

# Glendale City Court

Glendale City Court adjudicates criminal misdemeanors, City Code violations, traffic violations and certain juvenile offenses committed in the City of Glendale. In cases of domestic violence and harassment, the Court issues protective orders. The Court has the authority to issue search warrants for misdemeanors and felonies.



# 2014 Annual Report

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# A Message From the Presiding Judge



*Striving for successful case outcomes  
through problem-solving courts...*

When I first sat on the bench 35 years ago, there was little reason for a judge to reach outside the court to process a case. All I needed to administer justice was well within the comfortable confines of my courtroom and readily available from my staff and the attorneys working the case. As in any other industry however, court administrators and judges over the years realized to be responsible stewards of justice in an increasingly complex society, we needed to work closely with experts in other related fields. Partnerships and collaborative efforts based on proven practices, or evidence-based principles, have become judicial foundations for accountability and efficiency in the courtroom. Working together with dedicated community leaders and liaisons means successful court outcomes are often achieved very differently than by merely adjudicating or closing a case in a pre-defined desired timeframe. A successful business model in a modern courthouse can incorporate the ongoing creative efforts of law enforcement, behavioral health, medical, academic, political and judicial communities striving for common goals to raise the quality of life for everyone involved.

One strategy identified by Glendale City Court to improve case management practices and community quality of life involves the creation of several “problem-solving courts.” Problem-solving courts began in the 1990’s to accommodate offenders with specific needs and problems that were not or could not be adequately addressed in traditional courts. Problem-solving courts seek to promote outcomes that benefit not only the offender, but the victim and society as well. Thus, problem-solving courts were developed as an innovative response to deal with offenders’ troubles resulting in involvement in the criminal justice system. Although most problem-solving court models are relatively new, results from studies show these types of courts are having a positive impact on the lives of defendants and victims, and in some instances, are saving jail costs.

In Glendale, we have implemented specialized problem-solving courts to address mental health, domestic violence and substance abuse challenges. We have also assembled multi-disciplinary task forces of mental health and domestic violence experts in our community to alleviate breakdowns in these systems. The Glendale Mental Health and Domestic Violence Task Forces include stakeholders from the court, police and fire departments, prosecutor’s office and many behavioral health and non-profit entities. As we work collaboratively to achieve common goals, I am pleased to share this 2014 Glendale City Court Annual Report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth R. Finn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth R. Finn, Presiding Judge  
Glendale City Court

Specialized **problem-solving courts** are intended to combine treatment and court monitoring to help offenders avoid repeating their criminal offenses and stay out of jail. Problem-solving courts, or therapeutic courts, have received enormous public attention and acclaim. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, this is for good reason: problem-solving courts are viewed by many scholars and corrections experts as one of the most successful criminal justice innovations in the last 25 years. They have attracted bipartisan support, along with millions of grant dollars from Congress. Although problem-solving courts vary in target population, program structure and service resources, they are generally based on a comprehensive model involving:

- ✓ *Offender assessment*
- ✓ *Judicial interaction*
- ✓ *Monitoring and supervision*
- ✓ *Graduated sanctions and incentives*
- ✓ *Treatment services*

Problem-solving court programs are usually managed by a multidisciplinary team involving the judge as the leader, a prosecutor, public defender and someone from outside the court who relays the status of the offender. This is typically a treatment provider or case manager. Research has shown the influence of a specialized court program with a judge play a key role in successful case management and reducing offender recidivism. These programs take a problem-solving approach, rather than a traditional adversarial approach.

Glendale City Court has implemented several problem-solving courts and specialized court calendars:

- ✓ *Mental Health Court*
- ✓ *Treatment Court for Domestic Violence*
- ✓ *Supervised Domestic Violence Probation Review Docket*
- ✓ *DUI Review Docket*



## Glendale's Problem- Solving Courts in Action...

Glendale City Court's first **Mental Health Court** calendar was held in January 2013. More than 200 participants have been referred to Mental Health Court, and 76 graduates have successfully completed all program requirements to earn diversion of their criminal cases. In partnership with the City Prosecutor's Office and local behavioral health experts from Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care, the program's goal is to maintain psychiatric stability of mentally ill defendants, which reduces recidivism, jail costs and the high price tag associated with court-ordered psychiatric evaluations. Psychiatric stability also reduces drug and alcohol abuse and accompanying costs of incarceration and court proceedings. Mental Health Court provides judicial supervision to ensure defendants diagnosed with major mental illnesses follow their case manager's treatment plans, take medication as prescribed and attend required treatment programs, such as substance abuse counseling.

A recently televised story on Mental Health Court can be found on Glendale City Court's **You Tube** playlist. This feature is among several court stories produced by Glendale Channel 11. To view stories, cut and paste this link in your browser:

[http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh2qy1UEBrT\\_szUEJrzbyEd2W7lspPEgb](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh2qy1UEBrT_szUEJrzbyEd2W7lspPEgb)

Since 2004, all persons convicted of domestic violence crimes have been required to attend Glendale's **Domestic Violence Treatment Court** program. This specialized Court monitors about 360 domestic violence offenders each month. By law, a convicted domestic violence offender must complete a minimum of 26 weeks of counseling. Treatment Court follows a problem-solving approach similar to Mental Health Court. It is the only domestic violence problem-solving court in Arizona operating without the added costs of probation department resources. During the past ten years, more than 2,600 defendants completed all Treatment Court program requirements to achieve successful graduation. Treatment Court is a past recipient of the Arizona Supreme Court's annual "Justice for a Better Arizona" Achievement Award.

The Maricopa County Adult Probation Department provides felony-level supervision of Glendale City Court misdemeanor domestic violence offenders having at least one prior conviction. During the **Supervised Probation Review Docket** a specialized probation officer/surveillance officer team develops a monthly review calendar to verify completion and adherence to court orders. Noncompliant defendants are ordered to perform community service and other increased sanctions.

Glendale City Court conducts twice-monthly DUI Sentence Review Calendars during a **DUI Review Docket** to monitor compliance status and progress of all defendants convicted of DUI. This specialized calendar provides judicial oversight to maintain defendant accountability through status checks of counseling attendance and other sentencing conditions.

# 2014 Case Management

Glendale City Court processed 36,468 new case filings during calendar year 2014. Among these case filings were 3,071 protective orders issued for victims of domestic violence and harassment. The court conducted 1,049 associated protective order hearings this year. Glendale has the second highest volume of protective order requests among city courts in Arizona, behind only Phoenix Municipal Court.



## What's Trending at the Court?



*Security guards screened more than 100,000 visitors entering the court building in 2014 and confiscated more than 4,700 prohibited items (such as knives, box cutters, spray canisters).*



*Interpretation services for 33 different languages were conducted at Glendale City Court this year. Whether you speak Assyrian, Kurundi, Punjabi, English or use ASL, we are here to serve you.*



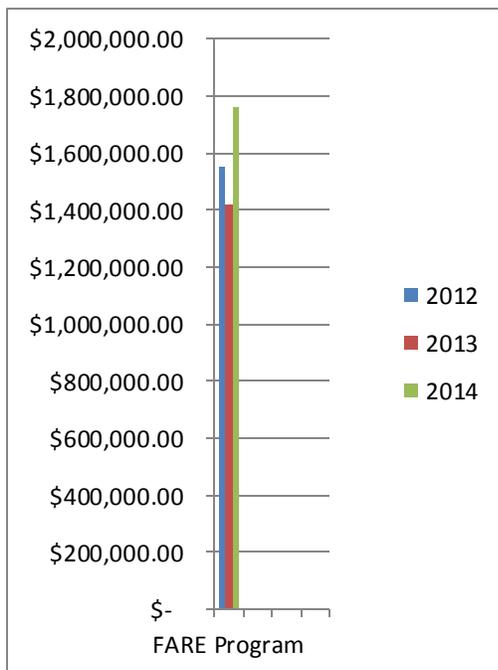
*Court staff shattered a training record this year with 1,350 hours of judicial education courses attended. This amount is 500 hours more than in 2013.*



*Between 2005 and 2014 Glendale City Court was awarded \$1.5 million in federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.*

# Revenue Enhancements

New initiatives to increase collections of fines and fees at Glendale City Court this year include **ARP (Automatic Reoccurring Payments)**. This service allows defendants to pay their penalties automatically. Customers simply provide credit card information for automatic charges whenever the next payment becomes due. This saves trips to the Court and time spent during transactions on the Court's website payment portal. It also removes the risk of an arrest warrant generated for failure to pay Court financial obligations.



Through the **FARE Collection Program (Fines, Fees and Restitution Enforcement)**, the Court recovered financial delinquencies totaling \$1,760,165 this year, an increase of nearly \$350,000 from 2013. FARE's automated statewide collections enforcement efforts are administered by the Arizona Supreme Court to target defendants in arrears on court financial obligations.

The Court's **Tax Intercept Program (TIP)** collected \$189,906 in 2014. This automated program operated by the Arizona Supreme Court allows the Court to collect state income tax refunds and lottery winnings for overdue Court payments.

Daily activities of the Court's two fulltime **warrant officers** contribute to revenue streams while holding offenders accountable. These police officers actively pursue defendants in the community who are delinquent on their Court payments and have generated failure to pay warrants. Arrests, phone calls, field contacts and other warrant officer involvement generated \$372,510 in collections for the year. These officers also provide valuable support to the Court by booking defendants into custody, transporting defendants from MCSO and fingerprinting defendants to ensure accurate criminal history records.

**Home detention with electronic monitoring** and random alcohol testing continues to provide substantial cost savings for the Glendale Police Department's prisoner maintenance budget. During 2014, a total of 5,213 days of electronic monitoring in lieu of incarceration were ordered by Glendale Judges and served by 314 defendants. Had all these days been spent in jail, nearly \$420,000 would have been incurred in additional jail costs. All defendants are carefully screened to eliminate any violent offenders.

# Programs and Services



**Customer Satisfaction Survey:** Many positive findings arose from this year's Court customer satisfaction survey. The "CourTools Access and Fairness Survey" is used by Court managers to measure performance indicators annually as part of the CourTools project sponsored by the National Center for State Courts and the Arizona Supreme Court. CourTools provides a framework to guide courts into the future by setting target performances, then monitoring, evaluating and learning from this year's survey results:

- 92% found the courthouse easy to find
- 86% said they were treated with dignity and respect
- 87% felt safe in the courthouse
- 81% said reasonable efforts were made to remove physical and language barriers to service
- 81% said our forms were clear and easy to understand

To seek additional customer input throughout the year, Glendale City Court displays customer satisfaction survey holders in each courtroom and various other public locations throughout the facility.

**Warrant Wipe-Out:** The Glendale Police Department spearheaded a three-day "Warrant Wipe-Out" that took place at Glendale City Court during an extended weekend in June. This may be the first time the Court was open for business on a Saturday. Defendants with outstanding Glendale City Court criminal warrants were able to walk in and see a judge without fear of being arrested on a misdemeanor warrant. The event generated substantial collections of overdue Court fines and obtained current location information on defendants. Representatives from ADOT were present during Glendale's Warrant Wipe-Out to provide motor vehicle services and information on restoration of driving privileges.

**Stand Up For Veterans:** Sixteen court employees volunteered their time on a Saturday in September for the second annual "Stand Up For Veterans" outreach event hosted by Glendale Community College and Mayor Jerry Weiers. More than 300 military veterans and service members registered for job interviews, motor vehicle services, and numerous other benefits from 55 service organizations



during Stand Up. Court staff provided triage for veterans to proper resource stations, running public access lookup information on court case histories, completing queries into court case management systems and tracking community service projects. Representing 14 local city courts, Judge Finn issued 40 court orders and referral forms for defendants, including 32 community service work project orders. Those projects were completed on-site at GCC during Stand Up for consideration of offsetting overdue court payments. Judges from Maricopa County Justice Courts and the Regional Homeless Court program also participated, along with the Maricopa County Public Defender's Office, the Glendale City Prosecutor's Office and a Glendale public defender. Defendants received legal advice on their criminal matters including restoration of civil rights in felony convictions.

**Law Day:** Glendale City Court continued its long-standing tradition of celebrating Law Day on May 1st by hosting 32 seventh and eighth grade students from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Elementary School. Each year, Law Day is designed to celebrate the rule of law in America and educate citizens about the role of the judiciary in their communities. This year's Law Day theme, "Realizing the Dream," honored the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. The students were greeted by Glendale City Councilmember Manny Martinez who told the students about the functions of the Council and how it integrates with the City Court. Other speakers included Glendale Police Sergeant Brent Coombs, City Prosecutor Rob Walecki, Public Defender Cary Lackey and Judge Finn.



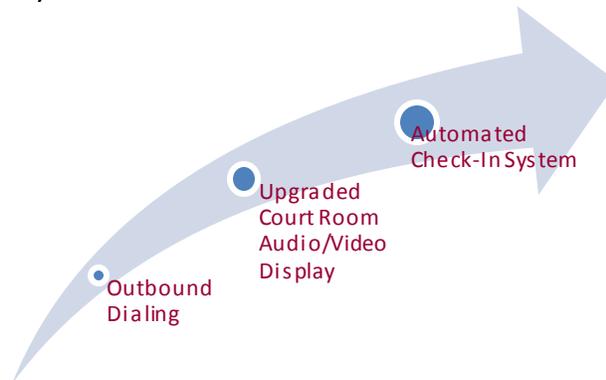
**New Security System:** The Glendale City Council authorized the Court to purchase a new closed-circuit television security camera system this year. The new system adds dozens of security cameras throughout the Court building, public safety complex, and adjacent parking garage to help insure all customers continue to be served in a safe environment. Programmable display monitors offer high quality digital images for viewing by Court security personnel.

**Online Quick Case Look-Up:** Glendale City Court now offers a dynamic case status look-up option on the City of Glendale website. Court customers can query vital case information through a new software database program linked to our IT case management system. The Court developed the software enabling web access to defendants' pending court dates and times, courtroom locations, payment status and lawyers' names. This information benefits defendants, victims, witnesses, police officers, public defenders, prosecutors, other courts and the public. This feature will likely reduce Court telephone calls for general information.

# Looking Forward

## 2015 and Beyond...

As we maintain our focus on judicial integrity and court business efficiencies, Glendale City Court also strives for new heights in customer service delivery. Our Court managers have targeted several automation and technology additions to improve case management and Court operations in the year ahead.



- An automated check-in system using bar codes to allow defendants and jurors to report quickly and easily to their proper courtrooms.
- Upgraded audio and video monitors to present trial evidence in all five courtrooms. The new AV package would also be used for training staff.
- An automated outbound telephone dialing program with emailing and texting options to notify defendants of future court dates or financial payment status.
- A digital reader-board in the Court lobby displaying daily case calendars for all courtrooms for easy public check-in.
- Increased capacity for the Court's IT storage area network to accommodate audio recordings of all courtroom proceedings mandated by law. This will also allow sufficient storage for future audio and video upgrades.

While these targeted improvements present opportunities for achieving court goals, the new year also brings challenges to some existing Court priorities. During the past nine years, Glendale City Court has received \$1.5 million in federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women to pay for a variety of domestic violence programs and staff. However, as the DOJ shifts its priority grant funding focus toward sexual assault services, the Court must explore alternative funding methods to maintain our bilingual Court-based victim advocate and our pro tem judge during the lunch hour to preside over domestic violence cases. The Court and the Glendale Domestic Violence Task Force are examining strategies to sustain these vital community resources.