



COURT PROGRAMS DIVISION

IMPORTANT STATISTICS FISCAL YEAR 2020–21

Alternative Dispute Resolution

2,144 family financial cases completed
4,365 arbitration cases completed
5,258 mediated settlement cases completed

Child Custody Mediation

17,870 people attended orientation
8,739 child custody cases mediated
9,424 mediation sessions held
4,046 parenting agreements drafted

Language Access Services

9 NCAOC Spanish court interpreters
72 certified Spanish court interpreters
2 certified Russian court interpreter
1 certified Vietnamese court interpreter
1 certified Portuguese court interpreter

Family Courts

47,178 domestic cases filed
32% of pending domestic cases were more than one year old
148 days pending median age of domestic cases

School Justice Partnerships (SJPs)

SJPs in 40 counties at end of FY 2020-21

Domestic Violence eFiling

14 counties serving 51% of state's population

WHO WE ASSIST

Court Officials

Judges, clerks of court, district attorneys, magistrates, defense attorneys, parent attorneys, Guardian ad Litem (GAL) attorneys

Court Staff

Custody mediators, family court staff, clerks, treatment court staff, trial court administrators, trial court coordinators, judicial assistants, grant and contract staff

Contractors

Interpreters, permanency mediators

STAKEHOLDERS

Citizens, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, treatment providers, Treatment Alternatives for Safer Communities (TASC) staff, school staff, N.C. Department of Public Safety



The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) Court Programs Division assists our state's courts in providing justice and increasing access to justice for families and individuals who face civil, child welfare, delinquency, and criminal court actions. We accomplish this through specific programs and services, many of which create pathways for resolving conflict in a less adversarial, more effective way.

Programs that are supported by NCAOC Court Programs staff and field staff include:

- Alternative dispute resolution services
- Child custody mediation
- Interpreting and translation services
- Unified family courts
- Access and visitation for non-custodial parents
- Treatment / recovery courts
- School Justice Partnerships
- Disability access
- Jury support

Other critical programs that are supported solely by NCAOC Court Programs staff include:

- Juvenile court improvement program
- Domestic violence
- Human trafficking

At the heart of our programs is providing information, advice, support, and solutions to court officials and staff on a daily basis. We are dedicated to making available tools, services, and training to advance the efficient management of court resources; providing research and best practices; communicating, collaborating, and partnering with stakeholders; identifying, encouraging, and supporting innovations in court management, services, and programs; and modeling performance measurement and accountability for outcomes of programs.

Court Program	Brief Description
Alternative Dispute Resolution	Provide support to judicial staff and clerks in districts with alternative dispute resolution services (family financial settlement, court-ordered arbitration, mediated settlement conferences, and the clerk's mediation program), which offer a less adversarial, more expeditious process for settling legal disputes
Child Custody Mediation	Assist district court staff to provide neutral, non-adversarial court-ordered mediation services in cases involving custody / visitation of minor children • deliver initial 40-hour training and oversee the training progression for new mediators • provide mentoring, specialized training, and professional development for all mediators and mediation coverage as needed • assist districts with development and implementation of permanency mediation services (provided by contractors) for parties in child abuse / neglect / dependency cases in order to stabilize the placement of the child(ren) involved • support the Custody Mediation Advisory Committee
Language Access	Facilitate equal access to justice for limited English proficient (LEP) parties in interest • provide court interpreters and translators for interpreting and translating services for court matters for which the state is authorized to pay • administer court interpreter training and certification testing for spoken foreign language court interpreters to ensure that proficient and ethical foreign language court interpreters are provided to the courts
Family Court	Facilitate planning, development, and implementation of new unified family courts, which coordinate the management of family law cases (e.g., divorce, child custody, equitable distribution, alimony, child abuse / neglect / dependency, and termination of parental rights) • support existing unified family courts in 15 districts (serving 27 counties and 47% of North Carolina's population) through technical assistance, consultation, and problem solving to ensure timely and efficient resolution of legal matters within established time standards • manage a federal grant to provide six access and visitation coordinators who assist non-custodial parents in 14 counties and respond to email and phone inquiries from parents statewide • support the Chief Justice's Family Court Advisory Commission
Treatment / Recovery Courts	Facilitate the development, implementation, and monitoring of local adult, juvenile, and family drug treatment courts and other recovery / treatment courts (DWI, Mental Health, and Veterans) • provide technical assistance and training by updating the field about best practices based on research and current trends • support the State Drug Treatment Court Advisory Committee
School Justice Partnerships	Provide technical assistance and support to districts with existing school justice partnerships • assist in the development, implementation, and promotion of districts that are in the planning stages of creating a school justice partnership
Disability Access	Assist court staff and officials to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to all court functions • process, analyze and fulfill reasonable accommodation requests, including American Sign Language and / or Certified Deaf Interpreter services for deaf/hard of hearing consumers • create, coordinate, and provide training about disability access in the courts • respond to grievances from the public • support the local disability access coordinators to address specific accommodation requests
Jury Support	Provide technical assistance to clerks of superior court, judges, and court managers regarding administrative issues related to jury management, such as summoning jurors, juror payment, public records requests, and grand jury selection • coordinate with the Division of Motor Vehicles regarding the development of master jury lists
Juvenile Court Improvement	Facilitate planning, development, and implementation of new juvenile court improvement projects, which coordinate the management of child abuse / neglect / dependency cases to ensure timely, efficient, and effective resolution • manage federal grant funds that support juvenile court improvement projects and provide technical assistance, consultation, and problem solving • coordinate specialized training of juvenile court judges, parent attorneys, DSS attorneys and staff, GAL attorneys and staff, and clerks
Domestic Violence	Provide technical assistance and training for judicial partners in domestic violence courts in all 100 counties, including law enforcement and advocates • manage a federal grant to operate the electronic filing system for domestic violence protective orders that exists in 14 counties, which serve over 50% of the state's population and represent 53% of the state's approximate 33,000 applications for domestic violence protective orders (DVPO) annually • serve as point of contact for research partnerships with local universities and for commissions and boards that govern the administration of justice for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault • provide training on the dynamics of domestic violence, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma on the state and federal level
Human Trafficking	Provide training on the dynamics of human trafficking to court personnel • coordinate the development of judicial juvenile sex trafficking eLearning training • provide technical assistance to district courts • research content for North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking website, newsletter, and social media accounts to build capacity of court personnel, law enforcement, and community organizations