available

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JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT CRIMINAL & TRAFFIC CHARGES BY COURT FY 2014



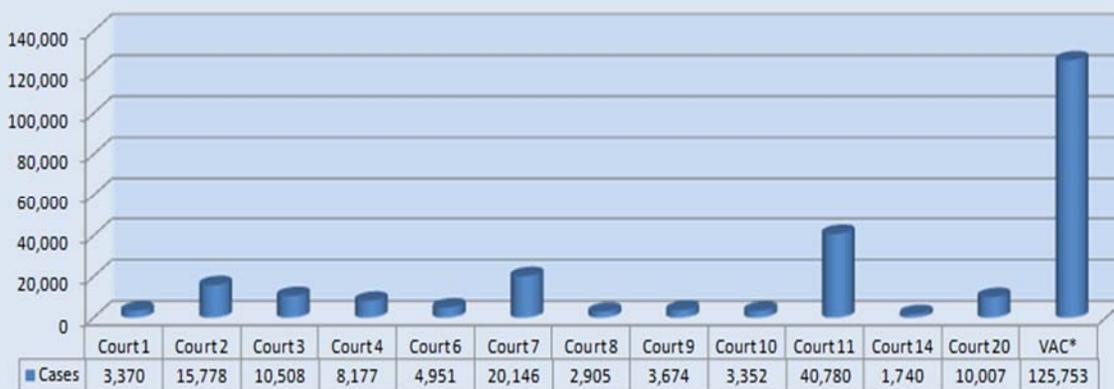
*Voluntary Assessment Center.

for viewing online by necessary personnel rather than forcing the printing of documents, wasting paper, and providing opportunity for the reports to be misplaced.

- Introduced viewing criminal histories online (DELJIS Web Portal) to judges. Getting the judges comfortable with relying on the Adjudication Summary Sheet and going online to see full criminal histories is critical to saving thousands of pieces of paper each day.

While no enormous changes marked FY14 for the Justice of the Peace Court, it remained a period of solid incremental improvement for our core functions. Enhanced information for bail setting, training to improve relations with the public we serve, and minor process improvements to streamline our daily operations all combined to make the year one of steady progress, while still handling hundreds of thousands of cases in a fair and efficient manner.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT CRIMINAL & TRAFFIC CASES BY DEFENDANT BY COURT FY 2014



*Voluntary Assessment Center.

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NEW CASTLE COUNTY JUDGES



Starting at the bottom (back to front):

William Young, III
Vernon Taylor
Nina Bawa
Thomas Brown
Christopher Portante
Susan Ufberg
Bonita Lee, DCM
Cheryl Stallman
Rosalie Rutkowski
David Skelley
William Moser
Cheryl McCabe-Stroman
Katharine Ross
James Tull
Sean McCormick
Beatrice Freel

Nancy Roberts
James Hanby, Sr.
Deborah McNesby
Kathy Gravell
Susan Cline
Marie Page

Not pictured:

Donald Callender, Jr.
Thomas Kenney
Vincent Kowal
Marilyn Letts
Roberto Lopez
Kathleen Lucas
Paul J. Smith
Terry L. Smith

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT

KENT COUNTY JUDGES



Starting at the bottom (back to front):

Alexander Montano
D. Ken Cox
Cathleen Hutchison
William J. Sweet
Dana Tracy
James Murray

Not Pictured:

Ernst Arndt, DCM
Pamela Darling
Dwight D. Dillard
W.G. Edmanson, II
Debora Foor
Michael Sherlock

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JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT

SUSSEX COUNTY JUDGES



Starting at the bottom (back to front):

Stephani Adams
John Martin
Herman Hagan
James Horn
Rochelle Knapp
Richard Comly
William Boddy
Jana Mollohan
Larry Sipple
Nicholas Mirro
Sheila Blakely, DCM

John Adams
Michelle Jewell
John McKenzie
John Hudson
Christopher Bradley
Deborah Keenan
William Wood

Not pictured:

Jeni Coffelt