

# PIERCE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT



# 2016

## ANNUAL REPORT

AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW  
OF THE PIERCE COUNTY  
SUPERIOR COURT, AND A  
LOOK AT WHAT'S ON THE  
HORIZON FOR 2017



## YEAR IN REVIEW 2016 PRESIDING JUDGE FRANK CUTHBERTSON

**New Administration.** Chris Gaddis, our new Superior Court Administrator was hired as well as Deputy Administrator Dea Finigan. The new administration is functioning and implementing the next phases of our Strategic Planning Goal Improving Court Administration.

**Domestic Violence Initiative.** Pierce County has the highest per capita rate of domestic violence protection order filings in Washington State. Our Pierce County system of DV Petition kiosks has led to a situation where litigants (petitioners) are not meeting requirements that they appear before the Court in person or by telephone within twenty-four hours of filing. We began a major initiative in 2016 to bring the County in line with existing statutes and new laws. Highlights include the following:

- Implementation of Weapon Surrender Procedures;
- Compliance with Statutory Requirements for Kiosk Filings;
- Implement Extreme Risk Protection Order Procedures by December 2016 per I-1490;
- Obtained County Budget Support for 9th Commissioner.

**Final Phase implementation of Pre-Trial Services.** The third phase is fully implemented with defendants being screened on a daily basis for referral to pre-trial Services. In addition, pre-trial services initiated an agreement with a private non-profit contractor, Friendship Diversion, for Electronic Home Monitoring and other compliance support services.

**DART.** The Drug Abuse Rehab and Treatment initiative was established in collaboration with District Court, the Superior Court Clerk, Prosecuting Attorney's

Office and Department of Assigned Counsel. This initiative is designed to reduce over-crowding in Superior Court, reduce jail utilization, and to make drug treatment, mental health services and other community supports available to the growing number of offenders addicted to opiates through greater use of District Court Probation.

**Mental Health System Crisis.** Our mental health system continues to be in crisis. The number of patients subject to civil commitment continues to increase and the number of jail inmates requiring mental health evaluation and competency restoration before trial spiked significantly in the second quarter of 2016. The major issues are summarized below.

- Overcrowding at Western State Hospital led Commissioner Adams to find the State of Washington and OPTUM in contempt.
- Implementation of Joel's Law; and RCW 10.77 amendments.
- Western State Involuntary Treatment Act Court facility lease near finalization.
- Western State Hospital non-compliance with RCW 10.77 and the Trueblood Federal Court decision.

**Judicial Education initiative.** One of the highlights of 2016 was the functioning of the judicial education committee. A variety of educational opportunities were provided. Topics included the 1890's Chinese expulsion from Tacoma, understanding gay lesbian bi-sexual and trans-gender youth; human sex trafficking; tips for handling modification of parenting plans; the Japanese internment during WWII, and background on juvenile probation practices.

**Improved Criminal Case processing.** Superior Court has begun to change the culture of delay that is plaguing timely criminal case processing by limiting the number of Omnibus hearings in criminal cases.

**New PREA Agreement.** A new agreement governing detention of certain youth for whom the juvenile court by statute waives jurisdiction because of the nature of the juvenile offense (auto-declines) has been entered between the Jail and Remann Hall.

**Measuring the Diversity of Jurors.** Jury administration has been involved in a statewide study of the diversity of our jury pool. A similar local initiative is also underway; however, focused on targeting geographic areas of Pierce County where the jury participation rate is below average.

**JBLM Veterans and Military Affairs.** Commissioner Kiesel and Judge Nevin have been working to improve relations with active military, their families and returning veterans through training of JAG officers on civil procedures and local court rules. JBLM has in turn made resources available for judges who come in contact with military personnel with plans for additional training for judges in the spring of 2017.

### Final Thoughts

It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as Presiding Judge of Pierce County Superior Court. I want to acknowledge all the support and hard work of my colleagues, Court Commissioners, and staff for making 2016 a very productive and successful year overall. For most of 2016 Superior Court has been without a judicial officer in Department 8. That has put increasing demands on all of us. It is no surprise, however, that the twenty-one other departments and court staff have all taken up the challenge and shared the increased workload.

I believe we have continued to improve as a Bench particularly our ability to struggle through critical challenges affecting the court and the community in professional and respectful ways. Our court has gone through a mega-transition during the past year. We owe much appreciation to the judicial officers and staff who have worked diligently for months to help our newly elected colleagues make the transition to the bench. Finally welcome again to our new colleagues as they join us in our efforts to maintain our tradition of functioning as a high performing court.

Frank E Cuthbertson



## MESSAGE FROM 2017 PRESIDING JUDGE ELIZABETH P. MARTIN

As I begin my term as Presiding Judge of the Pierce County Superior Court, I want to acknowledge the outstanding leadership provided by Judge Frank Cuthbertson who has served our court faithfully as Presiding Judge over the past two years. He has led us with wisdom and a fundamental sense of fairness through a time of transition and innovation. I want to extend appreciation as well to our new administrative team led by our Court Administrator, Chris Gaddis and Deputy Court Administrator, Dea Finigan, who enhance us as a court with their leadership, creative thinking and support.

As noted by Judge Cuthbertson in his year-end report, 2016 was a year of considerable accomplishment. As we head into 2017, we welcome 4 new Judges and 2 new Court Commissioners. The addition of these individuals only enhances our strength as a court and we are excited about the year ahead. We believe we have an outstanding bench, each of us bonded to one another by a shared commitment to justice and a strong work ethic.

Among our strategic action goals for 2017 is a study of how we deliver services to those seeking and responding to petitions for domestic violence protection orders. We have the highest filings of such petitions statewide yet our resources are limited. While advocating for additional resources, we remain fully committed to developing protocols for the processing of these petitions in a way that provides for full and fair hearing as well as ensuring due process.

Another strategic action goal for 2017 is our ongoing commitment to support and encourage jury service in our court as well as in District and Tacoma Municipal Courts. We value our citizens who serve as jurors and want to ensure that we have done everything we can to address obstacles and inconveniences related to juror service. Our system of justice does not function without citizens willing to do their civic duty as jurors.

We will continue to respond to particular challenges posed by the large number of self-represented litigants in our court system. We are fully committed to the principles embodied in "access to justice." In that regard, we will continue to ensure that justice remains accessible regardless of financial resources or other limitations.

Our court also remains committed to working with all of our stakeholders, including the Prosecutor's Office, Department of Assigned Counsel and private criminal defense bar to ensure that criminal cases are resolved in a timely manner and that our backlog of cases, particularly older ones, continues to diminish. We are working internally in creating a manual of best practices for criminal case management.

Over the past several years, we have enjoyed a strong working relationship with other branches of government, including our County Council and our Executive. Although 2017 brings change there as well, we are confident that we will continue to work collaboratively on issues and projects of mutual concern throughout the coming years, with particular emphasis on issues surrounding mental health and substance abuse disorders within our community and the considerable impact these issues have on all aspects of our court.

In closing, it is my distinct privilege to serve as the Presiding Judge. An essential aspect of the role of Presiding Judge is to listen and in that regard, I want to hear from those we serve and from our stakeholders on how we can improve our delivery of services. I look forward to continuing the justice initiatives that were started under Judge Cuthbertson's leadership as we continue in our unwavering commitment to provide for the fair, prompt and efficient resolution of disputes and to provide due process and individual justice in each case that comes before us.

Elizabeth P. Martin

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Message from 2017-2018 Presiding Judge

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## PIERCE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

### OUR MISSION

- 1 Actively manage the business of the court so as to provide for fair, prompt and efficient resolution of disputes.
- 2 Maintain independence and parity as an equal branch of government.
- 3 Provide due process and individual justice in each case.

### OUR DIVISIONS & ASSIGNED JUDGES

**Presiding Judge**  
Frank Cuthbertson

**Criminal**  
Brian Tollefson, Bryan Chushcoff, Kitty-Ann van Doorninck, Stephanie Arend, James Orlando, Katherine Stolz, Kathryn Nelson, Ronald Culpepper, Edmund Murphy, Elizabeth Martin, Stanley Rumbaugh, Jerry Costello, Jack Nevin, Gretchen Leanderson, G. Helen Whitener, Michael Schwartz

**Civil**  
Vicki Hogan, Bryan Chushcoff, Ronald Culpepper, Susan Serko, Stanley Rumbaugh, Jack Nevin, Phil Sorensen, Gretchen Leanderson

**Family**  
Kitty-Ann van Doorninck, Stephanie Arend, Garold Johnson

**Drug Court**  
Elizabeth Martin

**Felony Mental Health Court**  
Edmund Murphy

**Juvenile Court**  
John Hickman, Susan Serko, Jerry Costello

Due to Judicial Rotations, some Judges may be listed in multiple Divisions.

## 2017 STRATEGIC ISSUES

Seven strategic issues are identified upon which the court will focus in order to achieve specific and measurable results.

For the complete list of strategic priorities, please visit [www.piercecountywa.org/superiorcourt](http://www.piercecountywa.org/superiorcourt).

## 1 ENHANCING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

- Streamline procedures in Ex Parte Courtroom.
- Fund Department 23 Judge, Judicial Assistant and Court Reporter (authorized in 1997, RCW 2.08.061.)
- Institute Virtual Courtrooms
- Hire a 9th Commissioner (Quarter 4 of 2017)
- Hire an additional Guardian Ad Litem in 1st quarter 2017.
- Analyze and implement reorganization of our response to Domestic Violence Protection Order Petitions and an analysis of the impact of the kiosk system on the Court.
- Develop Best Practices Manual for criminal case processing.

## 2 BROADENING ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

- Expand the translated documents and videos provided by the Court.
- Support and encourage jury service.
- Provide links on court website to videos on court processes.
- Complete review and reworking of Superior Court website based on statistical data review.
- Expand ways to assist self-represented litigants navigating the dissolution process.

## 3 PROMOTING COMPETENCE, PROFESSIONALISM AND CIVILITY

- Complete review and possible overhaul of the Superior Court Personnel Manual.
- Investigate ways to measure the Court's effectiveness.
- Conduct specialized training for new Administration Supervisors.
- Continue internal judicial education sessions, including cultural competence and social justice issues.

## 4 JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE: ENSURING IMPARTIALITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Produce a report which can be distributed to the public about court processes and performance.
- Superior Court Personnel and Policy Manual update.

## 5 IMPROVING COURT FACILITIES

- Create Technology Go-Kits which would allow Superior Court personnel to complete mission critical functions away from our primary location.
- Work with AOC to be able to hold court outside of Pierce County in the event of a catastrophic event.
- Determine an alternative site for Western State Hospital during a catastrophic event.
- Complete the lease with DSHS for Western State Hospital space.

## 6 EFFECTIVELY UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY

- Update to the latest tablet version for Administration Management and Judicial Officers to take advantage of technological advances.
- Investigate the use of TV monitors in the Criminal Division Court hallway for the Therapeutic Courts to display pertinent information.
- Investigate the creation of a Juror mobile application to assist in the juror process.

## 7 BUILDING TRUST & CONFIDENCE THROUGH COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Begin Phase 2 of Court History Project.
- Attend local legal classes with Administration employees to encourage a diverse hiring pool.
- Presentations on jury summons response.
- Update court brochures/handouts.
- Improve the Superior Court website design, to be more user friendly.
- Complete the Superior Court Annual Report for 2016.
- Engage in community service projects which are creative, interesting, and educational.



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR COURT ADMINISTRATOR

CHRIS GADDIS

Thank you for your interest in the Superior Court of the State of Washington for Pierce County. It is the job of Superior Court Administration to ensure the professional operation of the Court. We are all here to provide the highest level of customer service to our stakeholders.

Pierce County Superior Court had a very productive 2016. As a Court, we accomplished 17 of the 18 priorities set by the Bench during the strategic planning session at the 2016 Judicial Retreat. These priorities ranged from hiring a new Court Administrator to improving criminal case management.

Aside from the daily operations of the Court and the long range planning for our future, there will be a few agenda items which will take a majority of our attention in 2017. The following items will be addressed in great detail in 2017:

- Criminal Case Processing Best Practices Manual
- Juror Summons Response Study
- Domestic Violence Protection Order Process Study
- Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Emergency Procedures Drills

I hope you enjoy the opportunity to discover more about your Superior Court. Please be on the lookout for more details about the Court when we provide a recap of our programs in our 2018 Annual Report undertaken during 2017.

## SUPERIOR COURT OVERVIEW

Pierce County Superior Court consists of twenty-two judges and eight commissioners. Each judge has two staff members; a judicial assistant who is the case manager, the bailiff, and the clerk of the court; and a court reporter. The judges and commissioners are supported by Superior Court Administration and Juvenile Court Administration. Superior Court Administration consists of different departments who work together to administer the court. These departments include civil administration, criminal administration, jury administration, commissioner services, interpreter services, and information technology services.

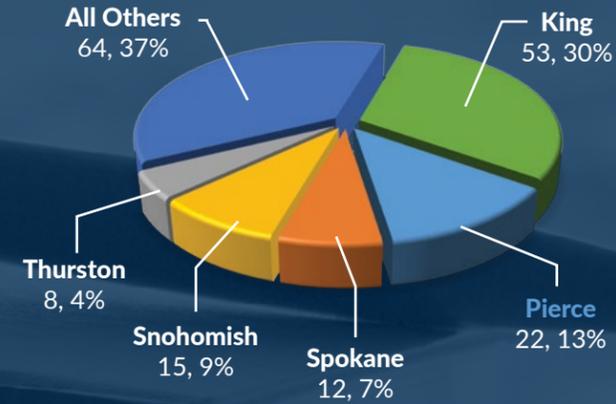
In addition to administration, the courts are also supported by the Clerk of the Court. The clerk's office keeps and maintains the court's files, documents and exhibits.

*"I would like to recognize the Pierce County Superior Court's Judges, Commissioners, Judicial Assistants, Court Reporters and Administration Staff Members for their hard work in 2016. Pierce County Superior Court tops the state in several categories for our annual number of proceedings and filings. We accomplish this with a very lean but extremely dedicated and professional staff."*

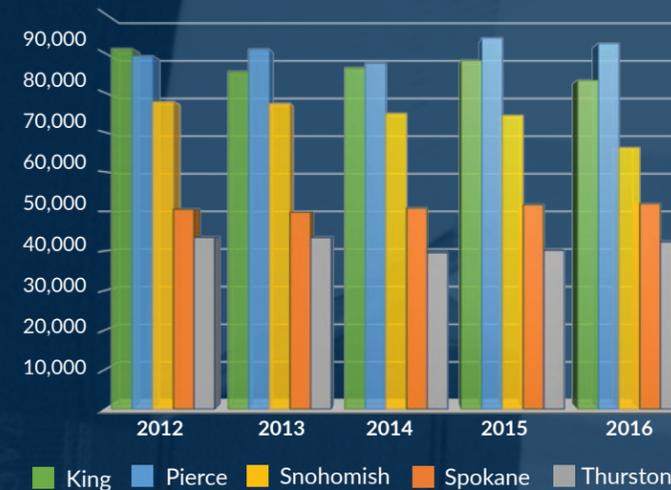
### "BIG FIVE"

KING, PIERCE, SNOHOMISH, SPOKANE & THURSTON COUNTIES

#### NUMBER OF SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES IN WASHINGTON STATE



#### PROCEEDINGS COMPARISON



#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CIVIL PROTECTION ORDERS FILED 2012-2016



### OUR LOCATIONS



#### COUNTY-CITY BUILDING

930 Tacoma Ave S, Tacoma  
 20 Judges  
 5 Commissioners  
 69 Staff Members



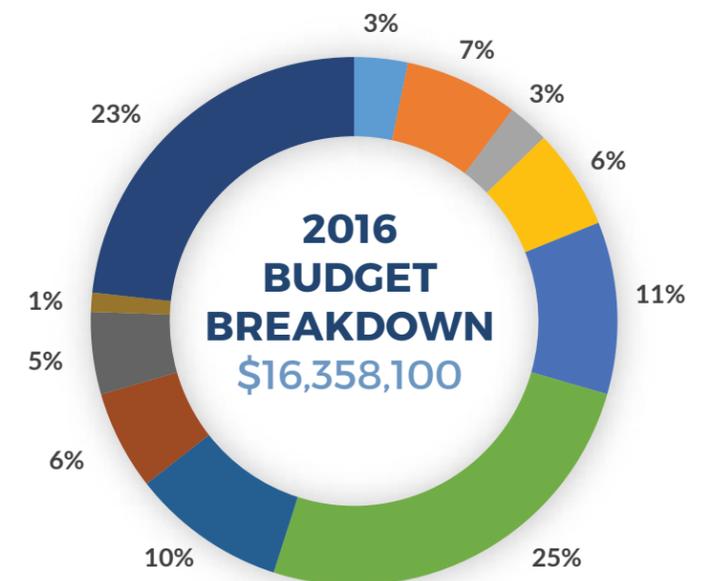
#### REMANN HALL

5501 6th Ave, Tacoma  
 2 Judges  
 2 Commissioners  
 4 Staff Members



#### WESTERN STATE HOSPITAL

9601 Steilacoom Blvd, Lakewood  
 0 Judges  
 1 Commissioners  
 3 Clerk's Office Staff



- 3% Interpreter Services
- 7% Jury Administration
- 3% SUPTECH
- 6% Juvenile Court
- 11% Therapeutic Court
- 25% Criminal
- 10% Civil
- 6% Commissioner Services
- 5% Family
- 1% Involuntary Commitment
- 23% Administration

# SUPERIOR COURT CRIMINAL DIVISION

• • While ensuring that the criminally accused are afforded a speedy trial, the Criminal Presiding Judge must balance that right against a number of others, including the right to the effective assistance of counsel, the discovery obligations of the parties, as well as a defendant's mental capacity to proceed to trial. 'Speed' can never outweigh fairness.

- Judge Michael Schwartz



Brian Tollefson



Bryan Chushcoff



Kitty-Ann van Doorninck



Stephanie Arend

Supporting Staff from left to right

JA | Brian Matson  
CR | Tim Regis

JA | Susan Winnie  
CR | Katrina Smith

JA | Michele Tufts  
CR | Carla Higgins

JA | Dan Vessels, Jr.  
CR | Jan-Marie Glaze



James Orlando  
Special Assault Unit



Katherine M. Stolz



Kathryn J. Nelson  
Special Assault Unit



Ronald E. Culpepper

JA | Karen Ladenburg  
CR | Shaun Linse

JA | Linda Shipman  
CR | Kim O'Neil

JA | Ginele C. Eilert  
CR | Dana Eby

JA | Angela Edwards  
CR | Karla Johnson



Edmund Murphy



Elizabeth Martin



Stanley Rumbaugh  
Criminal Div. Presiding  
Judge Jan. - June.



Jerry Costello

JA | Michelle Evans  
CR | Angela McDougall

JA | Dea Finigan  
CR | Cathy Schamu

JA | Merri Reagan  
CR | Carol Frederick

JA | Michelle Prichard  
CR | Natasha Semago



Jack Nevin



Gretchen Leanderson



G. Helen Whitener  
Special Assault Unit



Michael Schwartz  
Criminal Div. Presiding  
Judge July-Dec.

JA | Iva Rockett  
CR | Kathleen Mahr

JA | Heather Wynne  
CR | Jamie Booker

JA | Julie Armijo  
CR | Ann Marie Allison

JA | Patti Wood  
CR | Raelene Semago

## CRIMINAL DIVISION | ABOUT

Superior Court presides over felonies which are more serious crimes such as assault, robbery, and murder, and are punishable in excess of one year. Criminal cases begin by the Prosecutor's Office filing a criminal charge on behalf of the State of Washington. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office then prosecutes the charge against the accused (Defendant) on behalf to the State of Washington (Plaintiff). The prosecution must prove to the judge or jury that the defendant is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Generally, thirteen judges and one commissioner are assigned to hear criminal dockets and trials. Two judges and one commissioner hear arraignments, guilty pleas, sentencing, and

motions leaving eleven judges to hear jury trials. On average, criminal jury trials last three days and are heard Monday through Thursday allowing departments to hear civil and criminal motions on Fridays. Two judges are designated to hear pre-assigned sexual assault and serious robbery cases.

All judges may also be pre-assigned to complex criminal trials including death penalty cases and certain other cases meeting the court's pre-assignment criteria. All judges have "Friday Motion Dockets" where civil or criminal matters other than trials are heard, even when a jury is deliberating on that Friday.

## CRIMINAL DIVISION | BY THE NUMBERS

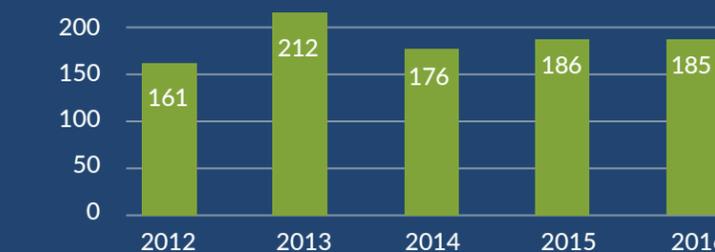
### Number of Criminal Cases Filed



### Number of Criminal Proceedings Held

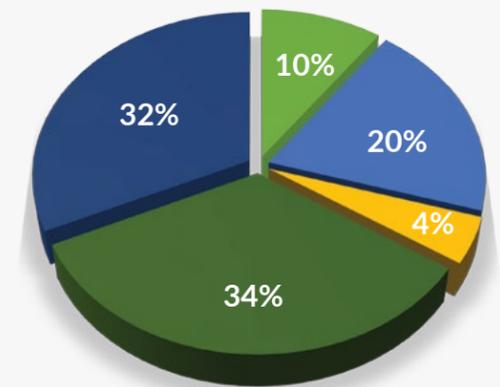


### Number of Criminal Trials Held



## CRIMINAL DIVISION 2016 EXPENSES

Total Expenses: \$4,168,435



- Admin \$414,806
- Judges \$821,664\*
- Commissioner \$191,845
- Judicial Assistants \$1,411,747
- Court Reporters \$1,328,373

\* State of Washington covers 50% of judges' salary.

“There’s a folk saying “Without law, civilization dies.” And laws are useless without courts to ensure their proper meaning and operation. Civil law as well as criminal law helps safeguard that everyone has equal rights to liberty, to their property, and to the protection of the law. Through our courts society protects and fosters families and children, injured people, and business and property relationships.”

- Judge Bryan Chushcoff

## SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL DIVISION



Vicki L. Hogan



Bryan Chushcoff



Ronald E. Culpepper



Susan K. Serko

Supporting Staff from left to right

JA | Andrew Shanstrom  
CR | Jennifer Flygare

JA | Susan Winnie  
CR | Katrina Smith

JA | Angela Edwards  
CR | Karla Johnson

JA | Candy Augustin  
CR | Lanre Adebayo



Stanley J. Rumbaugh



Jack Nevin



Phil Sorensen



Gretchen Leanderson

JA | Merri Reagan  
CR | Carol Frederick

JA | Iva Rockett  
CR | Kathleen Mahr

JA | Monica Schmuck  
CR | Sheri Schelbert

JA | Heather Wynne  
CR | Jamie Booker

## MAKING DECISIONS

Decisions are based upon a preponderance of evidence. The party suing (plaintiff) must prove his or her case by presenting evidence that is more persuading to the trier of fact (judge or jury) than the opposing evidence. There are special court procedures for the protection of persons threatened by harassment and domestic violence. Persons may request protection orders through documents available at their county clerk’s office.

## CIVIL DIVISION | ABOUT

Five judges and four commissioners handle all non-juvenile civil matters. These judges also take criminal trials when their schedule opens due to last minute settlements.

### Areas of principal responsibility

- Actions arising from landlord and tenant disputes
- Adoptions
- Breach of warranty on consumer goods
- Contract disputes
- Guardianships
- Marriage dissolutions (divorce)
- Personal injuries
- Probates
- Professional liability suits



**JUDGE VICKI HOGAN'S RETIREMENT PARTY**  
Presiding Judge Cuthbertson, retired Judge Larkin, and Judge Vicki Hogan. (Left to Right)

## CIVIL DIVISION | BY THE NUMBERS

### Number of Civil (Non-Criminal) Cases Filed



### Number of Civil (Non-Criminal) Cases Resolved

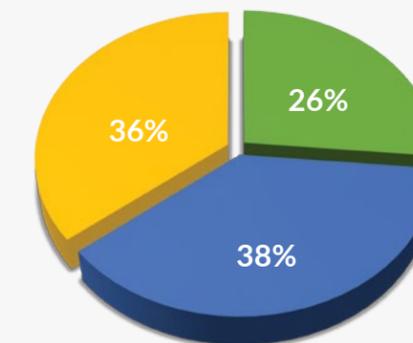


### Number of Civil (Non-Criminal) Trials Held



## CIVIL DIVISION 2016 EXPENSES

Total Expenses: \$ 1,552,549



- Judges \$410,832 \*
- Judicial Assistants \$588,228
- Court Reporters \$553,489

\* State of Washington covers 50% of judges' salary.

# SUPERIOR COURT FAMILY DIVISION

“With case management and trial date certainty, the goal of Family Court is to provide stability and finality to children who are caught in the middle of family disputes.”  
- Judge Kitty-Ann van Doorninck



Kitty-Ann van Doorninck



Stephanie Arend



Garold Johnson

Supporting Staff from left to right

- JA | Michele Tufts  
CR | Carla Higgins
- JA | Dan Vessels, Jr.  
CR | Jan-Marie Glaze
- JA | Linda Schramm  
CR | Leslie J. Thompson

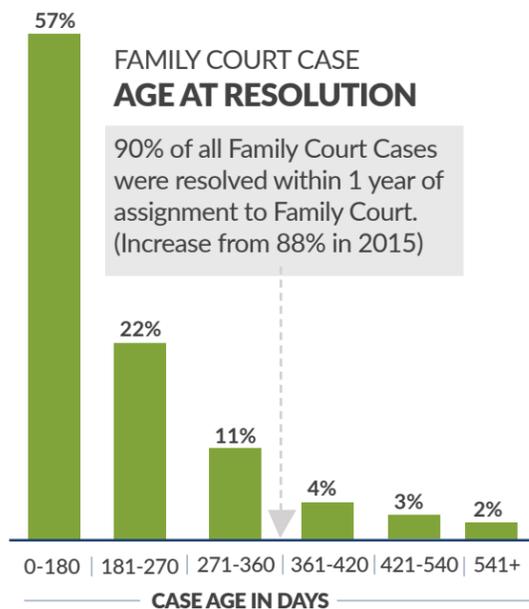
## FAMILY DIVISION | ABOUT

Two judicial departments and five commissioners handle Family Court cases, with support from a Family Court Case Coordinator. One Family Law Staff GAL is available for self-represented individuals who cannot pay the GAL retainer and a Family Law Case Technician assists self-represented parties complete documents required to complete their case.

### FAMILY COURT PRIMARILY FOCUSES ON CASES INVOLVING THE CUSTODY OF CHILDREN:

Modification of Custody, Non-Parent Custody, Relocations, and all other custody matters when a GAL has been authorized to investigate the parenting plan issues.

Hundreds of children in Pierce County are the subject of custody disputes. All of them live in a state of uncertainty which hurts these children. Children who are victims of high-conflict custody “wars” are at risk for school failure, teen pregnancy, and criminal behavior. The duration of family conflict is a major source of reduced well-being among children of divorce. Timely resolution of disagreement minimizes the pain and damages these children and their families experience. Reducing the time to dispute resolution is facilitated by a dedicated and well-managed judiciary.



Family Law Case Technician assisted on 561 cases and worked 323 of those to resolution.

## FAMILY DIVISION | OUR GOALS

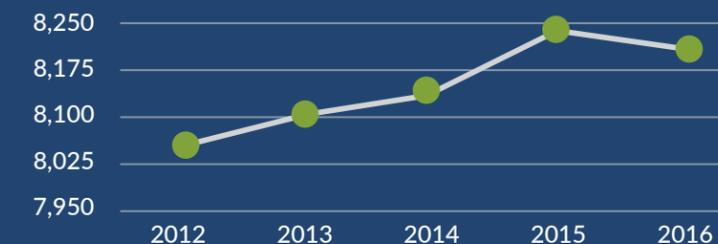
- Identify, segregate, and prioritize cases involving the custody of children.
- Provide consistent and timely judicial decision-making with intensive case management, settlement conferences, and education to litigants.
- Provide early judicial intervention for dissolutions, legal separations, and petitions for residential schedule.

## FAMILY DIVISION | ONGOING CHALLENGES

- High unemployment and military deployments. These issues put pressure on families and increase the demand made on the resources available to Family Court.
- Self-represented (pro se) litigants. The number of people representing themselves in court has increased significantly in recent years. They face coping with and understanding a bewildering set of court rules and changing Washington family law. These litigants require extra time from judicial officers and other team members to ensure they have the same access to justice as those represented by counsel. This slows the system and compounds the difficulty of timely resolution of court cases.

## FAMILY DIVISION | BY THE NUMBERS

### Number of Family Division Cases Filed



### Number of Family Division Proceedings Held

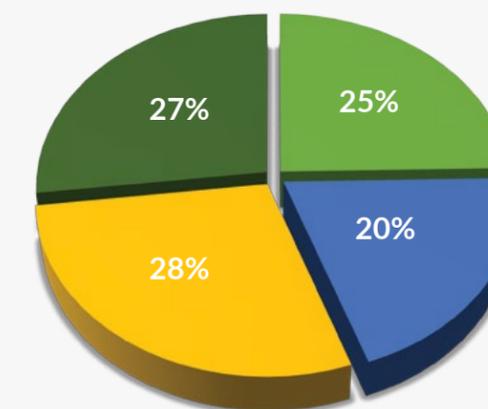


### Number of Family Division Trials Held



## FAMILY DIVISION 2016 EXPENSES

Total Expenses: \$824,346



- Admin \$203,327
- Judges \$164,333 \*
- Judicial Assistants \$234,718
- Court Reporters \$221,909

\* State of Washington covers 50% of judges' salary.

# Pierce County Drug Court

Adult • Family

## SUPERIOR COURT THERAPEUTIC DIVISION

*Together, we rescue lives, we reunite separated families, we repair broken relationships, we inspire individuals to reclaim the futures they were meant to lead and we restore hope to those who had lost all hope due to their addiction.*

- Judge Elizabeth Martin



Edmund Murphy



Elizabeth Martin

Supporting Staff  
from left to right

JA | Michelle Evans  
CR | Angela McDougall

JA | Dea Finigan  
CR | Cathy Schamu



## FAMILY RECOVERY COURT

### ABOUT

Family Recovery Court is a collaborative program administered by Pierce County Superior Court in cooperation with Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Pierce County Alliance, the Department of Assigned Counsel, Prosecutor's Office, and the assigned judicial department.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

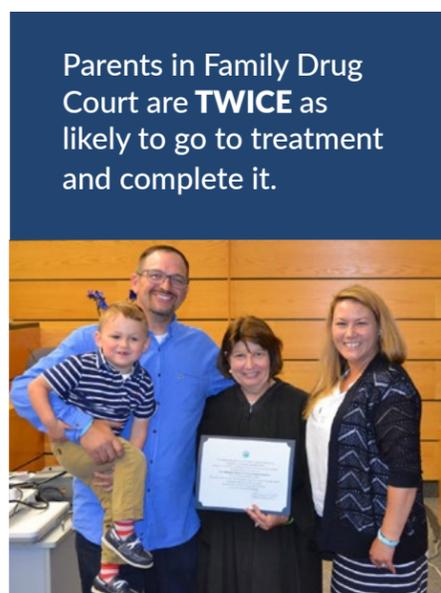
Our family partners include: Pierce County Juvenile Court, Multicultural and Children Family Services, Recovery Café, Court Appointed Special Advocates/Guardian Ad Litem programs, and various other local non-profits who provide family resources and training.

### WHAT WE DO

Work with families who have had dependency matters filed for their children as a result of substance use and dependence.

Facilitate early intervention and treatment with a complete approach to strengthening family functioning by focusing on emotional, developmental, and physical needs of clients and their children.

Provide parents structured programs that include frequent court appearances, substance abuse treatment, drug testing, as well as training, education, parenting, and counseling.



Parents in Family Drug Court are **TWICE** as likely to go to treatment and complete it.



Children of Family Drug Court participants spend **SIGNIFICANTLY LESS TIME** in out-of-home placements such as foster care.



Family reunification rates are **50% HIGHER** for Family Drug Court participants.

## FELONY DRUG COURT & VETERANS TRACK

### ABOUT

Pierce County established one of the state's first therapeutic Drug Courts in 1994 to break the cycle of criminal recidivism caused by addiction and has been a national leader ever since. Drug Court operates as a team consisting of treatment (provided by Pierce County Alliance), the prosecutor, the defense attorney, and the judge.

### DRUG COURTS REDUCE CRIME

- Nationwide, 75% of Drug Court graduates remain arrest-free at least two years after leaving the program.
- Rigorous studies examining long-term outcomes of individual Drug Courts have found that reductions in crime last at least 3 years and can endure for over 14 years.
- The most rigorous and conservative scientific "meta-analyses" have all concluded that Drug Courts significantly reduce crime as much as 45 percent more than other sentencing options.

### DRUG COURTS SAVE MONEY

- Nationwide, for every \$1.00 invested in Drug Court, taxpayers save as much as \$3.36 in avoided criminal justice costs alone.
- Drug Courts produce cost savings ranging from \$3,000 to \$13,000 per client. These cost savings reflect reduced prison costs, reduced revolving-door arrests and trials, and reduced victimization.

### DRUG COURTS ENSURE COMPLIANCE

- Unless substance abusing/addicted offenders are regularly supervised by a judge and held accountable, 70% drop out of treatment prematurely.
- Drug Courts provide more comprehensive and closer supervision than other community-based supervision programs.
- Drug Courts are six times more likely to keep offenders in treatment long enough for them to succeed.

## DRUG COURT TESTIMONIALS

“My life prior to Drug Court was finding ways to get money for that next high. I never thought about what I was doing to my family or friends, I only thought about myself. Today I have a career and I'm actually a trustworthy, responsible, dependable person and have a beautiful baby boy that I get to come home to every night.”

“Drug Court was not only a chance to avoid prison, but a chance to get clean and become a father again. Drug Court had the following benefits on my life: I can face myself in the mirror. I've earned the trust and respect of my family and friends. I have a job. And I am a positive member of society again.”

“I was hopelessly addicted to drugs. The effect I had on my community: I was an addict and thief and made no good contributions at all to my neighborhood or community. Being arrested and given the option of Drug Court was my motivation to enter the program and be a positive, productive member of society. I got my relationship back with my wife and family. I gained back the trust I lost. I now aspire to be a walking, talking, breathing example that the Drug Court program works.”

# SUPERIOR COURT THERAPEUTIC DIVISION

“With the help of our community and justice system partners, we are able to join mental health and chemical dependency treatment services with housing, transportation, and medication assistance in an effort to end the revolving door to jail and prison for the mentally-ill defendants in our program.”  
- Judge Edmund Murphy

## FELONY MENTAL HEALTH COURT

### ABOUT

Felony Mental Health Court (FMHC) is a partnership between the Court, Prosecutor, Department of Assigned Counsel, and Treatment to optimize Recovery through Accountability. Upon graduation a participant’s associated felony case would be dismissed.



### PROGRAM GOALS:

FMHC partners with community agencies such as Greater Lakes Mental Healthcare and the Veteran’s Administration with the goal to:

- Increase access to mental health treatment.
- Promote recovery and increase access to housing.
- Reduce recidivism and improve public safety.
- Provide wrap-around 24/7 treatment for participants in FMHC.
- Expedite case processing for individuals with mental illness involved in the Justice System.
- Increase communication between the criminal justice and mental health systems.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

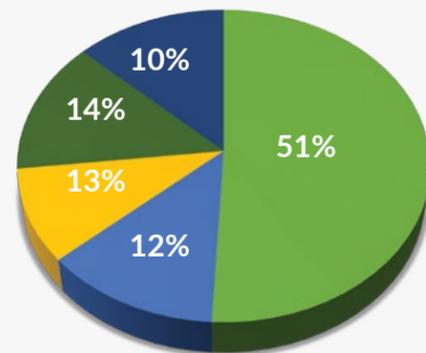
- Must have a diagnosed, serious, and persistent mental illness.
- Approved for entry through the screening process.
- Demonstrate a likelihood they will benefit from treatment.
- Are competent, under RCW 10.77.
- Are charged with a felony in Pierce County Superior Court, that does not involve the use of a firearm, is not a sex offense, and did not cause substantial or great bodily harm.
- Have a link between their felony charge and mental health.
- Are Pierce County Residents.

### FMHC EXPECTATIONS:

- Maintain law-abiding behavior.
- Comply with all treatment recommendations, including treatment for mental health, substance use, and/or domestic violence.
- Take all medications exactly as prescribed.
- Maintain housing and follow all rules of residence.
- Comply with all urine analysis sample requests.
- Appear in court for all reviews.
- Sign releases of information.

### THERAPEUTIC DIVISION 2016 EXPENSES

Total Expenses: \$1,723,379



- Contract Services \$866,000 \*
- Admin \$216,360 \*
- Judges \$164,333 \*\*
- Judicial Assistants \$234,778
- Court Reporters \$221,909

\* Grant Supplemented \$858,458.  
\*\* State of WA covers 50% of judges' salary.

# SUPERIOR COURT REMANN HALL

“Our mission at Remann Hall is to empower youth, strengthen families, and invest in the community to ensure all youth live in safe, healthy homes and are prepared to make a successful transition to productive adulthood.”  
- Judge Susan Serko

### ABOUT JUVENILE COURT

The Pierce County Juvenile Court has exclusive jurisdiction over those juveniles within Pierce County who violate the criminal laws of this state or who are in need of protection and/or advocacy as a result of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. The Juvenile Department provides probation, court, detention, and adoption services. Juvenile Court is handled by two judicial departments and two court commissioners. They are supported by Juvenile Court Administration staff members.

Supporting Staff from left to right



John Hickman



Susan K. Serko



Jerry Costello

JA | Connie Mangus  
CR | Emily Dirton

JA | Candy Augustin  
CR | Lanre Adebayo

JA | Michelle Prichard  
CR | Natasha Semago



### BABY COURT

“Baby Court” was developed at Remann Hall in 2016 in order to provide our most vulnerable infants with a fast-track to permanency. Parents and care givers, are provided pathways to success in obtaining community-based services which allow for maximum bonding under court supervision.

Currently we have 6 infants and hope to expand to 20 children in a model program that is the first of its kind in the Northwest. This project is only possible because of the collaboration between a team of court partners who are dedicated to what is “Best for Babies.”

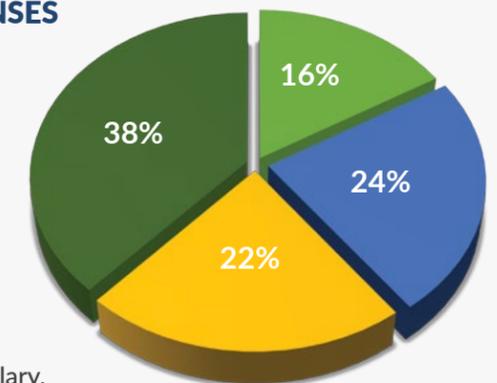
### JUVENILE CIVIL & CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS



### JUVENILE COURT 2016 EXPENSES

Total Expenses: \$1,004,196

- Judges \$164,333\*
- Judicial Assistants \$234,778
- Court Reporters \$221,909
- Commissioners \$383,176



\* State of WA covers 50% of judges' salary.



### JUVENILE COURT ADMINISTRATION ANNUAL REPORT

Learn more about the programs in Juvenile Court by clicking the image or using the QR code.



# SUPERIOR COURT COURT COMMISSIONERS



Bottom Row: Meagan Foley, appointed Aug. 1988, Mary Dicke, appointed Feb. 1999, Mark Gelman, appointed Jan. 2001  
Top Row: Robyn Lindsay, appointed October 2006, Diana L. Kiesel, appointed October 2009, Clint Johnson, appointed October 2010, Craig Adams, appointed March 2012, Karena Kirkendoll, appointed April 2013

In Pierce County, self-represented individuals out-number the attorneys who appear before our Court Commissioners on family law matters. Although our dockets are filled to capacity, frequently necessitating hearings being scheduled out a month or longer, dozens of cases each day are continued, canceled, or stricken as the result of unintentional due process or procedural errors caused by self-represented individuals.

The hundreds of hearings each month that do not move forward have an adverse impact on families needing assistance, artificially delay hearing-date availability, clog our Ex Parte courtroom, increase the workload of the Commissioners, overly burden our Commissioner Service's Department, and increase costs for everyone - from the clerk's office to the court to the tax payer. The lack of basic legal assistance for self-represented individuals in our community is a serious issue.

Our Court is fully committed to addressing this challenge in a collaborative, constructive manner that ensures continued access for self-represented litigants and to making these issues a strategic priority for 2017.

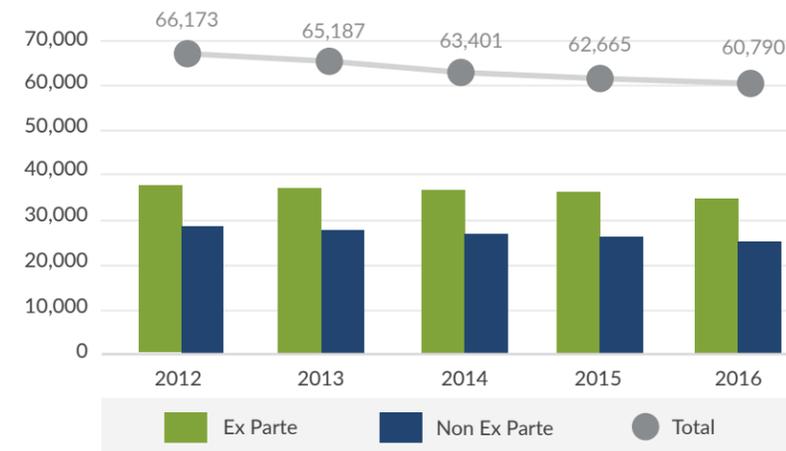
Statement provided by former Commissioner Karena Kirkendoll

## IMPACTS ON COMMISSIONER WORKLOAD:

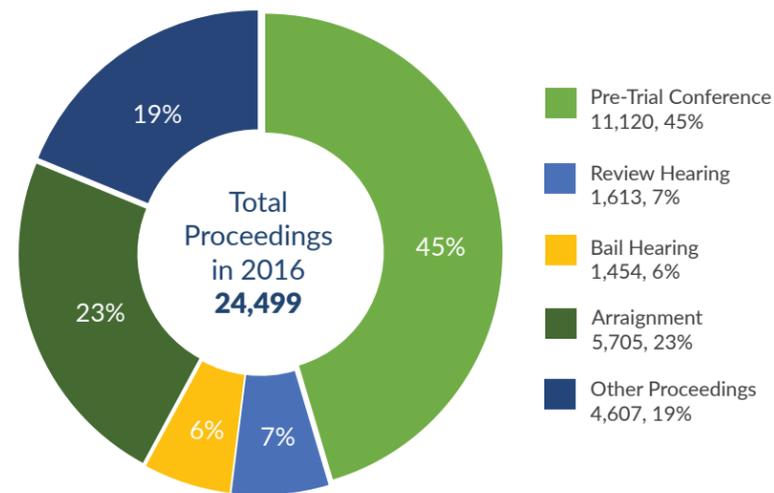
- 1 Excessive workload for commissioners on cases that cannot move forward.
- 2 Dockets filled to capacity; delays in hearing date availability.
- 3 Ex Parte courtroom congestion.
- 4 Excessive workload for the Commissioner Services Department.

## COMMISSIONERS | BY THE NUMBERS

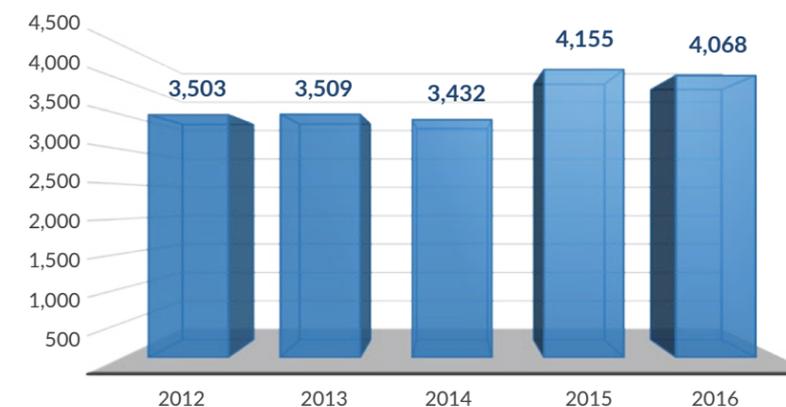
### Civil Commissioner Proceedings



### Number of Criminal Division 2 Proceedings



### Number of Proceedings at Western State Hospital

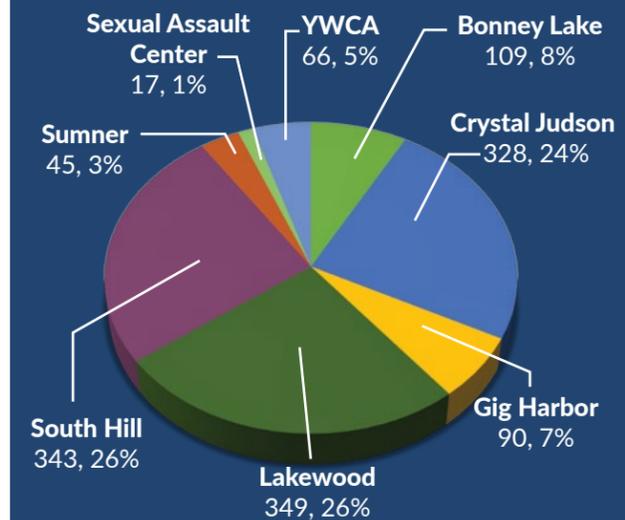


## Number of Domestic Violence Kiosk Petitions Filed

2016 Total: 1,347

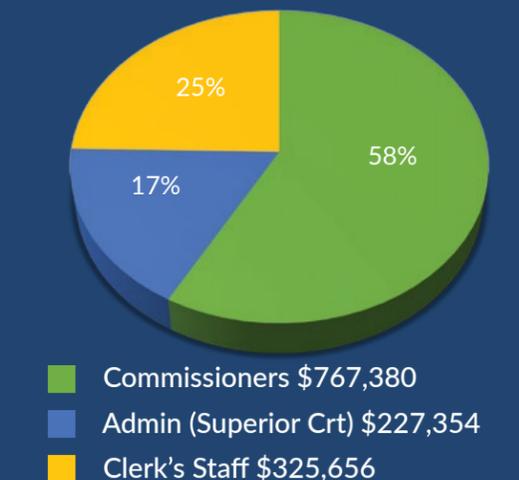


The kiosks, which opened in 2004 and are located throughout Pierce County, allow a person to file a protection order petition without having to make a trip to the County/City Building in Tacoma.



## COMMISSIONER SERVICES 2016 EXPENSES

2016 Total: \$1,320,390



# SUPERIOR COURT INTERPRETER SERVICES

Our Interpreter's Office provides interpreter services for all criminal and civil cases in Superior, Juvenile, and District Courts. We also provide interpreters for the Department of Assigned Counsel (DAC) attorneys who need to communicate with Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients, and also to the Prosecutor's Office for defense interviews and witnesses who need language assistance.

**4,688 Hearings** with only five hearings not having an interpreter due to last minute requests (99.90% coverage rate).

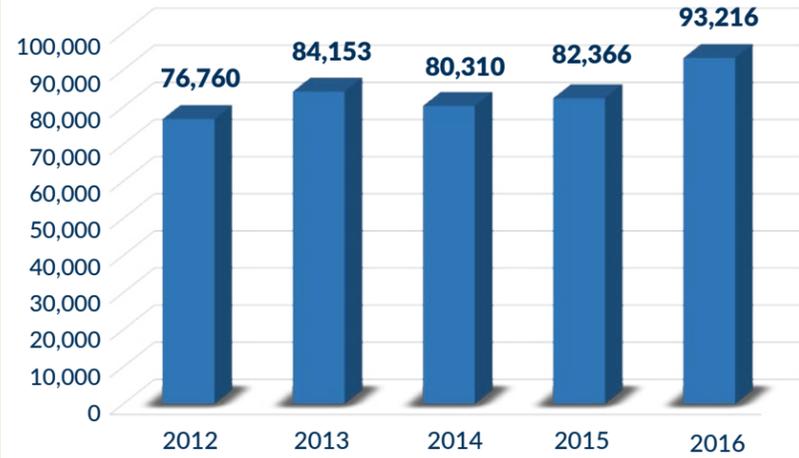
**Provided interpreters for 51 different languages in 2016.** Some of these unique languages are Twi from Ghana, Quiche from Guatemala, Chimwiini from Somalia, and Kosraean from Kosrae.

## INTERPRETER USAGE



# SUPERIOR COURT JURY ADMINISTRATION

COUNTY-CITY BUILDING JURY SUMMONS SENT Superior Court, District Court, Tacoma Municipal



### Juror summons are provided to 21 other jurisdictions:

- |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Auburn      | 12. Orting           |
| 2. Bonney Lake | 13. Pacific/Algona   |
| 3. Buckley     | 14. Puyallup         |
| 4. DuPont      | 15. Roy              |
| 5. Eatonville  | 16. Rustin           |
| 6. Edgewood    | 17. South Prairie    |
| 7. Fife        | 18. Steilacoom       |
| 8. Fircrest    | 19. Sumner           |
| 9. Gig Harbor  | 20. University Place |
| 10. Lakewood   | 21. Wilkeson         |
| 11. Milton     |                      |

### TOTAL JUROR COST

Mileage, Jury Pay, and Transportation Costs



# SUPERIOR COURT COURT HISTORY PROJECT

The Pierce County Court History Project began in 2014 as a way to capture the idea of "Honoring the Rule of Law." 2015's work consisted of determining what would be included in the photo installation and how it would be presented. In 2016, members of the Pierce County Facilities Management Department completed the installation of pictures of all of our Judges dating back to territorial times.

The idea behind the Court History Project was the brainchild of Judges Stephanie Arend and Vicki Hogan. The judges were inspired during a trip to the Washington State Supreme Court in Olympia. Ultimately, the judges would like to have museum quality pieces throughout the County-City Building, which would provide a walking tour to the visitors of the Court. Please stop by Courtroom 100 at the County-City Building in Tacoma, WA and see for yourself. You can also visit the attached link to see a PCTV production about Phase 1 of the project: <https://youtu.be/riAjp3TDunA>. Phase 2, which will begin in 2017 includes biographies for all of our current and past Judges and a photo installation in Courtroom 100 about the different locations of Superior Court.



PHASE 2

## SUPERIOR COURT ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### ABOTA Award - Judge Stephanie Arend

Judge Stephanie Arend received the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) 2016 Judge of the Year Award. On November 10th, 2016, the award was presented in appreciation for her leadership of the bench and in the legal profession; her focus on progressive and pragmatic justice system innovation and her unwavering support of the Seventh Amendment Right to Jury Trial. The American Board of Trial Advocates is a national association of experienced trial lawyers and judges, dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the civil jury trial right provided by the Seventh Amendment to the United States Constitution.



### Emory Law Faculty - Judge Jack Nevin

Judge Jack Nevin of the Pierce County Superior Court joined the 2016 faculty of Emory University School of Law's Kessler Eidson Trial Techniques Program which was held in April. Judge Nevin joined an elite group of more than 120 jurists, practitioners, and legal scholars from across the United States and foreign jurisdictions, including Mexico, to teach in the prominent program which, over the course of three decades, has launched some of the nation's leading trial lawyers and judges.



### WWL Legacy Award - Judge Gretchen Leanderson

Judge Gretchen Leanderson (pictured on the left) received the prestigious Legacy Award from the Washington Women Lawyers (WWL) at the 2016 WWL Annual Banquet in October. This award is well deserved and stands as a tribute to her outstanding career as an attorney and now as a jurist. Judge Leanderson has been a member of WWL since 1988. She has served on the WWL state board and was co-president of the Pierce County chapter. Judge Leanderson received this Legacy Award for her years of service and mentoring through WWL.



### Jurist of the Year – Commissioner Diana Kiesel

Commissioner Diana Kiesel was named the Jurist of the Year by the Washington State Bar Association Family Law Section. Commissioner Kiesel received her award in June at the Mid-Year Conference of the Washington State Bar Association Family Law Section.



### Liberty Bell Award – Daniel Badillo

The Young Lawyers Section of the Tacoma-Pierce County Bar Association honored Daniel Badillo (pictured on the left), Pierce County Superior Court Spanish Interpreter, with the non-attorney Liberty Bell Award during their annual Law Day Luncheon.

## SUPERIOR COURT RETIREMENTS



### JUDGE BRIAN TOLLEFSON

Judge Brian Tollefson, Pierce County Superior Court's most senior judge, announced his retirement in May of 2016. Judge Tollefson was elected to Superior Court in 1988 and had served continuously in that position, without opposition for over twenty-seven years. During that time he was on the Executive Committee, served as Presiding Judge, and worked on a number of local Superior Court committees. He was also active in the Washington State Superior Court Judges Association, with membership in several committees and participation on the Board of Trustees. Before being elected to the Superior Court bench, Judge Tollefson was an attorney in private law practice for ten years.



### JUDGE VICKI HOGAN

After 24 years of service with Pierce County Superior Court, Judge Vicki Hogan retired from the bench. Prior to being elected to the Pierce County Superior Court Bench in 1992, Judge Hogan served as a Pro Tem Judge/Commissioner for 11 years. Judge Hogan was also a private attorney in both Washington and California. Judge Hogan was an Adjunct Professor at the University of Puget Sound School of Law from 1985 through 1994. Judge Hogan served as Pierce County Superior Court's Presiding Judge in 1999 and 2000, served on the Court's Executive Committee for seven years and was the Criminal Division Presiding Judge in 2010.



### JUDGE RONALD CULPEPPER

Superior Court Judge Ronald E. Culpepper retired after 38 years of service with Pierce County. Judge Culpepper began as an extra-hire Commissioner in District Court on Oct. 9, 1978, and then a regular full-time District Court Commissioner on Sept. 24, 1987. In February of 2003 Ron became a Superior Court Judge, where he served up until his retirement. Santa Culpepper, as he was known around the County-City Building, has wrapped and delivered packages to needy families in Pierce County from the Court for twenty-five years.



### DEPUTY COURT ADMINISTRATOR BRUCE MORAN

Bruce Moran, Deputy Court Administrator for Superior Court announced his retirement in June of 2016. Bruce had been with Pierce County since 2007 and he completed 45 years of public service in law enforcement and the court system. Bruce began his career in 1971 as a Deputy Sheriff in Kitsap County and moved to Kitsap County Juvenile and Family Courts as a Probation Officer and Guardian ad Litem in 1979. Bruce moved to Okanogan County in 1990 and served as the Juvenile and Family Court Administrator for 17 years before moving to Pierce County.



### COMPUTER SUPPORT SPECIALIST MOHAMMAD SAATCHI

After 18 years of service with Pierce County Superior Court, Mohammad Saatchi has retired. Mohammad graduated from Washington State University in 1985 with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science. Mohammad joined Superior Court in 1998 as the Information Technology Specialist and later became their Court Computer Support Specialist.



## CONTACT US

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