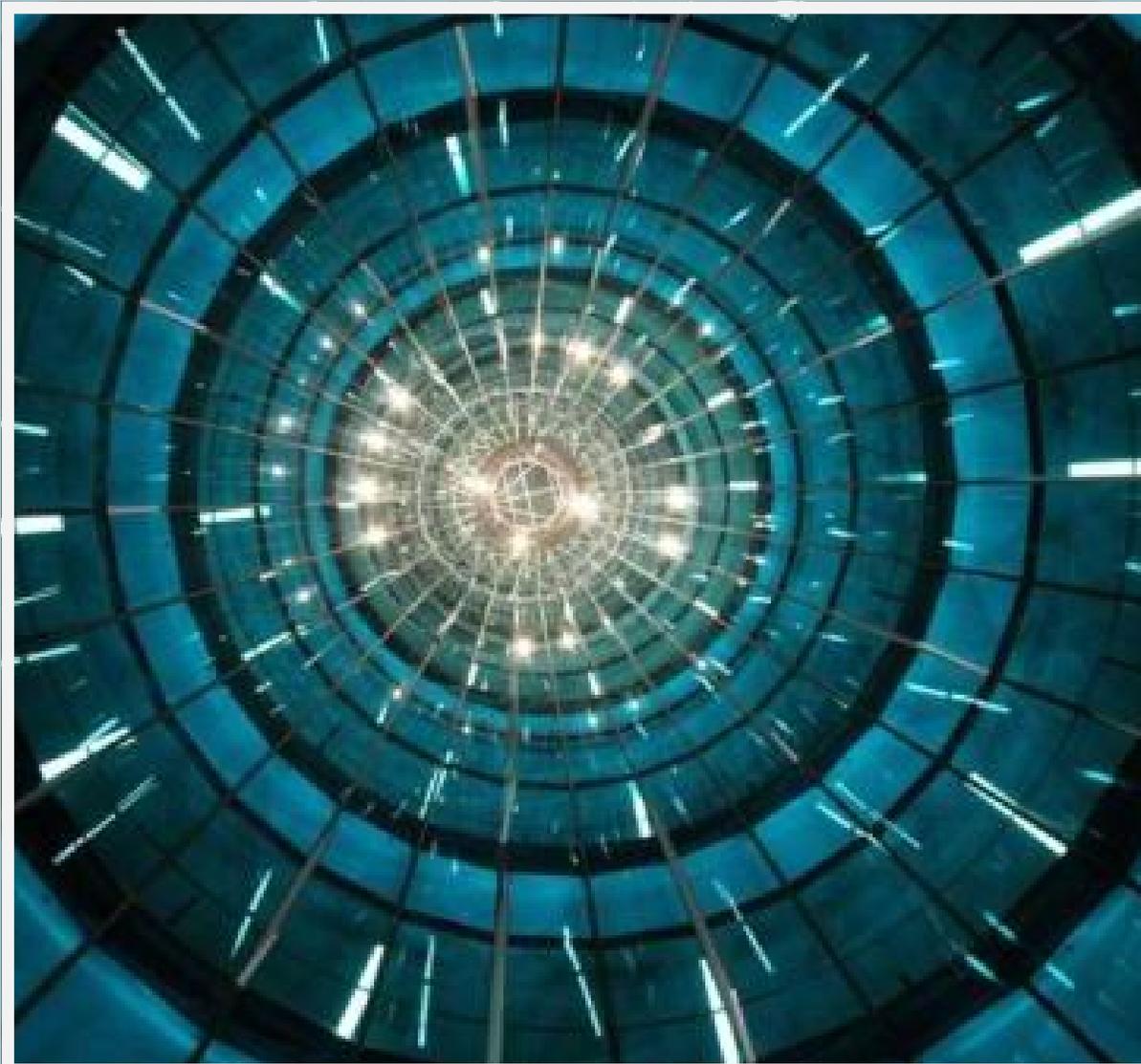


UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA



STATE OF THE COURT REPORT  
2012

# US COURTS

## 2012

### T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

3	The Southern District of Florida
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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  
PHONE: (305) 523-5100  
WWW.FLSD.USCOURTS.GOV

## 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 Vero Beach in the north to the nation's southernmost point in Key West, the Court's bench includes 18 authorized District Judge positions; 8 Senior District Judges; 16 Magistrate Judge positions; and 3 recalled Magistrate Judges in 2012. 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 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 and facilities specialists 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 1,567 new criminal case filings involving 2552 criminal defendants, and 7,499 civil case filings during 2012. 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 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 University, 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 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

## **Judge Robin S. Rosenbaum**

Nominated by: President Barack Obama  
Commission Date: June 27, 2012  
Cornell University, B.A., 1988  
University of Miami School of Law, J.D., 1991

# THE JUDGES OF 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 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

## **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 DISTRICT — MAGISTRATE JUDGES

**Chief Magistrate Judge  
Barry S. Seltzer**

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  
Ted E. Bandstra**

Initial Appointment:  
September 25, 1989

**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  
Jonathan Goodman**

Initial Appointment:  
July 23, 2010

**Magistrate Judge  
Dave Lee Brannon**

Initial Appointment:  
February 24, 2012

**Magistrate Judge  
Alicia M. Otazo-Reyes**

Initial Appointment:  
April 12, 2012

**Magistrate Judge  
William Matthewman**

Initial Appointment:  
July 2, 2012

**Magistrate Judge  
Patrick M. Hunt**

Initial Appointment:  
January 28, 2013

**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**

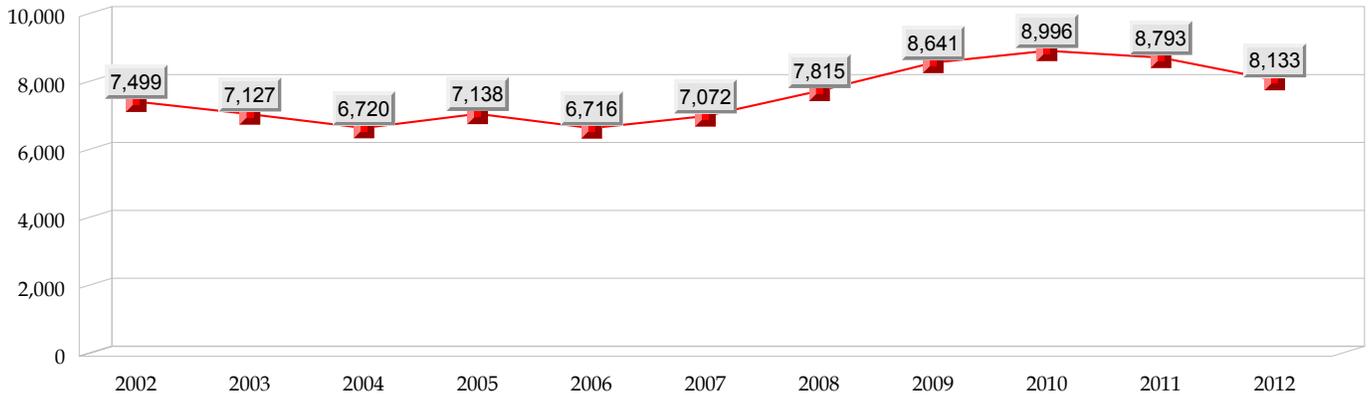
Initial Appointment:  
September 18, 1991  
*Recalled*

# STATISTICAL CHARTS AND GRAPHS OF COURT OPERATIONS

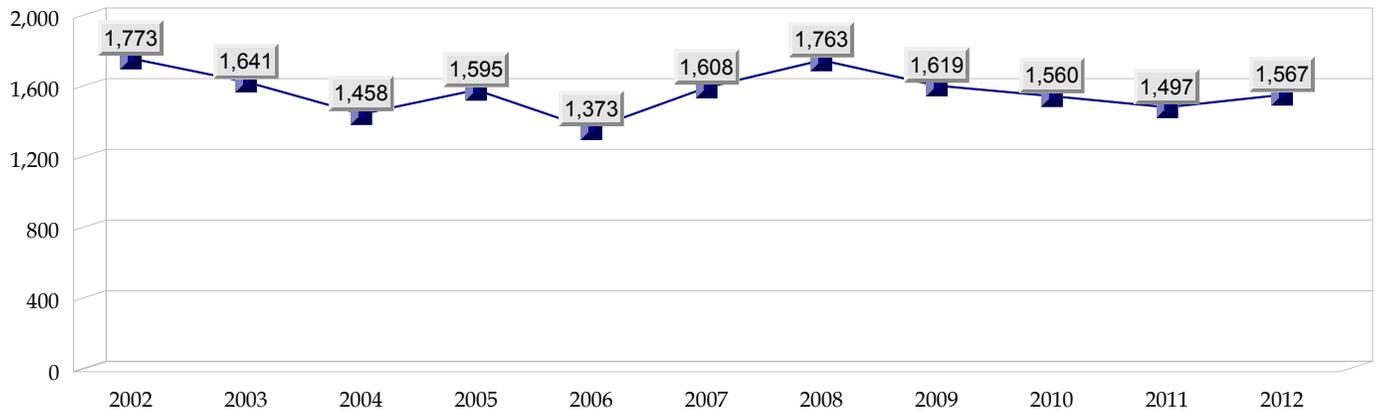
## TOTAL FILINGS

Case Filings  
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

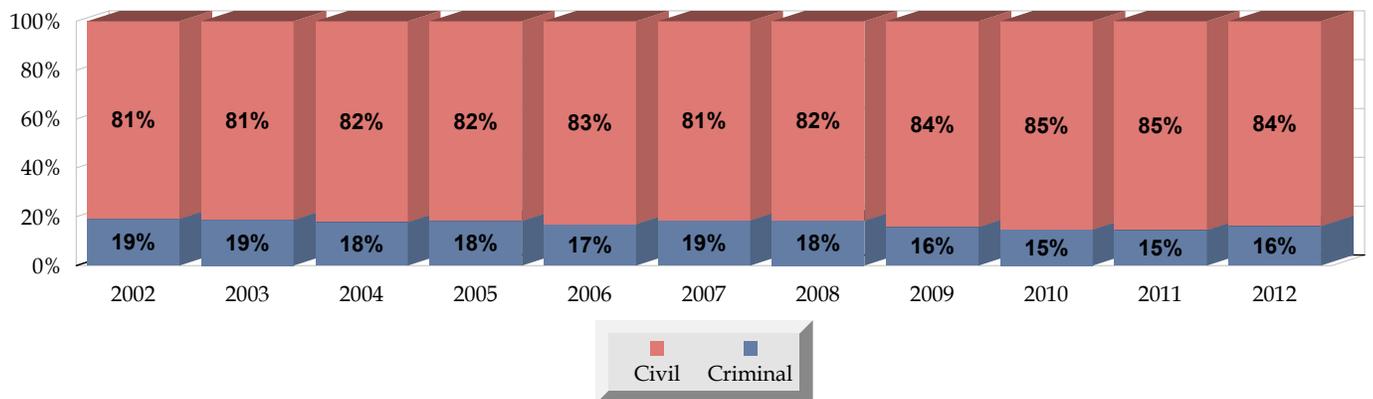
Civil Filings



Criminal Filings



Share of Total Filings



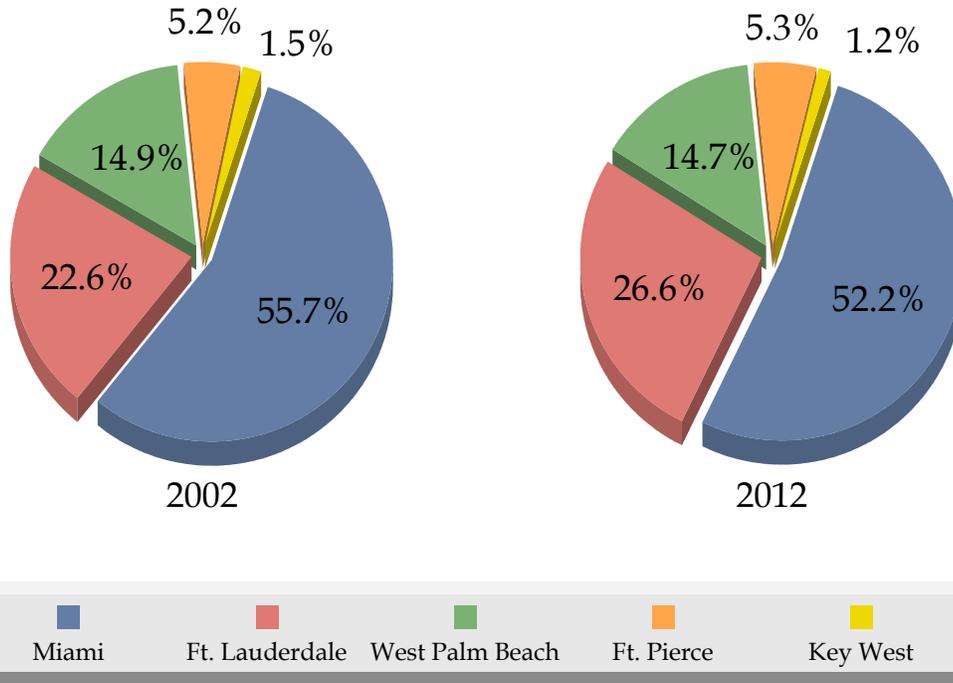
Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2002-2012). Tables: C, D.

<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

## STATISTICS – TOTAL FILINGS

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



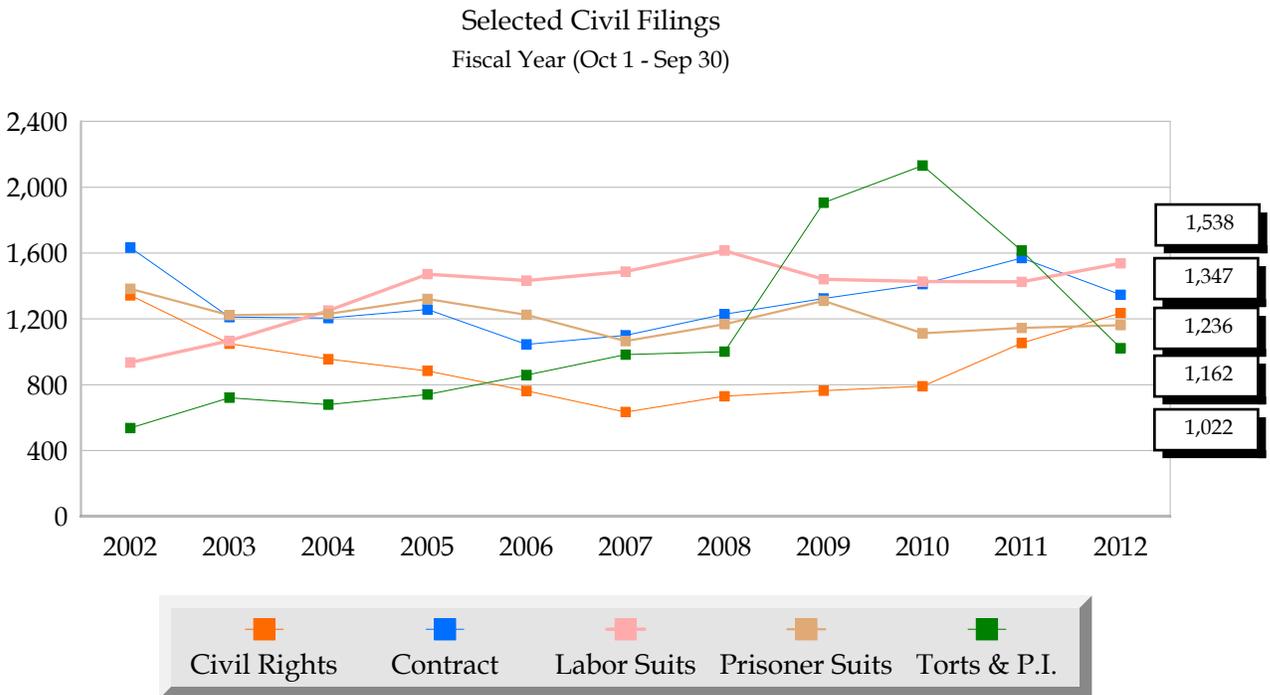
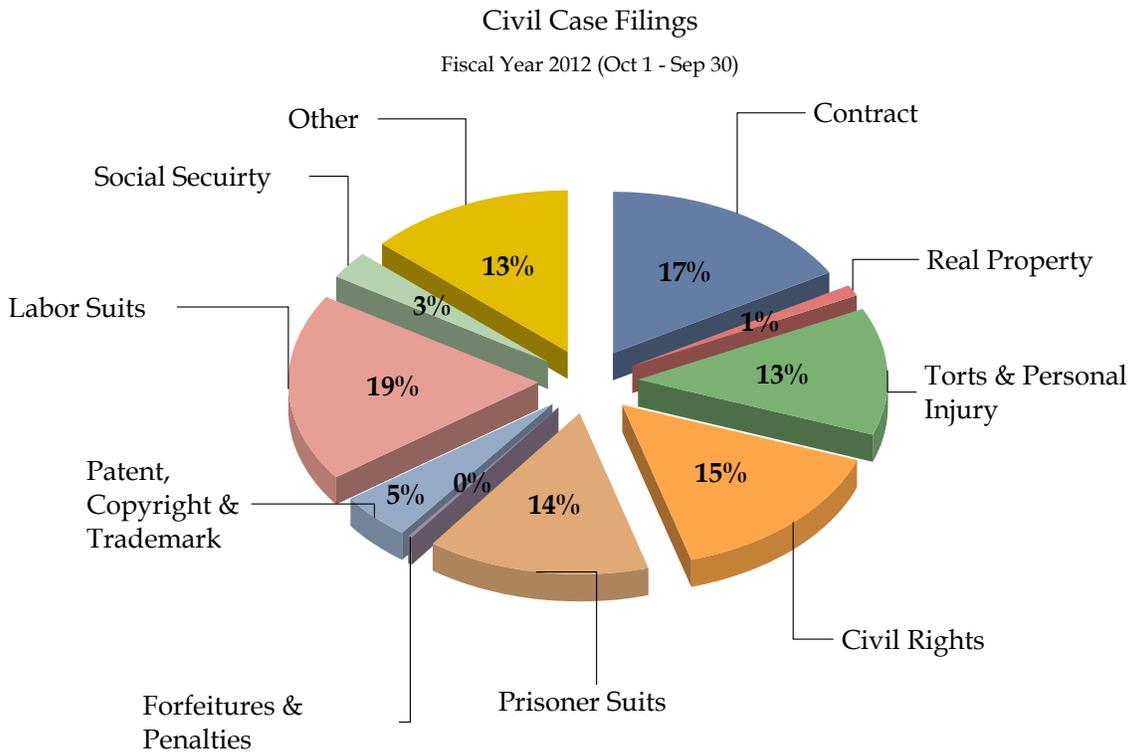
	Civil Filings			Criminal Filings			Total Filings		
	2002	2012	Change	2002	2012	Change	2002	2012	Change
Miami	4,039	4,131	2.3%	1,129	930	-17.6%	5,168	5,061	-2.1%
Ft. Lauderdale	1,795	2,275	26.7%	297	304	2.4%	2,092	2,579	23.3%
West Palm Beach	1,170	1,193	2.0%	213	233	9.4%	1,383	1,426	3.1%
Ft. Pierce	395	434	9.9%	91	81	-11.0%	486	515	6.0%
Key West	100	100	0.0%	43	19	-55.8%	143	119	-16.8%
District	7,499	8,133	8.5%	1,773	1,567	-11.6%	9,272	9,700	4.6%

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

Source: CM/ECF; Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2002,2012). Tables: C, D.

<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

# STATISTICS - CIVIL



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

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2002-2012). Table: C3.

<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

# STATISTICS - CIVIL

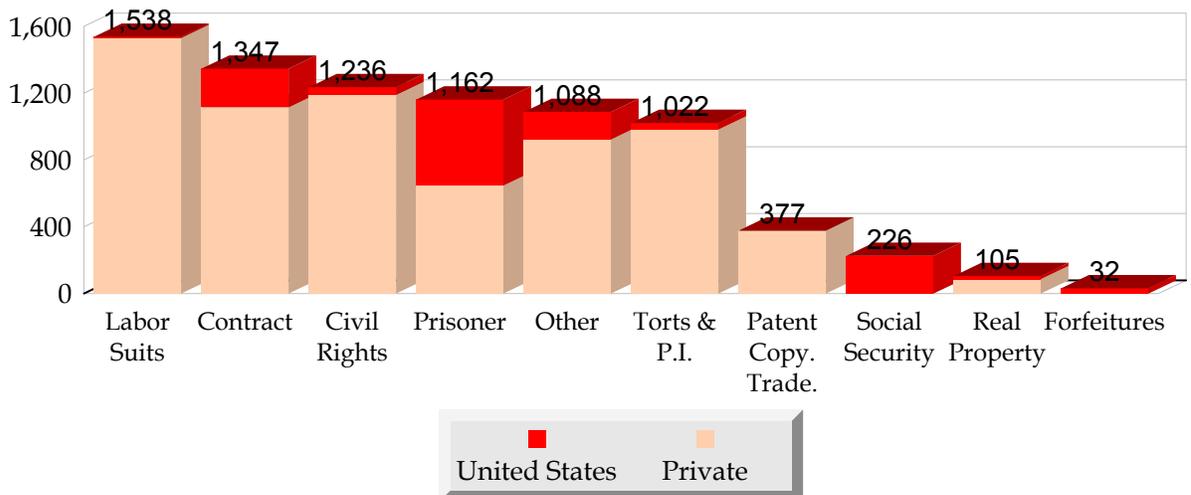
## Civil Filings

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

	2011	2012	Change
Civil Rights	1,053	1,236	17.4%
Contract	1,570	1,347	-14.2%
Forfeitures & Penalties	38	32	-15.8%
Labor Suits	1,425	1,538	7.9%
Patent, Copyright & Trademark	356	377	5.9%
Prisoner Suits	1,145	1,162	1.5%
Real Property	91	105	15.4%
Social Security	263	226	-14.1%
Torts & Personal Injury	1,615	1,022	-36.7%
Other	1,237	1,088	-12.0%
Total	8,793	8,133	-7.5%

## Civil Filings

Fiscal Year 2012 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



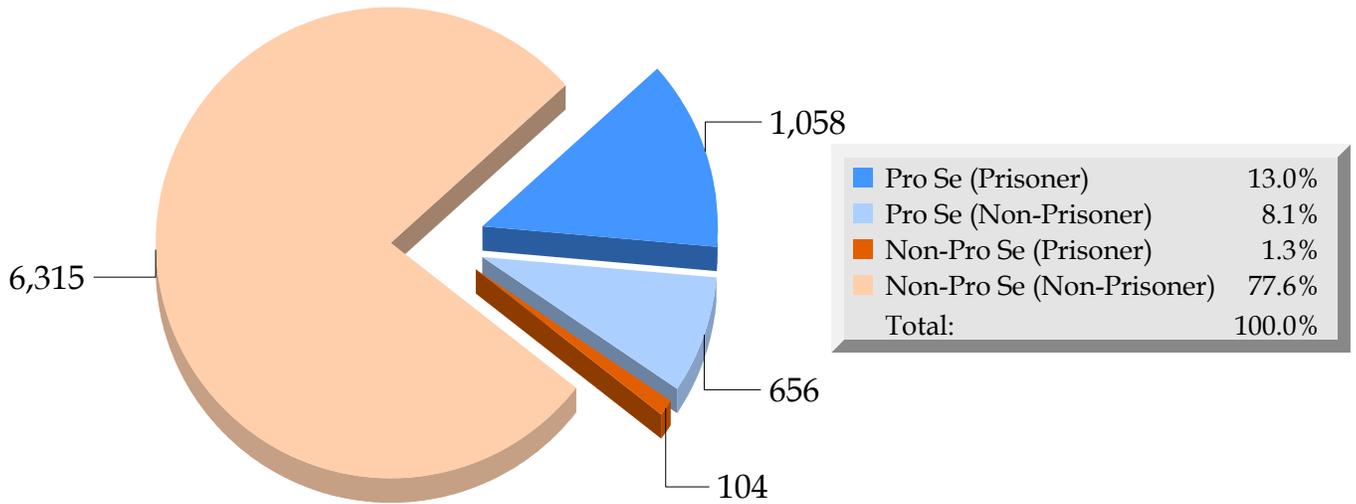
Notes: Includes original and reopen filings. Excludes misc. filings.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2011-2012). Table: C3.

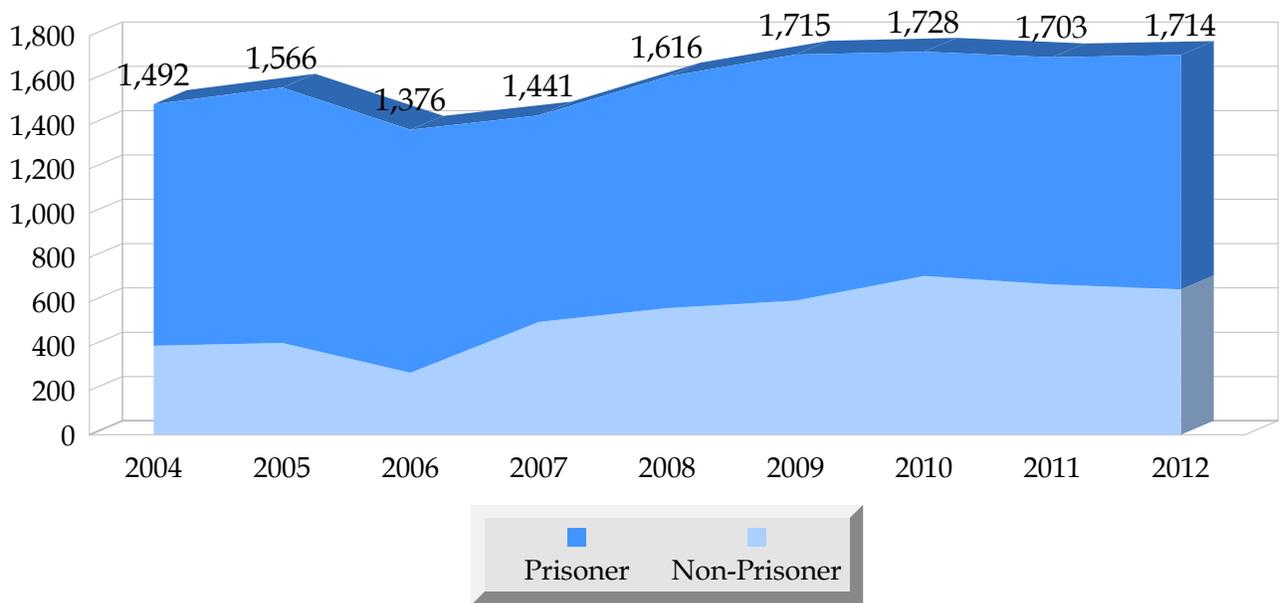
<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

# STATISTICS - CIVIL

Pro Se Case Filings  
Fiscal Year 2012 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



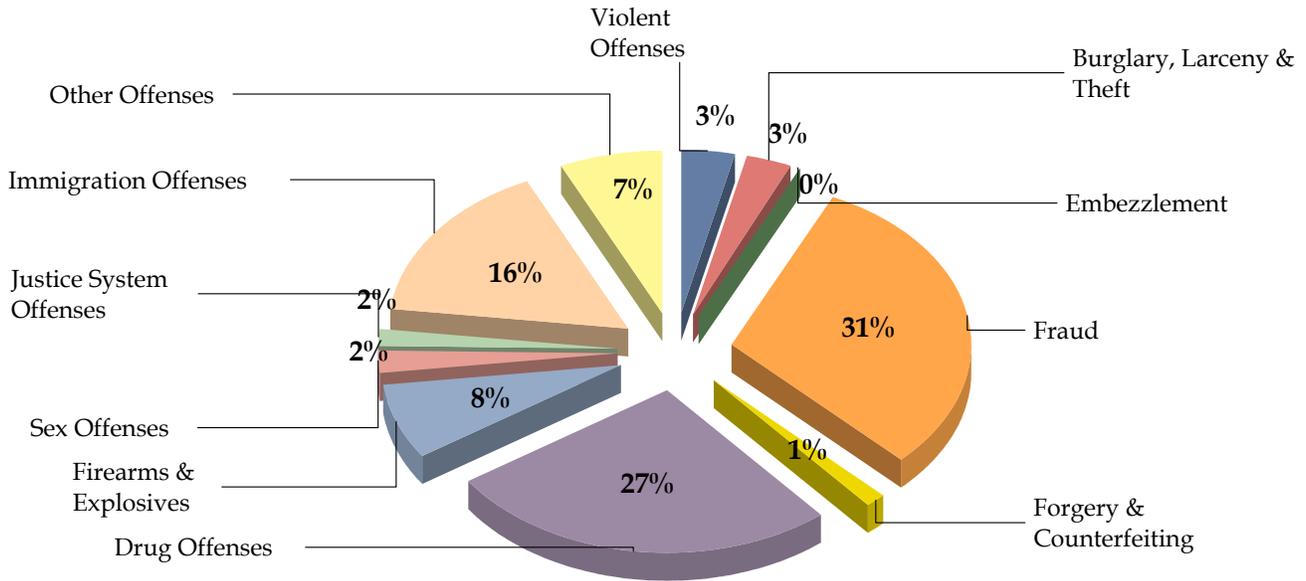
Pro Se Case Filings  
Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



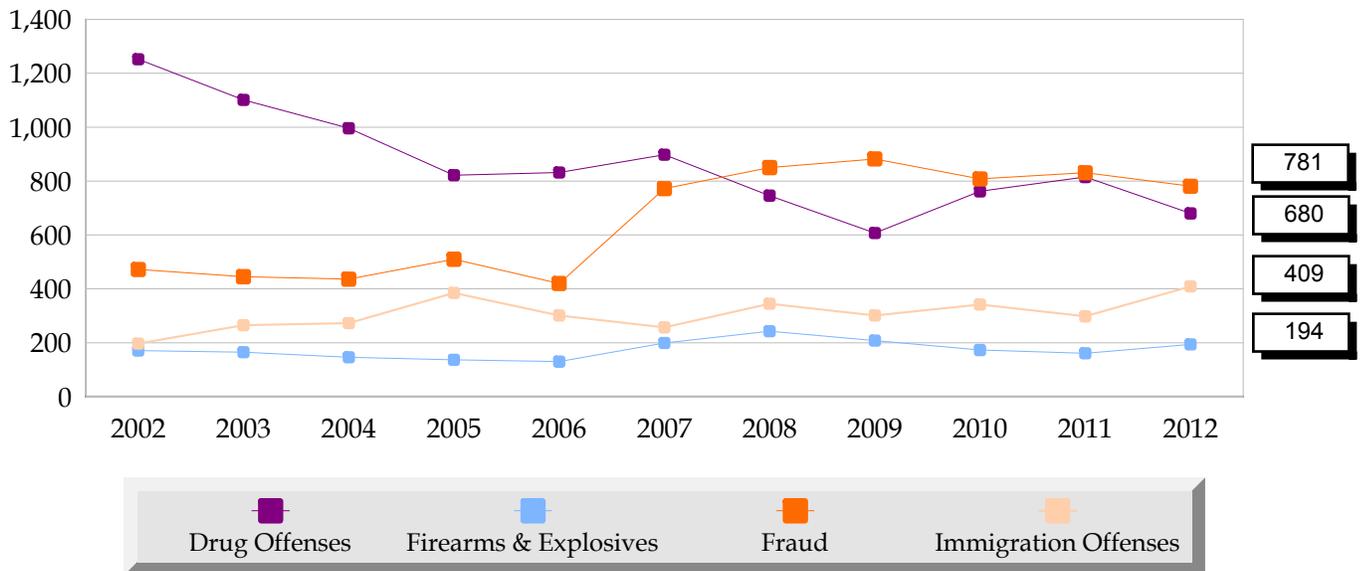
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2004-2012). Table: C-13,S-23,S-24.  
<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

# STATISTICS - CRIMINAL

Criminal Defendant Filings  
Fiscal Year 2012 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



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



Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2002-2012). Tables: D,D-3.  
<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

## STATISTICS – CRIMINAL

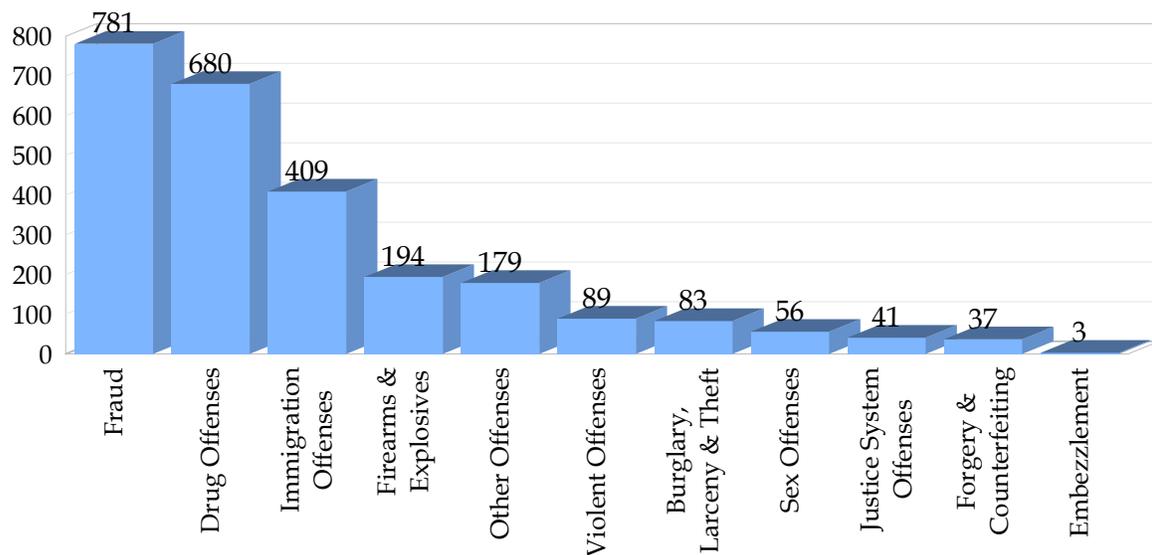
### Criminal Defendant Filings

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

	2011	2012	Change
Burglary, Larceny & Theft	35	83	137.1%
Drug Offenses	815	680	-16.6%
Embezzlement	17	3	-82.4%
Firearms & Explosives	161	194	20.5%
Forgery & Counterfeiting	46	37	-19.6%
Fraud	831	781	-6.0%
Immigration Offenses	298	409	37.2%
Justice System Offenses	35	41	17.1%
Sex Offenses	66	56	-15.2%
Violent Offenses	79	89	12.7%
Other	202	179	-11.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>2,552</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>

### Criminal Defendant Filings

Fiscal Year 2012 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

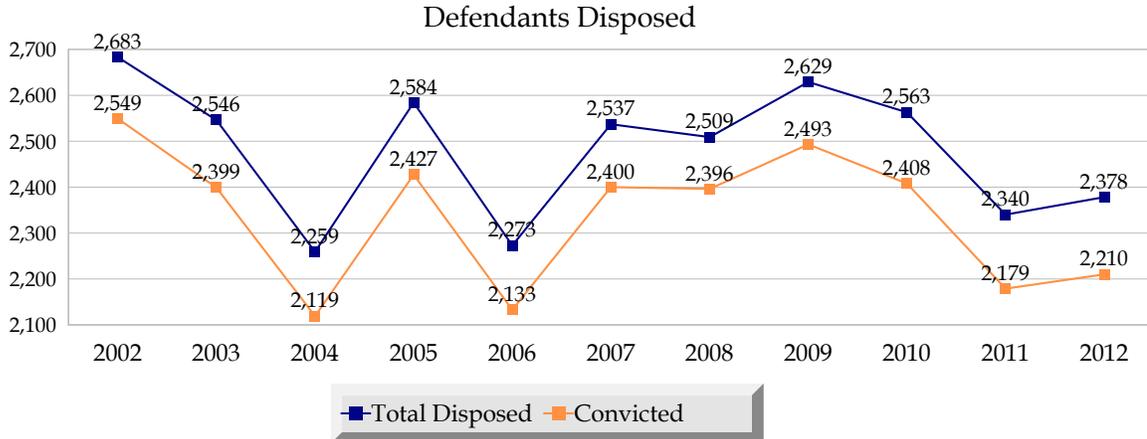


Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts, Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2011,2012). Tables: D,D-3.

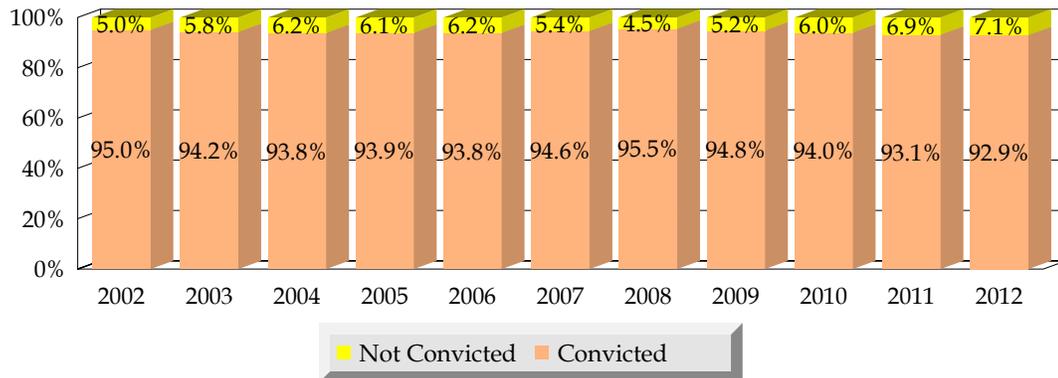
<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

# STATISTICS - CRIMINAL

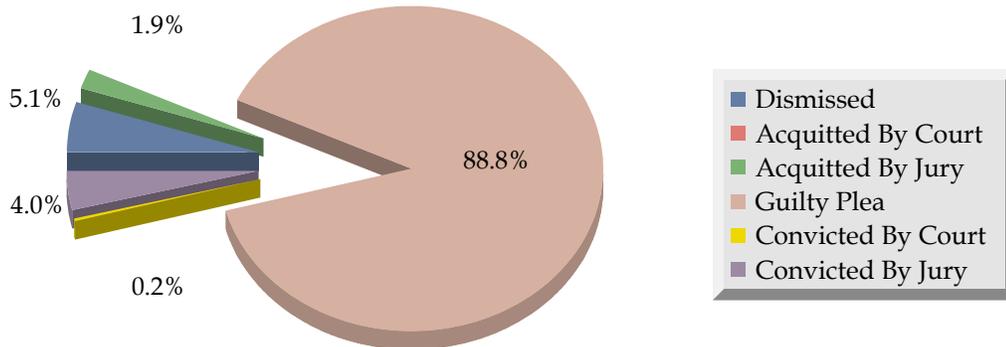
## Criminal Defendants Disposed Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



### Rates of Conviction



### Criminal Defendants Disposed Fiscal Year 2012 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



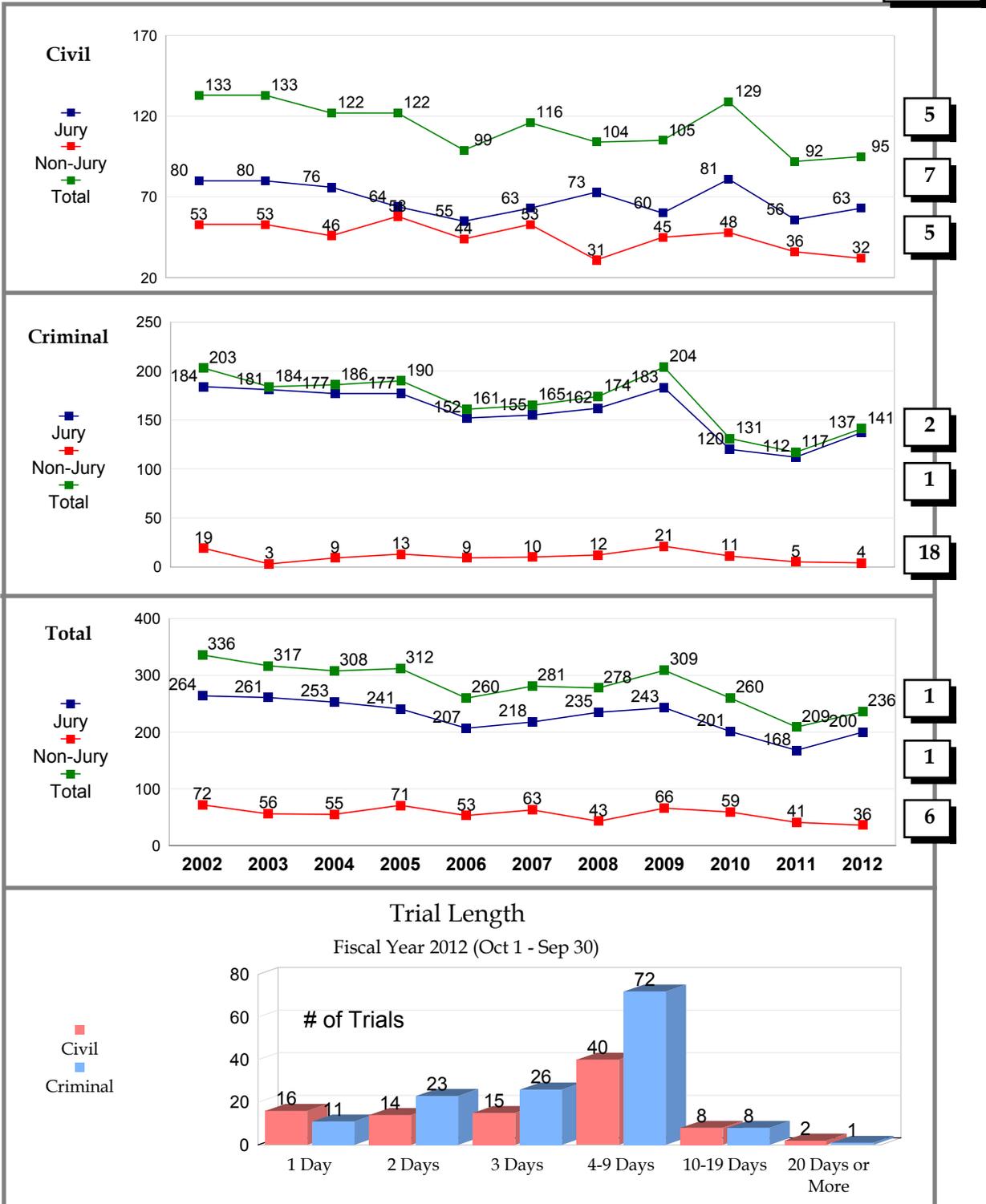
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2002-2012). Table: D-7.  
<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

# STATISTICS - TRIALS

## Jury and Non-Jury Trials Completed

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)

National Rank



Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2002-2012).

Tables: T-1, T-2, T-4, T-5.

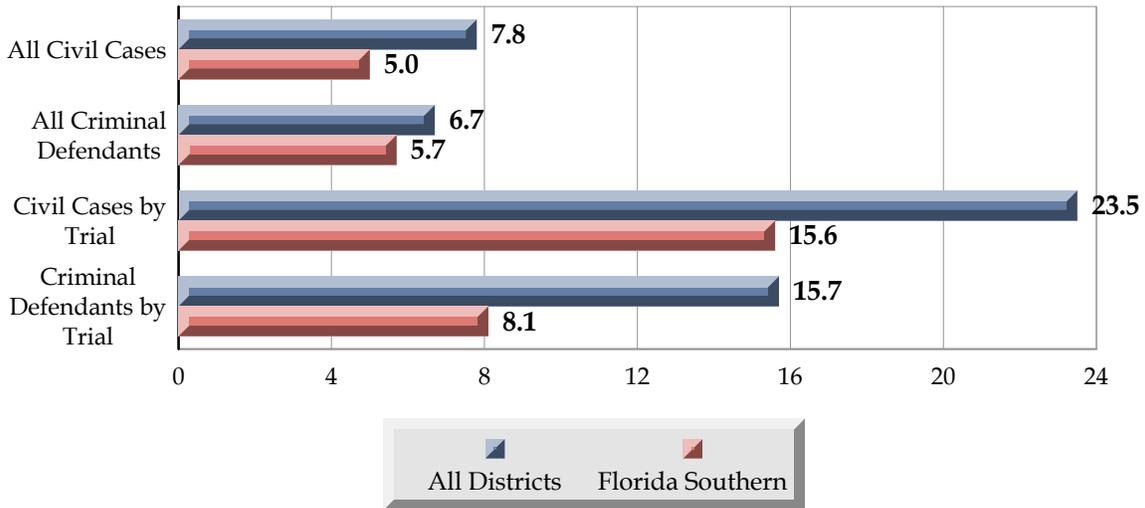
<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

# STATISTICS - DISPOSITION TIMES

## Median Months Filing to Disposition

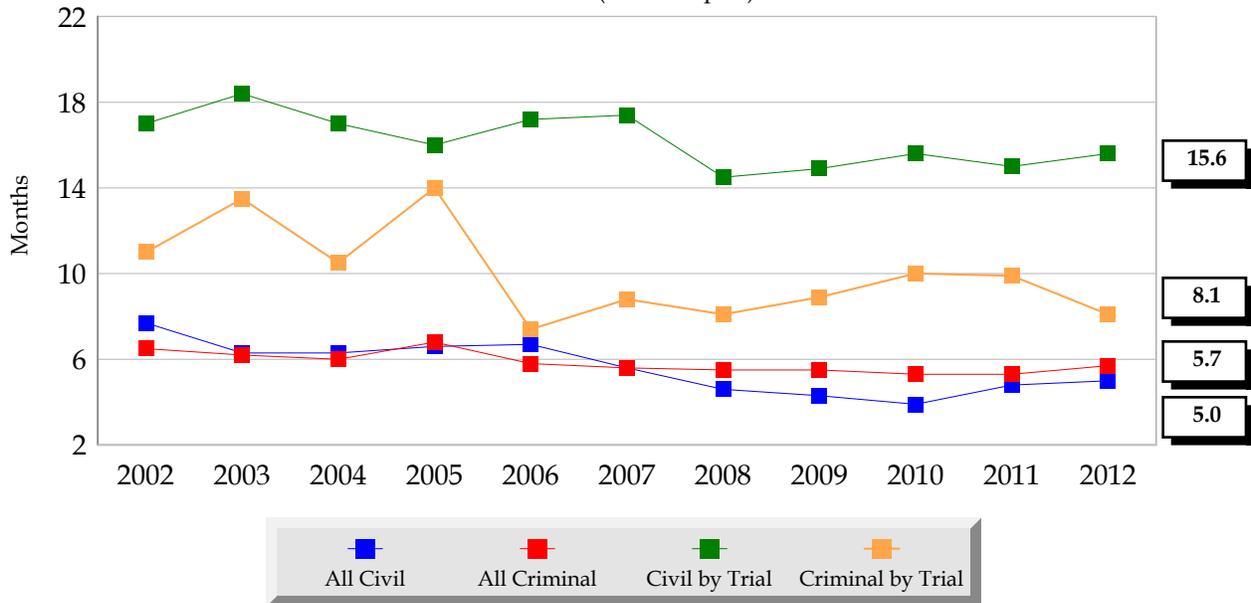
### Disposition Time Comparison

Fiscal Year 2012 (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



### Disposition Time - Florida Southern

Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sep 30)



Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2002-2012). TableS: C-5, D-6.

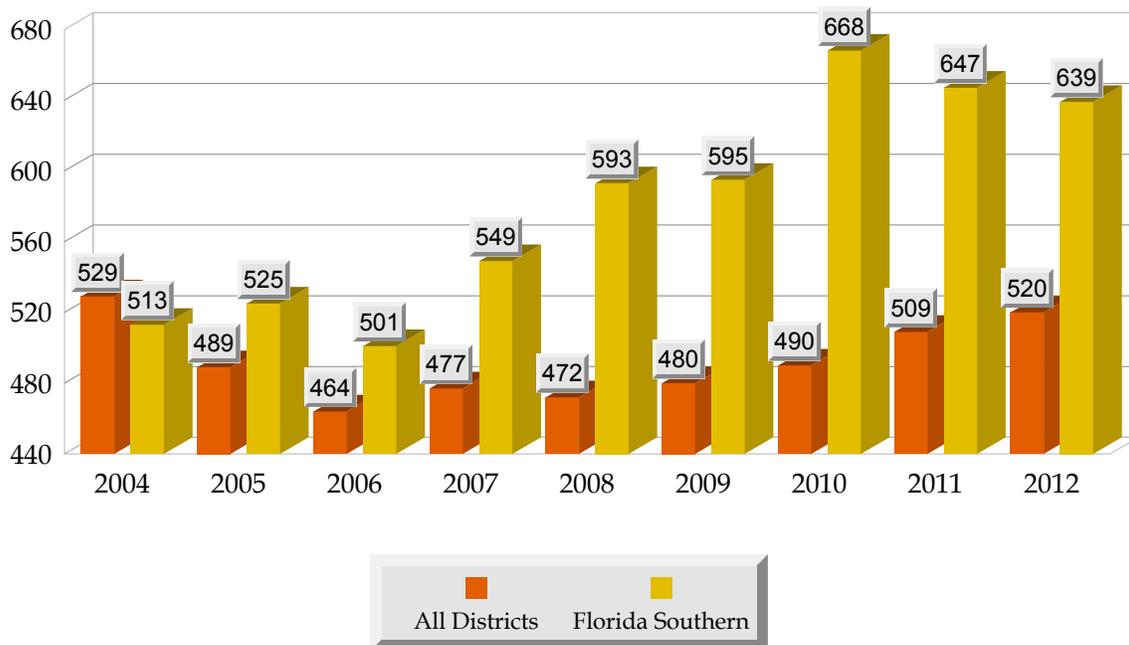
<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

## 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 Release</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>National 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
2012	507	128	3.52	639	13

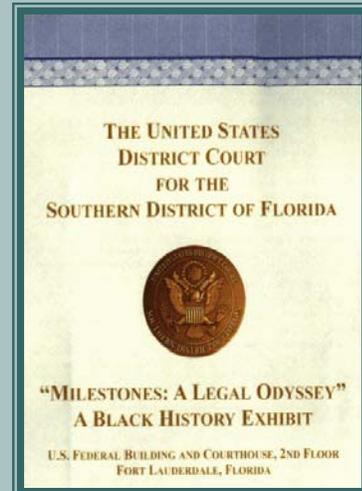
Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts (2004-2012). Table: X-1A.

<http://www.uscourts.gov/Statistics/JudicialBusiness.aspx>

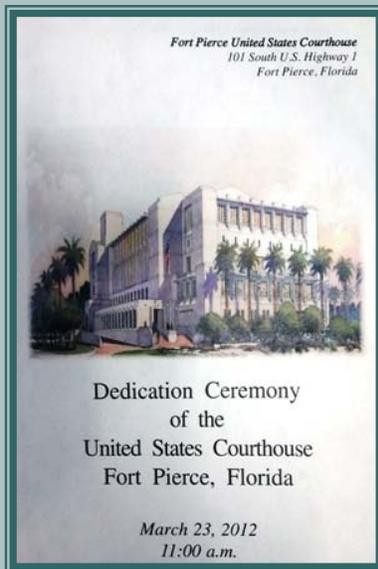
## SPECIAL EVENTS AND OCCASIONS



**Magistrate Judge  
Linnea R. Johnson's  
Retirement  
January 5, 2012**



**Black History Month Celebration  
February 23, 2012**



**Fort Pierce Courthouse  
Dedication Ceremony  
March 23, 2012**



**Chief Magistrate Judge  
Stephen T. Brown's  
Retirement  
March 27, 2012**

# SPECIAL EVENTS AND OCCASIONS



**Magistrate Judge  
Dave Lee Brannon's Investiture  
April 20, 2012**



**Magistrate Judge  
Ann E. Vitunac's  
Retirement  
April 26, 2012**



**Judge James C. Paine  
Unsung Hero Award  
Recipient: Valentin Rodriguez, Jr., Esq.  
April 26, 2012**

A screenshot of the website for the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida's Bench and Bar Conference. The page features the court's logo and the text: "Please join us for the Third Biennial Southern District of Florida Bench and Bar Conference." Below this, it states: "The Conference will be hosted by the Southern District of Florida in conjunction with the Palm Beach County, Broward County and South Florida Chapters of the Federal Bar Association." The page is divided into sections: "Event Information" (describing the program, including a judicial reception, panel discussions, and a social reception), "When &amp; Where" (listing the date as Thursday, April 26, 2012, from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Palm Beach County Convention Center), "Conference Location" (providing the address: 6500 Okeechobee Boulevard, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401), and "Hotel Accommodations" (listing the Marriott West Palm Beach at 1001 Okeechobee Boulevard).

**SDFL Biennial Bench and Bar  
Conference  
April 27, 2012**

# SPECIAL EVENTS AND OCCASIONS

United States District Court  
Southern District of Florida

Contact: Steven M. Larimore  
Court Administrator (305) 523-5001

## PRESS RELEASE April 24, 2012

Juror Appreciation Week  
April 30-May 4, 2012

Chief United States District Judge Federico A. Moreno announced today that the Southern District of Florida is sponsoring Juror Appreciation Week [April 30-May 4, 2012] to recognize residents who have completed jury duty and to highlight the honor and importance of serving on a jury.

According to Chief Judge Moreno, the objective of Juror Appreciation Week is to show past and prospective jurors that their contributions are greatly appreciated by the Court.

"Jury service is a vital aspect of our government," said Moreno. "When you serve as a juror, you not only serve your country, but you serve as an integral part of the justice system." The Southern District of Florida is one of the busiest trial courts in the federal judiciary, issuing jury summons to over 100,000 jurors annually, from Fort Pierce to Key West, with approximately 12,000 jurors being called to report to courthouses annually. "We recognize that jury service is an imposition on the time and lives of our jurors. But a busy court like ours, which is among the leaders in the nation in jury trials every year, simply could not function without civic minded, dedicated jurors."

Jurors that are participating in petit and grand juries during the first week of May will be provided special refreshments and will have various Judges and the Clerk of Court participating in juror orientations. Special certificates will be issued commemorating their service. The Court's website, [www.flsd.uscourts.gov](http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov), will be updated to reflect our juror appreciation and to provide information about the history of jury service.

Chief Judge Moreno noted: "We want every juror to feel appreciated. The Judges and staff of the Southern District of Florida value their time and contribution to our system of justice."

Please contact Steven M. Larimore, Court Administrator • Clerk of Court, if you have any questions.

April 24, 2012



**Judge Joe Eaton Unsung Hero Award  
Recipient: Henry Burnett, Esq.  
May 8, 2012**

## Juror Appreciation Week May 2012



**Magistrate Judge  
Alicia M. Otazo-Reyes' Investiture  
June 8, 2012**



**Judge Adalberto Jordan's Elevation  
to the Eleventh Circuit  
June 12, 2012  
(Retired Supreme Court Justice  
Sandra Day O'Connor administering the Oath)**

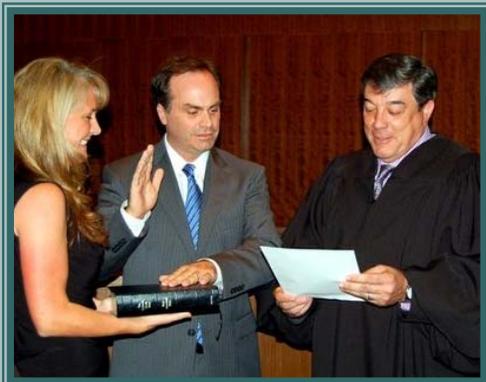
SPECIAL EVENTS AND OCCASIONS



**Senior Judge  
William M. Hoeveler's  
35 years on the bench  
June 14, 2012**



**Magistrate Judge  
William Matthewman's  
Investiture  
October 12, 2012**



**Federal Public Defender  
Michael Caruso's  
Swearing-in Ceremony  
October 26, 2012**



**National Association of  
Women Judges Reception  
November 7, 2012**

## SPECIAL EVENTS AND OCCASIONS



**District Judge  
Robin S. Rosenbaum's  
Investiture  
December 13, 2012**



**Fort Pierce Courthouse Naming Ceremony  
Alto Lee Adams, Sr. US Courthouse  
December 17, 2012**



**Fort Pierce Courthouse Atrium  
Naming Ceremony for  
Dr. William R. Dannahower  
December 17, 2012**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

### *"Chasing Perfection...Not Paper!"*

For the past few years, our motto in the Clerk's Office of the Southern District of Florida has been "Chase Perfection, Catch Excellence." This is a variation of legendary football coach Vince Lombardi's mantra.<sup>1</sup> As I read through this annual report, however, it occurs to me that perhaps we should change that to "Chasing Perfection, Not Paper!" Virtually all of our highlights over the past year either directly or indirectly involved minimizing paper and transitioning away from traditional paper processes. Even some of our current paperless processes, such as microfiche and microfilm, are giving way to newer and more sophisticated digital processes. We are not, of course, on an anti-paper crusade simply for the sake of saving trees. Rather, our quest for improved efficiency and cost savings drives these initiatives. My hat is off to the creative men and women of the Clerk's Office who had the foresight to envision the benefits of these innovations. Their hard work made it happen. In the end, maybe we did get it right: *We are* catching excellence... just not paper.



Steven M. Larimore

Court Administrator • Clerk of Court



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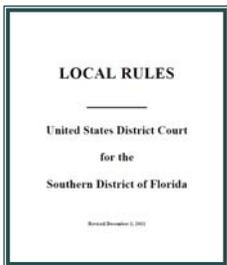
<sup>1</sup> "[W]e are going to relentlessly chase perfection, knowing full well we will not catch it, because nothing is perfect. But we are going to relentlessly chase it, because in the process we will catch excellence. [We are] not remotely interested in just being good." Carlson, Chuck: *Game of My Life: Memorable Stories of Packers Football* (2004), p. 149.

**2012 ATTORNEY RENEWAL FEE IMPLEMENTATION**

**Members of the SDFL Bar  
2012 Attorney Admission  
Renewal Fees - See  
Administrative Order 2012-4  
for more information.**

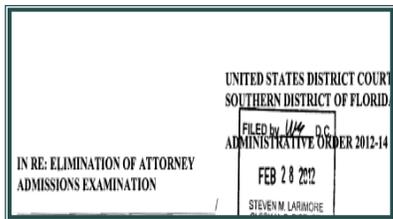
On January 26, 2012, the Court entered Administrative Order 2012-004 adopting a \$25 attorney admission renewal fee. To retain membership in our bar the renewal fee must be paid before March 15, 2012, and every other year thereafter. Since there are over 20,000 members of this Court’s bar, we knew an automated process would need to be established to process such a high volume of renewal fees in a timely manner. Our programmers and a team from Financial and Attorney Admissions established procedures for payment of the renewal fees to be made via CM/ECF. The renewal fees will be used, *inter alia*, to fund the ongoing operations of the Volunteer Lawyers’ Project established by Administrative Order 93-106 for the benefit of the bench, the bar and the public. As of December 31, 2012, 12,434 members had paid their renewal fee.

**LOCAL RULES REVISIONS**



**U**nder the guidance of Chair Kevin Jacobs, the Southern District of Florida’s Local Rules Committee continued its quest to streamline the Local Rules. Most significant was the removal and relocation of all forms in the Local Rules to the Court’s website. This has eliminated numerous pages from the Rules while allowing for a user-friendly and comprehensive collection of forms that are readily available as online PDF documents. Several additional rules were amended for clarification purposes, as well as to account for the elimination of the attorney admissions exam.

**ELIMINATION OF ATTORNEY ADMISSIONS EXAM**



At a regularly scheduled meeting held on February 23, 2012, the Judges of this District determined that our local attorney admission examination duplicates matters found on The Florida Bar exam and no longer accomplishes the purposes it was intended to serve. Administrative Order 2012-14 entered on February 28, 2012, suspended the examination requirement for attorneys to be admitted to this Court’s bar. Attorneys who satisfy all other requirements for admissions to this Court’s bar, and who have paid all required admission fees, shall be admitted to the bar of this Court without the necessity of passing an examination. To streamline the admission process, attorneys now complete the registration and payment on-line. In 2011, the number of attorneys who passed the examination and who were admitted to the bar was 1,022 compared to approximately 3,000 attorneys admitted in 2012 via the new admission process.

# PRIORITY PROJECTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

## MICROFICHE/FILM CONVERSION TO ELECTRONIC FORMAT



Microfiche and microfilm are largely outdated means of records storage. In addition to the fact that this storage media deteriorates over the years, most reading equipment is now old and the technology is unsupported. As a result, during 2012 the Clerk's Office's Records Section undertook the huge task of converting our aging microfiche/microfilm records and indexes into an electronic format. Over the course of the year, 343 rolls of microfilm amounting to almost 700,000 images were converted, as were almost 100 microfiche jackets totaling over 9,500 images. These records are now available both for search and retrieval from digital format. This project has greatly improved the public's ability to search and locate old records, and has allowed for the better preservation of those records.

## INS NAME CHANGES CONVERSION



The Records Section scanned and entered approximately 426 volumes of INS name change records into an electronic format. These records can be text searched electronically instead of manually retrieved as paper documents. This greatly increases the efficiency of searching for name change records which, in turn, allows better use of limited resources and greatly improves customer service.

## CIVIL 101-INTRODUCTION TO THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY AND FEDERAL PROCEDURE



After initial success in 2011, two more classes of the introductory course on the federal judiciary and federal procedure were provided to Clerk's Office staff. The Court's attorney, Todd Alfuth, spearheaded this effort along with the indispensable support of CM/ECF Training Specialists Nury Toloza and Greg Maestre, and the Computer Services Department. These classes explored the principles that govern civil litigation within the federal judicial system. The course was presented in a manner that took full advantage of the Court's audio and visual capabilities. Although designed for those new to the federal judiciary, its breadth and depth offered benefits to more seasoned employees as well.

## ELECTRONIC CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT (eCJA) VOUCHER PROCESSING SYSTEM (VPS)

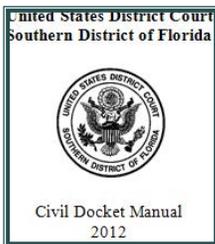
Our Court continued its participation in the working group developing the Electronic CJA Voucher Processing System (eCJA VPS). The eCJA system will provide a web-based application for use by CJA panel attorneys, expert service providers and judiciary staff to support the submission, review, approval and payment for CJA services. Automation of these core processes will replace the current paper-intensive process and will provide system edits to prevent double-billing and mathematical errors. We will be participating in user acceptance testing which begins in January 2013. Implementation of eCJA in pilot courts is projected for mid-2013.

## RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RMS) IMPLEMENTATION



Records staff have put forth much effort inputting hard copy archive data of case files into the new RMS. They routinely receive requests for this archive information (sometimes 10 cases per call) which previously required locating information found in many books and calling customers back. Because of this implementation, staff have quicker access to information enabling faster customer service. Records staff also spent much time working with Computer Services to reprogram scan guns, which are used with RMS to track files, to make them compatible with court technology.

## DOCKETING MANUALS



One key to improving operational efficiency is clearly documenting existing processes so that it is easier to identify needed changes. As a result, during 2012 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 operational areas such as Civil Docketing and Criminal Docketing. These manuals are all documented in electronic, text searchable formats for ready access by staff.

## SEALED DOCUMENT OPERATIONS TEAM



A team of Clerk's Office employees was tasked to develop procedures to address aged sealed documents and cases for implementation in January of 2013. The team created a systemic approach and process, along with procedures that will reduce shelving needs for paper records. In addition, the new practice and processes will have a long term records management impact by saving staff resources.

## COMPUTER SYSTEMS ARE NOW AVAILABLE 24/7



The Computer Services team implemented a new "fail-over" project that now keeps all computer systems working 24/7. Previously the systems were closed from around 10 p.m. daily until 7 a.m. the next day for backup.