

12th JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

STATE OF THE JUDICIARY

2000

The following is the 2000 Annual Report for the 12th District Court. The report summarizes the activities of the 12th District Court for the calendar year of 2000. The information is intended for informational purposes regarding the judicial business of the district court.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:

The 12th District Court collected a total of approximately \$6,666,834 in fines, costs and fees. Of that amount \$4,432,989 was deposited in the County General Fund. An amount of \$1,495,116.72 was collected for distribution to the State of Michigan. \$460,841 was collected for distribution to the Jackson County Library. Approximately \$502,000 was collected for the various municipalities in Jackson County (see Appendix)

REVENUE:

	COLLECTED	BUDGETED	PERCENT
GENERAL FUND DISTRICT COURT 101-136	\$4,225,124	\$4,231,015	99.86%
GENERAL FUND INTENSIVE PROBATION 101-279	\$110,504	\$125,000	88.40%
GENERAL FUND PUBLIC DEFENDER 101-230-689.080	\$97,361	\$89,000	109.39%
TOTAL	\$4,432,989.00	\$4,445,015.00	99.73

EXPENSES:

	EXPENDED	BUDGETED	PERCENT
DISTRICT COURT 101-136	\$2,717,993	\$2,827,146	96.13%
INTENSIVE PROBATION 101-279	\$120,323	\$175,910	68.40%
PUBLIC DEFENDER 101-230-800.000	\$96,894	\$110,000	88.08%
CAPITAL OUTLAY 402-978	\$65,447	\$66,890	97.84%
VEHICLES 402-979	\$0	\$0	0.00%
TOTAL	\$3,000,657.00	\$3,179,946.00	94.36%

FILE MANAGEMENT:

OFFENSE	1997	1998	1999	2000	Difference from 99
Criminal Felony	1384	1384	1372	1392	20
Criminal Misdemeanor	5111	4836	5135	5144	9
OUIL Felony	73	84	106	130	24
OUIL Misdemeanor	1115	1087	1081	1080	-1
Traffic Misdemeanor	8579	8442	10219	10478	259
Civil Infractions	38619	37725	45262	44628	-634
Non-Traffic Civil Inf.	1	2	8	22	14
General Civil	2776	3236	2870	3044	174
Small Claims	1875	1955	1770	2032	262
Summary Proceedings	2021	2285	2565	2763	198
Parking	347	214	270	369	99
TOTALS	61901	61250	70657	70713	

The court opened 71082 new cases in 2000. The following represents the case filings for 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000.

CIVIL DIVISION:

Pursuant to Michigan Court Rule (MCR) 2.403 allows a court to submit to case evaluation any civil action in which the relief sought is primarily money damages or division of property. The civil division adopted this policy in April of 2000. Since its implementation, eleven suits have utilized this alternative means to reach a settlement before trial.

Small claims court offers a way for people to legally settle relatively minor financial disputes without the expense of hiring legal representation. The design of small claims court is to hear and decide cases where the dispute involves a limited dollar amount. The jurisdictional dollar amount in 1999 was \$1,750.00. Legislature passed HB 4103 allowing jurisdictional change from \$1,750.00 to \$3,000.00 in Small Claims court to take effect on January 1, 2000. This jurisdictional increase has directly affected the increase in small claims filings for the year 2000.

In 2000, the district court civil division experienced increases in filings. General civil filings increased 174 suits; Small Claims filings increased 262 suits; and Landlord Tenant filings increased 198 suits.

There were 186 suits filed in 2000 in which plaintiffs seeking monetary relief in damages over \$10,000.00 but not exceeding \$25,000.00. This is an increase of 118 suits filed in 1999.

Garnishments

1998	5529
1999	6468
2000	6451

Writs of Execution and Restitution

1998	931
1999	1143
2000	1150

District court judges and magistrates performed 273 weddings in 2000.

COLLECTIONS DIVISION

The 12th District Court collection program had a great year in 2000. The collection program assisted the District, Circuit and Juvenile Court in collecting over 1 million dollars in court fines and costs.

The District Court Collection program is comprised of four collection agents and a deputy clerk. The court has contracted with a private collection agency to assist the court in collecting outstanding court fines and cost.

The 2000 goal for the Court Collection Program was \$1,100,000.00. The amounts collected for the year are as follows: \$1,085,016.68 for District Court, \$10,991.94 for Circuit Court and \$11,402.02 was collected for Family Court. Court Services, the contracted collection agency, collected \$147,702.60 in delinquent District Court fines. The total amount collected for the courts was \$1,255,113.24.

<i>INTERNAL COLLECTIONS</i>	
District Court	\$1,085,016.68
Circuit Court	\$10,991.94
Family (Juvenile)	\$11,402.02
TOTAL INTERNAL COLLECTIONS	\$1,107,410.58
<i>EXTERNAL COLLECTIONS</i>	
Court Services Inc.	\$147,702.60
TOTAL EXTERNAL COLLECTIONS	\$147,702.60
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$1,255,113.18</i>

Awards and Recognition

The Honorable Charles Falahee, Jr., Mike Dillon, Court Administrator for the 12th District Court and Rick Bradley, Chief Enforcement Officer were invited to the Annual Judges Conference in Traverse City, MI to present on collection practices. The 12th District Court was one of four presenters invited to the conference.

Family Court Collections 2000

Collection rates improved in 2000 for both the Circuit and Juvenile courts as compared to 1999. The collection department collected \$10,991.94 for Circuit Court and \$11,402.02 for Family Court. The increase is attributed to several factors. Family court is now located in the courthouse which allows better communication between the court and the collection agents. We also receive referrals from the Family Court for collection matters. We are continually reviewing the processes for Circuit/Family Court to make improvements to the program.

Warrant Enforcement

In 1999, the 12th District Court began entering all warrants into LEIN. This was a very large project. In the past, when the court issued a warrant, it was sent to the respective police agency to be entered into LEIN. To have the warrant removed from LEIN, the court had to contact the police agency and the warrant would be returned to the court. The warrant would be returned to the court within 1 to 3 business days. Sometimes warrants were not removed from LEIN at all and the defendant would be falsely arrested. These problems were the direct result of how we entered and canceled warrants from LEIN.

The court now enters all warrants directly into LEIN. If the court has to cancel the warrant from LEIN, it is automatic taking very little time to complete. If the police arrests a defendant after the courts regular business hours, the police agency can cancel the warrant from LEIN. The court will get an automatic notice sent to the Court LEIN computer terminal. This process has greatly reduced the potential liability of the court from lawsuits from false arrest. The court has greatly reduced the amount of paper work that has to be sent from the court to the police departments.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

During 2000, the criminal division of the court handled 1006 felonies, 4232 misdemeanors and 981 drunk driving cases.

In April of 2000 training of a new supervisor and clerical staff began and continued throughout the year. The deputy clerks attended a seminar hosted by the Michigan Judicial Institute, with training in Case File Management Standards, Professional Telephone Image, You and Your Boss: A Successful Team, Communication: Listening and Responding to Co-Workers, and Basic On-The-Job Grammar Skills. The supervisor attended two seminars in 2000 and a mid-management retreat hosted by Jackson County. This allowed the supervisor the opportunity to begin a Criminal Division Procedure/Policy Manual, in addition to her training within the division.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR 2001

The court hopes to have all clerks in the division cross-trained in the basic duties and operation of each station, in order to effectively keep the division running smoothly in times of short staffing. We also hope to have everyone in the division educated in the criminal process by learning more about what happens in the courtroom, as well as from a law enforcement perspective. The largest project, however, is also the most important goal for 2001. We are working together to produce a Criminal Procedure/Policy manual for the division, and are striving to have it completed before the end of the year.

PROBATION DIVISION:

In 2000 the 12th District Court probation department conducted 2,138 pre-sentence investigations, compared to 2,081 in 1999. October 2000 began a new fiscal year for a grant-funded program for a Domestic Violence Probation Officer. The probation department was awarded the Federal Grant for 4 years to help combat domestic violence in Jackson County. Since October 2000, we have averaged 35 new cases assigned to this officer per month.

The department has implemented an Intern Program and has had two interns during the course of the year. The department has moved forward in implementing the use of voice-activated software. The software has been loaded on each computer and currently one probation agent is using it when time permits. The departmental procedure manual is growing and assisting the probation agents and deputy clerks with their daily jobs.

The department has changed the screening and assessment tool used by probation agents for a more psychologically/personality based tool. Using this tool will assist the agents in determining the most appropriate method of treatment for each individual.

In 2000, the average number of pre-sentence investigations conducted per week was 6.85. With seven full-time probation officers handling caseloads of approximately 275.

The probation department continues to assist outside organizations such as, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (with monthly Victims Impact Panels), and the Jackson County Intermediate School District (making presentations at various schools on the effects of drinking and driving). The probation department currently has a staff member serving on the Coordinated Council Committee for Domestic Violence in an effort to contribute to intergovernmental agency relations and communication.

We continue to offer several different sentencing alternatives for defendants, including electronic monitoring which was used more frequently in 2000 due to the jail-overcrowding problem. Other alternative programs include, ankle tether, visual tether with on-site preliminary breath tests, on-site drug tests and watch patrol.

The intensive supervision program, which is a program designed to help eliminate jail overcrowding had a successful year with few violations and increased saved jail beds and revenue for the county. In 2000, 12,289 jail beds were saved which contributed to a \$414,155.00 savings in jail bed dollars. There were a total of 569 participants supervised throughout the year. There were a total of 53 violations during the year.

TRAFFIC DIVISION:

The 1999 record year for traffic citations came close to losing its first-place status by merely 300 tickets. For the first time in three years, the Traffic Department caseload did not increase. The year was without backlog as two deputy clerk positions were created for the department on a temporary basis in early 2000. By July, the positions were approved.

In May, the 56K line was installed from the Court's AS/400 to the Secretary of State's computer system. This enables customers' driving records to receive immediate clearance of a suspension issued for nonpayment of a traffic citation when the payment is made. Under the prior system, it could take up to two months for such information to reach a driving record. A written policy is in place for this process, and all 12th District Court personnel trained on it.

A grant was applied for and received from the Jackson Traffic Safety Counsel. This grant pays for one 15-hour employee.

In October the entire closed filing system was reorganized with new procedures to eliminate time consuming filing efforts.

The supervisor scheduled and met with the local police agencies in August in an effort to address concerns and open lines of communication among the organizations. An additional meeting was held at the Michigan State Police Headquarters in Lansing, Michigan, to investigate a paperless ticket system. That remains an open project.

The abstract reporting percentile increased to 94 percent for 2000. This is up nearly 50 percent from 1998, and 1 percent from 1999. A new process was put into place in December to ensure abstract correction before the 30-day period. With the new process in place, we project an increase for 2001.

The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system for the Traffic Department was approved in the 2001 budget. That project will continue in 2001, commencing with a requirement study.

The ticket upload program, which transfers tickets entered into the Sheriff Department's AS/400 to the Court's AS/400, was completed. Currently, Jackson County, Summit Township, and Leoni Township traffic citations are uploaded from the Sheriff's system, eliminating hand entry of tickets from those agencies.

It was the Traffic Department's goal to have at least two people trained during the year for each function of the Department. The duties that did not have this versatility were informal hearing scheduling, processing daily and monthly reports, entering truck tickets, and updating files from the Courtrooms. By the year's end, each position has a minimum of two deputy clerks trained to perform the task. Many departmental functions have three deputy clerks trained to perform it. This eliminates areas of work delay during vacations/illnesses.

In addition to the cross training departmentally, two deputy clerks from the Traffic Department provide coverage during staff meetings in the Civil Department. This practice will continue, and by the end of 2001, both Clerks will be fully cross-trained in Civil.

2001 Goals:

1. Move forward with IVR requirement study and implementation of system.
2. Accept credit card payments by telephone until the IVR system provides for this service. This will be a tremendous customer service enhancement. A policy will be developed, and two deputy clerks will be assigned to the process, one primary, and one backup.
3. Add two townships and the City of Jackson to the ticket upload program.
4. Accept payments via the Internet.

JUDICIAL SUPPORT DIVISION:

RECORDERS:

The court continues to contract court recorder services with Court Services of Jackson, Michigan. This initiative came to fruition after the administration of the court was spending a significant amount of time covering for recorders when on vacation or at conferences. These efforts have proven to be beneficial to the court especially when emergencies arise.

During September 1999, Gloria Alexander and Jennifer Meade attended the Michigan Electronic Court Reporters Association (MECRA) Conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The main focus of this conference was the new CD ROM Digital Court Technology being approved around the country.

In early 2000, the State of Michigan approved a new digital recording system that would keep real-time records of court proceedings. District Court was particularly interested in the new software because of cost and storage savings. Currently, the court struggles to find appropriate storage space for court documents. This new technology will allow the court to store twice the amount of information on disc which decreases the need for additional storage space.

District Court will pilot the new technology during 2001 in the newly constructed courtroom of the Honorable Lysle Hall. The State of Michigan has already approved digital recording for 12th Judicial District Court.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND INFORMATION:

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE:

Four new employees joined the sunshine committee of 12th District Court in 2000. The committee put on a variety of events with themes surrounding the Holidays' of the year. The highlight, of course, was the Holiday Party held in December. At this event, the first Employee of the Year Award was presented to Chad Surque, Probation Agent.

CASUAL DRESS COMMITTEE:

The participating employees of 12th District Court raised approximately \$800.00 for needy families in the Jackson area. During 2000, the court sponsored families from the Salvation Army and the Jackson Interfaith Shelter. As an added responsibility, the court adopted two teenagers from the Department on Aging Grandparent Christmas Program. This gave the court an opportunity to support the efforts of another department during this special time of the year.

The casual dress committee will take on the task of locating a nice denim shirt to add to the casual dress attire in 2001.

CLOSING:

On behalf of the administration of the court, I would like to express our gratitude to the Jackson County Board of Commissioners for the allocation of funds for the construction of a new courtroom and increased personnel in the traffic division of the court. These actions have positively impacted employee morale. The new courtroom has brought a professional look to the court and increased our physical services to the handicap community of Jackson. Positive employee morale has maintained in the traffic department since personnel are able to keep up with the demands of a high caseload.

This report is an attempt to provide to the Jackson County Board of Commissioners with a summary of district court activity during 2000. The administration of the district court recognizes the dedication and hard work exemplified by the employees of the district court. Their dedication and hard work have contributed significantly to the efficient operation of the 12th District Court. The administration of the court would like to thank the Jackson County Board of Commissioners and Chet Taraskiewicz, County Administrator, for their continued support of 12th District Court Operations. We at the court will continue to strive to be a model district court in the State of Michigan and would like to thank those who have contributed to our success thus far.

This report and other information is made available accessing the 12th District Court's website at www.d12.com.

Anethia O. Brewer
Deputy Court Administrator

APPENDICES

REVENUE COMPARED TO EXPENSES

REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

ANNUAL CASE FILINGS

ANNUAL CRIMINAL FELONY FILINGS

ANNUAL CRIMINAL MISDEMEANOR FILINGS

ANNUAL FELONY DRUNK DRIVING FILINGS

ANNUAL MISDEMEANOR DRUNK DRIVING FILINGS

ANNUAL TRAFFIC MISDEMEANOR FILINGS

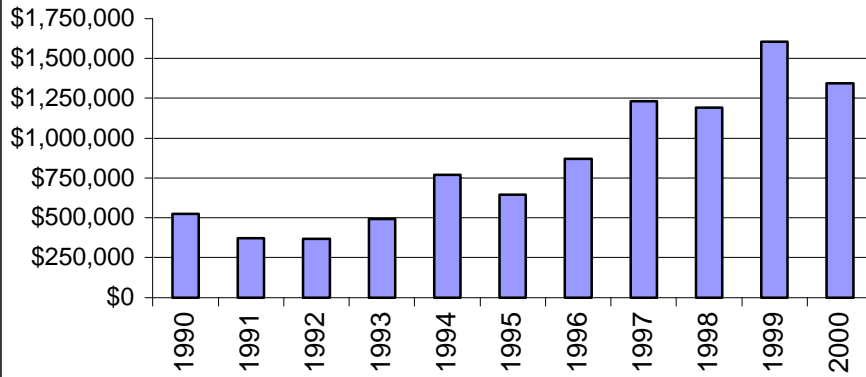
ANNUAL CIVIL INFRACTION FILINGS

ANNUAL GENERAL CIVIL FILINGS

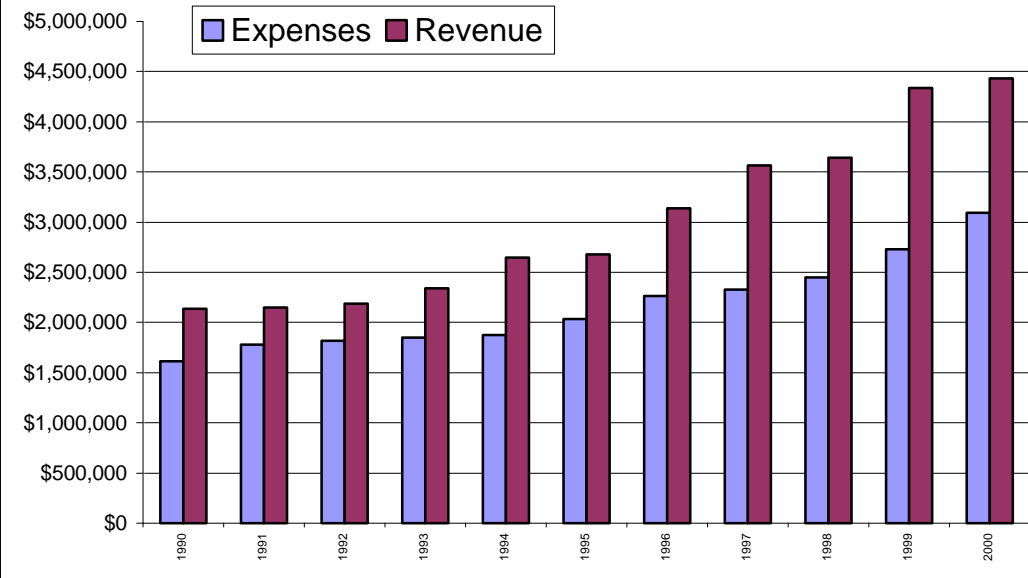
ANNUAL SUMMARY PROCEEDING FILINGS

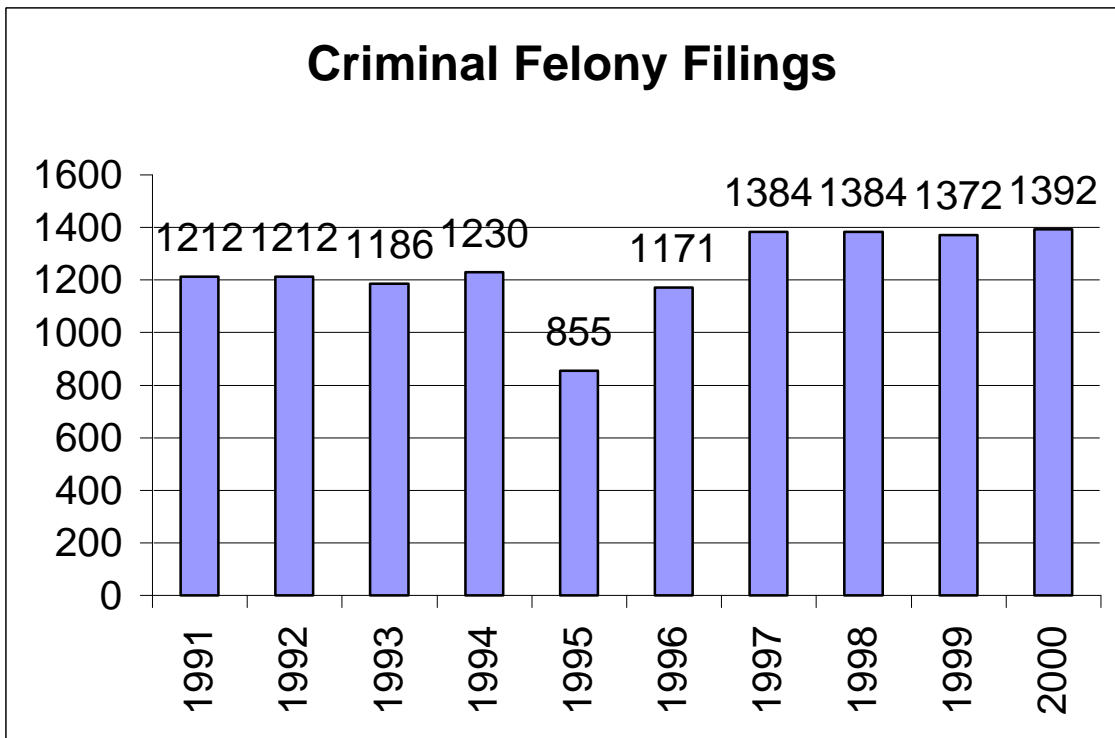
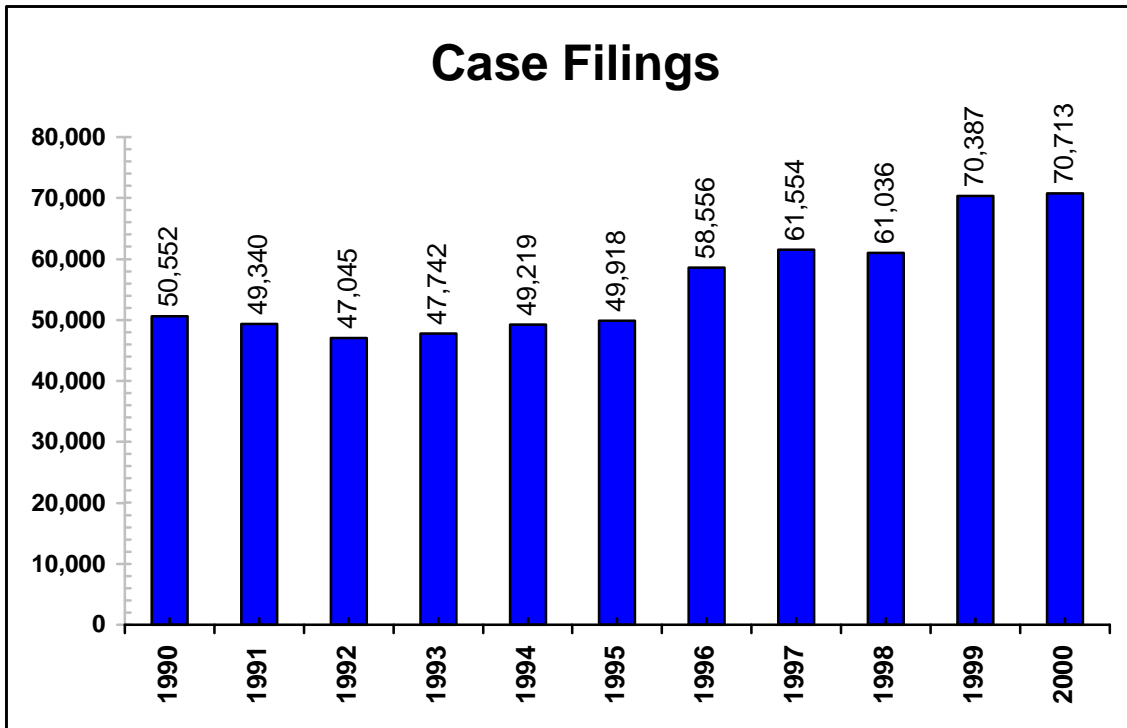
ANNUAL SMALL CLAIMS FILINGS

12th District Court Revenue Over Expenses

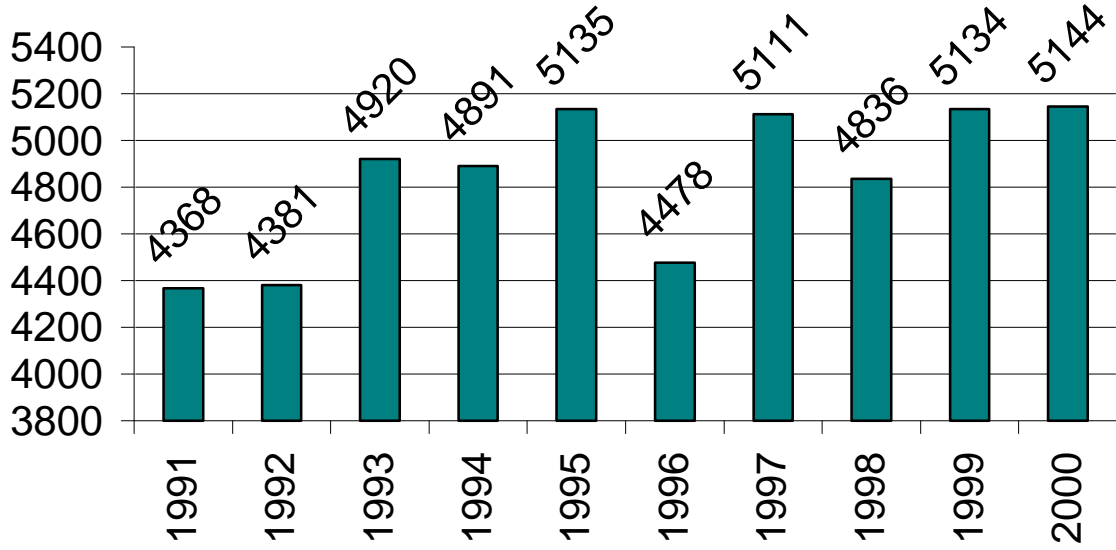


Revenue Compared to Expenses

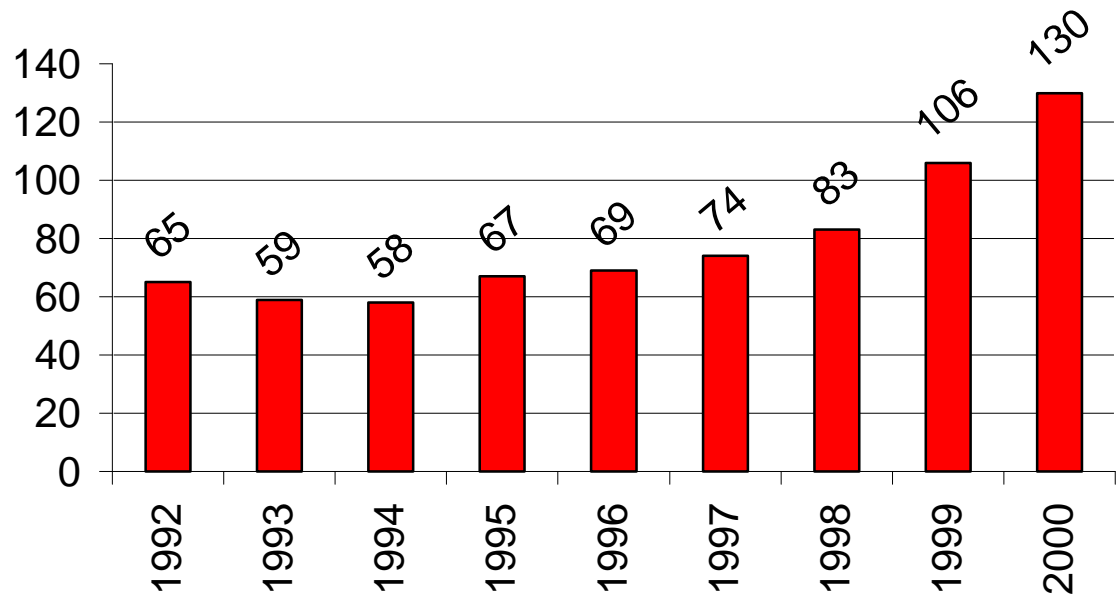




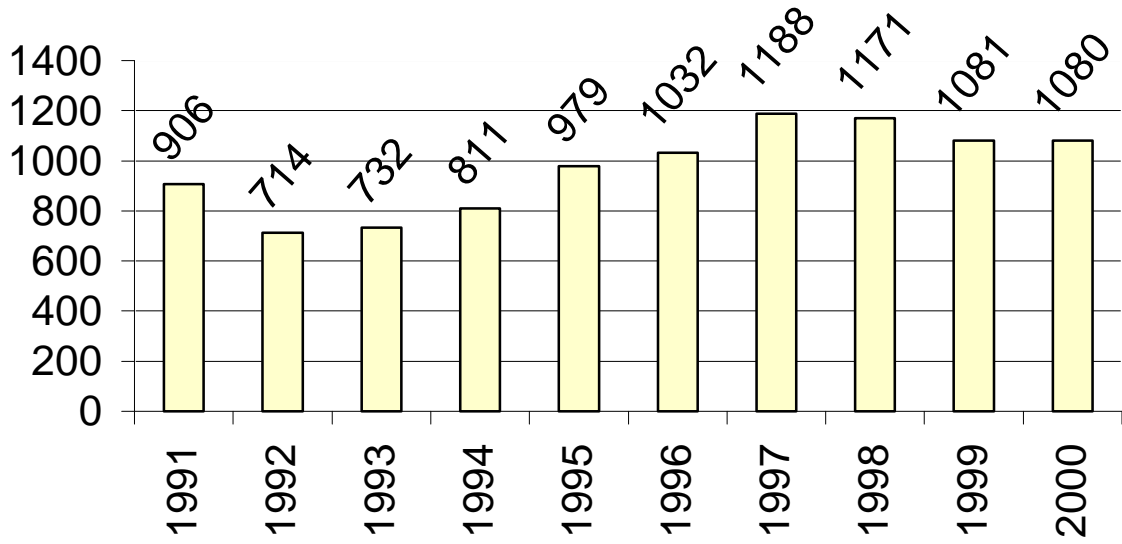
Criminal Misdemeanor Filings



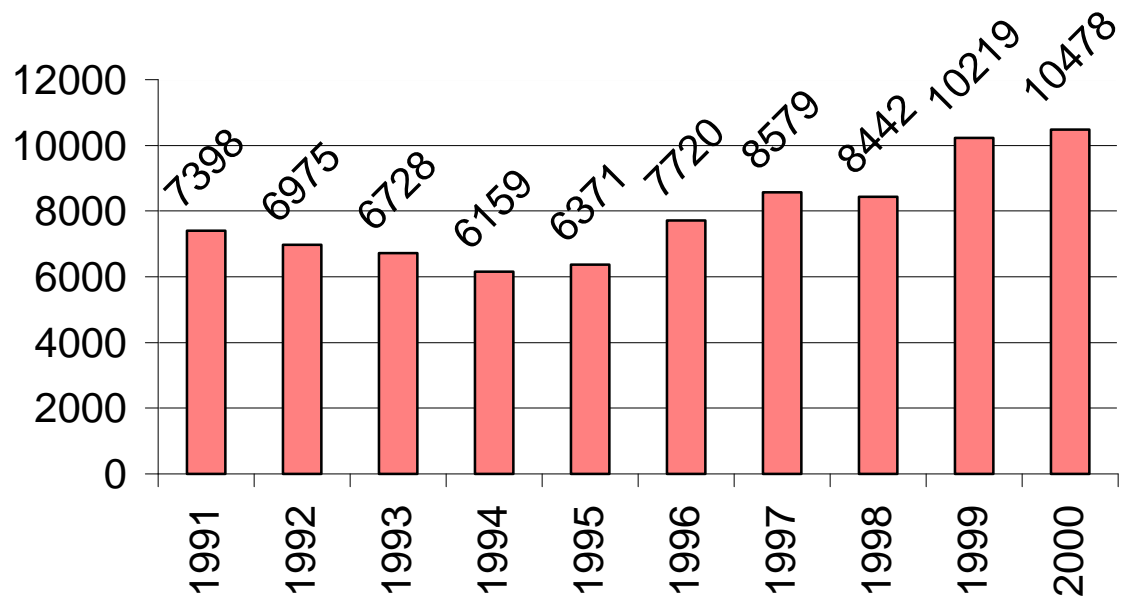
Felony Drunk Driving Filings

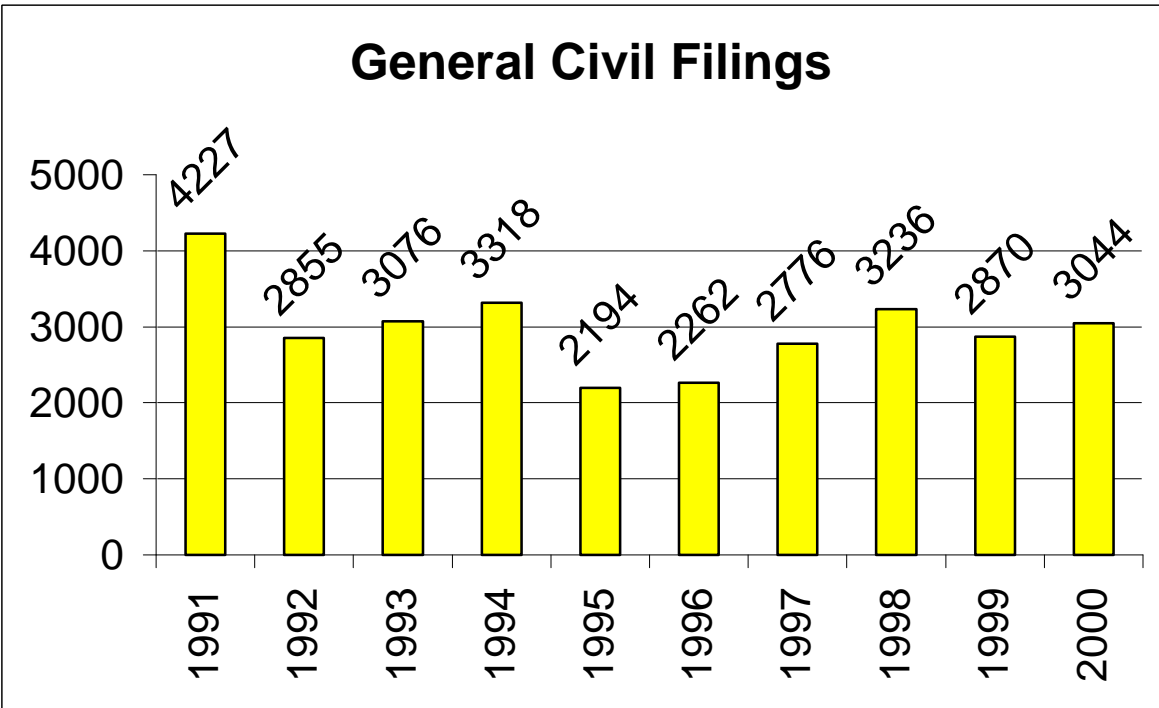
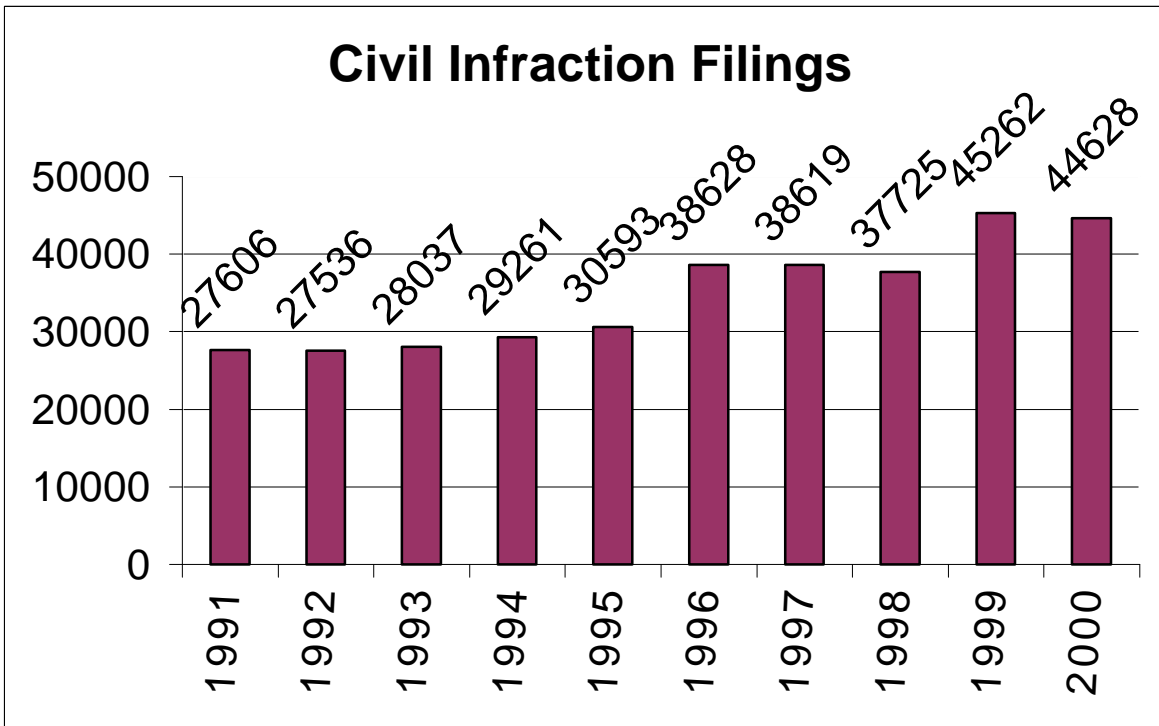


Misdemeanor Drunk Driving Filings

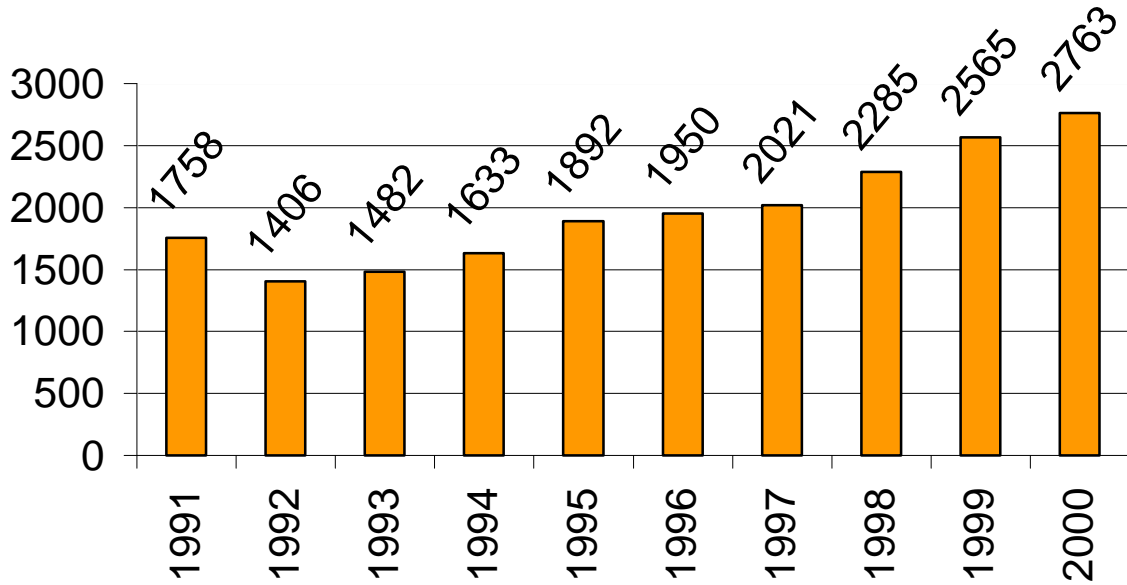


Traffic Misdemeanor Filings





Summary Proceedings Filings



Small Claims Filings

