

LEHA ^{FR}
DOC.
RUSH

57975

This advance report presents selected caseflow data for general jurisdiction courts for 1976. The data included in this report were extracted from the forthcoming State Court Caseload Statistics: Annual Report, 1976, which was prepared by the National Court Statistics Project of the National Center for State Courts in close cooperation with the Conference of State Court Administrators. The data were collected from published annual reports provided by the states and from unpublished material requested from and supplied by the state court administrators and appellate court clerks.

The 1976 annual report of state court caseload statistics is the second in a series of reports to be produced on the subject. In the 1975 annual report, available data were collected from appellate and general jurisdiction courts in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The 1976 report collected these data as well as data from Puerto Rico and from limited and special jurisdiction courts having statewide data available. Parking cases and other minor traffic violations were not displayed as a part of the general jurisdiction data in the 1975 annual report. The 1976 report displays these cases, along with driving while intoxicated cases (counted as misdemeanors in 1975), under traffic. Some traffic data were reported for 13 out of the 14 court systems that handle at least some traffic cases in their general jurisdiction courts.

The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the 50 states reported that more than 11.7 million civil, criminal,

and juvenile cases were filed in their courts of general jurisdiction in 1976.¹ Civil cases accounted for over 40 percent of these; criminal, over 15 percent; traffic, more than 34 percent; and juvenile, over 5 percent. This compares with more than 6.6 million civil, criminal, and juvenile cases reported by general jurisdiction courts in 1975. The increase in 1976 is largely due to the inclusion of traffic (4.0 million cases), to data reported by seven states that did not report in 1975, and to the addition of Puerto Rico to the report. There have also been increases in the volume of cases handled by the state courts.

The distribution of the pending caseload at the end of 1976 looked considerably different from that for cases filed. Whereas there were two and a half times as many civil as criminal cases filed, there were more than five times as many civil as criminal cases reported pending at the end of 1976. Some of this difference is to be expected because civil matters tend to be protracted (for example, probating a will). Also, the Speedy Trial Act and similar state and local provisions may cause criminal cases to move through the system more quickly than civil cases.

¹More cases were filed in these courts than the figures indicate because some courts did not report certain types of cases filed; for example, a court that had jurisdiction over all types of cases may not have reported the number of filings for one or more of the case types.

Thirty-nine states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico reported data on pending cases for the beginning and end of the 1976 judicial year. Not all categories of cases were specified in the pending data; however, enough data were available to calculate both beginning and end pending data for 1976. Thus it is possible to examine the change in pending cases for the year.

Of the 41 'states'² that did report the number of cases pending at the beginning and end of 1976, 9 reported a decrease in that period. These decreases ranged from less than 1 percent to more than 15 percent. The median percent increase for those court systems reporting an increase was 8.4 percent, with 26 of these 32 court systems having an increase of less than 20 percent.

Looking at total cases only, however, masks some interesting patterns that emerge when civil and criminal cases are examined separately. Although the average number of cases pending at the end of the year as a percent of the number of cases filed was 73.1 for total caseload in general jurisdiction courts, the values were quite different for civil and criminal caseload. The average percent for criminal cases was 52.2 compared with 89.7 for civil cases.

Thirty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico indicated that they handle all or some of their juvenile cases in general jurisdiction courts. Of these, 29 reported some data for juvenile cases, but only 14 'states' reported pending data for both the beginning and the end of 1976. Of the 14, 8 reported a decrease in the pending juvenile caseload, ranging from 5.1 percent to 43.9 percent. The percent increase for the other six 'states' ranged from slightly more than 15

²The 50 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are collectively referred to as 'states' in the remainder of this report.

percent to almost 47 percent, with a median of 18 percent. This is considerably higher than the median percent increase in civil (8.2) or criminal (8.4) cases. However, less than half of the 'states' handling juvenile cases in their general jurisdiction courts reported pending case data for the beginning and end of 1976. Moreover, juvenile cases are frequently heard in limited and special jurisdiction courts, which are not included in these data.

Methodology

General jurisdiction court and limited or special jurisdiction court data were compiled from published and unpublished data received from the states. In addition to review of these materials, instructions used by the states to collect caseload statistics from their respective courts were reviewed. Additional information was secured from appropriate personnel in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico as necessary.

To improve the comparability of data from state to state, standard categories were established and the state-produced data were classified accordingly. The data were then submitted to the appropriate state court administrators and the appellate court clerk offices for review and verification.

Definitions

Case--the unit of count for court activity data. Because the caseload data were collected from already published court system sources that used different definitions, the definition of case in this report varies from 'state' to 'state'. In trial courts the predominant unit of count used in civil cases is the complaint or petition. In criminal cases most trial courts use either the number of indictments/informations/complaints or the number of defendants on each

indictment/information/complaint. The data tables in this report are footnoted to indicate each court system's definition of case.

Court--a unit of the judicial branch of government, authorized or established by constitution or statute, which has the legal authority to decide cases or controversies between persons or parties brought before it.

A court was considered to be a general jurisdiction trial court if it met one of the following criteria:

- the individual state considers it to be a general jurisdiction court;
- felony cases are tried and felony sentences given for all types of felony cases;
- the judges of the court are general jurisdiction court judges sitting on temporary assignment.

All other trial courts were classified as limited or special jurisdiction courts. These are trial courts whose legal jurisdiction covers only a particular class of cases, such as probate, juvenile, traffic, or cases where the amount in controversy is below a prescribed sum or is subject to specific exception. For example, civil jurisdiction may be limited to civil cases with a maximum of \$500 in controversy; criminal jurisdiction may be limited to cases with a maximum \$500 fine or six-month sentence.

Filing--for statistical reporting purposes, the beginning of a court case by the formal submission of a document to the court alleging the facts and requesting relief.

Disposition--for statistical reporting purposes, the termination of a case pending before a court.

Pending--the status of a case that has not been terminated or disposed by the court in which it was filed. Beginning pending is the number of cases awaiting disposition in a particular court at the beginning of a reporting period. End pending is the number of cases awaiting disposition in a partic-

ular court at the end of a reporting period.

Indictment--a formal written accusation submitted to a court by a grand jury, alleging that a specific person(s) has committed a specific offense(s).

Information--a formal written accusation made and submitted by a prosecutor alleging that a specified person(s) has committed a specific offense(s).

Limitations of data

To classify the great diversity of data provided by the 'states', standard categories were established by the National Court Statistics Project, and the 'state' produced data were classified accordingly. The data were then submitted to the appropriate state court administrators or appellate court clerks for review and verification. However, there was no way of verifying whether the data initially reported were complete or accurate.

Variations in reference periods

This report reflects court organizations and jurisdictions as they existed in 1976. Hence, caution should be used in attempting to compare the data in this report with a 'state's' current data without ascertaining whether or not the organization or jurisdictional characteristics of that 'state's' court system have been altered since 1976.

Some 'states' report data by calendar year and some by fiscal year. Hence, even within the 1976 period used in this report, the time spans covered are not always directly comparable.

Variations in jurisdiction

General jurisdiction courts vary widely in the kinds of cases over which they have jurisdiction. As one example, general jurisdiction courts in 'states' with unified trial courts may hear all cases from parking violations

Reported general jurisdiction caseflow, 1976. Civil, criminal, traffic,

State and court title	Beginning pending				Filed					
	Civil	Criminal	Traffic	Juvenile	Civil	Criminal	Traffic	Juvenile	Total	
Alabama--Circuit Court ^{1,6}	46,052 ^{fh}	10,553 ^{fh}	NH	NH	56,605 ^{fh}	78,016	25,466	NH	NH	103,482
Alaska--Superior Court ^{1,6}	7,382 ^h	564 ^f	NH	N/A	7,946 ^{fl}	10,749	991	NH	NH	13,250
Arizona--Superior Court ^{1,8}	54,064 ^f	5,882 ^f	NH	794	60,740 ^f	62,574	13,913	NH	8,287	84,774
Arkansas--STATE TOTAL	49,911 ^f	7,675	NH	NH	57,586 ^f	59,916	12,813	NH	NH	72,729
Circuit Court ^{1,6}	14,586 ^f	7,675 ^f	NH	NH	22,261 ^f	20,200	12,813	NH	NH	33,013
Chancery and Probate Court ¹	35,325 ^{fl}	NH	NH	NH	35,325 ^{fl}	39,716	NH	NH	NH	39,716
California--Superior Court ^{1,8}	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	50,175	57,430	NH	107,917	667,122
Colorado--STATE TOTAL	79,096	10,031	NH	8,795	97,922	83,879	14,334	NH	22,838	121,051
District Court, Denver Superior Court, Denver Juvenile Court, and Denver Probate Court ^{1,8}	73,424	10,031	NH	8,795	92,250 ^f	82,035	14,334	NH	22,838	119,207
Water Court ^{1,8}	5,672	NH	NH	NH	5,672	1,844	NH	NH	NH	1,844
Connecticut--Superior Court ^{1,8}	32,961 ^f	3,370	NH	NH	36,331 ^f	26,004	4,555	NH	NH	30,559
Delaware--STATE TOTAL	11,550	1,593	NH	NH	13,143	7,599	3,786	NH	NH	11,385
Superior Court ^{1,8}	3,963	1,593	NH	NH	5,556	4,955	3,786	NH	NH	8,721
Court of Chancery ¹	7,587	NH	NH	NH	7,587	2,644	NH	NH	NH	2,644
District of Columbia--Superior Court ^{2,9}	13,139 ^{fl}	5,832	4,287	1,967	25,225 ^{fl}	170,059	31,956	97,903	7,391	307,309 ^f
Florida--Circuit Court ^{1,9}	228,856	52,242	NH	20,761	302,865	243,128	66,166	NH	64,317	373,572
Georgia--Superior Court ^{1,9}	50,903 ^h	X	X	NH	69,535 ^{hr}	87,133	42,962	13,517	NH	143,612 ^f
Hawaii--STATE TOTAL	19,379	1,803	171	2,778	24,131 ^r	16,098	2,028	650	7,363	28,139 ^f
Circuit Court ^{1,8}	19,256	1,803	171	2,778	24,008 ^r	16,000	2,028	650	7,363	28,041 ^r
Land Court ¹	76	NH	NH	NH	76	57	NH	NH	NH	57
Tax Appeal Court ¹	47	NH	NH	NH	47	41	NH	NH	NH	41
Ideho--STATE TOTAL	19,783	5,363	4,658	1,944	31,678 ^r	40,245	30,490	183,474	7,927	262,636 ^f
Circuit Court ^{1,8}	7,035 ^{fh}	880 ^{fh}	10 ^{fh}	3 ^{fh}	7,928 ^{thr}	9,719	3,379	21	1	13,120 ^f
Magistrates Division ^{1,9}	12,748 ^{fh}	4,483 ^{fh}	4,678 ^{fh}	1,941 ^{fh}	23,750 ^{thr}	30,526	27,111	183,853	7,926	249,516 ^f
Illinois--Circuit Court ^{1,7}	344,005 ^f	19,278 ^f	N/A	13,608 ^h	376,889 ^f	633,246	520,112	2,305,483	25,731	3,484,572 ^f
Indiana--STATE TOTAL	X	X	X	X	231,848 ^f	173,924	45,889	48,337	12,981	281,131 ^f
Superior Court and Circuit Court ^{1,7}	X	X	X	X	231,492 ^f	173,924	43,495	48,337	12,981	278,737 ^f
Criminal Court of Marion County ^{1,7}	NH	356	NH	NH	356	NH	2,394	NH	NH	2,394
Iowa--District Court ^{1,6}	47,146 ^f	X	X	N/A	133,424 ^{lr}	125,415	X	X	5,672	587,921 ^f
Kansas--District Court ^{1,7}	18,602 ^f	1,902 ^f	46 ^f	NH	20,550 ^{lr}	37,811	7,026	229	NH	45,066 ^f
Kentucky--Circuit Court ^{1,6}	71,720 ^f	8,228 ^f	NH	NH	79,948 ^f	59,497	11,202	NH	NH	70,699
Louisiana--District Court ¹ , Family and Juvenile Court ^{1,8}	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	100,868	52,297	NH	10,406	163,571
Maine--Superior Court ^{1,7}	8,188 ^h	3,844 ^h	NH	NH	12,032 ^h	5,851	6,533	NH	NH	12,384
Maryland--Circuit Court ^{1,6}	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	62,158	34,333	NH	25,185	121,676
Massachusetts--Superior Court ^{1,6}	93,291	43,147	NH	NH	136,438	31,085	37,508	NH	NH	68,593
Michigan--STATE TOTAL	106,669	16,080 ^l	2,563 ^l	NH	125,312 ^{lr}	127,911	122,894	782,255	NH	1,033,060 ^f
Circuit Court ^{1,9}	106,368 ^f	11,359 ^f	NH	NH	117,727 ^f	126,924	26,426	NH	NH	153,350
Court of Claims ¹	301 ^f	NH	NH	NH	301 ^f	987	NH	NH	NH	987
Recorder's Court ⁹	NH	4,721 ^l	2,563 ^l	NH	7,284 ^{lr}	NH	96,468	782,255	NH	878,723 ⁵
Minnesota--District Court ^{3,12}	8,261	1,763	NH	N/A	10,024 ^l	21,643	8,919	NH	N/A	30,562 ^l
Mississippi--STATE TOTAL	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	52,217	7,441	NH	N/A	59,658 ^l
Circuit Court ^{1,6}	N/A	N/A	NH	NH	N/A	12,635	7,441	NH	NH	20,076
Chancery Court ¹	N/A	NH	NH	N/A	N/A	39,582	NH	NH	N/A	39,582 ^l
Missouri--Circuit Court and Court of Common Pleas ^{1,6}	63,023 ^f	10,171 ^f	NH	10,530 ^f	83,724 ^f	74,474	18,080	NH	16,929	109,483
Montana--District Court ^{1,7}	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	18,668	2,122	NH	1,793	22,583 ^l
Nebraska--District Court ^{1,8}	5,220	895	NH	NH	6,115	17,232	7,215	NH	NH	24,447
Nevada--District Court ^{1,9}	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	25,106	4,633	NH	2,343	32,082
New Hampshire--Superior Court ^{5,12}	18,361	4,461	NH	NH	22,872	17,758	6,431	NH	NH	24,189
New Jersey--Superior Court and County Court ^{2,6}	49,443 ^f	27,436 ^f	NH	NH	76,879 ^f	64,877	31,680	NH	NH	96,557
New Mexico--District Court ^{1,9}	17,305	2,096	NH	2,848	22,249	35,990	4,706	NH	5,259	43,955
New York--Supreme Court and County Court ^{1,8}	66,709 ^f	N/A	NH	NH	66,709 ^{fl}	114,099	31,659	NH	NH	145,758
North Carolina--Superior Court ^{1,12}	13,269 ^f	15,282 ^f	NH	NH	28,551 ^f	10,774	52,547	NH	NH	63,321
North Dakota--District Court ^{1,6}	2,908 ^f	X	X	X	3,421 ^f	7,630	1,091	3	1,001	9,680 ^f
Ohio--Court of Common Pleas ^{1,8}	167,984 ^{fl}	6,487 ^f	NH	19,226 ^f	193,697 ^{fl}	244,569	30,527	NH	189,342	464,438
Oklahoma--District Court ^{1,6}	134,617 ^f	33,150 ^{fl}	44,833 ^f	3,911 ^f	216,511 ^{fl}	160,562	55,581	178,599	8,272	403,014 ^f
Oregon--STATE TOTAL	39,238 ^l	4,974	NH	N/A	44,212 ^l	55,799	14,485	NH	13,470	83,754
Circuit Court ^{1,11}	39,055 ^{fl}	4,974 ^h	NH	N/A	44,029 ^l	55,618	14,485	NH	13,470	83,973
Tax Court ¹	183	NH	NH	NH	183	181	NH	NH	NH	181
Pennsylvania--Court of Common Pleas ^{1,8}	61,253	29,124	NH	5,920	96,297	178,800	76,302	NH	37,084	292,186
Puerto Rico--Superior Court ^{1,10}	53,236	26,264	NH	2,474	81,974	78,476	26,331	NH	6,215	111,022
Rhode Island--Superior Court ^{1,6}	N/A	N/A	NH	NH	N/A	6,753	3,277	NH	NH	10,010
South Carolina--Circuit Court ^{1,6}	22,215	11,128	NH	NH	33,343 ^l	25,377	28,548	NH	NH	53,925 ^l
South Dakota--Circuit Court ^{1,6}	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,210	4,210 ^l
Tennessee--STATE TOTAL	49,880	16,943	NH	NH	66,823	83,202	29,609	NH	NH	112,811
Circuit Court and Criminal Court ^{1,6}	29,642 ^{fh}	16,943 ^{fh}	NH	NH	46,585 ^{fh}	47,357	29,609	NH	NH	76,966
Law and Equity Court ¹	3,128 ^{fh}	NH	NH	NH	3,128 ^{fh}	4,847	NH	NH	NH	4,847
Chancery Court ¹	17,110 ^{fh}	NH	NH	NH	17,110 ^{fh}	30,998	NH	NH	NH	30,998
Texas--District Court ^{1,9}	270,142	68,812	NH	5,328	344,282	272,601	78,317	NH	11,031	361,949
Utah--District Court ^{1,7}	15,678 ^l	287 ^l	NH	NH	15,965 ^f	25,533	3,068	NH	NH	28,601
Vermont--STATE TOTAL	21,997	4,567	2,396	255	29,215 ^f	19,559	16,987	37,091	1,020	74,657 ^f
Superior Court ^{1,6}	6,784	19	NH	NH	6,803	6,691	59	NH	NH	6,750
District Court ^{1,7}	15,213	4,548 ^f	2,396	255	22,412 ^f	12,868	16,928	37,091	1,020	67,907 ^f
Virginia--Circuit Court ^{1,8}	82,779 ^{fh}	12,174 ^{fh}	NH	NH	94,953 ^{fh}	63,976	42,843	NH	NH	106,819
Washington--Superior Court ^{1,8}	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	94,325	14,053	NH	13,433	121,811
West Virginia--Circuit Court ^{5,12}	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	X	X	NH	N/A	53,697 ^l
Wisconsin--Circuit Court and County Court ^{1,6}	88,715 ^{fh}	24,504 ^{fh}	35,770 ^{fh}	N/A	148,989 ^{fh}	208,280	78,403	395,792	N/A	682,475 ^{lr}
Wyoming--District Court ^{1,6}	2,789	704	NH	X	3,493	7,981	1,329	NH	X	9,310

¹A civil case is counted with the filing of a petition or complaint.

²A civil case is counted when it is placed on the calendar (had reached issue).

³A civil case is counted at the note of issue.

⁴This footnote is used only for limited jurisdiction courts which appear in the annual report, but not on this table.

⁵A civil case is not counted in the same way throughout the state.

⁶The criminal case unit of count is the number of informations or indictments.

⁷The criminal case unit of count is the number of informations, indictments, or complaints.

⁸The criminal case unit of count is the number of defendants on the information or indictment.

⁹The criminal case unit of count is the number of defendants on the information, indictment, or complaint.

¹⁰The criminal case unit of count is the number of charges.

¹¹The criminal case unit of count is the case number assigned at arraignment.

¹²The criminal case unit of count is not consistent.

juvenile, and total cases. With state population and number of judges.

Disposed					End pending					Population in	Number of
Civil	Criminal	Traffic	Juvenile	Total	Civil	Criminal	Traffic	Juvenile	Total	thousands, 1976	Judges
75,052	25,451	NH	NH	100,503	49,016	10,568	NH	NH	59,584	3,653	102
8,604	1,077	NH	1,133	10,814	9,527	480 ⁹	NH	N/A	10,007 ¹	408	19
62,133	13,765	NH	7,088	82,986	54,446 ⁹	6,030	NH	938 ⁹	61,416 ⁹	2,249	70
50,394 ¹	11,730	NH	NH	62,124 ¹	53,747 ¹	8,758	NH	NH	62,505 ¹	2,117	55
18,708	11,730	NH	NH	30,438	16,078	8,758	NH	NH	24,836	---	29
31,686 ¹	NH	NH	NH	31,686 ¹	37,669 ¹	NH	NH	NH	37,669 ¹	---	26
401,496	52,242	NH	103,664	557,402	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	21,522	520
93,686	13,760	NH	24,015	131,461	69,289	10,605	NH	7,618	87,512	2,575	99
89,934	13,760	NH	24,015	127,709	65,525	10,605	NH	7,618	83,748	---	99 ^c
3,752	NH	NH	NH	3,752	3,764	NH	NH	NH	3,764	---	7 ^a
29,168	4,100	NH	NH	29,268	33,797	3,848 ⁹	NH	NH	37,645 ⁹	3,102	45
7,944	4,022	NH	NH	11,966	11,205	1,357	NH	NH	12,562	582	14
5,265	4,022	NH	NH	9,287	3,633	1,357	NH	NH	4,990	---	11
2,679	NH	NH	NH	2,679	7,572	NH	NH	NH	7,572	---	3
164,621 ¹	32,418	95,323	8,254	300,616 ^{1r}	16,009 ¹	5,204 ⁹	5,867	1,104	29,184 ^{1r}	700	44
234,395 ¹	63,887 ¹	NH	61,365	359,647 ¹	(k)	(k)	NH	(k)	(k)	8,353	273
75,534	40,222	13,372	NH	129,128 ^f	62,502	X	X	NH	84,019 ^f	4,984	88
16,109	1,683	751	6,865	25,408 ^f	21,368	2,148	70	3,276	26,862 ^f	884	22
16,005	1,683	751	6,865	25,304 ^f	21,251	2,148	70	3,276	26,745 ^f	---	22
46	NH	NH	NH	46	87	NH	NH	NH	87	---	2**
58	NH	NH	NH	58	30	NH	NH	NH	30	---	2**
36,663	29,360	183,679	7,513	257,215 ^f	23,365	6,493	4,983	2,258	37,099 ^f	833	91
8,426	3,206	26	2	11,670 ^f	8,318	1,053	5	2	9,378 ^f	---	25
28,227	26,154	183,653	7,511	245,545 ^f	15,047	5,440	4,978	2,256	27,721 ^f	---	66
375,465	437,221	2,229,623	26,229	3,268,838 ^f	397,256 ¹	20,511 ¹	N/A	12,808	430,575 ¹	11,193	603
168,710	32,192	46,991	13,331	281,224 ^f	X	X	X	X	232,342 ^f	5,313	173
168,710	49,769	46,991	13,331	278,801 ^f	X	X	X	X	232,134 ^f	---	169
NH	2,423	NH	NH	2,423	NH	208 ⁹	NH	NH	208 ⁹	---	4
118,767 ¹	182,199	285,710	6,629	593,305 ^{1r}	47,844 ¹	X	X	N/A	123,047 ^{1r}	2,874	318 ^c
37,059	6,867	192	NH	44,118 ^f	19,354	2,061	83	NH	21,498 ^f	2,299	63
55,110	11,740	NH	NH	66,850	76,104 ⁹	9,152 ⁹	NH	NH	85,256 ⁹	3,436	87
N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	3,875	148 ^c
5,024	6,339	NH	NH	11,363	9,015 ^h	4,038 ^h	NH	NH	13,053 ^h	1,071	14
54,464	33,491	NH	27,751	115,706	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	4,125	85
33,361	33,804	NH	NH	67,165	91,015	46,851	NH	NH	137,866	5,791	46
120,449	43,459 ¹	6,439 ¹	NH	170,347 ^{1r}	114,131	18,746 ¹	3,169 ¹	NH	136,046 ^{1r}	9,113	161
119,948	25,575	NH	NH	145,523	113,344	12,210	NH	NH	125,554	---	138
501	NH	NH	NH	501	787	NH	NH	NH	787	---	1**
NH	17,884 ¹	6,439 ¹	NH	24,323 ^{1r}	NH	6,536 ¹	3,169 ¹	NH	9,705 ^{1r}	---	23
21,234	8,634	NH	N/A	29,868 ¹	8,666 ⁹	2,043 ⁹	NH	N/A	10,709 ¹	3,954	72
N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	2,365	65
N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	---	30
N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	---	35
73,846	17,964	NH	18,443	110,253	63,651	10,287	NH	9,016	82,954	4,787	111 ^c
10,987	1,726	NH	1,414	14,127	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	755	28
16,250	6,823	NH	NH	23,073	6,202	1,287	NH	NH	7,489	1,552	45
N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	613	25 ^c
16,494	5,771	NH	NH	22,268	19,675	5,118 ⁹	NH	NH	24,793 ⁹	827	13
57,393	29,466	NH	NH	86,859	56,927	29,650	NH	NH	86,577	7,339	201
32,765	4,573	NH	4,828	42,166	18,530	2,229	NH	3,279	24,038	1,172	32
113,287	37,662	NH	NH	150,949	66,809 ⁹	N/A	NH	NH	66,809 ⁹	18,053	357
9,391	49,398	NH	NH	58,789	14,652	18,431	NH	NH	33,083	5,462	56
6,784	989	5	922	8,700 ^f	3,752 ⁹	X	X	186	4,272 ⁹	645	19
256,271	30,312	NH	190,321	476,904	151,380 ¹	6,702	NH	18,247	176,329 ¹	10,690	296
146,131	53,717	182,717	6,803	389,368 ^f	148,848	34,972 ¹	40,715	5,380	229,915 ^{1r}	2,770	189
45,708 ¹	14,909	NH	N/A	60,617 ¹	42,359 ¹	4,550	NH	N/A	46,909 ¹	2,326	69
45,533 ¹	14,909	NH	N/A	60,442 ¹	42,170 ¹	4,550	NH	N/A	46,720 ¹	---	68
175	NH	NH	NH	175	189	NH	NH	NH	189	---	1
177,060	74,343	NH	38,145	289,548	59,717 ⁹	25,064 ⁹	NH	4,859	89,640 ⁹	11,802	285
85,491	28,752	NH	5,830	120,073	46,221	23,843	NH	2,859	72,923	3,214	89
N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NH	NH	N/A	936	17
32,214	27,193	NH	NH	59,407 ¹	15,796 ⁹	12,415 ⁹	NH	NH	28,211 ⁹	2,844	25
17,439	13,278	N/A	3,972 ¹	34,689 ¹	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	686	36
82,153	30,298	NH	NH	112,451	50,929	16,254	NH	NH	67,183	4,234	112
47,321	30,298	NH	NH	77,619	29,678	16,254	NH	NH	45,932	---	80 ^c
4,541	NH	NH	NH	4,541	3,434	NH	NH	NH	3,434	---	5
30,291	NH	NH	NH	30,291	17,817	NH	NH	NH	17,817	---	27 ^c
250,555	77,370	NH	11,411	339,336	292,188	69,759	NH	4,948	366,895	12,599	261
22,638	2,494	NH	NH	25,132	18,573	861	NH	NH	19,434	1,232	21
23,968	16,853	37,006	1,103	78,930 ^f	17,588	4,701	2,481	172	24,942 ^f	477	18
6,335	53	NH	NH	6,388	7,140	25	NH	NH	7,165	---	7
17,633	16,800	37,006	1,103	72,542 ^f	10,448	4,676	2,481	172	17,777 ^f	---	11
63,074	42,250	NH	NH	105,324	83,681	12,767	NH	NH	96,448	5,052	104
79,911 ¹	14,374	NH	N/A	91,113 ¹	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	3,611	101
X	X	NH	N/A	45,106 ¹	N/A	N/A	NH	N/A	N/A	1,832	50
228,516	78,725	393,429	22,561 ¹	723,231 ^{1r}	103,212 ¹	24,182	38,133	N/A	165,527 ^{1r}	4,610	180
7,255	1,346	NH	815	8,601	3,515	687	NH	X	4,202	391	13

N/A = This case type is handled by the court, but the data are unavailable.
 NH = This case type is not handled in this court.
 X = The data for this case type are known to be included in the total, but were not available by category.

*district Judges serve.
 **circuit Judges serve.

^aCourt jurisdiction:

Colorado Water Court: Data for this court are included with the general jurisdiction courts because District Court Judges serve.

Hawaii Land Court and Tax Appeal Court: Data for these courts are included with the general jurisdiction court because circuit Judges serve. The Circuit Court also handles some land cases.

Idaho Magistrate Division: The magistrate division is a division of the District Court and its data are included in the general jurisdiction tables.

(Continued on pages 7-8)

to the largest civil cases. An adjacent 'state' may have general jurisdiction courts with a criminal division hearing felony matters only (after preliminary hearing in a limited jurisdiction court) and a civil division hearing only civil cases involving more than \$10,000. Both civil and criminal cases are handled at the general jurisdiction level in each state, but general jurisdiction courts may have civil jurisdiction only, criminal jurisdiction only, or both, depending on the 'state'. Some general jurisdiction courts handle juvenile or traffic matters; others do not. In comparing general jurisdiction court statistics, the differences in the types of cases handled both within and between 'states' must be taken into consideration.

Variations in definitions

Definition problems abound in trial court data. The definitions used in this report have been chosen for practical purposes as a means of classifying the data gathered.

Trial court data have problems concerning the unit of count used, especially in criminal cases. The most common unit of count in general jurisdiction criminal cases, used in 25 states, is the number of informations, indictments, or complaints; some 'states' count criminal cases when the complaint is filed, while others require an information or indictment before a criminal case is counted. There are 20 states and the District of Columbia that count the number of defendants on each information, indictment, or complaint; one state counts the case number assigned at arraignment; Puerto Rico counts the number of charges; one state simply counts a "case"; and three states reported no consistent definition.

Units of count for civil cases in general jurisdiction courts present far fewer problems. There are 47 'states' that count a civil case at the point of

filing. One state counts civil cases at the filing of a note of issue and two when the case is placed on the calendar. Two states report not having a specific unit of count for civil cases. A few have indicated that prescribed unit-of-count definitions are not followed uniformly by their local courts.

Information on unit of count used for general jurisdiction courts is provided in the footnotes to the table in this report.

Variations in completeness and accuracy of data

All 'states' were requested to provide complete breakdowns for civil, criminal, traffic, and juvenile cases in their general and limited or special jurisdiction courts. Whereas all 'states' could provide some general jurisdiction court data, one state could not provide criminal and civil breakdowns for total cases processed in 1976. There were 29 'states' that reported juvenile cases as part of their general jurisdiction court data, whereas general jurisdiction courts in 20 'states' did not process juvenile cases. Three states processed juvenile cases as part of their general jurisdiction caseload but collected no data for juvenile cases.

Extensive efforts were required to validate the classifications of the data provided by the 52 'states' and to avoid further distortion of the data received. No attempt, however, was made by the National Court Statistics Project staff to assess the underlying validity or accuracy of the data received from the courts. For example, the cumulative statistics for case categories published by the 'state' frequently did not agree with reported totals within each category. Such discrepancies were seldom footnoted or explained in published state reports.

These questions of validity and accuracy of source data, as well as pre-

viously discussed caveats concerning variation in court structure and subject matter jurisdiction among the court systems, make it imperative that the data contained in this report be used with extreme caution. Care must be exercised in attempting to compare even the broadest categories of caseflow for 1976. Direct comparisons of the statistics for any two jurisdictions presented in this report are questionable and quite probably invalid. Meaningful comparisons among the jurisdictions require more complete information about each jurisdiction's court structure, operating procedures, statistical reporting procedures, and demographic characteristics.

Availability of data

The data contained in this advance report were extracted from State Court

Caseload Statistics: Annual Report, 1976, to be published in the Fall. That report contains data not included here, such as appellate caseflow, available data from courts of limited and special jurisdiction, trial data, disposition type breakdowns, time-to-disposition data, and ten-year filing data for the few states reporting on these subjects. In addition, the annual report contains information on the organization of each of the 52 court systems. The annual report will be announced and distributed by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, Box 6000, Rockville, Md. 20850, when it becomes available. Persons with a special need for data before then should contact the Director, Statistics Division, National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, LEAA, Washington, D.C. 20531, telephone (301) 492-9045.

Table footnotes (Continued from p. 5)

Michigan Court of Claims: Data for this court are included with the general jurisdiction courts because circuit judges serve. Effective January 1, 1979, the jurisdiction of the Court of Claims will be assigned to the 30th judicial circuit.

Mississippi Chancery Court: The Chancery Court handles juvenile cases in 66 of the state's 82 counties, but no data are reported for juvenile cases.

Oregon Tax Court: Data from the Oregon Tax Court are included in the general jurisdiction charts because ORS 305.405 designates the Tax Court as one of general jurisdiction within the substantive areas defined by ORS 305.410.

^bParticular court or reporting system information:

Florida Circuit Court: Two different reporting systems were used during 1976, one between January and June, and another one between July and December. The first system counted supplemental filings and dispositions in addition to original filings and dispositions. The second system counted only original filings and dispositions.

Tennessee Law and Equity Court: Data for the separate Equity Courts in Dyer and Gibson Counties are included.

^cJudge information:

Georgia Superior Court: Some Superior Court judges also handle juvenile cases in counties without a Juvenile Court. These cases are, however, included on the Juvenile Court profile in the annual report and are not included in the Superior Court caseload.

Colorado District Court: Five of these 99 judges serve on the Denver Superior, Juvenile, and Probate Courts.

Iowa District Court: Data include cases handled by 89 district and 18 district associate judges, 14 regular full-time, 8 substitute full-time, and 191 part-time magistrates.

Louisiana District Court: Nine of the 139 judges are from the five parishes that submitted no reports.

Missouri Circuit Court and Court of Common Pleas: The 111 Circuit Court judges also handle the cases in the Court of Common Pleas. There are no separate Court of Common Pleas judges.

Nevada District Court: There are 25 judges statewide in the District Court; however, data were available only from the Second and Eighth Districts, which have 7 and 11 judges, respectively.

Tennessee Circuit and Criminal Court: The circuit judges also handle the chancery cases in the 11 counties with no Chancery Court.

Tennessee Chancery Court: The circuit judges also handle the chancery cases in the 11 counties without a Chancery Court.

^fBeginning pending figure for the 1976 court year does not equal the end pending figure for the 1975 court year.

Colorado District Court: These figures have changed because of the inclusion of the Denver Probate Court pending figures which had not previously been recorded.

Connecticut Superior Court: The number of pending cases was adjusted by the office of the chief court administrator to reflect transfers and other related year-end input.

New Jersey Superior and County Court: Difference is due to recounts by the counties resulting from their periodic physical inventories and the discovery of other reporting errors by the counties during the course of the year.

Oregon Circuit Court: The beginning pending figure was corrected by the state court administrator's office during verification of the data.

^gChange in pending does not equal the difference between filings and dispositions.

Arizona Superior Court: This discrepancy is due to missing data.

Kentucky Circuit Court: Discrepancy for criminal cases results from estimation procedures used to arrive at some criminal figures.

New York Supreme and County Court: This difference is because of adjustments made by the court.

^hFigure was computed:

Maine Superior Court: Beginning pending figure was calculated from data available for 1975.

End pending figure was calculated from filed, disposed, and beginning pending data.

ⁱData are not complete:

Alaska Superior Court: Grand total pending figure does not include juvenile cases.

Arizona Superior Court: Adoption pending figures do not include data from Maricopa County. Reciprocal support pending figures do not include data for Cochise County.

Probate pending figures do not include data from Cochise and Maricopa counties.

Juvenile pending data do not include Maricopa, Cochise, Navajo, Pima, Yuma, or Yavapai Counties.

Juvenile filings and dispositions include no data from Pima County and only partial data for Maricopa County.

(Continued on p. 8)

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
JUS-436



Table footnotes (Continued from p. 7)

Arkansas Chancery and Probate Court: Civil total and grand total pending and disposed cases do not include adoptions, guardianships, alcoholics, mental, and miscellaneous probate.

District of Columbia Superior Court: Total civil and grand total pending and disposed cases do not include estate cases. Estate cases are included in the filing figures.

Florida Circuit Court: Appeals disposed are for January to June only. Appeals filed are for entire year.

Georgia Superior Court: Pending and disposition figures represent only cases filed between July 1, 1970, and December 31, 1975, that were still pending or were disposed in 1976.

Illinois Circuit Court: Civil total pending cases do not include pending cases for probate.

Criminal total pending cases do not include pending cases for misdemeanor and ordinance violations.

Grand total pending cases do not include pending cases for probate, misdemeanor, ordinance violation, and traffic.

Iowa District Court: Probate, total civil, and grand total disposed cases do not include guardianship and conservatorship or trusteeship.

Total civil pending cases do not include probate data.

Grand total pending cases do not include probate or juvenile data.

Kentucky Circuit Court: The following counties were not included in the state totals because their caseload reports were not received in time by the administrative office of the courts: Breathitt, Carroll, Casey, Johnson, Knott, Lincoln, Montgomery, Rockcastle, Scott, Whitley, and Woodford.

Louisiana District Court: Of the 64 parishes, no data were submitted for St. Mary, Ascension, Assumption, Plaquemines, and Terrebonne Parishes.

Recorder's Court of Detroit, Michigan: Total criminal and grand total pending cases do not include misdemeanor division and ordinance violation cases.

Total criminal and grand total disposed cases do not include ordinance violation cases.

Minnesota District Court: Grand total figures do not include juvenile cases.

Mississippi Chancery Court: The total filed figure does not include juvenile cases.

Montana District Court: Total filings exclude 800 "other" cases filed in this year but not detailed in the case description table.

Nevada District Court: Data were available for two districts only: the second district (Washington County) and the eighth district (Clark County). These two counties contain 81 percent of the state population.

New York Supreme and County Court: Grand total pending cases do not include criminal cases.

Ohio Court of Common Pleas: Pending cases do not include all civil categories. Only those reported are included in the total.

Oklahoma District Court: Total criminal and grand total pending cases do not include pending figures for felony conviction appeals. This category is included in the filing and disposition totals.

Oregon Circuit Court: Total civil pending and disposition figures do not include adoption or mental competency cases.

Grand total disposition and pending figures do not include adoption, mental competency, or juvenile cases. Filings include all categories.

South Dakota Circuit Court: Circuit Court figures do not include data for the lay magistrates or lawyer magistrates division of the Circuit Court.

Total juvenile and grand total disposition figures do not include dependency and neglect dispositions.

Filed data include juvenile filings only.

Washington Superior Court: Total civil disposition figure does not include mental health cases.

Grand total disposition figure does not include mental health or juvenile cases.

Wisconsin Circuit Court and County Court: Total civil and grand total filing and pending figures do not include data for adoption, public assistance, guardianship, trust, or other probate. In addition, the grand total filing and pending figures do not include juvenile data. These cases are included in the disposition totals.

Wyoming District Court: Pending cases and disposed cases do not include cases filed before 1974.

^JExplanation of data included in the category:

South Carolina Circuit Court: Criminal data also include the criminal cases handled in the County Criminal Courts.

^KAdditional information:

Florida Circuit Court: End pending figures were not computed because the change in reporting systems made it inappropriate.

New Hampshire Superior Court: Disposition figures that were calculated do not sum to the total given in the biennial report. Total dispositions given in the report are displayed for total civil and total criminal dispositions.

North Carolina Superior Court: Total civil and grand total figures do not include estates and special proceedings, which are handled by the clerk of the Superior Court. There were 27,582 estates filed, 28,425 disposed, and 43,630 end pending, and 28,254 special proceedings filed, 29,468 disposed, and 20,333 end pending.

^LData include traffic cases other than parking.

^MData include parking and other traffic cases.

END