

Service Business Plan



Service Name	Halton Court Services	Service Type	Public
Service Owner Name	Frances Evans	Budget Year	2017
Service Owner Title	Manager of Court Administration		

Service Description

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

Current State

Customers & Their Expectations	<p>This service is delivered to:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Existing Service Delivery	<p>Each year, the services include:</p> <p>Administration, which processes about 70,000 charges, 75,000 fine payments and 2,000 court applications, and schedules about 40,000 court hearings.</p> <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>

Existing Customer Engagement Tools / Methods	<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>
Is this Service Provincially Legislated?	<p>Yes Service requirements are mandated under Part 10 of the Provincial Offences Act.</p> <p>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. Reporting requirements to the Ministry of the Attorney General include: Annual Performance Report on the performance of obligations under the Transfer Agreement.</p> <p>Annual audited financial statements certified by an independent auditing firm.</p> <p>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.</p>
For this Service are there Approved Service Standards?	<p>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.</p>

Sub-Services

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. 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

During 2015 and 2016:

The acquisition of laptops by the prosecution unit allowed for paperless Early Resolution meetings which resulted in more efficient use of staff resources and a significant reduction in the amount of paper used, and also required less file storage space.

In response to a customer service survey conducted by the Prosecution Unit, evidence is now provided to legal representatives and defendants before resolution meetings which has increased the Early Resolution request rate resulting in fewer cases proceeding to trial. This has had a positive effect on service delivery and internal efficiencies.

The electronic submission and storage of all evidence as well as a move from handwritten to typewritten notes by the Halton Region Police Service has increased the accuracy of and significantly reduced the turnaround time to provide evidence to defendants resulting in improved customer service and fewer adjourned cases.

The Court Administration Management System was implemented in the Administration Unit for processing applications for re-opening of cases and extension of time to pay fines. This has resulted in an automated process, reduced duplication of administration procedures and the ability to track numbers and outcome of all applications.

Adding eligible unpaid fines to Halton property tax rolls was carried out by the Collections Unit in early spring and has resulted in approximately defaulted fines totaling approximately \$210,000 being transferred to tax rolls and an increase in number of eligible cases being transferred to civil enforcement.

A consent adjournment process was implemented in both Administration and Prosecution Units. This joint venture replaces the requirement for defendants and counsel to use a formal process for first-time adjournment requests, resulting in efficiencies in court and staff time and effort as well as an increased level of customer service.

Emerging Opportunities and Anticipated Risks

Emerging Opportunities	<p>An increased use of automated processes (such as e-storage of prosecution files, electronic court dockets and a court scheduling system) will have a positive effect on service delivery and internal efficiencies.</p> <p>The prosecution unit will utilize the recently acquired Court Administration Management System to monitor and report on the effectiveness of functionalities within the System and tailor initiatives towards developing trends that require positive action to ensure effective delivery of services. For example, monitor the types of charges that: do not resolve at the early resolution meeting stage; frequently result in an adjournment of the trial date; result in a withdrawal of charges.</p>
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>

Service Objectives

Target Completion

Implement an electronic docket system to streamline administration processes, reduce costs and staff time and to ensure a more efficient process for presenting court information to affected court stakeholders.	Jan 2017
Increase reporting and monitoring capabilities utilizing the recently acquired Courts Administration Management System.	Dec 2017
Continue to streamline and enhance service delivery in each sub-service by reviewing delivery processes (e.g. requests for adjournment of court cases and transcript preparation) to increase response time and and improve customer service levels.	Dec 2017

MEASURING SUCCESS

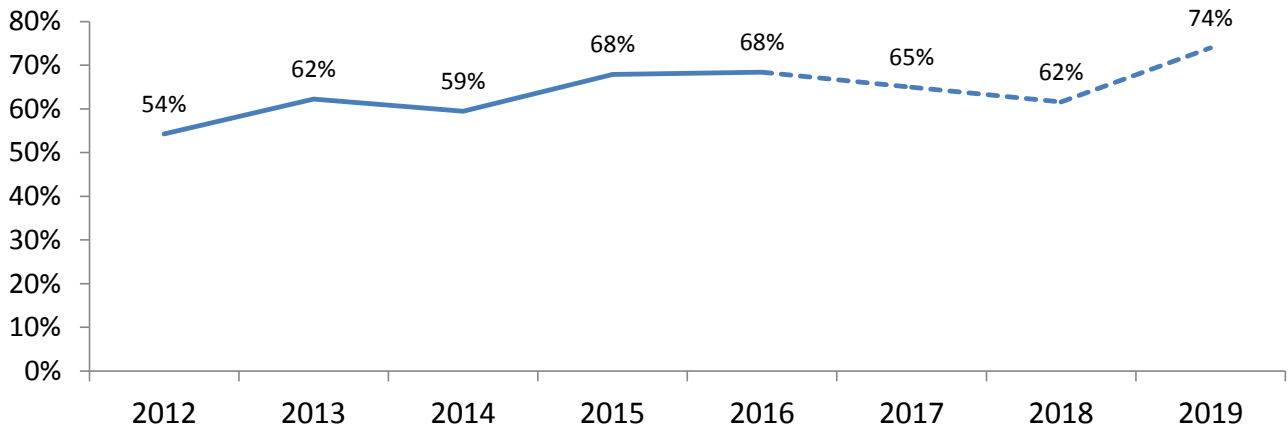
How much did we do?

Performance Measurement	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Projection	2017 Forecast	2018 Forecast	2019 Forecast
Total number of charges issued	66,497	67,211	69,300	69,700	70,000	71,000	72,775	74,600
Total number of courtroom hours used	2,139	2,328	2,286	2,430	2,400	2,400	2,450	3,250
Total number of Early Resolution meetings held	6,169	8,929	8,369	12,700	13,800	13,800	14,200	28,000
Total Value of Collected Defaulted Fines *	\$1,701,900	\$1,903,352	\$2,117,693	\$2,496,201	\$2,340,000	\$2,340,000	\$2,340,000	\$2,886,000

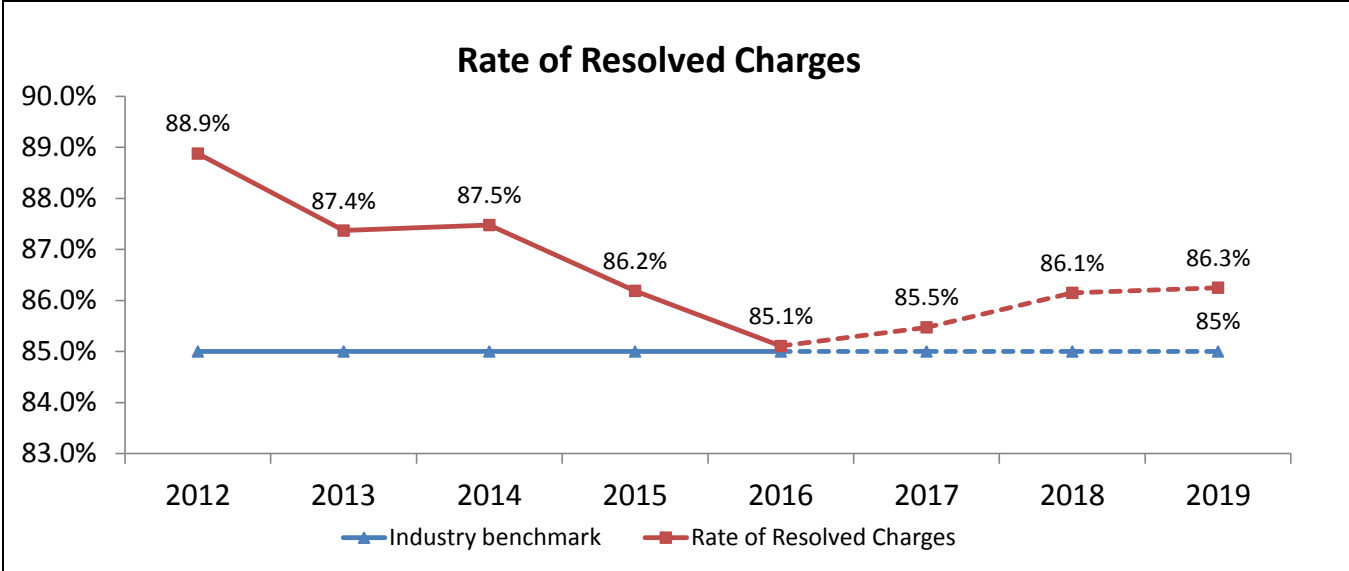
How well did we do it?

Performance Measurement	Collection Rate of New Defaulted Fines
Story behind the data	<p>The collection rate represents the percentage of overdue fines that is collected each year. A variety of collection tools are utilized wherever possible including civil enforcement, drivers licence and plate denial enforcement and adding defaulted fines to property tax rolls which had a significant impact on 2015 collections. The collection rate could increase as high as 74% by the end of 2019 once there is an opportunity to add another staff position at the new courthouse.</p> <p>*Note - the 2015 collection value and rate have been amended to reflect actuals.</p>

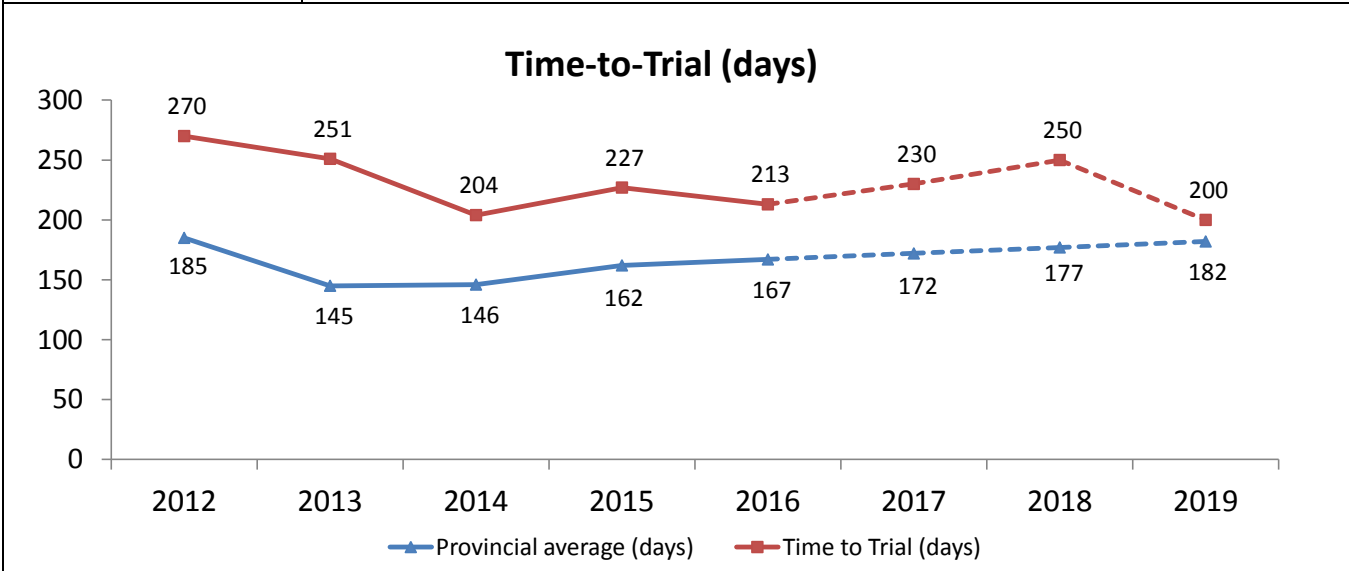
Collection Rate of New Defaulted Fines



Performance Measurement	Rate of Resolved Charges
Story behind the data	The rate of resolved charges remains fairly constant and is slightly over the industry average of 85% during 2016. Prosecutors make every effort to offer reasonable alternatives that meet the needs of defendants yet also discourage them from committing the offences again.



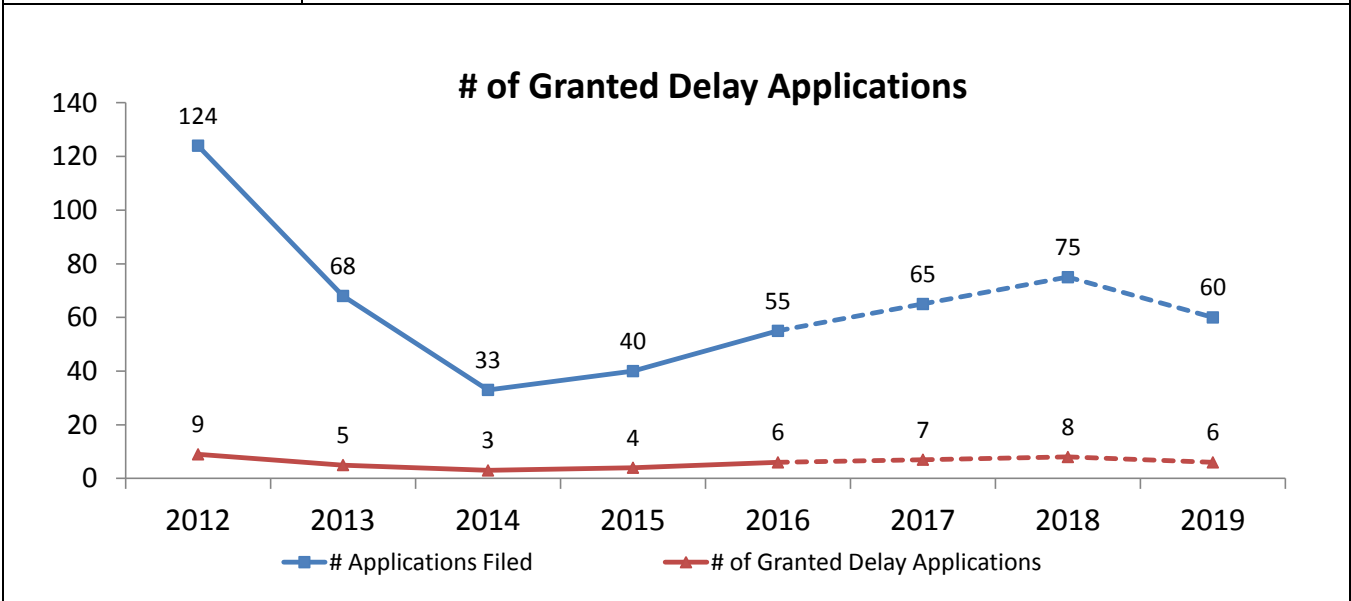
Performance Measurement	Time-to-Trial (days)
Story behind the data	Courtroom usage reached 100% capacity in 2011, creating an increasing time-to-trial rate that is notably higher than the provincial average. There was an opportunity to decrease time-to-trial for some charges through such means as Early Resolution meetings and more efficient use of courtroom time. This is an interim solution only, and time-to-trial will increase as the number of charges continues to rise and the request rate for resolution meetings levels off. The time-to-trial will improve in 2019 due to availability of additional courtroom at new courthouse.



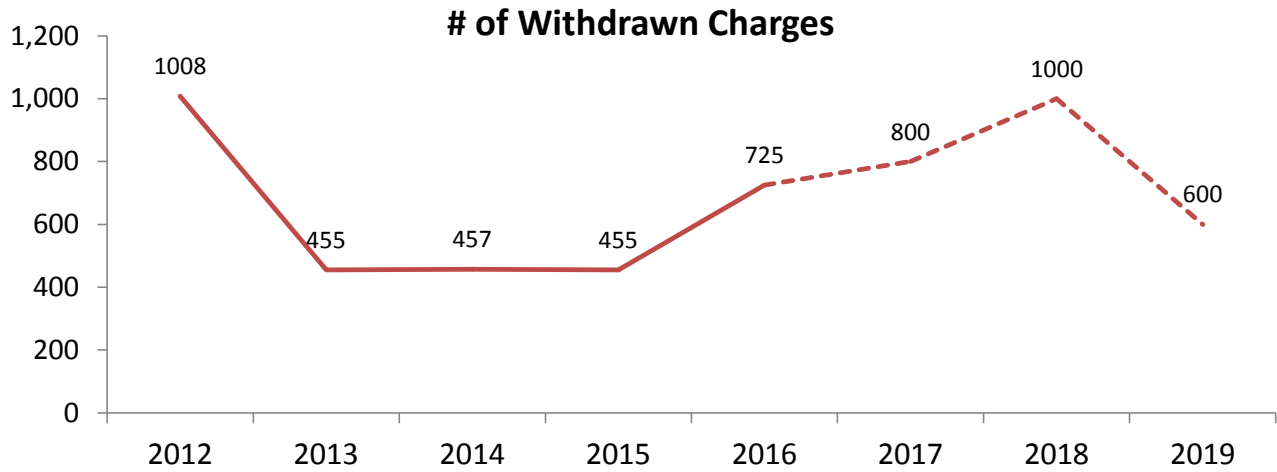
Is anyone better off?

Performance Measurement	Total Collected Unpaid Fines
Story behind the data	The increasing number of unpaid fines is a serious issue across the province. Increasing the rate of collections helps to counter the perception that consequences do not exist if you don't pay which could have a negative effect on public safety. In addition, there is a higher net revenue for sharing among the area municipalities.
Where do we want to go?	Halton Court Services will explore every available option to ensure that net revenue is maximized for municipalities in Halton. This will be achieved by making use of all available collection tools and by increasing available resources. We expect to increase the collection rate with the addition of one staff member at the new courthouse in 2019.

Performance Measurement	Number of granted delay applications as a result 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 behaviour and attitude. There is also more court time available for defendants who wish to have a trial, resulting in fewer delay applications and fewer charges that cannot proceed because the defendant's right to a speedy trial was not guaranteed.
Where do we want to go?	Maintain the resolution rate between 85% and 87.0% over the next four years. To achieve this target, we will continue to use automation and electronic means to deliver the prosecution sub-service.



Performance Measurement	Number of withdrawn charges as result of 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 increase in the withdrawal rate this year is partially due to unexpected absence of police witnesses and rather than further compromise the time to trial, a higher number of charges were withdrawn.
Where do we want to go?	Seek further creative solutions and then add more courtrooms through the move to new larger courthouse in January 2019.



SERVICE RESOURCE SUMMARY

Service Description

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

Service Owner Name

Frances Evans

	2015	2016		2017 Proposed				
	Actual	Budget	Year End Projections	Base Budget	% Change vs. 2016 Budget	Business Cases	Total Budget	% Change vs. 2016 Budget
Human Resources	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
Operating/Minor Capital Equip.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
Purchased Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
Corp. Expenditures/Provisions	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
Internal Charges & Settlements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
Controllable Revenues	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
General Revenues & Recoveries	\$ (623,074)	\$ (634,473)	\$ (622,866)	\$ (622,866)	-1.8%	\$ -	\$ (622,866)	-1.8%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ (623,074)	\$ (634,473)	\$ (622,866)	\$ (622,866)	-1.8%	\$ -	\$ (622,866)	-1.8%
NET OPERATING BUDGET	\$ (623,074)	\$ (634,473)	\$ (622,866)	\$ (622,866)	-1.8%	\$ -	\$ (622,866)	-1.8%