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# 13TH CIRCUIT COURT

ANTRIM COUNTY  
GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY  
LEELANAU COUNTY



## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

*[www.13thcircuitcourt.com](http://www.13thcircuitcourt.com) / (231)922-4701 / [c13court@13thcircuitcourt.org](mailto:c13court@13thcircuitcourt.org)*

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Antrim County Courthouse  
203 E. Cayuga St.  
Bellaire, MI 49615



Grand Traverse County Courthouse  
328 Washington St.  
Traverse City, MI 49684



Leelanau County Courthouse  
8527 E. Government Center Dr.  
Suttons Bay, MI 49684



Circuit Court cases are separated into the following categories: Appellate, Civil, Domestic Relations, Adult Personal Protection, Proceedings Under the Juvenile Code, Proceedings Under the Adoption Code, Miscellaneous Family/Ancillary. The Appellate category includes Criminal Appeals, Civil Appeals, Agency Appeals (Administrative Agency, Employment Security Commission, Secretary of State, and Parole Board decisions), and Other Appeals (habeas corpus, superintending control and writs). The Civil category includes General Civil (business claims, condemnation, employment discrimination, environments, forfeiture claims, housing & real estate, contracts, labor relations, antitrust/franchising/trade regulations, corporate receivership and general civil), Auto Negligence (property damage, no-fault insurance and personal injury), Other Civil Damage (medical malpractice, other professional malpractice, other personal injury, products liability, dramship act and other damage suits), and Other Civil (proceedings to restore/establish/correct records, claim & delivery, receivers in supplemental proceedings, supplemental proceedings and miscellaneous proceedings). The Domestic Relations category includes Divorce with Minor Children, Divorce Without Children, Paternity, UIFSA (assist with discovery and establishment), Support, and Other Domestic (custody and other domestic relations matters). The Adult Personal Protection category includes Domestic Relations and Non-Domestic Relations. The Juvenile Code category include Designated Juvenile Offenses, Delinquency Proceedings, Traffic and Local Ordinance, Child Protective Proceedings and Juvenile Personal Protection Actions. The Adoption Code category includes Petitions for Adoptions (adult, agency international, direct placement, relative, safe delivery of newborn, non-relative guardian, step-parent and other). The Miscellaneous Family/Ancillary category includes emancipation of a minor, infectious disease, safe delivery of newborn child, name change, young adult voluntary foster care, violation proceedings on out-of-county personal protection orders, adult conservatorship, minor conservatorship, developmental disability guardianship, adult guardianship, limited guardianship of adult, minor guardianship, limited guardianship of minor, protective orders, judicial admission and mental commitment.

## CASE MANAGEMENT

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court serves Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties. The Circuit Court handles all civil cases with claims in excess of \$25,000, all felony criminal cases, requests for injunctive relief and domestic relations matters. Additionally, the Judges hear cases appealed from other trial courts or from administrative agencies. The Circuit Court judges preside over matters in Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties. In 2022, Judge Elsenheimer served as the Thirteenth Circuit Court's Chief Judge. The Family Divisions of the Thirteenth Circuit Court handle all juvenile criminal cases, child abuse and neglect cases, guardianships of juveniles and adoption proceedings. The Probate Judge for each County is also the presiding Judge of the Family Division in the county where he or she was elected. In 2022, Judge Elsenheimer served as the Chief Probate Judge for Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau counties. The Circuit Court follows the mandated timelines schedule as delineated in the Michigan Court Rules and Administrative Orders to efficiently manage and dispose of its cases. Once a new case has been opened, the Court issues a Scheduling Order providing time guidelines for the processing of the case and establishing dates when future actions should begin or be completed with regard to the case. The primary goal of the Court Administrator's staff is to ensure that cases are kept current and the docket remains up to-date.



13TH CIRCUIT COURT - HON. THOMAS G. POWER

Watch  
live!



<http://gtcml.us/judgepower>



13TH CIRCUIT COURT - HON. KEVIN A. ELSENHEIMER

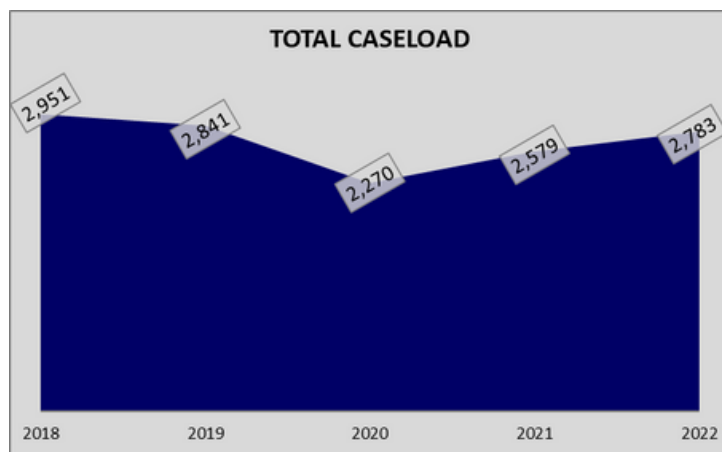
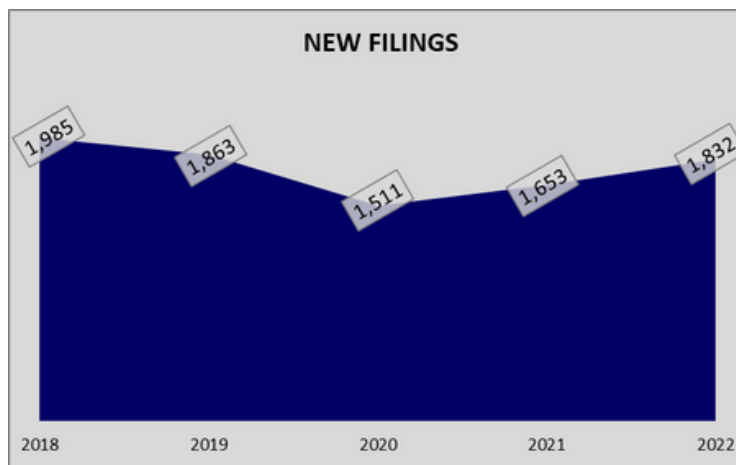
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live!



<http://gtcml.us/judgeelsenheimer>

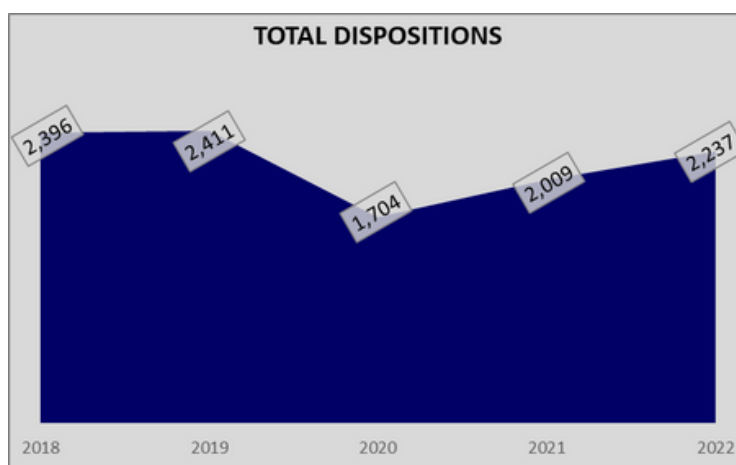
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In 2022, the number of **newly filed** civil cases in the Thirteenth Circuit Court was 1,832. This is an increase from the number of new civil cases filed in the previous year.

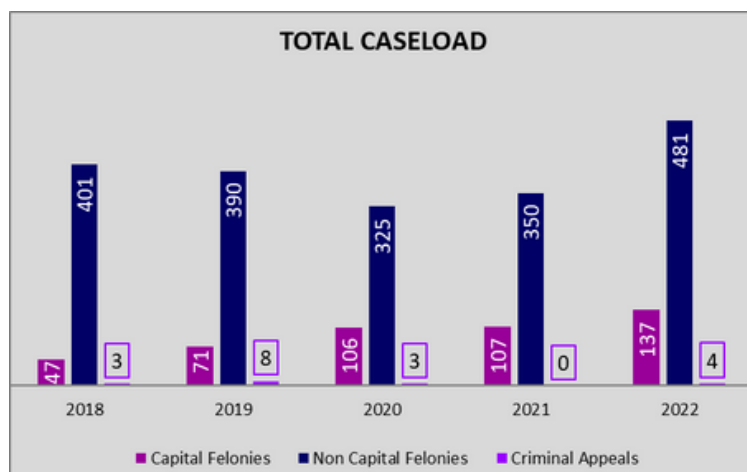
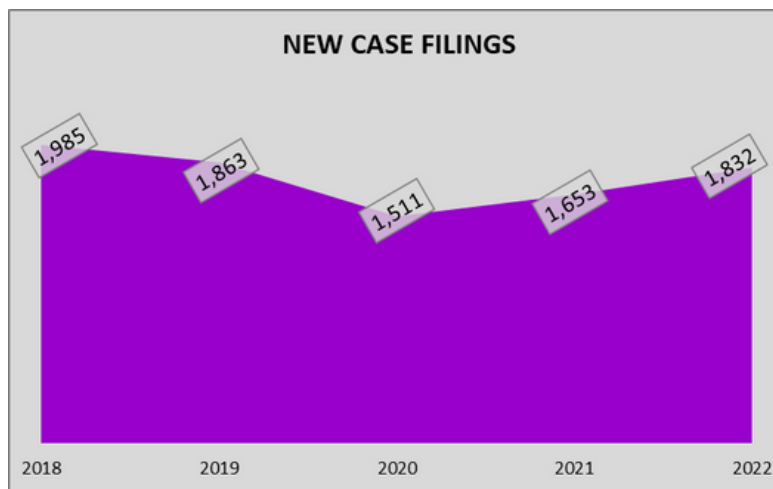


The Thirteenth Circuit Court's **total caseload** consists of cases that were still pending when the year began, cases that were re-opened and all newly filed cases. In 2022, the Thirteenth Circuit Court's total civil caseload increased.

In 2022, the Court **disposed** of 2,237 civil cases. The primary method of disposition, at 30%, was settlement by the parties. Other disposition methods included, but were not limited to: jury or bench trials, dismissal by the parties or the Court, entry of orders by the Court, denial either ex parte or after a hearing, withdrawal by a petitioner, transfer, deferral or case type change.

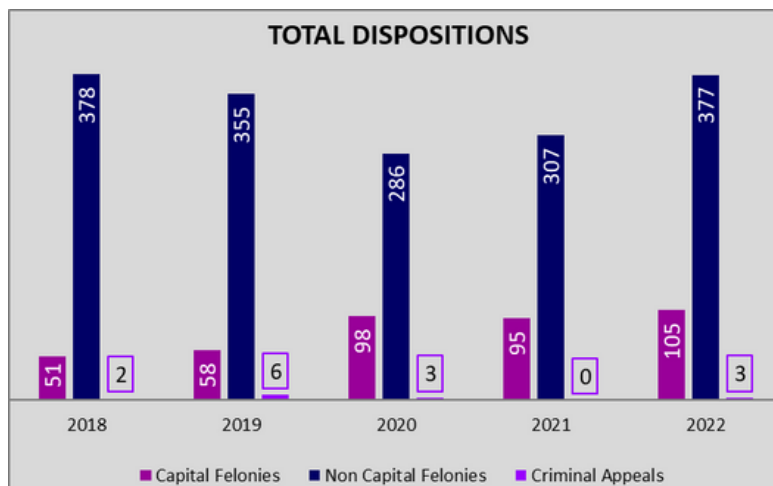


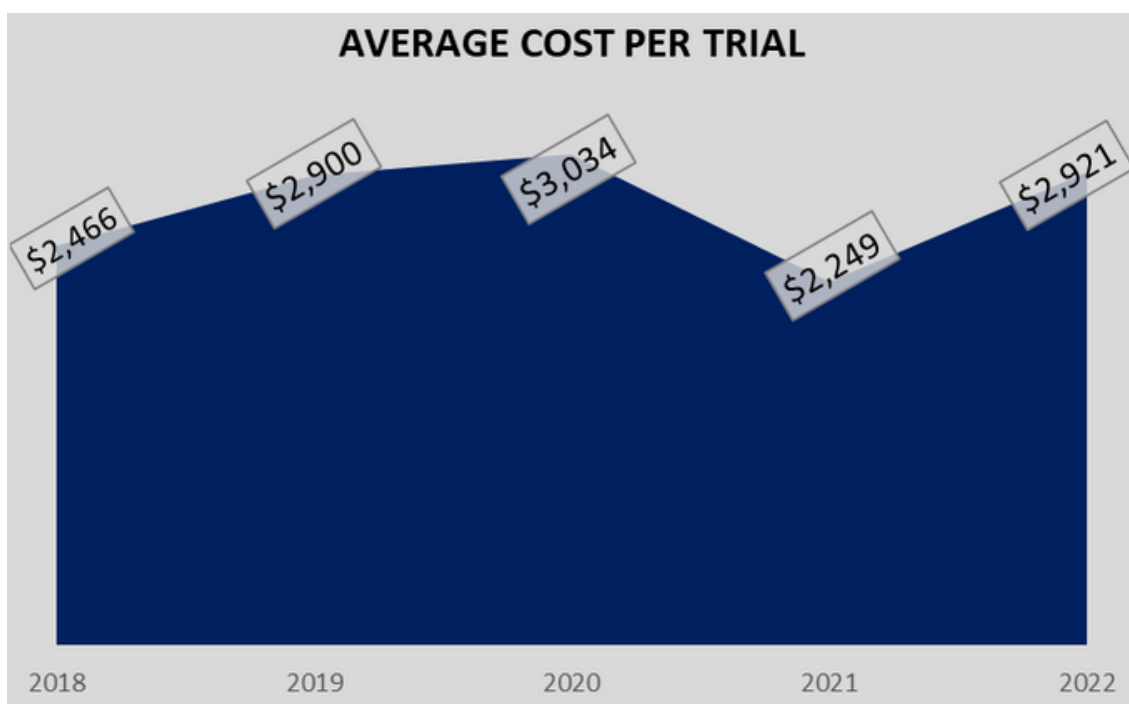
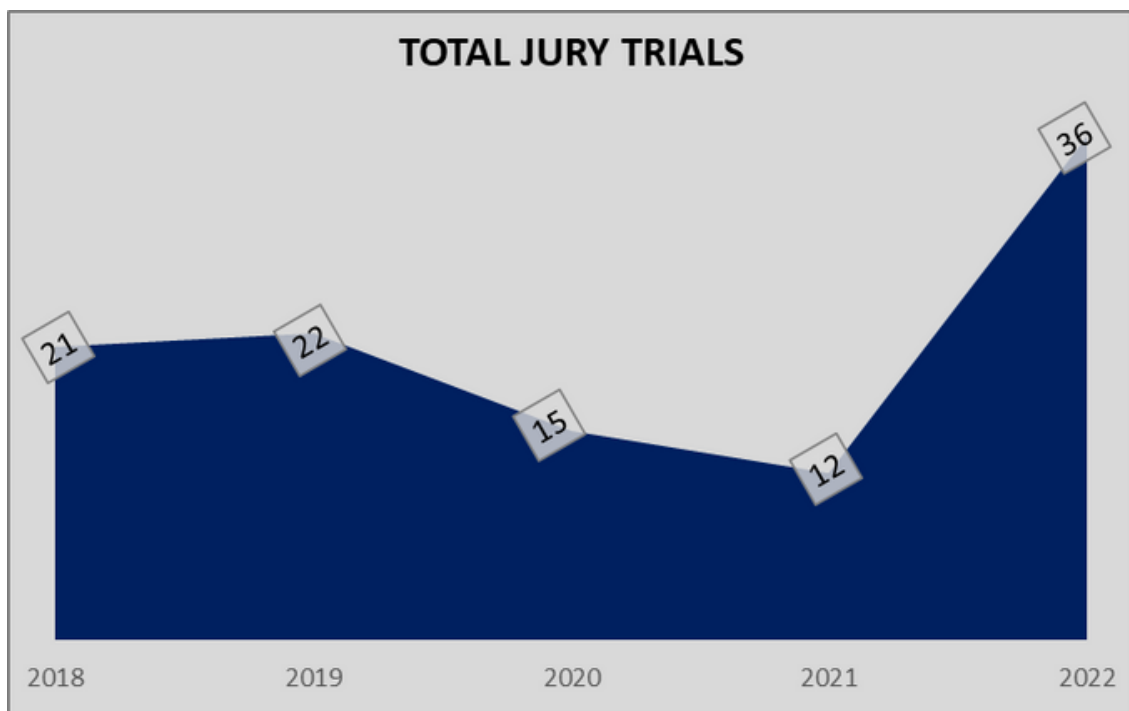
In 2022, the number of **newly filed** capital felony cases (in which the maximum sentence is lifetime imprisonment), the number of non-capital felony cases and the number criminal appeals all increased.



The Circuit Court's **total caseload** consists of cases that were still pending when the year began, cases that were re-opened, and all newly filed cases. In 2022, the Thirteenth Circuit Court's total criminal caseload for capital felonies, non capital felonies and criminal appeals all increased.

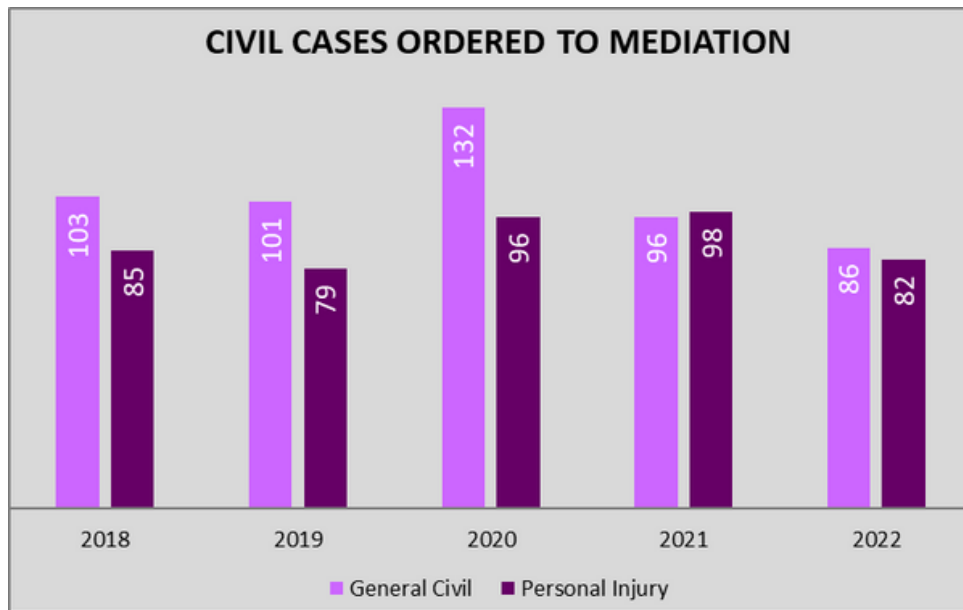
In 2022, the Court **disposed** of 485 criminal cases. Guilty pleas resulted in the greatest number of dispositions, with the Court receiving 57 guilty pleas in Antrim County, 259 in Grand Traverse County and 25 in Leelanau County.



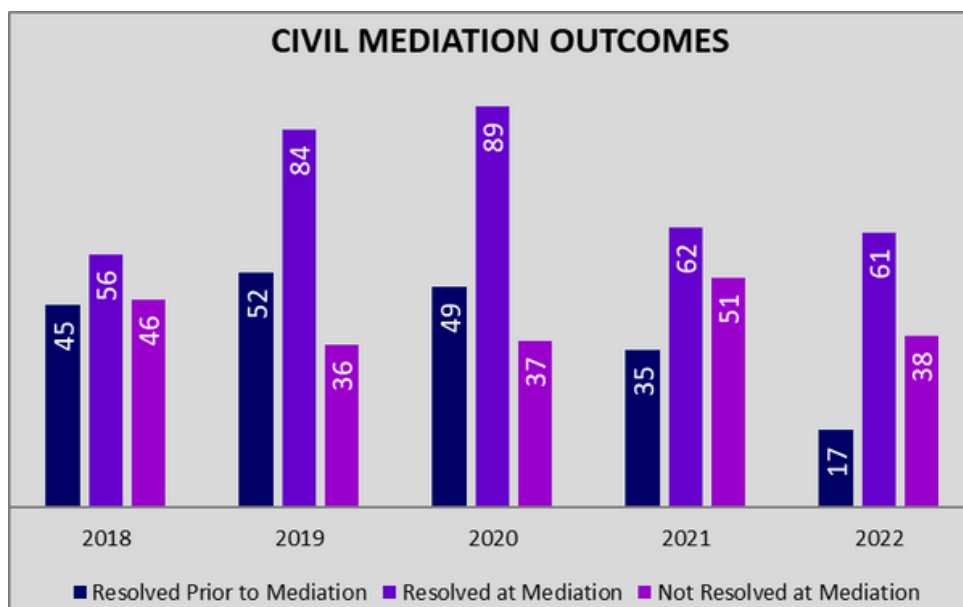


In 2022, the Thirteenth Circuit Court conducted a total of **36 jury trials**.

In order to limit public health risk and establish parameters for conducting in-person jury trials during a pandemic, the Court continued Local Administrative Order 2020-09. These parameters incorporated safety protocols such as health screening all participants, remote participation of attorneys and witnesses when possible, social distancing, contract tracing, and enhanced sanitization and disinfection of facilities. Furthermore, jury selection continued to be conducted at off-site locations under specific circumstances that could accommodate the necessary social distancing guidelines.



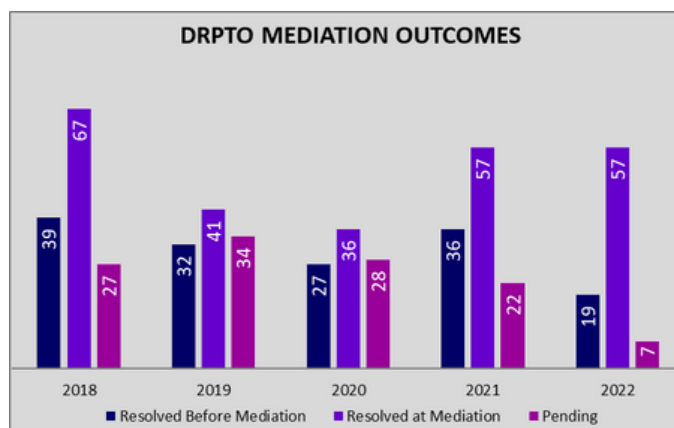
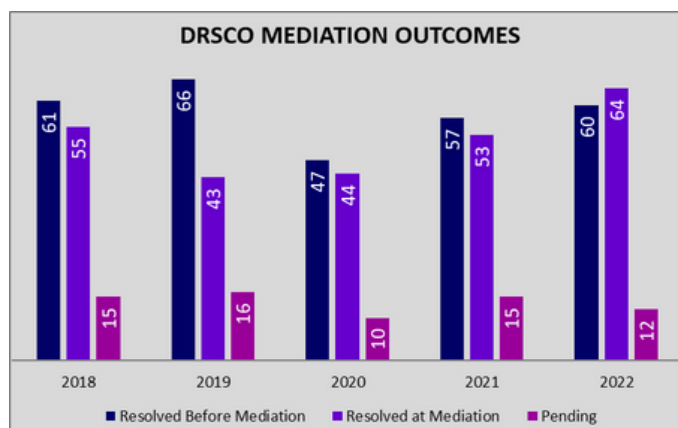
Facilitative mediation is an alternative dispute resolution process in which a neutral third-party facilitates confidential communications between the parties in an attempt to help them reach a mutually agreeable resolution. In mediation, solutions are generated by the parties; whereas, in litigation, the resolution of a conflict is imposed upon the parties by the Court. In 2022, 168 total cases were ordered into mediation, with 151 actually mediated.



**40%**  
SETTLED AT MEDIATION



In 2022, 379 cases were ordered to facilitative mediation via a Domestic Relations Scheduling Conference Order (DRSCO) or a Domestic Relations Pre-Trial Order (DRPTO). DRSCOs are generated by the Court when a divorce matter is filed, whereas DRPTOs can be generated either before or after a Judgment of Divorce has been entered when there are child related issues such as, paternity, support, custody and UIFSA registration.



## 2022 Mediator of the year: Sara C. Vyncke

The 13th Circuit Court approves ADR mediators based on their character, experience and training. Since 2018, the Court has issued a "Mediator of the Year" award to a renowned mediator who demonstrates honesty, integrity and impartiality in providing court-connected dispute resolution services. The recipient of the 2022 Mediator of the Year award is Sara C. Vyncke. Sara is the founder of the firm Legacy Legal Group, PLC and has been practicing law since 2007. She has mediated over 150 cases.

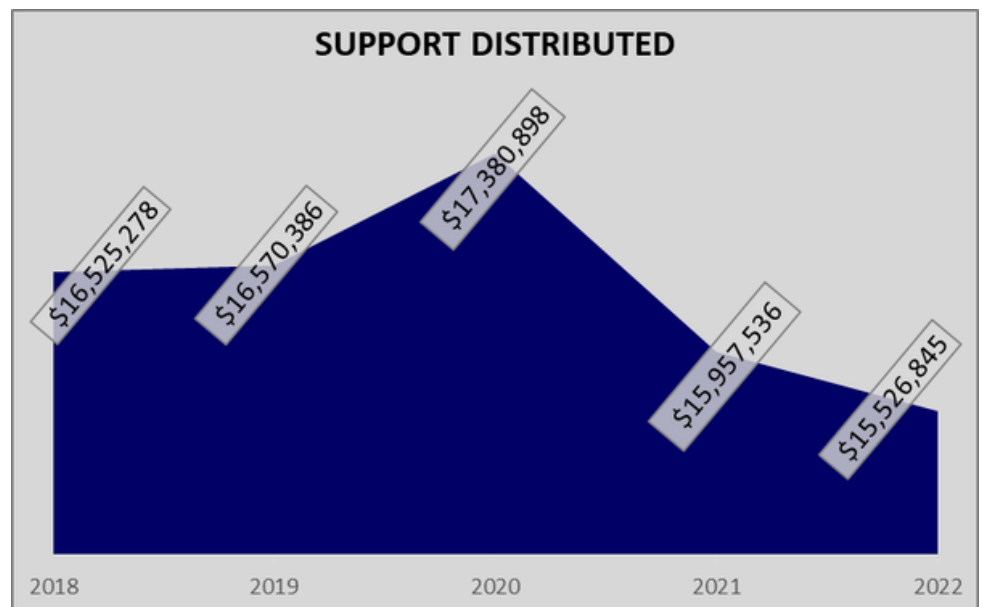
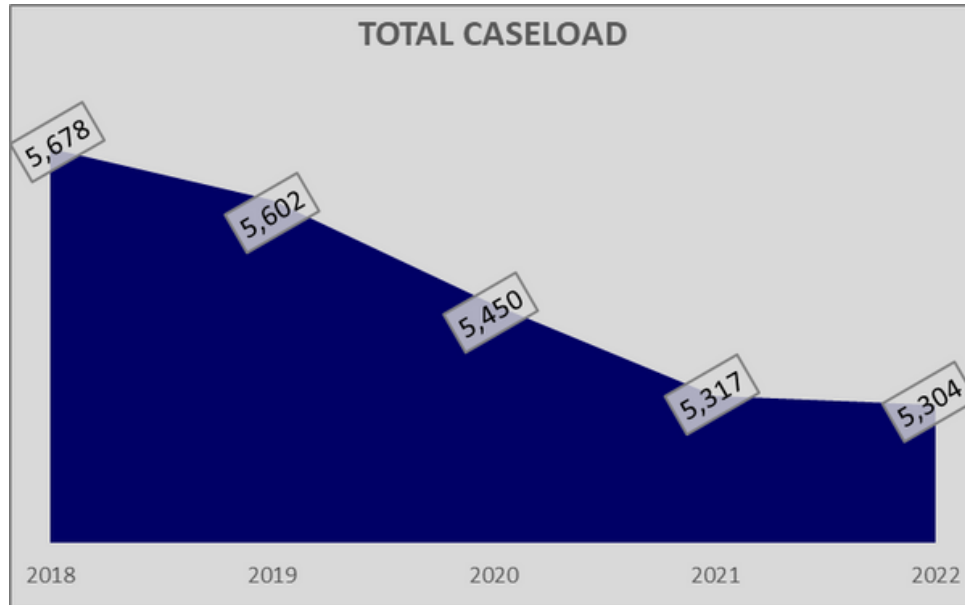


# 40%

SETTLED AT MEDIATION



The Friend of the Court (FOC) assists the Circuit Court by providing enforcement of Court Orders relating to child support, health care, spousal support, parenting time/custody and investigating, evaluating and submitting recommendations to the Court on contested domestic relations matters.



In 2022, the FOC conducted a total of 693 investigations and reviews, including: 17 parenting-time investigations, 381 child support reviews, 294 other support investigations and 1 miscellaneous/other review. The FOC also registered 81 orders pursuant to the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act, sent 520 National Medical Support notices, issued 384 bench warrants, and generated 153 custody and parenting time notices.

The FOC's total revenue is composed of support judgment fees, custody and parenting time judgment fees, license reinstatement fees, service fees, incentive payments, returns for IV-D services, and program and non-program income. The total amount of support distributed includes child support, spousal support, extraordinary medical expenses and birthing costs.

**ANTRIM:** In 2022, 116 new domestic relations cases were filed with the Antrim County Family Division. The total domestic relations caseload consisted of 170 cases, with the Court disposing of 113 cases. The total juvenile caseload consisted of 53 cases. There were 46 new juvenile filings: 41 delinquency cases and five child protective cases. Further, in 2022, there were six children associated with new child protective filings and the Court served as temporary legal guardian for two children. The Court also finalized 15 adoptions, processed 65 adult personal protection actions and disposed of 23 miscellaneous family actions.

Antrim County Courthouse



Grand Traverse County Courthouse



**GRAND TRAVERSE:** In 2022, 470 new Domestic Relations cases were filed with the Grand Traverse County Family Division. The total domestic relations caseload consisted of 879 cases, with the Court disposing of 712 cases. The total juvenile caseload consisted of 310 cases. There were 262 new juvenile filings: 237 delinquency cases, two traffic cases, 18 child protective cases and five personal protection actions. The Court supervised 73 juveniles in 2022. Further, there were 32 children associated with new child protective filings and the Court served as temporary legal guardian for 48 children. The Court also finalized 24 adoptions, processed 303 adult personal protection actions and disposed of 66 miscellaneous family actions.

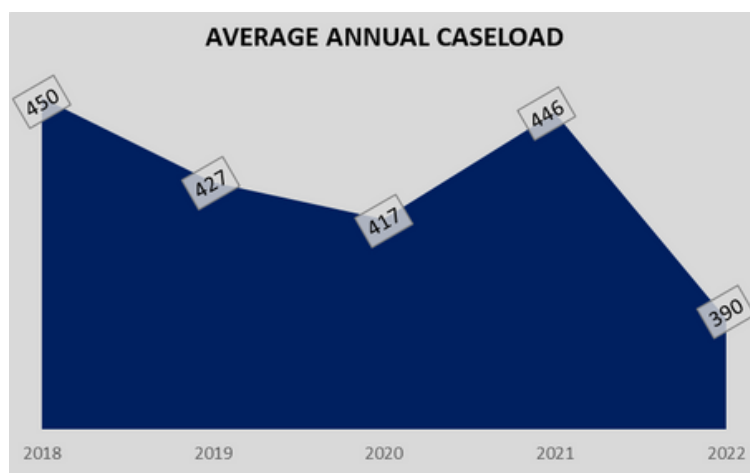
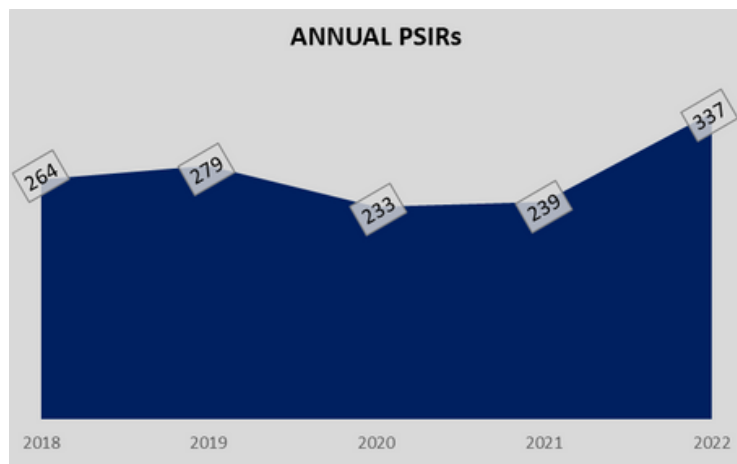
**LEELANAU:** In 2022, 92 new Domestic Relations cases were filed with the Leelanau County Family Division. The total domestic relations caseload consisted of 132 cases, with the Court disposing of 96 cases. The total juvenile caseload consisted of 32 cases. There were 29 new juvenile filings: 23 delinquency cases and six child protective cases. Further, in 2022 there were 12 children associated with new child protective filings and the Court served as temporary legal guardian for two children. The Court also finalized two adoptions, processed 26 adult personal protection actions and disposed of three miscellaneous family actions.

Leelanau County Courthouse



As employees of the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) assigned to local courts, staff supervise convicted offenders that fall within the Thirteenth Circuit Court's jurisdiction. The probation/parole staff maintain close working relations with court personnel, law enforcement, Community Corrections and many other area partners to assure public safety and ensure offenders are well supervised. In 2022, the MDOC was partially staffed with eight agents and two secretaries covering the tri-county area. The MDOC averaged an annual caseload of 390 cases between the three counties in 2022, specifically 61 cases in Antrim County, 297 in Grand Traverse County and 32 in Leelanau County. In addition to supervising MDOC clients, each probation/parole agent must complete a Pre-Sentence Investigation Report (PSIR) for every Circuit Court conviction as well as supplement reports for follow up and re-sentencings. The PSIR includes the scoring from the Michigan Sentencing Guidelines and a detailed summary of the individual's history, which is then used by the Circuit Court judges as a tool to assist in determining the appropriate sentence for the crime committed and the specific offender. In 2022, 337 new PSIRs were created for the Thirteenth Circuit Court, including 54 for Antrim County, 257 for Grand Traverse County, and 26 for Leelanau County.

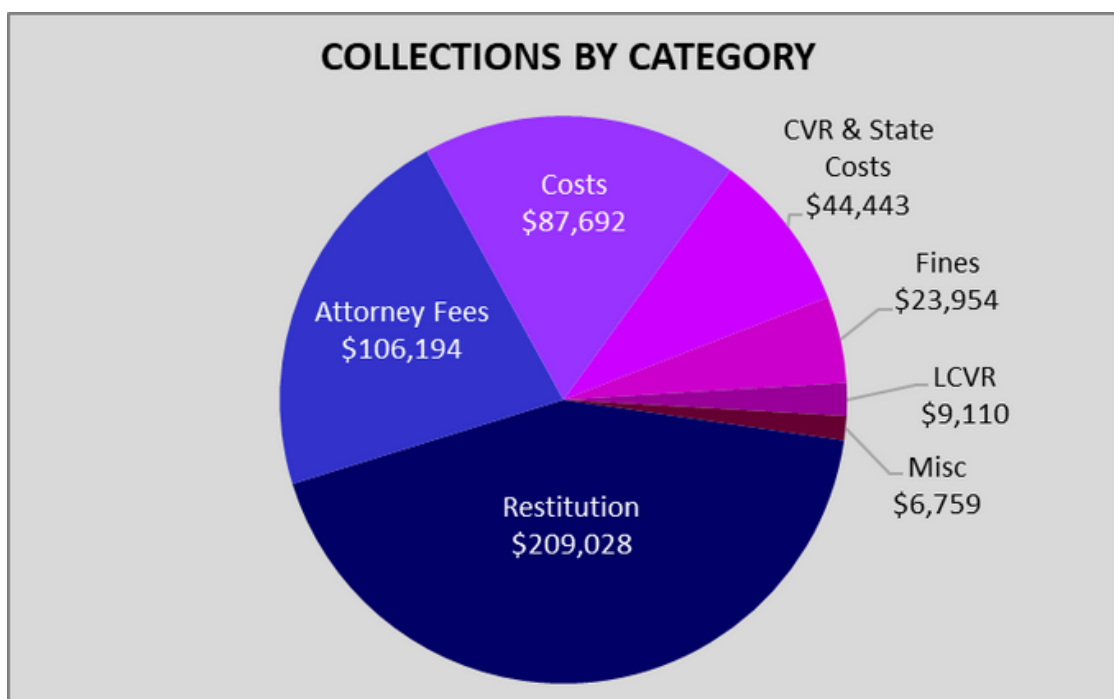
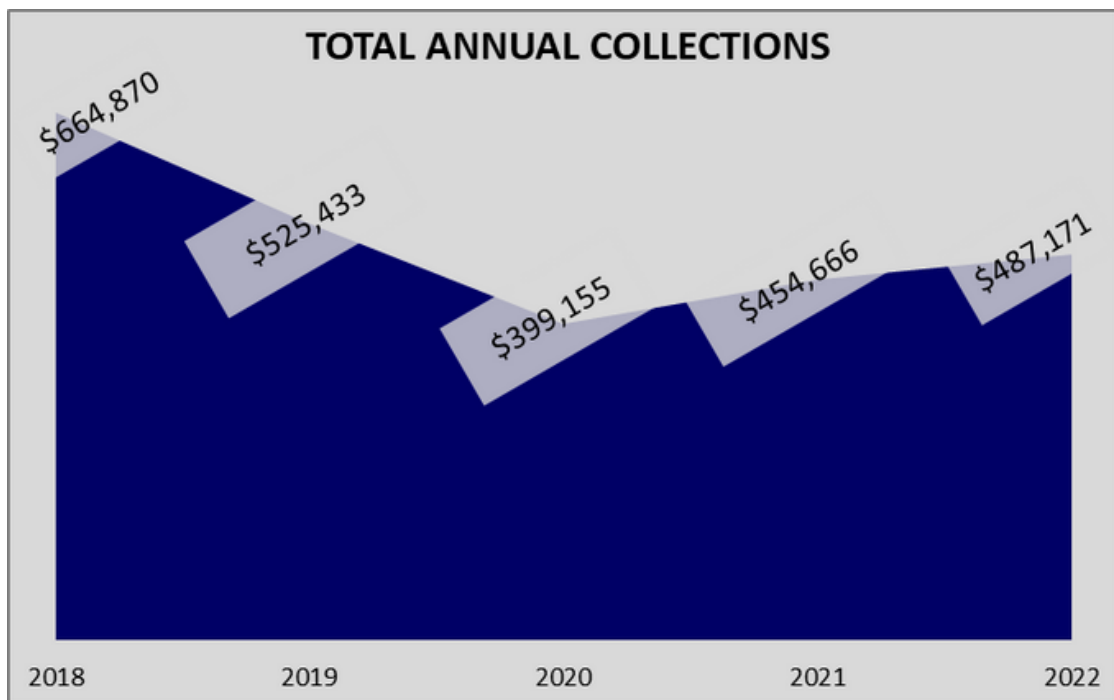
337 PSIs were created by MDOC agents in 2022



MDOC averaged a caseload of 390 per month in 2022

The Court collects fines, costs, court-appointed attorneys' fees, restitution, and crime victim fund payments from convicted felons. The funds collected are used to help support the public libraries, assist in defraying the costs of providing court-appointed counsel for indigent defendants and serve as reimbursement to crime victims for losses they may have suffered.

In 2022, the 13th Circuit Court collected \$209,028 in criminal restitution for distribution to local victims of crime.



**TINA BRADEN**

RECOGNIZED FOR 5 YEARS WITH THE 13TH CIRCUIT COURT-FRIEND OF THE COURT

**GETCHEN OSIM**

RECOGNIZED FOR 5 YEARS WITH THE 13TH CIRCUIT COURT-FRIEND OF THE COURT

**HON. KEVIN A. ELSENHEIMER**

RECOGNIZED FOR 5 YEARS WITH THE 13TH CIRCUIT COURT

**HOLLY DAVISON**

RECOGNIZED FOR 5 YEARS WITH GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY FAMILY DIVISION

**HEATHER PREVO**

RECOGNIZED FOR 10 YEARS WITH GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY FAMILY DIVISION

**JEFFREY BURDICK**

RECOGNIZED FOR 15 YEARS WITH GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY FAMILY DIVISION

**AMANDA FLOWERS**

RECOGNIZED FOR 15 YEARS WITH GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE COURT

**ANGELA PELLETIER**

RECOGNIZED FOR 20 YEARS WITH 13TH CIRCUIT COURT-FRIEND OF THE COURT

**JULIE DUBAY**

RECOGNIZED FOR 20 YEARS WITH 13TH CIRCUIT COURT-FRIEND OF THE COURT

**HON. JENNIFER L. WHITTEN**

APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR WHITMER ON FEBRUARY 3, 2022. JUDGE WHITTEN WAS SWORN IN BY CHIEF CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE KEVIN A. ELSENHEIMER ON MARCH 4, 2022 AND STARTED ON THE BENCH ON MARCH 7, 2022.

**TERI QUINN**

RETIRED FEBRUARY 4, 2022 FROM THE 13TH CIRCUIT COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE  
26 YEARS

**WILLIAM HEFFERAN**

RETIRED JUNE 3, 2022 FROM ANTRIM COUNTY FAMILY DIVISION  
26 YEARS

**JOSEPH POVOLO**

RETIRED AUGUST 12, 2022 FROM LEELANAU COUNTY FAMILY DIVISION  
34 YEARS

**KATHY NIXON**

RETIRED SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 FROM GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY FAMILY DIVISION  
13 YEARS

**HON. THOMAS G. POWER**

RETIRED DECEMBER 31, 2022 FROM 13TH CIRCUIT COURT  
30 YEARS

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