

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Court Services Division

Mission

The Ministry of the Attorney General is responsible for administering justice in Ontario. Within the Ministry, the Court Services Division (CSD) is responsible for the administration of the courts. CSD's mission is to provide a modern and professional court service that supports accessible, fair, timely and effective justice services.

Core Services

CSD's core services include:

Court Office Services

CSD provides court office services in 181 communities across the province. Court staff schedule court cases at the direction of the judiciary, maintain court records and files, provide information to the public and facilitate the delivery of key justice programs including the Victim/Witness Program, the Bail Program, Domestic Violence Courts and Legal Aid.

Judicial and Courtroom Support

CSD provides administrative support to all judges of the Court of Appeal, the Superior Court of Justice and the Ontario Court of Justice and to justices of the peace. The Division also manages the jury system and provides courtroom support through court registrars, clerks, reporters, monitors and interpreters.

Mediation Programs

CSD manages the delivery of mediation services in the family and civil courts. Mandatory civil mediation is now part of the civil court process in Ottawa, Toronto and Windsor. As well, the Family Court branch of the Superior Court of Justice offers family mediation services on a voluntary basis across the province.

Enforcement Services

CSD administers the filing of writs of execution, enforces civil orders and manages the collection of fine and restitution revenues from the prosecution of criminal offences.

Highlights from the Opening of Courts

The annual Opening of Courts ceremony provides an opportunity for the legal community to reflect on the daily work done in the courts. On January 5, 2004, Chief Justice McMurtry of the Court of Appeal presided with Chief Justice Smith of the Superior Court of Justice and Chief Justice Lennox of the Ontario Court of Justice at the province's Opening of Courts ceremony at the Superior Court of Justice at 361 University Avenue in Toronto. Representatives from the judiciary, the bar, the federal and provincial governments, the police, the clergy, the media and social service agencies were in attendance. The newly appointed Attorney General, Michael Bryant, addressed the Chief Justices. He emphasized Ontario's commitment to judicial independence and his commitment to ensure a greater judicial role in the administration of justice.

"I envisage a new era of unprecedented collaboration with the judiciary to ensure a greater judicial role in courts administration."

Attorney General Michael Bryant,
Opening of Courts Speech, January 2004

The Division's mission is to provide a modern and professional court service that supports accessible, fair, timely and effective justice services.



Photo collage (clockwise from top left): Motions room at the John Sopinka Courthouse, Hamilton; Court services counter at the John Sopinka Courthouse, Hamilton; Courtroom at the Burlington Ontario Court of Justice; Model electronic courtroom at the 393 University Avenue Superior Court of Justice, Toronto; Courtroom at the Collingwood Superior Court of Justice;

Role of the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Court Services Division

The Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Court Services Division, has overall responsibility for the administration of the courts in Ontario. The Assistant Deputy Attorney General reports to the Deputy Attorney General, who in turn reports to the Attorney General.

Regional Structure

For the purpose of providing court services, Ontario is organized into administrative regions. Each region is responsible for:

- Delivering local criminal, civil and family court services
- Maintaining records, files, exhibits and databases
- Providing judicial support services, including courtroom and administrative support
- Managing juries

- Delivering civil and family mediation programs
- Enforcing court orders
- Managing fines, fees and trust funds
- Managing regional financial and human resources
- Identifying and coordinating regional facility plans
- Managing regional stakeholder communications
- Implementing divisional initiatives

During 2003/04, CSD's North region was divided into the Northeast and Northwest regions. As a result, CSD's regions now correspond more closely with the Ontario Court of Justice administrative regions. Courts in the Northeast and Northwest can focus on, and be more responsive to, the unique service delivery challenges in their separate geographic areas.

Regional Directors

Each region is managed by a Director of Court Operations who reports to the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Court Services Division.

Map is not to scale.

**Summary of Court Locations*
by CSD Administrative Region**

Region	Base Courts	Satellite Courts	Total Courts
Central East	12	11	23
Central West	12	5	17
East	19	11	30
Northeast	10	26	36
Northwest	5	35	40
Toronto	10	0	10
West	17	8	25
Total	85	96	181

* Each court location is comprised of at least one courtroom.

“I wish to recognize the enormous debt that the Court and the entire justice sector owe to the members of the Court Services Division, who consistently demonstrate the highest values of public service.”

Chief Justice Lennox, Opening of Courts Speech, January 2004

Central East Regional Profile



**Director of Court Operations
Central East Region**
Susan Lee

Located geographically to the north and east of Toronto, the Central East region serves many of the communities of the Greater Toronto Area, including Barrie, Newmarket, Oshawa and Whitby. The population growth rate in this area is among the highest in Canada.

In 2003/04, the Central East region partnered with the Division's Business Solutions

Unit to pilot the new electronic court case tracking system for civil, family, Small Claims Court, Divisional Court and Superior Court criminal cases in Oshawa and Whitby. Oshawa and Whitby were the largest provincial pilot sites for the case tracking system, and provided valuable feedback on implementation issues.

The Justice Delay Reduction Initiative was also implemented during the fiscal year in Oshawa and Newmarket, to help reduce backlogs in these high-volume courts. The region welcomed nine new judges

in Barrie, Oshawa and Newmarket and five new justices of the peace.

The region was honoured in 2004 with a *Building Owners and Managers Association of Greater Toronto Award for Building Excellence*, in recognition of the facility improvements at the Newmarket courthouse. To receive an Award of Building Excellence, a building must meet high standards in building management, operations, environmental management, design, tenant satisfaction and building personnel training.

The region also completed construction of a new satellite courthouse in Midland in August 2003. Opened officially on September 2, 2004, the new courthouse will accommodate continued caseload growth in the area. Renovations to the Newmarket, Oshawa, Barrie and Peterborough courthouses increased the amount of functional court space in the region and ensured compliance with facility requirements under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

In addition, during 2003/04, the Central East region worked on planning for the largest trial of members of a motorcycle gang in Ontario's history.

Central East Regional Statistics

Regional Centre: Newmarket
 Population: 1,953,928
 Area: 25,810 km²
 Population Density: 75.7 persons/km²
 Base Court Locations: 12
 Satellite Court Locations: 11
 Total Court Locations: 23

● Base Court Location
 ● Satellite Court Location



Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.

Central West Regional Profile



**Director of Court Operations
Central West Region**
Joanne Spriet

Serving over 2.5 million residents, the Central West region has the highest population of the seven CSD regions. The Central West region includes Pearson International Airport, numerous communities in the Greater Toronto Area and Ontario's largest Indian reserve, the Six Nations Reserve, as well as the New Credit Reserve.

Rapid population growth, the expansion of the Peel Regional Police force, the relocation of Caledon Ontario Provincial Police charges to the Orangeville courthouse and the presence of Pearson International Airport are contributing to high caseload growth in the Brampton and Orangeville courts. To address this growth, Orangeville and Brampton have received additional judicial, court services and Crown resources as part of the Justice Delay Reduction Initiative. The Ministry is constructing two additional courtrooms in the Orangeville courthouse.

The Central West region, in conjunction with the Business Solutions Unit, has successfully implemented the new electronic court case tracking system for civil, family, Small Claims Court, Divisional Court and Superior Court criminal cases in Simcoe, Cayuga, Brantford, Welland, St.Catharines and Brampton. Implementation of the system in Milton, Oakville, Burlington, Orangeville and Hamilton is to be completed by fall 2004.

During 2003/04, the Central West region also developed a Divisional Business Continuity Framework, to ensure court services are provided during unforeseen or emergency situations. The framework will act as a model to assist local court managers in other CSD regions with the development of local business continuity plans.

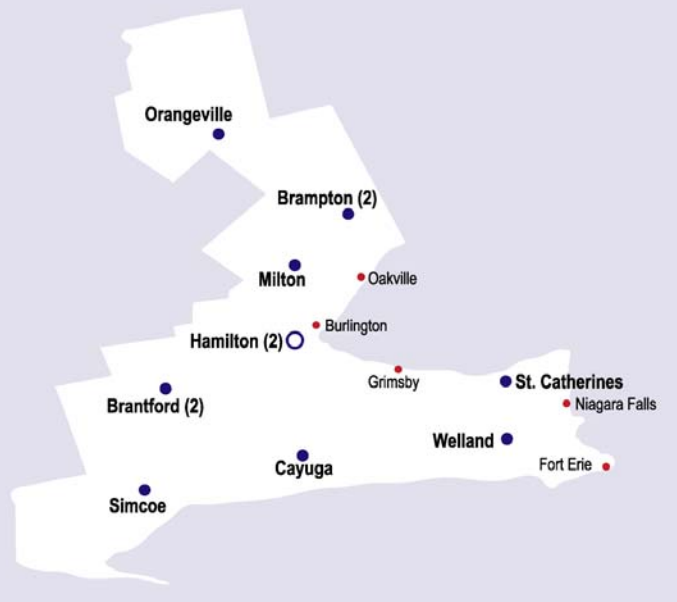
The Director of Court Operations for the Central West region, Joanne Spriet, also serves as Vice-President of the Association of Canadian Court Administrators (ACCA). ACCA exists to promote innovation and foster collaboration, the sharing of knowledge and best practices to improve the Canadian court system and enhance the administration of justice.

Central West Regional Statistics

Regional Centre: Hamilton
 Population: 2,539,187
 Area: 10,662 km²
 Population Density: 238.2 persons/km²
 Base Court Locations: 12
 Satellite Court Locations: 5
 Total Court Locations: 17

- Base Court Location
- Satellite Court Location

Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.



East Regional Profile



Director of Court Operations East Region
Tom Fagan

The East region provides court services to 10 counties/unioned counties in eastern Ontario. The region has a significant francophone population and provides many services in French. The East regional office is located in Canada's capital city, Ottawa.

The population in the Ottawa area continues to grow at a faster rate than the provincial

average and is expected to be over one million by 2011. This growth is reflected in the courts, as CSD issues in the East region are beginning to mirror large city issues.

Two courts in the East region were identified as Justice Delay Reduction Initiative sites for 2003/04. Ottawa and Cornwall received additional judicial, court services and Crown resources. Plans are underway for facility upgrades over the next two years to address the needs of this project.

Consolidation of the Brockville Ontario and Superior Courts of Justice into a renovated five-courtroom heritage courthouse was substantially completed in 2003/04. Occupancy is planned for summer 2004.

The region also implemented the new electronic case management system in Belleville. The rest of the region is scheduled for implementation by the end of 2004/05.

Information technology resources for the East region courts, Crowns and judiciary were upgraded in 2003/04. Systems officers for the courts and the Crown worked together as a team to provide more efficient completion of this project.

During 2003/04, the Director of Court Operations for the East region participated in a United Nations' mission to modernize the Algerian court system and served as the elected chair of the Eastern Interministerial Council. The Council is comprised of regional directors and senior managers who work together to achieve excellence in delivery of public services.

East Regional Statistics

Regional Centre: Ottawa
 Population: 1,543,162
 Area: 35,299 km²
 Population Density: 43.7 persons/km²
 Base Court Locations: 19
 Satellite Court Locations: 11
 Total Court Locations: 30



Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.

Northeast Regional Profile



Director of Court Operations Northeast Region
Paul Langlois

The Northeast region includes some of the major urban centres in Ontario's north, as well as some of the smaller communities near James Bay.

The region comprises 40 percent of Ontario's land mass but is home to only 5 percent of its population. There are significant francophone and aboriginal populations in the region and court services are

regularly provided in French, Ojibway and Cree.

During 2003/04, the region implemented the new electronic court case tracking system in Parry Sound, Haileybury, Sudbury, Kirkland Lake, Manitoulin and Elliot Lake. The region plans to implement the system in Cochrane, Timmins, Sault Ste. Marie and North Bay in 2004/05.

Building on technology already in place under the Video Remand Project, the region has begun piloting

video assessment hearings. The pilot will continue through 2004/05, and is expected to improve access to justice in remote areas, decrease scheduling wait times and reduce travel for hearings officers. Haileybury was also selected as a 2004 provincial test site for the re-engineering of writs of seizure and sale.

The Northeast continues to face facility challenges. Many of the region's courthouses were originally built in the 1920s and 30s and do not have sufficient space to accommodate court initiatives such as the Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP), Family Law Information Centres and Legal Aid.

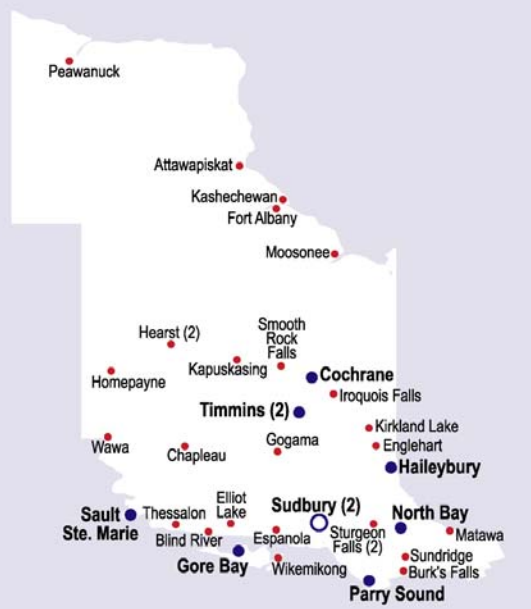
Facilities projects during 2003/04 were undertaken to create additional space in existing courthouses. At the Sudbury courthouse, a lower floor area was excavated to create new offices for Police. The space vacated by the Police is being converted to a Video Court and an Intake Office. Phase 2 of this project will result in enlarged holding cells and a sally port. At the Haileybury courthouse, Crown attorney staff were relocated within the facility to increase operational efficiency and space was created and assigned to VWAP and Legal Aid services.

Northeast Regional Statistics

Regional Centre: Sudbury
Population: 553,158
Area: 366,184 km²
Population Density: 1.5 persons/km²
Base Court Locations: 10
Satellite Court Locations: 26
Total Court Locations: 36

- Base Court Location
- Satellite Court Location

Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census. Because the Northeast Region crosses census districts, the following assumptions were used to calculate the regional statistics. The population includes all complete census districts, plus the population of Peawanuck, Attawapiskat and Kashechewan. The geographic area includes all complete census districts, plus 86% of the Cochrane district and 27% of the Kenora district.



Northwest Regional Profile



Director of Court Operations Northwest Region
Robert Gordon

The Northwest region comprises 48 percent of Ontario's land mass but is home to only 2 percent of its population.

The region delivers court services in five base court locations, three staffed satellite court locations and 32 un-staffed satellite court locations. 25 of the satellite court locations are accessible only by air. To provide community-centred

services, court staff and members of the judiciary and the bar must travel extensively.

There are significant aboriginal populations in the Northwest region, and court services are regularly provided in Ojibway and Cree.

The region's vast geography, remote locations and winter travel conditions present many program delivery

challenges. The Northwest region has been using technology to help meet these challenges and to ensure that court services are accessible and efficient.

Video conferencing infrastructure has been installed in Thunder Bay, Kenora, Dryden, Fort Frances, Sioux Lookout and Red Lake. Although this infrastructure has primarily been used for video remands, it has also allowed the region to explore new uses for video in court. The technology has enhanced access to the family court from remote communities, and will ensure that judicial resources are available to families, child protection agencies and lawyers, regardless of the remoteness of the communities in which they live. The infrastructure platform is an important vehicle to help CSD provide timely, accessible justice services in spite of geographic limitations.

In 2003/04, the Northwest region also implemented the new electronic court case tracking system for civil, family, Small Claims Court, Divisional Court and Superior Court criminal cases in locations across the region.

Northwest Regional Statistics

Regional Centre: Thunder Bay

Population: 233,285

Area: 436,194 km²

Population Density: 0.5 persons/km²

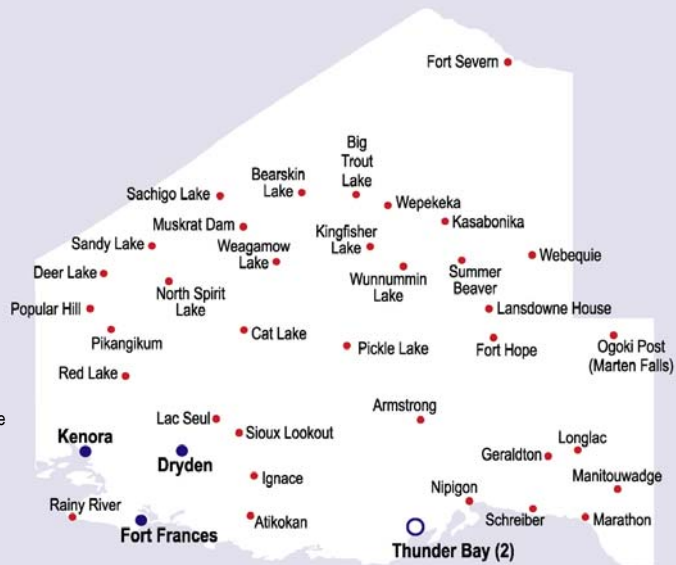
Base Court Locations: 5

Satellite Court Locations: 35

Total Court Locations: 40

- Base Court Location
- Satellite Court Location

Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census. Because the Northwest Region crosses census districts, the following assumptions were used to calculate the regional statistics. The population includes the districts of Thunder Bay, Rainy River and Kenora, minus Peawanuck, Attawapiskat and Kashechewan. The geographic area includes Thunder Bay and Rainy River, plus 14% of the Cochrane district and 73% of the Kenora district.



Toronto Regional Profile



**Director of Court Operations
Toronto Region**
Lori Newton

The Toronto region serves the City of Toronto. With a population of almost 2.5 million, the Toronto region has the highest population density of the CSD regions. One in four immigrants to Canada settles in Toronto and the region is ethnically diverse.

The Toronto region includes many high volume courts and key justice system participants, including: the Court of Appeal for Ontario; the Offices of the Chief Justices; the Provincial Legislature; the offices of the Provincial Law Society; and many of the province's largest law firms. The Region also manages Ontario's first electronic courtroom for commercial and other non-jury civil matters.

Three Justice Delay Reduction Initiative (JDRI) courts are located in Toronto, at 2201 Finch Avenue West, 1000 Finch Avenue West and 1911 Eglinton Avenue East. Each of these courthouses is undergoing

substantial renovations to accommodate the initiative. In addition, JDRI best practices are being introduced to non-JDRI locations within the region.

In the past year, Toronto developed and implemented the Transcript Backlog Initiative to reduce delay due to transcript backlogs. Court of Appeal directives were issued instructing court reporters to prepare transcripts within 90 days of the ordering date. The initiative has been successful in reducing delay in the region.

The region also implemented changes to forensic procedures for accused persons with mental health problems. Instead of sending accused persons to hospitals for mental health assessments, psychiatrists are now brought to the court to perform assessments. The new arrangement is more cost efficient and avoids unnecessary remand time in custody. In addition, Toronto established an agreement with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health to ensure that appropriate medical professionals are available to support the court. The agreement consolidates forensic assessment and expert testimony services and ensures that psychiatrists attending at the courthouse are expertly trained and supervised.

Toronto Regional Statistics

Regional Centre: 720 Bay Street
 Population: 2,481,494
 Area: 630 km²
 Population Density: 3,939 persons/km²
 Base Court Locations: 10
 Satellite Court Locations: 0
 Total Court Locations: 10



● Base Court Location

Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.

West Regional Profile



Director of Court Operations West Region
Len Griffiths

The West region crosses three Superior Court judicial regions and is comprised of both large urban centers and rural farming areas. The region includes Sarnia and Windsor, both major border crossings between Canada and the United States. The volume of traffic from trucks and cross-border commuters generates a high number of traffic-related charges in this region.

The West region also houses Ontario's Central Jury Office, which is responsible for managing the selection of jury panels for courts across the province.

Video technology is used extensively in the majority of court locations in the West region. Because London is the sole location of the Weekend and Statutory Holiday Court for the West, matters from across the

region are dealt with from this single location via video technology.

In 2003/04, two new courthouses were opened in the region in Owen Sound and Chatham. Renovations were completed to the Cambridge and Stratford courthouses, resulting in additional courtrooms and judicial chambers. Further renovations and a technology upgrade to the London courthouse created a state-of-the-art courtroom which can accommodate up to 24 accused persons and their counsel.

In January 2003, Windsor implemented civil case management under Rule 77 of the *Rules of Civil Procedure*. Under case management, the court supervises the progress of cases to promote timely resolution. Civil case management has been in place in Windsor under a different rule since 1990. However, by implementing Rule 77, Windsor now follows the same rule for case management as Toronto and Ottawa. Windsor also migrated to a new technology system in 2003 to support the implementation of Rule 77 case management.

West Regional Statistics

Regional Centre: London
 Population: 2,105,832
 Area: 32,876 km²
 Population Density: 64 persons/km²
 Base Court Locations: 17
 Satellite Court Locations: 8
 Total Court Locations: 25

- Base Court Location
- Satellite Court Location

Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.



Corporate Support

The CSD corporate offices are located at 720 Bay Street in Toronto. The corporate offices include the offices of the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, the Corporate Planning Branch, the Criminal Policy and Programs Branch, the Civil/Family Policy and Programs Branch and the Business Solutions Unit.

The Corporate Planning Branch is responsible for:

- Divisional planning
- Managing financial and human resources
- Collecting and reporting court statistics
- Establishing Divisional performance measures and monitoring compliance with operational policies and business standards
- Co-ordinating public communications
- Developing and distributing Divisional directives, operational manuals and staff training guides
- Managing Divisional facilities
- Acting as a liaison with municipalities for *Provincial Offences Act* matters
- Establishing policy project teams to respond to justice system challenges

The Criminal Policy & Programs Branch is responsible for:

- Developing, implementing and managing legislative, regulatory and administrative initiatives with respect to the criminal justice system
- Providing policy and program support to criminal court staff
- Providing legal support and advice to senior management on criminal court issues
- Providing support to initiatives from the Ministry's Criminal Law Division
- Providing support to backlog initiatives in the criminal courts
- Supporting the appointment process for judges, justices of the peace, commissioners and notaries public
- Managing the Justice of the Peace Review Project

The Civil/Family Policy & Programs Branch is responsible for:

- Developing, implementing and managing legislative, regulatory and administrative initiatives with respect to the civil and family justice system
- Providing policy and program support to civil and family court staff
- Providing legal support and advice to senior management on civil and family court issues
- Developing, implementing, and managing civil justice reform strategies to reduce cost and delay in the civil justice system
- Managing family mediation and information services
- Participating on Federal/Provincial/Territorial Family Law Committees and the Family Rules Committee
- Negotiating and monitoring federal family justice funding

The Business Solutions Unit is responsible for:

- Developing, implementing and managing the CSD Strategic Information Technology Plan
- Developing, implementing, managing and supporting courts information technology systems
- Managing the acquisition of CSD information technology hardware and software
- Liaising with CSD branches and Justice Technology Services on new system requirements and enhancements to new systems
- Managing the implementation of corporate information technology initiatives in CSD
- Managing issues and relationships with partners and stakeholders, with respect to court technology

Corporate Directors

The Corporate Planning Branch, the Criminal Policy and Programs Branch, the Civil/Family Policy and Programs Branch and the Business Solutions Unit are managed by Corporate Directors who report to the Assistant Deputy Attorney General.



Director, Corporate Planning Branch
Sandra Wain



Director, Criminal Policy & Programs Branch
Tara Dier



Director, Civil/Family Policy & Programs Branch
Ann Merritt



Director, Business Solutions Unit
Chris Walpole



Photo collage (clockwise from top left): Windsor Ontario Court of Justice; Napanee Superior Court of Justice; Sault Ste. Marie Superior and Ontario Court of Justice; Campbellford Satellite Courthouse; St. Catharines Superior and Ontario Court of Justice; Brockville Superior Court of Justice