

2007 Caseload Report

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Circuit Court Administrator



January 31 is the date on which caseload reports for the previous year must be submitted to the State Court Administrative Office. Having just completed our report and while we are still knee-deep in caseload data, now is a good time to talk about the Circuit Court's productivity in 2007.

Case/Petition Type	Number Filed			Number Disposed		
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007
1. Appeals	1,069	1,089	1,059	1,135	1,098	1,080
2. Civil	7,260	7,445	7,544	8,416	8,206	8,350
<i>a. Auto Negligence</i>	758	604	568	937	825	646
<i>b. Medical Malpractice</i>	200	187	167	288	248	220
<i>c. Contracts</i>	2,242	2,503	2,697	2,618	2,603	2,926
<i>d. Housing & Real Estate</i>	765	798	903	866	834	952
<i>e. Pers. Injury (non-auto)</i>	582	525	493	720	635	592
<i>f. General Civil</i>	1,450	1,540	1,506	1,558	1,667	1,615
<i>g. Other Civil</i>	1,263	1,288	1,210	1,429	1,394	1,399
3. Criminal	6,119	6,096	6,159	6,873	6,825	6,670
<i>a. Non-Capital</i>	5,828	5,738	5,824	6,566	6,407	6,306
<i>b. Capital</i>	291	352	330	307	411	358
<i>c. Felony Juvenile</i>	0	6	5	0	7	6
4. Reopened cases	1,252	1,207	1,187			
Subtotal Civil/Criminal	15,700	15,837	15,949	16,424	16,129	16,100
4. Domestic	7,739	7,699	8,029	7,805	8,281	7,896
<i>a. Divorce with children</i>	2,570	2,402	2,371	2,618	2,644	2,462
<i>b. Divorce no children</i>	2,496	2,629	2,515	2,584	2,764	2,609
<i>c. Paternity</i>	938	1,002	1,007	863	1,088	923
<i>d. Custody</i>	137	153	168	164	148	164
<i>e. Interstate</i>	414	362	329	423	373	325
<i>f. Other Support</i>	1,127	1,112	1,583	1,088	1,228	1,357
<i>g. Other Domestic</i>	57	39	56	65	36	56
5. Juvenile	4,836	4,557	4,474	4,462	4,982	4,326
<i>a. Delinquency</i>	3,918	3,660	3,636	3,492	4,041	3,433
<i>b. Abuse & Neglect</i>	603	546	490	646	561	517
<i>c. Juvenile Traffic</i>	315	351	348	324	380	376
6. Adoptions	413	425	444	441	411	416
7. Pers. Protection Order	3,211	3,128	2,828	3,946	3,716	3,375
8. Miscellaneous Family	484	487	484	556	456	542
9. Reopened cases	800	793	772			
Subtotal Family	17,483	17,089	17,031	17,210	17,846	16,555
Total Circuit Court	33,183	32,926	32,980	33,634	33,975	32,655

Statistics without comparative information or trends is like watching a foreign-made movie without subtitles – one can see what's taking place but the story has little meaning. Caseload data for the preceding two years is given to provide some context as to whether 4,836 delinquency petitions filed in 2007 is static, rising or falling. Trends also enable decisionmakers in the court to understand where shifts in resources may be needed to handle the workload.

The information presented at left is in summary format. Those who are interested in more detailed caseload information may find it on the Supreme Court's Web site at www.courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/reports/statistics.htm#annual. Here you will find current and historical caseload information for each circuit, probate and district court in Michigan.

At left is a table showing the number of new cases and petitions filed and disposed for the years 2005-2007. The information is presented for the Family and Civil/Criminal divisions.

Please bear in mind that the caseload data for 2007, while reported to the State Court Administrative Office, has not yet been verified – a process that typically takes a few weeks with an annual deadline of

the last day in February. Verification means that folks in the Court Administrator's Office dig beneath each reported number to ensure that they are supported by the monthly and quarterly detail. It is expected that our verified caseload report will appear on the Supreme Court's Web site in April – possibly sooner.

As to what's included in a couple of the case types listed above, "Other Civil" cases include all case numbers wherein the suffix (for those who are familiar with the Circuit Court's case numbering system) begins with a "C." These are contracts cases that include such areas as business claims, condemnation, environment, forfeiture and labor relations. This category is distinguished from "General Civil," which is a catchall for cases that do not fit nicely into the various civil case types listed in the table above. Examples of these cases include attachment proceedings; proceedings to restore, establish or correct records; claim and delivery matters; and garnishments.

Under the Domestic category you will see a reference to "Interstate." These cases generally involve child support issues (i.e., enforcement or modification of a court order) where one party is not in Michigan or an order was issued in another state.

Miscellaneous Family includes several case types, the most voluminous being name changes. Other cases in this

category include emancipation, safe delivery of newborn, parental waivers, infectious diseases and violations of personal protection orders.

Here are some numbers not in the table but that might be of interest. The Circuit Court conducted 628 trials in 2007 – 375 jury and 253 non-jury. Trial numbers for 2005 and 2006 were 704 and 749, respectively. It would appear that the number of trials in 2007 is down significantly, but the number is actually representative of most years. We saw a spike in the number of trials in 2005 and 2006, most likely due to an urgency to move criminal cases because of chronic jail overcrowding and the need to reduce the pending docket to ensure compliance with case disposition time guidelines.

The average length of time to complete a jury trial in 2007 was 2.4 days. For bench trials the average length of time was 1.2 days. Not included in these numbers is the time needed to select juries.

Our judges continue to preside over one of the busiest dockets in this state. The court is able to manage the heavy workload because of the dedicated and capable jurists on this bench and the assistance of a knowledgeable and skilled support staff. Please check out the Supreme Court's Web site for more information about our caseload or call my office at 248-858-0345.

Until next time...



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