

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LACKAWANNA BAR ASSOCIATION
BY THE PRESIDENT JUDGE OF THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
THE HONORABLE TRISH CORBETT

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS 2023 REPORT

5573 civil cases filed, including 2,270 municipal lien cases and 62 professional liability/medical malpractice cases (53 medical, 4 legal, 4 dental, 1 other).

2032 criminal cases filed.

429 divorces.

427 custody cases.

238 summary appeals.

133 PFA contempts/violations.

1039 PFAs.

In the Adult Probation Department, there were:

1,948 Sentences

1059 PSIs Ordered.

452 Gagnon II Hearings.

3,126 Cases on Active Supervision (194 are ARDs).

266 Defendants on Pre-Trial Services Supervision.

211 Defendants on the COLOR Drug Testing System.

Treatment Court Participants:

70 DUI Court

158 Drug Court

90 Domestic Violence Court

25 IP/RIP Court

33 Veterans Court

35 Mental Health Court

501 Total number on supervision in our Treatments Courts.

IN ORPHANS' COURT, there were:

12 Accounts to Court

64 New Adoptions

60 New Guardianships, Appointments of Guardians

80 Relinquishments/Terminations

- I wish to acknowledge Atty. John Mascelli who has served as the Bar Association President this past year. John has done a great job communicating between the Bench and Bar. We appreciate his dedication and service. I wish to welcome Atty. Tim Hinton, who will be sworn in tonight as Bar Association President. I look forward to working with Tim this year.
- I congratulate Judge Jim Gibbons, who has been retained for a ten-year term on our court. We look forward to our continued work and collaboration with him in the future.
- I wish to congratulate and welcome Judge Frank Ruggiero, who has been elected to a ten-year term on our Bench. We look forward to him serving the court for many years to come.

We congratulate our former colleague, Judge Julia Munley who has become a Federal Judge for the US District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. We miss her on our Bench and wish her many years of success.

- I acknowledge and thank both Magistrate Terry Gallagher who has retired after 30 years of service and Magistrate John Pesota who has retired after 24 years of service. I wish them many years of a happy and healthy retirement.
- Two newly elected Magistrates were sworn in last week. Atty. Sean Gallagher is replacing his father and Atty. Chris Szewczyk is replacing John Pesota. I wish them all the best as they begin their career in the judiciary.
- On Friday, January 19th, the Bar Association and the Court of Common Pleas will honor Senior Judge Vito Geroulo with the unveiling of his portrait. We hope you will join us for this special event as we honor him for his many years of dedicated service to the Bench.
- Our Chief of Juvenile Probation, Cindy Cummings retired in December after 39 years of service to the county and the court. We thank her for her service and wish her a happy retirement. I appointed Melissa Pavlowski as the new Chief of Juvenile Probation.
- As you know, our court currently has a vacancy on the Bench due to Judge Julia Munley leaving us. We are hopeful that the Governor will appoint someone soon. My intention is for the new judge to be assigned to civil cases to assist with that docket.

- I wish to acknowledge and thank my colleagues on the Bench. Each one of them works extremely hard every day to provide access to justice for the litigants and attorneys who appear in our court. Due to the vacancies we have experienced in the past few years they have taken on extra cases and duties. I am grateful for their dedication and commitment.
- I wish to acknowledge Atty. Michael McDonald who, as you know, is currently serving as President of the Pennsylvania Bar Association. Mike is doing a tremendous job representing us throughout the state. He is a credit to our profession and our Bar.
- In terms of a civil case update, I wish to thank Judge Nealon, Judge Gibbons, Judge Mazzoni, Mauri Kelly, and Tim Hinton for the extraordinary work they have done this past year reducing the number of inactive civil cases greater than 24 months old. At the direction of the AOPC, an age-of-inventory benchmark was set requiring no more than 25% of all civil actions to be pending for more than 24 months. At the start of the project, 43.70% of our civil action inventory was pending for more than 24 months. Their work resulted in 1,697 civil actions closed and our year-end statistics show that only 21.57% of our pending civil action inventory is now pending for more than 24 months. Great job by Judge Nealon and his team.

- I wish to acknowledge the 50-year members who are being honored tonight:
 - Joseph F. Cimini, Esq.
 - Sal Cognetti, Jr., Esq.
 - Ralph J. Iori, Jr., Esq.
 - John Krisa, Esq.
 - Albert E. Nicholls, Jr. Esq.

- I wish to recognize the law firms who will receive Equal Access to Justice Awards this evening:
 - Abrahamsen Conaboy and Abrahamsen
 - Dougherty Leventhal and Price
 - Powell Zero and Mundy

- I wish to recognize Atty. John Notarianni who will receive the Attorney Samuel Fallk Equal Access to Justice Award tonight.

- On behalf of the entire Bench, I express our sympathy to the families of those members we remember tonight who we lost this past year:
 - John “Barry” Beemer, Esq.
 - John Dunn, Esq.
 - Frank A. Mazzeo, Esq.

James E. O'Brien, Esq.

Jacob Nogi, Esq.

James A. Sposito, Esq.

- I want to update you on plans for renovations at the main Courthouse. We are working with the County to remodel the lower level of the Courthouse which previously housed Central Court and the Processing Center. Our plans include the relocation of the Court Administrator's Office and the Jury Assembly Room from its current location on the first floor to space on the ground floor. This will free up much-needed space for the expansion of both the Clerk of Judicial Records Office and the Public Defender's Office. Also, new space will be allocated for the law library and meeting rooms for attorneys and clients to meet prior to court hearings.

We recently purchased wooden benches from a church that was closing in Pike County and have placed them on the second and third floors of the main Courthouse. This is part of my plan to improve the aesthetics of the Courthouse, with the next phase to include artwork of local historical significance.

Another important project we are working on in conjunction with the County and the Office of Youth and Family Services is the establishment of a wing at the County Prison dedicated to housing juvenile offenders. This will allow for Lackawanna County juvenile offenders to be housed locally during their detention status.

- I wish to thank the Bar Association and in particular, Lee Ann Munley, her staff, and the officers and directors for all their great work throughout the year. We enjoy a wonderful relationship with the Bar Association and are grateful to all of you.

Our Annual Report containing the various statistics of cases filed in all court divisions will be posted on the Bar Association website for your review.

Thank you.



**Register of Wills / Clerk of Orphans' Court
LCGC at The GLOBE
123 Wyoming Avenue
Suite 521
Scranton Pa 18503
570-963-6702
570-963-6377 (fax)**

January 4, 2024

RE: Orphans' Court Annual Report

Dear Frank,

The following reports are the total filings and dispositions per month for the year 2023. Currently the Orphans' Court has 431 active Guardianships that are reviewed annually. Along with the 90-day reports.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frances M Kovalski".

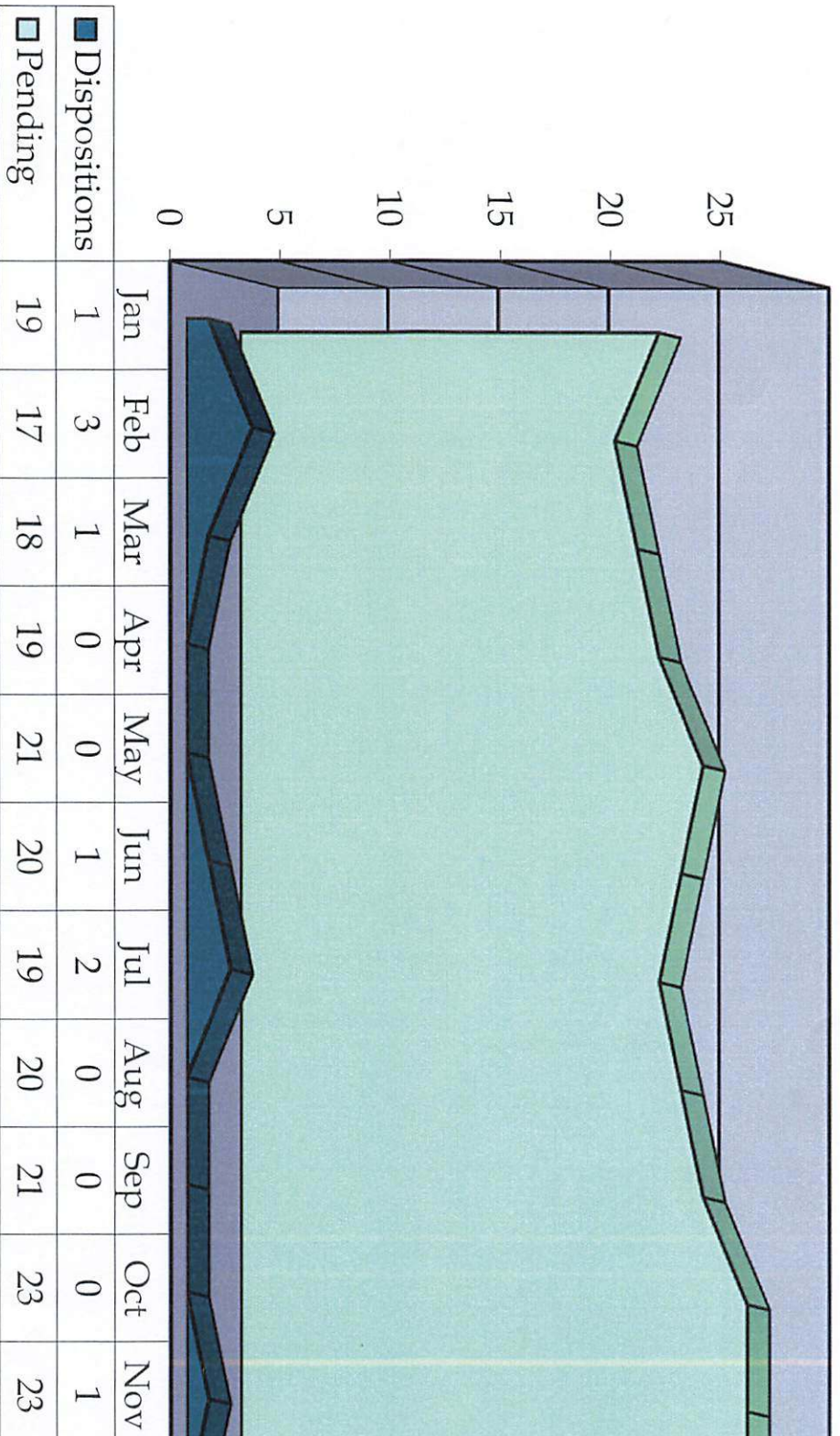
Frances M Kovalski
Register of Wills / Clerk of Orphans' Court

Common Pleas Filings & Dispositions 2023

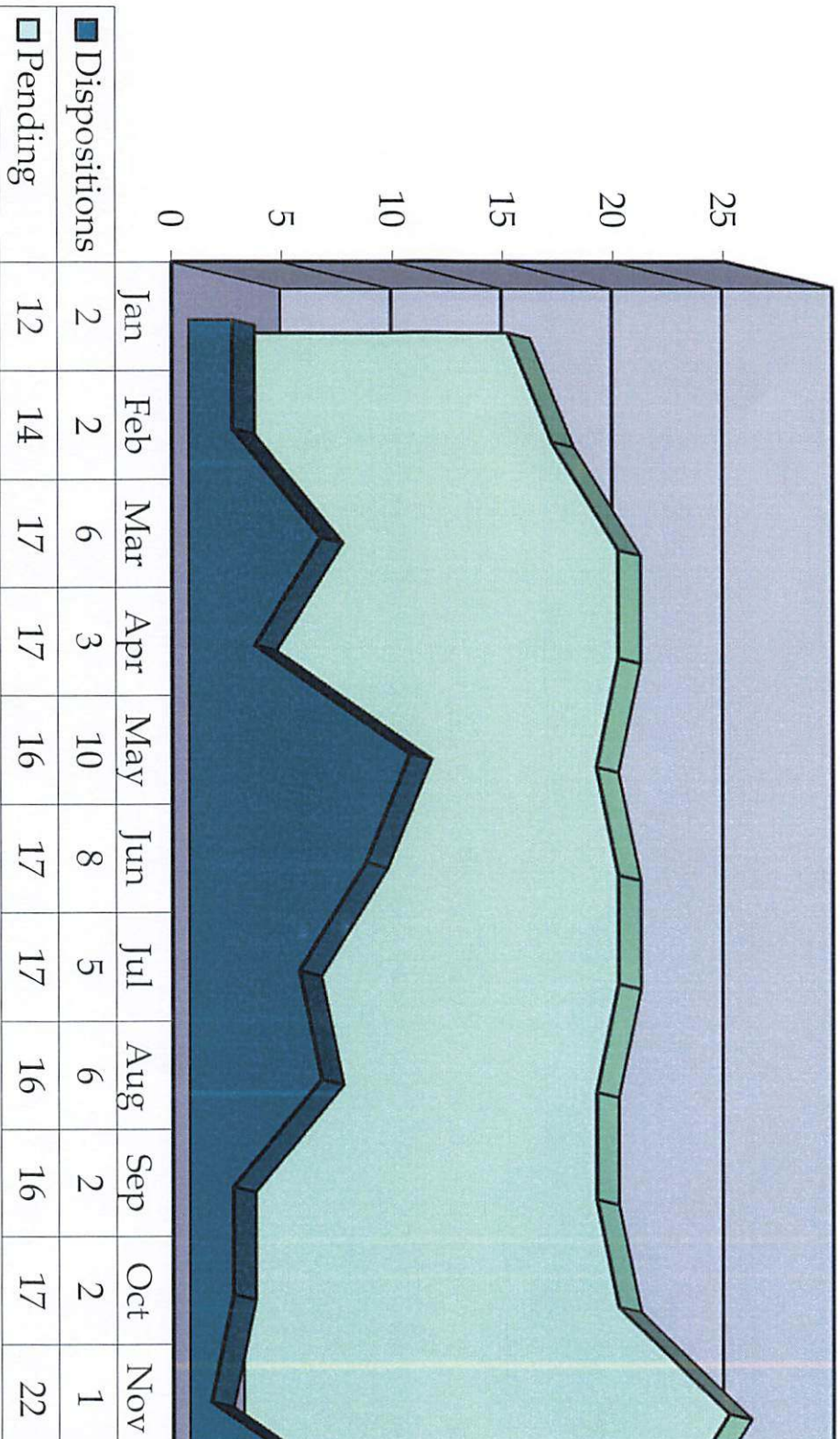
	Accounts	Adoptions	Relinquishments / Terminations	Guardianship Appointments	
Jan	0	4	6	4	Filings
	1	2	12	2	Dispositions
Feb	1	4	6	5	Filings
	3	2	9	2	Dispositions
March	2	9	5	4	Filings
	1	6	3	5	Dispositions
April	1	3	7	8	Filings
	0	3	6	4	Dispositions
May	2	9	3	4	Filings
	0	10	11	3	Dispositions
June	0	9	1	3	Filings
	1	8	4	7	Dispositions

July	1	5	10	7	Filings
	2	5	5	2	Dispositions
August	1	5	7	4	Filings
	0	6	2	3	Dispositions
September	1	2	12	6	Filings
	0	2	2	5	Dispositions
October	2	3	6	2	Filings
	0	2	2	11	Dispositions
November	1	6	11	3	Filings
	1	1	10	5	Dispositions
December	0	5	6	10	Filings
	0	8	3	4	Dispositions

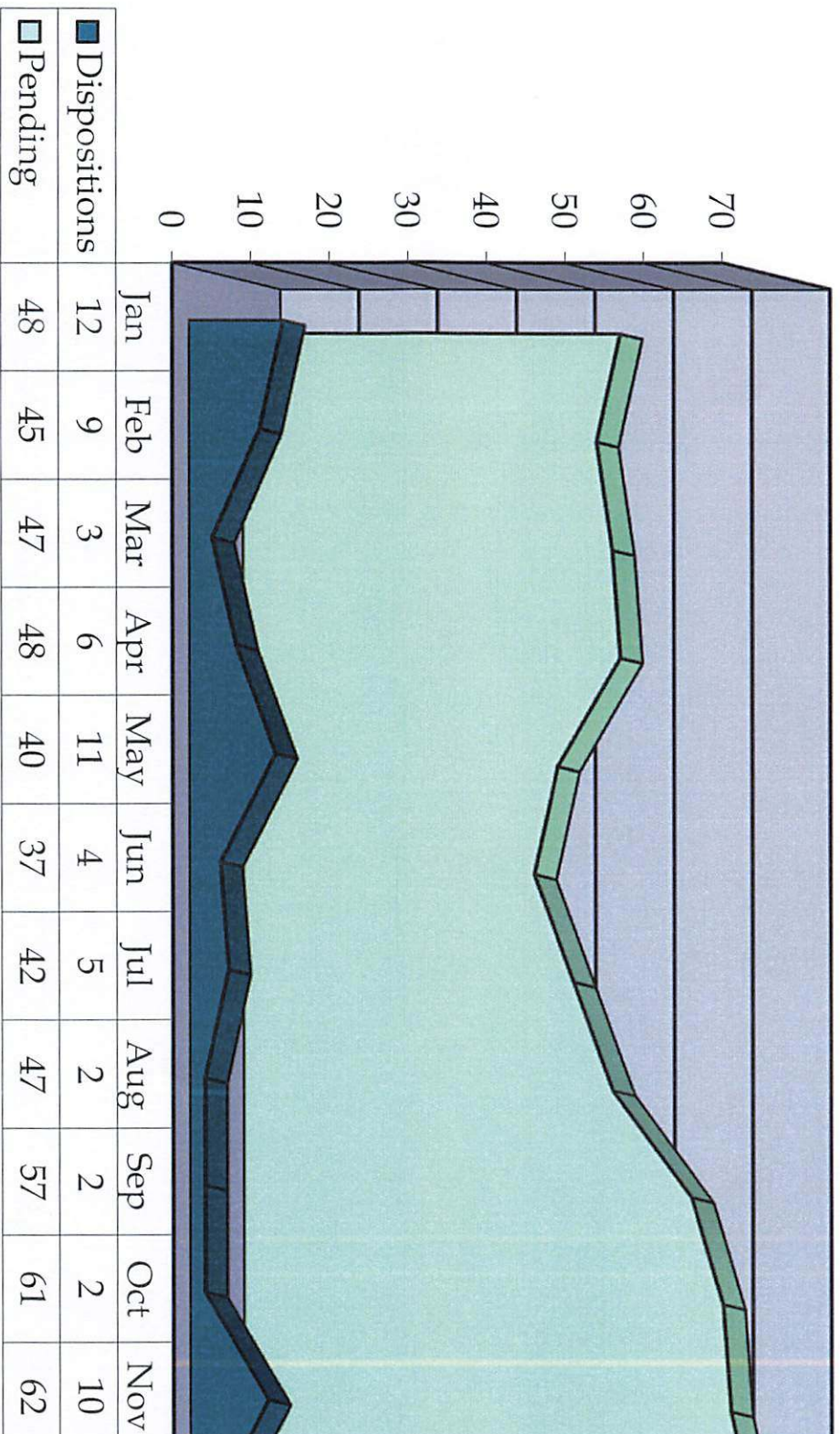
Common Pleas Account Cases: Pending Inventory and Disposed Cases



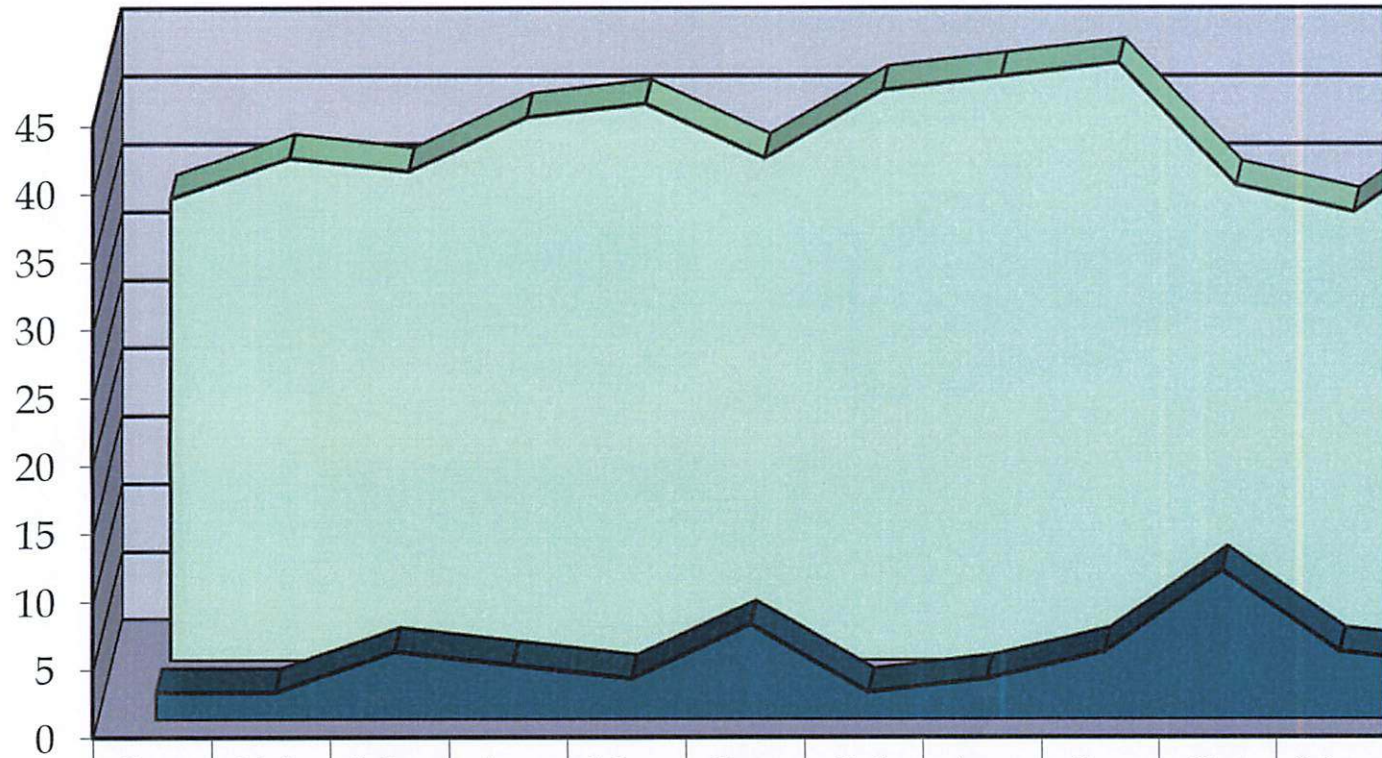
Common Pleas Adoption Cases: Pending Inventory and Disposed Cases



Common Pleas Relinquishment/Termination Cases: Pending Inventory and Disposed Cases



Common Pleas Appointment of Guardian Cases: Pending Inventory and Disposed Cases



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
■ Dispositions	2	2	5	4	3	7	2	3	5	11	5
■ Pending	34	37	36	40	41	37	42	43	44	35	33