

Ministry of the Attorney General

Annual Report 2014-15

Court Services Division
Ministry of the Attorney General



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Message from the Deputy Attorney General

The 2014-15 fiscal year saw important accomplishments in Court Services Division. Amongst these accomplishments, and setting the foundation for upcoming modernization initiatives, was the launching of Court Services Division's 5-year strategic plan in the fall of 2014. This strategic plan links to the ministry-wide strategic plan and supports the Division's mission to:

- modernize the delivery of accessible and accountable court services, and
- support an engaged, professional and client-focused workforce that works collaboratively with justice participants to inspire public trust.

I have been impressed with the progress to date in achieving these goals. The successful implementation of initiatives such as the electronic in-court production of the three most common criminal court orders, the launch of the online next day court dockets, and the launch of the small claims court e-filing project are just some examples of the collaborative efforts of Court Services Division to modernize court processes to make them more accessible and efficient for both those working in the justice system and the people of Ontario who use the courts.

Equally impressive are the local and regional modernization initiatives that have led to more efficient and effective court processes, both through technological improvements and innovative ways of doing business.

Court Services is the largest Division in the ministry and its seven regions reflect the diversity of the population at large. Whether in the fastest growing areas of the province, or the most densely populated areas, or the northern sites where court is only accessible by plane, each region has its unique set of issues to deal with. Each region, however, along with the Division's corporate branches, has shown a commitment to excellence in supporting, developing, and implementing important initiatives that make the court system more accessible and accountable.

I invite you to read this annual report and learn about Court Service Division's provincial, regional and local accomplishments. Its work this year will act as a springboard for new creative thinking and innovative ideas for the future.

I would like to thank Assistant Deputy Attorney General Lynne Wagner, her management team, and staff across the province, for their commitment and dedication to providing excellence in customer service and championing the many initiatives to deliver a modern and professional court service. A strong foundation has been set – I look forward to building on it.

Patrick Monahan
Deputy Attorney General

Foreword by the Assistant Deputy Attorney General

I am pleased to release the Court Services Division Annual Report for the April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 fiscal year. Our division has been hard at work over the past year to ensure high quality justice services are provided to the public. As the assistant deputy attorney general of Court Services Division, I am very pleased by the results we have achieved.

Court Services Division launched its strategic plan in fall 2014, following the launch of the ministry's strategic plan in fall 2013. The division's strategic plan highlights our vision, mission and values, and our key priorities and goals as a division. It is important that as a team, we share a vision of the goals we are striving towards, and how we plan to get there.

I am very confident that the Court Services Division Strategic Plan will provide us with the foundation to succeed. I take great pride in our division's commitment to delivering a modern, accessible and accountable court service. Court modernization initiatives continued to expand in 2014-15. The division is in its third year of implementing a multi-year plan for court services modernization. The division's modernization approach continues to focus on making evidence-based decisions, streamlining business processes, and establishing a culture of innovation.

One of the division's priority projects in 2014-15, criminal electronic order production, was substantially completed in January 2015. This project supports not only the division's modernization goals, but also the ministry's green initiative. The ability to distribute court orders electronically is expected to save a million sheets of paper annually. An updated family electronic order production tool will be piloted with Legal Aid Ontario in 2015-16. This interactive tool will allow court staff to create court orders quickly and efficiently. These are just a few of the projects Court Services Division has been working hard to implement. The development of other court services initiatives are highlighted in this report. Thank you to all staff in the division who work diligently to support the ministry's commitment to provide a modern and professional court service. I

would also like to thank Deputy Attorney General Patrick Monahan for his continued support and commitment to court modernization and service excellence.

Lynne Wagner
Assistant Deputy Attorney General
Court Services Division

Chapter 1: Introduction to Court Services Division

Mission

The Ministry of the Attorney General is responsible for administering justice in Ontario. Within the ministry, the Court Services Division is responsible for the administration of the courts.

The division's mission is to provide a modern and professional court service that supports accessible, fair, timely and effective justice services.

Court Services Division Strategic Plan

In fall 2013, the Ministry of the Attorney General released a new strategic plan covering the period 2014 to 2019. Court Services Division launched its divisional strategic plan in fall 2014. This plan supports the vision, mission and values of the ministry plan and provides a clear direction for the future of court services. A summary of the new divisional strategic plan is included below.

Our Vision

A modern and professional court service that supports accessible, fair, timely, and effective justice services.

Our Mission

The mission of the Court Services Division is to modernize the delivery of accessible and accountable court services and support an engaged, professional and client-focused workforce that works collaboratively with justice participants to inspire public trust.

Our Values

- Collaboration
- Respect
- Innovation
- Professionalism
- Service Excellence
- Inclusion
- Accountability
- Integrity

Goals

The Courts of Justice Act sets out important goals for the administration of the courts. Section 71 of the act states:

The administration of the courts shall be carried on so as to:

- maintain the independence of the judiciary as a separate branch of government
- recognize the respective roles and responsibilities of the Attorney General and the judiciary in the administration of justice
- encourage public access to the courts and public confidence in the administration of justice
- further the provision of high quality services to the public
- promote the efficient use of public resources

All of the division's activities are designed to fulfill these goals. This annual report responds to the division's legislative obligation to be publically accountable for its progress made each year to meet them.

Core Services

Court Office and Counter Support

Court Services Division staff provide court office services in 165 court locations across the province, including scheduling court cases at the direction of the judiciary, providing information and counter services to the public, entering data in court case management systems and maintaining court records and files.

Judicial and Courtroom Support

The division provides administrative support to all judicial officers of the Court of Appeal for Ontario, the Superior Court of Justice and the Ontario Court of Justice. It also provides courtroom support through court clerk and registrars, court reporters, court services officers and interpreters, and manages the jury system.

Other Core Services

Mandatory civil mediation is part of the civil court process in Ottawa, Toronto and Windsor. Family mediation services, mandatory information programs and information and referral coordinators are provided by external service providers at all court locations that hear family cases throughout Ontario. Court Services Division manages the contracts for the delivery of mediation and information services in these courts, through procurement and oversight of the providers.

Role of the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Court Services Division

The assistant deputy attorney general of the Court Services Division oversees the administration of Ontario's courts and is responsible for legislative, regulatory and operational policy and program development related to improving the court system.

Regional Structure

For the purpose of providing court services, the division is organized into seven administrative regions.

Each region is responsible for:

- delivering local criminal, civil, small claims and family court services
- maintaining records, files, exhibits and databases
- providing judicial support services, including courtroom and administrative support
- managing juries
- enforcing court orders
- managing fines, fees and trust funds
- managing regional stakeholder communications
- implementing divisional initiatives

Regional Directors

Each region is managed by a director of court operations who reports to the assistant deputy attorney general of Court Services Division.

Corporate Directors

Corporate directors manage each of the division's branches, including: Corporate Planning Branch, Divisional Support Branch, Civil/Family Policy and Programs Branch, and Criminal/Provincial Offences Act Policy and Programs Branch.

The Corporate Planning Branch is responsible for:

- developing operational policy and providing program support to court operations in the areas of court interpretation, court reporting and human resources, including:
- training, testing and ongoing recruitment of fee-for-service court interpreters
- managing the ministry's fleet of digital recording devices and supporting the ministry's court reporting model
- setting court transcript standards required by legislation, regulation, policy and court practice direction

- producing and publishing the Court Services Division Annual Report and other multi-year operational tools
- developing divisional training and learning initiatives

The Criminal/Provincial Offences Act Policy and Programs Branch is responsible for:

- providing operational support to managers and staff in the criminal courts
- overseeing the municipal courts that hear Provincial Offences Act matters
- liaising with the Offices of the Chief Justices and Criminal Law Division on operational and administrative initiatives affecting the criminal and Provincial Offences Act courts
- providing support to initiatives from the ministry's Criminal Law Division and Justice on Target team
- providing legal and operational support and advice to senior management on cross-practice area issues such as court reporting and court interpreters
- supporting judicial and legal appointments, judicial library and court website services
- providing management information to support management decision-making

The Divisional Support Branch is responsible for:

- leading business and financial planning
- supporting facilities and emergency management planning
- developing operational policy and providing program support to court operations in such areas as exhibit management, jury management, records retention and court security
- managing the jury selection process across the province through the Provincial Jury Centre
- maintaining court documentation and web resources
- coordinating public communications

The Civil/Family Policy and Programs Branch is responsible for:

- developing, implementing and managing legislative, regulatory and administrative initiatives with respect to the civil and family justice system
- providing legal, operational, policy and program support to civil and family court and enforcement office staff
- providing legal, operational and policy support and advice to senior management on civil/family court and enforcement issues
- developing, implementing and managing civil justice reform strategies to reduce cost and delay in the civil and family justice system and divert appropriate cases from court
- managing and developing family mediation and information services in communities across Ontario
- negotiating and managing the ministry's share of a federal/provincial/territorial family justice contribution fund
- participating in the Coordinating Committee of Senior Officials – Family Justice, to collaborate with federal, provincial and territorial officials on areas of joint jurisdiction in family matters
- participating in the Family and Civil Rules Committees and managing Rules Committee initiatives to improve the family court process
- maintaining the ministry's public legal information about the family justice system in Ontario

Chapter 2: Introduction to Ontario's Courts

Ontario's Courts of Justice Act provides the legislative framework for the province's court structure. The act establishes the jurisdiction of each of the province's three courts: the Court of Appeal for Ontario, the Superior Court of Justice, and the Ontario Court of Justice.

The Court of Appeal for Ontario

The Court of Appeal for Ontario is Ontario's highest court. The Court hears:

- criminal appeals of decisions of the Superior Court of Justice and the Ontario Court of Justice in relation to indictable offences
- appeals from unrepresented inmates who are assisted by duty counsel (heard on alternate months in Kingston and heard monthly in Toronto)
- motions for leave to appeal and appeals from lower court appellate decisions in relation to summary convictions and provincial offences
- appeals of final decisions of the Superior Court of Justice in relation to civil and family disputes
- appeals of final decisions from the Ontario Review Board
- motions for leave to appeal and appeals of appellate decisions of the divisional court
- single judge and panel motions brought in relation to appeals before the court
- matters remanded to the court of appeal by the Supreme Court of Canada and matters referred to the court of appeal by the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the Federal Minister of Justice

The court of appeal is situated in downtown Toronto at Osgoode Hall. Its members are the Chief Justice of Ontario, who is the President of the Court of Appeal; the Associate

Chief Justice of Ontario; eighteen full-time judges; and eight supernumerary judges. Appeals are heard before panels of three or five judges.

The court of appeal is the last avenue of appeal for most Ontario litigants. Although, the Court's decisions can be appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, this usually requires leave, and the Supreme Court of Canada hears less than 2 percent of the cases that have already been heard by the court of appeal.

The Honourable George R. Strathy was appointed Chief Justice of Ontario and President of the court of appeal on June 13, 2014. He replaced the Honourable Warren K. Winkler who retired on December 9, 2013. Associate Chief Justice Alexandra Hoy led the court in the interim period, between December 10, 2013 and June 12, 2014.

"We have high expectations when it comes to our justice system, because we have high standards. And we should have high standards because we are fortunate enough to live in a society governed by the rule of law. We are proud of our justice system, but ... our goal should be nothing less than to make our system of justice the best in the world. I commit myself to working with you to continue to build a justice system that is the best in the world. A justice system that will contribute to a fair and inclusive society in Ontario."

The Honourable George R. Strathy
Appointed Chief Justice of Ontario on June 13, 2014

The Superior Court of Justice

The Superior Court of Justice hears civil, family and criminal matters, including the following:

- criminal prosecutions of indictable offences, including some prosecutions involving young persons
- summary conviction appeals and bail reviews from the Ontario Court of Justice
- all civil proceedings (civil claims under \$25,000 are dealt with in small claims court, a branch of the superior court)
- family law disputes involving divorce or property claims, child and spousal support, and custody and access claims (in its 17 family court branch locations,

the superior court hears all family cases, including child protection and adoption matters)

- certain family and civil appeals (the divisional court, which is branch of the superior court, hears applications for judicial review and statutory appeals from decisions of provincial administrative tribunals, as well as family and civil appeals)

The superior court sits in over 50 court locations in Ontario. The Court is led by Chief Justice Heather J. Smith. She is supported by Associate Chief Justice Frank Marrocco, who also oversees the divisional court and the small claims court on her behalf. The chief justice has the statutory authority to direct and supervise the sittings of the superior court as well as the assignment of judicial duties. These powers are delegated, subject to the direction of the chief justice, to eight regional senior judges to exercise in their respective regions. In turn, the regional senior judges may designate local administrative or lead judges to assign and schedule cases at certain court sites. Senior Family Justice George Czutrin advises the chief justice on specific matters related to family justice throughout the province and performs other duties relating to the family court as assigned by the chief justice.

“As a court of inherent jurisdiction, the superior court’s authority and origins can be traced back to the Magna Carta, which is currently celebrating its 800th anniversary. While we mark this milestone, our Court is focused on the future. And as we strive to find new ways to deliver meaningful, accessible and affordable justice to the people of Ontario we look forward to working collaboratively with the Court Services Division’s talented and dedicated staff.”

The Honourable Heather J. Smith
Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Justice

The Ontario Court of Justice

All criminal cases are commenced in the Ontario Court of Justice and over 95 per cent of these cases are completed in this Court. Ontario Court of Justice judges and justices of the peace sit in close to 200 locations across the province.

Judges of the Court hear:

- criminal prosecutions of indictable and summary conviction offences

- most criminal prosecutions involving young persons
- Provincial Offences Act appeals from the decisions of justices of the peace
- child protection applications, family law disputes involving custody, access and support, and adoption applications in areas where the family court branch of the Superior Court of Justice does not exist

Justices of the peace hear:

- bail hearings
- first appearance matters
- prosecutions of provincial offences

At the end of 2014, the Court was led by Chief Justice Annemarie E. Bonkalo. Associate Chief Justice Coordinator of Justices of the Peace Faith Finnestad and Associate Chief Justice Lise Maisonneuve provided support to the chief justice and had special delegated responsibilities as well as those set out by statute. Chief Justice Annemarie E. Bonkalo's term as chief justice ended on May 3, 2015. For the purposes of judicial administration of the Ontario Court of Justice, the province is divided into seven geographic regions, each of which has a regional senior judge and a regional senior justice of the peace. Across the province, local administrative judges and justices of the peace assist the regional senior judges and regional senior justices of the peace respectively.

"The Ontario Court of Justice works together with the Ministry of the Attorney General, and in particular, the Court Services Division, to achieve our goal of serving the people of Ontario by providing open, modern and fair justice. The commitment of everyone in the ministry and Court Services Division is impressive and vital to the effective delivery of justice services. On behalf of the Ontario Court of Justice, I extend my sincerest thanks for working so collaboratively with us to ensure we are providing the highest quality of judicial services to the people of Ontario."

The Honourable Annemarie E. Bonkalo

Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice 2007- 2015

Judicial Complement (as of March 31, 2015)

Judicial Complement (as of March 31, 2015)

Court	Judicial Official	Complement
Court of Appeal for Ontario	Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal for Ontario	1
	Associate Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal for Ontario	1
	Judges of the Court of Appeal for Ontario (Full-time)	18
	Judges of the Court of Appeal for Ontario (Supernumerary)	8
Superior Court of Justice	Judges of the Superior Court of Justice (Full-time)	226
	Regional Senior Judges of the Superior Court of Justice	8
	Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Justice	1
	Associate Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Justice	1
	Senior Judge of the Family Court	1
	Judges of the Superior Court of Justice (Supernumerary)	95
	Case Management Masters	16

	Judges of the Small Claims Court (Part-time)	2
	Deputy Judges of the Small Claims Court	360
Ontario Court of Justice	Judges of the Ontario Court of Justice (Full-time)	274
	Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice	1
	Associate Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice	1
	Associate Chief Justice Co-ordinator of Justices of the Peace	1
	Regional Senior Judges	7
	Senior Advisory Family Judge	1
	Judges of the Ontario Court of Justice (<i>per diem</i>)	58
	Justices of the Peace (Full-time)	335
	Senior Advisory Justice of the Peace	1
	Regional Senior Justices of the Peace	7
	Senior Justice of the Peace/Administrator of the Ontario Native Justices of the Peace Program	1
	Senior Justice of the Peace	1

	Justices of the Peace (<i>per diem</i>)	76
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Chapter 3: 2014-15 Overview and Initiatives

The division is a true partnership between corporate branches, regional offices and local courts and this is demonstrated by the ongoing work of the subject matter operational and policy tables. These tables meet regularly to foster communication, brainstorm and develop innovative ideas and encourage feedback and collaboration as new ideas are developed. The operational and technical tables are also one of the main vehicles for allowing corporate staff to hear from local court staff about new challenges, changes to process and local innovation.

All of the projects highlighted below were successful because of the unique blend of policy, program and operational expertise that court staff across the province bring together to deliver the highest quality of justice.

Court Services Modernization

The division is in its third year of implementing a multi-year plan for court services modernization. The division's approach to modernization continues to focus on:

- proceeding incrementally, building on successful implementation of modest projects that can readily be evaluated
- making evidence-based decisions
- harnessing the creativity and recognizing the expectations of staff, judiciary and court users to identify potential opportunities for modernization
- making better use of technology
- streamlining business processes
- entrenching a culture of innovation

The division works in close partnership with the ministry's Innovation Office as well as with other divisions in the ministry, Justice Technology Services, Service Ontario and other Ontario Public Service partners to deliver on the modernization strategy.

The following were our modernization achievements in 2014-15.

Criminal Electronic Order Production

A criminal practice area priority project in 2014-15 was to support the Ontario Court of Justice's pilot, evaluation and province-wide implementation of the electronic in-court production of the three most common criminal court orders: Judicial Interim Release Orders (JIROs, or 'bail papers'), adult probation and conditional sentence orders and youth probation orders.

E-Orders are created on-screen using an electronic form, printed on multi-functional devices and signed in the courtroom. They are then shared electronically with justice partners, such as police, probation and victim services. This has significantly expedited the production of court orders and the ability to distribute them electronically is expected to save a million sheets of paper a year.

The corporate project team worked closely with the Office of the Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice to deliver this initiative. Regional leads for each of the Ontario Court of Justice seven regions also worked in close cooperation with regional senior judges and justices of the peace. Province-wide implementation was substantially completed in January 2015.

Family Electronic Order Production

The ministry developed an electronic family order production tool to enable court staff to more quickly create court orders. The tool is an interactive form that includes:

- an editable and easily navigable list of the ministry's standard clauses
- multiple blank fields to enable data entry or cutting and pasting of non-standard clauses
- auto-populate features to eliminate repetitive data entry requirements, e.g., party and children's names

Court Services Division is working on an updated version of the tool that will assist parties and their lawyers to quickly and accurately prepare minutes of settlement and convert them into final orders for review by a judge. The updated tool will be piloted with Legal Aid Ontario in 2015-16. The ministry has plans to adapt the tool to allow mediation service providers to use the tool to create mediation summary reports and to allow lawyers who provide legal advice to clients who attend mediation to prepare separation agreements based on the mediation summary reports.

Centralized Divorce Processes

A pilot focused on enhancing the processing of joint and simple divorces was established in Toronto's Superior Court of Justice family office beginning in August 2013 and expanded to the Ottawa Superior Court of Justice in September 2014.

Participating staff:

- have expertise in processing joint and simple divorces
- provide thorough, expert review to ensure cases are judge-ready
- have direct access to the federal Central Registry of Divorce Proceedings, which allows them to:
 - directly input information into the federal database
 - quickly determine when a clearance certificate has been issued by the federal government, instead of waiting for notification by mail
 - process divorces more quickly

It is estimated that divorce processing times will ultimately be reduced for joint and simple divorces in Toronto and Ottawa by several weeks. The division is continuing to explore opportunities for expansion of this pilot program and the use of technology to reduce divorce processing time.

Recording Management System

A web-based recording management system (RMS) was successfully implemented across the province in spring 2013 to standardize the management and tracking of transcript orders. In 2014-15, the final phase of RMS was implemented, creating

efficiencies for staff uploading transcript orders to the system and providing access to the Court of Appeal for Ontario to view and track appeal transcripts.

Online Next Day Court Dockets

The division supported the launch of the online “Next Day Court Dockets” website. Since April 2014, court users who would normally obtain next day case event information by telephoning or attending a courthouse can obtain this information from the internet. The website provides court users with basic next day case information for criminal, civil, small claims, family and divisional court matters and is available at www.ontariocourtdates.ca. The website received over 9 million hits in its first year of operation.

Small Claims Court E-Filing Project

The small claims court e-filing pilot launched in August 2014 in Brampton, Oshawa, Ottawa and Richmond Hill Small Claims Courts. The pilot was expanded to Toronto on March 2, 2015 and as of March 30, 2015, individuals and businesses from across the province can file small claims court forms and pay fees online, 24 hours a day.

There are two ways to file:

- Filing Wizard guides the user through the process of creating and submitting small claims court documents and paying fees. This is a good option for first time filers who are unfamiliar with the court process and people who are representing themselves in court
- Quick file gives legal professionals and others who frequently file small claims the option of uploading already completed forms

Not all types of claims can be filed using the online system. Eligible claims include those set out in a contract of \$25,000 or less, such as unpaid accounts for goods and services, loans, credit card debt and overdue rent. Claims for amounts in dispute – such as many claims related to personal injury – cannot be completed using the online process. Visit www.ontario.ca/smallclaims for more information.

Ideas and Innovation Fund

In fall 2013, the ministry launched the Ideas and Innovation Fund for staff to share their ideas about how the ministry can streamline processes, increase productivity and improve the way business is done. Court Services Division staff contributed 65 of the 164 ideas received. The Innovation Executive Committee approved 12 ideas to advance to the implementation phase. Four of the projects from Court Services are complete and have resulted in workplace efficiencies.

Ongoing Support for and Enhancement of High Quality Court Services

The Criminal Courts

Mental Health Initiatives

Court Services Division continued to participate on the Interministerial Mental Health and Justice Committee, a forum for ongoing discussions about various mental health issues affecting the justice system. This committee is comprised of officials from the Ministries of the Attorney General, Health and Long Term Care, Community Safety and Correctional Services, Children and Youth Services, and Community and Social Services.

The division is working collaboratively with colleagues in the Criminal Law Division and other ministries to ensure timelier and better-coordinated access to mental health assessments for accused persons across the province.

Federal Legislation

The Criminal/Provincial Offences Act Policy and Programs Branch reviews and assesses the impact on court administration of federal bills amending the Criminal Code and other federal legislation in the area of criminal law. In 2014-15, the branch supported the implementation of the following bills:

- C-13 The Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act
- C-14 The Not Criminally Responsible Reform Act
- C-36 The Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act
- C-395 An Act to Amend the Criminal Code and National Defence Act (Criminal Organization Recruitment)

- C-489 An Act to Amend the Criminal Code and the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (Restrictions on Offenders)

The Civil Courts

Civil Rules

The Civil Rules Committee is a statutory committee composed of representatives from the judiciary, the bar and the Ministry of the Attorney General. The committee has jurisdiction to make rules regarding procedures in all civil proceedings, including both the Superior Court of Justice and small claims court. Associate Chief Justice Alexandra Hoy is the Chair of the Civil Rules Committee.

Rule changes effective July 1, 2014 included amendments to:

- address the impact of vexatious litigants and vexatious litigation on the court and other parties
- allow the expansion of electronic writ filing, including in small claims court cases
- allow certain small claims court documents to be filed and issued electronically, once the required technology is available
- remove the requirement that court staff serve defences for small claims court defendants

Rule changes effective July 18, 2014 include amendments to improve accessibility of regulated small claims court forms by removing interlineation.

Rule changes effective January 1, 2015 include amendments to:

- allow parties to serve documents through a new electronic document exchange system
- expand service by e-mail to documents not requiring personal service and for service of documents on a lawyer of record
- reform administrative dismissals for delay, allowing parties a longer period of time to set their actions down for trial and conclude their actions
- provide pre-trial and case conferences in actions and applications on a judge's initiative or party's request province-wide

- simplify motions for leave to appeal to Divisional Court

Rule changes effective March 31, 2015 include new venue requirements for mortgage actions to ensure matters are commenced in the region where the property is located.

The Family Courts

Family Law Rules

The Family Rules Committee is a statutory committee composed of representatives of the judiciary, the bar and the Ministry of the Attorney General, with jurisdiction to make rules regarding procedures in Ontario's family courts. The committee is chaired by the Honourable Mary Lou Benotto of the Court of Appeal for Ontario.

In 2014, the Family Rules Committee made the following amendments to the rules:

- amendments that permit the electronic filing of writs of seizure and sale in family law cases. These amendments will allow the Family Responsibility Office, lawyers and other government agencies to file these electronically
- amendments which provide the court with the ability to make certain procedural orders at any point in a case
- amendments to rule 16 (summary judgment) such that its provisions track the summary judgment provisions of the Rules of Civil Procedure and reflect the principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Hryniak v. Mauldin*, 2014 SCC 7
- amendments clarifying parties' obligations to provide financial disclosure to one another in support and property cases. In particular, the rules have been amended to provide financial disclosure at a very early stage in a family law case and make explicit what types of information must be disclosed in relation to property and support claims. Two new forms were developed alongside these amendments to the rules: a Comparison of Net Family Property Statements form and a Certificate of Disclosure

Since fall 2011, families across the province have had access to:

- a mandatory information program

- both on-site and off-site family mediation to help families work out solutions outside the courtroom
- information and referral coordinators who help direct and connect potential litigants to services in the community that assist with family breakdown, including counselling and support services and alternatives to litigation

These services are delivered by service providers who were successful bidders through a competitive procurement process. The division provides oversight to these providers, policy support, and financial accountability for these contracts. The term of the current service contracts is three years, from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017, with two one-year extension options on the same terms and conditions.

Dispute Resolution Office (DRO) Program

The Superior Court of Justice launched the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO) program in Toronto in 1996. The DRO program has now expanded to eight other locations: Barrie, Brampton, Durham, Hamilton, Milton and Newmarket, London and St. Catherine's.

DROs are private sector lawyers who have been selected by the regional senior justice to hear first case conferences, primarily in motions to change cases but in other cases as well if they have been specifically referred to them by a judge.

On September 9, 2014, the Attorney General of Ontario entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Justice regarding the DRO program. The Attorney General has agreed to pay an honourarium in the amount of \$250 per session to the DROs at all existing locations except London and St. Catherine's which continue to operate on a pilot basis.

The MOU also sets out the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the selection of DROs and the delivery of the program.

In fall 2014, the ministry ran a competitive process to create a panel of DROs. The ministry worked closely with the Superior Court of Justice to create the panel. The empanelment process is nearly complete, and the ministry will be working with the Superior Court of Justice to develop tools to evaluate the program.

Expansion of Partnership with the Family Responsibility Office

After an evaluation demonstrated success of a pilot project with the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) to centralize the processing of writs of seizure and sale and notices of garnishment and the scheduling of Notices of Default proceedings, the division expanded the partnership to include all family courts in Ontario. Two court clerks located at the FRO in Toronto now issue writs, notices of garnishments and schedule Notices of Default proceedings for all FRO cases. Court Services Division continues to work closely with the FRO to consider further advances in the enforcement of support orders.

Registration of Final Orders (made in Canada) ISOA

One of the selected projects from the ministry's Ideas and Innovation Fund is the centralization of "Registration of Final Orders (made in Canada) ISOA". This project has the Interjurisdictional Support Order unit within the Family Responsibility Office completing the registration process of these types of orders onsite, inclusive of all data entry requirements on the courts case management system, FRANK. Once the registration process has been completed the documents are then uploaded to a shared folder accessible to court staff. Court staff will no longer be processing these types of orders after March 31, 2015.

Online Child Support

The Ministries of the Attorney General, Finance, Community and Social Services and Government and Consumer Services are working jointly to create an online administrative child support calculation service to allow separated parents to set up and update child support in a simple, fast and affordable manner outside the court system.

On July 24, 2014, the Legislature passed amendments to the Family Law Act in Bill 14, the Building Opportunity and Securing Our Future Act (Budget Measures), 2014, to authorize the creation of the new online service, and the ministries are working toward an implementation date in early 2016.

Access to Justice

Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The division is committed to providing accessible court services in Ontario. New requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) now apply with the Information and Communication Standards coming into effect on January 1, 2014 and the Accessible Built Environment Standards coming into effect on January 1, 2015. These new requirements under the IASR build on previously existing ministry policies and practices.

Management and staff completed training on accessible formats and communications support requirements in 2014. In addition, a number of court forms have been developed in an accessible format for people to access, including students enrolled in legal education courses. The division is currently working toward meeting the AODA standards to make court forms fully accessible by January 1, 2016. Courthouse accessibility coordinators continue to be fundamental to the delivery of accessible services and have supported a range of disability-related accommodation requests, such the provision of sign language interpretation, assistive listening devices, real-time captioning, document filing and mobility around the courthouses. This year, wheelchairs were made available in all courthouses in order to support people who require assistance. As well, more assistive listening devices were provided to courthouses that have a higher demand for this equipment.

Court Services Division is committed to providing ongoing training and support to the ministry's accessibility coordinators. Together with the ministry's Accessibility Unit, two half-day training sessions were held in June 2014. The training was delivered by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and focused on the legal duty to accommodate people with disabilities under the Human Rights Code. The disability accommodation process and practical examples were also discussed.

The Courts Accessibility Subcommittee continued to meet regularly to provide advice about accessibility priorities and plans for the division. This committee is chaired by a regional director and includes representatives from divisional branches, regions, Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division, Criminal Law Division, and Provincial Offences Act (POA) municipal court partners.

The ministry opened a new courthouse in April 2014 in Thunder Bay. The courthouse is accessible to people with disabilities and includes barrier-free access to public spaces, public counters, courtrooms, jury boxes, witness boxes, and spectator areas; and more advanced accessibility features, such as height adjustable lecterns.

Several facilities projects in 2014-15 focused on increasing accessibility and removing barriers in courthouses. Some examples include: accessible counter renovations at various court locations; modification of the existing jury boxes with an accessible juror position at the Ottawa, Cornwall and Brampton Courthouses; reconfiguration or addition of accessible public washrooms at the Ottawa, Barrie and Newmarket Courthouses; installation of barrier-free dais and witness box at College Park and 47 Sheppard Courthouses; and completion of signage improvement projects at the Brampton and Sault Ste. Marie Courthouses.

The ministry has a requirement under the AODA to make all ministry buildings accessible by 2025. To assist the ministry in reaching the requirements of the act the ministry has retained the services of a consultant to complete an audit of all ministry buildings to identify where we currently meet and do not meet the requirements of the act. Upon completion of this audit the ministry will be able to identify where and how it should invest capital dollars to meet the 2025 requirements of the AODA. The division works closely with Facilities Management Branch, who has the lead for this work.

The assistant deputy attorney general continues to co-chair the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee with Justice Janet Simmons of the Court of Appeal. This committee includes representatives of the judiciary, bar, ministry and the disability community. Participation on this committee is one of the ways the division stays engaged with stakeholders with a particular interest in improving the accessibility of the court system.

French Language Services

The division continues to focus on French Language Services (FLS) and has been participating for the last number of years in the Annual Justice Sector Francophone Stakeholders' Meetings as well as in the justice sector ministries' strategic planning process to better understand the needs of French-speaking clients. The division continues to co-chair and participate in the French Language Services Bench and Bar Response Steering Committee. This committee was established in spring 2013 with a two-year mandate to review and advise on the recommendations of the Access to

Justice in French / Access à la justice en français report. The report focuses on the steps necessary to ensure that French speakers have effective access to justice in French in Ontario.

The Steering Committee and its related working groups and subcommittees have been actively moving forward with the important recommendations for the justice system made in the report, including providing FLS based on the concept of active offer, raising awareness of French language rights, and ensuring that French-speaking Ontarians are able to access their language rights in our courts in a timely and cost-effective way. In 2015-16, the ministry will publish a response to the Access to Justice in French / Access à la justice en français report which outlines the activities of the Steering Committee.

In 2013-14, in response to a report recommendation, Court Services Division appointed an FLS Coordinator for the division who has taken the lead in ensuring that the division's handling of French language matters encourages appropriate access to the courts and confidence in the administration of justice.

Educational and training materials and tools have been developed by the Court Services Division FLS Coordinator, the FLS team and internal committees to assist staff in providing high-quality services to the public. For example, in 2014-15, the division implemented the CSD FLS Volunteer Program. The program seeks to offer services in French to clients in locations that are not in designated areas and do not have bilingual staff by connecting clients remotely with bilingual staff at other locations where available.

Court Interpreters

Court interpreting is a highly skilled profession and the Court Services Division continues to foster relationships in order to support the profession and share information and best practices. In 2014-15, the division continued to focus on the recruitment and testing of high demand languages. The division also continued to offer test preparation classes to supplement online test preparation materials.

In September 2013, the division implemented the first phase of the new Court Interpreter SharePoint Tool which creates efficiencies in the way courts view the interpreter registry and schedule interpreters. The new registry is used by over 500 staff in the Ministry of the Attorney General and its municipal court partners. In spring 2014, the division implemented the second phase of the Court Interpreter SharePoint Tool.

Phase two enhanced the way interpreter coordinators schedule fee-for-service court interpreters by centralizing court interpreter scheduling online.

To ensure continuous improvement of the court interpreter program, the division continues to provide opportunities to expand the use of video and audio technology in the provision of remote interpretation.

Juries

In 2015, a new interim Juror Questionnaire was developed and implemented for the 2016 jury roll. The new questionnaire is the product of community engagement sessions that were led by the Debwewin Jury Review Implementation Committee. The interim Juror Questionnaire has helped to address key recommendations stemming from the Honourable Frank Iacobucci's report "First Nations Representation On Ontario Juries", which can be found online at

www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/#iacobucci

Debwewin continues to work on additional recommendations to the jury questionnaire that may require changes to the Juries Act in future.

In addition improved juror information has been added to the Ministry's jury duty website to support the public during the jury process.

Court and Client Representative

In 2014-15, the division expanded its use of the new Court and Client Representative job description. The division launched the new Court and Client Representative job description for use by managers across the province in 2013-14 as part of courts modernization. The job description supports the administration of the courts by performing a range of both in-court and out of court duties, as assigned. The new job description provides managers with the flexibility to assign staff to meet operational requirements and provides staff with job enrichment opportunities.

Court Reporting Services

Digital Recording Device Implementation

In 2013, the ministry completed the implementation of digital recording devices (DRDs) in courtrooms across the province. The devices have been implemented in over 700 courtrooms at 165 court sites. DRDs provide a standardized method of court reporting and are a step in the division's incremental, multi-year plan to provide professional tools to our staff and to ensure the integrity and security of the court record. The division continues to manage all aspects required to maintain its extensive fleet of DRDs, including system enhancements such as electronic uploading of docket information into the annotated digital recording. Automatic uploading of docket information supports accurate transcription and creates efficiencies for courtroom staff.

The ministry continues to receive positive feedback from court staff, judicial officers and management. In particular, feedback highlighted the benefits of digital recording, including the clarity and security of the recording in ensuring future access for both playback of the record and transcript production.

New Model for Transcript Production

On June 9, 2014, the ministry implemented a new model for court transcript production that provides enhancements and meets the needs of judicial officers, justice partners and court users. These changes build on Ontario's commitment to ensure the timely and accurate production of court transcripts and are consistent with the proven approach in most other provinces and many international jurisdictions.

Under the new model, ordering parties select a transcriptionist from the publicly accessible List of Authorized Court Transcriptionists for Ontario. The list is maintained by an independent service provider and can be found online at www.courttranscriptontario.ca.

Divisional Training Initiatives and Partnerships

Training Initiatives for Court Staff and Managers

Court Services Division has demonstrated its ongoing commitment to providing effective training to all divisional staff in support of the division's learning and development goals. To meet the varied learning needs of staff and managers, the division has developed several educational tools and supports to enable a professional, skilled and engaged workforce.

The division's training plan guides the central coordination of training initiatives and ensures consistent high quality training materials to support staff development. The plan is supported by the work of the Learning and Development Committee, consisting of corporate and regional representatives from across the division. The committee provides a forum for consultation on the identification of learning and development priorities, evaluation of current and ongoing training and the identification of knowledge or skill gaps that might be addressed through future planning.

In support of the courts modernization initiative, the division delivered a half-day change management training session to approximately 3,500 division staff. The training focused on providing staff with the tools and support they require to effectively adapt to change. In addition to the change management training, the division also launched a half-day training session on customer service in a court environment, in support of the division's commitment to providing quality customer service. Between November 2014 and March 2015, approximately 3,500 division staff attended the training in person or via webcast. The training provided staff with tools and tips to deliver quality customer service to clients.

The division's management team attended an annual two-day learning event in May and June 2014. This learning event gave managers the opportunity to provide input into the division's new strategic plan and to share best practices with colleagues.

Court Services Division continues to demonstrate its commitment to supporting a professional and respectful workplace. All new managers are required to complete a Management Awareness Session within the first six months of employment where they learn strategies to effectively support this initiative. Staff are also required to complete training on supporting a professional and respectful workplace as a part of their orientation.

Each year, the Operational Support Unit conducts jury training for staff across the province in support of the province's First Nations jury selection process. During the training, staff have the opportunity to raise questions and discuss matters related to the administration of the First Nations jury process. Training sessions are held annually in the summer and early fall in advance of the jury questionnaires being mailed out.

Specialized Court Support Services Certificate Program

Court Services Division continues to work with Durham College, Centennial College and Algonquin College to support court support training programs. The programs focus

on court support staff roles and responsibilities, and include training on pre-court, in-court, and post-court related functions, as well as ethics, courtroom procedures and legal terminology. With ongoing support provided by our managers, supervisors and members of the judiciary, graduates of the program continue to develop the necessary skills and remain highly successful in the competition process for court support positions in Court Services Division.

Customer Service

Court Services Division Service Standards

On April 1 2014, the division implemented revised service standards to replace the service standards that were implemented in 2010. Service standards let customers know the division cares about their experiences while informing them of the level of service they can expect. The Ontario Public Service Directive Guide recommends that ministries and divisions review service standards regularly to adjust them to reflect new client needs, expectations and program initiatives.

Client Satisfaction Surveys

In January and February 2015, the division conducted its annual Client Satisfaction Survey. The survey was conducted online and in-person at 17 court locations across the seven regions and focused on client satisfaction with court counter services for the civil, family, criminal and small claims court practice areas and measured organizational performance, not personal performance of staff members.

In total, 1,737 surveys were collected from across the province over a two-month period. The surveys consistently indicated high levels of overall client satisfaction for all practice areas and locations. Overall, 85 per cent of clients agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the court counter service they received.

The survey also assessed client satisfaction with the division's French language and accessibility services. Eighty eight per cent of clients indicated that they were satisfied with the French language services received, and 73 per cent of clients indicated that they were satisfied with the accessibility services received. The Client Satisfaction Survey results reflect the high quality of work that is achieved every day in courthouses across the province by division staff and managers.

Working with our Justice Partners

Municipal Administration of Provincial Offences Courts

The Provincial Offences Act (POA) is the procedural code governing the enforcement, prosecution and adjudication of offences established by municipal bylaws and provincial statutes, such as the Highway Traffic Act. Judicial officials in the Ontario Court of Justice preside over these matters. Court services for POA matters are provided primarily by municipalities.

In 2014-15, the division led a number of initiatives to assist municipal partners in the delivery of local justice services and to strengthen the provincial-municipal POA partnership, including:

- working with the Ministries of Transportation, Finance and Municipal Affairs and Housing and municipal stakeholder associations to improve the municipal enforcement of defaulted POA fines
- working with the Office of the Chief Justice for the Ontario Court of Justice to identify and share best practices for making the best use of trial time in municipal courts
- working with municipal partners to enhance statistical reports available to municipal court managers to support management decision making and case processing
- reviewing and modernizing the division's oversight of municipal court administration across the province
- regular meetings between senior divisional representatives and municipal partner representatives to facilitate communication, collaboration and consultation
- working with municipal partners and Francophone stakeholders to enhance the delivery of French Language Services in municipally administered courts, including focused work through a dedicated French Language Services subcommittee of the POA Table
- supporting Municipal Court Managers' Association and Prosecutors' Association of Ontario's training initiatives on a range of subjects, including courts accessibility, French Language Service delivery obligations and the recent streamlining amendments to the POA

Legal Appointments Office

Through the legal appointments office, the division is responsible for processing applications from members of the public for appointments as commissioners for taking affidavits and non-lawyer notaries public.

In 2014-15, the legal appointments office received 9,305 requests for commissioner appointments and 422 requests for notary public appointments.

Judicial Appointments Office

The division is responsible for providing administrative support to the appointment of Ontario Court of Justice judges, justices of the peace, regional senior judges and regional senior justices of the peace. It also supports the appointment of Superior Court of Justice, case management and small claims court deputy judges.

Judicial appointments for the Ontario Court of Justice are made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council upon the recommendation of the Attorney General. The Attorney General will recommend for appointment only a candidate who has been recommended by the independent Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee or the Justice of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee. More information about these committees is available on their websites at www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/jaac and www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/jpaac.

In 2014-15, 45 judicial appointments were processed: 25 judges, 4 regional senior justices and 16 deputy judges.

Judicial Library Services

Judicial Library Services provides support to 85 judicial libraries across the province, as well as to the library committees for each court. Judicial Library Services also provides library research support, including the maintenance of an intranet for judges, masters, justices of the peace, counsel and law clerks. In addition to the library functions, Judicial Library Services maintains the websites for the three levels of courts as well as the Ontario Judicial Council, Justices of the Peace Review Council, Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee and Justice of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee.

Managing Court Facilities

Within the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Corporate Services Management Division (CSMD) has the lead responsibility for capital planning and strategic oversight of the ministry's real estate portfolio through its Facilities Management Branch (FMB). Court Services Division works in partnership with CSMD to identify capital planning priorities and to manage courthouse facilities issues across the province. FMB works closely with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) and the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to implement capital courthouse improvements.

Asset Management Planning

In summer 2011, the province released its new 10-year infrastructure plan, "Building Together". As part of this plan, asset management was identified as a priority for the government and all ministries. Each provincial ministry that owns and operates infrastructure is now required to prepare and update an annual inventory of its infrastructure assets and a plan to maintain those assets, based on a consistent framework.

In response, FMB initiated a multi-phase initiative to properly measure and document its major facilities and to undertake audits of their physical condition. In fall 2011, FMB, in collaboration with IO undertook phase one, a comprehensive inventory and asset description of 125 ministry locations, including courthouses and selected office space across the province. This phase was completed in 2012.

In late 2013, phase two of the inventory and asset description was initiated. This phase involved a comprehensive inventory asset description and space measurement of the entire ministry's clustered agencies and related office space, including hearing/tribunal spaces and related offices. This work was completed in February 2014.

Phase three of the work includes an audit of building conditions. In March 2014, the ministry, in conjunction with IO, undertook a review of the current condition of finished materials in all ministry buildings. The condition of those materials will be placed into a computer program which will provide a report each year by courthouse to allow the ministry to identify where life cycle maintenance investment is required. This project will be complete in 2016-17.

The information collected will be used as part of the foundation for the ministry's Asset Management Plan and will enable the ministry to provide more effective, proactive, strategic, and financially responsible stewardship of court and office facilities.

Wayfinding and Signage Projects

In 2008, former Attorney General Christopher Bentley announced a province-wide interior signage (wayfinding) improvement project beginning at the Barrie Courthouse. Signage improvement projects were completed during 2014 in Brampton and Sault Ste. Marie.

Facilities Accessibility Audit Project

The ministry has a requirement under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to make all ministry buildings accessible by 2025. To assist the ministry in reaching the requirements of the Act, the ministry has retained the services of a consultant to complete an audit of all ministry buildings to identify where we currently meet and do not meet the requirements of the act. Upon completion of this audit the ministry will be able to identify where and how it should invest capital dollars to meet the 2025 requirements of the AODA.

Renovations and Expansions

The ministry is committed to investing in courthouse renovation and expansion projects to address facility performance matters. Examples of projects recently completed or underway at court locations that meet these criteria include: a new satellite court location in Hearst; secure, single point of entry project in Ottawa; and expansion/renovation projects in Barrie and Newmarket.

In 2014-15, the ministry was involved in nearly 450 active facility projects for a total value of approximately \$33.5 million.

Interim Facilities Solutions for Barrie, Newmarket

The implementation of interim facilities solutions are now complete for the Barrie and Newmarket Courthouses to address immediate space pressures. These initiatives highlight the government's commitment to explore a wide range of strategies to improve

the efficiency and effectiveness of justice services. These solutions provide additional courtroom capacity and associated support functions. The ministry has worked closely with our judicial partners to implement these projects.

New Courthouse Construction

Through the Alternative Financing and Procurement (AFP) Courthouse Projects Office, in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure and Infrastructure Ontario, the ministry delivered a number of new courthouse development projects in Waterloo Region (Kitchener), Quinte (Belleville), Thunder Bay, and Elgin County (St. Thomas) and is currently working on the recently announced new Toronto Courthouse. The AFP model uses private sector expertise and financing to build vital infrastructure, such as courthouses.

Court Security

The division continues to work with its partners at the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS), the Ontario Provincial Police, and municipal police services to ensure the safety and security of all court facilities and those who work or visit these facilities. Throughout 2014, the division worked closely with our justice partners such as the judiciary, MCSCS, and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police to ensure that local court security committees continue to play an important role in addressing court security at the local level. The division developed a regular monitoring process to track the progress of these committees to verify that they continue to meet regularly and ensure court security plans are in place.

Exhibits Management

Significant work has been accomplished over the years to strengthen the supports for handling and securing exhibits. In 2012, the High-Risk Exhibits Management Guide – Phase Two was released to provide procedures for safely handling and storing high-risk exhibits. Online training for this guide was also released. Building on the guide, the division will launch a comprehensive Exhibits Management Manual that provides a comprehensive resource for exhibit management staff in all practice areas to reference current policies and procedures. Online training is also being developed to accompany the manual.

Information Technology Initiatives and Accomplishments

Justice Technology Services (JTS) MAG Solutions Branch collaborates with the division and the ministry's Innovation Office to ensure appropriate information technology support for Court Services Division (CSD) modernization initiatives and ongoing legislative and business process change requirements. This work includes project management, the documentation of business and system requirements, User Acceptance Test plans, and training expertise in support of enhancements to existing applications.

JTS delivers technology and application solutions for courts as well as support for the day to day technical operating environment of the many solutions supporting CSD. In the past year, the JTS MAG Solutions Help Desk, which is focused on technical support and administration of various CSD applications, has resolved 4,231 incidents. In addition to those items highlighted below, the MAG Solutions Branch fulfilled 33 change requests for various courts applications over the course of the year.

In 2014-15, in partnership with CSD and other stakeholders, a variety of technology solutions were completed and implemented. Some of the highlights include:

Small Claims Court Online

A partnership between the Ministry of the Attorney General, ServiceOntario, and Justice Technology Services, Small Claims Court Online provides for the online filing of seven small claims court forms with integration into the courts' operational system, FRANK. Launched in August 2014, this online application allows, for the first time, members of the public to prepare and submit small claims court forms, without setting foot in a courthouse.

Initially only available for filings in Brampton, Oshawa, Ottawa, and Richmond Hill, the service was expanded to Toronto in early March 2015 and to the rest of the province's small claims courts at the end of March 2015. As of the end of March 2015, more than 1,800 Plaintiff's Claims had been commenced online and more than 3,400 total online filings.

The project has received a Project Excellence Award in the Exceptional Project Team category as well as an Excelsior award for innovation.

Search Warrants Tracking System

In November 2014, the provincial Search Warrants Tracking System was completed, and deployed into Toronto region for the pilot. The Search Warrants Tracking System is a tool that has robust functionality to track, in detail, the location and status of search warrants that have been filed with the court.

Upon successfully completing the pilot phase in Toronto, the application will be deployed across the province to all court locations.

Docket Streamlining

An initiative from the Ideas and Innovation Fund selected for implementation, docket streamlining sought to eliminate alignment pages from court dockets generated out of the Integrated Court Offences Network. Dating back to the days when dockets were printed on dot matrix printers, every docket contained three leading pages which were used to align the docket paper in the printer.

As of January 19, 2015, docket streamlining was implemented, saving the ministry and the taxpayer the cost of 20,000 sheets of wasted paper every year, as well as the toner and the time that staff spend sorting the test pages from the dockets.

Provincial Jury Centre, Print and Mail Services

To comply with the procurement directive which designates the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS) as the common service provider for print and mail services within the Ontario Public Service, the Provincial Jury Centre was required to migrate from their third-party service provider to MGCS.

To facilitate this, the automated processes within the Provincial Jury Selection System application, which generates and sends the data files for producing jury summonses needed to be modified. Not simply a case of changing the destination for the data files, it also involved altering both transfer and data encryption methods.

Implemented on March 31, 2015, MGCS was able to seamlessly assume the print and mail function with no interruption in service.

Regional Achievements

As described previously, innovative processes and ideas come from all corners of the division. Corporate branches provide policy and program development for these ideas and support for implementation, while regional staff and managers provide extensive leadership and subject matter expertise to guide projects and implementation. This work is in addition to the daily work related to the operation of the courts. The division's ability to meet its priority commitments is therefore completely reliant on the energy and generosity of regional staff and managers, and their successful local collaboration with other justice participants.

In addition, the regions identify and implement their own priority initiatives. These initiatives are highlighted throughout the next pages.

Central East Region

The Central East Region is located to the north and east of Toronto and is part of the Greater Toronto Area. The region has a population of nearly two and a half million people. Through eight courthouses and eight satellites, the region serves the communities of York, Haliburton, Muskoka, Simcoe, the City of Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland, Durham, and Peterborough.

Over the past decade, this region has experienced one of the highest growth rates in the country.

A number of court locations across the Central East Region were provided with facility upgrades. In Newmarket, modular courtrooms were built as a mid-term solution to meet the rising demands. The addition houses two courtrooms, a jury assembly area, interview rooms, child friendly room and judicial chambers. The courtrooms are equipped with state of the art technology for hearing remote testimony, video conferencing and evidence presentation. In addition a renovation of two Superior Court judicial chambers will accommodate newly appointed judges.

The Barrie Courthouse also received a modular courtroom, jury deliberation room with state of the art technology and several new and re-designed judicial chambers in response to space pressures.

Security plans have been established in all court locations with the collaboration of all justice partners.

The Justice on Target (JOT) strategy saw significant improvements in reducing time to trial and reducing the number of court appearances at all court locations in the Central East Region. One of the initiatives was triage court in Newmarket, where first appearance criminal matters are prioritized at the beginning of the day and scheduled into appropriate courts for speedy resolution. Bail committees continue to meet regularly to review bail processes. Video equipment was installed in the holding cells to reduce prisoner movement and to expedite court appearances. In addition, a pilot of the electronic telewarrant initiative is being implemented in Durham and Newmarket in cooperation with Waterloo and Peel regional police services. The pilot evolved out of the judiciary and police services wanting to enhance the current telewarrant system in Ontario to support electronic filing of warrant applications. The process will allow police to scan the warrant and e-mail it to the justice of the peace.

As the deputy attorney general noted in his recent communication at the deputy regional roundtable, a key priority of both the ministry and the Ontario Court of Justice is ensuring a more modern, accessible and sustainable justice system. In alignment with these priorities, the region is working with court staff to design and implement new applications to enhance efficiencies in the administration office and support staff training.

Central East Region has established modernization committees in each court location and staff meet regularly to discuss modernization ideas. One idea from the Bracebridge court services staff was to create a staff training video for jury selection. The script, written by staff, has been completed and is currently being used by Central East Region as a staff training tool. Staff throughout the region participated in the production of the video which was completed in spring 2015.

Several local technology solutions have been piloted to address operational challenges. One such tool is a courtroom staff scheduling tool, which replaces manually assigning staff to courtrooms and can produce the staff court schedule. It is in operation in the Lindsay Courthouse and in pilot in the Oshawa Courthouse. Another tool is the exhibit management tool currently in operation in the Barrie and Newmarket Courthouses. This tool allows staff in the court to administer the flow of exhibits from the time they become an exhibit until they are returned. The enforcement management tool provides for the administration and preparation of the necessary paperwork associated with the enforcement function. A few of the other tools currently being piloted or used in the region include the file retrieval tracking tool which is used to assist with retrieving files from the record centre; the scanning of completed OCJ informations to local repositories in order to facilitate the delivery of certified copies without having to search

through large volumes of paper files; and the family mediation and information contract administration tracking tool, which is designed to record all necessary information with the service providers in order to support the effective monitoring of compliance with contractual obligations.

Central West Region

The Central West Region is comprised of 14 court locations serving a diverse multicultural population of over three million people. The region includes several Greater Toronto Area communities including Milton, Mississauga and Brampton and is the highest populated of the seven Court Services Division regions in Ontario. Milton was named the fastest growing community in Canada according to the 2011 Canadian Census. Canada's largest first Nation reserve, the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, as well as the Missisaugas of the New Credit First Nation, are also located within the Central West Region.

The province has announced the expansion of the A. Grenville and William Davis Courthouse in Brampton to address the growing needs of Peel Region and the significant pressures at the facility. The permanent addition to the courthouse will include two floors of courtrooms and four additional floors provided for future expansion. This new addition in Brampton is targeted for completion in December 2017.

Improvements to existing courthouse in the Central West Region continued throughout 2014-15.

The region continues to promote access to justice by increasing accessibility in the courthouses and addressing the mobility, audio, and visual needs of its clients. An accessibility project at the Unified Family Courthouse in Hamilton is underway.

In Brampton, a Backlog Reduction Committee was established, chaired by all Brampton Supervisors of Court Operations, to eliminate operational administrative backlog. This initiative has been implemented across the region. Managers and staff throughout the region work as a team and provide assistance when required at other locations by using the provincial delegation of authority.

A video bail project is underway at the Brampton Courthouse to allow video remand from the cells within the courthouse. This will minimize prisoner transport to and from the courtrooms and increase efficiency in the court.

To improve service delivery in Brampton and Milton, court staff have implemented one of the Idea and Innovation Fund initiatives, which is scanning completed family court orders to a shared drive. This initiative has reduced the time it takes to locate an order and reduced costs associated with retrieving files from the records retention centre. Implementation of this initiative throughout the region is currently underway.

Staff in Brampton have started scanning and electronically filing completed criminal court informations and small claims court endorsements onto a shared drive. This assists staff as they are able to easily locate the endorsements and informations in order to answer inquiries and provide copies. Small claims court has set up a feneral email address for public inquiries. This has reduced the number of phone calls and clients at the counter.

At the Welland Courthouse, a drop box located near the Family Court counter allows counsel to drop off case conference briefs and orders. This has significantly reduced the wait times at the Welland Family Court counter.

In Simcoe and Cayuga, the region has enabled audio remands by purchasing Polycom Conference Phone Systems to improve the efficiency of Superior Court of Justice Assignment Courts.

The regional and local leadership teams for Justice on Target continue to meet regularly to discuss new process improvement initiatives. A successful case management forum was held in May 2014. This was led by the Ontario Court of Justice Regional Senior Justice Nicklas. This forum included internal and external stakeholders, and each court location made local commitments. Meetings were held in the fall at each court location with Regional Senior Justice Nicklas and the directors of court operations for the Court Services and Crown Law Divisions to review the status of commitments. Successful initiatives were implemented at all locations. A case management forum session is scheduled in May 2015.

Diversity and inclusion are key priorities for the Central West Region. Diversity training was delivered to all staff in the region and several diversity events were held.

The region supported training and development for all staff, including Vicarious Trauma, DNA Forms, Estates, Transmission of Infectious Disease, "Management – Is it for Me?", "Resumes that Rock", Management Awareness and local training initiatives, cross training and all mandatory training. Staff in the Central West Region also assisted the northern regions by providing records management system training in August 2014.

In support of the e-Order Program, the region created shared drives for completed criminal court orders in Brampton, Niagara and Simcoe. The shared drive is accessible by the crown attorney's offices, adult probation offices, youth probation offices and Victim/Witness Assistance Program offices.

East Region

The region serves over 1.6 million people and provides court services in 25 locations covering 10 counties. Many of these court locations are designated locations where services are provided in English and French.

Facilities were enhanced at several East Region court locations. The Cornwall and Ottawa Courthouses reconfigured jury boxes to meet accessibility standards and accommodate 14 jurors. Security measures were increased at the L'Orignal Courthouse by adding security cameras and expanding swipe card access. The Napanee justice of the peace intake office was upgraded to address security deficiencies and meet the demands in that community. A justice of the peace chamber was added at the Kingston Ontario Court of Justice. The Ottawa Courthouse completed a number of renovation projects in 2014-15. A seating project replaced over 1000 seats with a more accessible layout. In October 2014, the enhanced surveillance and security project began. This project, which will be completed in summer 2015, will incorporate magnetometers, x-ray screening devices, optical portals and a queuing area at the Ottawa Courthouse entrance.

Courts in the region have Justice on Target committees that meet regularly to discuss local issues. Committees include participation from the judiciary, crown, police, Court Services Division, Victim/Witness Assistance Program and defence counsel. The Ottawa Courthouse is increasing its use of videoconferencing technology for out of town witnesses and for court hearings held during weekends and statutory holidays.

As an important access to justice initiative, Ontario is implementing a pilot project where the Chief Justices of the Superior Court of Justice and Ontario Court of Justice will partner with the ministry to provide timely and seamless French Language Services at the Ottawa Courthouse. Much work has been completed in preparation for the launch of the pilot in June 2015. The project will have a strong emphasis on the concept of active offer and will aim to reduce challenges for French-speaking litigants, lawyers and others using the Ontario court system in Ottawa.

The pilot project responds to various recommendations of the 2012 report, Access to Justice in French. It will help raise awareness and improve understanding of French language rights, test various ways of providing quality court services in French and identify and promote best practices for the delivery of French Language Services. The concepts tested in the project will help determine how best to continue to improve justice services for the Francophone population in courts across Ontario.

The Kingston Courthouse implemented a Drug Treatment Court in June 2014. This court sits bi-monthly and has a Drug Treatment Court Committee consisting of judiciary, crown, Court Services Division and community stakeholders.

The East Region implemented the new e-Orders initiative in 2014-15. The Ottawa Courthouse served as a pilot site for the new small claims court online filing service. In September 2014, the Ottawa Family Court formed a partnership with the Federal Department of Justice, specifically the Central Registry of Divorce Proceedings (CRDP), as part of a pilot project. The main objective of this partnership was to significantly reduce the processing time of divorce applications by allowing ministry staff to input information directly into the CRDP database, and this objective was met.

Significant technology upgrades were made to courtrooms at the Ottawa Courthouse to display electronic evidence and allow remote access with justice partners.

Court services staff in the East Region continue to engage with stakeholders in their community on different initiatives. Some court locations continued to support local schools by allowing them to use a courtroom for mock trials as part of their school curriculum. Staff in all court locations held fundraising activities to assist those in need in their communities.

The director of court operations in the East Region held 21 courtside chats with staff in Kingston, Brockville, Perth, Cornwall, L'Orignal, Belleville, Ottawa, Napanee and Pembroke. Positive feedback was received with respect to the chats as it gave staff an opportunity to meet the director and provide their input on topics discussed, such as the division's strategic plan.

Over 140 staff in the East Region participated in the in-person customer service training sessions held in Kingston and Ottawa. Many staff who attended the sessions indicated that this training was useful and helpful.

Northeast Region

Seventy per cent of the population for northern Ontario resides in the Northeast Region. There are significant Francophone and Aboriginal populations in the region and court services are regularly provided in French, Cree and Ojibway. The Northeast Region encompasses nine base court locations and 26 satellite courts. Six satellite court locations are located on First Nations reserves and five in the region are remote and can only be reached by aircraft.

Basement renovations at the Sault Ste. Marie Courthouse were completed in 2014. Some of the changes included the addition of a Victim/Witness Assistance Program Office, a vulnerable witness room, an Ontario Provincial Police and Sault Ste. Marie court coordinator office, a crown witness interview room, a secure Legal Aid room and three new interview rooms.

A new site was secured in March 2015 to hold court in Hearst. The newly secured site will combine two facilities in Hearst and reduce the ministry's footprint by 1152 square feet. The new site is expected to be ready to hold court in summer 2015.

A pilot project was initiated at the North Bay Courthouse in February 2015 to comply with recommendations from independent engineers for additional reinforcing to ensure the long-term integrity of the facility. Information sessions were held in February 2015 to inform staff, judiciary and stakeholders on the scope of the pilot, which is expected to be completed in April 2015. The completion of the pilot will provide a better understanding of the methodology to complete the required larger capital repairs and better understand the impact on program operations.

Justice on Target strategies continued throughout the region in 2014-15. As a result of the Bail Experts Table Recommendations Report, bail committees were established in each base court location in the Northeast Region. Work continues to increase communication and coordination for everyone involved in local bail processes, including private counsel, Legal Aid Ontario, police and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Among the priorities for the Northeast Region include more effective Weekend and Statutory Holiday (WASH) courts, including full staffing of judiciary, crown, duty counsel and court staff. A new WASH court initiative was launched in December 2014 and has proven to be effective; the region is pleased to report a significant increase in the number of releases in WASH court. A total of 67 consent releases were reported in the first quarter of 2015 compared to a total of 50 consent releases reported for the entire 2014 year.

In August 2014, the Court Time Reporting System eliminating the need to complete manual time sheets was rolled out in the Northeast Region. Feedback received from in-court staff, supervisors and payroll clerks has been positive.

Deputy Attorney General Patrick Monahan travelled to Sudbury in June 2014 to host a Regional Roundtable session. The event was broadcast to staff in the Northwest Region via videoconference. Staff from all divisions in Sudbury and the surrounding area participated in the event and appreciated the opportunity to network. A representative from each division delivered a presentation about “A Day in the Life” in an effort to increase knowledge of various careers within the ministry. A presentation by Darcy Lampkin from the West Region entitled “Resumes that Rock”, received great feedback and the Northeast Region requested that Darcy return in October 2014 to deliver to staff a more in-depth presentation. The Regional Roundtable event was well received overall and feedback was positive.

Beginning in 2015, Kashechewan prisoner remands are conducted via videoconference. The Cochrane Courthouse connects to Monteith Correctional Centre via videoconference on a monthly basis to remand prisoners reducing the need to transport prisoners, and therefore reducing costs. It is hoped that this process will be expanded to Attawapiskat in the future.

In 2014-15, French Language Services Lunch and Learn sessions were offered via video conference to staff in the Northeast Region in an effort to improve their French language skills. The facilitator, located in Sudbury, was able to connect with participants from Parry Sound and Sault Ste. Marie to converse in French.

Staff members on the Sudbury Courthouse Recreation Committee were recognized with the regional Team Excellence in Courts Administration awards and a staff member in Cochrane was the recipient of the Staff Excellence in Courts Administration award. These staff exemplify the eight core divisional values of service excellence, collaboration, accountability, innovation, inclusion, respect, integrity, and professionalism in their delivery of courts administration.

Courtside chats continued in the Northeast Region in 2014-15. The director of court operations hosted a courtside chat at each base site in the region, leading to increased staff participation.

Northwest Region

The Northwest Region includes four base courts and 36 satellite court locations, 22 of which are in Aboriginal communities that are only accessible by air transportation. Court staff, members of the judiciary and members of the legal profession travel extensively within these remote areas to provide community-centred services. The vast geography, remote locations and winter travel conditions present many program delivery challenges.

On April 14, 2015, the Thunder Bay Courthouse became fully operational. The 225,000 square foot facility consists of 15 courtrooms, including a multiple-accused, high-security courtroom and four settlement conference rooms as well as the province's first Aboriginal Settlement Conference Suite (ASCS). The Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre and Nishnawbe Aski Legal Services deliver diversion and restorative justice programming in the ASCS, including the Aboriginal Community Council Program, providing diversion programming for youth and adult offenders who are approved for diversion, Talking Together, an alternative justice process focused on child welfare cases, and Maa-Mii-Nah-Chi-Ke-Win, a restorative justice program focused on youth and adult pre- and post-charge reconciliation.

The Thunder Bay Courthouse collaborated with the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law, Lakehead University, to host student mock civil appeals on March 26, 2015. The matters were presided over by faculty and members of the Thunder Bay Law Association as part of the second and third year curriculum.

In 2014, Fort Frances Courthouse marked the 100 year anniversary of the courthouse. A special sitting of the court was held on September 23, 2014. Four drummers from Couchiching First Nation performed a traditional aboriginal ceremony and guest speakers and dignitaries offered their remarks. A tree-planting followed the special sitting of the court, in which a red maple tree, donated by the Superior Court of Justice, a silver maple tree, donated by the Ontario Court of Justice, a red pine, donated by the Rainy River Law Association, and a second red pine, donated by court staff, were planted.

In 2014-15, the Kenora Courthouse received several infrastructure upgrades. A new public announcement system is being used to page counsel and the public in order to maximize use of court time, and will also be used to implement a security colour code system. Synchronized clocks were installed to ensure consistency between courtrooms. Electronic bulletin boards were also installed to provide counsel and members of the public with accurate, up-to-date information about the day's court sittings.

A Dryden Courthouse staff member was recognized for her idea for docket streamlining, eliminating the wasted pages printed with ICON dockets. These pages were once needed for aligning dot matrix printers, but are unnecessary with modern printers. Of the 164 ideas submitted through the Ideas and Innovation Fund for modernizing or improving the way the division does business, the proposal was one of the 12 selected for implementation.

On January 1, 2015, the Northwest Region implemented the final phase of its trust amalgamation process. As of January 1, 2015, all trust business functions for the region are managed out of the Thunder Bay Courthouse, using one consolidated computer program, and with transactions being conducted out of a single, regional trust account. The amalgamation of trust functions allows for a more efficient alignment of resources and meets the needs of clients and stakeholders.

Northeast and Northwest Collaborative Projects

In 2014-15, the Northeast and Northwest Regions worked collaboratively on a number of projects.

A pilot project was commenced in the northern regions to conduct pre-assessment hearings via teleconference in an effort to resolve solicitor/client assessments and reduce court appearances. While those efforts continue, in January 2014, regular video conferencing dates were introduced as an additional method to conduct solicitor/client assessments. The assessment schedule now alternates between a video conference appearance and an in-person appearance at each site in the northern regions. It is hoped that this new initiative will create efficiencies, reduce costs and improve access to justice.

Efforts to increase First Nations awareness of the jury system in Ontario and to encourage their participation on jury panels continue in the north. Pilot projects were undertaken in an effort to improve First Nations juror questionnaire response rates. Print and digital ads were provided to band offices and were placed in northern publications highlighting the importance of First Nations representation on juries. Toll-free numbers to the aboriginal jury coordinator and the Provincial Jury Office were published, and links to the jury duty website were provided.

Management in the Northeast Region attended an open house in May 2014 hosted by the Debewewin First Nations Jury Review Implementation Committee at the Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation Community Centre.

An aboriginal jury coordinator position was created for the Northwest Region. In-person meetings with chief and council were held in thirteen communities to explain the jury selection process, and the importance of First Nation representation on juries.

In 2014-15, the northern regions undertook further First Nations court interpreter testing to enhance the pool of accredited Ojibway, Oji-Cree and Cree interpreters. A working group of First Nation court interpreters was formed in 2014-15 to provide input into developing support materials, and a second workshop to support the professional development of First Nation court interpreters is planned for fall 2015.

In 2014-15, the ministry renewed its agreement with KO-KNet, a First Nations owned and not-for-profit service offering network, bandwidth optimization, installation, training, scheduling, and on-the-ground support for video conferencing. This formalized agreement allows the ministry to increase the use of video conferencing in the far north thus improving access to justice.

Based on the recommendations made by the Ontario Court of Justice Ministry of the Attorney General Joint Fly-In Court Working Group, draft court security plans were developed for a number of fly-in court communities. A process was developed to standardize payments to First Nations communities for the use of their facilities. Furthermore, the division is actively pursuing discussions with Infrastructure Ontario in an effort to secure lease agreements in these communities.

The northern regions continue to take full advantage of technology using video, Adobe Connect, and e-learning modules to enhance their ability to deliver training and implement divisional initiatives in an efficient and cost-effective manner as part of the regions' commitment to support a trained and professional workforce. Change management and customer service training sessions were provided to all staff in 2014 to increase awareness and improve skills in those areas.

Toronto Region

The Toronto Region serves the City of Toronto. With a population of over 2.6 million, the region has the highest population density in all Court Services Division regions. It is ethnically diverse with one in four immigrants to Canada settling in Toronto.

The Toronto Region includes many high-volume courts and key justice system participants, including the Court of Appeal for Ontario; the Offices of the Chief Justices for the Court of Appeal, the Superior Court of Justice and the Ontario Court of Justice;

the Provincial Legislature; the offices of the Law Society of Upper Canada; and many of the country's largest law firms. The region also houses Canada's first integrated domestic violence court, and Ontario's first guns and gangs courtrooms along with a number of speciality courts.

Improvements to existing courthouses continued throughout 2013-14, including a multi-year HVAC project at Old City Hall. The project, which is led by the City of Toronto and focuses on the replacement and upgrading of the heating, air conditioning and ventilation, is expected to be completed in 2015.

Renovations to the court office at 393 University Avenue commenced in May 2014 to install glass at court counters, and are expected to be completed in the near future.

In December 2014, a meeting room at College Park was transformed into a functional courtroom that hears out-of-custody matters only. This increased the number of courtrooms at this location to 11.

In January 2015, the Superior Court of Justice at 361 University Avenue embarked on a facility project that will create eight new judicial chambers. Within the same project scope, courtroom 3-2 will be modernized with technology improvements, a new dais and proper counsel tables to allow for a fully functional, judge alone criminal courtroom. The project is expected to be completed by March 2016.

In March 2015, a new courtroom hearing both family and small claims court matters at 47 Sheppard Avenue was completed. The courtroom includes video technology to support remote testimony/participation as well as electronic evidence display equipment. To ensure ministry compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the courtroom, judicial dais, retiring room and public washroom are all designed for accessibility.

In the May 2014 budget, the government announced a new, modern and accessible courthouse for Toronto. The new courthouse will bring together many of Toronto's courts operating across the city. While precise timelines on the completion of the new courthouse are not known, other new courthouses have taken up to seven years to build.

The Toronto Region continues to support the ministry's Justice on Target strategy. Local leadership team meetings were held at all Ontario Court of Justice locations throughout the year to increase communication between justice participants and discuss new initiatives to better support the administration of justice. To streamline the

delivery of court documents to justice participants, the distribution of the electronic pre-sentence reports (EPSRs) commenced in September 2014. All EPSRs are now securely distributed to defence counsel by staff through email.

Effective November 10, 2014, civil practice court was launched by the Superior Court of Justice at 393 University Avenue to act as the entry point to case management in appropriate cases. Three civil practice courts run simultaneously at 9:30 am on Monday, Tuesday and Friday, and the initiative has resulted in praise from the civil bar for its success in reducing backlogs and managing cases more effectively.

In March 2015, the small claims court at 47 Sheppard Avenue East implemented e-filing for default judgments. Toronto small claims court users can now file default judgments for liquidated claims online 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Deputy Attorney General Patrick Monahan hosted two employee engagement events in Toronto, as part of the Town Hall series that took place across the province from March to June 2013. During this meeting, staff of all levels across the ministry had the opportunity to collaborate with management and share ideas to help promote employee engagement and share best practices. Feedback from staff was positive, with many staff members expressing their wish for more frequent Town Hall sessions.

In December 2014, the regional search warrant tracking system (SWTS) pilot was implemented in Toronto to improve the recording and tracking of search warrants and related applications in the Ontario Court of Justice. The SWTS provides a more efficient search warrant tracking process and enhances public access to court documents.

Throughout 2014, Old City Hall added new digital evidence displays to courtrooms 122A, 123, M2 and 126, which includes monitors installed on the dais, crown and defence tables and witness boxes, and in public galleries; a document camera; Blu-Ray DVD player; VCR; and a touch panel screen on the courtroom clerk and registrars' desk. The digital evidence display is capable of presenting content to the judiciary, counsel, witness and gallery simultaneously.

West Region

The West Region has an estimated population of 2,259,725. Geographically, the region spans approximately 33,000 square kilometres and contains major border crossings between Canada and the United States in Sarnia and Windsor.

From 2001 to 2011, the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and Wellington County have experienced some of the highest growth rates in the West Region.

The region is served by 15 base courts in 12 communities providing full justice support services for criminal, civil, family and small claims court cases. In addition, five satellite courts are located in the region.

The Elgin County Courthouse has been operational for one year and contains eight courtrooms and three motions/settlement conference rooms. On May 29, 2014, an official Opening of the Courts was held at the Elgin County Courthouse. The courthouse won the National Gold Award for Innovation and Excellence from the Canadian Council for Public and Private Partnerships.

On July 28, 2014, the South West Detention Centre opened in Windsor. Court Services Division management, along with local justice participants from Windsor and Chatham-Kent, worked extensively with management from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of court operations related to transportation and appearances of in-custody individuals.

The Ontario Court of Justice schedules a court sitting in the First Nation Community of Walpole Island First Nation. The sitting deals with criminal court matters focusing on resolution, diversion and direct accountability, and has been expanded in 2014 to hear child protection matters.

Supported by private donations, phase three of a historical gallery depicting the justice system in Windsor and Essex County was completed at the 200 Chatham St., Courthouse. The public can view this impressive gallery during business hours and supports legal educational programs of local students.

The region has a strong focus on modernizing its services and has implemented a number of initiatives, including the use of e-Orders in the Ontario Court of Justice, electronic dockets online, digital recording device docket extraction, moving to paperless scheduling processes, participating on local bail committees and implementing small claims court online.

In January 2015, a very successful three week family court trial blitz was scheduled in London to deal with 162 matters on the trial list. At the conclusion of the blitz, only 13 matters remained before the court.

In November 2014, court staff in Windsor began a multi-year project with a research team from Western University who are conducting a comparative study between Ontario and Quebec family law litigants regarding their experiences with various family justice services.

On January 5, 2015, a dispute resolution officer (DRO) pilot was commenced in the London family court. DROs are lawyers whose primary role is to hear all first case conferences for motions under Rule 15 of the Family Law Rules. It is anticipated that this pilot will provide a more efficient processing of matters through the family court system in London. Matters heard by a DRO are currently scheduled every Monday.

The region successfully repurposed refreshed hardware components to enhance remote and/or vulnerable witness testimony and evidence presentation in some locations.

Ongoing French language training and development has continued for beginner, intermediate and advanced levels through lunch hour sessions in the West Regional Office in partnership with the ministry's Office of the Coordinator of French Language Services (OCFLS).

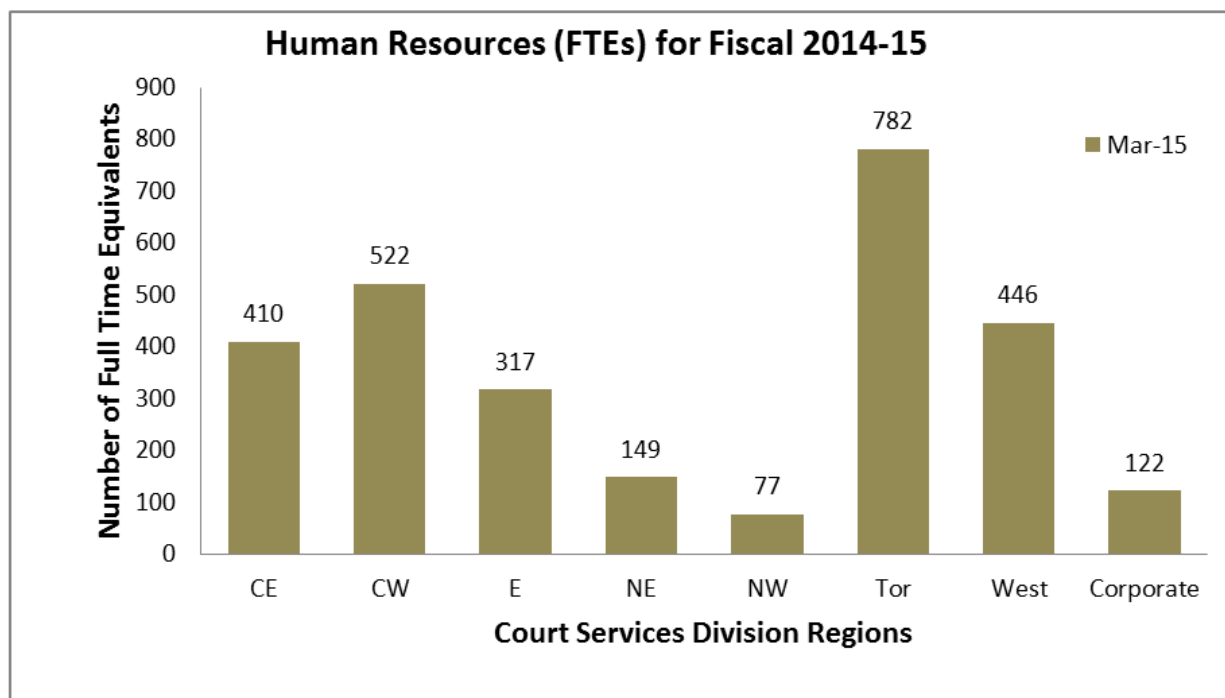
The West Region has one of the highest eligibility rates for potential retirements within Court Services Division. With the pending turnover of our highly skilled, diverse, and knowledgeable workforce, the management team is focused on succession planning to attract and retain new and highly qualified employees while engaging our existing staff and investing in their ongoing learning and development.

In support of our commitment to develop staff skills, onboarding and orientation sessions are held for new staff, while all staff participate in training related to professionalism and respect in the workplace, accessibility training, customer service and change management training. Opportunities and events for staff to engage with senior leaders were provided through forums such as the deputy regional roundtable events, local strategic plan launch events, and courtside chats.

In support of staff career progression, managers were involved in formalized coaching and mentoring initiatives, including the Mentorship for Career and Inclusion Program. Darcy Lampkin from the West Region participated in four deputy regional roundtable events with the deputy attorney general across the province, delivering a staff presentation on "Resumes that Rock".

Chapter 4: Report on Resources

Human Resources by Region



Notes:

1. Data Source: FTE Tracker Tool - Human Resources Strategic Business Unit
2. FTE (Full Time Equivalent) numbers are a “point in time” count of active employees as of the last business day in March each year.
3. FTE numbers convert all part-time employees to an equivalent full-time number. For example, a regular part-time employee working 21.75 hours per week is counted as 0.6 FTE, while a full-time employee is counted as one FTE.
4. Human resources do not include judiciary or judicial support staff.

2014-15 Revenue by Region

2014-15 Revenue by Region

	Central East	Central West	East	Northeast	Northwest	Toronto	West
Fees	10,267,519	17,919,949	6,508,918	2,487,099	881,235	24,940,380	9,420,8
Sales	71,834	85,102	27,670	24,914	7,143	69,644	76,755
Fines	10,758,583	11,771,890	6,279,853	1,704,679	1,256,606	4,560,617	10,336
Reimbursements*	3,518,008	3,849,355	2,053,484	557,422	410,905	1,491,301	3,380,0
Miscellaneous	227,434	396,941	144,178	55,091	19,520	552,449	208,67
Government of Canada	732,941	1,279,206	464,636	177,540	62,906	1,780,356	672,50
Total	25,576,319	35,302,443	15,478,739	5,006,745	2,638,315	33,394,747	24,095



* Reimbursements from municipalities for services related to POA

Court Services Division – Expenditures 2014-15

Court Services Division – Expenditures 2014-15

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE	
Salaries and Wages	\$158,081,718
Employee Benefits	\$26,713,520
Transportation and Communication	\$8,881,024
Services	\$60,791,073

Supplies and Equipment	\$6,538,180
Recoveries	\$0
TOTAL	\$261,005,515
JUDICIAL SERVICES	
Salaries and Wages	\$136,702,041
Employee Benefits	\$10,092,180
Transportation and Communication	\$2,874,365
Services	\$14,297,761
Supplies and Equipment	\$670,964
Transfer Payments	\$231,951
TOTAL	\$164,869,262
BAD DEBT EXPENSE	\$9,193,402
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$435,068,179
OPERATING ALLOCATION	\$433,854,700
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	\$42,361,505
CAPITAL ALLOCATION	\$42,430,100

