



To: The Honorable Karen E. Spilka, Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Brian S. Dempsey, Chair, House Committee on Ways and Means

cc: Christopher Marino, Fiscal Analyst, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Taylor Shepherd, Fiscal Analyst, House Committee on Way and Means

From: Tara Maguire, Executive Director, Massachusetts District Attorneys Association

Date: January 12, 2016

Re: **Annual Report on the District Attorneys' Prosecution Statistics**

As required by Chapter 46 of the Acts of 2015,¹ the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association submits to the Ways & Means Committees data from the District Attorneys relative to their criminal prosecutions and workloads for fiscal year 2015.

¹ 0340-2100 For the operation of the Massachusetts District Attorneys' Association . . . provided further, that the Massachusetts District Attorneys' Association shall work in conjunction with the 11 district attorneys' offices to prepare and submit a report to the house and senate committees on ways and means and the clerks of the senate and house of representatives not later than January 12, 2016; provided further, that the Association shall provide the 11 district attorneys' offices with an agreed upon template for the report to be filled out; provided further, that the district attorneys' offices shall submit the report in a standard electronic format; provided further, that the template shall include, delineated by charge type: (a) the number of criminal cases initiated by arraignment in each department of the trial court; (b) the number of criminal cases disposed in each department of the trial court; (c) the number of cases appealed to the appeals courts, supreme judicial court, supreme judicial and appeals court single justices and any other appeals court; and (d) the number of cases reviewed but not charged.

While the reports of the individual districts delineating their workloads by charge or category of work are attached, below please find a synopsis of the Fiscal Year 2015 totals per listed category² pertaining to those districts who have reported thus far:

Superior Court/Youthful Offender Arraigned: 455

Superior Court/Youthful Offender Disposed: 418

Juvenile Court Arraigned: 22,068

Juvenile Court Disposed: 28,837

Juvenile Diversion: 3,863

Superior Court (Adult) Arraigned: 32,596

Superior Court (Adult) Disposed: 69,595

District Court (Adult) Arraigned: 441,796

District Court (Adult) Disposed: 605,666

Appellate Work: 3,506+

Cases Reviewed/Not Charged: 27,205+

Other Work: 28,237+

As evidenced by the attached submissions, the District Attorneys utilize the same case management system (DAMION) but differ significantly in how each office defines its data and inputs and reports that data, as well as whether certain data is even tracked at all. Please also note that, due to budget constraints, and resulting administrative staffing shortages, not all offices are able to input all cases (especially those in the district courts) into DAMION, resulting in underreporting of cases; and not all offices are able to quickly close their disposed cases out of the system, resulting in over reporting.

The DA offices have utilized DAMION for more than eleven years and the current software is nearing end-of-life. With funding provided by the legislature in FY14 and FY15, MDAA underwent a lengthy and involved business-needs-assessment. In FY16, MDAA is drafting a request for responses to begin the process of selecting new case management software. MDAA's plan includes

² Data lists total charges with the exception of "Appellate Work," "Cases Reviewed/Not Charged," and "Other Work," all of which measure cases, investigations or a specific event.

a process to make certain that the new case management software is deployed in a uniform manner, including the use of common definitions. Thus, once implemented, the districts will be able to collect and report common data to the legislature.

Attached to this memo are the individual submissions from the eleven District Attorneys' Offices.³ Where the reporting requirements have changed considerably from those of years past, the District Attorneys have encountered issues interpreting the report fields consistently, extracting specific data from DAMION, and hand-counting information that is not currently captured by DAMION. This has made it difficult to produce these reports in a uniform manner.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

³ Please note that three submissions are incomplete – Suffolk was unable to report the number of Elder Abuse cases arraigned and disposed of; and both Bristol and Plymouth were unable to report the data typically not tracked and reported in DAMION, mainly appellate work, cases reviewed but not charged, and other work. As such, these three categories summarized herein contain a plus sign “+” after the tally.