



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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## **Mediation results in improved, more timely outcomes in child protection cases**

*[New report](#) says participants in child protection mediation 'Very Satisfied'*

LANSING, MI, April 12, 2019 –The Michigan Supreme Court today released the [results of a study](#) that evaluated the Child Protection Mediation (CPM) process in Michigan as an alternative means of achieving permanency in child welfare cases. Focusing on cases in Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Jackson, Marquette, and Traverse City, the [report](#) found that CPM improves time to permanency, yields high parental compliance and positive stakeholder perceptions, and improves judicial efficiency.

Of special note, participants in counties that used CPM reported higher “Satisfied/Very Satisfied” combined scores than those in traditional court proceedings.

“Our goal in child protection cases is always to establish safety and stability in a child’s life,” said Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack. “Child protection mediation is a valuable and effective method to accomplish exactly that while also benefiting the family, the community, and the court.”

Permanency is defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as “a legal permanent family living arrangement, that is, reunification with the birth family, living with relatives/guardianship, or adoption.” Michigan mediation centers using CPM have proven to achieve permanency faster and more frequently than in jurisdictions that do not use it, with the most common type of permanency being reunification with the parents.

CPM began in Michigan following the 1998 implementation of pilot programs as part of the federal Court Improvement Program and can be used at every stage of child protection proceedings. However, the report found that mediation is most often used during the pretrial stage, which results in better, speedier, outcomes for families.

The [report](#) was conducted by the Grand Valley State University College of Community & Public Service and School of Criminal Justice with input from MSC, regional mediation centers, and courts.

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