



# Overview: Municipal Courts

## Colorado Municipal Judges Association

Presented to the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice: Pretrial Release Task Force, June 11, 2019

# Colorado Municipal Judges Association's Mission

*“To improve the quality of justice prevailing in the municipal courts of the State of Colorado by enhancing the professionalism and judicial skills of the judges presiding over those courts and promoting respect and support for the integrity of the Colorado municipal court system.”*

# Number of Colorado Municipal Courts

(To Date)

# 215

Established by the Colorado Constitution,  
Article XX, Section 6(b) or

By Statute, Title 13, Article 10



# Colorado Municipal Judges Association

## *Engagement & Advocacy*

- **Community Outreach and Engagement**
- **State Legislative and Policy Advocacy**
- **Creating and Providing Resources to the Community.**

# Types of Municipal Court Cases:

- **Traffic**
- **Civil Infractions**
- **Municipal Code Violations**
- **Criminal Offenses**
- **Juvenile**

# Specialty Courts Offered by Colorado Municipalities

## *“Problem Solving Courts”*

*Specialty courts offer a non-traditional approach to integrating treatment provisions and criminal justice case proceedings to minimize the number of repeat offenders and offer assistance outside the courtroom.*

- **Teen Court (addressing juvenile offenses)**
- **Outreach Court (addressing homelessness & employment barriers)**
- **Wellness Court (addressing substance abuse & mental health issues)**
- **Veterans Court (addressing substance abuse & mental health issues)**

*Community engagement is key!*



# Specialized Juvenile Programs

*Community \* Integrity \* Justice*

## Arvada Teen Services

[Arvada Teen Services](#) uses evidence-based practices to restore youth offenders back into the community through individualized attention using a suite of programs, services, and resources, high quality community service opportunities, and innovative, problem-solving solutions.

## Girls Circle Program

The [Lakewood Probation Girls Circle](#) group is a model of structured support groups for girls. It is designed to foster self-esteem, help girls maintain authentic connection with peers and adult women in their community, counter trends toward self-doubt and allow for genuine self-expression through verbal sharing and creative activity.

## R.E.W.i.N.D. – Longmont’s Youth Redirection Program

[Longmont’s Project REWiND](#) is a voluntary program for youth who have violated a Longmont municipal ordinance. It will divert youth from the Longmont Municipal Court and provide opportunity for positive life outcomes and for youth to learn from their mistakes. It provides youth with experiences that are different from traditional juvenile justice experiences.

## Lakewood Early Action Program (LEAP)

The [Lakewood Early Action Program \(LEAP\)](#) strives to serve the best interest of our youth and families through competency development, follow through with behavioral

health interventions and with innovative programming and community partnerships, while fairly administering justice to all whose lives are impacted by the juvenile justice system.

## Teen Courts

### *“Justice for Teens by Teens”*

Teen Courts are a community-based, juvenile intervention/prevention programs that offer an alternative to the juvenile justice system. These programs are generally for juvenile offenders who commit first-time, nonviolent, misdemeanor offenses or ordinance violations. Unlike the traditional justice system, Teen Court operates under the Restorative Justice Principles, which gives those impacted by crime the chance to be directly involved in the justice process. By harnessing the power of positive peer pressure, each juvenile offender is held accountable by his or her peers and given the opportunity to repair any harm caused to the community.

[Aurora Teen Court](#)  
[Brighton Teen Court](#)  
[Castle Rock Teen Court](#)  
[Colorado Springs Teen Court](#)  
[Grand Junction Teen Court](#)  
[Parker Teen Court](#)  
[Lakewood Teen Court](#)  
[Loveland Teen Court](#)

# Problem Solving Courts and Services

## Fort Collins – “Special Agency Sessions”

[Special Agency Sessions \(SAS\)](#) are part of the Fort Collins Municipal Court to address public concerns with quality of life violations for those without housing and/or with other service needs. The sessions are intended to support dispositions which balance compassion and resourcefulness with accountability. This program was created by and functions as a collaborative effort involving personnel from the Court, the City Attorney’s Office, Police Services, Sister Mary Alice Murphy Center for Hope, Homeward 2020, and Touchstone Partners. It supports the City’s key strategic outcome of “safe community” and, specifically, Strategic Objective 5.8: “Improve community involvement, education and regional partnerships to make our community safer and stronger.”

## Lakewood – Specialized Adult Services

Lakewood Probation Division – [Specialized Adult Supervision Services](#) actively supervises defendants charged with prostitution and continues to be responsible for securing specialized residential placements to provide housing and treatment to address a number of presenting issues including substance abuse, mental health, lack of education or vocational training as well as other types of abuse for this vulnerable population.

## Lakewood Municipal Court Veterans Process

The [Lakewood Municipal Court Veterans Process](#) helps promote public safety by holding justice-involved veterans accountable for their behavior while referring to and

monitoring treatment, interventions and support through a team-based approach and increased probation and judicial monitoring.

## Littleton Conflict Resolution Center

Littleton’s Conflict Resolution Center offers [mediation services](#). Mediation is an acceptable alternative to resolving a dispute through the court system. Agreements made in mediation are legally binding and are recognized by the court.

## Loveland’s Jumpstart Program

The [Loveland Municipal Court](#), in partnership with the [Community Partnership Office](#), is an alternative sentencing program for the homeless that empowers individuals to make life improving changes. It utilizes individualized assessment and coordination with local resources to help with an individuals needs and provide for accountability for the community.

## Aurora Wellness Court

Individuals who suffer with mental illness are falling through the cracks of this country’s social safety net and are landing in the criminal justice system at an alarming rate. The City of Aurora recognized the need for an alternative process and has established a treatment and recovery court (mental health court). The program’s goals is to reduce incarceration and recidivism of people with mental illness by linking them to metal health services and supports.



# Reform For Municipal Courts

**HB 16-1309: Right to Counsel at First Appearance While In Custody**

**HB 16-1311: Procedures When Orders Require Monetary Payments**

**HB17-1338: Notice to Municipal Courts of Municipal Holds**

**HB17-1208: Sealing of Municipal Records**

**HB17-1204: Expungement of Juvenile Records**

**HB17-1083: Municipal Judge Advisement For Traffic Offenses**

**SB18-203: Conflict-free Representation In Municipal Courts**

**HB19-1225: No Monetary Bail For Certain Low-level Offenses**

# Case Numbers in Comparison:

## County Court Cases 2018 FY

County Court	Criminal Filings
Adams	5,254
Arapahoe	3,746
Boulder	2,687
Broomfield	486
Denver	6,736
Douglas	1,350
El Paso	7,281
Jefferson	4,777
Larimer	3,282
Mesa	2,520
Pueblo	2,715
Weld	3,063

# Case Numbers in Comparison (cont.)

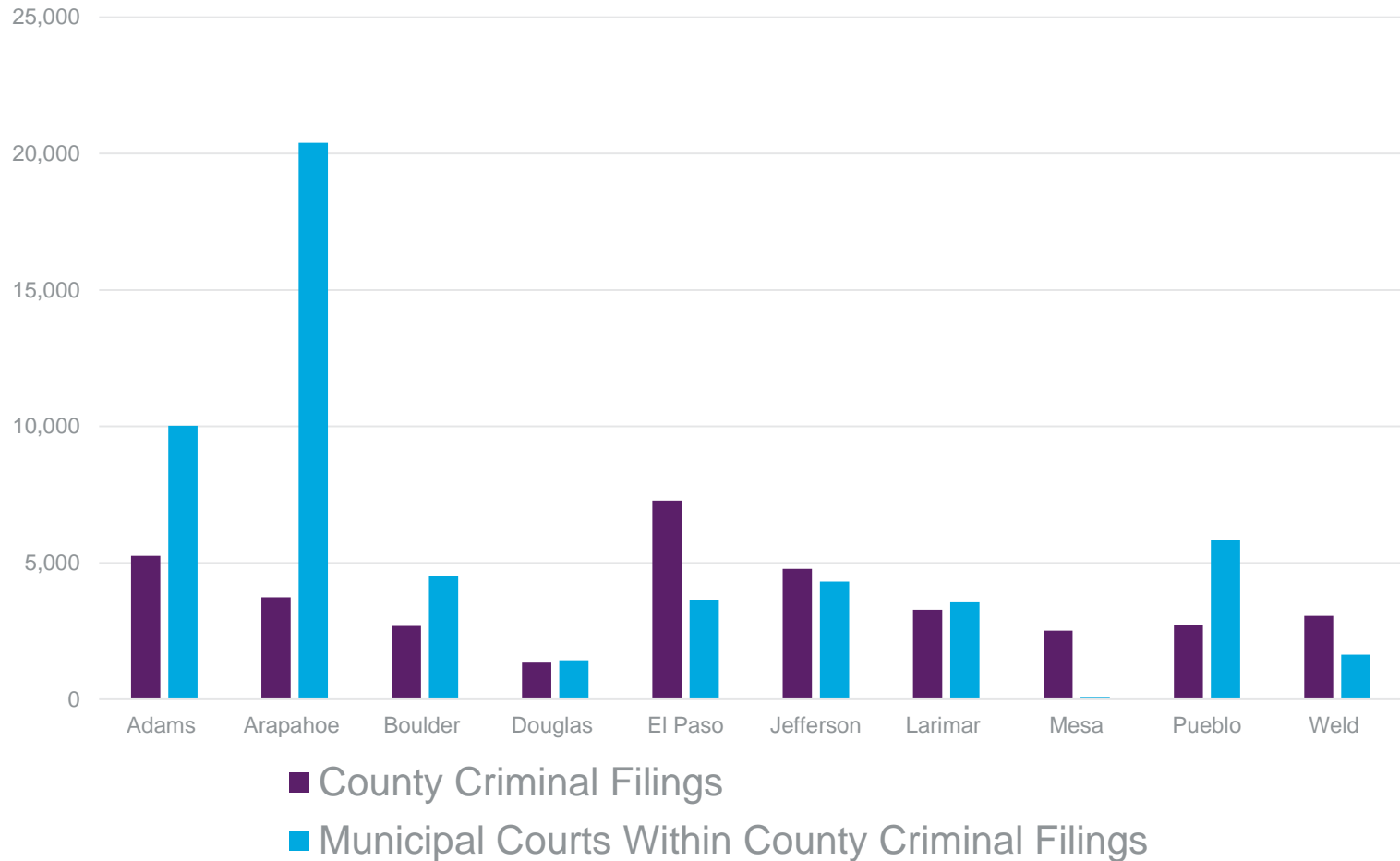
## Sample Survey of (27) Municipal Courts - Average Criminal Cases Per Year

County Jurisdiction	City/Town	2015-2018 Criminal Cases Average
<b>Adams</b>	Arvada	1,600
	Brighton	709
	Commerce City	1,237
	Federal Heights	500
	Northglenn	976
	Thornton	2,500
	Westminster	2,505
<b>Arapahoe</b>	Aurora	17,400
	Glendale	491
	Englewood	1,750
	Littleton	750
<b>Boulder</b>	Boulder	3,900
	Louisville	144

County Jurisdiction	City/Town	2015-2018 Criminal Cases Average
<b>Boulder</b>	Lafayette	488
<b>Douglas</b>	Castle Rock	1,434
<b>El Paso</b>	Colorado Springs	3,658
<b>Jefferson</b>	Lakewood	3,928
	Golden	392
<b>Larimer</b>	Fort. Collins	2,502
	Loveland	1,020
	Wellington	35
<b>Mesa</b>	Palisade	54
<b>Pueblo</b>	Pueblo	5,840
<b>Weld</b>	Firestone	235
	Eaton	140
	Frederick	77

County Jurisdiction	City/Town	2015-2018 Criminal Cases Average
Weld	Hudson	25
	Longmont	1,160

Surveyed County Criminal Cases  
vs.  
Surveyed Municipal Criminal Cases\*



# The Importance of Municipal Courts

*64 Counties in Colorado - 271 Incorporated Municipalities*

## *Municipal Courts...*

- *Are the only Courts that the vast majority of our community members will ever come in contact with as part of the criminal justice system.*
- *Can be described as the first line of recourse in a community when dealing with criminal behavior.*
- *Focus more municipal resources and attention on first time offenders, reducing the number of repeat offenders.*
- *Provide municipal resources to address community issues, such as: homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, etc.*
- *Reduce the workload of the District and County criminal courts.*



# Questions?

**Shawn Day, Aurora Municipal Judge  
Pretrial Task Force & CCJJ Member**