



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Success Stories: How Probate Courts Work to Protect the People of Michigan

MIDLAND, MI, June 25, 2018 – The Michigan Supreme Court today released a [report](#) in conjunction with the annual conference of the Michigan Probate Judges Association (MPJA) highlighting the successful efforts of the state’s 103 probate judges. The report, “[Success Stories: How Probate Courts Work to Protect the People of Michigan](#),” features six probate court judges from around the state, a look at the problem of mental illness in the criminal justice system, and a history of probate courts in Michigan.

“Within our judicial branch, it is imperative that we have in place an effective system for resolving a variety of deeply-sensitive legal matters, such as the probate of estates, the supervision of trusts, the administration of guardianships and conservatorships, and addressing the treatment of persons with mental illness,” said Justice Kurtis T. Wilder. “Michigan’s probate courts have a lengthy and honored history of providing that very system and protecting vulnerable people all across Michigan.”

Probate judges featured in the report: Chief Judge Dorene S. Allen, Midland County; Chief Judge Freddie G. Burton, Jr., Wayne County; Judge Linda S. Hallmark, Oakland County; Chief Judge Monte Burmeister, Crawford County; Chief Judge Cheryl W. Lohmeyer, Monroe County; and Chief Judge David M. Murkowski, Kent County.

State Court Administrator Milton L. Mack, Jr., a former probate judge whose work on a policy paper on mental illness in the criminal justice system is featured in the [report](#), said, “As a former probate judge, I know firsthand that dealing with mental illness is one of the toughest challenges a family can face. I believe the judiciary has a key role to play in enabling Michigan’s families to get timely help for loved ones facing mental health issues.”

“This report captures how probate judges go above and beyond in their communities, how they take action and lead to effect change in the courts, and how they work every day to make positive a difference in the lives of the people they serve,” said Chief Judge Allen, who currently serves as MPJA President. “The compassion and dedication of probate judges are on display in courts statewide, protecting children, seniors, and other vulnerable people.”

Probate judges also play an important role in Family Division cases. Along with their traditional probate and juvenile cases, probate judges continue to oversee a variety of family court cases including divorces and child custody cases. Find additional court success stories [here](#).

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