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November 1, 2014

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Honorable Michael E. Busch  
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Honorable Norman H. Conway  
Chair, House Appropriations  
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121 House Office Building  
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Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Re: Annual Report of the Office of Problem-Solving Courts  
CJ § 3-8C-12 SB 469/Ch. 71, 2010; 2007\_p16\_JUD\_Annual Report  
on the Problem Solving Courts (and truancy)

Gentlemen:

Pursuant to Courts and Judicial Proceedings, § 3-8C-12 SB 469/Ch. 71, 2010 and the 2007 Joint Chairmen's Report page 16, please find enclosed the Annual Report of the Office of Problem-Solving Courts (and truancy) for Fiscal Year 2014. As you will see, these court programs seek to address the behavioral manifestations associated with drug and alcohol addiction, mental health problems, and habitual truancy.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (410) 260-1295, or via email at [pamela.harris@mdcourts.gov](mailto:pamela.harris@mdcourts.gov).

Sincerely yours,

Pamela Harris  
State Court Administrator

Enc.

cc: Honorable James DeGrange, Sr., Chair, Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee  
Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair, Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee  
Honorable Mary Ellen Barbera, Chief Judge, Court of Appeals  
Honorable Nicholas E. Rattal, Chair, Problem Solving Courts Committee  
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# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **Problem-Solving Courts**

**Fiscal Year 2014**



**Administrative Office of the Courts**

**November 1, 2014**

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## Executive Summary

The Office of Problem-Solving Courts (OPSC), which began as the Drug Treatment Court Commission in 2002, was tasked to oversee the six existing operational drug courts and to expand the concept of coordinated substance abuse treatment and intensive supervision with judicial oversight. Today, there are over 40 drug courts, two re-entry courts, three mental health courts, and nine truancy reduction courts in Maryland. Over the years, hundreds of criminal justice and treatment professionals have had access to professional development courses, ranging from Pharmacology to drug testing. During this time, data collection has changed as well; where paper surveys once were faxed, Maryland now boasts of a real-time web-based data management system. When the Commission first was formed, there were no general funds dedicated to problem-solving courts; now with the help of OPSC, there are millions of State and federal dollars dedicated to drug, mental health, and truancy courts.

Problem-solving courts represent a shift in the way courts handle individuals who have a high potential for recidivism. In this approach, the court works closely with prosecutors, public defenders, probation officers, social workers, and other justice system partners to develop a strategy that will increase the likelihood that court-involved individuals will enter and complete treatment programming, as well as abstain from behaviors that brought them to court.

### **Problem-Solving Court Definition**

Problem-Solving Courts address matters that are under the court's jurisdiction through a multidisciplinary and integrated approach that incorporates collaboration between courts, government, and community organizations.

As part of the annual appropriation to the Judiciary, OPSC disseminated \$4.8 million in grants to local drug and mental health court programs during Fiscal Year 2014. These funds, granted only to operational drug and mental health court programs, were used for program staff, treatment, drug testing, travel and training, and ancillary services that directly benefitted court participants.

During Fiscal Year 2014, over 4,000 people participated in problem-solving courts in Maryland. Drug court participants submitted over 86,000 drug and alcohol specimens, while judges and masters met with participants nearly 24,600 times in court hearings. Problem-solving courts continue to be the most intensive, community-based programs available to address aberrant behavior associated with addictions and mental illnesses.

OPSC continues to provide needed technical assistance to both planning and existing programs to ensure continued positive outcomes and sustainability. Training and education for problem-solving court practitioners are integral parts of expanding the field. The Judiciary continues to set high expectations for monitoring and evaluating these programs to ensure the use of "best practices" in the problem-solving court field. As

these programs continue to be successful in Maryland, the problem-solving approach might possibly become integrated into the traditional adjudication process.

## **History**

In 1994, one of the first drug courts in the country was initiated in Baltimore City to address substance abuse issues for those caught in the seemingly never-ending cycle of the criminal justice system. In 2002, the Maryland Judiciary established the Drug Treatment Court Commission (Commission) for the purpose of supporting the development of drug court programs throughout Maryland. The Commission led the Judiciary's effort to implement and maintain drug court programs in the State. Commission members included: Circuit and District Court judges, legislators, representatives from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Juvenile Services, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, State's Attorney's Offices, the Office of the Public Defender, and the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention.

In December 2006, Chief Judge Robert M. Bell issued an administrative order to establish a Judicial Conference Committee on Problem-Solving Courts to institutionalize the work of the Commission and to expand its scope to include all problem-solving courts. At the same time, the Office of Problem-Solving Courts was formed in the Administrative Office of the Courts, to assume the role held by the Commission and to address the needs of other problem-solving courts in Maryland.



**OPSC Director Gray Barton shakes the hand of a new Wicomico County Circuit Court Drug Court Graduate**

## **Oversight**

### ***Office of Problem Solving Courts***

The Office of Problem Solving Courts (OPSC) is a department in the Administrative Office of the Courts, Programs Division, responsible for assisting the problem-solving courts in development, maintenance, and advancement of a collaborative therapeutic



system. OPSC has overseen the creation of problem-solving programs in 20 of the 24 jurisdictions in Maryland and works with public and private stakeholders to develop and establish best practices in problem-solving courts.

The OPSC oversees the financial support for problem-solving courts and is responsible for setting and enforcing programmatic guidelines, creating a statewide management information system, and targeting new and expanding populations for problem-solving courts. Working with the Judiciary's justice partners, the OPSC continues to serve as the court's liaison to sustain and advance problem-solving courts in Maryland.

### ***Program Approvals***

In FY2014 the Court of Appeals, with the recommendation from the Problem-Solving Courts Judicial Conference Committee approved applications for the following jurisdictions:

- Calvert County Circuit Court, Adult Drug Court
- Princes George's County Circuit Court, Re-Entry Court
- Princes George's County Circuit Court, Veteran's Court

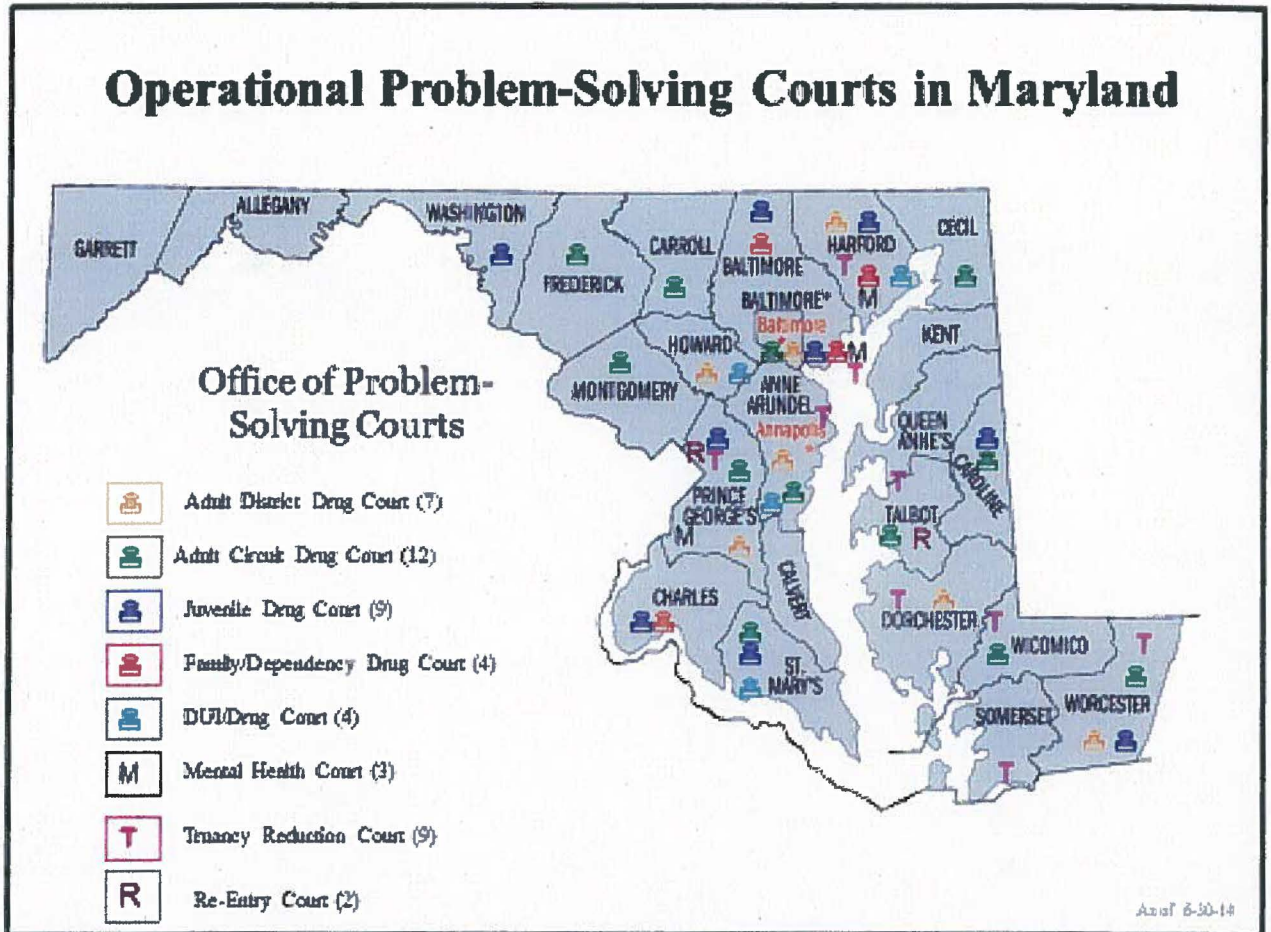
### ***Suspending Drug Court Operations***

The *Wicomico County District Court* elected in FY2014 to suspend the Adult Drug Court Program. The court experienced several changes in program staff which interrupted court, program scheduling and services for a period of several months. When the coordinator position was vacated the administrative court staff including the Administrative Judge and Drug Court Judge consulted with OPSC and determined that it was in their best interest to suspend operations and prepare to discharge the participants to standard supervision. The Judges expressed concerns with availability of Judges who would be able to continue to devote time to the drug court in order for the program to operate sufficiently.

The *Montgomery County, Somerset and Anne Arundel County and Talbot County Juvenile Drug Court Programs* elected to suspend their Juvenile Drug Courts in FY 2014. The reasons provided by each program were directly related to low referrals and inability to maintain a caseload size which would support future requests for funds and services from OPSC and their community. The teams also expressed a similar concern that the initiatives provided through the Department of Juvenile Services consistently superseded opportunities for youth to enter and complete the comprehensive drug court programs in their respective jurisdictions

The *Worcester County Circuit Court* elected to suspend services for the Family Recovery Court due to low referrals to the court and program. The Department of Social Services has employed a new initiative called "Alternative Response" which is available to establish a diversion track for DSS cases prior to making a court referral for a child in need of assistance (CINA) application. In Worcester County this initiative reduced the referrals to standard court and therefore reduced the admission opportunities for Family Recovery Court.

## Operational Problem-Solving Courts in Maryland



### ***Judicial Conference Committee on Problem-Solving Courts***

The mission of the Judicial Conference Committee on Problem-Solving Courts (Committee) is to promote, oversee, and sustain a comprehensive and collaborative approach for court-involved persons through the development, implementation, and operation of problem-solving courts. The Committee advocates for the access and delivery of effective and appropriate treatment and other community based services to achieve positive measurable results. The Committee promotes best practices by providing evidenced-based training, technical assistance, research, funding, and technical support.

Judges and Masters met with drug court participants over 24,000 times in court hearings in FY 2014.

### ***Drug Court Oversight Committee***

The mission of the Drug Court Oversight Committee is to sustain and promote a comprehensive, collaborative, integrated and coordinated systems approach for court-



involved persons with addictions through the development, implementation and operation of Drug Courts across the State of Maryland. This includes developing, supporting, evaluating and facilitating the access and delivery of comprehensive, effective and appropriate treatment and other community-based services, as well as advocating and educating many constituents.

***Mental Health Court Oversight Committee***

The mission of the Mental Health Court Oversight Committee is to identify and recommend evidence-based and consensus-based practices that will improve the response of the public mental health system and the criminal justice system to people with primary mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, or co-occurring substance abuse disorders for those involved in the criminal justice system.

**Funding**

***Office of Problem-Solving Court Grants***

In Fiscal Year 2014, OPSC solicited grant applications to support and maintain the capacity of existing drug and mental health courts across Maryland. The Problem-Solving Court Discretionary Grant's core purpose areas are to support staff and services targeted for the problem-solving court participants. In Fiscal Year 2014, funds were allocated to court programs to address staffing needs by the Judiciary and collaborating agencies, provide needed ancillary services, provide critical drug/alcohol testing, conduct training, and to enhance treatment services through OPSC's partnership with the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration (ADAA).

<b><u>Number of Days in Drug Court*</u></b>	
Adult Circuit	24.03 Months
Adult/DUI District	16.83 Months
Juvenile	11.97 Months
Family Recovery	9.30 Months

\*For those program participants who were discharged (Completed, Unsuccessful, or Neutral) from drug courts during FY 2014

Over the past several years, OPSC has recognized and responded to the adverse budget climate by accessing resources from federal, state, and local partners in an effort to sustain programs. OPSC continues to collaborate with State partners, such as the ADAA, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, the Maryland Highway Safety Administration, and the Governor's Office on Crime Control and Prevention to maximize access to existing resources. The partners also supplement other resources that would otherwise be lost due to budget reductions.

**OPSC/ADAA Problem-Solving Court Grant Allotments for FY 2014 by Jurisdiction**

Problem-Solving Court Program	OPSC Grant Award	ADAA Treatment Award	OPSC Treatment Award	Total by County
Anne Arundel Circuit Adult - Juvenile	249,000			
Anne Arundel District Adult / DUI	362,478		96,300	707,778
Baltimore City Circuit Adult / Family / Juvenile	371,350			
Baltimore City District Adult	205,475	51,517	46,340	733,649
Baltimore City Mental Health	58,967			
Baltimore Co. Circuit Family - Juvenile	102,115		187,328	289,443
Caroline Circuit Adult - Juvenile	61,882	62,763		124,645
Carroll Circuit Adult	150,909		134,855	285,764
Cecil Circuit Adult	169,000	112,581		281,581
Charles Circuit Family - Juvenile	113,000	81,688		194,688
Dorchester District Adult	72,000	139,692		211,692
Frederick Circuit Adult	140,800	68,111		208,911
Harford Circuit Family / Juvenile	110,000			
Harford District Adult / DUI	90,000		151,241	377,818
Harford Mental Health	26,577			
Howard District Adult - DUI	180,437	57,352		237,789
Montgomery Circuit Adult / Juvenile	149,000		83,581	232,581
Prince George's Circuit Adult - Juvenile	143,850			
Prince George's District Adult	109,647	114,024		593,731
Prince George's Mental Health	226,210			
Somerset Circuit Juvenile	37,685			35,380
St. Mary's Circuit Adult / Juvenile	152,225	104,622		256,847
Talbot Problem Solving Court	105,000	46,437		151,437
Washington Circuit Juvenile	74,000	48,171		122,171
Wicomico Circuit Adult	225,000			
Wicomico District Adult	124,300	113,042		462,342
Worcester Circuit Adult / Family / Juvenile	211,500			
Worcester District Adult	18,500		68,255	298,255
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,040,907</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>767,900</b>	<b>5,806,502</b>

***Washington/Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)***

The Washington/Baltimore HIDTA funds treatment/criminal justice programs that provide integrated drug treatment services and criminal justice supervision for high-risk substance dependent offenders, including drug testing and graduated sanctions for individuals that violate program requirements. The treatment services must include an assessment of the individual's drug use and criminal history, as well as placement in the appropriate level of care, such as residential, intensive out-patient, out-patient, or aftercare services.



During Fiscal Year 2014, the Baltimore City Adult District and Circuit Court Drug Treatment Court Programs were awarded \$540,341 by HIDTA to cover direct substance abuse treatment services for drug court participants. Also, in Fiscal Year 2014, the Anne Arundel County Adult Circuit and District Drug Courts were awarded \$138,450, while the Prince George's County's Adult Drug Court was awarded \$151,146 from HIDTA.

Jurisdiction	HIDTA Treatment Funding
Anne Arundel County	\$136,450
Baltimore City	\$540,341
Prince George's County	\$151,146
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$827,937</b>

***U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance***  
 The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded a three-year \$1.5 million grant to the Judiciary in 2011. This grant has enabled Baltimore City, Carroll, Cecil, and Wicomico Counties an opportunity to enhance and expand the adult drug court programs in various ways. Included in this grant are funds for a statewide comparative analysis of drug courts that looks at program outcomes of the largest and most representative courts to identify the drug court characteristics and practices contributing to participant successes and failures. The analysis will use data from the Statewide Maryland Automated Record Tracking (SMART) system to compare factors affecting participant outcomes. A cost-benefit study of two drug courts compared with two traditional court process comparison samples also will be conducted. In addition, pre-post analyses of the operational improvements will be completed to assess whether the enhancements of the four drug courts had any effect on participant outcomes. The grant was given a no-cost extension to end on September 2015.

Still other federal partners such as the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the National Drug Court Institute, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration awarded grants and/or provided direct training or technical assistance to problem-solving programs throughout Maryland in Fiscal Year 2014.

## **Professional Development and Technical Assistance**

### ***Professional Development***

Professional Development among problem-solving courts remains a priority for OPSC. On an annual basis the OPSC staff and the training subcommittee plan a series of events to encourage ongoing educational opportunities for Problem-Solving Court Teams and the criminal justice field professionals.

In FY2014 OPSC provided the following events:

**Adult and Juvenile Problem-Solving Court Team Training** - At the 2013 National Association of Drug Court Professionals Training Conference the National Drug Court Institute presented the five Best Practices for Drug Court Programs and Practitioners. OPSC provided two 6 hours courses which illustrated various applications of each best practice and how it related to all types of problem-solving courts. The OPSC Director, Deputy Director, various problem-solving court Judges and local service representatives facilitated the five courses best practices. Seventeen drug, DUI, family recovery and mental health court programs attended the event on November 14. Nine juvenile drug courts and one truancy reduction program attended the event on December 12, 2014.

OPSC provided three one-day professional development courses for criminal justice practitioners. The courses consisted of Vicarious Trauma and Staff Considerations; Problem-Solving Court 101-102, and Ethical Considerations for Criminal Justice Professionals provided by OPSC Staff. Each of this courses host approximately 50 to 60 practitioners each.

In October of 2013, OPSC sponsored a one-day professional development course for the Baltimore City Problem-Solving Courts. The course hosted over 40 members of the court as well as substance abuse and mental health partners for the drug court program of both Circuit and District. The topics were Trauma Informed Care and Motivational Interviewing.

**Substance Abuse Treatment Encounters**

Drug court participants attended over **56,000** treatment sessions in FY 2014

In May and June of 2014 OPSC co-sponsored a 4-day Motivational Interviewing Course. This professional development course was held in Wicomico County.

This was a partnership between the Wicomico County

Circuit Court Drug Court, Wicomico County Health Department and the Office of Problem-Solving Courts.

***Technical Assistance***

Technical Assistance from OPSC provides aide to court programs with a level of expertise and guidance to improve operations, client services, and team communication. Teams may address protocol development, ancillary services, treatment service/types, funding opportunities, court proceedings, and role clarification. Teams may discuss and devise plans to institute new research and evidence based practices into their current operations.

In FY 2014 OPSC provided aide to eleven problem-solving courts. OPSC also assisted District Court Administrative Staff during staff vacancies to provide oversight until staff replacements or program closures could occur.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

A statewide management information system allowing for the collection and standardization of data directly related to drug and mental health court outcomes has been developed in collaboration with the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration (ADAA). The Statewide Maryland Automated Record Tracking (SMART) system is a web-based data management system that has been modified to support the advanced needs of problem-solving courts in Maryland.

SMART provides problem-solving court team members with direct access to information needed for making informed decisions about participants and the court. SMART is a multi-purpose tool that can be used for several purposes: identifying and prioritizing participant needs; developing knowledge about services available across agencies; and obtaining immediate access to information about participant status. SMART sets out standard performance measures to assist drug and mental health courts in monitoring performance and in using outcome data to improve programs and services.

In addition, individual drug and mental health courts use SMART data for a variety of purposes: to generate presentations for local community and oversight boards; to report mandated data to state or federal stakeholders; to provide information on outcome and continuous quality improvement activities to accrediting bodies; and to evaluate program and service effectiveness.

Through a contract with the University of Maryland's Institute for Governmental Services and Research (IGSR), OPSC provides support to drug and mental health court programs across Maryland in maintaining their data management. In addition to responding to thousands of technical assistance and training questions, the IGSR project team developed a SMART Case Management curriculum training for all problem-solving court case managers. IGSR also modified several components of SMART at the request of the problem-solving court users. Additionally, new data elements were added to SMART to better differentiate between mental health and drug courts. With these additions, as well as several others anticipated for release in 2014, the mental health courts will be able to collect data that more accurately reflects the population served.

## **Drug Courts**

Drug courts are a Judiciary-led, coordinated system that demands accountability of staff and court participants and ensures immediate, intensive and comprehensive drug treatment, supervision and support services using a cadre of incentives and sanctions to encourage participant compliance. Drug courts represent the coordinated efforts of the criminal justice agencies, mental health, social service, and treatment communities to actively intervene in and break the cycle of substance abuse, addiction, and crime. As an alternative to less effective

### **Drug/Alcohol Tests**

90% of the over **86,000** drug/alcohol specimens collected from drug court participants in FY 2014 we negative for tested substances.

interventions, such as incarceration or conditions of general probation, drug courts quickly identify substance-abusing offenders and places them under strict court monitoring and community supervision that is coupled with effective, individually assessed treatment and ancillary services.

### Drug Court Statistical Summary July 1, 2013—June 30, 2014

County	Location	Type of Program	Year Est.	Entered Program	Graduated	Neutral	Terminated	Total Served in FY 2014
Anne Arundel	Circuit	Adult	Dec-05	29	20	0	16	86
Anne Arundel	Circuit	Juvenile	Mar-02	11	17	5	11	33
Anne Arundel	District	Adult DUI	Feb-97 Jan-05	147	140	6	50	356
Baltimore City	Circuit	Adult	Oct-94	93	117	14	70	600
Baltimore City	Circuit	Family	Aug-05	93	29	17	58	158
Baltimore City	Circuit	Juvenile	Sep-98	8	3	0	3	20
Baltimore City	District	Adult	Mar-94	27	48	2	9	255
Baltimore Co	Circuit	Juvenile	Mar-03	29	22	17	8	73
Baltimore Co	Circuit	Family	Aug-10	15	8	2	6	29
Caroline	Circuit	Juvenile	Jul-04	2	1	0	7	9
Caroline	Circuit	Adult	Nov-11	10	1	0	8	20
Carroll	Circuit	Adult	Apr-07	39	13	2	15	83
Cecil	Circuit	Adult	Jun-06	47	12	2	13	117
Charles	Circuit	Juvenile	May-06	15	7	5	3	29
Charles	Circuit	Family	Jan-11	21	3	3	9	40
Dorchester	District	Adult	Jul-04	13	9	0	10	33
Frederick	Circuit	Adult	May-05	36	25	1	10	70
Harford	Circuit	Family	May-04	24	6	3	11	37
Harford	Circuit	Juvenile	Oct-01	28	11	3	11	46
Harford	District	Adult	Nov-97	22	15	1	4	40
Harford	District	DUI	Jan-05	18	11	0	2	30
Howard	District	Adult	Jul-04	3	0	0	2	16
Howard	District	DUI	Jul-04	8	0	0	0	30
Montgomery	Circuit	Adult	Nov-05	27	17	2	11	63
Montgomery	Circuit	Juvenile	Nov-05	1	1	1	8	10
Prince George's	Circuit	Adult	Aug-02	5	12	0	2	100
Prince George's	Circuit	Juvenile	Aug-02	20	18	3	8	70
Prince George's	District	Adult	Apr-06	10	5	2	5	25
Somerset	Circuit	Juvenile	Apr-06	2	3	1	1	5
St. Mary's	Circuit	Juvenile	Feb-04	18	8	2	9	35
St. Mary's	Circuit	Adult	July-09	26	11	1	9	52
Talbot	Circuit	Problem-	Aug-07	15	6	0	6	31



County	Location	Type of Program	Year Est.	Entered Program	Graduated	Neutral	Terminated	Total Served in FY 2014
		Solving						
Talbot	Circuit	Juvenile	Oct-04	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	Circuit	Juvenile	Jun-07	8	10	1	7	25
Wicomico	Circuit	Adult	Sep-05	29	9	1	6	60
Wicomico	District	Adult	Apr-08	16	11	24	3	39
Worcester	Circuit District	Adult	Dec-05	31	14	2	7	65
Worcester	Circuit	Juvenile	Oct-05	14	6	0	1	21
Worcester	Circuit	Family	June-07	2	0	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>				<b>962</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>2,813</b>

## Mental Health Courts

A mental health court is a specialized court docket established for defendants with a primary mental health diagnosis that substitutes a problem-solving approach for the traditional adversarial criminal court processing. Participants are identified through mental health screenings and assessments and voluntarily participate in a judicially supervised treatment plan developed jointly by a team of court staff and mental health professionals. The overarching goal of the mental health court is to decrease the frequency of participants' contacts with the criminal justice system by providing them with judicial oversight to improve their social functioning with respect to employment, housing, treatment, and support services in the community. Mental health courts rely on individualized treatment plans and ongoing judicial monitoring to address both the mental health needs of and public safety concerns of communities in which they reside. These courts also seek to address the underlying problems that contribute to criminal behavior, and to assist with the avoidance of recurring correctional visits, as well as to lower the overall recidivism rate of this population.

<b>Mental Health Court Statistical Summary</b>					
<b>June 30, 2013- July 1, 2014</b>					
County	Location	Year Est.	Entered Program	Discharged Program	Total Served in FY 2014
Baltimore City	District	Oct-02	192	273	458
Harford	District	Jan-03	7	10	17
Prince George's	District	Jul-07	141	304	425
<b>Total</b>			<b>340</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>900</b>

***Baltimore City Mental Health Docket (BCMHC)***

All cases in the Baltimore City District Court where competency evaluations are ordered are transferred to the Mental Health Docket. The scheduling of competency evaluations and the monitoring of cases while defendants are in psychiatric hospitals working to become competent, become the responsibility of the mental health docket. Once competency is restored, defendants either return to the court where the case was originally heard for disposition, or are placed on the mental health docket under one of the various tracks, if they qualify and agree to be sentenced by the Mental Health Court judge.

The Baltimore City Mental Health Court has acted as a “pilot” for new mental health court functions in the Statewide Maryland Automated Record Tracking (SMART), which will be completed and available for all problem-solving courts in the future. The Program Enroll Function within SMART, allows Baltimore City Mental Health Court to track the various legal statuses in SMART, thus giving the program a more accurate view at the fluidity of BCMHC.

The program enroll function allows SMART users to track data on 8-505 treatment orders, 8-507 treatment placements, competency as well as addressing criminal responsibility (NCR). These legal statuses are logged into SMART at the time of admission in the mental health docket. This allows the court to properly track their clients as they move throughout the program.

***Prince George’s County Mental Health Court (PGCMHC)***

The Mental Health Court of Prince George’s County strives to humanely and effectively address the needs of individuals with mental health disorders who enter the Prince George’s County criminal justice system. The court project is committed to providing access to resources, training, and expertise to address the unique needs of these individuals. All participating agencies have agreed to collaborate for the purpose of improving outcomes for this special population, while increasing public safety.

During this fiscal year, PGCMHC had issues regarding their data collection. Once these issues were realized, a significant effort was made in conjunction with the Institute for Governmental Services and Research (IGSR) to correct any erroneous information. It was found that a significant number of cases were not closed out of SMART in a timely fashion resulting in an exaggerated number of program participants on statistical reports.

***Harford County Mental Health Diversion Program (HCMHD)***

Harford County Mental Health Diversion Program strives to provide alternatives to incarceration for the defendants who are involved in the criminal justice system as a result of their mental illness. This is accomplished by linking persons with a mental health diagnosis to community-based treatment resources with the goals of reducing recidivism, and helping the participants to become stable, productive members of the community.



## **Truancy Reduction Programs**

### ***Truancy Reduction Court***

The purpose of Truancy Reduction Court is to improve school attendance and the youth's attitude about education through a nurturing approach that ultimately will build a relationship between the family, the school, and the court, rather than using punitive or harsh measures such as having parents prosecuted in criminal court, or stigmatizing the child and further souring their outlook on education and the criminal justice system. A social worker, counselor or case manager works with the families to determine the reasons for poor attendance and makes referrals for community-based services when appropriate.

### **Truancy Court Statistics June 30, 2013-July 1, 2014**

<b>County</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year Est.</b>	<b>Current Participants*</b>	<b>Entered Program</b>	<b>Graduated</b>	<b>Discharged from Program</b>
Dorchester	Circuit	Mar-07	23	24	2	4
Harford	Circuit	Jan-08	11	12	9	11
Somerset	Circuit	Nov-05	8	8	5	5
Prince George's	Circuit	May-09	19	17	11	22
Talbot	Circuit	Jan-11	4	4	3	1
Wicomico	Circuit	Dec-04	62	48	14	20
Worcester	Circuit	Jan-07	7	5	1	3

\*As of 6/30/14

### ***University of Baltimore Center for Families, Children, and the Courts Truancy Court Program***

The University of Baltimore Center for Families, Children, and the Court Truancy Court Program (TCP) is an innovative, early intervention and holistic approach to truant behavior that addresses the root causes of truancy. Operating in Baltimore City and Montgomery County, the program is strictly voluntary on the part of students and their families, and consists of ten weekly in-school meetings per session (with one session in the fall and another in the spring). The TCP meeting involves the student, his or her family, teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, principals, TCP staff, a law student, and a volunteer judge. TCP students also meet weekly with a mentor, who calls the home once a week to engage family members.

The purpose of the TCP meetings is to identify and address the reasons why each participating student is not attending school regularly and/or on-time. Once the causes of truant behavior are uncovered, the TCP team puts resources into place that target truant behavior and support the student's regular school attendance, graduation from high school and ultimately, service as a productive member of the community. Though technically not a Judiciary approved problem-solving court, OPSC monitors this program along with the Department of Family Administration.