

Service Business Plan



Service Name Halton Court Services

Service Lead Name Frances Evans

Service Lead Title Manager of Court Administration

Service Description

A public service to administer provincial court services and prosecute provincial offense charges on behalf of the City of Burlington and Towns of Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills.

Strategic Alignment with Vision to Focus Plan

Delivering customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

Service Goals

To provide court services and processes

To provide customers with information, respect, professional and courteous service

To be fiscally responsible by providing efficient and effective services

Current State

Customers & Their Expectations

This service is delivered to:

Municipal partners, including the Towns of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. These partners require the City to be fiscally responsible in how court services are delivered, meeting the partners' expectations and fulfilling the obligation of Halton Court Services as the service provider.

Defendants, Justices of the Peace, enforcement agencies (e.g. Halton Regional Police and OPP), provincial ministries (e.g. Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of the Attorney General), provincial and municipal prosecutors, lawyers and paralegals, general public and victims. These customers expect access to justice through convenient, timely, accurate, efficient and accessible court services and processes. The delivery of these services and processes is expected to be carried out in an informative, respectful, professional and courteous manner.

Existing Service Delivery

Each year, the services include:

Administration, which processes about 64,000 charges, 70,000 fine payments and 2,000 court applications, and schedules about 40,000 court hearings.

	<p>Courtroom Support, which types about 250 transcripts (10,000 pages) and monitors about 3,000 hours of court proceedings.</p> <p>Collections, which recovers about \$2.4 million in unpaid fines, costs and surcharges.</p> <p>Prosecution, which appears at about 22,000 court hearings, including trials, motions and appeals; prepares about 1,800 summonses to witnesses; and processes about 3,500 requests from defendants for case information.</p>
<p>Existing Customer Engagement Tools / Methods</p>	<p>Annual stakeholder meeting, which includes Prosecutors, Justices of the Peace, Crown Attorney's office and various enforcement agencies, including Halton Regional Police, OPP, MTO and GO Transit.</p> <p>Halton Court Services public website.</p> <p>Information brochures at the front counter and inserted in hearing notifications and collections statements.</p> <p>Online and automated payment processing options.</p> <p>Annual Business Report for five area Councils, including Region of Halton, City of Burlington and Towns of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville.</p> <p>Annual Performance and Progress Report prepared for the Ministry of the Attorney General.</p> <p>Quarterly financial and operational reports prepared for the five area Treasurers and five area Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs).</p> <p>Customer service survey.</p>
<p>Is this Service Provincially Legislated?</p>	<p>Yes Service requirements are mandated under Part 10 of the Provincial Offences Act. The Transfer Agreement with the province sets out standards for the conduct of prosecution, for the administration of the courts, and for the provision of mandated levels of court services and reporting requirements, as well as sanctions for failure to meet the standards.</p> <p>Reporting requirements to the Ministry of the Attorney General include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Performance Report on the performance of obligations under the Transfer Agreement. Annual audited financial statements certified by an independent auditing firm. Incident Reports, including disputes and complaints, conflicts of interest, breaches of ethics or law in the performance of transfer obligations and financial or administrative irregularities.

For this Service are there Approved Service Standards?	Yes All duties and obligations are to be carried out in accordance with the terms, conditions and principles of the Transfer Agreement. At a minimum, the same services and level of service delivery previously offered by the Ministry of the Attorney General must be maintained.
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Programs

Halton Court Services Prosecution	<p>Handling court appearances, including guilty pleas, trials, motions and appeals and conducting resolution meetings with defendants to discuss their options.</p> <p>Putting together detailed information and evidence and providing to defendants.</p> <p>Preparing summonses to witnesses and other court documents.</p> <p>Preparing for court, including reviewing case information and evidence, offering advice to enforcement agencies and conducting legal research.</p> <p>Addressing customer service inquiries.</p>
Halton Court Services Administration	<p>Processing and administering charges through various stages of the court system, including updating results from court hearings, enforcement for unpaid fines and fine payment processing.</p> <p>Processing court applications, including appeals and requests for extension of time to pay a fine.</p> <p>Scheduling court hearings, including trials, resolution meetings and requests for changes to status of hearings.</p> <p>Addressing customer service inquiries and requests for assistance with the filing and preparing of court documents.</p> <p>Scheduling language interpreters.</p>
Halton Court Services Courtroom Support	<p>Recording and monitoring court proceedings.</p> <p>Maintaining and ensuring safe storage of official court records.</p> <p>Processing and storing exhibits from court hearings.</p> <p>Typing transcripts.</p>
Halton Court Services Collection of Unpaid Fines	<p>Collecting defaulted fines through the use of collection tools such as civil enforcement, property tax roll additions, payment plans and collection agencies.</p>

Recent Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Expansion of summons process for ticketable careless driving charges resulted in improvements in case screening as well as cost savings for interpreters and witnesses as there was a drop in the number of court appearances.

Disclosure provided to defendants at early resolution meetings resulted in fewer adjournment requests on trial dates and better customer service.

Greater use of technology in partnership with police has improved upon both meaningful dialogue with defendants at early resolution meetings and reduction of waste through elimination of hard copies of videos

Environmental Considerations

Greater public awareness of on line service options to schedule early resolution meetings will reduce manual and paper processes.

Emerging Opportunities and Anticipated Risks

Emerging Opportunities	The Prosecution and Administration units will explore opportunities to use the Business Intelligence technology to assist with better decision-making, improved tracking and reporting methodology and means to convert processes and documents to an electronic format.
Anticipated Risks	<p>Relying on enforcement agencies and lack of control over enforcement initiatives increases the financial vulnerability of Halton Court Services when there is a downward shift in enforcement. An upward shift in enforcement could create a greater demand for more court resources.</p> <p>Relying on a projected number of charges presents a risk to the reliability of future planning for the overall operation and budget (e.g. staffing, courtroom use, court resource requirements, etc.).</p>
Enterprise Risk Considerations	

Service Initiatives

Target Completion

Review the delivery processes and focus on design of Business Intelligence reporting tools for the prosecution service.

Sep 2020

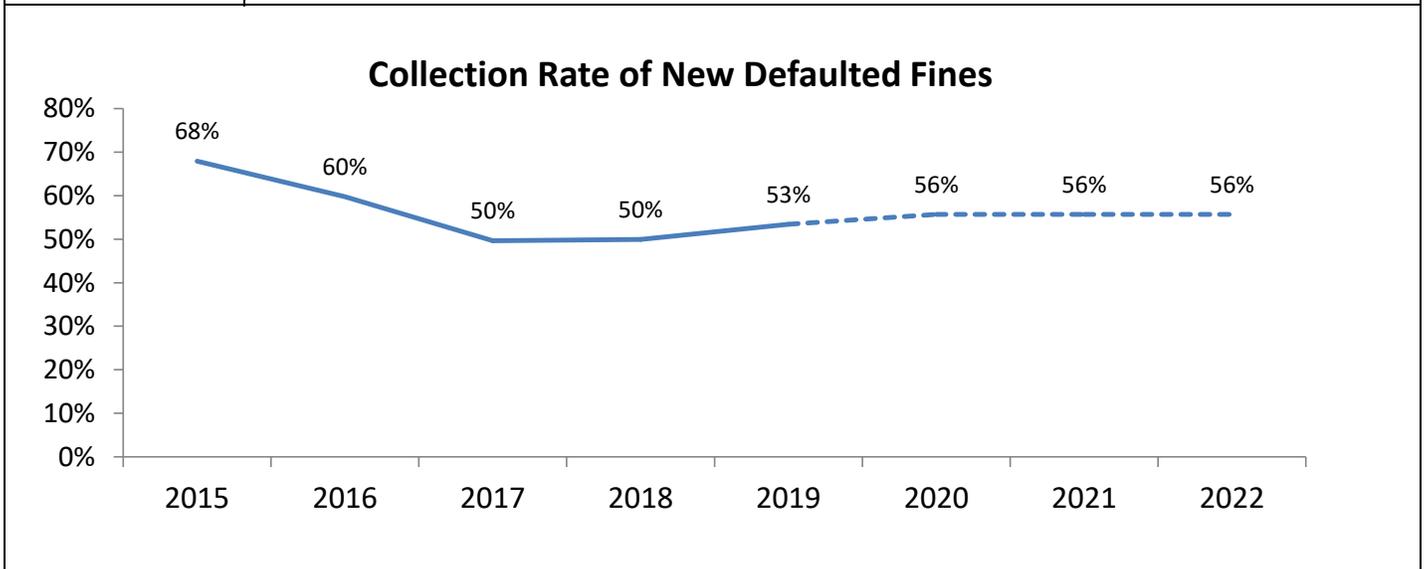
MEASURING SUCCESS

How much did we do?

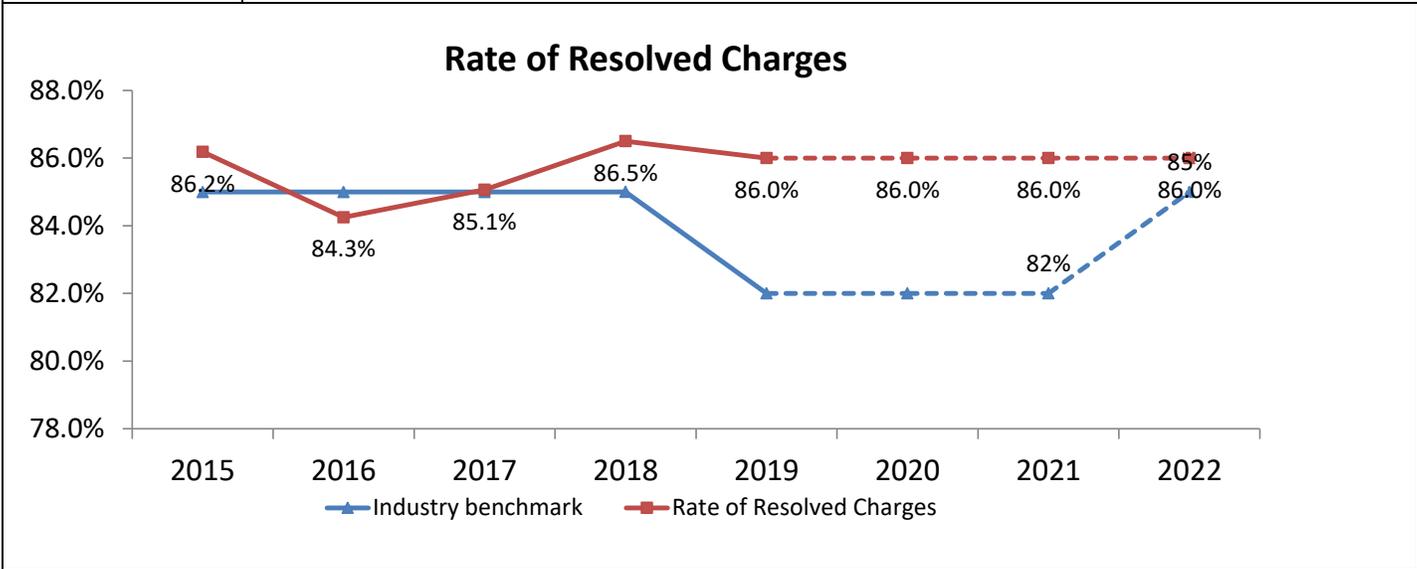
Performance Measurement	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Forecast	2020 Forecast	2021 Forecast	2022 Forecast
Total number of charges issued	69,700	71,317	63,577	66,800	67,468	68,143	68,824	69,512
Total number of courtroom hours used	2,430	2,310	2,389	2,380	3,780	3,600	3,600	3,601
Total number of Early Resolution meetings held	12,700	14,883	15,531	15,800	16,800	16,800	16,800	16,800
Total Value of Collected Defaulted Fines *	\$2,496,201	\$2,419,590	\$2,172,323	\$2,157,330	\$2,350,750	\$2,450,750	\$2,450,750	\$2,450,751

How well did we do it?

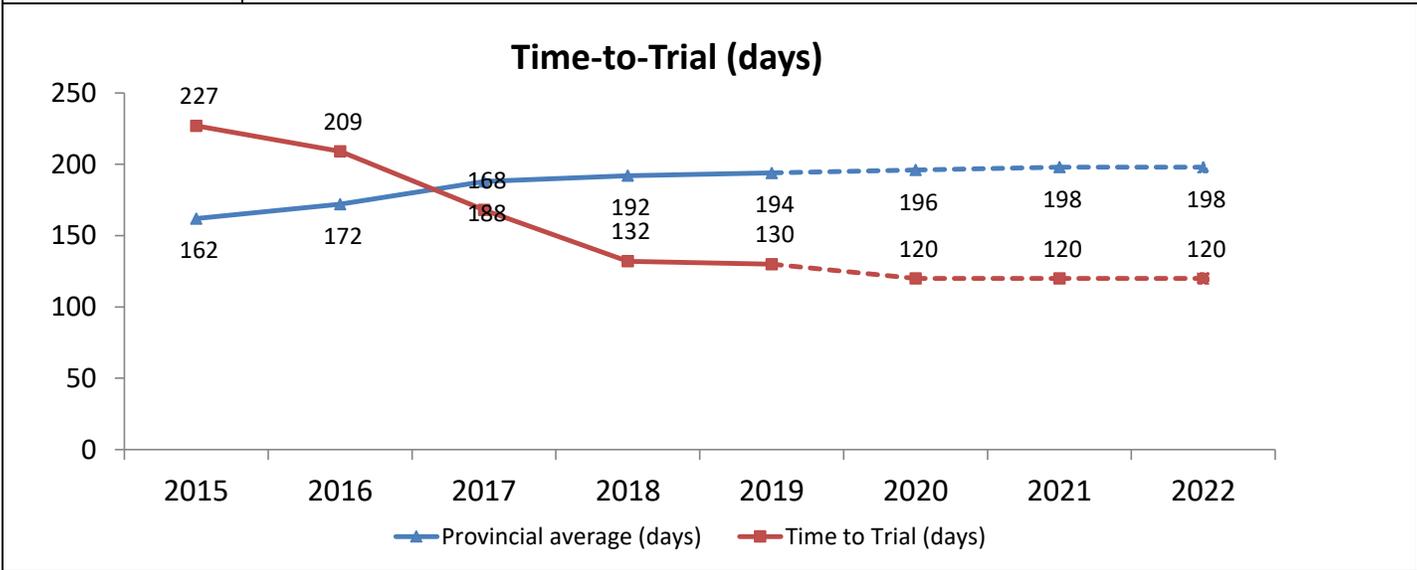
Performance Measurement	Collection Rate of New Defaulted Fines
Story behind the data	Amounts from 2017 to 2018 decreased due to an increase in write-offs of uncollectable defaulted fines. This increase included a one-time write off of license suspensions.



Performance Measurement	Rate of Resolved Charges
Story behind the data	The rate of resolved charges in 2017 met the industry standard of 85% with a slight improvement over the 2016 rate. It is anticipated that the future resolution rate will decrease slightly as a result of an anticipated higher request for trial rate due to increasingly severe consequences for certain offences. Prosecutors make every effort to offer reasonable alternatives that meet the needs of defendants yet also discourage them from committing the same offences again.



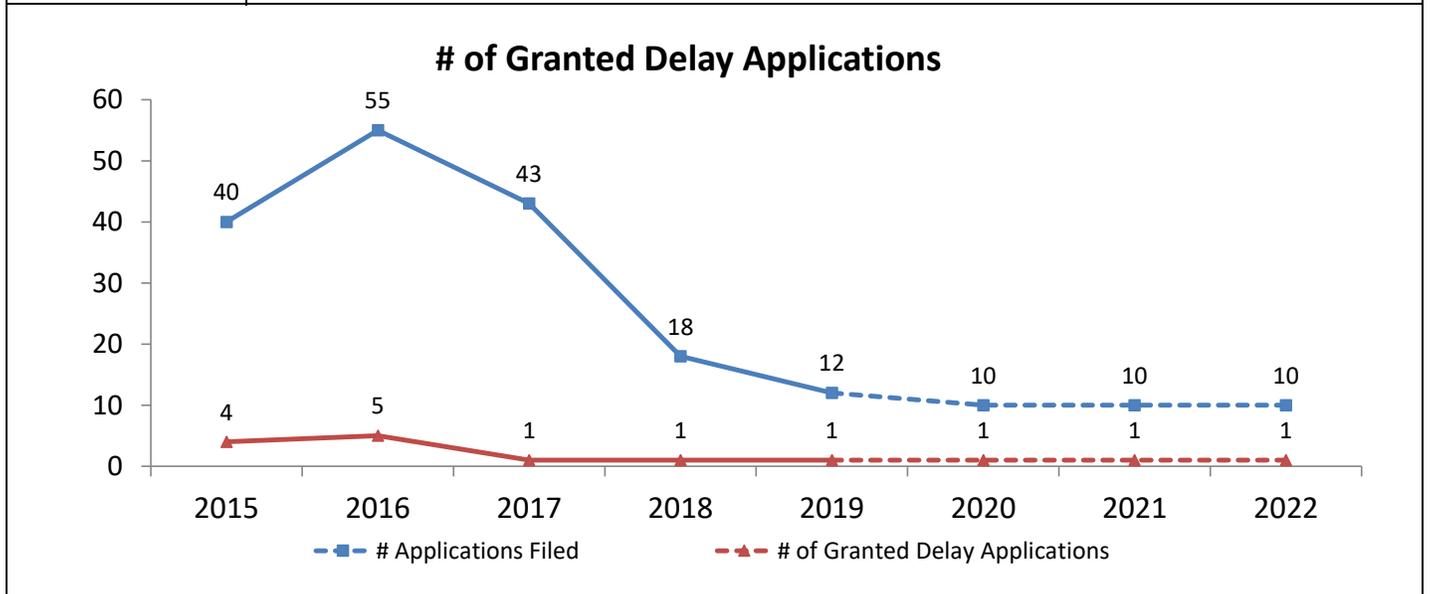
Performance Measurement	Time-to-Trial (days)
Story behind the data	Time to trial has decreased due to reduction in number of filed charges. Expectation that time to trial will further decrease once settled in new courthouse due to the operation of four courtrooms rather than the current three courtrooms.



Is anyone better off?

Performance Measurement	Total Collected Unpaid Fines
Story behind the data	The Collections Unit will be adding an additional staff person upon relocation to the new courthouse in February 2019. The goal is to increase the overall rate of collections, thereby ensuring that the value of receivables is kept to a minimum.
Where do we want to go?	It is projected that this additional staff will collect approximately \$200,000 of defaulted fines revenue during the first year and \$300,000 each year thereafter. The net budget impact for this additional staff is approximately \$70,000 per year.

Performance Measurement	Number of resolved Early Resolution meetings.
Story behind the data	Following a meeting with a prosecutor, most defendants choose to resolve their charges and accept responsibility for their actions. This means that prosecutors are responding to society's expectation that justice is served while facilitating a change in behavior and attitude. Also, more court time is available for defendants who want a trial, resulting in fewer applications and fewer charges that cannot proceed because the defendant's right to a speedy trial was guaranteed.
Where do we want to go?	Maintain the resolution rate between 82% and 85% over the next four years. Anticipated that the resolution rate will decrease slightly as more punitive penalties for some HTA offences will start in 2019 - likely increasing the request for trial rate. We will continue to use automation and electronic means to deliver the prosecution sub-service.



Performance Measurement	Time to trial
Story behind the data	Efforts to decrease time-to-trial has resulted in defendants and witnesses feeling that the court process is fairer because they have quicker access to a trial and therefore a reduced chance of forgetting the relevant details. The number of charges withdrawn due to the unexpected absence at trial of police officers decreased during. Rather than compromise the time to trial, a higher number of charges were withdrawn.
Where do we want to go?	Seek further creative solutions such as reliance on certified evidence when permissible which reduces need for officer attendance at trials.

