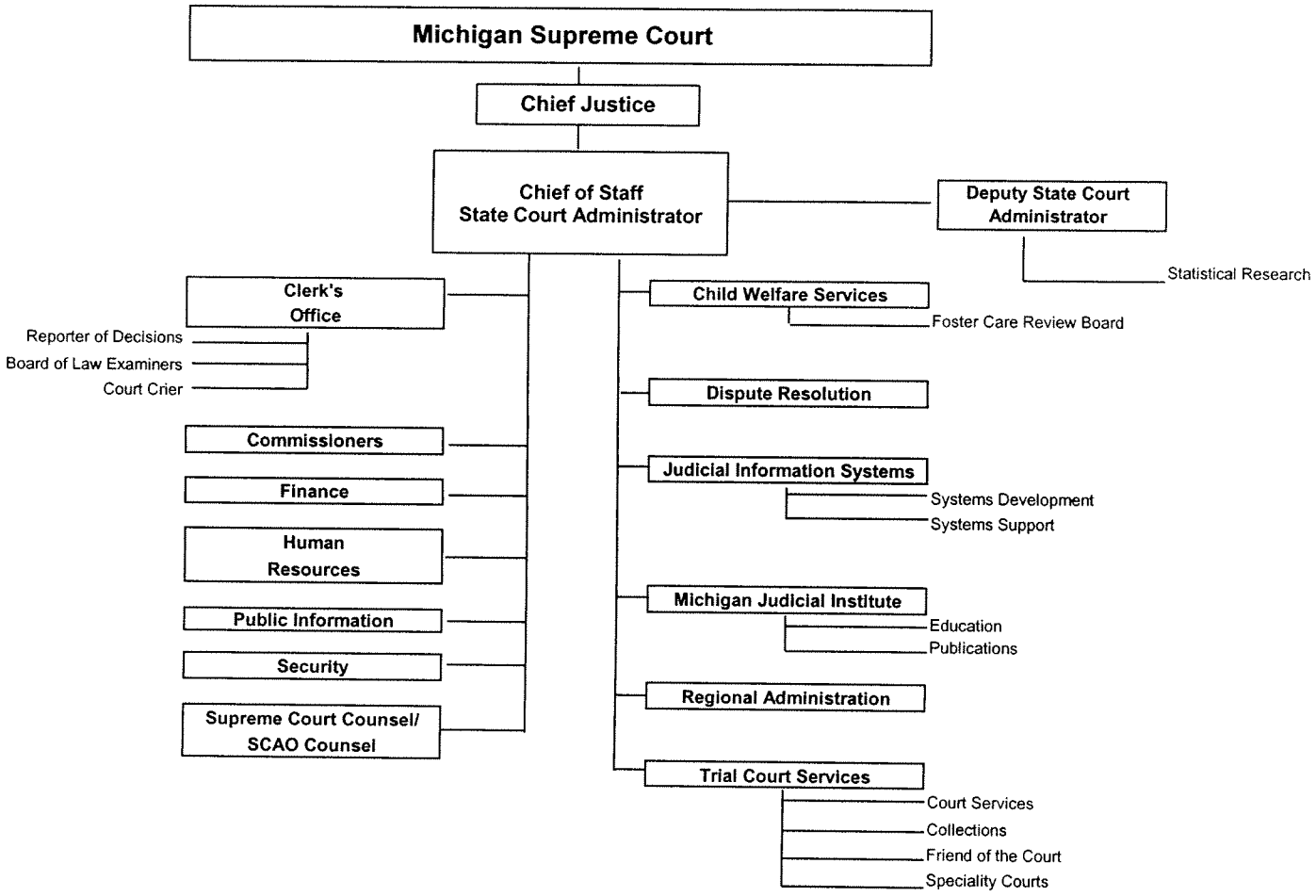
Submitted by
Mike Gadola



Employee Count

Supreme Court: 99
State Court Administrative Office: 134
Court of Appeals: 180
Total: 413

ANNUAL REPORT

of the Michigan Supreme Court

2007

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

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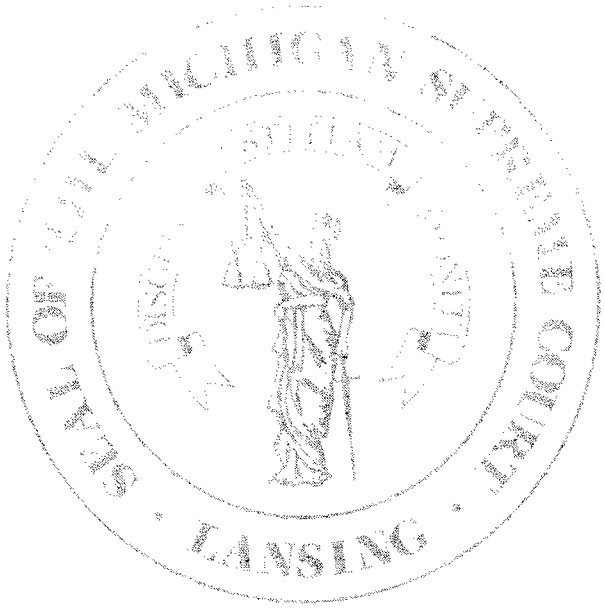

Cover: The Michigan Supreme Court during oral argument in the historic Lapeer County courthouse. The September 14, 2007 hearing marked the completion of the courthouse's 18-year renovation, and also launched Court Community Connections, a Supreme Court public education program aimed at high school students.

Photo credit: © David House Sr.—Lapeer Photography.

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Judicial Activity and Caseload

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A MESSAGE FROM

Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor

As tough economic times continue in Michigan, it has become commonplace, and indeed trite, for both the public and private sectors to say that "we are doing more with less." For Michigan's judicial branch, "doing more with less" is not just a catchy phrase, but a daily reality since budget reductions began in fiscal year 2001.

In 2007, due to a mid-fiscal year negative supplemental and additional reductions in the FY 2008 budget, judicial branch agencies faced a loss of $3.3 million in general fund appropriations. The brunt of these cuts fell on judicial branch operations and employees in the form of layoffs, unpaid furlough days, and short-term shutdowns at the Court of Appeals.

Despite these difficulties, in 2007 the Michigan judicial branch advanced some of the most innovative projects in its history. In November, work began on the first statewide, web-based case management system, which will be available to all Michigan trial courts. Progress continued on the Judicial Data Warehouse, a database of pending and closed cases throughout Michigan, which supports state efforts ranging from law enforcement to court collections. The state averted the loss of nearly $40 million in child welfare funding, thanks in part to the work of judicial branch staff. And Michigan Friend of the Court offices continued their diligent work on behalf of the state's children, with Michigan ranking sixth in the country in child support distribution and fourth in the more difficult area of collecting and distributing past-due support.

The year past also marked what I hope is just the beginning of a very serious discussion: whether the state judiciary should, like so many other institutions, consider downsizing.

In August, the State Court Administrative Office's Judicial Resources Recommendations Report found that the state could do with ten fewer trial judgeships, and that the Court of Appeals could function as effectively, and at less cost, with four fewer judges and additional staff. A majority of the Supreme Court not only supported those recommendations, but went further in recommending that the Legislature eliminate by attrition 20 trial court judgeships, which represented, with the Court of Appeals reductions, a savings of millions of taxpayer dollars. The surrounding debate may have generated more heat than light, and as of the date of my writing this, no action has been taken to eliminate any judgeships, now or in the future.

Still, I remain hopeful that we can have a serious discussion about whether Michigan is "overjudged." While the Supreme Court and State Court Administrative Office began the conversation, it remains for others to continue it, and to take action: the number of state judgeships can be reduced only by the Legislature with the Governor's approval.

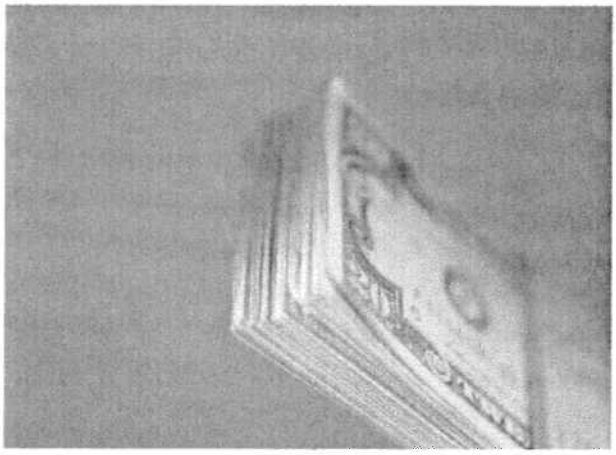
There is much talk about streamlining state government, but we need genuine efforts in that direction. Otherwise, we deserve the rebuke Abigail Adams aimed at an earlier age: "We have too many high-sounding words, and too few actions that correspond with them."

Clifford W. Taylor

Clifford W. Taylor
Chief Justice, Michigan Supreme Court

HIGHLIGHTS

BUDGET ISSUES



Michigan's economy continued to struggle in 2007, reflecting the woes of the auto industry, the fallout from subprime mortgages, and the highest unemployment rate in the nation. State government was forced to deal with billions of dollars in shortfalls in the fiscal year 2007 and 2008 budgets.

Like the rest of Michigan government, judicial branch agencies were again forced to deal with budget reductions in 2007. A negative supplemental appropriation in the middle of FY 2007, followed by additional reductions in the FY 2008 budget, left the judicial branch operating budget with $3.3 million less in general fund appropriations than the original enacted 2007 appropriation, a 4.5 percent reduction. Justices' and judges' salaries were excluded from the cuts because the Michigan Constitution provides that jurists' compensation may not be reduced during the term of office.

These budget reductions continued a downsizing trend for the judicial branch. From FY 2001 to FY 2008, the number of full-time equivalent judicial branch employees fell by 12.7 percent.

In 2007, budget reductions resulted in layoffs, unpaid mandatory and voluntary furlough days, and delays in filling vacancies. Certain contractual services were suspended, and some planned equipment purchases were abandoned.

The judicial branch addressed these challenges while striving to maintain the highest possible level of public service. The narratives that follow illustrate how the judicial branch continued to serve the public despite serious budget setbacks.

JUDICIAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

Every two years, the State Court Administrative Office issues its Judicial Resources Recommendations report, in which SCAO recommends the addition or elimination of state trial court judgeships. Only the Legislature and Governor can implement these recommendations. SCAO reviews trial courts' judicial needs to determine whether each court's workload supports the number of judges for that court. Where necessary, SCAO will recommend to the Legislature that judgeships be added or eliminated. A judgeship can be eliminated only by attrition, when a judge dies or leaves office.

SCAO's recommendations are based on a quantitative assessment, which applies a weighted caseload formula to case filing numbers provided by each trial court. Weights represent the average

amount of time required to handle each case type; the weighted formula takes into account that different types of cases require varying amounts of a judge's time. The result is an estimate of the judicial resources each court needs.

In 2007, SCAO updated the case weights, based on a 2006 study involving 86 Michigan trial courts. In these courts, both judges and court staff recorded the time that judicial officers spent on case-related activities. SCAO used this data to revise the case weights, making the weighted caseload formula reflect current court practices. This updated formula was used in SCAO's 2007 analysis of trial courts' judicial needs.

In August, after an extended analysis, SCAO released the 2007 Judicial Resources Recommendations report to the Legislature and Governor. The report, which provided weighted caseload statistics for all state trial courts, concluded that ten trial court judgeships should be eliminated by attrition. The report also determined that the Michigan Court of Appeals could run as efficiently, and at less cost, with four fewer judgeships and additional research attorneys.

In September, the Michigan Supreme Court issued its own recommendations regarding the reduction in judgeships. The Court voted 4-3 to support eliminating four judgeships from the Court of Appeals. By the same vote, the Court also recommended that 20 trial court judgeships be eliminated through attrition.

Additional information is available on the web at: http://courts.mi.gov/scao/resources/publications/reports/summaries.htm#judres.

THE FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION

SCAO's Family Services Division has three components: Child Welfare Services, the Foster Care Review Board, and the Friend of the Court Bureau. All three units help the Michigan courts administer child-centered programs that are partly funded by the federal Social Security Act. SSA Title IV-D provides matching funds for Michigan's child support enforcement programs, and SSA Title IV-E does the same for child welfare programs, including foster care.

The Michigan Legislature created the Friend of the Court Bureau (see MCL 552.501 *et seq.*) and the Foster Care Review Board (see MCL 722.132 *et seq.*) to handle certain federally-mandated tasks that states must perform to qualify for federal Title IV-D and IV-E funds. SCAO created the Child Welfare Services unit to serve as the Michigan judiciary's coordinator for all other child welfare programs.

Child Welfare Services

Federal Performance Reviews

2004 and 2007 Title IV-E Eligibility Reviews: The federal Administration for Children and Families, which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, periodically conducts audits, called "reviews," to determine whether a state's expenditures of federal Title IV-E funds have complied with Title IV-E and the related HHS regulations. The Title IV-E eligibility review checks foster children's eligibility for Title IV-E funds and the state's efforts to verify eligibility.

In March 2007, Michigan passed a secondary Title IV-E review, thus avoiding a potential $40 million penalty. Like most states, Michigan failed its primary eligibility review in March 2004, jeopardizing approximately $40 million of federal Title IV-E funds that Michigan had already received. Between the primary and secondary reviews, the Family Services Division and the Michigan Department of Human Services implemented a comprehensive program improvement plan designed to correct the problems identified by the primary review. The Family Services Division reviewed thousands of case files to find and correct any documentation flaws, and instructed judges and court staff on the procedural details of the federal regulatory requirements. The division also designed new, fully IV-E compliant court order forms, which are now used by all Michigan family division courts.

Thanks to these efforts, the federal review team did not find a single court error in the March 2007 review of Michigan's IV-E caseload.

Michigan will not have to undergo another Title IV-E "eligibility" review until at least 2010.

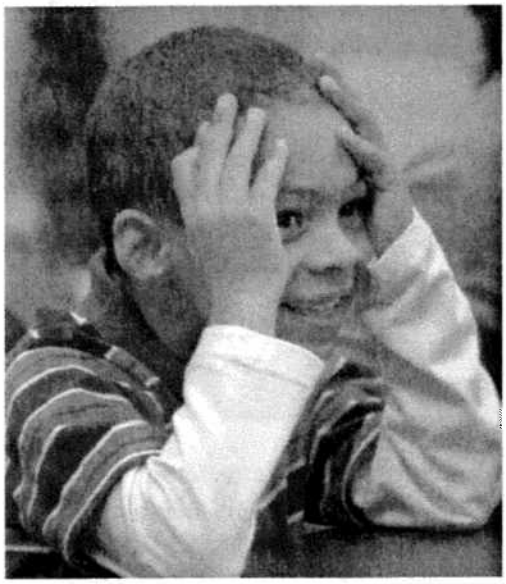
Child and Family Services Review: Armed with the experience gained during the 2004 and 2007 Title IV-E reviews, the Family Services Division began preparing in 2007 for a 2008 Child and Family Services review, a comprehensive federal study of how each state handles child abuse and neglect cases. These reviews, conducted by the federal HHS/ACF Children's Bureau, determine whether states are in substantial conformity with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. State compliance with ASFA is a condition for federal funding of the state's public child welfare agencies.

While the Child and Family Services Review is not principally a study of the courts or the legal system, it does analyze how the state's legal system influences the state's performance in complying with federal ASFA standards. Michigan, along with the other 49 states, "failed" its initial on-site review in 2002 and thus incurred financial penalties. But penalties can be mitigated if a state develops a statewide program improvement plan and achieves that plan's objectives.

Through SCAO's Child Welfare Services division, Michigan has implemented the court-related aspects of the state's program improvement plan. Accordingly, we anticipate that the 2008 review will find that Michigan has improved its compliance with ASFA.

Michigan Adoption Day

Michigan's fifth annual Adoption Day, the largest such event in the United States, was held on November 20, 2007, with 33 courts finalizing more than 215 adoptions. The event was co-sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court, the Michigan Department of Human Services, the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange, and SCAO's Family Services Division. Courts throughout the state opened their adoption hearings to the public and media to help citizens learn about the need for permanent loving families for over 4,300 children waiting for new homes. Other courts held open houses with speakers and information about the adoption process.



Marcus Seidell, 5, reacts as Muskegon County Probate Judge Gregory C. Pittman jokes with him during Adoption Day, when Marcus and his two brothers were adopted.
Photo credit: Kendra Stanley-Mills, Muskegon Chronicle.

Also on Michigan Adoption Day, the Supreme Court announced that it was recognizing veteran *Detroit Free Press* reporter Jack Kresnak for his many years covering children's welfare issues. A Supreme Court resolution in his honor was presented to Mr. Kresnak by Justice Marilyn Kelly; she and other Justices served as guest speakers at Adoption Day events across the state.

During the five years that Michigan has celebrated Adoption Day, with the fitting theme of *Giving Thanks for Families*, more than 13,000 children have been placed into adoptive homes from foster care. Those interested in adopting a child may contact the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange at http://www.mare.org. For more information about public adoption policies and data, go to http://www.michigan.gov/dhs and click on "Adoption." For more information about Michigan Adoption Day events, visit the Michigan Courts web site at http://courts.mi.gov/supremecourt/Press/MichiganAdoptionDayIndex.htm.

Children Absent Without Legal Permission

Circuit courts throughout Michigan have special dockets for foster children who are missing from their court-ordered placements, often referred to as children Absent Without Legal Permission (AWOLP). In 2007, 767 foster children were reported missing from their foster homes or other placements. Of that total, 116 were reported AWOLP twice and 12 went AWOLP three times. In 84.5 percent of all those cases, the child was located. Several courts have been especially innovative in locating missing children and addressing their needs, including the reasons the children ran away from foster care. Child Welfare Services provides resource materials to the courts, and presents live and archived AWOLP "best practices" forums.

Court Improvement Program (CIP) Grant Administration

In child protective cases, the goals are either to reunite a child with the child's natural family or to find another permanent home for that child. If the courts do not handle these cases properly, children who have been abused or neglected in their parents' home will simply languish in the foster care system until they "age out." The Court Improvement Program, which receives federal grants under SSA Title IV-B, aims to improve Michigan courts' handling of cases that involve at-risk families with children. Toward that goal, Child Welfare Services collaborates with the Department of Human Services, Indian tribes, the Governor's Task Force on Children's Justice, and other child welfare stakeholders.

For administrative and accounting purposes, federal grant funds are divided into three categories: the CIP Main grant, the CIP Data Collection and Analysis grant, and the CIP Training grant. CWS has some discretion in choosing exactly how to spend money from the CIP Main grant.

Child Welfare Training and Publications

Child Welfare Services uses the CIP Training grant money, with additional assistance from the Governor's Task Force on Children's Justice, to provide both profession-specific and cross-disciplinary child welfare training for judges, court personnel, caseworkers, attorneys, other child welfare professionals, foster parents, and citizen volunteers. Some training programs are presented live at locations around the state; others are webcast. Most are video recorded and archived for those who could not attend or view the live presentations.

Training programs first presented during 2007 addressed substance abuse, medical issues, permanency, and foster youth concerns. Some of the most successful programs from previous years were also updated and presented live in 2007.

In addition to live and archived programs, the CIP Training grant allows Child Welfare Services to publish or purchase books that comprise a "Core Child Welfare Law Library." Child Welfare Services has provided sets of those books free of charge to courts, prosecutors, DHS county offices, Indian tribes, community mental health boards, and other child welfare agencies. In 2007, Child Welfare Services completed and distributed *Addressing the Educational Needs of Foster Children in Michigan.*

CIP training programs planned for 2008 will include a "best practices" forum on the Indian Child Welfare Act, to be planned by Child Welfare Services in collaboration with the Michigan Tribal/State Partnership.

Child Support Services: The Friend of the Court Bureau

Michigan's Friend of the Court offices help circuit courts in Michigan's 83 counties formulate and enforce court orders regarding child support, child custody, and parenting time. In 1982, the Legislature created the state-level Friend of the Court Bureau, and placed it within SCAO, to assist local Friend of the Court offices.

Federal SSA Title IV-D money covers two-thirds of the Bureau's budget and almost that great a share for county Friend of the Court offices. But Michigan's continued receipt of those federal funds requires that the state meet federal Title IV-D performance standards, most notably those related to collecting court-ordered child support payments. Therefore, much of the Bureau's work involves staying abreast of the federal requirements and helping local FOC offices meet those requirements.

The Friend of the Court Bureau provides a Customer Service Unit staffed by Lansing-area law school students who serve as "customer service clerks." The clerks write articles for the bureau's quarterly *Pundit* newsletter; help bureau analysts with special projects; and respond to telephone calls and e-mails from litigants, government officials, and county Friend of the Court offices. The student interns, many of whom plan to pursue careers in family law, gain valuable real-world experience. In 2007, the bureau's student interns handled more than 1,500 telephone calls and nearly 4,000 letters and e-mails.

Michigan's Child Support Enforcement Programs Spared from Federal Budget Cut

Almost two-thirds of the funding for Michigan's child support enforcement programs comes from the federal government via distributions under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. The federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 reclassified federal appropriations in ways that restricted Michigan's ability to qualify for some of those federal two-for-one matching funds. The act threatened to reduce Michigan's child support enforcement funding by approximately $54 million, effective October 1, 2007, unless Michigan appropriated an additional $18 million of state General Fund money for child support enforcement programs. Fortunately, despite Michigan's FY 2007-2008 budget crisis, the Legislature and the Governor responded by appropriating the additional $18 million of state funds required to requalify Michigan for the two-for-one federal match.

Michigan's Child Support Collection Performance

In 2007, the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, which monitors all states' child support collections, reported that Michigan ranked sixth in the country for child support distribution in FY 2006. The state distributed $1,399,561,029 in child support collections—support money actually paid out to custodial parents. Better yet, Michigan ranked fourth in the collection and distribution of harder-to-collect *past-due* child support, with $396,723,294 of previously unpaid support going to custodial parents. In both rankings, only more populous states placed ahead of Michigan, and Michigan ranked ahead of some larger states.

In FY 2007, thanks to collaboration between the courts and DHS's Office of Child Support, the Financial Institution Data Match program collected over $12 million in past-due support by locating

financial assets owned by parents who had failed to pay court-ordered child support. The program uses a statewide computer system, known as the Michigan Child Support Enforcement System, to locate bank accounts belonging to parents who have failed to pay support. The data match program not only helps custodial parents and children, but also increases Michigan's share of federal "incentive" funding, which is awarded on the basis of each state's overall success in child support collections.

Mediation in Domestic Relations Cases

In 2007, the Friend of the Court Bureau, in collaboration with the Wayne County Circuit Court and Wayne County Mediation Center, began offering mediation to families involved in domestic relations litigation in the circuit court. This service, which is available to unrepresented, low-income families, helps divorcing parents resolve custody, parenting time, child support, and property issues. The project involves volunteers and Wayne County Circuit Court mediators. The first group of mediators trained for this project began working with families in 2007; additional mediators will be trained and begin working in 2008.

Also in 2007, the Friend of the Court Bureau, working with the Kent County Circuit Court, designed a cooperative parenting pilot project. Parents in 50 selected domestic relations cases will be required to use special parenting-time planning forms in court-required informal negotiations. In addition, the pilot project will have the parties' court documents and the courts' orders use special "nonadversarial" language. As of December 31, 2007, this proposed pilot was under consideration by the Michigan Supreme Court.

Foster Care Review Board

The Legislature created the Foster Care Review Board program in 1984 and placed it within SCAO. The FCRB's five-member local boards, which are composed of trained citizen volunteers, review randomly selected cases of abused or neglected children whom the courts and DHS have placed in foster care. In addition, local review boards investigate appeals filed by foster parents who object to a child-placing agency's decision to remove foster children from a foster home. Volunteer board members bring an outside, objective perspective on whether the courts, DHS, and private child welfare agency contractors are assuring safe and timely permanency for children in the foster care system.

In FY 2007, FCRB local boards conducted approximately 1,050 reviews affecting almost 2,350 children. The FCRB also received 158 phone requests for appeals by foster parents, and the local boards formally considered almost half of those appeals. Program representatives reconciled the remaining appeals without hearings.

In addition to its local review boards, the FCRB also has a statewide Advisory Committee that studies Michigan's foster care programs and makes recommendations for systemic improvements. The FCRB publishes an annual report that summarizes its activities and offers recommendations to the judicial, legislative, and executive branches. The 2006 report was published in April 2007.

COURT TECHNOLOGY

Judicial Network Project

In 2007, law enforcement continued to benefit from the Judicial Network Project, an effort headed by SCAO's Judicial Information Systems division with assistance from the Michigan State Police, Michigan Department of Information Technology, SCAO's Trial Court Services division, county and municipal governments, and private contractors. The project allows Michigan trial courts to report felony and misdemeanor dispositions electronically to a state law enforcement database. As of December 2007, over 95 percent of all felony and misdemeanor dispositions were reported electronically from the courts to the Michigan State Police and Secretary of State, up from 90 percent in 2006. The increase is due in part to automation of Upper Peninsula courts that had paper-based filing systems. In addition, several counties with large caseloads were assisted by a vendor.

In 2007, activities focused on cleaning up criminal disposition records that were submitted before the project made electronic transmission possible. This clean-up effort uses the Judicial Data Warehouse (see below) to electronically update the state's Criminal History Records System with data from dispositions that were previously submitted on paper.

Judicial Network Project funding came from National Criminal History Improvement Program grants and the Judicial Technology Improvement Fund, an annual funding source in the Supreme Court's budget supported by court fees.

The Judicial Technology Improvement Fund will be used primarily to fund ongoing support of the network. The fund also supports other applications for data warehousing, electronic payment of traffic tickets, electronic filing of court documents over the Internet, and a new court case management system.

Judicial Data Warehouse

In 2007, SCAO continued implementing the Judicial Data Warehouse, which allows the judiciary to collect information about pending and closed cases throughout Michigan.

The data warehouse gives state trial judges and staff access to a statewide name index with associated detail data to identify pending and closed cases in other courts. Once the warehouse is fully implemented, SCAO will use it to generate statistical and trend information.

In 2007, the Judicial Data Warehouse received grants from the Office of Highway Safety Planning and the Michigan State Police's Criminal History Records Division; the grants were used to improve traffic safety information and to supply missing court dispositions in the Criminal History Records System.

Also in 2007, the Judicial Data Warehouse assisted state trial courts' efforts to collect court-imposed financial sanctions. The warehouse imports a file of Michigan's death records from the Department of Community Health to compare those records to outstanding receivables in the warehouse. The warehouse then generates a list of uncollectible debts, which is provided to state trial courts. Another collection initiative includes importing data from the Michigan Department of Corrections to help courts collect outstanding fines and costs from prisoners.

In 2007, SCAO and DHS began developing a reporting system to help monitor children who are at risk for abuse and neglect. The reporting system will be based on the federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System and National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.

As of December 31, 2007, the Judicial Data Warehouse was implemented in 187 courts in 80 counties and contained approximately 29 million case records. Forty courts have their data uploaded and awaiting network connectivity, which is scheduled for the first quarter of 2008. The map on page 10 illustrates the project's status for 2007.

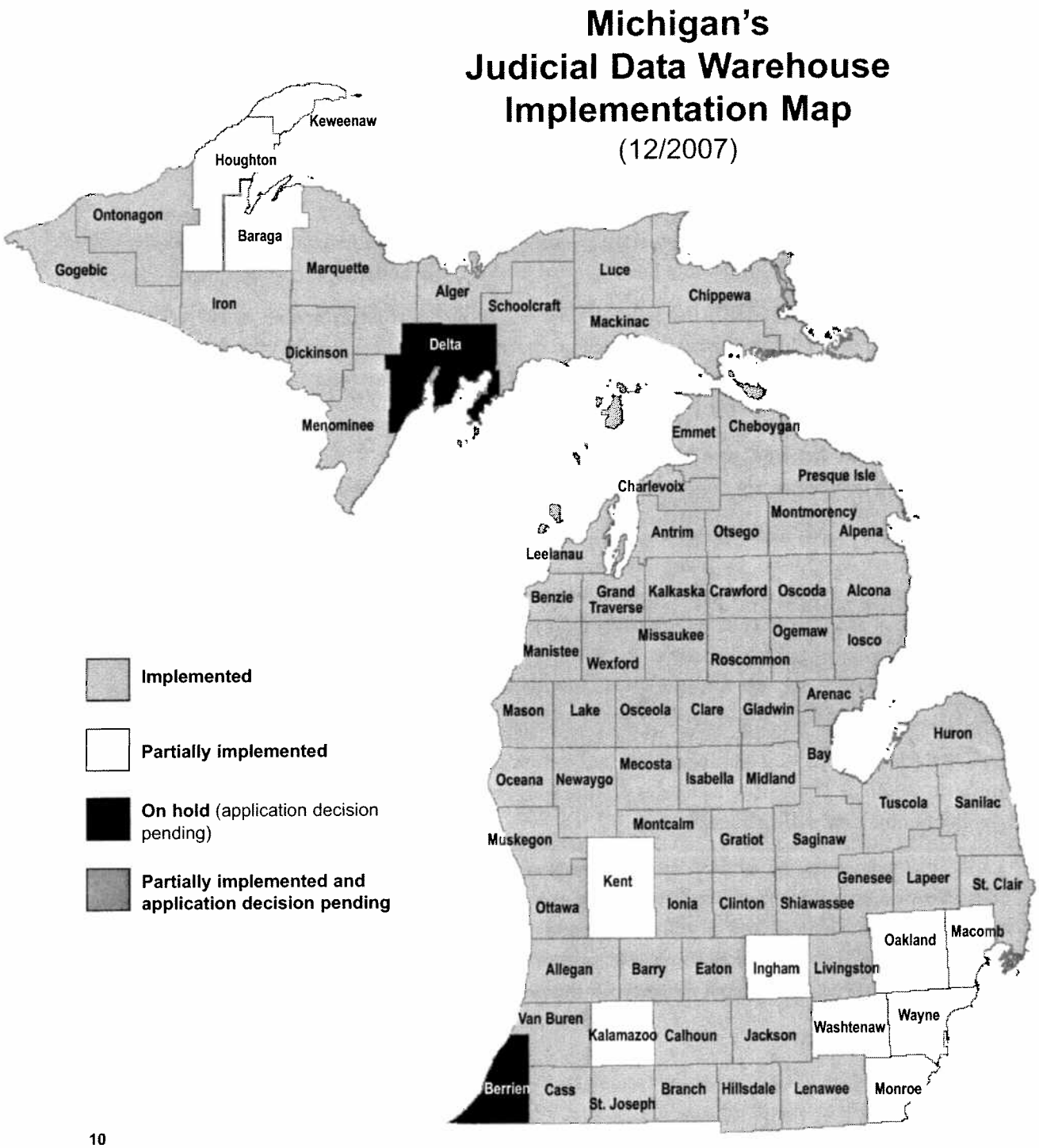
Statewide Trial Court Case Management System

The backbone of every Michigan trial court is its case management system. In the past, each trial court selected a system that best met the court's needs within the court's financial limits. As a result, trial courts are supported by many different case management systems, which are deployed on different and decentralized servers. Recently, however, many courts are seeking alternatives to their existing case management systems, spurred by a number of factors: the need to upgrade applications, an increase in mandated electronic reporting requirements, costly conversion failures, cutbacks in local funding, and vendors' termination of support services.

After thoroughly investigating trial court system options, a formal evaluation team, which included trial court judges, administrators, and technical staff, attended proposals and demonstrations by four vendors. Unisys, a technology consulting firm, received an almost unanimous vote to develop a new case management system.

Unisys will use an established court case management framework that it developed for Western Australian courts. This framework will serve as the foundation for a custom-built Michigan court system. The state judicial branch will own the end product. The first phase of the project, completed in June 2007, was to analyze both current system requirements and potential improvements. This phase also provided a better cost estimate for the project's design, development, and implementation.

Phase I of the project—creating software to address civil case processing in circuit and district courts—started in November 2007 and is expected to last 18 months. Subsequent phases for criminal, juvenile, and probate cases are estimated to be completed in 30 months after the first phase. Funding sources for this project include increased user fees, Judicial Technology Improvement funds, and partnerships with the Berrien County and Washtenaw County trial courts.

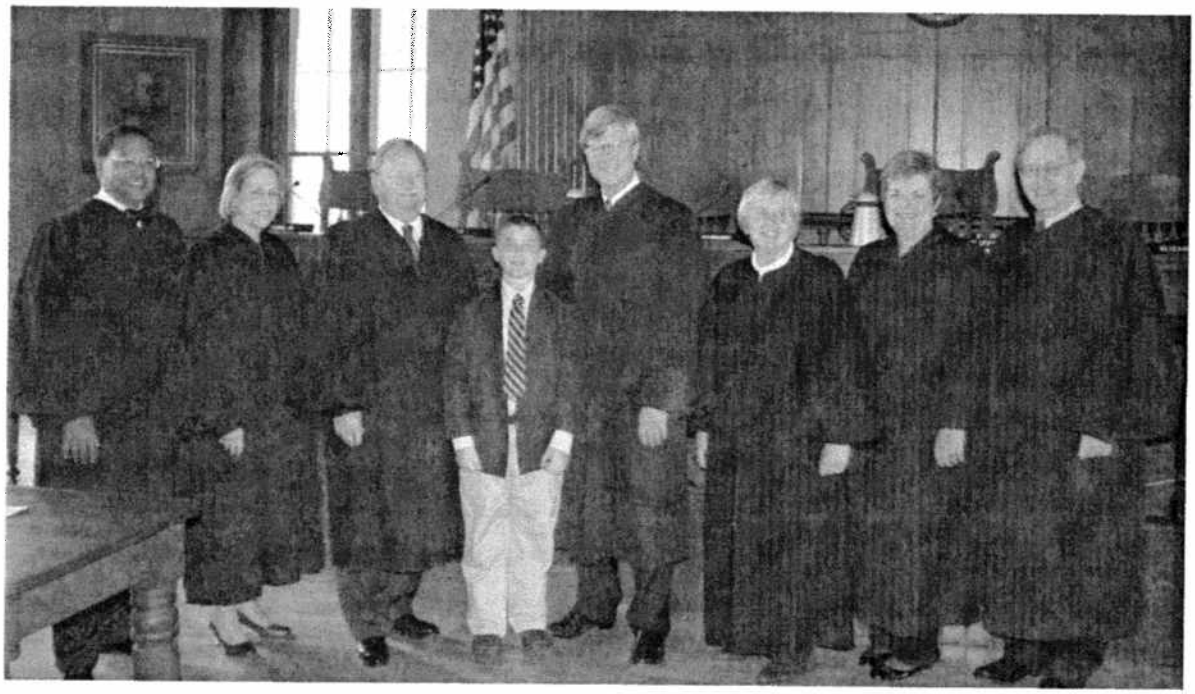


COURT COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

Court Community Connections, an educational program of the Michigan Supreme Court, was launched on September 14, 2007, when the Court held oral argument at the Lapeer County Courthouse to mark the building's restoration. Modeled on the Ohio Supreme Court's Off Site Court program, Court Community Connections is designed to bring the Supreme Court to communities throughout Michigan, with the particular goal of introducing high school students to the state's court system.

The Supreme Court will hold oral argument in locations outside the capital once or twice each year, selecting a different host county and courthouse each time. About three months before the hearing, Supreme Court staff will begin working with the host court and local attorneys to set up various events. Court staff will work with local educators to assemble a representative group of public, private, and home-schooled students from the host county. Students and their teachers will be provided with study materials before the hearing, including summaries of the cases the Court will hear and a glossary of "legal lingo." Local "attorney-educators" will work with teachers at each participating school to explain the state's judicial system, review case materials, and analyze the roles of attorneys and justices. Following the oral argument, students will debrief the case with their attorney-educators and the attorneys who argued the case. They will return to their schools to share their knowledge and insight with classmates.

For more information, contact Court Relations Program Coordinator Barbara Browne at BrowneB@courts.mi.gov or at 517-373-0714.



Lapeer student Garrett Knowlton joins Supreme Court justices for "Court Community Connections."

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT LEARNING CENTER

The Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center, located on the first floor of the Michigan Hall of Justice, welcomed over 11,000 visitors in 2007. Hands-on exhibits and special programs educate visitors about basic principles of law and Michigan's judicial branch, including the judiciary's history. Visitors included grade school, high school, and college students, as well as community organizations and the general public. The great majority of visitors are Michigan residents, but the Learning Center also welcomed travelers from across the United States, Europe, and Asia. Trained volunteers guide tours and assist with special projects.

On May 1, the Learning Center celebrated Law Day 2007, following the national theme of "Liberty Under Law: Empowering Youth, Ensuring Democracy." Law Day included tours highlighting the role of youth, and presentations were made by representatives of the Lansing School District's restorative justice program. In addition, each group had the opportunity to meet with a justice, judge, or lawyer.

Justice Stephen J. Markman, fourth from left, with student "Justices" from the high school program.

In June and July, students interested in legal careers attended week-long programs, "Exploring Careers in the Law." In the high school program, students prepared and argued a moot court case; the junior high program students explored a variety of law-related careers. Both groups had the opportunity to meet with justices, judges, and other members of the legal community.

Changes to the Learning Center gallery included an updated exhibit about tribal courts in Michigan.

MICHIGAN JUDICIAL INSTITUTE

The Michigan Judicial Institute is SCAO's educational division, dedicated to providing quality, timely education for Michigan judges and judicial branch staff. In 2007, the Institute held 36 seminars, several of which were multi-day programs, which focused on substantive, procedural, and practical issues. In addition, the Michigan Judicial Institute collaborated with judicial and court professional associations to provide educational sessions during the associations' annual conferences.

In 2007, the Michigan Judicial Institute continued to offer educational opportunities via the Internet. Court staff throughout Michigan participated in selected educational seminars through webcasts, viewed either as the seminar took place or later in an archived format. Eleven seminars were simultaneously webcast; over 600 participants "attended" via the Internet. In 2007, over 1,500

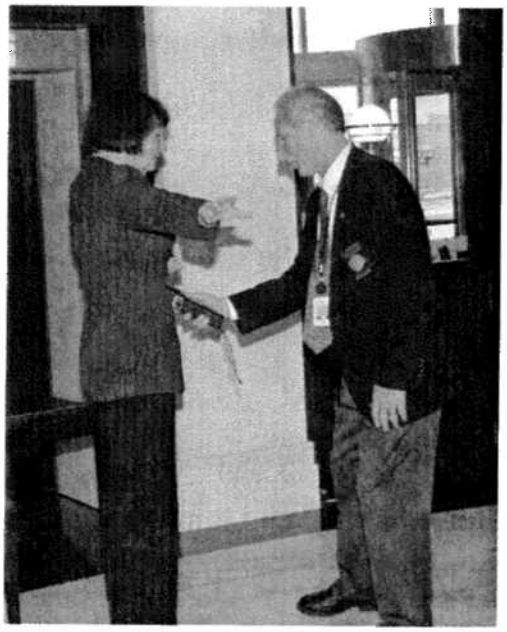
people viewed the Institute's archived webcasts. Additionally, the Institute updated an online learning resource, "Personal Protection Orders—A web-based training." This program can be accessed through "web-based training" on the Michigan Judicial Institute's website at http://www.ppowbt.net/.

In April 2007, the Michigan Judicial Institute Controlled Substances Benchbook was printed and distributed to judges and select court personnel, and an electronic version of the benchbook was posted to the website at the same time. This electronic version of the Controlled Substances Benchbook is the first Institute publication that includes hyperlinks to statutory law, court rules, and other Michigan Judicial Institute publications cited in the benchbook's text, as well as direct links to the cross-references noted within the benchbook itself. Links to published Michigan case law will be added when the Institute finalizes access to approved versions of the electronic opinions. This electronic benchbook serves as a model for all future editions of the Michigan Judicial Institute's core publications.

In May, the Institute also updated and posted an electronic version of the Sentencing Guidelines Manual to the website. A printed version was produced in collaboration with West Publishing, which bore the entire cost of printing and distributing copies of the manuals to Michigan judges and select court personnel.

Michigan Judicial Institute webcasts and publications, including quarterly publication updates, are available at http://courts.mi.gov/mji.

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT SECURITY DIVISION



The Michigan Supreme Court Security Division provides physical security and emergency management services for the Michigan Hall of Justice, as well as security and emergency management support services for Michigan's 244 trial courts.

In 2007, lobby security received 22,573 visitors to the Hall of Justice, including 10,176 persons in tour groups. Hall of Justice security personnel responded to 52 incidents, which included damage to property, disorderly persons, employee injuries, lost and found property, and security for special events and hearings.

The Trial Court Security Specialist position has been vacant since May 2007, but the Security Division continued to meet Michigan trial courts' requests for security training, including such topics as "De-Escalating Volatile Situations," "Center and Mediation Site Security Considerations," and "Personal Security and Safety for Judges." The Security Division also responded to requests for site security overviews and other special security-related needs. Because

of trial courts' high demand for security training, it is anticipated that the Trial Court Security Specialist position will be filled in 2008 if funding is available.

The first draft of the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for the Michigan Hall of Justice will be completed in the first quarter of 2008. COOP is aimed at managing court operations in the event of widespread disasters, such as a pandemic or terrorist attack.

Also planned for March 2008: emergency management training for circuit court chief judges and circuit administrators, the release of a COOP tool kit for trial courts, and the launching of a secure trial court security and emergency management website using the Michigan Court Application Portal. This portal will also be used as focal point for many other security and emergency management-related resources for the trial courts.

COLLECTIONS

Collecting court-ordered financial sanctions is a top priority for the Michigan judiciary. Financial sanctions, like other court orders, must be enforced to uphold the justice system's integrity and credibility. In addition, the judiciary is responsible by statute for collecting court fines, fees, and costs. These funds support law enforcement, libraries, the Crime Victims Rights Fund, and local governments.

Accordingly, in 2004, the Supreme Court launched a statewide effort to improve court collections. Under a Supreme Court-approved plan, each state trial court will have a collections program in place by the end of 2009.

In 2007, SCAO evaluated trial courts' collections practices on site, providing technical assistance and recommending improvements. More than two dozen collections pilot programs operated under SCAO's supervision and with the guidance of a SCAO-appointed collections committee of judges and court administrators.

Also in 2007, SCAO provided courts with software that manages payment plans and generates mailings to defendants with outstanding balances. SCAO began developing similar software for juvenile cases; the program will generate monthly account statements or delinquency notices to litigants with outstanding balances. To improve tracking of amounts owed by prisoners, SCAO entered into a data-sharing agreement with the Michigan Department of Corrections.

In 2008, the collections committee will begin work on a plan to implement best practices and pilot programs statewide.

COUNSEL APPOINTMENTS

Trial courts can appoint attorneys to represent indigent defendants in criminal matters and juveniles in delinquency cases, and all parties in child protective cases. Courts can also appoint counsel for certain individuals in mental competency, guardianship, and conservatorship proceedings.

The trial court's funding unit, which is generally a county or city, compensates these court-appointed attorneys. In 2005, appointed attorneys and public defenders offices were paid more than $72 million. In 2006, payments totaled more than $76 million; in 2007, the total was more than $80 million.

Under Michigan Court Rule 8.123, each trial court must compile an annual report of the total public funds paid to each court-appointed attorney. Trial courts must make that information available for public inspection, without charge. More information is available at: http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/reports/summaries.htm.

THERAPEUTIC JUSTICE: PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS

Drug Treatment Courts

Criminal offenders who are addicted to alcohol or drugs frequently cycle in and out of the justice system. Drug treatment courts seek to break that cycle by treating the offender's addiction. This approach, often described as "therapeutic jurisprudence," focuses on treatment.

In fiscal year 2007, Michigan had 63 operational drug treatment courts with an additional 9 courts in the planning stages. There were also three reported adult tribal courts in operation. Michigan drug courts include programs for adults, juveniles, families, and drivers arrested for operating a vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Both operational courts and those in planning stages are eligible for federal and state grant funding. Federal funding is available through the Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program; the funding is administered by the state Office of Drug Control Policy. State funding is administered by SCAO through the Michigan Drug Court Grant Program. In fiscal year 2007, drug treatment courts received a total of approximately $2 million from the state program.

In 2007, SCAO continued to collaborate with the Office of Drug Control Policy and the Department of Corrections in funding drug treatment courts that target prison-bound, nonviolent felony offenders and probation violators. By focusing on this population, selected drug courts help reduce prison overcrowding and address the cycle of addiction and criminal activity in this priority population. SCAO awarded nearly $1.8 million in federal funding to 11 drug court programs in 2007

for this purpose. Outcome and cost-benefit studies conducted during 2006 in two of these courts found savings of nearly $1 million in taxpayer money during a two-year period alone. Two more cost studies were implemented in 2007, one in a juvenile drug court and another in an adult felony circuit drug court program. The results of these studies will be available in late 2008.

The success rates among the Michigan drug court programs are comparable to national figures; national average success rates for adult drug courts range between 50 and 55 percent. In fiscal year 2007, adult Michigan drug treatment court programs had an average success rate of 53.8 percent; the average success rate for juvenile programs was 54.3 percent.

Family Dependency Drug Treatment Courts

Parental substance abuse has long been acknowledged as a significant factor in many child welfare cases. Family dependency courts, a fairly new concept, help protect children in neglect and abuse cases by coordinating the efforts of child welfare services, the court system, and community treatment providers. These agencies help provide substance abuse assistance and other services for parents. In fiscal year 2007, Michigan had four operational family drug treatment courts and another two in the planning stages.

Sobriety Courts

Sobriety courts, also known as DWI courts, work with offenders who have been charged with driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. DWI courts make up approximately 26 percent of the total number of drug treatment courts in Michigan. In 2007, SCAO continued a joint effort with the Office of Highway Safety Planning to evaluate whether DWI courts are effective in reducing repeat alcohol-related driving offenses. Results from the three DWI courts evaluated show that offenders who participated in DWI treatment court programs were 5 to 19 times less likely to be rearrested for another alcohol-related driving offense within 2 years after entering DWI programs, compared to offenders who did not participate.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION/COMMUNITY DISPUTE RESOLUTION

SCAO, through its Office of Dispute Resolution, continued to fund and oversee 20 Community Dispute Resolution Program centers, which provide alternative dispute resolution for parties who wish to avoid litigation. In 2007, the centers resolved 73 percent of cases in which all parties agreed to use a center's services. Of the 15,362 cases disposed of by centers in 2007, 79.3 percent were

referred by courts. Volunteer mediators, who have all completed a 40-hour SCAO-approved training program, provided 20,770 hours of service. A separate report for this program is available at http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/reports/summaries.htm#arss.

Family issues constituted an important part of the centers' work. Thirteen centers continued to accept Friend of the Court referrals through a pilot project supported by a federal Access and Visitation Program grant administered by SCAO. This project assesses the centers' ability to effectively resolve parenting time and visitation disputes. In 2007, centers disposed of 632 cases referred by the Friend of the Court. In 75 percent of the 408 cases that were mediated, parties reached a full or partial settlement of their issues.

Twenty-seven Friend of the Court offices also received Access and Visitation Program funds to provide supervised parenting time and neutral drop-off services. These services permit parties in high-conflict divorces to either visit with their children in a neutral supervised setting, or to pick up and drop off their children in a neutral setting. In 2007, these Friends of the Court provided 4,266 supervised parenting time services and 3,832 neutral drop-off services in 749 cases.

Also in 2007, the Michigan State Bar Foundation awarded a grant to the Office of Dispute Resolution aimed at providing mediation for indigent parties in divorce cases. Litigants who do not have their own lawyers, have low or no income, and have no children involved in the case will be eligible for mediation services. SCAO's Office of Dispute Resolution convened an advisory committee in late 2007 to develop a pilot project, which will be implemented through at least six CDRP centers in 2008.

In late 2007, SCAO appointed a Dispute Resolution Rule Committee to recommend court rule amendments to improve alternative dispute resolution services for trial-level civil cases. The 27-member committee was charged with assessing case evaluation and mediation practice under current court rules and determining whether improvements are needed. The committee's report is expected in mid-2008.

More information about the Office of Dispute Resolution can be found at http://courts.mi.gov/scao/dispute/odr.htm.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Michigan Supreme Court is Michigan's court of last resort, with final authority over all state courts. In 2007, 2,612 cases were filed with the Supreme Court. Civil cases accounted for 30.3 percent of the filings and criminal cases accounted for 69.6 percent. The Court disposed of 2,625 cases. More Supreme Court information can be found on pages 19 and 20 of this report.
- The Court of Appeals is the intermediate appellate court between the trial courts and the Supreme Court. In 2007, 7,590 cases were filed with the Court of Appeals; the court disposed of 7,543 cases. Of those dispositions, 60.1 percent were by order and 39.9 percent were by opinion. More Court of Appeals information can be found on pages 21 through 23 of this report.
- The Circuit Court is the trial court of general jurisdiction in Michigan. Circuit courts have original jurisdiction in all civil cases involving more than $25,000; in all criminal cases where the offense involves a felony or certain serious misdemeanors; and in all family cases and domestic relations cases, such as divorce, paternity actions, juvenile proceedings, and adoptions. In addition, circuit courts hear appeals from other courts and from administrative agencies. In 2007, 339,352 cases were filed in circuit court. More circuit court information can be found on pages 24 through 39 of this report.
- The Probate Court has jurisdiction over cases pertaining to the admission of wills, administration of estates and trusts, guardianships, conservatorships, and the treatment of mentally ill and developmentally disabled persons. In 2007, 61,635 cases were filed in probate court. More probate court information can be found on pages 40 through 46 of this report.
- The District Court has jurisdiction over all civil litigation up to $25,000, small claims, landlord-tenant disputes, civil infractions, most traffic violations, and a range of criminal cases. In 2007, district court filings, including parking cases, exceeded 4,000,000. More district court information can be found on pages 47 through 58 of this report.

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Justice Michael F. Cavanagh, Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor, Justice Elizabeth A. Weaver. BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Justice Robert P. Young, Jr., Justice Marilyn Kelly, Justice Maura D. Corrigan, Justice Stephen J. Markman.

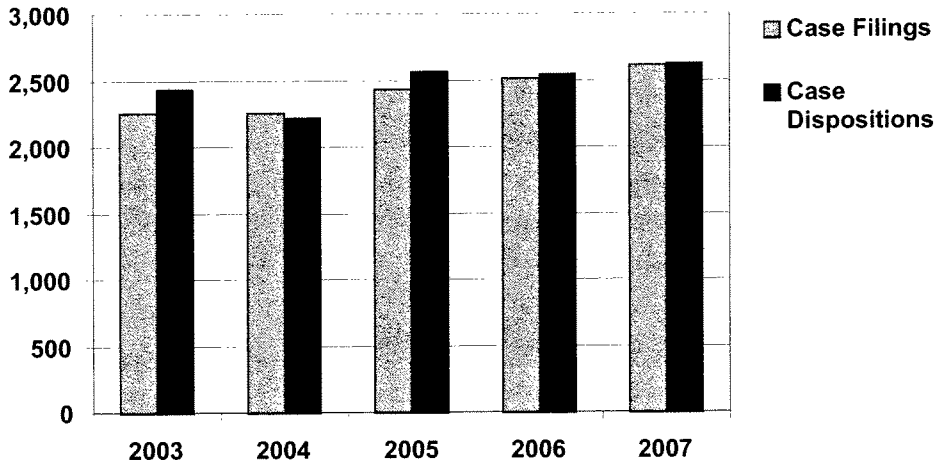
The Michigan Supreme Court, Michigan's court of last resort, consists of seven justices who are elected for eight-year terms. Candidates are nominated by political parties and are elected on a nonpartiasan ballot. Two justices are elected every two years (one in the eighth year) in the November election. Supreme Court candidates must be qualified electors, licensed to practice law in Michigan for at least five years, and under 70 years of age at the time of election. The justices' salaries are fixed by the State Officers Compensation Commission and paid by the state of Michigan. Vacancies are filled by appointment of the Governor until the next general election. Every two years, the justices elect a member of the Court as chief justice.

Each year, the Michigan Supreme Court receives over 2,000 new case filings. Most are applications for leave to appeal from Michigan Court of Appeals decisions, but the Court also hears cases involving charges of professional misconduct by attorneys and judges and a small number of matters as to which it has original jurisdiction. All cases are reviewed and considered by the entire Court. The justices are assisted by the Supreme Court commissioners, the Court's permanent research staff. The Court issues a decision by order or opinion in all cases filed. The Court may deny leave to appeal, enter a final order based upon the application, or hear oral argument before issuing an opinion or order. By court rule, all leave granted cases orally argued in a term (which begins August 1 and runs through July 31 of the following year) must be decided by the end of the term.

In 2007, 2,612 new cases were filed in the Michigan Supreme Court; the Court disposed of 2,625 cases. Of the 2,612 new filings, 30 percent were civil cases and 70 percent were criminal cases. As of December 31, 2007, the total number of cases pending was 883.

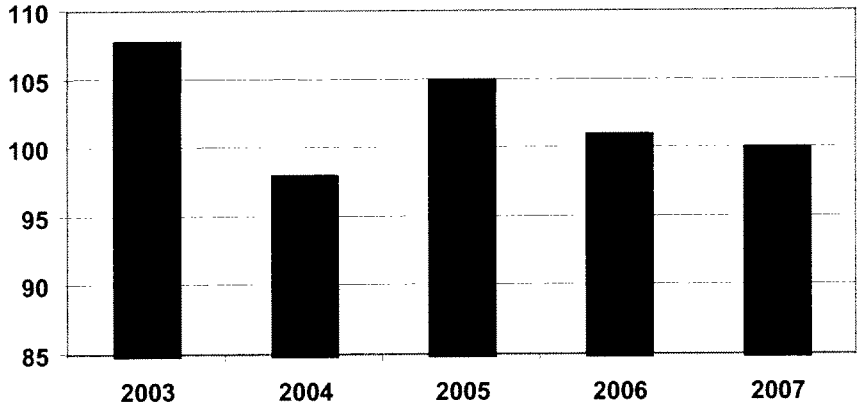
Supreme Court Case Filings and Dispositions

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Case Filings	2,256	2,255	2,437	2,517	2,612
Case Dispositions	2,431	2,215	2,564	2,543	2,625



Supreme Court Disposition Rate

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Disposition Rate	108	98	105	101	100



Disposition Rate: Case Dispositions Per 100 New Filings

COURT OF APPEALS

The Court of Appeals is the intermediate appellate court between the trial courts and the Michigan Supreme Court. While the Court of Appeals was created by the 1963 Michigan Constitution, its jurisdiction is established by statute. The Court of Appeals' practices and procedures are governed by the Michigan Court Rules, which are established by the Supreme Court. Court of Appeals judges' salaries are set by the Legislature. The Supreme Court chooses a chief judge for the Court of Appeals every two years.

The Michigan Court of Appeals courtroom in the Michigan Hall of Justice. The Court of Appeals has four locations to serve the public, in Detroit, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Troy.

Court of Appeals judges are elected for six-year terms in nonpartisan elections. A candidate for the Court of Appeals must be a lawyer admitted to practice for at least 5 years, under 70 years of age at the time of election, a qualified elector, and a resident of the district in which the candidate is running.

Judges are elected from four districts, which are drawn by the Legislature along county lines. The districts are, as nearly as possible, of equal population. The Legislature may change state law to alter the number of judges and the districts in which they are elected.

Each Court of Appeals panel is composed of three judges. Panels hear cases in Lansing, Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Marquette. Panels are rotated geographically so that the judges hear cases in each of the Court's locations.

The Court of Appeals hears both civil and criminal cases. Persons convicted of a criminal offense other than by a guilty plea have an appeal by right under the state constitution.

In 2007, 7,590 cases were filed with the Court of Appeals. This represents a decrease of 4.5 percent (361 cases) over the 7,951 cases filed in 2006.

In 2007, the Court of Appeals disposed of 7,543 cases, a decrease of 8.9 percent (740 cases) over the 8,283 cases disposed of in 2006. Of the dispositions, 4,536 (60.1 percent) were by order and 3,007 (39.9 percent) were by opinion.

Court of Appeals Judges (as of 1/31/08)

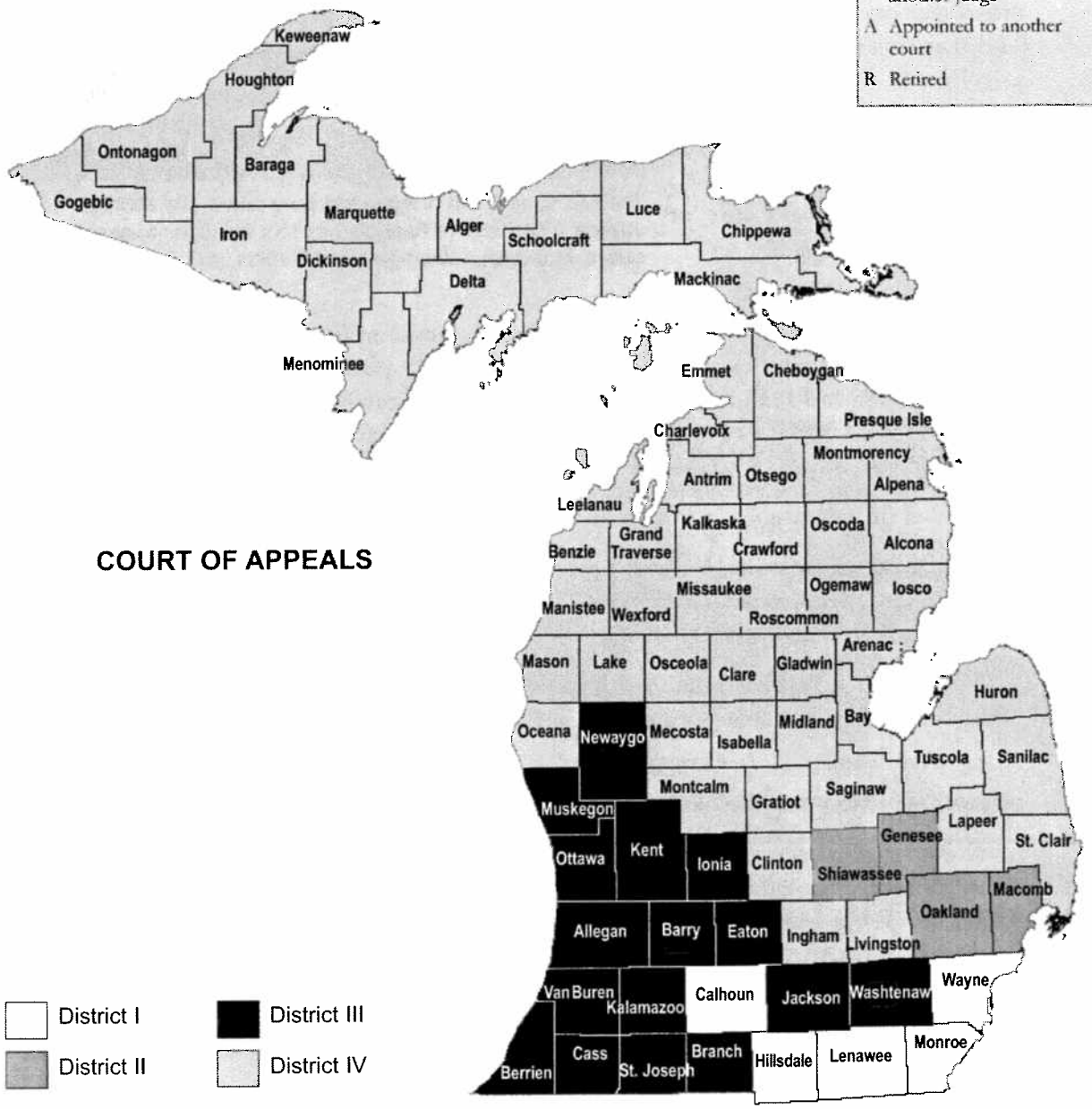
District I
Hon. Karen Fort Hood
Hon. Kirsten Frank Kelly
Hon. Christopher M. Murray
Hon. Michael J. Talbot
Hon. Helene N. White
Hon. Kurtis T. Wilder
Hon. Brian K. Zahra

DISTRICT II
Hon. Mark J. Cavanagh
Hon. Jessica R. Cooper[R]
(left the court 7/27/07)
Hon. Pat M. Donofrio
Hon. E. Thomas Fitzgerald
Hon. Elizabeth L. Gleicher*
(joined the court 9/7/07)
Hon. Kathleen Jansen
Hon. Henry William Saad
Hon. Deborah A. Servitto

DISTRICT III
Hon. Richard A. Bandstra
Hon. Jane M. Beckering*
(joined the court 9/10/07)
Hon. Joel P. Hoekstra
Hon. Jane E. Markey
Hon. William B. Murphy
Hon. Janet T. Neff[R]
(left the court 8/3/07)
Hon. David H. Sawyer
Hon. Michael R. Smolenski

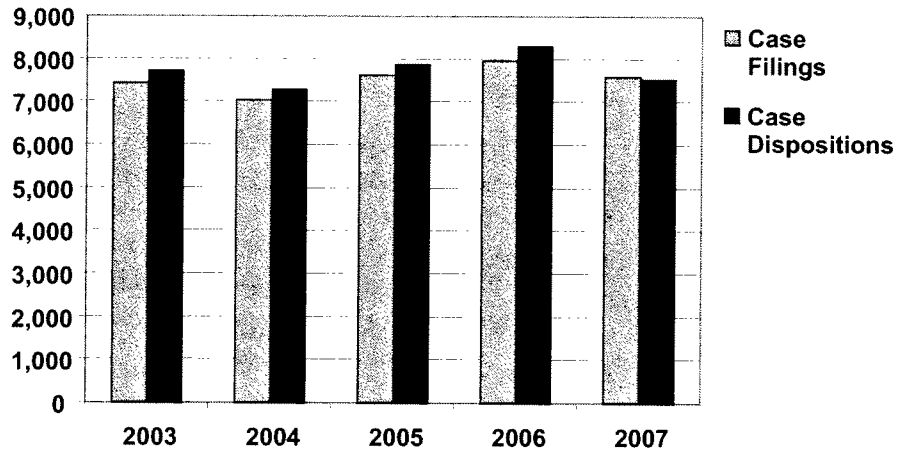
DISTRICT IV
Hon. Stephen L. Borrello
Hon. Alton T. Davis
Hon. Patrick M. Meter
Hon. Peter D. O'Connell
Hon. Donald S. Owens
Hon. Bill Schuette
Hon. William C. Whitbeck

KEY
* Appointed to succeed another judge
A Appointed to another court
R Retired



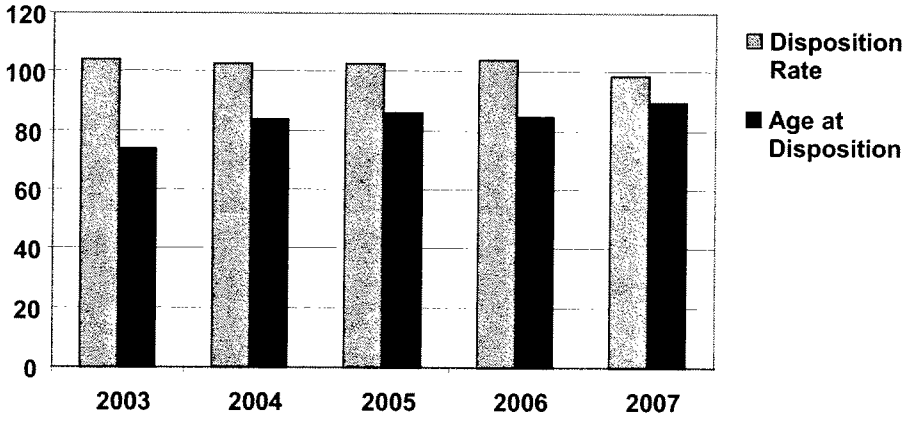
Court of Appeals Case Filings and Dispositions

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Case Filings	7,445	7,055	7,629	7,951	7,590
Case Dispositions	7,708	7,293	7,853	8,283	7,543



Court of Appeals Disposition Rate

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Disposition Rate	104	103	103	104	99
Age at Disposition	74	84	86	85	90



Disposition Rate: Case Dispositions Per 100 New Filings
Age at Disposition: Percent of Cases 18 Months Old or Less at Disposition

CIRCUIT COURT

The circuit court is the trial court of general jurisdiction in Michigan; it has jurisdiction over all actions except those given by state law to another court. The circuit court's original jurisdiction over criminal cases includes felonies and certain serious misdemeanors. The court's civil jurisdiction includes cases where the amount in controversy is $25,000 or more; the court also handles cases where a party seeks an equitable remedy. Family division cases, and appeals from other courts and administrative agencies, are also within the circuit court's civil jurisdiction. In addition, the circuit court has superintending control over courts within the judicial circuit, subject to final superintending control of the Supreme Court.

The state is divided into judicial circuits along county lines. The number of judges within a circuit is established by the Legislature to accommodate the circuit's workload. In multi-county circuits, judges travel from one county to another to hold court sessions.

Circuit judges are elected to six-year terms in nonpartisan elections. A candidate must be a qualified elector, a resident of the judicial circuit, a lawyer admitted to practice for 5 years, and under 70 years of age at the time of election. The Legislature sets circuit judges' salaries.

Circuit Court Judges (as of 1/31/08)

C01
Hon. Michael R. Smith

C02
Hon. Alfred M. Butzbaugh
Hon. John M. Donahue
Hon. Charles T. LaSata
Hon. Paul L. Maloney[A]
(left the court 7/30/07)

C03
Hon. Deborah Ross Adams
Hon. David J. Allen
Hon. Wendy M. Baxter
Hon. Annette J. Berry
Hon. Gregory D. Bill
Hon. Susan D. Borman
Hon. Ulysses W. Boykin
Hon. Margie R. Braxton
Hon. Megan M. Brennan
Hon. Helen E. Brown
Hon. Bill Callahan
Hon. James A. Callahan
Hon. Michael J. Callahan
Hon. Jerome C. Cavanagh[E]
(joined the Court 1/1/07)
Hon. James R. Chylinski
Hon. Robert J. Colombo, Jr.
Hon. Daphne Means Curtis
Hon. Christopher D. Dingell
Hon. Gershwin Allen Drain
Hon. Prentis Edwards
Hon. Charlene M. Elder
Hon. Vonda R. Evans
Hon. Edward Ewell, Jr.
Hon. Patricia Susan Fresard
Hon. Sheila Ann Gibson
Hon. John H. Gillis, Jr.
Hon. William J. Giovan
Hon. David Alan Groner
Hon. Richard B. Halloran, Jr.
Hon. Amy Patricia Hathaway
Hon. Cynthia Gray Hathaway
Hon. Diane Marie Hathaway
Hon. Michael M. Hathaway
Hon. Muriel D. Hughes
Hon. Thomas Edward Jackson
Hon. Vera Massey Jones
Hon. Mary Beth Kelly
Hon. Timothy Michael Kenny
Hon. Arthur J. Lombard
Hon. Kathleen I. MacDonald
Hon. Kathleen M. McCarthy
Hon. Wade McCree
Hon. Warfield Moore, Jr.
Hon. Bruce U. Morrow
Hon. John A. Murphy
Hon. Maria L. Oxholm
Hon. Lita Masini Popke
Hon. Daniel P. Ryan

C03 (continued)
Hon. Michael F. Sapala
Hon. Richard M. Skutt
Hon. Mark T. Slavens*
(joined the court 5/14/07)
Hon. Leslie Kim Smith
Hon. Virgil C. Smith
Hon. Jeanne Stempien
Hon. Cynthia Diane Stephens
Hon. Craig S. Strong
Hon. Brian R. Sullivan
Hon. Deborah A. Thomas
Hon. Isidore B. Torres
Hon. Carole F. Youngblood
Hon. Robert L. Ziolkowski

C04
Hon. Edward J. Grant[R]
(left the court 12/31/07)
Hon. John G. McBain, Jr.
Hon. Chad C. Schmucker
Hon. Thomas D. Wilson[E]
(joined the court 1/1/07)

C05
Hon. James H. Fisher

C06
Hon. James M. Alexander
Hon. Martha Anderson
Hon. Steven N. Andrews
Hon. Leo Bowman*
(joined the court 2/6/07)
Hon. Rae Lee Chabot
Hon. Mark A. Goldsmith
Hon. Nanci J. Grant
Hon. Shalina D. Kumar*
(joined the court 10/1/07)
Hon. Denise Langford-Morris
Hon. Cheryl A. Matthews
Hon. John James McDonald
Hon. Fred M. Mester
Hon. Rudy J. Nichols
Hon. Colleen A. O'Brien
Hon. Daniel Patrick O'Brien
Hon. Wendy Lynn Potts
Hon. Gene Schnelz[R]
(left the court 7/7/07)
Hon. Edward Sosnick
Hon. Deborah G. Tyner[R]
(left the court 1/1/07)
Hon. Michael D. Warren, Jr.
Hon. Joan E. Young

C07
Hon. Duncan M. Beagle
Hon. Joseph J. Farah
Hon. Judith A. Fullerton
Hon. John A. Gadola
Hon. Archie L. Hayman
Hon. Geoffrey L. Neithercut

C07 (continued)
Hon. David J. Newblatt
Hon. Michael J. Theile
Hon. Richard B. Yuille

C08
Hon. David A. Hoort
Hon. Charles H. Miel

C09
Hon. Gary C. Giguere, Jr.*
(joined the court 2/28/07)
Hon. Stephen D. Gorsalitz
Hon. J. Richardson Johnson
Hon. Pamela L. Lightvoet[E]
(joined the court 1/1/07)
Hon. Alexander C. Lipsey*
(joined the court 8/13/07)
Hon. Philip D. Schaefer[R]
(left the court 4/2/07)

C10
Hon. Fred L. Borchard
Hon. William A. Crane
Hon. Lynda L. Heathscott
Hon. Darnell Jackson
Hon. Robert L. Kaczmarek

C11
Hon. Charles H. Stark

C12
Hon. Garfield W. Hood

C13
Hon. Thomas G. Power
Hon. Philip E. Rodgers, Jr.

C14
Hon. James M. Graves, Jr.
Hon. Timothy G. Hicks
Hon. William C. Marietti
Hon. John C. Ruck

C15
Hon. Michael H. Cherry

C16
Hon. James M. Biernat, Sr.
Hon. Richard L. Caretti
Hon. Mary A. Chrzanowski
Hon. Diane M. Druzinski
Hon. John C. Foster
Hon. Peter J. Maceroni
Hon. Donald G. Miller
Hon. Edward A. Servitto, Jr.
Hon. Mark S. Switalski
Hon. Matthew S. Switalski

KEY
* Appointed to succeed another judge
A Appointed to another court
E Newly elected to this court
F Deceased
N New judgeship
R Retired

Circuit Court Judges (as of 1/31/08)

C16 (continued)
Hon. Antonio P. Viviano
Hon. David Viviano[N]
(joined the court 1/1/07)
Hon. Tracey A. Yokich

C17
Hon. George S. Buth
Hon. Kathleen A. Feeney
Hon. Donald A. Johnston, III
Hon. Dennis C. Kolenda
Hon. Dennis B. Leiber
Hon. Steven M. Pestka
Hon. James Robert Redford
Hon. Paul J. Sullivan
Hon. Mark A. Trusock[N]
(joined the court 1/1/07)
Hon. Daniel V. Zemaitis

C18
Hon. William J. Caprathe
Hon. Kenneth W. Schmidt
Hon. Joseph K. Sheeran

C19
Hon. James M. Batzer

C20
Hon. Calvin L. Bosman
Hon. Jon H. Hulsing
Hon. Edward R. Post
Hon. Jon Van Allsburg

C21
Hon. Paul H. Chamberlain
Hon. Mark H. Duthie

C22
Hon. Archie Cameron Brown
Hon. Timothy P. Connors
Hon. Melinda Morris
Hon. Donald E. Shelton
Hon. David S. Swartz

C23
Hon. Ronald M. Bergeron
Hon. William F. Myles

C24
Hon. Donald A. Teeple

C25
Hon. Thomas L. Solka
Hon. John R. Weber

C26
Hon. John F. Kowalski

C27
Hon. Anthony A. Monton
Hon. Terrence R. Thomas

C28
Hon. Charles D. Corwin[R]
(left the court 2/1/07)
Hon. Willliam M. Fagerman*
(joined the court 5/15/07)

C29
Hon. Jeffrey L. Martlew[R]
(left the court 5/1/07)
Hon. Randy L. Tahvonen
Hon. Michelle M. Rick*
(joined the court 9/10/07)

C30
Hon. Laura Baird
Hon. William E. Collette
Hon. Joyce Draganchuk
Hon. James R. Giddings
Hon. Janelle A. Lawless
Hon. Paula J. M. Manderfield
Hon. Beverley R. Nettles-Nickerson

C31
Hon. James P. Adair
Hon. Peter E. Deegan
Hon. Daniel J. Kelly

C32
Hon. Roy D. Gotham

C33
Hon. Richard M. Pajtas

C34
Hon. Michael J. Baumgartner

C35
Hon. Gerald D. Lostracco

C36
Hon. William C. Buhl
Hon. Paul E. Hamre

C37
Hon. Allen L. Garbrecht
Hon. James C. Kingsley
Hon. Stephen B. Miller
Hon. Conrad J. Sindt

C38
Hon. Joseph A. Costello, Jr.
Hon. Michael W. LaBeau
Hon. Michael A. Weipert

C39
Hon. Harvey A. Koselka
Hon. Timothy P. Pickard

C40
Hon. Michael P. Higgins
Hon. Nick O. Holowka

C41
Hon. Mary Brouillette Barglind
Hon. Richard J. Celello

C42
Hon. Michael J. Beale*
(joined the court 12/3/07)
Hon. Paul J. Clulo[R]
(left the court 8/16/07)
Hon. Jonathan E. Lauderbach

C43
Hon. Michael E. Dodge

C44
Hon. Stanley J. Latreille
Hon. David Reader

C45
Hon. Paul E. Stutesman

C46
Hon. Janet M. Allen
Hon. Dennis F. Murphy

C47
Hon. Stephen T. Davis

C48
Hon. William H. Baillargeon*
(joined the court 5/8/07)
Hon. Harry A. Beach[R]
(left the court 1/31/07)
Hon. George R. Corsiglia

C49
Hon. Scott P. Hill-Kennedy
Hon. Ronald C. Nichols[N]
(joined the court 1/1/07)

C50
Hon. Nicholas J. Lambros

C51
Hon. Richard I. Cooper

C52
Hon. M. Richard Knoblock

C53
Hon. Scott Lee Pavlich

C54
Hon. Patrick Reed Joslyn

C55
Hon. Thomas R. Evans
Hon. Roy G. Mienk[N]
(joined the court 1/1/07)

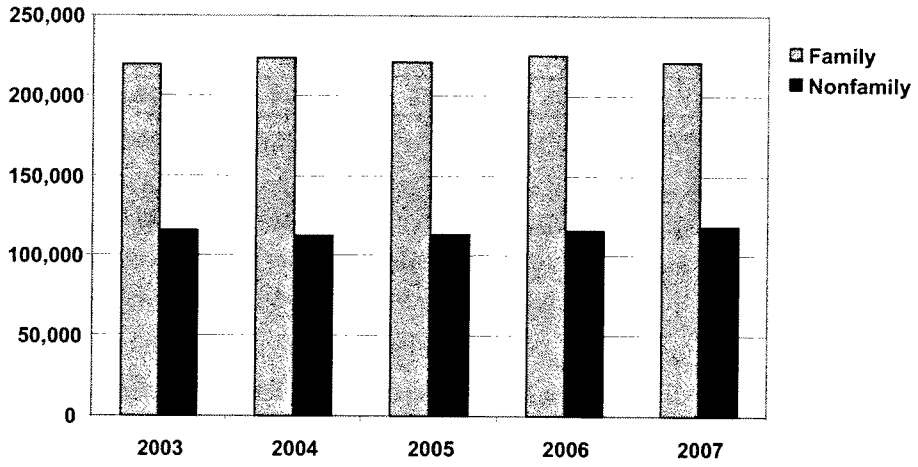
C56
Hon. Thomas S. Eveland
Hon. Calvin E. Osterhaven

C57
Hon. Charles W. Johnson

KEY
* Appointed to succeed another judge
A Appointed to another court
E Newly elected to this court
F Deceased
N New judgeship
R Retired

Circuit Court Filings by Division

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Family	219,330	223,499	221,274	225,348	220,898
Nonfamily	116,241	113,024	113,690	115,694	118,454
Total Filings	**335,571**	**336,523**	**334,964**	**341,042**	**339,352**



In 2007, 339,352 cases were filed in the circuit court. Of that total, 220,898 cases, or 65.1 percent, were family division filings and 118,454 cases, or 34.9 percent, were nonfamily filings. Family division filings include domestic relations, juvenile code proceedings, adoption code proceedings, personal protection, other family proceedings, and ancillary proceedings. Non-family division filings include civil, criminal, appeals, administrative, and court of claims cases, and extraordinary writs.

Circuit Court Civil Case Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
General Civil	28,287	26,064	26,050	27,025	28,797
Auto Negligence	10,185	9,435	9,162	8,525	8,424
Nonauto Damage	9,364	8,789	7,436	7,006	6,134
Other Civil*	2,222	2,292	2,092	2,432	2,734
Total Filings	**50,058**	**46,580**	**44,740**	**44,988**	**46,089**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
General Civil	28,790	28,084	28,162	28,066	29,129
Auto Negligence	10,136	10,313	10,141	9,716	9,184
Nonauto Damage	10,112	11,059	9,184	8,012	7,625
Other Civil*	2,130	2,204	2,045	2,400	2,758
Total Dispositions	**51,168**	**51,660**	**49,532**	**48,194**	**48,696**

* Includes proceedings to restore, establish, or correct records; claim and delivery; receivers in supplemental proceedings; supplemental proceedings; and miscellaneous proceedings.

Circuit Court Civil Case Filings and Dispositions (continued)

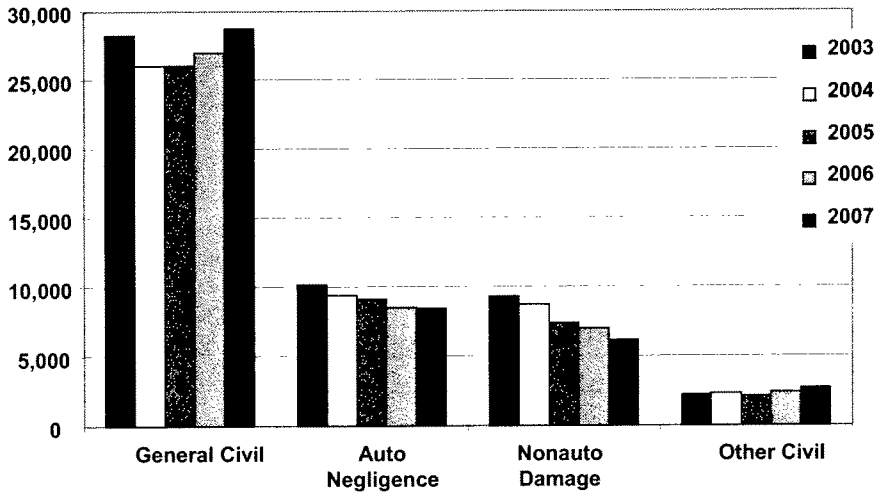
Method of Disposition	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Jury Verdict	526	504	487	525	432
Bench Verdict	548	532	563	419	423
Uncontested, Default, Settled	17,847	18,866	19,022	19,466	20,501
Dismissal by Party	19,412	19,978	17,893	17,193	16,276
Dismissal by Court	10,791	9,809	9,779	9,005	9,368
Other Dispositions*	2,044	1,971	1,788	1,586	1,696
Total Dispositions	**51,168**	**51,660**	**49,532**	**48,194**	**48,696**

* Includes cases transferred, cases that changed case type, and other dispositions (not including cases made inactive).

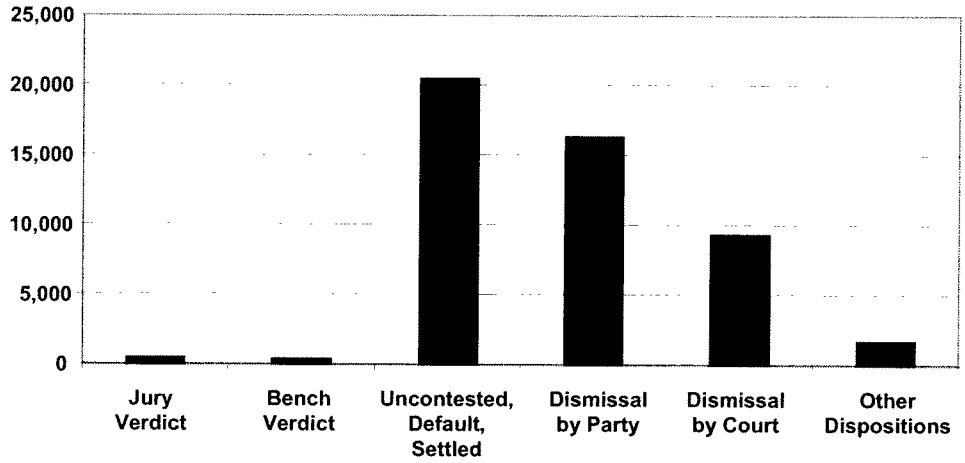
In 2007, 38.9 percent of the non-family division filings in circuit court were general civil, auto negligence, nonauto damage, and other civil cases. Auto negligence and non-auto damage cases continued to decline; 17.3 percent fewer auto negligence and 34.5 percent fewer nonauto damage cases were filed in 2007 than in 2003.

The statewide clearance rate for civil cases was 101.8 percent. Over half (52.7 percent) of the civil cases were voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiff or dismissed by the court for various reasons, including no progress, failure of the plaintiff to appear, and payment of an award under MCR 2.403(M). Defaults, consent judgments, settlements, or summary dispositions accounted for 42.1 percent of dispositions. Less than two percent of civil cases were resolved by a jury verdict or bench verdict.

Circuit Court Civil Case Filings



Circuit Court Civil Case Dispositions by Disposition Method



Circuit Court Criminal Case Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Noncapital	56,414	57,524	59,656	61,275	62.866
Capital	3,707	3,549	3,818	4,160	4,158
Felony Juvenile	87	98	101	97	99
Total Filings	**60,208**	**61,171**	**63,575**	**65,532**	**67,123**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Noncapital	58,002	59,421	60,880	63,169	63,784
Capital	3,757	3,661	3,903	4,298	4,245
Felony Juvenile	82	99	91	125	82
Total Dispositions	**61,841**	**63,181**	**64,874**	**67,592**	**68,111**

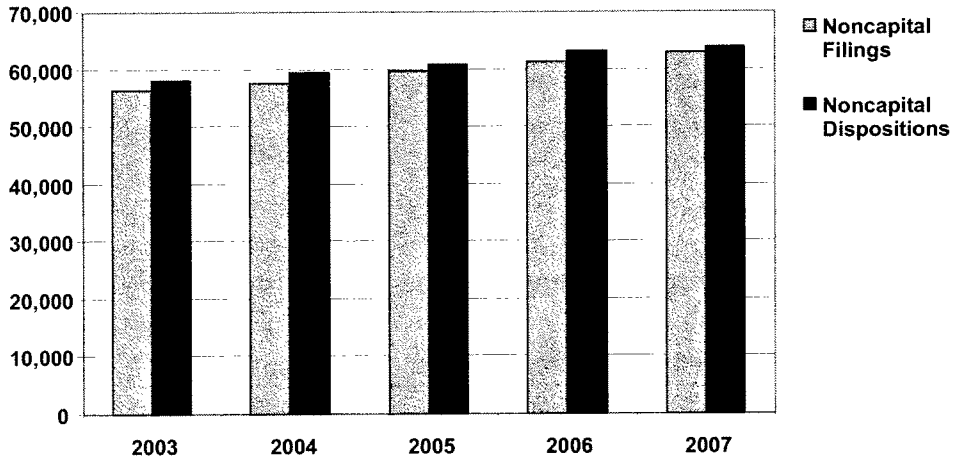
Method of Disposition	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Jury Verdict	2,032	1,763	1,858	1,830	1,814
Bench Verdict	1,048	885	862	1,075	904
Guilty Plea	49,902	50,497	52,498	55,758	56,838
Dismissal by Party	3,813	4,046	3,979	3,772	3,440
Dismissal by Court	2,002	2,475	2,076	2,205	2,228
Other Dispositions*	3,044	3,515	3,601	2,952	2,887
Total Dispositions	**61,841**	**63,181**	**64,874**	**67,592**	**68,111**

* Includes cases transferred and cases that changed case type.

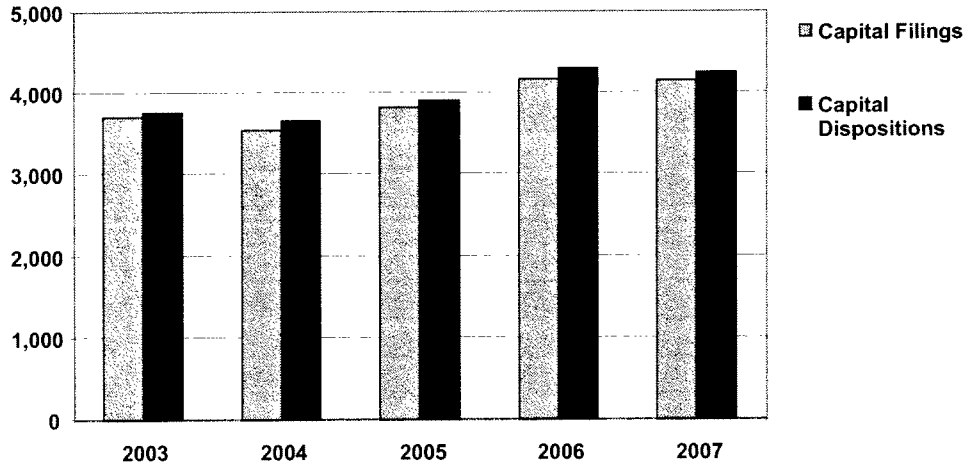
In 2007, more felonies were filed and disposed of than in any other year since 2003. Capital felony case filings increased by 12.2 percent between 2003 and 2007, reaching 4,158. A total of 62,866 non-capital felony cases were filed in 2007, representing an increase of 12.2 percent since 2003.

The statewide clearance rate for felonies was 99.3 percent. Most felonies (83.4 percent) were disposed of by guilty plea. In four percent of dispositions, the case went to trial and a judge or jury returned a verdict.

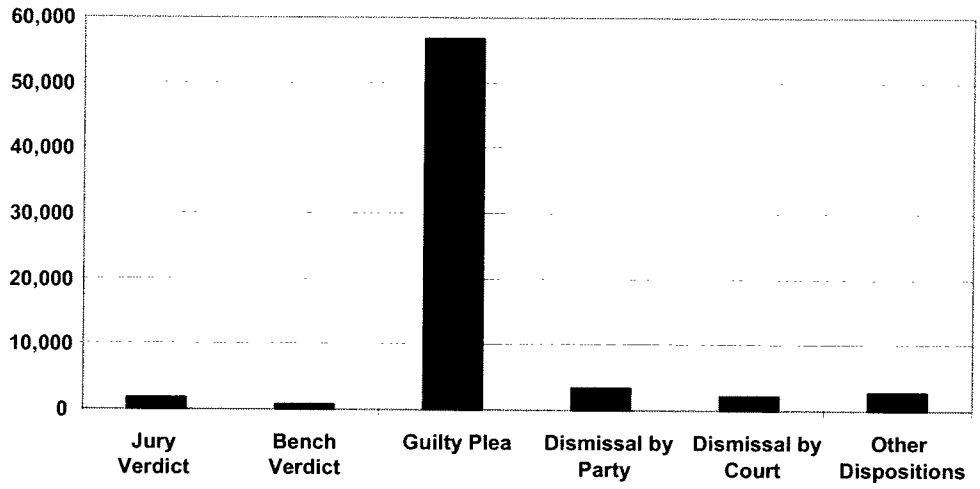
Circuit Court Criminal Noncapital Case Filings and Dispositions



Circuit Court Criminal Capital Case Filings and Dispositions



Circuit Court Criminal Case Dispositions by Disposition Method



Circuit Court Appeals, Administrative Review, and Extraordinary Writ Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Criminal Appeals	475	411	464	378	369
Civil Appeals	757	765	740	798	847
Agency Appeals and Reviews	2,994	2,499	2,609	2,505	2,497
Other Civil Cases	1,453	1,354	1,337	1,307	1,352
Total Filings	**5,679**	**5,029**	**5,150**	**4,988**	**5,065**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Criminal Appeals	436	407	436	435	366
Civil Appeals	793	790	794	783	840
Agency Appeals and Reviews	3,272	2,624	2,513	2,577	2,507
Other Civil Cases	1,506	1,422	1,326	1,337	1,330
Total Dispositions	**6,007**	**5,243**	**5,069**	**5,132**	**5,043**

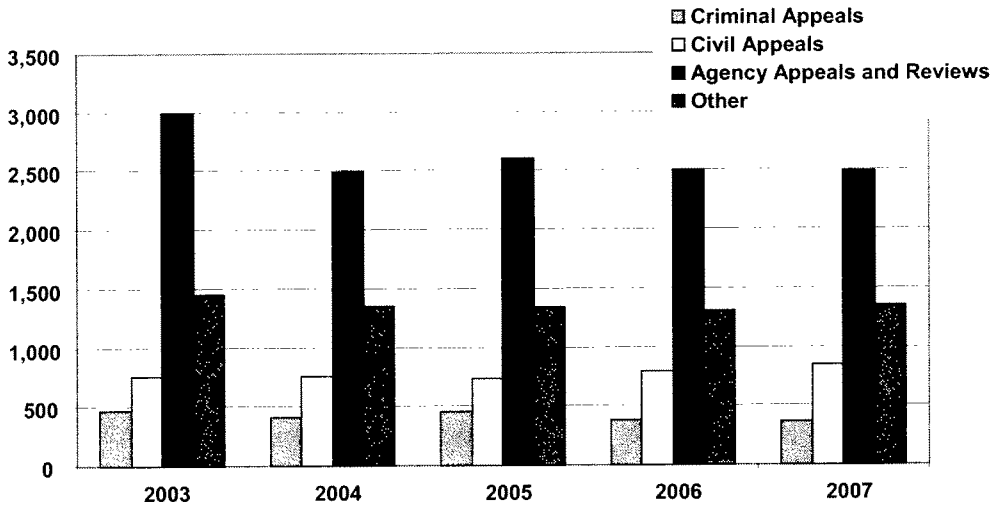
Method of Disposition	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Order Entered	3,695	3,258	3,114	3,070	3,058
Dismissed/Denied	2,290	1,960	1,827	1,944	1,882
Other Dispositions*	22	25	128	118	103
Total Dispositions	**6,007**	**5,243**	**5,069**	**5,132**	**5,043**

* Includes cases transferred and cases that changed case type.

Statewide filings of appeals, administrative cases, and extraordinary writs remained relatively low in 2007. Appeals in civil cases were the exception to this trend, increasing by 11.9 percent between 2003 and 2007.

The statewide clearance rate for appellate and administrative cases was 98.4 percent. In most cases (60.6 percent), the court entered an order other than dismissal or denial; 37.3 percent were dismissed or denied by the court.

Filings of Circuit Court Appellate Cases, Administrative Reviews, and Actions for Extraordinary Writs



Circuit Court Domestic Relations Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Divorce without Children	22,628	21,915	22,461	22,592	21,818
Divorce with Children	23,802	22,890	23,070	22,538	22,433
Paternity	10,718	17,458	17,541	19,960	19,603
Support	11,803	18,095	17,894	19,356	20,044
Other Domestic*	4,456	4,635	4,282	3,119	3,097
UIFSA*	2,833	4,124	3,888	5,099	4,946
Total Filings	**76,240**	**89,117**	**89,136**	**92,664**	**91,941**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Divorce without Children	23,713	22,621	23,126	23,296	22,730
Divorce with Children	25,628	24,632	24,264	24,002	23,559
Paternity	12,223	15,558	18,479	19,069	19,725
Support	11,721	16,316	19,201	18,961	19,622
Other Domestic*	4,457	4,629	4,461	3,158	3,071
UIFSA*	2,587	3,713	3,844	5,108	4,885
Total Dispositions	**80,329**	**87,469**	**93,375**	**93,594**	**93,592**

Circuit Court Domestic Relations Filings and Dispositions (continued)

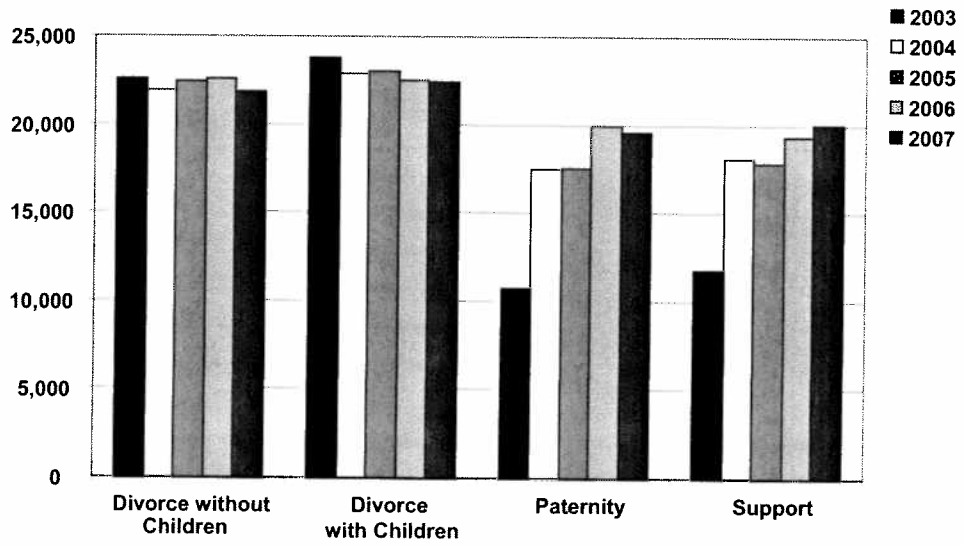
Method of Disposition	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bench Verdict	5,177	4,848	1,339	1,456	1,342
Uncontested, Default, Settled	53,806	56,317	64,372	65,700	66,508
Dismissal by Party	6,526	6,786	6,955	7,292	6,585
Dismissal by Court	11,819	15,361	16,443	15,101	15,238
Other Dispositions*	3,001	4,157	4,266	4,045	3,919
Total Dispositions	**80,329**	**87,469**	**93,375**	**93,594**	**93,592**

* Includes cases transferred and cases that changed case type.

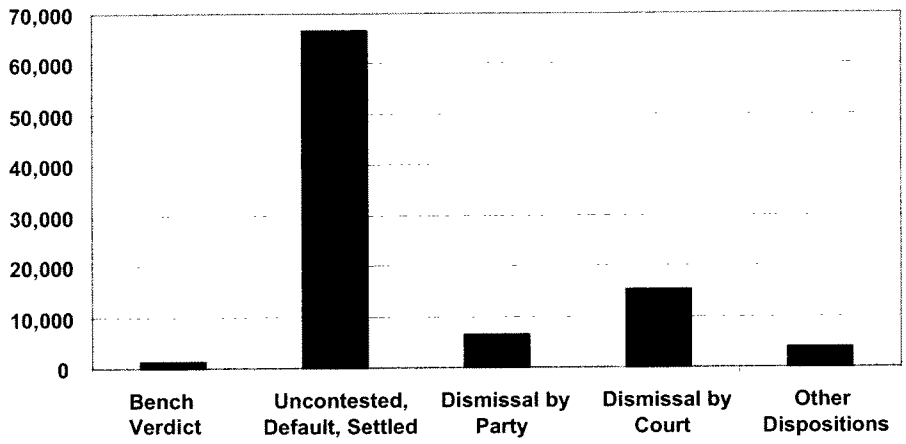
In 2007, 220,898 cases were filed in the family division of circuit court, representing 65.1 percent of all circuit court filings. Of the family division filings, 20 percent were divorce cases and 17.9 percent were paternity and support cases.

The statewide clearance rate for domestic relations cases was 99.8 percent. Most cases (71.1 percent) were disposed of by default, consent judgment, or settlement during trial; 1.4 percent were disposed of by a judge's verdict.

Circuit Court Domestic Relations Case Filings



Circuit Court Domestic Relations Case Dispositions by Disposition Method



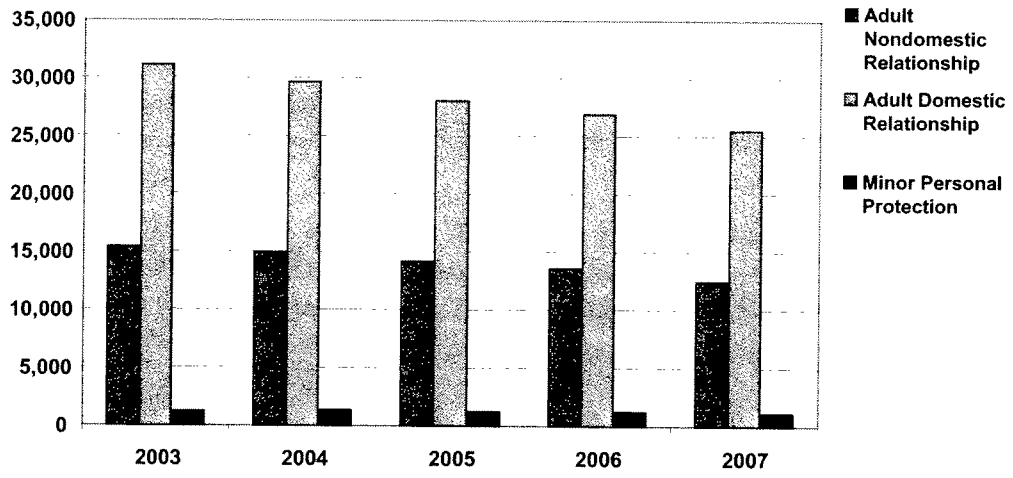
Circuit Court Personal Protection Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Adult Nondomestic Relationship	15,405	15,025	14,233	13,647	12,513
Adult Domestic Relationship	31,168	29,629	28,053	26,921	25,562
Minor Personal Protection	1,235	1,341	1,257	1,211	1,088
Total Filings	**47,808**	**45,995**	**43,543**	**41,779**	**39,163**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Adult Nondomestic Relationship	15,879	15,586	14,945	14,206	13,061
Adult Domestic Relationship	32,152	30,546	29,593	28,062	26,581
Minor Personal Protection	1,173	1,352	1,236	1,237	1,115
Total Dispositions	**49,204**	**47,484**	**45,774**	**43,505**	**40,757**

Fewer petitions for personal protection were filed in 2007 than in any other year since 2003. Of all personal protection filings, 32 percent sought protection against stalking by adults, while 65.3 percent were filed to obtain protection against adult domestic partners. The remaining 2.8 percent were filed to obtain protection against minors. Most cases (63.3 percent) were disposed of by a court order; 36.7 percent were dismissed by the court or the moving party, or were denied by the court.

Circuit Court Personal Protection Petition Filings



Circuit Court Filings and Dispositions Under Juvenile Code

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Delinquency	59,298	56,506	56,024	56,906	53,930
Traffic	17,674	13,629	15,121	16,869	19,380
Child Protective	8,491	8,490	8,323	8,306	7,988
Designated	201	191	153	162	158
Total Filings	**85,664**	**78,816**	**79,621**	**82,243**	**81,456**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Delinquency	56,849	56,264	56,226	56,911	55,735
Traffic	15,901	14,048	13,866	15,230	18,932
Child Protective	7,754	7,614	7,583	8,012	7,935
Designated	163	160	135	162	151
Total Dispositions	**80,667**	**78,086**	**77,810**	**80,315**	**82,753**

Juveniles Under Supervision	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Supervised by the Court	14,160	13,246	12,986	13,172	12,799
Supervised by DCJ* of Wayne Co.	2,112	2,283	2,632	3,193	3,050
Supervised by DHS**	1,436	1,314	1,171	1,199	938
Total Juveniles	**17,708**	**16,843**	**16,789**	**17,564**	**16,787**

* DCJ: Department of Community Justice.

**DHS: Michigan Department of Human Services.

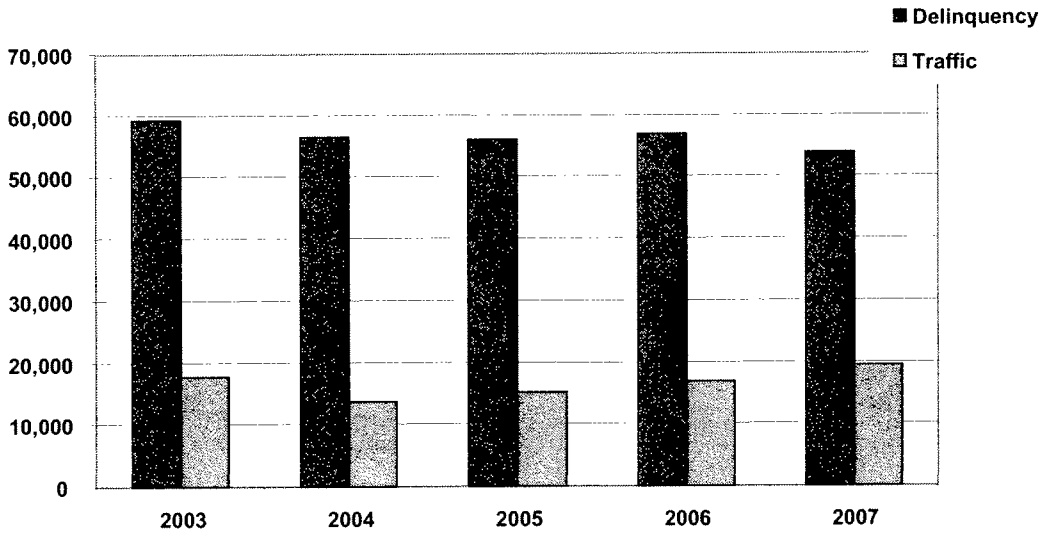
In 2007, 158 juvenile offense filings were designated to be heard in the same manner as adult criminal cases. In 66.9 percent of the case dispositions, the court accepted the juvenile's plea. In 12 cases (7.9 percent), the case went to trial and a judge or jury returned a verdict.

Delinquency case filings decreased by 9.1 percent between 2003 and 2007; 53,930 cases were filed in 2007. In 35.9 percent of the dispositions, the court accepted the juvenile's plea. In 2.8 percent of the dispositions, the case went to trial and a judge or jury returned a verdict. The statewide clearance rate for delinquency cases was 101.3 percent.

At the close of 2007, 16,787 juveniles were under court jurisdiction as a result of delinquency proceedings. Of those, 12,799 were supervised by the circuit court, 3,050 were supervised by the Wayne County Department of Community Justice, and 938 were supervised by the Department of Human Services. An additional 8,649 juveniles not already under court supervision were awaiting adjudication.

Juvenile traffic filings continued to increase from 2004, when both juvenile traffic and misdemeanor traffic cases in district court were at a low level.

Circuit Court Petitions Filed Under Juvenile Code



Circuit Court Child Abuse and Neglect Cases and Children Associated With New Filings

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Cases	8,491	8,490	8,323	8,306	7,988
Children	14,349	13,524	12,925	13,080	12,493

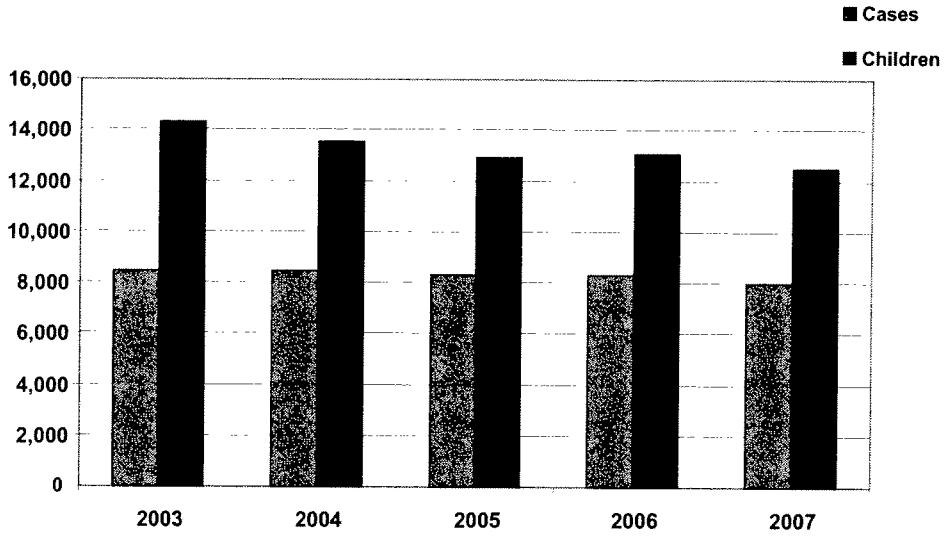
In 2007, 7,988 child abuse and neglect petitions were filed with the circuit court. In 56.1 percent of the dispositions, the court accepted a plea of admission. A relatively few cases (17.3 percent) went to trial and a judge or jury returned a verdict. An additional 16.7 percent were dismissed by the court or withdrawn by the petitioner. The statewide clearance rate for child protective petitions was 98.6 percent.

Of the 12,493 children associated with new child protective filings in 2007, 889 (7.1 percent) had previously been under court jurisdiction.

Termination of parental rights petitions totaled 2,587 and involved 4,332 children. Of these, 1,118 were filed as part of original or amended petitions and 1,469 were filed as supplemental petitions. There were an additional 815 supplemental petitions, involving 989 children, related to child protective cases; these petitions were filed for reasons other than termination.

At the close of 2007, the circuit court had jurisdiction over 18,336 children as a result of child protective proceedings. Of that number, 11,658 were temporary wards of the court, 6,222 were permanent wards of the court or the Michigan Children's Institute, and 456 were temporary wards who were ordered to the Michigan Children's Institute for observation. An additional 2,224 children were awaiting adjudication and were not yet under court jurisdiction.

Circuit Court Child Protective Case Filings and Children Associated with New Cases

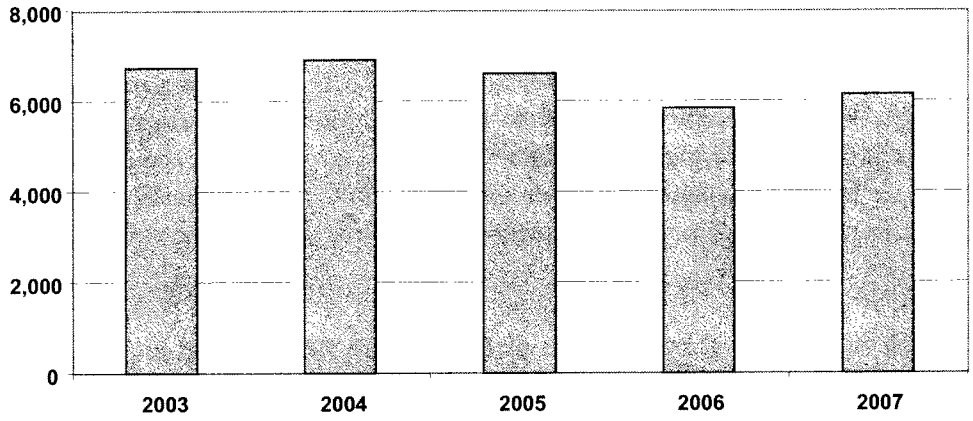


Circuit Court Filings and Dispositions Under Adoption Code

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Adoption Filings	5,659	5,804	5,504	4,874	5,066
Requests for Release of Adoption Information	758	843	773	734	853
Petitions for Appointment of Confidential Intermediary	323	283	329	226	234
Adoptions Finalized	5,218	5,474	5,383	4,595	4,632
Adoption Dispositions	5,541	5,839	5,777	4,937	4,982

In 2007, 5,066 petitions for adoption were filed and 4,632 were finalized. Circuit courts received 853 requests for the release of adoption information and 234 petitions for the appointment of a confidential intermediary. These requests and petitions are included in the bar graph below.

Circuit Court Petitions Filed Under Adoption Code



Circuit Court Miscellaneous Family Case Filings

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Waiver of Parental Consent	588	560	535	381	389
Name Change	2,999	2,700	2,449	2,845	2,665
Emancipation of Minor	109	80	69	83	55
Infectious Disease	3	10	8	11	4
Safe Delivery of New Born	2	5	7	7	13
Out-of-County Personal Protection Violations Orders	49	39	38	34	43
Total Filings	**3,750**	**3,394**	**3,106**	**3,361**	**3,169**

Miscellaneous family division filings include name change petitions, proceedings under the Minors and Emancipation Act, and proceedings under the Safe Delivery of Newborns Act. Also included are public health code proceedings for treating or testing for infectious disease, and personal protection order violations heard by a court in a different county than the one that issued the order.

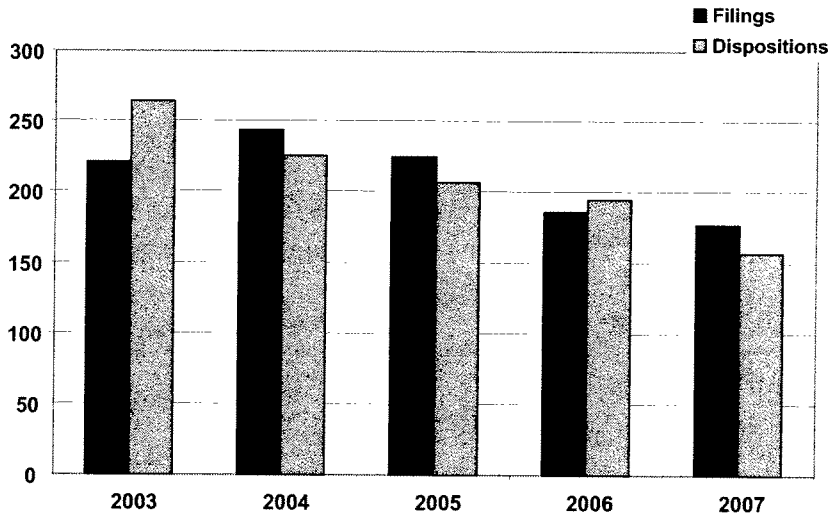
In 2007, 2,780 miscellaneous family cases were filed; 95.9 percent were petitions for a name change. Of the miscellaneous family cases, 88.8 percent were disposed of by an order other than a dismissal or denial.

Court of Claims Filings and Dispositions

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Filings	221	244	225	186	177
Dispositions	264	226	207	195	157

The Court of Claims, a function of the 30th Circuit Court of Ingham County, has jurisdiction over claims against the state or any of its departments. In 2007, 177 cases were filed with the Court of Claims. Of these, 42.4 percent, or 75 cases, were related to state taxes. Highway defect, medical malpractice, contracts, constitutional claims, prisoner litigation, and other claims for damages are also heard by the Court of Claims.

Court of Claims Case Filings and Dispositions

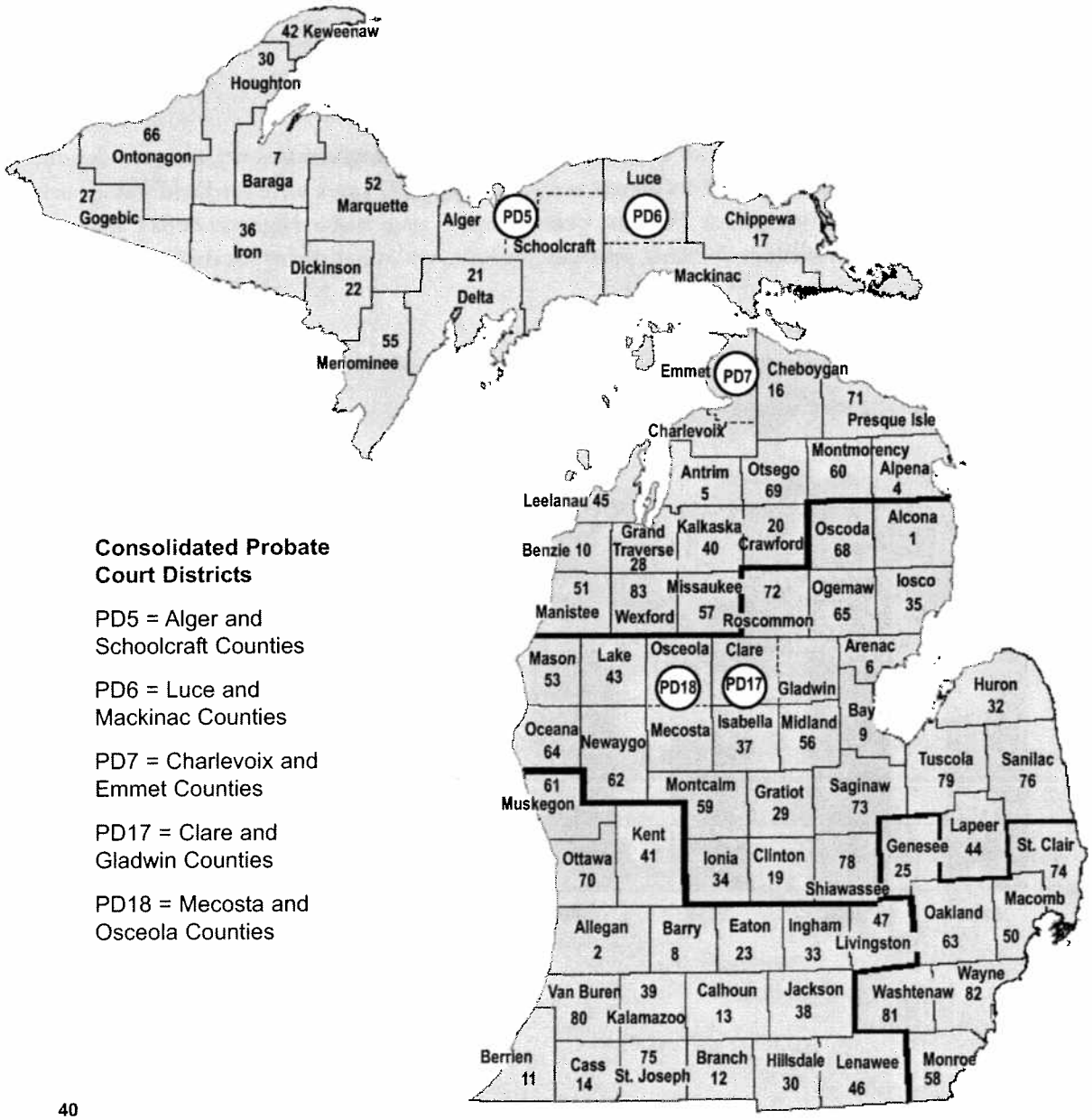


PROBATE COURT

The probate court has jurisdiction over admission of wills, administration of estates and trusts, guardianships, conservatorships, and the treatment of mentally ill and developmentally disabled persons.

Each county has its own probate court, with the exception of 10 northern counties that have consolidated to form five probate court districts. Each of those probate court districts has one judge. Other probate courts have one or more judges, depending on that court's weighted caseload.

Probate judges are elected to six-year terms on a nonpartisan ballot, subject to the same requirements as other judges. The Legislature sets probate judges' salaries.



Consolidated Probate Court Districts

PD5 = Alger and Schoolcraft Counties

PD6 = Luce and Mackinac Counties

PD7 = Charlevoix and Emmet Counties

PD17 = Clare and Gladwin Counties

PD18 = Mecosta and Osceola Counties

Probate Court Judges (as of 1/31/08)

P01 Alcona County
Hon. Laura A. Frawley[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

PD5 Alger & Schoolcraft Counties
Hon. William W. Carmody

P03 Allegan County
Hon. Michael L. Buck

P04 Alpena County
Hon. Thomas J. LaCross[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P05 Antrim County
Hon. Norman R. Hayes

P06 Arenac County
Hon. Jack William Scully

P07 Baraga County
Hon. Timothy S. Brennan

P08 Barry County
Hon. William M. Doherty

P09 Bay County
Hon. Karen Tighe

P10 Benzie County
Hon. Nancy A. Kida

P11 Berrien County
Hon. Mabel Johnson Mayfield
Hon. Thomas E. Nelson

P12 Branch County
Hon. Frederick L. Wood

P13 Calhoun County
Hon. Phillip E. Harter
Hon. Gary K. Reed

P14 Cass County
Hon. Susan L. Dobrich

PD7 Charlevoix & Emmet Counties
Hon. Frederick R. Mulhauser

P16 Cheboygan County
Hon. Robert John Butts

P17 Chippewa County
Hon. Lowell R. Ulrich

PD17 Clare & Gladwin Counties
Hon. Thomas P. McLaughlin

P19 Clinton County
Hon. Lisa Sullivan

P20 Crawford County
Hon. Monte Burmeister[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P21 Delta County
Hon. Robert E. Goebel, Jr.

P22 Dickinson County
Hon. Thomas D. Slagle

P23 Eaton County
Hon. Michael F. Skinner

P25 Genesee County
Hon. Jennie E. Barkey
Hon. Robert E. Weiss

P27 Gogebic County
Hon. Joel L. Massie

P28 Grand Traverse County
Hon. David L. Stowe

P29 Gratiot County
Hon. Jack T. Arnold

P30 Hillsdale County
Hon. Michael E. Nye

P31 Houghton County
Hon. Charles R. Goodman

P32 Huron County
Hon. David L. Clabuesch

P33 Ingham County
Hon. R. George Economy
Hon. Richard Joseph Garcia

P34 Ionia County
Hon. Robert Sykes, Jr.

P35 Iosco County
Hon. John D. Hamilton

P36 Iron County
Hon. C. Joseph Schwedler

P37 Isabella County
Hon. William T. Ervin

P38 Jackson County
Hon. Diane M. Rappleye[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P39 Kalamazoo County
Hon. Curtis J. Bell
Hon. Patricia N. Conlon
Hon. Donald R. Halstead

P40 Kalkaska County
Hon. Lynne Marie Buday

P41 Kent County
Hon. Nanaruth H. Carpenter
Hon. Patricia D. Gardner
Hon. G. Patrick Hillary
Hon. David M. Murkowski

P42 Keweenaw County
Hon. James G. Jaaskelainen

P43 Lake County
Hon. Mark S. Wickens

P44 Lapeer County
Hon. Justus C. Scott

P45 Leelanau County
Hon. Joseph E. Deegan

P46 Lenawee County
Hon. Margaret Murray-Scholz Noe

P47 Livingston County
Hon. Carol Hacket Garagiola[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

PD6 Luce & Mackinac Counties
Hon. W. Clayton Graham[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P50 Macomb County
Hon. Kathryn A. George
Hon. Pamela Gilbert O'Sullivan

P51 Manistee County
Hon. Thomas N. Brunner[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P52 Marquette County
Hon. Michael J. Anderegg

P53 Mason County
Hon. Mark D. Raven

PD18 Mecosta & Osceola Counties
Hon. LaVail E. Hull

P55 Menominee County
Hon. William A. Hupy

P56 Midland County
Hon. Dorene S. Allen

P57 Missaukee County
Hon. Charles R. Parsons

P58 Monroe County
Hon. John A. Hohman, Jr.
Hon. Pamela A. Moskwa

P59 Montcalm County
Hon. Charles W. Simon, III[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P60 Montmorency County
Hon. John E. Fitzgerald

P61 Muskegon County
Hon. Neil G. Mullally
Hon. Gregory C. Pittman

P62 Newaygo County
Hon. Graydon W. Dimkoff

P63 Oakland County
Hon. Barry M. Grant
Hon. Linda S. Hallmark
Hon. Eugene Arthur Moore
Hon. Elizabeth M. Pezzetti

P64 Oceana County
Hon. Bradley G. Lambrix[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P65 Ogemaw County
Hon. Shana A. Lambourn[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P66 Ontonagon County
Hon. Joseph D. Zeleznik

P68 Oscoda County
Hon. Kathryn Joan Root

P69 Otsego County
Hon. Michael K. Cooper

P70 Ottawa County
Hon. Mark A. Feyen

P71 Presque Isle County
Hon. Donald J. McLennan[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P72 Roscommon County
Hon. Douglas C. Dosson

P73 Saginaw County
Hon. Faye M. Harrison
Hon. Patrick J. McGraw

P74 St. Clair County
Hon. Elwood L. Brown
Hon. John Tomlinson[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P75 St. Joseph County
Hon. Thomas E. Shumaker

P76 Sanilac County
Hon. R. Terry Maltby

P78 Shiawassee County
Hon. James R. Clatterbaugh

P79 Tuscola County
Hon. W. Wallace Kent, Jr.

P80 Van Buren County
Hon. Frank D. Willis

P81 Washtenaw County
Hon. Nancy Cornelia Francis
Hon. Darlene A. O'Brien

P82 Wayne County
Hon. June E. Blackwell-Hatcher
Hon. Freddie G. Burton, Jr.
Hon. Judy A. Hartsfield
Hon. Milton L. Mack, Jr.
Hon. Cathie B. Maher
Hon. Martin T. Maher
Hon. David J. Szymanski
Hon. Frank S. Szymanski[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

P83 Wexford County
Hon. Kenneth L. Tacoma

KEY
- * Appointed to succeed another judge
- A Appointed to another court
- E Newly elected to this court
- F Deceased
- N New judgeship
- R Retired

Probate Court Estate and Trust Filings and Dispositions

Filings	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Supervised Administration	672	641	661	535	610
Unsupervised Administration	18,130	17,728	17,417	16,687	16,287
Small Estates	6,897	6,828	6,371	6,048	5,942
Trusts Inter Vivos and Trusts Testamentary	916	991	1,008	1,098	1,034
Determination of Heirs	20	25	19	23	19
Total Filings	**26,635**	**26,213**	**25,476**	**24,391**	**23,892**

Dispositions	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Supervised Administration	707	685	733	645	581
Unsupervised Administration	18,175	17,569	17,840	17,205	16,631
Small Estates	6,973	6,846	6,607	6,335	6,227
Trusts Inter Vivos and Trusts Testamentary	739	734	822	949	866
Determination of Heirs	14	17	16	18	20
Total Dispositions	**26,608**	**25,851**	**26,018**	**25,152**	**24,325**

Method of Disposition	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Petition Granted	26,157	25,384	25,580	24,635	23,862
Petition Denied	112	107	58	71	66
Petition Withdrawn, Dismissed	290	283	324	393	344
Other Dispositions*	49	77	56	53	53
Total Dispositions	**26,608**	**25,851**	**26,018**	**25,152**	**24,325**

* Includes orders determining testacy or heirs, cases transferred, and cases that changed case type.

The Estates and Protected Individuals Code became effective April 1, 2000. Since then, fewer decedent estates involve court-supervised administration. In 2007, courts were asked to supervise the administration of only 610 out of 16,897 new decedent estates.

In addition to new filings, probate courts' active pending caseload is used to assess the courts' judicial and administrative workload. Of the 38,089 estates and trusts that were active at the end of 2007, 3,071 were court-supervised at some point during the year. Probate courts also conducted follow-up procedures associated with the administration of these open estates.

Probate Court Trust Registrations and Wills

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Trust Registrations and Wills	13,195	12,543	11,457	10,777	11,350

In 2007, probate courts reported 11,212 wills filed for safekeeping and wills delivered after the testator's death. The courts also registered 138 trusts.

Probate Court Guardianship, Conservatorship, and Protective Proceeding Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Guardianships	17,176	16,322	16,624	16,730	16,434
Conservatorships	6,084	5,441	5,255	4,983	4,588
Protective Proceedings	425	427	478	430	506
Total Filings	**23,685**	**22,190**	**22,357**	**22,143**	**21,528**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Guardianships*	17,521	15,785	16,303	16,677	16,171
Conservatorships*	5,744	5,207	5,179	4,993	4,545
Protective Proceedings	380	374	434	391	483
Total Dispositions	**23,645**	**21,366**	**21,916**	**22,061**	**21,199**

* Guardianships include both adult and minor guardianships. Conservatorships include both adult and minor conservatorships.

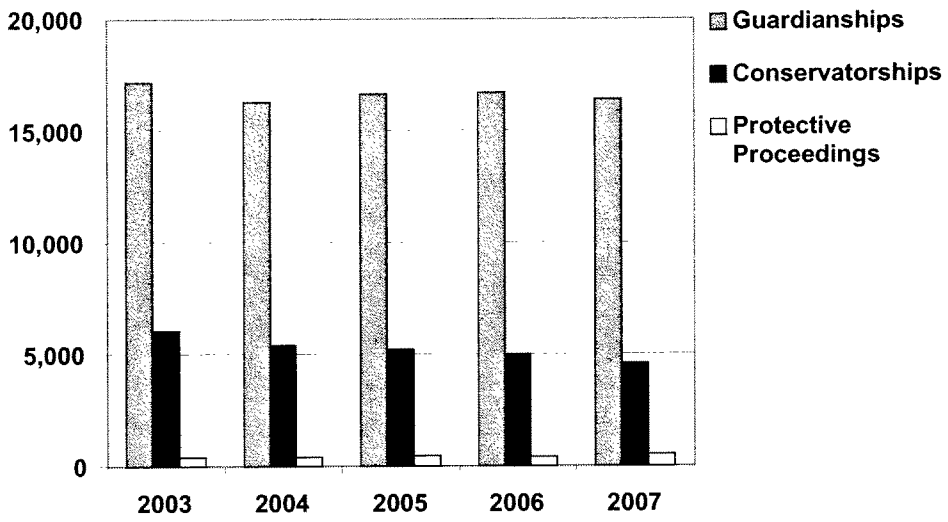
Disposition Method	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Petition Granted	19,568	17,374	17,967	18,054	17,358
Petition Denied	288	275	270	304	311
Petition Withdrawn, Dismissed	3,651	3,300	3,366	3,527	3,400
Other Dispositions	138	417	313	176	130
Total Dispositions	**23,645**	**21,366**	**21,916**	**22,061**	**21,199**

In 2007, 16,438 guardianship and 4,588 conservatorship petitions were filed. An additional 506 petitions for a protective order were filed separately from conservatorship petitions.

In 81.9 percent of the dispositions, the probate court granted the petition. Sixteen percent were withdrawn by the petitioner or dismissed by the court. The statewide clearance rate for guardianship, conservatorship, and protective orders was 98.5 percent.

At the end of 2007, there were 28,063 adults with a full or limited guardian, 27,879 minors with a guardian, and 20,600 developmentally disabled persons with a guardian. As of the end of that year, there were 13,822 adults and 13,190 minors with conservators.

Filings for Probate Court Guardianships, Conservatorships, and Protective Proceedings



Probate Court Mental Health Proceedings Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Mental Health	13,707	13,893	13,758	14,421	15,165
Judicial Admission	74	90	119	135	100
Total Filings	**13,781**	**13,983**	**13,877**	**14,556**	**15,265**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Mental Health	13,136	13,366	14,244	15,399	16,276
Judicial Admission	46	68	112	122	96
Total Dispositions	**13,182**	**13,434**	**14,356**	**15,521**	**16,372**

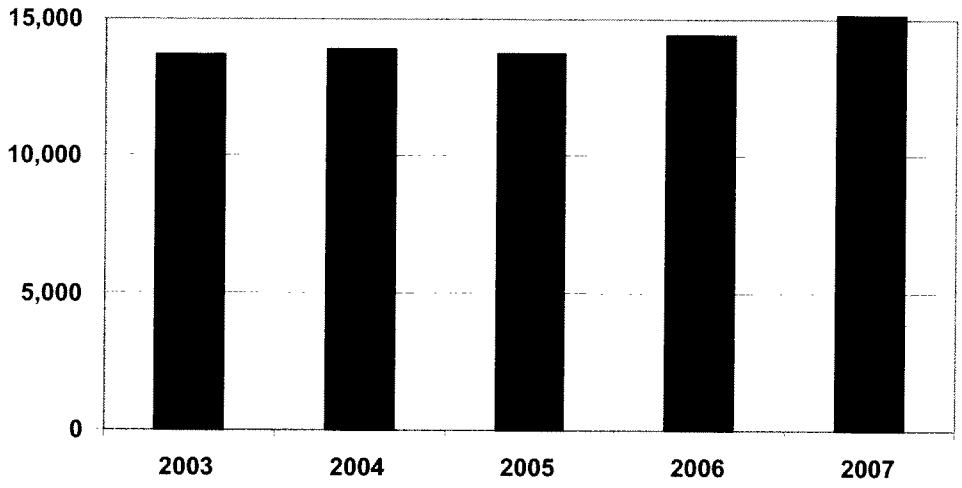
In 2007, 15,165 petitions were filed in probate court under the Mental Health Code. Of the 16,276 mental commitment petitions disposed in 2007, 50.1 percent were granted by the probate court. An additional 20.6 percent were dismissed by the court and 28.7 percent were deferred.

Probate courts also received 615 petitions for a second order of commitment and 1,794 petitions for a continuing order of commitment. The courts granted 577 petitions for a second order and 1,616 petitions for a continuing order.

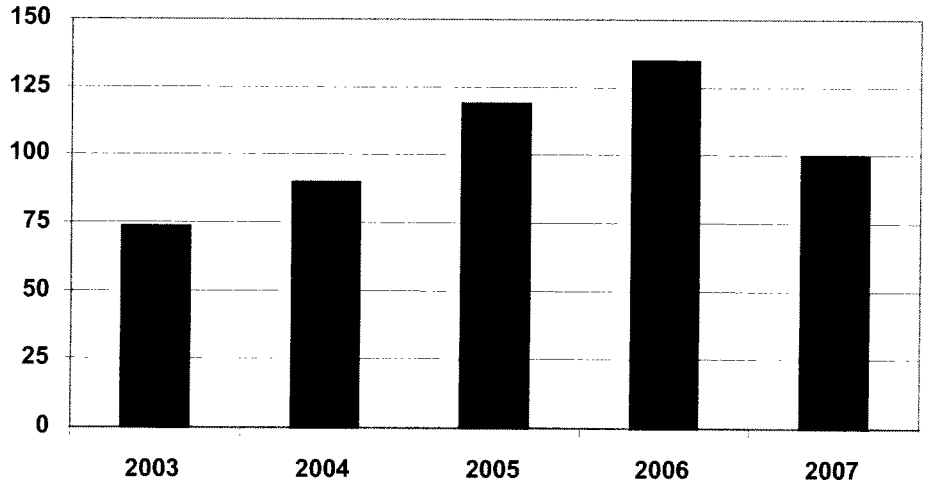
Supplemental petitions for court-ordered examination on an application for hospitalization and petitions for court-ordered transportation of a minor totaled 2,940.

There were 100 matters filed involving judicial admission of individuals with developmental disabilities. Of the judicial admission matters disposed of in 2007, the court granted 70.8 percent.

Probate Court Mental Illness Petition Filings



Probate Court Judicial Admission Petition Filings



Probate Court Civil and Miscellaneous Filings and Dispositions

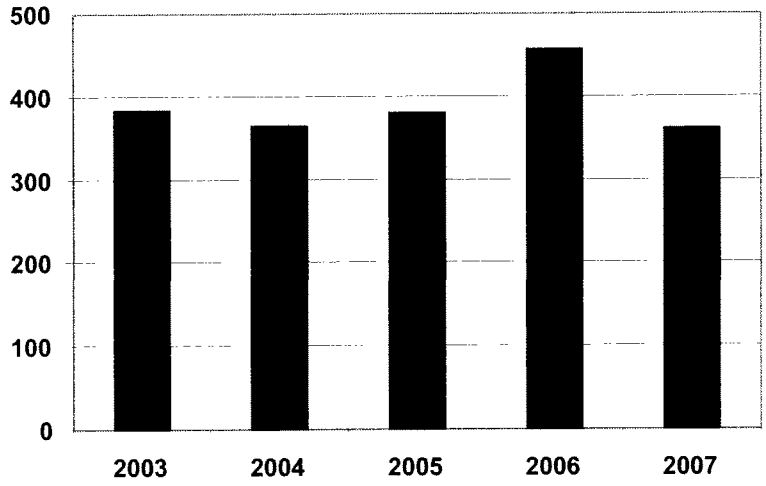
Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Civil	384	365	381	457	362
Miscellaneous	479	511	519	594	584
Total Filings	**863**	**876**	**900**	**1,051**	**946**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Civil	260	260	390	349	398
Miscellaneous*	409	429	496	576	566
Total Dispositions	**669**	**689**	**886**	**925**	**964**

* Includes death by accident/disaster, filings of letters by foreign personal representative, kidney transplants, review of drain commissioner, review of mental health financial liability, etc.

In 2007, 362 civil actions were filed in probate court. There were also 584 filings for miscellaneous matters, including petitions seeking judicial decisions regarding death by accident or disaster, kidney transplants, review of drain commission proceedings, review of mental health financial liability, secret marriages, etc.

Probate Court Civil Case Filings



DISTRICT COURT

The district court is often referred to as "The People's Court," because the public has more contact with the district court than with any other court in the state, and because many people go to district court without an attorney.

The district court has exclusive jurisdiction over all civil claims up to $25,000, including small claims, landlord-tenant disputes, land contract disputes, and civil infractions. The court may also conduct marriages in a civil ceremony.

The district court's small claims division handles cases in which the amount in controversy is $3,000 or less. Small claims litigants represent themselves; they waive their right to be represented by an attorney, as well as the right to a jury trial. They also waive evidence rules and any right to appeal the district judge's decision. If either party objects, the case is heard in the court's general civil division, where the parties retain these rights. If a district court attorney magistrate enters the judgment, the decision may be appealed to the district judge.

Civil infractions are offenses formerly considered criminal, but decriminalized by statute or local ordinance, with no jail penalty associated with the offense. The most common civil infractions are minor traffic matters, such as speeding, failure to stop or yield, careless driving, and equipment and parking violations. Some other violations in state law or local ordinance may be decriminalized, such as land-use rules enforced by the Department of Natural Resources and blight or junk violations. There is no jury trial for a civil infraction. In contrast to criminal cases, where the burden of proof is "beyond a reasonable doubt," the burden of proof for a civil infraction is by a preponderance of the evidence. Most civil infractions are handled in an informal hearing before a district court magistrate, although a judge may hear the case by request or on appeal.

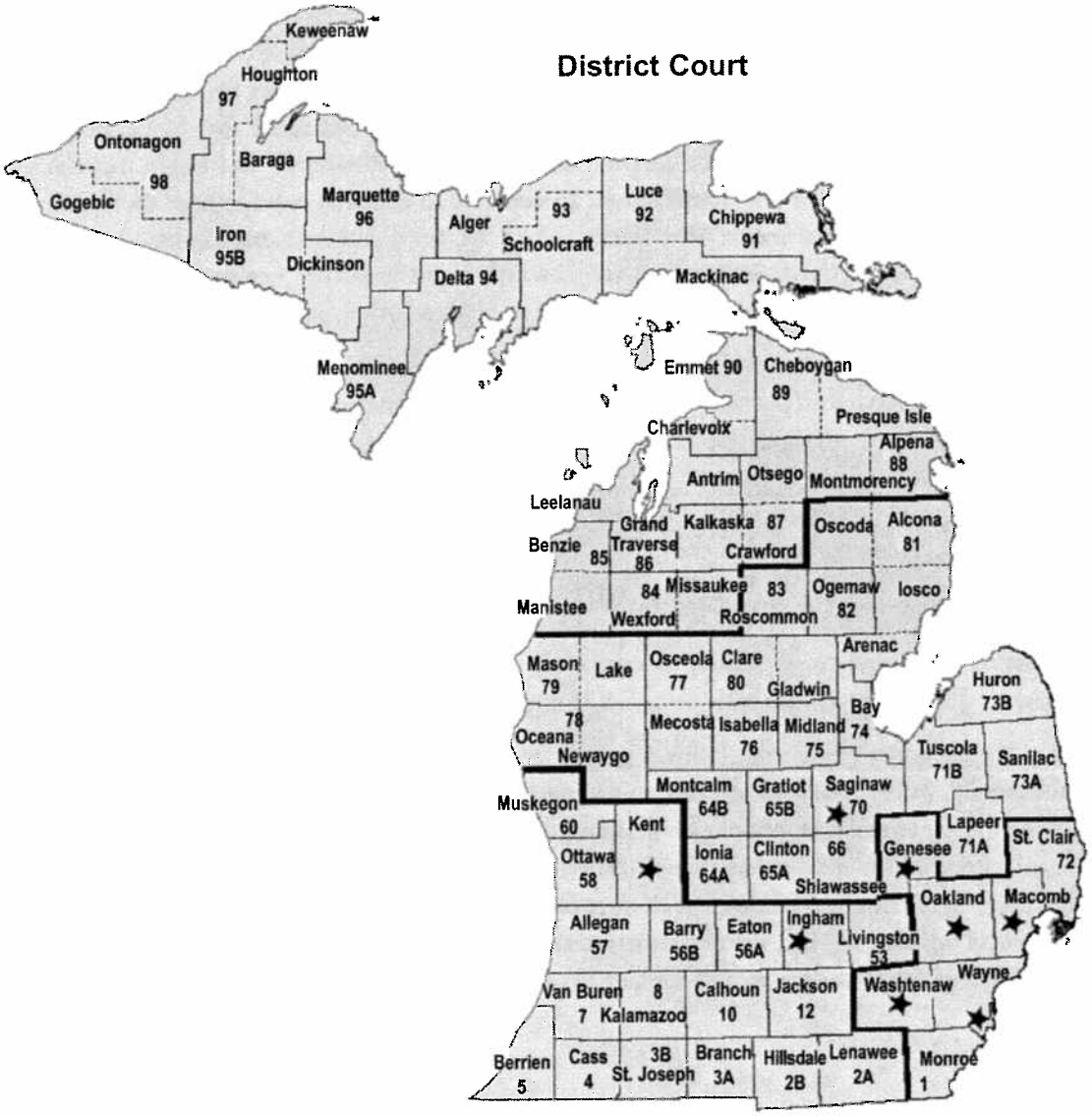
District courts handle a wide range of criminal proceedings, including misdemeanors, offenses for which the maximum possible penalty does not exceed one year in jail. In misdemeanor cases, the district court judge arraigns the defendant, sets and accepts bail, presides at the trial, and sentences the defendant. Typical district court misdemeanor offenses include driving under the influence of intoxicants, driving on a suspended license, assault, shoplifting, and possession of marijuana. The district courts also conduct preliminary examinations in felony cases, after which, if the prosecutor provides sufficient proofs, the felony case is transferred to the circuit court for arraignment and trial. The district courts also handle extraditions to another state for a pending criminal charge, coroner inquests, and issuance of search warrants. The court may appoint an attorney for persons who cannot afford a lawyer and may go to jail if convicted.

District court clerks may, with a judge's approval, accept admissions of responsibility to civil infractions, guilty pleas to certain misdemeanor violations, and payments to satisfy judgments. Indeed, as a general rule, people who come to district court are more likely to interact with court staff than with a judge, particularly on traffic civil infractions where the offender does not request a hearing. Clerks provide a variety of district court forms for the public at little to no cost, but may not give legal advice. By law, district courts provide information to various state agencies, such as the Secretary of State (motor vehicle violations) and the Michigan State Police (criminal convictions).

District courts can order probation for offenders; most district courts have a probation department to monitor offenders' compliance with probation. A judge can order a defendant to fulfill various conditions, including fines, classes, and treatment or counseling. With some exceptions, probation cannot exceed two years.

District judges have statutory authority to appoint district court magistrates. Magistrates may issue search warrants and arrest warrants when authorized by the county prosecutor or municipal attorney. They may also conduct arraignments and set bail, accept guilty pleas to some offenses, and sentence most traffic, motor carrier, and snowmobile violations, as well as animal, game, and marine violations. If the district court magistrate is an attorney licensed in Michigan, the magistrate may also hear small claims cases. At the chief judge's direction, the magistrate may perform other duties as provided by state law.

District judges are elected to six-year terms on a nonpartisan ballot, subject to the same requirements as other judges. The Legislature sets district judges' salaries.

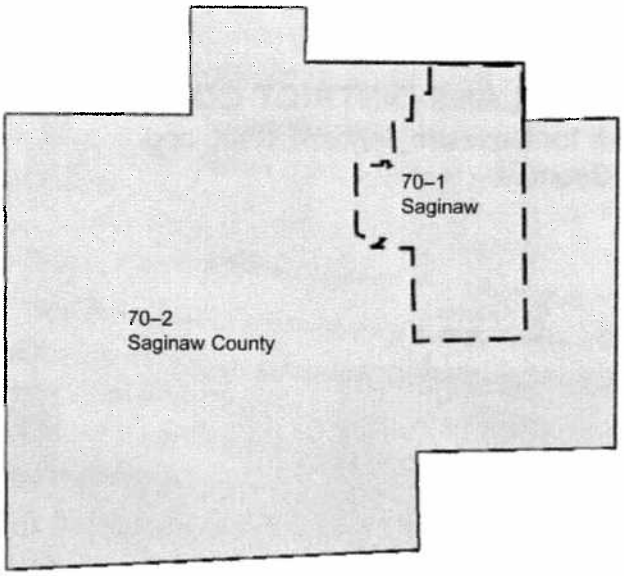


★ See detail maps.

1ST CLASS DISTRICT COURT

Detail Map for Saginaw County

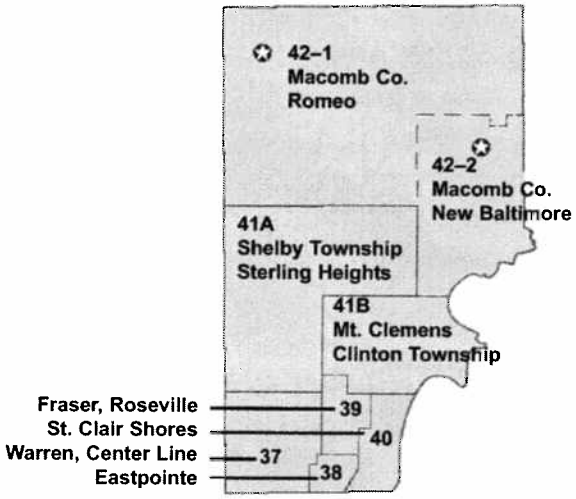
Saginaw 1 Court 6 Judges



2ND and 3RD CLASS DISTRICT COURT

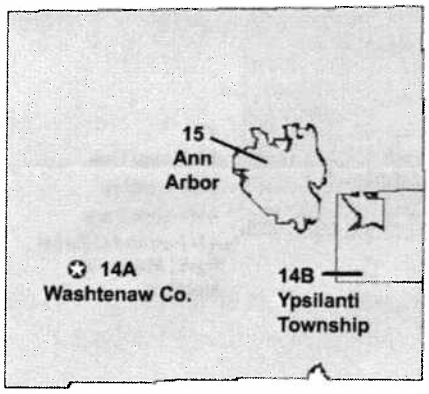
Detail Map for Macomb, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties

Macomb 7 Courts 19 Judges

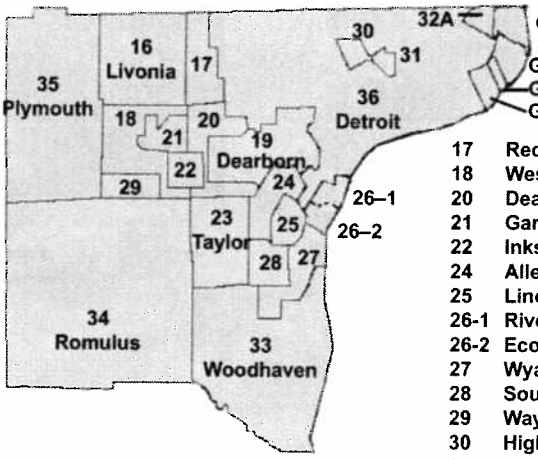


✪ Second Class District; all others are Third Class Districts

Washtenaw 3 Courts 7 Judges



Wayne 23 Courts 65 Judges



MUNICIPAL COURTS

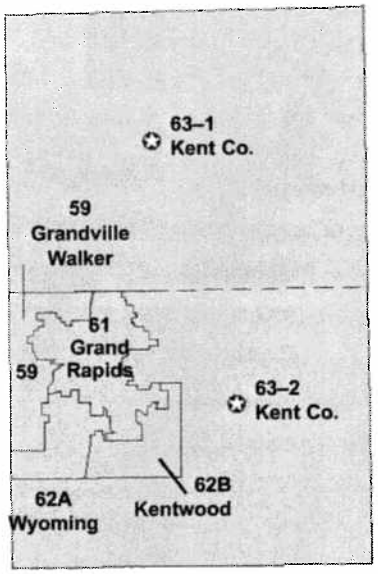
	Grosse Pointe Woods
	Grosse Pointe Farms
	Grosse Pointe City
	Grosse Pointe Park
17	Redford Township
18	Westland
20	Dearborn Heights
21	Garden City
22	Inkster
24	Allen Park, Melvindale
25	Lincoln Park
26-1	River Rouge
26-2	Ecorse
27	Wyandotte/Riverview
28	Southgate
29	Wayne City
30	Highland Park
31	Hamtramck
32A	Harper Woods

2ND and 3RD CLASS DISTRICT COURT

Detail Map for Genesee, Ingham, Kent, and Oakland Counties

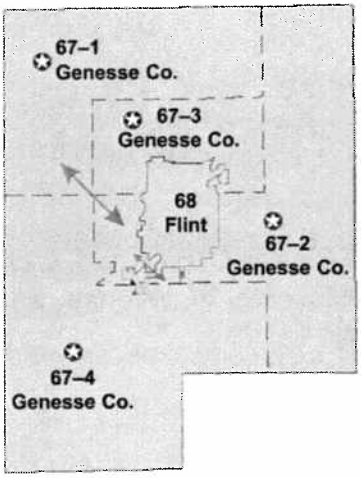
Kent

5 Courts
12 Judges



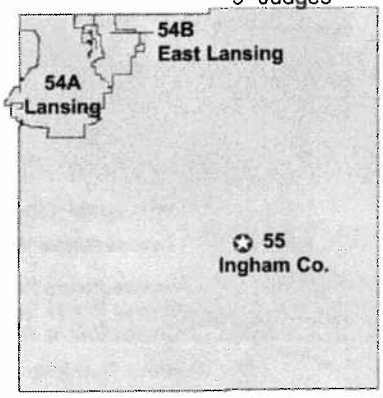
Genesee

2 Courts
12 Judges



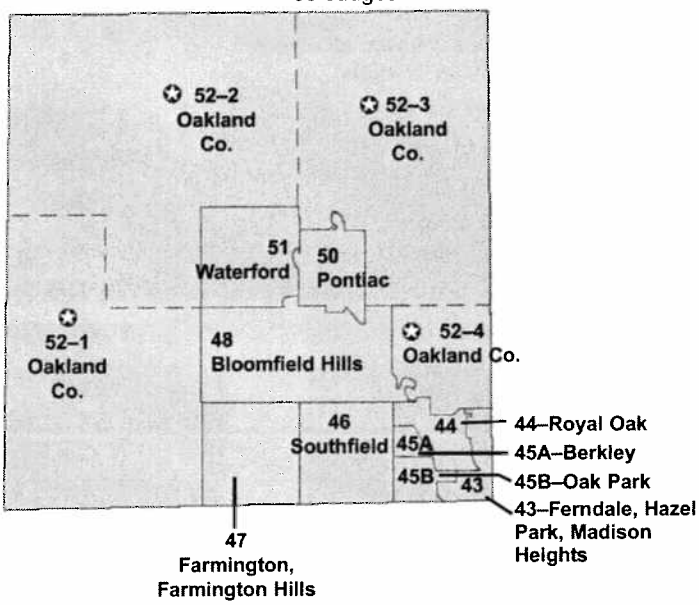
Ingham

3 Courts
9 Judges



Oakland

10 Courts
33 Judges



Second Class District; all others are Third Class Districts

District Court Judges (as of 1/31/08)

D01
Hon. Mark S. Braunlich
Hon. Terrence P. Bronson
Hon. Jack Vitale

D02A
Hon. Natalia M. Koselka
Hon. James E. Sheridan

D02B
Hon. Donald L. Sanderson

D03A
Hon. David T. Coyle

D03B
Hon. Jeffrey C. Middleton
Hon. William D. Welty

D04
Hon. Paul E. Deats

D05
Hon. Gary J. Bruce
Hon. Angela Pasula
Hon. Scott Schofield
Hon. Lynda A. Tolen
Hon. Dennis M. Wiley

D07
Hon. Arthur H. Clarke, III
Hon. Robert T. Hentchel

D08
(D08-1, D08-2 and D08-3 became D08 on 01/02/07)
Hon. Quinn E. Benson
Hon. Anne E. Blatchford
Hon. Paul J. Bridenstine
Hon. Carol A. Husum
Hon. Robert C. Kropf
Hon. Richard A. Santoni
Hon. Vincent C. Westra

D10
Hon. Samuel I. Durham, Jr.
Hon. John R. Holmes
Hon. Franklin K. Line, Jr.
Hon. Marvin Ratner

D12
Hon. Charles J. Falahee, Jr.[R] (left the court 5/1/07)
Hon. Joseph S. Filip
Hon. James M. Justin
Hon. Michael J. Klaeren* (joined the court 8/6/07)
Hon. R. Darryl Mazur

D14A
Hon. Richard E. Conlin
Hon. J. Cedric Simpson
Hon. Kirk W. Tabbey

D14B
Hon. John B. Collins

D15
Hon. Julie Creal
Hon. Elizabeth Pollard Hines
Hon. Ann E. Mattson

D16
Hon. Robert B. Brzezinski
Hon. Kathleen J. McCann

D17
Hon. Karen Khalil
Hon. Charlotte L. Wirth

D18
Hon. C. Charles Bokos
Hon. Sandra S. Cicirelli[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

D19
Hon. William C. Hultgren
Hon. Mark W. Somers
Hon. Richard Wygonik

D20
Hon. Mark J. Plawecki
Hon. David Turfe[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)

D21
Hon. Richard L. Hammer, Jr.

D22
Hon. Sylvia A. James

D23
Hon. Geno Salomone
Hon. William J. Sutherland

D24
Hon. John T. Courtright
Hon. Richard Page

D25
Hon. David A. Bajorek
Hon. David J. Zelenak

D26-1
Hon. Raymond A. Charron

D26-2
Hon. Michael F. Ciungan

D27
Hon. Randy L. Kalmbach

D28
Hon. James A. Kandrevas

D29
Hon. Laura R. Mack

D30
Hon. Brigette R. Officer

D31
Hon. Paul J. Paruk

D32A
Hon. Roger J. La Rose

D33
Hon. James Kurt Kersten
Hon. Michael K. McNally
Hon. Edward J. Nykiel

D34
Hon. Tina Brooks Green
Hon. Brian A. Oakley
Hon. David M. Parrott

D35
Hon. Michael J. Gerou
Hon. Ronald W. Lowe
Hon. John E. MacDonald

D36
Hon. Lydia Nance Adams
Hon. Roberta C. Archer
Hon. Marylin E. Atkins
Hon. Joseph N. Baltimore
Hon. Nancy McCaughan Blount
Hon. Izetta F. Bright
Hon. Esther L. Bryant-Weekes* (joined the court 11/19/07)
Hon. Ruth C. Carter
Hon. Donald Coleman
Hon. Nancy A. Farmer
Hon. Deborah Geraldine Ford
Hon. Ruth Ann Garrett
Hon. Ronald Giles[E] (joined the court 1/1/07)
Hon. Jimmylee Gray
Hon. Katherine Hansen
Hon. Beverley J. Hayes-Sipes
Hon. Paula G. Humphries
Hon. Patricia L. Jefferson
Hon. Vanesa F. Jones-Bradley
Hon. Kenneth J. King
Hon. Deborah L. Langston
Hon. Willie G. Lipscomb, Jr.
Hon. Leonia J. Lloyd
Hon. Miriam B. Martin-Clark
Hon. Donna R. Milhouse
Hon. B. Pennie Millender
Hon. Cylenthia LaToye Miller
Hon. Jeanette O'Banner-Owens[F] (left the court 7/27/07)
Hon. Mark A. Randon
Hon. Kevin F. Robbins
Hon. David S. Robinson, Jr.
Hon. C. Lorene Royster

D37
Hon. John M. Chmura
Hon. Jennifer Faunce
Hon. Dawnn M. Gruenburg
Hon. Walter A. Jakubowski Jr.

D38
Hon. Norene S. Redman

D39
Hon. Joseph F. Boedeker

D39 (continued)
Hon. Marco A. Santia
Hon. Catherine B. Steenland

D40
Hon. Mark A. Fratarcangeli
Hon. Joseph Craigen Oster

D41A
Hon. Michael S. Maceroni
Hon. Douglas P. Shepherd
Hon. Stephen S. Sierawski
Hon. Kimberley Anne Wiegand

D41B
Hon. Linda Davis
Hon. Sebastian Lucido
Hon. Sheila A. Miller

D42-1
Hon. Denis R. LeDuc

D42-2
Hon. Paul Cassidy

D43
Hon. Keith P. Hunt
Hon. Joseph Longo
Hon. Robert J. Turner

D44
Hon. Terrence H. Brennan
Hon. Daniel Sawicki

D45A
Hon. William R. Sauer

D45B
Hon. Michelle Friedman Appel
Hon. David M. Gubow

D46
Hon. Stephen C. Cooper[R] (left the court 1/31/07)
Hon. Sheila R. Johnson
Hon. Susan M. Moiseev
Hon. William J. Richards* (joined the court 2/26/07)

D47
Hon. James Brady
Hon. Marla E. Parker

KEY
- * Appointed to succeed another judge
- A Appointed to another court
- E Newly elected to this court
- F Deceased
- N New judgeship
- R Retired

District Court Judges (as of 1/31/08)

D48
Hon. Marc Barron
Hon. Diane D'Agostini
Hon. Kimberly Small

D50
Hon. Leo Bowman[A]
(left the court 2/5/07)
Hon. Michael C. Martinez
Hon. Preston G. Thomas
Hon. Cynthia T. Walker

D51
Hon. Richard D. Kuhn, Jr.
Hon. Phyllis C. McMillen

D52-1
Hon. Robert Bondy
Hon. Brian W. MacKenzie
Hon. Dennis N. Powers

D52-2
Hon. Dana Fortinberry
Hon. Kelley Renae Kostin

D52-3
Hon. Lisa L. Asadoorian
Hon. Nancy Tolwin Carniak
Hon. Julie A. Nicholson

D52-4
Hon. William E. Bolle
Hon. Dennis C. Drury
Hon. Michael A. Martone

D53
Hon. Theresa M. Brennan
Hon. L. Suzanne Geddis
Hon. Carol Sue Reader[E]
(joined the court 1/1/07)

D54A
Hon. Louise Alderson
Hon. Patrick F. Cherry
Hon. Frank J. DeLuca
Hon. Charles F. Filice
Hon. Amy Krause

D54B
Hon. Richard D. Ball
Hon. David L. Jordon

D55
Hon. Rosemarie E. Aquilina
Hon. Thomas P. Boyd

D56A
Hon. Harvey J. Hoffman
Hon. Julie H. Reincke

D56B
Hon. Gary R. Holman

D57
Hon. Stephen E. Sheridan
Hon. Joseph S. Skocelas

D58
Hon. Susan A. Jonas
Hon. Richard J. Kloote
Hon. Bradley S. Knoll
Hon. Kenneth D. Post

D59
Hon. Peter P. Versluis

D60
Hon. Harold F. Closz, III
Hon. Maria Ladas Hoopes
Hon. Michael Jeffrey Nolan
Hon. Andrew Wierengo

D61
Hon. Patrick C. Bowler
Hon. David J. Buter
Hon. J. Michael Christensen
Hon. Jeanine Nemesi LaVille
Hon. Ben H. Logan, II
Hon. Donald H. Passenger

D62A
Hon. Pablo Cortes
Hon. Steven M. Timmers

D62B
Hon. William G. Kelly

D63-1
Hon. Steven R. Servaas

D63-2
Hon. Sara J. Smolenski

D64A
Hon. Raymond P. Voet

D64B
Hon. Donald R. Hemingsen

D65A
Hon. Richard D. Wells

D65B
Hon. James B. Mackie

D66
Hon. Ward L. Clarkson
Hon. Terrance P. Dignan

D67-1
Hon. David J. Goggins

D67-2
Hon. John L. Conover
Hon. Richard L. Hughes

D67-3
Hon. Larry Stecco

D67-4
Hon. Mark C. McCabe
Hon. Christopher Odette

D68
Hon. Tracy L. Collier-Nix*
(joined the court 12/10/07)

D68 (continued)
Hon. William H. Crawford, II
Hon. Herman Marable, Jr.
Hon. Michael D. McAra[R]
(left the court 3/31/07)
Hon. Nathaniel C. Perry, III
Hon. Ramona M. Roberts

D70-1
Hon. Terry L. Clark
Hon. M. Randall Jurrens
Hon. M. T. Thompson, Jr.

D70-2
Hon. Christopher S. Boyd
Hon. A.T. Frank
Hon. Kyle Higgs Tarrant

D71A
Hon. Laura Cheger Barnard
Hon. John T. Connolly

D71B
Hon. Kim David Glaspie

D72
Hon. Richard A. Cooley, Jr.
Hon. John Monaghan[E]
(joined the court 1/1/07)
Hon. Cynthia Siemen Platzer

D73A
Hon. James A. Marcus

D73B
Hon. Karl E. Kraus[R]
(left the court 1/1/08)

D74
Hon. Craig D. Alston
Hon. Timothy J. Kelly
Hon. Scott J. Newcombe

D75
Hon. Stephen Carras[E]
(joined the court 1/1/07)
Hon. John Henry Hart

D76
Hon. William R. Rush

D77
Hon. Susan H. Grant

D78
Hon. H. Kevin Drake

D79
Hon. Peter J. Wadel

D80
Hon. Gary J. Allen

D81
Hon. Allen C. Yenior

D82
Hon. Richard E. Noble

D83
Hon. Daniel L. Sutton

D84
Hon. David A. Hogg

D85
Hon. Brent V. Danielson

D86
Hon. John D. Foresman
Hon. Michael J. Haley
Hon. Thomas J. Phillips

D87
Hon. Patricia A. Morse

D88
Hon. Theodore O. Johnson

D89
Hon. Harold A. Johnson, Jr.

D90
Hon. Richard W. May

D91
Hon. Michael W. MacDonald

D92
Hon. Beth Gibson

D93
Hon. Mark E. Luoma

D94
Hon. Glen A Pearson

D95A
Hon. Jeffrey G. Barstow

D95B
Hon. Michael J. Kusz

D96
Hon. Dennis H. Girard
Hon. Roger W. Kangas

D97
Hon. Phillip L. Kukkonen

D98
Hon. Anders B. Tingstad, Jr.

KEY
- * Appointed to succeed another judge
- A Appointed to another court
- E Newly elected to this court
- F Deceased
- N New judgeship
- R Retired

District Court Filings

In 2007, a total of 4,069,326 cases and parking tickets were filed in district courts. The majority (53.6 percent) were misdemeanor traffic and traffic civil infractions, including drunk driving. Felonies, including felony drunk driving and felony traffic cases, accounted for 2.2 percent of new district court filings. Civil cases accounted for 17.3 percent of new filings.

District Court Non-Traffic Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Felony and Extradition	78,121	81,535	83,271	83,044	84,258
Misdemeanor	336,827	264,430	266,871	270,588	281,506
Civil Infractions	43,798	44,164	51,866	62,436	69,189
Total Filings	**458,746**	**390,129**	**402,008**	**416,068**	**434,953**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Felony and Extradition	79,911	83,505	85,707	86,912	85,106
Misdemeanor	291,309	267,942	268,482	266,086	266,055
Civil Infractions	42,105	51,076	57,018	65,597	71,586
Total Dispositions	**413,325**	**402,523**	**411,207**	**418,595**	**422,747**

Method of Disposition	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Jury Verdict	987	924	881	824	819
Bench Verdict	12,052	10,479	9,938	6,646	4,379
Verdict at Hearing	NA	NA	NA	NA	3,382
Guilty Plea/Admission/Waiver	204,402	198,991	201,323	214,202	216,622
Bindover/Transfer	50,443	53,289	54,759	60,293	58,848
Dismissal by Party	67,058	73,176	72,631	65,691	68,412
Dismissal by Court	48,410	31,799	35,130	38,212	38,291
Default	13,048	18,860	23,970	29,591	31,682
Other Dispositions	16,925	15,005	12,575	3,136	312
Total Dispositions	**413,325**	**402,523**	**411,207**	**418,595**	**422,747**

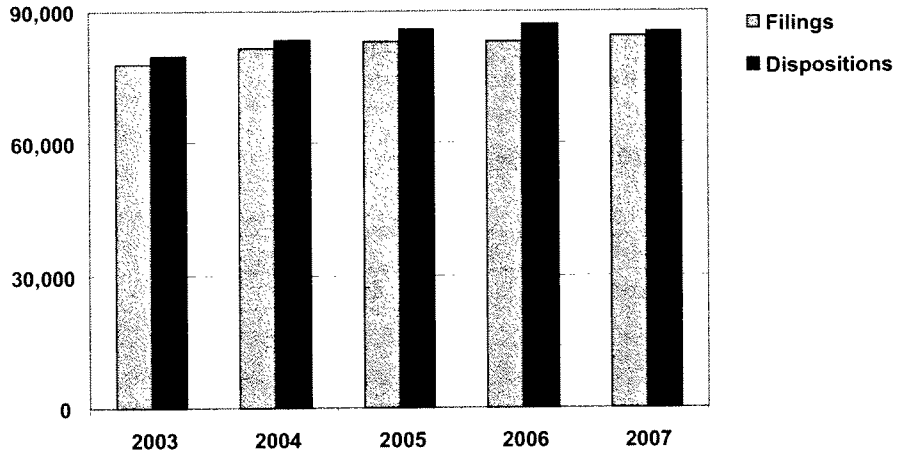
In 2007, district courts received a total of 434,953 filings in non-traffic felony, non-traffic misdemeanor, and non-traffic civil infraction cases.

Since 2003, non-traffic felony filings have increased by 7.9 percent, and have remained over 80,000 for the fourth year in a row. The majority (69.1 percent) were bound over to circuit court.

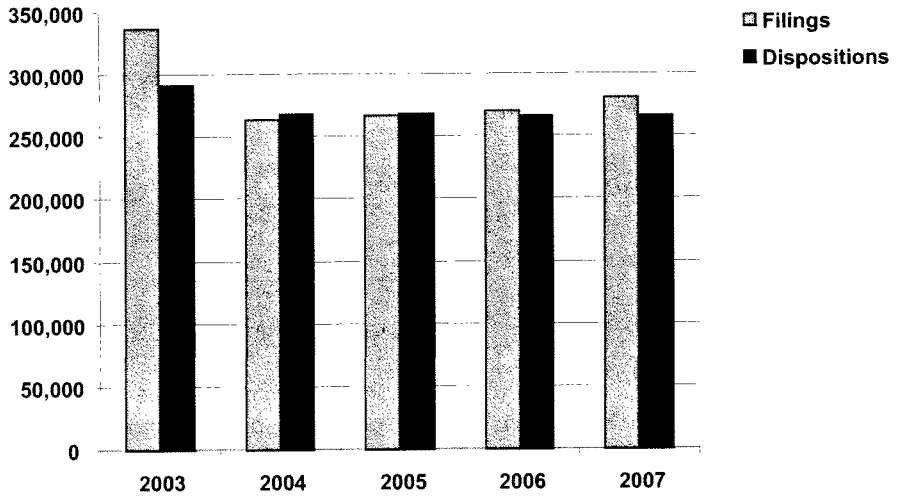
Non-traffic misdemeanor filings (both ordinance and statute), conversely, remained under 300,000 after declining by 21.5 percent from 2003 to 2004. In the majority (65.9 percent) of cases, the court accepted the defendant's guilty plea; 32.2 percent were dismissed upon the prosecutor's or city attorney's motion, or by the court.

Non-traffic civil infraction (both ordinance and statute) filings continued to increase, totaling 69,189. In 44.3 percent of cases, the court entered a default judgment after the respondent failed to appear. In 35.4 percent, the court accepted the respondent's admission of responsibility. In 4.7 percent, a judge or magistrate decided the matter after a formal or informal hearing.

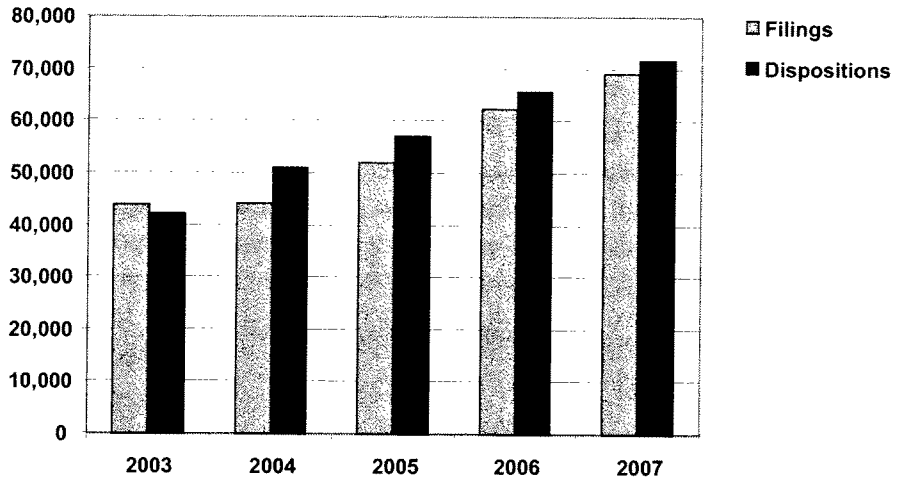
District Court Non-Traffic Felony Case Filings and Dispositions



District Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Case Filings and Dispositions



District Court Non-Traffic Civil Infraction Case Filings and Dispositions



District Court Traffic Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Misdemeanor	435,042	295,868	286,036	306,484	299,800
Civil Infraction	1,742,497	1,715,278	1,776,916	1,795,348	1,828,735
OWI Misdemeanor and Felony	59,788	56,140	55,668	54,096	50,916
Total Filings	**2,237,327**	**2,067,286**	**2,118,620**	**2,155,928**	**2,179,451**

Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Misdemeanor	373,969	278,471	272,597	288,793	276,694
Civil Infraction	1,819,642	1,865,794	1,879,883	1,844,866	1,867,554
OWI Misdemeanor and Felony	58,939	58,161	57,218	54,441	52,395
Total Dispositions	**2,252,550**	**2,202,426**	**2,209,698**	**2,188,100**	**2,196,643**

Disposition Method	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Jury Verdict	454	399	414	391	337
Bench Verdict	137,155	145,648	135,939	133,516	149,977
Guilty Plea/Admission/Waiver	1,346,643	1,246,688	1,254,456	1,289,722	1,287,637
Bindover/Transfer	3,388	3,258	2,946	2,749	3,969
Dismissal by Party	110,189	129,683	130,383	138,586	142,273
Dismissal by Court	142,049	128,924	128,460	129,622	135,748
Default	500,362	538,558	549,890	492,922	476,260
Other Dispositions	12,310	9,268	7,210	592	442
Total Dispositions	**2,252,550**	**2,202,426**	**2,209,698**	**2,188,100**	**2,196,643**

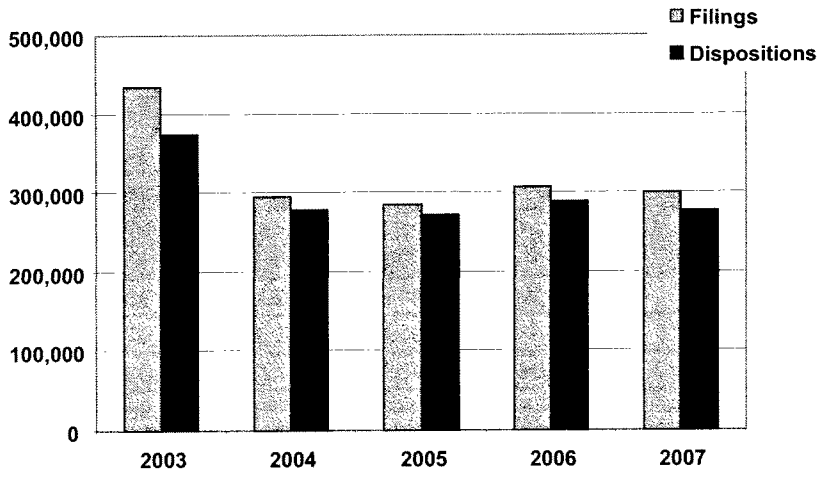
In 2007, 2,179,451 traffic cases, including misdemeanors, civil infractions, and drunk driving, were filed. The overwhelming majority (83.9 percent) were civil infractions.

Misdemeanor traffic cases returned to a downward trend. Filings decreased by 2.2 percent, from 306,484 in 2006 to 299,800 in 2007. The statewide clearance rate for misdemeanor traffic cases was 99.9 percent in 2007. In 70.5 percent of cases, the court accepted the defendant's guilty plea. Another 27.2 percent were dismissed on the plaintiff's motion or upon action by the court.

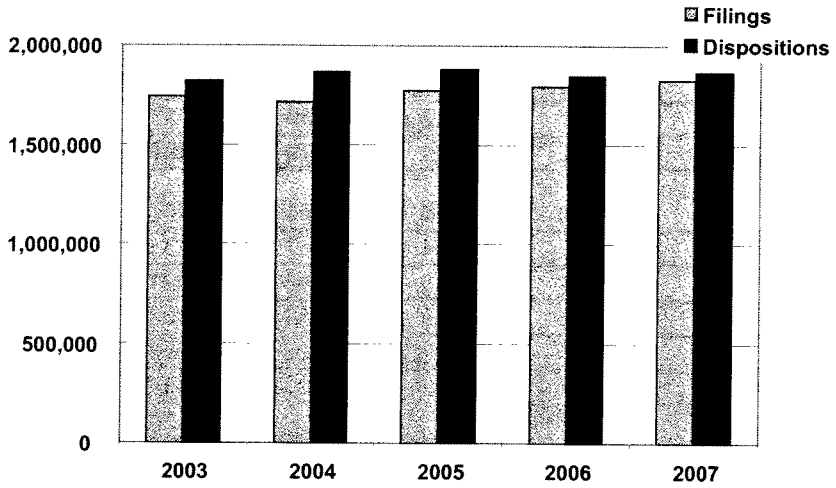
Traffic civil infraction filings remained relatively stable between 2003 and 2007, at more than 1.7 million per year. The statewide clearance rate was 99.7 percent in 2007. In over half (56.1 percent) of traffic civil infraction cases, the court accepted the respondent's admission of responsibility. In 25.5 percent, the court entered a default judgment after the respondent failed to appear or respond; 10.7 percent were dismissed upon motion by the plaintiff or upon action by the court. In 7.7 percent of the cases, a judge or magistrate decided the matter after a formal or informal hearing.

Drunk driving case filings continued to decrease in 2007; 50,916 felony, misdemeanor, and ordinance drunk driving cases were filed. Of the drunk driving filings, 5,323 (10.4 percent) were felony cases. The statewide clearance rate for drunk driving cases was 101.3 percent. Of the felony drunk driving cases, 76.1 percent were bound over to circuit court. In 91.3 percent of the misdemeanor and ordinance drunk driving cases, the court accepted the defendant's guilty plea; 7.4 percent were dismissed and 1.2 percent were heard by the court and resulted in a verdict.

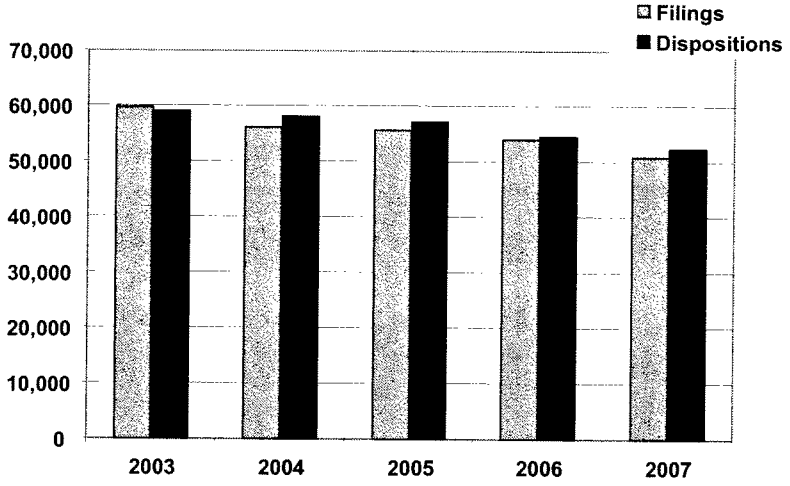
District Court Traffic Misdemeanor Case Filings



District Court Traffic Civil Infraction Case Filings and Dispositions



District Court OWI Case Filings and Dispositions



District Court Civil Filings and Dispositions

Filings	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
General & Miscellaneous Civil	298,802	277,855	288,536	317,165	379,418
Small Claims	101,680	93,935	90,383	89,167	84,803
Summary Proceedings	217,596	211,213	213,535	222,738	238,591
Total Filings	**618,078**	**583,003**	**592,454**	**629,070**	**702,812**

District Court Civil Filings and Dispositions (continued)

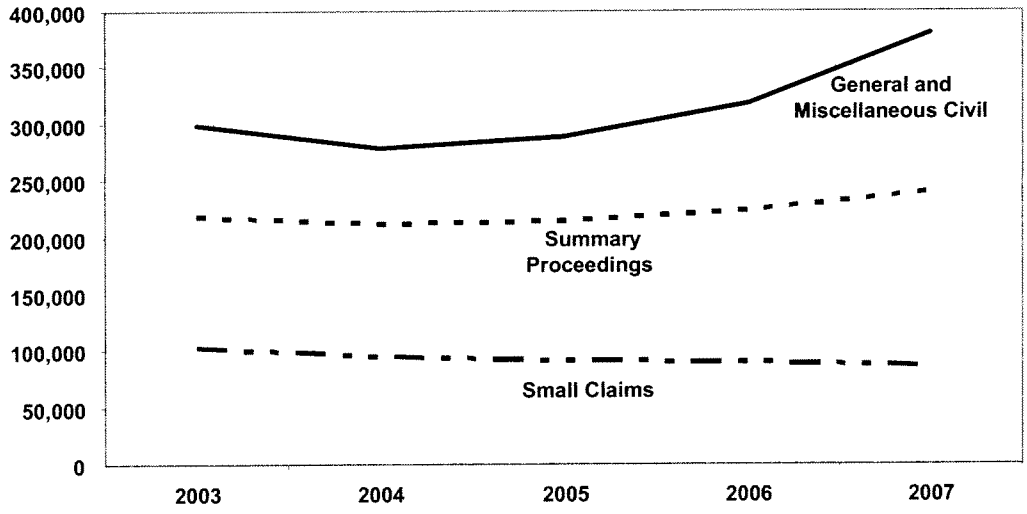
Dispositions	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
General & Miscellaneous Civil	283,576	299,321	274,435	305,010	358,574
Small Claims	103,089	97,233	90,629	90,129	86,728
Summary Proceedings	196,323	193,667	188,222	219,840	237,537
Total Dispositions	**582,988**	**590,221**	**553,286**	**614,979**	**682,839**

Disposition Method	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Jury Verdict	92	137	154	367	131
Bench Verdict	33,945	34,861	32,345	33,593	34,921
Uncontested/Default/Settled	364,591	370,135	344,776	376,113	430,258
Bindover/Transfer	5,206	4,728	4,118	4,029	3,963
Dismissal by Party	114,237	113,735	107,657	118,463	121,314
Dismissal by Court	61,921	64,666	61,793	80,769	90,594
Case Type Change	116	222	183	104	139
Other Dispositions	2,880	1,737	2,260	1,541	1,519
Total Dispositions	**582,988**	**590,221**	**553,286**	**614,979**	**682,839**

In 2007, filings continued to increase for general civil suits, miscellaneous civil suits, landlord-tenant summary proceedings, and land contract summary proceedings. Small claims cases, however, declined by 20 percent from a peak in 2001 of 105,971 filings.

Most civil cases (63 percent) were disposed of by default, consent judgment, settlement, or summary disposition. In 31 percent, the case was dismissed by the plaintiff or the court. A judge or jury decided 5.1 percent of the civil cases.

District Court Civil Case Filings



MUNICIPAL COURT

Municipal Court Judges

Municipal Court of Grosse Pointe (MGP)
Hon. Russell F. Ethridge

Municipal Court of Grosse Pointe Farms (MGPF)
Hon. Matthew R. Rumora

Municipal Court of Grosse Pointe Park (MGPP)
Hon. Carl F. Jarboe

Municipal Court of Grosse Pointe Woods (MGPW)
Hon. Lynne A. Pierce

Municipal Court Filings and Dispositions

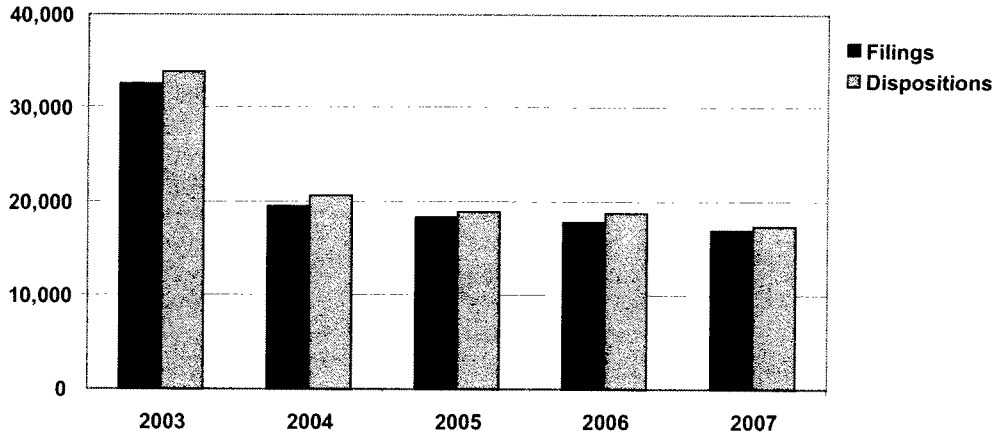
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Filings	32,533	19,465	18,346	17,832	17,004
Dispositions	33,905	20,699	18,935	18,729	17,342

On 1/1/2004, Eastpointe Municipal Court became a district court. Parking cases were excluded from both filings and dispositions in all years.

In 2007, 17,004 cases, excluding parking tickets, were filed in Grosse Pointe City, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park, and Grosse Pointe Woods municipal courts. The courts also received 24,768 parking tickets. These courts disposed of 17,342 nonparking cases and 25,769 parking tickets.

On January 1, 2004, the Eastpointe Municipal Court became a district court. The caseload for municipal courts, therefore, is lower for 2004 through 2007 than for previous years.

Municipal Court Filings and Dispositions



NUMBER OF TRIAL COURT JUDGESHIPS IN MICHIGAN

	Circuit Court	Probate Court	District Court	Municipal Court	Total
Region 1	113	22	143	4	282
Region 2	57	27	66	NA	150
Region 3	32	26	30	NA	88
Region 4	19	28	19	NA	66
Statewide	**221**	**103**	**258**	**4**	**586**

Circuit Court (as of 1/31/08)

Court	Region	# of Judges	Court	Region	# of Judges
C01	2	1	C30	2	7
C02	2	4	C31	1	3
C03	1	61	C32	4	1
C04	2	4	C33	4	1
C05	2	1	C34	3	1
C06	1	19	C35	3	1
C07	1	9	C36	2	2
C08	3	2	C37	2	4
C09	2	5	C38	1	3
C10	3	5	C39	2	2
C11	4	1	C40	3	2
C12	4	1	C41	4	2
C13	4	2	C42	3	2
C14	2	4	C43	2	1
C15	2	1	C44	2	2
C16	1	13	C45	2	1
C17	2	10	C46	4	2
C18	3	3	C47	4	1
C19	4	1	C48	2	2
C20	2	4	C49	3	2
C21	3	2	C50	4	1
C22	1	5	C51	3	1
C23	3	2	C52	3	1
C24	3	1	C53	4	1
C25	4	2	C54	3	1
C26	4	1	C55	3	2
C27	3	2	C56	2	2
C28	4	1	C57	4	1
C29	3	2			

Probate Court (as of 1/31/08)

Court	Region	# of Judges	Court	Region	# of Judges
P01	3	1	P45	4	1
P03	2	1	P46	2	1
P04	4	1	P47	2	1
P05	4	1	P50	1	2
P06	3	1	P51	4	1
P07	4	1	P52	4	1
P08	2	1	P53	3	1
P09	3	1	P55	4	1
P10	4	1	P56	3	1
P11	2	2	P57	4	1
P12	2	1	P58	1	2
P13	2	2	P59	3	1
P14	2	1	P60	4	1
P16	4	1	P61	2	2
P17	4	1	P62	3	1
P19	3	1	P63	1	4
P20	4	1	P64	3	1
P21	4	1	P65	3	1
P22	4	1	P66	4	1
P23	2	1	P68	3	1
P25	1	2	P69	4	1
P27	4	1	P70	2	1
P28	4	1	P71	4	1
P29	3	1	P72	3	1
P30	2	1	P73	3	2
P31	4	1	P74	1	2
P32	3	1	P75	2	1
P33	2	2	P76	3	1
P34	3	1	P78	3	1
P35	3	1	P79	3	1
P36	4	1	P80	2	1
P37	3	1	P81	1	2
P38	2	1	P82	1	8
P39	2	3	P83	4	1
P40	4	1	PD17	3	1
P41	2	4	PD18	3	1
P42	4	1	PD5	4	1
P43	3	1	PD6	4	1
P44	3	1	PD7	4	1

District Court (as of 1/31/08)

Court	Region	# of Judges	Court	Region	# of Judges
D01	1	3	D54A	2	5
D02A	2	2	D54B	2	2
D02B	2	1	D55	2	2
D03A	2	1	D56A	2	2
D03B	2	2	D56B	2	1
D04	2	1	D57	2	2
D05	2	5	D58	2	4
D07	2	2	D59	2	1
D08	2	7	D60	2	4
D10	2	4	D61	2	6
D12	2	4	D62A	2	2
D14A	1	3	D62B	2	1
D14B	1	1	D63	2	2
D15	1	3	D64A	3	1
D16	1	2	D64B	3	1
D17	1	2	D65A	3	1
D18	1	2	D65B	3	1
D19	1	3	D66	3	2
D20	1	2	D67	1	6
D21	1	1	D68	1	5
D22	1	1	D70	3	6
D23	1	2	D71A	3	2
D24	1	2	D71B	3	1
D25	1	2	D72	1	3
D26	1	2	D73A	3	1
D27	1	1	D73B	3	1
D28	1	1	D74	3	3
D29	1	1	D75	3	2
D30	1	1	D76	3	1
D31	1	1	D77	3	1
D32A	1	1	D78	3	1
D33	1	3	D79	3	1
D34	1	3	D80	3	1
D35	1	3	D81	3	1
D36	1	31	D82	3	1
D37	1	4	D83	3	1
D38	1	1	D84	4	1
D39	1	3	D85	4	1
D40	1	2	D86	4	3
D41A	1	4	D87	4	1
D41B	1	3	D88	4	1
D42	1	2	D89	4	1
D43	1	3	D90	4	1
D44	1	2	D91	4	1
D45A	1	1	D92	4	1
D45B	1	2	D93	4	1
D46	1	3	D94	4	1
D47	1	2	D95A	4	1
D48	1	3	D95B	4	1
D50	1	4	D96	4	2
D51	1	2	D97	4	1
D52	1	11	D98	4	1
D53	2	3			

Municipal Court (as of 1/31/08)

Court	Region	# of Judges
MGP	1	1
MGPF	1	1
MGPP	1	1
MGPW	1	1

Back cover: Demari Mathews, 14, sits in Muskegon County Family Court Judge Gregory C. Pittman's chair after Judge Pittman finalized his adoption. Sixteen children were adopted in Judge Pittman's courtroom on Michigan Adoption Day, November 20, 2007.

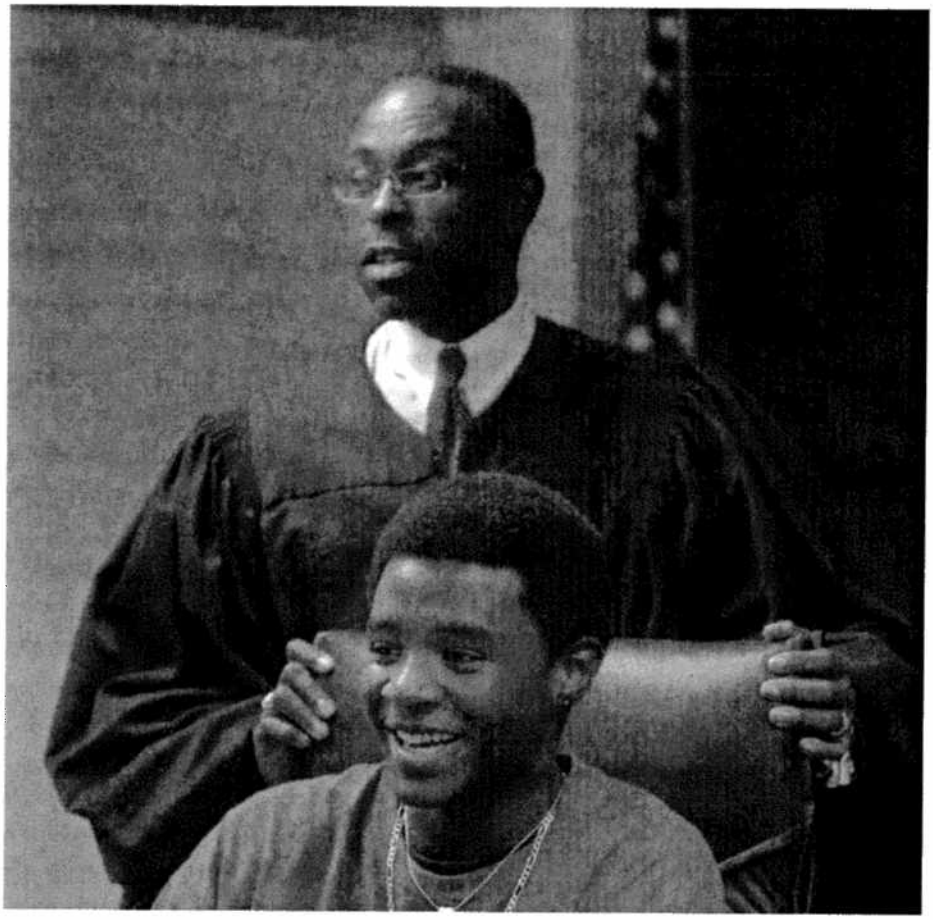



Photo credit: *Kendra Stanley-Mills*, Muskegon Chronicle.