



# Maricopa County Justice Courts

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## Justice of the Peace Gerald Williams Earns Prestigious Award

*Justice Michael D. Ryan Award for Judicial Excellence*

PHOENIX – Maricopa County Justice of the Peace Judge Gerald Williams is the 2019 recipient of the Justice Michael D. Ryan Award for Judicial Excellence.

The Arizona Bar Association's Public Lawyers Section presents this honor yearly to a judicial officer who demonstrates a dedication and commitment to improving the justice system.

The award criteria state that nominees should have high ideals, personal character and judicial competence. Nominees may be distinguished by: (1) participation in projects focused on improving the quality of justice or the justice system; (2) demonstrating innovation in the performance of their duties; and/or (3) demonstrating an ability to effectively handle complex or unusual trials or appeals.



The Arizona Bar Association recognized Judge Williams' service on several State Bar and Supreme Court committees, his frequent contributions to newspapers and magazines, and his leadership in the Maricopa County Justice Courts. Judge Williams was appointed as Justice of the Peace to the North Valley Justice Court in 2004, is a past Associate Presiding Judge for the Justice Courts, and serves as Chairman of the Justice Courts' Best Practices committee. He holds a law degree from the University of Oklahoma's College of Law.

Judge Williams is only the third Justice of the Peace to be recognized in the award's 20 year history. He will officially receive the award at a ceremony in the Fall.

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### ABOUT:

There are 26 Justice Courts throughout Maricopa County. Each is presided over by an elected Justice of the Peace. These 'limited jurisdiction' courts handle civil lawsuits (\$10,000 or less, small claims cases (\$3,500 or less), evictions, misdemeanor offenses (shoplifting, writing bad checks, etc), and the full range of civil and criminal traffic offenses, including DUIs. Like other trial and municipal judges, they also preside over orders of protection and injunctions against harassment.

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