



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

John Nevin, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

CONTACT (517) 373-0129 TWITTER @CourtInfo

Chief Judge Nancy M. Blount Takes Control of 36th District Court Special Judicial Administrator Michael J. Talbot Releases Restructuring Report

DETROIT, MI, September 18, 2014 – Chief Judge Nancy M. Blount today took control of administration of the 36th District Court in Detroit, marking another step forward in Detroit’s comeback. Under the leadership of Special Judicial Administrator Michael J. Talbot, dozens of reforms were implemented to improve service to the public and increase efficiency.

“A smoothly functioning judiciary is a critical layer of the foundation of a thriving city,” said Chief Judge Blount. “The citizens of the city, the lawyers and other users of the court as well as our employees deserve a better court, and we are committed to continue our transformation.”

The transition was finalized today as Special Judicial Administrator Judge Michael J. Talbot returned his keys to the courthouse and released a report documenting the transformation of the 36th District Court. In May of 2013, Judge Talbot was appointed by the Michigan Supreme Court to supervise reform of court operations to improve service to the public. The order appointing Talbot was rescinded in an order released today; however, several critical benchmarks are being put in place through a planned administrative order so that progress in improving service to the public can be maintained.

“I commend Judge Talbot and Chief Judge Blount for driving change to improve service to the public,” said Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice, Robert P. Young, Jr. “Thanks are due to the entire team at the 36th District Court for their hard work and commitment to giving the people of Detroit an efficient, well-run court that treats everyone with dignity and respect.”

“I’m proud of the results and of everyone who works in this courthouse,” said Judge Talbot. “They had to make a lot of sacrifices, yet they produced a turned-around court. That’s heroic.”

Key accomplishments highlighted in the report include:

- reducing lines and improving service by, among other steps, opening more courtrooms, permanently assigning judges to specific dockets, grouping courtrooms together by type, adding arraignments, expanding magistrate duties and installing monitors listing litigants and their assigned courtrooms;
- improving fiscal accountability by balancing the budget, reforming the collection process, cutting costs, renegotiating union contracts and containing rising health care costs; and,
- management reforms, including improved communication with judges and staff, recruiting new and experienced managers; and building bridges with community leaders to explain the reform process and enlist their support.

The Talbot report builds on the findings of a recent [one-year review](#) conducted by the National Center for State Courts that called the transformation of the 36th District Court “remarkable.”

Find the report [here](#).