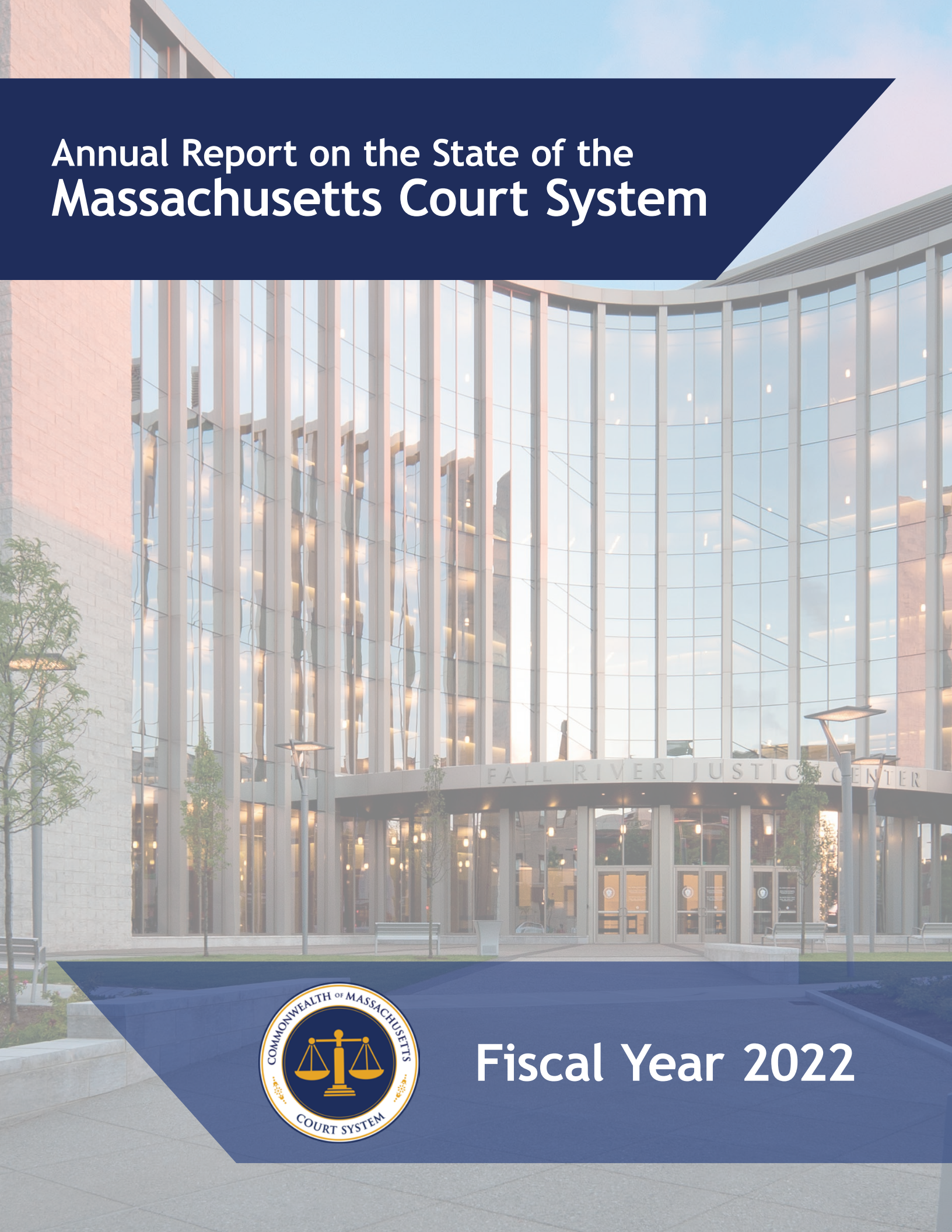
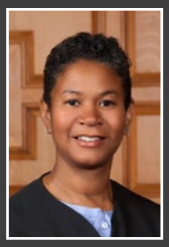
# Annual Report on the State of the Massachusetts Court System




## Fiscal Year 2022

Hampshire Superior Court, Northampton

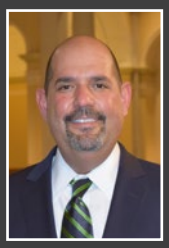
# FROM COURT LEADERSHIP



Chief Justice
Kimberly S. Budd
Supreme Judicial Court

Chief Justice
Mark V. Green
Appeals Court

Chief Justice
Jeffrey A. Locke
Trial Court



Court Administrator
John A. Bello
Trial Court

During Fiscal Year 2022, the court system was able to restore some normalcy and make headway using technology to improve the delivery of justice

Though the pandemic continued to impact court operations in FY 2022, particularly through the first half of the year, we are pleased that the courts successfully adopted new practices that have improved and expedited court processes.

Ongoing change affected everyone across the system – judges, clerks, court officers, probation officers, facilities employees, and administrative staff – who continued to exhibit resilience in the face of health and safety concerns. We are grateful for their dedication and support.

Passage of the Judiciary's IT Bond Bill by the legislature and governor in August 2022 was certainly a highlight of the past year. The approved investment of $165.5 million will unlock the full potential of a digital courthouse that initially became apparent through the use of virtual hearings and services during the pandemic.

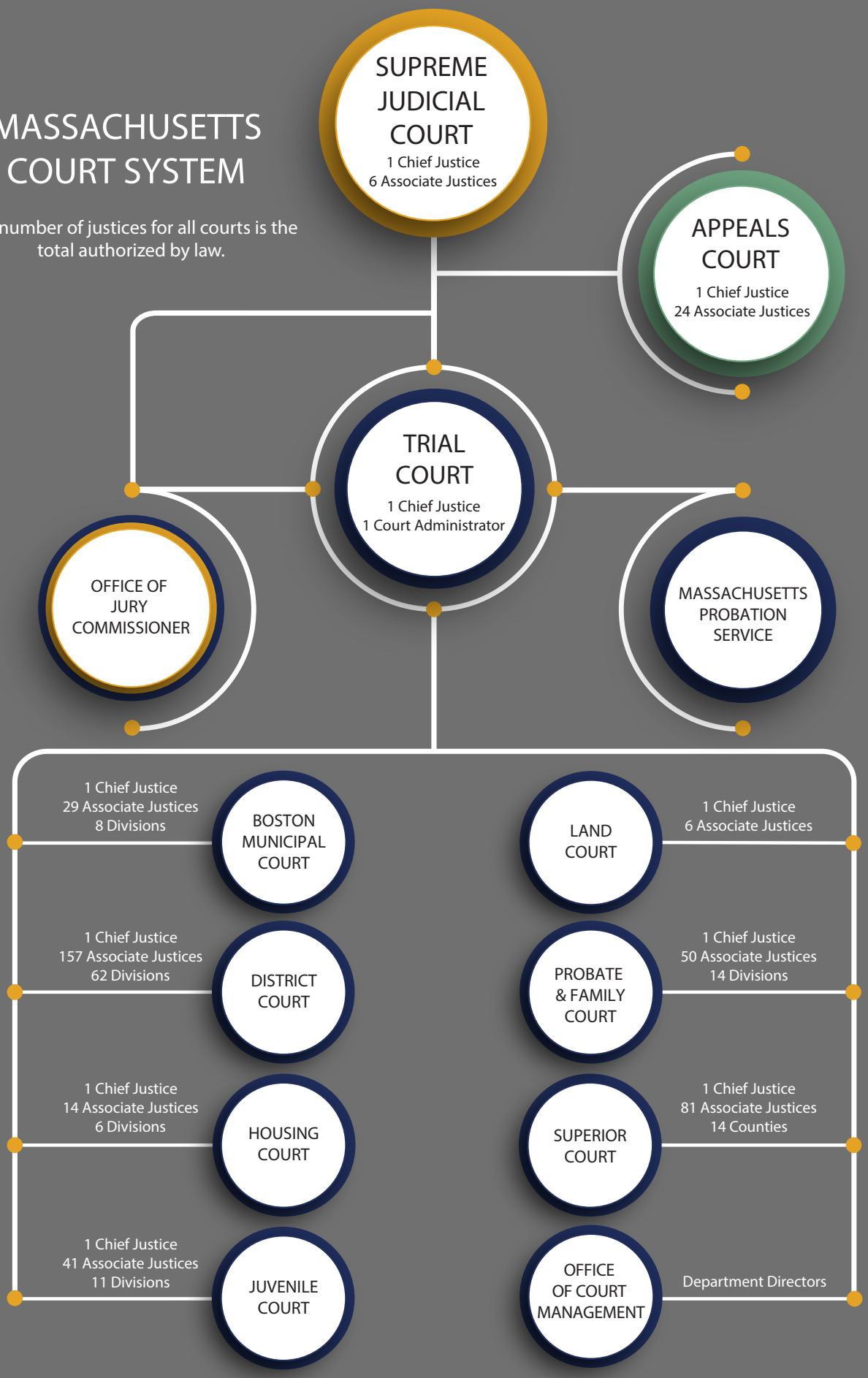
We look forward with optimism and a renewed commitment to access to justice through continued improvement.

Sincerely,

*Kimberly S. Budd, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court*
*Mark V. Green, Chief Justice of the Appeals Court*
*Jeffrey A. Locke, Chief Justice of the Trial Court*
*John A. Bello, Court Administrator of the Trial Court*

# MASSACHUSETTS COURT SYSTEM

The number of justices for all courts is the total authorized by law.



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# SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT
## *Justices and Officials*

*As of June 30, 2022*

### CHIEF JUSTICE
Kimberly S. Budd

### JUSTICES
Frank M. Gaziano
David A. Lowy
Elspeth B. Cypher
Scott L. Kafker
Dalila Argaez Wendlandt
Serge Georges Jr.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Carol R. Lev

### CLERK FOR THE COMMONWEALTH
Francis V. Kenneally

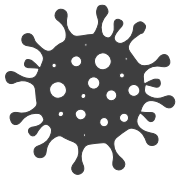
### CLERK FOR THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK
Maura S. Doyle

# SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT

## FISCAL YEAR 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

### Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) continued to exercise its superintendence authority to guide the response of the Massachusetts courts to changing conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of the termination of the COVID-19 state of emergency declared by the Governor and increased availability of COVID-19 vaccines, on July 1, 2021, the SJC issued new orders that eased prior restrictions on public access to courthouses and on in-person proceedings. The SJC provided for a general return to conducting court business in person, while permitting courts to continue to hold certain proceedings virtually (i.e., by telephone, videoconference, or comparable means), in both civil and criminal cases where it was consistent with constitutional rights and statutory requirements.



The SJC also lifted COVID-related restrictions on the conduct of jury trials, while directing that jury trials in cases where a person was being held in custody should continue to receive priority. Due to the trial backlog, the SJC continued to require that civil cases typically tried to juries of 12 in the Superior Court and Housing Court instead be tried to juries of six persons. The Court also permitted certain criminal and youthful offender trials to use juries of six persons with the consent of the defendant or juvenile; permitted sexually dangerous person trials to be tried to juries of six persons with the consent of all parties; and limited the number of peremptory challenges permitted in various types of trials. In addition, the SJC declared that the general continuance of jury trials effectuated by its orders would apply until October 1, 2021, and that the time periods of such general continuances would continue to be excluded from speedy trial computations under Mass. R. Crim. P. 36. Due to the surge of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, the SJC briefly halted all jury trials from January 3, 2022, until February 14, 2022, but resumed them thereafter.

### Attorney Survey on Pandemic Changes in Court Procedures

In November and December 2021, the SJC and the Trial Court invited attorneys to complete a voluntary survey on whether pandemic related changes in court procedures should be adopted permanently in some form. The SJC also requested feedback concerning its emergency orders authorizing the use of electronic signatures by attorneys, parties, judges, and clerks; email service of pleadings and other papers in civil cases; and remote depositions and administration of oaths in civil cases. The Trial Court asked for attorneys' views regarding the use of videoconferencing in specific settings in various courts. Nearly 10,000 attorneys responded and the Trial Court Department of Research and Planning summarized the survey responses. The SJC further analyzed the attorney comments relating to the procedural changes and asked its Standing Advisory Committee on the Rules of Civil Procedure to consider whether rules should be amended to adopt these procedural changes permanently.

The Supreme Judicial Court (SJC), originally called the Superior Court of Judicature, was established in 1692 and is the oldest appellate court in continuous existence in the Western Hemisphere. The SJC serves as the leader of the Massachusetts court system; it exercises final appellate authority over the decisions of all lower courts and is responsible for general superintendence over the administration of the state court system.

## State of the Judiciary Address by SJC Chief Justice Kimberly S. Budd

Chief Justice Kimberly S. Budd delivered her inaugural State of the Judiciary address on October 27, 2021. Trial Court Chief Justice Paula Carey, Court Administrator John Bello, and Massachusetts Bar Association President Thomas Bond also made remarks as part of this program, which was held virtually due to the pandemic. Chief Justice Budd acknowledged the many challenges caused by COVID-19 and the changes in court procedures required to protect public health during the pandemic. In addition to these issues, she noted, the court system had "suffered a devastating blow" with the unexpected death of SJC Chief Justice Ralph D. Gants in September 2020.

Calling him "a great mentor and friend," Chief Justice Budd paid tribute to her predecessor's leadership and support for his colleagues, especially during the pandemic, saying that "his wisdom, energy, and can-do spirit buoyed us all during a dark time." Taking inspiration from Chief Justice Gants' observation in his last State of the Judiciary address that "justice is a team effort," Chief Justice Budd extended her "deepest thanks to the more than 6,000 employees of our court system for all that you have done to help us weather the many challenges of COVID-19." She also thanked Governor Charlie Baker, legislative leaders, and the bar associations for their support.

Chief Justice Budd then discussed the court system's efforts "to envision what 'normal' court operations should look like in the future." "We will need to sift through the many procedural and technological changes we have made in response to the pandemic," she said, "and think carefully about whether to adopt them permanently, modify them in some way, or abandon them."

She also discussed the SJC's efforts to address "another kind of virus that has affected our legal system for far too long – the problem of racial and ethnic inequities." She noted that the SJC had begun convening quarterly meetings with the Chief Justices of each trial court department and the Commissioner of Probation to discuss what each was doing to combat these inequities, which "[l]eft unchecked, … undermine the fundamental principle of equal justice for all."

In closing, Chief Justice Budd observed, "Our courts have been sorely tested by unprecedented challenges over the last year-and-a-half, and we have done our collective best to meet those challenges. And now we have the opportunity to profit from what we have learned, and to make our courts more efficient, more transparent, more responsive to the needs of court users, and more equitable in treatment of all. Let us all join together to make the most of this extraordinary opportunity."

## Appointment of Chief Justice of the Trial Court

In October 2021, the Honorable Paula M. Carey, Chief Justice of the Trial Court, announced her intention to retire in January 2022, after eight-and-a-half years in that role and a total of more than 20 years of service as a judge. Pursuant to G. L. c. 211B, § 6, the Justices of the SJC were responsible for choosing her successor.

On January 13, 2022, the Justices announced that they had selected the Honorable Jeffrey A. Locke, Associate Justice of the Superior Court, as the new Chief Justice of the Trial Court, effective January 19, 2022. In announcing Judge Locke's appointment, SJC Chief Justice Kimberly Budd observed that he "is the right person for these times," and that his "experience, skills and dedication to the mission of the Trial Court will allow him, working with the Court Administrator, to effectively lead the Trial Court in this challenging period."

Judge Locke brought to this position decades of experience as a jurist, administrator, and prosecutor. During his 20-year tenure in the Superior Court, he served as regional

administrator for Plymouth County from 2007 to 2011 and for criminal cases in Suffolk County from 2012 to 2015, and as chair of the Massachusetts Sentencing Commission from 2018 to 2022. Before his appointment to the bench, Judge Locke also held positions as Commissioner of the Department of Social Services from April 1999 to October 2001; as District Attorney in Norfolk County from 1997 to 1999; and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and an Assistant District Attorney.

Chief Justice Budd thanked Chief Justice Carey for her service saying, "She worked tirelessly to improve access to justice, and diversity, equity, and inclusion for all who work in and use our courts and to shepherd the Trial Court through the pandemic with perseverance and determination."

## Restorative Justice Program

In April 2022, Chief Justice Budd presented the keynote address at a program on restorative justice presented by the Flaschner Judicial Institute. Restorative justice is a voluntary process in which offenders, victims, and members of the community collectively identify and address the harms resulting from an offense and offenders take responsibility for their actions and seek to make reparation to the victim or the community.

Chief Justice Budd noted that, although the number of people in Massachusetts correctional facilities has fallen substantially in recent years, the Commonwealth's incarceration rate remains one of the highest in the world as compared with other nations, and it has not dropped nearly as much as the crime rate.

Moreover, evidence indicates that incarceration alone is not particularly effective in preventing recidivism, and there are racial and ethnic disparities in its use. In light of these issues, she urged that it is time to take a closer look at how restorative justice might be used by the courts as an alternative to incarceration in appropriate cases.

Following Chief Justice Budd's remarks, a variety of panelists, including Judge Leo Sorokin of the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Superior Court Judge Peter Krupp, Commissioner Edward Dolan of the Massachusetts Probation Service, and District Attorney David Sullivan offered various perspectives on restorative justice practices.

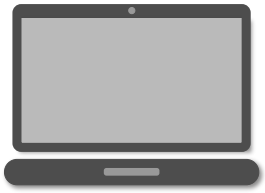
## Community Outreach

Each year, the Supreme Judicial Court engages in numerous activities to inform and educate the public about the Court's work, the judicial system, and the rule of law.

- The Supreme Judicial Court's Judicial Youth Corps (JYC) returned to an in-person program during the summer of 2022. A 12-week legal education program for high school students held with the assistance of judges, lawyers, court employees, bar associations, and other dedicated supporters, JYC teaches students about the rule of law and the role of the judicial branch. The Court's Public Information Office administers the program, which is funded by foundations and grants. In FY22, the program engaged 22 Boston students and 15 Worcester students in a rich learning experience that included conducting mock trials, attending hearings, and sessions with numerous guest speakers.
- The Supreme Judicial Court participated in the Commonwealth's 74th annual Student Government Day program held virtually on April 1, 2022. This event invites students from across the Commonwealth to learn about the three branches of state government. Supreme Judicial Court Associate Justice Serge Georges Jr. presented to the students about the critical importance of youth civil engagement, the role of the judiciary in

state government, what inspired him to get involved in public service, and his role as an associate justice.

- The website continues to provide extensive information for lawyers, litigants, educators, students, journalists, and the public. Supreme Judicial Court staff regularly update and post content to the SJC's webpages, including appellate opinions, recently entered cases, SJC orders, notices and press releases about court events and initiatives, rule changes, invitations to comment, and committee vacancies. The SJC maintains historical and educational content for students and educators on the website, including an online form educators can use to schedule tours of the historic John Adams Courthouse and request a presentation by an appellate court judge.



In addition, webcasts of SJC oral arguments, produced in partnership with Suffolk University Law School, provide a valuable resource enabling the public and others to view live and archived oral arguments from anywhere in the state or country. The website also offers online access to docket information and briefs in all non-impounded cases before the SJC.

Scan with your mobile device to visit us on Mass.gov

*SJC Chief Justice Kimberly S. Budd with 2022 Judicial Youth Corps students from Boston.*

John Adams Courthouse Great Hall

# APPEALS COURT
## *Justices and Officials*

*As of June 30, 2022*

### CHIEF JUSTICE
Mark V. Green

### JUSTICES
Amy Lyn Blake
Robert A. Brennan
Andrew M. D'Angelo
Kenneth V. Desmond Jr.
Joseph M. Ditkoff
John Englander
Marguerite T. Grant
Rachel E. Hershfang
Kathyrn E. Hand
Vickie L. Henry
C. Jeffrey Kinder
James Lemire
Gregory I. Massing
William J. Meade
James R. Milkey
Eric Neyman
Peter J. Rubin
Peter Sacks
Sookyoung Shin
Sabita Singh
Mary T. Sullivan
Ariane D. Vuono
Maureen E. Walsh
Gabrielle R. Wolohojian

### COURT ADMINISTRATOR
Gina L. DeRossi

### CLERK
Joseph F. Stanton

# APPEALS COURT

## FISCAL YEAR 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

### Appellate Caseload

The Appeals Court panel caseload in FY22 remained steady with FY21: specifically, 1,206 new appeals were entered, 101 fewer than FY21. Of the appeals entered, civil cases outnumbered criminal cases at 64% of all new entries – a 9% increase. Net entries totalled 813 cases. The court decided 959 cases.

During FY22, the Appeals Court held most of its oral arguments in person at the John Adams Courthouse, as well as other courthouses, law schools, and universities across the Commonwealth. As a public health precaution due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Appeals Court permitted parties to request a remote oral argument. In addition, during a winter surge of the coronavirus, the court held all oral arguments for January and February remotely. All remote arguments are conducted on the Zoom videoconference platform with a live stream to the Appeals Court's public YouTube channel. During FY22, the court's YouTube channel generated over 10,000 views of oral arguments.

### Technology Enhancement

The Appeals Court purchased a voice-activated camera system for courtroom oral arguments that will livestream hearings from the John Adams Courthouse to the court's public YouTube channel. The system became operational in October.

#### Modernization of the Appellate Courts Case Management System

Senior members of the Appeals Court spent much of FY22 meeting with representatives of the Supreme Judicial Court and Gartner Consulting to develop an RFP for a new appellate case management system. The RFP was published in August 2022. The court will conduct vendor selection during FY23, while performing additional work to develop the new system.

#### Electronic Filing

During FY22, 95% of all briefs were filed electronically (97% criminal, 94% civil). The Appeals Court mandates electronic filing for most documents with limited exceptions, including impounded documents or documents filed by self-represented litigants. Self-represented litigants generally elect to electronically file, except those persons committed to an institution who do not have the technical ability to electronically file.

#### Intracourt Record Transmission

The Appeals Court continued to expand its pilot program with the Trial Court for electronic assembly of the record and transitioned all local courts to receive electronic Appeals Court notices. The number of Trial Court locations participating in the electronic assembly pilot has increased steadily.

The Appeals Court was established in 1972 to serve as the Commonwealth's intermediate appellate court. The court has a chief justice and 24 associate justices. The justices sit in a "quorum" or panel of three justices, with the composition of judicial panels changing each month. The Appeals Court is a court of general jurisdiction that hears criminal, civil, and administrative matters. All appeals from the Trial Court (with the exception of first-degree murder cases) are initially entered in the Appeals Court. Similarly, the court receives all appeals from the Appellate Tax Board, the Industrial Accident Review Board, and the Commonwealth Employment Relations Board.

## Civil Appeals Clinic

The Appeals Court continued to collaborate with the Volunteer Lawyers Project and the Supreme Judicial Court's Access to Justice Program to conduct the Pro Bono Civil Appeals Clinic. The weekly clinic provides pro bono attorneys to assist indigent self-represented parties with appellate questions. The Volunteer Lawyers Project now hosts the clinic online.

## Public Access to Case Records

The Appeals Court continued posting briefs of non-impounded cases and audio recordings of oral argument in panel cases on the court's website. In addition, oral arguments held before Appeal Court justices were live streamed via Zoom to the Court's public YouTube channel and are publicly accessible in its YouTube archive. Access to the posted documents and recordings is free. In addition, the Appeals Court expanded its online system to allow the public to purchase case records. The court also began to convert archived microfiche case records to the portable document format (PDF) upon request.

## Participation on Judicial Branch Committees & Bar Associations

Justices and staff of the Appeals Court serve on numerous judicial branch committees and bar associations, including the Standing Advisory Committees on the Massachusetts Rules of Appellate Procedure, Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure, Massachusetts Rules of Criminal Procedure, and Massachusetts Evidence Law. Justices and staff also serve on the board of editors of the Boston Bar Association's *Boston Bar Journal* and the Massachusetts Bar Association's *Massachusetts Law Review*.

## Community Outreach

The Appeals Court published four issues of its newsletter, *The Review*, during FY22, as an additional way to communicate with the bar and other stakeholders.

In addition, Appeals Court justices and personnel served as speakers on multiple legal education programs for lawyers and judges. These included seminars discussing appellate practice, evidence, and diversity in the legal profession. Appeals Court justices and personnel also served as speakers on a variety of programs affiliated with bar associations and Massachusetts law schools.

## Translation Project Improves Access to Justice for All

The Appeals Court Clerk's Office with assistance from the Trial Court Office of Language Access (OLA) launched a translation project to make it easier for non-English speaking self-represented litigants to file pleadings and understand the appellate procedure. The project identified the most commonly used appellate forms and guides for translation into the most frequently used languages in the courts. Ninety documents were translated and when the project is finished, the Appeals Court website will have 140 documents available in five non-English languages.

The project team also is converting the forms to a fillable format so they are easier to complete. Since self-represented litigants may be inexperienced with how to complete a filing, the project team created fillable pdfs with cues to guide the litigant through questions to enable preparation of a ready-to-file motion that is compliant with the Rules of Appellate Procedure. The forms are available at this link: *https://www.mass.gov/lists/appeals-court-forms.*

Adding forms and guides in a litigant's primary language will increase access to justice for non-English speaking members of our community.

## Appeals Court Holds Oral Argument Sessions Across the Commonwealth

As part of a continuing effort to broaden public awareness, understanding, and accessibility of the Massachusetts court system, the Appeals Court conducted a record number of off-site sittings during the 2022 fiscal year. The sittings were held at:

- UMass Law, Dartmouth
- Western New England School of Law
- Massachusetts School of Law
- Essex Superior Court
- UMass, Amherst
- New England Law | Boston
- Boston University School of Law
- Suffolk University Law School
- Worcester Trial Court
- Barnstable Superior Court

*Oral argument session at Barnstable Superior Court*

## Appeals Court Debuts the Virtual Appellate Clerk

The Appeals Court Clerk's Office launched the *Virtual Appellate Clerk* help center via Zoom where court personnel are available to assist attorneys and self-represented parties, answer questions, and provide information about available resources.

## Massachusetts Appeals Court Hosts Council of Intermediate Appellate Court Chief Justices

In October 2021, the Council of Chief Judges of the State Courts of Appeal (CCJSCA) held its annual conference in Boston, resuming an in-person format after holding the 2020 conference virtually due to the pandemic. The conference theme was *Declare Your Judicial Independence*. Chief Justice Mark Green chaired the conference planning and host committees. Court Administrator Gina DeRossi also served on the host committee handling logistics. The conference offered a variety of educational and social programs for the approximately 100 participating current and retired chief judges. Participants discussed their court's experiences during the pandemic – what was learned and how those lessons will affect justice going forward. United States Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer participated in a "fireside chat" with Chief Justice Green on *Preserving Constitutionalism, Democracy, and the Rule of Law*.

*U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer (right) with Appeals Court Chief Justice Mark Green*

## Justices Hold Educational Conference

After a two-year postponement due to the pandemic, Appeals Court justices met in person for their annual educational conference. Topics discussed included jury issues; diversity, equity, and inclusion; child welfare; post-conviction motion practice; scientific evidence and technology in criminal cases; zoning, standing, and current trends in Land Court; and threat management and assessment.

# TRIAL COURT
## *Justices and Officials*

*As of June 30, 2022, unless otherwise noted*

### CHIEF JUSTICE
Jeffrey A. Locke *(eff. January 2022)*
Paula M. Carey *(ret. January 2022)*

### COURT ADMINISTRATOR
John A. Bello

### DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

*Boston Municipal Court*
Roberto Ronquillo Jr., Chief Justice
Cheryl A. Sibley, Deputy Court Administrator

*District Court*
Stacey J. Fortes, Chief Justice *(eff. July 2022)*
Paul C. Dawley, Chief Justice *(ret. July 2022)*
Philip J. McCue, Deputy Court Administrator
Joseph Jackson, Deputy Court Administrator *(eff. April 2022)*
Ellen S. Shapiro, Deputy Court Administrator *(ret. March 2022)*

*Housing Court*
Timothy F. Sullivan, Chief Justice
Benjamin O. Adeyinka, Deputy Court Administrator

*Juvenile Court*
Amy L. Nechtem, Chief Justice
Thomas R. Capasso, Deputy Court Administrator

*Land Court*
Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice
Jill K. Ziter, Deputy Court Administrator

*Probate & Family Court*
John D. Casey, Chief Justice
Domenic DiCenso, Deputy Court Administrator

*Superior Court*
Heidi E. Brieger, Chief Justice
Elaina M. Quinn, Deputy Court Administrator

### MASSACHUSETTS PROBATION SERVICE
Edward J. Dolan, Commissioner
Dianne Fasano, First Deputy Commissioner

### OFFICE OF JURY COMMISSIONER
Pamela J. Wood, Commissioner

# TRIAL COURT

## Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic continued to consume Trial Court efforts in Fiscal Year 2022. Procedural changes to accommodate remote hearings were operationalized and many will continue post-pandemic. Virtual meetings are now part of regular interaction with the public and other key stakeholders and have expanded access to justice.

New case filings totaled 684,483 a 13 percent increase from FY21, the first full fiscal year of the pandemic. The courts used CDC guidelines to implement health and safety precautions.

The Office of Jury Commissioner and the Jury Management Advisory Committee tested procedures to minimize risk for those appearing for jury service and a video was created to help them know what to expect at the courthouse.

Trials had resumed on a limited basis in January 2021, and fully resumed still using precautions in fall 2021.

The Trial Court developed a new three-year strategic plan to become effective in FY23. Trial Court accomplishments for FY22 are reported in the following six priority areas:

### FY22 PRIORITY AREAS

- Pandemic Response
- User Experience
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Judicial System Excellence
- Operational Excellence
- Responsiveness to Societal Challenges

JUSTICE WITH DIGNITY AND SPEED

MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT STRATEGIC PLAN 3.0

The Massachusetts Trial Court operates under the general superintendence of the Supreme Judicial Court and includes seven court departments – Boston Municipal Court, District Court, Housing Court, Juvenile Court, Land Court, Probate and Family Court, and Superior Court. The Chief Justice of the Trial Court and the Court Administrator oversee the court departments, as well as the Massachusetts Probation Service and the Office of Jury Commissioner. The Trial Court has 385 authorized judicial positions and employs more than 6,300 staff who handle approximately 800,000 case filings annually in 94 locations statewide.

## Innovation and Transformation Mark Pandemic Response

The major upheaval in court operations that began in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic extended through FY22. Courts introduced health and safety protocols to allow staff, attorneys, litigants and the public to be safe in courthouses. All aspects of operations demonstrated flexibility, innovation and transformation that set new standards for responsiveness and access to justice. Many court events transitioned to a virtual platform and technology was used creatively to establish virtual clerks' offices and registries that enabled matters to be resolved expeditiously.

The Jury Management Advisory Committee sought stakeholder input and issued recommendations. A three-phase return of jury trials began in January and fully resumed in fall 2021. Overall, nearly 131,000 jurors appeared for service and 2,553 impanelments took place in FY22.

### Remote Operations

Policies and procedures to accommodate and safeguard court users and court staff during the pandemic were implemented by all court departments and administrative departments, including Probation, Human Resources, Judicial Information Services, and Facilities Management. Technological advancements during the pandemic led to significant progress toward establishing a digital court system, including an expansion of the delivery of e-Notices, rule changes to support digital caseflow, and eFiling of Summary Process cases.

Judges and court staff managed many thousands of remote court events via Zoom, including hearings on those held in custody, plea agreements, motions, pretrial conferences, small claims, and bench trials. Court Departments were well prepared to conduct remote court operations and revert to standing orders during a surge in Covid-19 in early January 2022.

Court departments promulgated operational standing orders to provide guidance and direction to attorneys and the public on the status of court operations and which court events would presumptively occur in-person or remotely. They also worked together to update forms and MassCourts functionality.

### Pandemic Efforts by Departments

- Boston Municipal Court addressed the backlog of cases and achieved a clearance rate of 97% by the end of the fiscal year. Caseflow metrics and backlog dashboards assisted court divisions in prioritizing cases.
- District Court and Boston Municipal Court issued a joint standing order to designate which hearings to conduct in-person or virtually. The order increased the number and types of hearings conducted in person, including arraignments and motions arising out of arraignment; probation matters; criminal and civil bench trials; and hearings pursuant to G.L. c. 209A and 258E.
- Housing Court operated a hybrid model for in-person and virtual hearings. "Virtual front counters" provided face-to-face assistance to court users with housing specialists and with representatives from the Tenancy Preservation and Lawyer for the Day programs.
- Juvenile Court worked with an outside firm on digital caseflow and held workshops to address the changing technology needs of the court.
- Land Court held court events via telephone, Zoom, and in-person, with an increasing occurrence of in-person events as the year progressed.
- Probate and Family Court Virtual Registries provided face-to-face assistance to court users via Zoom. Users received case information, court dates, paid for and obtained copies of documents, received filing packets of court forms, and more. Supportive programs such as Lawyers of the Day and Kinship Navigator also assisted individuals via the Virtual Registries.
- Superior Court grappled with a significant number of continued or not-scheduled jury

trials. Once jurors were called again for service, priority was given to increase the number of empaneled trials and proceedings to ensure that litigants' claims and defenses were fairly and timely addressed.

## Improving the User Experience

The pandemic underscored the court system's priority to ensure ease of use and access to the court system, timeliness of case disposition, and procedural fairness. Many court innovations and online initiatives were accelerated to accommodate and safeguard court users and court staff during the pandemic. Investments in technology, remote services, case flow processes and other enhancements are part of this greater effort.

### Remote Services

The Trial Court continued to improve and expand online processes, digitize court operations, and build a robust foundation for remote services. Court departments expanded virtual operations to reduce courthouse visits and minimize in-person contact for safety reasons throughout the fiscal year. This also served to improve the experience of those who needed to physically go to court and reduced wait times. A virtual Court Service Center was created to provide statewide access to supportive resources and interpretation services also added virtual capability.

Additional court department remote services included:

- Boston Municipal Court and District Court increased the use of technology with remote hearings to increase access. Zoom Rooms were set up in several high-volume courthouses for communities with limited access to technology.

- Probate and Family Court expanded electronic access to estate and administration case docket entries and images on the public access portal.
- Superior Court embraced remote hearings for many civil and criminal matters and issued Standing Order 1-22: Videoconferencing of Court Events, outlining certain criminal and civil proceedings that are presumptively to be held in-person or by videoconference.

### Electronic Delivery of Documents & Notices

The Trial Court expanded eDelivery of court documents and notices to all active Massachusetts attorneys registered with the Board of Bar Overseers – 99% of the approximately 59,000 Massachusetts attorneys opted to participate in the program when it launched in 2020.

In FY22, Housing Court began eDelivery of court event notices to attorneys, with plans to extend the service to self-represented litigants using an opt-in process and also introduced text reminders to remind court users of their upcoming court case dates. Many documents produced and sent by the court to parties and counsel in Land Court cases are now eDelivered and the number continues to grow.

### Electronic Filing for Civil Cases

The Trial Court continued to expand the availability of civil eFiling to more case types, with over 92,451 new cases filed electronically and over 574,755 documents eFiled into new and existing cases, a 39% and 52% increase from the year before.

- Land Court expanded the availability of eFiling in Tax Lien cases to include all filers. A new resource assists homeowners to complete a Tax Lien foreclosure answer form using a question-and-answer format to generate a form for electronic or manual filing.
- Probate and Family Court continued to expand eFiling for case types including name changes, conservatorship, and parenting time.

- The Superior Court implemented eFiling in civil matters in all 14 counties. Efforts to configure and implement eFiling in criminal matters will begin in FY23.

## Standardization of Forms through Plain Language

The Access to Justice (A2J) Forms Management Team works with court departments and the Mass. Probation Service to review, simplify, and standardize forms and self-help materials most commonly used by self-represented litigants. The FMT is incorporating best practices and planning for the "future of forms" in terms of accessibility, software consistency, ease of use, standardized templates, and case types compatible with a guided interview format.

In FY22, FMT completed a plain language project through a grant from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). The effort resulted in the creation of a Plain Language Guidance document, revision of some commonly used forms, creation of a Summary Process explanatory video in English and Spanish, and an online training class for employees.

Other plain language initiatives:

- Boston Municipal Court created multi-language small claims forms and notices to inform court users of the availability of interpreter services.
- Boston Municipal Court and District Court worked with FMT and Housing Court to standardize the Housing Transfer Form and create a single new form.
- The District Court continued to promulgate and publish new fillable forms for ease of completion and accessible to clerks, judges, police and public court users.

## Text Messaging Expansion

The Massachusetts Probation Service (MPS) continued to develop and implement programs and expand services to probationers to support criminal justice reform. The Interactive Text Response program (ITR) alerts court users of upcoming court dates in an effort to reduce the number of warrants issued for "failure to appear" cases and reduce pretrial detention. During the year, MPS made great strides in adding court events and capturing phone numbers to opt into the program. Between April and June 2022, over 78,000 successful notifications were sent to litigants across the state – 18,000 more than the previous quarter. The failure to appear rate for pretrial hearings was consistently lower for the text reminder group regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, or offense severity.

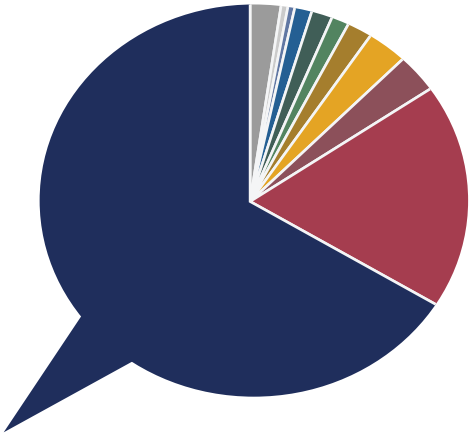
**More than 218,600 text alerts were sent in FY22, an increase of 264%, with an opt-in rate of over 8%.**

## Language Access and Court Records

The Office of Language Access (OLA) continued to improve language services for diverse, Limited English Proficiency communities.

FY22 initiatives included:

- Hired new interpreters for Spanish, Portuguese, Cape Verdean, and Haitian Creole;
- Recruited contract interpreters for 15 languages to serve throughout the judicial system;
- Secured out-of-state court interpreters for in-person and video remote interpretation and translation services for 13 less frequently requested languages; and
- Completed translations of court communications, forms, guides for court user accessibility in nine languages.



## FY22 TOP LANGUAGE REQUESTS

- Spanish (67%)
- Portuguese (17%)
- Haitian Creole (3%)
- Cape Verdean (3%)
- Chinese (2%)
- Vietnamese (1.5%)
- Arabic (1.5%)
- American Sign Language (1.5%)
- Russian (0.5%)
- Khmer (0.5%)
- Other (2.5%)

Total Language Requests: 159,953 for 108 languages

### Court Service Centers

To provide broader access to services in FY22, Court Service Centers operated a hybrid model of both in-person and remote services. The hybrid model meets the needs of in-person court users walking into courthouses, in addition to those who do not reside in geographic areas where CSCs are located but need remote legal assistance. In response to increased demand, plans are underway to increase CSC staff in FY23.

### Law Libraries

The Trial Court's 15 public law libraries provided long-established chat, text, email, and phone services. In FY22, the Brockton Law Library launched a weekly virtual Ask a Librarian initiative in partnership with the public libraries in Brockton, Holbrook, Quincy, Avon, Scituate, Whitman, and Randolph, and began offering one-on-one legal reference services. Law libraries elsewhere in the state also are increasing outreach to public libraries to explore additional virtual services.

The Berkshire Law Library held its annual "Cinema of Law" film series with the Berkshire Bar Association and Anthenaeum, and the Hampshire and Franklin Law Libraries presented a webinar on navigating the Law Library to Bar Advocates.

### Law Libraries:

**Served 31,999 patrons** including:
- 17,741 self-represented litigants
- 15,006 on-site visitors
- 7,696 chat or text sessions
- 6,054 email inquiries

Responded to **18,061** questions and **8,560** requests for limited assistance

Delivered **3,893** online documents

Received over **229,000** hits/month to flagship legal research database on Mass.gov

Scan with your mobile device to view database

### Partnership with Public Libraries

In FY22, the Trial Court began to provide access to virtual court resources and services at public libraries across the state. First launched at Norwood's Morrill Memorial Library, the initiative provides access to computer terminals and the internet to search for court resources, such as interpreter services, legal aid, case information and more. Visitors can contact the virtual court help desk, use library computers and printers to access and print court forms, and in some cases use designated library spaces for virtual court hearings. The partnership is expanding with libraries in Chelsea, Quincy, Boston, and Chicopee launching in FY23.

### Public Outreach

Judicial volunteers visited more than 113 schools, colleges, senior centers, public libraries, and community organizations across the state as part of the American Bar Association's fifth annual National Judicial Outreach Week. Observed each March, in Massachusetts the initiative, which focuses on "Preserving the Rule of Law," is a month-long signature outreach program for the state judiciary. More than 85 judges and staff from Trial Court departments and the appellate courts raised public awareness about the importance of the courts in upholding the Rule of Law and educated students and communities about their work.

*Judge Thomas Kaplanes with elementary school students in Canton, Mass.*

## Building Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Trial Court remains deeply committed to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into all its work and strives to provide equal access to justice in a safe and dignified environment. During the year, the court continued efforts to build a more inclusive, equitable workforce, increase community outreach, expand education and training programs, and better understand the court user experience.

The Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Experience, the Office of Workplace Rights and Compliance, and the Judicial Institute work together to embed discussions of diversity, equity, and inclusion into the planning and delivery of all Trial Court training, education and professional development.

The Office of Workplace Rights and Compliance introduced new training, Upstander Intervention, encouraging employees to stop, address, or report any incident of discrimination or harassment, and provided tools on how best address such incidents. OWRC also led an ADA Task Force with internal and external stakeholders to improve the request process for those seeking reasonable accommodations from the courts.

### Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Experience (ODEIE)

The Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Experience coordinates the championing of equity internally and externally. ODEIE's work focuses on building organizational capacity to advance diversity, equity and inclusion goals to improve the experience of court users and personnel. FY22 initiatives included:

- Piloted a new introductory DEI training, called *Centering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Experience (DEIE)*, in collaboration with the Security Department.
- Presented *Beyond Intent: Understanding the Impact of your Words and Actions* to personnel in the Probation Department, Community Justice Support Centers, and the Probate and Family Court leadership team.
- Collaborated with the Judicial Institute to deliver *Beyond Intent* to the entire Probate and Family Court.
- Facilitated a session with judges and leaders of the Appeals Court to identify strengths, challenges, solutions, and priorities for court leadership to address moving forward.
- Held a courtwide *Conversation on Race: The Latinx Experience* during National Hispanic Heritage Month highlighting the commitments of Latinx personnel to their work and allowed others to engage in dialogue.
- Hosted a virtual Women's History Month celebration supporting the 2022 theme, *Women Providing Healing, Promoting Hope*, with leaders from Chelsea District Court and the Probation Department.
- Produced a video, called *Upstander*, featuring a call-to-action from court leaders and staff for everyone to speak up and speak out against disrespectful actions and work to create positive change.
- Hosted four organization-wide listening sessions for all personnel to share experiences dealing with race and bias to help inform the efforts of the Committee to Eliminate Racism.
- Continued ongoing collaboration with Bentley University's User Experience Center, which researched and reported on the current state of wayfinding in various courthouses coupled with proposed solutions.
- Partnered with external agencies and organizations to advance DEIE efforts within the legal community, locally and nationally, including presenting Signature Counter Experience training to the Oregon State Courts, and leading an implicit bias program for first-year students at the New England School of Law.

## Additional Diversity Initiatives

Court Departments and the Massachusetts Probation Service continued their efforts to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels, including training and working with Human Resources and the Office of Workplace Rights and Compliance to ensure diverse recruitment.

- Boston Municipal Court formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee with subcommittees on education, outreach and community and culture.
- District Court trained judicial officers on discriminatory motor vehicle stops and jury selection. The Court added racial and ethnic fairness information to resource materials for new judges and created an internal webpage with cases, articles, podcasts, documentaries, and suggested readings.
- Housing Court continued to recruit, hire, and promote diverse candidates to ensure that its workforce reflects the communities it serves and participated in community outreach to promote court careers.
- The Juvenile Court DEI Committee presented *Bias in Courts: Factors Impacting the Well Being of MA Attorneys from Underrepresented Populations* at its spring conference. The Court continues to analyze and assess available data to build and update dashboards on delinquency cases at a variety of decision points disaggregated by race and ethnicity. Public dashboards can be located at: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/drap4687
- Land Court issued a standing order for Massachusetts homeowners to address and remedy racially restrictive covenants in land deeds and records. The statute declares void any "provision in an instrument relating to real property which purports to forbid or restrict

the conveyance, encumbrance, occupancy, or lease thereof to individuals of a specified race, color, religion, national origin or sex."

- Probate and Family Court hosted the *Beyond Intent* program and a series of dialogues with staff to share their experiences in a safe and welcoming environment.
- Superior Court continued to encourage judicial candidates in an effort to promote a bench balanced by race, ethnic background, and gender. The court also compiled and disseminated resource materials, and conducted discussion groups focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The Trial Court celebrated its fifth annual Cultural Appreciation Week with events at courthouses and offices across the state. Introduced in 2017 to unite and educate court employees around issues of diversity and inclusiveness, the FY22 theme, *Justice, Culture, and Community*, celebrated diversity, equity, fairness and inclusion in courthouses and communities served. Courts held a second statewide food drive and launched a winter clothing drive.

As part of the weeklong celebration, the Probation Service introduced its diversity pledge.

*Court leaders celebrate Cultural Appreciation Week at the Ruane Judicial Center in Salem.*

**MPS Diversity Pledge**

The Massachusetts Probation Service stands against structural and systemic bias, racism, discrimination in all of its forms, and harassment by intentionally building a more diverse and inclusive workplace where we value all of our employees for their talents, abilities, and the unique qualities they bring to the Service. We commit to bringing these same values - diversity, equity, and inclusion - to our work, our partners in the justice system, and the communities we serve.

## Judicial System Excellence

The Trial Court made significant efforts to enhance judicial excellence and strengthen coordination among court departments and across the justice system. The court worked on aligning policies, procedures, and practices within and between court departments, improving workflow, case flow management and data and information access, identifying and sharing best practices, and strengthening research, education, and training programs for judges and court staff.

- Boston Municipal Court developed a "brown bag" lunch series for judges by members of the Legal Department staff.
- Boston Municipal Court and District Court updated judicial training materials, including "90 Day Guides" issued to new judges, as well as BMC's Judicial Benchbook.
- District Court expanded professional development opportunities for clerks and judges, including a conference on domestic violence along with the Judicial Institute and other partners.
- District Court revised Guidelines for Judicial Practice on Abuse Prevention Proceedings and on new Civil and Criminal model jury instructions.

- Housing Court posted an electronic version of the daily case list, and reported metrics to divisional leaders in real time, through dashboards.
- The Juvenile Court received a $1.5 million grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to develop family treatment courts. Employees will be hired to facilitate and enhance collaboration and coordination within and across judicial, child welfare, behavioral health treatment and community-based systems.
- Land Court updated its Glossary of Terms for interpreters and Court Service Center staff. Judges are participating in pilot projects of tools for working in a digital environment.
- Probate and Family Court created a Judge & Register Working Group to develop best practices for each division. The court also created an Electronic Certification and Attestation Committee to research a secure and efficient method, standardize language, and establish a uniform process for electronic certification/attestation.
- The Superior Court Model Jury Instructions Committee began publishing official, court-approved model jury instructions in March 2021 and published 30 sets of civil and criminal instructions in FY22. Members of the Committee conducted seminars to educate the bar on the new instructions, which have been positively received.

## Alternative Dispute Resolution

Legislative funding for ADR services provided nearly $1.1 million for programming and $500,000 for permanency mediation services. Programming funds supported free mediation and conciliation services in the Boston Municipal Court, District Court, Juvenile Court, Probate and Family Court, Land Court and Superior Court Departments.

Permanency mediation, an alternative to contested court proceedings for children in the state foster care system, provided services for children in the custody of the Department of Children and Families with active cases.

In FY22, all free mediation and conciliation services in the Boston Municipal Court, District Court, Juvenile Court, Probate and Family Court and Superior Court Departments, were available via Zoom or in-person. Through a new request for proposals to continue free mediation and conciliation services, 20 programs received funding for a three-year term.

## Trauma Response Task Force

The Trauma Response Task Force, now in its third year, is developing strategies to address the impact of trauma across the court system – on court users, judges, staff, and jurors – and to educate and assist Trial Court staff who are regularly exposed to primary and secondary trauma at work. This includes efforts to integrate trauma-informed practices into court operations.

In FY22, the task force launched a pilot project with the Institute for Health and Recovery to conduct a pilot trauma integration process in the Lawrence District Court. Project participants include court leaders from all departments and a Trauma Integration Committee with staff who will assess practices, develop recommendations, and monitor implementation of the pilot.

The Trial Court now makes available short-term, free counseling after conclusion of a trial for jurors who may be troubled by their experience.

## Judicial Education, Training & Professional Development

The Judicial Institute designs, delivers, and coordinates online and on-site continuing professional education programs and skills training for all judges and court staff.

In FY22, the Judicial Institute launched a new series of online onboarding courses for new employees. The eight-course program introduces new employees to the Trial Court and includes an

overview of the structure and history, purposes and responsibilities of the Trial Court, personnel policies and procedures, and segments on overcoming barriers to justice, such as poverty and mental illness.

The Judicial Institute also:

- Held the first in-person orientation since 2019 for recently appointed Clerk Magistrates and Assistant Clerk Magistrates;
- Delivered virtual and in-person programs for new judges, including segments on ethics, domestic violence and after-hours emergency response;
- Presented *Women on the Bench: Being Prepared to Navigate Gender-Related Experiences*. The program included tools and strategies to address gender-based experiences in the courtroom and in the courthouse;
- Offered well-being webinars in collaboration with the Human Resources Department to all Trial Court judges and staff;
- Supported webinars for judges, in partnership with the District Court Education Committee, on topics such as supplementary process, digital evidence, and significant civil cases;
- Introduced online course for local Language Access Liaisons to facilitate interpreter requests and support court users with limited English or hearing issues; and
- Launched training program for judges, in coordination with the Court Services & Law Libraries department, on emergency judicial response service.

The Judicial Response System received 5,557 after-hours calls in FY22, an average of 107 weekly calls statewide.

### Interactive Dashboards of Case Data

The Trial Court continues to expand the variety of information and data available to the public through its interactive dashboard platform. The dashboards allow courts to identify trends and

Scan with your mobile device to view Interactive Dashboards

enable the routine publication of data of public interest. Public dashboards are updated weekly, eviction activity reports are produced monthly, and new dashboards are uploaded quarterly. Throughout the year, efforts focused on improving and reporting case flow metrics, including data on pending cases.

In FY22, the Trial Court Department of Research and Planning began working with the Supreme Judicial Court to implement a criminal data action plan in response to the 2020 Harvard Law School study on racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

## Advancing Operational Excellence

The pandemic underscored the critical importance of the court system's technology infrastructure in the delivery of justice. In August 2022, Governor Baker signed the Judiciary's IT Bond Bill, a commitment to invest $165.5 million to enable the courts to improve technology and undertake a digital transformation. First filed in FY20 and delayed by the pandemic, it is the first technology bond bill for the courts since 1997.

Main investment areas within the bill will greatly improve the experience of court staff, court users, and connected agencies. Enhancements will

enable courts to align business processes and significantly improve operational effectiveness and shift to a more paperless system. Information about these investments can be found at https://www.mass.gov/news/court-leadership-testifies-on-it-bond-bill.

In June 2021, the Trial Court secured $8 million in technology funding from the Investment Advisory Committee of the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security to jumpstart technology investment in priority areas. These resources were directed to foundational planning support, expansion of bandwidth across the court system, and improved digital security.

**Human Resources** continued to refine and develop new processes for recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and benefits. A new automated Applicant Tracking System went live in July 2021. A new customer-focused recruitment model includes outreach to community groups and professional affinity groups to attract a broad range of diverse candidates. The onboarding process now includes clearly defined processes, a robust orientation, and training to improve the experience of newly hired staff.

**The Office of Workplace Rights & Compliance** trained affinity law associations on the policy and procedure to file a complaint and sought feedback on ways to improve the process. OWRC developed posters for use in courthouses across the state to raise awareness among court staff and the public about its services for anyone experiencing or witnessing discrimination or harassment at a court location.

**Facilities Management and Capital Planning (FMCP)** completed building ventilation assessments of all courthouses and continued to improve existing conditions for courthouses, including building access. FMCP is working with the Commonwealth's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to review courthouse design in the post-pandemic environment to develop guidelines for future projects.

## Technology Enhancements

**Bandwidth/Infrastructure:** The Judicial Information Systems Department implemented infrastructure upgrades to the court system's network capacity, increasing bandwidth to courthouses across the state, helping to ensure that virtual proceedings are conducted without disruption.

**eCourts:** A planning process headed by the eCourts team and IT contractor Gartner worked with all court departments to examine case processes, identify how they might transition to the digital world, and identify ways to create more consistency across departments. More than 35 workshops were held to identify challenges and suggestions for improvement. Recommendations are under review.

**Cybersecurity:** The Trial Court made significant progress in its IT security posture. The Judicial Information Services Department continues to raise the security culture through regular, ongoing training, awareness, simulations, and tools to make cyber security a priority.

**Digital Recording:** A series of efforts upgraded and streamlined the court's For the Record digital recording of in-person and virtual court hearings. The Trial Court also completed deployment of mobile recording systems for hearings conducted in spaces not fully equipped with FTR. In addition, the introduction of remote bench headsets and recording equipment allowed distanced benching in place of a traditional sidebar.

## Probation Initiatives

The Massachusetts Probation Service made significant progress in the selection of a vendor for a state-of-the art system to modernize overall case management, including realigning core business processes, monitoring capabilities, information collection, and coordination. A contract will be finalized in FY23.

Probation continued its move to the single sign-on, web-based platform Focal Point Solution. Authorized users will access multiple state

and federal criminal justice data sources, in collaboration with Judicial Information Services and the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security. MPS will realign core business processes to support a unified criminal record search platform.

Other initiatives:

- Implemented evidence-based tools to support the field in developing high-quality supervision plans using digital guides that help Probation Officers address client criminogenic needs and case management issues. The tools help clients understand and address risk factors and help POs address client skill deficits and support positive change.
- Established a partnership with the UMass Chan Medical School to assess local court capacity to introduce new researched-supported supervision plans using a readiness survey, administration timeline, and data analysis.
- Collaborated with executive branch partner agencies to develop a technological infrastructure for compliance with the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services/Federal Bureau of Investigation standards.
- Assisted 3,000 victims and survivors through referrals to programming and resources (1,925), notifications (7,217), help with victim impact statements (405), and safety planning (1,700).
- Improved information sharing and collaboration with the Massachusetts State Police on probationer DNA collection.

DNA samples collected in FY22: 1,063
Drug tests administered: 195,790

## Selected Operational Improvements by Court Departments

- Boston Municipal Court made significant progress on developing a digital caseflow program, including the delivery of eNotices and rule changes to support digital caseflow.
- District Court met monthly with mental health partners to review mental health protocols and practices to address issues arising from the pandemic and participated in bi-weekly meetings regarding Section 35 petitions.
- Housing Court made work accessible from any court location, providing specialists the tools to conduct mediations in spaces without internet access.
- Juvenile Court is designing a virtual online resource for stakeholders, participants and community members to access information about court processes and services, with support from Casey Family Programs and Chapin Hall.
- Land Court launched a Surveying Project Management System to digitize all registered land plan information in the Commonwealth dating back to 1898.
- Probate and Family Court received a two-year federal Elder Justice Innovation Grant to help create an office of guardianship/conservatorship oversight.
- Superior Court judges and staff began using the Judicial Tools software application, allowing judges to access MassCourts documents virtually.

*New Court Officers attend training in Clinton, Mass.*

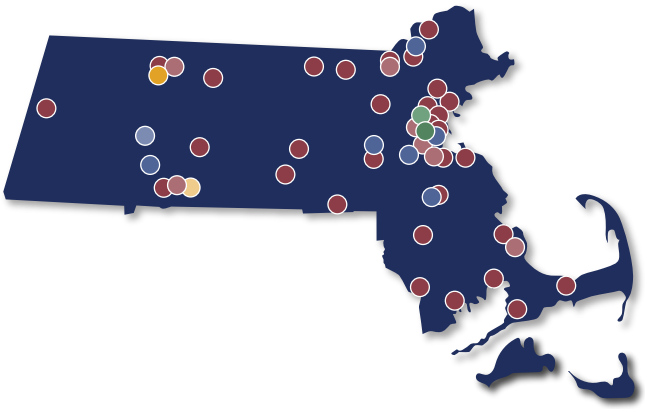
## Responding to Societal Challenges

Courts launched innovative practices, operations, and services to respond to new societal changes and challenges over the year. They worked to meet community needs across the state and continued to implement criminal justice reforms signed into law in 2018.

The Trial Court:

- Enhanced services for specialty courts
- Improved and expanded services to the growing number of self-represented litigants
- Expanded Probation Service programs, including building the statewide system of pre-trial services
- Continued efforts to address racial inequities in the justice system

## Specialty Court Locations Across the Commonwealth



| | | 2013 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Drug Courts | 18 | 31 |
| | Mental Health Courts | 3 | 12 |
| | Veterans Treatment Courts | 1 | 6 |
| | Family Resolutions Court | 0 | 1 |
| | Family Drug Treatment Court | 0 | 1 |
| | Young Adult Court | 0 | 1 |
| | Homeless Court | 0 | 1 |
| | Community Court | 0 | 1 |

### Specialty Courts Expand Services

Specialty Courts address underlying issues that can lead to justice involvement – such as substance use and mental health disorders, PTSD, and the effects of trauma. These sessions provide an alternative to incarceration through intensive probation supervision, mandated participation in treatment, random drug screens, and regular court appearances before a judge. In addition to specialty court sessions, the Specialty Courts & Behavioral Health Initiatives Team has implemented several large-scale projects aimed at supporting those who come before the courts with behavioral health issues.

In FY22, the Trial Court received a $1.5 million federal grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to integrate Family Treatment Court practices throughout the Juvenile Court. This PATHS Initiative will fund staff to conduct the analysis of child welfare resources and gaps in several counties. In addition, a Specialty Court in that jurisdiction will address substance use disorders, mental health, and the effects of trauma on parents and families involved in Care & Protection cases.

This latest grant brings the total of active grant funding for behavioral health initiatives and specialty court-related projects to nearly $21.7 million. These include:

- $2 million from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to provide MISSION case management and peer support services in the Springfield Drug Court;
- $4 million to pilot the use of Assisted Outpatient Treatment through Boston's Mental Health Courts;
- $6 million for Project NORTH to enhance court-coordinated treatment services in 13 courts serving 77 communities; and
- $6.1 million in SAMHSA grants to support the delivery of MISSION Model wraparound case management and peer support in Barnstable, Greenfield, Lawrence and Lowell.

New Specialty Court sessions were created in FY22 – a new drug court session in Attleboro and mental health court sessions in Chelsea and Lynn. The Trial Court received notice that $500,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act is reserved for transportation of veterans in specialty courts over the next five years.

## Project North

In FY22, the Trial Court began to implement Project NORTH (Navigation, Outreach, Recovery, Treatment, and Hope) with $6 million from the Department of Justice to enhance court-coordinated substance use disorder treatment services in 13 courts serving 77 communities across the state. Project NORTH includes voluntary court-based recovery/support/navigation services, transportation to court and court-mandated treatment, and rent for up to six months in a certified sober home. The program launched in Barnstable and is available in Boston, Brockton, Fall River, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Quincy, Springfield, Taunton, and Worcester.

## Community Justice Project /Sequential Intercept Mapping

The Massachusetts Community Justice Project (MCJP) facilitates and supports connections among the justice system, behavioral health treatment, healthcare, and social service partners statewide to support recovery, enhance public safety, and improve community quality of life. Thirty Sequential Intercept Mapping workshops have been held since 2013, covering 174 communities in partnership with community services, police, sheriffs, district attorneys, defense counsel, treatment providers, hospitals, and state agencies. In FY22, MCJP staff continued to support implementation of Project NORTH to provide court-based recovery support navigation services for court-involved persons impacted by substance use disorder.

MCJP staff also supported the Juvenile Court initiative focused on children and families at-risk and involved with the child welfare system. Child welfare resource mapping, the first of its kind in the country, will provide the needs assessment for developing statewide family treatment court sessions.

## Court Department Initiatives

- Boston Municipal Court organized a virtual "Community Response" court session to address the public health and safety crisis at an encampment in Boston. The session connected individuals to treatment, housing and other resources while addressing court matters. The court also worked with the community to set up a vaccination clinic in the Roxbury courthouse.
- Housing Court's Tenancy Preservation Program continued to work with litigants to determine whether behavior related to a disability may be reasonably accommodated to save an otherwise healthy tenancy. Housing Court Specialists provided referrals to community-based resources.
- The Juvenile Court launched a mapping initiative in collaboration with the National Center for State Courts to help communities strengthen families and support permanent homes for children.
- Superior Court continued to increase awareness about the services provided by the Office of Community Corrections for pre-trial supervision and probation services as possible alternatives to incarceration.

## FY22 Grants Fund New Initiatives

The Trial Court received federal grant awards for three new initiatives this year:

- $1 million two-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Community Living (ACL) to create a statewide Office of Adult Guardianship and Conservatorship Oversight.
- $1.1 million four-and-half year grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance for the Trial Court's High-Risk Probationer Recidivism Reduction Project to allow the Probation Service, in partnership with Roca, Inc., to expand its work with its highest-risk young offenders.

- $1.5 million three-year grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Family Drug Court Program for its Prevention and Treatment for the Health and Stability of Children and Families (PATHS) Project, referenced in the Specialty Courts section.

## Probation Community-focused Initiatives

Probation Service staff coordinated 20,000 hours of community service in FY22. Probation's Community Service team delivered more than 15 tons of food and supplies, donated by court staff in the Trial Court's first statewide food and supply drive, to soup kitchens and food pantries statewide. They also collected and delivered more than 40 large boxes of toys and gifts for the Toys for Tots holiday toy drive.

## Community Justice Support Centers

Community Justice Support Centers are a vital part of Probation's mission and support safer, stronger communities by delivering community-based alternatives to prison and jail that reduce recidivism.

The Trial Court's 18 Community Justice Support Centers, formerly called Community Corrections Centers, work with community-based partners to deliver treatment, education, career counseling, and clinical case management as an alternative to jail and prison. Support Centers also provide a statewide network of re-entry services for those returning to the community after a period of incarceration. In FY22, the Trial Court began to rededicate the centers to highlight this resource and service hub that focuses on the rehabilitation and public safety needs of communities.

MPS contracted with UMass Chan Medical School to ensure the Support Centers deliver state-of-the-art services with fidelity to evidence-based practices. The University of Pennsylvania reported that Support Center participants demonstrated a 36% reduction in recidivism among those at high-risk.

*Court leaders celebrate reopening of Boston Community Justice Support Center.*

Support Centers operate through contracts with community-based service providers like Bay State Community Services, Old Colony YMCA, and Social Services, Inc., as well as county sheriffs' departments.

1,030 participants matriculated through CJSC programs and nearly 52,000 used the Support Centers to check in after hours or for special programs like Fatherhood/Motherhood, Intimate Partner Abuse Education, Hi-SET/GED or employment support.

## Probation Expands Residential Re-entry Services

MPS and the Massachusetts Parole Board continued their partnership to provide access to sober housing beds for up to eight weeks. This partnership included the Mass. Alliance for Sober Housing and began during the pandemic in response to expedited releases. MPS and Parole used federal CARES Act funds and housing funds to co-finance this effort.

Sober houses supported 118 participants per month totaling close to 2,223 total bed days (19 days per participant) paid per month.

MPS manages transitional residential reentry housing with its community partner, Community Resources for Justice, in western Massachusetts, New Bedford, and Boston, providing more than 150 transitional beds. This program is available to all criminal justice partners and is key to reducing recidivism. In FY22, more than 270 participants received transitional housing support, through the efforts of the MPS Reentry Services Unit.

## National Adoption Day Builds Awareness

On one of the happiest days of the year in the courts, more than 103 children across the state who had been in foster care officially joined their forever families as part of National Adoption Day. A virtual kick off was broadcast statewide, celebrating families that had adopted throughout the year. The opening ceremony was followed by in-person and Zoom adoptions in courthouses across the state. The annual event raises awareness of the thousands of foster children in Massachusetts needing adoptive families.

Scan with your mobile device to visit the Trial Court on Mass.gov

*Left: Middlesex County Juvenile Court First Justice Gloria Tan with a new "forever family" at National Adoption Day.*

*Right: Children happily celebrate National Adoption Day at Bristol County Juvenile Court.*

Palmer District Court

# MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT BY THE NUMBERS

Data is for Fiscal Year 2022 or as of June 30, 2022.

## PEOPLE

| | |
|---|---|
| Judicial Positions Authorized by Statute | 385 |
| Total Judges and Staff | 6,186 |
| Percent Women | 59% |
| Percent Diverse Staff | 26% |

## ACCESS TO JUSTICE

| | |
|---|---|
| Judicial Emergency Response (calls after hours) | 5,557 |
| Interpreted Events | 159,953 |
| Number of Languages | 108 |
| Law Libraries | 15 |
| Law Libraries: On-site Patrons | 15,006 |
| Seven Court Service Centers (visitors to date) | 28,864 |
| Judiciary Website Unique Page Views (Mass.gov/Courts) | 18.5M |
| Judiciary Website Total Page Views | 24.4M |

## COURT BUSINESS

| | |
|---|---|
| New Case Filings | 684,483 |
| Jury Trial Impanelments | 2,553 |
| Jurors Appearing | 130,977 |
| Juror Utilization Rate | 41.3 % |
| Probation Supervision Caseload | 45,519 |
| Violations of Probation Notices | 16,003 |
| Total GPS-monitored Caseload | 4,180 |
| Community Justice Support Centers (CJSC) | 18 |
| CJSC New Enrollees | 1,030 |
| Specialty Courts | 54 |
| Drug Courts | 31 |
| Mental Health Courts | 12 |
| Veterans Treatment Courts | 6 |
| Other | 5 |
| Video Events | 188,944 |
| Stays in Lockup | 106,329 |

# MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT BY THE NUMBERS

Data is for Fiscal Year 2022 or as of June 30, 2022.

## MONEY MATTERS

| | |
|---|---|
| Operating Appropriation | $783M |
| General Revenue Collected | $47.2M |
| Probation Fees Collected | $7.9M |
| Investment in Capital Improvements | $12.8M |
| Prompt Pay Discounts | $293,305 |

## FACILITIES

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Number of Facilities | 107 |
| Facilities with Courtrooms | 94 |
| State/County Owned Facilities | 75 |
| Leased Facilities | 32 |
| Number of Courtrooms | 434 |
| Total Square Feet of Floor Space | 5.8M |

## MASSCOURTS CASE MANAGEMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| Daily Transactions | 1.2M |
| Cases in MassCourts | 27.6M |
| Case Calendar Events | 63.3M |
| Electronic Documents | 38.4M |
| eFiled Cases | 92,451 |
| eFiled Documents | 574,755 |
| Electronic Applications for Criminal Complaints | 92,303 |
| ePayments | $7.35M |
| Public Access ePortal Inquiries | |
| Internet | 5,308K/month |
| Attorney | 1,300K/month |
| Courthouse | 896K/month |

# STRUCTURE & STATISTICS

## SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT STRUCTURE

The Supreme Judicial Court consists of a chief justice and six associate justices. The full court usually sits at the John Adams Courthouse in Boston during the first full week of each month from September through May, hearing appeals and other cases involving a broad range of criminal and civil matters. The SJC typically issues approximately 200 written decisions each year.

The SJC also maintains a single justice session, known as the Supreme Judicial Court for the County of Suffolk. The single justice dockets include cases involving the exercise of the SJC's general superintendence power under G.L. c. 211, § 3, various requests for interlocutory relief, attorney discipline cases, matters referred to the single justice by the full court, and all petitions for admission to the Massachusetts bar. The single justice session operates throughout the year and has a combined total of more than 600 single justice and bar discipline cases and approximately 3,000 bar admission cases annually.

In addition to adjudicating cases, the Supreme Judicial Court also has extensive administrative responsibilities by virtue of various statutes, as well as its inherent constitutional and common law authority as the highest court in the Commonwealth. The SJC appoints certain positions within the court system and in a number of affiliated boards, commissions, and committees. The SJC is also responsible for approving all court rules, as well as codes of conduct for attorneys, judges, and clerks, and it has established several advisory committees to propose recommendations for those rules.

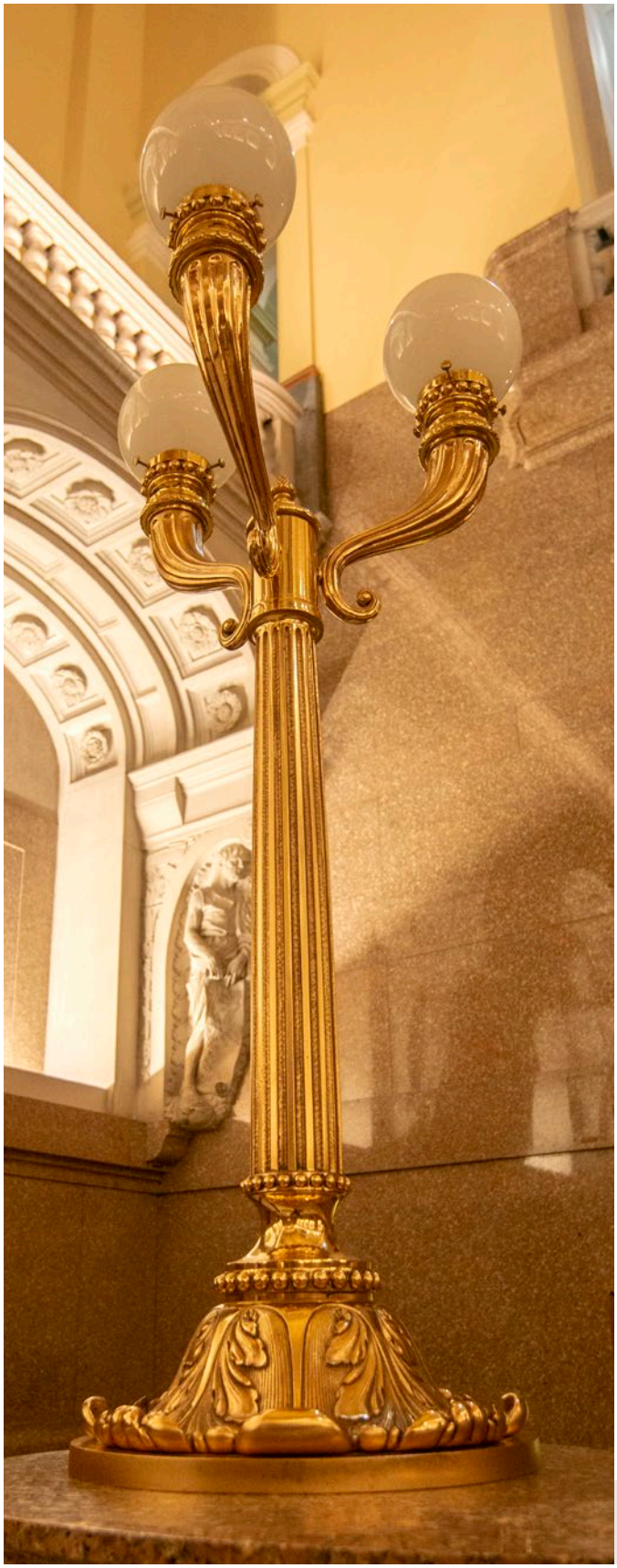
From left: SJC Justices Dalila Argaez Wendlandt, Elspeth Cypher, Frank Gaziano, Chief Justice Kimberly Budd, David Lowy, Scott Kafker, and Serge Georges Jr.

## SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT FY2022 STATISTICS

| CASELOAD | FY2021 | FY2022 |
|---|---|---|
| Direct Entries | 94 | 87 |
| Direct Appellate Review – Applications Allowed | 25 | 28 |
| Direct Appellate Review – Applications Considered | 64 | 68 |
| Further Appellate Review – Applications Allowed | 10 | 12 |
| Further Appellate Review – Applications Considered | 786 | 514 |
| Transferred by SJC on its Motion from Review of Entire Appeals Court Caseload | 33 | 40 |
| Gross Entries | 162 | 167 |
| Dismissals | 31 | 28 |
| Net Entries | 131 | 139 |

| DISPOSITIONS | FY2021 | FY2022 |
|---|---|---|
| Full Opinions | 144 | 117 |
| Rescripts | 24 | 32 |
| Total Opinions | 168 | 149 |
| Total Appeals Decided [1] | 173 | 151 |

[1] Indicates the total number of appeals resolved by the Court's opinions.



## APPEALS COURT STRUCTURE

The Appeals Court is the court of last resort for the overwhelming majority of Massachusetts litigants seeking appellate relief. Appeals from the seven departments of the Trial Courts and certain state agencies are docketed and decided by the Appeals Court, subject to further appellate review by the Supreme Judicial Court. A small number of appeals are transferred by the Supreme Judicial Court for direct appellate review before the Appeals Court considers the case. During FY22, the Supreme Judicial Court transferred 68 cases for direct appellate review of the 1,206 appeals docketed. The remaining cases are decided or resolved by settlement or dismissal by the Appeals Court.

In addition to its panel jurisdiction, the Appeals Court also runs a continuous single justice session, with a separate docket. The single justice reviews petitions for review of interlocutory orders and orders for injunctive relief issued by certain Trial Court departments, as well as requests for review of summary process appeal bonds, certain attorney's fee awards, motions for stays of civil judgments or criminal sentences pending appeal, motions to review impoundment orders, and petitions transferred from the Supreme Judicial Court involving pretrial custody and bail. During FY22, 689 cases were entered on the single justice docket – 107 more cases than during FY21, an 18% increase.

The Appeals Court again met the appellate court guideline for the submission of panel cases. By June 2022, all appeals fully briefed by February 1st had been argued or submitted to panels of justices for decision without oral argument. In total, 955 appeals were assigned to panels for decision, and the Appeals Court issued 959 written decisions, including 126 published opinions and 833 summary dispositions.

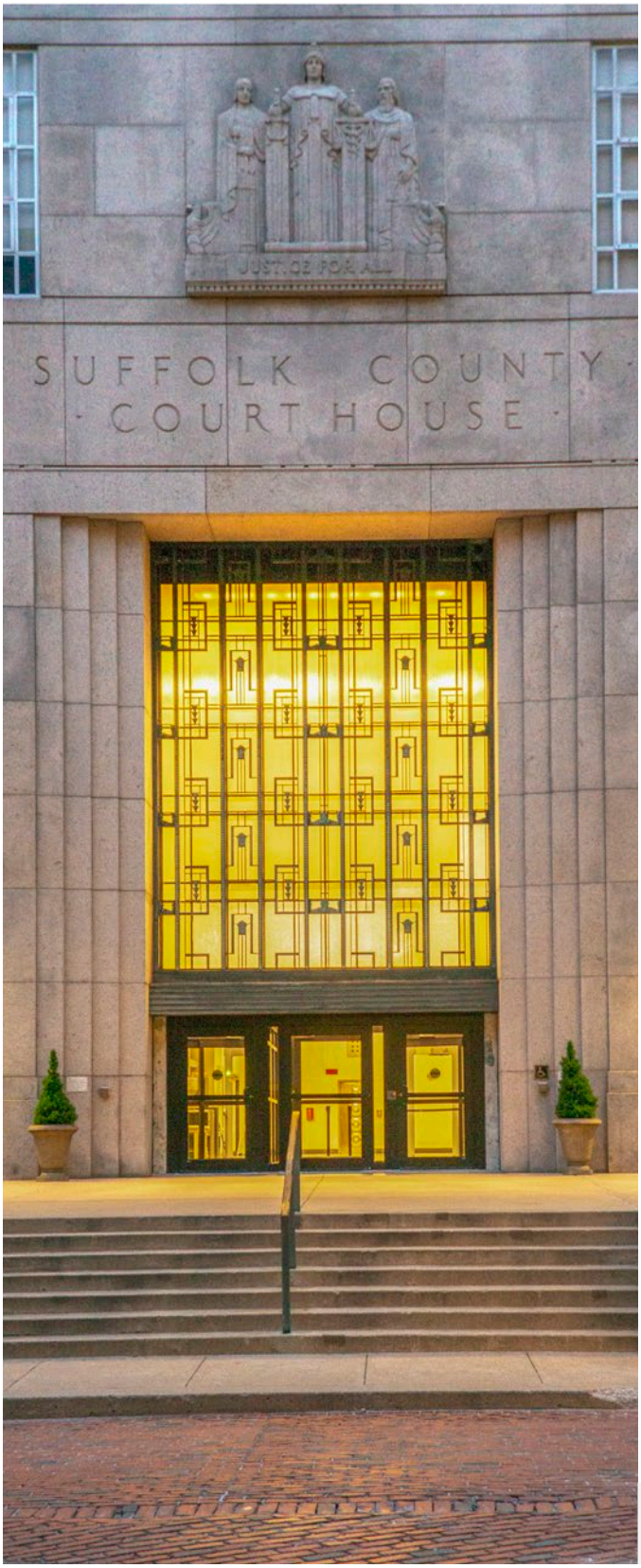
John Adams Courthouse, Boston

## APPEALS COURT FY2022 STATISTICS

| SOURCES/TYPES OF APPEALS | CIVIL | CRIMINAL | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Superior Court | 381 | 214 | 595 |
| BMC/District Court | 62 | 199 | 261 |
| Probate & Family Court | 108 | — | 108 |
| Juvenile Court | 73 | 10 | 83 |
| Land Court | 52 | — | 52 |
| Housing Court | 46 | — | 46 |
| Appeals Court Single Justice | 27 | 10 | 37 |
| Industrial Accident Review Board | 2 | — | 2 |
| Appellate Tax Board | 17 | — | 17 |
| Employment Relations Board | 5 | — | 5 |
| Total Fiscal Year 2021 | **773** | **433** | **1,206** |
| (Total Fiscal Year 2020) | 725 | 582 | 1,307 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Panel Entries | 1,206 |
| Transferred to Supreme Judicial Court | 68 |
| Dismissed/Settled/Withdrawn/Consolidated | 325 |
| Net Annual Entries | **813** |

| | CIVIL | CRIMINAL | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Published Opinions | | | 126 |
| Summary Dispositions | | | 833 |
| Total Panel Decisions | | | **959** |




## TRIAL COURT STRUCTURE

The Trial Court Chief Justice and the Court Administrator oversee the seven court departments, the Massachusetts Probation Service, and the Office of Jury Commissioner. They head the Executive Office of the Trial Court, which includes staff focused on specialty courts, access to justice, diversity/equity/inclusion/experience, policy and communications, as well as the Legal Department, Judicial Institute and Department of Research & Planning. In addition, the Court Administrator oversees the Office of Court Management, which serves all court departments in the following areas: facilities and capital projects, fiscal, human resources, technology, language access, law libraries, service centers, security, and workplace rights and compliance.

Each court department has its own Chief Justice, Deputy Court Administrator, and Administrative Office. In most Trial Court departments, each court division is managed by a First Justice appointed by the department's Chief Justice. The Superior Court Department designates Regional Administrative Justices who assist the Chief Justice in administering the department. The District Court Department also designates Regional Administrative Judges.

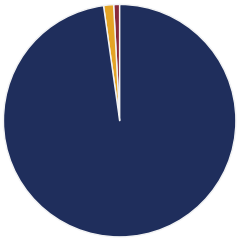
The Massachusetts Probation Service, led by the Commissioner of Probation, includes 105 probation offices across the state, 19 Community Justice Support Centers, as well as a training and operations center with teams that oversee electronic monitoring and warrant management. The MPS mission is to increase community safety, support victims and survivors, and assist individuals and families in achieving long-term positive change.

Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston

# TRIAL COURT FISCAL DATA FY2022

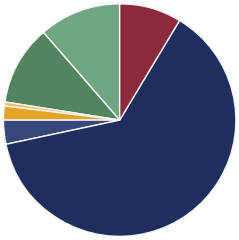
## Breakdown of Trial Court Funding

| | |
|---|---|
| Trial Court Operating Appropriations | $783,363,060 |
| Capital / Bond Funds | $12,774,007 |
| Grants, Trusts & Intergovernmental Funds | $4,449,690 |
| **Total** | **$800,586,757** |



## Trial Court Expenditures from Operating Accounts

| | |
|---|---|
| Judicial Salaries | $68,425,043 |
| All Other Salaries | $494,890,112 |
| Employee-Related Expenses | $24,280,424 |
| Case-Driven Expenses | $15,317,313 |
| Law Library / Legal Research Expenses | $5,384,884 |
| Office and Court Operations | $87,946,897 |
| Facility Rental, Maintenance and Operation | $87,118,387 |
| **Total** | **$783,363,060** |

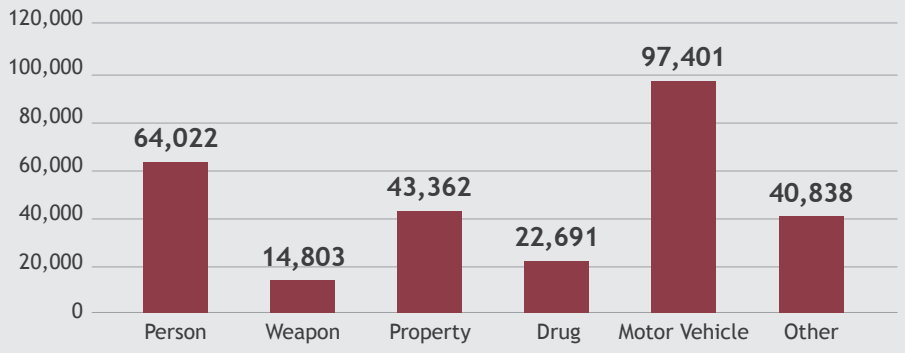


## Interdepartmental and Reserve Transfers pursuant to G.L.c. 211B §9A

| Total Amount Transferred Between Accounts | |
|---|---|
| Central Accounts | (12,130,000) |
| Superior Court Department | 650,000 |
| District Court Department | 3,900,000 |
| Probate & Family Court Department | 2,550,000 |
| Land Court Department | 450,000 |
| Boston Municipal Court Department | (450,000) |
| Housing Court Department | (1,350,000) |
| Juvenile Court Department | (920,000) |
| Probation Accounts | 7,000,000 |
| Jury Commissioner | (300,000) |

## CRIMINAL CHARGES BY TYPE AND OFFENSE CATEGORY

FY2022 TRIAL COURT CRIMINAL CHARGES BY OFFENSE CATEGORY




| Offense | Charge Type | FY2018 | FY2019 | FY2020 | FY2021 | FY2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Totals** | **352,775** | **334,525** | **278,570** | **261,543** | **283,117** |
| PERSON | **Total** | **67,400** | **65,193** | **59,397** | **58,183** | **64,022** |
| | Assault | 8,951 | 8,519 | 8,091 | 8,539 | 8,585 |
| | Assault & Battery | 43,831 | 42,837 | 39,406 | 37,225 | 41,708 |
| | Kidnap | 810 | 856 | 711 | 670 | 747 |
| | Murder / Manslaughter | 309 | 279 | 230 | 300 | 314 |
| | Other Person | 6,032 | 5,678 | 5,172 | 5,199 | 5,967 |
| | Robbery | 2,890 | 2,391 | 2,021 | 1,749 | 1,519 |
| | Sex | 4,577 | 4,633 | 3,766 | 4,501 | 5,182 |
| WEAPON | **Total** | **11,662** | **11,376** | **9,963** | **13,375** | **14,803** |
| | Dangerous Weapon | 1,161 | 946 | 866 | 914 | 1,040 |
| | Firearm | 7,668 | 7,618 | 6,734 | 9,409 | 9,300 |
| | Other Weapon | 2,833 | 2,812 | 2,363 | 3,052 | 4,463 |
| PROPERTY | **Total** | **62,293** | **58,075** | **45,173** | **37,665** | **43,362** |
| | Arson / Burn | 302 | 230 | 220 | 290 | 278 |
| | B&E / Burglary | 6,961 | 6,743 | 5,460 | 5,237 | 5,534 |
| | Forgery | 3,567 | 3,896 | 2,714 | 1,373 | 1,842 |
| | Fraud | 1,806 | 2,177 | 1,513 | 1,178 | 1,205 |
| | Larceny | 28,962 | 23,874 | 18,097 | 15,216 | 18,017 |
| | Motor Vehicle | 2,590 | 2,498 | 2,321 | 2,640 | 2,970 |
| | Other Property | 5,194 | 5,240 | 4,657 | 4,188 | 4,862 |
| | Shoplifting | 7,228 | 7,997 | 5,792 | 4,373 | 4,959 |
| | Trespassing | 5,683 | 5,420 | 4,399 | 3,170 | 3,695 |

## CRIMINAL CHARGES BY TYPE AND OFFENSE CATEGORY

| Offense | Charge Type | FY2018 | FY2019 | FY2020 | FY2021 | FY2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DRUG | Total | 34,151 | 30,134 | 23,406 | 24,165 | 22,691 |
| | Distribute Class A | 3,253 | 3,333 | 2,409 | 2,197 | 1,967 |
| | Distribute Class B | 5,918 | 4,761 | 3,468 | 3,286 | 3,201 |
| | Distribute Class C | 493 | 436 | 382 | 471 | 378 |
| | Distribute Class D | 2,037 | 1,675 | 1,324 | 1,295 | 1,125 |
| | Distribute Class E | 600 | 488 | 302 | 466 | 357 |
| | Distribute School Zone | 783 | 118 | 89 | 45 | 39 |
| | Other Drug | 3,676 | 3,010 | 2,153 | 2,072 | 1,612 |
| | Possess Class A | 4,124 | 4,052 | 3,012 | 3,170 | 2,992 |
| | Possess Class B | 6,854 | 6,233 | 5,303 | 5,230 | 5,071 |
| | Possess Class C | 975 | 808 | 653 | 636 | 712 |
| | Possess Class D | 183 | 125 | 104 | 136 | 112 |
| | Possess Class E | 2,173 | 2,071 | 1,610 | 1,791 | 1,509 |
| | Possess Marijuana | 44 | 69 | 38 | 59 | 60 |
| | Trafficking Class B / Cocaine | 2,006 | 2,144 | 1,786 | 2,217 | 2,348 |
| | Trafficking Heroin | 1,001 | 776 | 735 | 1,045 | 1,164 |
| | Trafficking Marijuana | 31 | 35 | 38 | 49 | 44 |
| MOTOR VEHICLE | Total | 118,042 | 114,562 | 93,984 | 91,904 | 97,401 |
| | Motor Vehicle Other | 103,552 | 100,164 | 81,423 | 81,114 | 85,925 |
| | Motor Vehicle Homicide | 85 | 109 | 80 | 98 | 112 |
| | Motor Vehicle OUI | 14,405 | 14,289 | 12,481 | 10,692 | 11,364 |
| OTHER | Total | 59,227 | 55,185 | 46,647 | 36,251 | 40,838 |
| | License Violation | 742 | 728 | 959 | 269 | 620 |
| | Other | 38,000 | 35,539 | 29,357 | 22,027 | 24,374 |
| | Public Order | 14,451 | 12,879 | 10,965 | 8,341 | 9,440 |
| | Restraining Order, Violation | 6,031 | 6,038 | 5,364 | 5,613 | 6,403 |
| | Trespassing | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

*Trial Court charge data has been restated for all fiscal years. Previously reported figures undercount the number of charges filed. Overall filing trends based on previously reported data remain unchanged.*

## FY22 TRIAL COURT CASE FILINGS BY DEPARTMENT AND TYPE

| | Case Types | Boston Municipal | District | Housing | Juvenile |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **All Case Types** | **54,251** | **426,695** | **27,763** | **24,500** |
| Criminal Matters | Criminal | 15,364 | 127,569 | 417 | 204 |
| | Criminal Show Cause Hearings | 17,788 | 106,027 | 1,278 | — |
| | Subtotal | 33,152 | 233,596 | 1,695 | 204 |
| Civil Matters | Civil - Regular | 3,175 | 25,762 | 3,434 | 15 |
| | Servicemembers | — | — | — | — |
| | Subtotal | 3,175 | 25,762 | 3,434 | 15 |
| | Civil - Specialized Matters: Small Claims | 7,390 | 69,894 | 601 | — |
| | Supplementary Process | 212 | 2,684 | 38 | — |
| | Summary Process | 311 | 3,964 | 21,522 | — |
| | Restraining / Harassment Orders | 4,165 | 36,934 | — | 592 |
| | Mental Health | 1,715 | 12,191 | — | 112 |
| | CMVI Appeals | 342 | 4,016 | — | — |
| | Administrative Warrants | 757 | 1,743 | 2 | — |
| | Other Specialized Civil | 25 | 339 | — | 37 |
| | Subtotal | 14,917 | 131,765 | 22,163 | 741 |
| Hearings | CMVI Hearings | 2,895 | 33,089 | — | — |
| | Applications for Complaint | — | — | — | 9,359 |
| | Non-MV Infraction Civil Hearings | 72 | 1,799 | 471 | — |
| | Subtotal | 2,967 | 34,888 | 471 | 9,359 |
| Juvenile Matters | Juvenile Delinquency | — | 2 | — | 5,365 |
| | Youthful Offender | — | — | — | 100 |
| | CRA / CHINS Applications | — | — | — | 4,064 |
| | Care & Protection Petitions | — | — | — | 2,354 |
| | Subtotal | — | 2 | — | 11,883 |
| Probate | Probate | — | — | — | 5 |
| | Guardianship | — | — | — | 651 |
| | Child Welfare and Adoption | — | — | — | 1,314 |
| Domestic Relations | Divorce | — | — | — | — |
| | Paternity | — | — | — | 328 |
| | Modification / Contempt | — | — | — | — |
| | Other Domestic Relations | — | — | — | — |
| | Subtotal | — | — | — | 328 |
| | Appeals | 40 | 682 | — | — |

## FY22 TRIAL COURT CASE FILINGS BY DEPARTMENT AND TYPE

| | Case Types | | Land | Probate & Family | Superior | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **All Case Types** | | **7,325** | **118,846** | **25,103** | **684,483** |
| Criminal Matters | Criminal | | — | — | 6,585 | 150,139 |
| | Criminal Show Cause Hearings | | — | — | — | 125,093 |
| | Subtotal | | — | — | 6,585 | **275,232** |
| Civil Matters | Civil - Regular | | 2,860 | — | 17,053 | 52,299 |
| | Servicemembers | | 2,842 | — | — | 2,842 |
| | Subtotal | | 5,702 | — | 17,053 | **55,141** |
| | Civil - Specialized Matters | Small Claims | — | — | — | 77,885 |
| | | Supplementary Process | — | — | — | 2,934 |
| | | Summary Process | — | — | — | 25,797 |
| | | Restraining / Harassment Orders | — | 2,198 | 84 | 43,973 |
| | | Mental Health | — | — | — | 14,018 |
| | | CMVI Appeals | — | — | — | 4,358 |
| | | Administrative Warrants | — | — | — | 2,502 |
| | | Other Specialized Civil | 1,623 | 712 | 1,094 | 3,830 |
| | | Subtotal | 1,623 | 2,910 | 1,178 | **175,297** |
| Hearings | CMVI Hearings | | — | — | — | 35,984 |
| | Applications for Complaint | | — | — | — | 9,359 |
| | Non-MV Infraction Civil Hearings | | — | — | — | 2,342 |
| | Subtotal | | — | — | — | **47,685** |
| Juvenile Matters | Juvenile Delinquency | | — | — | — | 5,367 |
| | Youthful Offender | | — | — | 101 | 201 |
| | CRA / CHINS Applications | | — | — | — | 4,064 |
| | Care & Protection Petitions | | — | — | — | 2,354 |
| | Subtotal | | — | — | 101 | **11,986** |
| Probate | Probate | | — | 41,481 | — | 41,486 |
| | Guardianship | | — | 9,129 | — | 9,780 |
| | Child Welfare and Adoption | | — | 3,661 | — | 4,975 |
| Domestic Relations | Divorce | | — | 19,395 | — | 19,395 |
| | Paternity | | — | 14,955 | — | 15,283 |
| | Modification / Contempt | | — | 27,284 | — | 27,284 |
| | Other Domestic Relations | | — | 31 | — | 31 |
| | Subtotal | | — | 61,665 | — | **61,993** |
| | Appeals | | — | — | 186 | 908 |

*Beginning in FY2021, filings data excludes criminal search warrants.*

## MASSACHUSETTS PROBATION SERVICE
### YEAR-END CASELOAD BY COURT DEPARTMENT

| Supervision Type | Boston Municipal Court | District Court | Juvenile Court | Superior Court | Administrative Supervision Unit | Total Supervision Cases | Probate & Family Court |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative Supervision | 1,259 | 11,628 | 384 | 631 | — | **13,902** | — |
| Care & Protection Petitions | — | — | 3,198 | — | — | **3,198** | — |
| Child Requiring Assistance (CRAs) | — | — | 2,245 | — | — | **2,245** | — |
| Completed Formal Investigations | — | — | — | — | — | — | **176** |
| Completed Short Term Investigations | — | — | — | — | — | — | **447** |
| Dispute Intervention Mediations | — | — | — | — | — | — | **15,128** |
| Driving Under the Influence | 73 | 1,965 | — | — | 5,368 | **7,406** | — |
| Pre-Trial Category B | 1,450 | 7,173 | 683 | 2,224 | — | **11,530** | — |
| Risk-Need Supervision | 610 | 6,331 | 371 | 3,926 | — | **11,238** | — |
| Seek Work Supervision | — | — | — | — | — | — | **260** |
| Totals | **3,392** | **27,097** | **6,881** | **6,781** | **5,368** | **49,519** | **16,011** |

## LAND COURT PERMIT SESSION REPORT
### PERMIT SESSION STATUS PURSUANT TO MGL c.185, §3A

Pursuant to MGL c. 185, §3A, cases filed in the Land Court Permit Session are individually assigned to a judge who handles the case from commencement to conclusion. By statute, the cases allowed entry into the Permit Session only include specified disputes where, "…the underlying project or development involves either 25 or more dwelling units or the construction or alteration of 25,000 square feet or more of gross floor area or both." The legislation also established three timeframes or tracks for these cases to follow.

At the beginning of FY22, thirteen Permit Session case were pending. During the fiscal year three new Permit cases were filed and three were disposed, resulting in thirteen cases remaining pending at the close of the fiscal year. The three cases disposed originated out of Barnstable, Middlesex, and Norfolk Counties. All three cases were completed without requiring a trial. The disposed cases had a combined average of twelve months to disposition. Of the thirteen permit session cases pending at the close of the fiscal year, seven were originally filed in the Permit Session, one was transferred in from the regular Land Court docket, and five were transferred in from the Middlesex and Suffolk County Superior Courts. The pending cases are actions based upon property located in the counties of Hampden, Middlesex, Plymouth, and Suffolk.

# FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHY

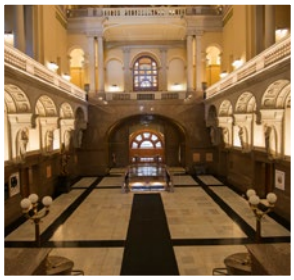
Front Cover:

Fall River Justice Center

Anton Grassl Esto Photographics Inc

Table of Contents:

Columns, Newburyport District Court



Pages 6-7, 11:

Great Hall, John Adams Courthouse, Boston

Pages 12-13:

Exterior, John Adams Courthouse, Boston

Photographer:
Judge Peter W. Agnes Jr.

Page 33:

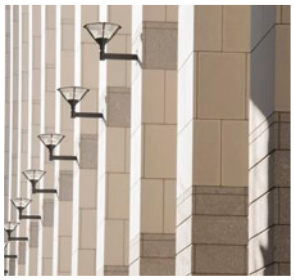
Palmer District Court

Pages 34-35:

Jury Benches, Hampshire County Superior Court, Northampton

Page 36:

Courtoom, Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston



Back Cover:

Exterior, Edward W. Brooke Courthouse, Boston

Featured courthouse photography by Judge David S. Ross, unless otherwise noted.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

John Adams Courthouse, Suite 1100
One Pemberton Square
Boston, MA 02108-1724

https://www.mass.gov/courts