



# NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

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## **ARIZONA COURTS PROCESS DUI CASES FASTER**

PHOENIX – The Arizona Judicial Branch, led by Chief Justice Ruth V. McGregor, has decreased the amount of time it takes to process DUI cases in certain courts and, by so doing, has enhanced public safety.

The Statewide DUI Case Processing Committee, created by the Chief Justice in 2005, proposed a number of recommendations regarding how to decrease case processing time. Chief Justice McGregor implemented many of these standards by adopting Administrative Order 2006-38. This Order allowed a number of justice and municipal courts statewide to take part in a pilot program using new and specific criteria.

The initial standards of the pilot project required courts to:

- Set firm pre-trial and trial dates;
- Require a defendant to appear at the pre-trial conference; and
- Not allow unnecessary case delays.

The results in the courts taking part in the pilot projects have been impressive. Some highlights of results in various courts include:

- DUI cases pending over 180 days were reduced by 77%;
- Total active pending DUI cases were reduced by 20%;
- The percentage of cases resolved at the first trial setting more than doubled, increasing from 31% to 63%; and
- The clearance rate averaged 116%, meaning the pilot courts produced more outgoing cases than incoming, thus reducing backlog.

This initiative is a part of Chief Justice McGregor’s five-year strategic agenda for the Arizona Judicial Branch called “Good to Great.”

Pilot courts received 14,055 new DUI cases while disposing of 14,400 DUI cases. The average number of trial settings per case was reduced from 2.7 to 1.2 (56% decrease).

The following participating courts achieved these impressive results:

Phoenix Municipal Court

Mesa Municipal Court

Winslow Justice Court

Holbrook Justice Court

Prescott Justice Court

Snowflake Justice Court

Kayenta Justice Court

Prescott Municipal Court

Pima County Consolidated

Pinetop-Lakeside Justice Court

Show Low Justice Court

Justice Courts

-more-



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Chief Justice McGregor said of the successful policy changes, “These positive outcomes from courts across the state illustrate how, by analyzing and addressing the specific issues DUI cases present, together we have been able to process cases faster without jeopardizing fairness and move Arizona’s judicial branch from Good to Great.”

Chief Justice McGregor remarked, “While our courts have done great work, much remains to be done in this area. To that end, a second phase of the program will begin this fall for the courts participating in the pilot program. In the future, all courts statewide will use the standards set in the pilot program.”

Regarding how these changes help the public, Chief Justice McGregor stated, “It is important that DUI case processing be handled as quickly and fairly as possible to prevent future incidents and accidents and to allow people to move on with and improve their lives.”

For more information on the Arizona Judicial Branch, please visit [www.supreme.state.az.gov](http://www.supreme.state.az.gov).

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