

COURT BULLETIN

May 2016

Senate Budget Released & Amendments Filed

On May 17, the Senate Ways and Means Committee released its FY17 budget recommendation. The recommendation included \$643.4 million for the Trial Court. Included in this amount is \$1.2 million to fund the Housing Court expansion.

Senators Cynthia Creem and Kenneth Donnelly filed two amendments on the Trial Court's behalf:

- \$2.8 million to fund specialty court expansion, and;
- \$7 million to increase our maintenance budget

On May 24, the Senate will take up the amendments and begin its budget debate on the floor of the Senate.

Next month, a final compromise budget will be developed by a Conference Committee made up of three House and three Senate members. That budget will be presented to both chambers for approval.

Strategic Plan 2.0 Update: Probation Planning Effort Aligned with Trial Court

Commissioner Ed Dolan recently updated the Trial Court's Strategy Leadership Team (SLT) on the strategic planning effort that is underway in Probation and on track for integration into the overall Trial Court Strategic Plan 2.0. He reported that the Mass. Probation Service planning effort is actively aligning its goals with those of the court departments.

"Development of a strategic plan is a big, important step to harness the knowledge, experience and capability of the 2,000-plus staff of the Probation Service," he said. "Our mission and vision are intentionally stated as outwardly focused to reinforce our role to make a positive difference in people's lives every day. The strategic plan will organize, clarify and communicate how we do that in concert with judges and clerks across our 105 locations."

Probation formed five 10-member planning teams - a steering committee and four strategic task forces. They are composed of volunteers from all job titles, court departments and geographic areas to ensure broad representation from across the Service. Commissioner Dolan said he was heartened by the extent of interest in participation.

Teams are working on probation practice, probation services, workforce development, business processes and IT, and governance and alignment, as outlined [below]. They have identified approximately 30 tactics and will report to the SLT on June 6th. Strategic Plan 2.0 will incorporate

ongoing input as the process continues. The overall planning framework and priorities will be reviewed with the Supreme Judicial Court in July.

Who's who: Click on the link below to see Probation's five Strategy areas and the list of Strategic Planning Committee members.

[Read more](#)

Commonwealth Second in Nation for Access to Justice

The National Center for Access to Justice announced that it has scored Massachusetts at the top for access to justice efforts in its 2016 the Justice Index, second to the District of Columbia.

First released in 2014 by the National Center for Access to Justice, the Justice Index evaluates all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, across four categories: access to attorneys (the number of civil legal aid lawyers); services for people without lawyers; language assistance; and assistance for people with disabilities.

In addition to scoring second overall, this year's index ranks Massachusetts:

- Second (after California) in services for people without lawyers - up from 8th in 2014
- Third in language access (after Hawaii and New Mexico) - up from 20th in 2014
- Tied for sixth in support for people with disabilities - up from 31st place in 2014
- 10th in number of civil legal aid attorneys per 10,000 people in poverty - down from 6th in 2014

The Trial Court's Access to Justice team is led by Housing Court First Justice Dina Fein and Access to Justice Coordinator Erika Rickard. They coordinate their efforts with the Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission, as well as the judges, clerks, housing specialists, probation officers, and court officers who help unrepresented litigants navigate our court system every day.

"Access to justice has been a concerted and coordinated effort by the entire Trial Court," says Trial Court Chief Justice Paula Carey. "The state's rise in the Justice Index reflects this dedication and commitment. We are proud of our achievements and remain steadfast in our efforts toward continuous improvement in the area of access to justice."

Norfolk County Juvenile Programs Strengthen Families

Losing custody of a child as a result of an allegation of neglect can be devastating. When that happens, parents who work with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) receive a "service plan" that includes a check list of tasks they must accomplish to maintain or gain custody of their children. When Juvenile Court Judge Mary McCallum observed that there were no parenting programs for justice-involved mothers in Norfolk County, Probation Officers Tracey Clogher and Teresa Plante decided to address the issue head-on.

The result, MPower, is an 11-week course that teaches mothers how to navigate the court process and regain custody of their children. To provide additional support, Officers Clogher and Plante also offer a second program, Triple P (Positive Parenting Program), a parenting

intervention course certified by the World Health Organization to help parents of children aged 0-12 with positive parenting skills.

After three years of data collection, the two programs are starting to show promising results.

[Read More](#)

Courts Celebrate Law Day



Law Day in Lynn: Juvenile Court Judge Garrett McManus congratulates essay contest winners from St. Mary's and Lynn English High Schools. Chief Justice Amy Nechem presided over the morning portion of Law Day at the Essex County Juvenile Court, which included art project displays from Fecteau-Leary Junior-Senior High School students on this year's Law Day theme, "Miranda: More than Words."

[See photos](#)

Trial Court Launches e-Learning Center

Focus on expanding virtual learning, standardized training opportunities

What: The recent roll-out of the Trial Court's new internet-based e-Learning Center (e-LC), has seen nearly 2,700 employees access the system and enroll for 377 separate, live training events so far. Meanwhile, the number of online and live courses offered continues to grow as the Trial Court's training efforts rapidly expand.

Why: The e-LC is the Trial Court's new system for registering judges and employees for live training, and is a centralized resource for online training and materials. It automatically adds new staff to the system via a regular feed from the Human Resources Compensation Management System (HRCMS).

The e-LC compiles your training hours by fiscal year, and lets you print and save transcripts and

certificates of completed courses in time for performance reviews, or when applying for promotions or new positions within the court system, for example.

How: Go to the Trial Court intranet (internal web) homepage and scroll down to the **Trial Court e-Learning Center** button on the left-hand navigation bar to sign in and get started. You can also access the e-LC remotely from any external computer with an internet connection by typing (and bookmarking) <https://tclearning.csod.com> into your browser window. Follow the prompts to sign in. Your username is your 6-digit Trial Court employee ID number, and your default password (for first-time log in) is **chang1t**.

What's next: Single sign-on functionality will provide faster access to the e-LC without having to enter your username and password each time you want to use the system. The Judicial Information Services Department is installing course players onto designated computers at each courthouse for private viewing of mandatory training videos, such as the Domestic Violence statutory training requirement. Also coming soon: a new e-Learning Center FAQ for managers; you can download the current e-LC FAQ guide by clicking on the link below.

Learn more...

Unless noted, links below are available from Trial Court computers only:

- [Transmittal 16-3: Announcement of New e-Learning Center](#)
- [e-Learning Center FAQ Guide](#)
- [Trial Court e-Learning Center](#)
- [Trial Court e-Learning Center](#) (external web)

Community Service Holds Statewide Earth Day Clean-Up



Spring cleaning. *The Trial Court's Community Service Program held its first annual statewide Spring Clean-Up in honor of Earth Day. As part of their community service requirements, some 200 probationers helped clean more than 20 parks and other public spaces around*

Massachusetts, including Look Memorial Park in Northampton (photo above), where 13 participants from Hampshire County raked and removed leaves from picnic areas.

"Growing up, I was taught to 'leave it better than you found it,'" says Community Service Statewide Supervisor David Skocik. "This Earth Day event helps us do exactly that, while we deliver valuable services to our communities and non-profit organizations, and encourage a sense of achievement for our participants."

What's happening at your courthouse?

Keep us in the loop. Send us your news, photos, and upcoming events you'd like to share with your Trial Court colleagues: execofc@jud.state.ma.us.

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Coming Up in June:

- Roca and UTEC: Two Community Models Reduce Recidivism for 18-24 year olds
- Western Mass. Veterans Treatment Court Celebrates Launch
- Springfield's Court Service Center Holds Open House for Court Leaders, Community