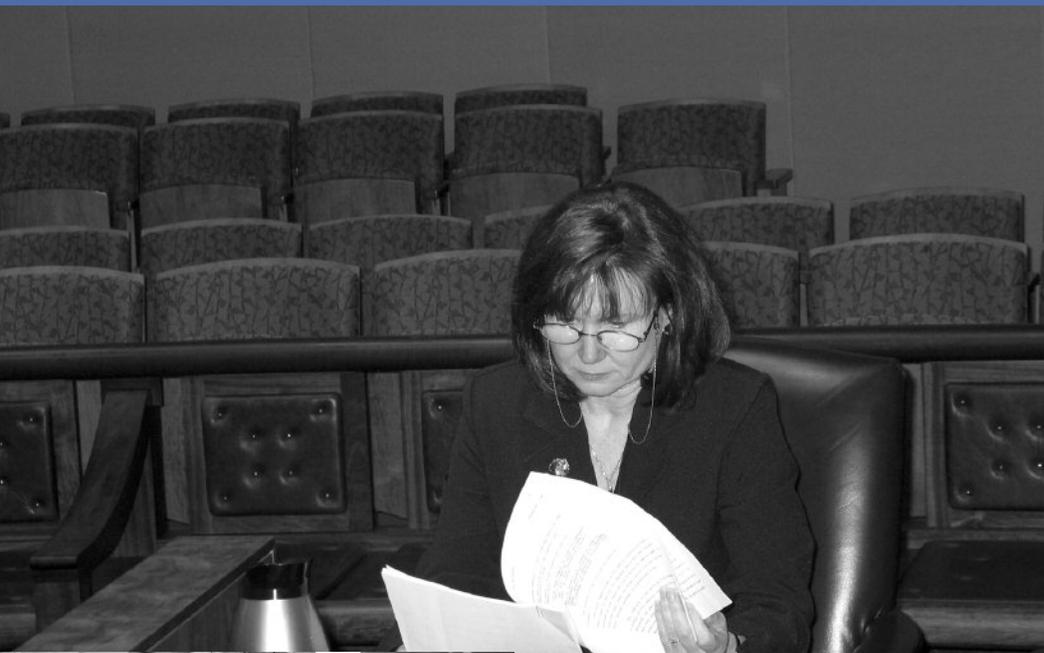


# NEW JERSEY COURTS Annual Report

Court Years 2004 - 2005



*Making a Difference*



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## THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

Philip S. Carchman, J.A.D.  
Acting Administrative  
Director of the Courts

Theodore J. Fetter  
Deputy Administrative Director

David P. Anderson  
Director, Office of Professional and  
Governmental Services

Winifred M. Comfort  
Director, Office of Communications

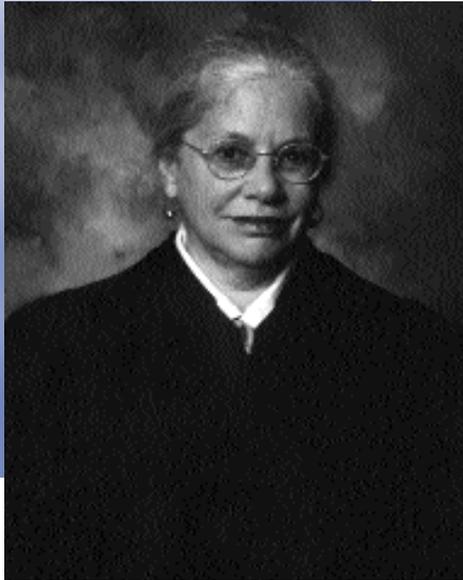
Christina P. Higgins  
Director, Office of Management and  
Administrative Services

John P. McCarthy Jr., Esq.  
Director, Trial Court Services

James R. Rebo  
Chief Information Officer



## LETTER FROM CHIEF JUSTICE DEBORAH T. PORITZ



When I joined the Judiciary in 1996, state funding for the court system was phasing in and a daunting task lay ahead. Organizing 15 vicinages and all of our staff members into a single organization seemed overwhelming at times, but now we can look back and see what we have accomplished. At the same time, we are looking forward, because now that unification has been completed we can move ahead with innovations that will improve the quality of justice for the people of New Jersey in ways that would be impossible if we were still divided.

One example is our statewide effort to tackle backlog, an effort that has made a significant difference for litigants who await the resolution of their disputes. One of the things I am most proud of is the dramatic reduction in backlog for cases involving children and families. Keeping these cases current is one way that we can make a difference for the thousands of families in New Jersey whose lives are deeply affected by the work we do.

Statewide drug courts are another way that the Judiciary has made a difference, not only for the

## LETTER FROM ACTING ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR PHILIP S. CARCHMAN, J.A.D.



The New Jersey Judiciary has undergone significant changes in the past 10 years and, looking back, it has been an exciting transformation. Our 21 counties now act in concert to provide consistent service to all those who come before the courts. They are the beneficiaries of equalized funding and staffing, consistent case management procedures, and integrated technology systems.

Change is never easy, but it can make us stronger. This is especially true when we are able to accomplish needed changes without disrupting our cherished traditions, and without abandoning our priorities. Continuity eases the process of transformation and ensures that the best of the past carries forward.

Unification has meant significant changes in the way we do business. These changes have evolved gradually, produced through the collaborative efforts of judges and staff in every vicinage. The result has been more consistency, reduced backlog, increased innovation and a higher standard of service. Through it all, we have kept our traditions, our pride in our work, and our appreciation for those who have laid the groundwork of change.

I am happy to be included among the Judiciary's many changes. Since I became acting administrative director in

non-violent drug offenders who complete the program, but for their families and communities as well. Now that the Legislature has provided us with the funding to implement drug courts statewide, we are making equal justice a reality for drug offenders regardless of where they live in our state.

We also have implemented the first round of necessary upgrades to our information technology infrastructure, improving our services to thousands of court users who interact with us electronically. More consistent communication, more flexible databases, and more reliable hardware provide better opportunities for litigants to file documents, for systems users to extract data, for attorneys to prepare their cases, and for the public to access information.

We continuously seek new ways to improve the quality of justice we deliver to New Jersey's citizens. Our annual report outlines both the accomplishments that make us the most proud and the areas where we hope to make a difference in the coming months.

## Retirement of Administrative Director Richard J. Williams, J.A.D.



Judge Richard J. Williams, administrative director of the courts, retired on August 31, 2004, after 23 years with the Judiciary. A graduate of Princeton University and of the University of Virginia Law School, Judge Williams was serving as the Atlantic County Prosecutor when Gov.

Brendan T. Byrne appointed him to the bench in 1981. He served as the assignment judge overseeing the Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage from 1985 until 1999, when Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz named him administrative director of the courts. Judge Williams oversaw much of the Judiciary's efforts to unify its management, budget, human resource and information technology into a single statewide system. He also engineered the Judiciary's historic reduction in backlogged cases, helped implement the best practices standards that guide court management in almost every division of the courts, and supported the development of the Judiciary's award-winning Web site.

## Appointment of Acting Administrative Director Philip S. Carchman, J.A.D.



Judge Philip S. Carchman became acting administrative director of the courts on September 1, 2004. Judge Carchman has experience at every level of New Jersey's courts, including municipal court as well as a tempo-

rary assignment to the Supreme Court. After receiving both a bachelor's and a law degree at the University of Pennsylvania, Judge Carchman served as a deputy attorney general and then in private practice for 15 years. He was named the Mercer County prosecutor in 1981, where he served until his appointment to Superior Court in 1986 by Governor Thomas H. Kean. Judge Carchman held leadership positions in the Family, Civil, and General Equity Divisions of Superior Court in the Mercer Vicinage before being named assignment judge in 1995. He was elevated to the Appellate Division by Chief Justice Poritz in 1997. As a judge, he has authored more than 100 published opinions.

September 2004, I have had the opportunity to travel around the state and meet most of our staff members who have contributed to our transformation into a statewide Judiciary. As I had known all along, our Judiciary employs an extraordinarily dedicated and talented work force. Every day I work with them, my appreciation for their contributions grows.

Each staff member makes a unique contribution to the quality of life in New Jersey. Whether processing clerical work, counseling probationers, or managing a courtroom, Judiciary personnel have devoted themselves to fairness, to integrity, and to service, all in the interest of ensuring that justice is achieved. That devotion makes a difference for all of those who come before the courts, whether they are litigants, attorneys, or other members of the public. Indeed, Judiciary staff is making a difference in the quality of life for all of New Jersey's citizens. This report salutes and honors Judiciary staff—the people who make a difference.

It is my pleasure to present this annual report of the New Jersey Judiciary. I hope you will take this opportunity to learn more about how the Judiciary is making a difference in people's lives.

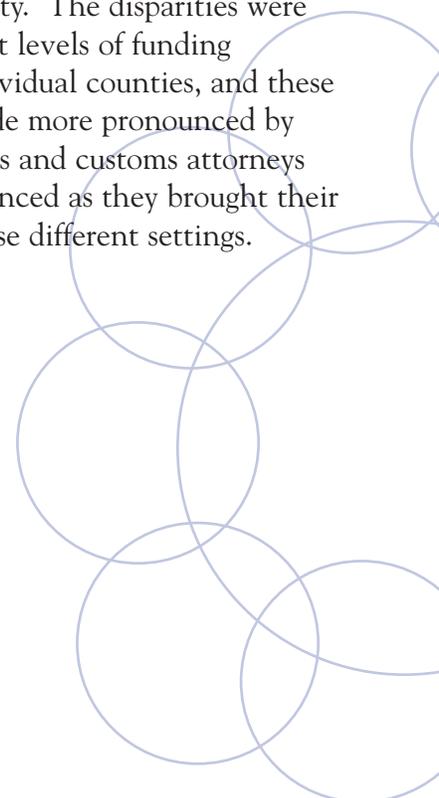
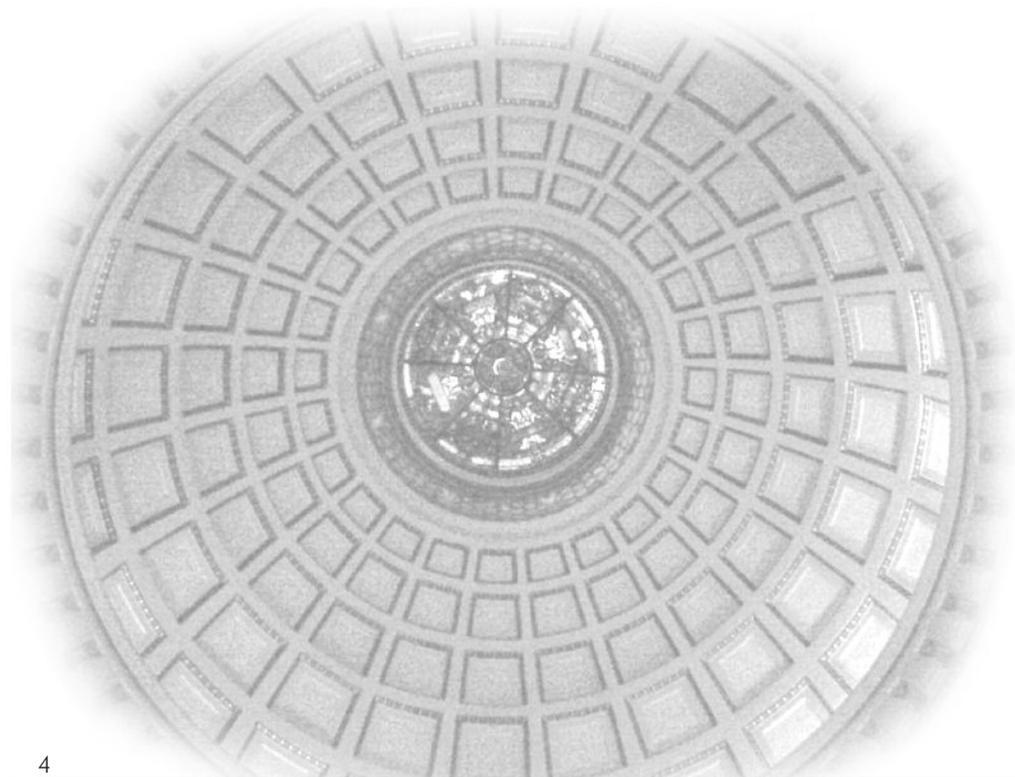
# 10<sup>th</sup>

## ANNIVERSARY OF UNIFICATION

The year 2005 marked the 10th anniversary of the final step in unifying the New Jersey Judiciary into a fully integrated, state-funded court system, a process that began in 1947 with the ratification of New Jersey's Constitution.

The 1947 Constitution eliminated a redundant system of smaller courts around the state and established a simplified court structure free of overlapping jurisdictions that contributed to unnecessary delays and backlogged caseloads. The new Constitution also charged the chief justice and the Supreme Court with oversight in the administration of all state courts and vested authority to adopt rules of court establishing practices and procedures in all of the courts.

In spite of these reforms, the administration of justice in New Jersey's courts varied widely from county to county. The disparities were the result of different levels of funding provided by the individual counties, and these differences were made more pronounced by the different climates and customs attorneys and litigants experienced as they brought their cases to court in these different settings.



With the passage of the Judicial Unification Act in 1994, the New Jersey Legislature accomplished the final step in unifying the courts: a state-funded court system. On January 1, 1995, all Judiciary employees joined the state payroll and all Judiciary functions came under the oversight of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

The Judicial Unification Act made possible the equitable administration of justice across the state. With a statewide budget, the Judiciary was able to allocate its resources more fairly among all of the counties, develop equitable staffing plans for each county, and improve efficiency through centralized management. As an example, in 1995 the Judiciary's 9,000 employees were categorized into more than 700 job titles. By 2001, the same number of employees had been classified into 70 job titles, greatly reducing the administrative burden of managing salaries, promotions, and other human resource functions.

State funding did much to unify the judicial system, but the problems caused by the varied systems, procedures and cultures among the different counties required an innovative solution: best practices. The establishment of best practices standards in each practice area, as well as in probation, has helped to unify the culture of the New Jersey Judiciary. Through best practices, judges, staff and the bar in each vicinage engage in an ongoing dialogue about which practices and procedures seem to work best to resolve cases fairly and efficiently. Based on those discussions, guidelines are formulated to help each vicinage conform to the best practices standards and deliver high-quality service consistently throughout the state.

In addition to best practices standards, unification has enabled the New Jersey Judiciary to implement statewide case management strategies that have resulted in significant reductions in backlogged cases across all divisions. Progress in this area is measured not only across divisions but also within each vicinage, giving each vicinage the benefit of learning from other counties which

approaches best improve the timeliness of case resolution.

Finally, unification has enabled the Judiciary to develop and maintain statewide technology systems. Those systems manage communication, collect data, and share information between court offices, with other state agencies and with the public.

Statewide technology initiatives include:

- The award-winning Web site, [njcourtsonline.com](http://njcourtsonline.com)
- The statewide Automated Traffic System (ATS) and Automated Complaint System (ACS) used by all of New Jersey's 531 municipal courts
- The NJMCDirect Web site, allowing traffic and parking offenders to pay fines electronically over the Internet and simultaneously update their driving records with the state's Motor Vehicle Commission
- The statewide Comprehensive Automated Bail System, replacing the efforts of 21 county clerks to track bail with a statewide automated system capable of communicating directly with the automated systems in each county jail.
- The statewide Superior Court case tracking systems, including the Family Automated Case Tracking System to track family cases, the Promis/Gavel system to track criminal cases, the Automated Case Management System to track civil cases, the Comprehensive Automated Probation System, and the Automated Child Support Enforcement System. Each database is a statewide system capable of sharing information with other Judiciary systems, other agencies, and, for non-confidential records, the public.

Unification has served the public by ensuring consistent, high quality justice in every courthouse in the state. From municipal courts to the Supreme Court, New Jersey's statewide Judiciary is committed to a single purpose: resolving the disputes of New Jersey citizens quickly, fairly, and professionally.

## Backlog Reduction

### What is Backlog?

Cases that are not resolved within self-imposed time goals are considered to be in backlog. The table below lists the time goals for resolution of each case type:

#### FAMILY DIVISION

Dissolution	
New	12 months
Re-opened	6 months
Non-dissolution	3 months
Domestic Violence	1 month
Child Abuse/Neglect	
Out-of-home	4 months
In-home	6 months
Juvenile Delinquency	3 months
Child Placement Review	12 months to permanency hearings
Juvenile/Family Crisis	1 month
Term. Parental Rights	6 months

#### CRIMINAL DIVISION

Criminal Post-indictment	4 months
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#### CIVIL DIVISION

Civil Track 1	12 months
Civil Track 2	18 months
Civil Track 3	24 months
Civil Track 4	24 months
Special Civil	
Small claims/tenancy	2 months
All other small claims	4 months

#### GENERAL EQUITY DIVISION

Equity	12 months
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The New Jersey Judiciary has implemented aggressive case management strategies that have resulted in dramatic reductions in the backlog of old cases. This trend has remained strong in recent years, with a 9 percent reduction in overall backlog in court year 2004 and 13 percent in court year 2005.

Every court case represents an ongoing dispute, and delaying the resolution of those cases can have negative effects on the parties, on the quality and timeliness of the evidence and testimony, and on the remedies available. The Judiciary measures the time to disposition for every one of the more than one million cases that are filed in Superior Court. Cases are in backlog when not resolved within expected time goals for resolution. For some case types, this time goal can be as short as one month. Other goals are four or six months (see chart). In addition to monitoring backlog figures closely, court staff in every vicinage develop backlog reduction plans geared toward reducing the number of old cases and keeping the calendar current.

From June 2001 through June 2005, the Judiciary reduced backlogged cases from 40,467 to 22,854., a reduction of 44 percent. The Family Division reduced its backlog by 67 percent. That reduction includes a 77 percent drop for backlogged domestic violence cases; a 39 percent backlog decline for cases involving child support, custody and/or visitation (non-dissolution cases); a 93 percent decline for backlogged child abuse/neglect cases; a 71 percent decline for dissolution (divorce) cases; and a 50 percent decline in backlogged juvenile/family crisis cases. In addition, the backlog of child placement review cases has been reduced by 97 percent since 2002, the first year that time goals were established for that case type.

This progress involved every division of the courts. Backlogged special civil cases fell 46 percent since June 2001. Backlogged civil cases dropped by 45 percent during that same time period. General equity backlog fell by 33 percent since June 2001. Criminal backlog fell by 24 percent.

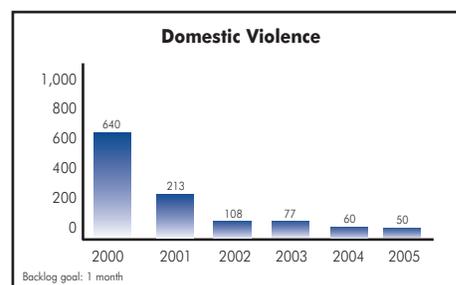
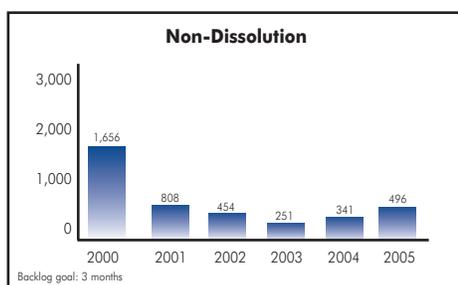
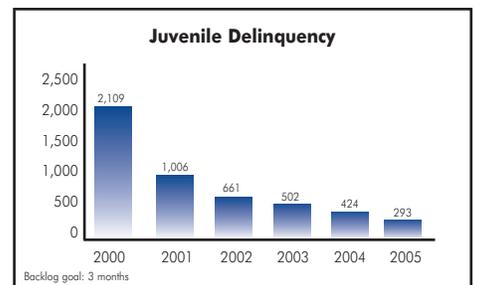
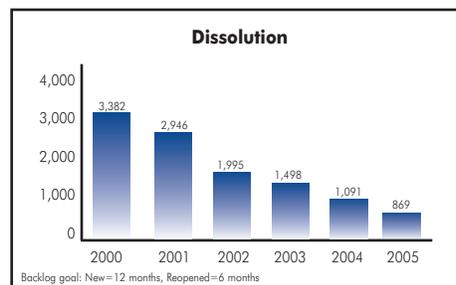
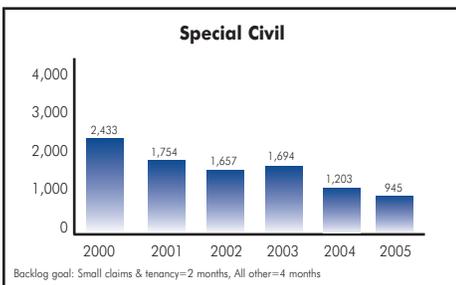
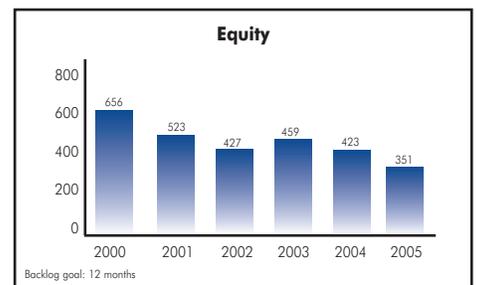
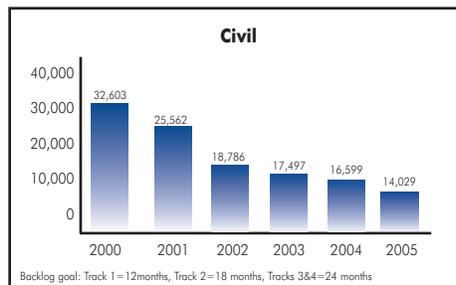
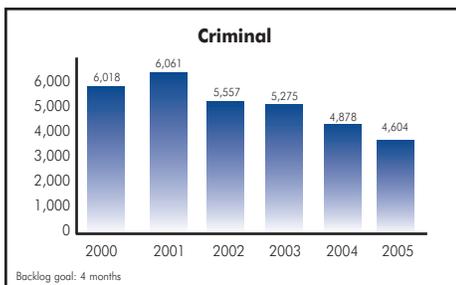
# BACKLOG REDUCTION

The number of cases in backlog for each case type on June 30

Case Type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	percent change from 2001-2005
<b>FAMILY DIVISION</b>						
Dissolution	2,946	1,995	1,498	1,091	869	-71%
Non-dissolution	808	454	251	341	496	-39%
Domestic Violence	213	108	77	60	50	-77%
Child Abuse/Neglect	374	232	139	96	26	-71%
Juvenile Delinquency	1,006	661	502	424	293	-93%
Child Placement Review		394	403	6	10	*
Juvenile/Family Crisis	26	14	7	17	13	-50%
Term. Parental Rights	346	260	215	247	146	-58%
<b>CRIMINAL DIVISION</b>						
Criminal	6,061	5,557	5,275	4,878	4,604	-24%
<b>CIVIL DIVISION</b>						
Civil	25,562	18,786	17,497	16,599	14,029	-45%
Special Civil	1,754	1,657	1,694	1,203	945	-46%
<b>GENERAL EQUITY DIVISION</b>						
General Equity	523	427	459	423	351	-33%

\* Backlog goals first adopted in 2002. Five-year data not available.

## BACKLOG REDUCTION JUNE 2000 - JUNE 2005

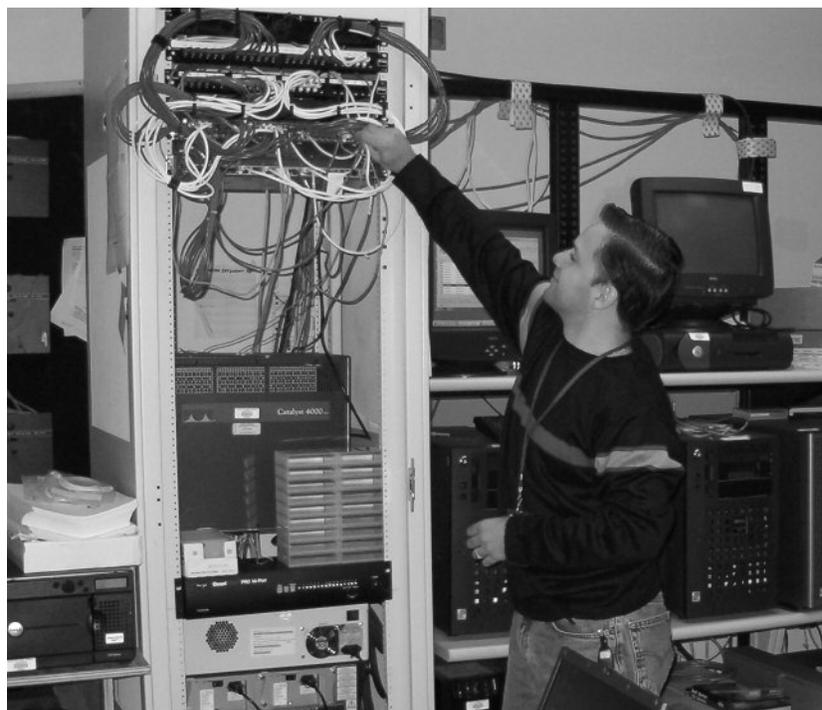


# MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH

## Information Technology

The Judiciary's unified computer systems process approximately four million electronic transactions each day. Recognizing the fiscal resources required to maintain these systems, the New Jersey Legislature recently approved an increased fee paid by traffic and parking offenders to the Judiciary Automated Traffic System (ATS) Fund. The Judiciary has earmarked the money from the fund to upgrade its older computer systems and to offer better service to court-system users.

Updates to ATS are part of a Judiciary-wide Information Technology Strategic Plan. Promulgated in 2001, the Plan establishes the need for system-wide updates. The Legislature approved an initial funding source in 2002, and that money has thus far provided more than \$23.7 million for the Judiciary to implement its highest technical priorities. These upgrades have strengthened the Judiciary's technology infrastructure, improved service to constituents and made court operations more efficient.



## The following upgrades have been made:

- The development and installation of a consistent local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN) and desktop environment in most court offices, allowing for efficient and uninterrupted workflow between offices and court locations on a single standard system. The new funding supports the Judiciary objective to make similar upgrades to municipal court systems as well.

- The implementation of a single e-mail system that enables all Judiciary staff to communicate effectively with each other and with outside users. Increased funding now will enable the Judiciary to install this system on municipal court computers.

- The conversion of many of the Judiciary's case management databases from outmoded systems to new technology that allows far more comprehensive data compilation and research. The Superior Court judgment system already has been converted, and the Civil Division's Automated Case Management System (ACMS), and the Municipal Courts' Automated Complaint System (ACS) and Automated Traffic System (ATS) are now in conversion.

- Statewide e-payment of traffic and parking tickets. With NJMCDirect, parking and traffic offenders can access information about their ticket and use a credit card to settle payable fines. New Jersey is the only state that is able to offer this service statewide.

- Wireless, real-time access for New Jersey State Police to the warrant data available from ACS/ATS. Immediate access from patrol car computers to the Judiciary's system increases law enforcement's ability to enforce warrants promptly, thereby safeguarding the public.

- Inquiry access to the Judiciary's criminal case database at public terminals in each criminal courthouse. The database, known as Promis/Gavel, is used by attorneys, law enforcement personnel, employers and others to access information on criminal cases. The new technology and software provide an easy-to-use Web-like interface that allows even those unfamiliar with the database to perform searches by entering information in response to on-screen prompts.

- An online "e-writ" system that allows court staff to summon inmates to court electronically through a joint program with New Jersey's Department of Corrections. The system frees court staff from several time-consuming tasks: accessing prisoner information in paper files, typing out writ forms, obtaining judges' signatures, and sending writs through the mail. Instead, court staff can enter an inmate's name or State Bureau Identification number and the entire e-writ is completed, printed and sent to Corrections automatically, with less work and fewer chances for error.

### Current projects include:

- Implementation of electronic filing and document management that will in the future make possible a "paperless court." E-filing involves both electronic document transmission and electronic imaging, which preserves the documents in electronic case files that can be viewed by all involved parties online at any time. Currently, e-filing is operational statewide for appellate cases and special civil part cases.

- Additional form automation, which allows court staff and other users to complete documentation online. Once certain case information is entered into the relevant system, form automation reduces clerical errors and redundancy by filling in previously entered data on a series of automated forms and by allowing court staff to send completed forms electronically.

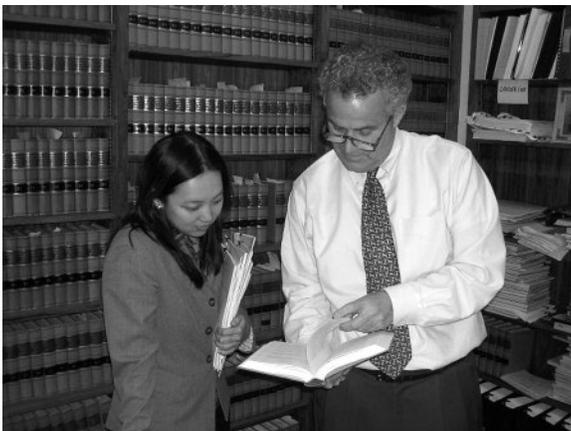
MAKING A  
DIFFERENCE  
WITH

## Better Training and Development for Judges and Staff

### Judicial Development and Education

With more than 450 judges sitting in the Superior and Tax Courts, the New Jersey Judiciary offers extensive training for both new and experienced judges. Among other development programs, an initial two-week orientation program helps judges make the transition to their new careers on the bench by providing a comprehensive overview of the State's judicial system, pairing each judge with an experienced mentor, and offering judges access to a vast library of audio and video resources. Presiding judges, who have been selected to lead their divisions within each vicinage, receive additional training addressing executive leadership skills.

Judicial seminars offer ongoing training in many areas of the law, and each division offers its judges training retreats that allow them to focus on topics specific to their work. Judges also attend the annual Judicial College to take a wide range of courses on current topics of law and judicial administration. Courses offered at the 2004 Judicial College included such diverse topics as co-occurring mental illness and addiction, high profile trials, environmental law, and peremptory challenges and jury voir dire.





## Staff Development

The Organizational Development and Training (OD&T) Unit offers the Judiciary's nearly 9,000 staff members a range of training opportunities designed to help them work more productively, manage more efficiently, and achieve more personally. Each new staff member is introduced to the Judiciary with a five-day orientation program where they learn about the components and operation of the Judiciary, assimilate themselves to the culture of the organization, and gain an appreciation for their own important role in serving New Jersey's citizens. Furthermore, each staff member who assumes a managerial role receives executive leadership development training similar to that given new presiding judges. The training develops strong leadership in all areas of the Judiciary.

OD&T also publishes an on-line catalog of training courses for Judiciary personnel. The wide range of offerings includes training in basic and advanced computing, leadership, workplace diversity and personal enrichment. In-house specialists provide almost all of the training and Judiciary personnel take these courses free.

The John Neufeld Staff College provides still another opportunity for court executives and managerial staff to gain expertise by attending workshops designed to help them improve their leadership skills and motivate their staff. This statewide conference is offered annually and makes use of both internal staff and external consultants to lead workshops and plenary sessions. Topics of the 2004 Staff College ranged from computer training to team-building to case management strategies.

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH

## More Access

### Supreme Court Arguments Viewable Online

Oral arguments before the New Jersey Supreme Court can now be viewed online via videostreaming at njcourtsonline.com. Nine voice-activated cameras and 10 microphones have been installed throughout the Supreme Court courtroom to capture images and sounds that are transmitted electronically through the Web site. The arguments are shown in real time and then archived on the Judiciary's Web site for 30 days. After 30 days they are archived in the Rutgers University digital library. The webcasting and archiving of Supreme Court arguments allows the public to view arguments from anywhere, at any time, on cases of utmost significance to the citizens of New Jersey. Observing arguments before the state's highest court revolutionizes the study of law, bringing it alive in a new way for countless school students, aspiring attorneys, interested citizens, and other members of the public.

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**NJMCDirect**  
**Pay your traffic ticket online.**  
 The New Jersey Supreme Court will hear oral argument on Wed., Feb. 15, 2006 at 10 a.m. in the matter of **Mark Lewis vs. Gwendolyn L. Harris** (Does the New Jersey Constitution require the State to allow same-sex couples to marry?). Read the release.

**Webcast**  
 The next webcasts are scheduled for **January 30 and 31, at 10:00 a.m.**  
 Check the archive section for recent Supreme Court Webcasts.  
 View webcasts older than 30 days at the Rutgers Newark Law School Library.

**HERE'S THE LATEST**

- 01.27.06 Job Opportunities
- 01.27.06 Appellate Court Opinions
- 01.26.06 Notice to the Bar -- Appointment of Clerk of the Appellate Division
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- 01.26.06 Notice to the Bar -- Reassignment of HRT Mass Tort to Middlesex
- 01.26.06 Press Release -- Superior and Tax Court Judges to Preside over Mock Trials
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- 01.23.06 Supreme Court Tentative Agenda for 1/30 and 1/31
- 01.23.06 Notice to the Bar -- Amendment to Rule 1:20B-2

**I WANT TO FIND...**

**LOCAL COURTS:** Atlantic/CapeMay, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem, Essex, Hunterdon/Somerset/Warren, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Passaic, Sussex/Morris, Union Driving Directions to Local Courts.

## Interpreting Services

### Videoconferencing

More than 60 courtrooms in New Jersey now have videoconferencing equipment that enables parties in remote locations to participate in court events. The equipment improves courthouse safety by reducing the need to bring prisoners to court for criminal proceedings. Videoconferencing also saves significant resources by allowing prisoners, witnesses, caseworkers and other parties to communicate in real time with the court without the expense and inconvenience of traveling to the courtroom. A new program in the Family Division enables caseworkers in the Division of Youth and Family Services to use videoconferencing to communicate with the judge in children-in-court cases without traveling to court and waiting for their hearing to be called. This service allows caseworkers to devote more time to the children in their caseload while enabling them to perform their necessary functions in court. That same technology enables family courts in 10 New Jersey vicinages to conduct arraignments and hearings with juveniles held in participating detention centers, speeding the resolution of juvenile cases and minimizing detention time for juveniles awaiting arraignment.

In addition to establishing videoconferencing links with other agencies, the Judiciary has established a video bridge that allows all of the vicinages to be connected to the Administrative Office of the Courts and to each other. The technology makes possible real-time statewide discussion and collaboration and the immediate dissemination of information in the event of a high-priority policy change or an imminent threat to public safety.



In the past year the Judiciary used a combination of staff interpreters, free-lance interpreters, and telephone interpreters to provide real-time interpreting in more than 80 languages, including American Sign Language. Interpreters assisted with more than 80,000 events, including trials, hearings, arraignments, conferences, and support services such as intake interviews and probation supervision contacts.

New Jersey has led the way in offering high quality interpreting services for litigants and witnesses who cannot communicate with the courts in spoken English. In court year 2004, the Judiciary adopted statewide standards for providing interpreting services. The standards, developed after extensive research, already have become a model for other states and for other nations seeking to emulate New Jersey's success in providing high quality interpreting services. The standards provide guidelines determining those entitled to interpreting services, which types of services are appropriate at a particular court event, and the qualifications required of those who provide interpreting services. Many of the guidelines were already in place, such as the requirement that court interpreters take a Judiciary-approved qualifying exam to ascertain their proficiency in simultaneous interpreting. The standards also include guidelines relevant to the services provided by the Judiciary for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

In court year 2005 the Judiciary began producing official bilingual English-Spanish versions of all vital forms and documents issued by the Administrative Office of the Courts and used routinely by the public. English-Polish and English-Portuguese versions of certain vital forms are now in development. The bilingual forms will be available in each courthouse as well as on the Judiciary Web site.

# THE COURTS

## SUPREME COURT

The seven members of the New Jersey Supreme Court are appointed by the governor to serve an initial seven-year term. After seven years, they may be reappointed to serve until the mandatory retirement age of 70. Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz has served on the Court since 1996. Justice Virginia A. Long has served since 1999, Justices Jaynee LaVecchia and James R. Zazzali have served since 2000, Justice Barry T. Albin has served since 2002 and Justice John E. Wallace has served since 2003. Justice Roberto Rivera-Soto joined the court on Sept. 1, 2004.



New Jersey Supreme Court

*Top row, from left to right:*  
Justice John E. Wallace, Jr.; Justice James R. Zazzali; Justice Barry T. Albin; Justice Roberto A. Rivera-Soto

*Front row, from left to right:*  
Justice Virginia Long; Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz; Justice Jaynee LaVecchia.

### Retirement of Justice Peter G. Verniero

Justice Peter G. Verniero retired on Aug. 30, 2004. A graduate of Drew University and Duke University School of Law, Justice Verniero served as a law clerk to New Jersey Supreme Court Justice Robert L. Clifford before entering private practice. He served as chief counsel and then chief of staff to Gov. Christine Todd Whitman, who later appointed him attorney general in 1996. She appointed him to the Supreme Court in 1999. Justice Verniero authored more than 100 opinions while on the Court, including 58 for the majority. His work has impacted New Jersey law in many areas, including criminal, employment, insurance, and business law.

### Appointment of Justice Roberto Rivera-Soto

Justice Roberto Rivera-Soto was appointed by Gov. James M. McGreevey on April 20, 2004 and confirmed by the Senate on June 10, 2004. He was sworn in as an associate justice on Sept. 1, 2004. Born in New York City, Justice Rivera-Soto grew up in Puerto Rico. He graduated from Haverford College and earned a law degree from Cornell University School of Law. He worked as an assistant U.S. attorney before entering private practice. Justice Rivera-Soto is the first Hispanic justice to be named to the Court. He is the 33rd associate justice on the New Jersey Supreme Court since the adoption of the 1947 Constitution.

## Annual Review

The New Jersey Supreme Court is the state's highest court. In reviewing cases from the lower courts, the Supreme Court interprets the state and federal Constitutions, New Jersey statutes, administrative regulations of various state agencies, and the body of common law. The Court automatically considers all capital cases and cases in which the judges of the Appellate Division have disagreed on one or more issues. Most of the cases the court hears are accepted through the petition for certification process, which means that the Court has the discretion to decide whether to take the case. Generally, the Court grants certification in cases that present significant public questions or issues that have been the subject of separate conflicting opinions in the Appellate Division.

During the court year ending August 31, 2004, the Court received 1,408 petitions for certification, 38 notices of appeal and 6 appeals by motion. The Court disposed of 1,453 petitions for certification. Of those, 113 were granted. In addition, the Court heard argument in 109 appeals and decided 117 appeals. It also disposed of 300 disciplinary matters. During the court year ending August 31, 2005, the Court received 1,383 petitions for certification and 45 notices of appeal. The Court disposed of 1,398 petitions for certification, granting certification in 137 cases. The Court heard arguments in 122 appeals and decided 115 appeals. It disposed of 236 disciplinary matters.

The Supreme Court maintains authority over the state's judicial and attorney ethics systems, including the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct, the Office of Attorney Ethics, the Disciplinary Review Board, and the Disciplinary Oversight Committee. The Court also oversees committees charged with a wide variety of functions, such as considering proposed changes to the New Jersey Rules of Court and the practice of law, advising judges and staff on outside activities, and examining the treatment of women and minorities in the courts. In court year 2004 the practice committees completed their biennial cycle for proposing changes to the Rules of Court. The Court reviewed proposed rule changes in all areas of court operations and,

prior to acting on those recommendations, held public hearings and considered comments of the bar and other interested parties.

In addition to its standing committees, the Supreme Court convened special committees to consider specific topics affecting the legal profession and the courts. Recently the Court released the report of the Special Committee on Recordation of Custodial Interrogations, chaired by retired Appellate Division Judge Richard J. Williams, as well as the report of the Special Committee on Peremptory Challenges and Jury Voir Dire, chaired by Appellate Division Judge Joseph F. Lisa. The Court has solicited comments from the Bar and public before acting on the committee recommendations.

The Committee on the Skills and Methods Course, chaired by Superior Court Judge Jack M. Sabatino, has been charged with the responsibility of re-evaluating the structure and content of this course, which must be taken by all new attorneys. The committee will make its recommendations to the Court in the coming months.

### Courtroom Renovations Improve Access

In 2004 the Supreme Court courtroom, located in Trenton, underwent significant renovations. Oral arguments are open to the public, and the courtroom provides seating for attorneys, litigants, and members of the public when the Court is in session. The renovations improve the safety of, and access for, those who come before the Court. In addition, the renovation process provided the opportunity to install the cameras, microphones, and other equipment necessary to broadcast oral arguments on the Judiciary Web site.

# THE COURTS

## APPELLATE COURT

### Retirement of Sylvia Pressler, Presiding Judge for Administration of the Appellate Division



Judge Sylvia Pressler, who oversaw the management of the Appellate Division since 1997, retired on May 31, 2004. A graduate of Boston University and Rutgers University School of Law, Judge Pressler was appointed to the bench in Bergen County in 1973 by Gov. Brendan T. Byrne. After a temporary assignment to the Appellate Division in 1976, she joined the appellate bench permanently in 1977. She became the first woman to preside over a part in 1984 and the first woman to serve as presiding judge for administration of the Appellate Division in 1997. During the course of her appellate career, Judge Pressler wrote more than 3,500 opinions, with 463 of them published. Since 1969, Judge Pressler has annotated the New Jersey Rules of Court for Gann Law Books—an important reference for legal practitioners in New Jersey.

### Appointment of Judge Edwin H. Stern



Judge Edwin H. Stern was named presiding judge for administration effective June 1, 2004. Judge Stern holds a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and a law degree from Columbia University School of Law. As an attorney, Judge Stern worked in private practice before serving in the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office. He then moved to the Administrative Office of the Courts, where he served as director of criminal practice. He then became a deputy attorney general in the Department of Law and Public Safety before rejoining the Judiciary as assistant director for legal services. In 1981, he was appointed to the bench by Gov. Brendan T. Byrne. Judge Stern joined the Appellate Division temporarily in 1985 and permanently in 1986. In addition to authoring more than 300 published opinions, he has contributed significantly to the Judiciary by helping to train other judges and by serving on a number of Supreme Court committees.

# The Civil Appeals

## Settlement

Program uses pre-argument conferencing to help litigants clarify the issues on appeal and often helps them reach settlement more quickly than the regular appeals process.

cases. The Civil Appeals Settlement Program uses pre-argument conferencing to help litigants clarify the issues on appeal and often helps them reach settlement more quickly than the regular appeals process. In fact, the average time to resolution for cases in the program is nearly a year less than for regular appeals. The program helped speed resolution for nearly 400 appeals last year. The Sentencing Appeals Program speeds the outcome of sentencing appeals by ruling on papers, without the need to schedule oral arguments. The Appellate Division resolved close to 670 sentencing appeals during the court year.

Cases involving contested custody, termination of parental rights, and child abuse and neglect also are resolved on an accelerated basis. An Appellate Division

judge oversees the progression of these appeals to ensure that they are dealt with promptly, thereby reducing as much as possible the negative effects of delayed decision making on the parties involved. These cases, on average, are resolved within six months.

Overall the Division added 7,051 appeals and resolved 6,576 appeals. There were 6,253 appeals pending as of June 30, 2005.

## Division Update

The Appellate Division of Superior Court is the state's intermediate appellate court. It considers appeals from the trial courts, the Tax Court, and the state's administrative agencies, and interlocutory motions from cases pending in these venues. Appellants are now able to file notices of appeal electronically using a Web-based filing system, which is available around the clock, seven days a week. Appellants who choose to represent themselves in court can download a kit containing the necessary forms and instructions from the Judiciary Web site at [www.njcourtsonline.com](http://www.njcourtsonline.com).

The 35 judges in the Appellate Division serve on one of eight parts, with the senior judge in each part serving as the presiding judge who manages the workflow. Each case is heard by a panel of two or three judges whose decision is delivered in the form of a written opinion. A "published" opinion sets new legal precedent and is recorded in case law for reference in future cases.

Appellants have a number of options that accelerate the appeals process for certain types of

# THE TRIAL COURT COURTS

## FAMILY DIVISION

### Backlog Reduction

The Family Division achieved a 27 percent reduction in backlogged cases during court year 2004 as well as a further 16 percent reduction in backlogged cases during court year 2005. Those reductions directly benefit the families and children who await resolution on matters critical to their personal welfare.

During the past two years, the courts have reduced the number of child abuse/neglect cases in backlog by 81 percent, the number of child placement review cases in backlog by 98 percent, and the number of domestic violence cases in backlog by 35 percent. The number of dissolution cases in backlog has been reduced by 42 percent, the number of termination of parental rights cases in backlog has been reduced by 47 percent and the number of juvenile delinquency cases in backlog has been reduced by 42 percent. As of June 30, 2005, there were 50 domestic violence cases in backlog statewide, 25 abuse/neglect cases in backlog statewide, and 10 child placement review cases in backlog statewide.

### Grant-funded Improvements

The Judiciary received three federal grants, enabling the Division to implement some important enhancements to improve the quality of justice for families in court.

**Management information systems upgrade.** The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has awarded the Administrative Office of the Courts a \$199,950 grant to upgrade the Family Automated Case Tracking System. The money will be used to improve the database and increase the accuracy of the statistical reports that are analyzed by judges and court managers. The reports are used to determine the most effective and efficient ways to resolve children-in-court-cases such as child placement reviews, child abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights, adoption, and kinship legal guardianship.

**Victim waiting rooms.** A \$65,307 grant funded through the federal Victim of Crimes Act enabled the creation of victim waiting rooms in eight counties: Cumberland, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Morris, Ocean, Salem and Union. The waiting rooms offer victims and their supporters a safe place to await their court event away from their assailants.

**Domestic violence initiative.** A \$68,045 grant funded through the federal STOP Violence Against Women Act was used to provide training for all Child Placement Review Board volunteers on issues of domestic violence, particularly as they affect cases where children are removed from their homes. In addition, each vicinage identified its own improvement project: Some chose to provide additional domestic violence training for court staff. Other projects included a transportation and videoconferencing program to help witness appear at necessary court events, training for judges and court staff to help them interview children at risk more effectively, and additional therapeutic services for families with active domestic violence complaints.

### Juvenile Detention Study

Five counties—Atlantic, Camden, Essex, Hudson and Monmouth—have joined with the Juvenile Justice Commission and other state agencies in a national study seeking to develop strategies to reduce juvenile detention populations while maintaining public safety. Funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) is a multi-state project aimed at reducing the number of children unnecessarily or inappropriately held in detention centers, reducing the number of youth who fail to appear in court or who commit new

offenses prior to adjudication, encouraging better reform strategies, and improving conditions in youth detention centers. In New Jersey, local county youth services commissions have collaborated with the court and a grant-funded consultant to analyze data and find detention alternatives. Preliminary results in the five counties show a one-year decline in the average daily population (ADP) from 392 in June 2004 to 343 in June 2005. In addition, the number of new admissions to detention centers in those counties fell by 11 percent, from 500 to 443.

### New Standards for Child Placement Review

New best practices standards for Child Placement Review Boards (CPRB) were developed by the Conference of Family Presiding Judges and approved by the Judicial Council during court year 2004. The standards will help each CPRB conform to statewide standards and eliminate disparities in local practice in accordance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act. Some vicinages will need to create additional boards and recruit additional volunteers to comply with the new standards. In addition, the new standards require each vicinage to conduct post-termination reviews for each child who has not been placed permanently in an adoptive home after the termination of parental rights.



## Backlog Reduction

The Criminal Division continued to reduce the number of cases in backlog, achieving a 13 percent reduction in backlogged post-indictment cases since 2003. A backlog reduction plan, approved by the Judicial Council in October 2002, supported the Division's efforts to ensure a speedy trial. The plan makes several recommendations, including the establishment of annual backlog reduction goals; more involvement from the visitation team to evaluate backlog by vicinage and make recommendations for local backlog reduction efforts; changes in training for team leaders and judges to manage court calendars more effectively; and ideas to lessen the time between indictments and arraignment conferences. The plan continues to guide the backlog reduction efforts of the division.

As of June 30, 2005, there were 4,604 criminal cases in backlog, fewer than half the backlog of 10 years ago. In fact, the Judiciary now has the lowest number of backlogged post-indictment cases in more than 20 years.

## Sentencing Primer

The Conference of Criminal Division Presiding Judges adopted a new manual to provide judges in the Criminal Division with a quick reference tool on sentencing. The primer excerpts the laws contained in Title 2C, the New Jersey Criminal Code, and incorporates the latest changes in case law. The primer is divided into sections on authorized dispositions, crimes with mandated terms of imprisonment, drug offenses, sexual offenses, fines and penalties, aggravating and mitigating factors, and parole eligibility.

## Drug Court

Drug court is a specialized program within the criminal court system that uses a non-adversarial team approach to help nonviolent addicted offenders break the cycle of drugs and crime. In addition to completing substance abuse treatment, participants appear regularly before a Superior Court judge and are required to undergo frequent drug testing, obtain jobs, pay their fines, and support their families. They are intensely supervised by specially trained probation officers and supported by a team of professionals who provide them with an individual treatment plan and close monitoring to ensure compliance with the program. Incarceration remains a possible sanction, thereby discouraging relapsed behavior. After completing the most intensive phases of the program, participants continue under supervision for up to five years. The approach is thus intensive and extensive, offering addicted offenders the best chance to remain drug-free.

First introduced in New Jersey in 1996, drug courts have proven successful in breaking the cycle of drug abuse and crime. Since their introduction, drug courts in New Jersey have helped more than 5,000 people confront their addictions to drugs or alcohol and choose a path toward a more productive life.

Drug courts offer obvious societal benefits, including the cost savings of treatment versus incarceration and the ability of offenders to remain with their families during most of their recovery. In addition, drug courts help address the problem of minority overrepresentation in prison; currently, 60 percent of the drug court population comprises minority groups.

The initial five-vicinage program was expanded to incorporate five additional vicinages in 2002. In June 2004, the Legislature approved funding for drug courts in all fifteen vicinages. New Jersey is the second state in the nation (after Delaware) to have a statewide drug court program.

As of June 30, 2005, there were 2,105 drug court participants.

Incarcerating an adult for one year costs \$35,000. In contrast, residential substance abuse treatment costs about \$14,600, and out-patient treatment costs average \$2,300 per participant.

Four hundred drug court participants have graduated from all phases of the program.

Drug courts in New Jersey have a 70 percent retention rate.

Six percent of drug court graduates have been re-convicted for indictable offenses, compared to the 41 percent re-conviction rate of New Jersey parolees.

Of the more than 88,500 drug tests administered to participants in the last two years, 96 percent have been negative. As of June 30 there have been 54 babies born drug-free to drug court participants.

Fifty-four drug court participants have regained custody of their children after participating in drug court.

## Backlog Reduction

The Civil Division has led the way in developing best practices standards designed to reduce the time to disposition across all case types. By far the largest number of cases is filed in the Special Civil Part, which resolves cases with damages less than \$15,000 for all matters except landlord-tenant and small claims. In court year 2004 the Special Civil Part received 466,274 new filings and resolved 467,247, with 46,665 active pending cases remaining on June 30. Of these, 98 percent were within time goals for resolution. Since 2003, the backlog of special civil cases has dropped by 44 percent.

The division also reduced the number of backlogged civil cases, which involve damages of more than \$15,000, by 20 percent during the last two years. The reduction in backlogged Civil Division cases is due not only to the hard work of judges and staff but also to the 700-plus mediators and 1800-plus arbitrators around the state who participate in the statewide civil mediation and arbitration programs.

## Mass Tort Litigation Program

In October 2003 the Supreme Court established rules governing the designation of certain types of litigation as “mass torts.” Mass torts have many personal injury claims involving a single product. These claims share common issues and the resolution of each case depends on the outcome of the other cases. A single judge manages all of the claims in a mass tort, which streamlines the process and helps ensure equitable outcomes for all of the claims.

Mass tort consolidation may be sought when a large number of cases are filed regarding a similar product, such as asbestos, tobacco, pharmaceuticals, or hazardous chemicals. The Supreme Court seeks comments on any mass tort application from the Bar and, thereafter, determines whether a mass tort designation is appropriate. Currently, nine mass torts in New Jersey are being resolved in Atlantic, Bergen, and Middlesex Counties.

## Customer Service Training

In 2004 the Civil Division received the John Neufeld Court Achievement Award of the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management for its statewide customer service initiative. The initiative addresses the division’s goal of providing excellent customer service to litigants, attorneys, witnesses, and other parties served by the courts. All Civil Division staff members receive extensive and ongoing customer service training and are recognized for giving exceptional service.

## Visitation Team

As part of its civil best practices standardization, the division has created a visitation program that sends a team of judges, court staff and AOC personnel to each vicinage to assess court operations and offer feedback as each vicinage incorporates the new standards into its daily workflow. The teams have completed visits and reviewed operations in all 21 counties. The cross-collaboration between the vicinages has invigorated the Civil Division statewide, increased cooperation and initiated important changes to court operations. Visitation programs now have been established in every practice area, as well as in finance and probation.

## Electronic Filing

The Judiciary offers attorneys the option of filing electronically in the Special Civil Part using the Judiciary's Electronic Filing System (JEFIS). Through JEFIS, complaints, motions and other documents can be sent electronically 24 hours a day, saving resources for the parties as well as the courts. JEFIS also is used to send notices electronically to participating attorneys, further reducing costs and labor. In addition, the Judiciary is expanding JEFIS to allow all documents to be stored electronically and access online by the court and the parties, essentially eliminating paper files. Currently about half of the counties in New Jersey have implemented this paperless system, with the rest scheduled to begin offering this service by the end of 2006.



## GENERAL EQUITY

### Complex Commercial Case Pilot

Chief Justice Poritz in May 2004 announced the implementation of a pilot program for resolving complex commercial cases. Under the new program, administered in Burlington, Hudson, Mercer and Ocean Counties, the parties in complex commercial cases receive notice after the case is filed that they may request to have their case be assigned to the pilot and transferred to a general equity judge for individualized case management. In order to participate in the

program, the parties must waive a jury and must commit to an expedited discovery process and aggressive use of complementary dispute resolution techniques with a goal of resolving the case within 12 months. A single judge oversees each case until it is resolved, and court staff assigned to these matters receive focused training to maximize their ability to resolve these cases timely.

### Law Clerk Training

The General Equity Division has implemented a one-day seminar to assist incoming law

clerks who will be working with general equity judges. Law clerks, generally recent law school graduates, often do not have the specialized information they need to work in the division. The seminar provides specific information and advice to prepare for the specialized work they are assigned. Topics range from a discussion of the nature of general equity cases to instructions on drafting orders, reviewing motions, and performing various roles during court events. The seminar will be given to new general equity law clerks each September.

# THE COURTS

## TAX COURT

Created in 1979, New Jersey's Tax Court resolves disputes between taxpayers and local and state government taxing agencies. In resolving these disputes, the Tax Court reviews the determinations of assessors, county boards of taxation, and state agencies in order to make decisions regarding appropriate rates of taxation. In addition, Tax Court judges may hear cases from Superior Court that involve complex tax issues. The presiding judge of the Tax Court is Judge Joseph C. Small.

The Tax Court's Differentiated Case Management pilot program, introduced in Bergen County in 1996 and in Hudson County in 1999, expanded statewide as of Jan. 1, 2005. Under the program, the Tax Court assigns cases to the appropriate track: complex, standard, small claims, farmland or exemption. Each track has its own timetable, enabling court staff to set appropriate discovery deadlines for each case.

During the court year the Tax Court expanded its Web page at [www.njcourtsonline.com](http://www.njcourtsonline.com) to offer the public more online services. The public can access forms for initiating a case with the Tax Court; the New Jersey Rules of Court applicable to the Tax Court; driving directions to all Tax Court chambers; links to the County Boards of Taxation, when available; and a list of frequently asked questions.

The tax court added 8,105 cases during court year 2004, a 23 percent increase from court year 2003. The court resolved 5,973 cases during the year. Another 7,332 cases were filed during court year 2005, and the Court resolved 6,719 cases. There were 12,282 cases pending resolution on June 30, 2005.



Judge Joseph C. Small  
*Presiding Judge of the Tax Court*

# THE MUNICIPAL COURT COURTS

Municipal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction that primarily resolve municipal ordinance, parking and traffic matters, as well as some petty criminal offenses and regulatory violations. Some of New Jersey's 567 municipalities share court services in order to save administrative costs. The state's 530 municipal courts reduced the total number of backlogged cases by 26 percent during court year 2004 and another four percent during court year 2005. The municipal courts received 6,267,189 new cases in court year 2004 and 6,300,182 new cases in 2005. Those courts resolved 6,312,514 cases and 6,344,734 cases in those years. On June 30, 2005, there were 1,014,322 municipal court cases pending resolution.

## Courting the Future

New Jersey is unique in creating an electronic system to handle parking and traffic tickets automatically, with no direct input from municipal court staff. The first component is the Parking Authority Ticketing System (PATS), which allows parking authority staff to print parking tickets from handheld devices that also communicate wirelessly with the Judiciary's Automated Traffic System (ATS). The Judiciary has distributed more than 200 PATS devices to 21 New Jersey parking authorities, and more than 700,000 parking tickets were issued on them.

The second component of New Jersey's "paperless court" municipal ticket system is the online ticket payment service NJMCDirect. NJMCDirect is the fastest, most convenient way to pay a ticket in New Jersey. Users can access NJMCDirect from the Judiciary Web site and enter the number on their summons to determine whether their fine is payable. If so, they may select the e-payment option, enter their credit card information, and satisfy the fine without making any trips to the mailbox or the municipal court. If the summons does require a court appearance, users can get information on the court date and location from the Web site. Online payment automatically updates records in ATS and in the Motor Vehicle Commission system, keeping driver records current. A graduated convenience fee, assessed of traffic and parking offenders at the time of the online payment, funds the maintenance of the NJMCDirect system.

In court year 2005, more than 700,000 transactions and nearly \$38 million in fines and fees were processed through NJMCDirect. In June 2005, 22 percent of all payable traffic and parking tickets were processed on the system, with no input necessary from municipal court personnel.

# PROBATION SERVICES

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## Adult Supervision

A sentence of probation allows convicted offenders to remain in the community under the supervision of probation officers. Probationers must adhere to the rules and conditions laid out by the judge at sentencing, such as maintaining employment or attending school, remaining drug free, paying appropriate fines and fees and avoiding additional unlawful behavior. Probation officers measure client success in terms of compliance with these outcome-based standards. At year-end, the Probation Division was supervising 62,202 clients. In addition, the division oversees clients whose only obligation to the courts is payment of fines or performance of community service. At year-end the division was monitoring 59,520 of those clients.

The Intensive Supervision Program (ISP) offers an intermediate form of punishment that permits carefully selected offenders the chance to serve the remainder of their prison sentences in the community rather than in prison. Rigorous and highly structured, ISP includes extensive client contact and surveillance, restrictive curfews and frequent drug testing. The application screening process selects only those inmates who have the

potential to succeed without jeopardizing community safety. In addition to standard probation obligations such as employment, participants in ISP must maintain close contact with their probation officer and adhere to strict rules including keeping curfews, logging expenses and daily activities, and performing community service. ISP officers use the latest technological tools to track information on client contact, community service, and other aspects of their caseload. The success of ISP in reducing criminal behavior has been confirmed repeatedly during its 22-year history. A 2005 study of 4,433 program graduates found that after five years in the community, only 8.6 percent had been convicted of a new indictable offense. This figure is a fraction of the 41 percent re-conviction rate reported by the Department of Corrections in a three-year study of its parole population. Since the program's inception in 1983, more than 12,500 nonviolent inmates have been released from state prison into ISP, saving nearly \$400 million in prison costs.



## Comprehensive Enforcement

The Comprehensive Enforcement Program (CEP) collects court-ordered restitution, fines, assessments, surcharges and judgments in Superior Court. The enforcement of court orders maintains the respect of the public for the rule of law and the credibility of the judicial process. Sanctions for non-compliance may include assignment to labor assistance or enforced community service programs. Other sanctions available to CEP include jail time for willful non-compliance, suspension of driving privileges, additional fines, state income tax refund offsets, civil judgments, bench warrants, income withholding, weekly reporting requirements and/or a return of the case to the sentencing court. CEP addresses non-compliance with community service orders as well as failure to pay court-ordered financial obligations involving both adults and juveniles.

CEP also holds hearings for those individuals who fail to return a jury questionnaire or who fail to attend when they have been assigned for jury duty.

In court year 2005, approximately \$25,958,776 of the \$43,098,363 in total probation collections was received after strategies for comprehensive enforcement were implemented. Half of the money collected by probation goes to victims of crime as restitution.

## Juvenile Supervision

Juvenile supervision gives young offenders the opportunity to remain in their own community, with emphasis placed on rehabilitation as well as community protection and compliance with court orders. In addition to adhering to the rules of probation, juveniles also may be required to undergo drug testing, to participate in group or individual counseling, and to attend school or, if legally out of school, to obtain employment. Parents and guardians play a crucial role in rehabilitation and often must participate in counseling with the offender. Juvenile probation officers also coordinate programs

that provide their clients with social and educational opportunities that may not be available in their community. Cognitive skills programs focus on the juveniles' responses to triggers that could result in delinquent behavior, and social and sporting events provide positive leisure activities and rewards for improved performance. On June 30, 2005, there were 15,293 juvenile probationers.

The Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program (JISP), implemented statewide in 1996, provides an intermediate form of community-based correctional supervision that is less costly than

incarceration but more restrictive than traditional probation. As with the adult program, JISP requires strict adherence to many rules regarding curfews, community service, and counseling, among others. In addition, each participant receives an individual case plan designed to improve behavior and minimize any danger to the community. Families of program participants must agree in writing to uphold their part of the individual case plans, and juveniles who do not comply with the plan may receive more restrictive sanctions, including incarceration.

## Child Support

The Office of Child Support Enforcement Services is responsible for the collection of court-ordered child support and spousal support. In court year 2005, collections totaled \$1,014,907,355, a 5.1 percent increase over the previous year. This is the first year in which collections exceeded one billion dollars.

In addition to collecting payments directly from non-custodial parents, the Office of Child Support Enforcement has implemented a number of innovative strategies to obtain for families the support to which they are entitled. In October 2003, the National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) program was implemented. This national effort provides a standardized means of communication between state child support enforcement agencies, employers, and administrators of group health plans to initiate medical coverage for children of non-custodial parents who have access to health benefits through their employer. As of July 2005, there were 36,911 children receiving health coverage through their parents' employers because of this program.

During the past court year, the Office of Child Support began implementing best practices standards, resulting in greater uniformity in service delivery. In addition, the processing of child support cases was strengthened across divisions through the streamlining and standardization of functional responsibilities. Functions were viewed

from the perspective of the customer in an effort to present a more seamless customer interface when dealing with different divisions within the Judiciary, such as Finance, Child Support Enforcement, and the Family Division.

Building on the theme of quality customer service, in November 2004, a pilot customer call center was established to handle all incoming telephone calls for the child support enforcement offices in Somerset, Mercer and Middlesex Counties. Through this call center, all customer calls arising from cases enforced in the three counties are answered promptly and uniformly. Call center staff are able to resolve nearly 75 percent of all customer service issues, and the rest are referred for vicinage review and response within two business days. The call center currently averages 10,000 to 12,000 calls per month.

The Office of Child Support Enforcement relies on the most current technologies to distribute funds promptly to families both in and out of state. Electronic money transfer transactions, including direct deposit, increased by 11.4 percent during the court year, comprising 43.1 percent of all the money distributed by Child Support Enforcement Services. Electronic payments eliminate the printing and postage costs associated with more than 1.8 million checks.

# TRIAL COURT FILINGS, RESOLUTIONS AND BACKLOG BY DIVISION

	Filings			Terminations			Inventory (Active Cases Pending Within Time Goals)			Backlog (Active Cases Pending Over Time Goals)		
	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change
<b>Criminal Division</b>												
Indictable Cases	53,478	53,762	1%	55,171	56,722	3%	9,715	9,148	-6%	4,878	4,604	-6%
Municipal Appeals	1,476	1,487	1%	1,538	1,517	-1%	349	338	-3%	191	176	-8%
Post-Conviction Relief	613	619	1%	432	502	16%	127	158	24%	604	687	14%
<b>General Equity</b>	5,413	5,154	-5%	5,350	5,460	2%	2,130	1,947	-9%	423	351	-17%
<b>Civil Division</b>												
Civil	99,855	99,70	60%	100,332	106,982	7%	81,208	76,965	-5%	16,599	14,029	-15%
Special Civil	499,476	466,274	-7%	500,018	467,247	-7%	44,268	45,720	3%	1,203	945	-21%
Probate	10,566	10,488	-1%	10,435	10,462	0%	1,501	1,451	-3%	148	105	-29%
<b>Family Division</b>												
Dissolution	64,723	64,252	-1%	65,655	64,314	-2%	16,712	16,829	1%	1,091	869	-20%
Delinquency	79,424	72,926	-8%	80,383	73,123	-9%	4,930	4,826	-2%	424	293	-31%
Non-Dissolution	158,756	156,290	-2%	157,801	155,630	-1%	10,171	10,510	3%	341	496	45%
Domestic Violence	60,834	58,924	-3%	60,874	59,006	-3%	1,467	1,425	-3%	60	50	-17%
Abuse/Neglect	4,075	4,021	-1%	3,410	3,935	15%	4,432	4,586	3%	96	26	-73%
Adoption	2,490	2,557	3%	2,419	2,722	13%	649	531	-18%			
Child Placement Review	7,323	5,855	-20%	6,816	7,271	7%	13,176	11,844	-10%	6	10	67%
Juvenile/Family Crisis	1,435	1,088	-24%	1,430	1,111	-22%	45	26	-42%	17	13	-24%
Term of Parental Rights	1,123	1,095	-2%	1,030	1,237	20%	469	434	-7%	247	146	-41%
Criminal/Quasi-Criminal	11,333	11,499	1%	11,545	11,436	-1%	679	738	9%	41	54	32%
Kinship	1,083	1,311	21%	1,050	1,285	22%	201	228	13%			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,063,476</b>	<b>1,017,308</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>1,065,689</b>	<b>1,029,962</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>192,229</b>	<b>187,704</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>26,369</b>	<b>22,854</b>	<b>-13%</b>

# TRIAL COURT FILINGS, RESOLUTIONS AND BACKLOG BY COUNTY

	Filings			Terminations			Inventory (Active Cases Pending Within Time Goals)			Backlog (Active Cases Pending Over Time Goals)		
	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change	July 2003 to June 2004	July 2004 to June 2005	percent change
Atlantic	46,95	46,832	0%	46,886	44,423	-5	8,162	10,581	30	896	86	-3%
Bergen	84,35	74,617	-12%	78,356	81,199	4%2	0,245	14,303	-29%	1,445	1,468	2%
Burlington	50,415	47,268	-6%	51,140	47,541	-7	8,662	8,603	-1%	1,148	1,061	-8%
Camden	79,856	78,821	-1%	80,179	80,034	0%	14,148	13,836	-2%	1,891	1,408	-26%
Cape May	14,076	13,681	-3%	14,178	13,688	-3%	2,170	2,206	2%	193	188	-3%
Cumberland	30,767	28,337	-8	30,55	28,602	-6%	4,282	4,145	-3%	60	619	2%
Essex	153,058	145,465	-5%	155,413	146,65	-6%	27,915	28,419	2	3,164	2,669	-16%
Gloucester	29,735	29,761	0%	29,574	29,722	1%	4,957	5,133	4%	690	582	-16%
Hudson	93,890	90,043	-4%	94,817	91,850	-3%	15,395	14,659	-5%	1,790	1,317	-26%
Hunterdon	6,847	6,900	1%	7,035	6,895	-2%	1,269	1,329	5%	203	128	-37%
Mercer	46,898	45,359	-3%	47,330	44,833	-5%	8,219	8,788	7%	1,240	1,246	0%
Middlesex	78,524	75,692	-4%	80,547	76,871	-5%	17,312	17,139	-1%	3,491	2,839	-19%
Monmouth	69,589	66,495	-4%	70,673	67,843	-4%	12,518	11,990	-4%	3,286	2,838	-14%
Morris	33,396	32,825	-2%	33,951	33,010	-3%	6,103	6,17	41%	1,007	878	-13%
Ocean	53,137	50,104	-6%	52,898	50,497	-58,626	8,626	8,386	-3%	1,111	1,049	-6%
Passaic	68,523	66,268	-3%	69,282	66,121	-5%	10,789	10,992	2%	1,214	1,228	1%
Salem	12,245	11,638	-5%	12,254	11,722	-4%	1,380	1,421	3%	124	134	8%
Somerset	22,429	22,059	-2%	22,115	22,111	0%	4,01	4,058	1%	685	618	-10%
Sussex	12,968	12,574	-3%	12,723	12,913	1%	2,128	1,932	-9%	388	315	-19%
Union	64,981	62,134	-4%	64,635	63,016	-3%	12,525	12,093	-3%	1,606	1,249	-22%
Warren	10,831	10,435	-4%	11,150	10,420	-7%	1,409	1,517	8%	188	152	-19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,063,476</b>	<b>1,017,308</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>1,065,689</b>	<b>1,029,962</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>192,229</b>	<b>187,704</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>26,369</b>	<b>22,854</b>	<b>-13%</b>

# Vicinages

Assignment Judges and Trial Court Administrators  
Court year 2004-2005

## VICINAGE 1

Atlantic County • Cape May County

Assignment Judge Valerie H. Armstrong  
Trial Court Administrator Charles E. McCaffery

## VICINAGE 2

Bergen County

Assignment Judge Sybil R. Moses  
Trial Court Administrator Jon Goodman

## VICINAGE 3

Burlington County

Assignment Judge John A. Sweeney  
Trial Court Administrator Jude Del Preore

## VICINAGE 4

Camden County

Assignment Judge Francis J. Orlando Jr.  
Trial Court Administrator Michael O'Brien

## VICINAGE 5

Essex County

Assignment Judge Patricia K. Costello  
Trial Court Administrator Collins E. Ijoma

## VICINAGE 6

Hudson County

Assignment Judge Maurice J. Gallipoli  
Trial Court Administrator Joseph F. Davis

## VICINAGE 7

Mercer County

Assignment Judge Linda R. Feinberg  
Trial Court Administrator Sue Regan

## VICINAGE 8

Middlesex County

Assignment Judge Robert A. Longhi  
Trial Court Administrator Gregory Edwards



## VICINAGE 9

Monmouth County

Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson  
Trial Court Administrator Marsi Perkins

## VICINAGE 10

Morris County • Sussex County

Assignment Judge B. Theodore Bozonelis  
Trial Court Administrator Michael J. Arnold

## VICINAGE 11

Passaic County

Assignment Judge Robert J. Passero  
Trial Court Administrator Kirk L. Nixon

## VICINAGE 12

Union County

Assignment Judge Walter R. Barisonsek  
Trial Court Administrator Elizabeth Domingo

## VICINAGE 13

Hunterdon County • Somerset County  
Warren County

Assignment Judge Graham T. Ross  
Trial Court Administrator Eugene T. Farkas

## VICINAGE 14

Ocean County

Assignment Judge Eugene D. Serpentelli  
Trial Court Administrator Richard D. Prifold

## VICINAGE 15

Cumberland County • Gloucester County  
Salem County

Assignment Judge Georgia M. Curio  
Trial Court Administrator James R. Castagnoli



## New Jersey Judicial Council

September 2005

**Seated (left to right):** Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson; Assignment Judge Eugene D. Serpentelli; Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz; Acting Administrative Director Philip S. Carchman; Assignment Judge Linda R. Feinberg

**Standing (left to right):** Deputy Administrative Director Theodore J. Fetter; Assignment Judge B. Theodore Bozonelis; Assignment Judge Graham T. Ross; Assignment Judge Walter R. Barisonek; Judge Ellen L. Koblitz (*Chair, Conference of Family Presiding Judges*); Assignment Judge Maurice J. Gallipoli; Assignment Judge Georgia M. Curio; Judge Eugene J. Codey, Jr. (*Chair, Conference of Civil Presiding Judges*); Assignment Judge John A. Sweeney; Judge James D. Clyne (*Chair, Conference of General Equity Presiding Judges*); Assignment Judge Sybil R. Moses; Assignment Judge Robert A. Longhi; Judge Albert J. Garofolo (*Chair, Conference of Criminal Presiding Judges*); Assignment Judge Francis J. Orlando, Jr.; Assignment Judge Valerie H. Armstrong; Assignment Judge Robert J. Passero; Assignment Judge Patricia K. Costello

# Judges and Justices of the New Jersey Judiciary

(as of June 30, 2005)

## Supreme Court

### Deborah T. Poritz, Chief Justice

Barry T. Albin	Roberto Rivera-Soto
Jayne LaVecchia	John E. Wallace
Virginia A. Long	James R. Zazzali

## Superior Court

Allison Accurso	Harry G. Carroll	John B. Dangler	Ronald J. Freeman
Salem Vincent Ahto	Michael R. Casale	William A. Daniel	Richard M. Freid
Roberto Alcazar	Karen M. Cassidy	Wendel E. Daniels	Jose L. Fuentes
Christine Allen-Jackson	Joseph C. Cassini III	Rachel N. Davidson	Harold W. Fullilove
Edwin R. Alley	Thomas W. Cavanagh Jr.	Lawrence P. DeBello	Garry J. Furnari
John A. Almeida	Paul F. Chalet	Bernadette N. DeCastro	Bruce A. Gaeta
Carmen H. Alvarez	Amy Piro Chambers	Miguel A. de la Carrera	Sebastian Gaeta Jr.
Frances Lawrence Antonin	Joseph Charles Jr.	Estela M. De La Cruz	Maurice J. Gallipoli
Ross R. Anzaldi	Lisa F. Chrystal	Charles A. Delehey	Edward V. Gannon
Paul W. Armstrong	Yolanda Ciccone	William R. DeLorenzo Jr.	Albert J. Garofolo
Valerie H. Armstrong	Alfonse J. Cifelli	Ralph L. DeLuccia Jr.	Bryan D. Garruto
Victor Ashrafi	James N. Citta	Paul M. DePascale	Francis W. Gasiorowski
Eugene H. Austin	Frank M. Ciuffani	Harriet E. Derman	Richard J. Geiger
Francine I. Axelrad	Marilyn C. Clark	Hector E. DeSoto	Melvin L. Gelade
Mark A. Baber	Patricia Del Bueno Cleary	Francis P. DeStefano	F. Michael Giles
Max A. Baker	James D. Clyne	Frederick P. DeVesa	William P. Gilroy
Marc M. Baldwin	Donald S. Coburn	Michael K. Diamond	Donald S. Goldman
Peter F. Bariso Jr.	Eugene J. Codey Jr.	Thomas H. Dilts	Jane Grall
Walter R. Barisonek	Mary Eva Colalillo	Louise D. Donaldson	Glenn A. Grant
Ann Reynolds Bartlett	Claude M. Coleman	Michael A. Donio	Vincent J. Grasso
Raymond A. Batten	Edward M. Coleman	Joseph P. Donohue	Ronald B. Graves
Linda G. Baxter	Rudy B. Coleman	Richard J. Donohue	Anthony J. Graziano
Marie White Bell	Donald G. Collester Jr.	Charles W. Dortch Jr.	Nestor F. Guzman
Glenn J. Berman	N. Peter Conforti	Peter E. Doyne	Stephan C. Hansbury
Stephen J. Bernstein	Erminie L. Conley	W. Hunt Dumont	Jamie D. Happs
Maryann K. Bielamowicz	Kyran Connor	Katherine R. Dupuis	John J. Harper
Audrey Peyton Blackburn	Michael R. Connor	Gerald C. Escala	John E. Harrington
James M. Blaney	John A. Conte	Joseph A. Falcone	Craig Randall Harris
Ronald E. Bookbinder	Joseph S. Conte	Robert A. Fall	Jonathan N. Harris
Salvatore Bovino	Robert P. Contillo	Nan S. Famular	Margaret M. Hayden
G. Thomas Bowen	James B. Convery	James A. Farber	James C. Heimlich
B. Theodore Bozonelis	Robert A. Coogan	Timothy G. Farrell	Carol E. Higbee
Dennis J. Braithwaite	William J. Cook	Douglas M. Faciale	Helen E. Hoens
Robert J. Brennan	Patricia K. Costello	Linda R. Feinberg	Richard S. Hoffman
Kathryn A. Brock	Gerald J. Council	Bradley J. Ferencz	Ronald E. Hoffman
Thomas F. Brogan	James P. Courtney Jr.	Faustino Fernandez-Vina	Michael J. Hogan
Thomas A. Brown Jr.	Cynthia E. Covie-Leese	Michael Brooke Fisher	Stephen M. Holden
Peter A. Buchsbaum	John J. Coyle Jr.	Clarkson S. Fisher Jr.	Michelle Hollar-Gregory
Frank A. Buczynski Jr.	Thomas J. Critchley	Patrick F. X. Fitzpatrick	Harold C. Hollenbeck
John L. Call	Martin Cronin	Sallyanne Floria	John S. Holston Jr.
Kevin G. Callahan	Mary Catherine Cuff	Terence P. Flynn	Jared D. Honigfeld
Richard C. Camp	Philip B. Cummis	Marlene Lynch Ford	Louis F. Hornstine
Jane B. Cantor	Georgia M. Curio	William L. Forester	James P. Hurley
Ernest M. Caposela	Barbara A. Curran	F. Lee Forrester	Eugene A. Iadanza
Philip S. Carchman	Heidi W. Currier	Travis L. Francis	Paul Innes
Dennis F. Carey III	Roger W. Daley	Sheldon R. Franklin	Joseph V. Isabella

David J. Issenman  
James L. Jackson  
Mary C. Jacobson  
Harold U. Johnson Jr.  
Joseph E. Kane  
Paul A. Kapalko  
Michael Kassel  
Thomas P. Kelly  
Frederic S. Kessler  
John C. Kennedy  
Camille M. Kenny  
Howard H. Kestin  
Fred Kieser Jr.  
Honora O'Brien Kilgallen  
Michael P. King  
Harriet Farber Klein  
Ellen L. Koblitz  
Paul T. Koenig Jr.  
Melvin S. Kracov  
Ira E. Kreizman  
Fred H. Kumpf  
Catherine M. Langlois  
Lee B. Laskin  
Lawrence M. Lawson  
Verna G. Leath  
Vincent LeBlon  
Patricia Richmond LeBon  
Steven L. Lefelt  
Alexander D. Lehrer  
Betty J. Lester  
Kenneth S. Levy  
Laura Lewinn  
Jack L. Lintner  
Lois Lipton  
Joseph F. Lisa  
Severiano Lisboa III  
Charles A. Little  
Louis F. Locascio  
Sebastian P. Lombardi  
Robert A. Longhi  
Thomas N. Lyons  
Kenneth C. MacKenzie  
Roger F. Mahon  
Colleen A. Maier  
John F. Malone  
Thomas V. Manahan  
Maureen B. Mantineo  
Julie M. Marino  
Ronald G. Marmo  
Walter L. Marshall Jr.  
Brian R. Martinotti  
Bill H. Mathesius  
Susan F. Maven  
Jessica R. Mayer  
Eugene J. McCaffrey Jr.  
Robert E. McCarthy  
Thomas M. McCormack  
Ann Graf McCormick  
Frederic R. McDaniel  
Anne McDonnell  
James McGann  
William J. McGovern III  
F. Patrick McManimon

Jean B. McMaster  
John T. McNeill III  
Margaret Mary McVeigh  
Daniel P. Mecca  
William C. Meehan  
Octavia Melendez  
Anthony J. Mellaci Jr.  
Louis R. Meloni  
Julio L. Mendez  
Donald W. Merkelbach  
Carmen Messano  
E. Benn Micheletti  
Charles Middlesworth Jr.  
E. David Millard  
Robert G. Millenky  
Elijah L. Miller Jr.  
Christine L. Miniman  
Philip H. Mizzone Jr.  
David W. Morgan  
James J. Morley  
Sybil R. Moses  
Scott J. Moynihan  
James F. Mulvihill  
Samuel D. Natal  
Edward M. Neafsey  
Mark J. Nelson  
Michael J. Nelson  
Richard Newman  
Dennis V. Nieves  
William E. Nugent  
Thomas E. O'Brien  
Amy O'Connor  
Edward T. O'Connor Jr.  
Robert W. O'Hagan  
Edward M. Oles  
Thomas P. Olivieri  
Francis J. Orlando Jr.  
John A. O'Shaughnessy  
Mitchell E. Ostrer  
Robert W. Page  
Phillip Lewis Paley  
Lorraine C. Parker  
Anthony J. Parillo  
George W. Parsons Jr.  
Robert J. Passero  
Edith K. Payne  
Norman J. Peer  
Stuart L. Peim  
Darlene J. Pereksta  
Joseph P. Perfilio  
Jamie S. Perri  
Steven P. Perskie  
John A. Peterson Jr.  
James J. Petrella  
Michael A. Petrolle  
James L. Pfeiffer  
Diane Pincus  
John Pisansky  
Alan J. Pogarsky  
Lorraine Pullen  
John H. Pursel  
Joseph P. Quinn  
James E. Rafferty

Charles M. Rand  
David B. Rand  
John R. Rauh  
Michael L. Ravin  
Joseph L. Rea  
Raymond A. Reddin  
Robert B. Reed  
Ronald L. Reisner  
Susan L. Reisner  
Joseph J. Riva  
Ariel A. Rodriguez  
Mathias E. Rodriguez  
Patricia B. Roe  
George F. Rohde Jr.  
Patrick J. Roma  
Joseph R. Rosa  
David A. Rosenberg  
Ned M. Rosenberg  
Graham T. Ross  
James S. Rothschild Jr.  
Garry S. Rothstadt  
Stephen B. Rubin  
Karen D. Russell  
Mark M. Russello  
Edward J. Ryan  
Peter V. Ryan  
Jack M. Sabatino  
Lourdes I. Santiago  
Ramona A. Santiago  
Paulette Sapp-Peterson  
Barry P. Sarkisian  
Marvin E. Schlosser  
Francine A. Schott  
Frederick J. Schuck  
Francis B. Schultz  
Thomas F. Scully  
Vincent D. Segal  
Torkwase Y. Sekou  
John E. Selser  
George L. Seltzer  
Eugene D. Serpentelli  
Neil H. Shuster  
Marie P. Simonelli  
Nancy Sivilli  
Stephen Skillman  
Lawrence D. Smith  
Stephen F. Smith Jr.  
Thomas S. Smith Jr.  
Andrew J. Smithson  
Irvin J. Snyder  
Maureen P. Sogluizzo  
Ronald B. Sokalski  
Miriam N. Span  
Jo-Anne B. Spatola  
Isabel B. Stark  
Edwin H. Stern  
Barbara Clarke Stolte  
Nicholas J. Stroumtsos Jr.  
Randolph M. Subryan  
Cornelius P. Sullivan  
Mark A. Sullivan Jr.  
Karen L. Suter  
John A. Sweeney

Maria Marinari Sypek  
Patricia M. Talbert  
Joseph P. Testa  
Frederick J. Theemling Jr.  
William C. Todd III  
Daryl F. Todd Sr.  
Shirley A. Tolentino  
John Tomasello  
Edward V. Torack  
John S. Triarsi  
James G. Troiano  
Edward J. Turnbach  
Bette E. Uhrmacher  
Peter J. Vazquez  
Hector R. Velazquez  
Thomas R. Vena  
Sheila Ann Venable  
Deborah J. Venezia  
Donald R. Venezia  
Paul J. Vichness  
Barbara Ann Villano  
Joseph C. Visalli  
M. Allan Vogelsson  
Donald J. Volkert Jr.  
David Waks  
Daniel M. Waldman  
Charles J. Walsh  
John M. Waters Jr.  
Alexander P. Waugh Jr.  
Barbara Byrd Wecker  
Renee Jones Weeks  
Dorothea O'C. Wefing  
Thomas L. Weisenbeck  
Harvey Weissbard  
Craig L. Wellerson  
Harold B. Wells III  
Glenn R. Wenzel  
William L'E. Wertheimer  
Mary K. White  
Rosemarie R. Ruggiero Williams  
Deanne M. Wilson  
Robert C. Wilson  
Theodore A. Winard  
Michael Winkelstein  
Stephen H. Womack  
Joseph L. Yannotti  
Thomas P. Zampino

## Tax Court

Vito L. Bianco  
Angelo J. DiCamillo  
Joseph L. Foster  
Raymond A. Hayser  
James E. Isman  
Harold A. Kuskin  
Marie E. Lihotz  
Gail L. Menyuk  
Peter D. Pizzuto  
Joseph C. Small

# NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY



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Fairness • Quality Service

