

ORPHANS' COURT

MISSION AND SERVICES

Mission - The Orphans' Court provides supervision of decedents' estates and children's property to the beneficiaries in order to protect decedents' and children's assets.

The Court's mission supports accomplishing the countywide vision by:

- Working to support families and individuals in need

Core Services –

- Administration of decedents' estates, primarily through probate hearings; determining the validity of wills and claims against estates for the benefit of the heir(s) of the estate.
- Administration of children's property, including appointing and supervising the guardianship of minors.

SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

GOAL 1 – To monitor the property of a deceased resident of the County in order to carry out the wishes of the decedent and to ensure distribution to the beneficiaries.

Objective 1.1 - Decrease the percent of decedents' estates rulings that are appealed to a higher court from 1.09% in FY 2009.

Targets -

- **Short term:** By FY 2010 – 1.00%
- **Intermediate term:** By FY 2013 – 0.50%
- **Long term:** By FY 2016 – 0.25%

Performance Measures –

Measure Name	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Estimated	FY 2011 Projected
Resources (input)					
Number of judges	3	3	3	3	3
Workload, Demand and Production (output)					
Number of hearings	150	160	180	200	220
Number of pleadings			3,000	4,100	4,600
Number of estates open			931	990	1,010
Number of hearing notices, orders and writs issued			320	355	410
Efficiency and Quality					
Average number of hearings per judge	50.0	53.4	60.0	66.7	73.3
Average number of pleadings per judge			1,000.8	1,366.7	1,533.3
Impact (outcome)					
Number of intact estates	980	984	990	1,000	1,055
Percent of estates being challenged to a higher court			1.09%	1.00%	0.80%

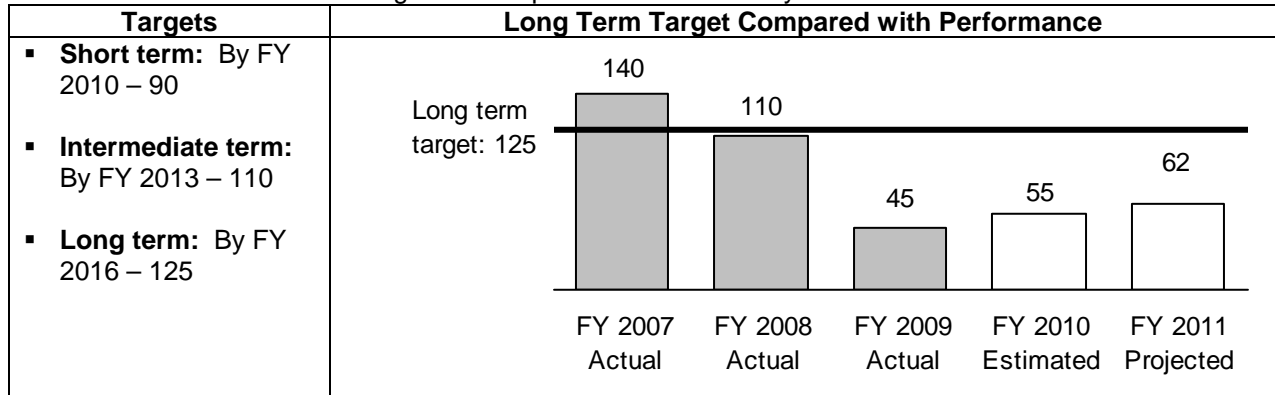
Performance Measures Explanation – The Court is mandated by the State to have three judges. In some cases, data is unavailable.

Strategies to Accomplish the Objective –

- **Strategy 1.1.1 –** Have one sitting judge three days a week to review and rule on the case docket
- **Strategy 1.1.2 –** Have one judge available per day to review chambers work
- **Strategy 1.1.3 –** Maintain an up-to-date legal reference guide for judges entitled the Bench Book
- **Strategy 1.1.4 –** Issue hearing notices, orders and writs
- **Strategy 1.1.5 –** Follow-up on all rulings and applicable wills by reviewing a decedent's and heir's accounts to ensure decedent's assets are distributed within the law
- **Strategy 1.1.6 –** Rule on petitions for decedent's assets including petitions for fees
- **Strategy 1.1.7 –** Monitor estates and appeals in collaboration with the Register of Wills Office, which is the Clerk to the Court

GOAL 2 - To provide protection of children’s assets until they are legally adults (18 years of age) in order to ensure proper monetary distribution for their short-term and long-term needs.

Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of guardianships closed successfully with all assets intact from 110 in FY 2008.



Performance Measures –

Measure Name	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Estimated	FY 2011 Projected
Resources (input)					
Number of judges	3	3	3	3	3
Workload, Demand and Production (output)					
Number of hearings	170	183	164	200	215
Number of pleadings			250	550	650
Number of guardianships open			43	60	80
Number of orders and writs issued		50	65	90	110
Efficiency and Quality					
Average number of hearings per judge	56.7	61.0	54.7	66.7	71.7
Average number of pleadings per judge			83.3	183.3	216.7
Impact (outcome)					
Number of intact guardianships	140	110	45	55	62

Performance Measures Explanation – The Court is mandated by the State to have three judges. The Court is responsible for managing and protecting children’s property. Part of the role of the Court is to distribute funds when needed for important living expenses such as school supplies.

Strategies to Accomplish the Objective –

- **Strategy 2.1.1** – Have one sitting judge three days a week to review and rule on the case docket
- **Strategy 2.1.2** – Have one judge available per day to review chambers work
- **Strategy 2.1.3** – Maintain an up-to-date legal reference guide entitled the Bench Book for all judges
- **Strategy 2.1.4** – Issue orders and writs
- **Strategy 2.1.5** – Review accounts of guardianships to ensure withdraws are proper and important
- **Strategy 2.1.6** – Rule on petitions for minor’s assets including petitions for fees
- **Strategy 2.1.7** – Monitor estates and appeals in collaboration with the Register of Wills office, who is the Clerk to the Court