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Greetings from the Clerk of the Superior Court

ello and welcome to the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court Office in Maricopa County. We are very pleased to present our **2018** - **2019** Annual Report. We hope you enjoy reading through it and learning about who we are and what we do. This report is designed to provide a summary of the achievements we made this past fiscal year, display our yearly statistics, and offer an overview of our leadership, organizational structure, office locations, and other important information.

The Clerk of the Court plays a vital role in the community. We serve a wide range of people through a variety of services and we strive to provide excellent service to our many customers. Our staff is a unique, talented, skilled group of individuals, who collectively come together to provide a single picture of quality, friendly, efficient service. In fact, our "collective efforts" is the theme of this report. Each staff person, no matter their role, is a very important piece to our overall goal of making the "US" in "Customer" a pleasant experience for those we serve.

Another important fact to note about our Office, is that despite being in existence for over 100 years, we are continually striving to look forward. We are not resting on just being a part of history, we are enthusiastically moving ahead to be an organization that is noted for making history through our innovative efforts and superb staff.

Thank you again for taking time to learn about the many pieces of our Office through this report.

The Clerk - Jeff Fine



Jeff Fine was sworn in as the new Clerk of the Superior Court on January 9, 2019. He was elected to the position by voters of Maricopa County in November 2018 and he is the 11th person to serve as the Clerk. As Clerk, Fine is the official record-keeper and financial officer for the Superior Court and is responsible for overseeing a staff of 690, a budget of nearly \$40 million, supporting close to 160 judges and commissioners, serving a constituency of over four million, and operating an office that serves one of the top five largest counties and trial court systems in the nation.

In leading the Office, Fine is focused on improving the customer experience, strengthening judicial/government partnerships, enhancing communication, and creating a positive and professional work environment for staff. Specifically, he is a strong advocate in leveraging technology and developing innovative strategies to make it easier for customers to access court services.

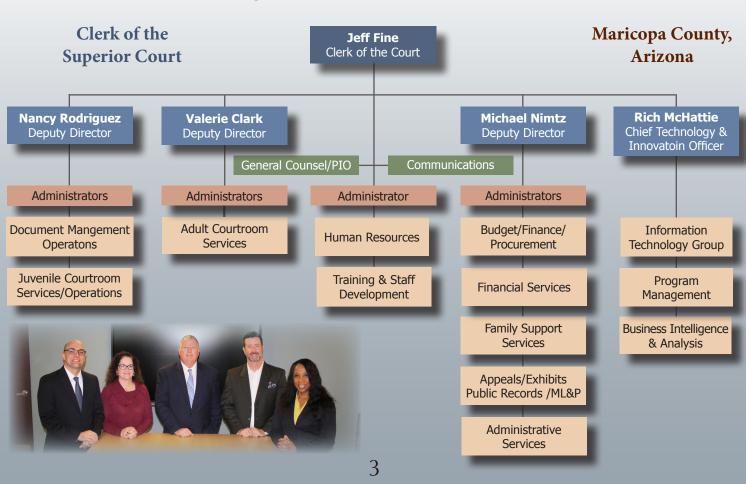
Prior to his election as Clerk, Fine served four years as the court administrator for the Maricopa County Justice Courts. Previous to that position, he was elected as a justice of the peace. Fine has also served as a police officer, court marshal, and court administrator for the City of Goodyear. In addition to his Judicial Branch service, he served over 20 years in the US Air Force on active duty and in the reserve.

Fine is also active in community and professional efforts by serving in several leadership roles with non-profit organizations and county/court committees. Fine was raised in the West Valley where he and his wife Kori (who is a professor at Grand Canyon University) and their four children reside.





Organizational Structure



The Overall Office Picture

The Clerk of the Superior Court's Office was established in the State Constitution to serve the citizens, legal community, and the Superior Court. The Office was created to be responsive to the public, mindful of the taxpayer, and independent of the court itself. The specific and special duties of the Office are assigned by statute, the Arizona Supreme Court, and local and statewide court rules.

The functions of the Clerk satisfy more than 500 state statutes and court rules.

Among the Office's responsibilities are to:

- provide public access to the records of the actions of Superior Court;
- keep a docket;
- attend each Superior Court session to record the actions of the court;
- receive filings for Superior Court actions in civil, criminal, mental health, probate, tax, juvenile, and family court matters;
- provide family support services to the public;
- ▷ collect and disburse court-ordered fees, fines, and victim restitution;
- store exhibits for all court cases;
- process passport applications; and
- ▷ issue and record marriage licenses.

The Office strives to provide progressive and efficient court-related records management and financial services for the justice system, legal community, and public so they have fair and timely access to accurate court records and services.

Clerk of the Superior Court

THE ELECTRONIC COURT RECORD (ECR)

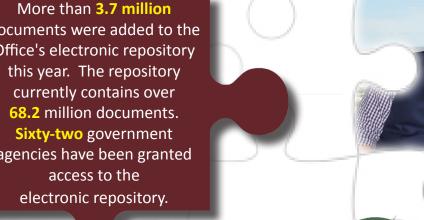
In 1997, the Office began scanning the paper documents it received to create an electronic court record. This initiative

began with Probate cases and expanded to other

court cases and records. In addition, in 2005 the Office began backscanning older cases to convert them to ECR. All of these electronic court records are stored in

an electronic repository.

documents were added to the Office's electronic repository this year. The repository currently contains over 68.2 million documents. Sixty-two government agencies have been granted access to the





ECR ONLINE PROGRAM

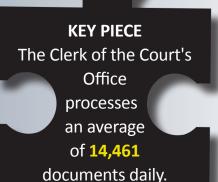
The Office has 24,573 attorneys and 64,197 self-represented litigants active in its ECR Online Program. ECR Online was implemented in 2007 to provide a secure, convenient method for attorneys and selfrepresented parties to register and view their case documents from their own computers rather than visit the Office.



In 2003, the Office implemented eFiling through a pilot project that allowed participating parties to electronically file case documents rather than physically file them at the filing counters. Through the years, eFiling expanded in the adult case types (except Probate) and mostly recently in Juvenile.

The Office received 989,141 eFiled documents this year, which is an 10% increase over last year's total.

The eFilings were in these case types:



ACCESSING THE ECR

The Office has 38 public access terminals in four locations (Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and the Customer Service Center) for customers to view the electronic court record.



390 passport applications were processed and **206** marriage licenses were issued on five different special Saturday Service Days this year.

SATURDAY SERVICE

In 2015, the Marriage Licenses and Passports Office in Downtown Phoenix opened its doors on select Saturdays

to extend the hours of service for customers. This service has continued to be offered each year and this year it was provided on five different Saturdays at two locations – the Customer Service Center in Downtown Phoenix and Northeast in Northeast Phoenix.





THE "CASE" OF EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION More than 100 employees and staff teams were recognized this year for their exemplary service through the Office's annual employee recognition event called "Celebrating And Saluting Employees (CASE). Employees were recognized in four categories: Excellence, Customer Service, Leadership, and Teamwork. Also during the event, other employees received service pins to honor their special milestone office anniversaries.

RESTITUTION SOLUTION

In 2009, the Office launched a program called Victim Locate (VL) to find the victims of crime who were not receiving their court-ordered restitution due to information that was either missing or outdated, often times due to an unreported change of address.

1,821 checks were disbursed in the amount of \$1,026,150 to the victims of crime this year. In total, 9,761 checks have been issued to victims through the Victim Locate Program. These checks have resulted in the disbursement of nearly \$3.1 million.



EXHIBITS UPGRADE

The Office upgraded more than **30** of its Exhibits Closet Doors and installed badge readers to increase security and improve the management of the exhibits. The Courtroom Clerks use the Exhibits Closets to store and secure the exhibits of a trial. Prior to this, the doors were key access.



TOP BILLING

For the past 20 years, the Billing and Deferral Unit has participated in Arizona's Tax Intercept Program which collects monies owed to the court through intercepting the tax returns from non-compliant individuals. For the third year in a row, the Unit finished first in Arizona among the participating court agencies. In total, the Unit collected \$2,076,876.



17,745 reservations were made this year on the Office's new Online Appointment Service.

NEW SERVICE OPTION

In January 2018, the Office launched a new service on its website that allowed customers to choose a date, time, and location to purchase a marriage license or process a passport application.

The locations for this new service are the Customer Service Center and the courts at Southeast, Northeast, and Northwest.





PROBATE/OLD COURTHOUSE NEWS

At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Office's Probate File Counter (located in the Old Courthouse) moved to the Central Court Building File Counter (201 W. Jefferson St., 1st Fl., Phoenix). The change was the result of Superior Court moving its probate functions to the East Court Building. All probate documents are now filed at the new Office location.

In other notable news, the OCH celebrated its **90th year anniversary** this year. The OCH opened in 1929. A special event was held commemorating the special occasion of the historic building.

EXPANDING NEW CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In 2012, an automated customer management system that provided a more efficient process to serve customers

was installed at the Downtown File Counter. Among its many benefits is it alleviated customers from having to stand in line. The system, called Qmatic, was then implemented at the Northwest and Southeast Offices.

In its first six months of operation, 44,165 customers were served using the new customer service management system at the NE Office

and the Customer Service Center. The final installment of Qmatic Office occurred this year at Northeast.



represents both the English and Spanish lines.

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Barbara Navarro was selected as the Office's Employee of the Year (EoY). Navarro serves as a Courtroom Clerk and consistently goes above and beyond to assist the Office and her co-workers. The honorees for the EOY Award are first nominated by other Clerk of Court staff members and selected as an Employee of the Quarter. The EoY winner is then selected from the EoQ honorees. Barbara received a record amount of nominations for the EOQ award by her peers.



5,762 documents were eFiled during the first year of offering eFiling in juvenile delinquency cases.

eFILE EXPANSION IN JUVENILE

Last year, the Office implemented eFiling in the Juvenile case type for the first time starting with the juvenile deliquency subsequent filings. In this first phase, attorneys, and self-represented parties involved with delinquency cases are able to electronically file case documents after the case has been initiated.



UPCOMING FINANCIAL MOVE

The development of a new financial application (called New RFR) that will manage the court-ordered victim restitution occurred throughtout the year. Staff also began training for the application. See page 17 "Future Fits" for more detail.



ENHANCING COMMUNICATION

Newly-elected Clerk of the Court Jeff Fine established new communications sessions to meet with staff, answer questions, address current topics, and communicate other news. Other communication enhancements of his include upgrading the social media efforts, developing a new website, creating new video communications, providing office tours, creating new communication avenues for employees, and holding special strategy sessions with the Office leadership to identify the future course for the Office.

NEW EMPLOYEE INITIATIVE

In 2017, the Office developed an Onboard Program to provide new staff members with the tools, support, and knowledge needed for a successful transition to the organization. This initiative was designed to increase employee engagement and productivity and reduce turnover.

More than 125 new employees went through the Office's newly implemented 90-day OnBoarding Program that is designed to help new staff have a successful start and to decrease turnover.



National
Association of County
Information Officers.

from the

NEW OPTION FOR CERTIFIED DOCUMENTS

The Office's public access terminals now have a new Certified Documents option. Customers can request electronically certified documents from these terminals, and pick them up in paper format at the Public Records Counter. Customers can select from active or inactive cases. Confidential documents, marriage licenses, wills, probate letters, exemplified (2-seal) or authenticated (3-seal) documents, and any document being used for Social Security are not available for electronic certification using the new Certified Documents option.



Additional Pieces

\$42,216,945

the Office's operating budget



\$603.778

the average monies the office processes daily

9.133 -

the daily average transactions through the Cash Management System

620.070

the amount of receipts created in the Office's Receipting System, which totaled \$139,326,196



(602) 37-CLERK -

The Office's main phone number.

Twitter -

The Office's feed is named @MaricopaClerk

Facebook -

The Office's page is named Clerk of Superior Court in Maricopa County

The Brief -

a bi-monthly publication that provides Office information for the legal community. To subscribe send an email making the request to: coccustomerrelations@mail.maricopa.gov

Website -

the Office's address is clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov

Email

to contact the Office via email, send an inquiry to: coccustomerrelations@mail.maricopa.gov



Additional Pieces



Adoption Day

The Office participated in Superior Court's National Adoption Day Event, which resulted in the adoption of 168 children.

On Feb. 14 (Valentine's Day), the Office experienced the secondhighest daily record in the issuance of marriage licenses when Valentine's Day falls on a Thursday. A total of 120 couples purchased a license. The highest amount of marriage licenses issued on a Thursday Valentine's Day was 132 in 2013. The alltime Valentine's Day record is 221, which occurred on a Friday in 2014.

Veteran's Stand Down Project -

Clerk staff worked with Superior Court to participate in the **Arizona Veteran's Stand Down Project** by setting up remote courtrooms to hear cases involving veterans. This year, a total of 142 hearings and 170 ex-parte motions were conducted. In addition, the Office's Criminal Financial Obligations Unit completed 180 cases and the File Counter assisted 30 veterans with court case issues and 26 veterans with Restoration of Rights applications.

Child Support Arrest Warrant Workshop -

Clerk of Court staff assisted in handling payments for the third-ever Child Support Arrest Warrant Workshop hosted by the Superior Court. The workshop provided parties, who owe support monies, to come to the workshop, make at least one month payment of their obligation, agree to participate in court services, and in turn their warrant was quashed. As a result of the event, \$9,397 was collected in child support.

Community Spirit -

Clerk staff donated \$1,872 to the County's Combined Charitable Campaign, plus 148 pairs of socks to the homeless and 140 new toys for children in need during the holidays. In addition, the NE staff donated 6,312 bottles of water during the County Water Drive for the homeless.



New Cases Filed

The Filing Counters are the starting point for the majority of Superior Court cases.

	18/19 - 25,878
Civil	17/18 - 26,228
	16/17 - 27,898
	18/19 - 60,307
Criminal	17/18 - 57,107
	16/17 - 53,881
	18/19 - 912
Tax	17/18 - 922
555	16/17 - 659

18/19 - 34,618	
Family 17/18 - 36,591	
16/17 - 36,943	
18/19 - 16,489	
Juvenile 17/18 - 17,627	
16/17 - 18,534	

Probate/	18/19 - 17,742
Mental	17/18 - 17,231
Health	16/17 - 14,618

Total New Case Filings - 18/19 = 155,946

Alternative Filings (Adult Case Types Only)

The Office has internal and external filing depository boxes to provide an alternative to filing documents at the filing counter. The external boxes are available 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. The internal boxes are available 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday.

External Filing 18/19 - 21,266
17/18 - 36,781
16/17 - 29,609



Internal Filing 18/19

17/18

18/19 - 56,026

17/18 - 46,376

16/17 - 56,578

Total Alternative Filings - 18/19 = 77,292

Insight

Initiative

Innovation



A minute entry is a written record of court hearings and judges' rulings on cases.

Adult	18/19 - 458,650 17/18 - 479,352 16/17 - 515,584	MEs created Juvenile	18/19 - 76,264 17/18 - 82,170 16/17 - 90,234
Adult	18/19 - 1,447,261 17/18 - 1,127,204 16/17 - 1,315,848	MEs emailed for distribution to attorneys, agencies, departments	18/19 - 399,314 17/18 - 433,926 16/17 - 469,883
Adult	18/19 - 214,295 17/18 - 232,357 16/17 - 242,667	MEs printed for distribution to Self-represented parties	18/19 - 52,005 17/18 - 56,478 16/17 - 58,043

Total Minute Entries Created - 18/19 = 534,914

Average MEs Distributed Daily = 8,451

Family Support Services

Family Support Services sends Withholding Orders to the obligor's employer, who is required to withhold, modify, or terminate withholding support money from their employee's wages. Withholdings are directed to the Support Payment Clearinghouse, who distributes the funds to the obligee.



Action

Accessible

Achievement

Marriage Licenses (MLs) & Passport Applications

License Services issues marriage licenses and also acts as an acceptance agent for passport applications.

	18/19 - 39,948
Passports	17/18 - 43,107
TIM	16/17 - 59,100

Marriage Licenses 18/19 - 23,433 17/18 - 22,957 16/17 - 23,507

Recording Services

Recording Services track marriage licenses (MLs) for Maricopa County and provides certified copies of marriage licenses.

	18/19 - 23,571
MLs Recorded	17/18 - 25,501
recorded	16/17 - 24,479

Certified	18/19 - 22,837
ML	17/18 - 21,437
Copies	16/17 - 18,806

Exhibits Processed and Released (Adult and Juvenile)

The **Exhibits Department** receives and stores exhibits accepted into evidence, as well as materials related to Grand Jury.

	18/19 - 135,096
Adult	17/18 - 157,549
	16/17 - 247,409

5 6 9 8	18/19 - 18,318
Juvenile	17/18 - 18,984
5500	16/17 - 29,072

Partnership

Professionalism

Progress

Billing/Deferral Unit

Billing/Deferral establishes time payment accounts for persons who have filing fees deferred, jury fee judgments, fines, incarcerated persons who file cases, businesses with commercial accounts, and complex litigation cases that require additional fees.

Receivables 17/18 - \$3,771,478 Collected

18/19 - \$4,336,895

16/17 - \$3,861,712

Criminal Financial **Obligations (CFO)**

CFO disburses all court-ordered financial sanctions, including restitution payments to victims of crime.

Monies Disbursed 18/19 - \$11,144,775

17/18 - \$9,678,760

16/17 - \$12,350,829

Monies In Trust

The Office holds certain funds in trust for the Court (such as appearance bonds, cost bonds, funds deposited for a preliminary injunction, eminent domain funds, and funds deposited for a temporary restraining order). The funds are released from the Trust pursuant to an order of the court.

Funds Released 18/19 - \$58,709,335

17/18 - \$51,383,760

16/17 - \$48,078,485

Accounts **Established** 18/19 - 6,253

17/18 - 5,573

16/17 - 5,369

Total Accounts **Established** 18/19 - \$65,363,242

17/18 - \$38,321,486

16/17 - \$64,129,668

Collaboration

Communication

Commitment

Appeals Filed

The **Appeals** Unit processes incoming appeals filed with the Clerk's Office.

Adult 18/19 -2,513

Juvenile 18/19 - 486

Water Case Update

The Water Case is a lengthy series of proceedings initiated in 1979 designed to determine ownership of surface water rights in Arizona. The Office maintains the claims and provides document access to litigants and the public.

The Case

currently consists of **10,729** documents

The Case

currently consists of **640** volumes

**The official name of the Water Case is the Arizona General Stream Adjudication. Since Maricopa County has the largest number of potential claimants, the Office is responsible for the record-keeping for the entire adjudication process.

Process Server

The Office monitors the certification of private process servers in Maricopa County.

Applicants Tested 18/19 - 68

Application Renewals 18/19 - 207

Dispositions Reported

The disposition is the outcome of a criminal case and it is reported to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to update criminal history.

Dispositions Reported to DPS 18/19 - 55,398

17/18 - 51,227

16/17 - 52,149

Feedback

Focus

Forward



25 Years Ago (from the 1993/1994 Annual Report)

➤ The Office began a pilot program of placing bar codes on the hard copy court files so that when a request was made to view the file it could be scanned out and back in to allow for an enhanced file tracking program. Update - In 2007, a new era began when the office stopped placing paper documents into hard copy files and hard copy folders stopped being created to hold the paper documents. Instead, the paper documents received were scanned and converted into an



electronic court record (ECR). The ECR allows multiple people to view a case simultaneously from their own computers or a public terminal rather than visit the Public Records Counter. In addition, as a result of the ECR, today there are very few shelving units containing hard copy folders in the Office's Fileroom.

20 Years Ago (from the 1998/1999 Annual Report)

➤ The Office's website was selected as one of the Top 10 Court websites in the nation by court management/justice experts. Update - Since that time, the website has received other awards and this fiscal year a team has worked to complete a streamlined design that provides new functionalities. The new website is set to launch in January 2020. See next page for more detail.

15 Years Ago (from the 2003/2004 Annual Report)

Construction of a new 263,000 square-foot Durango Juvenile Court facility was completed. The Clerk's Office moved into the 1st floor of the building to provide various juvenile-related services. **Update** - Today, the Office has more than 45 staff members serving in the building who work as courtroom clerks, at the file counter, in document management, and in other customer service functions.



10 Years Ago (from the 2008/2009 Annual Report)

The Office's "Case History Index" was made available online. **Update** - The online publication provides statistical and historical information about the court cases the Office has handled since 1871. It is still available on the Office's website today.



5 Years Ago (from the 2013/2014 Annual Report)

The total actions filed with the Clerk's Office from its creation in 1871 through the end of that fiscal year surpassed the four-million mark - 4,461,870 (which included all case categories with the exception of Juvenile cases, the Water case, and marriage licenses). Update - This year it surpassed the five-million mark with 5,188,970.



Major financial upgrade



For the past several years, the Office has worked to upgrade its financial systems. Recent advancements include implementing a new Receipting System, General Ledger system, and upgrading the RevQ Billing System. The next major initiative is implementing a new RFR (Restitution, Fines, & Reimbursement) system, which manages receipt and disbursement of the court-ordered victim restitution. The

current system has been in use for 23 years and in the past five years alone, the Office has distributed more than \$50 million in restitution to victims through the program. The new RFR application, which was implemented just prior to the publication of this report, features greater search functionality, advanced reporting, enhanced navigation, increased application security, improved efficiencies, and have platforms to develop future projects such as the ability to make online payments.

Option to make payments online

A major initiative for the Office is to implement the ability for customers to make payments online through the Office's website. Presently, payments are made at the filing counters, through the mail, over the phone, and across judicial-partner agencies. Planning for the initial implementation of this project is underway.



Care to Chat

The Office is developing a Virtual Assistant powered by Artificial Intelligence technology from IBM (Watson) that will interact with the public to answer questions that typically come through phone calls or emails. You can even text the Virtual Assistant or ask Alexa.

Expanding eFiling service

Last year, eFiling began in the Juvenile case type for the first time for delinquency cases only. Plans to expand eFiling for the other nine Juvenile case types are moving forward.

Newly-designed website to appear

The Office is set to launch a new website in the calendar year. The new website will have an improved appearance and functionality. In addition, the new website will offer streamlined content and have design improvements that make it easier to navigate, especially on a mobile device. Information will be provided that will help people find what they need faster and it will feature new options like online chat.

Other future initiatives



The Office is working on developing and publishing of a new Strategic Agenda that will outline major categories of emphasis for the Office including: leveraging technology and innovation, partnering with other judicial entities, focusing on the customer experience, new internal/external communication initiatives, and employee engagement.



14264 W. Tierra Buena Lane Surprise, AZ 85374

South Court Tower

175 W. Madison, Phoenix, AZ 85003

Southeast Adult

222 E. Javelina, Mesa, AZ 85210

Downtown

East Court, 101 W. Jefferson Central Court, 201 W. Jefferson West Court, 111 S. Third Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85003

Durango Juvenile

3131 W. Durango Phoenix, AZ 85009

Southeast Juvenile

1810 S. Lewis Mesa, AZ 85210

Customer Service Center



