

ONTARIO TARGETING CRIMINAL COURT DELAYS IN THUNDER BAY*McGuinty Government Implementing Faster, Focused Justice***NEWS**

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The McGuinty government is setting province-wide targets to reduce court delays and appearances by 30 per cent over the next four years.

The average number of court appearances and days to complete a criminal case has approximately doubled since 1992, even though the province has substantially increased the number of judges, justices of the peace, Crown attorneys and police.

Through *Justice on Target*, the province will refocus justice resources to make courts faster and more effective. To ensure transparency and accountability, the province has made [criminal court statistics](#) available to the public for the first time. The public will be able to follow the progress of the [strategy](#) and its impact on courthouses in Thunder Bay and other communities.

Two successful initiatives are also being expanded in Thunder Bay as part of *Justice on Target*: [Dedicated Prosecution](#) and [On-Site Legal Aid](#). Ontario is working with [Legal Aid Ontario](#) to introduce on-site legal aid and simplified online application to the Thunder Bay Ontario Court of Justice before the end of 2008.

QUOTES

“*Justice on Target* will help us reach the appropriate decisions sooner, guided by the facts and the law,” said Attorney General Chris Bentley. “We want to make our criminal justice system as effective as it can be — which means finding new ways for justice partners to work together.”

“*Justice on Target* aims to use Thunder Bay’s criminal justice resources more effectively, so we can make our community a safer place to live, work and play,” said Bill Mauro, MPP Thunder Bay - Atikokan.

“Reducing court delays and unproductive court appearances will increase public safety and confidence in the criminal justice system in Thunder Bay and across the province,” said Michael Gravelle, MPP Thunder Bay — Superior North.

QUICK FACTS

- In 2007, it took an average of 189 days and seven court appearances to dispose of a criminal charge in Thunder Bay. The provincial average is 205 days and 9.2 court appearances.
- With 600,000 charges entering the system every year, saving one minute per charge could save seven years of court time.

- Since 2003, the government's justice investments include:
 - 24 additional judges
 - 73 additional justices of the peace
 - Over 200 additional Crown attorneys
 - \$68 million for the Guns and Gangs Task Force
 - \$51 million over three years in new funding for Legal Aid Ontario.

LEARN MORE

Read more about the ministry's new *Justice on Target* [strategy](#) and recently announced [expert panel](#)

[View appearance statistics from the Thunder Bay courthouse](#)

[Read about national criminal court statistics](#)

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