



## Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan

COLEMAN A. YOUNG MUNICIPAL CENTER • 2 WOODWARD AVE, SUITE 711 • DETROIT, 48226-3413



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Wayne County Third Circuit Court Selected for Prestigious Juvenile Justice Program

Detroit, MI, September 19, 2024 – Wayne County is one of just five counties in the U.S. that was selected for the current cohort's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform's Transforming Juvenile Probation Certificate Program. Twelve county officials, including representatives of the Court, traveled to Washington, D.C. earlier this summer to participate in the certificate program.

This is the latest of many examples of how the Third Judicial Circuit and Wayne County are early adopters in instituting juvenile probation reform in Michigan.

As part of the program, Wayne County participants learned how to fundamentally transform their approach to probation in order to improve public safety and outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system. Court and county leaders received technical assistance as they developed a capstone project that identified a clear action for transforming juvenile probation in the county. Ongoing conversations are occurring at the county level to support the ongoing implementation of juvenile reform best practices.

The program, and juvenile justice reform in general is fully supported by the Court, which thanks the Annie E. Casey Foundation for its support of the Transforming Juvenile Probation Certificate Program. The Hon. Karen Braxton from the Third Judicial Circuit is leading the Wayne County team. There have been two previous cohorts for this certificate program, in 2019 and 2022, meaning Wayne County is just one of 15 counties in the U.S. that has participated.

"We're honored to be a part of the Transforming Juvenile Probation Certificate Program," said Third Judicial Circuit Chief Judge Patricia Perez Fresard. "The Court is committed to creating a juvenile justice system that prioritizes fairness and equity, and our selection for and involvement in this certificate program is a testament to that mission."

According to Wayne County Executive Warren C. Evans, "we are committed to improving the criminal justice experience for everyone who is affected by the criminal justice system, whether it be employees, residents or family members. Inclusion in the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform's Transforming Juvenile Probation Certificate Program is further evidence that how juveniles are affected is a top priority for my administration."

The move of the Third Judicial Circuit and Wayne County's Juvenile and Youth Services Department to the county's brand-new Criminal Justice Center in September is part of the collective efforts to transform detention into a rehabilitative space. "We are excited to implement programs in an environment that is attuned to the needs of young people facing heightened risks and trauma," said Director of Juvenile and Youth Services Melissa Fernandez.

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Our Vision: *We are an exemplary and innovative Court leading with integrity in providing justice and public service.*

For more information, visit our website [www.3rdcc.org](http://www.3rdcc.org).

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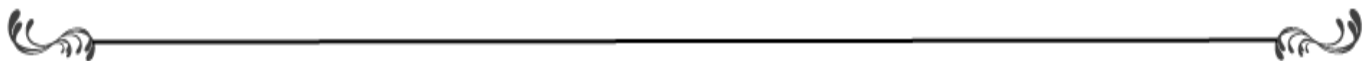
The Michigan legislature passed bipartisan bills, signed by Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist, reforming Michigan's Juvenile Justice System in December 2023. This legislation will include investment in diversion and re-entry services to better position Michigan's youth for successful adulthoods.

Learn more about the Transforming Juvenile Probation Certificate Program [here](#).

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### *About the Third Judicial Circuit*

The Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan is the largest circuit court in the state, with 59 judges and three operating divisions. It has jurisdiction over civil, criminal, and family matters arising in Wayne County. Learn more at [www.3rdcc.org](http://www.3rdcc.org).



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