United States District Court
Southern District of Florida
State of the Court Report
2010

This Report was prepared by the Executive Offices of the
Court Administrator • Clerk of Court
United States District Court, Southern District of Florida
400 North Miami Avenue, Room 8N09
Miami, FL 33128-7716
Phone: (305) 523-5100

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The Southern District of Florida

Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Courthouse– Miami

James Lawrence King Federal Justice Building– Miami

C. Clyde Atkins Courthouse—Miami

Sidney M. Aronovitz Courthouse— Key West

U. S. Courthouse - Fort Pierce

U. S. Federal Building and Courthouse—Fort Lauderdale

Paul G. Rogers Federal Building and Courthouse—West Palm Beach

The Southern District of Florida (SDFL) has long been one of the busiest Federal trial courts in this country. Stretching over 300 miles, from Fort Pierce in the north to the nation's southernmost point in Key West, the Court's bench includes 18 authorized District Judge positions; 6 Senior District Judges; 16 Magistrate Judge positions; and 3 recalled Magistrate Judges in 2010. The Court convenes court in five divisions—Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, Fort Pierce and Key West-and maintains full-time staff in each.

The Southern District's Judges are supported by over 160 full-time Clerk's Office employees and over 100 chambers staff. The duties of this dedicated work force involve a broad spectrum of service ranging from operational activities, including case processing and courtroom support, to administrative services such as budget and financial activities. Because the efficient functioning of a court this size requires a wide variety of professional support, a full cross-section of professional disciplines is represented. Our staff includes lawyers, who directly assist chambers; linguists, who provide interpreter services in a wide variety of languages; computer technicians, who support all aspects of court automation; architects, engineers, and mechanics, who plan, maintain, and support the Court's facilities; and other highly-skilled professionals. All Court staff, wherever assigned, work closely with other governmental agencies and participants in the criminal justice system to provide necessary support services for the prompt and efficient handling of court matters.

With the help of this diversely skilled work force, the Court processed 1560 new criminal case filings involving than 2484 criminal defendants, and 8996 civil case filings during 2010. The Southern District's caseload reflects not only the increasing population of South Florida, but also the diversity and uniqueness of the communities it serves. In addition to one of the most complex criminal caseloads in the country, the Southern District also has a unique mix of civil and international litigation stemming from its geographic location as a gateway to the Caribbean and South America. The Court's docket has also included internationally notorious criminal and civil cases with social and political overtones.

The Judges of the District

District Judges

Chief Judge Federico A. Moreno
Nominated by: President George H. W. Bush
Commission Date: July 16, 1990
J.D. University of Miami School of Law, 1978
University of Notre Dame, B.A., 1974

Judge William J. Zloch
Nominated by: President Ronald Reagan
Commission Date: November 4, 1985
J.D. Notre Dame Law School, 1974
University of Notre Dame, B.A., 1966

Judge Donald L. Graham
Nominated by: President George H. W. Bush
Commission Date: September 16, 1991
J.D. The Ohio State University College of Law, 1974
B.A. West Virginia State College, 1971

Judge K. Michael Moore
Nominated by: President George H. W. Bush
Commission Date: February 10, 1992
J.D. Fordham University School of Law, 1976
B.A. Florida State University, 1972

Judge Ursula Ungaro
Nominated by: President George H. W. Bush
Commission Date: October 9, 1992
J.D. University of Florida College of Law, 1975
B.A. University of Miami, 1973

Judge Joan A. Lenard
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: December 26, 1995
J.D. Antioch School of Law, 1976
B.A. Roger Williams College 1973

Judge Donald M. Middlebrooks
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: May 27, 1997
J.D. University of Florida College of Law, 1972
B.S., B.A. University of Florida, 1968

Judge Alan S. Gold
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: July 1, 1997
LL.M. University of Miami School of Law, 1974
J.D. Duke University School of Law, 1969
B.A. University of Florida, 1966

Judge William P. Dimitrouleas
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: May 22, 1998
J.D. University of Florida College of Law, 1975
B.A. Furman University, 1973

Judge Patricia A. Seitz
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: October 1, 1998
J.D. Georgetown University Law Center, 1973
B.A. Kansas State University, Manhattan 1968

Judge Adalberto Jordan
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: September 9, 1999
J.D. University of Miami School of Law, 1987
B.A. University of Miami, 1984

Judge Kenneth A. Marra
Nominated by: President George W. Bush
Commission Date: September 13, 2002
J.D. Stetson University College of Law, 1977
B.A. State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1973

Judge Jose E. Martinez
Nominated by: President George W. Bush
Commission Date: September 17, 2002
J.D. University of Miami School of Law, 1965
B.B.A. University of Miami, 1962

Judge Cecilia M. Altonaga
Nominated by: President George W. Bush
Commission Date: May 7, 2003
J.D. Yale University of Law, 1986
B.A. Florida International University, 1983

Judge James I. Cohn
Nominated by: President George W. Bush
Commission Date: August 1, 2003
J.D. Cumberland Law School, 1974
B.A. University of Alabama, 1971

Judge Marcia G. Cooke
Nominated by: President George W. Bush
Commission Date: May 18, 2004
J.D. Wayne State University Law School, 1977
B.S.F.S. Georgetown University, 1975

Senior Judge James Lawrence King
Nominated by: President Richard M. Nixon
Commission Date: October 19, 1970
Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, St. Thomas University, 1992
LL.B. University of Florida College of Law, 1953
B.A.E. University of Florida, 1949
A.A. University of Florida, 1947

Senior Judge William M. Hoeveler
Nominated by: President Jimmy Carter
Commission Date: April 27, 1977
LL.B. Harvard University School of Law, 1950
B.A. Bucknell University, 1947

The Judges of the District

District Judges

Senior Judge Jose A. Gonzalez, Jr.
Nominated by: President Jimmy Carter
Commission Date: July 28, 1978
J.D. University of Florida College of Law, 1957
B.A. University of Florida, 1952

Senior Judge Kenneth L. Ryskamp
Nominated by: President Ronald W. Reagan
Commission Date: April 24, 1986
LL.B. University of Miami School of Law, 1956
A.B. Calvin College, 1955

Senior Judge Daniel T. K. Hurley
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: March 11, 1994
J.D. George Washington University
National Law Center, 1968
A.B. Saint Anselm's College, 1964

Senior Judge Paul C. Huck
Nominated by: President William J. Clinton
Commission Date: July 11, 2000
J.D. University of Florida College of Law, 1965
B.A. University of Florida, 1962

The Judges of the District
Magistrate Judges

Chief Magistrate Judge
Stephen T. Brown

Magistrate Judge
William C. Turnoff

Magistrate Judge
Lurana S. Snow

Magistrate Judge
Linnea R. Johnson

Magistrate Judge
Ann E. Vitunac

Magistrate Judge
Ted E. Bandstra

Magistrate Judge
Barry S. Seltzer

Magistrate Judge
Frank J. Lynch, Jr.

Magistrate Judge
Andrea M. Simonton

Magistrate Judge
John J. O'Sullivan

Magistrate Judge
Patrick A. White

Magistrate Judge
James M. Hopkins

Magistrate Judge
Edwin G. Torres

Magistrate Judge
Chris M. McAliley

Magistrate Judge
Robin S. Rosenbaum

Magistrate Judge
Jonathan Goodman

Magistrate Judge
Peter R. Palermo
Recalled

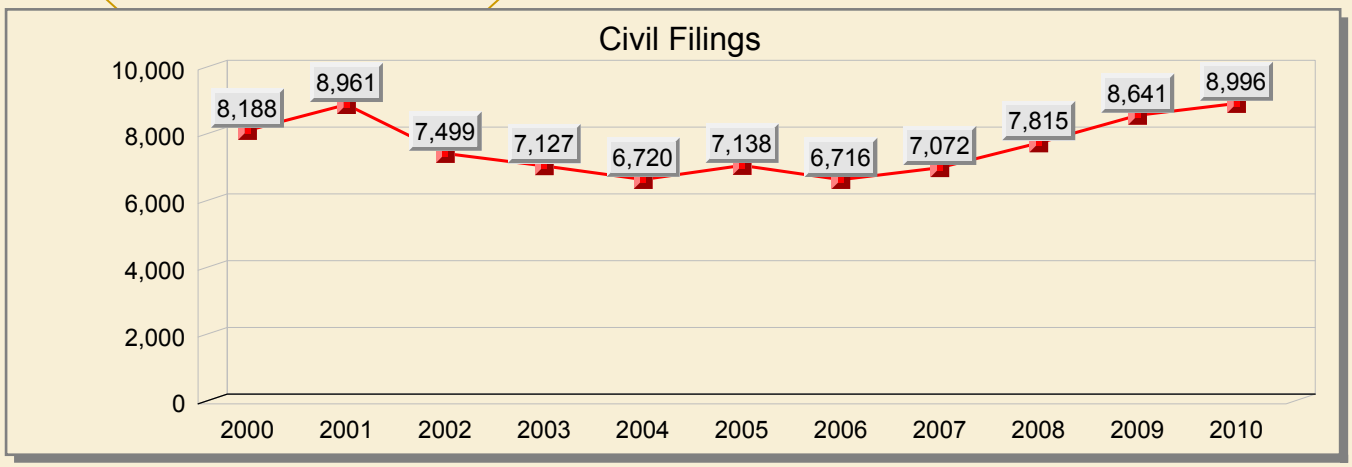
Magistrate Judge
Robert L. Dubé
Recalled

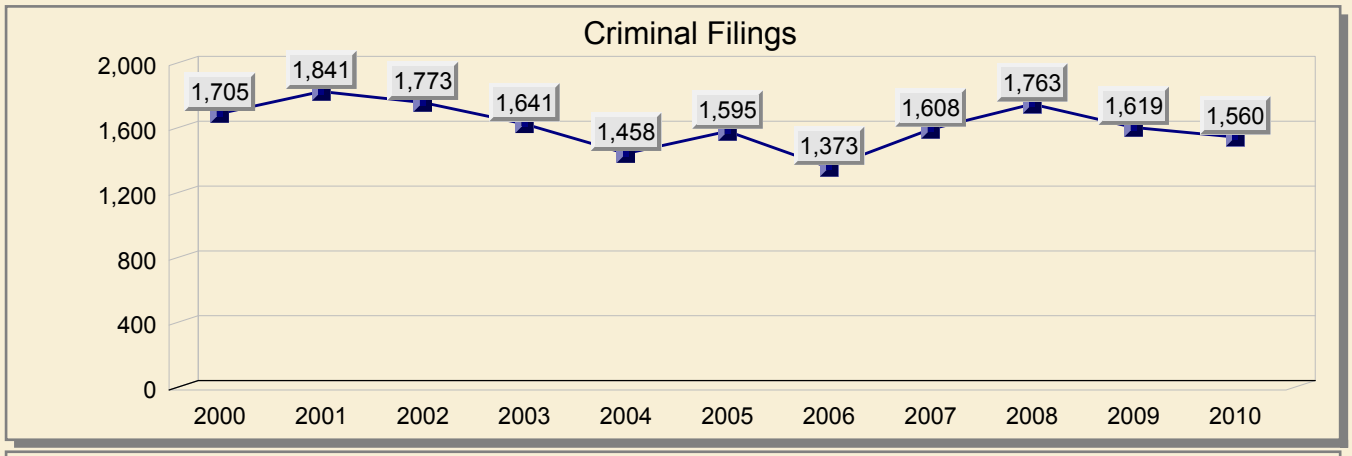
Magistrate Judge
Barry L. Garber
Recalled

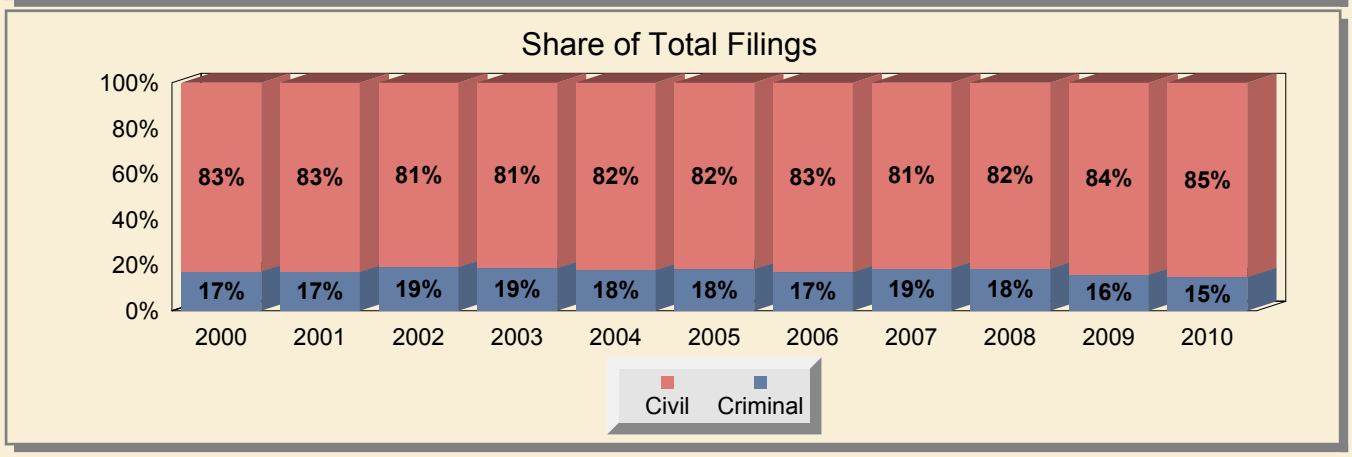
Statistical Charts and Graphs of Court Operations—Total Filings

Case Filings

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



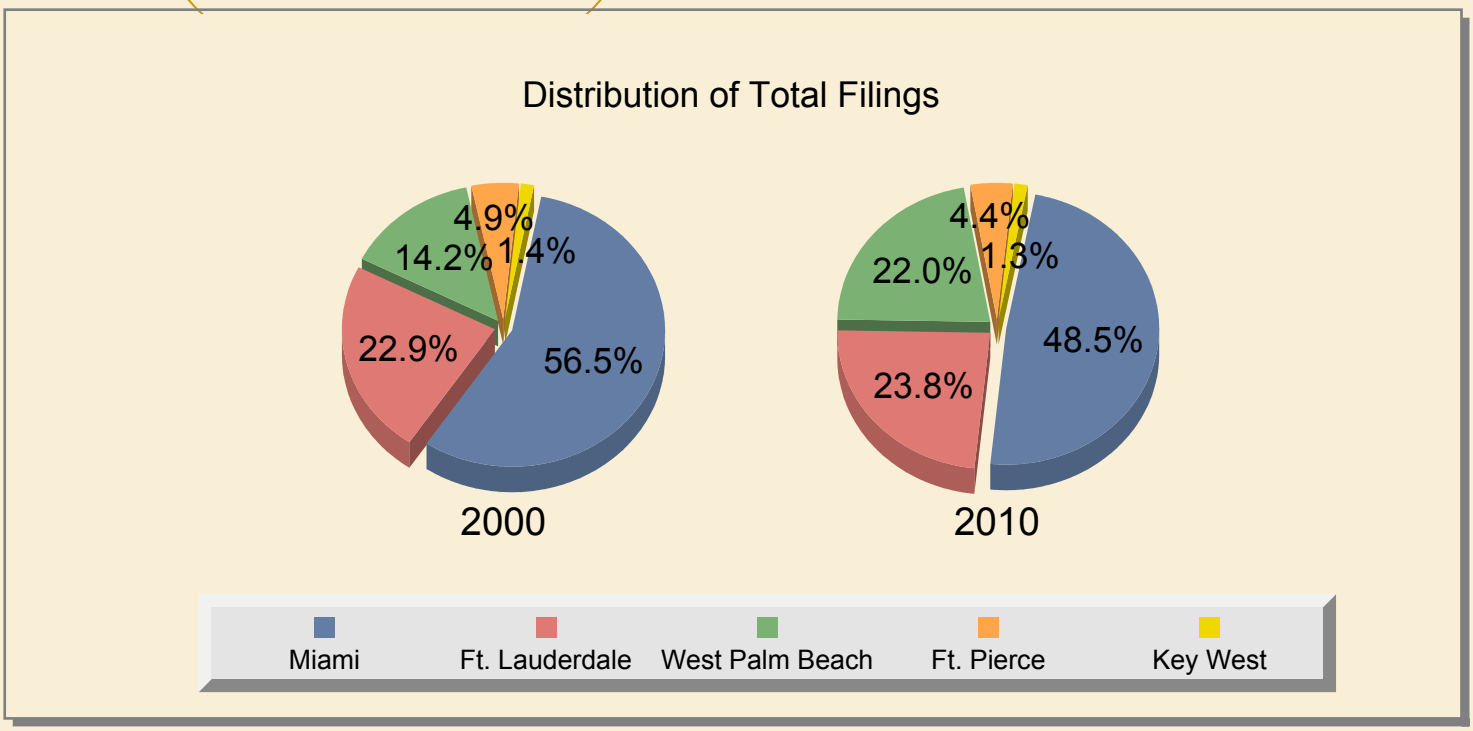




Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000-2010). Data File Exchange. Tables: C, D.
http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Statistics....Total Filings

Civil and Criminal Filings by Division
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



	Civil Filings			Criminal Filings			Total Filings		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Miami	4,535	4,195	-7.5%	1,056	925	-12.4%	5,591	5,120	-8.4%
Ft. Lauderdale	1,904	2,175	14.2%	363	333	-8.3%	2,267	2,508	10.6%
West Palm Beach	1,240	2,148	73.2%	168	174	3.6%	1,408	2,322	64.9%
Ft. Pierce	411	373	-9.2%	74	95	28.4%	485	468	-3.5%
Key West	98	105	7.1%	44	33	-25.0%	142	138	-2.8%
District	8,188	8,996	9.9%	1,705	1,560	-8.5%	9,893	10,556	6.7%

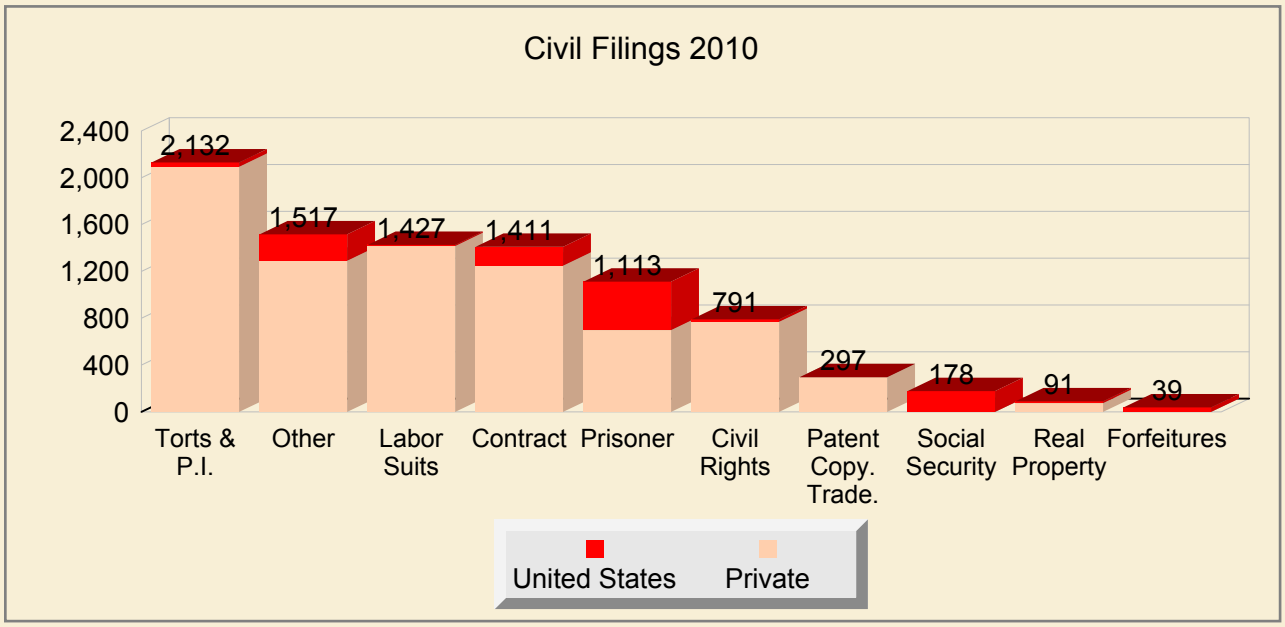
Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.
Sources:CM/ECF; Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000,2010). Data File Exchange. Tables: C, D.
http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Statistics...Civil

Civil Filings

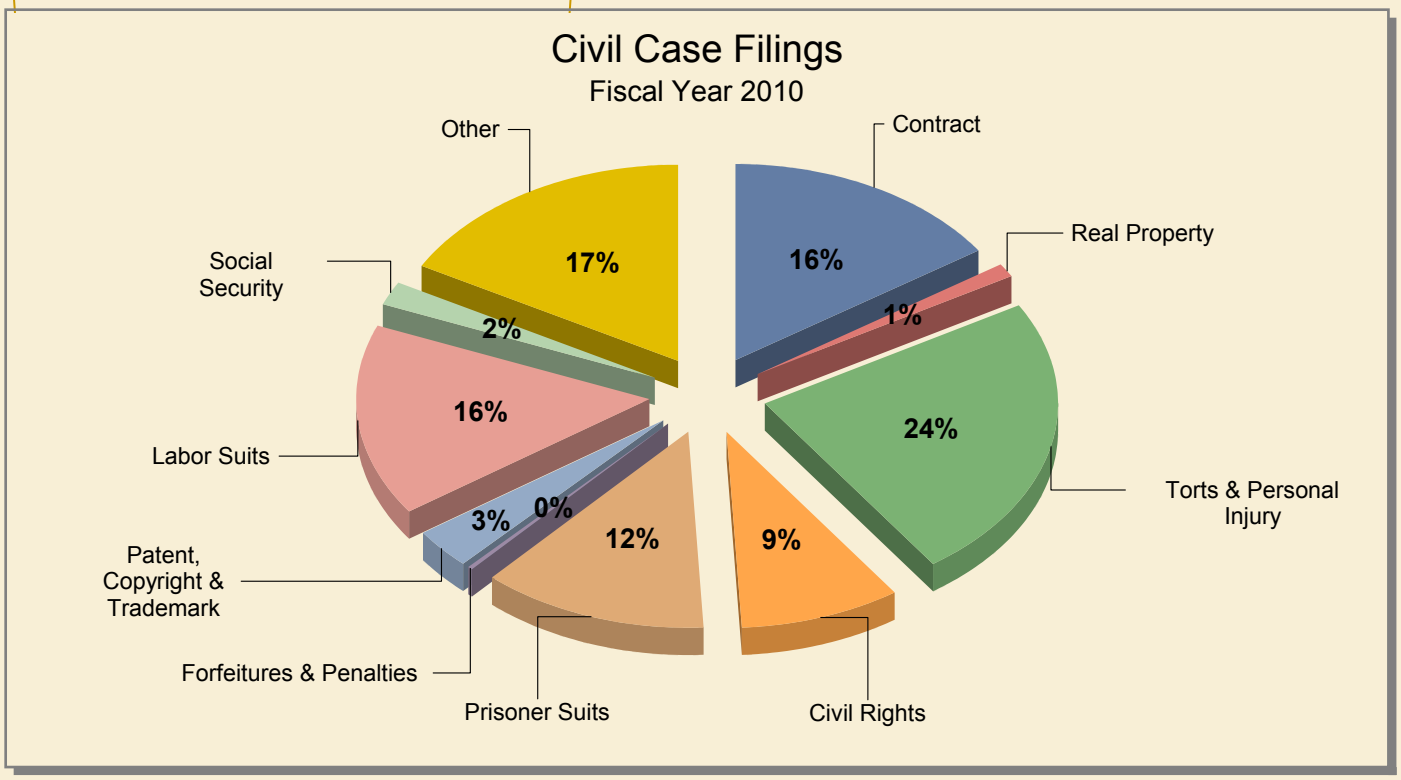
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

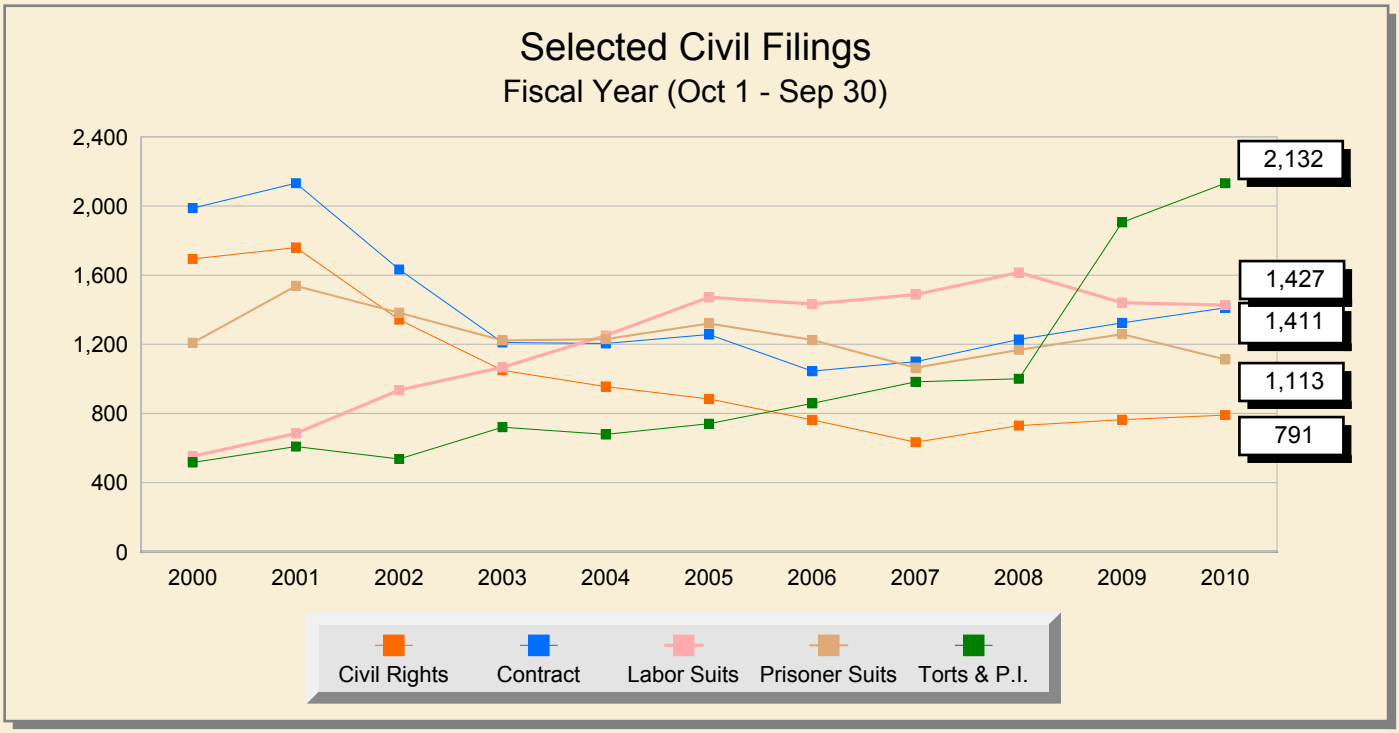
	2009	2010	Change
Civil Rights	764	791	3.5%
Contract	1,324	1,411	6.6%
Forfeitures & Penalties	51	39	-23.5%
Labor Suits	1,441	1,427	-1.0%
Patent, Copyright & Trademark	269	297	10.4%
Prisoner Suits	1,259	1,113	-11.6%
Real Property	183	91	-50.3%
Social Security	258	178	-31.0%
Torts & Personal Injury	1,906	2,132	11.9%
Other	1,186	1,517	27.9%
Total	8,641	8,996	4.1%



Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2009-2010). Data File Exchange. Table: C-3.
http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Statistics...Civil





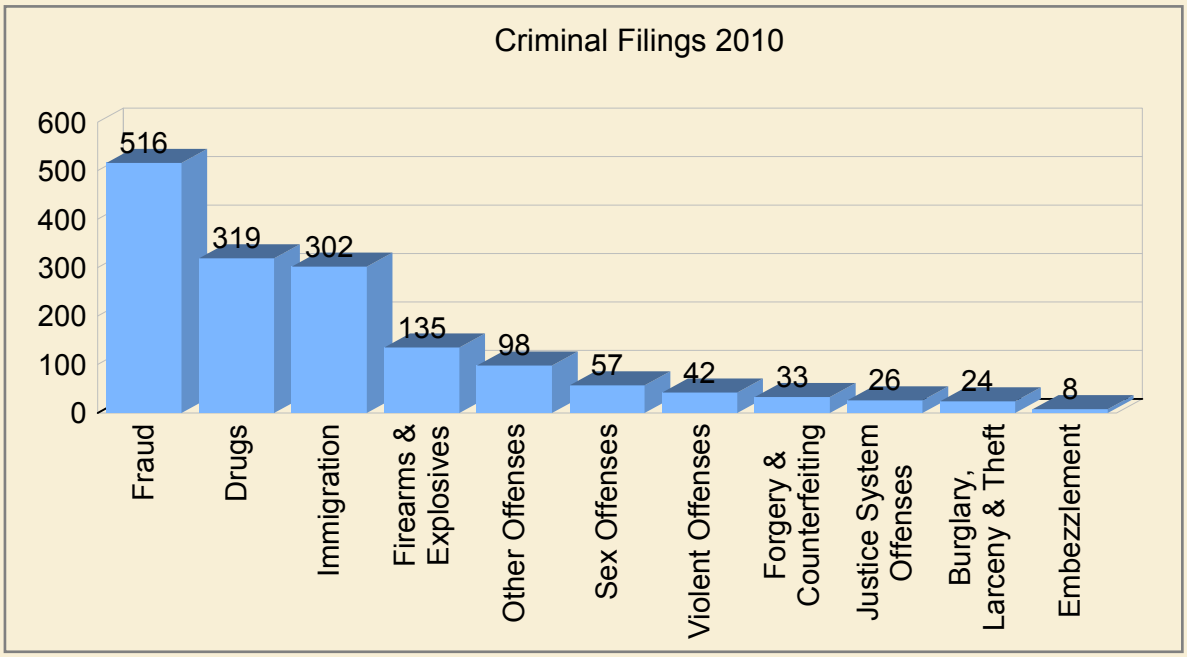
Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000-2010). Data File Exchange. Table: C-3.
http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Statistics...Criminal

Criminal Filings

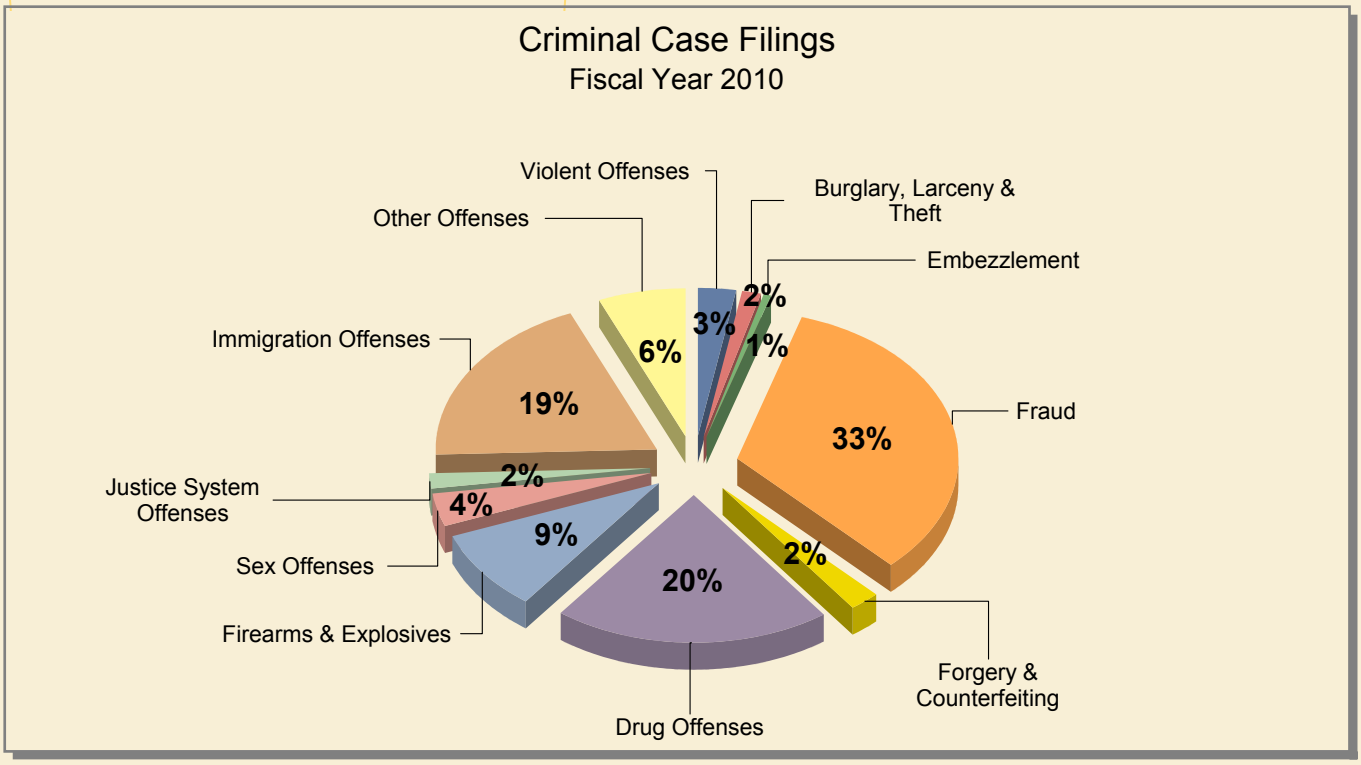
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

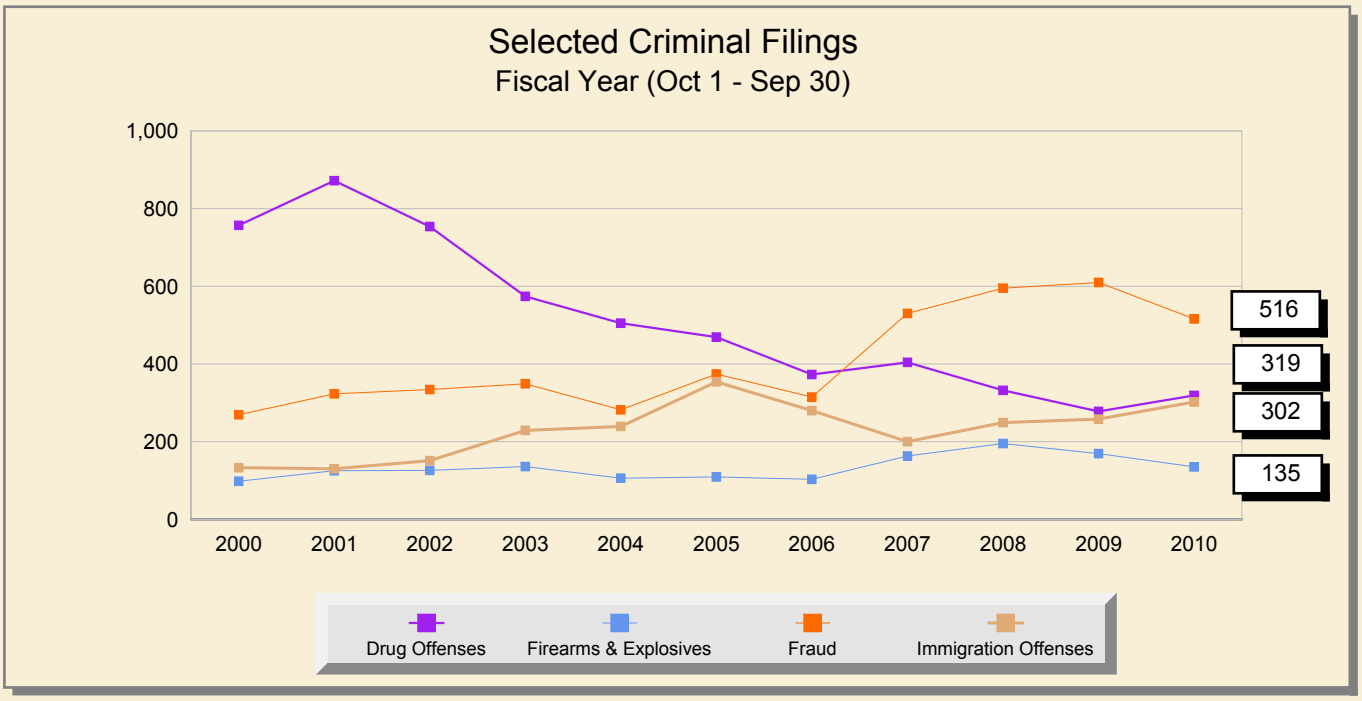
	2009	2010	Change
Burglary, Larceny & Theft	38	24	-36.8%
Drug Offenses	278	319	14.7%
Embezzlement	6	8	33.3%
Firearms and Explosives	169	135	-20.1%
Forgery & Counterfeiting	27	33	22.2%
Fraud	610	516	-15.4%
Immigration Offenses	258	302	17.1%
Justice System Offenses	42	26	-38.1%
Sex Offenses	73	57	-21.9%
Violent Offenses	28	42	50.0%
Other	90	98	8.9%
Total	1,619	1,560	-3.6%



Notes: Includes original and reopen filings.
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2009-2010). Data File Exchange.
Tables: D, D-3.

Statistics...Criminal

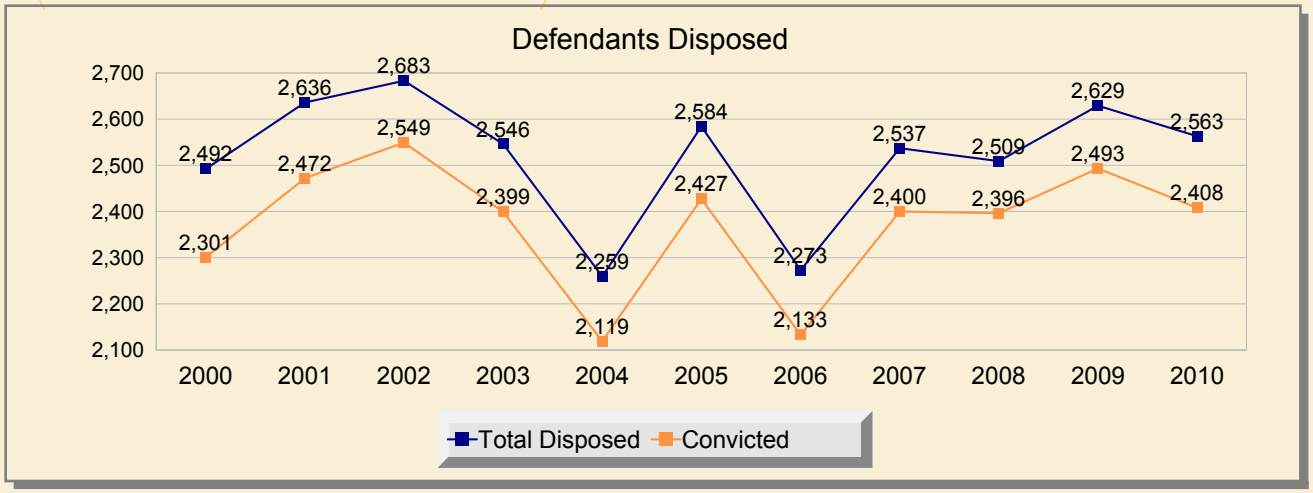


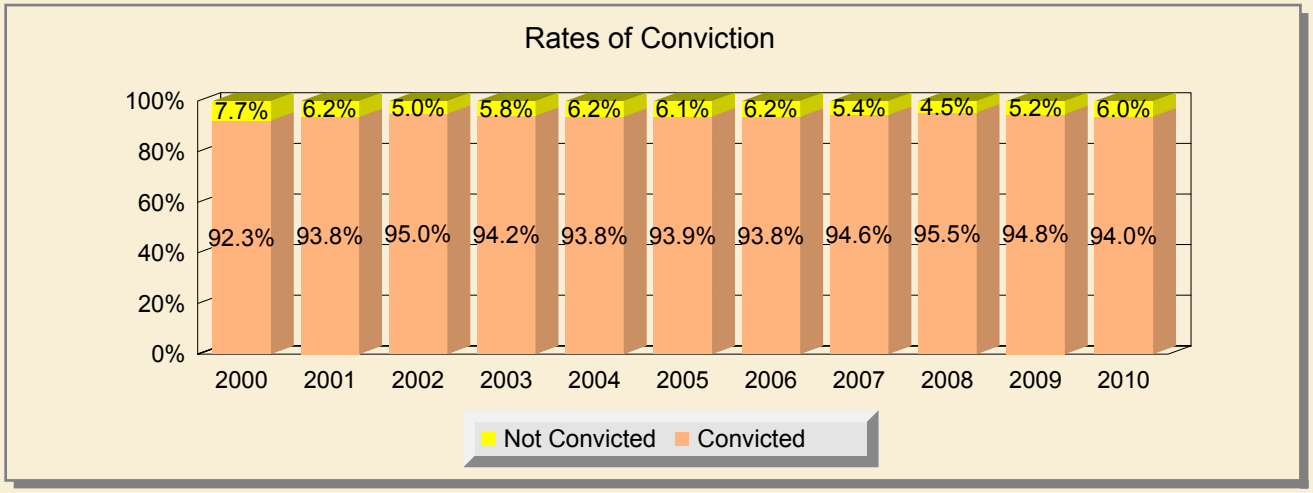


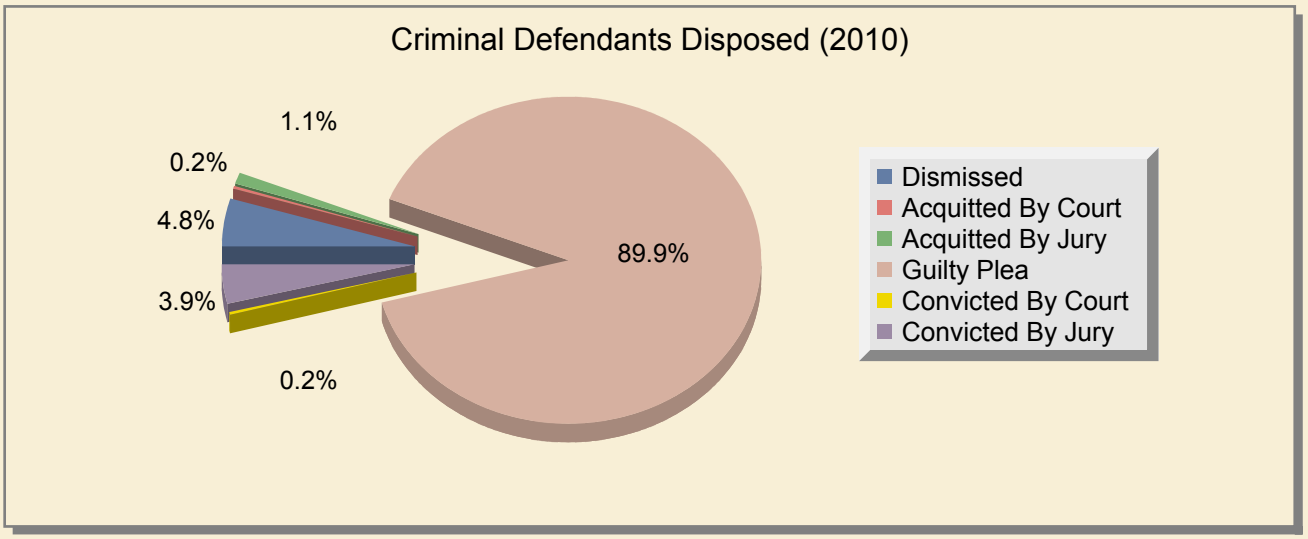
Notes: Includes original and reopen filings.
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000-2010). Data File Exchange. Tables: D, D-3.
http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Statistics...Criminal

Criminal Defendants Disposed
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

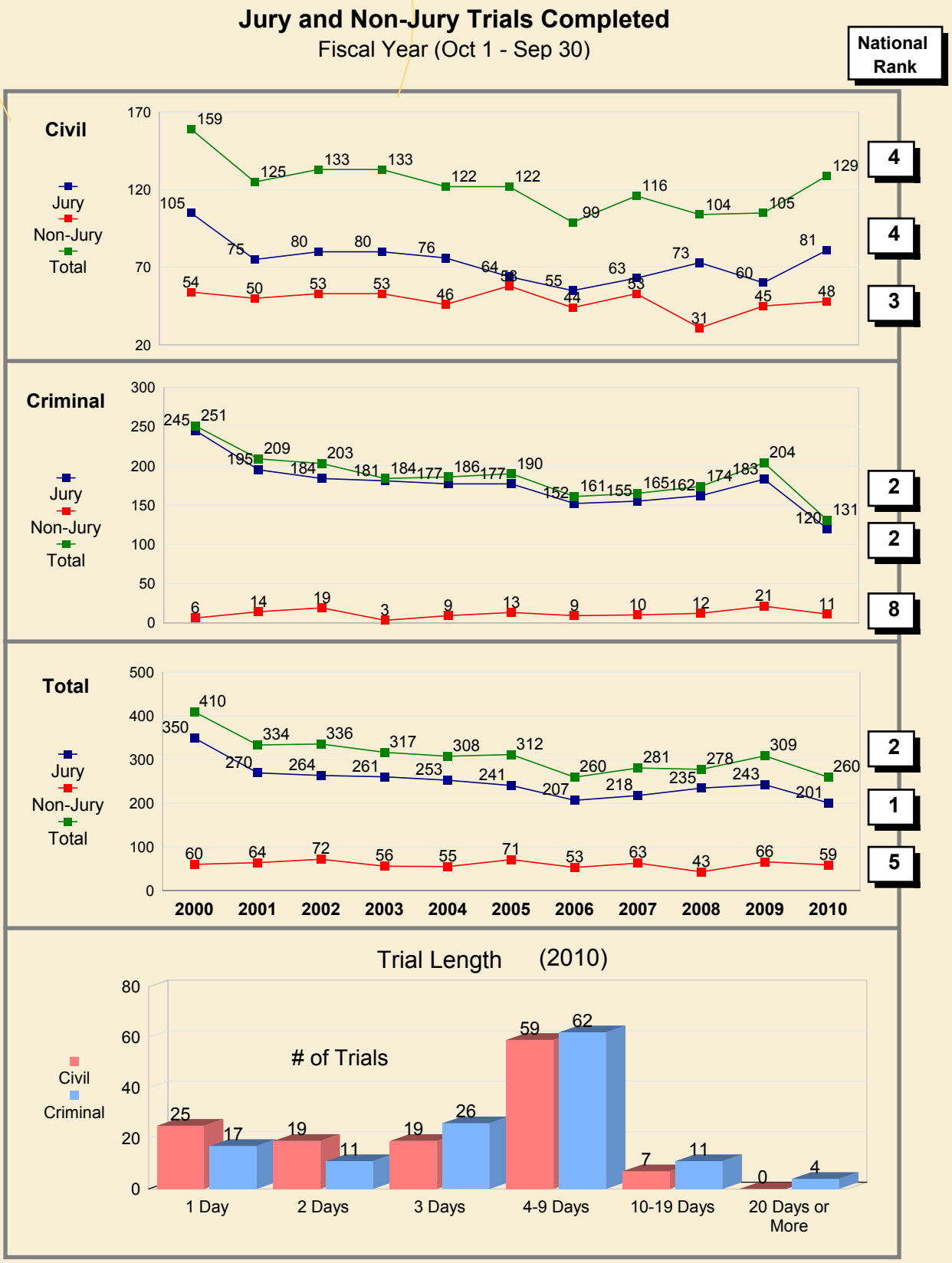






Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000-2010). Data File Exchange. Table: D-7.
http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

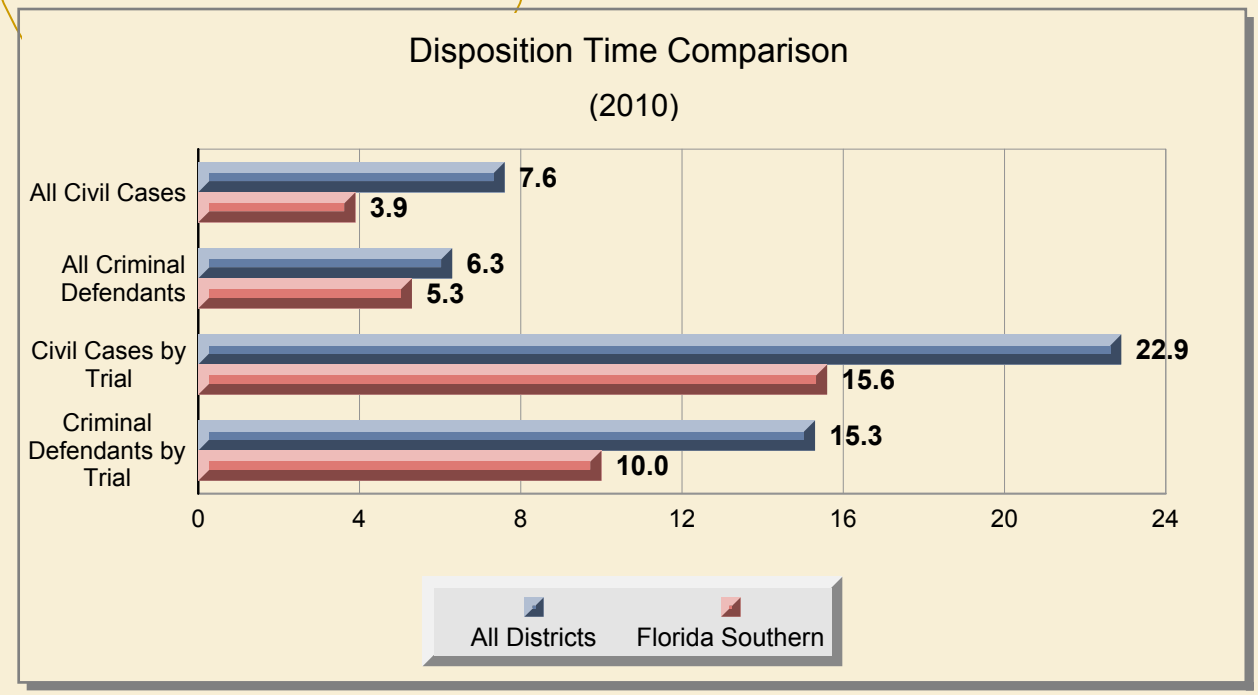
Statistics…Trials

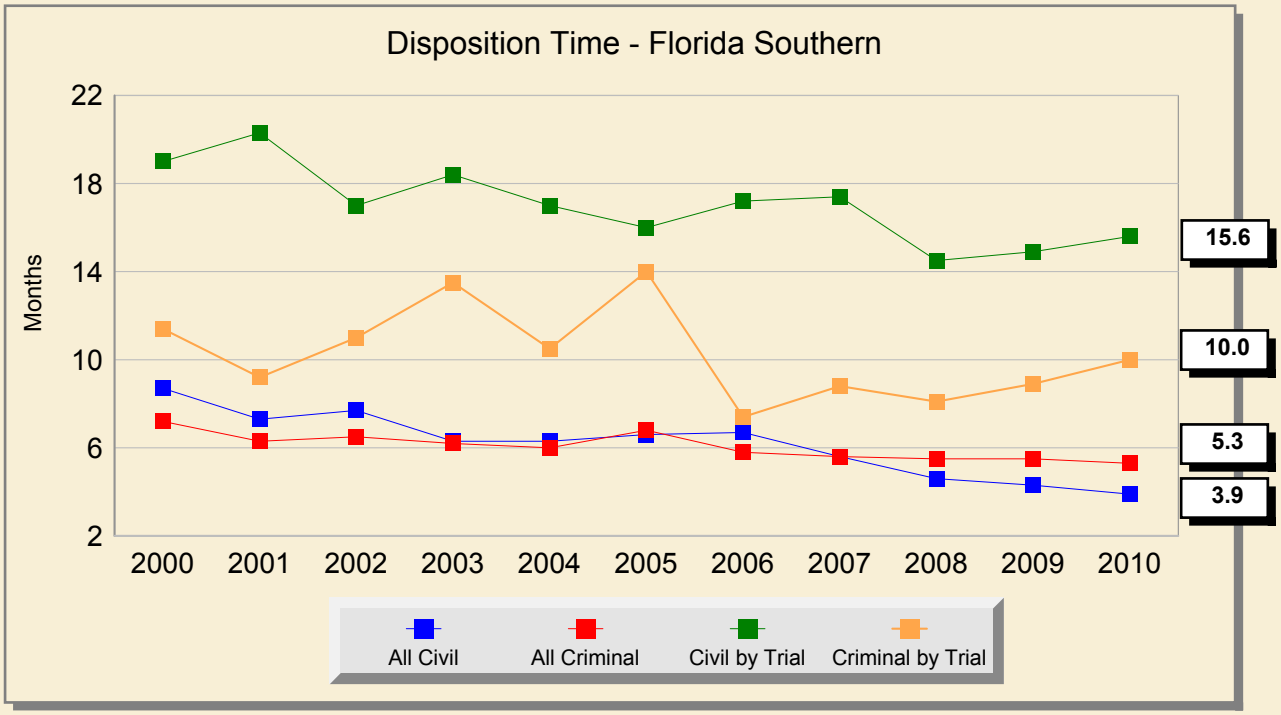


Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000-2010). Data File Exchange. Tables: T-1, T-2. http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Statistics…Disposition Times

Median Months Filing to Disposition
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

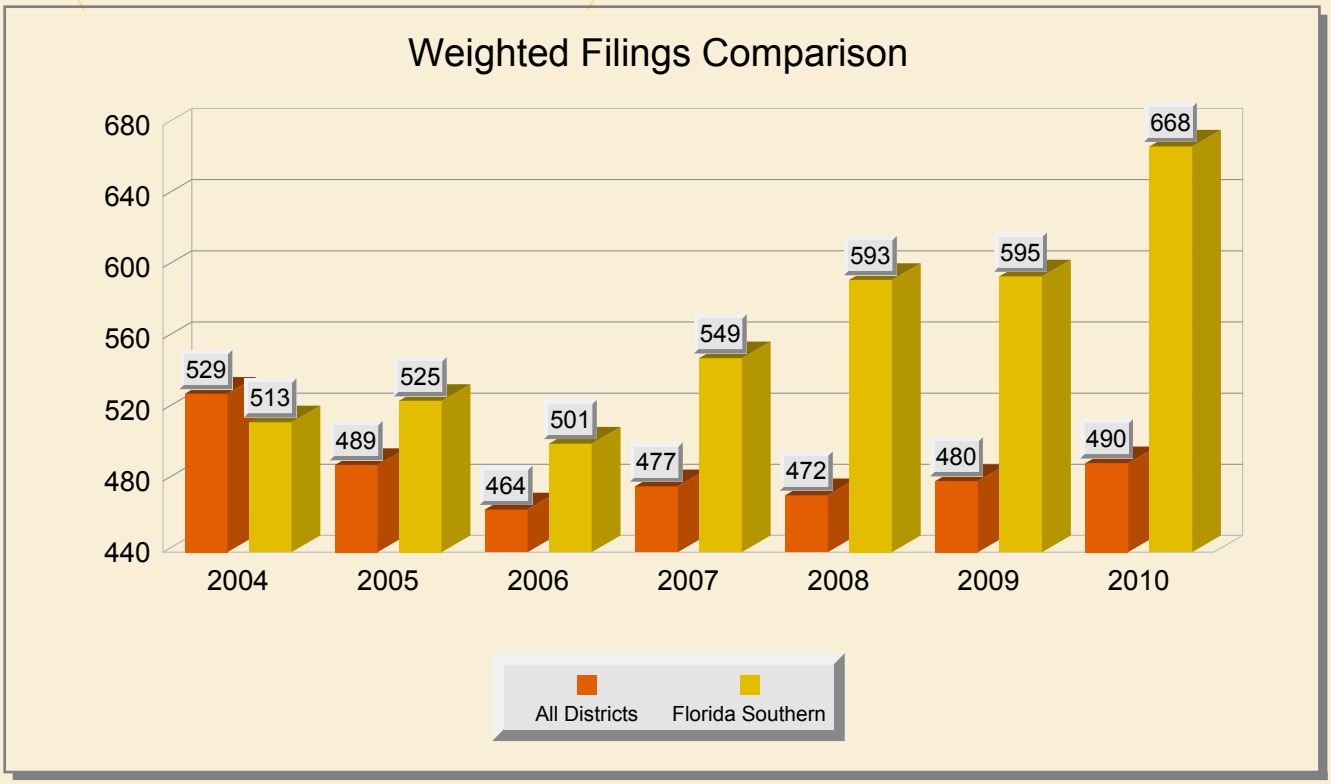




Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000-2010). Data File Exchange. Tables: C-5, D-6. http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Statistics...Weighted Filings

Weighted Filings per Authorized Judgeship
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



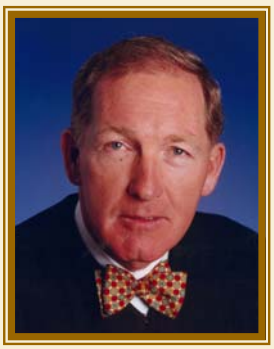
Weighted Filings Detail - Florida Southern

Year	Civil	Criminal	Supervised Release	Total	National Rank
2004	388	122	2.88	513	40
2005	410	112	3.36	525	26
2006	390	107	3.62	501	28
2007	413	133	2.90	549	16
2008	451	139	3.19	593	9
2009	470	122	3.61	595	11
2010	540	124	3.47	668	8

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2004-2010). Data File Exchange. Table: X-1A.
http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html

Special Events and Occasions...

Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. United States
Move into Courthouse [2008]



District Judge
Daniel T. K. Hurley
elected Senior status
[2009]

2008

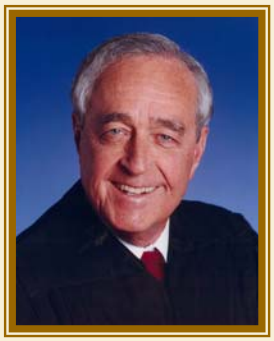
Magistrate Judge Palermo's 90th Birthday
Celebration [2008]

2009

New Fort Pierce Courthouse
Groundbreaking Ceremony [2009]

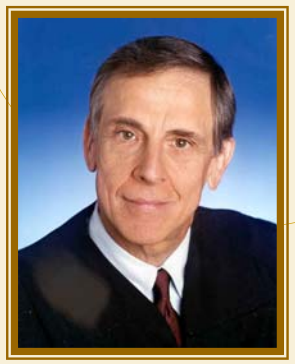
2010

Bench & Bar Conference [2010]



Senior Judge
Shelby Highsmith
retired [2008]

Special Events and Occasions...



District Judge
Paul C. Huck elected Senior
status [2010]

Renaming Ceremony for
Sidney M. Aronovitz
United States Courthouse in Key West [2010]

2008

Swearing-in Ceremony for South Florida
Congressional Representatives [2010]

Federal Bar Reception with Associate Justice of the
Supreme Court of the United States,
Sandra Day O'Connor [2010]

2009

2010

Magistrate Judge Jonathan Goodman
Investiture [2010]

Harry Solomon Recipient of the
Judge Eugene P. Spellman
CJA Attorney of Excellence Award [2009]

Special Events and Occasions...

Volunteer Lawyers Project - Pro Bono Recognition Reception [2010]

C. Clyde Atkins
United States Courthouse
Renaming Ceremony [2008]

Judge Eugene P. Spellman Attorney Lounge Dedication Ceremony [2010]

United States Attorney Wifredo Ferrer Investiture [2010]

Kelly Lee Reagan, James C. Paine Unsung Hero Award Recipient [2010]

Judge Barry L. Garber
Retirement/Recalled [2009]

2008

2009

2010

Other Events

Brian Spector, Judge Joe Eaton Unsung Hero Award Recipient [2009]

Deborah Poore-Fitzgerald, Judge Jose A. Gonzalez, Jr. Unsung Hero Award Recipient [2009]

McCabe Rabin, PA, James C. Paine Unsung Hero Award Recipient [2009]

Judge James Lawrence King's 40th Year Anniversary on the Bench [2010]

Thomas Meeks, Judge Joe Eaton Unsung Hero Award Recipient [2010]

Message From The Court Administrator

"Chase Perfection, Catch Excellence"

The personnel of the Southern District of Florida are some of the hardest working and most dedicated public servants that can be found. We are constantly aware of our role to provide quality service to our customers – both internal and external – while being good stewards of the public dollar. Recently, the Clerk's Office adopted "Chase Perfection, Catch Excellence" as our motto, fashioned after observations by Vince Lombardi.

Over the next few pages, you will see some of the results of our chase towards perfection. We have many accomplishments to be proud of, and many more in the planning stages. Tight budgets will pose many challenges over the coming years, but our Clerk's Office has a strong history of accomplishing much innovation with limited resources. I am very proud to join this group in our quest for excellence.

Steven M. Larimore
Court Administrator • Clerk of Court

"[W]e are going to relentlessly chase ***perfection***,

knowing full well we will not catch it,

because nothing is perfect.

But we are going to relentlessly chase it,

because in the process we will catch ***excellence***.

[We are] not remotely interested in just being good."

** Vince Lombardi

Priority Projects and Highlights

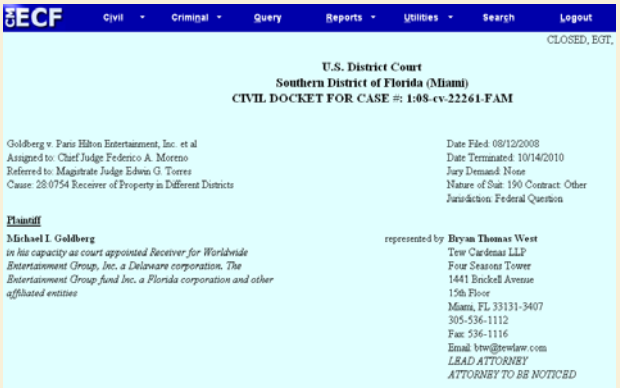
Case Management
CM / ECF
Electronic Case Files

CM/ECF

Computer Services installed a new high performance CM/ECF server and upgraded to CM/ECF version 4.0.2 in 2009. Since January, 2010, attorneys have been able to electronically file new civil cases. The benefits of electronic filing include 24/7 access for attorneys to file new civil cases; a reduction in the amount of paper filed in the Court; and a streamlined system in the assignment and transmission of cases to judicial officers.

PERFECT DOCKET PROGRAM

In 2009, the Clerk's Office adopted the lofty titled "Perfect Docket Program," with an eye towards improving the quality of our dockets. The program involves an aggressive training program for staff, with a goal of better consistency and quality of CM/ECF docket entries. Over 80% of our docketing is now done directly by attorneys over the Internet. Therefore, the Perfect Docket Program also includes outreach by sending CM/ECF trainers to law firms for on site training of groups of 20 or more, in hopes of improving the quality of attorney-generated docket entries.


ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout

CLOSED, EGT,

U.S. District Court
Southern District of Florida (Miami)
CIVIL DOCKET FOR CASE #: 1:08-cv-22261-FAM

Goldberg v. Paris Hilton Entertainment, Inc. et al
Assigned to: Chief Judge Federico A. Moreno
Referred to: Magistrate Judge Edwin G. Torres
Cause: 28:0754 Receiver of Property in Different Districts

Date Filed: 08/12/2008
Date Terminated: 10/14/2010
Jury Demand: None
Nature of Suit: 190 Contract: Other
Jurisdiction: Federal Question

Plaintiff
Michael I. Goldberg
in his capacity as court appointed Receiver for Worldwide Entertainment Group, Inc. a Delaware corporation, The Entertainment Group fund Inc. a Florida corporation and other affiliated entities

represented by Bryan Thomas West
Tew Cardenas LLP
Four Seasons Tower
1441 Brickell Avenue
15th Floor
Miami, FL 33131-3407
305-536-1112
Fax: 536-1116
Email: btw@tewlaw.com
LEAD ATTORNEY
ATTORNEY TO BE NOTICED

United States District Court
Southern District of Florida

Be it known, that as appears by the Files and Records of this Honorable Court,

Your Name Here

was duly admitted and qualified to practice as an Attorney in the District Court on December 22, 2009.

In Testimony Whereof, I have caused this certificate to be signed and the Seal of this Court affixed thereto at Miami, Florida, on the 5th day of January, 2010 A.D.

Court Administrator • Clerk of Court

ATTORNEY ADMISSIONS

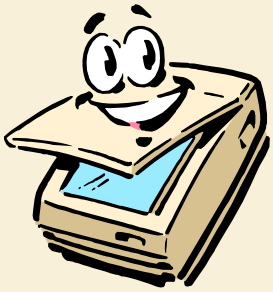
Attorneys are required to pass a core exam in order to be admitted to practice in the Southern District of Florida. Previously, registering for the exam was a time consuming, paper intensive process. The paper exam was only administered four times a year.

As of November, 2009, attorneys have been able to register on-line for the exam and take a computer generated exam on site at the Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach Courthouses daily. According to recent survey results, attorneys have found the new attorney admissions process to be very efficient and appreciate finding out their results immediately.

Priority Projects and Highlights

GREEN TEAM

The Green Initiative started in 2009 as a grass roots effort originating from the interest of a few Court staff to reduce the amount of energy we use and non-recyclable trash we produce. Results of the Green Team have included the development of a paper recycle program for Court offices, recycled aluminum cans and plastic bottles in courthouse lobbies and break rooms, as well as setting up printers to print on both sides of paper to reduce the Court's paper consumption. Additionally, the Team provides interesting facts and benefits of recycling in an on-line newsletter for staff.

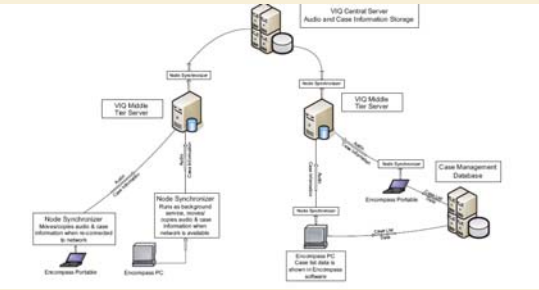


SCANNING PROJECT

The Clerk's Office's Records section, with the assistance of outsourced personnel, in 2009 began scanning more than 2.5 million pages of documents, dating back to 1972, that were stored in the basement of the Dyer Courthouse. The project involved a time-consuming process in which each page had to be carefully reviewed to ensure a perfect image of each document was scanned. The scanning project was completed at the end of 2010. The public can now review and copy thousands of old case records that were once inaccessible.

DIGITAL ACCESS RECORDERS

Throughout 2009 and 2010, digital recorders were installed in Magistrate Judge courtrooms throughout the District. Digital audio recordings, compared to the previous analog recording system, provides superior sound quality, longer record time, efficient storage, archiving of files, and allows access to any point in the recording instantly. Digital recorders are also PC compatible, therefore, the ability to download a file to the computer allows access to email capabilities, transcription kits and speech recognition systems.



Priority Projects and Highlights

CCAM: The Civil and Criminal Accounting Module (CCAM), a new, efficient case accounting and cash receipting system was installed by our Financial section beginning in the summer of 2010.

DOCUMENT RETENTION: In 2010, the Records section began reorganizing the management of paper throughout the Court by creating new records retention policies, clearing out and archiving old paper records and maintaining only the necessary amount of paper in accordance with retention policies.

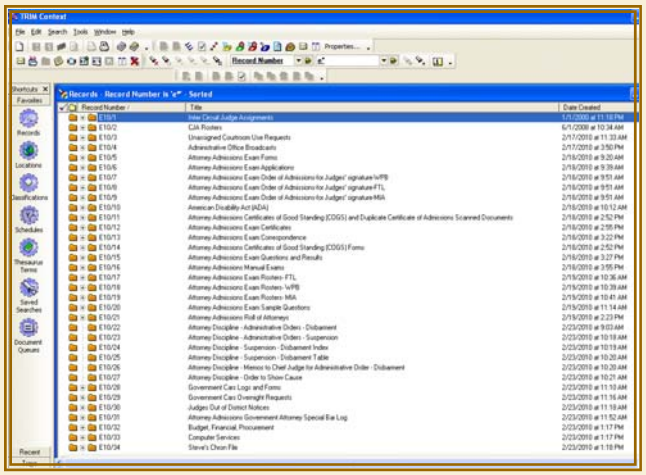
TRIM EXPANSION: TRIM is an Electronic Data Management System and works as a repository for imaged documents, therefore allowing for easy retrieval of any document. TRIM was accepted as the Official Record for the Southern District of Florida in 2007 and is currently being used in Human Resources, Procurement and Budget, CJA and Financial. In 2010, TRIM was expanded to include the Executive Offices, Jury, Interpreters and Records sections.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: The Judicial Conference approved performance management guidelines for local implementation in 2010. Our Court developed a performance management plan that provides goals and time-lines, priorities, communication and staff development. The plan provides for discretionary salary increases for exceptional performance and contributions to the Court. Staff training in performance management and evaluation systems began in February 2010 and the Court's performance management plan became effective with the first pay period in October, 2010.

NEW EXTERNAL COURT WEBSITE: The Court's website revamp project has been on the "back-burner" for years and finally this year, we rolled out our new external website. A team was formed to revamp the Court's website with a goal of making this site more professional, easier to use, and visually appealing. The new site was unveiled on October 23, 2010, and received high remarks from the Bar.

NEW CJA SYSTEM: A redesigned Criminal Justice Act (CJA) system was implemented in May 2010. The new system is a web-based program that provides faster access, better reporting capabilities, and improved accountability and navi-gational features. Our Court participated in the core group responsible for the development and implementation of this new system, and hosted system training for other courts. Also, we continue to participate in the CJA Core Project Team, evaluating system changes and future enhancements, and serving as a subject-matter expert.

New External Court Website



TRIM

Employee Recognition Awards and Service Anniversaries

2009 - 2010