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**WASHINGTON STATE CENTER
FOR COURT RESEARCH**

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Washington State Trial Court
Caseload Trends, 1998 to 2002

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Washington State Trial Court Caseload Trends, 1998 to 2002

Introduction

This report contains a brief, graphical overview of caseload trends for the trial courts of Washington State. This presentation is by no means exhaustive, nor does it attempt to provide explanatory analysis beyond a description of trends. Additional information may be obtained from the annual *Caseloads of the Courts of Washington*, which is available on-line at:

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/caseload/home.cfm>

Superior Court Highlights

Caseload

- Filings
 - Total filings increased by 2 percent from 1998 to 2002.
 - Criminal and civil filings increased by 10 and 12 percent respectively.
 - Juvenile dependency and offender filings decreased by 11 and 25 percent respectively.
- Pending Cases
 - Total pending cases increased by 14 percent.
 - The number of pending cases grew for all case types except domestic relations, juvenile offender, and RALJ.
 - The largest increases in pending cases were for mental illness (70 percent) and probate (65 percent) cases.

Workload

- The average annual workload for each Superior Court judicial officer (judge or commissioner) was:
 - 518 pending cases
 - 1,273 new cases
 - 1,238 cases resolved
 - 3,144 proceedings conducted
 - 42 jury and non-jury trials (judges only)
- Proceedings per Resolution
 - Total proceedings per resolution increased by 4 percent.
 - The only declines in proceedings per resolution were for criminal and civil cases (down 5 percent and 16 percent respectively).
 - Domestic relations and adoption/paternity had the largest increases in proceedings per resolution (30 percent and 60 percent respectively).
- While criminal cases comprised 26 percent of the average caseload, they accounted for 59 percent of proceedings and 42 percent of trials.

Composition of the Caseload

- The average caseload during this period consisted of:
 - 38 percent civil cases;

- 26 percent “family” cases (Domestic Relations, Adoption & Paternity, Juvenile Dependency including Becca Bill cases);
 - 26 percent criminal cases (adult and juvenile); and
 - 10 percent “other” cases (Probate, Guardianship, Mental Illness, RALJ).
- Noteworthy changes in the composition of the specific case types:
 - The fastest growing felonies are sex crimes.
 - The fastest growing civil complaint is civil harassment.
 - Alcohol commitment cases more than doubled from 1998 to 2002.
 - Sex crimes were the only juvenile offense category to increase.

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction Highlights

Caseload

- Filings
 - Total filings increased by 14 percent from 1998 to 2002.
 - Most of the increase in total filings was due to a 24 percent increase in traffic infraction filings.
 - Other traffic and non-traffic misdemeanors decreased by 13 percent and 10 percent respectively.

Workload

- The average workload in 2002 for each court of limited jurisdiction judicial officer (judge or commissioner/magistrate) was:
 - 737 contested non-parking infraction hearings
 - 91 contested parking infraction hearings
 - 212 Jury trials, non-jury trials, and contested small claims hearings (judges only)
- Proceedings per Resolution
 - Total proceedings per resolution increased by 4 percent.
 - The only declines in proceedings per resolution were for traffic infractions and DUI cases , both down 10 percent.
 - Proceedings per resolution for civil cases increased by 54%. This is probably a result of raising the limit for claims in district courts to \$50,000.

Composition of the Caseload

- The average caseload during this period consisted of: (doesn't add to 100 percent due to rounding)
 - 61 percent traffic infractions;
 - 3 percent non-traffic infractions;
 - 3 percent DUI/physical control cases;
 - 11 percent other traffic misdemeanors;
 - 11 percent non-traffic misdemeanors;
 - 8 percent civil cases;
 - 2 percent small claims cases;
 - 1 percent domestic violence/anti-harassment cases; and
 - 1 percent felony preliminary proceedings.

The Superior Courts

There are 31 Superior Court judicial districts in Washington State's 39 counties. For the year 2002 reporting period there were 175 judges, elected on a nonpartisan basis to four-year terms, 48 commissioners, administrative staff totaling 423 persons, and county clerk staff totaling 790 persons.

The Superior Courts are of general jurisdiction. They have original jurisdiction for felony matters, real property rights, domestic relations, probate and guardianship, mental illness, juvenile, and civil cases over \$50,000. The Superior Courts also hear appeals from the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction.

Summaries are offered for overall caseload and for each case type. The summaries give an overview of: 1) the total case load, 2) case flow and workload, and 3) where appropriate, the composition of the case load for the case type. The information presented includes:

Caseload

Filings: A filing is the initiation of a case by submitting to the court a document alleging the facts of a matter and requesting relief. A separate case filing occurs for each criminal and juvenile offender defendant. Total filings are reported for each year.

Resolutions: A resolution signifies that a case has been tried, settled, or otherwise concluded. It occurs when a judicial decision has been rendered or when a case has been transferred to another jurisdiction for subsequent adjudication. Total resolutions are reported for each year.

Pending Cases: A pending case has been filed but not resolved. The total number of cases pending on December 31st is reported for each year.

Case Flow and Workload

Clearance Rate: The clearance rate is defined as the ratio of cases resolved to cases filed. The lower limit of this ratio is zero, and there is no theoretical upper limit. However, the ratio tends to settle near 1.0. If the ratio is less than 1.0, resolutions are not keeping pace with filings. If the ratio is greater than 1.0, the backlog of unresolved cases will diminish.

Proceedings per resolution: Proceedings per resolution is a ratio of the total number of proceedings to the number of cases resolved during a calendar year.

Trial Rate: This is the number of trials (bench or jury) per 100 cases resolved during a calendar year.

Filings per Judicial Officer: This is the caseload (new cases filed) divided by the number of judicial officers (judges and commissioners, 40-hour FTE).

Composition of the Caseload (Composition breakdowns are not provided for Probate, Guardianship, and Mental Illness. Case sub-types with low numbers are excluded.)

Average Percent of Type: The average percent of type presents the average percent of filings from each case sub-type for the period of 1998 to 2002.

Percent Change in Type: This graph shows the percent increase or decrease in filings for each case sub-type.

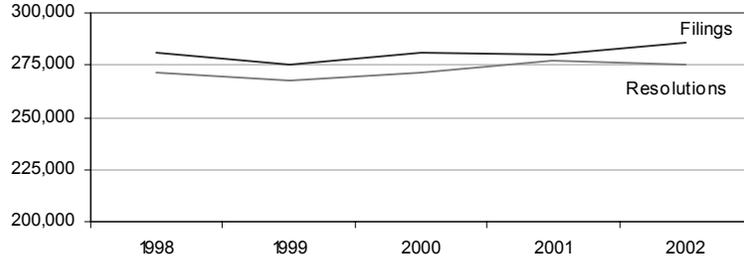
Superior Courts, All Case Types

Caseload

Filings & Resolutions

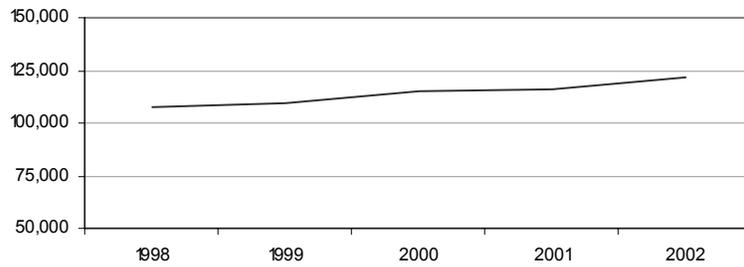
Filings: ↑ 2%

Resolutions: ↑ 2%



Pending

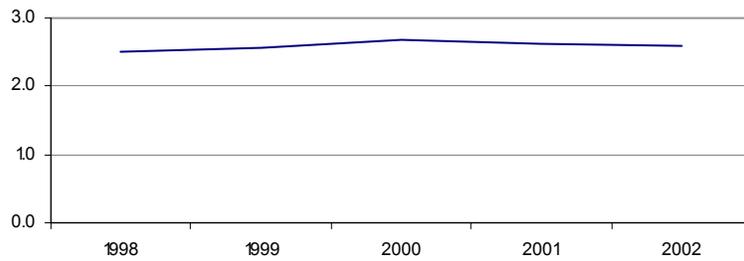
↑ 14%



Case Flow and Workload

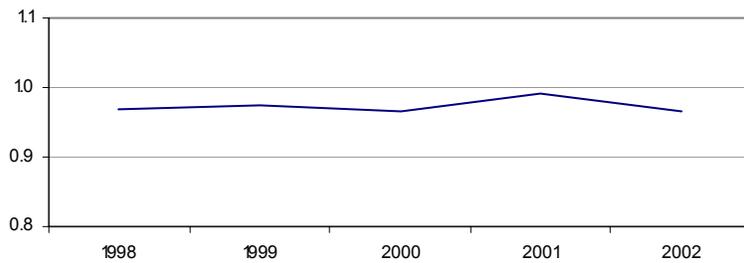
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 4%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

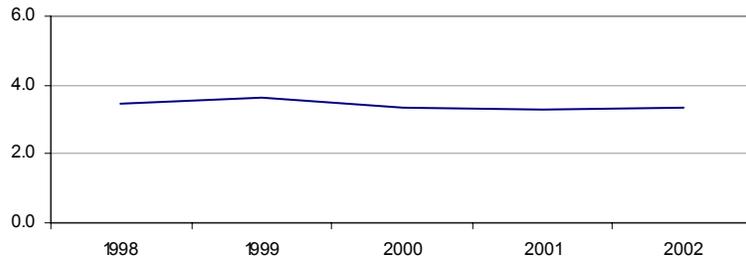
0%



Superior Courts, All Case Types Continued

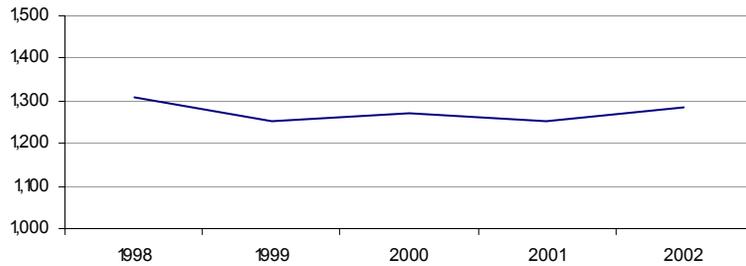
Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)

↓ 3



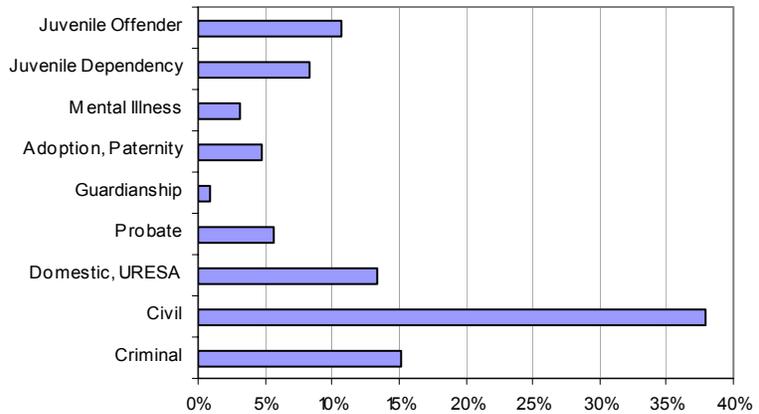
Filings per Judicial Officer

↓ 2

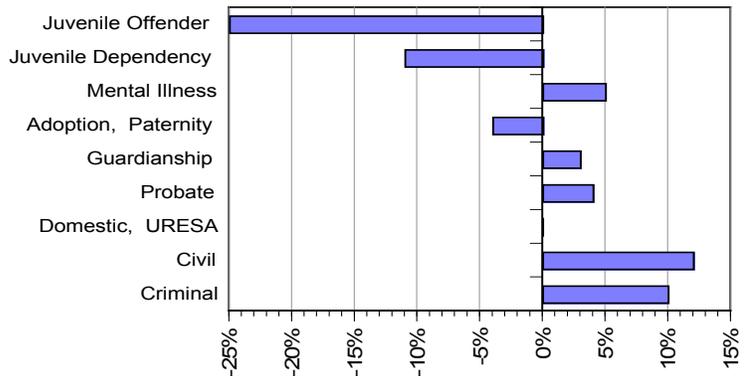


Composition of the Caseload

Average Percent of Filings by Case Type, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Case Type Filings from 1998 to 2002



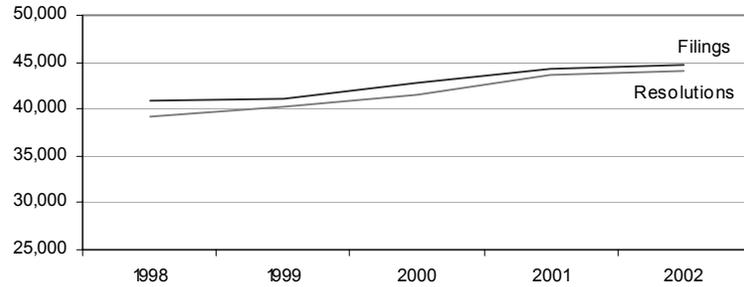
Superior Courts, Criminal Cases (Case Type 1)

Caseload

Filings and Resolutions

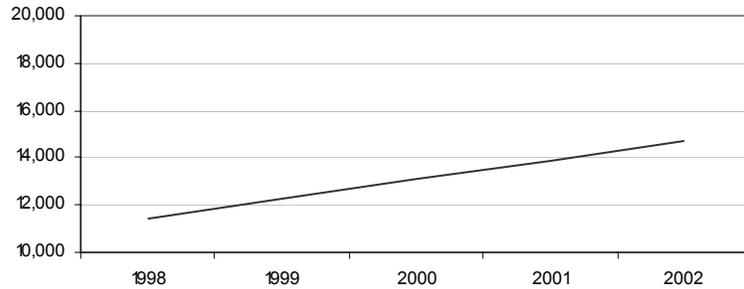
Filings: ↑ 10%

Resolutions: ↑ 13%



Pending Cases

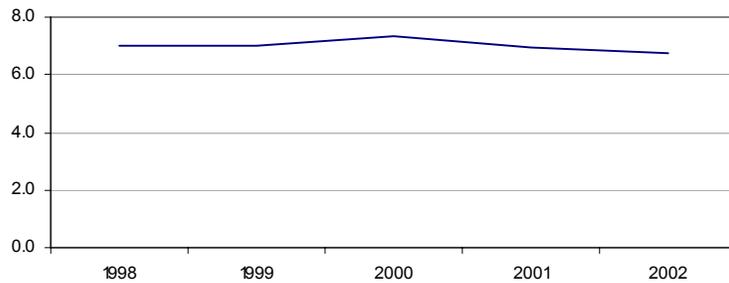
↑ 29%



Case flow and Workload

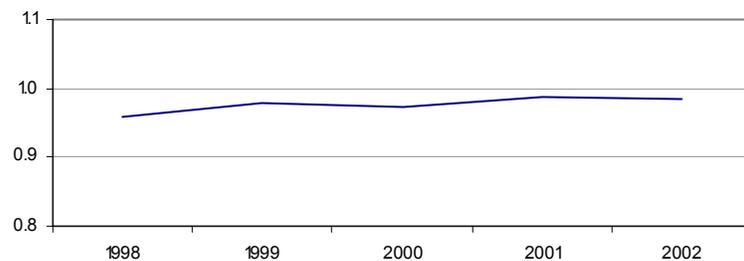
Proceedings per Resolution

↓ 5%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

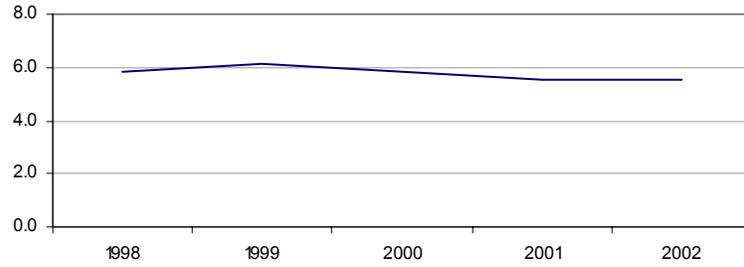
↑ 3%



Superior Courts, Criminal Cases Continued

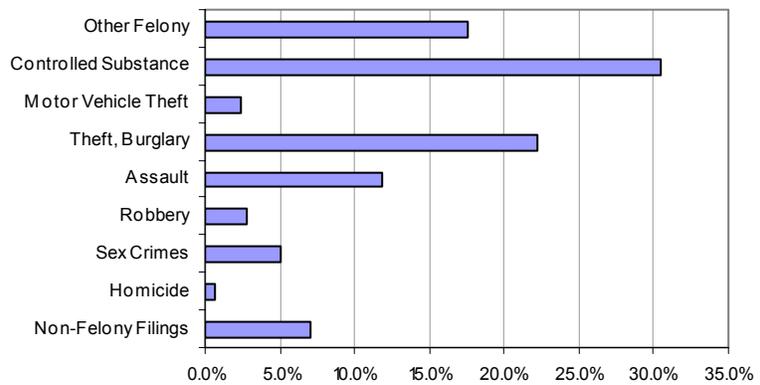
Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)

↓ 8%

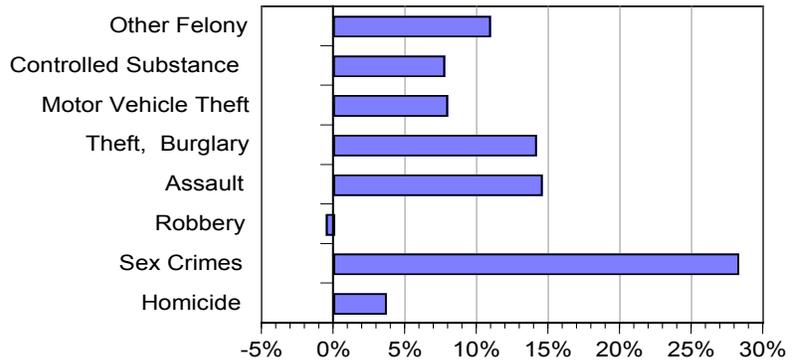


Composition of the Caseload

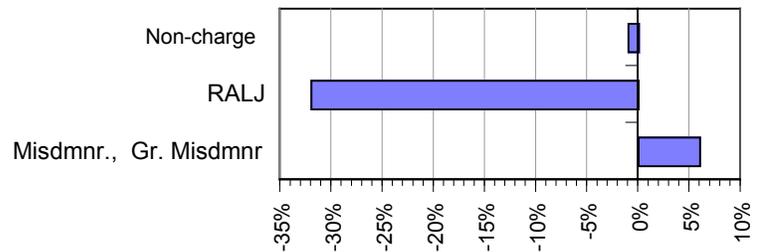
Average Percent of Type of Filings, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Felony Filings from 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Non-felony Filings from 1998 to 2002



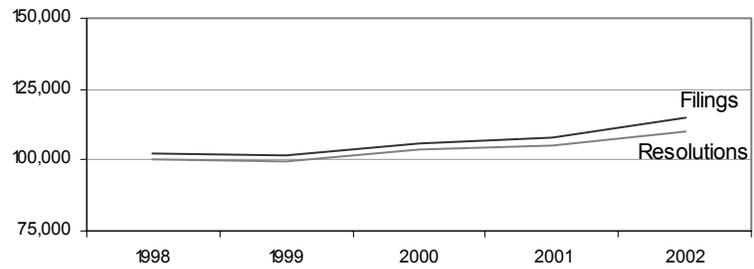
Superior Courts, Civil Cases (Case Type 2)

Caseload

Filings & Resolutions

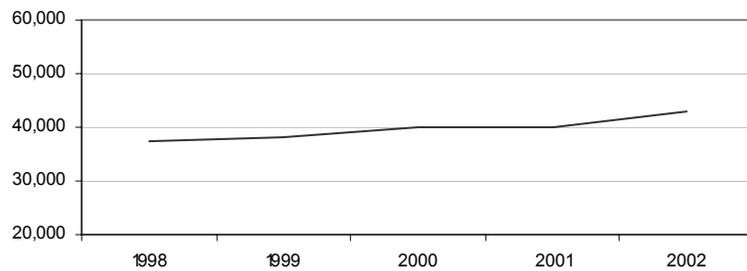
Filings: ↑ 12%

Resolutions: ↑ 9%



Pending

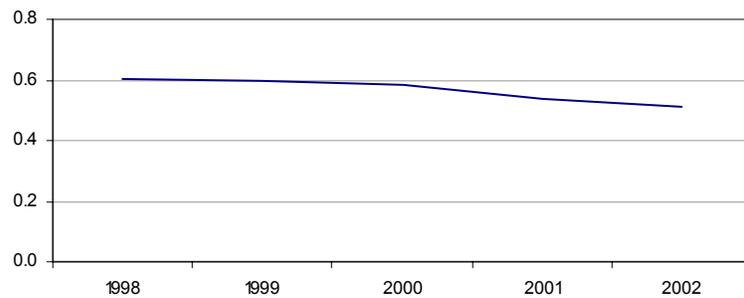
↑ 15%



Case Flow and Workload

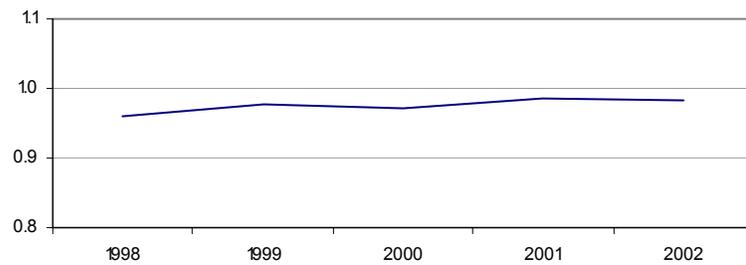
Proceedings per Resolution

↓ 16%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

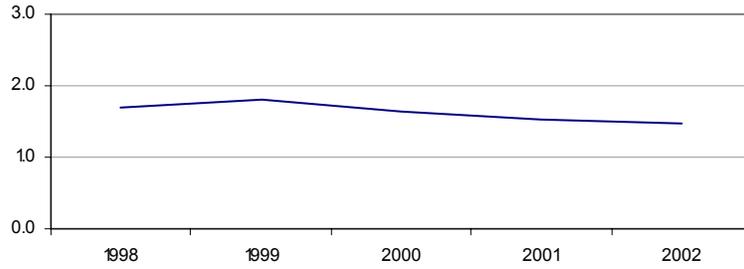
↓ 2%



Superior Courts, Civil Cases Continued

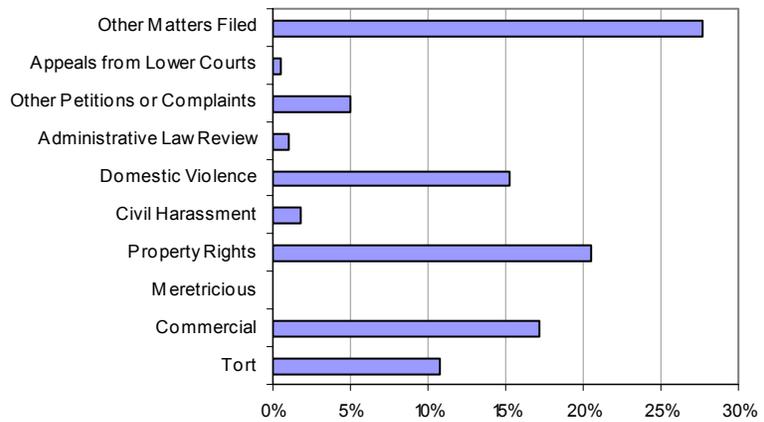
Trial Rate
*(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)*

↓ 12%

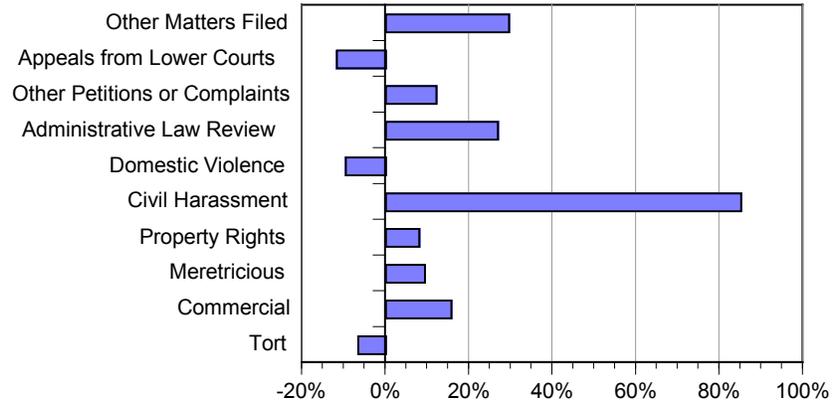


Composition of the Caseload

Average Percent of Type
of Filings, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Civil
Filings from 1998 to
2002



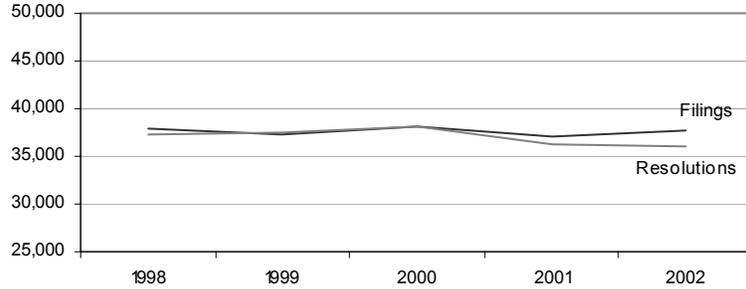
Superior Court, Domestic Relations Cases (Case Type 3)

Caseload

Filings & Resolutions

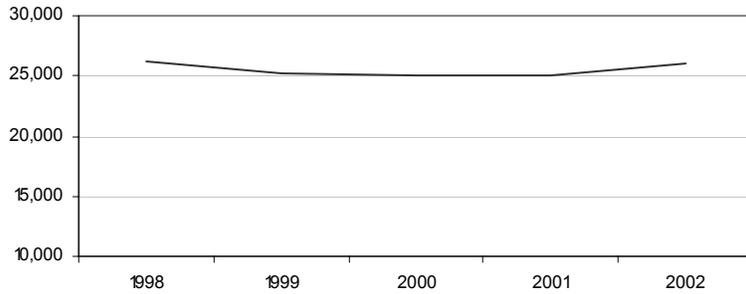
Filings: 0%

Resolutions: ↓ 3%



Pending

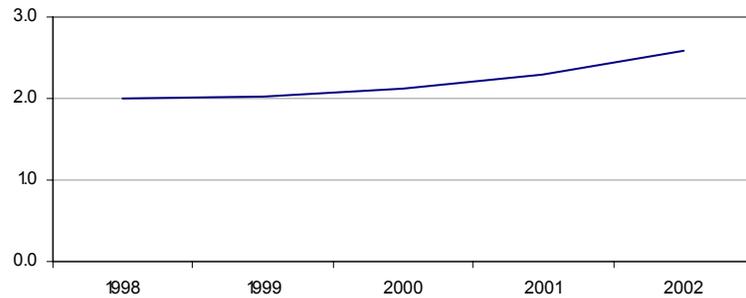
0%



Case Flow and Workload

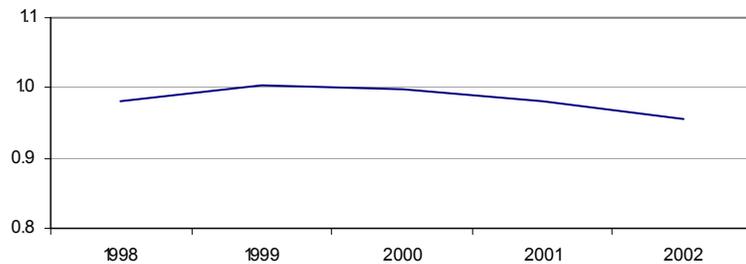
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 30%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

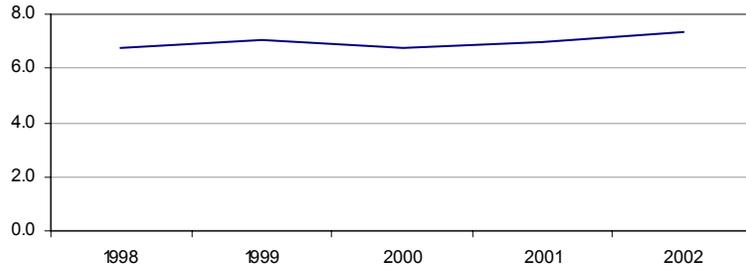
↓ 3%



Superior Court, Domestic Relations Cases Continued

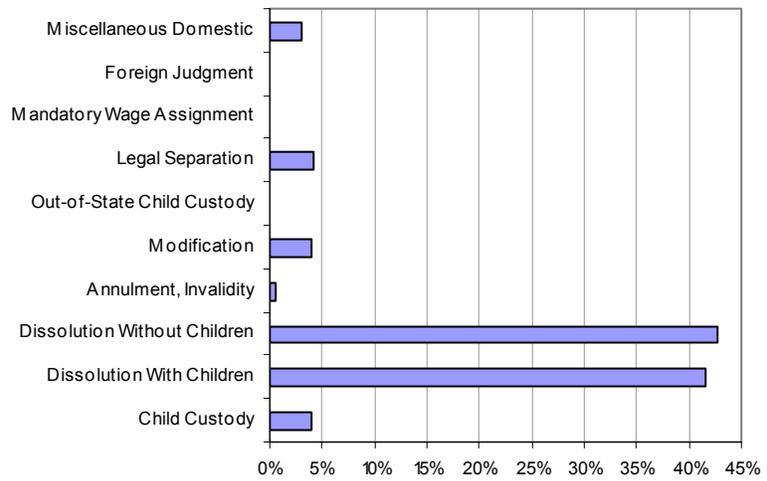
Trial Rate
*(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)*

↑ 8%

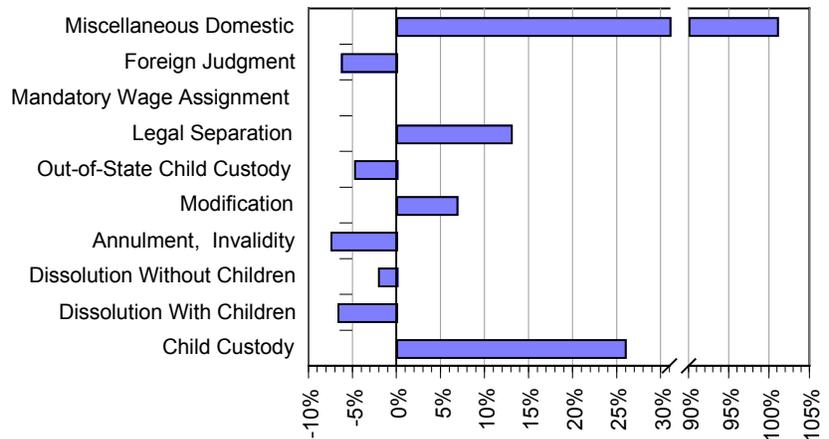


Composition of the Caseload

Average Percent of Type of Filings, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Domestic Filings from 1998 to 2002



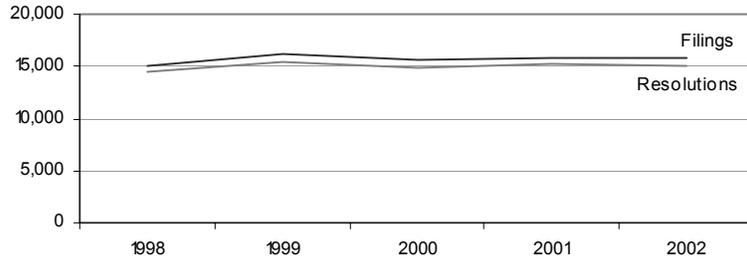
Superior Court, Probate Cases (Case Type 4; Causes ABS, DSC, EST, FNW, MSC, NC, and WLL)

Caseload

Filings & Resolutions

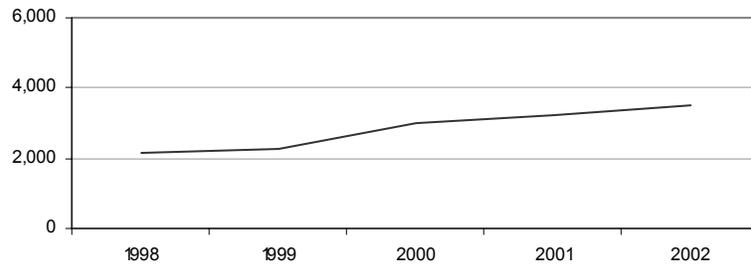
Filings: ↑ 4%

Resolutions: ↑ 4%



Pending

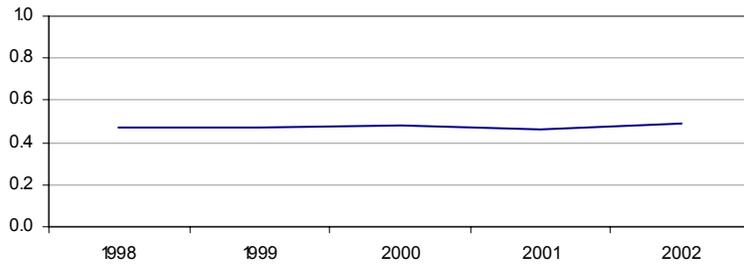
↑ 65%



Case Flow and Workload

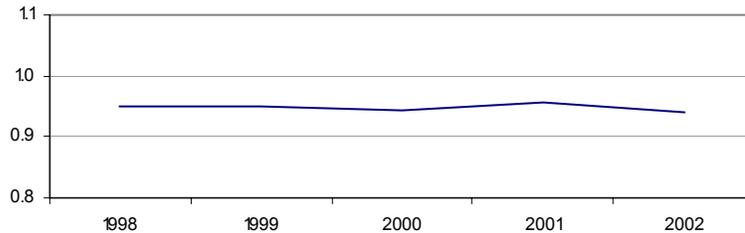
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 4%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

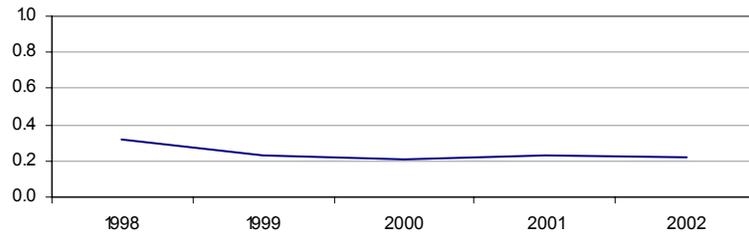
↓ 1%



Superior Court, Probate Cases Continued

Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)

↓ 33%

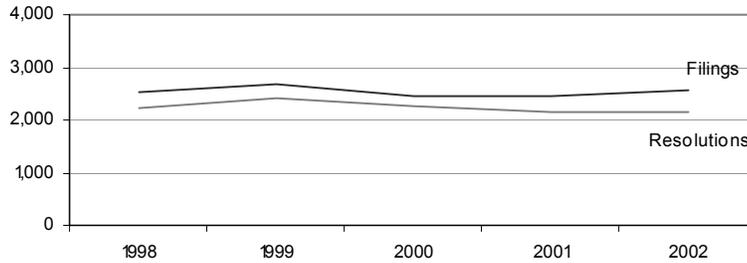


Superior Courts, Guardianship Cases (Case Type 4; Causes GDN, G/E, LGD, ad MST)

Caseload

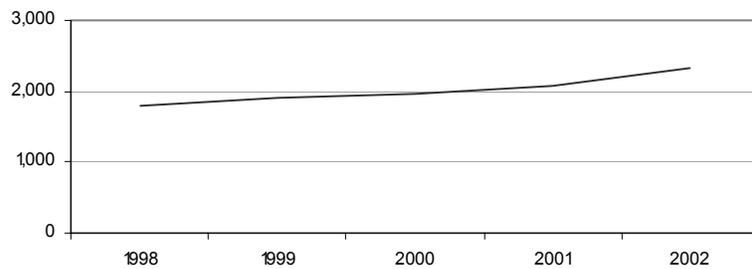
Filings & Resolutions

Filings: ↑ 3%
Resolutions: ↓ 3%



Pending

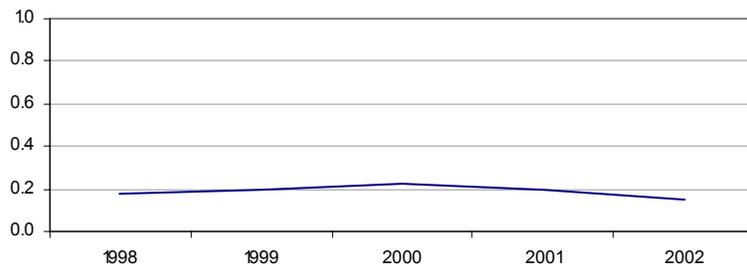
↑ 30%



Case Flow and Workload

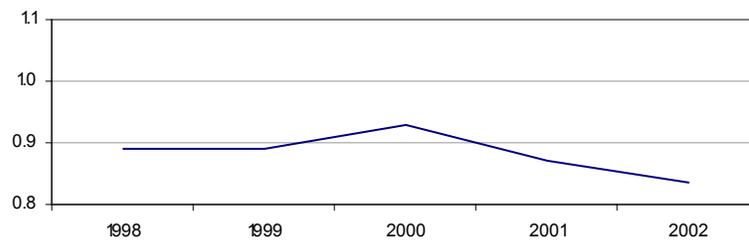
Proceedings per Resolution

↓ 14%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

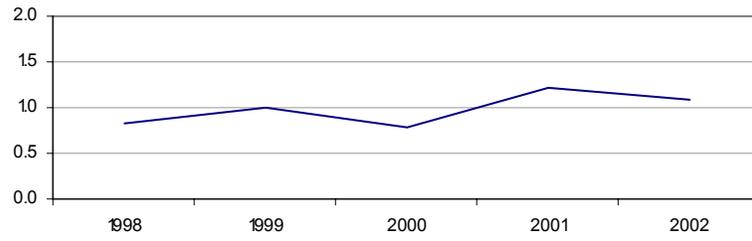
↓ 6%



Superior Courts, Guardianship Cases

Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)

↑ 38%



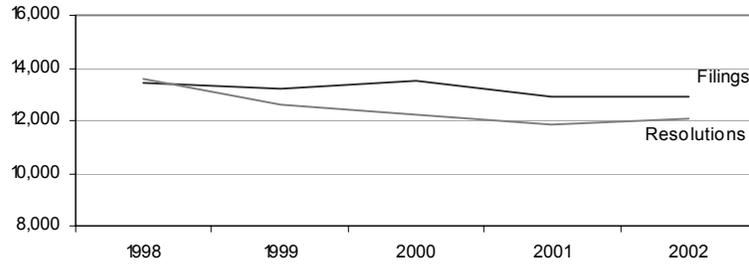
Superior Courts, Adoption/Paternity Cases (Case Type 5)

Caseload

Filings, Resolutions & Pending Cases

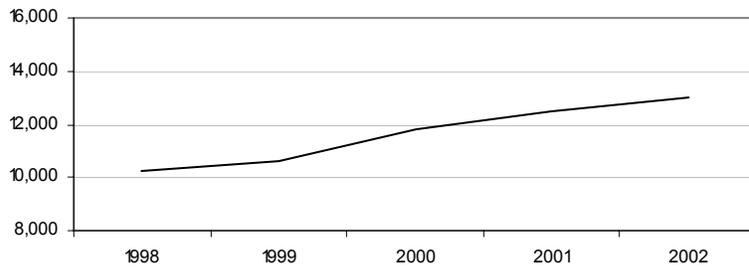
Filings: ↓ 4%

Resolutions: ↓ 11%



Pending

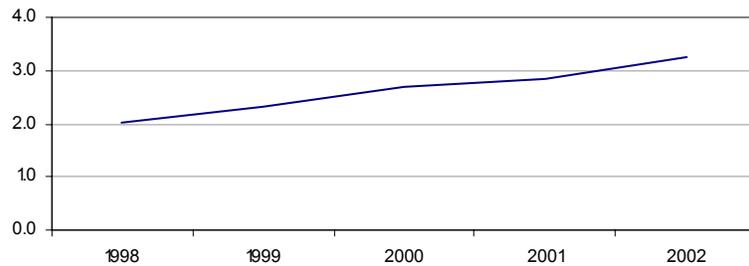
↑ 27%



Case Flow and Workload

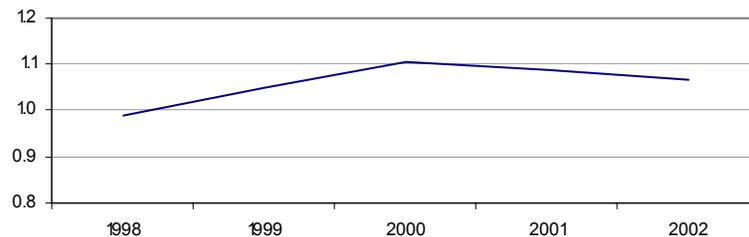
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 60%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

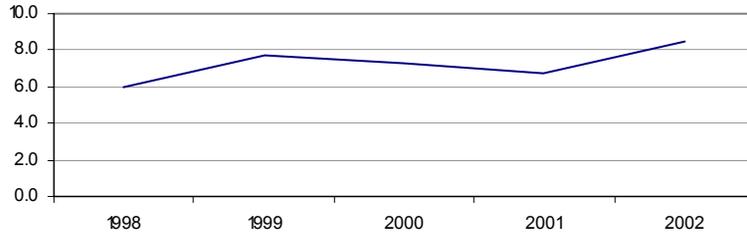
↑ 8%



Superior Courts, Adoption/Paternity Cases Continued

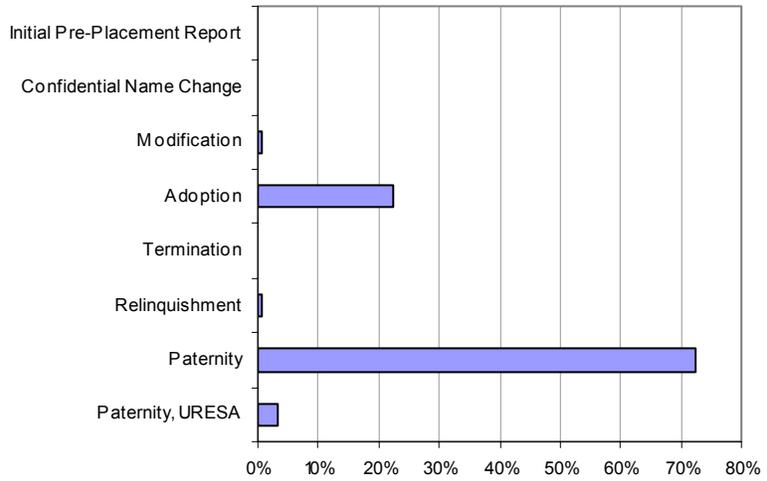
Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)

↑ 51%

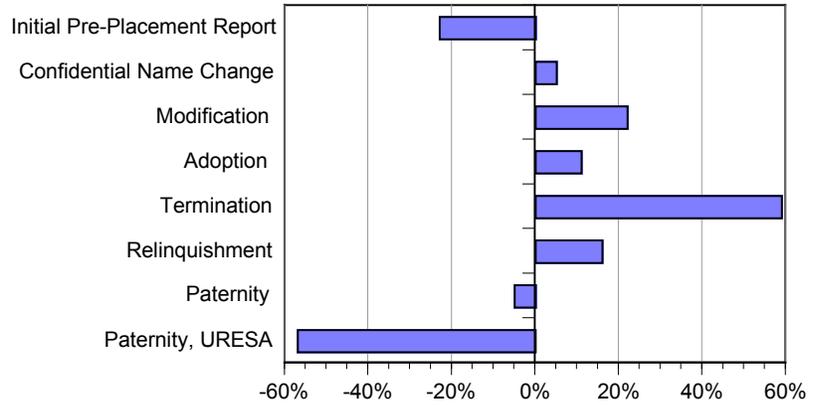


Composition of the Caseload

Average Percent of Type of Filings, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Adoption/Paternity Filings from 1998 to 2002



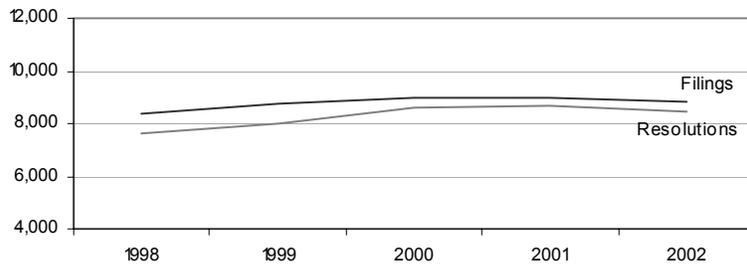
Superior Courts, Mental Illness Cases (Case Type 6)

Caseload

Filings, Resolutions & Pending Cases

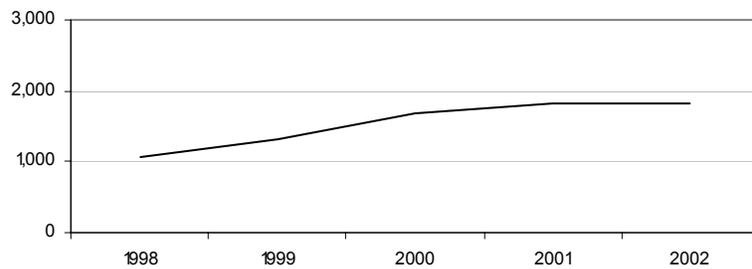
Filings: ↑ 5%

Resolutions: ↑ 12%



Pending

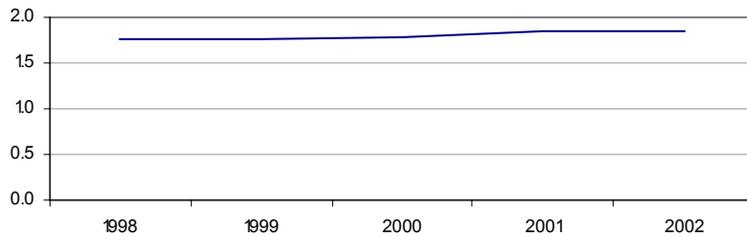
↑ 70%



Case Flow and Workload

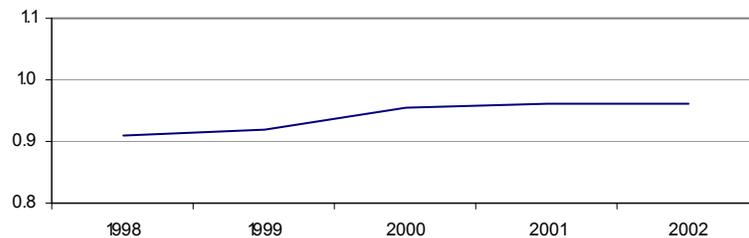
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 6%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

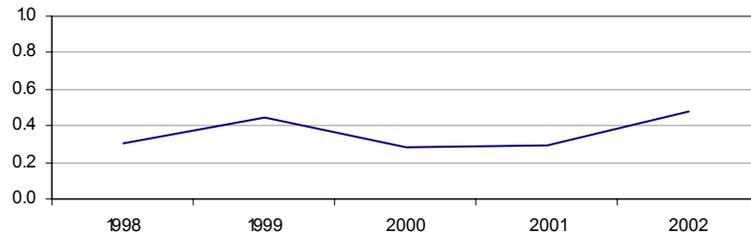
↑ 6%



Superior Courts, Mental Illness Cases Continued

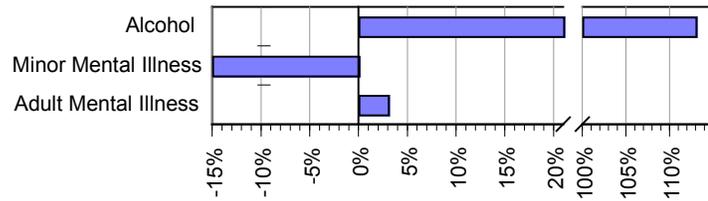
Trial Rate
*(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)*

↑ 51%



Composition of the Caseload

Percent Change in
Mental Illness Filings
from 1998 to 2002



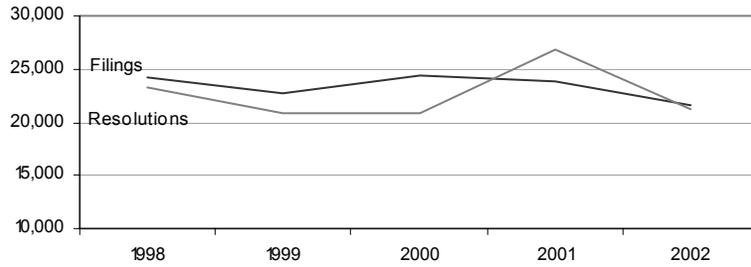
Superior Courts, Juvenile Dependency Cases (Case Type 7, which includes at-risk youth, child in need of services, dependency, developmental disability placement, termination, and truancy)

Caseload

Filings, Resolutions & Pending Cases

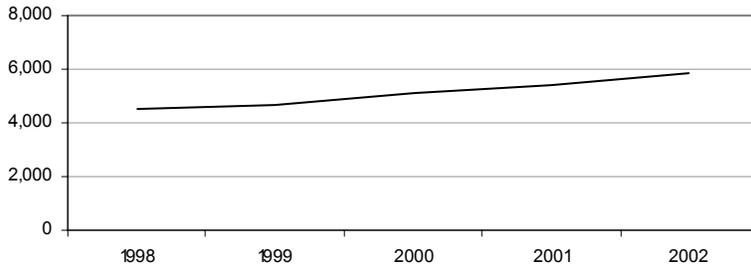
Filings: ↓ 11%

Resolutions: ↓ 9%



Pending

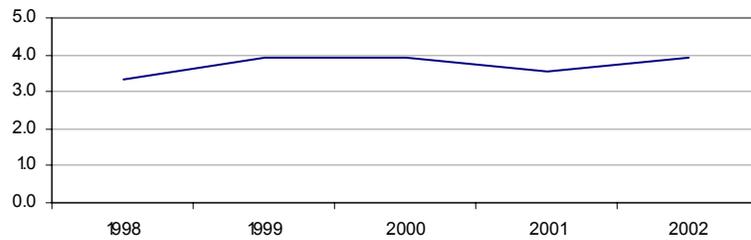
↑ 29%



Case Flow and Workload

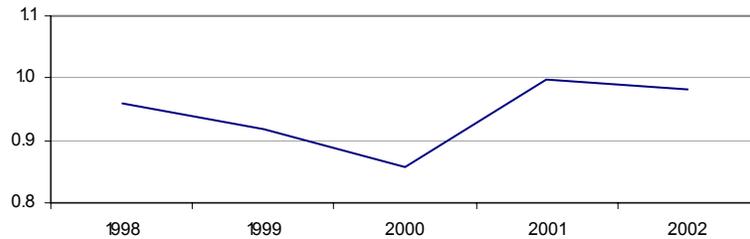
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 18%



*Clearance Rate
(Resolutions ÷ Filings)*

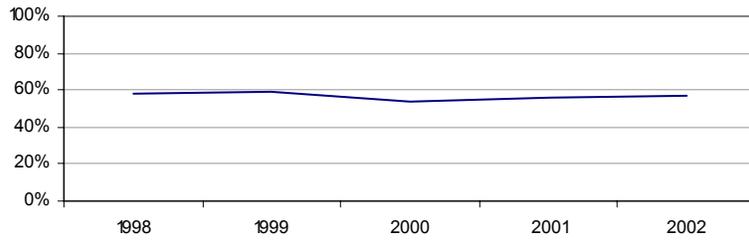
↑ 2%



Superior Courts, Juvenile Dependency Cases Continued

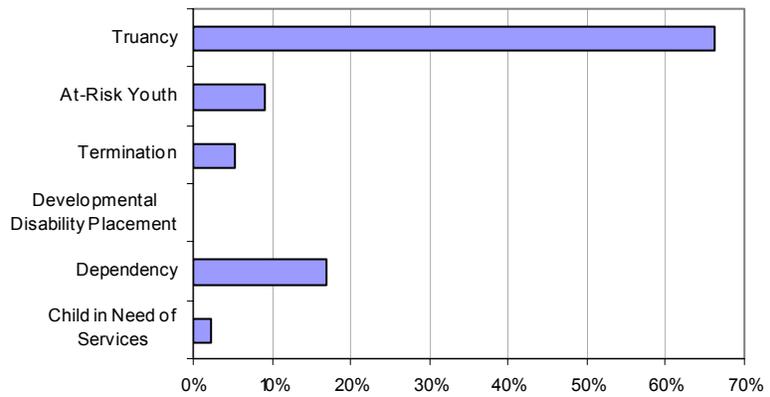
Petition Granted Rate

↓ 2%

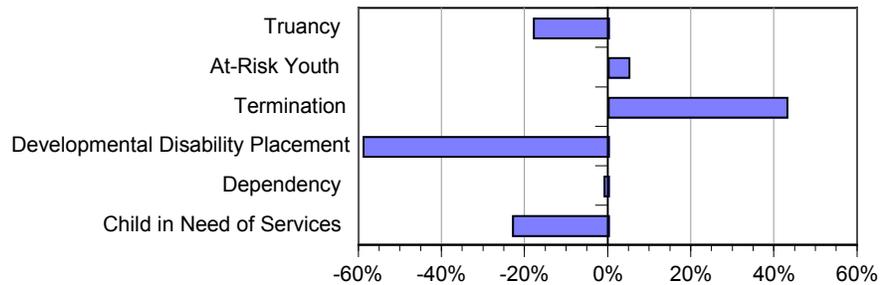


Composition of the Caseload

Average Percent of Type of Filings, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Juvenile Dependency Filings from 1998 to 2002



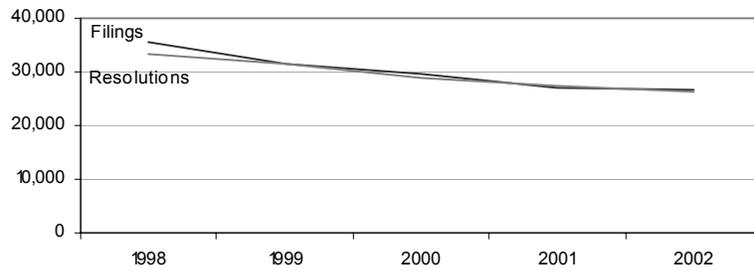
Superior Court, Juvenile Offender Cases (Case Type 8)

Caseload

Filings, Resolutions & Pending Cases

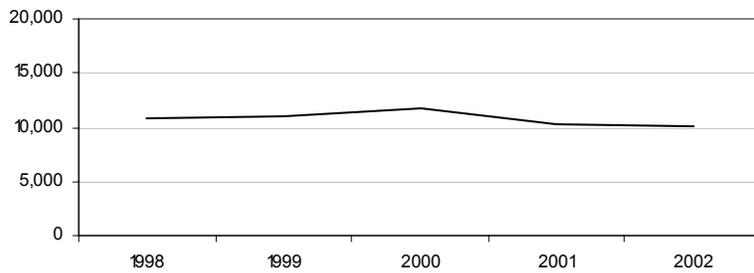
Filings: ↓ 25%

Resolutions: ↓ 21%



Pending

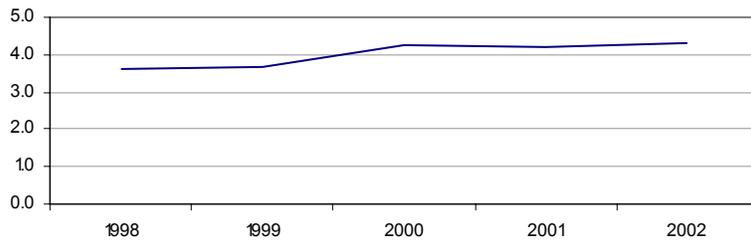
↓ 7%



Case Flow and Workload

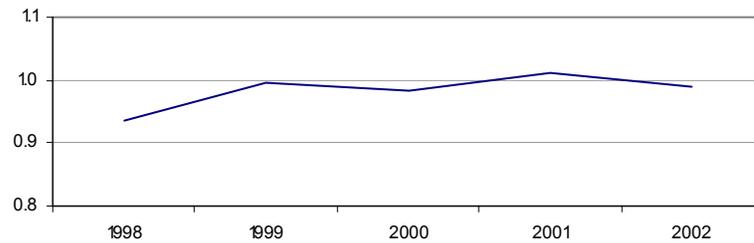
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 19%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

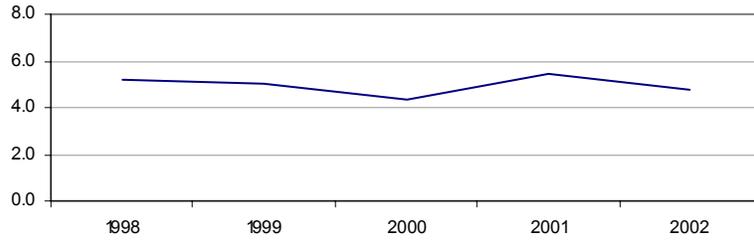
↑ 6%



Superior Court, Juvenile Offender Cases Continued

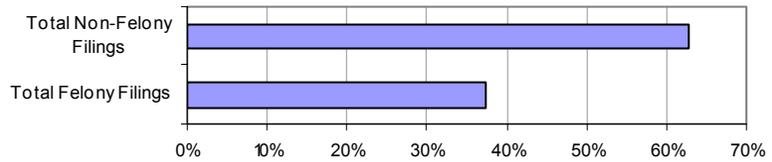
Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)

↓ 14%

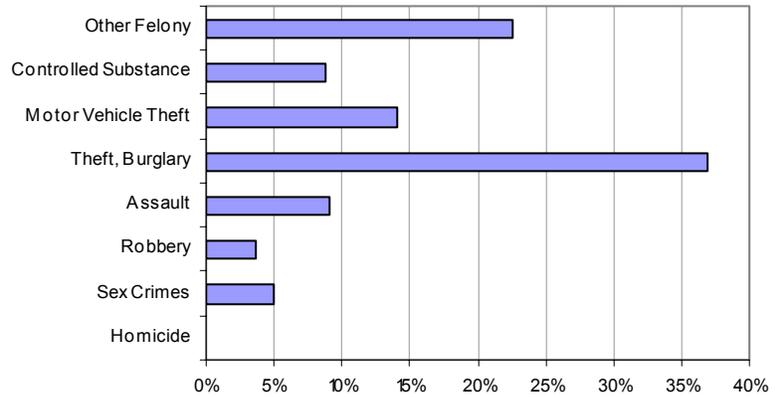


Composition of the Caseload

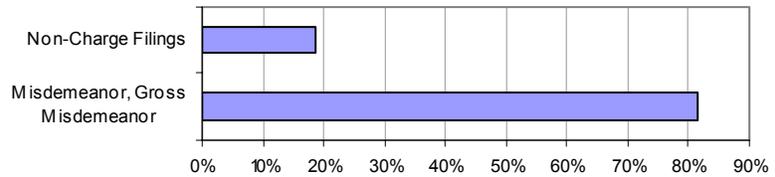
Average Percent of Type of Filings, 1998 to 2002



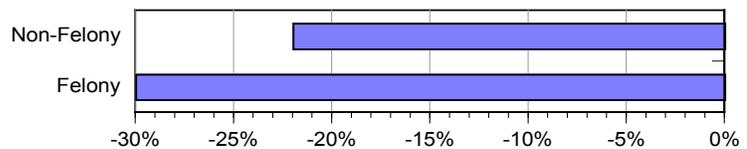
Average Percent of Type of Felony Filings, 1998 to 2002



Average Percent of Type of Non-felony Filings, 1998 to 2002

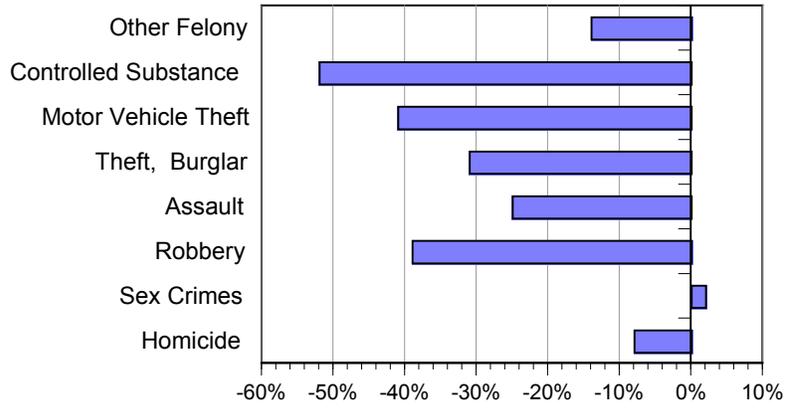


Percent Change in Juvenile Offender Filings from 1998 to 2002

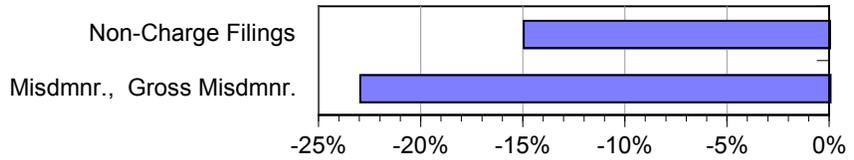


Superior Court, Juvenile Offender Cases Continued

*Percent Change in
Juvenile Offender Felony
Filings from 1998 to
2002*



*Percent Change in
Juvenile Offender
Misdemeanor Filings
from 1998 to 2002*



Note: The decline in controlled substance cases is in part due to a change in the SCOMIS RCW table, which directed a separate counting of misdemeanors and felonies defined by RCW 69.50.401. This change took place on November 12, 1998.

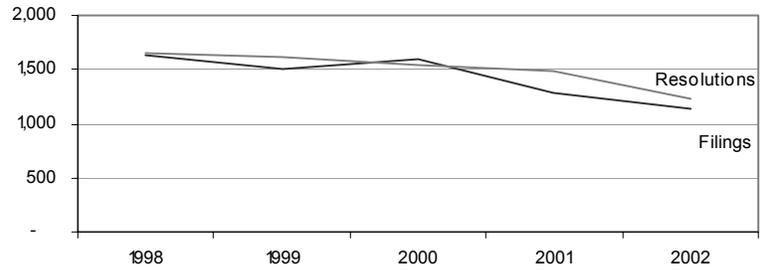
Superior Courts, RALJ Cases (Case Type 9)

Caseload

Filings, Resolutions & Pending Cases

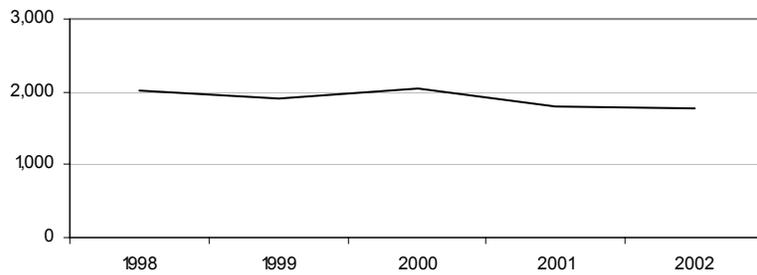
Filings: ↓ 42%

Resolutions: ↓ 26%



Pending

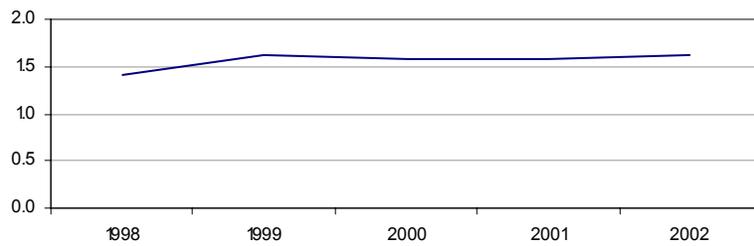
↓ 12%



Case Flow and Workload

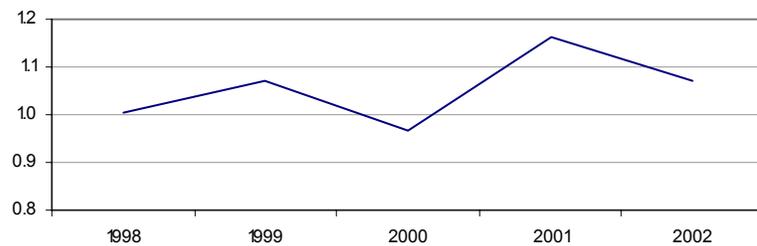
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 15%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

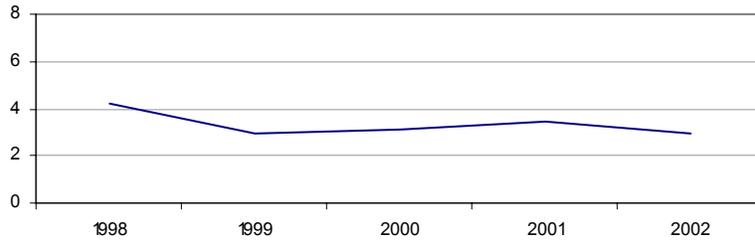
↑ 7%



Superior Courts, RALJ Cases Continued

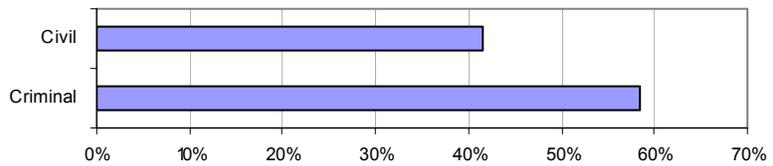
Trial Rate
*(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)*

↓ 30%

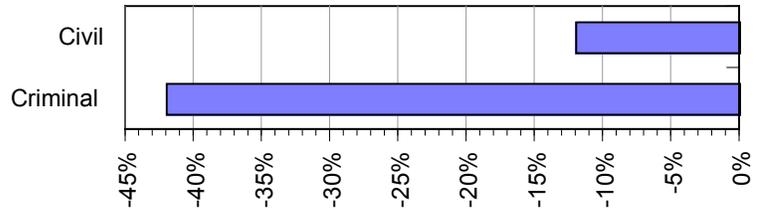


Composition of the Caseload

Average Percent of Type of Filings, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in RALJ Filings from 1998 to 2002

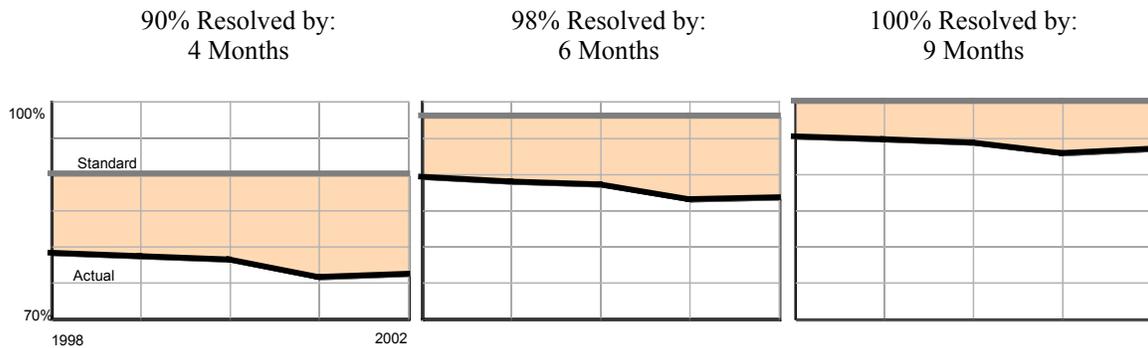


Time Standards

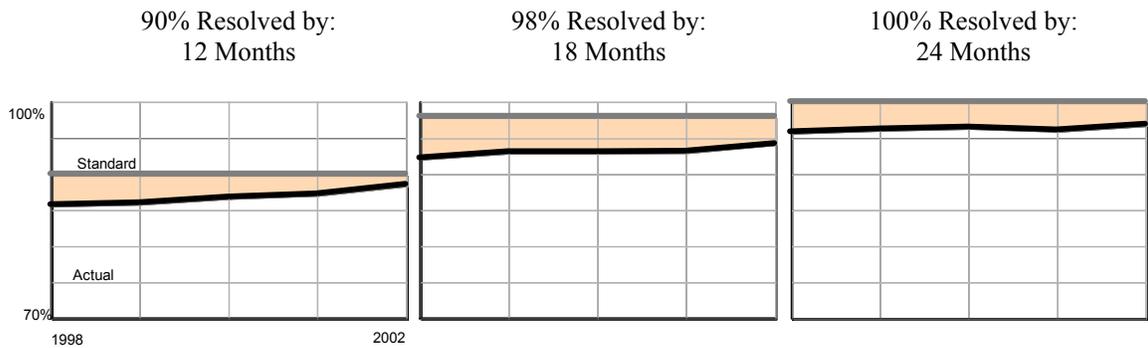
Time standards were adopted by the Courts to promote timely justice and combat congestion. They are based on American Bar Association (ABA) standards, with adjustments for the specific needs of Washington's courts. Further information about time standards may be obtained from *Guide to Caseload Management in Washington State: Including and Introduction to Washington State Case Processing Time Standards* (April, 1996).

Three charts are presented for each case type, one for each time standard goal: 90% resolved, 98% resolved, and 100% resolved. The time standard for each case type is presented for each case type. On the chart, the gray line indicates the time standard objective and the black line indicates the level achieved. The charts cover the period 1998 to 2002. Scales range from 70% to 100%, except for the RALJ chart, which ranges from 0% to 100%. The time standard figures for juvenile dependency cases exclude truancy petitions.

Criminal

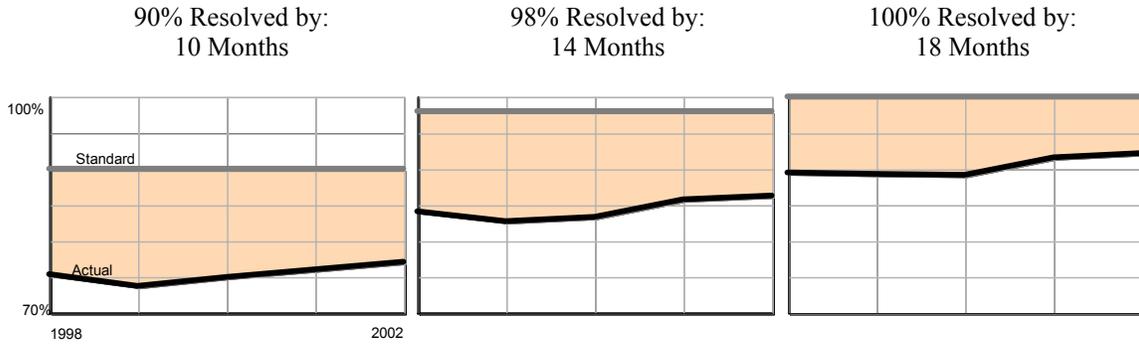


Civil

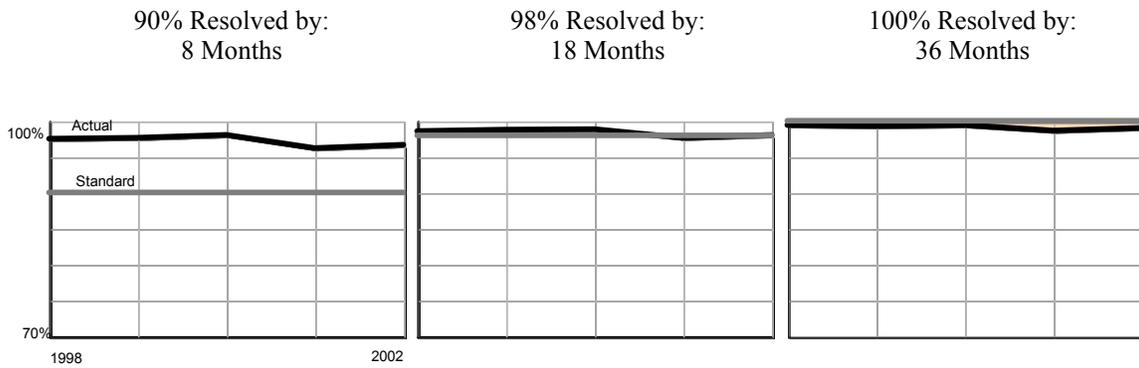


Time Standards Continued

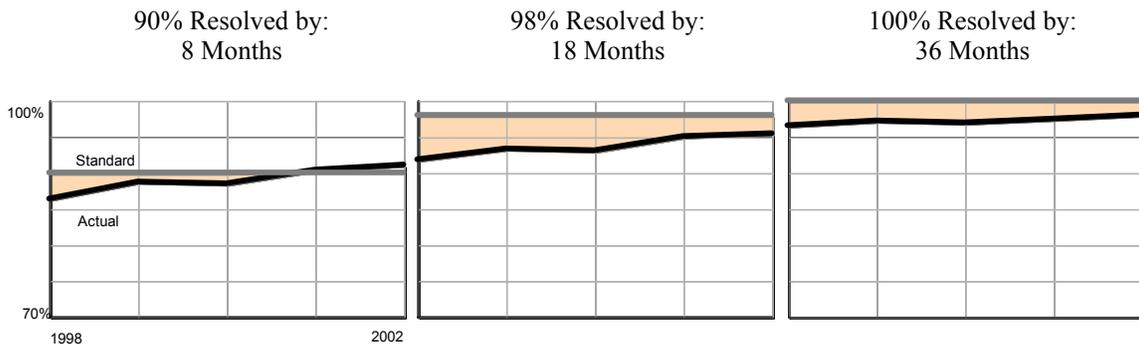
Domestic Relations



Probate

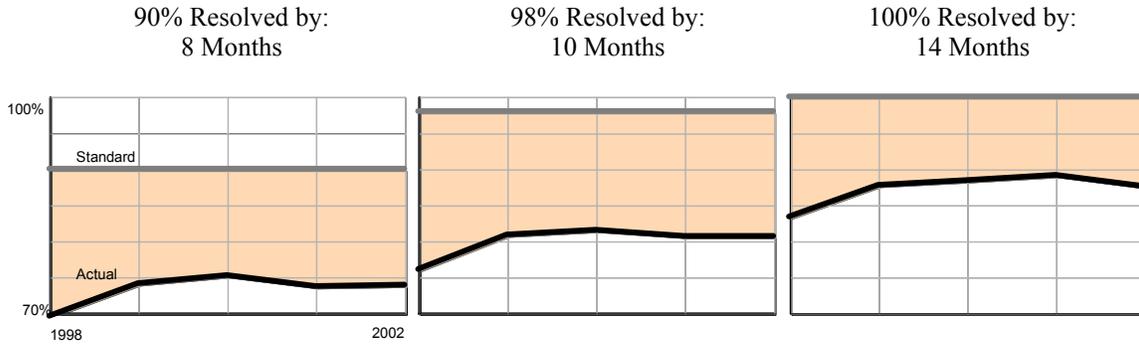


Guardianship

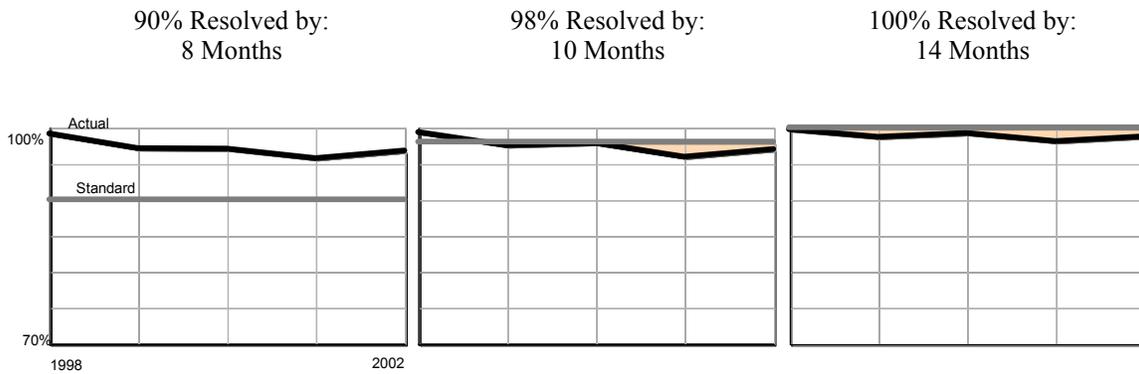


Time Standards Continued

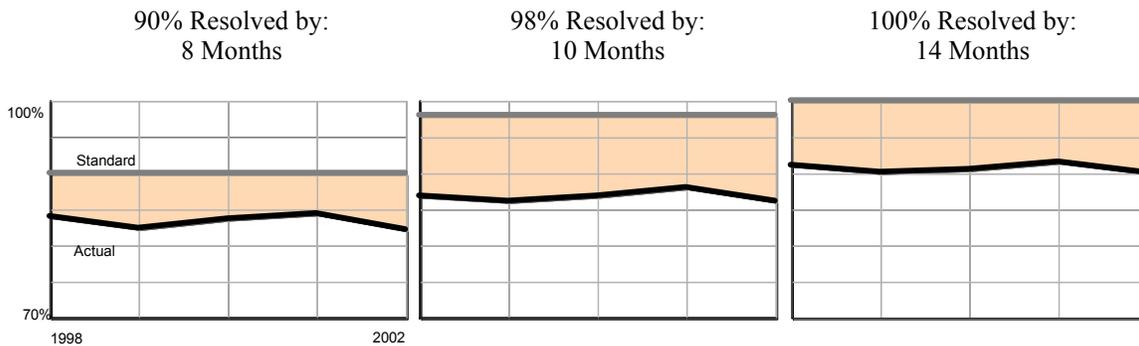
Adoption/Paternity



Mental Illness

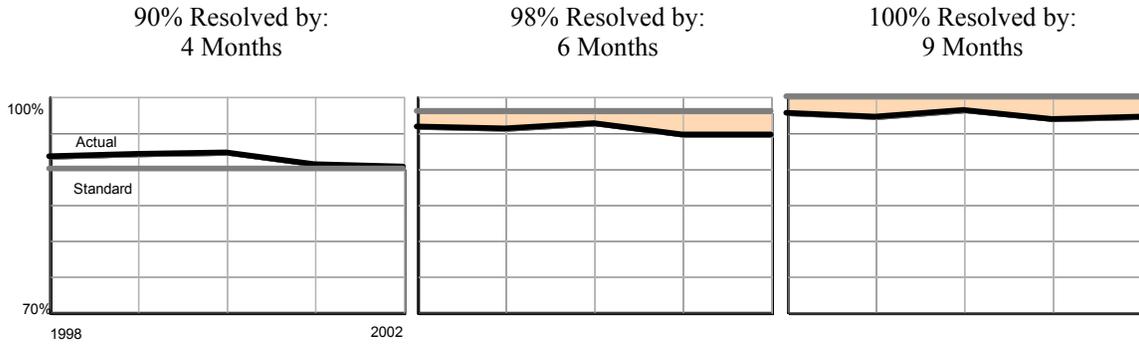


Juvenile Dependency

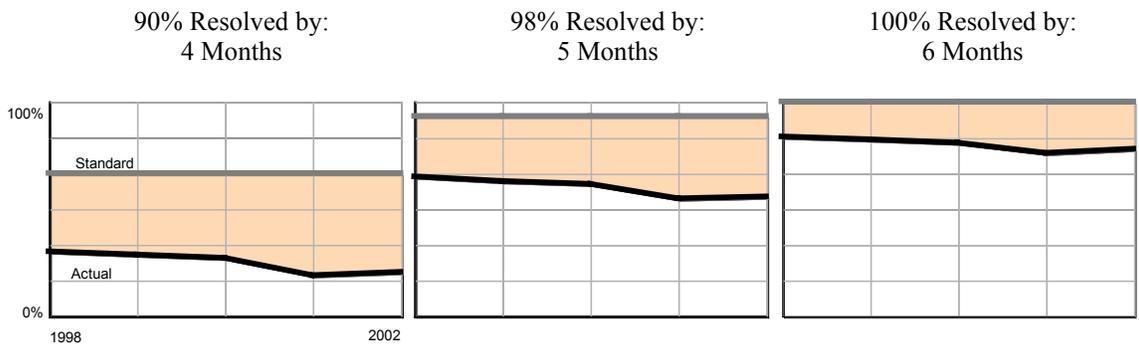


Time Standards Continued

Juvenile Offender



RALJ



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction

The Courts of Limited Jurisdiction include the District and Municipal Courts in the State of Washington. There are 49 District Courts in the 39 counties of Washington State, in 60 locations. There are 121 Municipal Courts.

District Courts have concurrent jurisdiction with the Superior Courts over misdemeanor and gross misdemeanors violations, and civil cases under \$50,000. They have exclusive jurisdiction over small claims and infractions. There are 113 District Court judges, elected on a nonpartisan basis to four-year terms.

Municipal Courts are established by city ordinance. They have concurrent jurisdiction with the Superior Courts over misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor violations, and have exclusive jurisdiction over infractions. There are 108 Municipal Court judges.

Summaries are offered for overall caseload, and for each case type. The summaries give an overview of: 1) the total case load and 2) case flow and workload. The information presented includes:

Caseload

Filings: A filing is the initiation of a case by submitting to the court a document alleging the facts of a matter and requesting relief. A separate case filing occurs for each defendant, but each filing may contain up to three charges. The percent change in total filings between 1998 and 2002 is reported to the side of a graph presenting the total number of notices of infractions and the total number of violations charged for each year.

Dispositions: A disposition is the resolution of an issue that has been brought before the court. Each violation charged has one disposition. This includes all dispositions within the year, regardless of when the charge was originally filed. The percent change in total dispositions between 1998 and 2002 is reported to the side of a graph presenting the total number of each type of disposition for each year.

Proceedings: Proceedings include all hearings, bench trials, and jury trials held in open court. A graph presents the total number of each proceeding type for each year.

Case Flow and Workload

Proceedings per disposition: Proceedings per resolution is a ratio of the total number of proceedings to the number of dispositions during a calendar year.

Clearance Rate: The clearance rate is defined as the ratio of dispositions resolved to filings. The lower limit of this ratio is zero, and there is no theoretical upper limit. However, the ratio tends to settle near 1.0. If the ratio is less than 1.0, resolutions are not keeping pace with filings. If the ratio is greater than 1.0, the backlog of unresolved cases will diminish.

Trial Rate: This is the number of trials (bench or jury) per 100 cases resolved during a calendar year.

Presentations are determined by the case type. Some case types have additional information, if warranted.

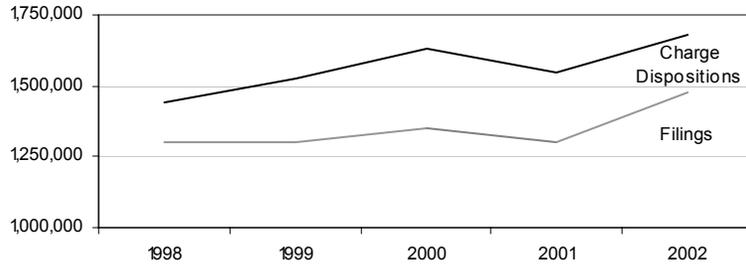
Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, All Case Types

Caseload

Filings & Dispositions

Filings: ↑ 14%

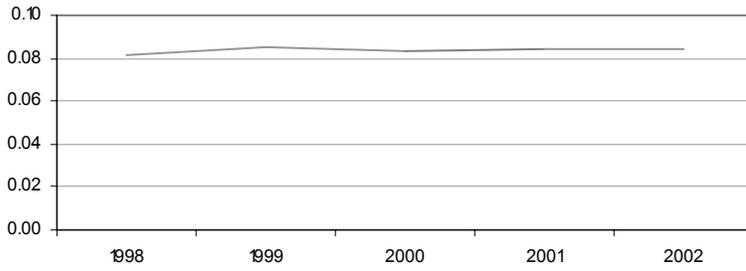
Dispositions: ↑ 17%



Case Flow and Workload

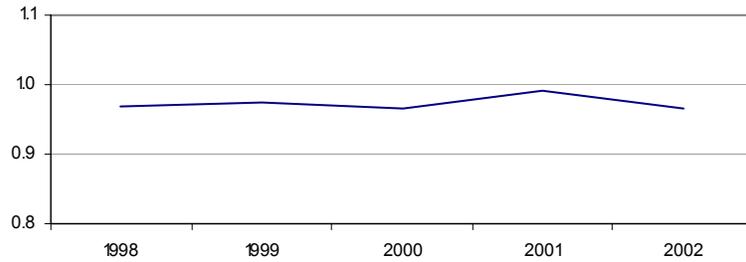
Proceedings per Resolution

↑ 4%



Clearance Rate (Resolutions ÷ Filings)

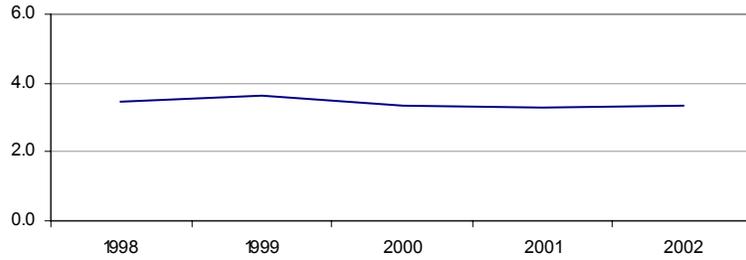
0%



Superior Courts, All Case Types Continued

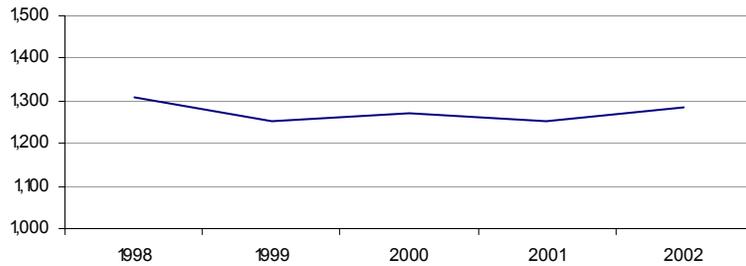
Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ resolutions * 100)

↓ 3



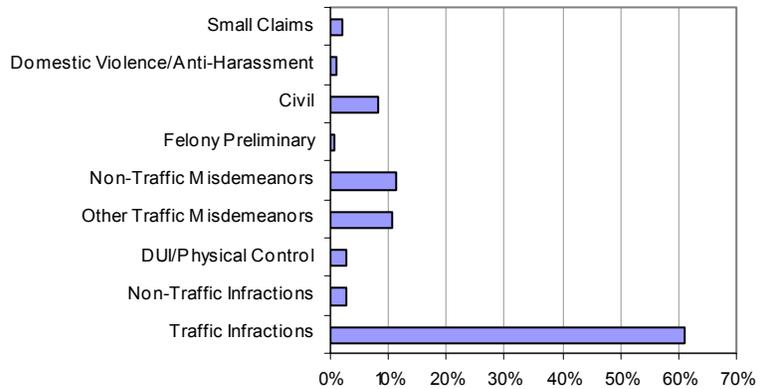
Filings per Judicial Officer

↓ 2

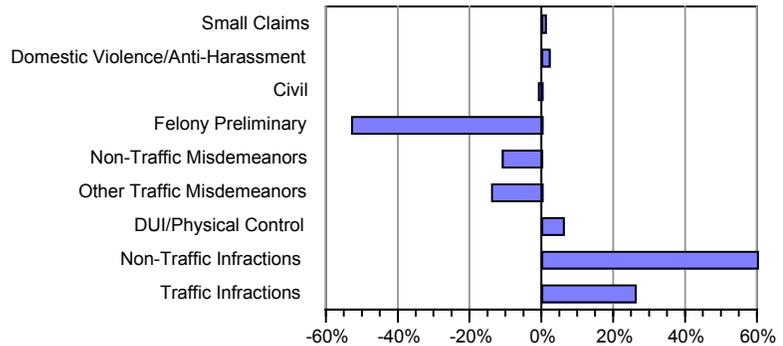


Composition of the Caseload

Average Percent of Filings by Case Type, 1998 to 2002



Percent Change in Case Type Filings from 1998 to 2002



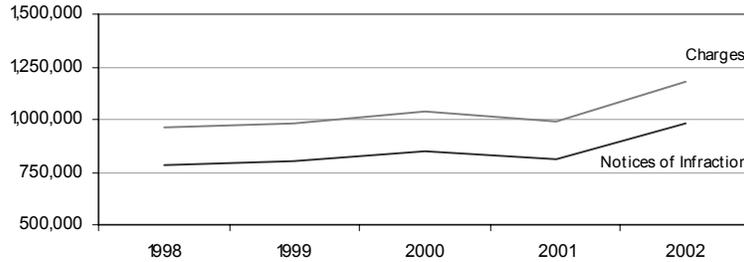
Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Traffic Infractions (Case Type IT)

Infractions are identified and defined under RCW 46.63.020, and include violations of traffic statutes, laws, or ordinances that are not punishable by a jail sentence. Traffic infractions pertain to (a) the operation of a vehicle whether it is moving, standing, or stopping; and (b) pedestrian offenses.

Caseload

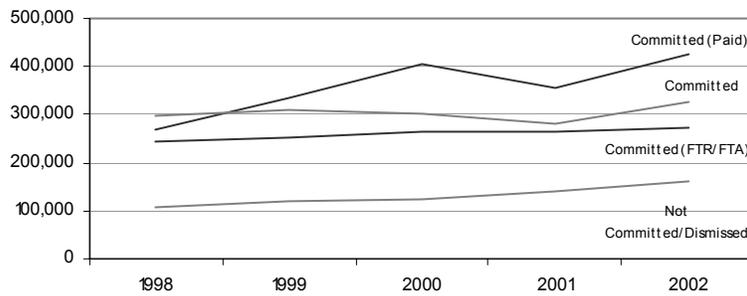
Filings

Notices of
Infraction: ↑ 24%



Disposition of Charges

↑ 29% (Total)

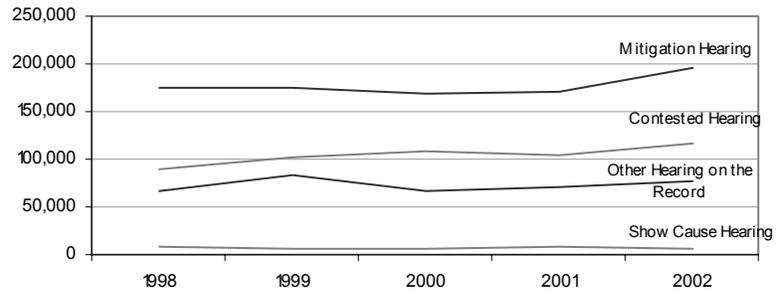


Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Committed—Paid	29%	33%	37%	34%	36%
Committed—FTR/FTA	27%	25%	24%	25%	23%
Committed	32%	31%	28%	27%	27%
Not Committed, Dismissed	12%	12%	11%	14%	14%

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Traffic Infractions Continued

Proceedings



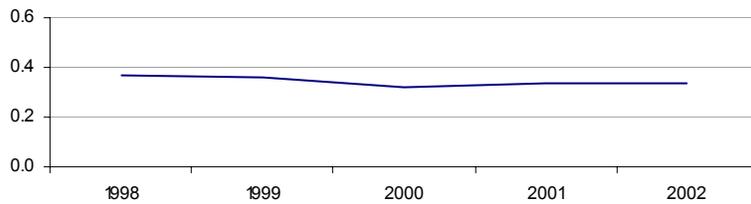
Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Mitigation Hearing	52%	48%	48%	48%	49%
Contested Hearing	26%	28%	31%	30%	29%
Show Cause Hearing	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Other Hearing on the Record	19%	23%	19%	20%	19%

Case Flow and Workload

Proceedings per Charge Disposition

↓ 10%



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, DUI/Physical Control Cases (Case Type CD)

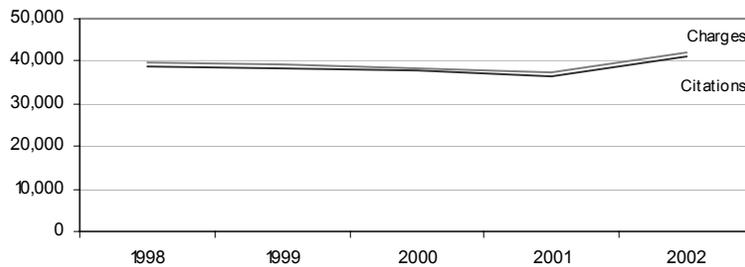
Misdemeanors are violations of traffic and criminal statutes, laws, or ordinances that are punishable by a jail sentence, but not by imprisonment. This include all traffic violations that may be classed as criminal offenses, which are listed as exceptions under RCW 46.63.020.

DUI/Physical Control consists of cases that cite RCW 46.61.502, driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs, or RCW 46.61.504, actual physical control of a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs, or comparable municipal ordinance.

Caseload

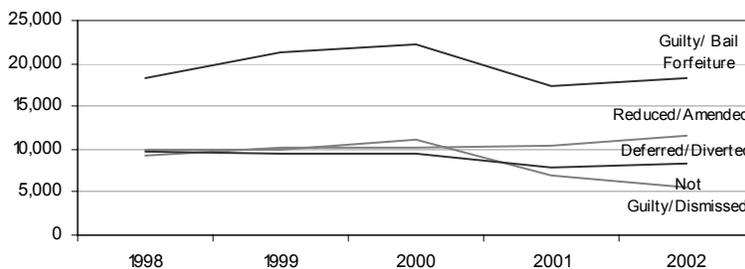
Filings

Notices of
Infraction: ↑ 6%



Disposition of Charges

↓ 16%

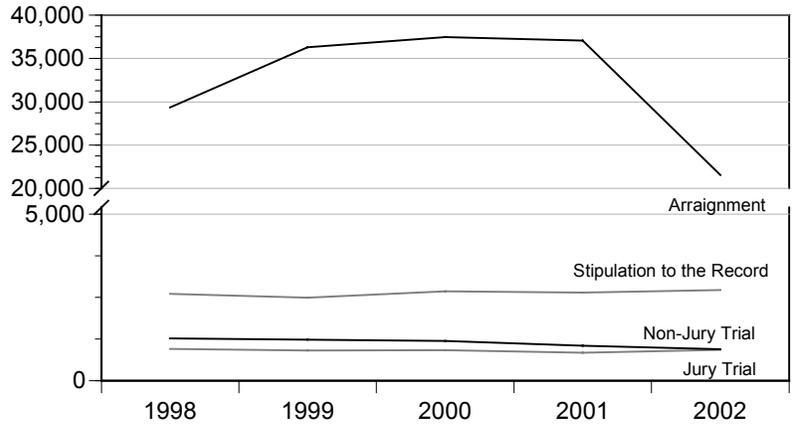


Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Guilty/Bail Forfeiture	49%	42%	42%	41%	42%
Not Guilty/Dismissed	27%	20%	21%	16%	13%
Red/Amd. to Lssr. Chrg	25%	20%	19%	24%	27%
Prosecution Deferred/Diverted	21%	19%	18%	19%	19%

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, DUI/Physical Control Cases Continued

Proceedings



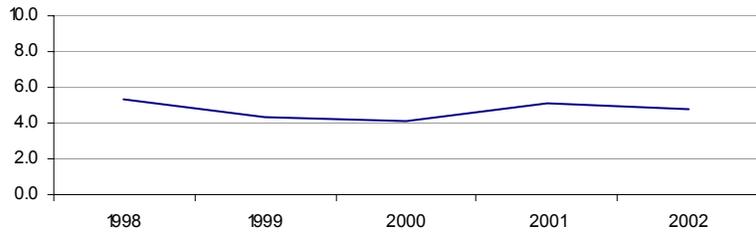
Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Jury Trial	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non-Jury Trial	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Stipulation to the Record	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Arraignment	15%	16%	17%	17%	10%
Other Hearing on the Record	83%	82%	81%	81%	88%

Case Flow and Workload

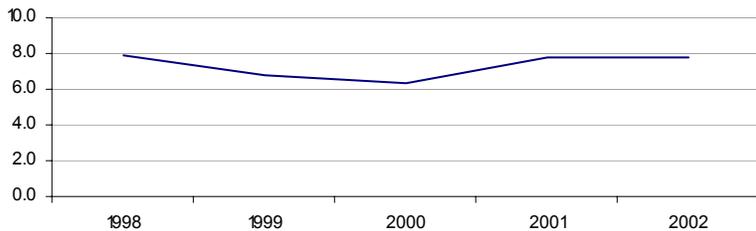
*Proceedings per Charge
Disposition*

↓ 10%



*Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ dispositions * 100)*

0%



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Other Traffic Misdemeanors (Case Type CT)

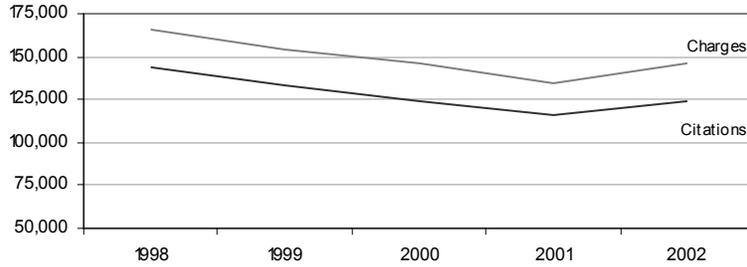
Misdemeanors are violations of traffic and criminal statutes, laws, or ordinances that are punishable by a jail sentence, but not by imprisonment. This include all traffic violations that may be classed as criminal offenses, which are listed as exceptions under RCW 46.63.020.

Other traffic misdemeanors are all citations or complaints other than those counted under DUI/Physical Control, that pertain to the operation or use of a vehicle.

Caseload

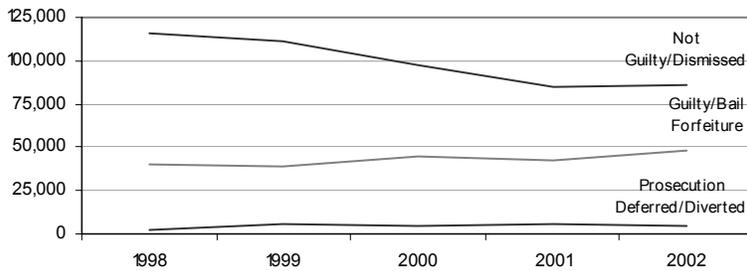
Filings

Notices of
Infraction: ↓ 13%



Disposition of Charges

↓ 14%

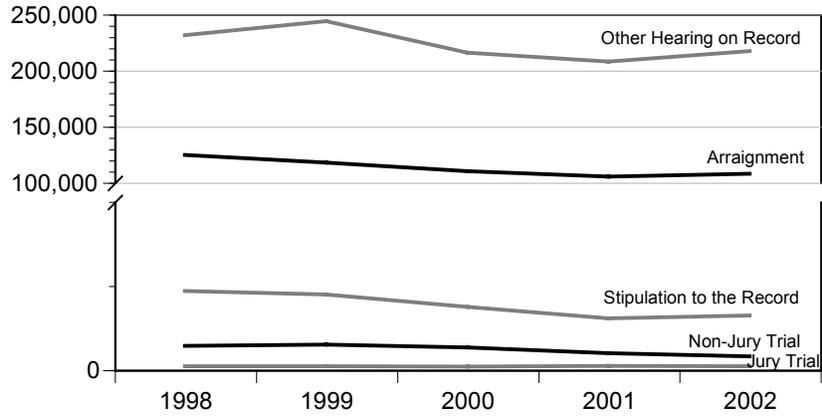


Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Guilty/Bail Forfeiture	74%	72%	66%	64%	62%
Not Guilty/Dismissed	26%	25%	31%	32%	35%
Prosecution Deferred/Diverted	1%	4%	3%	4%	4%

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Other Traffic Misdemeanors Continued

Proceedings



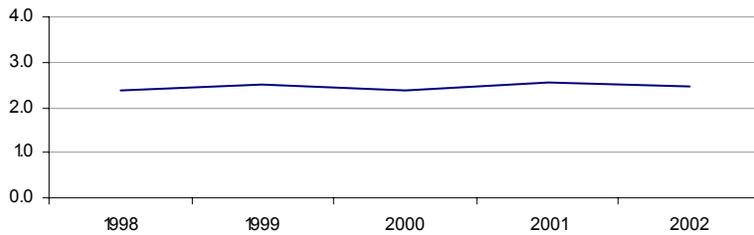
Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Jury Trial	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non-Jury Trial	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Stipulation to the Record	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Arraignment	34%	31%	33%	33%	32%
Other Hearing on the Record	63%	65%	64%	65%	65%

Case Flow and Workload

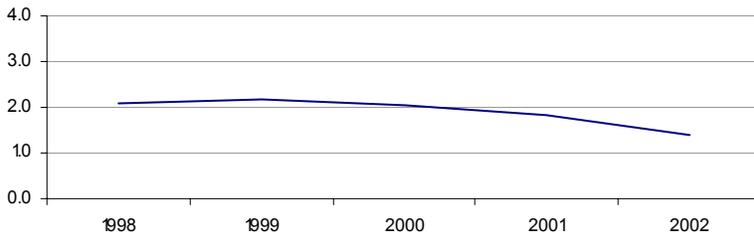
Proceedings per Charge Disposition

↑ 5%



Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ dispositions * 100)

↓ 31%



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Non-traffic Misdemeanors

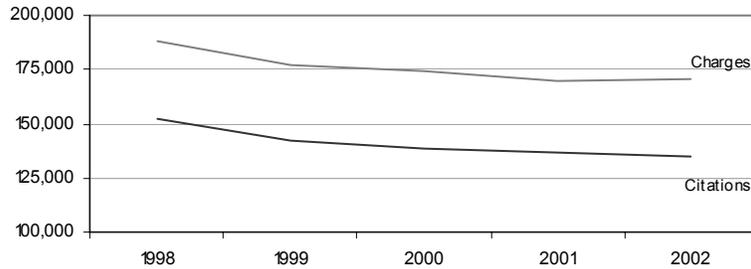
Non-traffic misdemeanors are criminal cases, excluding DUI/Physical Control, Other Traffic Misdemeanors, and felony complaints, that are punishable by up to one year in jail and/or a fine of up to \$5,000.

Misdemeanors are violations of traffic and criminal statutes, laws, or ordinances that are punishable by a jail sentence, but not by imprisonment. This includes all traffic violations that may be classed as criminal offenses, which are listed as exceptions under RCW 46.63.020.

Caseload

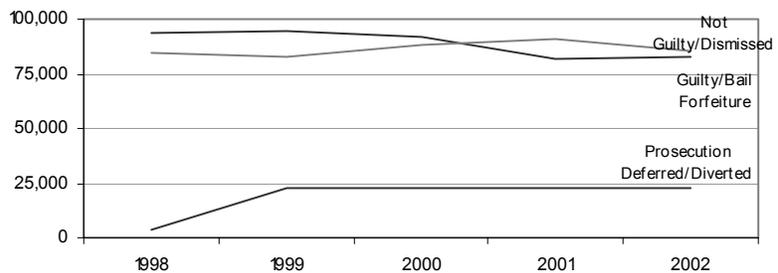
Filings

Notices of
Infraction: ↓ 10%



Disposition of Charges

↓ 6% (Total)

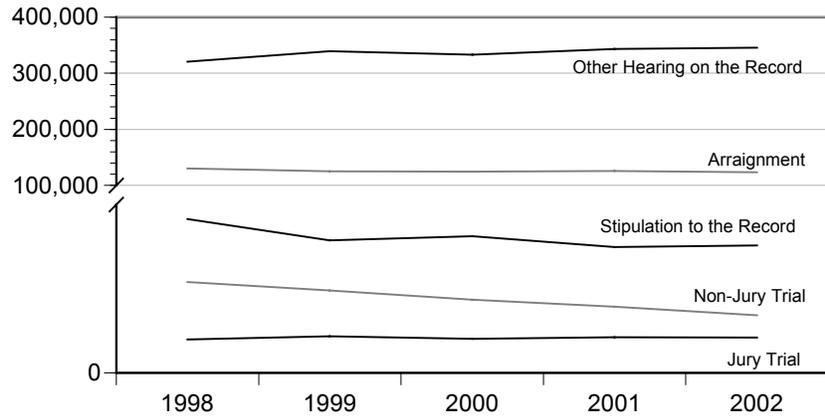


Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Guilty/Bail Forfeiture	52%	47%	45%	42%	43%
Not Guilty/Dismissed	48%	41%	43%	46%	45%
Total Charge Dispositions	2%	11%	11%	12%	12%

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Non-traffic Misdemeanors Continued

Proceedings



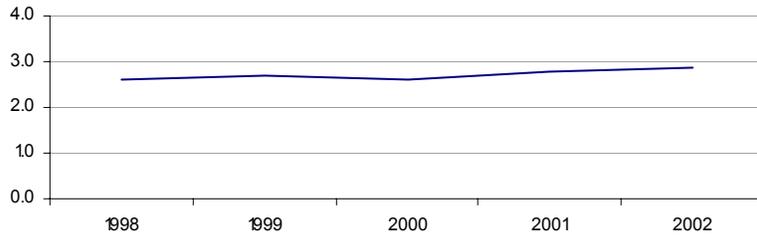
Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Jury Trial	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non-Jury Trial	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Stipulation to the Record	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Arraignment	28%	26%	26%	26%	26%
Other Hearing on the Record	69%	71%	71%	71%	72%

Case Flow and Workload

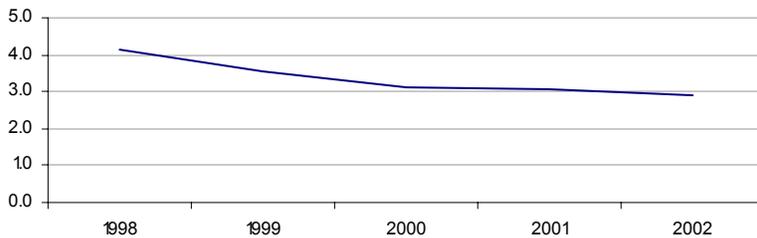
*Proceedings per Charge
Disposition*

↑ 9% (Total)



*Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ dispositions * 100)*

↓ 29%



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Civil Cases (Case Type CV)

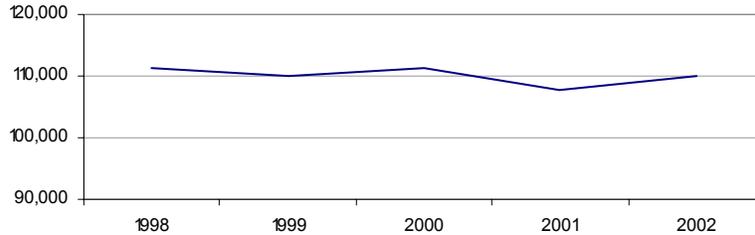
All complaints or petitions filed by a private or corporate party against another party or corporate party, requesting the enforcement or protection of a civil right, alleging civil damages, or calling for the redress or prevention of a wrong. In addition, these filings include small claims judgments that have been transferred to the civil court.

Effective June 8, 2000, District Court jurisdiction includes civil cases with damages to a maximum of \$50,000. (This limit increase to \$25,000, effective July 1, 1991; and \$35,000, effective July 27, 1997.) On June 11, 1998, Municipal Court jurisdiction was expanded to include determination of issue in one type of civil matter—impoundment authorized by agents of the municipality.

Caseload

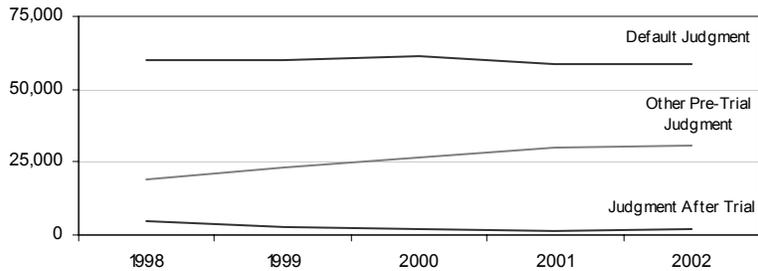
Filings

↓ 1%



Dispositions

↑ 10% (Total)

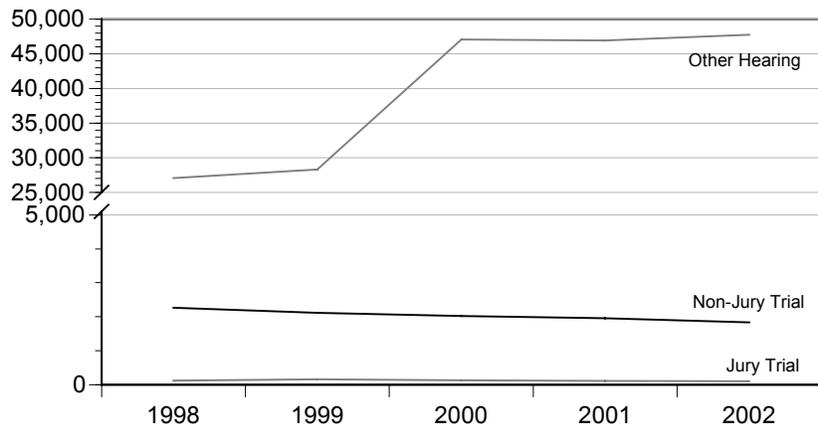


Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Default Judgment	72%	70%	68%	65%	64%
Other Pre-Trial Judgment	23%	27%	30%	33%	34%
Post-trial Judgment	5%	3%	2%	2%	2%

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Civil Cases Continued

Proceedings



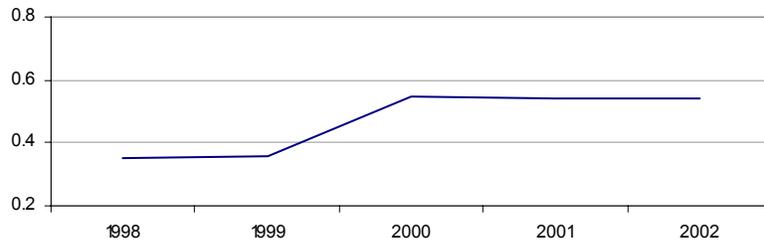
Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Jury Trial	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Non-Jury Trial	8%	7%	4%	4%	4%
Other Hearing	92%	92%	96%	96%	96%

Case Flow and Workload

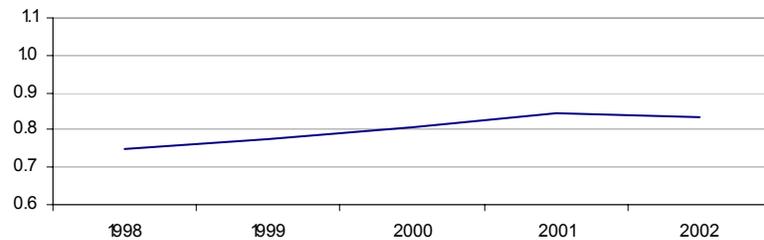
*Proceedings per
Disposition*

↑ 54%



*Clearance Rate
(Dispositions÷Filings)*

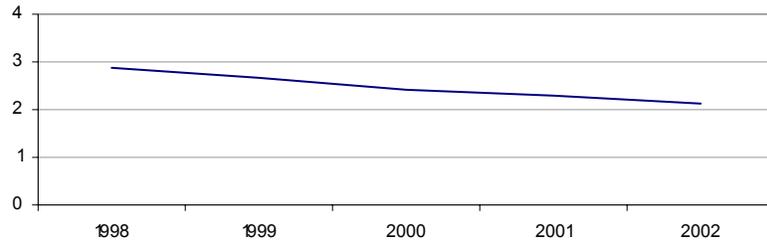
↑ 11%



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Civil Cases Continued

Trial Rate
(Trials ÷ dispositions * 100)

↓ 26%



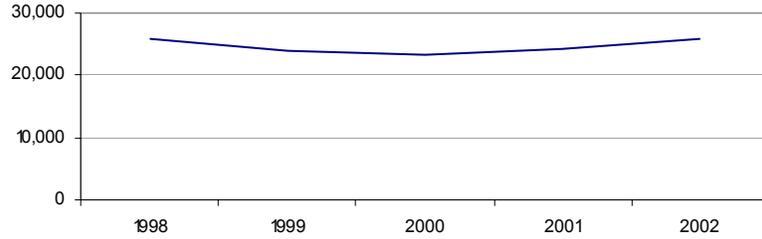
Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Small Claims Cases (Case Type SC)

Civil cases that are limited to redress through damages not to exceed \$2,500, and where the parties are not represented by attorneys.

Caseload

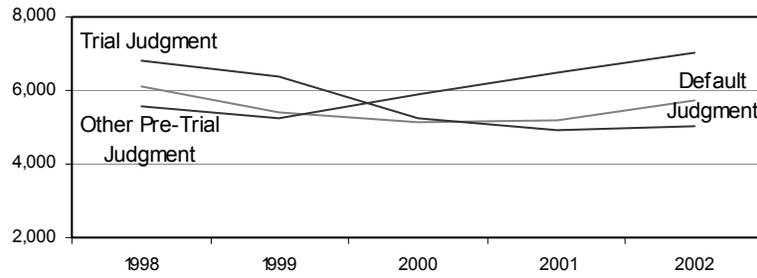
Filings

↑ 1%



Dispositions

↓ 10%

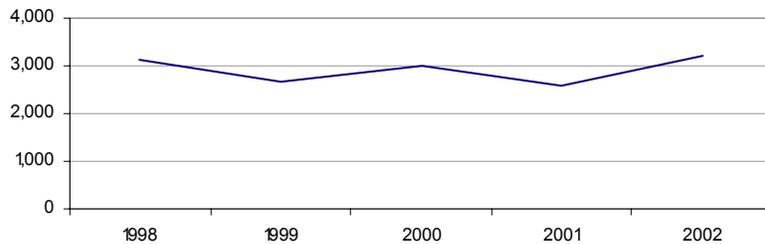


Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Default Judgment	33%	32%	32%	31%	32%
Other Pre-Trial Judgment	30%	31%	36%	39%	39%
Trial Judgment	37%	37%	32%	30%	28%

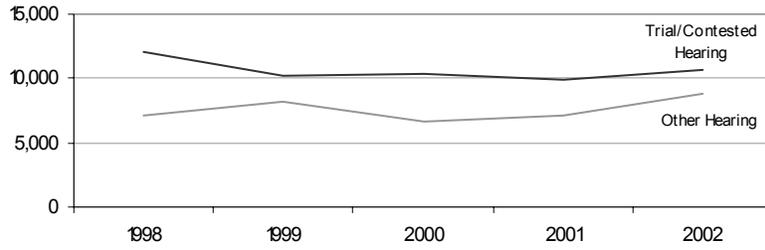
Transferred to Civil for Satisfaction of Judgment

↑ 4%



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Small Claims Cases Continued

Proceedings



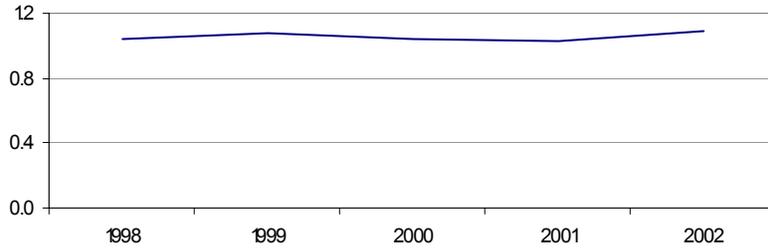
Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Trial/Contested Hearing	63%	55%	61%	58%	55%
Other Hearing	37%	45%	39%	42%	45%

Case Flow and Workload

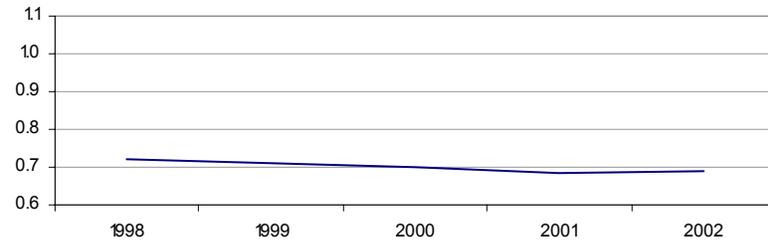
Proceedings per Disposition

↑ 5%



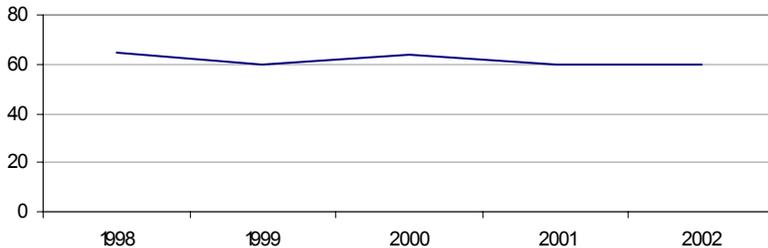
Clearance Rate (Dispositions ÷ Filings)

↓ 4%



Trial Rate (Trials ÷ dispositions * 100)

↓ 8%



Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Domestic Violence/Anti-harassment Protection Cases (Case Types DV)

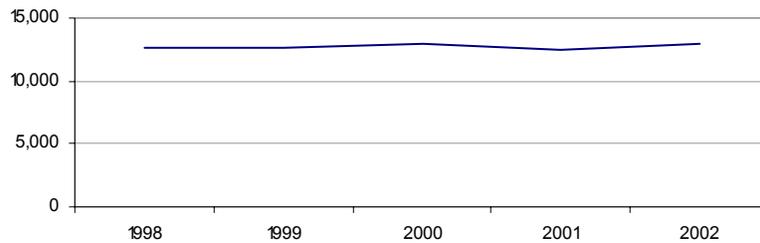
Petitions for orders of temporary protection filed by a person seeking relief from an allegedly violent person, either related to, or living with, the petitioner. Anti-harassment petitions included in this classification began to be processed by the District Courts on July 1, 1991.

Declines in domestic violence dispositions, seen at the end of this time period, are reflections of a revision in data-entry procedures pursuant to recent legislation to improve state-wide information sharing. Case disposition is no longer recorded at the time a judicial decision is rendered. Rather, disposition awaits the termination or expiration of all associated orders.

Caseload

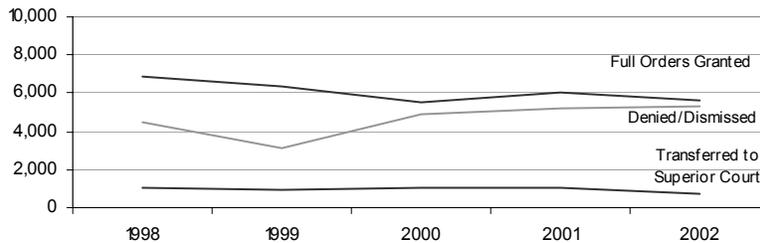
Filings

↓ 2%



Dispositions

↓ 10%

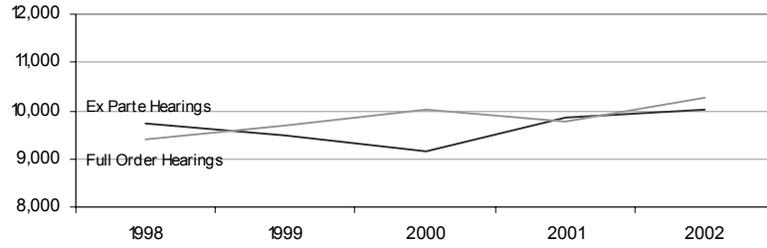


Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Full Orders Granted	55%	61%	48%	49%	48%
Denied/Dismissed	36%	30%	30%	42%	45%
Transferred to Superior Court	9%	9%	9%	9%	6%

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Domestic Violence/Anti-harassment Protection Cases Continued

Hearings



Percentage of Type, by Calendar Year—

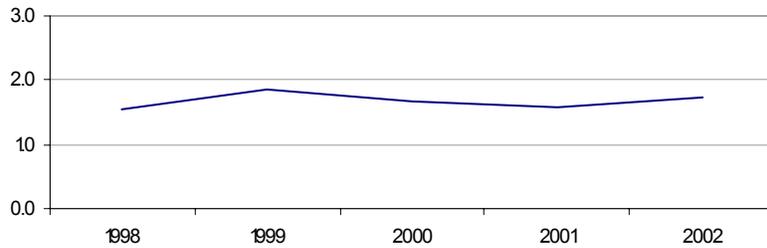
	<u>1998</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Ex Parte Hearings	51%	49%	48%	50%	49%
Full Order Hearings	49%	51%	52%	50%	51%

Case Flow and Workload

Hearings per Disposition

(Hearings ÷ Dispositions)

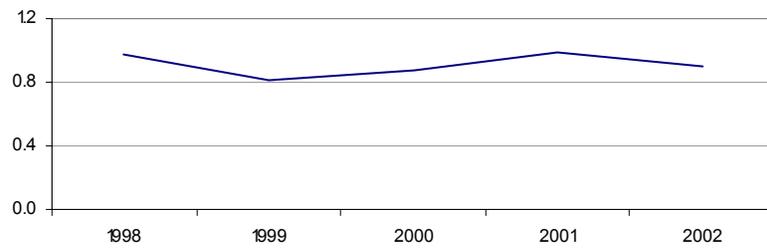
↑ 13%



Clearance Rate

(Dispositions ÷ Filings)

↓ 8%



Appendix A

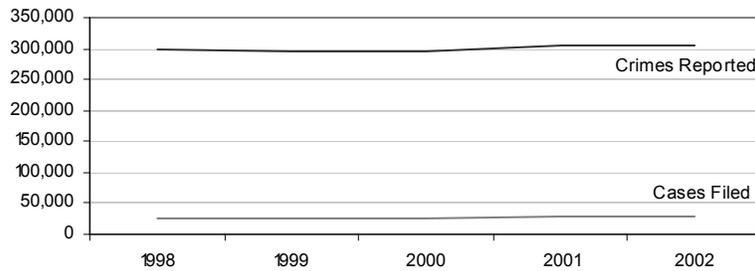
This appendix presents, without comment, a comparison of case filings statistics to other trends in the population.

Felony Filings and Uniform Crime Reports

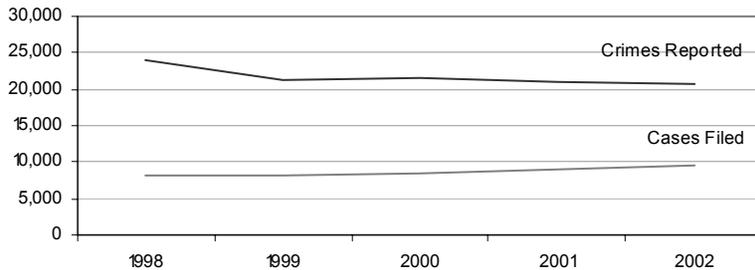
This set of four charts compares case filings in the Superior Courts against Uniform Crime Report (UCR) totals. The UCR numbers are from the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. They include totals for “violent” crime (which includes murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault), and “property” crime (which includes burglary, larceny/theft, motor-vehicle theft and arson).

For the purpose of comparison to felony filings, the arson component of “property” crimes is removed, as is the controlled substance case classification used in Superior Court felony filings.

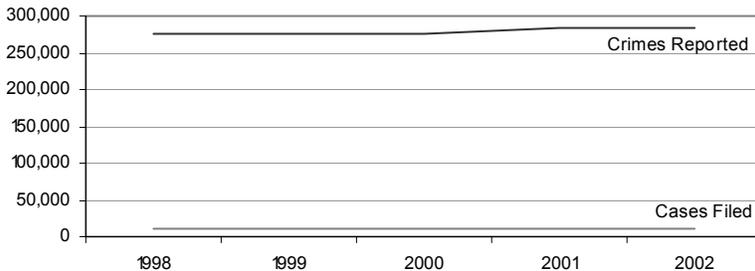
*Total Crimes Reported &
Total Cases Filed*



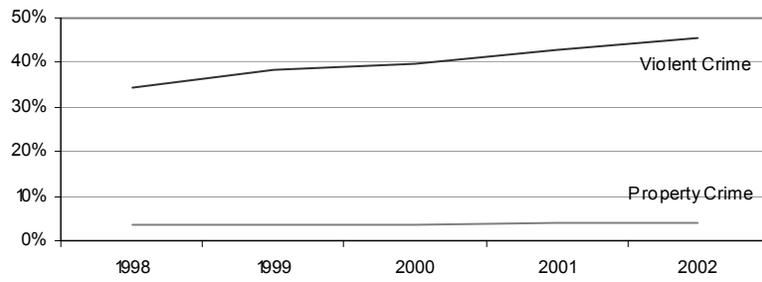
*Violent Crimes Reported
& Case Filings for
Violent Crimes*



*Property Crimes
Reported & Case Filings
for Property Crimes*



*Ratios of Cases Filed to
Crimes Reported, for
Violent and Property
Crimes*



Glossary

Superior Court Glossary

This is a reduced version of the glossary for the statistical tables of the Superior Courts, which appear in the *Annual Report*. The complete glossary may be found on the internet at:

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/caseload/superior/superiorglossary.cfm>

Filings

A filing is the initiation of a case in court by formal submission to the court of a document alleging the facts of a matter and requesting relief. A separate case filing occurs for each criminal and juvenile offender defendant. Criminal and juvenile offender filings are categorized by the primary (i.e., most serious) original charge against the defendant. For a non-criminal case, a separate filing is reported for each complaint or petition filed. Each unique mental illness/alcohol case number is reported as a single filing, no matter how many subsequent petitions are filed during the life of a case. A case reopened for subsequent adjudication after the initial judgment is not considered a new filing unless a new case number is assigned.

Proceedings

A proceeding is a matter held in open court with at least one of the parties present in a case in which oral argument or testimony is given. Trials and adjudicatory hearings are contested proceedings conducted by a judge to determine the guilt or innocence of the defendant in criminal and juvenile offender cases, or to resolve the issues of a case in non-criminal cases.

Cases Resolved

Resolution signifies that a case has been tried, settled, or otherwise concluded. It occurs when a judicial decision has been rendered or when a case has been transferred to another jurisdiction for subsequent adjudication. In some instances a case can be “completed” (i.e., the dispositive case documents filed with the clerk for the legal record) at the point of case resolution; however, a case can never be completed prior to resolution. For mental illness and alcohol cases, resolution occurs at the adjudication of the first commitment petition filed in a case other than the initial petition for detention.

Criminal and Juvenile Offender

Criminal and juvenile offender filings are categorized by the primary (i.e., most serious) original charge against the defendant in the following order: homicide, sex crimes, robbery, assault, theft/burglary, motor vehicle theft, controlled substances, other felony, and misdemeanors. Other filing categories include appeals from lower courts and “non-charge” cases.

Homicide—Cases where the primary charge involves murder, manslaughter, excusable homicide, or justifiable homicide.

Sex Crimes—Cases where the primary charge involves sexual exploitation of a minor, incest, rape, statutory rape, or indecent liberties.

Robbery—Cases where the primary charge involves theft of property by the use of force, violence, or fear of injury to a person or his or her property.

Assault—Cases where the primary charge involves assault or intent to cause another person physical harm, including malicious harassment and coercion.

Theft/Burglary—Cases where the primary charge involves theft of property (other than a motor vehicle), possession of stolen property, extortion, burglary, or criminal trespass.

Motor Vehicle Theft—Cases where the primary charge involves taking a motor vehicle without permission.

Controlled Substance—Cases where the primary charge involves violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act or violation of regulations regarding prescription drugs.

Other Felony—Cases where the primary charge involves a felony which is not specifically defined above.

Misdemeanor and Gross Misdemeanor—Cases where the primary charge involves a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor based on the *Revised Code of Washington*.

Appeals from Lower Courts—Cases involving the appeal of a judgment rendered on a criminal charge in a court of limited jurisdiction.

Non-charge—A matter brought before the court for which no formal charges have been filed, such as a preliminary appearance prior to the filing of an information; a non-charge matter for which a charging document is eventually filed becomes a criminal filing as of the date the information is filed.

Civil

Civil cases pertain to the settlement of disputes between and among individuals, organizations, or groups and have to do with the establishment, recovery, or redress of private and civil rights.

Tort—Cases involving injury to another person or damage to another’s property that does not involve a contract.

Commercial—Cases involving monetary disputes where damages are not at issue.

Meretricious Relationship—Cases involving the distribution of property from a meretricious relationship (i.e., a stable, marital-like relationship where both parties cohabit with knowledge that a lawful marriage between them does not exist).

Property Rights—Cases involving land and items attached to land.

Civil Harassment—Petitions for protection from civil harassment.—Petitions for protection from civil harassment.

Domestic Violence—Petitions for protection from domestic violence.

Administrative Law Review—Petitions to review rulings made by state administrative agencies.

Other Petitions and Complaints—Cases involving civil matters which are not specifically defined above.

Appeals from Lower Courts—Appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction to superior courts for civil or traffic infraction matters.

Matters Filed with Clerk—Matters that are primarily handled by the clerk, which include tax warrants, abstracts of judgment, transcripts of judgment, and foreign judgments.

Domestic

Child Custody—Dispute involving immediate charge and control of a child.

Dissolution With Children of the Marriage—Termination of a marriage other than by annulment, with dependent children of that marriage.

Dissolution With No Children of the Marriage—Termination of a marriage other than by annulment, with no dependent children of that marriage.

Annulment/Invalidity—Claim that a marriage is illegal or invalid.

Modification—Change of a previous order or decree, when a new case file is opened and a new case number assigned (e.g., when the dissolution decree or order at issue was previously entered in another county or state).

Out-of-State Child Custody—Recording custody established out-of-state.

Legal Separation—Petition by parties to live separate and apart.

Mandatory Wage Assignment—Petition for wage assignment (RCW 26.18.070).

Foreign Judgment—Any judgment, decree, or order of a court of the United States, or of any state or territory which is entitled to full faith and credit in this state.

Miscellaneous Domestic—Any other petition not specified by other domestic causes-of-action.

UIFSA—Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) cases involve agreements between states and other jurisdictions to enforce court-ordered child support.

Probate/Guardianship

Probate—Cases involving registering of a will, the determination of whether a will is a valid instrument, the statutory method of establishing a will’s proper execution, or the disposition of an estate in the absence of a will.

Guardianship—Cases involving the relationship between a person lawfully invested with the power and charged with the duty of taking care of the rights of another person who is considered by the court as incapable of caring for himself or herself.

Adoption/Paternity

Paternity/URESA/UIFSA—Petition to determine the legal status of an alleged biological father which is filed in conjunction with the reciprocal report entered under the URESA or UIFSA acts.

Paternity—Petition to determine the legal status of an alleged biological father.

Relinquishment—Petition to voluntarily relinquish parental rights of a child to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), an agency, or a prospective adoptive parent.

Termination—Petition for termination of a parent-child relationship of a parent or alleged parent who has not executed a written consent.

Adoption—Petition for the establishment of a new, permanent relationship of a parent and child between persons not having that relationship. This also includes an adoption involving either relinquishment or termination.

Modification—Change of a previous order or decree, when a new case file is opened and a new case number assigned (e.g., when the decree or order at issue was previously entered in another county or state).

Confidential Name Change—Petition for a confidential change of name for a victim of domestic violence.—
Petition for a confidential change of name for a victim of domestic violence.

Initial Pre-Placement Reports Filed With Clerk—An initial pre-placement report filed on a child by the DSHS prior to the filing of adoption papers.

Mental Illness/Alcohol

Mental Illness—Cases involving the determination as to whether an individual is mentally ill or incapacitated and should be placed or remain under care, custody, and treatment.

Alcohol—Cases involving the determination as to whether an individual is incapacitated by alcohol and should be committed to an institution for treatment.

Juvenile Dependency

Child In Need Of Services—Petition to allow out-of-home placement of a minor.

Dependency—Petition alleging a person under the age of 18 is dependent and requires court intervention to ensure his or her well being.

Developmental Disability Placement—Petition for a voluntary placement agreement when the sole reason for the out-of-home placement is the child’s developmental disability.

Termination—Petition for a termination of a parent and child relationship following the finding of dependency.

At-Risk Youth—Petition to request available juvenile court services for personal or family situations which present a serious and imminent threat to the at-risk child or family.

Truancy—Petition to request the juvenile court to intervene on behalf of a juvenile who is unjustifiably truant from school. The time standard figures for juvenile dependency cases exclude truancy petitions.

Courts of Limited Jurisdiction Glossary

This is a reduced version of the glossary for the statistical tables of the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, which appear in the *Annual Report*. The complete glossary may be found on the internet at:

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/caseload/clj/cljglossary00.cfm>

Infractions—Case Types

Infractions are identified and defined under RCW 46.63.020 and include violations of traffic statutes, laws, or ordinances that are not punishable by a jail sentence. There are three types of infractions:

Traffic Infractions—Cases that pertain to (1) the operation or condition of a vehicle whether it is moving, standing, or stopping, and (2) pedestrian offenses.

Non-Traffic Infractions—Cases including violations of RCW 18.27.340 and 18.106.020, contracting and plumbing license violations, and offenses decriminalized under municipal code, such as dog leash violations in some municipalities.

Parking Infraction—Cases pertaining only to violations of parking statutes and ordinances.

Infractions—Filings

Notices of Infraction Filed—Individual Uniform Court Docket forms received by the reporting court during the year. Each notice of infraction can contain up to three charges. Previously closed matters that have been reopened (for example, FTAs) are not counted. Violations charged are shown separately.

Number of Violations Charged—All violations for those infractions filed during the month as recorded on the Uniform Court Docket under the section entitled, “and did then and there commit each of the following offenses/infractions.” There will be at least one, and no more than three, violations per notice of infraction (increased from two, effective January 1, 1995).

Infractions—Proceedings

Proceedings include all hearings held in open court. A proceeding is conducted in “open court” if it is held in a courtroom with the judge, at least one of the parties to the action is present, and court is “in session.” Hearings outside the courtroom, such as those in chambers, should only be considered to be open court if they are “on the record” (electronically recorded where statute requires).

Mitigation Hearing—A hearing at which the offender agrees to having committed the offense but wishes to explain the circumstances to the court, pursuant to provisions of RCW 46.63.100. Witnesses may not be required to attend but may attend voluntarily.

Contested Hearing—A hearing at which the defendant contests the infraction pursuant to the provisions of RCW 46.63.090. Witnesses, including the citing officer, may be required to attend.

Show Cause Hearing—A hearing resulting from a failure by the defendant to appear for a requested mitigation or contested hearing. If the show cause hearing is followed immediately by a mitigation or contested hearing, the second hearing is also reported in the appropriate category.

Other Hearing on the Record—Any hearing, other than those above, that meets the criteria for proceedings that must be electronically recorded where statute requires. Routine paper signing is not counted in this category. Two criteria are used to determine this type of hearing. First, at the onset of the hearing, the judge states the name and number of the case and the names of the attorneys for the parties who are represented. Second, records of proceeding must be kept according to the appropriate method (i.e., electronically recorded where statute requires or recorded on the docket).

Infractions—Dispositions

A disposition is the resolution of an issue that has been brought before the court. Each violation charged has one disposition. This includes all dispositions within the year, regardless of when the charge was originally filed.

Paid—An instance when the defendant has paid the penalty in full for the infraction offense without an appearance in court by the defendant or his/her representative. The Abstract of Judgment will be marked as “P.”

Committed—Failure to Respond/Failure to Appear—An instance when the defendant failed to respond to a notice of infraction (FTR) or failed to appear for a scheduled hearing (FTA). This is a final disposition regardless of any subsequent actions or payments.

Committed—A decision by the court that a defendant committed the infraction that was charged. This includes charges in which the defendant failed to meet the conditions of a deferred finding agreement.

Not Committed—A decision by the court that a defendant has not committed the infraction that was charged.

Dismissed—An infraction charged against the defendant and rejected by the court. This includes charges dismissed as a result of defendant’s successful completion of the conditions of a deferred finding agreement.

Traffic Infractions—Deferred Findings

Those traffic infractions for which the court defers findings for up to one year and imposes specific conditions and costs on the defendant, as authorized by SSB 2776—Chapter 110, Laws of 2000 (effective 06/08/2000). At the end of the deferral period, if the defendant has successfully met those conditions and has not committed another traffic infraction, the court may dismiss the charge. If the defendant fails or re-commits, the court will enter a judgement of committed and impose appropriate penalties. Outcomes for these deferrals are included in the appropriate “Committed” or “Dismissed” disposition counts.

Misdemeanors—Case Types

Misdemeanors are violations of traffic and criminal statutes, laws, or ordinances that are punishable by a jail sentence and not by imprisonment. This includes all traffic violations that may be classed as criminal offenses and are listed as exceptions under RCW 46.63.020.

DUI/Physical Control—Cases that cite RCW 46.61.502, driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs, or RCW 46.61.504, actual physical control of a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs.

Other Traffic Misdemeanor—All citations/complaints other than those counted under DUI/Physical Control that pertain to the operation or use of a vehicle.

Non-Traffic Misdemeanor—Criminal cases, excluding DUI/Physical Control, Other Traffic, and Felony complaints, punishable by up to one year in jail and/or a fine of up to \$5,000.

Misdemeanors—Filings

Citations/Complaints Filed—Individual Uniform Court Docket forms received by the reporting court during the year. Each Uniform Court Docket form can contain up to two charges. These also include Misdemeanor Complaints filed by the prosecutor.

Number of Violations Charged—All charges for those misdemeanors filed during the year as recorded on the Uniform Court Docket. There will be at least one, and no more than two, charges per citation. Information filed by prosecutors may contain more than two charges.

Misdemeanors—Proceedings

All hearings, bench trials, and jury trials held in open court are included in proceedings.

Arraignment—A separate hearing conducted in open court that consists of reading the complaint to the defendant or stating the substance of the charge, and advising the defendant of his/her rights for the purpose of allowing the defendant to enter a plea.

Non-Jury Trial—A bench trial before the judge (without a jury) at which the defendant contests the charges made against him/her. A witness must be sworn before a hearing may be counted as a non-jury trial. Introduction of exhibits and stipulation to the record are not sufficient criteria for counting a hearing as a non-jury trial.

Jury Trial—A trial before a jury at which the defendant contests the charges. A jury trial is counted once, when it starts. A jury trial has started when the following events have taken place: (1) the jury has been impaneled, (2)

voir dire has occurred, and (3) the jury has been sworn and is ready to hear evidence. Jury trials are reported regardless of whether the jury eventually turns in a verdict.

Stipulation to the Record—A hearing before a judge at which the defendant maintains a plea of “not guilty,” but stipulates to a reading of the record. Witnesses may be examined by the judge. A finding of guilt is normally entered based on the facts in record.

Other Hearing on the Record—Any hearing other than those above that meets the criteria for proceedings that must be electronically recorded where statute requires. Routine paper signing is excluded from this category.

Misdemeanors—Dispositions

A disposition is the resolution of an issue that has been brought before the court. Each violation charged will have one disposition. This includes all dispositions within the year, regardless of when the charge was originally filed. Dispositions do not reflect outstanding warrants.

Bail Forfeiture—Charges for which the defendant has paid the penalty for the offense without an appearance in court by the offender or his/her lawyer.

Guilty—Charges for which the defendant has been found guilty of the offense.

Not Guilty—Charges for which the defendant has been found not guilty of the offense following an appearance before the court.

Dismissed—Charges for which the charge against the offender has been dismissed. This includes cases having successfully completed the probationary period resulting from deferred prosecution.

Misdemeanors—Reduced/Amended to a Lesser Charge

DUI/Physical Control charges which are amended or reduced to other traffic misdemeanors. Activity subsequent to the reduction or amendment, including final disposition, is counted under Other Traffic Misdemeanors.

Misdemeanors—Deferred Prosecution/Diversion

Prosecution Deferred those citations or complaints for which prosecution has been deferred, as in RCW 10.05 for a “probationary period” (for which conditions may have been set by the court). **Diversion** intervenes either prior to arraignment or prior to trial.

Domestic Violence/Antiharassment Protection—Petitions Filed

A petition for orders of temporary protection filed by a person seeking relief from an allegedly violent person, either related to or living with the petitioner. Antiharassment petitions included in this category began to be processed by district courts July 1, 1991.

Domestic Violence/Antiharassment Protection—Proceedings

Ex Parte Hearing—A hearing concerning temporary orders at which either the respondent, the petitioner, or their representative is present. Includes hearings which modify temporary orders for protection.

Full Order Hearing—A hearing concerning full orders at which either the respondent, the petitioner, or their representative is present. Includes hearings which modify full orders for protection.

Domestic Violence/Antiharassment—Dispositions

Full Orders Granted—The petition for the full protection order is granted by the court.

Denied/Dismissed—Both temporary and full orders for protection were not granted by the court.

Transferred to Superior Court—Full order petitions must be transferred to superior court if one or more of these conditions exist: (1) if the superior court has exercised jurisdiction over a proceeding involving the parties, (2) child custody is involved, or (3) there is a request to exclude a party from a dwelling which both parties share.

Civil—Filings

All complaints or petitions filed by a private or corporate party against another private or corporate party requesting the enforcement or protection of a civil right, alleging civil damages, or calling for the redress or prevention of a wrong. In addition, these filings include small claims judgments that have been transferred to the civil court. Effective June 8, 2000, district court jurisdiction includes civil cases with damages to a maximum of \$50,000. (This limit has increased several times over the years: \$25,000 effective 07/01/91, \$35,000 effective 07/27/97.) On June 11, 1998, municipal court jurisdiction was expanded to include determination of issues in one type of civil matter— impoundment authorized by agents of the municipality.

Civil—Proceedings

All hearings, bench trials, and jury trials held in open court are included in proceedings.

Non-Jury Trial—A bench trial before the judge (without a jury) to decide the facts of the original issues of the case. A witness must be sworn before a hearing may be counted as a non-jury trial.

Jury Trial—A trial before a jury. A jury trial is counted once, when it starts. A jury trial has started when the following events have taken place: (1) the jury has been impaneled, (2) voir dire has occurred, and (3) the jury has been sworn and is ready to hear evidence. Jury trials are reported regardless of whether or not the jury eventually turns in a verdict.

Other Participatory Hearing—A proceeding other than a trial in open court at which at least one of the parties to the case is present. Other participatory hearings include supplemental proceedings, 72-hour commitments for observation purposes, false alarm hearings, and vehicle impound hearings. Motions and reconsideration's argued in open court where one of the parties to the case is present are also counted.

Civil—Dispositions

Default Judgment—An instance where the defendant has failed to contest the action or failed to appear in court, and the court has found for the plaintiff on a motion for a default judgment.

Other Pre-Trial Disposition—Instances in which the case has been disposed of by some judgment or manner other than a default judgment, without having proceeded to trial. Reasons for such dispositions include summary judgments, dismissals, agreed judgments, changes of venue, and cases that were filed improperly due to the residency of the defendant.

Judgment/Disposition After Trial—Cases that have been disposed after having proceeded to trial, even if the case was disposed without successful completion of the trial. The important differentiation between this disposition category and those preceding is that a trial was commenced. Disposition may include dismissals or stipulations as well as judgments.

Civil—Appeals

All civil cases that have been appealed to the superior court.

Civil—Post-Judgment Writ

A writ issued after judgment for the purpose of capturing funds. These include writs of garnishment, execution, and replevin.

Small Claims—Filings

Civil cases limited to redress through damages not to exceed \$2,500, and where parties are not represented by attorneys.

Small Claims—Proceedings

Trial—A trial in open court at which both parties to the action are present and contesting the matter and a witness is heard.

Other Participatory Hearing—A proceeding in open court, other than a trial, where one of the parties is present.

Small Claims—Dispositions

Default Judgment—A judgment made when the defendant has failed to contest the action or failed to appear in court.

Other Pretrial Disposition—A case which has been disposed of by some judgment or manner, other than a default judgment, without having proceeded to trial. These dispositions include summary judgment, dismissal, agreed judgment, and transfers.

Judgment/Disposition After Trial—A case which has been disposed after having proceeded to trial. This classification is issued for dispositions even if the case was disposed of without successful completion of the trial. The important differentiation between this disposition category and those preceding is that a trial was commenced.

Small Claims—Judgments Transferred to Civil Department

Judgments that are transferred for collection purposes. These are considered to be new filings in the civil section.

Small Claims—Appeals to Superior Court

All small claims that have been appealed to the superior court. Appeal is possible only if the amount claimed was \$100 or more, and if the defendant did not make a cross-claim against the plaintiff.

Felony—Complaints

Complaints filed in a trial court that allege the commission of a criminal act punishable by a prison sentence. The jurisdiction of district courts is to provide a preliminary hearing; superior courts have jurisdiction for trying felony complaints. Each defendant is counted only once, regardless of the number of charges on the complaint.

Felony—In-Custody Defendants

All persons arrested on probable cause or held for investigation and appearing before the court. These include all persons arrested on felony complaints and fugitive warrants alleging a felony.

Felony—Proceedings

Preliminary Appearance—A hearing at which a defendant is informed of the nature of the charges. Bail may be determined at this hearing.

Formal Charge Hearing—A hearing at which the defendant is formally charged with a felony complaint. This hearing is sometimes called an arraignment, although the defendant cannot plead guilty to felony charges.

Felony Preliminary Hearing—A hearing in open court for the purpose of determining if there is sufficient cause to bind the defendant over for trial in superior court for the charges alleged. Witnesses may be required to attend, and evidence may be introduced.

Other Participatory Hearing—Any other hearing at which the defendant or an attorney representing either side is present. This category includes additional hearings to reduce bail, to release the defendant on personal recognizance, or to continue a previous hearing in order to receive additional information.

Felony—Dispositions

Dismissed—All charges against the defendant have been dismissed.

Bound Over to Superior Court—Sufficient cause has been found to bind the defendant over to be tried in superior court for any of the charges alleged.

Reduced to Misdemeanor—An instance in which all felony charges are dropped, but the defendant is still charged with a misdemeanor. The defendant may have entered a guilty plea to a lesser charge, a complaint may have been amended, or the case may have been refiled as a misdemeanor.