

# **SUPERIOR COURT OF ARIZONA IN MARICOPA COUNTY**



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## **ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT**

***FISCAL YEAR 2000***

**July 1, 1999 – June 30, 2000**

**Office of the Presiding Judge  
Office of the Court Administrator**

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# Superior Court of Arizona In Maricopa County

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On behalf of the judges, commissioners, hearing officers and court staff of the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County, we are pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Statistical Report. This is the first year that the Court has reported operational statistics in the fiscal year format of July through June. Previously, reports were released in a calendar year summary of January through December. For statistical reporting purposes, we have published the last of our calendar year reports in a *Semi-Annual 1999 Report* relating the first six months of operational statistics, January through June. These two reports reflect the combined efforts of many dedicated judicial officers and staff who serve the citizens of Maricopa County. Highlighted in the report are some newly developed and innovative projects designed to enhance the delivery of court-related services. In addition, the Report presents summaries of well-established and continuing justice programs.

The population continues to increase rapidly in Maricopa County, one of the most important factors affecting increasing court caseloads in the future. Maricopa County is now the sixth most populace county in the United States. Current projections predict another one million people will call Maricopa County their home by 2010.

The pages which follow in this statistical report provide a closer look at each operational department of the Superior Court and present a detailed analysis of Fiscal Year 2000 performance, as well as a comparison with the previous calendar year. Comments and suggestions regarding court programs and statistical reporting are most welcome.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colin F. Campbell,  
Presiding Judge

Gordon M. Griller  
Court Administrator

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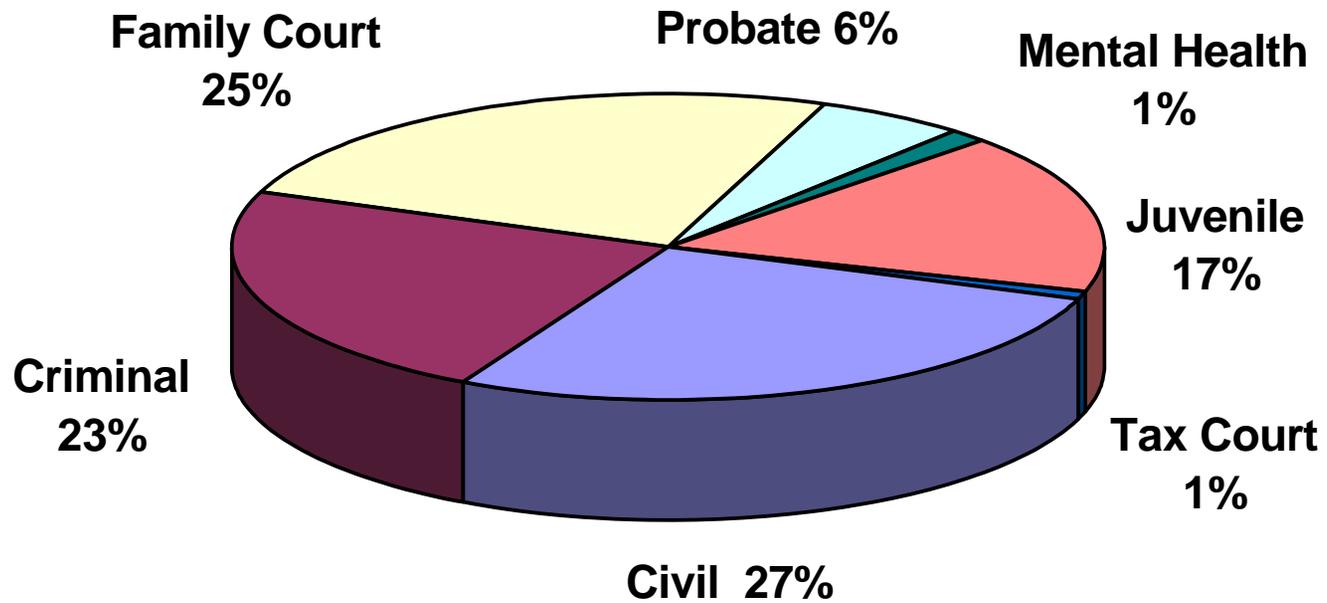
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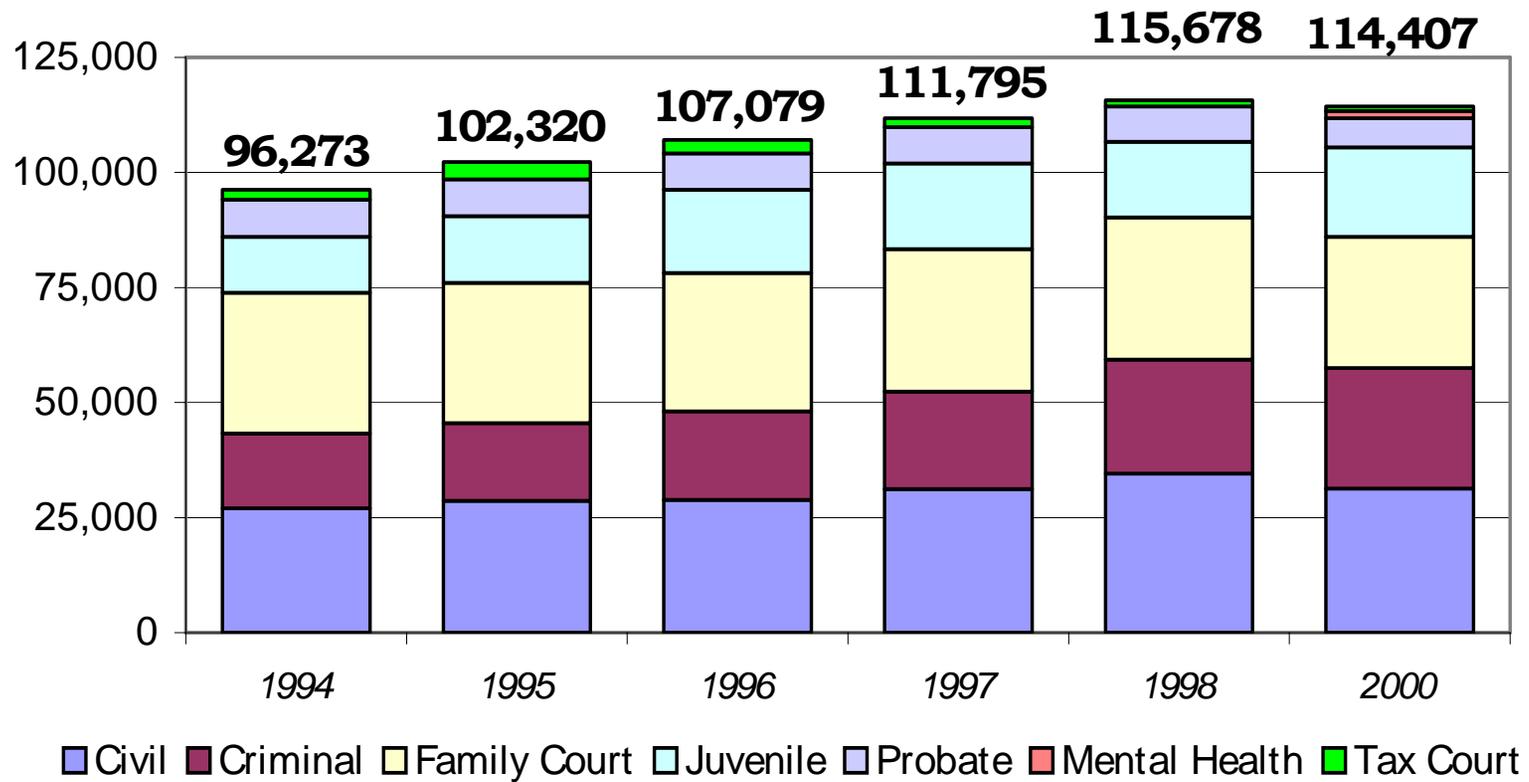
*Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County*

*Filings by Department, FY 2000*

*Total Filings = 114,407*



*Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County*  
**Case Filings by Department, CY 1994 - 98 and FY 2000**



NOTE: Prior to FY 2000, Superior Court reported in a calendar year format. In addition, Probate and Mental Health case filings were reported together.

***Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County***  
**Total Annual Case Filings by Department, CY 1994 – 1998 and FY 2000**

<b><u>COURT DEPARTMENT</u></b>	<b><u>CY 1994</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>CY 1995</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>CY 1996</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>CY 1997</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>CY 1998</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2000</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>
Civil	27,043	28.1%	28,591	27.9%	28,880	27.0%	31,158	27.9%	34,621	29.9%	31,258	27.3%
Criminal	16,244	16.9%	16,912	16.5%	19,203	17.9%	21,207	19.0%	24,708	21.4%	26,184	22.9%
Family Court	30,592	31.8%	30,501	29.8%	30,097	28.1%	31,050	27.8%	30,882	26.7%	28,551	25.0%
Juvenile	12,108	12.6%	14,481	14.2%	18,094	16.9%	18,610	16.6%	16,485	14.2%	19,439	17.0%
Probate <sup>1</sup>	8,130	8.4%	8,004	7.8%	7,871	7.4%	7,877	7.0%	7,630	6.6%	6,414	5.6%
Mental Health											1,518	1.3%
Tax Court	<u>2,156</u>	2.2%	<u>3,831</u>	3.7%	<u>2,934</u>	2.7%	<u>1,893</u>	1.7%	<u>1,352</u>	1.2%	<u>1,043</u>	0.9%
<b><i>ANNUAL TOTALS</i></b>	<b>96,273</b>	100.0%	<b>102,320</b>	100.0%	<b>107,079</b>	100.0%	<b>111,795</b>	100.0%	<b>115,678</b>	100.0%	<b>114,407</b>	100.0%

<sup>1</sup> Prior to Fiscal Year 2000, Probate and Mental Health case filings were reported together.

## CRIMINAL

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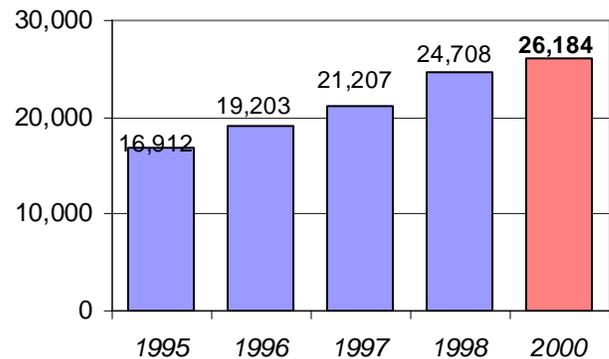
During FY 2000, as was evidenced in previous years, the Criminal Department again experienced substantial growth in new felony case filings. In fact, new case filings rose nearly 6 percent from the previous calendar year. However, the court was able to add judicial officers to the criminal bench. With restructuring in downtown Phoenix, and the addition of Quad F in Mesa in May 2000, the department grew from 22 judges to 24 and now has 3 Special Assignment Department judges dedicated exclusively to the Criminal Case Backlog Reduction Program. These Special Assignment judges will handle some of the oldest and most complex criminal cases in an effort to accelerate the time to trial. The Southeast (Mesa) Facility now has a total of 6 Criminal Department judges, with the remaining 18 assigned to downtown Phoenix calendars.

After several years of collaborative efforts between Superior Court and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Technology Bureau the **Year 2000 conversion** from LEJIS (Law Enforcement Judicial Information System) to CMS (Court Management System) was completed. Case tracking is now more accurately maintained and the data processing system is more 'user friendly.' Other benefits to the updated system include:

- Improved data integrity through edit functionality,
- Improved and expanded historical statistical reporting, as well as newly designed and implemented operational management reports, and
- System integration with other local justice agencies and information sharing.

**Initial Appearance Court (IA)** has also undergone significant changes during the fiscal year. The implementation of the continuous 24-hour IA Court began in April 2000 after recruiting and training of the five full-time Hearing Officers. As opposed to the use of pro tems, full-time Hearing Officers can devote more time and attention to individual defendants, as well as release conditions in the community.

**Total Criminal Filings  
CY 1995 - 1998 and FY 2000**



NOTE: Prior to FY 2000, criminal case filings were reported in a calendar year format.

In conjunction with the new Hearing Officers, the number of IA court dockets expanded from four to six. In cooperation with Pre-Trial Services, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, and the Office of the Court Interpreter, the restructuring of the IA dockets has resulted in more efficient processing of defendants. Hearing Officers work a variety of different shifts. In addition to IA calendar duties, they have assumed Emergency Orders of Protection (EOP) and DUI Search Warrant duties from Superior Court judges and commissioners. Plans are in place to also transition Justice and Municipal Court EOPs and DUI warrants to the IA Hearing Officers.

## CRIMINAL

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### *Some Interesting Facts In Fiscal Year 2000 Include:*

The number of **Bond Forfeiture** hearings held (970) resulted in \$2,657,632 forfeited. Although this was a decrease of over 5 percent from the number of hearings held in CY 1998, the total amount forfeited increased over 26 percent.

**Initial Appearance Court** processed 63,420 defendants, charged with either felonies or misdemeanors in the fiscal year, which was nearly 7 percent fewer than in the previous calendar year.

**Notices of Change of Judge** decreased over 38 percent, from 1,661 in CY 1998 to 1,022 in FY 2000.

**Early Disposition Court** (EDC) continues to expedite case processing of certain drug and welfare fraud case-types. For FY 2000, the median number of days from arraignment to case termination was 13, as compared to 96 days for all other felony cases terminated during the year. A majority of EDC cases are sentenced on the same day the guilty plea is accepted.

The expansion of Early Disposition Court to the Southeast Facility in Mesa occurred after months of planning with various county agencies and departments associated with the program. Construction should begin by the end of 2000 on permanent space dedicated for EDC in the Southeast. Construction was completed during FY 2000 for one EDC courtroom in Downtown Phoenix, which greatly improved the movement of people and paper through this high volume court. The EDC innovation in the Criminal Department continues to prove itself a vital component of expedited criminal caseflow management. In excess of 400 cases are assigned to EDC each month and, with the relatively recent expansion to the Southeast Facility, this number should continue to increase in the future.

# CRIMINAL

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## Criminal Department Selected Operational Statistics Calendar Year 1998 and Fiscal Year 2000

	CY 1998 <u>Totals</u>	FY 2000 <u>Totals</u>	CY 1998 - FY 2000 <u>% Change</u>
Total Case Filings	24,708	<b>26,184</b>	6.0%
Total Terminations	24,468	<b>22,576</b>	-7.7%
Clearance Rate <sup>1</sup>	99.0%	<b>86.2%</b>	-12.8%
Active Pending Caseload	6,827	<b>8,661</b>	26.9%
Total Trials Completed	901	<b>777</b>	-13.8%
Trial Rate <sup>2</sup>	3.6%	<b>3.0%</b>	0.6%
Defendants Sentenced	20,788	<b>18,702</b>	-10.0%
Acquitted/Dismissed	3,089	<b>3,698</b>	19.7%
Guilty Plea Arraignments	7,738	<b>6,974</b>	-9.9%
Notices of Change of Judge	1,661	<b>1,022</b>	-38.5%
Settlement Conferences Held	1,938	<b>1,797</b>	-7.3%
Successful Settlements	1,225	<b>943</b>	-23.0%
Lower Court Appeals Filed	1,441	<b>1,200</b>	-16.7%
Bond Forfeiture Hearings	1,026	<b>970</b>	-5.5%
Amount of Bonds Forfeited	\$2,088,251	<b>\$2,657,632</b>	27.3%

### Case Aging Statistics (in days)<sup>3</sup> for Terminated Criminal Cases

50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	106	<b>96</b>	-9.4%
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	263	<b>282</b>	7.2%
98 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	478	<b>596</b>	24.7%
99 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	602	<b>765</b>	27.1%

<sup>1</sup> Clearance rate equals total terminations divided by total case filings.

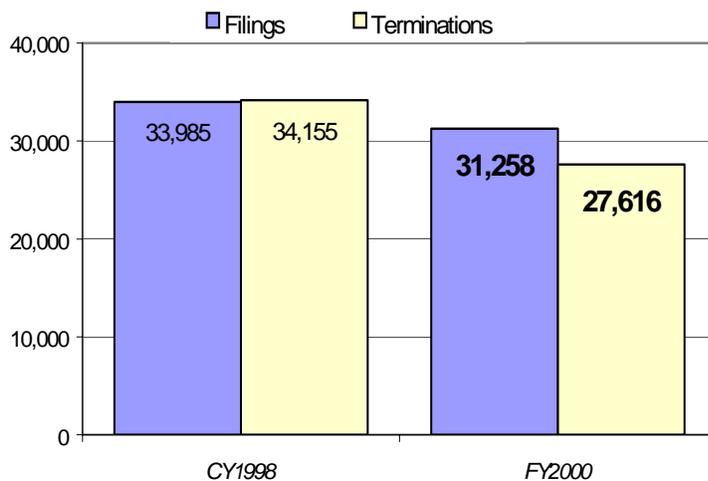
<sup>2</sup> Trial rate equals total trials completed divided by total case filings.

<sup>3</sup> Case aging days are computed from Filing Date in Superior Court to Termination, which includes days to sentencing for guilty defendants. In addition, case aging days include all elapsed calendar time except days out on bench warrants, Rule 11 competency treatments, and adult diversion programs.

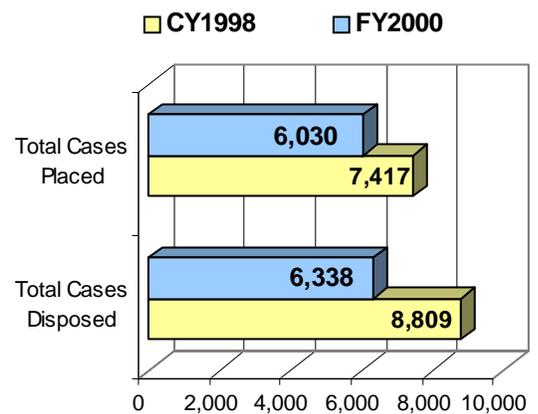
# CIVIL

In FY 2000, the Civil Department of Superior Court experienced an 8 percent decrease in the number of civil case filings from calendar year 1998. Filings of tort, medical malpractice, contract, tax, and non-classified civil cases were all down from the previous year. However, filings of eminent domain cases and lower court appeals increased significantly. The number of civil cases terminated in FY 2000 was much lower (19 percent) than the number of civil cases terminated in CY 1998. All case categories showed a decrease from the previous year's terminations. However, 452 civil trials were completed in FY 2000; a 64 percent increase from the 276 civil trials held in CY 1998. Throughout FY 2000, the Civil Department continued its commitment to sound caseflow management practices. These include vigorous enforcement of Rule V of the Uniform Rules of Practice, the use of management tools such as the 150-day minute entry, and adherence to firm trial dates.

**Civil Case Activity, CY 1998 - FY 2000**



**Arbitrated Court Cases**



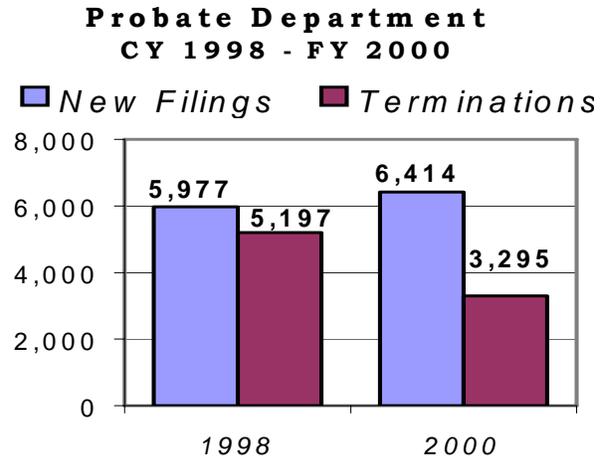
## Selected Civil Department Operational Statistics, CY 1998 - FY 2000

	New Case Filings			Case Terminations		
	<u>CY 1998</u>	<u>FY 2000</u>	<u>% change CY 98-FY 00</u>	<u>CY 1998</u>	<u>FY 2000</u>	<u>% change CY 98-FY 00</u>
Tort Motor Vehicle	7,088	<b>5,796</b>	-1.8%	8,538	<b>6,120</b>	-28.3%
Tort Non-Motor Vehicle	2,750	<b>2,279</b>	-1.7%	3,231	<b>2,175</b>	-32.7%
Medical Malpractice	458	<b>391</b>	-14.6%	474	<b>410</b>	-13.5%
Contract	9,761	<b>9,729</b>	-0.3%	10,672	<b>9,082</b>	-14.9%
Tax	20	<b>16</b>	-20.0%	108	<b>28</b>	-74.1%
Eminent Domain	199	<b>325</b>	63.3%	251	<b>224</b>	-10.8%
Lower Court Appeals	506	<b>590</b>	16.6%	523	<b>411</b>	-21.4%
Unclassified Civil	<u>13,203</u>	<u><b>12,132</b></u>	-8.1%	<u>10,358</u>	<u><b>9,166</b></u>	-11.5%
<b>TOTALS</b>	33,985	<b>31,258</b>	-8.0%	34,155	<b>27,616</b>	-19.1%

# PROBATE and MENTAL HEALTH

## Probate

Overall, new probate cases filed during FY 2000 increased over 7 percent from the number filed in CY 1998. Estate Probates and Trust Administration filings grew by more than 5 percent from 1998 to 2000, while Guardian and Conservatorships increased over 10 percent. New probate filings in the last fiscal year far outpaced the number of cases terminated, as opposed to 1998 when terminations were within 15 percent of total filings. At the end of fiscal year 2000, there were 30,620 probate cases pending in Superior Court, which is 15 percent more than the number pending at the beginning of the fiscal year.



Only 3,295 probate cases terminated during FY 2000, which is over 36 percent fewer than the number terminated in 1998. Guardian and Conservatorship case terminations actually increased over the previous calendar year total, but terminated Estate Probates and Trust Administrations were less than one-half of what they were in CY 1998.

### Probate Department Selected Operational Statistics, Calendar Year 1998 – Fiscal Year 2000

	<u>New Case Filings</u>		<u>% change</u>	<u>Case Terminations</u>		<u>% change</u>
	<u>CY 1998</u>	<u>FY 2000</u>	<u>1998 to 2000</u>	<u>CY 1998</u>	<u>FY 2000</u>	<u>1998 to 2000</u>
Estate Probates and Trust Administrations	3,984	<b>4,208</b>	5.6 %	3,612	<b>1,563</b>	-56.7 %
Guardianships and Conservatorships	1,978	<b>2,190</b>	10.7 %	1,574	<b>1,719</b>	9.2 %
Adult Adoptions	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	6.6 %	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>	18.2 %
<b>TOTALS</b>	5,977	<b>6,414</b>	7.3 %	5,197	<b>3,295</b>	-36.6 %

## Mental Health

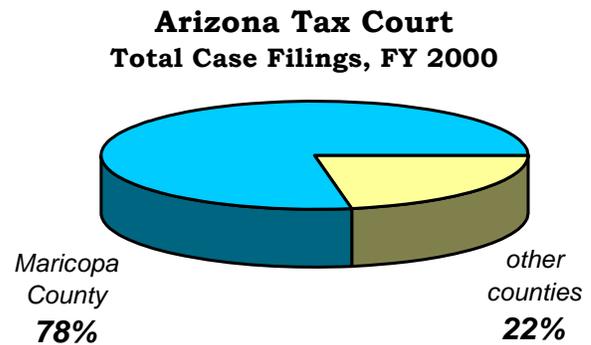
In FY 2000 there was a decrease of nearly 8 percent in new mental health cases filed from CY 1998. However, the number of mental health petitions terminated was virtually unchanged.

	<u>CY 1998</u>	<u>FY 2000</u>	<u>% change</u>
Mental Health Case Filings	1,648	<b>1,518</b>	-7.9 %
Mental Health Case Terminations	1,292	<b>1,265</b>	-0.2 %

# TAX COURT

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There were 1,043 cases filed in the Arizona Tax Court during FY 2000; a 22.9 percent reduction in new case filings from the previous year. Filings were down substantially in every case category. Four counties, Mohave, Pima, Yavapai, and Maricopa, filed 94.2 percent of all FY 2000 new Tax Court cases, and Maricopa County alone accounted for over 78 percent of the statewide total.



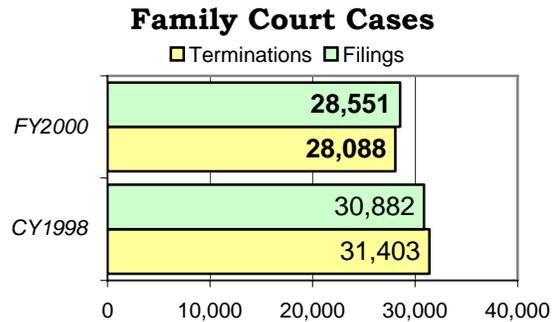
Tax case terminations in FY 2000 also registered a sharp decline. A total of 1,166 Tax Court cases were terminated, as opposed to 1,757 from the previous calendar year (a decrease of over 33 percent). Tax Court's pending caseload at the end of FY 2000 was reduced by over 14 percent (from 861 to 739).

## Tax Court Selected Operational Statistics, CY 1998 – FY 2000

	New Case Filings		% change <i>1998 to 2000</i>	Case Terminations		% change <i>1998 to 2000</i>
	<i>CY 1998</i>	<i>FY 2000</i>		<i>CY 1998</i>	<i>FY 2000</i>	
<b>Cases of Record</b>						
Property	407	<b>325</b>	-20.1 %	456	<b>382</b>	-16.2 %
Other	374	<b>330</b>	-11.8 %	259	<b>343</b>	32.4 %
<b>Small Claims</b>						
Property	569	<b>387</b>	-32.0 %	1,038	<b>439</b>	-57.7 %
Other	2	<b>1</b>	-50.0 %	4	<b>2</b>	-50.0 %
<b>TOTALS</b>	1,352	<b>1,043</b>	-22.9 %	1,757	<b>1,166</b>	-33.6 %

## FAMILY COURT

During FY 2000, the Family Court Department experienced a substantial decrease (nearly 8 percent) in pre-decree case filings from calendar year 1998. In addition, case terminations decreased almost 11 percent. As was the case in CY 1998, about one in every four new pre-decree case filings in the Family Court Department originates in the Southeast Court Facility (Mesa).



The case category of pre-decree filings that showed the greatest decrease (over 10 percent) from CY 1998 was filings other than dissolution (divorce), which includes cases such as paternity/maternity, legal separations, orders of protection, and establishment of support. Dissolution filings also decreased, but only by 6 percent. The active pending per-decree caseload has grown over 26 percent between CY 1998 and the end of FY 2000.

The number of Orders of Protection filed in FY 2000 decreased just over 2 percent from CY 1998, yet there was a 9 percent increase in the number of Orders of Protection issued. Family Court issued 3,156 orders prohibiting contact between two persons. In addition, the department received 1,505 requests for hearings to revoke or modify Orders of Protection in the fiscal year, a 5 percent increase from CY 1998. Of those hearing requested, about 88 percent actually commenced (up from 85 percent). The number of emergency Orders of Protection issued after regular court business hours decreased about 11 percent between CY 1998 and FY 2000.

### Domestic Violence – Orders of Protection

	<u>CY 1995</u>	<u>CY 1996</u>	<u>CY 1997</u>	<u>CY 1998</u>	<u>FY 2000</u>
Filed	3,419	3,265	3,472	3,533	<b>3,454</b>
Issued	3,112	2,952	2,965	2,896	<b>3,156</b>
Hearings Requested	1,460	1,221	1,297	1,435	<b>1,505</b>
Hearings Commenced	1,105	945	1,087	1,258	<b>1,317</b>

### Default File Review Project

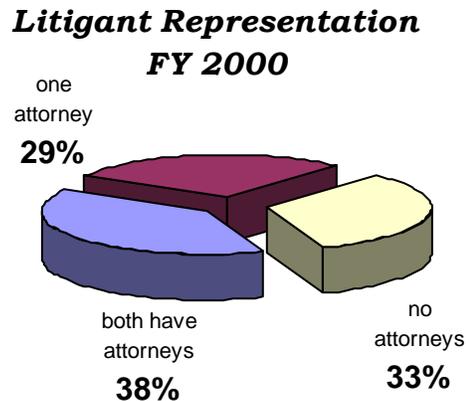
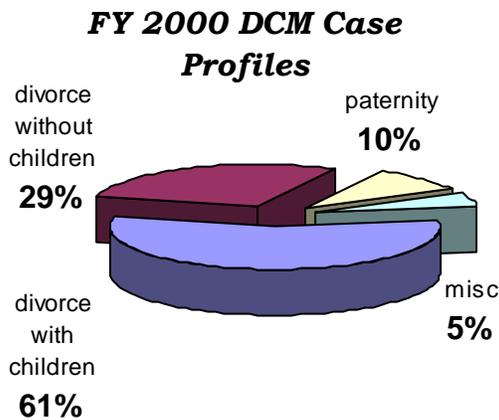
The default file review project, operating for the last four years, continues to provide time and cost savings to litigants, taxpayers, and the Court. Family Court Specialists review cases in which a default hearing has been requested, and neither party is represented by an attorney. Commissioners will hear the case once all legal requirements have been met. Local Rule changes in FY 2000 required additional filings and completion of specific classes of cases, which resulted in more rejections than during CY 1998. During FY 2000, a total of 8,188 files were reviewed and 5,536 (68 percent) were approved for hearing. The other 32 percent of cases were rejected from the default process. Only about 2 percent of the files approved required special attention by the Commissioner or additional tasks to be completed by the litigant prior to hearing.

# FAMILY COURT

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## *Differentiated Case Management (DCM)*

FY 2000 was the third year of operation for Differentiated Caseflow Management (DCM), which began as a pilot in December 1996 and expanded department-wide in May 1997. One of four DCM Case Managers supervised each contested court case filed, with the exception of Title IV-D and cases involving the filing of an Order of Protection. Changes to the DCM project during the year included the use of a new pathway, the Joint Certification (JCE) and excluded cases with an Order of Protection filed from participating in a conference. The JCE was utilized when both sides (usually represented by an attorney) “opted out” of a DCM conference for 120 days. Both sides had to agree to exchange information within specific time frames. DCM is utilized in both Downtown Phoenix and at the Southeast Court Facility (Mesa). During FY 2000, a total of 4,496 conferences were held (nearly 60 percent more than in CY 1998).



## *Temporary Child Support Process*

In FY 2000, the Family Court Department began a temporary child support project under local Administrative Order 99-029. The purpose of the project is to ensure that children are adequately supported as soon as possible after a family’s break-up. The Court requires the filing of a Child Support Information Form with the Petition for Dissolution of Marriage or Legal Separation when children are involved. A respondent also must file a Child Support Information Form if he or she contests the petitioner’s information. If there is no contest, a temporary child support order will be issued without further process. If there is a contest, a conference or hearing will be set. The Temporary Child Support Project Process will not be used if either party files a petition for temporary orders, or if both parties agree in writing to bypass the temporary child support project, not later than 20 days after the filing of the affidavit or acceptance of service. During FY 2000, a total of 3,008 temporary support packets were received and 1,916 child support orders were issued.

## *Integrated Family Court Task Force*

In June 1999, Family Court formed a Task Force to consider whether integrating domestic relations, juvenile, and probate matters would benefit caseflow in the court. Nearly forty stakeholders currently meet monthly to discuss best practices in providing resources to children and families, and discuss development of a case management and calendaring system.

# FAMILY COURT

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## Family Court Department Selected Operational Statistics Calendar Year 1998 and Fiscal Year 2000

	CY 1998 <u>Totals</u>	FY 2000 <u>Totals</u>	CY 1998 – FY 2000 <u>% Change</u>
Dissolution Filings	16,290	<b>15,257</b>	-6.3%
Other Case Filings	14,206	<b>12,714</b>	-10.5%
Case Transfers In(Out)	<u>386</u>	<b><u>580</u></b>	50.3%
TOTAL CASE FILINGS*	30,882	<b>28,551</b>	-7.5%
Dissolution Terminations	17,940	<b>16,174</b>	-9.8%
Other Case Terminations	<u>13,463</u>	<b><u>11,914</u></b>	-11.5%
TOTAL TERMINATIONS	31,403	<b>28,088</b>	-10.6%
Clearance Rate <sup>1</sup>	101.7%	<b>98.4%</b>	-3.3%
Active Pending Caseload	17,266	<b>21,828</b>	26.4%

### Domestic Violence: Orders of Protection

Total Filings	3,533	<b>3,454</b>	-2.2%
Orders Issued	2,896	<b>3,156</b>	9.0%
Orders Denied	238	<b>342</b>	43.7%

### Domestic Violence: Requests for Hearings to Revoke or Modify Orders of Protection

Requests	1,435	<b>1,505</b>	4.9%
Hearings Commenced	1,258	<b>1,317</b>	4.7%

### Domestic Violence: Emergency Orders of Protection

Total Filings	317	<b>281</b>	-11.4%
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\* NOTE: Case filings in Family Court only include pre-decree totals. It is estimated that post-decree activities, such as modifications and enforcements, represents an additional 50 percent of a Family Court judge's workload. Superior Court is currently enhancing its technological ability to accurately count post-decree activities

<sup>1</sup> Clearance Rate equals total terminations divided by total case filings.

## **FAMILY COURT CONCILIATION SERVICES**

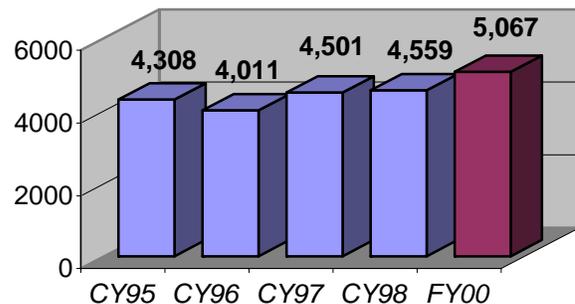
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Family Court Conciliation Services provides a variety of services for Family Court Department judges and court commissioners, as well as for families struggling with the difficult issues surrounding divorce and family restructuring. Professional counseling, mediation, and evaluation services are provided in both Downtown Phoenix and at the Southeast Facility (Mesa). Mediation and evaluation services are provided specifically for issues related to child custody and parenting time. During Fiscal Year 2000, approximately 70 percent of all conciliation services provided were in Downtown Phoenix. Total referrals during the fiscal year were over 11 percent higher than in Calendar Year 1998, with the greatest increases occurring in evaluation services (nearly 15 percent) and mediation services (13 percent). The year also saw an almost 9 percent increase in participation for the Parent Information Program.

### ***Conciliation Counseling***

Prior to, or subsequent to, the filing of a petition for dissolution, legal separation or annulment, a party may file a Petition for Conciliation (invoking A.R.S. 25-381). When such a petition is filed, Conciliation Services has up to sixty days to provide counseling to assist the parties in making an informed and thoughtful decision regarding the continuation or termination of their marital relationship. Even when the parties do not reconcile, counseling provides valuable assistance to families in need.

**Total Conciliation Cases**



### ***Mediation of Custody and Parenting Time Disputes***

Pursuant to a local rule (Maricopa County Rule 6.8) parties may request, or be referred by the court, to participate in mediation at Conciliation Services for the purpose of resolving child custody or parenting time disputes. Both pre- and post-decree disputes can be mediated. The goal of the mediation process is to assist the parents in formulating a comprehensive, written parenting plan that addresses the major areas of parental decision-making, as well as time-sharing arrangements with the children.

### ***Custody and Parenting Time Evaluation Services***

Parties to child custody or parenting time disputes before the court may be referred by a judicial officer to Conciliation Services for a Dispute Assessment or Family Evaluation to provide information and recommendations to the court. Recommendations regarding physical and legal custody, as well as parenting time and division of parental responsibilities, are formulated on the basis of the best interests of the children involved.

# FAMILY COURT CONCILIATION SERVICES

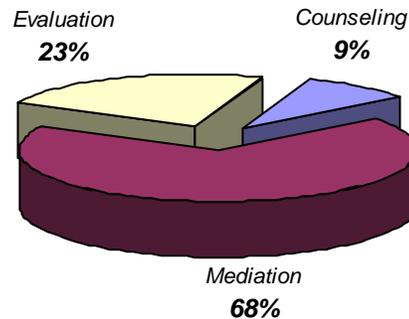
## Parent information Program

Pursuant to A.R.S. 25-351: “Domestic Relations Education on Children’s Issues,” Conciliation Services oversees and administers a Parent Information Program to provide information to divorcing or separated parents, and to parents involved in other types of domestic relations actions, including paternity and child support matters. The information addresses the impacts of divorce, family restructuring, and judicial involvement on children, and what parents can do to mitigate those effects. Classes are offered by a number of community-based providers.

## Major Accomplishments in FY 2000

- In October 1999, Conciliation Services introduced the Parental Conflict Resolution Class (4 hours), designed to address cases with high conflict, chronic litigation, or denial of access. Judicial officers may order parties to attend.
- Mediation Services began to report partial mediated agreements to the court.

## Conciliation Cases, FY 2000



## Conciliation Services Selected Operational Statistics Calendar Year 1998 – Fiscal Year 2000

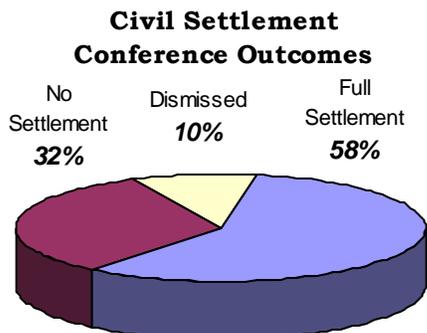
<u>Cases by Type</u>	<u>CY 1998 Totals</u>	<u>FY 2000 Totals</u>	<u>CY 98 – FY 00 % change</u>
Conciliation Counseling	477	<b>433</b>	-9.2%
Underage Premarital Counseling	4	<b>5</b>	25.0%
“Other” Counseling	<u>6</u>	<b><u>1</u></b>	-83.3%
<b>Total Counseling</b>	487	<b>439</b>	-9.9%
<b>Total Mediation</b>	3,069	<b>3,476</b>	13.3%
Assessment/Evaluation	983	<b>1,128</b>	14.8%
Reciprocal Evaluation	<u>20</u>	<b><u>24</u></b>	20.0%
<b>Total Evaluation</b>	1,003	<b>1,152</b>	14.9%
<b>TOTAL CONCILIATION</b>	4,559	<b>5,067</b>	11.1%
Parent Information Program (attendees)	13,272	<b>14,437</b>	8.8%

## ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) continues to provide litigants with swift and satisfactory alternatives to litigation, both in Superior Court and Justice Courts of Maricopa County. During FY 2000, the Justice Court Mediation Program grew in nine of the county's 23 Justice Courts. Community volunteers, trained by ADR staff in mediation skills, mediated small claims and general civil cases. Mediators' self-reported data indicates an average 68 mediations were conducted each month. Approximately 74 percent of cases assigned to mediation were resolved through the mediation process, with an average 60 percent reaching agreement in mediation.

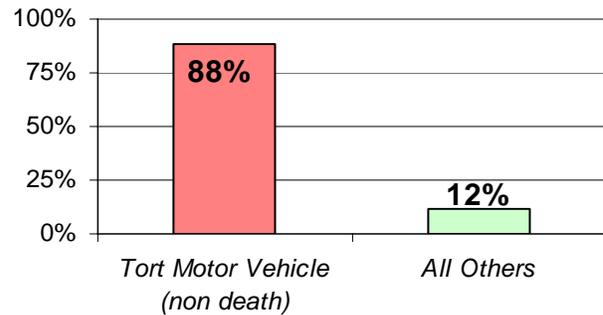
Over 300 volunteers rotate Justice Court mediation assignments. In addition, ADR offers continuing education programs for mediators throughout the year and annually coordinates mediation services with the Arizona State University Law School Mediation Clinic. In March 2000 a Mediation Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from each of the Justice Court Programs, was convened to address program policy, development, and procedural issues.

Several ADR initiatives flourished during FY 2000. In the Civil Department, ADR coordinated appointment of judges *pro tem*, who volunteer to conduct settlement conferences in the later stages of litigation. ADR processed approximately 60 to 80 civil settlement conference requests each month.



In Family Court, a pilot Settlement Conference Program increased case referrals from 2 per month to 14 per month by the end of Fiscal Year 2000. ADR also expanded this litigation alternative to the Superior Court's Southeast Facility in Mesa. 78 percent of all cases referred to the pilot settled at the conference. Approximately 220 judges *pro tem* volunteer their time and mediation skills to conduct settlement conferences in the Civil Department and Family Court.

### Types of Shorttrials in ADR



“Other” types of shorttrials referred to ADR include contracts, medical malpractice, tort motor vehicle (property damage), and tort non-motor vehicle.

ADR administered two other pilot projects in FY 2000. In the Civil Department, the *Shorttrial Alternative* continued to gain popularity. A “shorttrial” is a condensed version of a jury trial, using only four jurors and expedited case presentations. A judge *pro tem* presides over the shorttrial, which generally lasts a half-day. Counsel is given two hours to present their case and demonstrative evidence is encouraged over live testimony. Shorttrial participants must be represented by counsel and stipulate to a binding verdict. This year, ADR coordinated resources with the Superior Court Bailiff Pool and Jury Commission to expand shorttrial availability. By the end of FY 2000, ADR coordinated 36 shorttrials, and fully disposed of these cases.

## **ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

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In January, 2000 ADR began accepting case referrals for a Probate Mediation Pilot Project. A two-day training for Probate mediators was conducted before the program began. A group of 14 mediators was selected to co-mediate in the pilot. Half of the pilot group are attorneys practicing in the Probate Department of Superior Court. The other seven are experienced mediators in the Justice Court Program. The pilot mediators agreed to mediate their first six probate cases *pro bono*. At the close of FY 2000, the pilot project produced a 75 percent settlement rate (20 case referrals/12 mediations held/9 full settlements). Though it is too early to draw many definitive conclusions from this data, early results indicate favorable outcomes for the Probate Mediation Pilot.

ADR continues to develop its Employment Mediation Program, in conjunction with Superior Court Human Resources. Last May, ADR sponsored a continuing education program for the 20 court employees designated as Employment Mediators. This year, five cases were referred to ADR's Employment Mediation Program. Three cases were fully resolved, one is pending, and one yielded no settlement.

ADR offers ongoing continuing education classes to court and county employees through its Court-Ordered Judicial Education Training (COJET) series on conflict management and ADR alternatives. Generally, ADR presents 2 to 3 such sessions each quarter, and participant evaluations of these classes have been positive.

# JUVENILE COURT

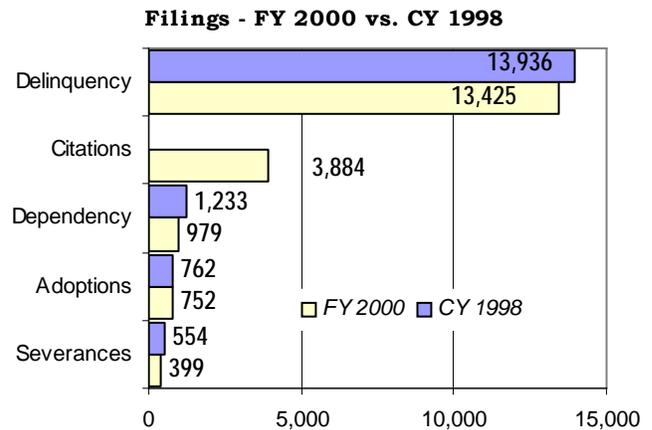
During Fiscal Year 2000, new case filings and petitions in Juvenile Court increased by almost 18 percent from calendar year 1998. However, almost all of this increase can be attributed to a change in the law during 1999 which allowed certain citations to be filed as petitions. In FY 2000, there were 3,884 citations issued. As a result, Juvenile Court has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of advisory hearings that are set and heard each month by judicial officers. Each of the other four Juvenile Court case-types (delinquency, dependency, adoptions, and severance) declined from the previous year's filings

In mid-year 1999, Juvenile Court completed transition to a One Family/One Judge case processing concept. Under this system, once a family has contact with Juvenile Court, a judge is assigned to that particular family. Any and all subsequent filings involving that family, or any other member of that family, are assigned to the same judge.

Prior to One Family/One Judge, Juvenile Court had been operating under the Keep the Kid System for delinquency cases. One Family/One Judge involved not only linking delinquent siblings through the Juvenile On-Line Tracking System (JOLTS), but also linking case types, such as delinquency and dependency. Many hours of case reviews were required to associate cases with families, as well as associating pending cases with judges, and assigning families to individual Juvenile Court judges.

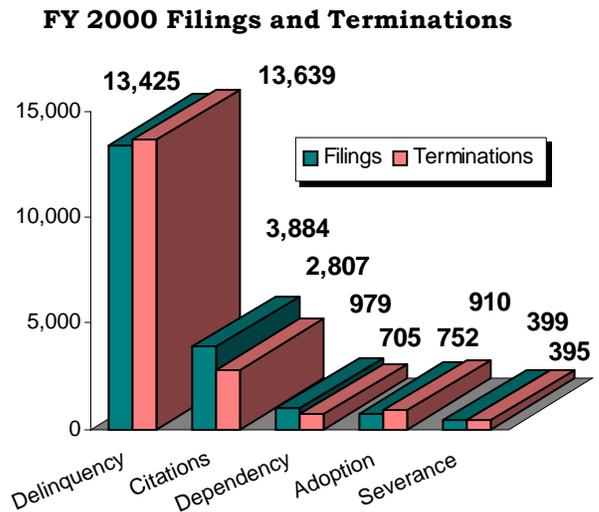
In FY 2000, Juvenile Court also implemented the Dependency Court Improvement Provisions, which included:

- The time in which a Dependency case must reach adjudication was accelerated from 120 days to 90 days;
- Severance filings allowed by motion in dependency cases, instead of separate;
- Expedited dependency process requiring parties to appear for a Preliminary Protective Conference and Hearing within 5 to 7 days from the removal of children from the home.



Note: Citations were not issued prior to FY 2000.

The adoption process was also expedited for some types of adoption cases as a result of legislation during FY 2000. To ensure compliance, Juvenile Court modified calendars, which meant three Juvenile Court commissioners handled adoptions instead of just one, which was the previous practice.



# JUVENILE COURT

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## *C.A.S.A. Program*

The Maricopa County Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA) has been actively coordinating advocacy for dependent children since 1985. Ten full-time staff members (one Program Manager, five Coordinators, one Recruiter, one Office Manager, and two Support Staff) assist more than 200 volunteers in performing their duties on behalf of nearly 500 abused, neglected, and abandoned children in Maricopa County. Fiscal Year 2000 was a special year.

Among the highlights were:

- An intern from the Family Advocacy Center, who is also an American Express employee, took a six-month company-sponsored sabbatical to assist with program operations.
- An Office Manager position was created and filled to oversee administrative functions associated with coordinating the large volunteer pool, which provided staff more time to direct volunteer service.
- Extensive training for new volunteers was implemented, highlighted with a full-day scheduled session, allowing volunteers to complete their annual training requirements in only one day as opposed to shorter and less frequently scheduled training sessions.
- Regularly scheduled Case Selection meetings with new volunteers allow for better matches.
- An October 1999 *Dateline* national television program featured a Maricopa County CASA who assisted with placing ten siblings with one adoptive family.
- The annual *Picnic for CASA Children* was held in November 1999 and in December, the first annual CASA “Get Tee’d Off About Child Abuse” golf tournament debuted. A *Volunteer Recognition Event* at the Phoenix Museum of History and an *Arts Day for CASA* children sponsored by Free Arts Arizona were also very successful.
- In January 2000 a representative from Maricopa County was added to the Arizona Council for CASA, a Tucson-based non-profit organization advocating for children’s issues.
- The Juvenile Court Presiding Judge accompanied two staff members and one volunteer to the national CASA Conference in Washington, D.C.
- Finally, all CASAs have been encouraged to “Put a Face on a File” by submitting photographs of the children they serve with their court reports, which is something Juvenile Court judicial officers find very helpful in better comprehending the child’s welfare.

### **Juvenile Court Selected Operational Statistics, CY 1998 – FY 2000**

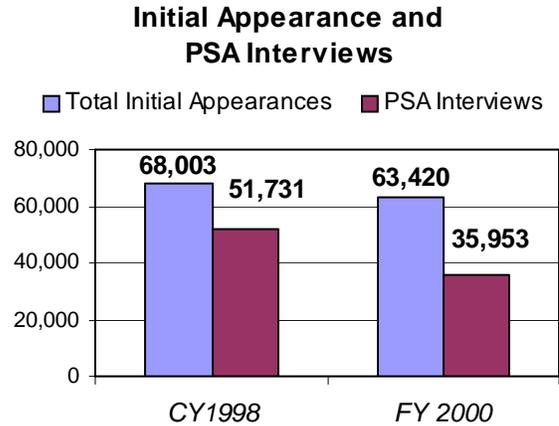
	<b>New Case Filings</b>		<b>% change <i>1998 to 2000</i></b>	<b>Case Terminations</b>		<b>% change <i>1998 to 2000</i></b>
	<b><i>CY 1998</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2000</i></b>		<b><i>CY 1998</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2000</i></b>	
<b>Delinquency</b>	13,936	<b>13,425</b>	-3.7%	14,825	<b>13,639</b>	-8.0%
<b>Citations<sup>1</sup></b>	n.a.	<b>3,884</b>		n.a.	<b>2,807</b>	
<b>Dependency</b>	1,233	<b>979</b>	-20.6%	1,204	<b>705</b>	-41.4%
<b>Adoption</b>	762	<b>752</b>	-1.3%	667	<b>910</b>	36.4%
<b>Severance</b>	<u>554</u>	<u><b>399</b></u>	-28.0%	<u>453</u>	<u><b>569</b></u>	25.6%
<b>TOTALS</b>	16,485	<b>19,439</b>	17.9%	17,149	<b>18,630</b>	8.6%

<sup>1</sup> Citations were not issued prior to FY 2000.

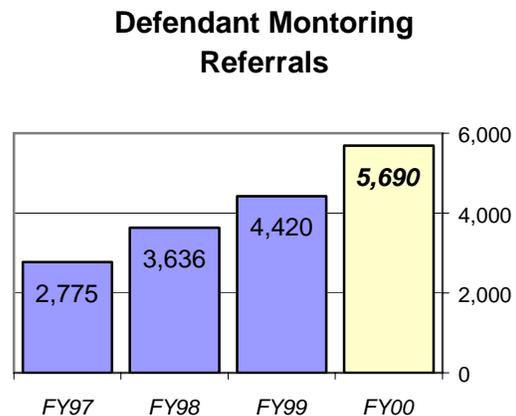
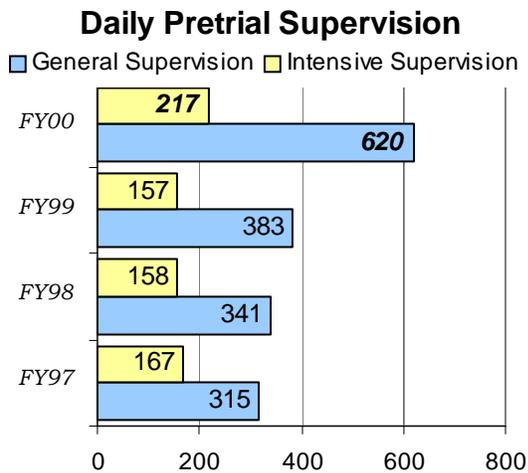
# PRETRIAL SERVICES AGENCY

The Pretrial Services Agency (PSA) in Superior Court occupies a fundamental position in the provision of court services by providing much needed demographic and objective information to assist Court Hearing Officers make informed release, detention, and bond decisions at a defendant's Initial Appearance. In addition, PSA promotes community safety through defendant monitoring services, which helps reduce taxpayer expense for criminal justice services by significantly reducing the number of felony defendants incarcerated and awaiting trial.

During Fiscal Year 2000, PSA increased operations to 24-hours in the *Jail Unit* to serve the expansion of services in Initial Appearance Court, which is also now staffed around-the-clock. An Electronic Monitoring Program was also implemented during the year, to help ensure defendant compliance with curfew or house arrest, 24-hours a day/7 days a week. During FY 2000, the Jail Unit interviewed approximately half of all defendants who made initial appearances, which is fewer than were interviewed during calendar year 1998.



The *Defendant Monitoring Unit (DMU)* is responsible for the supervision for supervising defendants released pending the disposition of their court cases. During FY 2000, the DMU experienced a 61 percent increase in the number of defendants ordered to report for supervision, compared with CY 1998 (5,690 vs. 3,537). The DMU supervised an average of 837 defendants per day during the year, which was considerably higher than in previous years. Also on average, the unit completed 15 intakes and conducted 50 office visits per day. PSA also continues its involvement with the *Women's Network*, the federally funded program with Adult Probation designed to screen, supervise, and coordinate social services for female substance abusers.



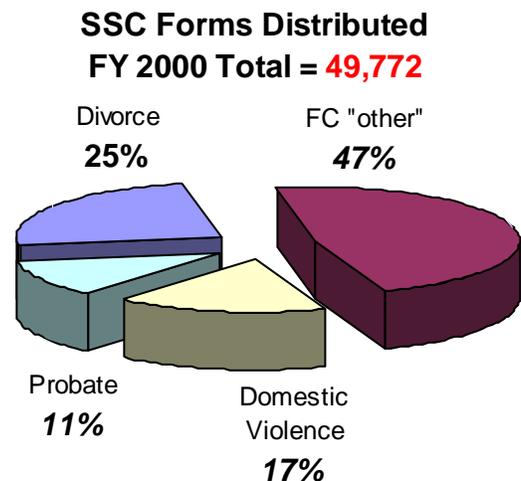
## SELF SERVICE CENTER

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The Self Service Center (SSC) was founded in 1995 to assist self-represented litigants by providing some of the tools they need to help themselves in court. Since its inception, this program has been recognized as one of the most innovative and comprehensive in the country, designed to improve public access to justice. Although the Superior Court operating budget currently provides funding for the program, it was created with start-up funding from the Arizona Supreme Court and State Justice Institute. Courts and other justice institutions nationwide have sent representatives to study the operation of the SSC.

The SSC provides self-represented litigants with three basic tools:

- **Court Information** – hours, locations, jurisdictions, legal terminology, and court structure.
- **Court Forms and Instructions** – more than 400 documents are currently available in user-friendly, plain language format packets, arranged by legal process. These documents are designed for use in the majority of Family Law, Domestic Violence, and Probate cases.



*Family Court "other" forms distributed includes establishments, modifications, and enforcements.*

- **Rosters of Professional Service Providers** – lists of legal professionals in the community who are willing to help people who want to represent themselves in court. The **attorney roster** lists local lawyers who are willing to provide brief legal advice and limited services for a nominal fee. The **mediator roster** includes the names of those who are professionally trained to assist in conflict resolution, possibly avoiding costly court appearances altogether. Each roster also contains detailed information about each service provider including office location and hours, fee structure, experience, education, language proficiencies, and professional licensing information.

The SSC provides these tools to the public through the following three delivery systems:

- **Court Locations** – walk-in customers can visit either the Downtown Phoenix Superior Court East Court Building, located on the first floor of the Law Library, or the Southeast (Mesa) Court Facility.
- **Automated Telephone System** – a touch-tone phone is all that is needed to access the system 24-hours per day, 7 days per week. Over six hours of pre-recorded information is available concerning the Court and various legal processes. There is also information available about court locations and hours of operation, jurisdictions, and organizational structure. The system can serve 120 callers at a time, averaging more than 1,000 calls each week.

## **SELF SERVICE CENTER**

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- **Internet** – people with access to the World Wide Web can reach the virtual Self Service Center around the clock. Court procedures, court forms and instructions, and the rosters of professional service providers are all available on-line. The website serves more than 300 users every day and is much more cost effective than traveling to either Downtown Phoenix or Mesa. The web address is <http://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/ssc/sschome.html>.

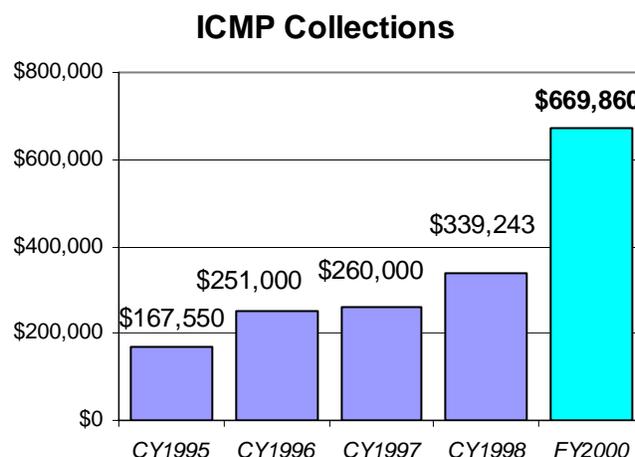
### **Important Fiscal Year 2000 Facts**

- Approximately 48,000 customers personally visited the Downtown Phoenix or Southeast Facility Self Service Centers in FY 2000. When combined with the number of Automated Telephone System users and the Internet website, the SSC had more than 200,000 customer contacts during the year.
- In 1998, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors established a nominal fee of \$1 for each legal packet provided. This fee was intended to help recover some of the costs of printing the packets for distribution to the public. Since many court procedures require multiple packets, the average transaction cost to each customer is between \$2 and \$3. In accordance with statutory provisions, this fee does not apply to the packets for Domestic Violence and Fee Waiver/Deferral procedures. The total amount collected by the SSC for legal packets in FY 2000 was \$115,265, a 3% decrease from calendar year 1998 attributable to increased use of the Internet.

## COURT COLLECTIONS UNIT

Fiscal Year 2000 brought several significant improvements in how the Superior Court pursues and collects outstanding financial obligations incurred through Court orders. Organizationally, the reporting period began with two separate departments within Court Administration pursuing collections' efforts, and the period ended with a single unit coordinating the Court's responsibilities. In February 2000, the Financial Review Unit (FRU) of the Pretrial Services Agency was officially merged with the Intensive Collections Management Program (ICMP) resulting in the newly created Court Collections Unit (CCU). The merger enables Court Administration to process collections cases more efficiently and reduce the often redundant efforts that previously existed.

In April 1999, the Court began actively pursuing defendants who, upon release from the Arizona Department of Corrections, still have a financial obligation resulting from a Court Order. By the end of FY 2000, the CCU had received more than 1,800 new cases with total assessments of nearly \$8,000,000. The total amount collected through ICMP for the year exceeded \$650,000, which is nearly double the total amount collected in calendar year 1998. Since its inception in 1993, ICMP has collected over \$1,850,000.



Also during the fiscal year, the judicial branch in Maricopa County entered into agreements with two private collection agencies to assist with the collection of court-ordered financial obligations. The CCU began referring cases to those vendors in May 2000. Through a partnership with the Clerk of Superior Court, the CCU acquired licenses for a new collections/billing system. The conversion into that system enables streamlined communication and data transfers between the CCU and the Clerk's Office, as well as with private collection agency partners.

### ***CCU Selected Operational Statistics – Fiscal Year 2000***

#### **Financial Review Unit**

Defendants Assessed	676
Amount Assessed	\$70,367
Amount Collected (Internal)	\$54,384
Amount Collected (Vendors)	\$1,020 <sup>a</sup>

#### **Intensive Collections Management Program**

New Orders	4,576
Amount Assessed	\$24,894,898
Amount Collected (Internal)	<u>\$669,860</u>
<b>Total CCU Collections</b>	<b>\$725,264</b>

<sup>a</sup> Vendor collections began in May 2000.

## LAW LIBRARY

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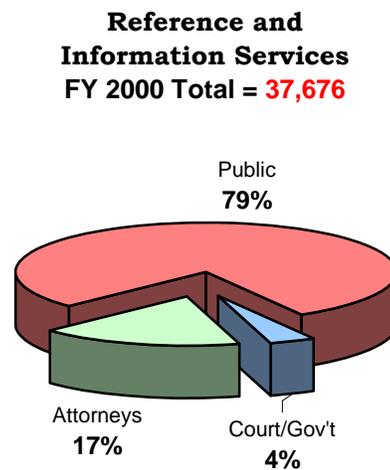
The Superior Court Law Library, a department of the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County, is a public court law library open to all. Access to justice is a fundamental right of every citizen and an essential element of that right is open, reliable access to legal information and knowledge. The Law Library provides timely, efficient, and reliable access to law and justice system resources for the court, the public, the bar, and other government agencies. The Law Library strives to create services focused on the information needs of the user, by providing a balance of traditional and innovative information services that ensure easy and rapid access to legal resources, whether locally or remotely held.

**Collections.** The Law Library comprises the main library in the Downtown Phoenix East Court Building, as well as a branch library in the Southeast Regional Facility in Mesa. The Library also maintains small cooperative core collections at the Maricopa County Library and the Scottsdale Public Library. In Spring 2000, a third cooperative law collection was opened at the county regional facility in Gilbert. The Library continues to acquire new print resources, and critically review all collections in conjunction with statewide and area law library cooperative efforts to efficiently allocate Library space, control continuation costs, and ensure breadth of subject content.

**Networked Resources.** The Library currently provides access to over 30 networked CD-ROM and Internet-based resources, covering over 160 databases. In FY 2000, over 50 databases from the Commerce Clearing House securities, banking, and credit regulation libraries were added. The Library's on-line catalog and electronic resources (such as *LOIS*, *Index to Legal Periodicals*, *Public Affairs Information Service*, *Criminal Justice Abstracts*, *Shepard's Citations*, *LegalTrac*, and *ComputerSelect*) are available to any Court or County government user. Many of these resources are now available remotely to all registered Library users via the Library's Web page.

### **Reference and Information Services.**

The Law Library provides reference services in response to in-house, telephone, or e-mail requests by members of the bench, the bar, the public, and court administration. Services vary in scope, from answering simple directional questions to in-depth research projects for court administration on complex issues such as court facility planning and the future delivery of services by courts. Reference requests from the public increased over 10 percent from the prior calendar year. Not surprisingly, e-mail requests nearly quadrupled (380 percent increase) from the prior year.



## LAW LIBRARY

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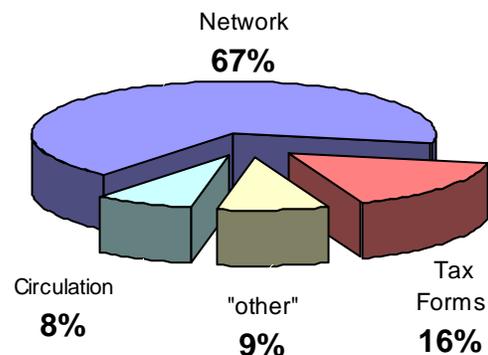
**Training Services.** Training continues to receive greater emphasis in Library services. Law Library staff conducted 19 Court-Ordered Judicial Education Training (COJET) classes, and nearly 100 individual training sessions. Library staff also developed and conducted *Using the Internet for Legal Research* Continuing Legal Education classes for the Arizona Office of the Attorney General, and hosted 10 programs and tours for local library associations and community colleges. In April, the Library hosted the American Association of Law Libraries video tele-conference *Books and Bytes: Balancing Formats in Today's Libraries*.

**Court Research.** Law Library personnel handle a variety of interesting research requests from judicial leadership and Court Administration. Research projects in FY 2000 included judicial salary comparisons, return on investment in court technology, judicial officer department rotations, COJET curriculum compliance, unified family courts, jury courtrooms in jails and prisons, victims' rights programs, and court ombudsman programs.

**Document Delivery Services.** The Library offers document delivery services in a variety of formats and delivery mechanisms, from traditional circulation and self-service photocopying, to mail, fax, and e-mail-based services. Network laser printing increased to over 19,000 print jobs in FY 2000, an increase of 144 percent. As users have become more aware and additional databases are added to the network, printing will continue to increase, resulting in a decrease in self-service, mail, and fax photocopying services ("other").

### Document Delivery Services

FY 2000 Total = 28,425



*In FY 2000, patrons used over 38,000 volumes in the Law Library.*

**Current Awareness Services.** The Library offers several e-mail-based current awareness services to the Court, including summaries of U.S. Supreme Court decisions and proposed changes to Arizona rules of court. This year, the Library expanded e-mail-based current awareness services to include 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals decisions.

**Publications.** Law Library publications included research guides, bibliographies on courts and court management issues; *En Banc* (the Library newsletter) and *Court Informer* (a current awareness publication). In FY 2000, judges and Court staff requested 812 documents from the six *Court Informer* issues, a 26 percent increase from calendar year 1998.

Although the Law Library has faced significant space and collection reductions in recent years, services to the Court, the Bar, and citizens have expanded. By increasing access to electronic resources, the Library is broadening the scope and reach of its services. The Law Library is committed to providing patrons the highest level of resources and direct services.

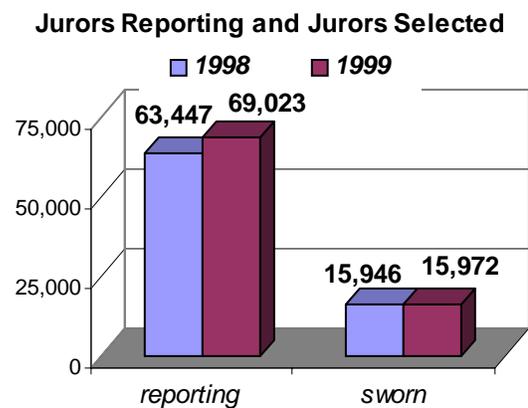
# JURY

The Office of the Jury Commissioner of the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County is responsible for creating a pool of qualified prospective jurors representative of the community as a whole. By law, this pool is formed every six months by merging the county's voter registration and state drivers' license files, and removing duplicate records. In July 1999, the resulting master list of prospective jurors contained 1,580,571 names, an increase of 8.5 percent from the previous year.

In addition to Superior Court, the Office of the Jury Commission also summons for all 23 Maricopa County Justice Courts, as well as for the state and county grand juries. The Superior Court is also under contract to provide jurors to nine local municipal courts and the U.S. District Court. During 1999, the Office of the Jury Commission mailed a total of 620,000 summonses for all courts combined, an increase of 8.1 percent from those mailed in 1998.

Citizens called for jury service in Superior Court serve either one day or the duration of one trial.

During 1999, 23 percent of prospective jurors sent to a courtroom as part of the voir-dire process actually were sworn as jurors, resulting in a total of 114,793 juror days served for the year (.6 percent above 1998). Jurors who have served either one day or one trial will not be selected for jury duty again for a minimum of 18 months. Those sworn are entitled to \$12 per day plus mileage to and from the court complex. Juror fees and mileage paid in 1999 for Superior Court jurors exceeded \$2.1 million. Other juror expenses in 1999 included approximately \$28,545.00 in bus tickets.



## *CY 1999 Jury Panel Usage Report*

	<b>CY 1999 Total</b>	<b>CY 1998 Total</b>	<b>% Change 1998 to 1999</b>
<b>Total Jury Trials</b>	1,550	1,530	1.3
<b>Total Jurors Reporting</b>	69,023	63,447	8.1
<b>Total Jurors Sworn</b>	15,972	15,946	0.2
<b>Percent Sworn</b>	23.1%	25.1%	-2.0
<b>Total Jurors Not Used</b>	11,736	8,829	25
<b>Percent Not Used</b>	17%	13.9%	3.1

## JURY

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Nineteen standards relating to juror use and management have been developed by the American Bar Association (ABA) to measure a jury system's efficiency. A comparison of three of the ABA standards with the actual figures for the Superior Court follows.

	<b>ABA Standard</b>	<b>Actual CY 1999</b>	<b>Actual CY 1998</b>	<b>Actual CY 1997</b>
<b>Percent sent to voir-dire</b>	100%	88.7%	95.7%	96.4%
Percent of jurors sworn	50%	23.1%	25.1%	22.7%
Percent of jurors not used	10%	17%	13.9%	14.4%

The Jury Commission continually measures performance, both quantitatively and qualitatively, through analysis of cost data and utilization measures from past years. This process allows the court to assess the efficiency of the jury system operation, review areas where present operations do not meet standards, suggest reasons for deficiencies, and recommend and implement strategies for improvement. The goal is to maintain a defensible, representative and efficient jury system that evokes positive attitudes in those persons who are called to serve on jury duty.

### *Demographic Summary<sup>1</sup>*

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Maricopa County Census<sup>2</sup></u>
White (non-Hispanic)	85.9%
Hispanic	8.3%
Black (non-Hispanic)	2.8%
Native American	1.2%
Asian	1.3%
Other	0.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Demographic summary information for the jury pool was not available for Calendar Year 1999 due to computer modifications performed in anticipation of Y2K.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security, Population Statistics Unit, 1990 U.S. Census figures.

## **SUPERIOR COURT WEBSITE** [www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov](http://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov)

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The Superior Court uses the Internet very extensively to disseminate a variety of information to the citizens of Maricopa County, the State of Arizona, and across the United States. In addition to the court docket, the Superior Court website has links to information on court departments, judicial calendars and personal biographies, the Law Library, Self-Service Center, community relations, and the Trial Court Leadership Center. More than 20 million court records, dating back to 1987, are accessible through the Superior Court website. Most recently, the Court has added the ability to change a citizen's Superior Court jury summons date via the Internet. In the very near future, all jurors will be able to change their summons date no matter where they are scheduled to appear.

The Court employs a legacy system (BULL mainframe) to interface with the web to view data that is dynamically formatted to the user's browser. Information is also made available to the news media via database driven Internet applications. High profile court cases are tracked and published on the Internet. The media can access this information twenty-four hours a day without the need to speak with a Public Information Officer. Court Rulings, Court Minutes, and News Releases are also published.

A large part of the Superior Court's website is dedicated to its Law Library. This section contains research information and online research, which exemplifies the Court's commitment to making court-related public information as accessible as possible to the citizens of Maricopa County. Also on the website is a short cartoon pamphlet intended to teach children about the State of Arizona's Court system in a language they can understand and appreciate.

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# **ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT**

***FISCAL YEAR 1999***

***(quarters 3 and 4)***

**January 1, 1999 – June 30, 1999**

***STATISTICS  
AND  
COMPARISONS***

## CRIMINAL

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	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 98 - FY 99</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>% change</i>
Total Case Filings	12,757	<b>12,421</b>	-2.7%
Total Terminations	11,860	<b>11,890</b>	0.3%
Clearance Rate <sup>1</sup>	93.0%	<b>95.7%</b>	2.7%
Active Pending Caseload	7,682	<b>7,133</b>	-7.7%
Total Trials Completed	461	<b>482</b>	4.4%
Trial Rate <sup>2</sup>	3.6%	<b>3.8%</b>	0.2%
Defendants Sentenced	10,243	<b>9,894</b>	-3.5%
Acquitted/Dismissed	1,623	<b>1,996</b>	23.0%
Guilty Plea Arraignments	4,020	<b>3,729</b>	-7.8%
Notices of Change of Judge	712	<b>676</b>	-5.3%
Settlement Conferences Held	870	<b>933</b>	0.0%
Successful Settlements	538	<b>651</b>	21.0%
Lower Court Appeals Filed	736	<b>674</b>	-8.4%
Bond Forfeiture Hearings	437	<b>470</b>	7.0%
Amount of Bonds Forfeited	\$1,039,483	<b>\$942,334</b>	-10.3%

<sup>1</sup>Clearance rate equals total terminations divided by total case filings.

<sup>2</sup>Trial rate equals total trials completed divided by total case filings.

## CIVIL

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	New Case Filings			Case Terminations		
	<i>FY 1998 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99 Q3 &amp; Q4 % change</i>	<i>FY 1998 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99 Q3 &amp; Q4 % change</i>
Tort Motor Vehicle	3,268	<b>3,010</b>	-7.9%	4,609	<b>3,927</b>	-14.8%
Tort Non-Motor Vehicle	1,218	<b>1,180</b>	-3.1%	1,766	<b>1,583</b>	-10.4%
Medical Malpractice	204	<b>214</b>	4.9%	256	<b>246</b>	-3.9%
Contract	4,569	<b>4,570</b>	0.0%	5,247	<b>5,628</b>	7.3%
Tax	5	<b>2</b>	-60.0%	63	<b>36</b>	-42.9%
Eminent Domain	68	<b>114</b>	67.6%	134	<b>118</b>	-11.9%
Lower Court Appeals	247	<b>197</b>	-20.2%	316	<b>295</b>	-6.6%
Unclassified Civil	<u>6,288</u>	<u><b>6,243</b></u>	-0.7%	<u>5,243</u>	<u><b>9,982<sup>a</sup></b></u>	90.4%
<b>TOTALS</b>	15,867	<b>15,530</b>	-2.1%	17,634	<b>21,815</b>	23.7%

<sup>a</sup> Includes TJ terminations prior to February 1, 1999 not reflected in previous statistical reports.

## PROBATE

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	New Case Filings			Case Terminations		
	<i>FY 1998 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99 Q3 &amp; Q4 % change</i>	<i>FY 1998 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999 Q3 &amp; Q4 Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99 Q3 &amp; Q4 % change</i>
Estate Probates and Trust Administrations	2,054	<b>2,203</b>	7.3%	3,249	<b>1,588</b>	-51.4%
Guardianships and Conservatorships	1,001	<b>1,119</b>	11.8%	1,007	<b>1,032</b>	2.5%
Adult Adoptions	<u>7</u>	<u><b>8</b></u>	<u>14.3%</u>	<u>2</u>	<u><b>4</b></u>	<u>100.0%</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>	3,062	<b>3,330</b>	9.3%	4,258	<b>2,624</b>	-34.6%

## MENTAL HEALTH

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	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 98 – FY 99</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>% change</i>
Mental Health Case Filings	774	861	11.2%
Mental Health Case Terminations	778	671	-13.8%

## TAX

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	New Case Filings			Case Terminations		
	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>% change</i>	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>% change</i>
<b>Cases of Record</b>						
Property	36	34	-5.6%	255	237	-7.1%
Other	219	174	-20.5%	154	216	40.3%
<b>Small Claims</b>						
Property	115	60	-47.8%	837	366	-56.3%
Other	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-50.0%</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	
<b>TOTALS</b>	269	287	-27.7%	1,249	819	-34.4%

## FAMILY COURT

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### Domestic Violence – Orders of Protection

	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i>	<i>FY 1999</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i>	<i>FY 99 – FY 00</i> <i>% change</i>
Filed	1,787	1,721	-3.6%
Issued	1,473	1,543	4.8%
Hearings Requested	763	660	13.5%
Hearings Commenced	682	560	17.9%

## CONCILIATION

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	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 98 – FY 99</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>% change</i>
<b><u>Cases by Type</u></b>			
Conciliation Counseling	236	227	-3.8%
Underage Premarital Counseling	3	0	
“Other” Counseling	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	
<b>Total Counseling</b>	242	227	-6.2%
<b>Total Mediation</b>	1,576	1,670	6.0%
Assessment/Evaluation	502	506	0.8%
Reciprocal Evaluation	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	0.0%
<b>Total Evaluation</b>	510	514	0.8%
<b>TOTAL CONCILIATION</b>	2,328	2,411	3.6%
Parent Information Program (attendees)	6,574	7,233	10.0%

## JUVENILE

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	New Case Filings			Case Terminations		
	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>% change</i>	<i>FY 1998</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 1999</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>Totals</i>	<i>FY 98-FY 99</i> <i>Q3 &amp; Q4</i> <i>% change</i>
<b>Delinquency</b>	7,148	6,734	-5.8%	7,709	6,628	-14.0%
<b>Dependency</b>	642	551	-14.2%	712	418	-41.3%
<b>Adoption</b>	349	434	24.4%	288	409	42.0%
<b>Severance</b>	<u>329</u>	<u>284</u>	-13.7%	<u>172</u>	<u>369</u>	114.5%
<b>TOTALS</b>	8,468	8,003	-5.5%	8,881	7,824	-11.9%

