



47th District Court 2025 Annual Report

Court Administrator: Matthew Friedrich
Deputy Court Administrator: Michele Muscat

Court Mission and Values

*The Court's mission is to provide a safe, neutral, and impartial forum for peaceful resolutions of public and private disputes. The Court strives to ensure: **Access to Justice; Expedition and Timeliness; Equality, Fairness and Integrity; Independence and Accountability; and Public Trust and Confidence.***

Court Jurisdiction

As part of "Michigan's One Court of Justice," the 47th District Court has jurisdiction over the following case types arising in the Cities of Farmington Hills and Farmington:

Criminal Felonies (through preliminary exam)
Traffic, Non-Traffic, and Zoning Infractions
Landlord-Tenant Disputes

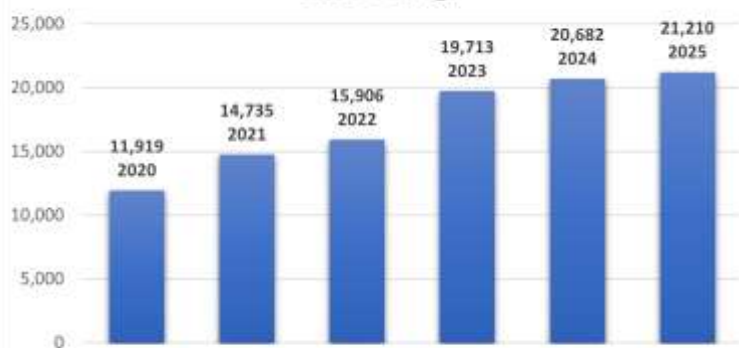
Criminal Misdemeanors
General Civil Lawsuits (up to \$25,000)
Small Claims Lawsuits

Court—Funding Unit Relationship

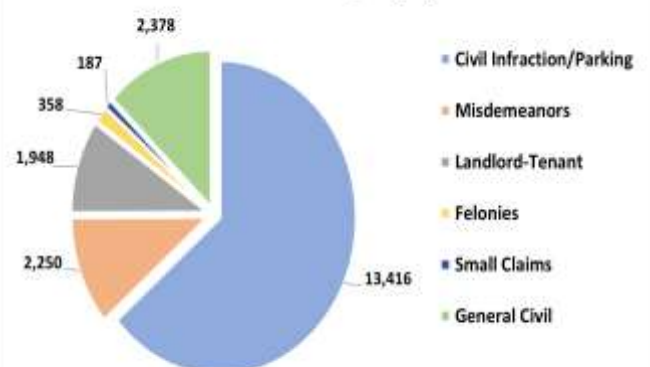
Although not an agency of either Farmington Hills or Farmington, by statute, the Court is mutually funded by both under a formula adopted by the two Cities that accounts for both population and annual caseload.

While being careful to protect the independence of judicial decision making (the Cities are litigating parties in the majority of the cases at the Court), ***the Court consistently strives to work with the Cities as partners in government to ensure the most efficient and effective use of public resources.***

Case Filings



2025 Case Filings by Type



Meet Our Judges



Judge James Brady is now in his 24th year as a district court judge. Judge Brady will complete his fourth six-year term at the end of 2026 and will be retiring at the end of December 2026.

At the end of 2025, **Judge Marla Parker** completed her 33rd year as a district court judge. Judge Parker remains the longest serving judge in the history of the 47th District Court, and is currently the longest serving judge in Oakland County.



Appointed 47th District Court Attorney Magistrates

Michael Sawicky

Brandy Hart

Mark Berke

Matthew Friedrich

MiFILE

On November 13 2025, the 47th District Court joined more than 100 other courts across Michigan in adopting MiFILE. MiFILE is the statewide electronic filing system sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court and the State Court Administrative Office. The modernized system provides attorneys and self-represented litigants with 24/7 access to submit and serve legal documents electronically, eliminating the need for in-person visits to the courthouse. Parties can now file any new civil action in the 47th District Court, as well as file pleadings into an existing civil case, from a computer or mobile device at any time and from anywhere.

The Court was able to secure grant funds from the Michigan Supreme Court to add a public terminal in the lobby near the clerk's office. This terminal can be used by anyone who would like to file a new, or into their existing, civil case. The terminal was added for those members of the public that might not have the capability of filing from a home computer or cellular device. The terminal is available during business hours.

Sobriety Court

Since 2005, the 47th District Court has focused on protecting society and reducing crime by targeting substance abuse and addiction through intervention, treatment, and offender accountability. Under strict court supervision, eligible participants in the voluntary 24 month, four phase program, must comply with court-ordered requirements including substance abuse treatment, alcohol and drug testing, education and life skill development.

Graduates of the program continue to report improved outcomes in their personal life. The most recent recidivism data from the State Court Administrative Office shows that **zero** percent of program graduates had reoffended during the study period.

Community Work Program

The Community Work Program (CWP) began in 1986 to provide a sentencing alternative to help address overcrowding at the Oakland County Jail. The program provides the cities with free labor and supervision costs for community work projects and is a partnership between the Court and the Cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

For calendar year 2025, the program provided numerous city departments and the Court with **5,720** hours of labor, which equates to over **\$71,000** in free labor. The program also provided for nearly **\$55,000** in supervision/operational costs funded through participant-paid fees. These totals are sharp increases over 2024 figures.

The Robe May Retire, But the Legacy Remains

Judge Brady began his service as a judge on January 1, 2003. Prior to being elected, Judge Brady worked for the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office from 1980-1984 followed by 18 years in private practice (1984-2002). Judge Brady was a magistrate at the 47th District Court from 1984 until he was elected in November 2002.

Over the years, he has won many distinguished service awards and has participated as faculty for the Michigan Supreme Court's Michigan Judicial Institute, training court staff and new judges on various topics. He is known throughout the state for his calm demeanor, excellent judicial temperament, and his undying love for the Michigan Wolverines. Judge Brady is an avid golfer, and hockey player, loves to travel, and is his grandkids biggest fan; driving them all over the state to play hockey.

In December 2026, Judge James Brady will hold his last session of court at the 47th District Court. Although he will be enjoying his time with his wife Diane, their children and grandchildren, the court will greatly miss him. He has forever left his mark on each of the employees of this court and on the entire community.



Financials

It's a common misconception that the Court keeps the money it collects; in reality, the collected money is transmitted on a monthly basis to other units of government as follows . . .

The **State of Michigan** receives:

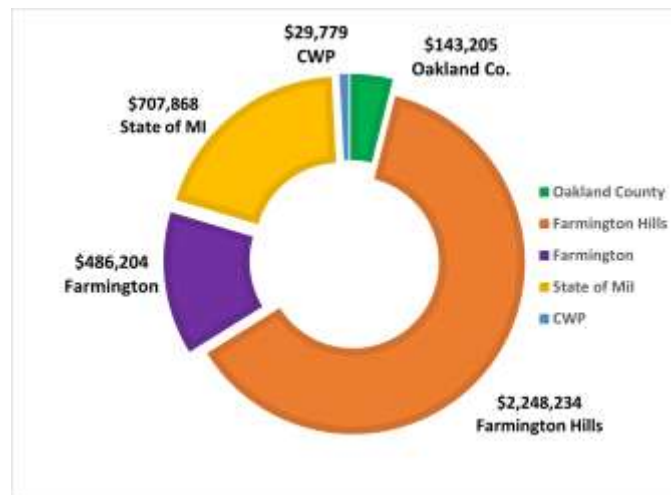
- \$40 from each traffic civil infraction and \$10 from each non-traffic civil infraction.
- \$50 costs and \$75 Crime Victim Rights fee on each misdemeanor.
- 56% - 79% from each civil case filing fee.
- \$10 from each \$20 motion fee.
- \$30 from each \$45 Driver's License Clearance Fee.

The **Oakland County Library Fund** receives:

- The penal fine portion of fees on all *state law* cases.
- 30% of the penal fine on *local ordinance* motor carrier cases.

All other money goes to the local funding units - the City of Farmington and the City of Farmington Hills - based on case venue.

Transmittal Amounts (7/1/24—6/30/25)



Collections and Ability to Pay Determinations

The Michigan Supreme Court requires all Michigan trial courts to comply with court collection program requirements which are established by the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO). Each year, a court's collection program is assessed by SCAO to see if the court complies with its established requirements. Each year, the 47th District Court is found to be fully compliant.

Not only has the Court established a collection program which complies with State requirements, but the Court also continues to emphasize collaborative solutions for delinquent balances, working with each individual to find the right solution. Sometimes that means establishing a payment plan, and sometimes that means working on waiving a portion of court costs/fees, when warranted, to give individuals the opportunity to make a payment and have their matter successfully closed.