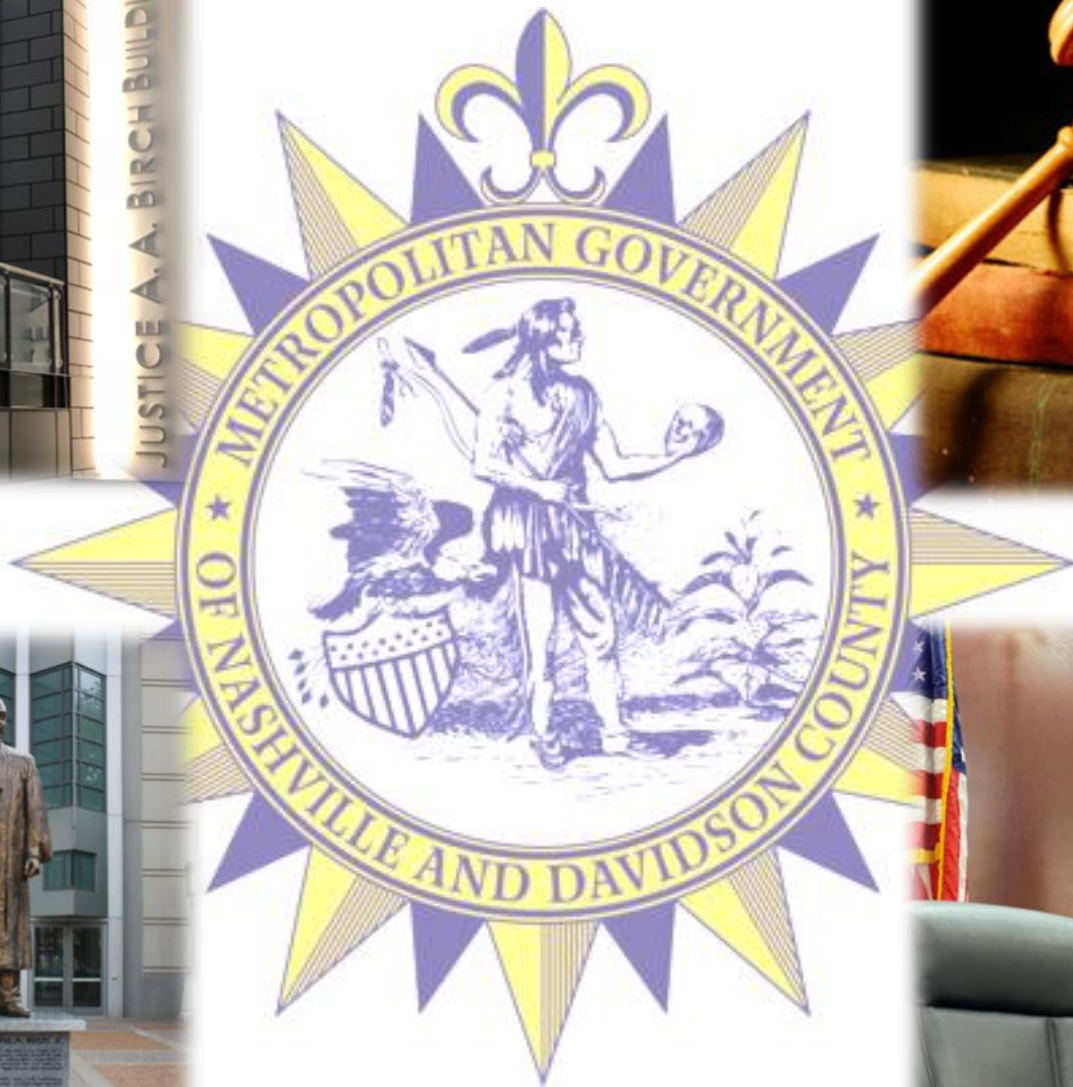


METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT NASHVILLE-DAVIDSON COUNTY GENERAL SESSIONS COURT



FISCAL REPORT

July 1, 2022—June 30, 2023

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FISCAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023

The Internet

Information regarding all services of the General Sessions Court can be found on-line at www.gscourt.nashville.gov.

For information regarding civil cases, the address is www.circuitclerk.nashville.gov.

For information regarding criminal matters, the address is www.ccc.nashville.gov.

From there, you can link to such topics as court dockets, judges' schedules, local rules, fees and downloadable forms.



Our Address:

General Sessions Court
Justice A.A. Birch
408 2nd Ave. N.
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, TN 37219
Phone: (615) 862-8317

**Nashville-Davidson County
General Sessions Court
Administration Office**
Justice A.A. Birch Building
408 2nd Avenue North, Suite 1140
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Phone: (615) 862-8317

Recovery Court
Justice A.A. Birch Building
408 2nd Avenue North
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Phone: (615) 862-4241

Mental Health & Veterans Court
Ben West Building
100 James Robertson Parkway
Suite 100
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Phone: (615) 862-8320

Night Court Magistrate's Office
Downtown Detention Center
440 3rd Avenue North,
Nashville, Tennessee 37201

Phone: (615) 862-8304

Court Language Interpretations
Justice A.A. Birch Building
408 2nd Avenue North, Suite 1140
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Phone: (615) 862-8335

Traffic Safety Education Department
Justice A.A. Birch Building
408 2nd Avenue North, Suite 1130
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Phone: (615) 862-8345

Probation Department
Ben West Building
100 James Robertson Parkway
Suite 10
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Phone: (615) 862-8380

Front Cover Photo:
courtesy of Gary Layda

WEB ADDRESS:

WWW.GSCOURT.NASHVILLE.GOV

OTHER RELATED DEPARTMENTS

Traffic Violations Bureau	(615) 862-5222
Criminal Court Clerk's Office	(615) 862-5601
Civil Court Clerk's Office	(615) 862-5195
Metro Environmental Court	(615) 862-6195
Codes Warrant Docket	(615) 862-6195
Codes Citation Docket	(615) 862-5222
Sheriff's Department	(615) 862-8170
District Attorney General's Office	(615) 862-5500
Public Defender's Office	(615) 862-5730



To request an accommodation, call (615) 862-5199



Court Jurisdiction

The Metropolitan General Sessions Court of Nashville-Davidson County serves as a very important “spoke in the wheel” as the basic foundation in the local justice system. It is a high volume limited jurisdiction Court that hears civil, misdemeanor, felony, traffic, environmental, and metropolitan ordinance violations. This court is served by 11 judges that are elected to an eight year term. There are also 5 full time, 5 power shift and 6 part time law-trained Judicial Magistrates, that handle the probable cause hearings in the issuance of a criminal warrant and 1 referee that handles the environmental cases and other non-traffic metro ordinance violations. For a majority of the citizens, this level of court will be their only encounter with the state’s justice system. Consequently, it has been frequently described as “the court of first resort.” The list below shows the area of law under the court’s jurisdiction.

- **Criminal**—Cases in which the applicable penalty is no more than 11 months, 29 days; Preliminary Hearing; Amount and conditions of all appearance bonds; Forfeiture of property used in commission of crime; Issuance of search warrants.
- **Civil**—Civil warrants with a jurisdictional limit of \$25,000 and monetary jurisdiction is unlimited in detainer actions; Orders of Protection; Mental Health (involuntary committal); Tuberculosis Treatment (Non-Compliance).
- **Environmental**—Animal control, Housing code violations and Building code violations.
- **Metro Ordinance**—Traffic law violations; All other county ordinance violations.



The Dockets

The Metropolitan General Sessions Court system is committed to excellence in administering justice and is a contributing partner working toward a safe and vital community in Nashville-Davidson County. The Court handles a vast array of cases such as traffic offenses, preliminary hearings on felony and misdemeanor cases, mental health, various alcohol and drug related cases and civil related cases up to \$25,000. It is estimated that the General Sessions Court system processed cases representing over 200,000 litigants in FY 2023. The following is a general overview of the docket system handled by the Court:

- * Criminal Bond
- * Felony/Misdemeanor
- * Daily Traffic
- * Daily Civil
- * Daily Driver License/ Misdemeanor
- * Daily Orders of Protection
- * Domestic Violence
- * Environmental
- * Emergency Committals
- * Special Committals
- * State Traffic
- * Felony Drug
- * Mental Health / Veterans Court
- * Recovery Court
- * Community Court
- * Cherished Hearts
- * Homeless Court

Caseload Overview	FY 2022	FY 2023
Criminal Warrants/Citations	36,116	36,897
Traffic—Metro/State	65,904	66,482
Mental Health Committals	8,618	9,043
Civil	29,245	29,381
Orders of Protection	3,191	3,206
Metro & Environmental	3,465	3,522
Totals	146,539	148,531

Source: Criminal Justice Planning Office, Criminal & Civil Clerk’s Offices

CREDITS

Published by the
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Gary Layda and Michael Bunch

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Kyle Sowell, Gina Fox, Angie Von Mann

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Kyle Sowell and Brad Freeman

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General Sessions Court Judges



Judge Gale Robinson
Division I



Judge Melissa Blackburn
Division II

Administrative Staff

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Suzetta Mimms
Division XI
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Phone: (615) 880-3683



Judge Ana L. Escobar
Division III



Judge Allegra Walker
Division IV



Judge Robin Hayes
Division V



Judge Jim Todd
Division VI



Judge Marcus Floyd
Division VII



Judge Rachel L. Bell
Division VIII



Judge Lynda Jones
Division IX



Judge Sam Coleman
Division X



Judge John Aaron Holt
Division XI

Central Address for All Judges: Justice A.A. Birch Building,
408 2nd Ave. N., P.O. Box 196300, Nashville, TN 37219



Chief Justice Adolpho A. Birch, Jr.

Former Chief Justice A. A. Birch, Jr. is described by many as a trailblazer in the legal profession, a pioneering African-American jurist and scholar. Throughout his legal career, Justice Birch maintained a courageous voice and was a zealous advocate for civil rights. He often provided fairness and equality in legal access and treatment of criminal defendants.

Before his judicial career, in the early 1960s, along with maintaining a private law practice, Justice Birch provided volunteer legal services and representation for civil rights activists who had been arrested for conducting or participating in acts of segregated lunch counters. From this work, Justice Birch became a part-time public defender and would go on to become the first African-American to work as a prosecutor in Davidson County.

Justice Birch began his judicial career in 1969 as a General Sessions Court Judge in Davidson County and was the first African-American, and only Tennessee judge, to have served at every level of the state judicial system - general sessions, criminal trial, criminal appeals and the State of Tennessee Supreme Court.

During his service on the State of Tennessee Supreme Court, he became the first African-American to serve as Chief Justice, serving in that capacity from May 1974 - July 1977. During his tenure on the bench he received many awards and honors including the prestigious William H. Hoyle Award from the National Bar Association's Judicial Council, the Barbara Jordan Award from the International Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee. Justice Birch retired in 2006, after serving 37 years on the bench and passed away on August 25, 2011.

This statue was dedicated to honor a lifetime of achievement by Justice A. A. Birch, Jr. that was inspired by an enduring commitment to equality, justice and service to all the citizens of Nashville, Davidson County and the State of Tennessee.

Erected on August 27, 2014.

Mental Health Court

For more than twenty years, the Davidson County Mental Health Court has provided crucial support and assistance to some of Nashville's most vulnerable citizens. One of the first mental health courts established in the United States, the Davidson County Court has been on the leading edge of working with those in our community who are dealing with mental health challenges. Judge Melissa Blackburn presides over the court and oversees a staff of specialists trained to address the particular needs of court participants. During the past five years, an average of 120 Nashvillians are receiving support from Mental Health Court specialists at any given time. Over that period, 81% of successful program graduates did not re-offend and did not return to involvement with the criminal justice system compared to more than 50% in the traditional justice system.

Individuals participating in the specialized court program may be on probation or on a diversion program for criminal charges. Potential clients are screened by mental health professionals to determine their compatibility for the program and, if they are accepted, the period of supervision typically lasts eleven months. More severe cases may remain within the program for a longer period of supervision. Court staff works on a routine basis to ensure compliance, assist in housing, monitor treatment for substance and alcohol abuse and provide medical services with a goal of establishing stability needed to be a contributing member of the community.

The court currently supervises more than one hundred participants, allowing them a fresh start and an opportunity to succeed in life.

In addition to the Mental Health Court, Judge Blackburn has initiated a court docket to deal directly with the population in Nashville facing issues with competency. These individuals are caught in a cycle of re-arrest with charges dropped due to a medical declaration of incompetency leaving them with no access to services and a potential dan

ger to themselves and others. The Competency and Wellbeing Docket redirects these cases to help with evaluation treatment and hopefully competency restoration. When we consider difficulties with increased incarceration and the constraints budget reductions placed on our justice and mental health systems, innovation in our approach is critical. The Davidson County Mental Health Court is meeting these challenges and providing a vital service to the community.

Judge—Melissa Blackburn, Division II (2)

Administrative Assistant:

Katie Torrence

Director:

Mark Winslow

Assistant Director:

Patricia Breeding

Administrative Assistant:

Cynthia Nelson

Client Service Specialists

Derek DeSha

Frances Whitaker

Brandon Bentley

Valerie Fisher

Court Officers:

Lovie Hurt Jr.

Pat Stockdale



Cases Referred:	151
Cases Accepted:	86
Graduates:	23
Graduate Success Rate:	84%
Court Costs Waived:	\$39,233

Veterans Court

In 2014, Davidson County was awarded a three-year Veterans Treatment Court implementation grant from the United States Department of Justice through the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. The purpose is to fund operation of a fully accredited specialty court tasked with serving Nashville's Veterans. During the past year, 22 Veterans successfully completed the program.

Veterans specialty courts originated in Buffalo, NY beginning in 2008. Since then, dozens of courts have been established across the United States to assist with the unique difficulties of our service veterans. Judge Melissa Blackburn of General Sessions Division II presides over the court and supervises its operations. Through a structured program administered by the court, eligible veterans can find stability and new purpose to be a contributor to the community. Benefits offered to assist veterans include mental health evaluation, alcohol/substance abuse assistance and supervision by client specialists assigned to work on their particular needs. Veterans agree to participate as a condition of probation or on a diversion program for criminal charges. The average success rate of Veterans Court graduates is 88%, meaning they did not re-offend within one year of program completion.

The court works in partnership with metro and state government agencies and mental health providers, as well as veterans outreach and advocacy groups. Together, they form a support system that gives eligible veterans an opportunity to address issues brought about by their military service.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2017 and continuing in 2023, the State of Tennessee included funding of Veterans Courts in the annual budget. The Davidson County Veterans Court was fortunate to receive a portion of the state's funding. As a result of this support, 14 new veterans were

supported and received the assistance they needed to return to life as a productive citizen.

In the new battlefields America faces, those in military service are exposed to warfare and experiences never previously encountered. Growing numbers of veterans returning from service face specific mental challenges as a result of fighting to defend our nation in an evolving and dangerous world. The methods by which we work to return them to full participation in society are crucial and the Davidson County Veterans Court is employing these new methods. It is the mission of the court to fulfill our nation's commitment to the men and women who chose to defend our way of life to leave no one behind.

**Serving:
ALL Armed Forces**



Cases Referred:	22
Cases Accepted:	15
Graduates:	14
Graduate Success Rate:	88%
Court Costs Waived:	\$2,315



Recovery Court

The mission of the General Sessions Recovery Court is to promote judicial intervention and rehabilitation to substance abuse offenders to reduce drug related crimes among repeat offenders and to improve the life of the offender, thereby enhancing the quality of life for their families and community.

The Davidson County General Sessions Recovery Court is for legally involved individuals suffering from substance use disorder who are high risk of re-offending due to their substance use. Recovery Court was created to provide free services to participants while under court supervision for criminal offenses. The Honorable Judge Gale Robinson and his Recovery Court Staff, Tennessee Recovery Foundation, Public Defenders Office, District Attorney's Office, and numerous partner agencies make up the support system for the Recovery Court. Funded by Davidson County Metropolitan Government and the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services through the Tennessee Recovery Foundation, the Court provides many services needed for positive reintegration into the community.

Recovery Court accepts candidates who can be supervised under bond conditions prior to any conviction. Upon successful completion of Recovery Court, these open charges are able to be dismissed or otherwise disposed of at the District Attorney's Office discretion. Recovery Court also accepts criminal court, community corrections and General Sessions probation cases. The Court requires participants to complete five program phases with a supervision period of about 18 months depending on the participant's clinical or criminogenic needs. Each phase addresses specific areas of the participant's life to support the recovery maintenance and societal reintegration into their community.

Program Manager Allison Tarpley, Probation Officers Kate Ramsaur, Chris Perry, Leticia Lozano and Case Manager Lorin Abdullatif supervise participants to ensure court-ordered requirements are met. Services provided include substance use treatment and medication assisted treatment as clinically assessed, behavioral health services as clinically assessed, a minimum of 8 hours of educational and vocational advancement, HiSet preparations and testing, housing and transportation referrals and assistance, drug and alcohol testing, employment and community service requirements and referrals for any other component in which our Probation Officers and the Treatment team recommend.

While participating in Recovery Court, participants attend office visits with their probation officer at a minimum of once per

Environmental Court

When disputes arise over the enforcement of the Davidson County Metropolitan Code of Laws and Regulations they are brought to the Environmental Court, a division of the General Sessions Court. This docket was created in 2001 to address Metro Code violations pertaining to buildings, trash, debris in neighborhoods and business sites, and short term rental violations. This court also enforces leash law violations, nuisance complaints about dog barking, and at large or vicious dogs. Defendants found guilty of violations of the Metro Code of Laws are liable for court costs and can be subject to fines of \$50 per day for every day the property remains in violation. The court may also order the defendant to spend time in jail for a maximum of ten days. Once a warrant has been served, the defendant is responsible for all costs, including any

month to have a one on one check in and provide a safe space in the legal arena for participants to visit. Additionally, Recovery Court staff complete home and employment visits for all participants on a monthly basis. These visits allow the probation officer to be further informed on the participant support systems and provides the participant the opportunity to communicate with their probation office on their own space. Building a strong, safe relationship with participants is a main aspect in the success of the Recovery Court model.

Recovery Court has multiple graduations each year signifying participants' achievement of meeting all treatment goals and court ordered requirements. Graduation confirms the participant is prepared to reenter their community in recovery and independent of legal involvement and substance use disorder. All graduating participants are invited to return to the program to provide support to current participants or seek assistance from the Court and partnering agencies if additional services are required or requested.

Total Candidates Screened:	135
Accepted:	41
Graduated:	40
Denied:	94
Number of random drug/alcohol screens	1,882
100% of all participants suffer from Severe Substance Use Disorder and prior to admission to Recovery Court were abusing alcohol/illegal/non-prescribed	



fines. The Codes Department cannot waive court costs, assessed fines or release any liens assessed by the court to recover these costs. The court meets each Tuesday with three (3) dockets at 9:00 am, 10:00 am and 11:00 am in courtroom 3B at the Justice A.A. Birch Building (408 2nd Ave. North). The 9:00 am docket handles metro codes cases. The 11:00 AM Metro Citation Docket, handles citations written by departments such as, Police Alarms, Fire, Water, Codes and Health, Emissions, Beer Board, Traffic And Parking Commission and Animal Control. Special hearings are conducted on Friday at 10:00 am & 1:00 pm. The court is presided over by current General Sessions Court Division IV- Judge Allegra Walker and Referee Renard Hirsch.

Domestic Violence Court

In response to a city-wide Domestic Violence Safety Assessment, the Davidson County General Sessions Court's docket structure was reorganized in 2014 to allow for a dedicated Domestic Violence Court. While the Court has been hearing cases involving Domestic Violence for more than 25 years, the current docket structure provides an efficient and timely processing of cases involving domestic violence, and simplifies the court process for all parties involved.

All Orders of Protection and criminal cases involving domestic violence in the General Sessions Court are docketed in the dedicated Domestic Violence Court which operates daily in Courtroom 4B and 4C of the Justice A.A. Birch Building. The three (3) judges assigned to preside over the dedicated Domestic Violence Court on a rotating basis are Allegra Walker, Ana L. Escobar and Marcus Floyd. The dedicated Domestic Violence Court began operation on September 2, 2014.



CHERISHED H.E.A.R.T.S.

Healing Enslaved and Re-pressed Trafficking Survivors

HUMAN TRAFFICKING INTERVENTION COURT

Cherished HEARTS (Healing Enslaved and Repressed Trafficking Survivors) is the General Sessions Human Trafficking Survivors Court created in 2016 to serve the Metropolitan Nashville/Davidson County, Tennessee area. Cherished HEARTS is one of the first sex trafficking intervention courts implemented in the United States and is specifically designed to reduce re-victimization of justice-involved survivors of human trafficking and individuals at risk of being exploited. Cherished HEARTS is a diversion program that accepts pre- and post-conviction cases from both the General Sessions Court and Criminal Court. Cherished HEARTS also accepts pre-adjudication cases where the Court's program acts as a condition of bond for legal purposes. Cherished HEARTS is a voluntary, treatment-based program that integrates treatment services and close judicial supervision for participants with the goal of breaking the cycle of substance use disorders and criminal behavior. The Court serves high-risk/high-needs, justice-involved individuals either suffering from

extreme trauma and/or living with substance use disorders or co-occurring mental health issues. The program's strategic approach combines clinical treatment and recovery support services through community partnerships while monitoring participants' compliance with program requirements. A multi-disciplinary team works together to balance participants' needs and rights while maintaining public safety and personal accountability. Candidates must be: 1) identified as a human trafficking victim using the validated Trafficking Victim Identification Tool; 2) committed to following the recommendations of the Cherished HEARTS Court team; and 3) non-violent offenders. Incarcerated candidates must have all charges and holds in other counties or jurisdictions cleared prior to being accepted into the program. Conversely, violent offenders, registered sex offenders, and confirmed gang members are not eligible. Judge Ana L. Escobar presides over Cherished HEARTS and meets with partners on a weekly basis to ensure compliance and support to participants. In September 2023, Cherished HEARTS was among the forty treatment courts in the United States to receive a Court Expansion and Enhancement Project Grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. This funding will ensure that participants obtain individual-

ized treatment from a therapist and counseling from a certified peer specialist who will work with participants during their journey of recovery. This addition to the program will increase their self-efficacy and self-worth which will lead to a healthy, safe and non-justice involved life.



FY 2022-23

Number of Drug Tests	% Positive
284	7

FY 2022-23

Candidates Screened for Cherished Hearts	15
Candidates Denied for Cherished Hearts	3
Candidates Accepted into Cherished Hearts	12
Cherished Hearts Graduates	4
Cherished Hearts Unsuccessful Terminations	8



General Sessions Music City Community Court, Division VIII (8)

Est. 2012 - 1st in the State - Nashville, Davidson Co., TN

2020-2021 Annual Report

“Justice does **NOT** stop at the courthouse steps.”[®]



Judge Rachel L. Bell,

Founder & Presiding Judge

Since its inception in 2012, the Court has a mission centered to create programs focused on preventative, restorative and diversionary justice. Its vision is to do all it can to break the playground to prison pipeline; to restore and rehabilitate lives by using its power and resources to move the needle for marginalized people.

C.A.R.E. 2020-2021

Creating Avenues for Restoration & Empowerment
Diversionary Court for Ages 18-30

The C.A.R.E. Diversionary Court launched in 2020 and works to emphasize the ways crime

harms relationships in the community and brings together the people most impacted by the crime to resolve it. Offenders ages 18-30 are still forming their cognitive ability and usually entering the criminal justice system for the first time. Participants are given a second chance and the ability to restore the victim and be held accountable. Successful participants receive individualized case management and after completion of the 5 Phase Program their charges are dismissed and expunged.

ASPIRE 6-12 month aftercare program designed to assist C.A.R.E. graduates with mentorship and guidance in collaboration with other providers and resources to ensure sustainability in their individualized success.

RESTORE

Saturday Dockets:
Community Service Work Return Docket
Expungement & Legal Clinic
Pro Se Indigency Docket

Since 2012, we have assisted **14,097 participants** with the necessary steps to gain access to getting their records expunged, restoring their right to vote, reinstating their drivers license, adequate housing and quality wage jobs.

Saturday Community Service Return Docket [2020-2021] Participants: 39
Hours Worked: 78
Taxpayer Money Saved: \$1,833

Since 2013, **1,234 participants** have served **6,014 hours** to save tax payers **\$129,490.78**

Expungement/Legal Clinic & Resource Fairs [2020-2021] Participants: 64

Since 2014, we have hosted **29 clinics**, serving **2,115 participants**.

Indigency Motion Docket [2020-2021] Participants: 884
Cases: 6,998

Since 2015, we have reviewed **66,489 cases** to help **10,748 participants** and waived **\$7,050,938.92** in court costs, fines, and fees.

Visit us at <https://gscourt.nashville.gov/community-court/> or on [f @musiccitycommunitycourt/](https://www.facebook.com/musiccitycommunitycourt/)

THE FOLLOW UP

Ring the BELL for Justice!
with Judge Rachel L. Bell & Special Guest

THE FOLLOW-UP

Restorative Justice & Restoring Your Rights

SAT. JULY 18, @ 10:00 A.M.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM & CANNABIS

Nashville DA to stop prosecuting minor marijuana possession offenses immediately

HOSTED BY:



Judge Rachel L. Bell
Presiding Judge, MCCC



GLENN FUNK
District Attorney



MARTESHA JOHNSON
Nashville Defenders

Judge Bell has also established a PODCAST called THE FOLLOW-UP where she brings on guests to provide valuable information on restorative justice and criminal justice reform.

THE FOLLOW UP

Restorative Justice & Restoring Your Rights

SAT. AUGUST 1st - 10:00 a.m.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM & JUVENILE COURT

HOSTED BY:



Judge Rachel L. Bell
Founder & Presiding Judge
Music City Community Court



JUDGE SHEILA CALLAWAY
Juvenile Court Judge



TRAVIS CLAYBROOKS
CEO/Founder, RAPHAH INSTITUTE

THE FOLLOW UP

Ring the BELL for Justice!
with Judge Rachel L. Bell & Special Guest

SAT. AUGUST 8th - 10:00 a.m.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT

Behind Closed Doors
Helping Survivors & Improving Offender Accountability



Judge Rachel L. Bell
General Sessions Court, Div. VIII
Music City Community Court



JAY YOUNG
Program Manager
Sherriff's Office



JUDGE ALLEGRA WALKER
General Sessions Court, Div. IV
General Sessions & Government

THE FOLLOW UP

Ring the BELL for Justice!
with Judge Rachel L. Bell & Special Guest

SAT. OCT. 10th - 10:00 a.m.

MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION - Part 1

Talk it OUT!
Getting Treatment & Assistance



Judge Rachel L. Bell
General Sessions Court, Div. VIII
Music City Community Court



Dr. Debrah N. Wilkerson Nash,
Ph.D. LPC-MHSP, MHC
Asst. Professor, East Nashville
Addiction & Trauma Center
Clinical Mental Health Counseling



Student Panelists:
Sonya Adkins
Frank Campos
Esther Chelladurai
Tessa Eringer
Jamilia Grimes
James Harper
Carla Porter
Mikaila Robinson
Hansell Smith

MLK Weekend
FREE FOOD BOX & HYGIENE KIT GIVE-AWAY
Saturday, January 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
"Justice is the only way to the courthouse steps"

DRIVE-THRU FOOD DISTRIBUTION

McGruder Center, 2013 25th Ave. Nash, TN 37208
DRIVE-THRU- CAN FOOD DISTRIBUTION- FIRST COME FIRST SERVED- FREE

Life's most important question is: what are you going for anyway?

McGruder Center

Partnership with: RING-BELL, Bordeaux North Community Justice Center, McGruder Center

JUNETEENTH FREEDOM-A-THON
Expungement/Legal Clinic, Indigency Docket & Resource Fair
Saturday, June 19, 2021 at 9:00 AM with Judge Rachel L. Bell and David Lantry, Criminal Court Clerk

REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Registration: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 8:00 PM
This event is limited to the first 50 registrants.

Check-In: 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM
Clinic Docket: 10:15 AM - 1:00 PM
Indigency Docket: 11:30 AM - 11:30 AM

DO YOU NEED YOUR RIGHTS RESTORED?

Registration is also known as Freedom Day and is celebrated on June 19th in honor of the enslaved African-Americans finally being freed in 1863 during the Emancipation Proclamation that was issued two years prior on January 1, 1863.

In Partnership with: Justice does NOT stop at the courthouse steps!

Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and the Nashville Tornado, we had to make some adjustments with the RESTORE Court. Courts were closed most of 2020 and reopened in 2021. We were able to host our Annual MLK Day and our Juneteenth Freedom-A-Thon. We had a great turn out and were pleased to get back into the Bordeaux North Community Justice Center that is located in the heart of Zip Code 37208 at the McGruder Family Resource Center.



The L.E.G.A.C.Y. Housing Resource Diversionary Court & Program (HRDC) was developed to assist the landlord and tenant with a streamlined way to navigate the current pandemic, particularly those whose income was affected directly by COVID-19 resulting in the inability to receive or pay rent. The court's innovations have received local and national attention.

July 21, 2021: Judge Rachel L. Bell presents at the White House Eviction Prevention Summit



July 30, 2021: Judge Rachel L. Bell featured Nationally on MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Show with Julian Castro, former Secretary of HUD.

OUR PREVENTATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS:

These programs were created to assist MNPS with programming geared to prepare our children to prevent going from the playground to the prison pipeline. Our programs are hosted during MNPS- Spring, Summer and Fall Breaks.



A summer literacy program for MNPS Rising 1st - 4th Graders.
 For MNPS students that are in the Youth Court program to learn about the three branches of our Davidson County Metropolitan Government.
 A National Safety Council Defensive Driver Class for 9th-12th grade MNPS students.

OUR NON-PROFIT:



L.E.G.A.C.Y. HRDC [2021]
 Participants: 1,292
 Cases: 2,505

Since February of this year (2021), the L.E.G.A.C.Y. Housing Resource Diversionary Court, in partnership with the MAC HOPE Program and United Way's CARES grant funding, has **settled more than 1,000 cases** by receiving federal funds to the tune of **\$5,927,877.43** into the hands of landlords to help Nashville tenants keep a roof over their heads during this crisis.

Homeless Court

The Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County General Sessions Courts along with several non-profits and Baker Donelson Legal Clinic have launched the Nashville Homeless Court program to assist our homeless. NHC is a diversionary court that routes individuals who struggle with homelessness out of the traditional legal outcomes of convictions, incarceration, and probation and toward connection with service providers that can further assist with removing barriers to employment and housing. Judge Lynda Jones is the Homeless Court Presiding Judge. Judges Blackburn and Coleman also assisted.

- Eligible Charges:**
 The charges eligible to go to the new Homeless Court include
 Criminal Trespass (T.C.A. §39-14-405)
 Trespass - Motor Vehicles (T.C.A. §39-14-407)
 Obstruction of a Passageway (T.C.A. §39-17-307)
 Disorderly Conduct (T.C.A. §39-17-305)
 Public Intoxication (T.C.A. §39-17-310)
 Open Container Violation (T.C.A. §55-10-416)
 Criminal Littering (T.C.A. §39-14-504)
 Unlawful Possession of Drug Paraphernalia (T.C.A. §39-17-425)
 Possession of a Legend Drug without a Prescription (T.C.A. §53-10- 105)
 Aggressive Panhandling (first and second offenses) (T.C.A. §39-17- 313)



Judge Lynda Jones (right) presiding over the Homeless Court docket at Room in the Inn



Total Candidates FY 2022-2023	
Candidates Screened	410
Candidates Accepted	29

Judicial Magistrates

Five judicial magistrates—each possessing the qualifications of a judge—comprise what is known collectively as “Night Court,” a viable and productive extension of the General Sessions Court. The identifying label is derived from the fact that the Magistrates preside over proceedings that take place after normal business hours. But it is misleading in that the panel is actually on duty 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, serving a broad range of functions relevant to the criminal justice process.

In addition to their other job responsibilities, the magistrates:

- * Conduct probable cause hearings, issue warrants and set bail bonds in criminal cases
- * Determine probable cause for judicial committals from county psychiatric facilities
- * Issue Ex Parte Orders of Protection, as well as warrants for violations of such orders
- * Issue property seizure warrants upon probable cause

Each magistrate is appointed by the court for a one-year term that dictates seven-day work weeks and alternating eight-hour work shifts.



Magistrate
Bruce Kessler



Magistrate
Carolyn Piphus



Magistrate
John Manson



Magistrate
Steve Holzapfel



Magistrate
Evan Harris

Night Court Activity

	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23
Warrants & Summons Issued	26,971	27,652
Conditions of Release / Orders	35,679	35,881
Emergency Committals	8,618	9,067
Mittimus of Appearance	33,987	34,118
Ex Parte Orders of Protection	3,155	3,206
Parole Violations	135	141
Orders of Protection Violations	649	661
Property Seizure Hearings	289	293
Search Warrants	1,568	1,698

Source: Criminal Justice Planning Office, Criminal & Civil Clerk's Offices

Power Shift Magistrates

Jeffrey Daigle
Chris Hofstetter
Dan Masten
Kyle Parks
Tim Lee

Night Court Magistrate's Office

440 3rd Avenue North
Nashville, TN 37201
Phone: (615) 862-8304

Part-Time Magistrates

Umeka Foreman
Edward Hastings
Marie Stacey
Chelsea Nicholson
Nicholas Waite

Court Information Technology—Fiscal Year Report

(July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)

Software Support: Microsoft, Oracle, Adobe, Power Builder Custom Applications, Solar Winds and Court Smart Digital, CISCO and ZOOM.

Hardware Support: Dell (Desktop/Laptop), CISCO, COURT SMART, RJ Young Copier/Printer/Scanner/Fax, Cell Phones and Tablets.

Helpdesk Phone Number

(615) 880-3680

Category	2022	2023
Phone Calls	1,833	1,799
Emails	6,229	6,314
Requests	542	529
Totals	8,604	8,642



Brad Freeman
Information
Systems Advisor

Amber Johnson
Information
Systems Advisor



Court Administrator
Kyle Sowell

Court Administration Office

According to the Metro Charter, the office of the Court Administrator assists the presiding judge with the improvement in the efficiency and operation of the Metropolitan General Sessions Court. These duties, include but are not limited to, the following: daily operations, budget and fiscal management, personnel management, office automation management, manage multiple courtrooms' digital recording system, assist in resolving court facility issues, court interpretative services coordination, manage supplemental court security personnel and preparation of the annual report.

Overview of Principal Services

Daily manage the Court's budget for FY 2023 of \$13,671,900 with a total of 147 court personnel review, oversee, and/or process various Metro R-12 Business system transactions:

- Over 2,211 payment transactions totaling over \$762,500

- Over 1,600 revenue transactions totaling over \$1 million
- Over 2000 personnel cost transactions (Payroll & Benefits) totaling over \$11,550,000.
- The estimated number of total phone calls handled in 2022-23 by all services: Over 12,000
- Manage Master Calendar for all Courtrooms for special hearings/events: 382
- The number of web e-mails received from the public and acted upon: 199
- The number of General Services work orders submitted by the Court Administration office: 114



Assistant to the Administrator
Gina Fox



Administrative Assistant
Angie Von Mann

Office Support for Magistrates Night Court
Darrenn Varnado

Finance Officer
Tadayoshi Kawawa

Language Interpretations

Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 42 was promulgated to assist the courts in providing equal access to participants who have limited ability to speak or understand the English language. It is the responsibility of the court to determine whether a participant in a legal proceeding has limited ability to understand and communicate in English. For the fiscal year 2023-2023, the General Sessions Court's language interpreter coordinator scheduled 4,088 total court interpretations with 3,637 of those requiring Spanish interpretations. This computes to an average of 341 court interpretations

monthly. The predominant foreign languages involved include Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Laotian, Korean, Chinese, Kurdish and Somalian.

The number of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations made: 8

- * 3 Criminal docket related
- * 4 Civil, Traffic School/other
- * 1 Order of Protection related



Court Interpreter Coordinator
Delma Aguilar

Court Security

Each "in-courtroom" security officer maintains order and decorum in the courtroom at all times and prevents unauthorized entry into the private secured hallways adjacent to the courtrooms.

- * Security related incidents: 34
- * Medical related incidents: 6
- * Defendants taken into custody for Outstanding Warrants: 196



Security Officer Coordinator
Sherman Cecil

Assistant Security Officer Coordinator
Chris Edmondson

Courtroom Security Officers

Joseph Farnsworth	Torrian Hall
Monica Johnson	James Kelly
John A. Kent	Jason L. Stack
Gabriel Santiago	William Stevenson
Patrick Wood	Robert Virga



Our Address:

General Sessions Court
Administration Office
Justice A.A. Birch
408 2nd Ave. N., Suite 1140
P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, TN 37219
Phone: (615) 862-8317

WEB: WWW.GSCOURT.NASHVILLE.GOV



Johnetta Nelson
Director

Traffic Safety Education Fiscal Year Report: 7/1/22—6/30/2023

General Sessions Traffic Education - Johnetta Nelson, Director

General Sessions Traffic Education

Prepared by: Johnetta Nelson, Director & Shannon Hodge, Supervisor

Performance

Nashville's Traffic Safety Education Program continues to outperform other municipalities. In 2018, our agency had the honor of being awarded the Training Center of the Year for our Defensive Driving Course (DDC) Online by the National Safety Council (NSC). Another prestigious award was given to the agency as the 2018 Training Center of the Year Multiple Program recognizing the tremendous efforts poured into numerous courses offered at the General Sessions Court Traffic Safety Education Program. As the staff continues to work closely with the National Safety Council, we're hopeful that the Fiscal Year

2022-2023 awards will include our agency and further promote the hard-work and dedication of our staff. The staff at the Traffic Safety Education Program have been diligent in accommodating the needs of those wanting to attend classes during these unchartered times. The staff has maintained great perseverance and professionalism.

Traffic School Education Department Staff:

Director – Johnetta Nelson

Supervisor – Shannon Hodge

Administrative Enrollment Staff – Betty Bailey, Candy Catalan

Traffic School Instructors – Gloria Bishop, Ron Elliott, and Clarence Tangney

Gross revenues for FY 22/23

\$714,500

Total Enrollments for FY 2022/2023 7,624

Enrollments for Live Classes 2,545

Online Enrollments 5,079

Enrollments by Class

Defensive Driving (4-Hour) 4,035

Defensive Driving (8-Hour) 718

First Offender 2,619

Alive @ 25 (4-Hour) 125

Attitudinal Dynamics Driving (8-Hour) 127

Drivers License Reinstatement N/A

Chronic Offender (8-Hour) N/A

Traffic School Classes

- **First Offender (FOT)** – a four hour curriculum covering traffic safety rules and consequences, including laws on seat belts, child restraint, speeding, DUI and most commonly committed traffic offenses.
- **Alive at 25 (A25, 4hr.)** – designed to reduce risk-taking behavior such as driving distracted among people 15-24 years of age utilizes embedded video and group discussions.
- **Defensive Driving-4 (DDC-4 hr.)** – certified by the National Safety Council, this course teaches the importance of safety belts and other restraints, dangers of speeding, proper following distance and effects of alcohol and drugs.
- **Defensive Driving-8 (DDC-8 hr.)** – is a more intensive version of the 4-hour course with emphasis on preventing traffic deaths and injuries.
- **Attitudinal Dynamics of Driving (ADD, 8hr.)** – an intense 8-hour curriculum in group format that addresses mental health and attitude as they affect the ability to safely operate a vehicle.
- **Chronic Offender (COF8, 8hr.)** - an intense 8-hour workshop that looks at chronic behavior and addresses the thought process behind specific behaviors that lead to destructive and socially unacceptable patterns that create chronic citation and arrest histories.
- **Driver License Reinstatement Class (DLRC, 3hr.)** – a tutorial class, utilizing the students own driving history and state reinstatement letter. The purpose of the class is to devise a viable plan of action for each student to follow for driver's license reinstatement. Ongoing counseling is offered for individuals with complex cases. The State of Tennessee, Department of Safety and Homeland Security approves the standardized curriculums through the National Safety Council (NSC) and certifies our programs and instructors. The NSC curriculums are accepted in all 50 States and used by all branches of the military both in the U.S. and abroad.

Address:

Justice A.A. Birch Building,
408 2nd Avenue North, Suite 1170,
P.O. Box 196300, Nashville, TN 37219
Phone: (615) 862-8345

Member: The American Society
for Public Administration (ASPA)



Member: The National Safety
Council & NSC International
Advisory Committee





Johnetta Nelson
Director

Probation & DUI Bond

Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 Probation Department Annual Report

The General Sessions Court Probation Department is committed to promoting and maintaining a safe community for the citizens of Nashville-Davidson County. The department is responsible for providing the necessary resources available to offenders in

order for them to successfully comply with the conditions of probation.

In addition to the supervision of regular misdemeanor probation cases assigned by General Sessions Courts, the Probation Department provides additional support to General Sessions' Specialty Courts and Day Reporting Programs operated by the Davidson County Sheriff's Office. Probation Officers coordinate alternative options to meet the needs of our clients by collaborating with the Human Trafficking Intervention Court, also known as Cherished H.E.A.R.T.S. Our department also works closely with the C.A.R.E. Court, aimed at participants ages 18-30. The Probation Department recognizes the importance of utilizing the Recovery Court and/or Mental Health and Veterans Court as a means of addressing any substance abuse or mental health concerns our client base encounters. We also work closely with the Office of Family Safety, DA's Office, Mayor's Office, treatment providers, and other agencies on the High Risk Intervention Pan-

el (HRIP), identifying and discussing high-risk domestic violence cases. Our joint efforts with these specialized courts and agencies allow our department to create resources that prove beneficial to the success of the client's well-being.

The Probation Department also supervises persons on bond who are accused of being a multiple DUI offender. The purpose of this intensive supervision is to protect the public from potentially high risk impaired drivers and to direct them to substance abuse treatment, drug testing and additional pretrial monitoring if needed.

Over the years, the Probation Department has become more engaged in the community. We utilize staff expertise to provide information to clients on traffic and safety education, available community treatment resources, and started a job initiative program with local businesses. The department has held 2 job fairs that resulted in 20+ probationers being hired. To help lessen the struggle for school students, the Probation Department hosted a School Supply Drive benefitting DG Pencil Box and Metro Nashville Public Schools.

The Probation Department continues to seek alternative means of help for probationers who have critical needs. We recognize that the aftereffects of the COVID-19 pandemic and rise in cost of living has made it challenging for many clients to comply with probation requirements. To address these problems, the General Sessions Court Probation Department is focusing on providing resources to help the unemployed, indigent, homeless persons and those requiring alcohol and drug treatment.

Probation Department Staff:

- * **Probation Director** – Johnetta Nelson
- * **Management Staff** – Cindy Cossey, Michael Hannah and Laurel Howell
- * **Cherished HEARTS Program Manager**—Melanie Taylor
- * **Probation Support Staff**—Jennifer Norris-Allen, Grace Sawyers and Tammy Tune
- * **Multiple Offense DUI Bond Supervision**—Kenneth Connell, Theresa Fuqua and Johnny Velasco
- * **Probation Officers** – Alissa Bloom, Joe Brady, Becky Freeman, Tonya Howell, Robin Lively, Prentiss Martin, Kendall Matthews, Chris Perry, LouEllen Pickard, PJ Postiglione, Alesia Putman, Katherine Rowden, Schley Sadler, Maria Schaffner, Chris Sharp, Cole Stephenson, Johnny Velasco, Jimmy Waggoner.

For more information about the General Sessions Court Probation Department, please visit:

<https://gscourtprobation.nashville.gov>

Address: Ben West Building
100 James Robertson Parkway
Suite 10, P.O. Box 196300
Nashville, TN 37201
Phone: (615) 862-8380
Fax: (615) 862-8364

Prepared by: Johnetta Nelson, Director
Becky Freeman, Probation Officer

<u>New Cases</u>	
Probation	1,943
DUI Bond	185
Unsupervised/Under Advisement	5
Total	2,133
<u>Financial and Court-Ordered Public Service Work Hours</u>	
Victim Restitution Collected	\$128,873
Probation Supervision Fees Collected	N/A
Court-Ordered Public Service Work Hours	7,043

<u>Drug Testing Program</u>	<u>Tests Per Program</u>	<u>% Positive</u>
Probation	5,712	38%
DUI Bond	4,098	25%
Total	9,810	



Photo Courtesy of Angie Von Mann



General Sessions Court 2022-2023 Annual Report

