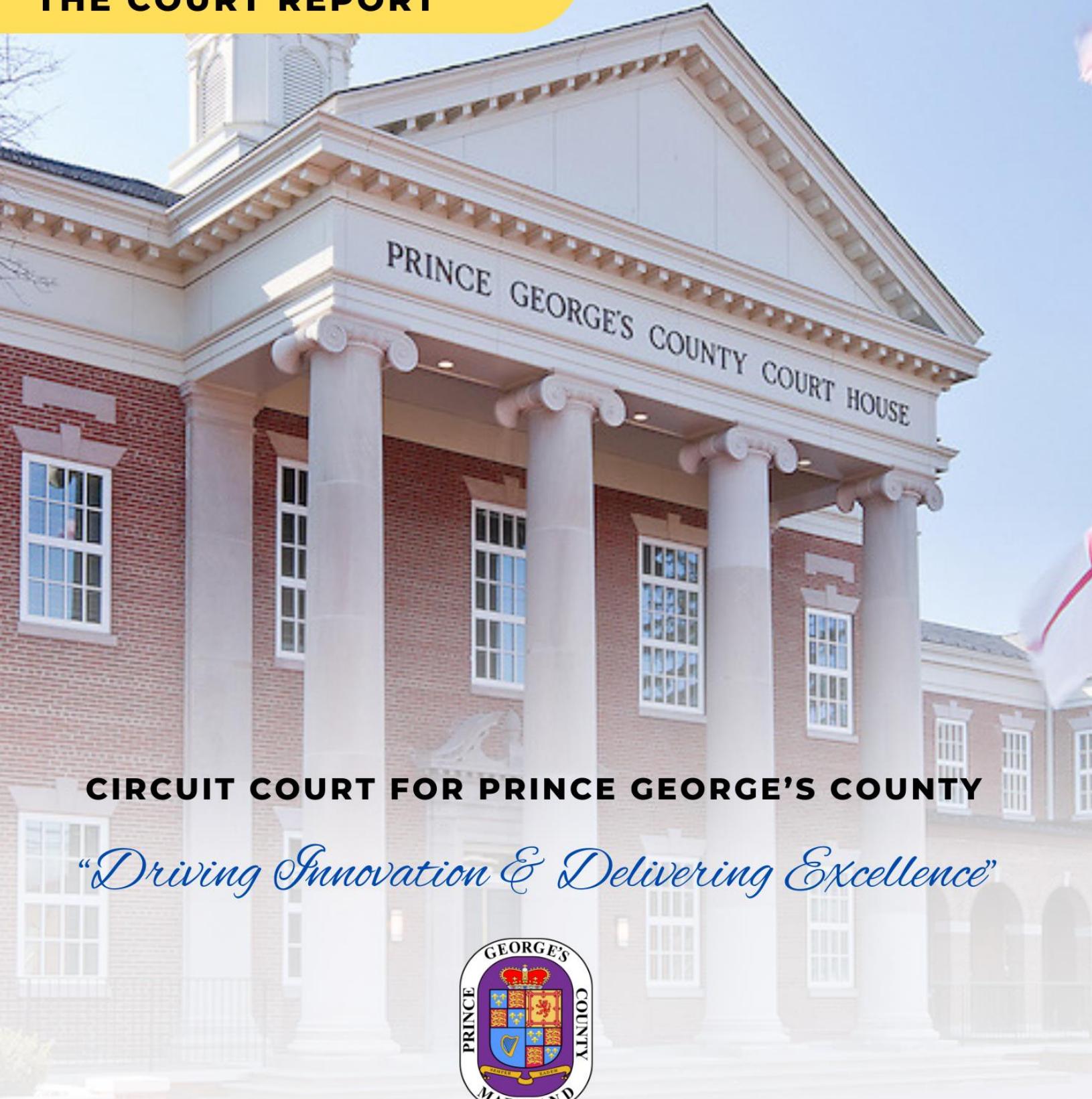


**FY2024  
ANNUAL STATE OF  
THE COURT REPORT**



**CIRCUIT COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**

*“Driving Innovation & Delivering Excellence”*



The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton  
Administrative Judge  
Circuit Court for Prince George's County  
and the Seventh Judicial Circuit of  
Maryland

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# I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

## A. Name

Circuit Court for Prince George's County

## B. County/City

Prince George's County/Upper Marlboro

## C. Court Level

Circuit Court

*The Circuit Court for Prince George's County will strive to serve the public through its judiciary and all staff by providing accessible, efficient, quality, and effective forums for the fair, just, timely and understandable resolution of legal disputes brought before the court and respecting the dignity of all individuals including those that work within and those who use and are served by the court system.*

## D. Reporting Period

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

## E. Date

October 13, 2024

The Circuit Court for Prince George's County is part of the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Maryland. The Seventh Circuit includes Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties. The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton is the Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court and the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Maryland.

## II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *A Message from the Administrative Judge*



**The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton**  
Administrative Judge  
Circuit Court for Prince George's County  
and the Seventh Judicial Circuit of  
Maryland

The Circuit Court for Prince George's County has remained committed to our mission of providing accessible, efficient, quality, and effective forums for the fair, just, timely and understandable resolution of legal disputes. Our priority has been to preserve the confidence that the citizens of the County place in the judicial system when they are often navigating extremely difficult and overwhelming challenges.

With this goal in mind, each division from Court Administration to the Court Reporters Office continued to focus on driving innovation and delivering excellence. Throughout FY24, each division has developed new programming, maintained ongoing

initiatives, and found creative ways to innovate processes and procedures.

The Court has also continued to utilize new technological tools and systems that have revolutionized the way in which the court manages cases and provides services. Our goal is always to maintain the highest levels of integrity and accuracy while at the same time providing convenience and expediency.

The development of employees is always a priority while ensuring the preservation of excellence and efficiency when providing service. Employees have had the opportunity to attend national conferences and engage with coworkers during professional development training hosted by Human Resources during the fiscal year. A major focus of retention has not only focused on development opportunities, but also showing employees they are appreciated through engaging activities.

The Court would not be able to serve effectively and efficiently without employees who make up a diverse and extremely talented workforce. Therefore, our goal is also to promote cultural diversity, inclusion, and equity. Through numerous commemorative events, employees celebrate each other's backgrounds and cultural experiences in educational and engaging ways.

As you read our FY24 report, my hope is that you will see our earnest commitment to serving our citizens holistically not only through the disposition of judicial cases but also through initiatives of the Circuit Court, such as the Prince George's County Family Justice Center and the Prince George's County Youth Experiencing Success Center. We are a

beacon of hope for all people at various stages of their lives and through excellence and innovation, we diligently serve all those who come before the Circuit Court.

Sincerely,

*DaNeeka Varner Cotton*

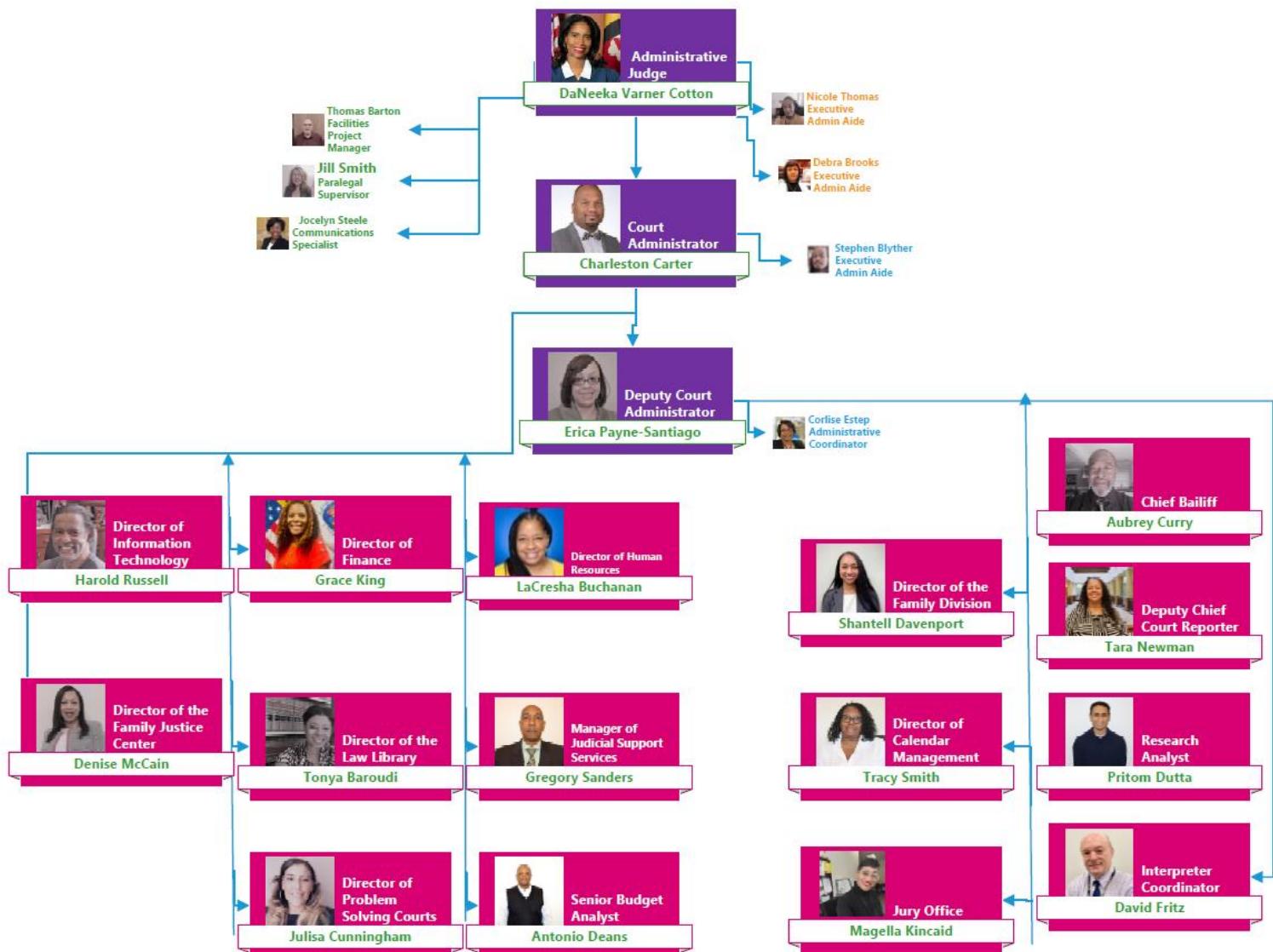
The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton  
Administrative Judge  
Circuit Court for Prince George's County  
And the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Maryland

### III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE COURT

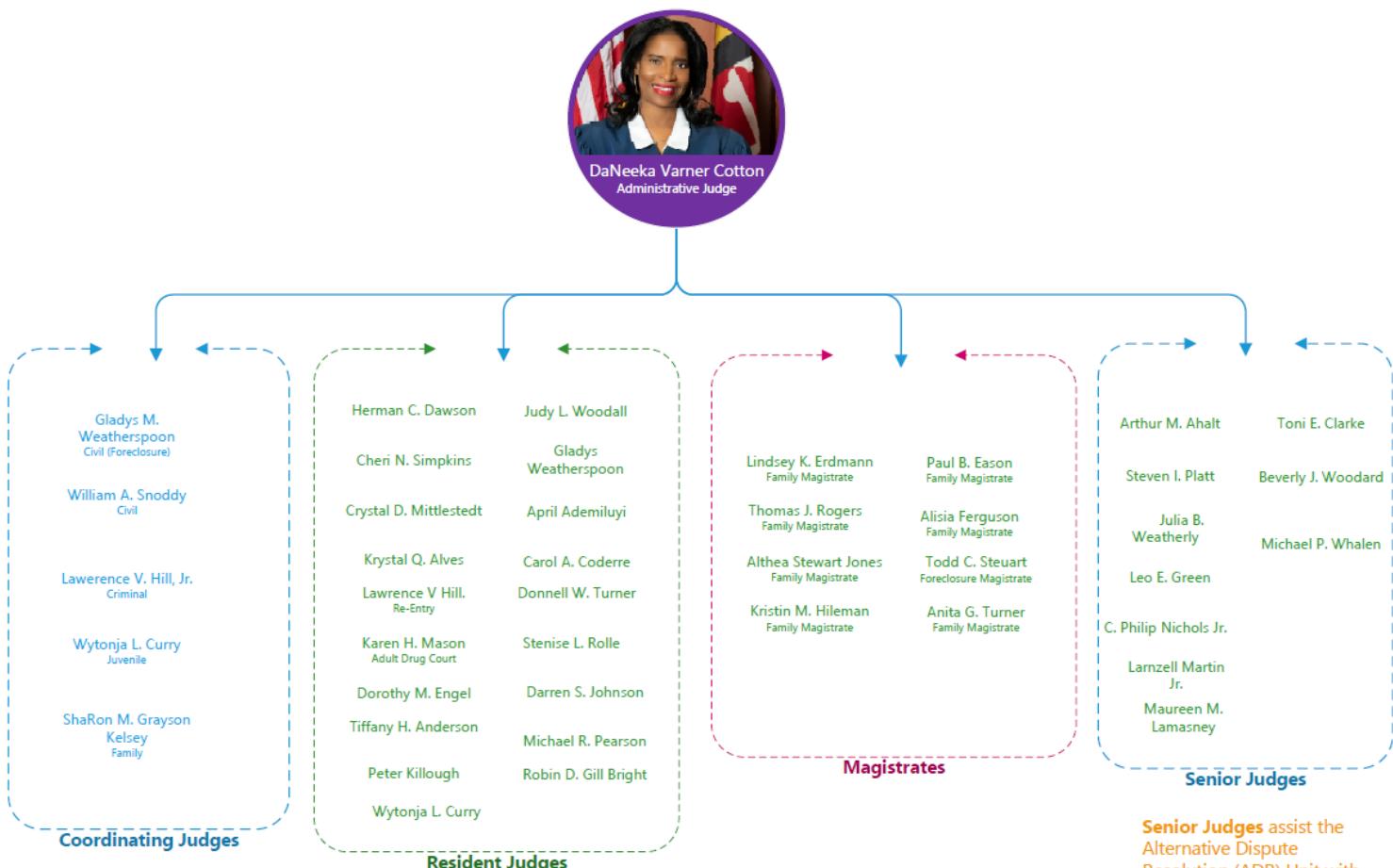
The Circuit Court is comprised of 24 Circuit Court Judges, 12 Senior Judges, and eight Magistrates. Each Judge has an Executive Administrative Aide and Law Clerk.

#### Administrative Team

The Circuit Court is managed by an Administrative Team that is comprised of the Administrative Judge, Court Administrator, and Deputy Court Administrator/Jury Commissioner. The team is supported by a dedicated group of directors, managers and staff who work together to manage the operations of the Court.



The following organizational chart for the Circuit Court Judges and Magistrates covers FY24 under the leadership of The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton, Administrative Judge. The Circuit Court for Prince George's County includes 24 active judges, who serve full-time during their term in office. As a result of the large volume of cases filed in this court, some matters may be heard by senior judges. Senior judges are retired judges recalled for service as needed. Senior judges have the same authority as active judges to hear and decide matters filed in this court. Magistrates serving in the Family Division are appointed by the Circuit Court to hear matters involving child support, paternity, juvenile delinquency, child custody and divorce. Foreclosure Magistrates hear matters regarding foreclosure and related issues.



**Coordinating Judges** preside over specific case types for the Court and meet with the Chief and Administrative Judge monthly to discuss ongoing administrative and operational issues affecting the Court

The Bench is supported by **24 Executive Administrative Aides and Law Clerks** who report to their individual Judges.

**Magistrates** are charged with the authority and responsibility to conduct hearings and make evidentiary rulings.

**Senior Judges** assist the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Unit with civil mediations, family settlement conferences, criminal and civil trials, and criminal pleas.

## Court Administration

The Court Administration Office is responsible for the administrative functions and daily management of court operations to include the following: Communications; Office of the Bailiffs; Office of Calendar Management; Office of Finance; Office of Human Resources; Office of Information Technology; Office of the Interpreter; Office of Judicial Support Services; Office of Jury Operations; and the Research Analyst.



- **Office of Finance**

The Finance Office is made up of four employees who maximize available resources and deliver innovative financial services to internal and external customers of the Circuit Court. The team manages the budget, monitor grants, oversees procurement processes, collects revenues, and receipts, maintains systems of accounting, records financial transactions and reports results of financial operations.

- **Office of Information Technology (IT)**

The IT Office consists of 14 employees who ensure that the Court's technological needs are met through various methods. The Court is connected to the Prince George's County Government network infrastructure supported by the Network Services Group of the Office of Information and Technology. IT provides support for all network servers hosting various Court applications, technologies, and the Judicial Information Systems (JIS).

- **Office of Human Resources (HR)**

The HR Office consists of three staff members who oversee the HR life cycle and provide support to over 250 staff. The office performs various services involving recruiting, training, employee relations, and compensation.

- **Office of the Bailiff**

The Bailiff's Office consists of approximately 40 bailiffs whose primary role is to maintain courtroom decorum and ensure the safety of judges, jurors, court personnel, and visitors. The bailiffs enforce rules and procedures of the court by screening visitors, escorting jurors throughout the courthouse safely, assisting with emergencies and providing administrative support to the courtrooms.

- **Communications**

The Communications Specialist develops external and internal communications for the Court. The Specialist also handles media relations, produces executive messages, employee newsletters and oversees social media platforms. As chair of the Special Projects Committee, the Specialist plans employee appreciation events and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

- **Office of Judicial Support Services**

The Office of Judicial Support Services oversees various services and amenities offered to visitors and employees. The office includes the following: Judicial Substitute Executive Assistants; the Information Desk; Children's Waiting Room; and Courier Services.

- **Judicial Substitute Executive Administrative Assistants**

There are three Judicial Substitute Executive Administrative Assistants who assist with office coverage for the Judges' chambers as needed.

- **Information Desk**

One Circuit Court staff member is assigned to greet visitors who come to the courthouse daily and provide information to the public. The Court obtains the services of greeters who assist visitors throughout the courthouse as to various needs.

- **Children's Waiting Room**

The Children's Waiting Room is an on-site resource available to parents of children ages 3 - 12 who are potty-trained. While parents are doing business at the courthouse, they can utilize this resource and have a place for their children to engage in play, relaxation, and learning. During FY24, the Children's Waiting Room served 175 children.

- **Courier Services**

The Courier is responsible for the daily movement of case files and mail from various offices and Judges' Chambers throughout the Courthouse Complex.

- **Office of Jury Operations**

The Office of Jury Operations ensured citizens are summoned to uphold their civic duty as a petit or grand juror. Jurors are selected from a cross-section of citizens who reside in Prince George's County, which is drawn from the Maryland Board of Elections and Motor Vehicle Administration. On average, over 1000+ jurors report for in-person petit jury duty a week. The petit jury term is one day, one trial and the grand jury terms are four months beginning in April, August, and December.

In coordination with a designated Circuit Court Jury Judge, the Deputy Court Administrator/Jury Commissioner oversees the jury selection and service process by providing oversight of seven staff members to include the Jury supervisor and six Jury Office employees from the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

- **Office of the Interpreter**

Interpreter services are provided to litigants for all Circuit Court criminal, civil, juvenile, and family cases, at no cost to the court user. The office is staffed with an Interpreter Coordinator who oversees the scheduling of interpreters as outlined by the Maryland Judiciary and three on-site Spanish-speaking Maryland Certified Interpreters.

- **Research Analyst**

The Research Analyst is responsible for providing analysis and other materials to help inform operational decision-making for Court Administration and other criminal justice stakeholders. Most often, this takes the form of targeted research into specific issues that generally result in a synthesized report that includes results, data visualizations and recommendations. The Research Analyst is also charged with maintaining awareness of legislative initiatives that may have an impact on the Court and operations.

## **Circuit Court Offices and Services**

### **• Law Library**

The Circuit for Prince George's County Law Library provides legal information and services to judges, attorneys, state and county employees and self-represented litigants. In FY24, the Law Library recorded approximately 17,000 in-person visits with over 4,500 service inquiries along with approximately 285 remote service requests. The public accounted for 72% of Law Library inquiries with questions on civil matters, family law, and technical assistance being requested. The Law Library's online catalog had approximately 3,800 hits.

### **• Office of Calendar Management**

The Office of Calendar Management is comprised of 16 employees who manage and schedule various hearings before 24 Associate Judges, 12 Senior Judges, and 8 Magistrates. The office structure consists of a director, two managers and one team leader that oversee units within the office. Those units include Civil, Family, Juvenile, Criminal Scheduling, and Quality Review Units. These units are responsible for scheduling hearings to include trials and merits. Additional responsibilities include entering daily courtroom dispositions; answering telephone inquiries from citizens, attorneys, and Judges' chambers; and monitoring courtroom activities.

A secondary function of the Office of Calendar Management includes maintaining calendars for reserving the Circuit Court training rooms, conference rooms and courtrooms to host various court-related events to include, but not limited to, Problem Solving Courts (PSCs) Graduations, National Adoption Day Celebrations, Annual Veterans Appreciation Ceremonies, Investitures, and other special events. Additionally, the Office coordinates judges' and magistrates' leave in conjunction with the Administrative Judge's Chambers. Beginning September 2023, the Office of Calendar Management became responsible for scheduling virtual hearings and/or meetings for the court.

### **Family, Civil and Juvenile Scheduling Unit**

- Family Scheduling Clerks set cases before judges and magistrates. The Magistrates hear uncontested status conferences and scheduling conferences along with other case types. The Judges hear contested matters, domestic violence petitions, contempt dockets and modification hearings along with various other domestic hearings.
- Juvenile Scheduling Clerks set cases before the two Juvenile Magistrates and the Juvenile Coordinating Judge. The Juvenile Magistrates hear juvenile delinquency

arraignments, emergency shelter care, permanency planning review and Children in Need of Assistance (CINA) adjudication hearings. The designated CINA/Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) Judges handle CINA exceptions, TPR trials and contested CINA adjudication hearings. The Juvenile Coordinating Judge presides over Crossover Youth Hearings, Peace Orders, Emergency Detentions, Waiver Up and Merits Hearings.

- Civil Scheduling Clerks set status conferences, jury/non-jury trials, review of sentences, post convictions and other hearing types related to civil matters.

#### The Criminal and Quality Review Unit

- Criminal Scheduling Clerks set status conferences, jury/non-jury trials, sentence reviews, post convictions, and other hearing types related to criminal matters.
- The Office of Calendar Management relies on two Differentiated Case Management (DCM) Coordinators to ensure that civil and criminal cases are completed within time standards established under the Circuit Court DCM Plans.

#### **• Family Division**

The Family Division was led by former Family Division Coordinating Judge Judy L. Woodall and is now led by Judge ShaRon M. Grayson Kelsey. The Division consists of four units dedicated to supporting families in transition by offering resources and services funded by State and County agencies. These services include parenting education, free legal and procedural assistance, supervised visitation and monitored exchange services, drug testing, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs, Model Court, and various other programs. Each unit within the Family Division plays a key role in providing services that assist Judges, Family Magistrates, and Juvenile Magistrates in efficiently managing cases and complying with the Maryland Judiciary Performance Standards and Measures.

During FY24, the Family Division implemented a new initiative to revise the process of generating child support orders. In collaboration with the Research Analyst, the Division identified key areas of improvement and made recommendations to streamline processes and provide better quality orders with improved accuracy.

#### Administrative Office

The Administrative Office provides oversight and administrative support to the other units in the Family Division and consists of the Director of the Family Division; Hispanic Liaison;

DCM Coordinator; Permanency Planning Liaison; the Director's Administrative Assistant; and the Management Analyst. Oversight and support include budget management; program funding; monitoring service contracts; and reporting statistical data. The unit also manages the Family Legislative Grant and Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement service contracts.

This fiscal year, the Family Administration Office saw the departure of a director who served the court in the position for nearly a decade. In March 2024, a new Director joined the Administrative Office with a focus on reviewing current processes, assessing operations, promoting training opportunities, and enhancing technology.

#### Hispanic Liaison

During FY24, the Hispanic Liaison continued to assist members of the public by conducting Self-Represented Litigant Orientations in-person at the Courthouse via telephone and through community outreach at various events throughout the County. Outreach is performed at events hosted by the following: Prince George's County Memorial Library; Office of Prince George's County Public Schools; and College Park Youth and Family Services. The Liaison delivers presentations at community events on topics including procedural steps related to family cases.

#### Permanency Planning Liaison (PPL)

The PPL provides oversight and feedback to the Court regarding CINA cases, particularly as it relates to guardianships. This fiscal year, the Juvenile Magistrates conducted over 1,200 CINA proceedings. There were 22 new CINA (non-shelter) cases filed, and 129 CINA (shelter) actions initiated.

#### Administrative Support Services

Administrative Support Services consists of 17 staff members who assist magistrates with court orders pertaining to child support, divorce, and order modifications. Communication is also provided to the parties regarding any necessary paperwork needed to pursue their cases. The team includes one Administrative Support Manager, seven Administrative Aides to Magistrates, and nine Hearing Room Clerks.

#### Information and Referral Staff

The Family Division Information and Referral Staff Unit is comprised of three General Clerks, a Bilingual Clerk and one Manager who provide direct support to the five Domestic

Magistrates and two Juvenile Magistrates assigned to the Family Division. The Magistrates of the Family Division hear divorce, custody, alimony, visitation, property, and child support establishment/modification/contempt/paternity cases. The Juvenile Magistrates hear CINA/TPR cases. There are three clerks responsible for checking in litigants and attorneys arriving at Court for scheduled hearings and aiding the citizens in person or by telephone. The staff also registers litigants for the Self-Represented Litigant Orientations (SRLO) that are held on alternating Wednesdays of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The orientation is conducted by attorneys who cover Family Law matters such as divorce, child custody, and child support. Furthermore, staff also assists with uploading audio case files from scheduled hearings to transcription companies.

### Family Support Services (FSS)

FSS provides assistance to families with disputes including psychological evaluations; home study investigations; domestic violence screenings; drug and alcohol screenings; mediation programs; and referrals for supervised visitation or visitation transfer centers. Family Support Services continues to foster a great partnership with the National Family Resiliency Center (NFRC) and the Children's Rights Council (CRC). The Unit is also developing resource guides for the bench, litigants, and practitioners to highlight family services and programs offered by local providers.

### Paralegal Unit

The Paralegal Unit is comprised of a staff of five paralegals and one supervisor. During this fiscal year, the staff assisted 14,495 litigants in-person and 2,247 litigants by telephone. In addition to providing in-person and telephonic assistance to litigants, paralegals review all legal pleadings submitted to the court in Family Law cases for legal sufficiency and routinely meet with members of the public that have inquiries. Pleadings are filed with the Office of the Clerk and forwarded to the Paralegal Unit for review, processing, and distribution. Paralegal staff work on cases involving domestic matters, guardianships, adoptions, and child support. Paralegals are permitted to provide procedural guidance; however, they may not give legal advice. The Paralegals routinely meet with members of the public that have inquiries as it relates to Family law matters.

This year, staff were trained and began conducting immediate scheduling conferences resulting from the return of in-person status conferences in May 2024. Over a two-month

period, the Paralegal Unit conducted approximately 50 immediate scheduling conferences which positively impacts the goal of the Court in maintaining cases within time standards.

### DCM Coordinators

The four DCM Coordinators designated to Civil, Family, Criminal, and Juvenile matters are responsible for ensuring cases are assigned to the appropriate case track and disposed in compliance with Maryland Judiciary standards. Court-wide case clean-up that was initiated in FY23 continued into FY24. With the assistance of the DCM Coordinators, a significant number of domestic and CINA cases were successfully reviewed and closed for statistical purposes. The DCM Coordinators continued efforts also ensure the accuracy of data in preparing for the Circuit Court's annual caseload assessment report.

- **Office of the Court Reporter**

The Office of the Court Reporter is currently comprised of a Deputy Chief Court Reporter, an Administrative Aide, four Court Reporters and five Court Technologists. Court Reporters make a verbatim record of all official proceedings and produce appeal and non-appeal transcripts upon request. The administrative staff processes all transcript and audio orders from agencies, attorneys, and parties of proceedings held in the Circuit Court. The administrative staff also archives daily dockets, completed transcripts and all transcript and audio orders. The Court Technologists cycle through multiple courtrooms, listen attentively and correspond with IT to maintain quality control of court proceedings and ensure audio is satisfactory.

- **Trust Office**

Guardianship matters are handled by the Trust Office, which is comprised of the Trust Attorney, Trust Paralegal, Guardianship Liaison, and Trust Clerk. The employees of the Trust Office are responsible for reviewing all petitions and motions related to guardianships of the person and property of disabled adults and property of minors, as well as petitions to create, modify and terminate trusts. The Trust Office reviews the annual reports of the person and annual fiduciary reports filed by guardians, prepares show cause orders regarding those reports when necessary, and issues late notices with respect to the filing of those reports.

The Trust Clerk is responsible for ensuring that all documents filed in guardianship and trust cases are properly docketed and entered, issuing true-test copies of court orders, notifying guardians concerning the reports required to be filed pursuant to the Maryland Rules, and issuing late notices for reports not filed timely.

The Trust Office monitors over 8,000 active and closed/active guardianship cases with approximately 400 new cases filed annually. Although cases are considered closed after the appointment of guardians, they technically remain open and ongoing in nature due to statutory annual reporting requirements placed on the guardians and the various motions that are continually filed in these cases.

- **Office of Problem Solving Courts**

The Office of Problem Solving Courts (PSCs) consists of Adult Drug Court, Veterans Court, Re-Entry Court, Juvenile Drug Court, New Direction Youth Diversion Program, Juvenile Gun Possession Program, and Truancy Reduction Court (TRC).

#### Adult Drug Court

Established in 2002, Adult Drug Court has provided services to over 1,304 county residents over the past 22 years. The program has held 63 graduation ceremonies with 534 participants successfully completing the program. The Honorable Karen H. Mason presides over the Court. Through the Adult Drug Court, PSCs continues to collaborate with the following partners: Prince George's County Health Department; Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office; Prince George's County Office of the Public Defender; Department of Corrections; Prince George's County Sheriff's Department; Department of Social Services; and the Prince George's County Police Department; and numerous community resource agencies focused on substance use disorder and mental health wellness. These partnerships have made the Adult Drug Court one of the best in the State of Maryland.

#### Veterans Court

Established in April 2015, the first Veterans Court Program in the State of Maryland was launched in Prince George's County. The Court has served 460 community members. The Veterans Court has held 22 graduations with 41 graduates. Currently, The Honorable Peter K. Killough serves as the Presiding Judge. The mission of the Veterans Court is to provide and assist veterans with substance abuse treatment, housing, family counseling and obtaining military benefits. The Veterans Court Program collaborates with the Veterans Administration Medical Center; the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs; Maryland Commitment to Veterans; Prince George's County Health Department; Prince George's County Department of Family Services; Prince George's County Department of Corrections; Prince George's County Sheriff's Office; Prince George's County Police Department; Prince George's County

Department of Social Services; Prince George's County Office of the Public Defender; Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office; Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; and the Salvation Army.

#### Re-Entry Court

Established on October 1, 2013, the Circuit Court launched the first Re-Entry Court Program in the State of Maryland. Since the inception of the Re-Entry Court, over 675 community members have been served. There have been 36 graduates, and 26 graduations held. Currently, The Honorable Lawrence V. Hill, Jr. serves as the presiding Judge. Though not all referrals meet eligibility criteria, referrals are still identified to connect participants to services in the community and with other community agencies. Services include Re-Entry Circle Mediation via the Key Bridge Foundation and monthly mentoring at the Prince George's County Department of Corrections. The Reentry Court Program collaborates with the Prince George's County Sheriff's Office; Prince George's County Police Department; Prince George's County Department of Social Services; Prince George's County Department of the Environment; Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation; Prince George's County Office of the Public Defender; Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office; Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; and the Salvation Army.

#### Juvenile Drug Court

Established in May 2004, the Juvenile Drug Court has provided services to over 345 community members. The Court has held 27 graduations, and 132 participants have graduated. The Presiding Judge for Juvenile Drug Court is The Honorable Wytonja L. Curry. The Juvenile Drug Court team, which closely monitors and manages participants, is composed of the following: Circuit Court Judge; Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office; Prince George's County Office of the Public Defender; Prince George's County Board of Education; Drug Court Coordinator/Case Managers; General Education Diploma (GED) Instructor; Prince George's County Department of Juvenile Services; Prince George's County Health Department; and Prince George's County Sheriff's Office. The Juvenile Drug Court provides the following services: mentoring and tutoring services for each participant; on-site substance abuse treatment; on-site assistance with establishing medical insurance; housing search; and job readiness.

### Truancy Reduction Court Program (TRC)

Established in September 2008, TRC has served 594 community members, and 161 participants have graduated. There have been 29 graduations. The Honorable Althea R. Stewart Jones is the Presiding Magistrate. The mission of the TRC Program is to improve student attendance, help students achieve academic success and identify the causes of habitual truancy by collaborative efforts between community agencies and local school districts.

The TRC focuses on identifying the underlying causes of chronic truancy and partners with community agencies to improve students' attendance and school success rates through referrals for appropriate services and support. Students completing the TRC Program demonstrate a consistent, long-term improvement in school attendance with the recognition of regular school involvement and the consequences of truancy. TRC cases are typically active for six to twelve months depending on participants' compliance. Release from TRC is dependent upon successful completion of the program (completion of all four phases and compliance with the Court's orders). Other factors include relocation, homeschooling, aging out, supervision provided by another agency, and release or unsuccessful completion.

The TRC Program provides the following services: workshops focusing on education; career development, life skills and resume building; mentoring and tutoring services; on-site substance abuse testing treatment; on-site social service assistance; job readiness; and parent support group workshops. A bilingual case manager also assists with Spanish-speaking families. In addition, GED instruction is offered to students. The program coordinates community service projects with participants in the community, such as the Back to School Bash and Judy's Closet to provide clothing and school supplies for participants.

### New Direction Youth Diversion Program

Established in March 2021, the New Direction Youth Diversion Program has served 47 community members, and 18 participants have graduated. The program is under supervision of The Honorable Michael R. Pearson. The New Direction Youth Diversion Program is designed to offer youth the opportunity to enter and complete a structured community-based program as an alternative to formal involvement within the criminal justice system. The objective of the program is to provide academic monitoring/assistance via case management supervision, provide services that would support sobriety and abstinence from illegal substances, provide mentoring/tutoring services, conduct monthly case reviews under non-

judicial proceedings and assist youth in comprehending and accepting the consequences of the delinquent behavior through multiple auxiliary services.

#### Juvenile Gun Possession Program

Established in February 2023, the Juvenile Gun Possession Court has served 39 community members, and 18 participants have graduated. The Honorable Michael R. Pearson is the Presiding Judge. The program is geared towards juveniles with first-time gun possession offenses. The program's mission is to reduce gun violence, address its impact on victims and their families, identify underlying causes as to why the offender is in possession of a firearm and implement methods and lifestyle changes to avoid future handgun possession. The Gun Possession Program is an intensive supervision, incentive/sanction-based program with a comprehensive curriculum for a first-time gun possession juvenile offender.

Participants are required to attend bi-weekly court hearings, take part in weekly supervision meetings with the case manager, submit to random drug testing, participate in educational services, and partake in a specified curriculum for mental health services and substance use treatment as required by the program. The program is designed to be completed within six months and progression is contingent upon a participant's completion of specific requirements. Participants are monitored by team members for progress in treatment, school, community and in the home. They are assigned a case manager who will assist them with reaching program and life goals, as well as meeting all probationary requirements. A participant's progression in the program is provided in bi-weekly reports to the Court and recommendations are made to the Presiding Judge regarding services, levels of care, incentives, and sanctions.

#### GED Program

In 2011, the PSCs launched its GED Program. The program provides educational sessions and GED test enrollment for adults and juveniles.

#### **• Prince George's County Family Justice Center (PGCFJC)**

The PGCFJC, an initiative of the Circuit Court, has remained steadfast in its mission to address the emergent needs of survivors of domestic sexual assault violence, human trafficking, and elder abuse in the aftermath of trauma, victimization, and abuse with the provision of critical resources and crisis intervention services. To that end, 1259 survivors

received timely access to a comprehensive array of trauma-informed services in a client-centered and survivor driven approach in FY2024. This included 5,443 referrals to the 23 onsite partnering agencies with streamlined access to legal, financial, and or housing assistance, emergency shelter, counseling, criminal investigations, or crime victims' rights and advocacy. New and advanced data analytics has enabled the PGCFJC to quantify the impact of its services with qualitative survey, which showed that overall client satisfaction was 84%, and 100% of clients served reported feeling more informed of their rights and the resources available to them.

- **Search Warrants**

The court issued a total of 3,962 search warrants in FY2024, which is an increase of 395 or 11.07% from the previous year. This number came in lower than projected due to a decrease in the number of judges and a substantial number of search warrants being referred to the District Court. A process to expedite urgent search warrants has been implemented to ensure the officers are getting their high-priority search warrants as quickly as possible. Although the number of Pen Registers and Electronic Device Locators is not recorded here, there has been a substantial increase in the number being signed by the judges.

The number of unreturned search warrants for this reporting period is 822, which is 20.74% of the total 3962 search warrants signed. This number is significantly lower than previous years pursuant to the reporting requirements of Senate Bill 178 (Chapter 62 of 2021). The officers are mandated to submit their search warrant data, including the return information per their agency reporting guide.

- **Foreclosures**

The Foreclosure Magistrate with the assistance of Foreclosure Paralegals processed the following numbers during FY24:

FY24 New Filings: July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

- Foreclosure - Commercial 127
- Foreclosure - Residential 1,493
- Right of Redemption 329

FY24 Case Closures: January 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024

- Foreclosure - Commercial 129
- Foreclosure - Residential 1,743
- Right of Redemption 473

## IV. ANNUAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- **Enhanced Security Measures**

The Circuit Court for Prince George's County is committed to keeping our workforce and citizens safe when entering and conducting business within the courthouse. As heightened security issues continue to rise nationwide, the Circuit Court is committed to enhancing our security measures through all aspects of Court operations.

- **Workforce Development and Training**

The Court provides training and opportunities to strengthen our workforce, enhance job knowledge and identify and implement alternative business processes.

- **Development and Operation Enhancements to Court Facilities**

The Court continues to enhance the framework for implementing a state-of-the-art facility with a goal to incorporate new infrastructure to improve technological capabilities, meet staff and public needs and effectively support Court operations.

- **Coordination and Collaboration with Justice Partners and the Community**

The Court embraces and values our justice partners and the community. Engagement, coordination and collaboration with various justice partners, residents, state, and local officials is essential to create a cohesive partnership that will positively impact our citizens.

- **Enhance Court Processes in Case Management to Provide Efficient Services to the Citizens of Prince George's County**

The Court values the need of our citizens to have fair, timely and impartial case resolution, as the Court's vision is to "Welcome All - A Fair Forum for Justice." It is the goal of the Circuit Court to cultivate systems that improve and streamline business processes, ensure accuracy of information, and resolve cases in a timely manner.

## V. PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

The Circuit Court has implemented new initiatives, programs, and projects during FY24 and continued initiatives that were already in place. In this section, current, ongoing, and planned programs in various offices and divisions will be explained in additional detail.

### A. Current and Ongoing

#### Administrative Judge

##### New Judgeships

Supreme Court of Maryland Chief Justice Matthew J. Fader and Administrative Judge DaNeeka Varner Cotton presented to the legislature a request for an additional Circuit Court judgeship. The General Assembly and Governor approved the resolution to add an additional judgeship to the Circuit Court in May 2024. This fulfilled a recommendation made by the Court during the previous fiscal year and brought the total number of judges in the Circuit Court for Prince George's County to 25.

#### Court Administration

##### Contracting Process Training Session

The Finance Office, under the leadership of the Finance Director, designed Standard Operating Procedures for travel and training and SPEED contracts in accordance with guidelines established by Prince George's County. In June 2024, the Finance Division held a training session for directors. The goal of the training was to ensure directors remain aware of internal processes for submitting travel/training and contract requests.

##### Business Processes

Under the leadership of the Circuit Court Administrator, the Circuit Court has continued to record all business processes for the various divisions. Each director/manager was charged with writing down policies and business procedures to ensure continuity and uniformity in court operations. The processes are recorded in binders as well as in SharePoint and can be accessed by current and prospective employees.

## Annual Art Exhibition

The Circuit hosted the Annual Art Exhibition on May 2 - 9, 2024 in the Duvall Wing of the Courthouse. The featured artists were students at MTC Art Studios, Inc. A community reception was held for participants and their families on May 2nd at the Courthouse.



## Calendar Management

### Virtual Domestic Settlement Conferences

Calendar Management began scheduling Family Magistrates to conduct virtual domestic settlement conferences in June 2024. This new responsibility shifted from senior judges. In-person status conference hearings began in April 2024.

### Civil and Criminal Backlog Initiative

The Director of the Office of Calendar Management, under the direction of the Administrative Judge, collaborated with the Deputy Court Administrator/Jury Commissioner, Research Analyst, DCM Coordinators, Coordinating Judges, and Associate Judges to successfully conduct quality review assessments and dispose of a large amount of backlog cases due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of FY24, 94% of civil backlog cases, and 91% of criminal backlog cases were dissolved. Hence, the Circuit Court is launching into FY25 within time-standards for both case types.

## Jury Operations

The Maryland Judiciary's Strategic Plan (2015 - 2020) requires the following as it pertains to court operations: (1) be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs; (2) improve systems and processes; (3) assure the highest level of service; and (4) use resources wisely. Under the collaborative leadership of the Deputy Court Administrator/Jury Commissioner and Administrative Judge, the Circuit Court for Prince George's County is excited about its new *Jury Operations Modernization Project (2024-2025)* that began March 2024, in alignment with the strategic plan. The project goal is to streamline jury administrative operations, expand the use of technology for jurors, and minimize wait times and crowds during check-in.

Beginning March 2024 - June 2024, the Circuit Court:

- Conducted visits to explore alternative jury operations.
- Created new floor plans for the reconfiguration of the jury lounge to support technological enhancements.
- Received funding and procurement support from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) of Maryland for the purchase of five kiosks to expedite check-in.
- Instituted “reminder notices” (mailed two weeks from a juror’s date to serve) to require potential jurors to complete Part B Jury Qualifications of the summons on-line.
- Secured a new jury van to accompany selected jurors safely to public parking area after hours or upon judicial request.

### Judge's Investiture

The Circuit Court welcomed The Honorable Cheri N. Simpkins to the bench during FY24. Judge Simpkins' Investiture was held on January 4, 2024, in The Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams Ceremonial Courtroom.



### PGCFJC

The PGCFJC has effectively implemented several projects and initiatives designed to improve systemic responses to survivors, facilitate survivors' healing and recovery in the aftermath of abuse, increase awareness of the Family Justice Center and the issues impacting those we serve.

### Stay in Touch (SIT) Program

One such initiative established to achieve this objective is the Stay in Touch (SIT) Program. SIT is an aftercare support group that is conducted in partnership with Special Victim Advocates from the Office of the Sheriff for Prince George's County and the University of Maryland Regional Healthcare's Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Center (DVSAC). The SIT Program is a 10-week open-ended group format that provides former PGCFJC clients a safe and supportive environment and a space to be heard, understood, and believed.

Members receive emotional support, empathy, and practical information to help them address their urgent needs and concerns, enabling them to regain their self-esteem become empowered. In FY24, 357 survivors participated in 47 weekly group sessions.

### Forensic Strangulation Examinations

In FY24, the PGCFJC broadened its scope of services and realigned its partnership with the Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD) to address the substantial increase in the number of victims being strangled by their abusers as revealed on lethality risk assessments. Effective March 2024, PGPD began forwarding all 911 calls for service that included incidences with strangulation to the onsite police officers working in the PGCFJC. These officers subsequently refer cases to PGCFJC's Intake Specialists for follow up services, to include scheduling for forensic strangulation examinations that are conducted by a team of certified sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE) nurses. This resource is made available 18 hours a day/7 days per week. Last year, 56 forensic examinations were conducted.



### Career Connections Workshops

There is a high correlation between domestic violence and poverty. Research suggests that low-income abused women are more significantly affected by domestic violence and poverty. Approximately 70% of clients seen at the PGCFJC have little to no income, thus a leading reason for remaining in an abusive relationship. The PGCFJC partnered with its onsite partner, The Training Source, Inc., and conducted three workshops for 26 current and former clients to mitigate this challenge and help survivors achieve financial independence, empowerment, and freedom from abuse.



## Dancing with the Stars

On October 12, 2023, the PGCFJC Foundation hosted its first annual *Dancing with the Stars* fundraiser to support the mission and work of the PGCFJC. The event was very successful and included a star-studded line-up of local celebrity dancers including elected officials, television personalities, business owners and representatives from criminal justice and nonprofit agencies. The Circuit Court Administrator served as the Master of Ceremonies. A special tribute was given to The Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams, the former Chief and Administrative Judge. She was honored for her leadership and steadfast commitment toward the seven year establishment of the PGCFJC.



## Family Division

### Grand Opening of Y.E.S. Center in Prince George's County

The Y.E.S. Center celebrated its grand opening on Friday, June 14, 2024. The Center is a one-stop resource center for young adults who have aged out of the foster care system and need assistance. The Grand Opening celebration was hosted by News 4's Tracee Wilkins, and program speakers included: The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton, Administrative Judge; The Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams, former Administrative Judge; The Honorable Judge Cathy H. Serrette, Y.E.S. Center Committee Co-chair; The Honorable Magistrate Althea R. Stewart Jones, Y.E.S. Center Committee Co-chair; Tara Jackson, Chief Administrative Officer, Prince George's County Office of the County Executive; The Honorable Wanika B. Fisher, Prince George's County Council; Stephen Liggett-Creel, Acting Director, Prince George's County Department of Social Services; Gloria Brown Burnett, Maryland Department of Human Services Deputy Secretary for Operations; and Samiryah Chaney, former foster youth.



The newly opened Y.E.S. Center is comprised of offices, meeting spaces, a sitting area, a Zen room, and a stock room filled with toiletries, clothing and other important items young adults may need. The Y.E.S. Center is located at 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 160, Largo, MD.

Prior to the official grand opening of the Y.E.S. Center, the Planning Committee, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore-Washington Metropolitan Alumni Chapter, in collaboration with Surrattsville High School, donated and sorted many items for the Y.E.S. Center, including clothing, food and toiletries during the Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. Five young adults were served during this event, and two students also volunteered. To learn more about the Center, click [here](#).



### Employee Appreciation Programming

#### Employee Appreciation Cookout

Each year, the Court shows appreciation to employees by hosting the Annual Employee Cookout at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 89 in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. During FY23, the event was held on September 15, 2023. The event allows employees to relax, fellowship and network in a recreational environment.



## Employee Appreciation Holiday Celebration

The Circuit Court's Employee Holiday Celebration was held on December 15, 2023, at Prince George's Community College. The goal of the event was to ensure that all employees felt valued and appreciated during the holiday season.



## Employee Appreciation Summer Ice Cream Event



The Circuit Court hosted an Ice Cream Social at the Courthouse for employees to enjoy ice cream treats on June 7, 2024. The goal of the event was to present employees with a token of appreciation for their dedication and commitment to serving citizens in Prince George's County.

## National Adoption Day

On November 16th, the National Adoption Day celebration returned in-person to the Courthouse for the first time since the COVID-19.

The theme was: *Empowering Youth: Finding Points of Connection*. Former Family Coordinating Judge Judy L. Woodall served as the chairperson, and the guest speaker was The Honorable Jason DeLoach, President of the Maryland State Bar Association. The celebration was a rousing success, and the adoptive families were celebrated with support as they start their new families.



## Law Links Summer Internship Program

The Law Links Summer Internship Program, sponsored by the Prince George's County Bar Association (PGCBA) for over 29 years, aims to help students achieve their post-high school goals, promote higher education, and inspire other professional organizations to develop similar programs in the future. The six-week program provides students with a comprehensive introduction to the professional world, the legal system, and law office operations. It includes hands-on work experience, participation in law-related activities, and engagement with the Law and Leadership Institute. During FY24, College Park Academy student Mansour Mbow was assigned to the Circuit Court from June 2023 through August 2023. To conclude the program, the Circuit Court hosted a luncheon for all interns.

## Circuit Court Law Clerks Luncheon

The Honorable Darren S. Johnson's Chambers hosted the Annual Law Clerk Luncheon on November 8, 2023, at the Courthouse Food Court. The yearly event is a welcome celebration for judges' new law clerks who are recent law school graduates.



## Diversity and Inclusion Programming

The Special Projects Committee is comprised of employees from various Circuit Court divisions who plan programs to increase employee engagement and highlight the contributions of diverse communities to the country and county.

### Hispanic Heritage Program

The Special Projects Committee hosted the Annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration on September 27, 2023. During the event, a panel discussion was presented about the role of interpreters and bilingual employees in court operations. The panel featured employees from the Circuit Court Interpreter's Office and the State's Attorney's Office. The program also featured poetry, dance performances, trivia, games, prizes, and a presentation about the first Latina national sorority.



## Black History Month Program

The Black History Month program was held on February 29, 2024. The theme was *A Celebration of Artistic Expression and Culture*. The event honored the artistic legacy of Black Americans. Employee also participated in trivia and won prizes. Performances were presented by gospel quartet, *It's a Family Affair*, Amanda Standard from the Divine Dance Institute, Inc., Circuit Court Administrator Charleston Carter, and Circuit Court Law Clerk Lola Lanlokun.



## Women's History Month Donation Drive

The Special Projects Committee also hosted a donation drive during Women's History Month in March 2024. During the drive, employees donated toiletries, clothing, and useful items for the Shepherd's Cove Shelter in Capitol Heights, Maryland. The shelter serves women and children in need. The Committee delivered all donations on April 4, 2024.



## Breast Cancer Awareness Month

During October, the Circuit Court hosted a “Pink Out the Courthouse” Day where employees were invited to wear pink in honor of cancer survivors. Employees also gathered collectively for pictures and honored coworkers who are cancer survivors. Cancer survivors were also featured prominently on digital billboards throughout the Courthouse Complex. You can view the video [here](#).



## Information Technology (IT)

### Prince George’s County IT Support Service Now Portal

In 2024, the Circuit Court IT Staff worked with Judicial Information Systems (JIS) to complete the first Prince George’s County IT Support Service Now Portal. Service Now is an IT ticketing system tool used to track IT service requests, events, incidents, and alerts that might require additional action. Ticketing software converts all service requests into a single point of contact. Other benefits include improved employee satisfaction, increased IT productivity, access to a centralized repository, and real-time data for reporting and analytics.

## Law Library

### 16th Annual Law Library Book Drive

The Law Library hosted the 16th Annual Book Drive April 8th - April 12th. This year’s recipient of the books was the Maryland Book Bank, a nonprofit organization whose goal is to provide books to communities and families that do not have access to them. The generosity of the Circuit Court community gifted more than 110 children’s and young adult books to this organization.



## Search Warrants

### Search Warrant Mini-Camp 2024

Every three years, the Circuit Court along with many community partners put together a day of in-depth search warrant training for the police detectives and patrol officers to give them the most up-to-date changes in the law and other tools they need to write a proper search warrant. The previously scheduled mini-camp had to be postponed and then cancelled due to COVID-19, therefore, it has been five years since the last mini-camp was held. The 2024 event was hosted by the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #89 in Upper Marlboro.



## PSCs

### French Judges and Judicial Reps Visit Adult Drug Court

The Adult Drug Court was selected by Gray Barton, Director of the State of Maryland Problem Solving Courts, to host an international visit with French Judges and other esteemed judicial representatives from the French Embassy. On March 7, 2024, the judicial representatives observed the pre-court meeting held with The Honorable Karen H.

Mason, legal team, and the Adult Drug Court team as well as examined the actual court status hearings with the Adult Drug Court participants.

Judge Mason and the Adult Drug Court team spent time answering many questions and provided the judges with policy and protocol information to assist with the implementation of treatment courts in France.



## PSCs Joint Adult Graduation Ceremony

The PSCs hosted a Joint Adult Graduation Program on Thursday, April 25th in the Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams Ceremonial Courtroom. Six participants graduated from the Veterans, Reentry and Adult Drug Courts. Also, the Reentry Court honored participants who made important phase progressions.



## PSCs Juvenile GED Program Hosts Career Day

On March 29th, the PSCs Juvenile GED Program hosted its Annual Career Day. The event featured 10 presenters, two of which were Reentry Court Program graduates. Other guest speakers work in various industries including HVAC; plumbing; real estate; transportation; motivational speaking; bartering; and culinary arts. The professionals met with several of the GED students and shared what a day in their profession looks like. Some of the students even had the opportunity to get their hair styled and cut by the barbers. The Chef also shared her smoothie recipes and samples with students and guests.



## Back to School Bash hosted by TRC

The TRC Program hosted its Annual Back to School Bash on Thursday, August 24th. During the event, backpacks filled with school supplies were distributed to students in Prince George's County. Students and their parents were also served pizza, snacks, and beverages.



## PSCs Joint Adult Graduation Ceremony

The Adult PSCs held the 20th Joint Graduation Ceremony on Thursday, November 9, 2023. The Veterans Court Program had the honor of hosting the event just ahead of Veterans Day. Together, the three adult programs celebrated eight graduates. The ceremony was held in The



Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams Ceremonial Courtroom and was the farewell graduation for former Veterans Court Presiding Judge Beverly J. Woodard.

## PSCs Joint Juvenile Graduation

The Juvenile PSCs hosted a commencement ceremony for graduates from the TRC on June 5th in The Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams Ceremonial Courtroom. The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton, The Honorable Wytonja L. Curry and The Honorable Althea R. Stewart Jones presided over the celebration.



Other initiatives that PSCs hosted and implemented during FY24 include the following:

- Peer Support Specialist services for adult participants of PSCs
- Men's Support Group "Man Up" to provide insight and support to adult male participants of PSCs
- Women's Support Group "Ladies of Elegance" to provide insightful tips, advice, and experiences to create a safe place for open discussion and live a purposeful life
- Open invitation to veterans' service providers to attend PSCs court hearings to present on their programs and services
- Career Day event with youth programs
- Implementation of AIMS, a new statistical tracking database

## Veterans Appreciation Ceremony

The Circuit Court hosted the 13th Annual Veterans Appreciation Ceremony on May 23rd in the Jury Lounge. The theme for the event was: *Honoring the Legacy of Women in the Military*. Chief Master Sergeant Rochelle M. Hemingway shared remarks as a retired Air Force member. Hemingway served in the military for 30 years. Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony C. Woods also served as the keynote speaker.



## PGCFJC Mother's Day Celebration

The PGCFJC, an initiative of the Circuit Court, hosted its first Hope Provider Mother's Day Brunch on May 4, 2024. The event honored survivors for their courage and their continuous efforts to persevere and exude hope in the aftermath of trauma and abuse. Hosted by PGCFJC's Deputy Director Monique Willis and Operations Manager Dominique Nash, the Hope Provider Mother's Day Brunch allowed survivors to let their hair down, enjoy healthy fellowship, and foster an environment of camaraderie and support. Attendees were provided with personalized awards and a small token of appreciation.



## Back on Track Graduation Program

The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton and The Honorable Maureen Lamasney presided over the Back on Track Program Graduation in conjunction with the State's Attorney's Office on June 11th in The Honorable Sheila R. Tillerson Adams Ceremonial Courtroom. The graduates spent 12 to 18 months in a strict program aimed at reducing the recidivism rate of first-time, low level felony offenders. They were held accountable through programming, including life skills development, career training, community service and home checks. After program completion, graduates' records are also expunged.



**b. Planned****PGCFJC****VOICES**

The PGCFJC values, listens, and respects survivors' voices. Plans are underway for the implementation for a program called, "VOICES," which is a network of survivors who will use their voices to effectuate change. The group will provide recommendations regarding the PGCFJC's service delivery process, identify systemic gaps, and ultimately give back during their healing processes. VOICES committee members will meet regularly and play an integral role in the development of policies and procedures. They will also perform outreach to targeted communities for these initiatives.

**Camp HOPE**

Under the leadership and support of the PGCFJC Foundation, the PGCFJC will implement a camping and mentoring program for survivors' children that have been exposed to trauma and abuse called Camp HOPE. Camp HOPE is a national evidence-based intervention that provides children the opportunity to heal and develop positive coping mechanisms that will allow them to thrive in difficult environments. This one-week overnight camp includes specialized programs, activities, and techniques that help children build character, resilience, and hope in their lives.

# VI. OPERATIONS

## A. Staffing

The Circuit Court has 241 positions. The staff consists of 155 full-time positions, 36 part-time positions, and 50 full-time grant positions. In addition, the Court has 24 Judges, 24 Law Clerks, 8 Magistrates, and 12 Senior Judges. The Circuit Court departments are comprised of Finance and Procurement, Human Resources, IT, Law Library, Court Reporters, Bailiffs, Research, Communications, Interpreter Services, PSCs, Calendar Management, Trust Office, Paralegals, Judges' Chambers, Judicial Support Services, Children's Waiting Room, Jury Office, Family Division, and the PGCFJC.

### Recruitment Initiatives

The effects of the Great Resignation of 2021 after the COVID-19 pandemic have continued to influence recruiting trends affected by skilled labor shortages. Consequently, the Circuit Court has utilized various methods to attract potential candidates, such as leveraging the court's social media accounts including LinkedIn, as well as Indeed and local university and community college job boards. By implementing multiple recruitment strategies, the Court has experienced an increase in the number of applicants who meet position requirements, shortened hiring times, reduced hiring costs, and increased the Court's visibility.

### Retention Initiatives

The Circuit Court prioritizes employee retention through initiatives designed to engage. Below are key strategies approved by the Administrative Judge to retain employees:

- Learning and Development: The Circuit Court invests in training programs to provide continuous learning and development opportunities such as conferences, internal learning opportunities, annual training, and certifications.
- Flexible Work Schedule: The Circuit Court offers one day a week of remote work for eligible positions.
- Employee Recognition and Rewards: The Circuit Court has recognition programs to celebrate achievements, including on-the-spot awards for employees as acknowledgement of accomplishments in the workplace. Additionally, the Administrative Judge approved an end-of-the-year bonus as part of an employee retention initiative.

- Employee Engagement: The Circuit Court engages employees through various events throughout the year, including an ice cream social, an employee appreciation cookout, and holiday celebration.

## B. Technology

The Circuit Court uses the following technological tools and applications to carry out daily operations.

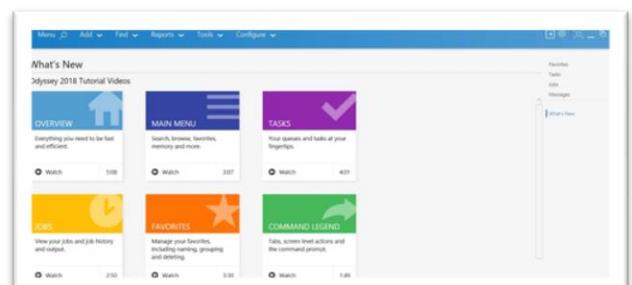
### Epson Projectors

Epson projectors are installed in 34 courtrooms. The attorneys use projectors and document cameras to display exhibits, videos, etc. The Epson Projectors are also used to conduct Voir Dire for Criminal Jury Trials in three courtrooms simultaneously.



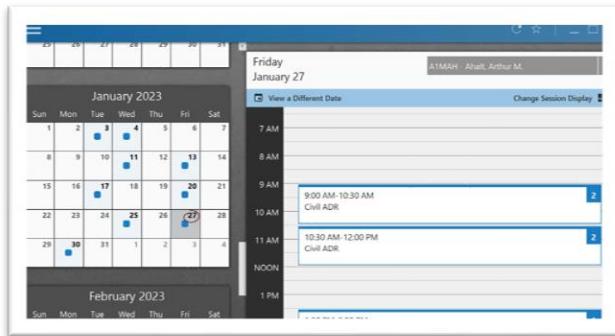
### Odyssey

The Odyssey Case Management System (CMS) is a fully integrated case and financial management system designed specifically for statewide deployment. It is a web-based computer system that allows configuration to be accomplished centrally while supporting statewide and county-specific rules. Standardization in the Odyssey CMS implements notable features, such as accurate Quarterly Case Status Reports. Odyssey is also a person-based system that allows for a directory of people and entities. For example, a judge can access all criminal cases that a defendant has in other courts around the state.



## Enterprise Justice Judge Edition

With Enterprise Justice Judge Edition and a touch screen, judges can access and control critical case information rapidly and securely from the bench. There is no need to rely on printed documents and stacks of folders. Judge Edition transforms paper chaos into seamless electronic information and quickly provides judges with up-to-date case data at their fingertips.



## Courtroom Equipment Training

The Circuit Court offers free training to attorneys, their staff, and pro se litigants on the Epson Projectors installed in every courtroom. Training is mandatory for the use of the equipment and must be completed at least three days before the scheduled court hearing.

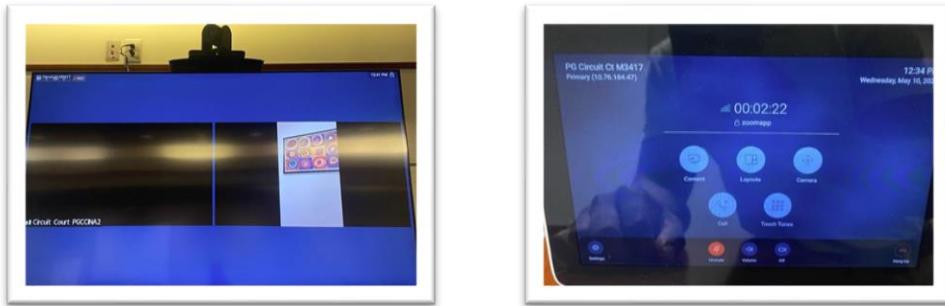
## Polycom G7500

Thirty-four courtrooms have Poly G7500 equipment that delivers simplicity in a small, elegant package. Users can easily connect to meetings via Zoom or almost any platform in small- and medium-sized rooms. They experience quality audio, advanced camera capabilities, and quick wireless content all in one sleek video bar.



## Polycom Touch Control (TC8)

The TC8 is an intuitive touch interface that provides easy access to Poly video conferencing solutions. The sleek design features an eight inch high-resolution touch display to ensure the control options are clear and accessible. A single cable carries both power and data to reduce clutter. Users can quickly initiate, join, or share content to focus on better collaboration.



## Voice Conferencing

Two Polycom Voice Conferencing Units are available in courtrooms and Judges' chambers.



## Audio Recording

Thirty-four courtrooms have CourtSmart audio/video recording systems installed. The CourtSmart systems provide the functionality to stream audio and record courtroom proceedings. It uploads all recordings to a centralized server and permanently archives audio files to Blu-Ray media and external storage. A Plexiglass recording display indicates the status of the recording for the bench and parties.



When the system is recording, the display glows blue, and if the system is not recording, the display blinks. If the system is muted intentionally, the display will flash. The typical courtroom has six to eight microphones. These microphones can be muted during private conversations.

#### ADA Accommodations

The Maryland Judicial Branch strives to provide access to justice, which includes meeting the needs of the public when a disability affects how an individual interacts with the court. Courts must also provide reasonable accommodations or modifications for individuals with a disability to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Maryland Rule 1-332 describes the basic steps a member of the public can take to request an accommodation for a disability. As part of that rule, Form CC-DC 49 is provided for individuals to submit such requests to a court. These requests are not required to be submitted as pleadings. Under MD Rule 1-332, advance notice of a request is preferred but not necessarily needed if a court has sufficient time to respond to a request. Our local ADA Coordinator is LaCresha Buchanan, Director of Human Resources.

#### ListenTALK® - [listentech.com](http://listentech.com)

With this technology, users have one-way and two-way communication device options. Users can field questions and engage with groups without raising their voices. This is a completely wireless system that allows you to communicate on the go, wherever you are. ListenTALK's tour guide headsets and receiver devices can be paired on the fly, and multiple groups can be created in seconds. Our Interpreter's Office is now using the ListenTALK devices for court hearings.



## Infrared Bodypack Listening Receiver

The Williams Sound WIR RX22-4N Bodypack is the infrared listening receiver for compatible Williams Sound transmitters. The bodypack features four channels and operates on the 2.3, 2.8, 3.3, 3.8MHz bandwidth. The WIR RX22-4 can be used with mono or stereo headphones, earphones, or a neck loop. These receivers are currently available in seven courtrooms.



## CourtSmart Listen Infrared Portable System

CourtSmart assists in compliance with the ADA and ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) requirements as amended in 2010. Section 219 of Assistive Listening Systems defines the requirements for compliance. CourtSmart installs ADA-compliant hearing-assisted systems that are right for any situation, ensuring that all parties can hear and participate in proceedings in accordance with guidelines. CourtSmart Infrared (IR) systems eliminate costly installation and make any public facility compliant with the regulations now mandatory under Titles II and III of the ADA.



## Wi-Fi

There are secured and unsecured Wi-Fi access points throughout the Circuit Court, provided by the State and the County. Users can access unsecured Wi-Fi by opening a browser and agreeing to the terms. This access is good for 24 hours.

## Electronic Signage

There are two 32 inch electronic signs and one 45 inch electronic sign in the courthouse located in the Marbury Wing Atrium, the Duvall Wing corridor, and the Judicial Administrative Services (JAS) Building. This signage is an interactive directory that directs visitors to the



courthouse's various rooms. The signage is in English and Spanish. The visitors decide the language.

## Enterprise Scanning

The Circuit Court can scan, index, and organize documents using this technology. This fully-featured document capture and indexing system maximizes the Court's productivity with highly efficient scanning within a network environment.



## High-Tech Courtrooms

Courtrooms M2402, M2403, and M3400 in the Marbury Wing are the high-tech courtrooms. These courtrooms have the following capabilities:

- Integrated and electronic evidence presentation with multiple flat-screen displays allowing the Judge, jury, and gallery to view
- Video conferencing for arraignments, remote witnesses, and secluded witnesses
- Integrated assistive listening and interpretive systems
- Judges have control of the technologies from the bench
- Overflow capacity to observe courtroom activity from another courtroom
- Streaming capabilities

## Apple iPads

All Judges and Directors are outfitted with iPads, which allows them to communicate via email, Zoom, Teams, or Polycom apps. The Duty Judge can receive and send documents with or without a signature via email. In case of inclement weather, the Judge can conduct bond hearing



reviews remotely. Also, with the Zoom application, the Judge presides over some hearings remotely.

### Docket Display

The Courthouse has combined Liquid Crystal Displays (LCDs) to display courthouse docket information. The LCDs show court information through a ticker display at the bottom of the screen. The LCDs panels are in the Marbury Wing on the ground floor, the first floor, and inside the Calendar Management lobby. They are also located in the Duvall Wings on the first and second floors.



### CaseQ

CaseQ is an electronic docket display solution for courthouses of all sizes. The solution seamlessly integrates with any CMS to provide up-to-date case information electronically to court visitors. CaseQ displays and organizes courtroom-specific case information on monitors in real-time. The CaseQ software integrates with the court's CMS to obtain the court's docket for the day. The, CaseQ filters through and organizes the cases by the courtrooms in which they are scheduled. After filtering the cases, CaseQ pushes the courtroom-specific dockets to the respective monitors outside individual courtrooms. By automating the daily docket, staff no longer has to reprint and repost the court calendar whenever case information changes.

CaseQ's web-based interface allows authorized court personnel to edit case information, make room changes, and more. The solution is fully configurable and can filter case information to display in different courtrooms throughout the courthouse.



## Jury Room (Interactive Display)

Each jury room throughout the courthouse has a 65 inch LiteTouch, an interactive board. The board displays all the evidence that was submitted in the case and jurors can interact with the evidence.



## Family Division Kiosks (Electronic Check-in System)

Three iPad Kiosks are available for electronic check-in for parties to a case. The parties enter their names and other required information through a brief series of screens. After collecting the information, the system retrieves and displays the parties' case information and verifies which courtroom their hearing will be heard in. The Kiosk, then, instructs the party to have a seat and wait for their name to be called. Individual portals are available for front desk counter staff to receive the information entered when the party checks in at any given time. Hearing room clerks and front desk counter staff have log-on access and status change options. Information is displayed on the existing displays at the front counter. One additional 55 inch display and a 43 inch display are installed outside the office for visitors.



## SharePoint

SharePoint is a web application platform in the Microsoft Office 365 Suite for team collaboration, blogs, wikis, and company news. SharePoint is a secure place to store, organize, share, and access information from almost any device.

## Online Payment of Fees

Online payment services are available to litigants in family cases to pay for referral services, such as custody investigations, mediation, psychological evaluations, etc.

<https://circuitcourt.princegeorgescountymd.gov/>

## Automated Interpreter Requests

The Circuit Court offers sign and spoken language interpreters without cost to litigants. On the Circuit Court's website, applicants can fill out one of two forms: Request for an Interpreter Form or the Cancel Interpreter Form. Once the form is completed by selecting the send button, it will be emailed directly to the appropriate division.

## Amcrest Web Cameras

Amcrest webcam technology gives employees access to a built-in noise-reducing microphone and superior stereo audio allowing unclouded and natural sound recording for the best video calling experience in a noisy environment.



## HDI iClass Card Reader

The readers were designed for door applications requiring standard wall switch mounting. iCLASS is a powerful, secure 256-bit encryption that provides an extra layer of encryption to protect identity data.



## 2N Verso (Video Doorbell)

Employees can take video calls from the entrance without picking up a handset. Instead, they remotely open the door for visitors and explain where their specific offices are located.



## Talk A Phones

The Courthouse has nine Talk A Phones installed in the parking garage with three on each level. Talk A Phones are excellent security solutions for visitor management, front door entry, secured areas, and other locations where access control is essential. In addition, the video call station interconnects with the IP video attendant station for a one-stop access control intercom solution. Talk A Phones also provide an area of rescue/refuge for those unable to evacuate a building in an emergency with a designated place to wait for assistance and the capability to communicate with emergency responders.



## LYNX System - Wireless Solutions

LYNX software and hardware utilizes the Inovonics one-button duress device and achieves communication through a client-initiated persistent socket session to the server. No network ingress connections are required. LYNX software utilizes panic buttons and mass notification software. One of the many avenues is the LYNX Alerts App downloaded on a smart mobile device which sends mass emails to users.



Inovonics' wireless intrusion detection devices and mobile duress (panic) buttons are designed with today's applications in mind. The application supports hundreds of security devices across the Courthouse environment. Unique to Inovonics is the high-power repeater mesh that intelligently amplifies transmissions from EchoStream transmitters. They are providing coverage throughout the Courthouse, thus eliminating the need for labor associated with wired installs.

## Oklahoma Sound Orator Lectern

This lectern has a standard height of 46 inches and includes all the bells and whistles. Concealed casters, lamps, digital clocks, and lapel mics complete this package.



## Search Warrant Record Tool

The Search Warrant Record Tool is used to insert, update, and research search warrants filed in the Prince George's County Circuit Court. Users can also print reports using this database, which is the only court in Maryland with such a database. This database was created using Microsoft Access and is managed by the Circuit Court IT Department. Because of the sensitivity of the data in this database, only a limited number of users can access it.

The screenshot shows the 'Search Warrant Record Tool' interface for the Prince Georges County Circuit Court. The top navigation bar includes the court's logo and the title 'Search Warrant Record Tool'. Below the title, a welcome message and a note about the tool's purpose are displayed. A central message states: 'Select a Form or Report to get started!' Below this, there are three main sections: 'WORD MERGE JOBS', 'FORMS', and 'REPORTS'. The 'WORD MERGE JOBS' section contains buttons for 'Print SW Cover Sheet' and 'Print SW Receipt'. The 'FORMS' section contains buttons for 'New Search Warrant', 'Add a Judge', 'Service Form', 'Add an Officer', 'Return Form', and 'Add a Return Reason'. The 'REPORTS' section contains buttons for 'Cases Without Complete Service', 'Search for Cases without returns based on Officer ID', 'Missing Returns by Officer ID', 'Search for Cases without returns based on Date Range', 'Search Warrant Cases Signed Between a Date Range', 'Search by Description', 'All SW Cases Filed by Officer Based on Officer ID', and 'Add SW by a Judge Based on Date Range'. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the court's name, 'IT Support: April Andrade', and an email address.

## SentryERS

SentryERS is an Emergency Response Lockdown System that provides comprehensive situational awareness in an emergency via video, two-way voice, text message, and GPS location. The unit communicates with the Sheriff's Motorola system for full communication.



## C. Training

### Human Resources

On April 19, 2024, a comprehensive mandatory staff training event was conducted, focusing on three key tracks: personal; professional; and leadership development. The training was designed to enhance the skills and perspectives of all Circuit Court employees, fostering a more cohesive and effective working environment.

- Personal Track:

#### Discovering a Growth Mindset

This session was designed to assist participants in cultivating a mindset that encourages continuous learning and improvement. The employees were introduced to practical and effective strategies to embrace a growth mindset. These strategies were aimed at enhancing their ability to view challenges as opportunities and overcome obstacles. The session also provided actionable approaches for sustaining a growth-oriented perspective, ensuring that employees could apply these concepts in both their personal and professional environment.

#### Effective Communication

Recognizing that communication is at the heart of successful relationships and collaborations, this session addressed the development of verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills. Employees were guided through various techniques to improve their communication, with an emphasis on active listening, clear expression, and understanding non-verbal cues. The session aimed to equip participants with the tools needed to foster a more cohesive and collaborative working environment. By the end of the session, attendees

were better prepared to engage in meaningful conversations that promote understanding and cooperation within their teams.

- Professional Track:

#### Work Smart, Achieve More

This session provided a foundational understanding of the time management process, emphasizing the characteristics of effective time managers. Employees explored the importance of prioritizing tasks and how to distinguish between urgent and important events. The session also delved into the art of delegation, teaching attendees how to effectively delegate tasks and communicate requests clearly to others. Participants were empowered to manage their time more efficiently, thereby increasing productivity and achieving more in their professional roles.

#### Discover the World of Emotional Intelligence

This session introduced employees to the concept of emotional intelligence and highlighted its benefits in professional settings. Attendees learned the importance of recognizing the emotions of family members and coworkers and how to respond in a balanced and rational manner. By fostering emotional intelligence, participants were encouraged to improve relationships and enhance their ability to work collaboratively. This track provided valuable tools for participants to enhance their professional effectiveness and emotional awareness contributing to a more productive and harmonious workplace.

#### Leadership Track:

A specialized leadership track was conducted exclusively for supervisors and managers as part of the broader staff training program. This track was designed to enhance leadership capabilities through focused sessions that addressed key aspects of guiding teams and fostering an inclusive work environment. The leadership track featured the following two sessions: The Coach Approach to Leadership and Inclusion Matters.

#### The Coach Approach to Leadership

This session centered on empowering leaders to guide and motivate their teams effectively. Employees explored methods to lead with clarity, purpose, and direction, learning how to optimize performance and unlock the potential of their team members. The session emphasized integrating coaching communication principles into leadership styles.

## Inclusion Matters

This session focused on the critical role of inclusive leadership in achieving organizational goals. Participants delved into the principles of fostering inclusivity within their teams and gaining insights into creating an environment where diverse perspectives are valued. The session provided practical strategies for building inclusive work cultures enabling leaders to contribute to their organization's success through inclusive leadership practices.

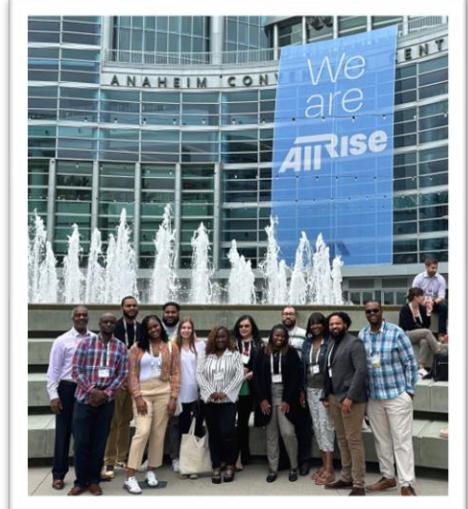
## Family Division

FSS staff members received CINA Mediation Training during FY24. In June 2024, staff attended The Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution's Annual Conference and the Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office's Maryland Mediators Conference in Boston, Massachusetts. Staff also attended the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) Annual Conference in Boston, Massachusetts.

## PSCs

The PSCs staff attended the following trainings and conferences during FY24: National Association of Drug Professionals in Anaheim, CA; Institute of Restorative Justice and Practice Conference at Bowie State University; and the Annual Veterans Legal Assistance Conference in Baltimore, MD.

The staff also attended All Rise webinars throughout the year regarding best practices and approaches to mental health. Finally, PSCs conducted annual training with current vendors regarding alcohol monitoring and global tracking systems.



## D. Docket Efficiency

The Administrative Judge, The Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton, established a Workgroup to Evaluate the Efficiency, Workload and Tasks of the Office of Calendar Management, The Courtroom Monitors, and Zoom Team in January 2023. The workgroup was a collaboration of employees and judges charged to review, assess, evaluate, and make

recommendations, if any, as to the reorganization, consolidation, and/or enhancement that may be required to maximize the efficiencies of the Court.

## **E. Post-COVID Adaptations and Innovations**

As a result of the aforementioned workgroup, the following operational changes were adopted by the Circuit Court between July 1 - September 1, 2023:

- The established Zoom Team during the COVID-19 pandemic was dissolved.
- Components of the Zoom Team were incorporated into two segments within the Circuit Court to include:

### Calendar Management

- Maintain and manage Virtual Boards for the website and internally for parties to obtain their Zoom links.
- Manage and maintain all Zoom accounts for judges, magistrates, special events, and the public.

### Court Reporter's Office (which has been expanded to include Court Technologists)

- Downloads hearings from Zoom to CourtSmart (as the official keeper of the record).
- Advises the Court in real time as to if there are issues with connectivity and clarity.

## **F. Emergency Preparation Planning Activities**

### Fire Alarm Testing

The Circuit Court is dedicated to ensuring that employees, Courthouse occupants and visitors are safe should an emergency arise. As part of the Court's commitment to safety, fire alarm testing was conducted at the Courthouse on March 16, 2024, beginning at 5 a.m. and concluding at 12 p.m.

## VII. FACILITIES

### A. Space

The Courthouse Complex is comprised of four wings (Bourne, Duvall, Marbury, and Marbury Expansion) in the Upper Marlboro Courthouse; the Circuit Court JAS Building; the PCGFJC building; and offices in the County Administration Building. During FY24, there have been several refresh projects and renovations within the Courthouse Complex.

#### Duvall Wing Entrance Refresh Project

In FY24, the Duvall Wing was enhanced with improvements, including the addition of space in the entrance way area to allow visitors to gain access to the Courthouse, and an additional security lane was added to allow visitors to move more efficiently and expeditiously thus resulting in citizens no longer having to wait in the elements.

#### Lactation Center Improvements

During March 4th - March 12th, the Lactation Room was closed temporarily for a refresh. The ceiling was replaced, and new lighting was installed. The entire room was painted, a new door was installed, and the floor was replaced.

#### Family Division Training Room (0421)

The Training Room located on the ground floor of the Marbury Wing is utilized for various Circuit Court division programs and events. The room was renovated to include new lighting, carpet, and fixtures. New furnishings were also added to enhance the room.

#### Courthouse Building Exterior Refresh

In March 2024, the exterior of the Courthouse building was power washed, and all windows were cleaned.

#### Courthouse Room Conversions

- The former Grand Jury Room was converted into new office space for the growing Bailiff unit.
- The former Bailiff's Office was converted into a new Senior Judges' Chambers as there was a great need for assistance in addressing our backlog.

## B. Security

### Renovations to Secured Judges' Entrance to Parking Garage

Repairs were made to the secured judges' entrance in February 2024. Two new roll up doors were installed at the entrance of the garage to increase safety and security.

### Installation of Ballistic Film

The Courthouse has installed ballistic film on the ground and first floors of all buildings within the Circuit Court Complex. The security film helps protect the Courthouse's vulnerable areas. The film does not allow the glass to break into dangerously sharp pieces.

### Duvall Wing Entrance Refresh Project

Security upgrades were made to the checkpoint at the Duvall Wing entrance to the Courthouse. The upgrades and renovations began in July 2023 and concluded in November 2023. A new x-ray machine and two magnetometers were installed.

### Judges' West Lot Parking Area

Artificial foliage was added to the fencing surrounding the Judges' Secured Parking Area on Water Street. The foliage enhances security by preventing drivers and pedestrians from viewing judges' cars that are parked in the lot. The parking lot was also paved, and parking spaces were restriped.

## **VIII. LEGISLATIVE**

### **A. Concerns**

There are no concerns.

### **B. Recommendations**

There are no recommendations currently.

# IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

## A. Justice Partners

### Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, co-chaired by the Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court, the Administrative Judge of the District Court, and the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer of Public Safety for Prince George's County is comprised of stakeholders who meet regularly to address criminal justice issues affecting citizens throughout the County.

### PSCs

PSCs has numerous ongoing partnerships within each of its programs that assist with providing comprehensive and rehabilitative services to participants. PSCs partnered with the following organizations and agencies during FY24:

- Maryland Office of Problem Solving Courts
- All Rise - National Treatment Courts
- Justice for VETS (JFV)
- Problem Solving Courts Foundation, LLC
- Prince George's County Office of the Public Defender
- Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office
- Maryland Department of Juvenile Services
- Prince George's County Health Department
- Prince George's County Department of Corrections
- Prince George's County Office of the Sheriff
- Prince George's County Police Department
- Prince George's County Social Services
- Prince George's County Public Schools
- Prince George's County Public Works and Transportation
- Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
- Salvation Army
- Chrysalis House for Women
- The Bridge Center
- Champ House Sober Living
- The Denney House

- Avenues Recovery Center
- Walden Pyramid Inpatient Center
- Hudson Health Recovery Center
- Gaudenzia Inpatient Center
- Avery Roads
- Jude House Inpatient Center
- Fields and Fields Outpatient Services
- Utopia Outpatient Services
- Insight Outpatient Services
- MAT Clinics, Inc.
- Mettle Works Mental Health Services
- Community Advocated for Family and Youth
- Interdynamics, Inc.
- Mountain Manor, Crownsville/Baltimore
- S.A.F.E. Counseling
- Hope House
- Employ Prince George's
- Destiny, Power, and Purpose
- State of Maryland Local Behavioral Health Department
- Department of Corrections - Butler House and Community Release Center

## PGCFJC

The PGCFJC has 23 on-site local government and private nonprofit agencies that work with the Center to address victims' needs. The coordinated response model has proven to be a more efficient and effective service delivery process. On-site partnering organizations include the following:

- Prince George's County Police Department
- Prince George's County Office of the Sheriff
- Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office
- Prince George's County Department of Health
- Prince George's County Department of Social Services
- Prince George's County Department of Family Services
- University of Maryland Capital Regional Health (Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Center)

- Community Crisis Services, Inc.
- Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center
- Community Advocates for Family and Youth (CAFY)
- Catholic Charities
- House of Ruth Maryland
- Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI)
- Maryland Legal Aid; Community Legal Services, Inc.
- Women's Law Center of Maryland
- Amara Legal Center
- Juanita C. Grant Foundation
- Forensic Nurse Examiners Solutions, LLC
- The Nehe Foundation, Inc.
- Synergy Family Services, Inc.
- The Training Source, Inc.
- Prince George's County Police Department

## **B. Grants**

The major grant programs include:

- Family Division Legislative Initiative Grant

The Judicial Institute of Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts provides funding to the Court's Family Division that provides three services: (1) a one-stop information and referral center; (2) the FSS Unit which provides certain family support services (e.g., mediation, domestic violence coordination, clinical assessment, and referral services); and (3) enhanced monitoring, scheduling, and oversight functions in the Family Law area.

- Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement (CRA)

This Federal formula funding is provided by the State of Maryland under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act with matching funding provided by the County. Funding supports the Circuit Court's child support enforcement programs. The Family Division hears and makes recommendations to the Circuit Court on cases concerning the establishment of civil support obligations and enforcement of the collection of Court-ordered child support.

- PSCs - Adult Drug, Juvenile Drug, Reentry and Veterans Programs  
The Judicial Institute of Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts provides funding to enhance operations. Funding received may only be used to support Judiciary staff assigned to PSCs and enhance any other ancillary services that will be utilized by and for the betterment of the community members served by this court program.
- PGCFJC: "Saving Lives, Restoring Hope" - Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)  
The Maryland Crime Control and Prevention provides funding for operational costs to include staff, supplies, training, outreach, and education. PGCFJC's "Saving Lives, Restoring Hope" project strengthens and improves ongoing efforts to provide survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and elder abuse a range of comprehensive services by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals who are co-located in one facility for community-wide intervention. Recognized as a "best-practice," this collaborative initiative eliminated barriers to service and enhances victims' access to critically needed resources in the aftermath of trauma.
- Memorandum of Understanding - Administrative Office of the Courts Security Grant  
The Court acquires through the County procurement process, security-related goods/or services, as described in and in strict accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with the Administrative Office of the Courts.
- Office of Violence Against Women (OVW): Improving Criminal Justice Response  
PGCFJC was awarded the U.S. Department of Justice - Office on Violence Against Women's Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program Grant. This funding helps PGCFJC enhance operations and increases survivors' access to services throughout Prince George's County. The grant money will also be used to open seven new satellite offices to provide more accessible services to citizens across Prince George's County. PGCFJC's new office locations will include the following: Prince George's County Police Department - Districts I and VII (northern and southern Prince George's County); four (4) municipal police departments (City of Bowie, Bladensburg, Cottage City and Mount Rainier); and Bowie State University. Officers in each location will facilitate services via virtual intake, and people in need will have greater access to obtaining services such as emergency shelter, protective orders, and crisis

intervention. Prior to the establishment of the PGCFJC, Prince George's County had the highest number of domestic related fatalities in Maryland.

With the additional funding, PGCFJC extended hours of operation to include evenings and weekends to better serve citizens in the County who are in crisis and need help to escape abusive situations and conditions. With more accessible hours, citizens can obtain protective orders, access safety planning crisis intervention counseling, file police reports and receive other services provided by law enforcement outside of the work week. The new enhanced hours of operation are as follows: Monday - Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.; and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

- **Federal Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) - Adult Drug Court and Veterans Court Treatment Discretionary Grant**

The U.S. Department of Justice provides funding for a four year term to promote initiatives and enhancements with the Adult Drug and Veterans Court Programs.

- **Improving Survivors Access to Critical Resources (GDVC)**

The Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention provides funding to domestic violence centers to respond to incidents of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence and to develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving such crimes.

- **MACRO-Court ADR Programs and Projects**

The Judicial Institute of Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts provides funding to support the Maryland Judiciary's mission to provide fair, efficient, and effective justice for all. MACRO's Conflict Resolution Projects Grants provide funding for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs or projects which develop, improve, and expand high quality ADR services statewide. These grants are being offered to Circuit Courts in Maryland to support ADR programs and services. Grants in this category typically support: ADR-specific staff, such as a program manager or staff practitioner; Mediator/ADR Practitioner Quality Assurance and training; fee-waiver funds; and other costs associated with providing mediation and ADR services to court users.

## C. Community Outreach

### PSCs

- TRC participation in Anti-Truancy Campaign Resource Fairs sponsored by the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office and Prince George's County Public Schools
- PSCs joint presentation for the PSCs Foundation Board of Directors
- TRC presentation for Pupil Personnel Services (PPW), September 2023
- Adult Drug Court selected by the State of Maryland PSCs to host French Delegation and conduct question and answer session with the team and The Honorable Karen H. Mason, March 2024
- PSCs representation on the Four County Collaborative Veterans monthly meetings
- Monthly PSCs representation in the TRC Work Group meetings to review legislative policies
- Quarterly PSCs representation on Disability and Severe Barriers Committee
- Ongoing internship opportunities for Bowie State University students
- Quarterly PSCs representation at the PSCs Foundation Board meetings
- Quarterly PSCs representation at Prince George's County Department of Health Overdose Fatality Report meetings
- Quarterly PSCs Alumni Meeting
- Bi-monthly PSCs representation on the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board Youth Standing Committee
- Re-Entry Court presentation for the State Office of PSCs County Coordinators
- PSCs presentation at Quarterly County Council Criminal Justice Coordinating Council regarding TRC initiatives, June 2024
- Re-Entry Program presentation for the Bureau of Justice Assistance (Federal grantor)
- TRC presentation to the Prince George's County Council Truancy Study Workgroup, June 2024

### Law Library

Law Library staff served on the Membership and Mentoring Committee of the Government Law Library section of the American Association of Law Libraries. In that capacity, staff assisted in implementing outreach strategies to increase membership and to mentor new and existing members. During FY24, Library staff continued to serve as presenters for the Law on the Frontlines: Legal Reference for Public Libraries Training

Program for public librarians. The program is sponsored by the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library, the Maryland Access to Justice Commission and other agencies.

## PGCFJC

The PGCFJC actively engaged in community outreach throughout the year by participating in several community forums held at local churches, schools, and allied partners' organizational events.

Staff members have served as recurring speakers at police academy sessions, training for first responders and the Elder Abuse Summit to increase the awareness of the PGCFJC throughout the County.

The PGCFJC also expanded its community presence through participation in the Prince George's County Local Behavioral Health Authority's Adult Behavior and Fitness Expo. The Center's presence amongst the Hispanic community also increased in FY24 through participation in Langley Park Day and by connecting with the County's Latino Affairs Liaison.

## X. OTHER CONCERNS/ISSUES

The continued growth of our community, alongside a significant rise in case numbers, highlights an urgent and critical need for additional physical space. Expanding our court facilities will provide the necessary courtrooms and office space for the Prince George's Circuit Court to effectively meet the increasing demands of our citizens. This expansion will empower us to uphold our commitment to justice and ensure that we can continue serving the community with efficiency, accessibility, and fairness. Together, we are building a stronger future for Prince George's County, where every need is met, and every voice is heard.