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Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin

Case Filings in State Courts, 1983

For 1983, 46 States and the District of Columbia reported more than 80 million cases filed in trial courts throughout the Nation. Of these filings, approximately 13 million were civil, 11 million criminal, 1 million juvenile, and 57 million traffic (table 1).

Preliminary data on State court case filings in 1983 indicate that more than 70% of all filings involve traffic cases. In 20 States, parking violations were included in traffic offenses, boosting the overall caseload. For the 24 jurisdictions able to provide this data, felony cases represented less than 2% of all case filings.

Trial court data from Indiana, Mississippi, Nevada and Ohio were not available at the time of this report. However, based on case filings from previous years, these four States could add as many as 4 million filings to the 1983 estimate of 80 million.

Of the 57 million traffic filings, more than 43 million were filed in States that did not distinguish between parking violations and other traffic offenses, which makes it difficult to gauge the impact of nonserious traffic cases on the total reported caseload.

Data from States able to report for both years showed that during the period between 1978 and 1983, civil filings increased nearly 20% and criminal filings increased 23%. Nationwide, the rate of increase for civil cases was slightly less than 4% per year and for criminal cases, slightly more than 4% per year.

October 1984

More than 80 million cases were filed in State trial courts during 1983. Although the large majority of these were traffic cases, civil and criminal cases accounted for 16% and 13%, respectively, of the total number of cases filed. Both civil and criminal caseloads increased by roughly 4% a year between 1978 and 1983.

The most rapid increase in case filings, however, was at the appellate level, where filings rose by 30% over the 5-year period. During this period, seven States established intermediate appellate courts.

These statistics are derived

from preliminary data on State court case filings. This bulletin initiates a series of annual Bureau of Justice Statistics bulletins releasing preliminary data on court case filings.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Conference of State Court Administrators and the National Center for State Courts for their continuing effort to establish a State court statistical series and to the individual Chief Justices and court administrators for providing these data.

Steven R. Schlesinger
Director

Individual States vary widely in changes over the 5-year period. Some States show caseload declines, while others show increases of more than 100% (table 2).

Appellate court filings increased at a faster pace than trial court filings. Excluding States that created intermediate appellate courts between 1978 and 1983, appellate filings showed an increase of 30%.

Trial court filings

Civil caseloads include torts (personal injury and property damage cases), contract cases, and the much more numerous small claims, domestic relations, and probate cases. Criminal

filings, as reported in this bulletin, include felonies and misdemeanors, as well as preliminary hearings in courts of limited jurisdiction, ordinance violations (other than traffic), and miscellaneous criminal cases.

Criminal cases account for less than 13% percent of total filings. However, criminal cases, especially felonies, place far greater demands on court time and resources than other less serious filings.

Only 24 States were able to separate the felony cases from other criminal cases. Although the definition of felony crimes varies from State to State, data for these 24 States do provide an indication of the proportion

Table 1. Filings in courts of general and limited jurisdiction by case type, CY-1983 or FY-1982-83

State	Civil	Criminal	Juvenile	Total excluding traffic	Traffic	Total including traffic
Total	12,839,400	10,511,116	1,142,271	24,074,511	57,287,920	80,580,851^a
Alabama	210,626	136,986	45,173	392,785	208,030	600,815
Alaska ^b	30,065	30,697	1,497	62,259	89,281	151,540
Arizona	151,293	290,080	8,489	449,862	943,181	1,393,043
Arkansas ^d	153,176	141,737	10,318	305,231	383,236	688,467
California ^c	1,637,247	961,769	100,656	2,699,672	15,219,611	17,919,283
Colorado	194,727	56,396	18,055	269,178	170,703	439,881
Connecticut	199,912	116,633	11,328	327,873	355,473	683,346
Delaware ^c	52,975	74,312	(e)	127,287	153,899	281,186
District of Columbia ^d	133,377	31,846	10,091	175,314	13,645	188,959
Florida	565,367	486,361	89,395	1,141,123	2,876,747	4,017,870
Georgia ^{c,f}	322,765	383,157	32,350	738,272	178,173	916,445
Hawaii ^c	50,902	30,687	9,006	90,595	900,741	991,336
Idaho	54,209	40,965	6,291	101,465	199,894	301,359
Illinois ^c	590,790	640,239	27,127	1,258,156	6,643,531	7,901,687
Iowa ^c	143,007	23,925	6,469	173,401	653,579	826,980
Kansas ^c	115,426	23,371	10,455	149,252	267,988	417,240
Kentucky	183,970	221,832	35,182	440,984	265,434	706,418
Louisiana ^{c,f}	256,660	471,528	50,489	778,677	438,326	1,217,003
Maine	58,563	37,128	3,240	98,931	146,214	245,145
Maryland ^c	610,718	159,508	33,804	804,030	723,737	1,527,767
Massachusetts ^h	461,922	235,675	43,105	740,702	326,591	1,067,293
Michigan	509,818	272,456	25,036	807,310	1,855,823	2,663,133
Minnesota ^{b,c}	236,937	130,203	33,582	400,718	1,483,886	1,884,604
Missouri ^{b,d}	208,304	79,186	20,451	307,941	371,719	679,660
Montana	25,072	2,933	1,111	29,116	—	—
Nebraska ^{c,f}	75,551	171,698	4,652	251,901	157,541	409,442
New Hampshire	84,959	79,487	7,131	171,577	194,965	366,542
New Jersey ^c	575,962	462,191	102,481	1,140,634	4,595,758	5,736,392
New Mexico ^c	72,390	21,484	5,422	99,296	252,615	351,911
New York ^c	1,217,035	717,907	(i)	1,934,942	452,414	2,387,356
North Carolina ^j	401,457	472,104	21,442	895,003	728,517	1,623,520
North Dakota	29,979	19,236	1,463	50,678	125,454	176,132
Oklahoma	223,289	67,890	—	—	243,263	—
Oregon	124,920	143,374	12,326	280,620	546,885	827,505
Pennsylvania ^{b,k,l,m}	403,641	578,500	51,108	1,033,249	3,674,054	4,707,303
Rhode Island ^d	42,601	42,967	6,282	91,850	—	—
South Carolina ^{f,g}	104,444	36,646	8,795	149,885	—	—
South Dakota ^{b,g}	38,621	16,322	1,257	56,200	122,359	178,559
Tennessee ^b	99,437	40,116	41,725	181,278	—	—
Texas ^c	665,175	1,480,519	11,978	2,157,672	7,256,865	9,414,537
Utah ^c	104,136	103,956	34,843	242,935	835,205	1,078,140
Vermont ^{b,c}	28,046	19,749	1,600	49,395	100,878	150,273
Virginia ^{c,n}	732,290	445,898	128,567	1,306,755	1,152,699	2,459,454
Washington ^c	204,677	160,939	21,074	386,690	1,546,950	1,933,640
West Virginia ^c	126,981	101,050	8,148	236,179	129,718	365,897
Wisconsin ^o	293,913	154,448	39,277	487,638	216,750	704,388
Wyoming	32,072	95,025	—	—	85,588	—

Note: These figures represent virtually all cases filed in general jurisdiction courts and between 70 and 80% of cases filed in limited jurisdiction courts for those States reporting. The following courts reported no data: Alabama (Probate Court, Municipal Court), Arkansas (Justice of the Peace Court), Georgia (Municipal Courts of Savannah and Columbus, Civil Court, Small Claims Court, Justice of the Peace Courts, County Recorder's Courts, Municipal Courts—includes Mayor's, Recorder's, Police, and City Council Courts), Kansas (Municipal Court), Louisiana (Justice of the Peace Court, Mayor's Court), Maine (Probate Court), Maryland (Orphan's Court), Montana (Justice of the Peace Court, City Court, Municipal Court), Nebraska (Workmen's Compensation Court), New Mexico (Municipal Court, Probate Court), New York (Town and Village Justice Court), Rhode Island (Municipal Court, Probate Court), Tennessee (General Sessions Court, Municipal Court, Trial Justice Court), West Virginia (Municipal Court, Justice of the Peace Court, District Court), and Wisconsin (54 of the 211 Municipal Courts reported no data).

^a Data not reported.

^b Total excludes those States that did not report filings for all categories.

^c Criminal caseload includes driving while intoxicated (DWI) cases.

^d Traffic caseload includes parking cases. In Virginia, however, only contested parking cases are included.

^e Juvenile caseload includes paternity cases in Arkansas, adoption cases in Missouri, and 5,956 neglect cases in the District of Columbia.

^f Criminal caseload in Delaware includes all juvenile cases and traffic cases in the Court of Common Pleas.

^g Criminal caseload includes some general jurisdiction court traffic cases.

^h Traffic caseload in South Dakota includes minor non-traffic cases. Traffic case totals from magistrates and municipal courts in South Carolina are unavailable, but are estimated to be at 600,000.

ⁱ Does not include 235,254 decriminalized motor vehicle complaints.

^j Civil caseload in New York includes juvenile cases. In addition to the civil caseload reported here, 16,344 filings were reported for the mandatory arbitration program for cases involving damages of \$6,000 or less, and 1,879 filings for the Small Claims Assessment Review Program for appeals of real property assessments.

^k Number of juvenile hearings in North Carolina was used to represent the number of filings.

^l The data reported were recently submitted to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts by the separate courts of Pennsylvania. Consequently, the Administrative Office cannot confirm, at this time, the accuracy of the data.

^m Tort figures are 97% complete.

ⁿ Felony figures are 98% complete.

^o Juvenile caseload in Virginia includes juvenile traffic cases.

^p Includes only contested Circuit Court traffic cases.

of felonies among criminal cases according to the laws of each reporting State (table 3).

Traffic filings are difficult to compare between States because some States count parking violations as part of their traffic caseload and others do not. Consequently, large fluctuations in the volume of filings and in caseload trends can be caused by parking violations, which consume relatively little court time.

Appellate filings

Some States have only one court of appeals, the court of last resort, but most have an intermediate appellate court between the trial court and the court of last resort. Appellate court filings include appeals of right, requests to appeal, and original jurisdiction cases, but not petitions for rehearing or other miscellaneous motions (table 4). (Requests to appeal are known by many names, including applications for leave

to appeal, petitions for certiorari, and petitions for review).¹

Large increases in appellate filings are occurring in almost every State (table 5). These findings are consistent

¹ Appeal of right is an appeal that an appellate court is required by law to hear; request to appeal is a petition for review of a judgment made by a lower court or administrator over which the appellate court has discretion to hear or not to hear; original jurisdiction cases are those filed under statutory or constitutional provisions that authorize an appellate court to be the first court to hear the case.

Table 2. Percentage change in civil and criminal filings in courts of general and limited jurisdiction, 1978-83

State	CY1978 or FY1977-78	Civil filings CY1983 or FY1982-83	Percent change	Criminal filings CY1983 or FY1982-83	Percent change
Alabama	206,523	210,626	+2%	121,391	+13%
Alaska	23,901	30,065	+26	24,688	+24
Arizona	118,630 ^a	152,186	+28	130,978	+8
Arkansas	89,404 ^b	114,282 ^c	+28	961,769	+21
California	1,391,856	1,637,247	+18	54,482 ^d	+4
Colorado	141,251	194,727 ^d	+38	56,396 ^d	+28
Connecticut	207,361	199,912	-4	116,633	+39
Delaware	40,015 ^e	52,975	+32	74,312 ^f	+44
District of Columbia	159,682	133,377 ^g	-16	31,846	+47
Florida	477,563	565,367	+18	486,361	+30
Georgia	258,390	297,488 ^h	+15	383,157 ⁱ	-24
Hawaii	33,656	50,902	+51	30,687	+40
Idaho	54,209	54,209	+13	40,965	+24
Illinois	48,172	590,790	-14	640,239	+7
Iowa	689,701 ^j	143,007	-1	23,371	+9
Kansas	143,817	115,426	+25	221,832	+35
Kentucky	92,076	183,970	+11	471,428 ^k	+16
Louisiana	165,994	256,660	+27	159,508	+4
Maine	202,575	58,563	+21	216,860 ^k	+3
Maryland	48,536	610,718	+29	2,933	+2
Massachusetts	472,980	397,564 ^k	+35	171,698 ^l	+93
Montana	295,117	25,072	0	79,487	+19
Nebraska	25,055	75,551	+6	447,419 ^m	+32
New Hampshire	70,947	84,959	+30	717,907	+14
New Jersey	65,351 ^e	575,283 ^l	+24	472,104	+3
New Mexico	465,682	723,113 ^e	+68	19,236	+14
New York	723,113 ^e	1,217,035	+20	67,890	+21
North Carolina	335,341	401,457	+38	143,374	-2
North Dakota	21,666	29,979	+38	42,967 ⁱ	+24
Oklahoma	181,020	223,289	+23	36,646	+35
Oregon	139,608	124,920	-11	103,956 ^t	+103
Pennsylvania	419,375	403,641 ^o	-4	578,500	+2
Rhode Island	41,125	42,601	+4	42,967 ⁱ	+21
South Carolina	71,169 ^e	89,137 ^q	+25	36,646	+35
Texas	566,956	665,175	+17	1,480,519	+2
Utah	63,230 ^r	104,136 ^s	+65	103,956 ^t	+32
Vermont	22,336	28,046	+26	19,749	+16
Virginia	22,336	732,290	+39	445,898	+62
Washington	528,486	204,677	+16	160,939	+62
Wisconsin	176,425	196,348 ^u	+4	101,287 ^v	+62

—Data were submitted but could not be used in this table because of problems with comparability.

^a No data were reported for 6 Justice of the Peace Courts and 5 Municipal Courts.

^b Data are incomplete. No reports were received from approximately 50 cities.

^c The civil caseload does not include paternity cases.

^d Does not include post-judgment actions.

^e The number of cases disposed is used as an estimate for the number of cases filed during the year in some of the courts.

^f Criminal caseload includes all juvenile cases and Court of Common Pleas traffic cases.

^g The reduction in the civil caseload is attributable to a decline of 34% (11,059) in small claims cases and 20% (21,988) in landlord tenant cases.

^h The civil caseload for the Probate Court

(25,277 cases) was removed from the 1983 caseload figures to make it comparable with 1978.

ⁱ Criminal caseload includes some traffic cases. In Louisiana no traffic cases are included in the courts of general jurisdiction only, not in the courts of limited jurisdiction.

^j Includes 75,166 personal property tax cases no longer filed after 1980.

^k Excludes caseloads of the Superior Court and Boston Municipal Court to make figure comparable with 1978.

^l Excludes 679 Surrogates Court cases to make figure comparable with 1978.

^m Excludes 14,772 domestic violence cases to make figure comparable with 1978.

ⁿ Civil caseload in New York includes juvenile cases.

^o Tort figures are 97% complete for Courts of Common Pleas.

^p Felony figures are 98% complete for Courts of Common Pleas. Excludes 29,900 cases for

Pittsburgh Magistrates Court to make figure comparable with 1978.

^q Excludes 15,307 Probate Court cases to make figure comparable to 1978.

^r Does not include 20 of the 181 justices of the peace.

^s 80% of the total increase in civil filings is accounted for by the increase in filings in the City Court, which was replaced by the Circuit Court July 1, 1978.

^t Eighty-six percent of the total increase in criminal filings can be accounted for by the increase in Justice Court cases, which handles only misdemeanors and preliminary hearings.

^u Excludes 97,565 uncontested small claims cases to make the figure comparable with 1978.

^v 11,858 traffic misdemeanors and 41,303 uncontested ordinance violation cases were removed from the 1983 figures to make them comparable with 1978.

with an earlier study showing that appellate filings grew almost 30% between 1978 and 1982.² Filings in courts of last resort in States with an intermediate appellate court increased by 27% during the period of study, and filings in courts of last resort in States without an intermediate appellate court increased 37%. Filings in intermediate appellate courts increased by 32% during the same period.

This increase in appellate filings may be related to the increased opportunity to appeal in States that have established an intermediate appellate court, expanded the jurisdiction of the appellate court, added judges to existing appellate courts, or created new judgeships for the new appellate court.

The creation of an intermediate appellate court is usually accompanied by the award of discretionary jurisdiction to the court of last resort. Hence, filings in the court of last resort, after the creation of an intermediate appellate court, will contain both appeals of right as well as the more frequent requests to appeal.

Because there is generally a substantial difference in the time a judge requires to decide an appeal of right or a request to appeal granted, and the time required to decide whether or not to grant an appeal or dispose of an

²Marvell, Thomas, "Recent Appellate Caseloads" IV *Appellate Court Administration Review* (1982-83).

State	Felony filings		Other criminal filings	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alaska	1,607	5%	29,090 ^a	95%
Arizona	14,519	5	275,561	95
Arkansas	18,396	13	123,341	87
California	72,421	8	889,348	92
Connecticut	8,138	7	108,495 ^b	93
District of Columbia	4,770	15	27,076	85
Florida	154,750	32	331,611	68
Idaho	3,223	8	37,742	92
Illinois	42,064	7	598,175	93
Kentucky	15,189	7	206,643	93
Maine	3,243	9	33,885	90
Michigan	36,518 ^a	13	235,938	87
Minnesota	11,265	9	118,938 ^a	91
Missouri	16,811 ^a	21	62,375	79
New Hampshire	3,730	5	75,757	95
New Jersey	35,855	8	426,336	92
North Carolina	43,708	9	428,396	91
Oregon	19,348	13	124,026	87
Pennsylvania	79,195 ^c	14	499,305	86
South Dakota	2,743	20	13,579 ^{a,d}	80
Texas	92,045	6	1,388,474	94
Vermont	2,035 ^a	10	17,714	90
Washington	15,647	10	145,292	90
Wisconsin	13,752 ^e	9	140,696 ^e	91

Note: Includes only those States that distinguished felony filings from other criminal filings for all courts with criminal jurisdiction, and which provided data on most or all of the courts' criminal caseload. The definition of felony cases varies from State to State. Felony preliminary hearings are included in the other criminal category.

^a Includes driving while intoxicated (DWI) cases.
^b Type D felony cases were counted as misdemeanors.
^c Felony figure 97% complete.
^d Some misdemeanors included in traffic filings.
^e Fifty-four (54) of the 211 Municipal courts reported no data.

original jurisdiction matter, it is helpful to separate total filings into appeals, requests to appeal, and original jurisdiction cases (table 6).

Conclusion

Since the beginning of this century, there have been numerous calls for statistical documentation of the business of State courts. Such data are needed to show litigation trends, to provide insight on the effect of reform efforts on the pace of justice, to equip State court administrative offices with tools for operational improvements, and to increase public awareness of court-related issues.

Until recently, repeated efforts to compile National court data have been frustrated by lack of uniformity in case reports, incomplete and erroneous data, the absence of statistical reporting centers, and a general inability on the part of the judicial system to provide such data.

The statistics reported in this bulletin are a small segment of a more determined effort to develop a National base of State court caseload data that contains sufficient detail for the documentation of litigation trends and current workloads, and for forecasts that can be used to gauge more accurately the role of courts in the future. Although the data presented here provide only a very general summary of current caseload volumes and may

change with the continuing efforts to refine collection procedures, they represent the most accurate, comprehensive, and detailed information on court caseloads now available.

Methodology

For the past 7 years, the National Center for State Courts, under the sponsorship of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, has assembled nationwide compilations of State court caseload statistics from State court annual reports. The years 1975 through 1980 are now completed.³ Because State courts require considerable time to produce their annual reports, the production of the *State Court Caseload Statistics: Annual Report* series has lagged by 2 to 3 years. Therefore, the *Case Filings in State Courts* bulletin series has been established to provide preliminary summary data in advance of the annual report for users who need current information on State court caseloads. The first advance report on State court caseloads, published as a BJS special report in February 1983, contained filing information for calendar year 1981 and fiscal year 1981-82. When published, *State Court Caseload Statistics: Annual Reports, 1981, 1982 and 1983* should provide an evaluation of the accuracy of data contained in these two preliminary reports.

Data contained in this bulletin come from the 1978 annual report and survey responses on 1982 and 1983 caseload data received from State court administrative offices. After the data were received, telephone contact and follow-up correspondence were used to collect missing items, confirm the accuracy of submitted data, and determine the legal jurisdiction of each court. The rate of response was excellent; most States provided at least some data. However, because different individuals on each State's administrative staff interpreted and completed the survey, differences in reporting among States are inevitable. For example, some States may count reinstated cases as new filings; others do not. Although every effort to ensure the comparability and accuracy of these data has been made, the inherent restrictions imposed by gathering timely data, in some cases before a State has published its own statistical report, must be considered.

Limitations of the data

All data in this bulletin cover a period of one year (but not necessarily the same period in each State). The

³National Court Statistics Project, *State Court Caseload Statistics: Annual Report* series for 1975 through 1980 (Williamsburg, Virginia, National Center for State Courts, 1980-83).

survey was first sent, in October 1983, to States that report data by fiscal year, and in late February of 1984 to States that report data by calendar year. A verification questionnaire was distributed in May 1984. The data reported here cover either the 1983 calendar year (CY) or the 1982/83 fiscal year (FY).⁴ In those States where major changes in court structure, jurisdiction, or procedures that would affect case filing volumes had occurred, 5-year comparisons were not made. Such major changes included court consolidations combining a number of courts or legislation creating new courts. It was not possible to take into account all changes in court procedures or jurisdiction that occurred during the 5-year period.

Interstate comparison may be affected substantially by variations in case definitions, court organization, and completeness of the data. If one State uses informations or indictments to identify a criminal case while another counts defendants and a third counts charges, the number of cases reported will vary greatly.⁵ Some courts report total filings without a breakdown by types of cases.

There are numerous differences in case types. Any attempt to compare the number of filings, dispositions, etc., between States must also take into account differences in court organization and jurisdiction. For example, Texas and Oklahoma have two courts of last resort, one for civil matters and one for criminal matters; other States have only one. Some States have intermediate appellate court(s); others do not. Some States have one trial court and no separate courts of limited jurisdiction; others have various specialized trial courts.

In States that have only one trial court, those courts have jurisdiction over cases ranging from parking violations to felonies and from small claims to the largest of civil actions. Other States may have some general jurisdiction courts that hear only felony

⁴Courts of general and limited jurisdiction in the following States report on a fiscal year basis: Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont.

Appellate Courts in the following States report on a fiscal year basis: Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont.

⁵An information is a formal written accusation submitted to a court by a prosecutor alleging that a specified person or persons has committed a specified offense (or offenses); an indictment is a similar charging document submitted to the court by a grand jury.

matters (after a preliminary hearing in a limited jurisdiction court); others have general jurisdiction courts that handle only civil cases involving more than a specified amount (such as \$10,000), and several limited or special jurisdiction courts.

The difficulty in making comparisons at the appellate level is largely the result of differences in the type and

extent of discretionary jurisdiction of courts of last resort. In States with two levels of appellate courts, the more difficult appeals are generally heard in the court of last resort, although the types of cases may vary widely from State to State.

These represent just a few of the many differences in court organization and case types. The accuracy and com-

State	Courts of last resort		Intermediate appellate courts ^a		Total from all appellate courts	
	Filings	Dispositions	Filings	Dispositions	Filings	Dispositions
Alabama ^b	1,304		2,016	1,866	3,320	—
Alaska	509	538	584	594	1,093	1,132
Arizona	1,225	1,165	2,559	2,519	3,784	3,684
Arkansas	479	474	863	907	1,342	1,381
California	3,856 ^c	3,827 ^c	16,353 ^d	16,363 ^d	20,209	20,190
Colorado	971		1,453	1,381	2,424	—
Connecticut	837	711	294	209	1,131	920
Delaware	413	446			413	446
District of Columbia	1,679	1,710			1,679	1,710
Florida	1,686	1,517	13,765	14,118	15,451	15,635
Georgia	1,589	1,610	2,215	—	3,804	—
Hawaii	518 ^e	480	91 ^e	131	518	611
Idaho	472	392	165 ^e	111	472	503
Illinois	1,786	1,758	6,815	7,396	8,601	9,154
Iowa	1,781 ^e	1,348	(e)	555	1,781	1,903
Kansas	218	378	1,087	986	1,305	1,364
Kentucky	998	954	2,822	2,229	3,820	3,183
Louisiana	2,664	2,885	5,378	4,698	8,042	7,583
Maine	540	530			540	530
Maryland	753	682	2,063	1,936	2,816	2,618
Massachusetts	1,183	—	1,416	1,284	2,599	—
Michigan	2,112	2,224	7,023	—	9,135	—
Minnesota	1,312	—	682	—	1,994	—
Mississippi	1,232	995			1,232	995
Missouri	1,061	1,264	3,062	2,982	4,123	4,246
Montana	561	546			561	546
Nebraska	993	993			993	993
New Hampshire	587	542			587	542
New Jersey	1,798	1,633	7,067	7,312	8,865	8,945
New Mexico	621	245	561	522	1,182	767
New York ^b	784 ^f	684 ^f	13,219	11,685	14,003	12,369
North Carolina	683	689	1,398	1,186	2,081	1,875
North Dakota	462	—			462	—
Ohio	2,103	1,882	9,713	—	11,816	—
Oklahoma ^g	2,657 ^e	2,493	763 ^e	1,052	2,657	2,493
Oregon	1,159	1,113	3,702	3,423	4,861	4,536
Pennsylvania ^{b,h}	1,333	—	9,338	—	10,671	—
Rhode Island	670	619			670	619
South Carolina	2,267	1,563	270	41	2,537	1,604
South Dakota	406	399			406	399
Tennessee ^b	986	1,013	1,886	1,830	2,872	2,843
Texas ^g	4,109	3,987	7,037	8,038	11,146	12,025
Utah	784	—			784	—
Vermont	602	544			602	544
Virginia	2,073	1,922			2,073	1,922
Washington	913	947	2,910	2,729	3,823	3,676
West Virginia	1,159	409			1,159	409
Wisconsin	804	941	2,418	2,284	3,222	3,225
Wyoming	276	223			276	223

— Data were not available.
^a The following States did not have intermediate appellate courts in 1983: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming.
^b This State has two intermediate appellate courts.
^c Does not include disciplinary (judicial/attorney conduct) or executive clemency cases.
^d Includes motions to dismiss on clerk's certificate.
^e All appellate cases are filed in the courts of last resort. A portion of this caseload is transferred to the intermediate appellate court for disposition.
^f Appeals only.
^g These States have two courts of last resort (one civil/one criminal).
^h The data reported were recently submitted to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts by the separate courts of Pennsylvania. Consequently, the Administrative Office cannot confirm, at this time, the accuracy of the data.

pleteness of the data are also affected by the fact that the data for a number of the States do not include all courts. Most often missing are courts of limited jurisdiction such as probate, municipal, small claims, and other types of special courts. The limitations described in this section and the problems discussed in other parts of this report emphasize the need to obtain more detailed information about each jurisdiction's court structure, operating procedures, and reporting procedures before attempting exact interstate comparisons.

Further reading

For a more detailed discussion of the limitations of caseload data as well as definitions of the terms used in this

bulletin, see the introductions to each volume in the annual report series and the Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, State Court Caseload Statistics 1977 and 1981 (February 1983, NCJ-87587). The annual report series includes data on caseload, workload, disposition type breakdowns, time interval data, court organization, and other related data on trial and appellate courts.

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Table 5. Percentage change in appellate court filings, 1978-1983

State	Courts of last resort			Intermediate appellate courts			All appellate courts		
	CY-1978 or FY-1977-78	CY-1983 or FY-1982-83	Percent change	CY-1978 or FY-1977-78	CY-1983 or FY-1982-83	Percent change	CY-1978 or FY-1977-78	CY-1983 or FY-1982-83	Percent change
States with intermediate appellate court created before 1978									
Alabama ^a	667	1,304	+96%	1,273	2,016	+58%	1,940	3,320	+71%
Arizona	1,171	1,225	+5	2,183	2,559	+17	3,354	3,784	+13
California	3,881	3,856	-1	13,018	16,353	+26	16,899	20,209	+20
Colorado	854	971	+14	1,119	1,453	+30	1,973	2,424	+23
Connecticut	474	837	+76	223	294	+32	697	1,131	+62
Florida ^b				9,563	13,765	+44			
Georgia	1,506	1,589	+6	2,000	2,215	+11	3,506	3,804	+9
Illinois	1,250	1,786	+42	4,411	6,815	+55	5,661	8,601	+52
Iowa ^c	1,490	1,781	+20				1,490	1,781	+20
Kansas	156	218	+40	792	1,087	+37	948	1,305	+38
Kentucky	771	998	+29	1,571	2,822	+80	2,342	3,820	+63
Louisiana	2,405	2,664	+11	2,386	5,378 ^d	+125	4,791	8,042	+68
Maryland	585	753	+29	1,644	2,063	+25	2,229	2,816	+26
Massachusetts ^b				1,050	1,416	+35			
Michigan	1,636	2,112	+29	5,248	7,021	+34	6,884	9,135	+33
Missouri	615	1,061	+72	2,255	3,062	+36	2,870	4,123	+44
New Jersey	1,016	1,798	+77	6,098	7,067	+16	7,114	8,865	+25
New Mexico	654	621	-5	539	561	+4	1,193	1,182	-1
New York	614	784	+28	10,599	13,219	+25	11,213	14,003	+25
North Carolina	541	683	+26	1,525	1,398	-8	2,006	2,081	+1
Ohio	1,593	2,103	+32	7,546	9,713	+29	9,139	11,816	+29
Oklahoma ^{c,e}	1,729	2,657	+54	449	763	+69	1,729	2,657	+54
Oregon	594	1,159	+95	3,106	3,702	+19	3,700	4,861	+31
Pennsylvania ^a	1,944	1,333 ^f	-31	7,692	9,338	+21	9,636	10,671	+11
Tennessee ^a	813	986	+21	1,424	1,886	+32	2,237	2,872	+28
Washington	654	913	+40	2,093	2,910	+39	2,747	3,823	+39
States with intermediate appellate courts created between 1978-83*									
Alaska ^g	630	509	-19		584		630	1,093	+73
Arkansas	584	479	-17		863		584	1,342	+130
Hawaii ^c	374	518	+38		91		374	518	+38
Idaho ^c	340	472	+39		165		340	472	+39
Minnesota	1,117	1,312	+17		682		1,117	1,994	+79
South Carolina	714	2,267	+217		270		714	2,537	+255
States without intermediate appellate courts									
Delaware	361	413	+14						
District of Columbia	1,372	1,679	+22						
Maine	422	540	+28						
Mississippi	774	1,232	+59						
Montana	517	561	+8						
Nebraska	646	993	+54						
New Hampshire	310	587	+89						
North Dakota	278	462	+66						
Rhode Island	445	670	+50						
South Dakota	279	406	+46						
Utah	625	784	+25						
Vermont	359	602	+68						
Virginia	1,846	2,073	+12						
West Virginia	713	1,159	+62						
Wyoming	157	276	+76						

Note: Indiana and Nevada did not submit data on appellate court filings. Texas was not included because of jurisdictional changes. Wisconsin was not included because of an administrative change affecting the base year reporting period.

* The 1983 figures are not directly comparable with 1978 because the 1983 figures include both appeals and requests to appeal and the 1979 figures include appeals only.

^a These States have two intermediate appellate courts.

^b Data from these States were submitted, but are not presented here because of problems with comparability.

^c All appellate cases are filed in the courts of last resort. A portion of this caseload is transferred to the intermediate appellate court for disposition.

^d This increase may be attributable in part to a change in the court's jurisdiction in mid 1982 to include criminal matters.

^e This State has two courts of last resort.

^f The Pennsylvania Supreme Court's jurisdiction was changed to make it a certiorari court in 1981.

^g Changed to fiscal year reporting in 1982.

Table 6. Appellate filings by case type and state, CY-1983 or FY-1982-83^a

State	Intermediate appellate courts				Courts of last resort			
	Original jurisdiction	Requests to appeal	Requests to appeal granted	Appeals	Original jurisdiction	Requests to appeal	Requests to appeal granted	Appeals
States with intermediate appellate courts								
Alabama ^b	22	—	—	1,994	133	499	—	672
Alaska ^c	3	74	—	343	19	113	—	363
Arkansas	25	9	8	837	5	—	—	474
California ^d	5,595	—	—	10,140	617	3,205	286	320
Colorado	17	—	—	1,436	372	394	—	205
Connecticut	—	—	—	294	—	74	—	763 ^e
Hawaii ^f	—	—	—	91	33	—	—	485
Idaho ^{c,f}	—	—	—	165	35	21	2	418
Iowa ^g	—	—	—	NA	—	NA	—	1,781
Kansas	50	—	—	1,037	55	—	—	163
Kentucky ^c	162	100	16	2,576	79	700	104	323
Louisiana	1,583	—	—	3,795	33	2,527	—	104
Maryland	—	142	—	1,921	65	688	160	160
Massachusetts	—	—	—	1,416	505	419	91	350
Michigan	—	4,996	—	2,027	54	2,058	138	138
Missouri	456	—	—	2,606	426	488	60	207
New Jersey	—	964	290	6,393	121	1,232	123	568
New Mexico ^c	313	—	—	248	312	NA	—	309
North Carolina	—	—	—	1,398	4	538	68	209
Ohio ^c	670	—	—	9,043	200	1,694	173	382
Oregon	—	—	—	3,702	252	895	134	146
Pennsylvania ^b	239	—	—	9,099	85	1,222	183	294
South Carolina ^g	—	—	—	270 ^h	5	(^g)	—	2,262
Tennessee ^b	—	—	—	1,886	84	769	—	133
Texas ^h	—	—	—	7,037	2,172	1,880	438	495
Washington	315	291	—	2,304	117	652	—	144
States without intermediate appellate courts								
Delaware	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	403
District of Columbia	—	—	—	—	—	106 ⁱ	7	1,580
Maine ^c	—	—	—	—	2	(^j)	—	538
Mississippi	—	—	—	—	363	—	—	869
Montana	—	—	—	—	119	—	—	442
Nebraska	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	993
New Hampshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	587
North Dakota	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	457
Rhode Island	—	—	—	—	47	123	—	500
South Dakota	—	—	—	—	21	38	9	356
Utah	—	—	—	—	41	—	—	743
Vermont	—	—	—	—	43 ^k	—	—	559
West Virginia	—	—	—	—	551	—	—	608
Wyoming	—	—	—	—	35	—	—	241

NA Not available.

^a Not included in court's jurisdiction.

^b Includes only States that provided a breakdown of the appellate caseload.

^c Has two intermediate appellate courts.

^d Appeals in the following courts also include sentence review only cases: courts of last resort—Alaska (14), Idaho (3), Kentucky (5), Maine (52), New Mexico (27), Ohio (74); intermediate appellate courts—Alaska (164), New Mexico (248).

^e The caseload of the Courts of Appeal also includes 618 motions to dismiss on the

^f clerk's certificate.

^g Includes original jurisdiction writs, disciplinary cases, and appeals filed following the grant of certification for appeal.

^h Cases filed in the Supreme Court and assigned to the Court of Appeals.

ⁱ The Court of Appeals was implemented effective September 1, 1983, and the first cases heard in October, 1983.

^j Has two courts of last resort.

^k Review of judgments of the Small Claims and Conciliation Branch of the Superior Court

of the District of Columbia and of judgments in the criminal division of that court where the penalty imposed is a fine of less than \$50 for an offense punishable by imprisonment of one year or less, or by fine of not more than \$1,000, or both, is by application for the allowance of an appeal.

^j The court also has discretionary jurisdiction over workers' compensation cases, but no requests to appeal were reported.

^k Requests to appeal included in original jurisdiction.

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