



**Judicial Branch of Arizona
in Maricopa County**



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New Courtroom Opens to Support Mental Health Hearings *Mental Health Cases Continue to Rise; Up 169% Over Past Decade*

PHOENIX (January 23, 2023) – In partnership with Valleywise Health, the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County has opened a second mental health courtroom in the Phoenix community of Maryvale.

The courtroom was built to accommodate the growing number of court-ordered mental health evaluation and treatment cases filed in Maricopa County. Over the past 10 years, the number of mental health cases has grown by 169%, and they are projected to keep rising.

“Over the years, Maricopa County has witnessed a tremendous growth and need for mental health services. As the need increases, we have a need for additional courtrooms,” Probate and Mental Health Administrator Keith Kaplan said. “The Court has been working with our partners at Valleywise, the Urgent Psychiatric Centers, Mercy Care, Maricopa County, and the public to identify what resources we need moving forward to address the mental health concerns in the community.”

Superior Court operates mental health courtrooms at the Valleywise Behavioral Health Centers in Mesa and Central Phoenix and two courtrooms at the Maryvale Valleywise Behavioral Health Center, 5102 W. Campbell Ave.

“The new Maryvale courtroom was constructed with input from judicial officers and court staff to reflect best practices and processes. For the Court, it’s not just about the physical space but identifying how cases flow to make the hearings efficient and effective for the patients and the community,” Kaplan said.

At the Maryvale site, the courtrooms are located on the second floor with inpatient bed spaces on the floors above. For hearings, patients are escorted to an elevator and taken directly to a waiting room outside the courtroom. The design reduces the possibility of a patient crossing paths with witnesses or others associated with the case. Also, to improve efficiency, the Office of the Public Advocate and the Maricopa County Attorney's Office have counsel on site.

"The new courtroom is the culmination of what we planned back in 2018 when we purchased the Maryvale building. We envisioned having 192 mental health beds and enough courtroom space to conduct all of our hearings. Our current setup will allow us to handle the increasing number of patients over the next two to three years." said Gene Cavallo, vice president of Behavioral Health Services for Valleywise. "I could not be prouder of this project at the Maryvale hospital. We found a good use for an old hospital that could have easily been torn down."

All court-ordered mental health evaluations and treatments at Valleywise are conducted by judicial officers from the Maricopa County Superior Court. The proceedings, governed by [Chapter 5 of Title 36, Arizona Revised Statutes](#), help people who are unwilling or unable to provide consent to receive behavioral health services and who meet legal criteria for the State of Arizona to compel them to receive treatment.

"I want to thank Valleywise for their continued support as we built this courtroom as well as the judicial branch leadership and staff. We all worked tirelessly to ensure that this court remains accessible, efficient and effective," Kaplan said.

For more information on Superior Court's Probate and Mental Health Department, please visit: <https://superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/probate-and-mental-health-department/>

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About the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County

The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County is comprised of Superior Court, Adult Probation and Juvenile Probation, which includes juvenile detention. The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is the fourth largest trial court system in the nation and, along with its 3,000 employees, is dedicated to providing a safe, fair and impartial forum for resolving disputes, enhancing access to services, and providing innovative, evidence-based practices that improve the safety of the community and ensure the public's trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch. For more information, visit superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.

About Valleywise Health

Located in Phoenix, Arizona and named one of the 100 Top Hospitals in the nation by IBM Watson Health in 2020, Valleywise Health (formerly Maricopa Integrated Health System) has a proud tradition of being the public safety net health care system with a mission and commitment to serving the underserved. Valleywise Health consists of Valleywise Health Medical Center, Arizona's only public

teaching hospital, Level I Trauma, and Arizona's only nationally verified Burn Center serving the entire Southwestern United States. Other services include the McDowell Healthcare Center, the largest provider of HIV primary care in Arizona, the Refugee Women's Health Clinic, three behavioral health centers, and a network of community health centers located throughout Maricopa County. To learn more, please visit www.ValleywiseHealth.org