

2018 Strategic Plan Progress Report



STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

OPEN TO ALL
TRUSTED BY ALL
JUSTICE FOR ALL

2018 – 2022

Strategic Plan Progress Report

The data and information included in this report are for calendar year 2018 unless otherwise stated.

Goal 1 – Access to Justice for All



The Courts have a responsibility to eliminate barriers to meaningful participation in the judicial process and to accessing court services.

DC Courts Access to Justice Index

82%

Rating of court users on the Courts accessibility and its treatment of court participants in terms of fairness, equality, and respect.

Free, Pro Bono, and Low-Cost Civil Legal Assistance

Court of Appeals Self-Represented Litigants (SRL) Trends 2015 - 2017

DCCA Case Types	2015 # SRL/ Total Cases Filed	2015 % SRL	2016 # SRL/ Total Cases Filed	2016 % SRL	2017 # SRL/ Total Cases Filed	2017 % SRL
Agency Matters	141/276	51	124/252	49	131/260	50
Civil	195/340	57	177/311	57	212/371	57
Family (unsealed)*	51/82	62	76/102	75	60/84	71
Probate	24/30	80	18/20	90	41/47	87
Discretionary Applications	11/11	100	9/13	69	9/10	90
Original Applications	41/49	84	45/48	94	28/31	90

The Court of Appeals, in partnership with the D.C. Bar, legal services providers and organizations such as the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia and Children's Law Center, ensures self-represented litigants obtain information and assistance in representing themselves.

Free, Pro Bono, and Low-Cost Civil Legal Assistance

Court of Appeals Pro Bono Assistance in 2018

Case Type	# of Cases
Administrative Agency	5
Criminal Felony	4
Criminal Misdemeanor	1
Criminal Other	3
Civil	1
Family	11
Family Sealed	8

- Launched the DC Bar Pro Bono working group.
- Created an appellate mediation pro bono counsel panel to ensure *pro se* litigants can participate in mediation process.
- Implemented computer assisted completion of notices of appeal, petitions for review, and motions to proceed *in forma pauperis* along with easy to read instructions.
- Updated the website landing page for unrepresented persons to explain the overall appellant process and provide links to useful information.
- Further work, including development of a *pro se* manual, is underway.

Free, Pro Bono, and Low-Cost Civil Legal Assistance

Superior Court Self-Represented Litigants Trends 2017

DCSC Divisions	# of Plaintiffs	% of SRL Plaintiffs	# of Respondents	% of SRL Respondents
<u>Civil Division</u>				
Civil Action	8,588	26%	5,727	19%
Landlord and Tenant	31,057	5%	7,966	88%
Housing Condition	426	75%	344	38%
Small Claim	6,413	26%	1,865	71%
Tax Lien	288	2%	243	26%
<u>Domestic Violence Division</u>				
Intrafamily	5,979	88%	5,955	95%
<u>Family Court Operations</u>				
Adoption	224	58%		
Divorce/Custody/Misc.	4,660	83%	5,020	93%
Mental Health	1,925	1%	1,966	2%
Parentage & Child Support	2,041	7%	2,053	97%
<u>Probate Division</u>				
Formal Probate	1,647	35%		
Guardianship	21	71%		
Intervention	318	82%		
Small Estate	583	97%		
Trust	13	54%		

In partnership with the D.C. Bar, legal services providers and organizations, the Superior Court has created self-help centers where litigants without legal representation can obtain information.

Civil Legal Assistance

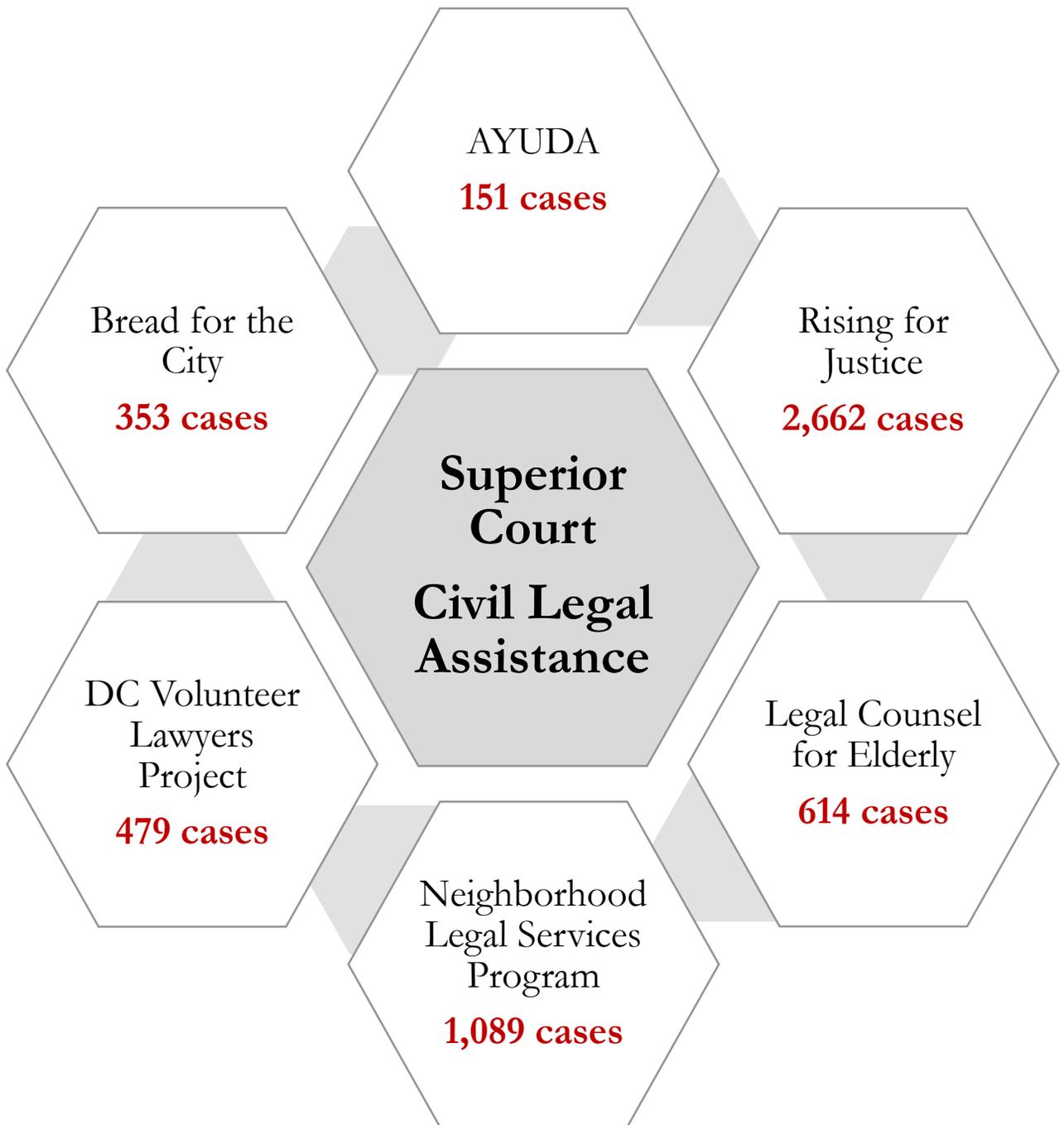
Superior Court D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center

	# Assisted
Landlord & Tenant Resource Center	4,116
Legal Advice and Referral Clinic	795
Consumer Law Resource Center	406
Pro Bono Full Representation	166
Total	5,483

Superior Court D.C. Legal Aid Society

Case Type	# Assisted
Landlord and Tenant	646
Housing Conditions	30
Foreclosure	85
Other Civil (Small Claims and General Civil)	253
Total	1,014

Community Based Legal Assistance



The Superior Court partners with many community based organizations to provide pro bono, free or low cost legal assistance to court users.

Services for Self-Represented Litigants

8,999

People Visited Family Court and Probate Self-Help Centers

Self-Help Centers provide Court users with a roadmap explaining each step in the court process, from start to finish.

- ✓ Provide information about DC family law and probate matters.
- ✓ Inform court users of their legal rights and obligations.
- ✓ Describe legal options available for court users.
- ✓ Advise which forms are most appropriate and how to complete them.
- ✓ Explain how to navigate the court process, and what to expect in court.
- ✓ Refer to other helpful legal clinics and programs.
- ✓ Provide free public seminars for self-represented litigants.

Reduce Wait Times

D.C. Superior Court

44,000

Court Participants Electronically Checked-In to Access Services

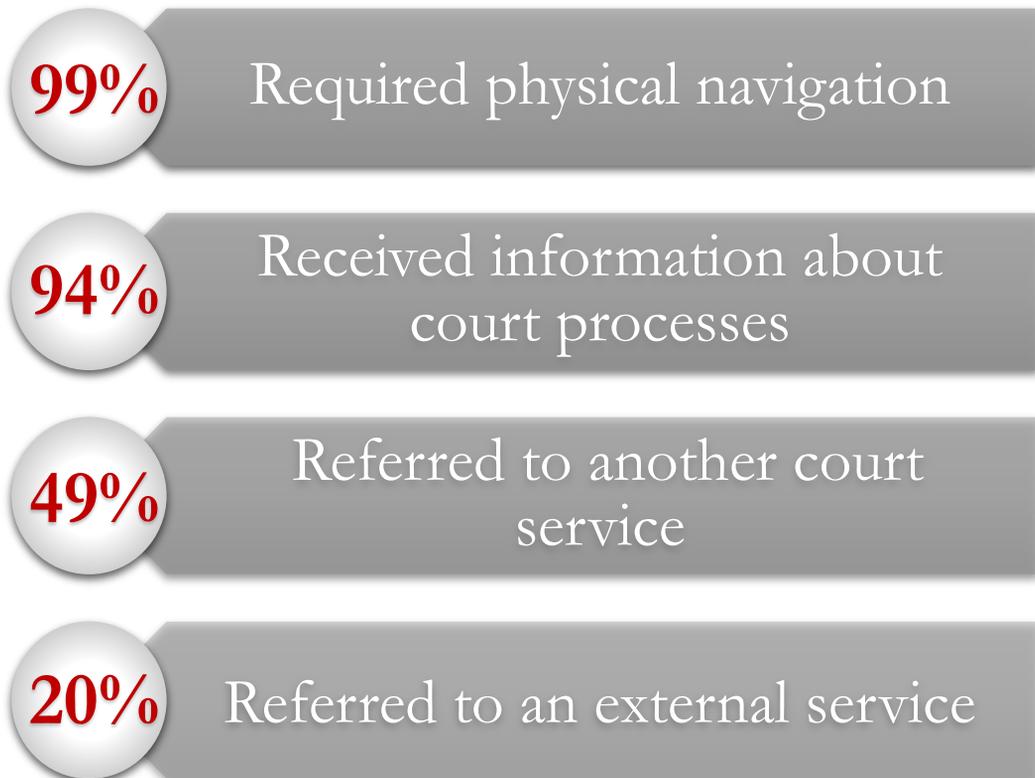
Civil Division	Civil Action Landlord and Tenant Small Claims
Criminal Division	Special Proceedings –Warrant Office
Crime Victims Compensation Program	Clerk’s Office
Domestic Violence Division	Clerk’s Office Courtroom support
Family Court Operations Division	Central Intake Marriage Bureau Family Self-Help Center
Probate Division	Legal Branch Probate Self-Help Center
Special Operations Division	Office of Court Interpreting Services Judge in Chambers

The Courts are committed to reducing wait time for all court participants. The Courts continue to assess wait times in clerks’ offices and courtrooms, and are piloting new business processes and case scheduling practices to reduce wait times.

Court Navigator Program

900

Court participants used the navigator program between
October and December 2018



A Court Navigator can: Explain the court process and what to expect in court, describe options for completing court business, help court visitors understand court forms, give information about legal service organizations and refer individuals to other helpful services.

Goal 2 - Fair and Timely Case Resolution



The Courts are committed to resolving disputes and legal matters in a fair and timely manner.

D.C. Courts Fairness Index

81%

Rating of court users on the Courts accessibility and its treatment of court participants in terms of fairness, equality, and respect.

Time Standards

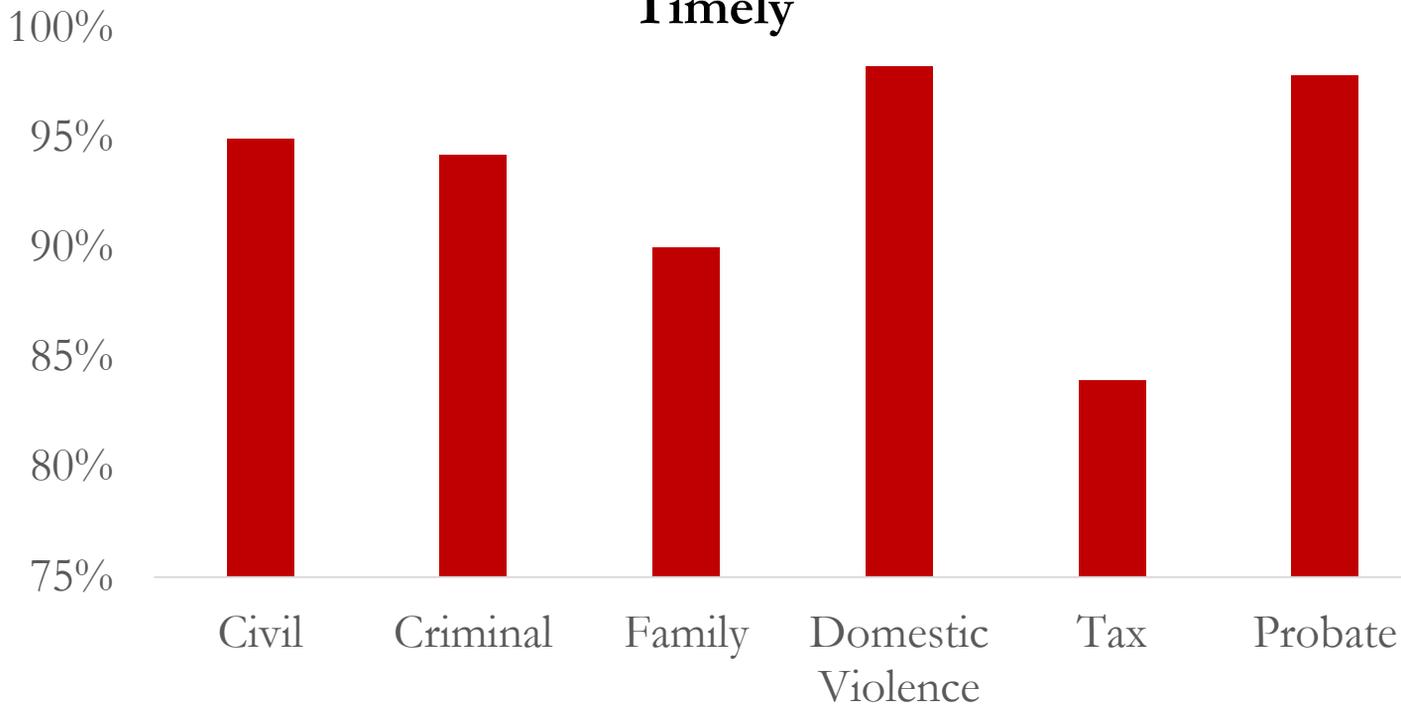
Court of Appeals Median Age of Disposed Cases by Category

Mandatory Appeals	Days
Administrative Agency	273
Civil	183
Criminal	405
Family	180
Special Proceedings	419
Bar	79
Original Jurisdiction	26
Discretionary Jurisdiction	40

These data represent the median days from the filing of the notice of appeal to case disposition. It should be noted that in 2018 the Court of Appeals operated with two judicial vacancies.

Time Standards

Superior Court Percentage of Cases Disposed Timely



Superior Court	Cases Disposed	Cases Disposed Timely	% Meeting Standards
Civil	50,947	48,366	95%
Criminal	17,787	16,754	94%
Family	9,910	8,921	90%
Domestic Violence	7,192	7,066	98%
Tax	898	754	84%
Probate	3,112	3,045	98%
Total Cases	89,846	84,906	

The Court continues to review time standards for court processes and manage hearings and trials to limit continuances and delays.

Efficiency of Courtroom Operations

49,000

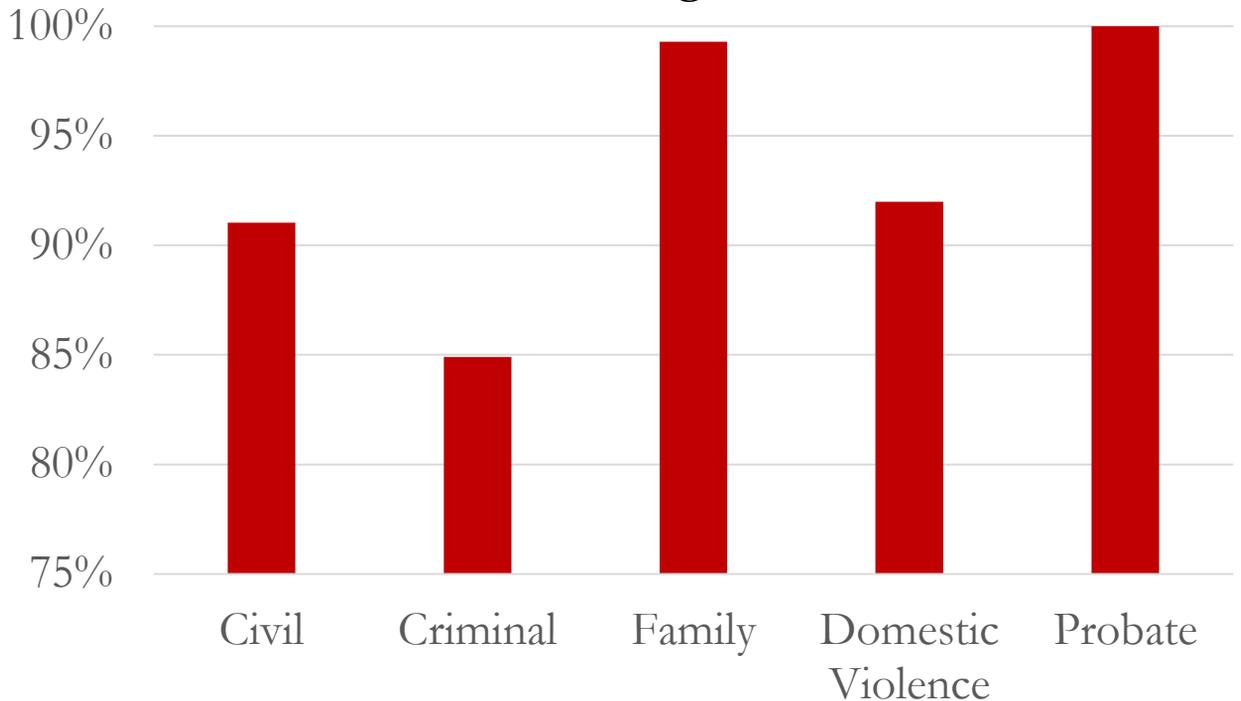
Staggered Hearings Scheduled

85%

Case Types have Case Management Plans

Trial Scheduling

Percentage of Superior Court Cases Disposed Within Two Trial Settings



Superior Court	Case Disposed by Trial	Trial Disposed in Two Settings	% Meeting Standards
Civil	390	355	91%
Criminal	742	630	85%
Family	283	281	99%
Domestic Violence	5,118	4,708	92%
Probate	17	17	100%
Total Cases	6,550	5,991	

The Court strives to ensure that trials start as scheduled and are completed on consecutive days.

Reducing In-Person Court Appearances

1,320

Court Hearings Held Remotely by Video
Conference

725

Temporary Protection Order Hearings Held
Remotely by Video Conference

Video Remote Interpreting Piloted

Courtroom Staff Trained on High Tech
Courtroom Operations

Courtrooms Equipped to Enable Secure Video
Conferencing with Bureau of Prisons (BOP)

Innovative Case Management

Court of Appeals Mediation Cases

261

Appeals referred to mediation

8

Settled during screening

36

Mandatory mediation

During screening, cases are reviewed and parties contacted to determine if matters are suitable for mediation. Eligible matters include: general civil, administrative, probate, and family (excluding child abuse and neglect and pattern of domestic violence).

Innovative Case Management

5,738

Superior Court Mediation Cases

Mediations Scheduled	Case Type	Mediations Held
2,967	Civil Actions	841
2	Complex	0
280	Child Protection	201
35	Early Medical Malpractice	26
1,680	Family	1,314
1,458	Landlord and Tenant	975
1,590	Small Claims	1,575
897	Probate	762
63	Tax	44

Effectiveness of Problem-Solving Courts

The DC Courts Mental Health Court Evaluation

Based on the *Ten Essential Elements of Mental Health Courts* developed by the National Council on Justice, and seeks to answer the overarching question:

“To what degree does the DC Courts Mental Health Community Court align to the Ten Essential Elements?”

Final report expected 2019

Juror Service

30,390

Jurors Reported for
Jury Duty

11,141

Jurors called off using
Juror On Call system

65%

Jury Utilization

[DC Courts Jury Duty Information](#)

[Video on Jury Duty](#)

Federal Rules Adoption Process

DC Courts are required to conduct business according to the Federal Rules of Civil, Criminal and Appellate Procedure, and to implement all federal rules amendments unless the Courts adopt modifications to those amendments. The Courts' goal is to adopt rules amendments within 15 months of promulgation of federal procedural-rule amendments.

Current federal rules under review from 2018

- 2018 federal amendments to Appellate Rules
8, 11, 25, 26, 28.1, 29, 31, 39, 41
- 2018 federal amendments to Civil Rules
5, 23, 62, 65.1
- 2018 federal amendments to Criminal Rules
12.4, 45, 49

<https://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/rules-committee>

Rules Adoption Process

In 2018, the Courts promulgated amendments to the following rules:

Appellate Rule 49
D.C. Rule of Professional Conduct 1.2
Small Claims Rules 1-18
Small Claims Arbitration Rules 1-6
All Domestic Relations Rules
Parentage and Support Rules 1-6
All Adoption Rules
DV Rules 1 and 2 (technical amendments)

Proposed amendments to the following rules were also under consideration in 2018:

Appellate Rule 46
Landlord and Tenant Rules 1-16
Agency Review Rules 1 and 2
Proposed New Small Claims Rule 19
Criminal Rules 100-17 and 119
All Probate Rules
All Juvenile Rules
Crime Victims Compensation Program Rules 7, 9-13, and 24-35.

<https://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/rules-committee>

Goal 3 - Professional and Engaged Workforce



The Courts will ensure a professional, engaged workforce that consistently achieves excellence and is agile to meet the demands of a changing environment.

DC Courts Employee Engagement Index

70%

Federal Agencies reported an Employee Engagement Index of 67% (source OPM)

Values-Based Workplace



DC Courts Employees Responded:

93%

Awareness of the Values

92%

Knowledge of the Values

90%

Commitment to live the Values

Professional Development

90%

New Hires Completed Mandatory Training During Probation Period

2,500

Online Trainings Available for Court Staff

3,744

Training Hours for Judges

14,000

Training Hours for Court Staff

Goal 4 - Resilient and Responsive Technology



The Courts will continue to enhance information technology capabilities to provide the highest level of service to the public and state-of-the-art technology tools to its workforce.

Technology Infrastructure Connectivity

97%

The Courts critical information technology systems uptime in 2018

Leverage Technology in Court Operations

Court of Appeals and Superior Court Electronic Access to Case Information

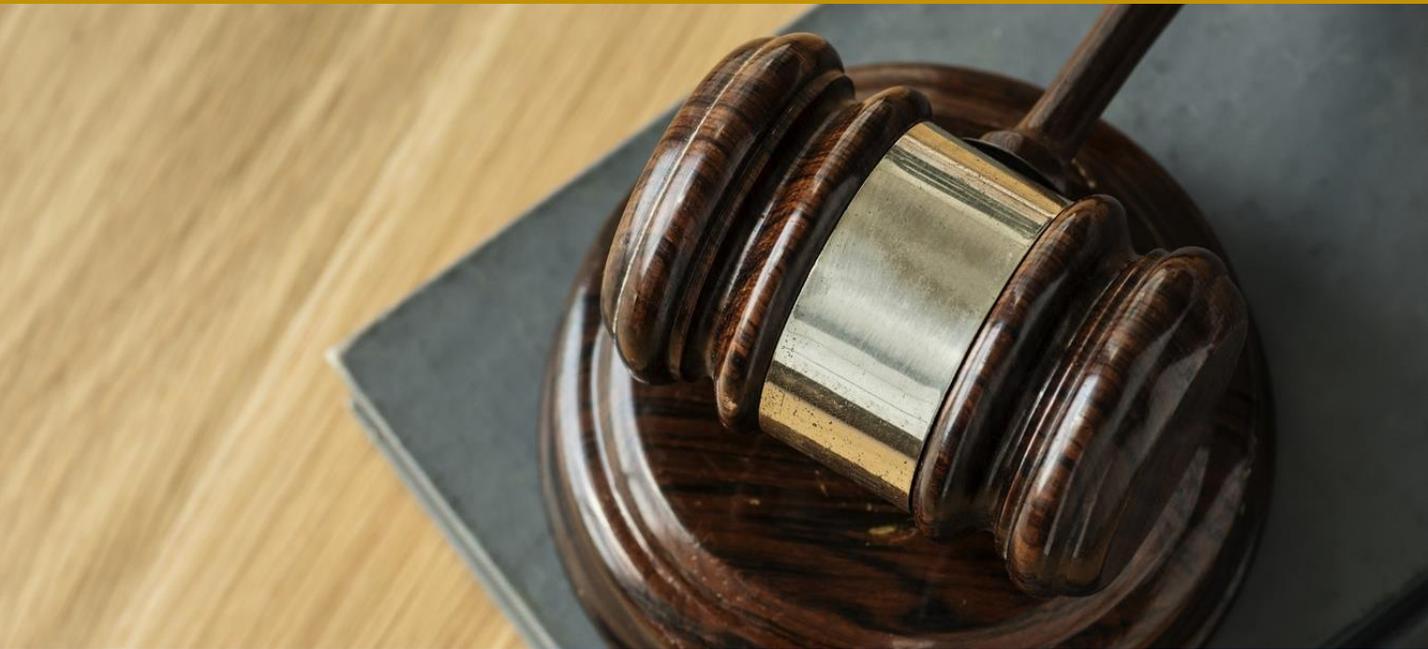
Court of Appeals	Live Streaming Oral Arguments
Budget and Finance Division	E-Payments Available for Court Fines and Fees
Criminal Division	New Warrant Automation System
Court Social Services Division	New Juvenile/Probation Case Management System
Multi-Door Division	New Web-Based Mediation Management System
Special Operations Division	Language Access Committee coordinated over 400 translated forms and documents and made them available online

Forms Help Online

Civil and Probate Division

Superior Court users interactive assistance in completing court forms

Goal 5 – Effective Court Management and Administration



Effective management and operation of the justice system for the District of Columbia requires a team of knowledgeable professionals with a common mission and shared resources, collaborating to achieve results that best serve the public.

Strategic Partnerships

22

New Strategic Partnerships

38

Community Services Available at
the Courts

17

Community Partnership
Meetings held in Court of
Appeals Building

80

Community Partnership
Meetings held in Superior Court
Buildings

Safe and Functional Court Facilities



Renovation for the C-Street Phase I addition is scheduled to be 100% complete by end of 2019



88% of court visitors felt safe in Court buildings

Data Quality and Availability

D.C. Courts Data Governance Program

Vision:

To create a data-driven culture
that promotes informed decision making

Mission:

To leverage data as a strategic asset focusing on quality, security,
and understanding of data, through the coordinated efforts of
cross-functional teams.

The program will protect data through the:

- Issuance of directives, guidelines, and rules that define data standards
- Establishment of a framework for appropriate access to and use of institutional data
- Oversight of relevant rules, practices, and projects