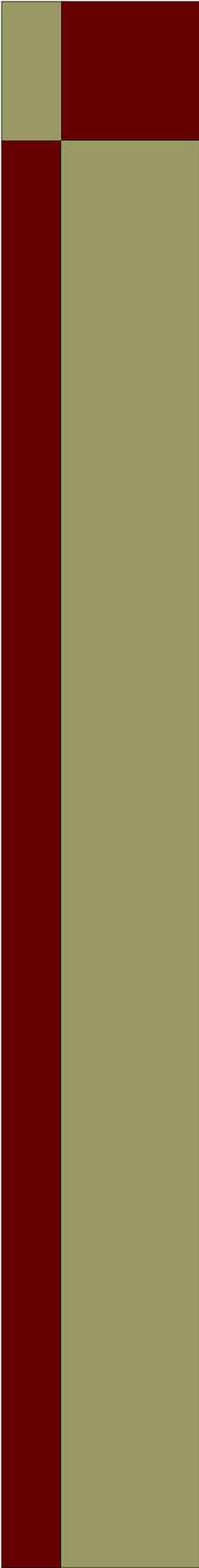


# United States District Court Southern District of Florida



State of the Court  
2011



# STATE OF THE COURT 2011

THIS REPORT WAS PREPARED BY THE  
OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR • CLERK OF COURT

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

WILKIE D. FERGUSON, JR. UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE  
400 NORTH MIAMI AVENUE, ROOM 8N09  
MIAMI, FL 33128-7716  
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# Table of Contents

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>4</b>     | <b>The Southern District of Florida</b>                      |
| <b>5–6</b>   | <b>The Judges of the District – District Judges</b>          |
| <b>7</b>     | <b>The Judges of the District – Magistrate Judges</b>        |
| <b>8–17</b>  | <b>Statistical Charts and Graphs of Court Operations</b>     |
| <b>18–21</b> | <b>Special Events and Occasions</b>                          |
| <b>22</b>    | <b>Message from the Court Administrator</b>                  |
| <b>23–26</b> | <b>Priority Projects and Highlights</b>                      |
| <b>27–28</b> | <b>Employee Recognition Awards and Service Anniversaries</b> |

# 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*

**T**he 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; 7 Senior District Judges; 16 Magistrate Judge positions; and 3 recalled Magistrate Judges in 2011. 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.

**T**he 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 services 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.

**W**ith the help of this diversely skilled work force, the Court processed 1497 new criminal case filings involving 2585 criminal defendants, and 8793 civil case filings during 2011. 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 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

## **Judge Kathleen M. Williams**

Nominated by: President Barack Obama  
Commission Date: August 4, 2011  
University of Miami School of Law, J.D., 1982  
Duke University, B.A., 1978

## **Judge Robert N. Scola, Jr.**

Nominated by: President Barack Obama  
Commission Date: October 20, 2011  
Boston College Law School, J.D., 1980  
Brown University, B.A., 1977

# The Judges of the District - District Judges

## **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

## **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 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  
A.A. University of Florida, 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**  
Initial Appointment:  
March 18, 1991

**Magistrate Judge  
William C. Turnoff**  
Initial Appointment:  
February 24, 1986

**Magistrate Judge  
Lurana S. Snow**  
Initial Appointment:  
March 10, 1986

**Magistrate Judge  
Linnea R. Johnson**  
Initial Appointment:  
August 24, 1987

**Magistrate Judge  
Ann E. Vitunac**  
Initial Appointment:  
January 7, 1985

**Magistrate Judge  
Ted E. Bandstra**  
Initial Appointment:  
September 25, 1989

**Magistrate Judge  
Barry S. Seltzer**  
Initial Appointment:  
March 18, 1991

**Magistrate Judge  
Frank J. Lynch, Jr.**  
Initial Appointment:  
February 18, 1993

**Magistrate Judge  
Andrea M. Simonton**  
Initial Appointment:  
April 1, 1999

**Magistrate Judge  
John J. O'Sullivan**  
Initial Appointment:  
April 1, 1999

**Magistrate Judge  
Patrick A. White**  
Initial Appointment:  
April 2, 2003

**Magistrate Judge  
James M. Hopkins**  
Initial Appointment:  
October 15, 2003

**Magistrate Judge  
Edwin G. Torres**  
Initial Appointment:  
October 31, 2003

**Magistrate Judge  
Chris M. McAliley**  
Initial Appointment:  
March 25, 2004

**Magistrate Judge  
Robin S. Rosenbaum**  
Initial Appointment:  
August 29, 2007

**Magistrate Judge  
Jonathan Goodman**  
Initial Appointment:  
July 23, 2010

**Magistrate Judge  
Peter R. Palermo**  
Initial Appointment:  
January 15, 1971  
*Recalled*

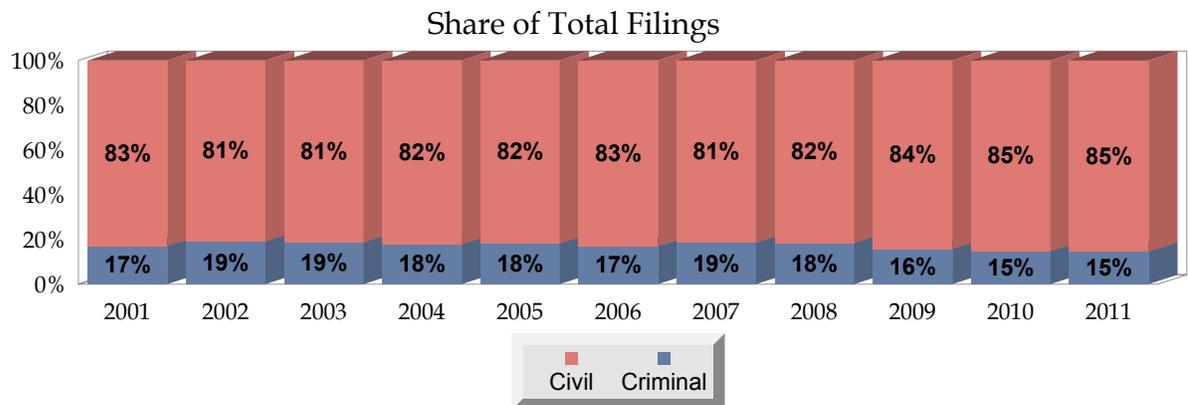
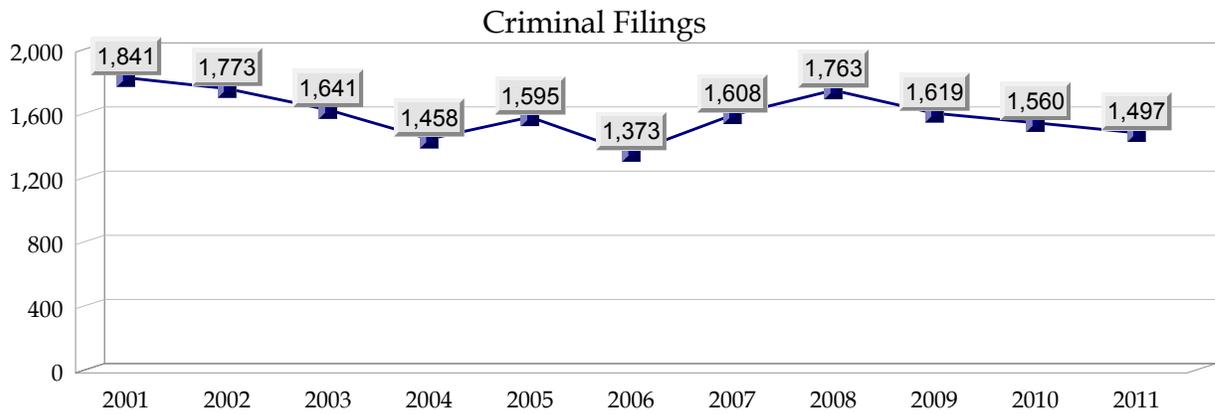
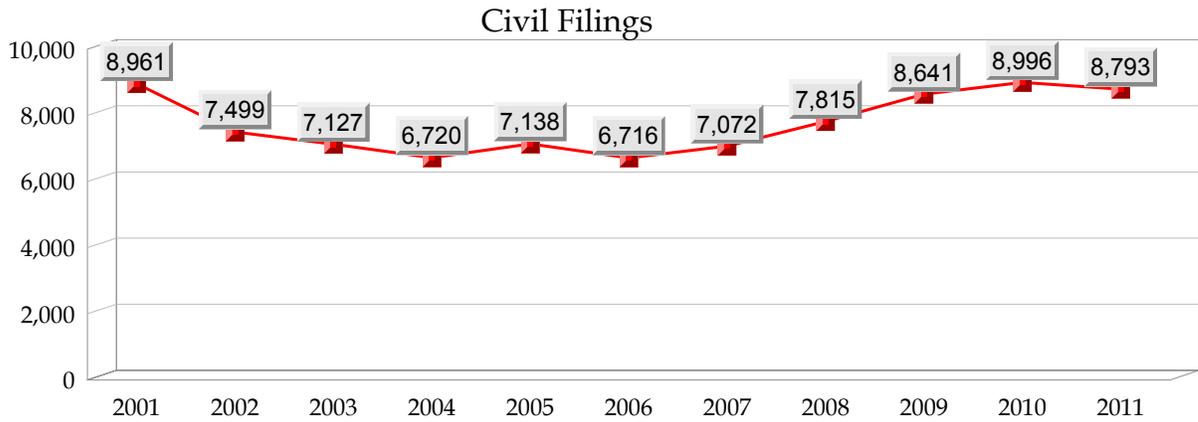
**Magistrate Judge  
Robert L. Dubé**  
Initial Appointment:  
March 25, 1996  
*Recalled*

**Magistrate Judge  
Barry L. Garber**  
Initial Appointment:  
September 18, 1991  
*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.

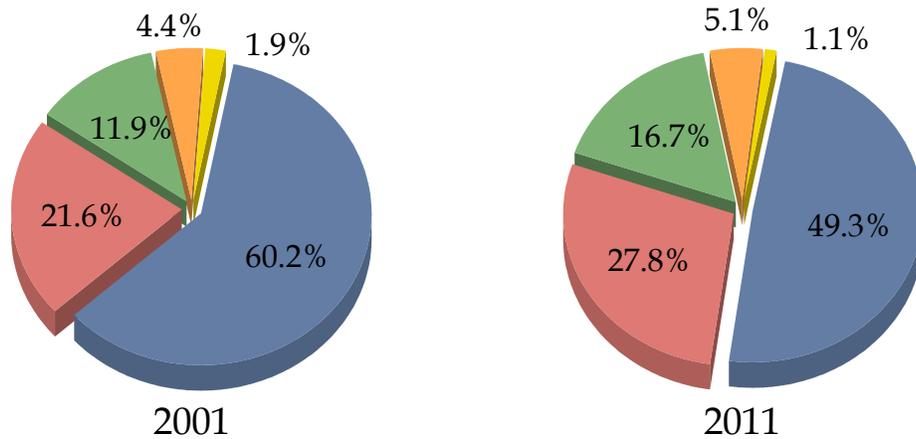
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2001-2011). Data File Exchange. Tables: C, D.

[http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data\\_File\\_Exchange.html](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 |        |        |
|-----------------|---------------|-------|--------|------------------|-------|--------|---------------|--------|--------|
|                 | 2001          | 2011  | Change | 2001             | 2011  | Change | 2001          | 2011   | Change |
| Miami           | 5,267         | 4,207 | -20.1% | 1,231            | 864   | -29.8% | 6,498         | 5,071  | -22.0% |
| Ft. Lauderdale  | 2,027         | 2,540 | 25.3%  | 308              | 323   | 4.9%   | 2,335         | 2,863  | 22.6%  |
| West Palm Beach | 1,118         | 1,513 | 35.3%  | 172              | 210   | 22.1%  | 1,290         | 1,723  | 33.6%  |
| Ft. Pierce      | 406           | 443   | 9.1%   | 65               | 80    | 23.1%  | 471           | 523    | 11.0%  |
| Key West        | 143           | 90    | -37.1% | 65               | 20    | -69.2% | 208           | 110    | -47.1% |
| District        | 8,961         | 8,793 | -1.9%  | 1,841            | 1,497 | -18.7% | 10,802        | 10,290 | -4.7%  |

Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.

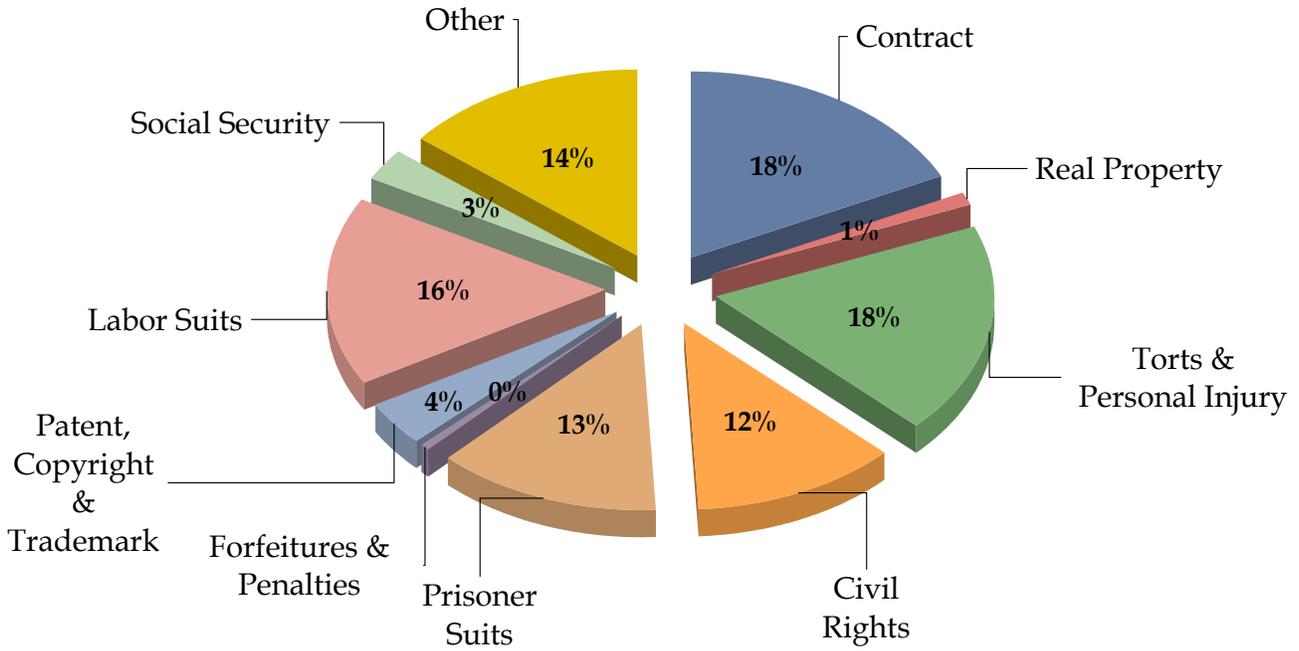
Sources: CM/ECF; Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2001,2011). Data File Exchange. Tables: C, D.

[http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data\\_File\\_Exchange.html](http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html)

# Statistics - Civil

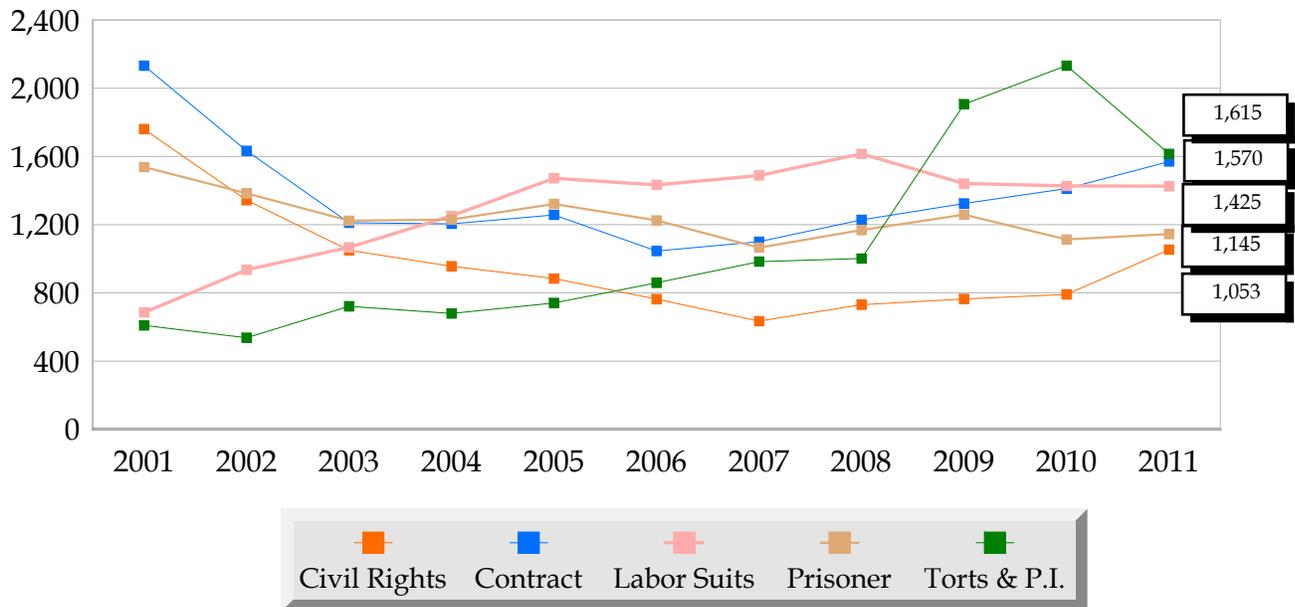
## Civil Case Filings

Fiscal Year 2011 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



## Selected Civil Filings

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2001-2011). Data File Exchange. Table: C-3.

[http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data\\_File\\_Exchange.html](http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html)

# Statistics - Civil

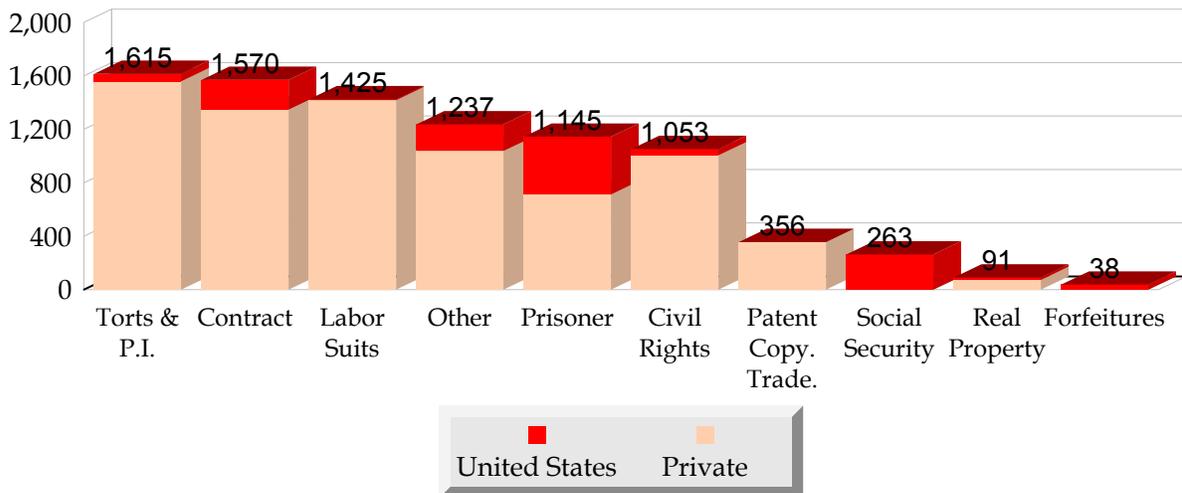
## Civil Filings

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

|                               | 2010  | 2011  | Change |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Civil Rights                  | 791   | 1,053 | 33.1%  |
| Contract                      | 1,411 | 1,570 | 11.3%  |
| Forfeitures & Penalties       | 39    | 38    | -2.6%  |
| Labor Suits                   | 1,427 | 1,425 | -0.1%  |
| Patent, Copyright & Trademark | 297   | 356   | 19.9%  |
| Prisoner Suits                | 1,113 | 1,145 | 2.9%   |
| Real Property                 | 91    | 91    | 0.0%   |
| Social Security               | 178   | 263   | 47.8%  |
| Torts & Personal Injury       | 2,132 | 1,615 | -24.2% |
| Other                         | 1,517 | 1,237 | -18.5% |
| Total                         | 8,996 | 8,793 | -2.3%  |

## Civil Filings

Fiscal Year 2011 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



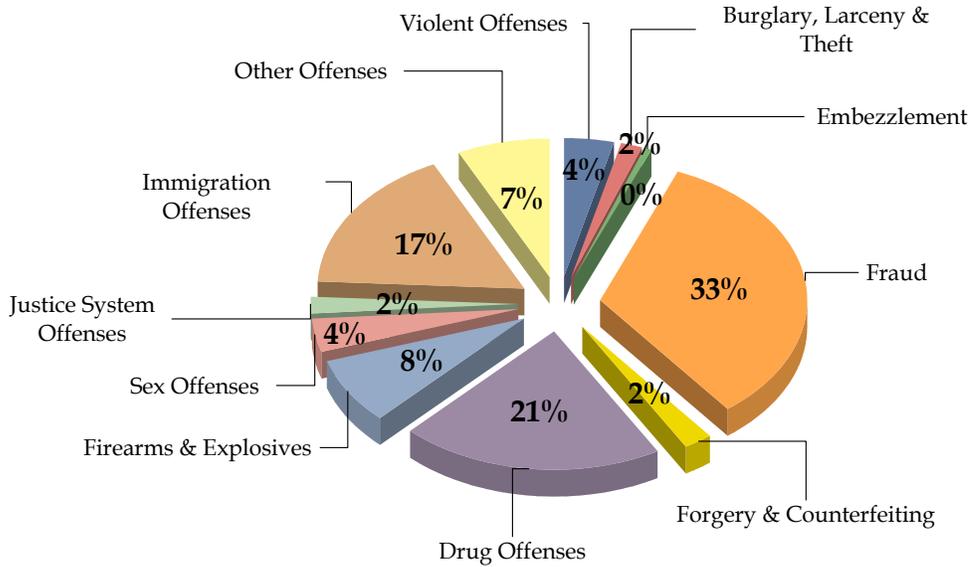
Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2010-2011). Data File Exchange. Table: C-3.

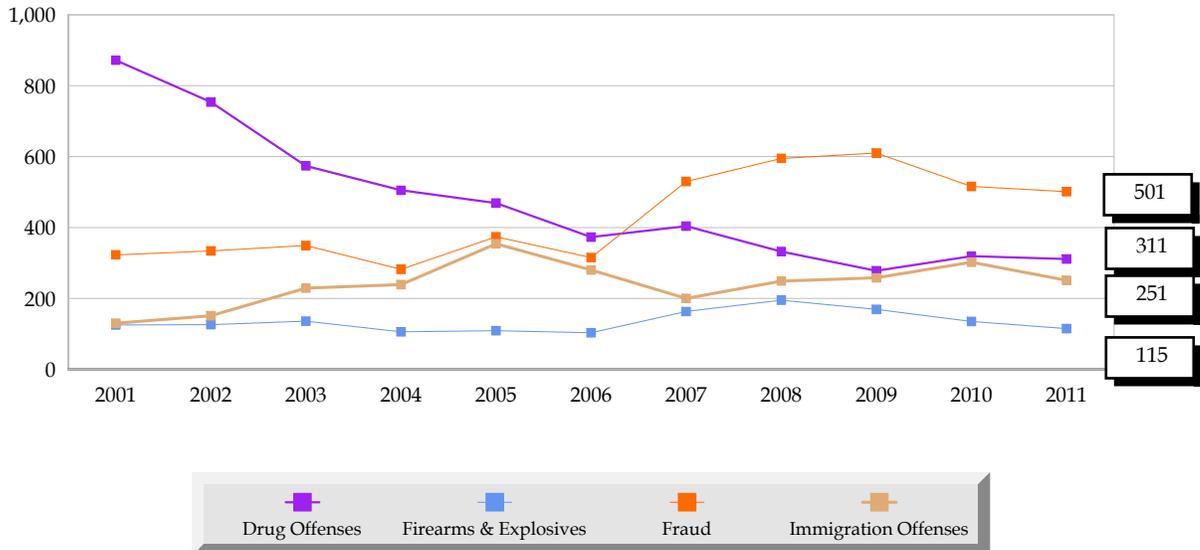
[http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data\\_File\\_Exchange.html](http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html)

# Statistics - Criminal

**Criminal Case Filings**  
Fiscal Year 2011 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



**Selected Criminal Filings**  
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



Notes: Includes original and reopen filings.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2001-2011). Data File Exchange. Tables: D, D-3.

[http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data\\_File\\_Exchange.html](http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html)

# Statistics - Criminal

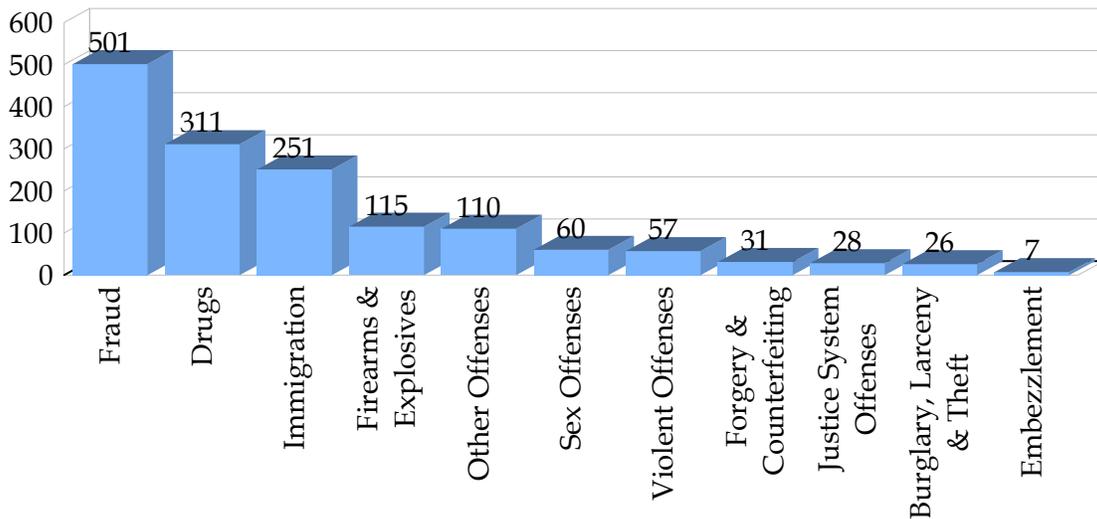
## Criminal Filings

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

|                           | 2010         | 2011         | Change       |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Burglary, Larceny & Theft | 24           | 26           | 8.3%         |
| Drug Offenses             | 319          | 311          | -2.5%        |
| Embezzlement              | 8            | 7            | -12.5%       |
| Firearms and Explosives   | 135          | 115          | -14.8%       |
| Forgery & Counterfeiting  | 33           | 31           | -6.1%        |
| Fraud                     | 516          | 501          | -2.9%        |
| Immigration Offenses      | 302          | 251          | -16.9%       |
| Justice System Offenses   | 26           | 28           | 7.7%         |
| Sex Offenses              | 57           | 60           | 5.3%         |
| Violent Offenses          | 42           | 57           | 35.7%        |
| Other                     | 98           | 110          | 12.2%        |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>1,560</b> | <b>1,497</b> | <b>-4.0%</b> |

## Criminal Filings

Fiscal Year 2011 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

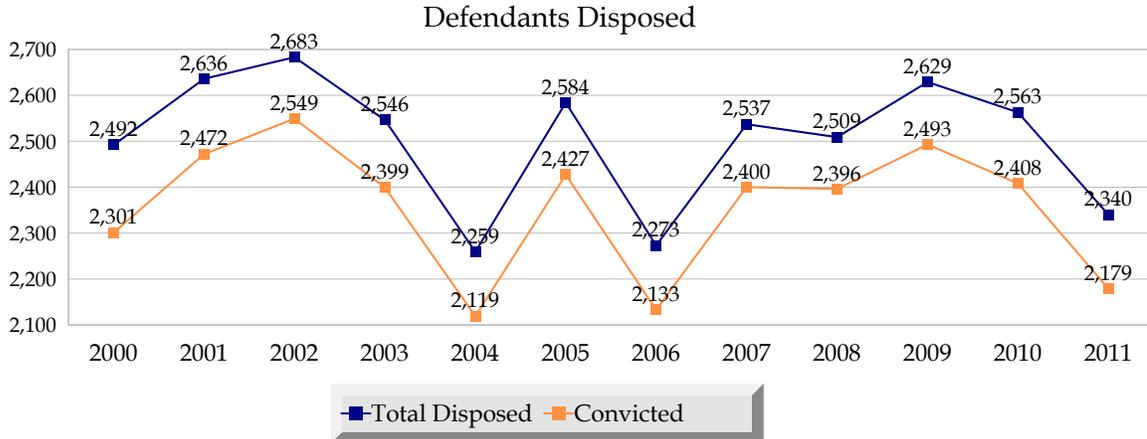


Notes: Includes original and reopen filings.

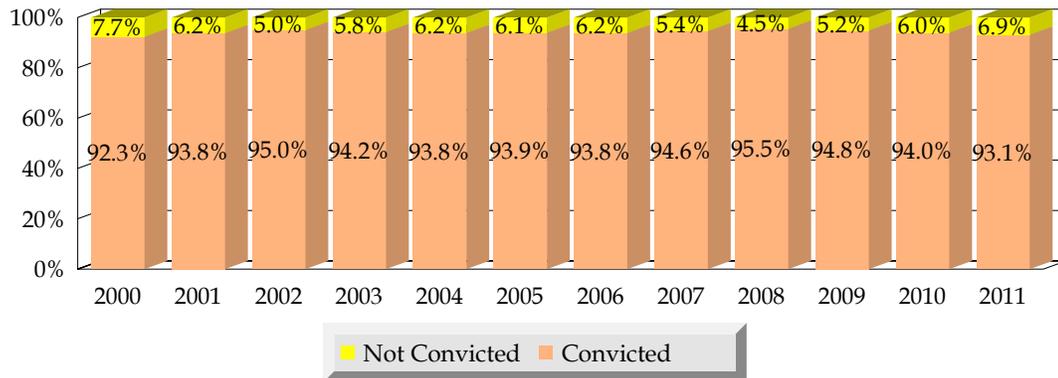
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2010-2011). Data File Exchange. Tables: D, D-3.

# Statistics - Criminal

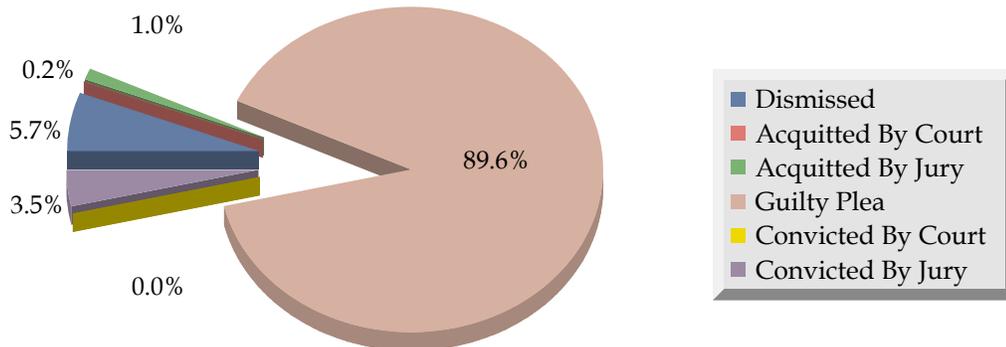
Criminal Defendants Disposed  
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



Rates of Conviction



Criminal Defendants Disposed  
Fiscal Year 2011 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



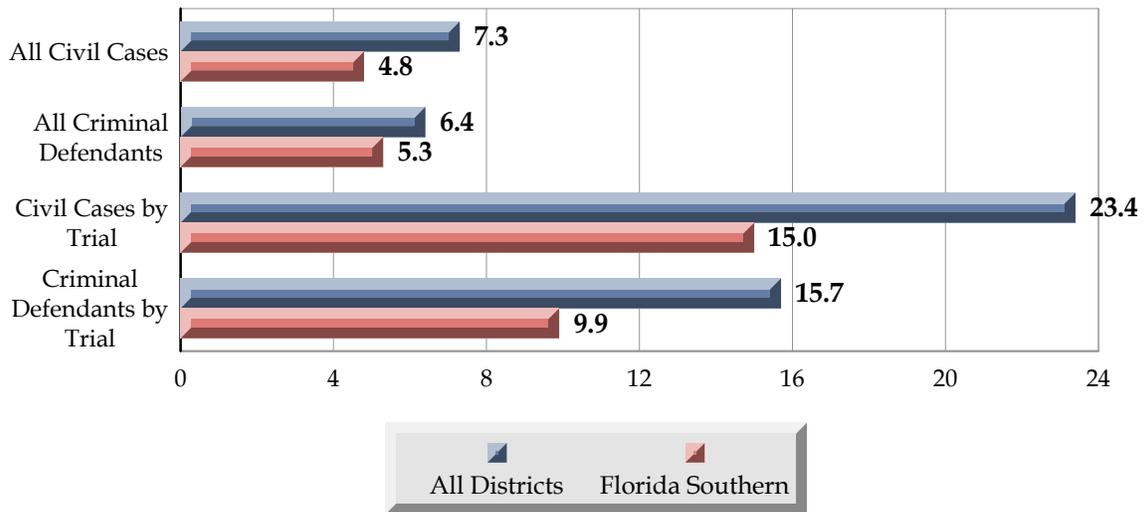
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2000-2011). Data File Exchange. Table: D-7.

# Statistics - Disposition Times

## Median Months Filing to Disposition

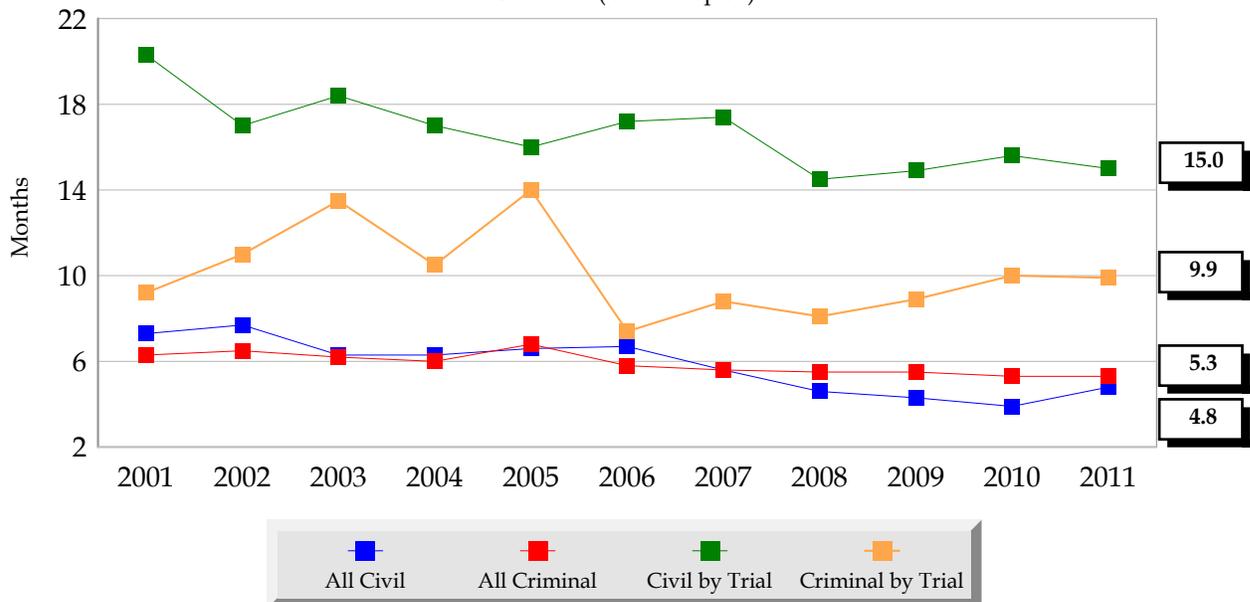
### Disposition Time Comparison

Fiscal Year 2011 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



### Disposition Time - Florida Southern

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



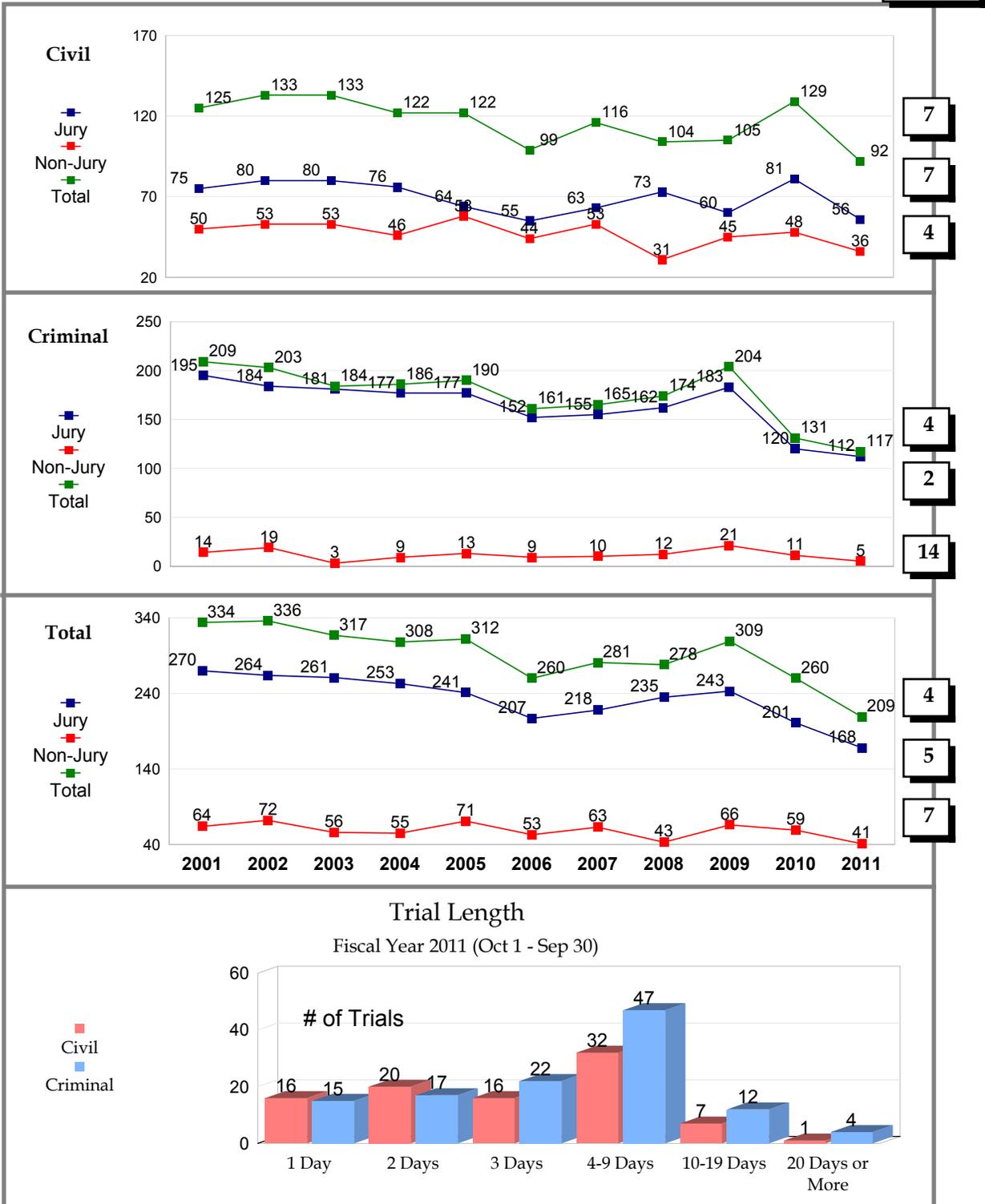
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2001-2011). Data File Exchange. Tables: C-5, D-6. [http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data\\_File\\_Exchange.html](http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html)

# Statistics - Trials

## Jury and Non-Jury Trials Completed

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

National Rank



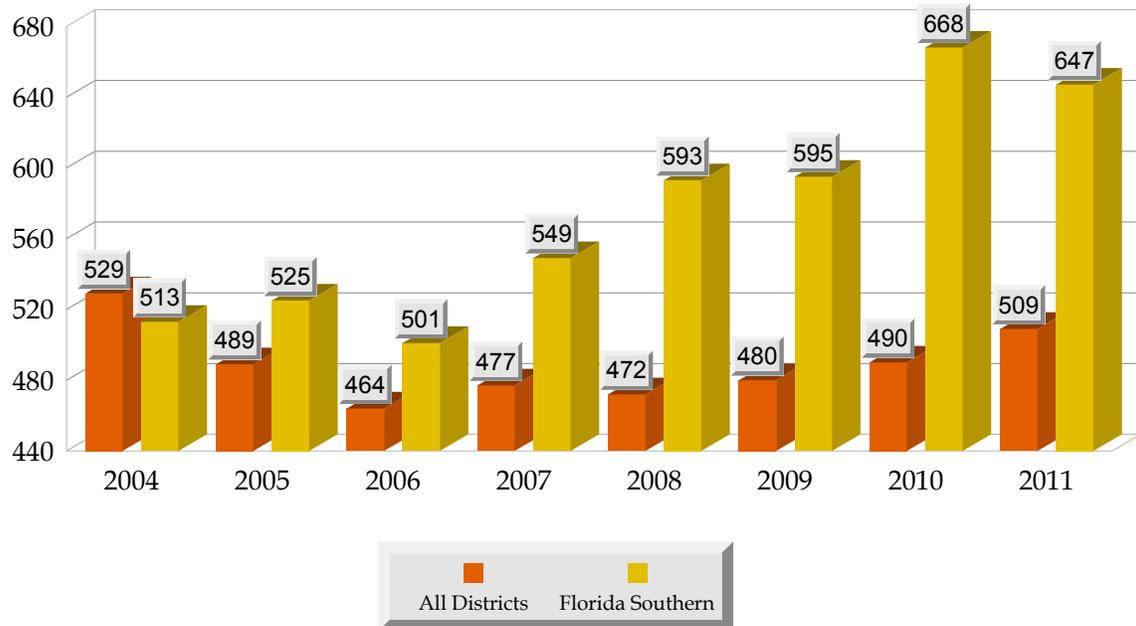
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. (2001-2011). Data File Exchange. Tables: T-1, T-2.  
[http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data\\_File\\_Exchange.html](http://jnet.ao.dcn/Statistics/Data_File_Exchange.html)

# Statistics - Weighted Filings

## Weighted Filings per Authorized Judgeship

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

### Weighted Filings Comparison



### Weighted Filings Detail - Florida Southern

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Civil</u> | <u>Criminal</u> | <u>Supervised<br/>Release</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>National<br/>Rank</u> |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| 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                        |
| 2011        | 511          | 133             | 3.30                          | 647          | 13                       |

# Special Events and Occasions



## Fort Pierce Courthouse Construction

The newest U.S. Federal Courthouse in the Southern District is an award winning Mediterranean revival design located in downtown Fort Pierce at the intersection of US 1 and Orange Avenue. This new structure is serving as a catalyst for the city's revitalization. The ground-breaking for construction started January 5, 2009, and the courthouse was completed on time and within budget, on November 2, 2011. The 123,400 gross square foot facility has four floors and blends interior aesthetics and exterior security. The main entrance has an atrium lobby featuring glass walls, terrazzo flooring, beech wood siding and floral-themed murals, entitled "Natural Justice," at either end of the lobby.

Several federal agencies have offices in the courthouse including the U.S. District Court, U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. Marshals Service, and U.S. Probation. There are two courtrooms in the courthouse and room for two more. The complex was designed to accommodate expansion needs for the next 30 years.

# Special Events and Occasions



**Congressional Swearing-In Ceremony  
(Chief Judge Federico A. Moreno, Senator Marco Rubio,  
Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Congressman  
Mario Diaz-Balart and Congresswoman Frederica Wilson)  
January 2011**



**District Judge Alan S. Gold  
elected Senior Status  
January 2011**



**Black History Month Celebration  
February 2011**

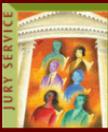


**Michael G. Smith  
Recipient of the Judge Eugene P. Spellman  
CJA Attorney of Excellence Award  
March 2011**

# Special Events and Occasions



**Eric Gabrielle—Recipient of the  
Judge Jose A. Gonzalez, Jr.  
Unsung Hero Award  
March 2011**



**JUROR APPRECIATION WEEK**  
**May 2 – 6, 2011**

[Click here for more information.](#)



**Juror Appreciation Week  
May 2011**

THE UNITED STATES  
DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT  
OF FLORIDA

**2011 HISPANIC  
HERITAGE  
CELEBRATION**



Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr.  
United States Courthouse  
Courtroom 13-3  
September 22, 2011  
11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Hispanic Heritage  
Month Celebration  
September 2011**



**Chief Judge Federico A. Moreno  
Judge Jose A. Gonzalez, Jr.  
September 2011**



**Chief Judge Federico A. Moreno  
Judge Mario P. Goderich  
September 2011**

# Special Events and Occasions



**Kathleen M. Williams,  
United States District Judge Investiture  
October 2011**



**Chief Judge Edward B. Davis  
Jury Assembly Room  
Dedication Ceremony  
December 2011**



**Robert N. Scola, Jr.,  
United States District Judge Investiture  
December 2011**

# A Message from the Court Administrator

*"Chasing Perfection...Economically!"*

**I**t seems that 2011 was all about the economic downturn, government cut backs and lay offs for our state court counterparts. Maintaining the *status quo* probably would have been an admirable feat under these circumstances. But as this report demonstrates, during 2011 Clerk's Office personnel and the Court as a whole achieved a number of accomplishments that will result in far better customer service for the bar and the general public that we serve.

**T**o guide our quest, the Clerk's Office has established and is constantly monitoring both quantitative and qualitative measures of our performance, such as how long it takes us to open new cases. We call these "Standards of Excellence." They serve as a constant reminder that even if our resources are reduced, we need to continue meeting these standards for critical items, as our purpose is to provide timely, quality services to our constituents.

**Y**ou will also notice that the vast majority of our projects and process improvements over the past year have involved some form of technological enhancements, such as installation of new software or development of new programming for existing systems. As good stewards of the public dollar, we are always on the lookout for ways to provide better service - often through technology - while keeping our costs as low as possible.

**D**espite adversity, I am extremely proud of what the Clerk's Office of the Southern District has accomplished this past year, as we continue our quest to "Chase Perfection, Catch 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

## CM/ECF ON-LINE INTERACTIVE TRAINING FOR ATTORNEYS



Beginning in December 2011, attorneys now have the option of satisfying our CM/ECF training requirement from the convenience of their office or home. Previously, attorneys were required to take time away from their busy practice to travel to either Miami or West Palm Beach to attend a hands-on training session. Now an attorney can choose to complete the on-line computer based course, and within three business days, an attorney will be able to start filing cases via CM/ECF. The computer based course is a convenient alternative to the hands-on training, which is still available for attorneys who prefer this training method.

## eJUROR

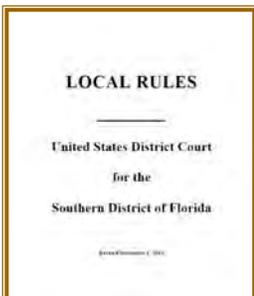


In our continuing efforts to automate and streamline processes, eJuror was implemented in April 2011. eJuror is a program from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts that was created to make the jury summons process easier for jurors, and as a cost-savings measure for the entire judiciary. Prospective jurors now have the opportunity to respond to their summons or questionnaires on-line from the convenience of their home. They can also update personal information, submit a request for excusal or deferral and find out when they need to report to jury service. Besides saving time for both jurors and jury staff, the Court has experienced a faster response from potential jurors, an increase in data reliability, a decrease in data entry and postage, as well as fewer forms to process manually. Approximately 30% of respondents now use eJuror.

## CLERK'S OFFICE LOBBY REDESIGN IN THE WILKIE D. FERGUSON, JR. COURTHOUSE

The Clerk's Office lobby on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of the Miami Courthouse was originally designed with several filing windows and a large amount of counter space to accommodate public access to the court via in-person contact. With the recent enhancements in technology, we have experienced a decrease in foot traffic and the lobby space was underutilized. In 2011, we redesigned the lobby to increase the number of computers available to the public and decrease the counter space which wasn't being used. This redesign provided us with additional space to accommodate the needs of the Intake, Records and Operations departments.

## LOCAL RULES REVISIONS



The Southern District of Florida's Local Rules Committee, chaired by attorney Kevin Jacobs, undertook the first comprehensive re-write of the Local Rules in many years. The result was a new streamlined version of our Local Rules adopted in December that deleted unnecessary rules and eliminated duplication with existing Federal Rules. The final product of this Herculean task contains 12 fewer rules and many fewer pages than its predecessor.

# Priority Projects and Highlights

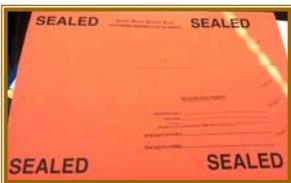
## PATENT PILOT PROJECT

In 2011, the Southern District of Florida became one of 14 Districts nationally participating in a pilot project established by Public Law 111-349. The Act aims to create local expertise in the management and adjudication of patent cases by establishing a small special wheel comprised of three judges to handle patent cases. Appeal and reversal rates will be studied nationally comparing results in cases handled by patent and non-patent judges. Information about the administration of the Patent Pilot in this District can be found on the Southern District's website.

## CM/ECF UPGRADE 5.0.3.

In October 2011, the Court upgraded its case management/electronic case filing system (CM/ECF). The upgraded system allows the Court more flexibility in defining electronically access to restricted and sensitive filings. It also includes functionality to search for key words throughout the cases in the system. In addition, the new upgrade provides additional security features associated with logging into the system.

## DOCKETING SEALED FILINGS



Most sealed case filings and sealed case documents are now docketed in CM/ECF with access restricted to specific internal users. Chambers staff now have electronic access to sealed documents and no longer have to request paper copies from the Records section. This allows Chambers to receive sealed documents faster. This process also allowed the Records section to redistribute their workload and process the mail and scan conventionally-filed documents in less time.

## FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

During 2011, our Financial section implemented a number of automated improvements to enhance our ability to provide better customer service in a more timely and accurate manner. Criminal debt payments are now easier to process by the use of new financial applications. The Over The Counter channel system (OTCnet) confirms daily deposits with the bank, the Transaction Reporting System (TRS) generates deposit reports and provides detailed information of collected payments, and the Consolidated Debt Collection System (CDCS) allows automatic transfer of collected funds by case number from the Clerk's Office to the U.S. Attorney's Office. Prior to these applications data was manually deposited, balanced and entered for each case. The new financial systems provide more detailed information about payments, identify and correct errors for reconciliation, and save time with month end closings.

# Priority Projects and Highlights

## MAIL PROCESSING



Staff now utilizes mail equipment instead of manual procedures to save processing time in Miami. Under new processes established in 2011, each day volumes of incoming mail are run through a meter machine that automatically inspects and stamps each piece of mail. When Fed Ex, UPS and other express mail are delivered, staff now uses a device that scans tracking numbers and reads addressee information that is immediately uploaded to a log for the mail receiver's signature. It is estimated that staff saves 2-3 hours of mail processing time each day due to the use of this new mail equipment.

## INS NAME CHANGE

Thanks to a scanning project completed by Records staff and a vendor in 2011, now more than 10,000 records of Naturalized citizens' name changes, dating back to the 1980's, can be quickly searched by text. Previously the research was a time-consuming, manual task for staff. The new process saves staff time and has enhanced customer service.

## INTERNET AND INTRANET ENHANCEMENTS



The Southern District internet and intranet sites were redesigned by staff in 2011 based on input from attorneys, court employees, and the public. Users agree that both new sites have a professional look and are user friendly, easier to navigate, and very informative. Your comments are always welcome.

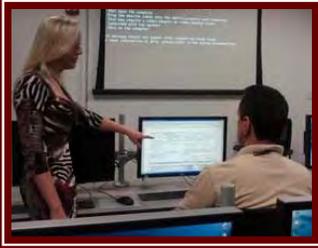
## EFFICIENCY PROCEDURES DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED IN 2011

One of the Clerk's Office's top priorities in 2011 was process improvement and operational efficiency. In part with the assistance of an outside efficiency expert who coached Clerk's Office personnel during a staff retreat in August, a number of areas were targeted for development of streamlined procedures. The most significant efficiencies achieved throughout the year included the following:

- ◆ Modification of Magistrate Court processes to consolidate Orders on Initial Appearance with minutes resulting in less data entry
- ◆ Creation of an application that stamps case/judge/time information on case initiating documents
- ◆ Establishment of electronic invoicing and consolidation of invoices for more timely payment of court vendors
- ◆ Development of an application that monitors CM/ECF standards of excellence
- ◆ Creation of an application that quickly updates AO statistical reports
- ◆ Replacement of an upload tool – ECF Assistant – with a more efficient system, Lean Scan

# Priority Projects and Highlights

## STAFF TRAINING



**I**ncreased training of Clerk's Office personnel was a major focus in 2011. Toward that end, the following new training programs were developed or delivered during the year:

**Introduction to the Federal Judiciary and Federal Procedure**—*Topics included jurisprudence, legal terms, civil procedure, pleadings and motions, international law;*

**Code of Conduct**—*Understanding ethical principles, obligations, and standards that guide work performance;*

**Stress Management**—*Exposure to concepts, principles, and behaviors to better manage one's self and enhance work performance;*

**Sexual Harassment Awareness**—*Understanding acceptable and unacceptable workplace behavior;*

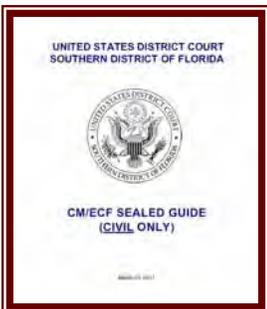
**Departmental Open Houses**—*Exposure to the purpose and responsibilities of each department in the Clerk's Office;*

**Lunch and Learn**—*Series of lunch time meetings to review employee benefits;*

**Leadership Program**—*Personal development for staff to learn leadership skills regardless of having a management title;*

**Staff Retreat**—*To explore ways to add value to the court and build relationships among staff to enhance decision making and collaboration;*

## UPDATES AND REVISIONS TO COURT OPERATIONAL MANUALS



**O**ne key to improving operational efficiency is clearly documenting existing processes so that it is easier to identify needed changes. As a result, during 2011 the Clerk's Office made a concerted effort to increase documentation of our processes. The result was either the complete revision of a number of existing manuals, or the creation of new manuals in a number of operational areas including:

- ◆ Civil New Case Opening User Guide
- ◆ Civil and Criminal Docket Manual Users Guides
- ◆ Sealed Case Procedures
- ◆ Clerk's Office Internal Operating Procedures
- ◆ Quality Control Procedures
- ◆ Revision of Courtroom Deputy Manual
- ◆ Revision of the District Judges FAQs
- ◆ Revision of the JS10 Guide

# Employee Recognition and Service Anniversaries



# Employee Recognition and Service Anniversaries

