

# Hot Topics Newsletter



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

An Education in Life from the Bench	2
Senior Judges' Award	3
Pilot Program	3
Survey Results	4
Committee Members	5
Next Meeting Date	5
Retirement Services Contact List	5

## Prescription Drug Coverage Extended through 2019

The Maryland Department of Budget and Management (“DBM”) released information about the pending changes to prescription drug coverage earlier this year. The information provided that state retirees would need to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug coverage (“Medicare Part D”) plan. State retirees would need to enroll in Medicare Part D and potentially leave their current plans by no later than December 31, 2018.

According to the DBM, that date has changed. The Director, Employee Benefits Division of DBM, has indicated: “In response to the court

order issued October 10, 2018, prescription drug coverage for Medicare-eligible retirees will extend beyond December 31, 2018. This means impacted retirees DO NOT have to enroll in a Medicare Part D plan for 2018 and may continue the coverage they have now into 2019 and at the same premium they are paying now.”



The Hogan Administration has said that they hope to work with the General Assembly to find a permanent solution. Some state legislators are discussing introducing legislation related to the coverage issue. But, in January 2020, the plan change to Medicare Part D is still scheduled to take effect.



## Payroll Information

The final pay period in 2018 is pay period 11/28 -12/11.

**This will be paid on 12/19/18, the final pay date of 2018.** Beginning 12/12/18, days worked

will be paid in calendar year 2019.

Advanced Payroll

**12/12/18 – 12/25/18** Timesheets need to be submitted by Noon on Friday, December 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Please note:**

If Senior Judges have reached their earning limitation and are still sitting, the Payroll Department asks Senior Judges to continue to record those hours and locations as if being paid.



## An Education in Life from the Bench

On October 19, 2018, Senior Judge Vincent Mulieri was recognized for his establishment of the School in the Courts program in 2001 in the District Court in Anne Arundel County (Annapolis).

The program, he explained, was initiated to introduce young people to the consequences of their actions: "The idea was to get cases that really brought the points home and show the students what can happen. You can make a thousand good decisions and one bad decision with consequences that can be life-altering."

The program enables students from Anne Arundel County to observe actual District Court cases, some of which involve other young people. After the docket concludes, the prosecutor, defense counsel, judges and other court staff address the students about the cases.

In 2000, Judge Mulieri, while visiting Los Angeles, California, was reading the Los Angeles Times when he came across an article about Michigan Judge Michael Martone and a program he had developed in Michigan where young people would come into the courtroom, listen to cases, and observe the consequences. Judge Mulieri contacted Judge Martone and began a dialogue about starting

the program in Anne Arundel County. Judge Martone continued to provide advice and, during the first School in the Courts Program, Judge Martone flew in from Michigan and participated in the program.

Judge Mulieri added that "Judge Shaem C.P. Spencer, who now operates the program has improved the program so much. I used to hold School in the Courts twice a year and now Judge Spencer is doing it four times a year and has improved the program as well."

Judge Mulieri was appointed to the District Court in April 1991 and retired in 2007. Continuing

to sit as a Senior Judge, he says, "I think it's important to keep working and I plan to work as much as I can for as long as I can because it keeps you alert...I like to keep up with the new changes and enjoy attending the Judicial College courses."

After receiving his award on October 19<sup>th</sup>, a young student tentatively approached Judge Mulieri and whispered to him, "Thank you for starting this program." Judge Mulieri responded, "Think before you act," and the young man replied, "I will."





## Senior Judges' Award

During MSBA's Annual Meeting on June 14, 2018, Judge Charles E. Moylan, Jr. received the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Senior Judges' Award.

The Senior Judges Award is an annual award that is jointly given by the Judiciary and the MSBA to a deserving Senior Judge who has demonstrated exemplary service and dedication to the Judiciary and the legal profession on and off the bench.

Judge Moylan, the former State's Attorney for Baltimore City, has served on the Court of Special Appeals since 1970. As a Senior Judge, he sits regularly on the Court of Special Appeals. He has taught and continues to teach many courses at the Judicial College and other institutions.



## Senior Judges' Pilot Program

By: Circuit Court Administrator Sondra D. Battle

In July 2018, Judicial Information Systems (JIS) working with the Senior Judges Committee invited a group of Senior Judges throughout the State of Maryland to participate in its Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) pilot program.

The Committee's efforts were spearheaded by Sondra D. Battle, the Court Administrator for Prince George's County. According to Judge Kenney, the Chair of the Committee, efforts such as this are important to making recalled service effective and efficient in light of the technology being utilized within the Judiciary.

VDI, a software system that can be installed onto any desktop computer, iPad or smartphone, will allow users to connect to the JIS network remotely

to access programs such as Odyssey and Task Manager. An internet connection is required. VDI will replace VPN or GoToMyPC accounts which many now use to connect into the JIS network. With VDI, Senior Judges will be able to better navigate various programs and it is less restricted as it can be installed on a variety of devices.

Five Senior Judges volunteered to serve on the VDI pilot program committee, including Senior Judge Nancy B. Shuger, who said, "VDI will seamlessly enhance the ability of Senior Judges assigned to the District Court to access software we use remotely and in the courtroom. Almost no training will be necessary to take advantage of this new cutting-edge connectivity solution. What's not to like?"



## Senior Judges' Jurisdictional Survey Results

The Senior Judges Committee surveyed the 192 Senior Judges to assess their experiences related to court operations, parking, staffing and other matters related to Senior service.<sup>1</sup>

The survey was sent to all Senior Judges via mail and email in January 2018. Nearly one-quarter of Senior Judges provided electronic or mailed responses to the survey.

The findings include:

### ***Logistics Related to Courts***

- 75% of Senior Judges serve in multiple jurisdictions.
- 20% of Senior Judges serve in all jurisdictions of their respective court.
- 80% of Senior Judges generally arrive for court by 8:30 AM for a 9:00 AM start time, sometimes with a phone call by clerk's office or law clerks.
- Judges' parking varies, but most locations have allocated parking for judges.
- 88% of Senior Judges have office space available for them at each location and normally are provided a computer and/or laptop.
- In some jurisdictions, Administrative Judges provide Senior Judges with information regarding changes to laws.
- 32% of judges indicated that staff treated them well.

### ***Training/Staff Assistance***

- 92% of Senior Judges have taken MDEC training in jurisdictions that offered training.
- There is usually a law clerk available to provide assistance to the Senior Judge in the circuit courts.

### ***Criminal Docket Questions***

- Issuance of Search Warrants –
  - 45% of Senior Judges issued search warrants.
  - 30% did not issue search warrants.
  - 24% answered "Don't know" or "N/A."
- Violation of Probation –
  - 35% of Senior Judges sat on VOPs.
  - 23% did not.
  - 17% handled VOPs only when the sitting judge is not available.
  - 25% responded "Don't know" or "N/A."

Overall, the survey indicated that Senior Judges are generally provided with what they feel they need to be efficient and effective. Two issues that were raised were receiving docket information prior to the day of service and the opportunity to attend bench meetings.

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<sup>1</sup>This was the number of Senior Judges in January 2018.

**THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL'S  
SENIOR JUDGES COMMITTEE**

- Hon. James A. Kenney III, Senior Judge, Chair*
- Hon. Deborah Sweet Eyster, Senior Judge, Vice Chair, Court of Special Appeals*
- Hon. Jean Baron, Senior Judge, District Five
- Hon. Lynne A. Battaglia, Senior Judge, Court of Appeals
- Sondra D. Battle, Court Administrator, Prince George's County
- Carole Burkhart, Judicial Assistant, District Court Headquarters
- Hon. Leonard J. Eiswert, Senior Judge, District Twelve
- Hon. Stephen P. Johnson, Senior Judge, District Six
- Hon. Barbara Kerr Howe, Senior Judge, Third Judicial Circuit
- Hon. Irma S. Raker, Senior Judge, Court of Appeals
- Hon. Gale E. Rasin, Senior Judge, Eighth Judicial Circuit
- Hon. Thurman H. Rhodes, Judge, District Five
- Hon. Nancy B. Shuger, Senior Judge, District One
- JaCina Stanton, Esquire – Staff Counsel



**NEXT SENIOR  
JUDGES COMMITTEE MEETING:**

**Tues. January 22, 2019  
5:30 PM  
JCECC**

**HOT TOPICS NEWSLETTER**

If you have any questions or concerns about this issue of Hot Topics, contact JaCina Stanton at (410) 260-1408, [jacina.stanton@mdcourts.gov](mailto:jacina.stanton@mdcourts.gov)

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**Social Security Administration (SSA)**  
1-800-772-1213  
[www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)

**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid**  
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**Maryland Supplement Retirement Plan (MSRP)**

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