

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 at 183 court locations 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

On January 5, 2005, 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. Attorney General Michael Bryant stressed the importance of strengthening public confidence in the justice system through transparency. As a step towards this goal, Minister Bryant announced the creation of a Panel on Justice and the Media, to bridge the gap between the media and the justice system and to discuss areas of mutual concern.

“Ontarians deserve a system that delivers justice, is readily accessible, is well understood, and earns public confidence.”

Attorney General Michael Bryant,
Opening of Courts Speech, January 2005

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



Photo: Lobby of the Court of Appeal for Ontario at Osgoode Hall, Toronto

Role of the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Court Services Division

The Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Court Services Division, is the Ministry executive who oversees the administration of Ontario's courts.

Regional Structure


For the purpose of providing court services, the Ministry of the Attorney General is organized into seven Court Services Division 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

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.

Region	Base Courts	Satellite Courts	Total Courts
Central East	11	12	23
Central West	12	5	17
East	18	11	29
Northeast	10	27	37
Northwest			
West			
Toronto			

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

“To the Assistant Deputy Attorney General Debra Paulseth, her assistants, to the Regional Directors, Court Managers, employees and staff of Court Services Division, I would like to say congratulations and thank you on behalf of the Court for your commitment to public service in the finest traditions.”

Chief Justice Lennox, Opening of Courts, 2005

Central East Regional Profile



A/Director of Court Operations
Central East Region
Lynn Wagner

Located geographically to the north and east of Toronto, the Central East Region serves the communities of York, Durham, Simcoe, Muskoka, Haliburton Northumberland, Peterborough and the City of Kawartha Lakes. The population growth rate in this region is among the highest in Canada.

In 2004/05, Central East conducted a review of computer support within the Region. As a result, Court Services entered into a unique partnership with the Criminal Law Division, resulting in a more efficient distribution of workload and resources, as well as enhanced technology service for the judiciary and staff in CSD, the Criminal Law Division and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program.

A number of infrastructure improvements were completed in the Central East Region in 2004/05 to enhance service delivery. The construction of two new

courtrooms in Oshawa, the amalgamation of counter services in Newmarket, along with security enhancements to the Barrie courthouse are just a few examples of the improvements.

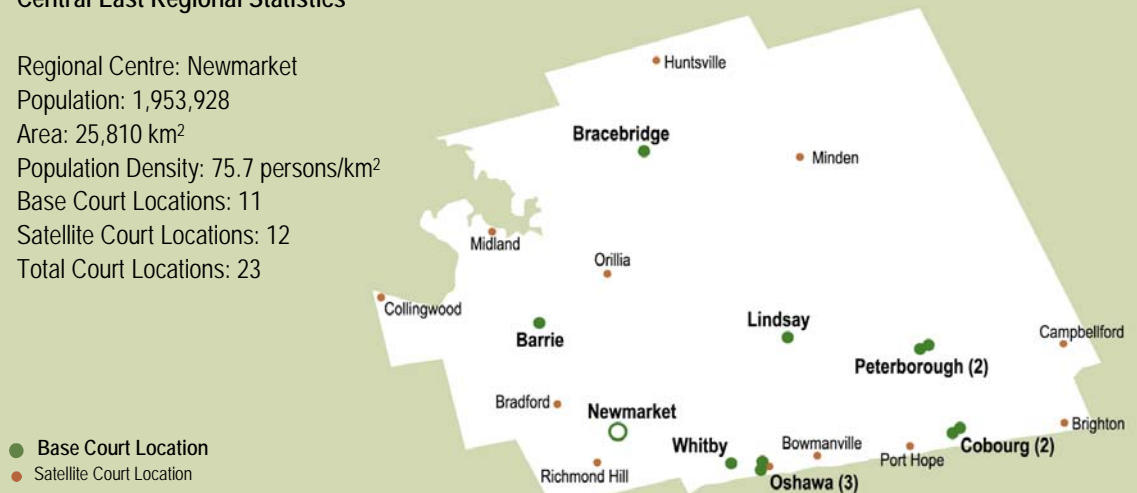
In April 2004, the Honourable Michael Bryant, Attorney General, inaugurated the opening of the Midland courthouse at a special sitting of the court. In December 2004, the Attorney General announced that the Durham Consolidated Courthouse Project would proceed with an expected completion date of winter 2008/09.

Several new additions were made to the Court Services management team and the Superior and Ontario Court benches over the last year including: a new Director of Court Operations, a new Manager of Court Operations in Simcoe/Muskoka, a new Supervisor in Bracebridge, three new Superior Court judges, two new Ontario Court judges and one new justice of the peace.

The Region also hosted the first Superior Court and Ontario Court Judges' Secretaries Conference in the fall of 2004.

Central East Regional Statistics

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



Population Statistics from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.

Central West Regional Profile



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

The Central West Region has the highest population of the seven CSD regions, and includes the western Greater Toronto Area, Pearson International Airport and the communities around Lake Ontario and north of Lake Erie.

The Region has a diverse multicultural population.

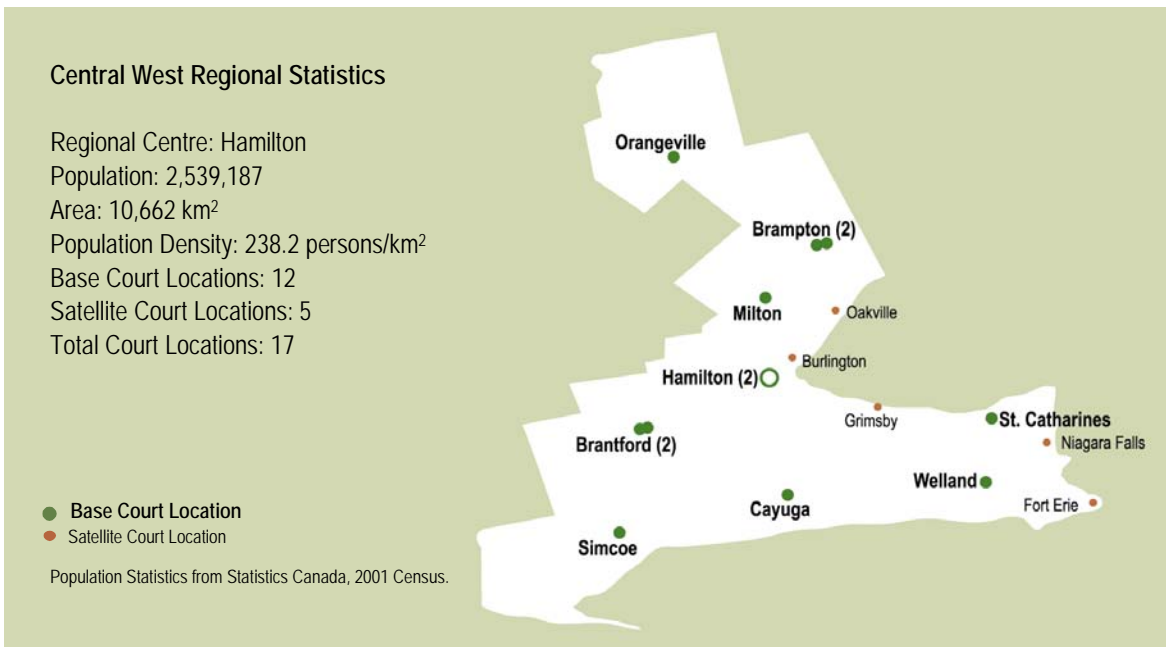
Courthouse renovations have been undertaken in Brampton and Orangeville to accommodate

caseload growth in the Region. In 2004/05, blitz courts were held in Brampton, Brantford and Milton to reduce court case backlog. In addition, Brantford was one of the pilot sites for CSD's Child Protection Backlog Initiative. During the past year, video remand courts and Weekend and Statutory Holiday (WASH) courts in Hamilton, St. Catharines and Brampton successfully handled bail matters on weekends for all locations in the Region. The Division's new case tracking system was successfully implemented in all court locations.

Also in 2004/05, the Region developed a succession management plan to ensure that capacity is available to deliver on the goals in the Division's Five-Year Plan. During this same period, the local management structure at the Peel courthouse was reorganized to meet growing operational needs.

As part of our continuing effort to promote public understanding of the justice system, Brampton and Milton hosted mock trials. Participants included law students from local high schools, members of the judiciary, lawyers and court staff.

The Director of Court Operations for the Region also serves as 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.



East Regional Profile



Director of Court Operations
East Region
Tom Fagan

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

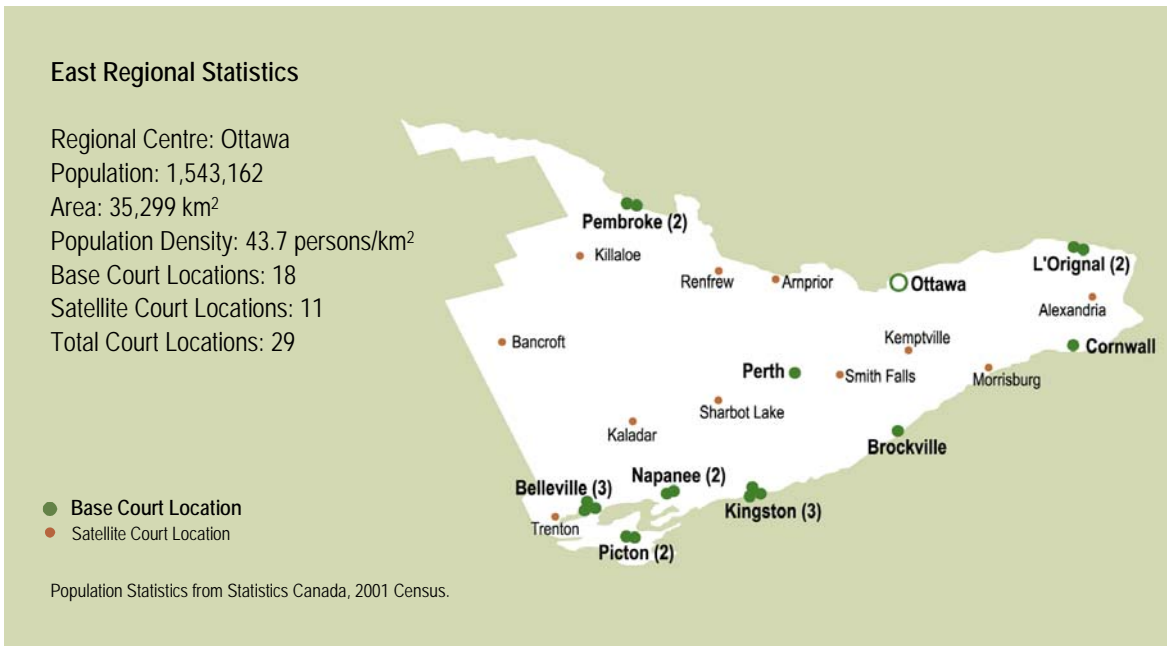
During the past years, the East Region has experienced higher than average increases in court activity, especially in the criminal practice area. These increases are partly attributable to population growth in the Ottawa area. The population in Ottawa continues to grow at a faster rate than the provincial average and is expected to be over one million by 2011.

In 2004/05, the Division's case tracking system was successfully implemented across the region. The Ottawa and Cornwall courthouses received additional judicial appointments, court services and Crown resources as part of the Justice Delay Reduction Initiative. Over the

next two years, court facilities in these communities will be upgraded.

In August 2004, the Ontario and Superior Courts of Justice moved into the consolidated Brockville Courthouse, and in December 2004, Pembroke Ontario and Superior Courts of Justice staff moved to an interim facility as part of the final Pembroke Consolidated Courthouse plan.

The Director of Court Operations for the East Region continues to serve as the elected chair of the Eastern Interministerial Council (EIC). The Council is comprised of Ontario Public Service (OPS) regional directors and senior managers who work together to achieve excellence in the delivery of public services within the East Region. One of the priorities in the EIC Business Plan for 2004/05 was Emergency Management and Business Continuity Planning through the Emergency Management Committee. OPS-wide initiatives such as Habitat for Humanity Ottawa Build, Dragon Boat Festival and United Way/Centraide Campaign continue to capture the commitment of staff.



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.

The video assessment hearings pilot project that was initiated in 2003/04 continued to be implemented in the Region during 2004/05. The aim of the project is to improve access to justice in remote areas, decrease scheduling wait times and reduce travel for hearings officers. Management and the judiciary are reviewing the possibility of expanding the use of video courts to the coastal community of Moosonee and enhancing video court capacity in Timmins.

In 2004/05, facilities projects were undertaken across the region. The cells upgrade project in Cochrane was completed; an intake office was created in North Bay; the Haileybury courthouse elevator project commenced with a scheduled completion in 2005/06; and renovations were completed to the Sudbury Video Remand court and intake office.

In 2005/06, the Northeast Region will participate in the Northern Recruitment Pilot Project, a government-wide human resources initiative that will provide northern managers with recruitment services. It is expected that this pilot project will significantly reduce the administrative burden associated with the recruitment process, allowing managers to focus their attention on the delivery of services and programs. The project will also be testing a new electronic human resources recruitment tool.

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: 27
Total Court Locations: 37

- 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 two percent of its population.

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

The Region delivers court services at five base court locations, three staffed satellite court locations and 32 un-staffed satellite court locations. Twenty-three of the satellite court locations are in communities that are accessible only by air. To provide community-centred services, court staff and members of the judiciary and the bar must travel extensively.

The Region's vast geography, remote locations and winter travel conditions present many program delivery challenges. The Northwest Region has been using video technology to help meet these challenges and to ensure that court services are accessible.

The completion of court video infrastructure has allowed the region to use video in new ways. Video conferencing is most frequently used for video bail remands. The Ontario and Superior Court judiciary have also used video technology in child protection matters, case conferences and motions.

The Region has also successfully connected the Kenora court to Keewaywin, a remote northern community, for a sentencing matter via video. This connection allowed the family, the community and the Chief to participate in the sentencing process. This successful demonstration will form the basis of future First Nations video partnerships to help resolve issues of access, particularly in family court matters.

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
Susan Lee

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.

In 2004/05, the Region made improvements to support timely and accessible justice services at the Court of Appeal. A review was initiated to update and improve

the *Criminal Appeal Rules* and the court developed a protocol in cooperation with Pro Bono Law Ontario to provide counsel to unrepresented litigants in civil appeals.

The Ontario Court of Justice family courts at 47 Sheppard Avenue East and 1911 Eglinton Avenue East began planning for their 2005/06 consolidation. Substantial renovations to the facility at 47 Sheppard are underway to support the consolidation. As part of the family initiatives program, the courts have also established a pilot court and community liaison committee that is reviewing child protection issues.

Technology within the Region was upgraded in 2004/05 to provide capacity to support multiple counsel in large commercial matters. Enhancements to the electronic civil courtroom at 393 University Avenue were also completed.

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, especially at the London courthouse where Weekend and Statutory Holiday (WASH) court matters are handled for the entire region.

Substantial renovations were undertaken in 2004/05 at the Superior Court of Justice courthouse in Windsor to improve general public areas and create a new small claims courtroom.

Also in 2004/05, the Justice Delay Reduction Initiative (JDRI) was fully implemented in the Kitchener courts to enhance criminal court capacity. Best practices were implemented to make the administrative processes more efficient and effective.

New *Family Law Rules* and the new Divisional case-tracking system were fully implemented in all court locations within the West Region. With the new case-tracking system, the court will be better able to govern the timeframes associated with the new *Family Law Rules* and will be able to track the progress of cases through the system.

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: 10
 Total Court Locations: 27

- 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 Branch.

The Corporate Planning Branch is responsible for:

- Strategic planning
- Financial and workforce planning
- Providing management information, including court activity statistics
- Facilities planning
- Establishing Divisional performance measures and monitoring compliance with operational policies and business standards
- Coordinating public communications
- Acting as a liaison with municipal partners on *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
- Supporting the appointment process for judges, justices of the peace, commissioners and notaries public

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 Branch 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

Corporate Directors

The Corporate Planning Branch, the Criminal Policy and Programs Branch, the Civil/Family Policy and Programs Branch and the Business Solutions Branch 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 Branch
Chris Walpole



Photo collage (clockwise from top left): Kingston Superior Court of Justice, Haileybury consolidated courthouse, Sudbury Superior and Ontario Court of Justice, Parry Sound consolidated courthouse