Throughout the years, the Justice of the Peace Court has worked hard to provide quality service to our court users and make improvements to their overall experience. In FY 2017 we continued to work toward better levels of service by reviewing what we could do to improve things for the end user and ended up focusing on efforts to provide better support for our staff through enhanced training opportunities, targeted pay enhancements and streamlining the Court’s physical footprint. We took this route under the theory that a more content staff leads to improved experiences for our court users.

Efficient and exceptional service can only be provided by judicial officers and staff who are well trained and knowledgeable in our business. Our judicial education program was put into place over twenty years ago. New judges have a rigorous basic legal education training course before taking the bench, and two educational conferences occur each year, keeping all judges current on new or upcoming changes in the judicial system. Over the course of the last year we undertook a significant overhaul of our judicial training philosophy and developed the application of proven adult learning techniques to better prepare our new judges for their experience on the bench. Also, after years of success of the Basic Legal Education program for judges, we created a new basic education program for our clerical staff and security officers. Newly hired staff work closely with peers, trainers and managers to learn the basics of the Court. Due to the implementation of these programs, we not only have a more professional organization but also an ever-growing avenue for court improvement.

Since our Court environment poses unique work scenarios for staff, another focus of the Court was on supporting our staff in the form of training and development.
of targeted pay enhancements. Three of our 14 court locations operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year, requiring our judicial officers, clerical staff and security to work during holidays and weather emergencies. Due to this, our turnover rates on the staff side have been exceedingly high, and a considerable amount of time and energy has been spent on analyzing potential solutions to address our staffing needs. In FY 2017, we were able to put into place a salary matrix to begin to address this issue. The implementation of this pilot program allowed the Court to provide an increased salary for our clerical staff in our most critically affected location, Court 11. In the future we hope to expand the salary matrix to other 24 hour operations as well as to our after-hours security staff.

In order to continue our efforts to remain efficient and retain staff, we also spent time analyzing the current locations of the Justice of the Peace Court to determine if we could consolidate locations and streamline operations. This fiscal year saw the closing of Court 1 in Frankfort, shifting their workload to other locations in Sussex County. By doing this, it enabled us to better utilize our resources and decrease the burden of supporting numerous locations. We have also begun analyzing our 24/7 operations to determine if there are any work processes that could be modified, relieving pressure during our evening and weekend hours. The undertaking of this project will be a significant focus for 2018.

Better trained judges and staff, with improved working conditions, lead to an enhanced experience for the people we serve. By focusing on these areas over the last fiscal year, we have attempted to give our staff the opportunity to improve themselves and their conditions, as well as the Court as a whole.
NEW CASTLE COUNTY JUDGES

Sitting, front row (left to right): Cheryl Stallmann, Katharine Ross, Senior Judge Rosalie Rutkowski, Kerry Taylor, Marie Page, Shelley Losito, Nina Bawa, Cheryl McCabe-Stroman.

Standing, middle row (left to right): Susan Cine, Beatrice Freel, Amanda Moyer, Thomas Kenney, Roberto Lopez, Sean McCormick, Christopher Portante, Carmen Jordan-Cox.

Standing, back row (left to right): Senior Judge William Moser, Gerald Ross, James Tull, David Skelley, James Hanby Sr., John Potts, Peter Burcat, William Young III.

Not pictured: Thomas Brown, Bracy Dixon Jr., Emily Ferrell, Vincent Kowal, Deputy Chief Magistrate Bonita Lee, Susan Ufberg.
KENT COUNTY JUDGES

_Sitting, front row (left to right):_
Nicole Alston-Jackson, Cathleen Hutchison, Dana Tracy.

_Standing, back row (left to right):_
Alexander Montano, Senior Judge Robert Wall, D. Ken Cox, Kevin Wilson, James Murray.

_Not pictured:_
Deputy Chief Magistrate Ernst Arndt, Pamela Darling, Dwight Dillard, W.G. Edmanson II, Michael Sherlock.
SUSSEX COUNTY JUDGES

Sitting, front row (left to right):
Nicholas Mirro, Michelle Jewel, Deputy Chief Magistrate Sheila Blakely, Jana Mollohan, Stephani Adams, Deborah Keenan, John McKenzie.

Standing, (left to right):

Not pictured: