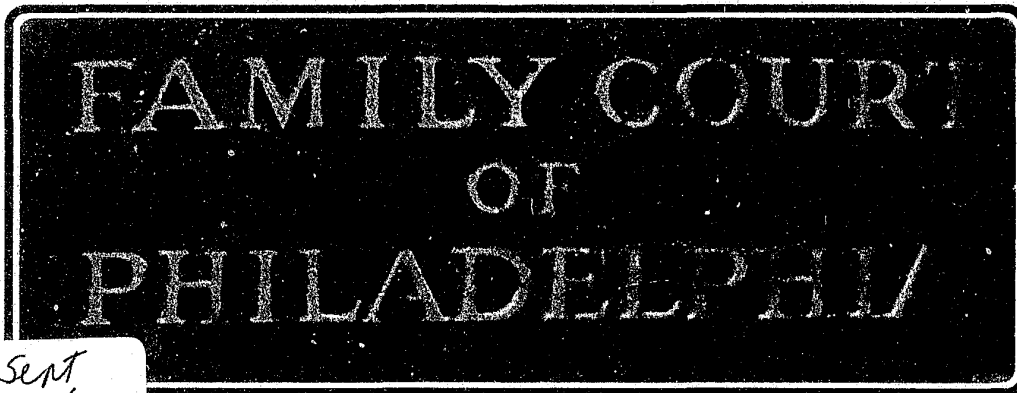


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PHILADELPHIA

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS



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REPORT

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U.S. Department of Justice
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COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF PHILADELPHIA FAMILY COURT DIVISION

SEVENTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

NCJRS

FEB 10 Rec'd

ACQUISITIONS

Honorable Edward J. Bradley
President Judge

Honorable Harry A. Takiff
Judge
Court Administrator

Honorable Nicholas A. Cipriani
Administrative Judge
Family Court Division

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THE JUDICIARY

Edward J. Bradley — *President Judge*
Harry A. Takiff, Judge — *Court Administrator*
Nicholas A. Cipriani — *Administrative Judge, Family Court Division*

JUDGES SITTING IN THE FAMILY COURT DIVISION DURING 1987

Alex Bonavitacola	Joseph P. McCabe
John L. Braxton	Frank X. O'Brien
Tama Myers Clark	A. Frank Reynolds
Leonard A. Ivanoski	Edward R. Summers
Frank M. Jackson	Petrese B. Tucker
Stephen E. Levin	Jerome A. Zaleski

SENIOR JUDGES

Vito F. Canuso	Edward B. Rosenberg
Jerome A. O'Neill	Evelyn M. Trommer

IN MEMORIAM



John R. Meade

Judge John R. Meade died at age 80 on August 15, 1987, at his center city home.

Judge Meade was appointed a County Court Judge in 1967. A year later, he was elected to serve as a Court of Common Pleas Judge. In 1977, he attained Senior Judge status, a post he held until his retirement in 1987.

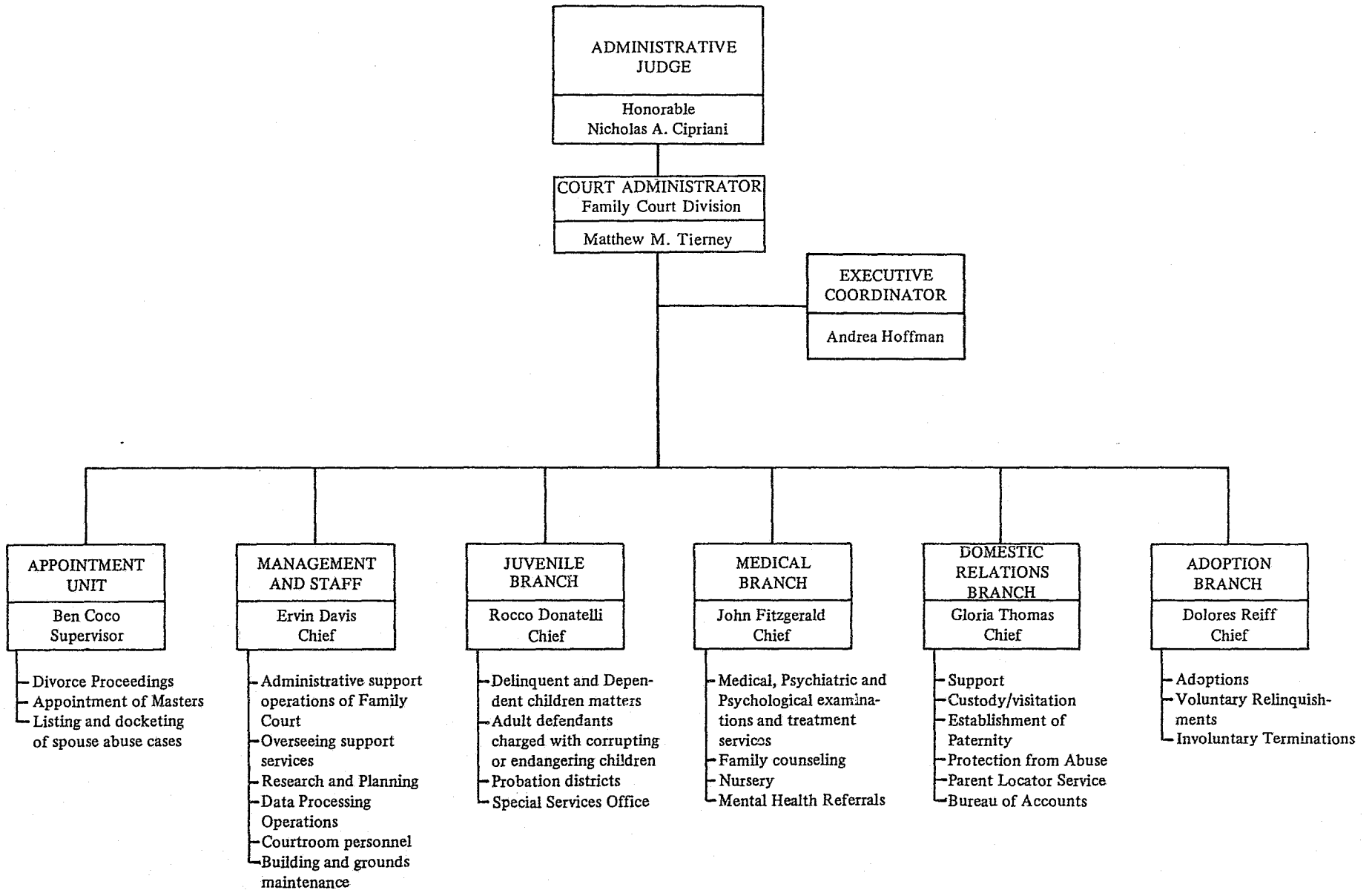
Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Meade worked as a reporter for 17 years and served a term as a Pennsylvania State Senator.

A native Philadelphian, Judge Meade attended Roman Catholic High School and the Temple University Law School.

Among his professional associations, he served on the Executive Board of the Pennsylvania State Council of Juvenile Court Judges and the Board of Directors of City Trusts.

Judge Meade is survived by a son, two daughters, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

FAMILY COURT DIVISION ORGANIZATION.



INTRODUCTION AND HIGHLIGHTS

Administrative Judge Nicholas A. Cipriani

As years go, 1987 was a good year. It was not a vintage year to be sure, but it was a year in which a number of good things were achieved, positive plans for the future were put in place, and we were able to cope with a severe shortage of judges and severe fiscal constraints.

The report of the Juvenile Justice Stakeholders was submitted to me. The Stakeholders, a committee of representatives of all agencies of the juvenile system, were charged with preparing a comprehensive plan of objectives, goals and recommendations to further upgrade the entire juvenile system.

The report provides a comprehensive short term and long term plan for improving the juvenile system. Certain of the recommendations were implemented and are in place:

- (1) Cross training program for employees in all agencies in the juvenile system. For the first time Court and agency staffs have had training together, and have had the opportunity to view the problems, concerns etc. of each other and to gain perspective from many vantage points.
- (2) A Youth Aid Panel program has been initiated on a Citywide basis. This program, under the aegis of the District Attorney's Office, allows juveniles, who are charged with minor offenses, to be heard by adult community groups rather than having to go through the formal court process.
- (3) Bench Warrants - A significant change in bench warrant processing has been effectuated to assure prompt service of warrants and follow-up by the District Attorney's Office. Heretofore bench warrants had not been served effectively. The District Attorney has received a grant from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency to effectuate this recommendation.

To assure that the comprehensive plan be implemented over time, I have retained the committee which will schedule meetings on a regular basis to review progress and work toward implementation of the various recommendations.



Judge Nicholas A. Cipriani, Administrative Judge, Family Court Division, addressed attendees at the annual employee awards ceremony.

Culminating months of intensive labor by a number of dedicated individuals, new rules pertaining to Adoptions were approved by the Board of Judges and effectuated in the fall.

The Domestic Relations Branch continues to function at an exceptionally high level of performance. Achievements are many and varied. However, one statistic which highlights the performance of the branch is the collection of child support monies. In 1987, \$73,755,032 was collected. When the Child Support Program started in 1976, \$35,000,000 was collected.

Some other significant achievements in a year of accomplishments: Juvenile histories were placed on line. Computerization of attorney appointments was also completed. Coupled with the computerization of the juvenile listing of cases in 1986, our computerization applications have progressed quite well. Additional terminals were provided to assure maximum utilization of the information provided.

At my direction, a new juvenile courtroom was opened at the Youth Study Center, which is the holding facility for detained juveniles. By having detention hearings at this facility, significant reductions in juveniles being held were achieved as well as reducing the numbers of juveniles transported to and from Court by the Sheriff's Office.

I am extremely interested in employee development and morale. To that end a wide variety of training programs were conducted both in-house and in other locations for our employees. The annual employee awards ceremony was held

at which time outstanding performance and perfect attendance were recognized.



Judge Ale. Bonavitacola, Chairman of the Awards Ceremony, congratulated Management and Staff employees who received Employee of the Year awards. Shown from left to right are: Joseph Pelligrino III, Joseph Pasquarella, Judge Bonavitacola, Joseph Pelligrino, Jr., and Clarence Smith.



Employees of the Juvenile Branch who were recipients of Employee of the Year awards are shown with Judge Bonavitacola. Starting at the left are: James Powers, John Irvine, Judge Bonavitacola, Charlotte Wenzel and Rita Capozzi.

The Family Court is most fortunate to have dedicated Judges and staff, and I wish to recognize and commend them for their outstanding performance.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance given to the Family Court Division during 1987 by the following Judges from the other Pennsylvania counties:

Hon. Anthony R. Appel
Hon. James E. Buckingham
Hon. John A. Cherry
Hon. John M. Cleland
Hon. William W. Lipsitt
Hon. Samuel C. Ranck
Hon. J. Quint Salmon
Hon. Nathan Schwartz
Hon. Charles G. Sweet
Hon. Grant E. Wesner

I shall endeavor to continue during my tenure to do everything possible to make the attainment of equitable justice in a timely fashion a reality for all.

STATISTICS

The data appearing in this report has been collected from original documents, capturing information at the time of filing and at disposition, as well as from internal reports.

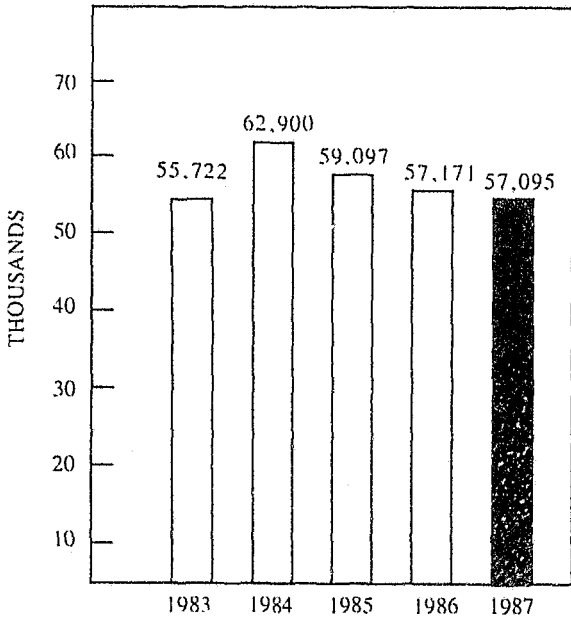
The reader is cautioned not to compare numbers of filings with numbers of cases disposed. These terms are not synonymous in that multi-petitions may be filed within a case. For example, both parents may file an individual petition for custody of a child. This would be counted as two petitions, but one case, if both petitions are disposed of at the same time.

The statistical unit used in this report regarding cases is the case disposed of because it is at the final stage that we have the most complete information about the case. The statistical data immediately following this section summarizes the overall workload of the Family Court Division for the past five years. I believe the data is fairly accurate due to the development and adoption of better procedures in recent years.

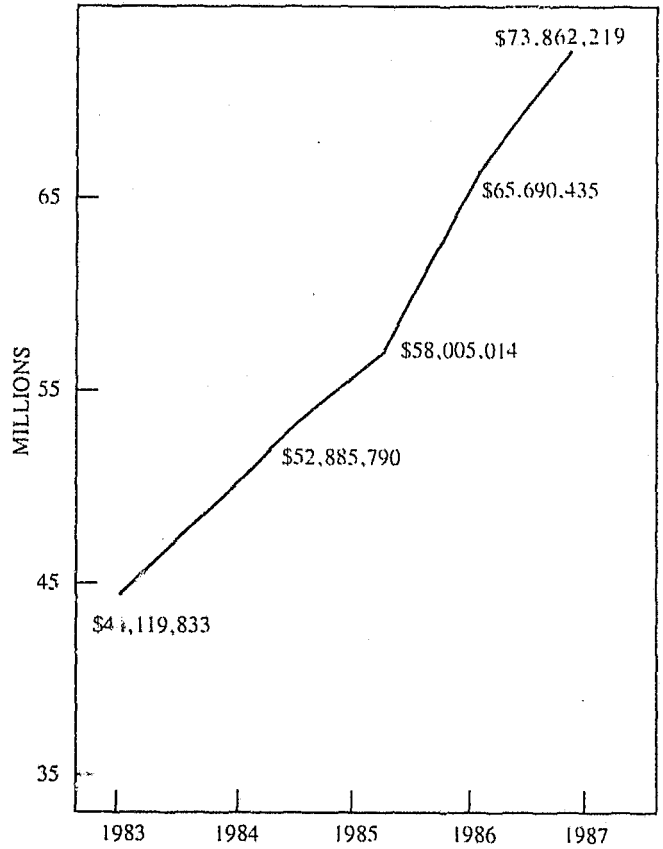
STATISTICAL SUMMARY: 1983 TO 1987

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
FILINGS:					
Juvenile Branch					
Petitions Filed	14,092	14,729	13,975	13,975	13,837
Adjusted at Youth Study Center	1,153	987	780	758	518
Total	15,245	15,716	14,755	14,733	14,355
Domestic Relations Branch Petitions	32,989	40,236	37,671	35,690	36,794
Adoption Branch Petitions	883	987	911	920	997
Divorce Proceedings Initiated ^{as}	6,605	5,961	5,760	5,828	4,949
Total	55,722	62,900	59,097	57,171	57,095
CASES DISPOSED:					
Juvenile Branch					
New Cases	14,208	14,493	14,430	14,699	13,095
Review Hearings	21,081	24,103	24,775	29,883	33,346
Total	35,289	38,596	39,205	44,582	46,441
Domestic Relations Branch	20,491	22,604	27,671	27,235	26,370
Adoption Branch	948	1,106	980	936	1,119
Divorces Granted	5,634	4,970	4,652	4,744	4,303
Total	62,362	67,276	72,508	77,497	78,233
SUPPORT ORDER AND RESTITUTION					
PAYMENTS RECEIVED:					
Support Payments					
Domestic Relations Branch	\$44,030,610	\$52,779,409	\$57,892,635	\$65,586,638	\$73,755,032
Juvenile Branch	28,524	16,422	14,413	9,074	6,882
Total	\$44,059,134	\$52,795,831	\$57,907,408	\$65,595,712	\$73,761,914
Restitution	60,699	89,959	97,966	94,723	100,305
Total	\$44,119,833	\$52,885,790	\$58,005,014	\$65,690,435	\$73,862,219

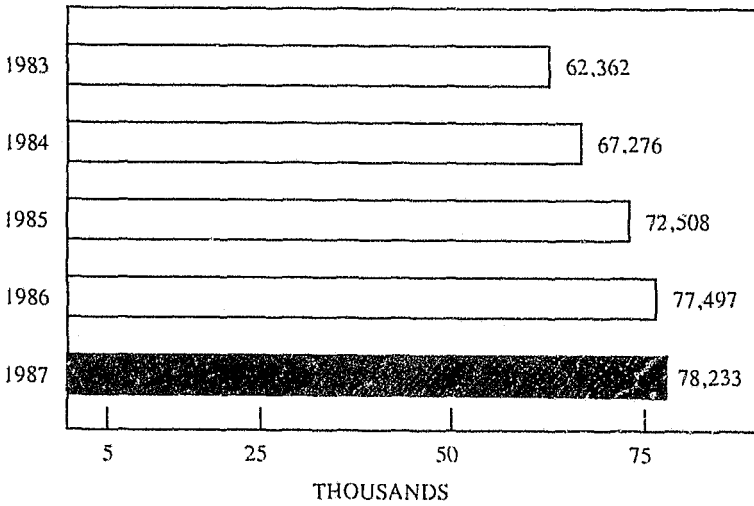
TOTAL FILINGS: 1983 TO 1987



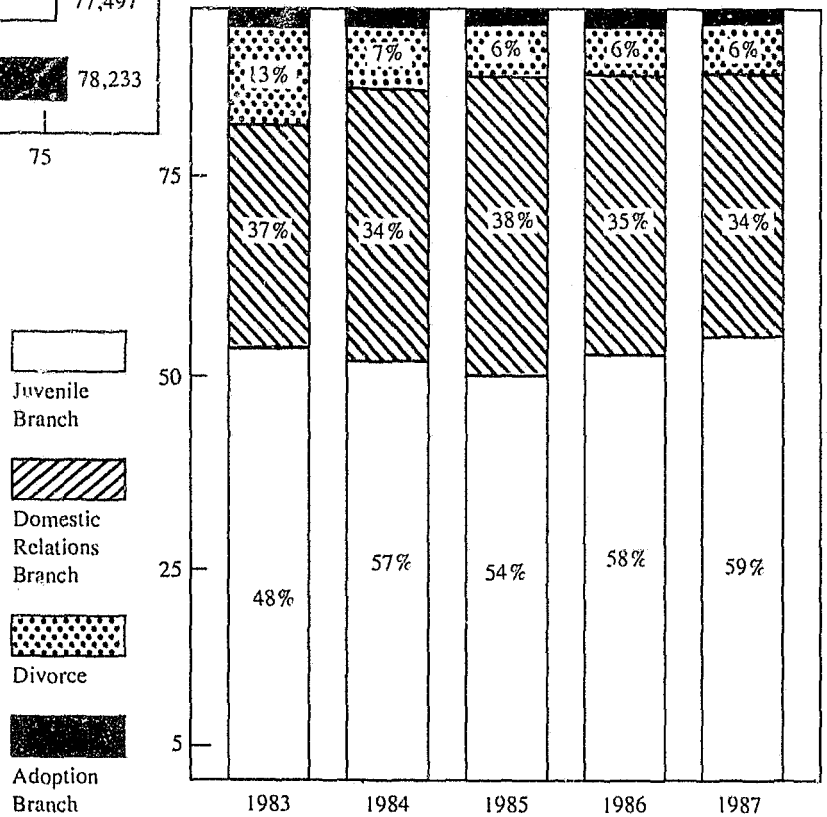
SUPPORT ORDER AND RESTITUTION PAYMENTS RECEIVED: 1983 TO 1987



TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES DISPOSED: 1983 TO 1987



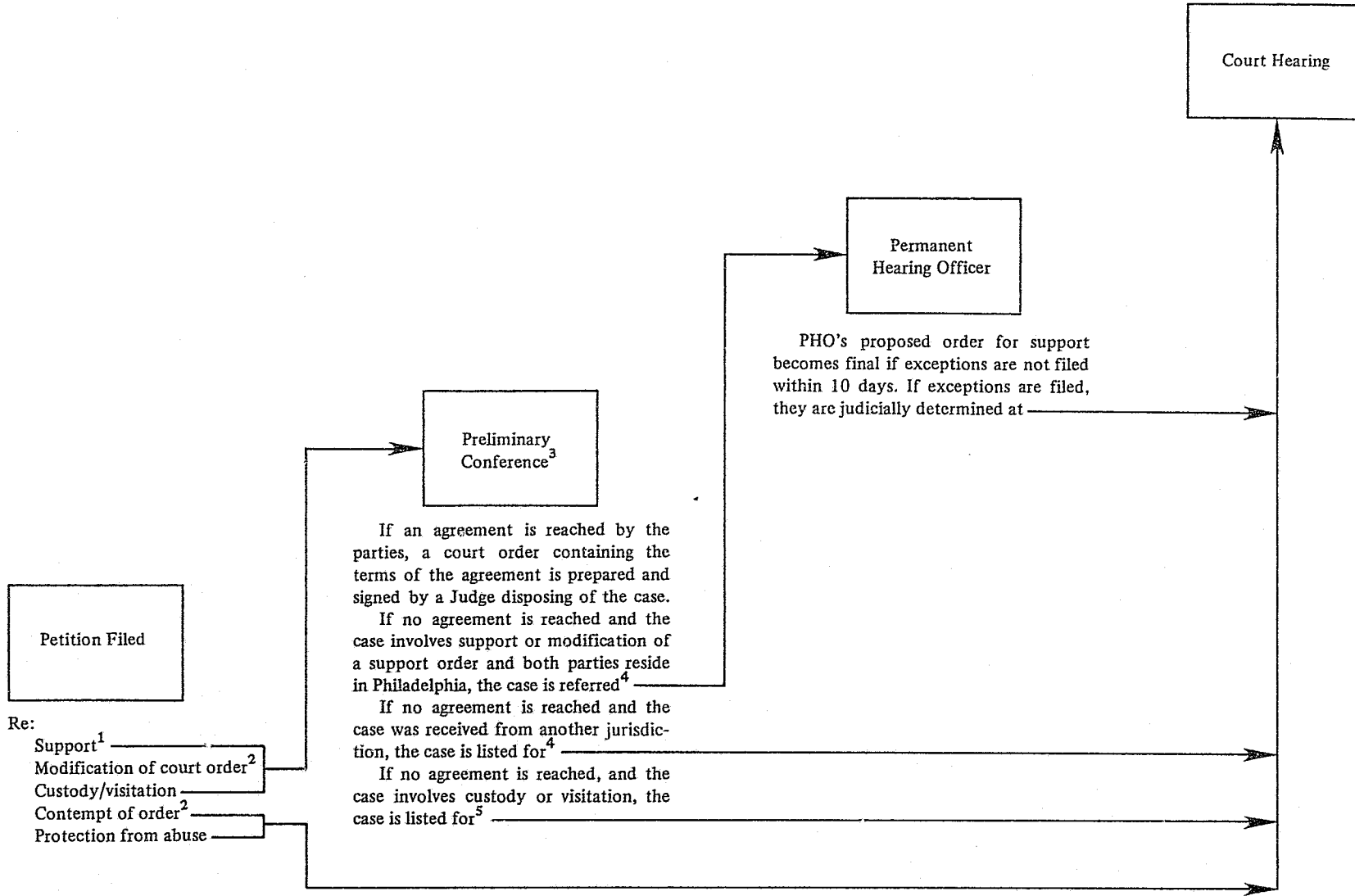
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION-CASES DISPOSED-1983 TO 1987



Domestic Relations Branch



DOMESTIC RELATIONS BRANCH FLOW GUIDE



48

¹ Local cases and petitions received from outside Philadelphia have a preliminary conference; petitions filed in Philadelphia involving a party living outside of Philadelphia are forwarded to the other jurisdiction for disposition.

² Includes cases involving support, custody, partial custody or visitation.

³ Where Philadelphia is the respondent in cases received from other jurisdictions only the defendant is present.

⁴ A temporary child support order may be obtained pending hearing before PHO or the Court.

⁵ Home investigations and neuropsychiatric evaluations may be scheduled and temporary custody/visitation orders may be obtained pending the court hearing.

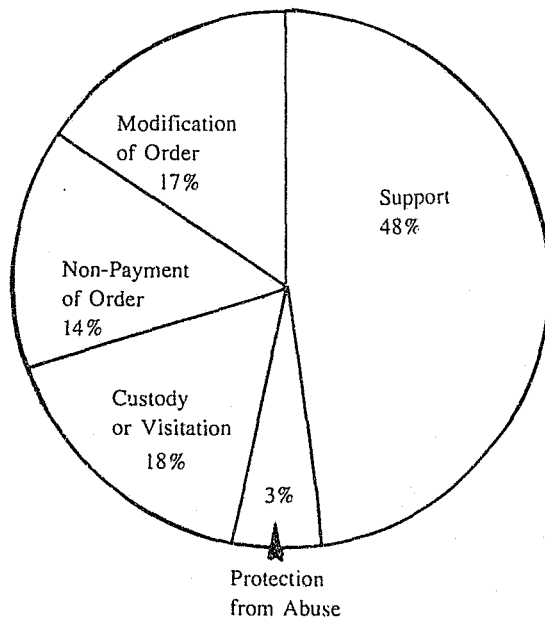
DOMESTIC RELATIONS BRANCH

The Domestic Relations Branch receives and processes most matters involving family conflicts excluding the granting of divorces. The workload of this branch is a varied one and includes such cases as: the establishment of paternity, financial support of children and spouses, custody and visitation matters, and protection from abuse within the family. The bulk of domestic relations cases, however, involves obtaining support for children from legally responsible parents.

A guide showing the flow of domestic relations cases is shown on the preceding page.

The enactment of Child Support Enforcement Act led to substantial increases in the workload of the Domestic Relations Branch. Since its passage in 1975, new support cases have tripled. In 1987, new petitions for support accounted for the majority of all petitions filed in the Domestic Relations Branch.

PETITIONS FILED: 1987



Many petitions for support concern children of unmarried parents. Before a support order may be entered, paternity must be determined. This may be accomplished through a voluntary acknowledgement of the father. If the reputed father denies paternity, an order for a HLA blood test is issued. Blood samples are taken from the reputed father, the child, and the mother, on the premises at 1600 Walnut Street. The studies performed on these samples

are very sophisticated and are highly accurate in determining the probability of paternity. When the tests are completed, the case is listed for court and the issue of paternity is judicially determined. After paternity has been established, the case is then processed as any other support case. In 1987, paternity was established in 5,819 cases. Of this number, 86 percent were established through voluntary acknowledgement of the father.

Petitions filed concerning custody, partial custody or visitation of children have increased in recent years. In 1987, 6,402 such petitions were filed as compared to 5,683 filed in 1986.

In order to process these cases expeditiously five social workers serve as Custody Officers, and conduct pre-trial conferences which are mandatory in all cases. The Unit also has two workers who perform all home investigations.

In all, a total of 36,794 petitions were filed in the Domestic Relations Branch during 1987.

Because of the volume of cases coming into the Domestic Relations Branch each year, it is imperative that good management practices be effected so that cases may be disposed of promptly and efficiently. The Domestic Relations Branch through its use of preliminary conferences and Permanent Hearing Officers, was able to negotiate nearly 15,000 agreements and orders thereby disposing of 56 percent of the 1987 workload without court hearings. This achievement enabled the judiciary to concentrate on the more complex protracted cases, contempt of court matters, issues involving other jurisdictions, exceptions to proposed orders in support cases and paternity.

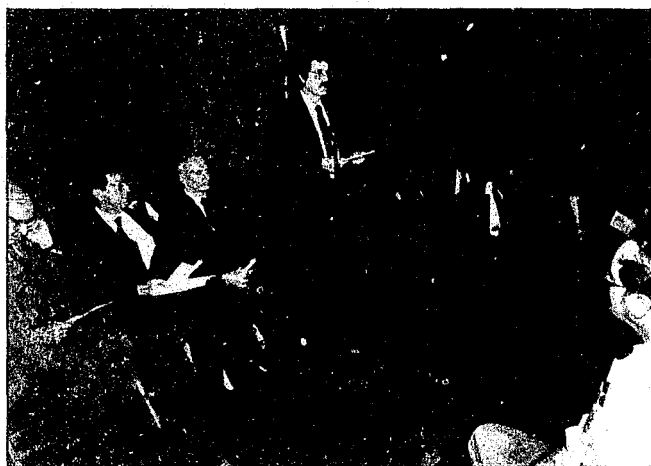
Overall 26,370 cases were disposed of in 1987. Of this number:

- 15,111 or 57% involved new cases of support or modifications of a current support order.
- 6,052 or 23% concerned non-payment of a support order
- 4,015 or 15% pertained to custody or visitation matters.
- 1,192 or 5% involved protection from abuse cases.

In addition, the Domestic Relations Branch has several specialized units which provide support services for the branch. For example, the Writ Servers Unit personally serves parties with orders to appear at conferences or court hearings; the Parent Locator Unit processes

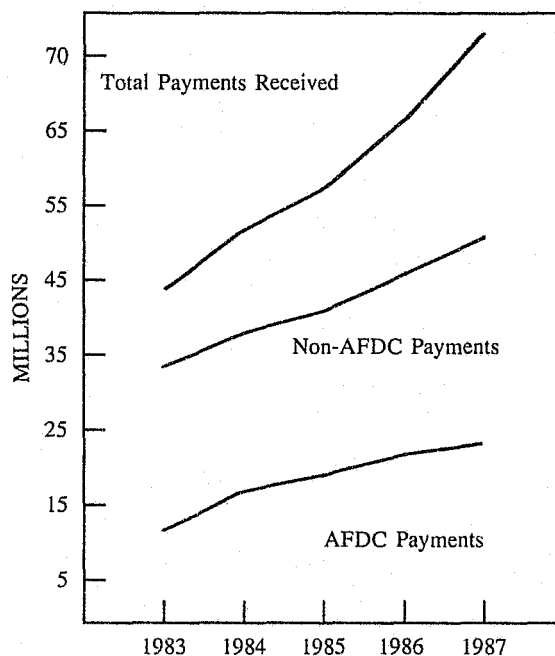
requests for assistance in locating absent parents in child support and custody cases; and the Legal Unit provides general legal services for the branch. A unit of the District Attorney's office provides attorneys for AFDC cases to assist in the establishment and enforcement of support order.

The Domestic Relations Branch continued its strong enforcement program in the collection of support payments. In 1987, this branch collected and disbursed a total of \$73,755,032 an increase of 12 percent over the 1986 total. Approximately 60 to 65 percent of all support collections were received as a result of wage attachment orders, including attachment of unemployment compensation. Collections in Aid for Dependent Children cases continue to rise. In 1987 total collections under this program amounted to \$21,982,964.



John F. Stuff, Director, Bureau of Child Support Enforcement, DPW, addresses attendees at Child Support Awareness Day.

SUPPORT ORDER COLLECTIONS: 1983 TO 1987



During the year varied training is provided to court staff. The Domestic Relations Branch staff were very active in 1987 in their efforts to keep abreast of changes in domestic relations issues. They attended numerous conferences, training course, seminars and workshops to improve their skills and to keep current on legal and social aspects having an impact on the branch.

The year 1987, was very productive for the Domestic Relations Branch, especially in the collection of support monies.

The statistics following this section reflect some of these accomplishments.



Vincent Colianni, Supervisor of the Enforcement Unit at 1600 Walnut Street received one of the Employee of the Year awards for the Domestic Relations Branch. He is shown receiving congratulations from Judge Alex Bonavitacola. Also shown on the left is Judge Frank M. Jackson.

TABLE 1

DOMESTIC RELATIONS CASES: 1987

Petitions filed ¹	36,794
Cases disposed ¹ :	
Through court hearing	11,483
Without court hearing	14,887
Pre-trial units	6,868
Custody unit	1,529
Master's unit	2,664
Enforcement units	3,826
Total	26,370
Other activities:	
Paternity blood studies	1,425
New wage attachments	26,366
Interviews and preliminary conferences	43,090
Cases referred to Parent Locator unit	7,458
Changes in beneficiary processed	2,997
Court sessions	1,334

¹See page 10 statistics.

TYPE OF PETITION FILED: 1983 TO 1987

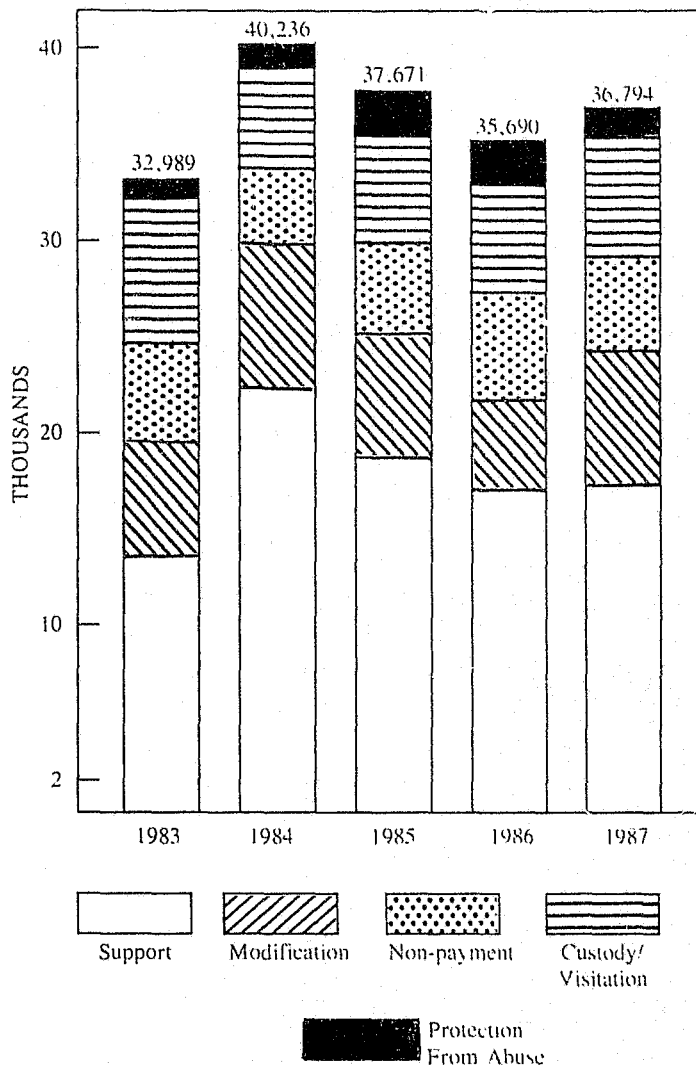


TABLE 2

TYPE OF PETITION FILED: 1987

Support	17,801 ²
Non-paternity cases	5,832
Paternity cases	11,969
Modification of support orders	6,291
Non-payment of support orders	5,115
Child custody, partial custody, visitation rights	6,402
Protection from abuse	1,185
Total	36,794

²Of this number, 14,952 were local petitions while 2,849 were petitions to/from other States or other Pennsylvania counties. Of the latter group, Philadelphia was the initiator in 1,056 petitions.

TABLE 3

CASES DISPOSED BY TYPE OF HEARING: 1987

	Total	Court hearing	Without Court hearing
Support/Modifications	15.202	2.942	12.260
Non-payment of order	5.757	4.863	.894
Child custody or visitation	4.219	2.486	1.733
Protection from abuse	1.192	1.192	
Total	26.370	11.483	14.887

CASES DISPOSED: 1983 TO 1987

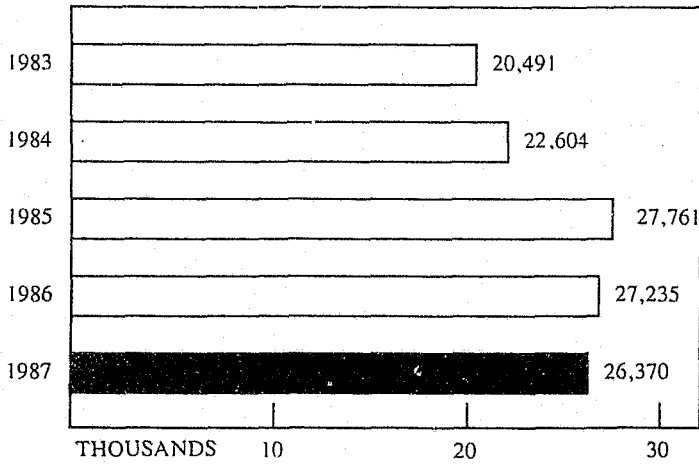


TABLE 4

PATERNITY ESTABLISHED: 1987

Preliminary conference	4,979
Court hearing	840
Total	5,819

TABLE 5

SUPPORT ORDERS: 1987

New orders made	6,698
Orders vacated	10,580
Orders changed	9,059

TABLE 6

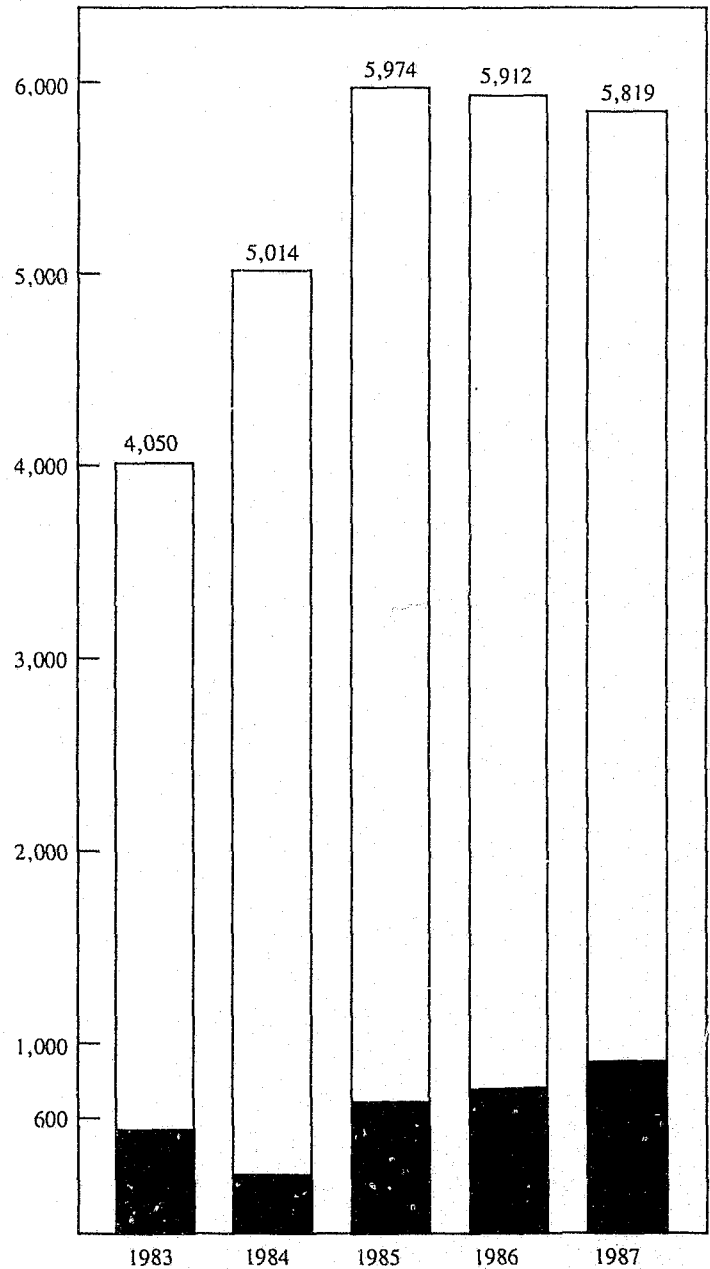
PAYMENTS RECEIVED ON SUPPORT ORDERS:
1983 TO 1987



	Total	AFDC ¹	Non-AFDC
1983	\$44,030,611	11,857,606	32,173,005
1984	\$52,779,409	16,517,356	36,262,053
1985	\$57,892,635	17,643,988	40,248,647
1986	\$65,586,638	20,046,064	45,540,574
1987	\$73,755,032	21,982,964	51,772,068

¹Aid for Dependent Children.

²Over 5 million of this amount was collected through the Federal Income Tax Refund Intercept Program.

PATERNITY ESTABLISHED 1983 TO 1987



 Court Hearing
 Preliminary Conference

Divorce Proceedings



DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS

Family Court has jurisdiction in all matters relating to divorce and annulment. Procedures in divorce and annulment actions are governed by the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure 1920.1 to 1920.92 inclusive. These State-wide rules have been implemented by local rules thereby providing the bench and bar with an integrated source for rules governing divorce and annulment.

The Appointment Unit receives and processes all matters pertaining to divorce and or annulment proceedings. The unit is also responsible for the appointment of Masters when required. In addition, it has the responsibility for listing and docketing spouse abuse cases.

A divorce proceeding is often emotionally unsettling for the parties involved due to the nature of the action and the variety of issues to be determined. Issues of support for spouses and children, division of marital property, and custody of minor children of the marriage are all matters to be decided in divorce actions.

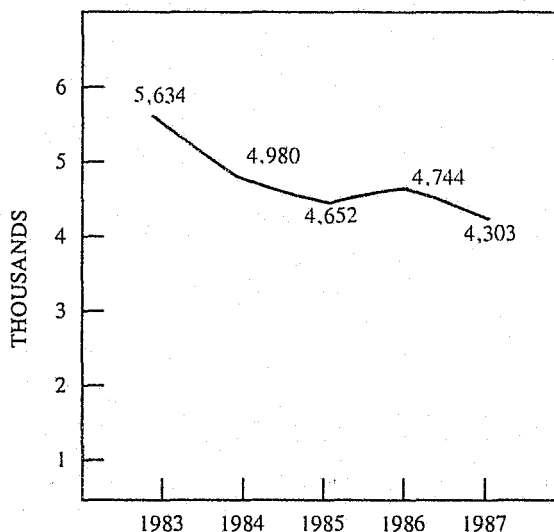
Until the enactment of the Divorce Code in July, 1980 (the first major reform in over 50 years), divorce proceedings required a plaintiff to bring a specific charge against the spouse, i.e., indignities, desertion, etc. In addition, other issues dealing with support, custody, etc. were usually considered as separate actions requiring additional input of time by the Court and the parties involved in the divorce action. This system was complicated and expensive for the parties adding additional pressures to an already tense situation.

The Divorce Code of 1980 addressed some of these problems. It added no fault grounds, and allowed for alimony and the equitable distribution of marital property.

While the Divorce Code still permits the filing of a specific charge in a divorce action, it also allows the parties in a divorce action (under Section 201c and 201d) to proceed to finality without the intervention of a Master when both parties agree the marriage is irretrievably broken. In addition, local court rules effective January, 1988, allow for a written agreement between the parties addressing matters related to the divorce to be incorporated into the final decree.

With the enactment of the Divorce Code in 1980, there were predictions of massive increases in the divorce rate. As yet, these forecasts have not materialized. In fact, since the inception of the Divorce Code, there has been a decreasing trend in divorce proceedings initiated and

DIVORCES GRANTED IN
PHILADELPHIA: 1983 TO 1987



granted with a marked decrease in 1984¹. A slight increase in both categories was noted in 1986, however the numbers decreased once again in 1987.

SUMMARY

In 1987, 4,949 divorce proceedings were initiated in Family Court. In addition, 1,731 motions and rules were filed requesting a court order or direction on a specific matter relating to the divorce action. Exceptions to the Master's report were filed in 38 cases. These actions signify disagreement with the Master's findings by one or both parties in a divorce action. The total number of divorces granted in 1987 was 4,303, a decrease of 9 percent from 1986.

Ninety-nine percent of the divorce cases in 1987 cited irretrievable breakdown as the reason for the divorce. As in previous years, the wife is most often the plaintiff (58 percent) in divorce actions.

The average marriage had lasted 13.7 years at the time the divorce was granted. More than half of the couples obtaining a divorce in 1987 (57 percent) were married for 10 years or more. Twenty-four percent of the marriages lasted 20 years or more. In 16 cases the marriage lasted one year or less while in 89 cases the couples had been married for more than 39 years.

¹See graph on divorce proceedings started and granted, page 57.

More than twice the number of wives (34 percent) as husbands (15 percent) were married before age 21. The median age of husbands divorced in 1987 was 38.1, for wives, 35.7. Fourteen percent of wives and 15 percent of husbands had previous marriages. During 1987, the highest number of divorces occurred in the 30-34 age group for both wives and husbands.

There were no children in 40 percent of the divorces in 1987, but a total of 5,324 children were involved in the balance of the divorces granted. Of the total number of divorcing couples with children, 39 percent had 1 child; 34 percent, 2 children; 16 percent, 3 children; and 10 percent had 4 or more children. The majority of children (3,561) were under 18 years of age at the time the divorce was granted. Twenty-six percent of this latter group were the "only child", while 13 percent came from families with 4 or more children.

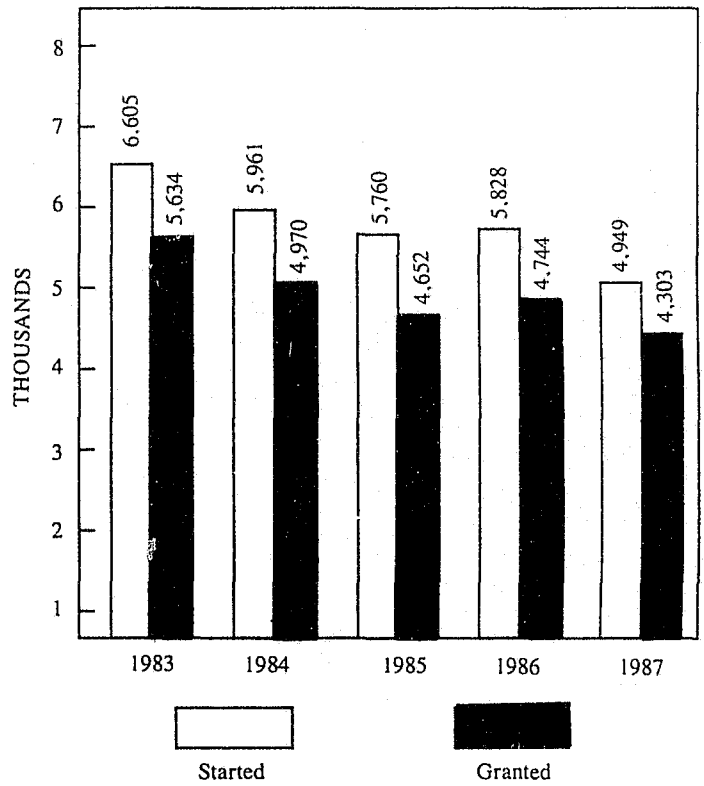
TABLE 1

DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS¹: 1987

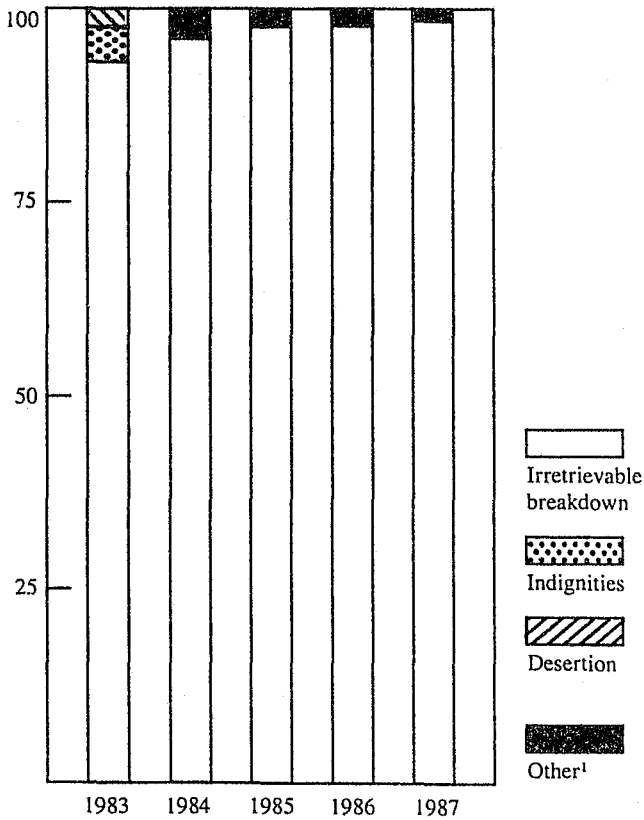
Divorce proceedings started	4,949
Divorces granted	4,303
Motions and rules filed	1,731
Motions and rules disposed	1,119
Exceptions to master's report filed	38
Exceptions to master's report disposed	21
Court sessions	145

¹Includes annulments.

DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS STARTED AND GRANTED: 1983 TO 1987



PERCENT DISTRIBUTION-LEGAL GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE: 1983 TO 1987



¹Grounds of desertion and indignities are included for the years 1984-1987.

TABLE 2
DIVORCES GRANTED BY LEGAL GROUNDS: 1987

Legal grounds for decree	Divorces granted	Plaintiff	
		Husband	Wife
Irretrievable breakdown	4,255	1,799	2,456
Indignities	40	5	35
Desertion	6	1	5
Other	2	1	1
Total	4,303	1,806	2,497

TABLE 3

CHILDREN INVOLVED IN DIVORCES GRANTED:
1987

Divorces granted	Number of children in family	All children	Children under 18
1,706	0	-	-
1,021	1	1,021	914
889	2	1,778	1,377
418	3	1,254	797
161	4	644	322
108	5 or more	627	151
4,303		5,324	3,561

PLAINTIFF IN DIVORCES GRANTED: 1987

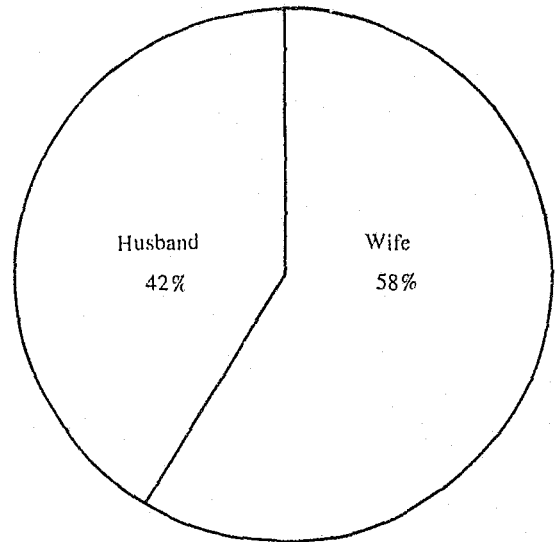
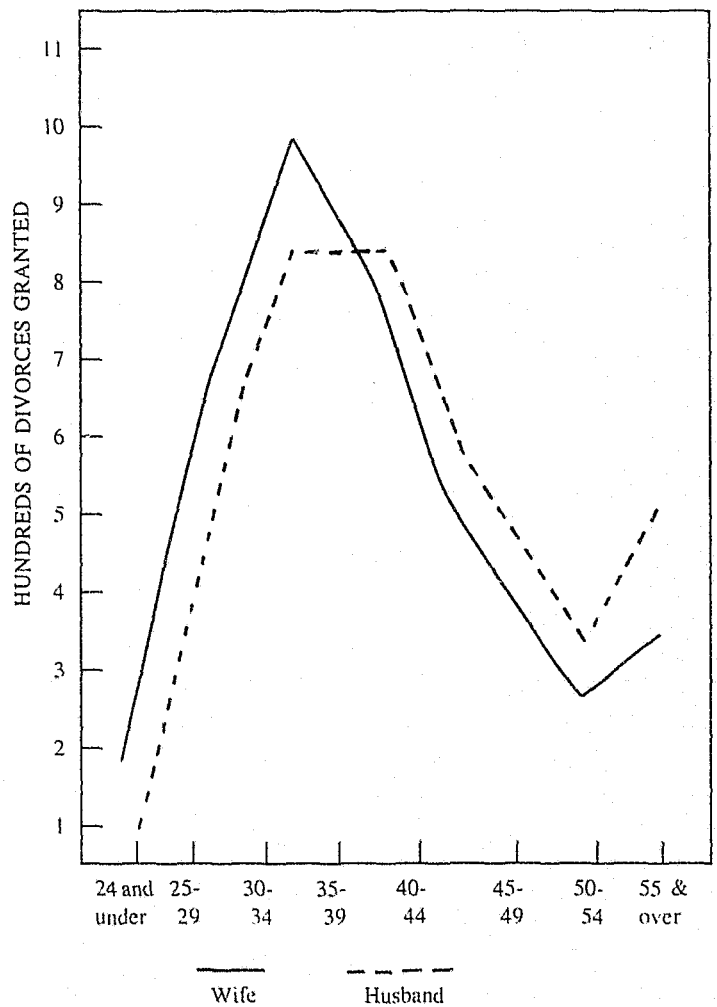


TABLE 4

DIVORCES GRANTED BY DURATION OF MARRIAGE: 1987

Duration of marriage	Divorces granted
1 year	16
2 years	106
3 years	220
4 years	239
5 years	279
6 years	289
7 years	232
8 years	255
9 years	195
10 years	203
11 years	167
12 years	157
13 years	158
14 years	119
15 years	149
16 years	135
17 years	114
18 years	105
19 years	112
20 - 24 years	400
25 - 29 years	281
30 - 34 years	146
35 - 39 years	106
Over 39 years	89
Not reported	31
Total	4,303

AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DIVORCE: 1987



Adoption Branch



ADOPTION BRANCH

The Adoption Act of January, 1981¹ provided for the following:

1. the adoption of individuals
2. the termination of certain parent-child relationships
3. the recording of foreign decrees of adoption
4. provisions for adoption procedures, decrees, records and related matters.

Under the law, any individual may be adopted and any person may become an adopting parent with the approval of the Court when in the best interest of the child.

The Adoption Branch of Family Court is responsible for investigating and processing all matters relating to termination of parental rights and adoption.

There are two types of adoption cases:

1. Kinship cases involve petitioner(s) and adoptee(s) who are related.
2. No kinship cases concern parties with no familial relationship.

In no kinship cases, placements are made under the auspices of an agency or a private attorney.

Adoption proceedings vary somewhat depending on the type of case and the relationship of the adoptee to the petitioner(s)

Petitions for termination of parental rights require a court hearing before a Judge. These petitions are granted only when the statutory requirements have been met. See chart in next column for conditions and requirements which must be met.

A report of intention to adopt must be filed with the Court in all adoptions where the child is not related by blood or marriage to the person having custody or control. The Court must make a complete investigation regarding the health, social and economic status of the adopting parent(s). No report is required when the child is related by blood or marriage to the adopting parent(s).

Since adoption is a statutory proceeding, the following are other mandates which are required by law.

1. The court shall appoint counsel or a guardian ad litem for a child who has not reached 18 years whenever it is in the best interest of the child. No attorney or law firm shall represent both the child and the adopting parent(s).

¹Repealed the Adoption Act of July 1970.

Petition	Party Filing Petition	Conditions for Termination
Voluntary Relinquishment	Natural Parents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consent of agency b. Consent of natural parent c. Court appearance by consenting parent
Involuntary Termination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Natural parent; When termination is sought with respect to other parent b. Agency; When custody of child has been given to agency c. Individual having custody of child 	<p>Parental rights may be terminated on any of the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Failure or refusal to perform parental duties for a period of six months. b. Parents whereabouts unknown and child is not claimed for a period of 3 months. c. Continued incapacity, abuse or neglect has caused the child to be without essential parental care, control or subsistence. d. The parent is the presumptive but not the natural father of the child. e. The child was removed from the parent by the Court or by a voluntary placement for a period of six months and the parent cannot or will not remedy the conditions which led to the removal or placement of the child
Petition to Confirm Consent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Intermediary b. In cases where there is no intermediary, the adoptive parent(s) may file the Petition. 	<p>If parent or parents of the child have executed consents to an adoption but have failed for a period of 40 days after executing the consent to file or proceed with the Petition for Voluntary Relinquishment, the intermediary may petition the Court to hold a hearing for the purpose of confirming the intention of the parent(s) to voluntarily relinquish their rights and duties as evidenced by the consent(s) to the adoption.</p>

2. If the adoptee is over twelve years of age, his/her consent to the adoption must be obtained.
3. A decree of adoption is not granted until the adoptee has been in the custody of the petitioner(s) for at least six months. This is not required when the adoptee is over 18 years of age or related to the petitioner(s) by blood or marriage.
4. All court hearings are conducted in private.
5. All records relating to an adoption proceeding are kept in strict confidence and may be inspected only through a court order.



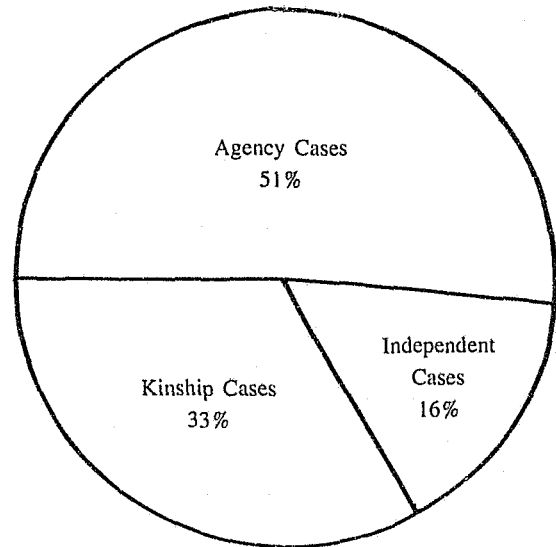
Darlene Servance was a recipient of an Employee of the Year award for the Adoption Branch. She is shown receiving congratulations from Judge Bonavitacola. Also shown on the left is Judge Stephen Levin.

SUMMARY

The total number of petitions filed in 1987, increased 8 percent from 1986. Adoption petitions filed in 1987 decreased by 2 percent over the number filed in 1986. Petitions for voluntary relinquishment increased by 37 percent while petitions for involuntary termination decreased by 1 percent.

The adoption of 450 individuals was approved by the Court in 1987, 425 children and 25 adults. Most of the adoptees had been born out of wedlock (71 percent). Children were placed for adoption by the natural parent(s) in 45 percent of the cases with an additional 48 percent placed by an agency or an intermediary. In the balance of cases (7 percent), the child was placed by other relatives or the Department of Human Services. Of the total adoptees, 54 percent were 5 years of age or under with 8 percent being under one year of age. The median age for adoptees born during wedlock was 9.2 years; for those born out of wedlock, 1.8 years. The majority of the adoptees (57 percent) were in custody of the petitioner(s) for one year or less. The adoptee and the petitioner(s) were not related in most cases (83 percent) while 10 percent

SOURCE OF PETITIONS: 1987



of the adoptees were adopted by step-parents. The balance of adoptions (7 percent) involved other relatives such as grandparents.

Single petitioners accounted for 11 percent of all adoption in 1987, with women being the predominant petitioner in these cases.

The ages of adopting parents ranged from under 25 years to 60 years and over with the median age for women at 35 years, for men 36.3 years.

The income of the adopting parents appears advantageous for the adoptee. Of the total petitioners, 66 percent had annual incomes of \$25,000 or more with 34 percent having incomes of \$40,000 or more.

TABLE 1

TOTAL ACTIVITY: 1987

Petitions filed	997
Reports of intention to adopt filed	248
Petitions disposed	1,119
Total adoptees	450
Court sessions	84

TABLE 2

TYPE OF PETITION BY SOURCE: 1987

Type of Petition	Total	Source		
		Agency	Independent	Kinship
Adoption	455	143	91	221
Voluntary relinquishment	315	268	42	5
Involuntary termination	227	97	26	104
Total	997	508	159	330

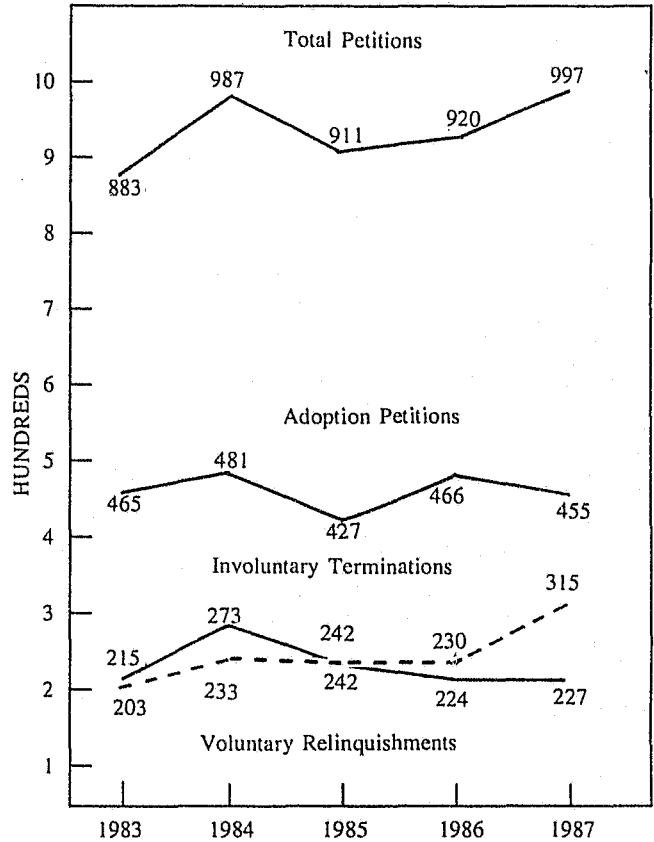
TABLE 3

PETITIONS DISPOSED: 1987

Adoption:	
Granted	432
Withdrawn	17
Voluntary Relinquishment¹:	
Granted	257
Withdrawn	138
Involuntary Termination:	
Granted	254
Withdrawn	21
Total	1,119

¹Includes petitions to confirm consent for adoption.

PETITIONS FILED: 1983 TO 1987



PETITIONS DISPOSED: 1983 TO 1987

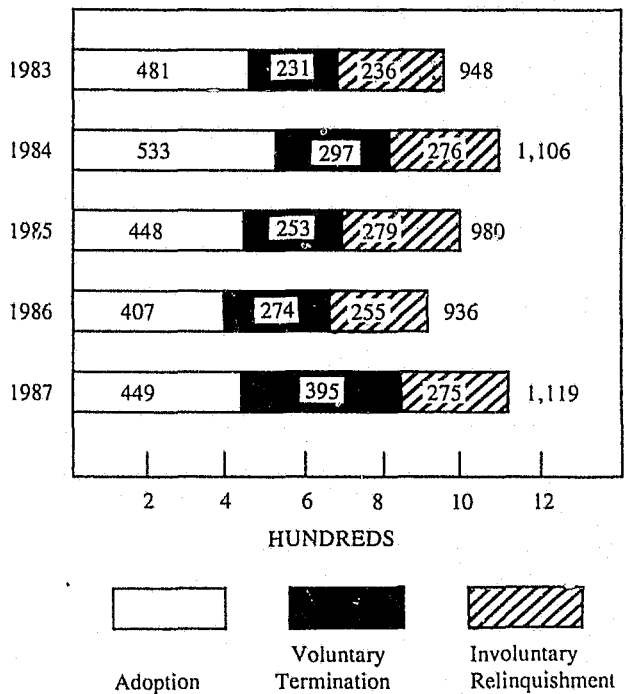


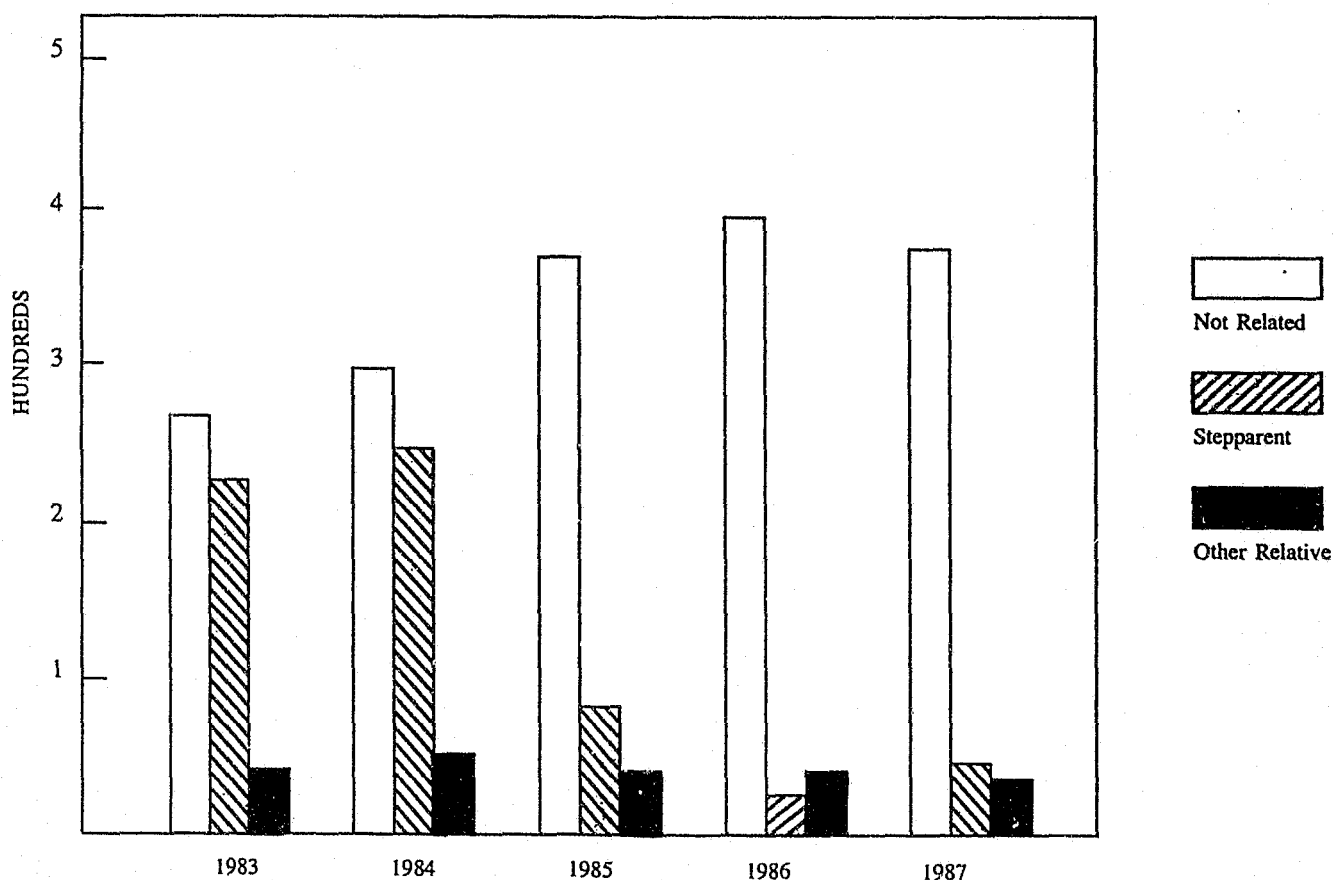
TABLE 4 \

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOPTEES AND PETITIONERS: 1987

Adoptees: 450		Petitioners																			
Age: Under 1 year 34 1—5 years 207 6—9 years 84 10—17 years 100 18 and over 25		Birth status: Born during wedlock 130 Born out of wedlock 320																			
Sex: Male 240 Female 210		Marital status: Married 399 Single 51																			
Duration of custody: Under 1 year 77 1—4 years 290 5—9 years 54 10 years and over 29		Adoptee placed by: Natural parent(s) 204 Agency 46 Intermediary 169 DHS ¹ 26 Other 5																			
		Age: <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Mother</th> <th>Father</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Under 25</td> <td>16</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-34</td> <td>185</td> <td>141</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-44</td> <td>179</td> <td>176</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-54</td> <td>42</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55 and over</td> <td>26</td> <td>29</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Mother	Father	Under 25	16	5	25-34	185	141	35-44	179	176	45-54	42	50	55 and over	26	29
	Mother	Father																			
Under 25	16	5																			
25-34	185	141																			
35-44	179	176																			
45-54	42	50																			
55 and over	26	29																			
		Relationship of petitioner to adoptee: Not related 376 Stepparent 44 Other relative 30																			
		Income: Under \$5,000 1 5,000—14,999 37 15,000—24,999 102 25,000—39,999 146 40,000—49,999 66 50,000 and over 86 Not reported 12																			

¹Department of Human Services.

RELATIONSHIP OF PETITIONER TO ADOPTEE: 1983 TO 1987



Medical Branch



MEDICAL BRANCH

The Medical Branch is an integral part of Family Court and has been in the forefront of activities since the Court's establishment in 1913.

Contributing more than seventy years of service, this branch has experienced tremendous changes as a result of medical advances and the growing awareness of good mental and physical health. Together with the increased availability of medical facilities, such as clinics and mental health centers in the community, as well as changes in court functions, laws and social mores, the types of cases referred to this branch and the services provided have varied over the years.

While there have been changes in the work of the branch throughout the years, the basic functions have remained the same. These functions are to examine, diagnose and recommend treatment for clients referred by other branches of the Court, or ordered by the judiciary.

The Medical Branch has a highly professional staff of physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, mental health workers and registered nurses to perform these services.

Among the duties performed are: physical examinations; psychiatric and psychological evaluations and studies; counseling of individuals and families; processing of involuntary mental health commitments of juveniles for evaluation and treatment; emergency treatment of clients and employees; and notifying clients of medical problems requiring treatment or care. In addition, the branch makes referrals to hospitals, clinics and mental health facilities and maintains follow-up on the client's progress. A group treatment program for delinquent juveniles (Correctional Group Counseling) is conducted by specially trained probation officers under the supervision of the Chief Psychologist.

The importance of diagnosing and assuring treatment of physical, mental or emotional deficiencies of clients referred to the Medical Branch cannot be stressed enough. The professional findings are an important aid to the judiciary in making decisions on cases before them.

For years, the Court has provided a unique service for its clients—a facility for infants and children while their parents appear in court. Family Court has two such facilities—one at 1801 Vine Street and a second at 1600 Walnut Street to service parents who must appear there. In addition, the facility at 1801 Vine Street is open on Sunday for court ordered visitations.



Virginia Roberts is shown receiving congratulations from Judge A. Bonavitacola upon being selected as one of the recipients of Employee of the Year Awards for the Medical Branch.

In an effort to make visitations more pleasant for child(ren) and parent(s), the facility was redecorated. In addition, a member of the supervisory staff is on hand to oversee the visits and to handle complaints and/or suggestions from clients utilizing this service.

The Medical Branch has indeed been an essential part of the Court. It has contributed much in the past and will continue in the future to provide a vital service to the Court.

SUMMARY

In 1987, 6,402 examinations were performed by the Medical Branch staff. These included: 1,632 physical, 1,896 psychiatric and 2,874 psychological examinations.

The two child care facilities cared for more than 11,000 children while their parents transacted business in the Court. In addition, more than 2,500 children were brought to 1801 Vine Street for Sunday visitation.

In the Clinical Services Unit, 399 cases were processed through interviews, treatments or referrals to outside agencies.

The Medical Branch staff was called upon to handle 914 emergency matters pertaining to clients and employees.

The Correctional Group Counseling Program, a group therapy program for juvenile delinquents, had 316 juveniles referred to it in 1987.

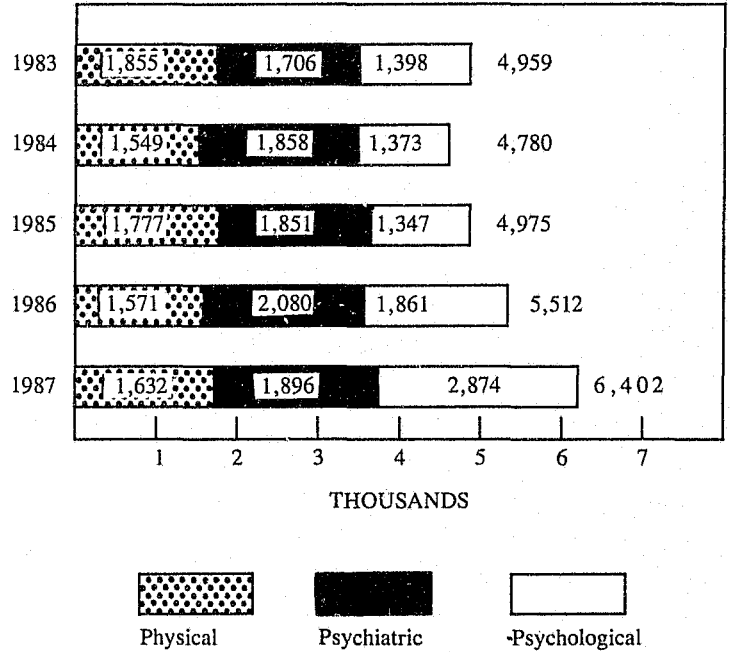
There were 267 mental health commitments for evaluation or long term treatment, as well as 895 pre-commitment investigations and/or follow-ups dealing with requests for commitments or review of commitments.

TABLE 1

TOTAL ACTIVITY: 1987

Physical examinations	1,632
Psychiatric examinations	1,896
Psychological examinations	2,874
Total	6,402
Pre-commitment investigations	895
Commitments under Mental Health Act	267
New cases enrolled in Correctional Group Counseling	316
New cases under supervision:	
Physical	504
Clinical services	295
Total	799
Children cared for in nursery	13,891

EXAMINATIONS COMPLETED: 1983 TO 1987



PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF ALL EXAMINATIONS BY SOURCE OF REFERRAL: 1987

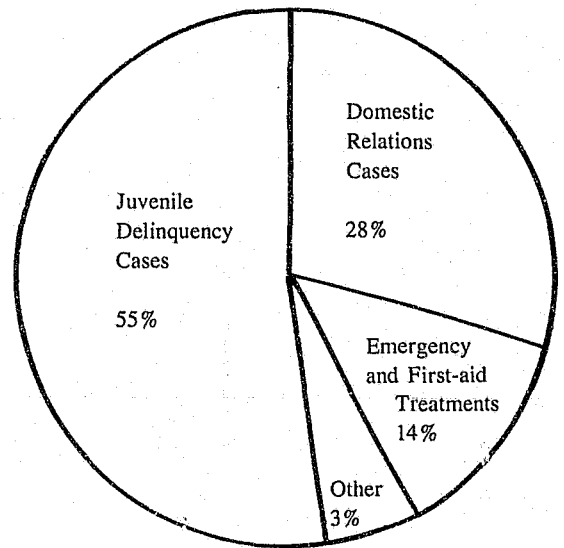


TABLE 2

TYPE OF EXAMINATION BY BRANCH: 1987

	Total	Psychiatric	Psychological	Physical
Juvenile branch	3,509	1,645	1,793	71
Domestic relations branch	1,775	249	1,080	446
Adoption branch	3	2	1	-
Employees	201	-	-	201
Emergency and first aid treatments	914	-	-	914
Total	6,402	1,896	2,874	1,632

TABLE 3

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS: 1987

Diagnoses	Total	Juvenile		Adults
		Delinquent	Non-Delinquent	
Superior	80	23	24	33
Bright normal	128	44	37	47
Normal	680	447	92	141
Dull normal	456	405	13	39
Borderline retardation	338	322	6	10
Mild retardation	102	92	5	5
Severe retardation	1	1	-	-
Other ¹	1,089	451	150	488
Total	2,874	1,785	326	763

¹Mental health assessment, no IQ required.

TABLE 5

CLINICAL SERVICES UNIT ACTIVITIES: 1987

Clinical services probation	295
Domestic relation cases	104
Total	399
Cases referred to outside agencies	18
Correctional group counseling:	
New cases	316
Carry over from previous year	300
Total	616

TABLE 4

PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATIONS: 1987

	Total	Juvenile		Adults
		Delinquent	Non-Delinquent	
Subnormal intelligence	7	5	1	1
Mental retardation	10	7	2	1
Schizophrenia	22	12	1	9
Neuroses	11	6	-	5
Personality disorders	142	128	1	13
Alcoholism	3	3	-	-
Drug dependence	84	72	-	12
Adjustment reaction of adolescence	624	618	5	1
Adjustment reaction of childhood	38	22	16	-
Unsocialized aggressive reaction	136	136	-	-
Group delinquent reaction	63	63	-	-
Social maladjustment	9	-	-	9
No mental disorder	684	524	31	129
Other diagnoses	63	36	9	18
Total	1,896	1,632	66	198

CHILDREN CARED FOR IN NURSERY: 1983 TO 1987

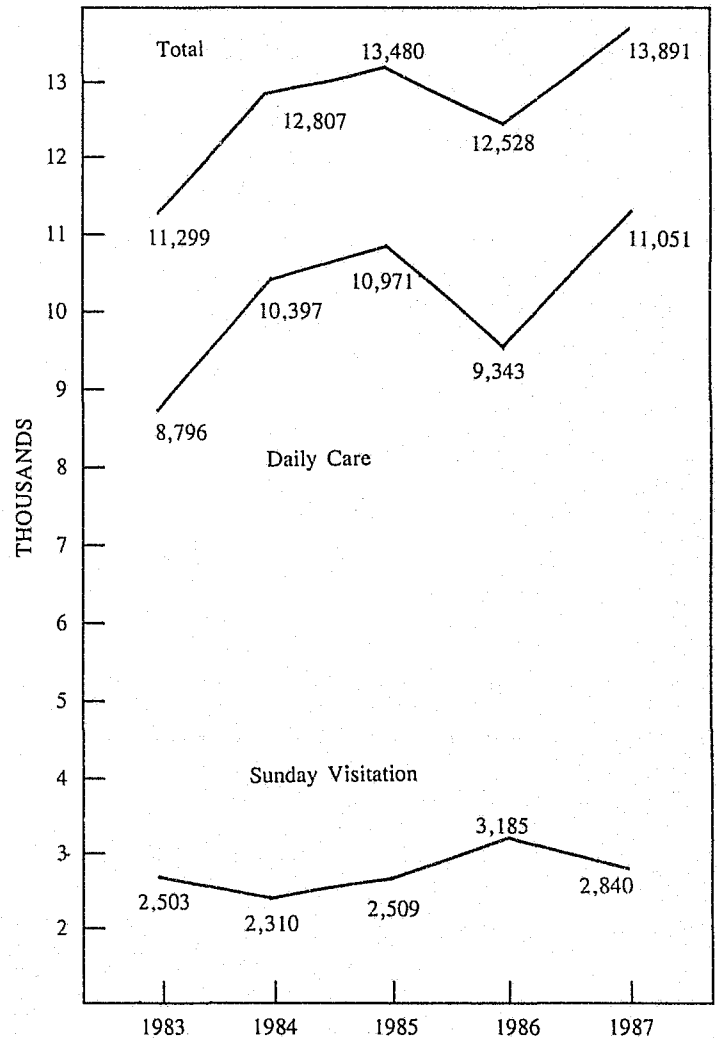
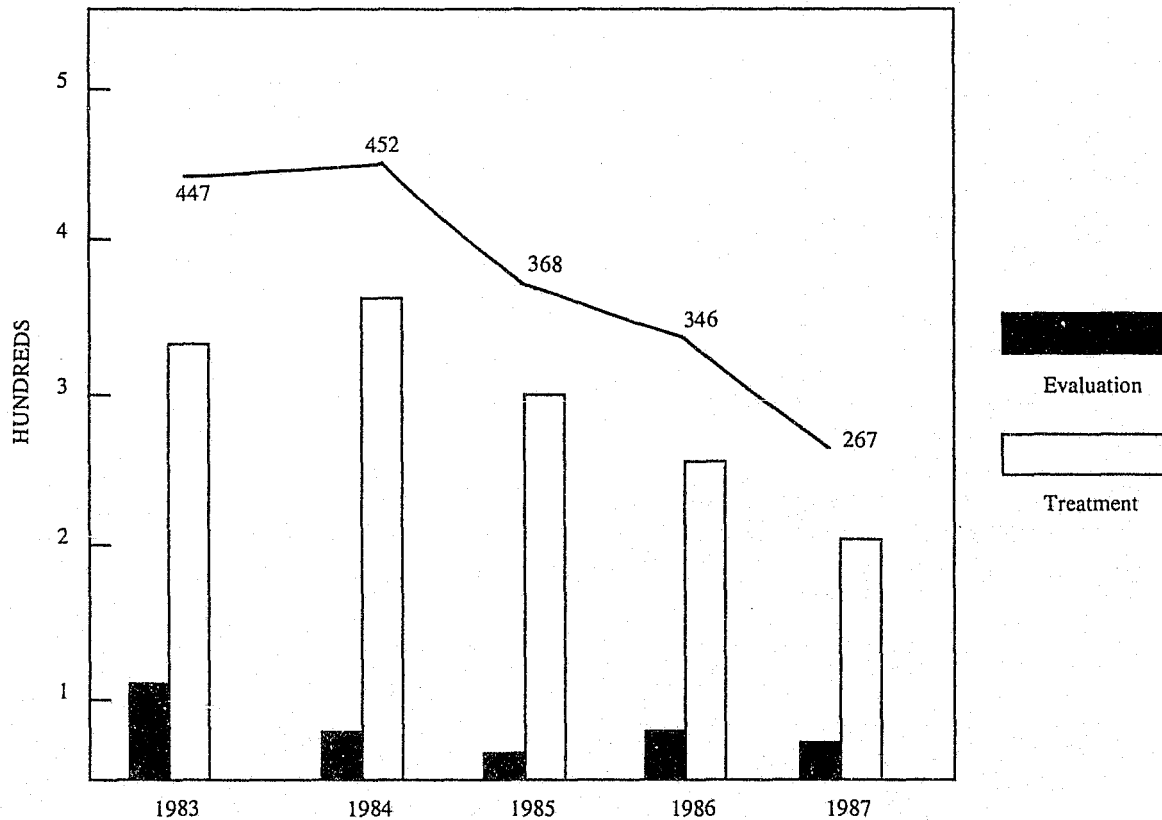


TABLE 6

COMMITMENTS UNDER MENTAL HEALTH ACT: 1987

Admitting Centers or Institutions	Evaluation	Treatment
Catch (formerly Jefferson)	3	3
Catchment Area No.4 CMHC	4	7
Charles R. Drew CMHC	2	7
COMHAR, Inc.	8	2
COMHAR (Temple)	10	-
Eastern State School and Hospital	-	135
Hahnemann Hospital	13	2
Hahnemann CMHC	-	5
Institute of Pennsylvania Hospital	-	3
Interac CMHC	1	1
Jefferson Hospital	3	-
Norristown State Hospital	-	21
Northeast CMHC	2	2
Northwestern CMHC	7	1
Northwestern Institute of Psychiatry	-	1
Path CMHC	2	-
Pennsylvania Hospital	4	3
Philadelphia Child Guidance	-	3
Philadelphia State Hospital	-	2
Philadelphia Psychiatric Center	1	1
Southern Home	-	1
St. Christopher's Hospital	-	1
West Philadelphia Consortium	3	-
Woodhaven Center	-	3
Total	63	204

COMMITMENTS UNDER MENTAL HEALTH ACT: 1983 TO 1987



Glossary



GLOSSARY

- AFDC** — Aid to families with dependent children.
- AFTERCARE** — a supervised and or treatment program for delinquent juveniles released from commitment.
- AGREEMENT** — mutual consent by both parties with respect to support or custody/visitation matters. The agreement is put in writing and becomes an enforceable order when given judicial approval.
- ARREST** — taking physical custody of a juvenile, by a legal authority, to answer a complaint regarding a delinquent act.
- CASE** —
- ADULT** — includes cases involving adults charged with endangering the welfare of a child, corrupting the morals of a child, or committing a crime against a child.
 - DOMESTIC RELATIONS** — case involving financial support of children and spouses; custody/visitation matters; establishment of paternity; and protection from abuse within the family.
 - JUVENILE** — cases involving children alleged to be delinquent or dependent.
- CHILD** — an individual under the age of 18 years, or under the age of 21 years who committed a delinquent act before reaching the age of 18 years; or who was adjudicated dependent before reaching the age of 18 years and requests the Court to retain jurisdiction. In no event will this jurisdiction extend past the age of 21 years.
- DELINQUENT CHILD** — a child ten years of age or older whom the Court has found to have committed a delinquent act and is in need of treatment, supervision or rehabilitation.
- DEPENDENT CHILD** — a child under the age of 18 years found to be:
- a. without proper parental care, control, subsistence or education as required by law.
 - b. ungovernable and in need of care, treatment or supervision.
 - c. habitually truant from school.
 - d. under the age of ten who has committed a delinquent act.
- COMMITMENT** — a child placed in the care of: Department of Human Services, private agency, institution or an individual, by order of the Court.
- CONSENT DECREE** — a court order placing the child under supervision for a period of six months with neither an adjudication of delinquency nor an admission of guilt.
- CUSTODIAN** — a person other than a parent or legal guardian, who stands in loco parentis to the child, or a person to whom legal custody of the child has been given by order of the Court.
- DELINQUENT ACT** — an act designated a crime under the laws of this State or another State if the act occurred in that State or under Federal law or local ordinances.
- DETENTION** — legal authorized confinement of a juvenile, subject to juvenile court proceedings, until committed to a correctional facility or released.
- DISPOSITION** — a final determination of a case.
- EXCEPTION** — a formal objection to the action of the Court during a hearing in which the party excepting seeks to reverse the Court's decision at a later proceeding.
- HEARING OFFICER** — a Court employee assigned to preside at domestic relations preliminary conference.
- HEARING** —
- ADJUDICATORY** — juvenile hearing to determine if child is either dependent or delinquent based on evidence presented at hearing.
 - CERTIFICATION** — a hearing to determine if a juvenile should be tried as an adult in criminal court.
 - DETENTION** — held within 72 hours of juvenile's detention. At this hearing a judicial determination is made as to the release or continued detention of the juvenile pending a further court hearing.
 - PRE-TRIAL** — hearing held after intake interview at Youth Study Center, before a Judge, at which time it is determined if the case should be disposed of or scheduled for an adjudicatory hearing.
 - REVIEW** — involves a case already under Court supervision which is returned to Court for review or amendment of the original disposition.
- INTAKE INTERVIEW** — an informal conference presided over by an intake interviewer authorized to screen all delinquent cases to determine if the Court has jurisdiction. If the case comes under the Court's jurisdiction, the interviewer hears the facts of the case and either disposes of the case or refers it to Court. Pending the court hearing, the child is either released to the parent(s)/guardian or detained.
- INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION** — the termination of parental rights with respect to a child.
- IV D PROGRAM** — a federally funded program under the Social Security Act which provides incentives and reimbursement funds to local domestic relations offices for increased efforts in collecting AFDC and non-AFDC child support monies.
- MASTER** — (a) an attorney employed by the Court to hear cases involving financial support of families; or, (b) one who presides over delinquent and dependent cases and with the consent of all parties, may conduct hearings on all matters relating to delinquent (except transfers to the Trial Division) or dependent proceedings; (c) an attorney appointed by the Court to make recommendation with respect to issues in a divorce case.
- MOTION** — an oral or written request made to a court at any time before, during, or after court proceedings, asking the Court to make a specified finding, decision, or order.

PETITION — a written request made to the Court asking exercise of judicial powers of the Court in relation to a specific matter.

PERMANENT HEARING OFFICER — see Master (a).

PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE — a domestic relations proceeding, in which a hearing officer, acting as a mediator, attempts to effect an agreement between both parties concerning financial support of children and spouses and/or matters involving custody/visitation of mutual children.

PROBATION — the placing of a delinquent child under the supervision of the Court's probation staff.

PROBATION OFFICER — a Court employee responsible for the supervision of juvenile offenders placed on probation.

PROTECTIVE CUSTODY — an emergency measure taking physical custody of a child where there is reasonable cause to believe that the health or safety of the child is in imminent danger, or that the child may abscond or be removed from the jurisdiction of the Court.

PROTECTIVE SUPERVISION — supervision of dependent children by the Court's probation staff or the Department of Human Services.

REFERRAL —

NEW — family or individual's first time contact with Family Court.

SOURCE — person or agency formally bringing the case to the attention of the Court.

REIMBURSEMENT ORDER — an order of the Court directing parents to reimburse the County for care of a child committed or accepted into an agency or institution.

RESTITUTION — a court order directing a juvenile to reimburse his/her victim for any loss due to the juvenile's action.

REVIEW HEARING — see hearing.

SUPPORT ORDER — an order of the Court directing the defendant in a domestic relations case to pay a specified sum on a regular basis to a spouse and/or children.

VOLUNTARY RELINQUISHMENT — a procedure whereby the natural parents of a child (under eighteen years) petition the Court to relinquish forever all parental rights and duties with respect to their child.