



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

*John Nevin, Communications Director*

Ph: 517-373-0129 Twitter: @MISupremeCourt FB: facebook.com/misupremecourt

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **State Budget Highlights Success of Treatment Courts, Legal Self-Help Program**

LANSING, MI, JUNE 10, 2016 – The Michigan Legislature has approved a state budget with increased investment in successful judicial initiatives, including drug, mental health, and veterans treatment courts and the legal self-help program. This commitment of resources reflects the continuing effectiveness of Court efforts to improve outcomes and increase access.

“Outcome data tell us that problem-solving courts are effective in keeping participants from reoffending,” said Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. “This funding will help these innovative courts solve even more problems and save even more lives.”

“Michigan Legal Help is opening the doors of our justice systems to hundreds of thousands of Michigan residents,” said Justice Bridget M. McCormack. “From divorce to landlord-tenant disputes, families are finding the legal help they need either online or at a self-help center.”

Highlights of the 2017 budget include:

- \$300,000 for the Michigan legal self-help website and centers. The website, [www.michiganlegalhelp.org](http://www.michiganlegalhelp.org), is visited more than 18,000 times each week and has had nearly 8 million page views since its launch in 2012. Recently featured in the [New York Times](#), the site ranks second in the nation in the number of forms completed using Law Help Interactive. In addition to 10 offices statewide, the program’s 11<sup>th</sup> self-help center was opened recently in Alcona County.
- \$750,000 for problem-solving courts as part of the Statewide Opioid Task Force Initiative. The funding will be used to establish a medication-assisted pilot program within existing drug treatment courts to target new offenders having alcohol or opioid drug disorders.
- \$500,000 to expand the number of participants in veterans treatment courts (\$250,000), drug courts (\$125,000), and mental health courts (\$125,000). The new funding will help build on Michigan’s national leadership with 23 veterans treatment courts. Graduates of Michigan treatment courts are two to three times less likely to reoffend. In addition, unemployment among participants has been cut by nearly 75 percent.

Problem-solving courts divert nonviolent offenders from expensive incarceration to treatment and rehabilitation services under strict judicial supervision. For the latest information and outcome data regarding Michigan problem-solving courts, download “[Solving Problems, Saving Lives: 2015 Problem-Solving Court Report](#).”

-MSC-