



# Maricopa County Justice Courts

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## Maricopa County Justice of the Peace named JP of the Year

*Hon. Donald Watts awarded for outstanding commitments to justice*

PRESCOTT – Judge Donald Watts of the Manistee Justice Precinct in Maricopa County is Arizona's top Justice of the Peace for 2022.

In a Wednesday morning ceremony, Watts earned the Sherry Geisler Justice of the Peace of the Year award recognizes and honors one Justice of the Peace (JP) in Arizona who selflessly supports the mission of the JP Association; who demonstrates continuous contributions to the Arizona judicial process; and who makes significant efforts to educate the public on the judicial system.

Judge Watts won his first election as JP in 2014. His Manistee precinct includes parts of Phoenix, Glendale, and Peoria and is the busiest court for evictions in Maricopa County. Watts has more than 30 years in law enforcement with experience as a patrol officer, swat team member, undercover detective, deputy constable, and more. His family's military history and his own service with the U.S. Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard prompt his desire to volunteer for veterans organizations. He developed and implemented a specialty court just for veterans and organizes the justice courts' participation at yearly Stand Down and StandUp events.

Watts has taken leading roles in various Supreme Court committees and work groups, always working to improve the judicial process, and increase access to justice for all who may encounter any court in Arizona.

The prestigious Justice of the Peace Award honors Judge Donald Watts for his tireless dedication in exhibiting all of the qualities expected from a Justice of the Peace.

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### ABOUT:

There are 26 Justice Precincts throughout Maricopa County. Each has an elected Justice of the Peace who presides over all cases filed within the court. 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.

Maricopa County Justice Courts  
222 N. Central Avenue #210  
Phoenix, AZ 85004

[www.justicecourts.maricopa.gov](http://www.justicecourts.maricopa.gov)

Contact: Scott Davis  
Communications/Public Information  
c: 602-390-6635

