Judicial Department

Agency Description

The objectives of the Judicial Department are: to uphold the laws of the state by determining the guilt or innocence of persons accused of crimes; to resolve disputes involving civil or personal rights; to interpret state statutes and to determine whether a law violates the Constitutions of the State or the United States; to insure the principles of fair and reasonable bail by interview­ing all detained criminal defendants to determine whether they should remain incarcerated dur­ing the pendency of their case; to effectively resolve family and interpersonal conflicts through a comprehensive program of negotiation, media­tion, evaluation and education and to provide safe and secure custody, treatment and rehabilitative services for children and families through the juve­nile justice system.

Additional objectives are: to create and sustain a full range of alternatives to incarceration for both pre- and post-conviction adult and juvenile populations; to supervise probationers in the community and to encourage improvement in their conduct and condition; to enforce, review and adjust child support orders; to advocate for victims of crime and arrange for or provide services and financial compensation; to maintain secure and safe conditions in courthouses and other Judicial Department facilities and to provide for the transportation of prisoners between courthouses and places of confinement.

Office of the Chief Court Administrator

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 51-1b(a), 51-182, 51-5a.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To carry out the Judicial Department's mission to resolve matters brought before it in a fair, timely and effective manner.

## Program Description

The Chief Court Administrator and the Deputy Chief Court Administrator are responsible for, among other things, the efficient operation of the Connecticut Judicial Department, the prompt disposition of cases and the assignment of superior court judges to specific court locations. In addition, the Chief Court Administrator represents the department on a myriad of boards and commissions.

The Office of the Chief Court Administrator is composed of the Administrative Services and the External Affairs Divisions.

*Administrative Services* develops systems, maintains records and processes all financial transactions of the department; prepares and substantiates fiscal year budget requests; prepares and analyzes current year expenditure projections and allocates resources within the department; processes and supervises rentals, leases, supplies, materials and equipment and maintains all supplies and equipment used in connection with the department; assesses current and projected space needs, monitors all lease arrangements and requests bond funds for capital projects through the submission of a five-year capital plan; develops personnel standards and procedures, processes and maintains personnel records and represents the department in all collective bargaining negotiations and collects and summarizes information from court records, accounts for and distributes all revenue collected during daily operations of the court and notifies appropriate agencies of criminal dispositions.

*External Affairs* serves as the liaison between the department and the other branches of government and community organizations; responds to numerous requests for information from policy makers, news professionals and members of the public; develops the department’s legislative agenda under the direction of the Chief Justice and the Chief Court Administrator; reviews all proposed legislation for potential impact on the department; administers the speakers’ bureau, under the direction of the Deputy Chief Court Administrator, that provides a panel of judges who are available to speak to community audiences on court-related topics; develops outreach programs in collaboration with various private and public agencies to educate and inform members of the community about the department and coordinates public events designed to invite the public to tour courthouses and learn about the role of the courts.

Supreme and Appellate courts

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 51-1a, 51-14, 51-19-22a, 51-197(a)(b), 51-198, 51-199, 51-212-216 and 52-263-269 and Article 5th, Section 1 of the Connecticut Constitution.

## Statement of Need or Program Objectives

To promote the just resolution of conflicts by providing a forum for the direct review of appeals from the Superior Court through the Supreme and Appellate Court System.

## Program Description

The Supreme and Appellate Court System performs the following activities:

Establishes a file for every case, processes and reviews all filings for substantial compliance with the rules of practice, maintains the docket of cases from filing to assignment for argument, schedules eligible cases for pre-argument settlement conferences and enters orders and assigns cases for oral argument or a decision on the briefs.

Reviews cases for jurisdictional problems, prepares memoranda on jurisdictional questions, prepares screening reports on certain cases prior to oral argument or submission of briefs and performs special research projects as required.

Reviews records and briefs, acts on motions and petitions for certification, hears oral arguments and writes opinions on all cases that it decides.

Files written opinions with the Reporter of Judicial Decisions, compiles and maintains statistics on case flow, institutes rules of practice and responds to inquiries concerning such rules.

Establishes personnel policies and compensation plans for employees whose salaries are not fixed by statute.

Prepares written decisions of the Supreme Court, the Appellate Court and the selected trial memoranda of the Superior Court for publication in the Connecticut Law Journal and in volume reports.

Prepares annual revision of the Connecticut Practice Book incorporating amendments adopted by the judges; informs judges, attorneys and the public of decisions of the Supreme and Appellate Courts and those decisions of the Superior Court that are useful as precedent.

Superior Court OPERATIONS DIVISION

court operations

The Superior Court is composed of 196 judges including the justices of the Supreme Court and the judges of the Appellate Court. Superior Court judges decide issues dealing with extremely serious problems affecting people's lives - their liberty, their children, their spousal relationships or their business relationships. This may involve the sentencing of a convicted defendant, the determination of which parent will raise a child, the awarding of damages to an accident victim or the question of whether a person should be taken off a life support system. Among other things, judges participate in the selection of jurors, advise defendants of their rights in criminal matters, set bail conditions for defendants, sentence defendants found guilty of a violation of state statute, grant dissolutions of marriage, hear and adjudicate cases involving child protection and juvenile delinquency and appoint counsel for indigent parties.

The Superior Court Operations Division supports the administration of justice by providing quality services and information to judges, the people it serves and the community. It ensures that courts have sufficient staff and resources to assist judges, family support magistrates and judicial officers in the resolution of disputes. Specialized staff maintain security in the courthouses, transport prisoners between places of confinement, assist with the collection of child support and provide information, compensation and advocacy services to people victimized by crime.

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 1, 46b-1 through 46b-11,46b-15 through 46b-16, 46b-38a through 46b-38c, 46b-38f through 46b-38i, 46b-40 through 46b-75, 46b-80 through 46b-88, 46b-115 through 46b-115jj, 46b-121 through 46b-150, 46b-160 through 46b-213w, 46b-215 through 46b-224, 46b-231 through 46b-232a, 47a-69, 47a-70, 51-5c, 51-9, 51-15, 51-51v, 51-52, 51-56a, 51-61, 51-79, 51-9 through 51-94, 51-164m-o, 51-164t, 51-165, 51-190, 51-194 through 51-197, 51-197c-f, 51-217 through 51-247c, 51-344, 51-344a, 51-348, 52-185 through 52-235b, 52-257 through 52-262, 52-549a through 52-549d, 54-1b through 54-36p, Article 5th, Section 1 of the Connecticut Constitution as amended by Article XX, and Public Act 00-99.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To provide support services to the Superior Court judges and to process all cases in a prompt and efficient manner.

## Program Description

The Superior Court includes 13 judicial districts, 20 geographical areas, six housing sessions and 12 juvenile courts, Centralized Small Claims, the Centralized Infraction Bureau, and Jury Administration. The staff perform the following activities:

* Prepares a case file, reviews and processes all petitions and official documents associated with each case and assigns all matters for judicial hearings, produces an official court record in all court proceedings except small claims and minor motor vehicle matters, maintains and updates written policies and procedures to ensure uniform operations of the clerks’ offices and provides operational direction to the clerks’ offices.
* Manages the operation of special court sessions i.e. Community Court, Drug Court, Complex Litigation, Domestic Violence, and Land Use in order to effectively process matters requiring specialized court resources.
* Responsible for fiscal management of trust and avails accounts.
* Responsible for ensuring data integrity of all computerized case management systems utilized by the courts.
* Maintains registry of restraining, protective and no-contact orders for use by law enforcement.
* Interprets proceedings for limited-English proficient parties in all criminal cases and, if available, in family, civil and housing cases. Translates court ordered documents and tapes.
* Provides specialized services in housing matters in six judicial districts including on-site inspections of the condition of the premises, mediation between the parties, assistance in finding financial and other resources to help resolve the issue and monitoring of compliance with court ordered repairs.
* Compiles, analyzes and prepares reports on caseload statistics for use in the allocation of personnel and other resources.
* Administers the Judicial Department Law Library System and provides direct legal research services to the judges of the Superior Court.
* Summons jurors and implements procedures for the improvement of jury administration.
* Governs members of the bar; receives applications for admission to the bar; receives, investigates and maintains records of grievance complaints against attorneys and persons not authorized to practice law; prosecutes findings of probable cause that an attorney has committed misconduct and, when appropriate, presents grievances in court.
* Administers Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs in order to speed resolution of cases and decrease the number of trials.
* Provides education and performance improvement opportunities for all judges and Judicial Department staff including diversity training.

Support Enforcement

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 1-24, 4a-18, 17b-137, 38a-497a, 46b-84, 46b-212, 46b-218, 46b-231, 52-50, and 52-362.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To enforce all Title IV-D child support and medical support court orders in accordance with federal and state regulations, rules and statutes and to review orders and initiate an action for modification before a family support magistrate when appropriate.

## Program Description

Support Enforcement Services staff perform the following:

* Supervises the payment of any child or spousal support order and determine appropriate enforcement action to take in accordance with federal and state performance standards through use of automated enforcement processes and professional discretion.
* Induces the defaulting party to resume payments through personal contacts (initial counseling), informal resolutions and/or formal enforcement action (income withholding, contempt citations, license revocation, etc.).
* In cases requiring formal enforcement actions, initiates an application for contempt, issues a summons for parties to appear, performs service of process, investigates and prepares cases for court, conducts pre-hearing conferences in an attempt to resolve the issue; and presents information to the court.
* Executes duties and responsibilities associated with the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) such as: maintains a registry of all foreign support orders registered in the tribunal for enforcement; maintains a registry of all foreign paternity judgments registered in the tribunal for enforcement; maintains a registry of all support orders entered by the Family Support Magistrate Division when it is serving as the tribunal; serves as a support enforcement agency in all actions filed under UIFSA and serves as the State Information Agent pursuant to UIFSA.
* Reviews child support orders in Title IV-D cases at the request of the parties or the IV-D agency to assess deviations from child support guidelines, including calculation of presumptive child support guideline amount, preparation of motions, service of process, pre-hearing conferences and presentation of case in court.
* Initiates review and adjustment in cases with a substantial change in circumstances.
* Monitors Title IV-D cases for medical support enforcement and administratively directs employers to comply with court orders.
* Monitors employer compliance with income withholding orders for support.
* Maintains a state case registry of all paternity and support orders established or modified in the state.
* Assists the Department of Social Services (DSS) in administrative enforcement activities by participating in administrative hearings conducted by DSS.
* Processes and serves non IV-D income withholding orders and provides notice of all court activity to parties in IV-D cases.
* Operates toll free customer service call center.

Victim Services

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 54-201 through 54-235.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To promote, design, administer and deliver statewide services to victims of violent crime. To develop and implement programs in support of crime victims' unmet needs in the State of Connecticut.

## Program Description

* Administers the state's crime victim compensation program, which provides financial reimbursement to victims of violent crime and in some cases, to their dependents and relatives.
* Provides court based victim services advocacy services, which include notification of victim rights, notification of court proceedings, assistance with victim impact statements, referrals to related services, and accompaniments to court.
* Provides victim assistance services for Board of Parole and Pardons hearings.
* Provides notification and information/referral services through a telephone hotline, post conviction notification program and the Protection Order Registry.
* Provides notification of certain criminal justice events by by managing the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (CT SAVIN) system.
* Contracts with and monitors community based nonprofit agencies that provide crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy and other direct services to victims of crime.
* Provides training to the criminal justice system, community partners, and the public on victim rights, OVS services and available resources.
* Staffs the statewide advisory council for victims of crime; provides training and technical assistance to state and local agencies and to statewide victim services coalitions and groups.
* Provides reimbursement to hospitals for the costs associated with the collection of evidence in sexual assault cases.
* Manages the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners on-call program to assist participating program hospitals respond in a timely manner to victims of sexual assault.

Judicial Marshals

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 6-32d, 6-32f, 6-32g, 6-38f, 6-38i, 17a-699,31-294d, 51-30, 51-206, 51-246, 52-434, 53a-3, 53a-278a,and 54-1f.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To maintain secure and safe conditions in courthouses and other Judicial Department facilities. To provide for the transportation of prisoners between courthouses and places of confinement. To hire and retain judicial marshals who are qualified to perform essential job functions.

## Program Description

The operation of the Judicial Marshal Services unit is managed by a central administrative office with local operations divided into thirteen judicial districts. The Administrative Judge for each Judicial District oversees the marshal functions in the respective district in conjunction with the Chief Judicial Marshal in each district who is also charged with the day-to-day scheduling and supervision of staff.

Judicial Marshal applicants must pass a physical examination, drug screening, and an agility test designed to assess the ability to perform essential job functions. Trainees must successfully complete a twelve week Pre-Service Training Program at the Judicial Marshal Academy, followed by a Field Training and Evaluation Program and a one year probationary period.

In addition, all marshals are required to complete an In-Service Training Program annually to maintain required certifications, receive other mandated training, and new training courses as necessary.

Court Support Services Division

Administration

Organization units include Central Office/Office of the Executive Director, Operations, Administration, and Program and Staff Development. There is a decentralized operations management structure with regional service areas reporting to the Central Office.

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Section 51-1d.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To provide direction and administrative support to the operational units of the Court Support Services Division (CSSD).

## Program Description

* Identifies, develops, implements and institutionalizes policies and procedures to provide the most effective and efficient services to the Court, including professional intake, assessment and referral services, supervision and monitoring for adults and juveniles, as well as assists in achieving the fair and timely resolution of family and interpersonal conflicts and domestic violence criminal cases.
* Oversees the operation of the juvenile detention facilities to ensure compliance with OSHA standards and divisional operational policies. Investigates detainee complaints and incidents within the detention facilities and ensures compliance with all provisions of a court order pertaining to conditions of confinement of juveniles.
* Administers interstate compact agreements and establishes and oversees a statewide network of contracted community based treatment, evaluation, social services and alternative to incarceration programs for adults, juveniles and families involved with the courts.
* Identifies and implements research and evaluation of best practice services, reports and analyzes outcome and performance data on CSSD services, conducts research and identification of evidence based practices proven to reduce recidivism and implements new services and delivery models within a statewide network of contracted community based services.

Juvenile Services

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 46b-121, 46b-123 and 46b-123-24, 46b-128- 130, 46b-133-134.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To provide safe and secure custody, treatment and rehabilitative services for children and families by the efficient management of a juvenile justice system which recognizes the needs, rights and responsibilities of children, families and the community.

## Program Description

Juvenile Services, which includes contracted services, intake, assessment, referral and supervision, performs the following functions:

* Identifies needs and risk factors of children and families that contribute to delinquent behavior and Family with Service Needs violations though an established classification system.
* Diverts children from the judicial process through non-judicial supervision services and referrals to appropriate community-based agencies and diversion programs.
* Assists the Court in making appropriate residential placements.
* Provides access to court-based assessments for appropriate medical, mental health and substance abuse services.
* Schedules and monitors payments in cases where restitution is ordered by the court.
* Appears in court in judicial cases, prepares pre-dispositional studies for the court, provides input about juveniles and responds to judicial inquiries.
* Supervises children placed on probation and keeps informed of the child's conduct through personal, family, school, community and/or other agency contacts and keeps the court informed of the child’s conduct.
* Monitors community service hours completed and obtains community service sites in certain cases.

Detention Services

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Section 4-141, 46b-121h, 46b-121i, 46b-121k, 46b-123, 46b-127, 46b-132, 46b-132a, 46b-127, and 46b-133.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To provide secure and therapeutic confinement to those juveniles who present a danger to the community or themselves.

## Program Description

Operation of three court based residential detention facilities. (Community-based contracted services, including Secure Detention for Girls and Alternative to Detention Programs (ADP) are administered through the Court Support Services Division's Administration subprogram.)

* Provides shelter, meals, clothing, medical, dental, mental health and case management services for juvenile detainees.
* Makes available educational services provided by local school districts.
* Provides a range of recreational and other gender-specific programs appropriate for the detainee population, including psycho-educational groups to address trauma, substance abuse, anger management and violence prevention.
* Maintains records concerning all children in detention.
* Transports juveniles from detention facilities and alternative detention programs to court facilities for hearings and to other locations for evaluations and additional professional services as required.

Adult Services

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 54-63(b), 54-63(d), 54-103(b), 54-106, and 54-123(a).

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To insure the principles of fair and reasonable bail as guaranteed by the state and federal constitutions. To monitor the behavior of offenders in the community and to use suitable methods to aid and encourage improvement in their conduct and condition. To assist the court in the resolution of family and domestic violence matters.

## Program Description

The CSSD Adult Services delivery system is comprised of three major disciplines: adult probation, bail, and family services. These disciplines perform the following functions:

* Supervises all individuals sentenced to probation in accordance with statutory requirements and provides them with the opportunity to promote positive change, reduce recidivism and ensure the successful completion of probation.
* Provides access and support to victims through victim impact statements, restitution and the monitoring of conditions of probation.
* Provides pre-dispositional studies and recommendations to the court to assist in disposition of criminal cases.
* Assists in the return of probation violators to court in a timely and efficient manner.
* Monitors and reports to the court on the defendant’s compliance with pretrial and release conditions.
* Determines eligibility for the Pretrial Alcohol Education Program, Drug Education Program and other diversionary programs and formulates recommendations for the court.
* Conducts independent interviews and assessments for all detainees unable to post bond prior to arraignment.
* Verifies interview information and investigates state and national criminal history information.
* Recommends specific release conditions necessary to ensure court appearance and public safety in appropriate cases; notifies each defendant interviewed of scheduled court appearance and, on order of the court, notifies defendants who have failed to appear prior to the issuance of a rearrest warrant; verifies, monitors and records the activities of individuals conditionally released; re-interviews defendants at correctional centers post arraignment to provide alternative to incarceration bond modification plans to the judge and provides written progress reports to the court on conditional releases including recommendations for graduated sanctions for pretrial misconduct.
* Classifies and supervises offenders by assessed risk level.
* Makes referrals to, and collaborates with, appropriate community services and programs.
* Provides program coordination, defendant assessment and release supervision for Drug, Domestic Violence and Community Courts.
* Facilitates the identification and exploration of issues involving child custody and/or parental access through mediation and conflict resolution conferences to resolve parenting disputes in a non-coercive and confidential manner.
* Conducts comprehensive and issue focused evaluations involving in-depth assessments of the family and/or the issues impacting a parenting plan that result in recommended parenting plans shared with the parties, attorneys, and the court.
* Conducts pretrial and final judgment settlement negotiations with attorneys and self represented litigants that also serve as the intake/screening for custody and access referrals and civil restraining order petition negotiation.
* Completes pre-arraignment risk assessments for all family violence cases and prepares recommendations for the court. Conducts comprehensive family violence case assessments for defendants referred subsequent to the arraignment process. Provides monitoring/pre-trial supervision of individuals referred for family diversionary programs or court ordered interventions/sanctions.

Information technology

The Information Technology Division is comprised of the Commission on Official Legal Publications and Judicial Information Systems. The division is charged with providing and supporting the IT infrastructure necessary for the timely and efficient processing of information in the department and for developing and implementing a long term strategic technology plan. In addition, the division is responsible for publishing court decisions and other important documents necessary to facilitate the administration of justice.

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 51-216a, 51-216b, 51-216c, 51-213, 51-212, 4-173, 51-215a.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To efficiently and effectively provide the judges and Judicial Department employees with comprehensive data processing services and publishing resources in a manner that maximizes the utility of these resources.

## Program Description

* Coordinates and supervises the creation and maintenance of computer systems, communications networks and a variety of application and data servers.
* Directs all technology projects that have as their goal the furtherance of the department’s mission.
* Develops and operates the Judicial Department website including creating and maintaining static data and electronic services for attorneys and the public.
* Establishes standards for an integrated computing and communications network connecting all court facilities to centralized systems.
* Coordinates, supervises and monitors publication operations.
* Maintains current inventories of legal publications and typesets.
* Composes, photographs, prints, binds and electronically publishes a number of publications.
* Supplies high quality legal publications to state offices, municipalities and the general public.