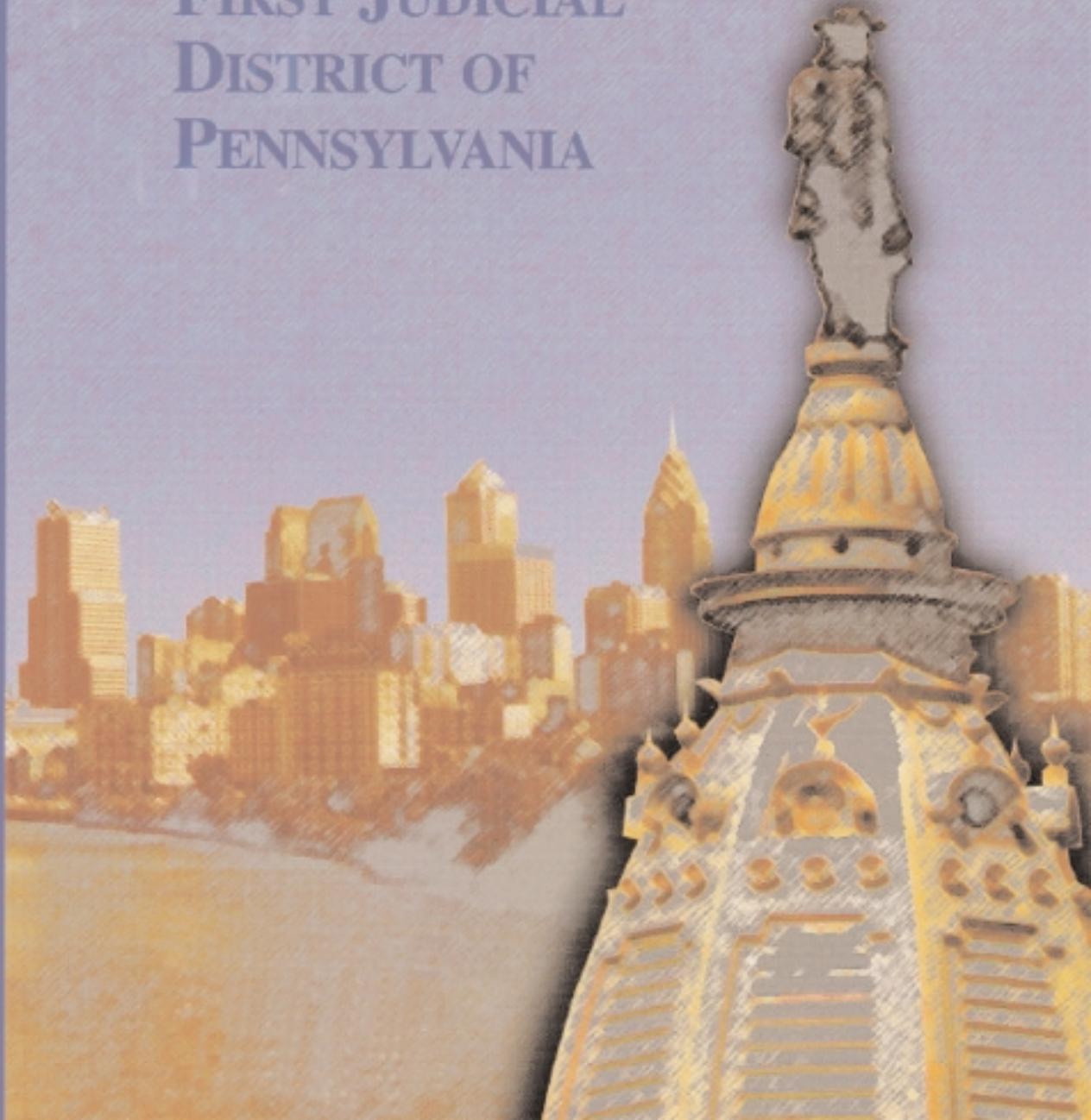




1999 Annual Report



FIRST JUDICIAL
DISTRICT OF
PENNSYLVANIA



1999 Annual Report

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA



fu-ture (fyoo'cher) noun

Time that is to come; time that is subsequent to the present; — often with reference to prospective happenings, state, or condition, and with a favorable implication.

*The present is the time in which we act;
the future that for which we prepare. (Ward)*

The Future is Now

Executive Summary

The 1996-1997 FJD Biennial Report and the 1998 Statistical Summary were received with very good reviews. For 1999, the First Judicial District (FJD) has reached another milestone. This is the first of the FJD reports to be published on an annual basis. Future presentations will rely on lessons learned from the revamped design and layout contained here. New for this publication, individuals and groups of employees will receive special attention in the colorful Significant Events section. All the employees and judges of the District are considered parts of the larger team whose members work together to reach their goals, ably dispense justice, serve the public, and help to improve the community. Arising from the need to publish current statistics and other information in a timely fashion, we have moved from biennial to annual reporting. Following close behind this is the eagerly awaited and more expansive FJD Millennium Report, due for release early in 2001. Among other benefits, a yearly schedule allows for:

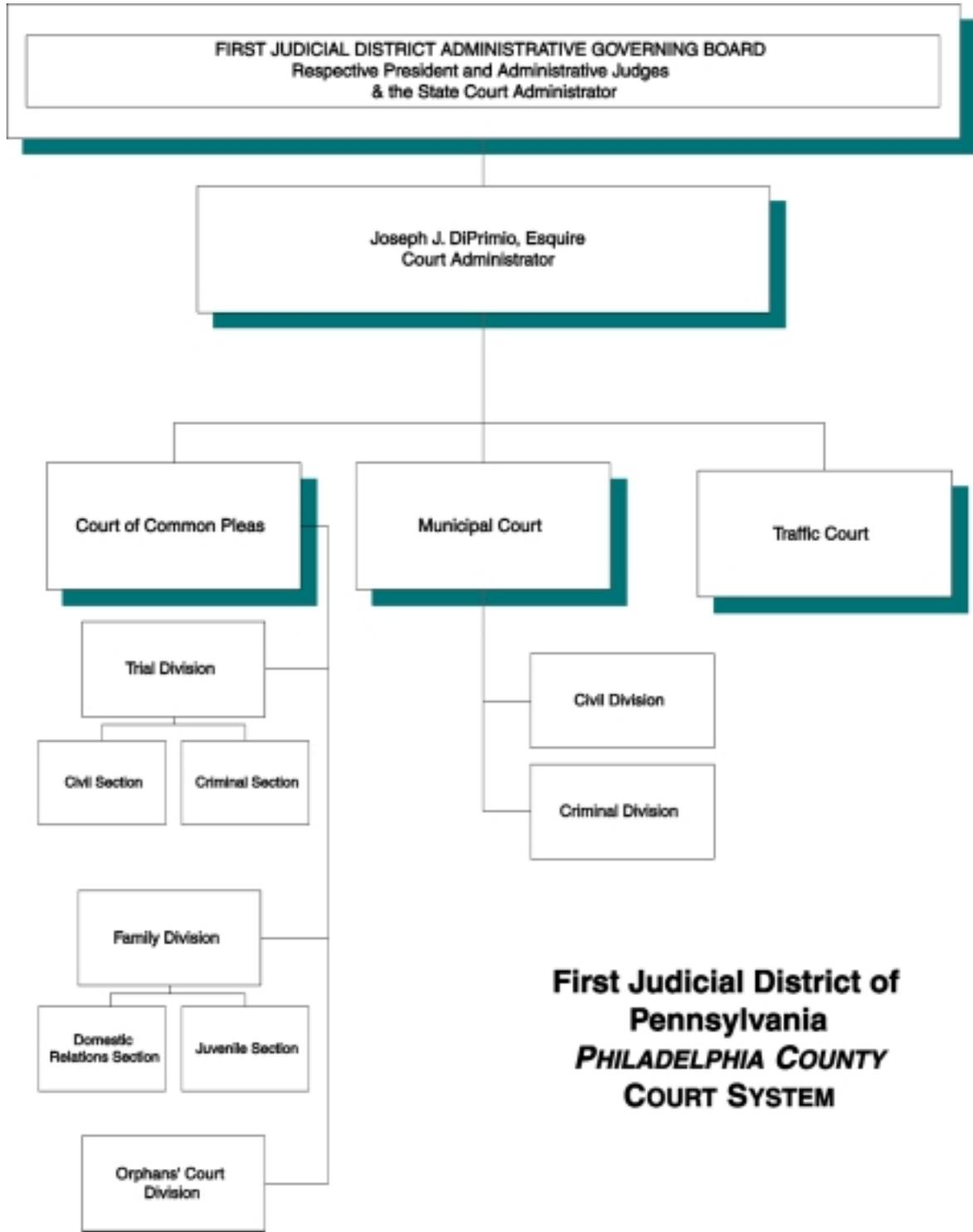
- Greater timeliness and freshness of information
- Better focus
- Streamlined design & layout
- Greater emphasis on employees and their achievements
- Better tracking with government and industry norms

Within this report, readers will find statistical synopses of the activities of various FJD constituent Courts. Each section will show 1999 data and graphs for pertinent aspects of the operations within the Courts of Philadelphia. Expanded employee current events and accomplishments are earmarks of this and subsequent annual reports. We hope that this 1999 presentation will be as well received as the previous reports, and that you, the readers, will gain useful knowledge and better understanding of the business of the Courts of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania. The FJD team seeks to expediently and efficiently mete out justice and settle differences, while heeding the voices of the communities and guarding the rights of the citizenry. The workforce aims to achieve precision and promote strategic planning with vision in the endeavor toward a better future by building and improving upon the solid foundations of the past. This is the pledge of the employees of the Courts to the people of Philadelphia.

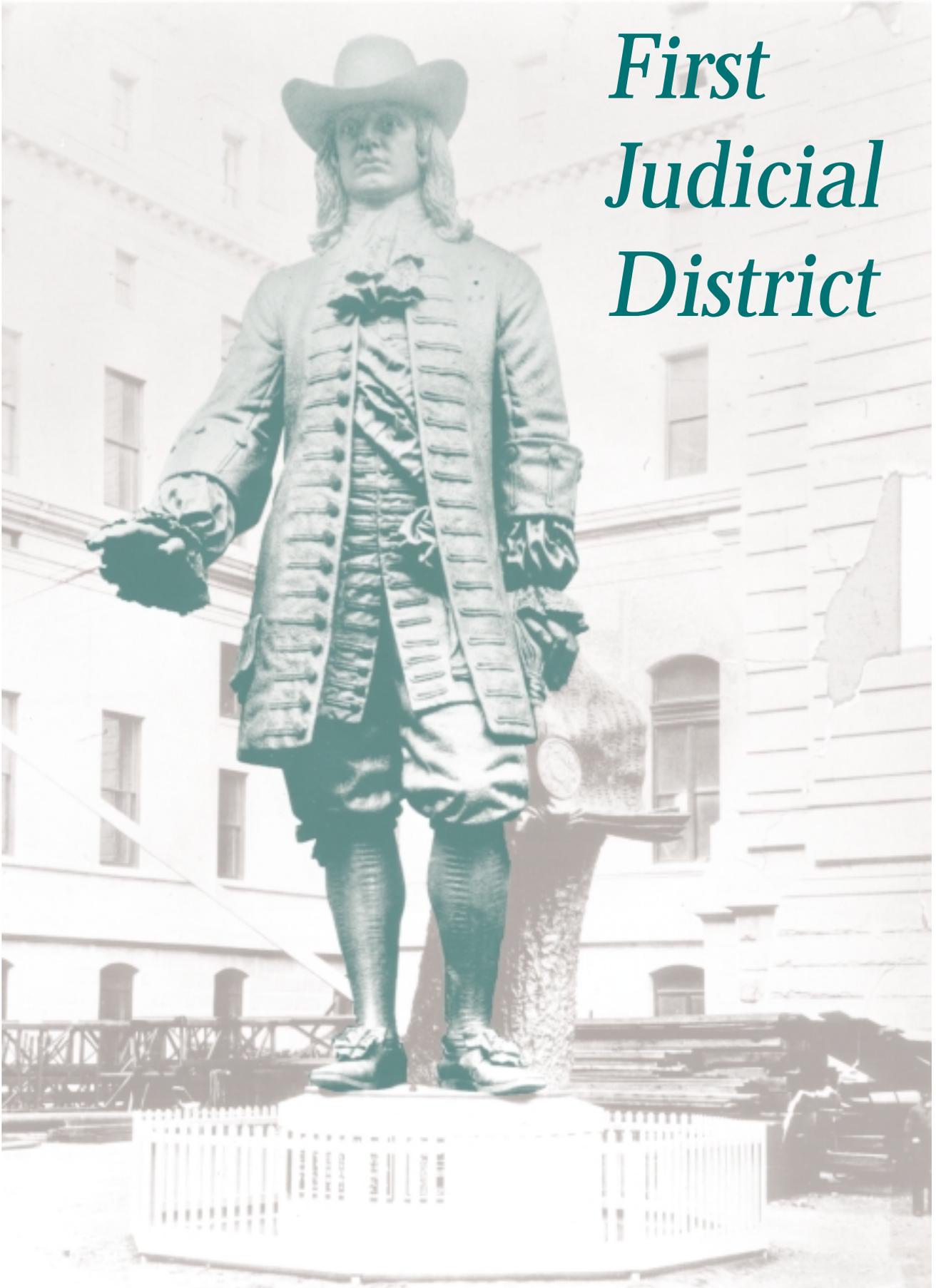
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First Judicial District



*First
Judicial
District*



ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD *First Judicial District*

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Administrative Governing Board

Within the First Judicial District, the Administrative Governing Board represents the final authority for judicial administration. The Board's membership comprises the judicial leaders of the FJD along with the State Court Administrator. With the help of the FJD Court Administrator, they guide the District through the continuously improving systems for the administration of justice in Philadelphia. The Board's 1999 members are spotlighted on the pages that follow.



HON. ALEX BONAVIDACOLA
President Judge
Court of Common Pleas
Chair, AGB

President Judge Alex BonavitaCola is a graduate of Temple University and Temple University School of Law (from which he earned his J.D. and LL.M. degrees). Judge BonavitaCola was elected Judge of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas in 1973, retained in 1983 and again in 1993. He has served in the Trial Division, the Family Court Division and the Orphans' Court Division. The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania appointed him Administrative Judge of the Trial Division of the Court of Common Pleas of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania on July 1, 1992, and he served in that capacity until December, 1995, when he was unanimously elected by his colleagues as President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County. His term as President Judge continues until January, 2001.

He is Past President of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges and served as Chairman of the Education Committee for three years.

During his tenure as Administrative Judge of the Trial Division, President Judge BonavitaCola implemented a novel and comprehensive civil case inventory reduction strategy (referred to as "Day Backward" and "Day Forward" Programs), which has received national recognition for the effective reduction of case backlog within the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County. As a result of these efforts, in June, 1996, he was presented with the prestigious Justice William J. Brennan Award by the Philadelphia Bar Association.

In March, 1996, by order of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, President Judge BonavitaCola was appointed Chairman of the Administrative Governing Board of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, a post he continues to hold. This Board is responsible for the day-to-day governance of the courts which compose the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania: the Common Pleas, Municipal and Traffic Courts.

First Judicial District

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD

Appointed to the Philadelphia Municipal Court bench in 1982, the Honorable Louis J. Prezenza was elected to a full term commencing January 1984. Following that, he twice received a 95% approval rating from the Philadelphia Bar Association and was retained in office in 1989 and 1995. In 1996 and 1997 he was appointed Supervising Judge of the Municipal Court Criminal Division. In that capacity he developed procedures for improving Court operations, created systemic improvements in case flow management, and cultivated productive relationships with Philadelphia Criminal Justice stakeholders. Judge Prezenza empaneled and chaired the Philadelphia Treatment Court Planning and Implementation Committee, which, after 17 months of intense activity, established the first drug treatment court in the Commonwealth in 1997. In 1999, his colleagues elected him to a five year term as President Judge the Philadelphia Municipal Court.

During his 18 years on the bench, Judge Prezenza has chaired or co-chaired numerous committees, panels, commissions, and boards. Some of these include: the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee for Preliminary Arraignment; the Municipal Court Implementation Team for Statewide Automation; the Committee for the Destruction of Firearms and Other Weapons; and the Philadelphia Pretrial Release Guidelines Committee. He also has experience as a member of the Criminal Justice Center Implementation Steering Committee; the Video Conferencing Project Committee; the Mayor's Prison Populace Management Policy Board; and the Criminal Justice Operation Task Force (Alternatives to Incarceration). Judge Prezenza has lectured on the criminal justice system to students at all academic levels and concerning courtroom practice and demeanor for attorneys in the District Attorney's office and the Defenders' Association. The judge has also been a panelist in discussions about Driving under the Influence of Alcohol, Violation of the Uniform Firearms Act, and Domestic Violence. He has also lectured at Continuing Legal Education seminars about Municipal Court practices and procedures. Judge Prezenza participated in a symposium to assist the Los Angeles Metropolitan Police Department in utilizing methods for expeditious case disposition and addressed the Pennsylvania State Conference of Trial Court Judges, the National Association of Pretrial Agencies, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, and the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association on Drug Treatment Courts. Judge Prezenza is serving as a peer reviewer and faculty member for the United States Department of Justice Drug Court Programs Office and the Justice Management Institute for workshops and training programs for drug professionals.

Judge Prezenza has been a recipient of many awards. In 1990, he was co-recipient of the first Philadelphia Coalition for Victim Advocacy Award, and in 1998, he received the Golden Crowbar Award from the Pennsylvania State Conference of Trial Court Judges. He was honored with the 5th annual Cesare Beccaria Award from the Philadelphia Bar Association Criminal Justice Section, and by the Justinian Society for his contributions to the causes of justice and legal education. The President Judge is a graduate of St Joseph's College with a law degree from the Villanova University School of Law.



HON. LOUIS J. PREZENZA
President Judge
Municipal Court

President Judge Little took office on January 8, 1998. He began his judicial career December 21, 1989, serving as Educational Judge beginning in 1993 and Emergency Judge from 1997. A dedicated Public Official of Philadelphia, he presided as the Director of Archives 1985-1990, headed Warrant Departments at Traffic Court and conducted investigations at Municipal Court in Private Criminal Complaints. He was proprietor and C.E.O. of a Philadelphia based Contracting Company from 1965 to 1975. He is a graduate of Wilson Law College, Minor Judiciary Law Degree, Philadelphia Police Academy and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Constable Program. Recipient of numerous community and press awards, Judge Little serves on the Boards of the Community Mental Health and Retardation Center. He is President of the Olney Betterment Alliance, Secretary of Lions International, Life Member of The Emerald Society and Board Member of the Korean-American Friendship Society.



HON. FRANK J. LITTLE
President Judge
Traffic Court

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD *First Judicial District*



HON. JOHN W. HERRON
Administrative Judge
Trial Division

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania designated Judge Herron as Administrative Judge of the Trial Division in January of 1996. He previously was elected to the Court of Common Pleas in November 1986 and re-elected for a second ten year term in November 1997. He served initially in the Criminal Section of the Trial Division, where he presided in both the List Room and Major Jury Programs. In his subsequent assignment to the Civil Section of the Trial Division, he served as Motion Court judge and as one of the original team leaders in the Major Jury Day Backward Program. During his tenure as a judge, he served on numerous judicial committees and chaired both the Judicial Accountability Committee and the Civil Management Committee.

As Administrative Judge of the Trial Division, Judge Herron worked to modernize and streamline the civil complaint, motion and discovery filing processes, initiate a commercial law civil trial program, extend a team leader case management model to the Criminal Section of the Trial Division, increase public awareness to the importance of jury service, implement jury service administration improvements and establish an executive administrative committee over which he serves as chair which is responsible for enhancement of adult probation and parole services provided to the judiciary and public at large. Throughout the duration of his assignment as Administrative Judge, Judge Herron continues an active trial calendar, including assignment within the new Commerce Program and as a Judicial Panel member of the Jackson v. Hendrick prison litigation.

Prior to his judicial service, Judge Herron was an associate in the Wills and Trusts Department of the Philadelphia law firm of White and Williams, an Assistant District Attorney and, later, Deputy District Attorney within the Philadelphia Office of the District Attorney and served as Chief Disciplinary Counsel to the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. In addition to his frequent appearances as a lecturer and panelist in various continuing legal education programs, he has for several years taught law school courses in both Professional Responsibility and Trial Advocacy. In 1993, Judge Herron was appointed by Governor Casey as the first trial judge and inaugural member of the constitutionally created Judicial Conduct Board and served a three year term. He has held memberships in the Temple Inn of Court and the University of Pennsylvania Law School Inn of Court, and is a member of the Junior Legal Club.



HON. PAUL P. PANEPINTO
Administrative Judge
Family Division

Administrative Judge Paul P. Panepinto attended Villanova University and received his B.A. in Political Science in 1971, and M.A. in Political Science in 1979; he received his J.D. in 1976 from Widener University School of Law. Before being appointed to the bench of the Court of Common Pleas in June 1990, and elected in his own right in 1991, Judge Panepinto served in the Family Court Division as a Probation Officer, Intake Unit Attorney, and as a Juvenile Master. A member of numerous professional associations, Judge Panepinto serves as a Board Member of the Alumni Association of the Widener University School of Law, and was presented the Widener University School of Law Outstanding Alumni of the Year Award in October, 1994.

In April 1996, Judge Panepinto was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to serve in his current position as Administrative Judge of the Family Court Division. Also, in 1996 and 1999, Judge Panepinto was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to the Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee and he was appointed by Governor Thomas J. Ridge to the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission of Pennsylvania. In 1997, Judge Panepinto was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to the Pennsylvania Futures Commission on Justice in the 21st Century. He is a member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Also, Judge Panepinto is a member of the Roxborough Lodge Order of Sons of Italy and serves as a member of numerous other community groups and organizations.

First Judicial District

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD

Appointed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court as Administrative Judge of the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas in April 1996, the Honorable Petrese B. Tucker originally assumed office April 6, 1987, and was subsequently elected to a ten year term in 1989. During her tenure in the Common Pleas Court, she has also served in the Juvenile Court Branch of the Family Division and the Criminal and Civil Sections of the Trial Division.

Before her appointment to the Bench, Judge Tucker was Assistant Chief of the Rape Unit and Assistant Chief of the Child Abuse Unit of the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. In addition, her prior work experience includes positions as Senior Trial Attorney for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), and Adjunct Professorships at the Great Lakes College Association and Trial Advocacy Courses at Temple University School of Law. Judge Tucker is a Member of the Barristers Association of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association.

As a member of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, National, and American Bar Associations, Judge Tucker has chaired and worked on numerous committees. She has received many meritorious distinguished service awards for her significant contributions to the community.



HON. PETRESE B. TUCKER
Administrative Judge
Orphans' Court Division

The Honorable Robert S. Blasi was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to his current leadership position as Administrative Judge of the Philadelphia Municipal Court in October, 1997. He is concurrently qualified to preside as a Common Pleas Court Judge for Civil Appeals from Municipal Court decisions, having been vested with that power through appointment by the Common Pleas Court President Judge Alex Bonavita. Having been originally appointed as a Municipal Court Judge in January 1992, Administrative Judge Blasi was reelected to the bench in January 1998. The Administrative Judge's background includes positions with an engineering firm; Board Member, Vice Chairman, and Acting Chairman of the Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment; and as a sole practitioner.

Judge Blasi adds dimension to his career as a lawyer and jurist through professional associations including his membership with the Philadelphia Bar Association and contributions to that institution through his work with the Real Property Committee, the Senior Citizens Judicare Project, the Lawyer Referral Service, and the Fee Disputes Committee. He is also a member of the Lawyer Club of Philadelphia, sits on the Board of Governors of the Justinian Society; and acts as the Director of the Widener University School of Law Alumni Association.

Judge Blasi's commitment to the community is reflected in his support of the Sons of Italy No. 2217 Greater Roxborough Lodge, where he has served as the President, Vice President, and Trustee. In addition, he has experience as the Past Director of the Rosary Federal Credit Union, a 4th Degree Member of the Knights of Columbus, a past member of the Pennsylvania Commission for Social Justice, Governor Casey's appointee to the Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, a Guest Lecturer at Holy Family College, and as a member of the Philadelphia Federal Credit Union Loan Review Committee. Finally, Administrative Judge Blasi has received numerous awards for his dedication and public service from the Sons of Italy, Widener University School of Law, the 21st Ward Veterans' Organizations, and the Sons of Italy in America.



HON. ROBERT S. BLASI
Administrative Judge
Municipal Court

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD *First Judicial District*



HON. BERNICE A. DeANGELIS
Administrative Judge
Traffic Court

The Honorable Bernice Ann DeAngelis was born February 17, 1940, the daughter of Benjamin M. and Josephine (Zachwieja) Soban. Of deep Polish ancestry; the Traffic Court Administrative Judge represents the third generation of her family to live in Fairmount (Art Museum area) section of Philadelphia. She is the oldest of three children with sister, Jane; and brother, Richard. Judge DeAngelis is a graduate John W. Hallahan Girl's High School where she achieved four years as first honor student. Later, she attended Holy Family College on the Dean's List. The judge served as Committeeperson for over 31 years in the same division and same ward, and she was elected Ward Leader three times, after serving as Secretary, Treasurer, and Ward Chairperson. Administrative Judge DeAngelis was also a member of the State Committee, a fundraiser, and a Member of the Democratic Women of Philadelphia. Prior to her election, Judge DeAngelis was employed in a State Senatorial District Office for almost 15 years with a Senator who served as Majority/Minority Chairman of the Transportation Committee. There, she specialized in constituent services relative to the Department of Motor Vehicles. The Administrative Judge ran in a City-wide election in 1991, and was elected Judge, to the bench of the Philadelphia Traffic Court – assuming

office on January 6, 1992. In 1996, the Judge DeAngelis was appointed by Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as Administrative Judge of the Philadelphia Traffic Court. As such, she is a Member of the Administrative Governing Board of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania. Administrative Judge DeAngelis is certified and trained by Wilson College, to serve as a Traffic Court Judge. In addition, she attended Reno Judicial College in 1993 and 1999; ABA Traffic Court Seminars at Georgia State University of Law in 1992, Tulane University in 1999, and Northwestern University in 2000. Judge DeAngelis is an Associate Member of the American Bar Association. She has been gifted with two children, Jeffrey Joseph and Janine Joanne; and enjoys her four grandchildren, Nicholas, Jeffrey, Ryan and Christine.

ZYGMONT A. PINES, ESQ.
Court Administrator
of Pennsylvania

Zygmont A. Pines was appointed acting Court Administrator of Pennsylvania in January 2000. As such, he is a member of the District's Administrative Governing Board pursuant to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court order establishing the makeup of the Board. The Office of the State Court Administrator was created by the Pennsylvania Constitution, which also authorizes an administrative staff to assist the Supreme Court. The statewide administrative duties include providing technical support and research to budgeting and managing fiscal matters for the Commonwealth's 1,600 judicial employees. Under the direction of the Chief Justice and Justices, the court administrator heads the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) in providing the necessary support for the supervision, legal representation, and administration of all of the courts in the Commonwealth. The court administrator's office also acts as a liaison with executive and legislative branch officials and agencies. Pines had been chief legal counsel for the AOPC for eight years before assuming his current post as Pennsylvania's seventh court administrator. Prior to coming to the AOPC, the court administrator was an assistant chief attorney for the Superior Court of Pennsylvania from 1978 to 1991 where he helped to create its Central Legal Staff. He also served as chief legal counsel to the Governor's Commission on Judicial Reform in 1987 and was an adjunct professor at both the University of Pennsylvania from 1986 to 1991 and Villanova Law School from 1984 to 1985. Pines previously had clerked for the Hon. James R. Cavanaugh and was an associate in the law firm of Raynes, McCarty, Binder & Mundy, 1975-1978. He has degrees from Wilkes University (B.A.), Cleveland State University College of Law (J.D.) and the University of Pennsylvania Law School (LL.M.). He authored many articles in various publications on criminal justice, appellate procedures and ethics. The State Court Administrator is also a member of the Judicial Council of Pennsylvania; Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; and the Pennsylvania Association of Court Management.

First Judicial District

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

1999 Summary & Achievements

BACKGROUND & ORGANIZATION

Although Courts of Common Pleas had already been in existence for years prior, the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania (FJD) was created with four other judicial districts in 1791. Today, the 67 counties of the Commonwealth are served through 60 Judicial Districts. The current FJD structure encompasses three major Courts: 1) the Court of Common Pleas; 2) the Philadelphia Municipal Court; and 3) the Philadelphia Traffic Court. Each is led by a President Judge elected by their peers, and at least one Administrative Judge chosen by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

At the next organizational level, the Common Pleas Court is divided into three Divisions: 1) the Trial Division, with Criminal and Civil Sections; 2) the Family Division consisting of the Juvenile, Adoptions, and Domestic Relations Sections; and 3) the Orphans' Court Division that manages probate and cases involving incapacitated individuals. Each of the divisional components is overseen by an Administrative Judge.

Philadelphia Municipal Court is configured with two constituent divisions: 1) the Civil Division; and 2) the Criminal Division. Municipal Court has one Administrative Judge.

Traffic Court also benefits from the leadership of a President and an Administrative Judge.

Altogether, there are three President Judges, and five Administrative Judges. They, along with the State Court Administrator form the nine-member FJD Administrative Governing Board – the central management authority for the District and one of the three elements listed below.

MANAGEMENT

Three important components span Court or Divisional lines, and they are essential to the administration of justice in Philadelphia:

The Administrative Governing Board – Composed of the three President and Five Administrative Judges with the State Court Administrator, the Administrative Governing Board manages the business of the Courts of Philadelphia.

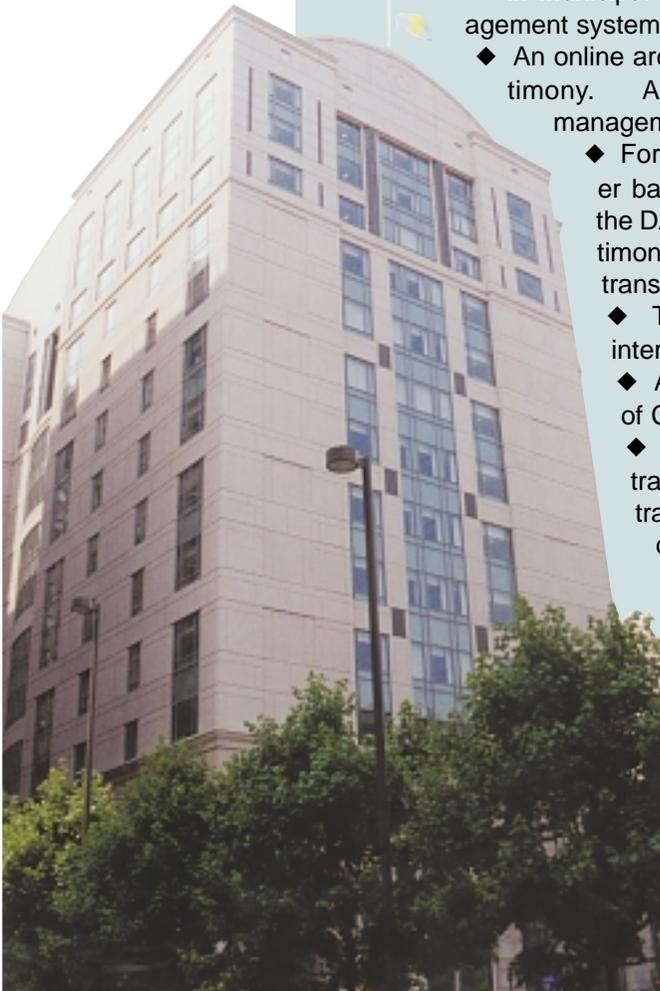
The Office of the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas – The Office of the Prothonotary (the clerk of civil case management and source for filings), the Law Library, and the mail services, fall under the auspices of the President Judge. Other areas of responsibility, including Court Reporting and Procurement Services, affect the judiciary throughout the Courts and Divisions of the District. In addition, the current President Judge, the Honorable Alex Bonavita, is the Chair of the Administrative Governing Board.

The Office of the Court Administrator – Joseph J. DiPrimio, Esq., is the Court Administrator of the First Judicial District. The Office of the Court Administrator oversees many of the administrative and management services that benefit judicial administration in the FJD. Among them are Data Processing, Human Resources, Management Analysis, Facilities, Budget, and Administrative Services. He attends meetings of the Governing Board, develops resolutions to problems, and implements improvement measures throughout the District.

First Judicial District

In 1999 ...

- ◆ The FJD website continued to improve and grow with expanded capabilities for access to court schedules, civil dockets, and more downloadable forms. The civil docket access display burgeoned to include 17,475,332 docket entries for 1,726,161 civil cases.
- ◆ The entire body of FJD personnel regulations was revamped and brought into compliance with federal and state regulations.
- ◆ A new, redesigned jury summons mailer was designed to include all the information formerly requiring two mailings, thereby cutting time, effort and expenditures in half. Another substantive result was seen in improved rates of return for the jury mailer program.
- ◆ Working through a collaborative effort with the City Administration and other branches of government, the Y2K “bug” was successfully squashed for a seamless transition to year 2000.
 - ◆ The FJD Newsletter, The Courterly, was redesigned to produce a sleek, graphically rich publication.
 - ◆ In Municipal Court, Phase I of an automated civil case management system project was completed.
 - ◆ An online archiving system was initiated to store notes of testimony. Adjunct components will provide for better management of Court Reporter and Interpreter resources.
 - ◆ For the first time, all court reporters became computer based, all transcripts were produced electronically, the DA, the Defender, and judges received notes of testimony via e-mai, and 30 reporters began real-time transcription training.
 - ◆ The first training seminar for language and sign interpreters was conducted.
 - ◆ A special access education web site for the Court of Common Pleas Bench was established.
 - ◆ A very successful in-house computer application training program began. The curriculum includes training in word processing, spreadsheet, and windows applications.
 - ◆ FJD building projects included total renovation of the FJD Law Library, the reconstruction of the Prothonotary records room, and new, larger, and more comfortable space for customers arriving for services in Domestic Relations.
 - ◆ Development of the first district-wide record retention schedule for Court records was begun.



First Judicial District

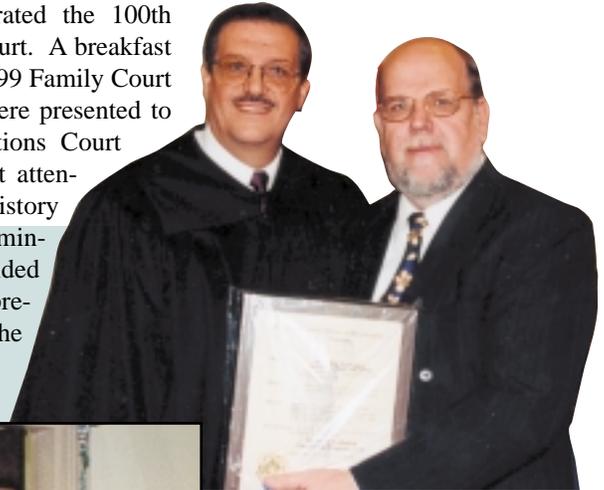
1999 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1999

Significant Events

Juvenile Celebrates

On October 7, judges and staff celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the American Juvenile Court. A breakfast for the entire staff was followed by the 1999 Family Court Employee Awards Ceremony. Awards were presented to dozens of Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court employees for outstanding performance, years of service, and perfect attendance. Later, many Court staff and others enjoyed programs about the history of the Philadelphia Family Court with presentations by the last five Administrative Judges of the Family Division. A children's choir provided entertainment following the historical presentations. Awards were then presented to a number of juveniles for their accomplishments. To top off the gala, a reception was held in the Courthouse foyer.



Above: Family Court Administrative Judge Paul P. Panepinto presents an award to Juvenile Probation Chief Kenneth E. Hale.



Left: The Northwest Probation District held open house for visitors to the Centennial Celebration.



Municipal Court 1999 Employee of the Year Carole Copes

Municipal Court hosted an awards luncheon recognizing outstanding employees at the Doubletree Hotel on May 19. Certificate of Service Awards went to Gail Arno and Willie L. Blue for their service of 25 years, and to Eric Klein and Eleanor V. Scipione for having achieved 20 years of service.

The Supportive Service Award, usually presented to an FJD employee from another Court or Division of the District, went to Carl L. Divens, Senior Staff Advisor from the Office of the Court Administrator, for his valuable contributions to the implementation of an automated civil case management system in Municipal Court. Former MC President Judge Joseph R. Glancy was presented with the Kevin R. Murray Spirit Award, identifying him as an individual who exemplifies the energy and commitment of the late MC Court administrator. The highlight of the event was the acceptance of the Employee of the Year Award by Carole D. Copes, who earnestly expressed her appreciation for the award.

Employee Awards

1999 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS *First Judicial District*



Elizabeth Jackson, Esquire, Chief of Custody and Support Masters for Family Court, was named President of the Barristers' Association of Philadelphia Incorporated — the local affiliate of the National Bar Association.

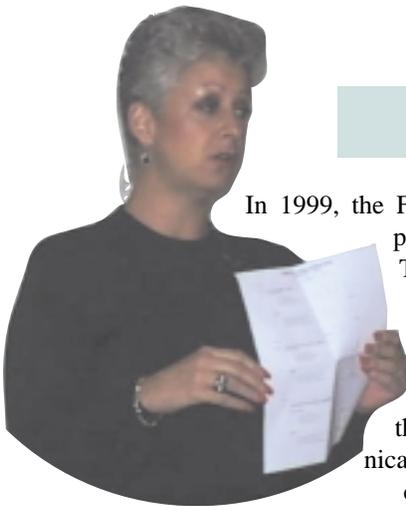
Appointments & Honors



Juvenile Probation Supervisor **Gerald Schrass** was selected as the 1999 Juvenile Probation Supervisor of the Year by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers.



The Citizens' Crime Commission of the Delaware Valley announced the appointment of **Judge Georganne V. Daher** as Trustee, in recognition of her record of excellence in the area of criminal justice.



Core trainer Kathleen Fitzpatrick

In 1999, the FJD instituted a comprehensive "Train the Trainers" program for continuous quality in-house and new-hire training, data system upgrades, and the formation of technical help desks. Four core trainers from the MIS staff led a four-month course in WordPerfect, Lotus, Windows98, and Beyond Mail for fifteen computer-savvy employees, enabling them to provide technical support and mentorship to their peers, and to redefine and set high standards necessary for quality-oriented service.

For its second anniversary, the FJD newsletter *The Courterly*, got a new look as a result of redesign, formatting improvements, and the introduction of color photographs and graphics.

Training

The Courterly

Points of Interest

- Dedicated employees reach milestone 2-4
- OW employee named Barristers' President 2
- MC 1999 Employee of the Year 2
- Judge Levin and Clerks are Rejuvenated 3
- Land a Hand, FJD 3
- Thank that someone else's world isn't empty? 3
- Uncovering a diamond in the rough 4
- The impressive FJD Law Library is reopened 4
- Another day of 5

Technology at Your Door - Train the Trainers

Municipal Court Honors Employees

MC Employee of the Year Recipients: Janet L. Smith, Esq., Anne M. McConville, Esq., Karen Kopp, Esq., and Anne A. McConville, Esq.

First Judicial District

1999 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Under the direction of Manager John A. Guerrero, the FJD Space and Facilities Unit undertook several major City Hall renovation projects, including the Judgement Index Unit,(Room 262, pictured below right) and the Law Library (Room 600 below left). Original turn-of-the-century ceramic tiled walls, terrazzo and glass flooring, spiral staircases, chandeliers, and furniture were painstakingly restored to their former brilliance. The renovation work served to create professional modern work areas, including state-of-the-art computers, while preserving the craftsmanship and history of the past.

Renovations



Helping Hands

Charitable causes benefitted from the help of FJD employees who gave their time and effort. Along with Kelly Harvey from CJC Coding (photo, top right) 29 volunteer coaches met with students from the Thomas Durham Elementary School for weekly reading sessions as part of the Philadelphia Reads program. Judge Stephen E. Levin and several law clerks participated in the 20th Philadelphia Bar Association 10K and 2-Mile Charity Run (bottom right). Civil Administration's Debbie Dailey (right) joined other employees in collecting donated toys for the "Toys for Tots" program.



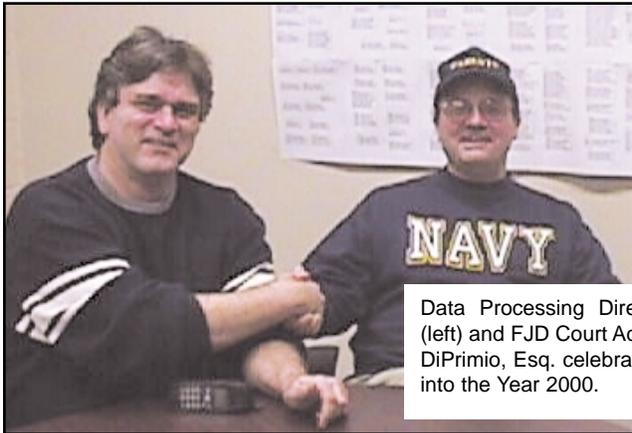
1999 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS *First Judicial District*

Notes

Domestic Relations staff completed the transition to a new state-mandated automated data system — PACSES. Employees put in hours of extra work to accomplish the necessary extensive computer programming, data clean-up and verification and training while maintaining operations and a high level of customer service.

Honorable Louis J. Presenza was sworn in as President Judge of the Municipal Court in January 1999. Judge Presenza served on the Municipal Court bench since 1982 and presided over the criminal division as supervising Judge since 1996. He implemented Pennsylvania's first Drug Treatment Court in 1997.

The FJD became the country's first court system to go on-line with internet access to details of lawsuits contained in civil dockets. The on-line database contains over 17 million docket entries representing more than 1.7 million Philadelphia civil cases. For attorneys and litigants access to docket information is quick and easy.



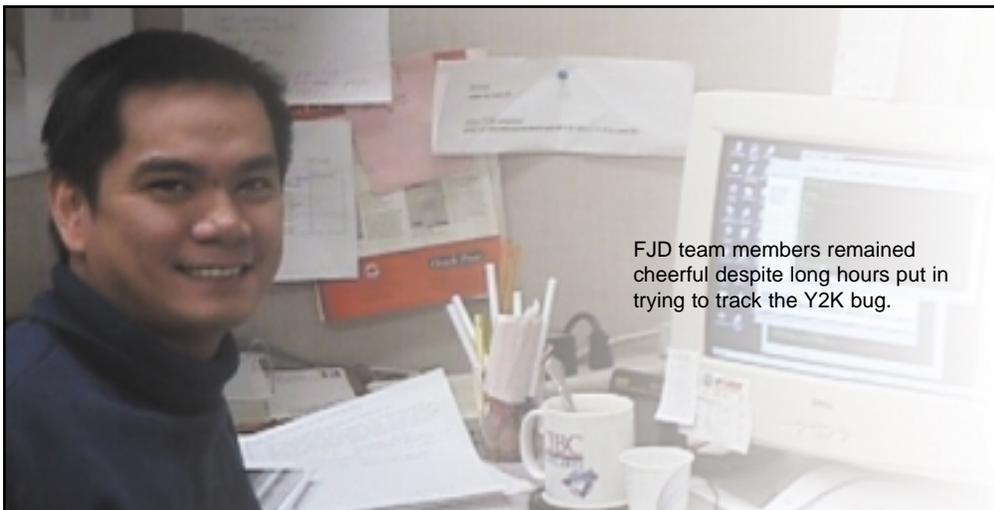
Data Processing Director George Hutton (left) and FJD Court Administrator Joseph J. DiPrimio, Esq. celebrate a smooth entrance into the Year 2000.

The FJD Y2K compliance effort, begun in 1996 shortly after the appointment of Joseph J. DiPrimio, Esq., as FJD Court Administrator, culminated over the New Year's weekend by welcoming in Year 2000 on a high note. The seamless transition into 2000 was the result of years of work on the part of Court leaders and employees from literally every constituent FJD Court, Division, and subdivision. Over the course of the last several years, many

Y2K

meetings, consultations with expert employee users, IS vendors, allied branches of government and outside connected agencies bred a reliable product that came through by killing the Y2K bug. The teamed approach

led to a comprehensive plan backed up with well-orchestrated performances by hundreds of individuals. FJD administrative and technology leaders, on a high state of alert as 1999 drew to a close, were networked by home phones, cell phones, offices, pagers, and by being there and being prepared were the need to arise. Many employees worked unselfishly over the New Year's holiday weekend to ensure the success of the enterprise.



FJD team members remained cheerful despite long hours put in trying to track the Y2K bug.

First Judicial District

OFFICE OF THE

Court Administrator



PURPOSE

The Court Administrator is entrusted by the District's top leadership body, the Administrative Governing Board (AGB), to carry out their directives and, through his own initiative, to creatively develop and institute new programs and project solutions.

Joseph J. DiPrimio, Esquire
Court Administrator
First Judicial District of Pennsylvania

RESPONSIBILITIES

Now a part of the Unified Judicial System of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Office of the Court Administrator of the First Judicial District was created by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 1996. That same year, Joseph J. DiPrimio, Esq., was appointed FJD Court Administrator. He continues to serve the District in that capacity. Essentially, the Court Administrator's Office acts as the District's hub of managerial activities.

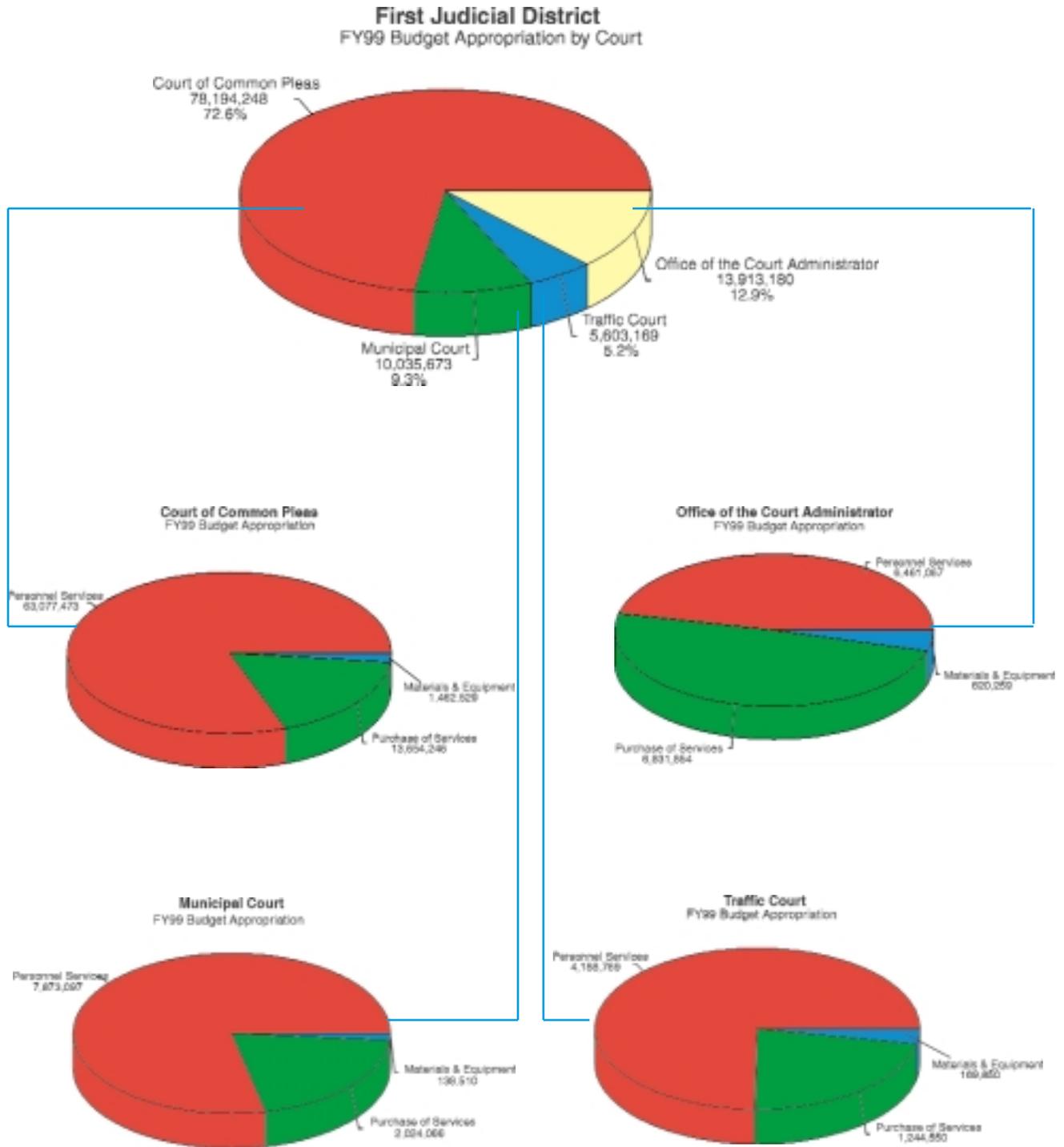
In day to day operations, the Office provides centralized management for five main service centers, the functions of which generally affect the work of the Courts throughout the District. They include Data Processing/Techology, Human Resources, Management Analysis, Space & Facilities, and Administrative Services. The Court Administrator also directs a team of eight Deputy Court Administrators located in the various sections of the divisions that make up the Common Pleas, Municipal and Traffic Court arms of the FJD. Concerned chiefly with those services that apply to all of the FJD component Courts and Divisions, the purview of the Office of the Court Administrator is the most wide-ranging of all the non-judicial positions in the FJD.

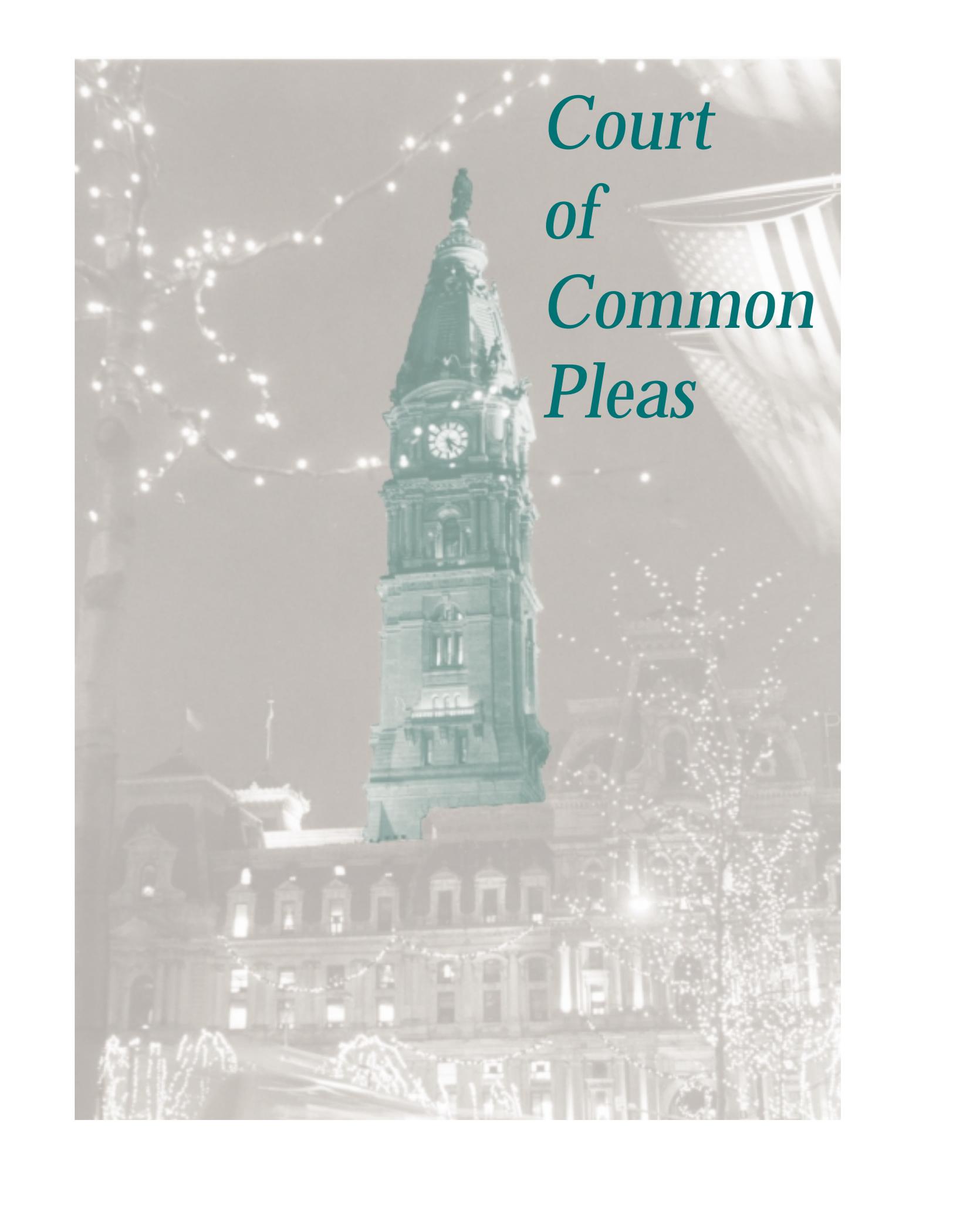
In 1999 ...

- ◆ The Court Administrator spearheaded the massive years-long task of FJD preparations and coordination for all FJD computer systems transition to year 2000 specifications.
- ◆ To bring the District into compliance with federal and state statutes and regulations, the entire body of FJD personnel policies was examined, evaluated, and revamped, improving management/employee relations through greater understanding of newly clarified guidelines.
- ◆ The Court Website, <http://courts.phila.gov> continued to expand services available over the Internet for improved access to the Civil Docket system, inclusion of more downloadable forms, and online court listings. In 1999, the site won five awards, including the StudyWeb Academic Excellence Award, the Medaille d'Or for Web Site Excellence, and the WPVI television station Cyber 6 Featured Site award.
- ◆ During 1999, major projects included the renovation of the City Hall Law Library and the renovation of office space for the FJD Procurement Unit.
- ◆ For the first time in the history of the Court, a District-wide Record Retention schedule and program began development in 1999. Other initiatives included the unfolding of a cost allocation plan, transactional-based Human Resources processes, work begun on procedural manuals and collections efforts, and the establishment of centralized statistic reporting capabilities.

OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR *First Judicial District*

Except for percentages, all figures below represent dollar amounts.



A photograph of Philadelphia City Hall at night, illuminated with warm lights. The building's iconic clock tower is the central focus. The scene is decorated with numerous strings of white Christmas lights, some draped across the frame and others clustered around the building. A large American flag is visible on the right side. The overall atmosphere is festive and celebratory.

*Court
of
Common
Pleas*

Common Pleas Court

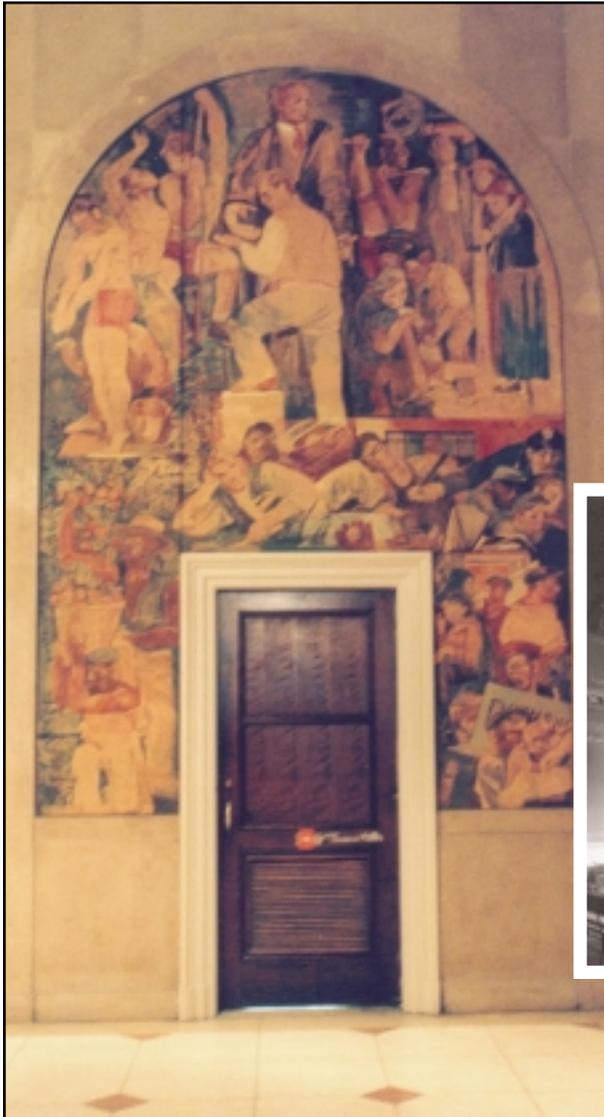
PURPOSE

Employees of the Court of Common Pleas support a complement of 90 judges in the largest Court in the Commonwealth. As a Court of general jurisdiction, the Common Pleas Court is distinguished from the two other special limited jurisdiction courts — Municipal Court and Traffic Court — that complete the organization of the First Judicial District. The Court of Common Pleas comprises three divisions — Family, Trial, and Orphans Court. The Family and Trial Divisions are each further delineated into separate sections: Family, with its Domestic Relations and Juvenile Sections; and the Trial Division with Criminal and Civil Section components.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In support of the judicial decision making process, the employees receive filings, coordinate schedules, manage case flow, and aid in the disposition of hundreds of thousands of cases annually. In 1999, 206,000 filings were registered.

The Trial Division Civil Section has jurisdiction over civil cases where the amount in question exceeds \$10,000. For Criminal, adult felony cases make up the bulk of the work (appeals from the Philadelphia Municipal and Traffic Courts are also heard here). In the Family Division, the Juvenile Section treats cases involving delinquency, dependency, and adoption, and the Domestic Relations Section disposes of cases involving paternity, spouse and child support, custody, divorce, and protection from abuse. The Orphans Court Division administers matters involving the management and distribution of the property or estates of decedents, minors, and incapacitated persons.



*Above: The Orphans Court City Hall courtroom circa 1920.
Left: Detail from one of the many murals at the Family Court Building at 1801 Vine Street.*

Common Pleas Court

In 1999 ...

- ◆ Court Administration and Pretrial Services participated in on-going preliminary arraignment system (PARS) upgrades and, through coordination with MIS, helped upgrade and install a new interface between PARS and PC Pretrial Plus.
- ◆ Pretrial Services increased electronic monitoring capacity by 100 units.
- ◆ The APPD was 99.4% compliant with the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole Bureau of Probation Services' standards. Probation additionally increased collections maintaining its commitment toward the collection of \$300,000 in victim costs and fines.
- ◆ The Office of Criminal Listings initiated the collection of over \$92,000 in delinquent fines, costs, and restitution from violators at county prison Gagnon I hearings.
- ◆ The Accelerated Adoption Review Court (AARC) was implemented. It examines those cases where the parental rights have been terminated but the adoption has not yet been finalized, aiming for timely completion.
- ◆ The Model Dependency Court was established. This is an innovative approach to dependency case processing with pre-hearing conferences among all parties before each hearing; time-specific hearing appointments; early appointment of counsel, and on-site assessments for immediate drug, alcohol and mental health problem intervention.
- ◆ Juvenile Court established a Victim & Community Services Unit to promote the implementation of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice System's Balanced & Restorative Justice Model.
- ◆ The Philadelphia Court-Appointed Special Advocates Program presented Family Court Administrative Judge Paul P. Panepinto with its Marvin E. Wolfgang Award for his support of their work with families in the dependency courts.
- ◆ Truancy Court expanded its PROJECT START initiative, adding three additional cluster courts and enabling the entire School District of Philadelphia to be involved.
- ◆ The Trial Division Civil Section reduced the average wait of five to six years for a trial to the ABA recommended one year for simple cases, two years for standard cases and three years for the most complex major jury cases.
- ◆ The 1994 28,000 case backlog of major jury Trial Division Civil cases was ultimately reduced in 1999 to an absolutely current inventory of 6,000 major cases.
- ◆ The Civil Section credited employee efforts and a cooperative spirit between Bench and Bar and a commitment by the judiciary to case management principles for their successes.
- ◆ The Trial Division Civil Section constantly monitored and revisited and altered procedures when necessary.
- ◆ The Family Division Domestic Relations Section again set a new record for Support collections: \$148,836,465 for an average annual increase of \$8.3 million.



*Criminal Justice Center Hallway
with mosaic map of Philadelphia*

OFFICE OF THE
President Judge

PURPOSE

The Court of Common Pleas of the First Judicial District is supervised by a President Judge who is elected for a five-year term by the judges of that Court.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In 1999, the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas was Alex Bonavita, who is also the chair of the First Judicial District's Administrative Governing Board, the District's core management leadership group established by the Supreme Court, and a member of the Judicial Council of Pennsylvania.

There are five major service centers under the auspices of the President Judge: 1) the Office of the Prothonotary, 2) the Law Library; 3) Court Reporter and Interpreter Services; 4) Messenger Service (Mail); and 5) the FJD Procurement Unit. Some of the 1999 accomplishments of these service centers are set forth hereunder. The Office of the President Judge is aided by its Director, and Coordinator of the Civil Mental Health Program, Dominic J. Rossi, Esquire.

The myriad duties and responsibilities of the President Judge include the following administrative duties: presides at meetings of the Board of Judges of the Court of Common Pleas and selects judges to serve on standing and special committees of the Board due to his status as Chair of the Board of Judges; serves as liaison between the City of Philadelphia and the First Judicial District; presents the budget of the entire FJD to City Council; administers the Judicial Education Fund; orders divisional assignment of judges; certifies the need for senior judges whose appointment is necessary for the prompt and proper disposition of the business of the Court, assigns them to divisions of the court as needed, and reviews their requests for payment; certifies the need for the assignment of out-of-county judges whenever the court as a whole needs to be recused; allocates space among the divisions of the Court of Common Pleas, and assigns judicial chambers; is responsible for the implementation of local rules, administrative orders, directives and general court regulations, as well as for monitoring legislative proposals and enactments; and interacts with Bar Association and civic leaders, and the news media.

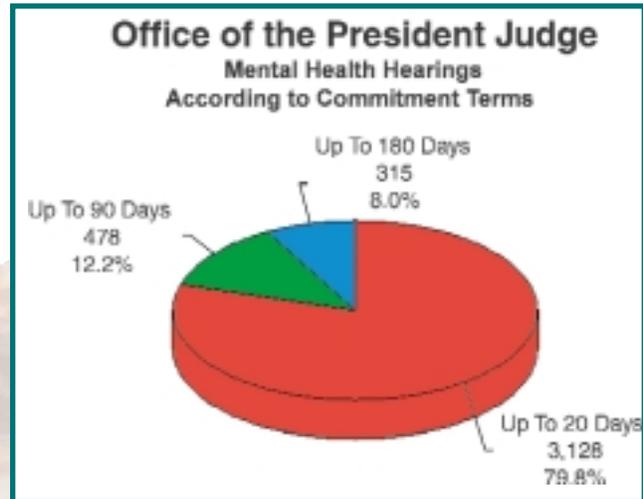
The President Judge's responsibilities include: the assignment of emergency judges who entertain emergency requests which occur during non-court hours rendering the court accessible on a 24 hour/seven day per week basis; supervises the election process by assigning judges to preside at off-site facilities to entertain questions concerning potential voters' eligibility to cast votes, hears petitions requesting the appointment of vacant election board positions in the various election districts throughout the city, and petitions seeking the appointment of poll watchers; hears petitions for review of Mental Health commitments; determines petitions for the Sale of Abandoned Vehicles; reviews and signs all writs of execution and out-of-state arrest reports; reviews and decides Homicide Fee

Common Pleas Court

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT JUDGE

Petitions filed by court-appointed counsel; enforces the Political Activity Prohibition of all FJD employees as well as compliance with the Residency requirement; appoints, and oversees, the Supervising Judge of Investigating Grand Jury; determines petitions to modify bail judgments; maintains a Disbarment Docket of local attorneys suspended or disbarred by the Supreme Court; hears special cases, such as class actions, stockholders derivative actions, land condemnation cases, as necessary.

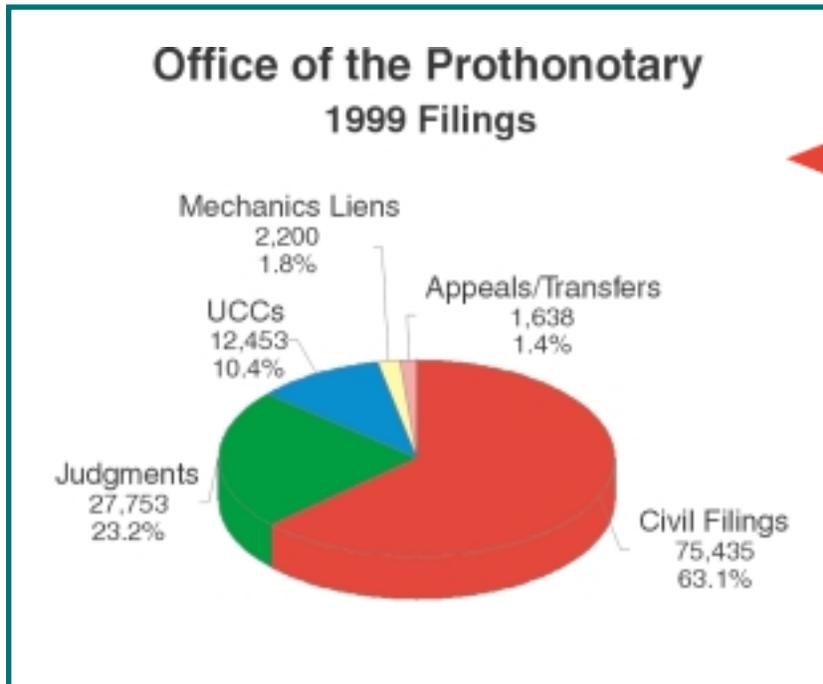
The Office of the President Judge also appoints and supervises Mental Health Review Officers who, in 1999, conducted 3,921 hearings pursuant to the Mental Health Act, as well as 137 hearings to determine whether greater restraint of consumers receiving involuntary mental health treatment should be ordered.



In 1999 ...

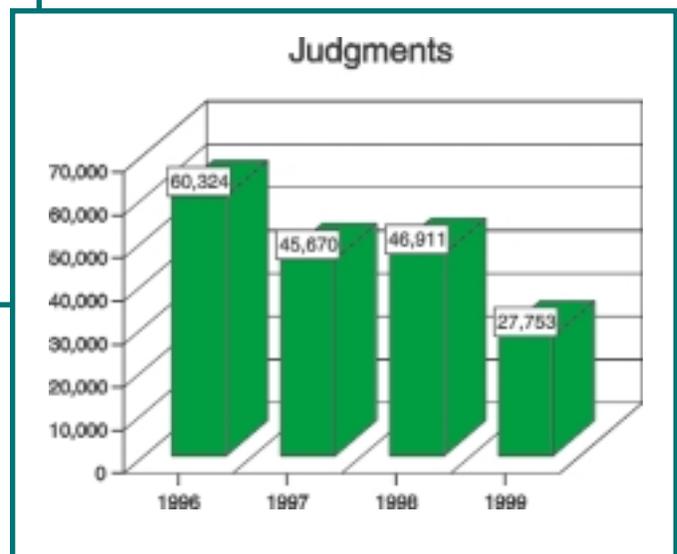
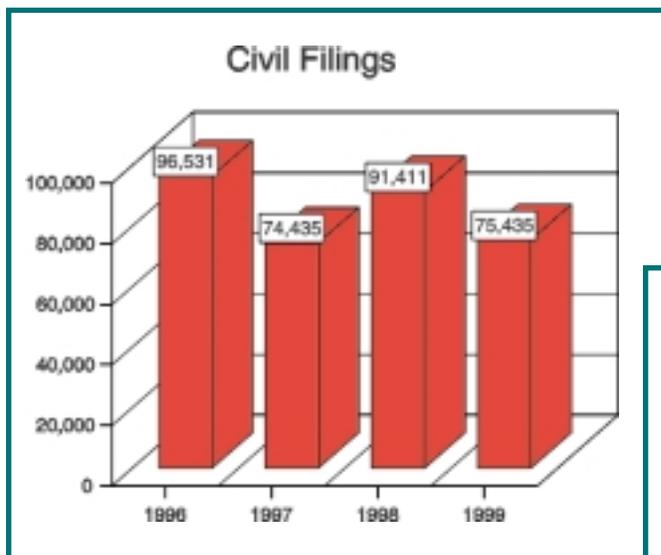
- ◆ The Judgment Index Unit was renovated, with the addition of 12 public access terminals.
- ◆ The tax lien docket was automated.
- ◆ More civil forms became available via the FJD web site.
- ◆ Customer service was improved by providing high-speed digital printers for public access.
- ◆ The Finance Unit operations were enhanced with the addition of a new cashiering system.
- ◆ The Prothonotary's Office was named as a participating site in the Welfare To Work transition program.
- ◆ The Big Sisters Association for Physically Challenged Students were provided with work site employment experience.
- ◆ Prothonotary employees and others attended the Senior Citizen Consumer Protection Fair and provided information and demonstrated methods for accessing information through the Court's web site.
- ◆ Staff continued to participate in legal education forums; i.e., Legal Secretary's Association, local colleges and high schools, etc.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT JUDGE *Pleas Court*



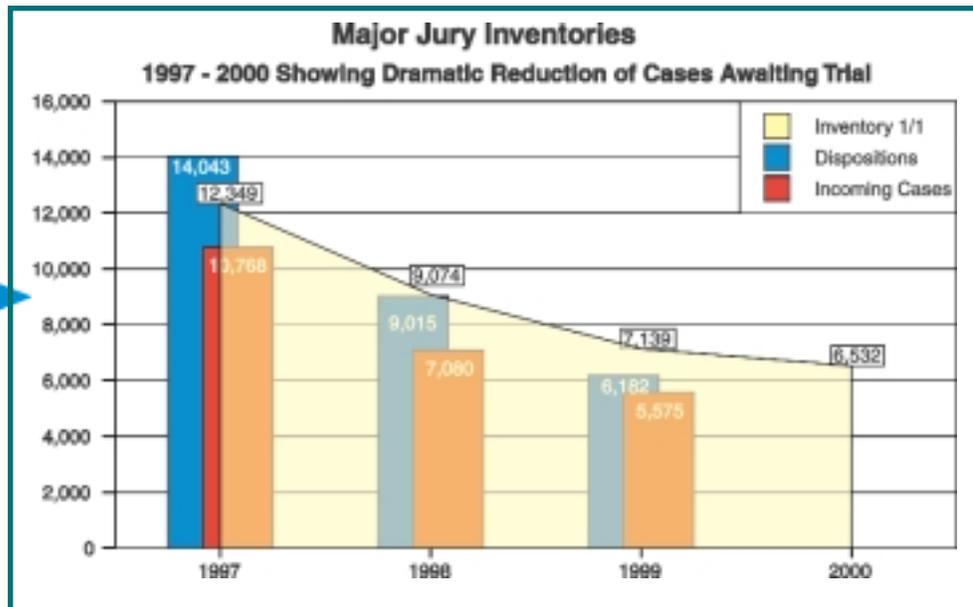
In 1999, a total of 119,479 filings were received and processed through the Office of the Prothonotary. With reported Civil Section filings in 1999 at 44,146, the difference of 75,333 filings were completed within the Prothonotary's Office.

Despite the incredible volume of cases, Prothonotary filings took a general downturn in 1999 as shown in the charts below.

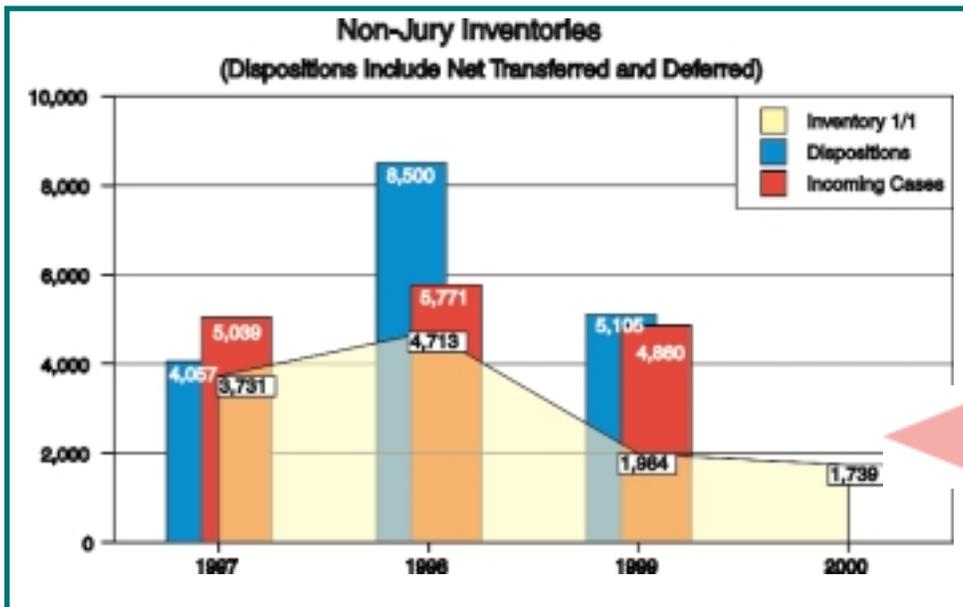


Common Pleas TRIAL DIVISION - CIVIL SECTION

The Major Jury program inventory was reduced by 5,817 cases or 47% from 1997 to 1999 at an average yearly rate of 18.8%. This is a result of dispositions outpacing filings at that same rate, further indicating that this is an ever-stabilizing caseload where the number of dispositions regularly exceeds the number of filings. As shown in the chart, the caseload reduction is leveling off. That the reductions in these numbers and proportions (rates) have



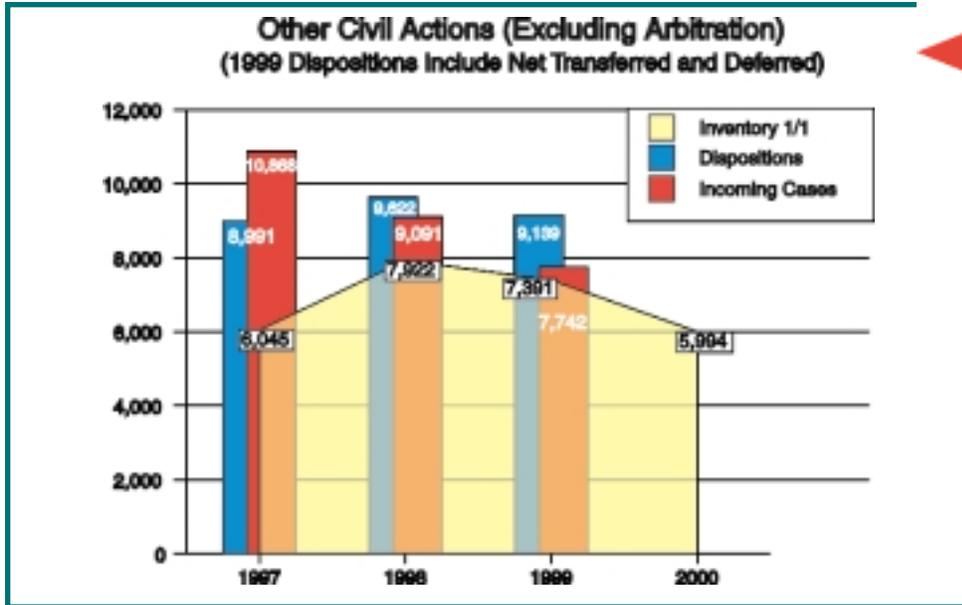
been slowing each year indicates that the maximum annual caseload reduction level may soon be approaching. The reduction from 1997 to 1998 was 3,275 cases (26.5%); from 1998 to 1999, 1,935 cases (21.3%); and from 1999 to 2000, 607 cases, or 8.5%. Under the conditions illustrated here, the reduction in the caseload inventory from 2000 to 2001 may be at an even lower rate. Of course, the numbers of filings also affect the calculations. But despite their decreases over the last 3 years, that rate of reduction is also slowing down and the extent to which the decreases in filings might affect caseload reduction is shrinking. This is a natural process indicative of a system where dispositions remain current with filings, continuing to provide access to the civil courts.



The same factors that affect Major Jury Cases also affect Non-Jury cases. When the number of dispositions exceed the number of filings, the caseload goes down by a like number. The inverse is also true, as in 1997, when the number of filings exceeded the number of dispositions, the caseload increased by the difference between those

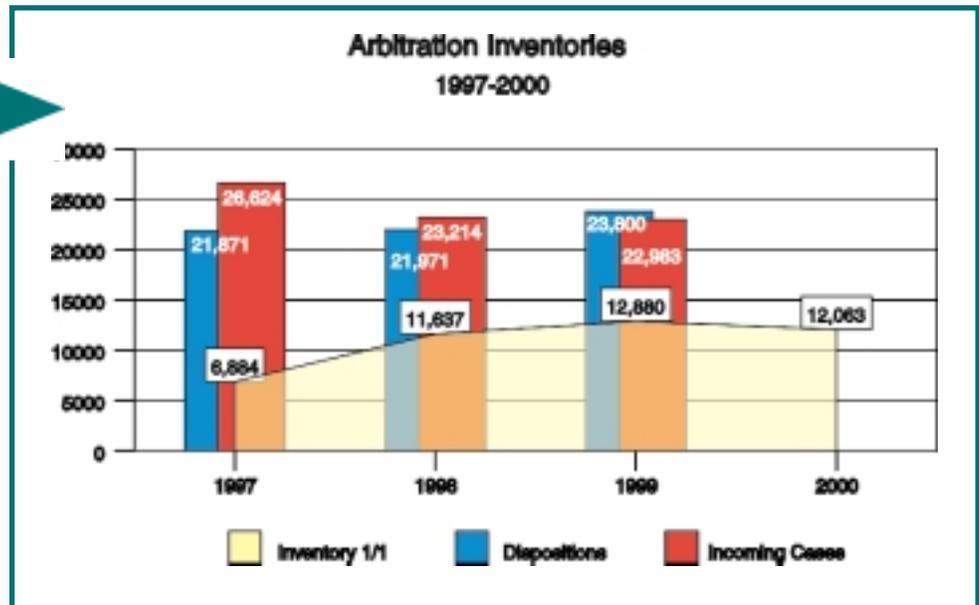
amounts. Here too, the rate of caseload reduction is slowing, meaning that future reductions may be less substantial. In 1998, there were 44.3% more dispositions than filings, driving a 58% inventory reduction. A year later, dispositions exceeded filings by only 5%, resulting in a much more modest inventory decrease of

TRIAL DIVISION - CIVIL SECTION *Pleas Court*



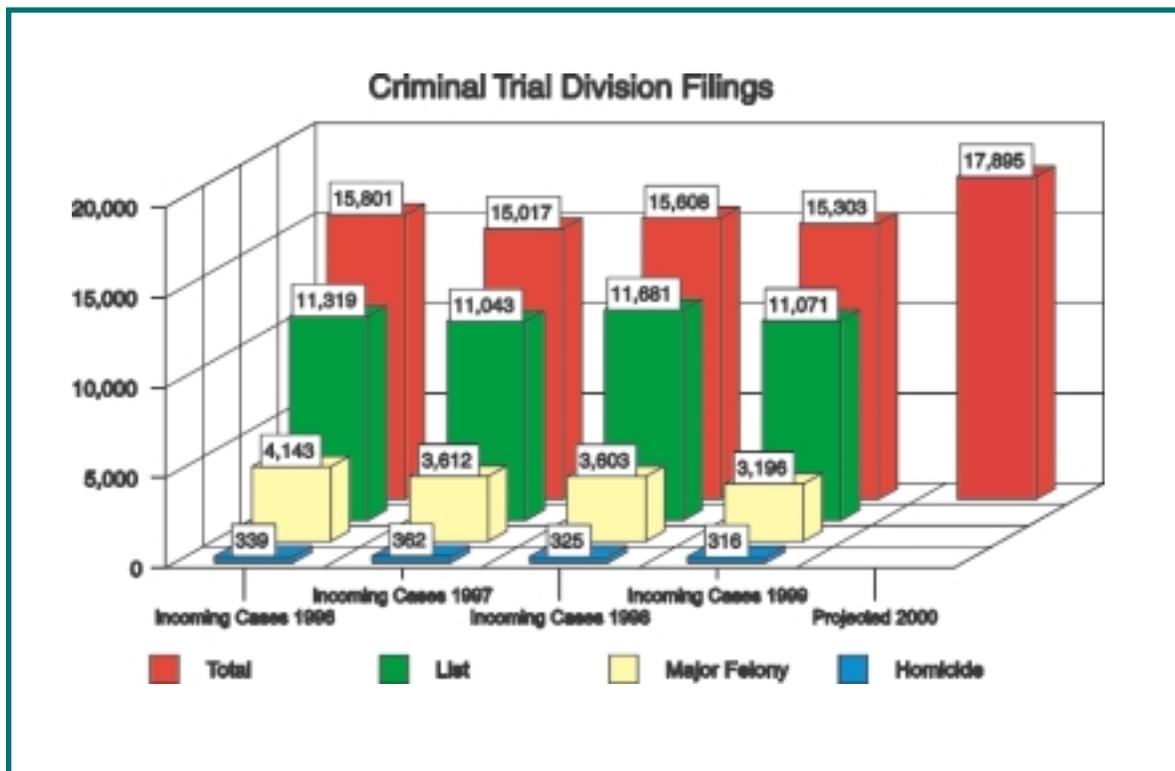
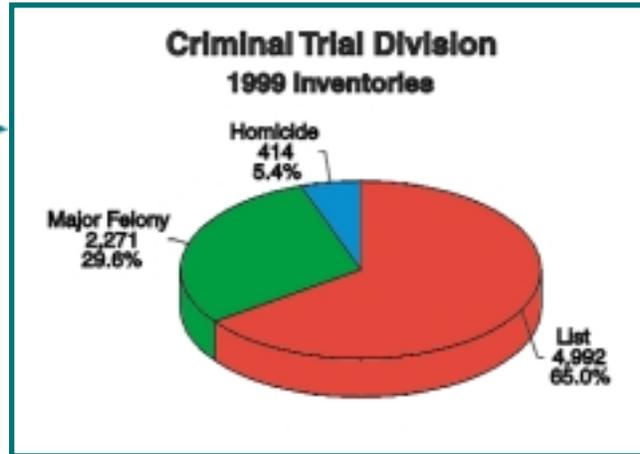
Activities in with Other Civil Actions have also achieved caseload reductions similar to the Major Jury and Non-Jury case types. For these case types, the rate of reduction (caused by climbing dispositions) is increasing. Under these conditions, caseload inventories for 2001 may be reduced by about 12%, or 839 cases.

Arbitration dispositions are increasing. Under current trends, dispositions for 2000 may exceed filings by 1,975 cases with attendant inventory reductions to close below 11,000 cases for the first time since 1997.



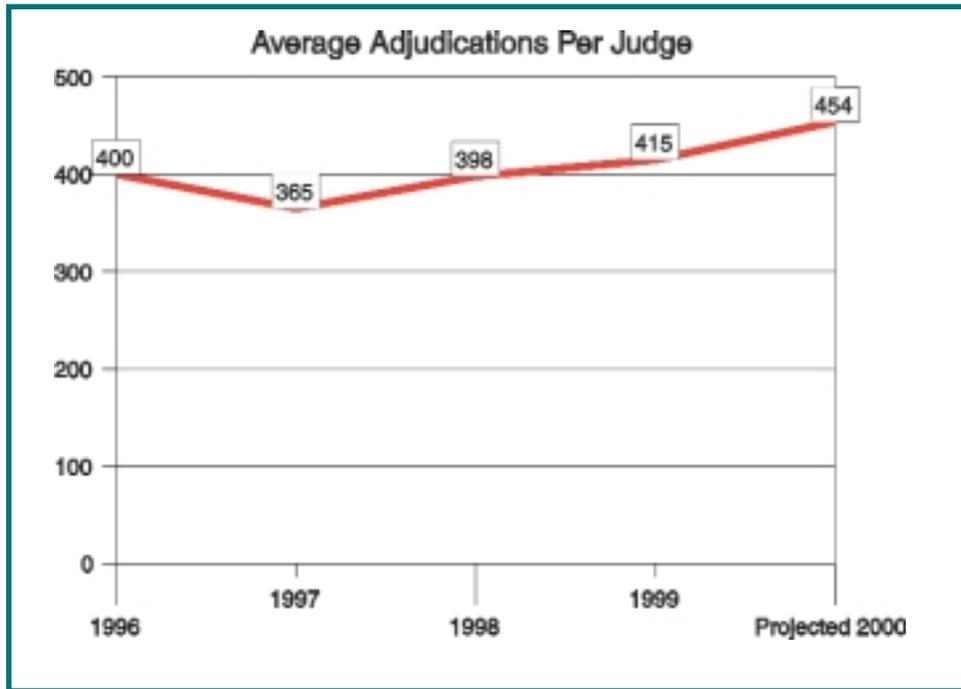
Common Pleas TRIAL DIVISION - CRIMINAL SECTION

The pie chart at right depicts the criminal filings for 1999 arranged according to case type category. Through differentiated case management, criminal cases are assigned to one of three programs: Homicide, Section Calendar (more serious and complex felony cases), and List (non-jury felony bench trials). Each of these is further delineated into tracks for the timely disposition of cases through scheduled conference events prompting agreement, or, alternatively, to ensure that they are ready for trial. Then, each trial judge maintains an individual calendar and effects disposition.



The filings chart shows that 1999 reductions in all three case categories led to an overall decrease of 305 cases or 2% less filings than 1998. However, early indications in 2000 point to an anticipated very substantial increase in total filings of 2,592 cases representing a 16.9% jump from 1999 levels.

TRIAL DIVISION - CRIMINAL SECTION *Common Pleas Court*



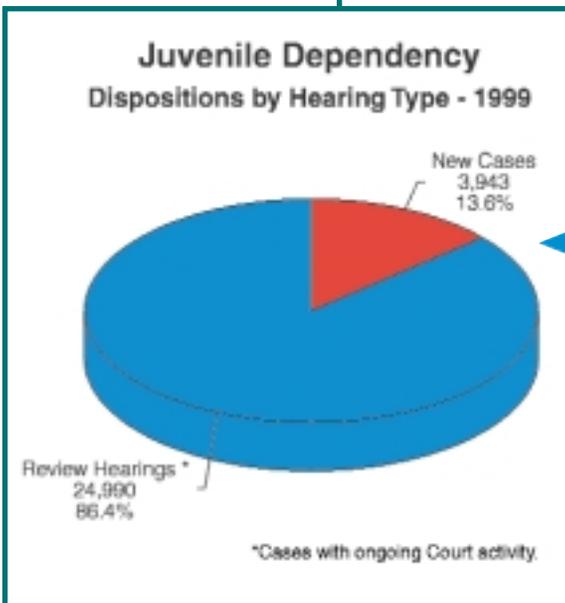
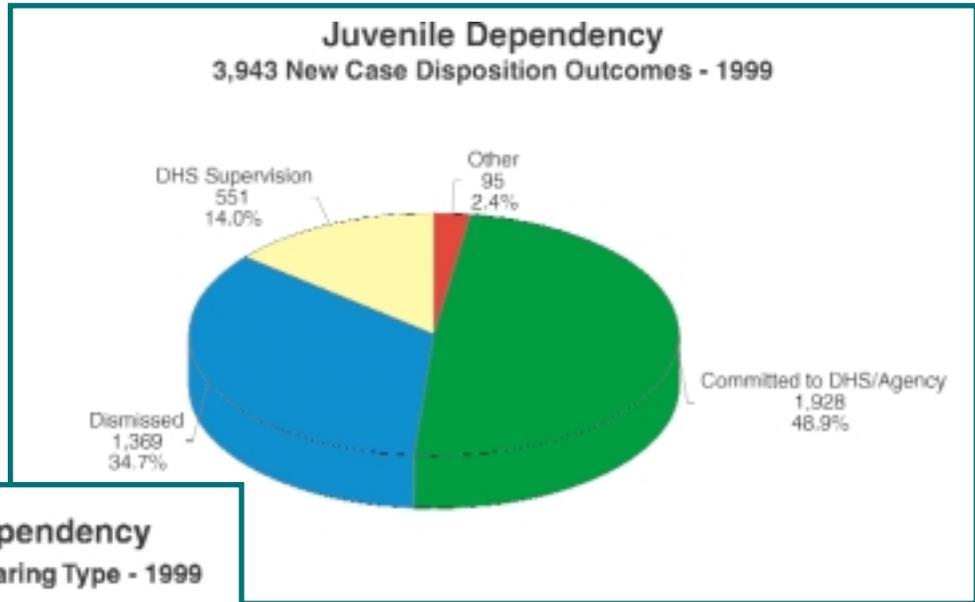
Demonstrating the dedication of the criminal bench and the case management abilities of Section employees and leaders, the number of criminal dispositions per judge has constantly risen – by an average of 6.65% in 1998 and 1999. Compared to 1997, each criminal judge disposed of 50 more cases in 1999.



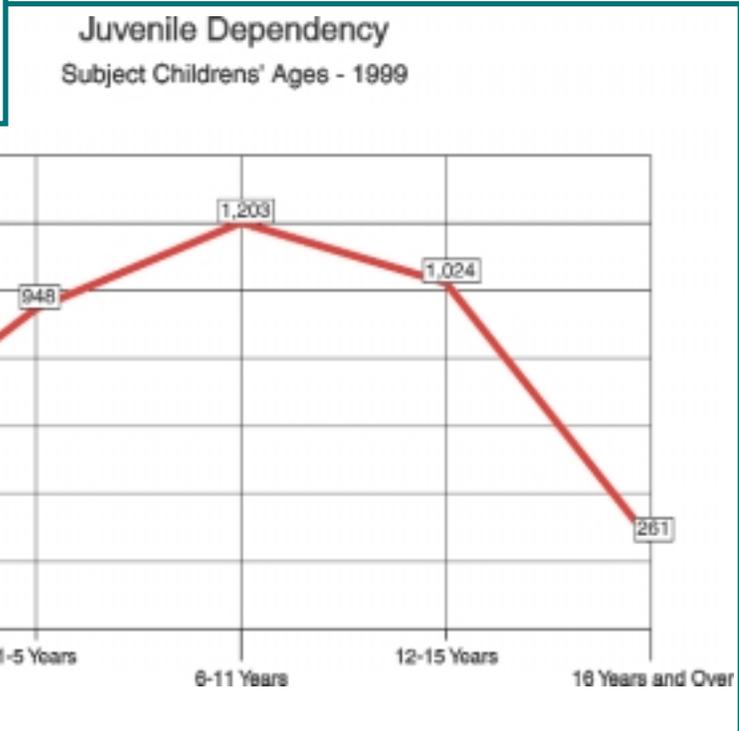
A Criminal Justice Center Courtroom

Common Pleas Court

FAMILY DIVISION - JUVENILE BRANCH

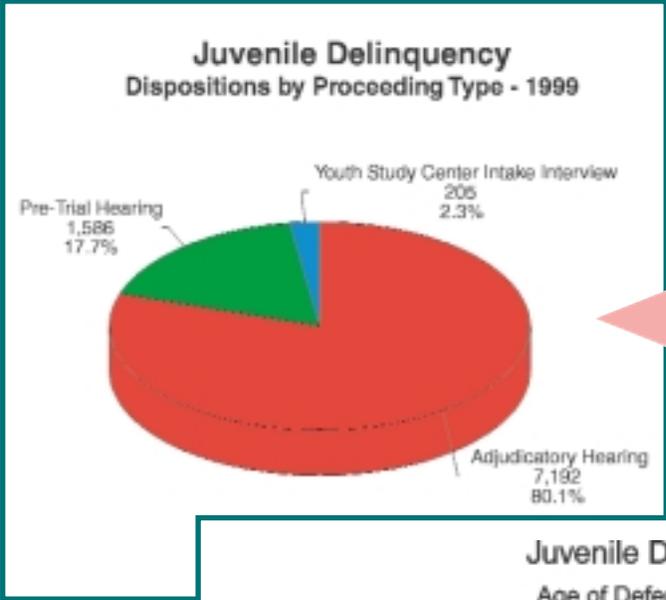
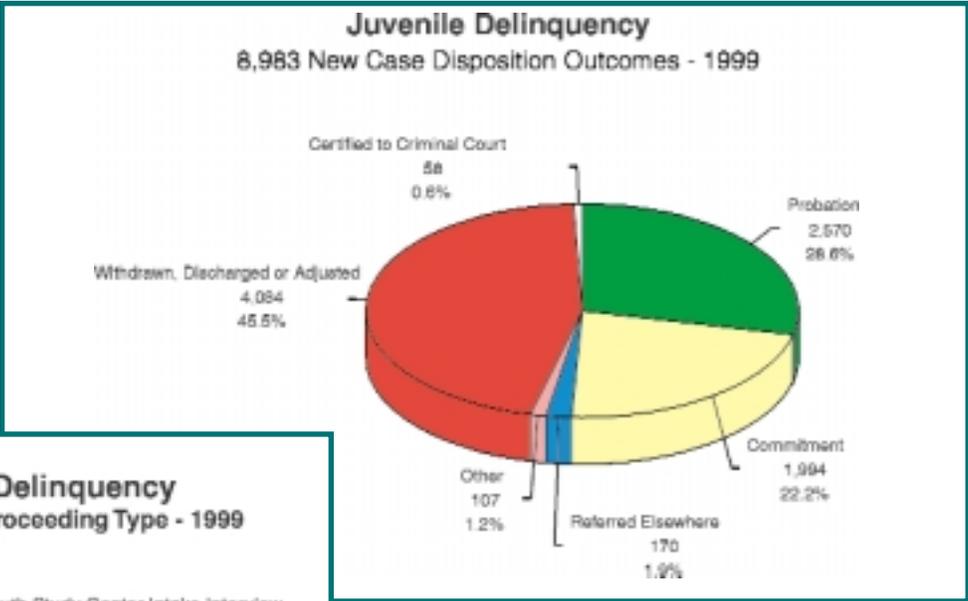


In 1999, there were 3,603 dependency filings in juvenile court. As was true in previous years, the number of new case dispositions (3,943) exceeded the number of new filings.

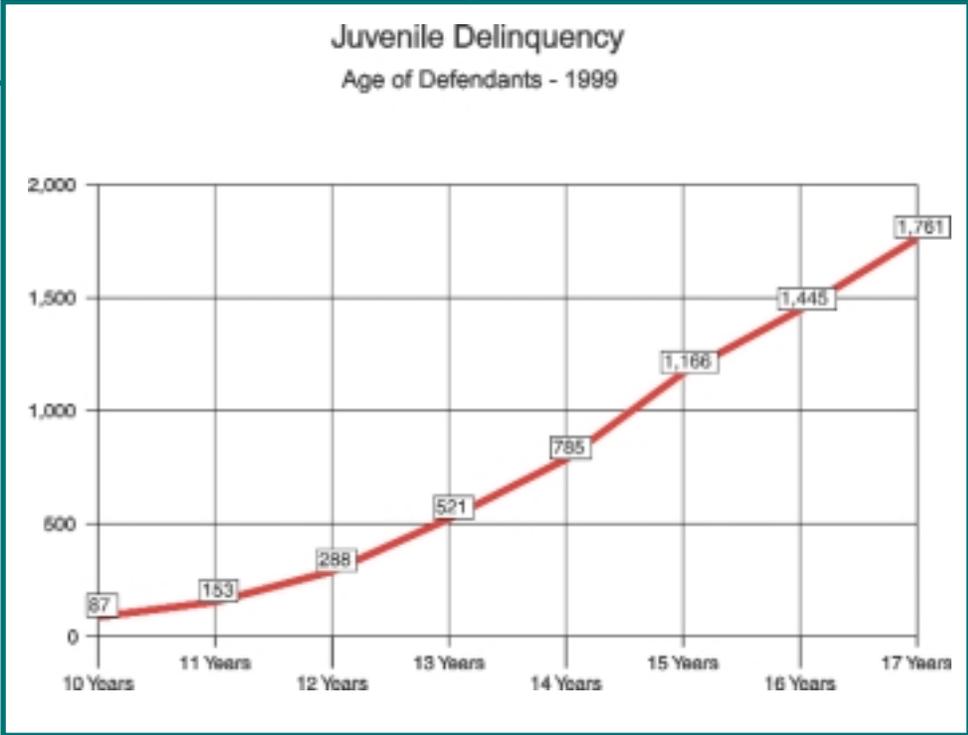


Of the 3,943 new case dispositions in 1999, ages were not reported in 21 instances. For the others shown above, 3,175 or 81% were between the ages of 1 and 15, with the largest group aged 6 to 11 years.

FAMILY DIVISION - JUVENILE BRANCH *Pleas Court*

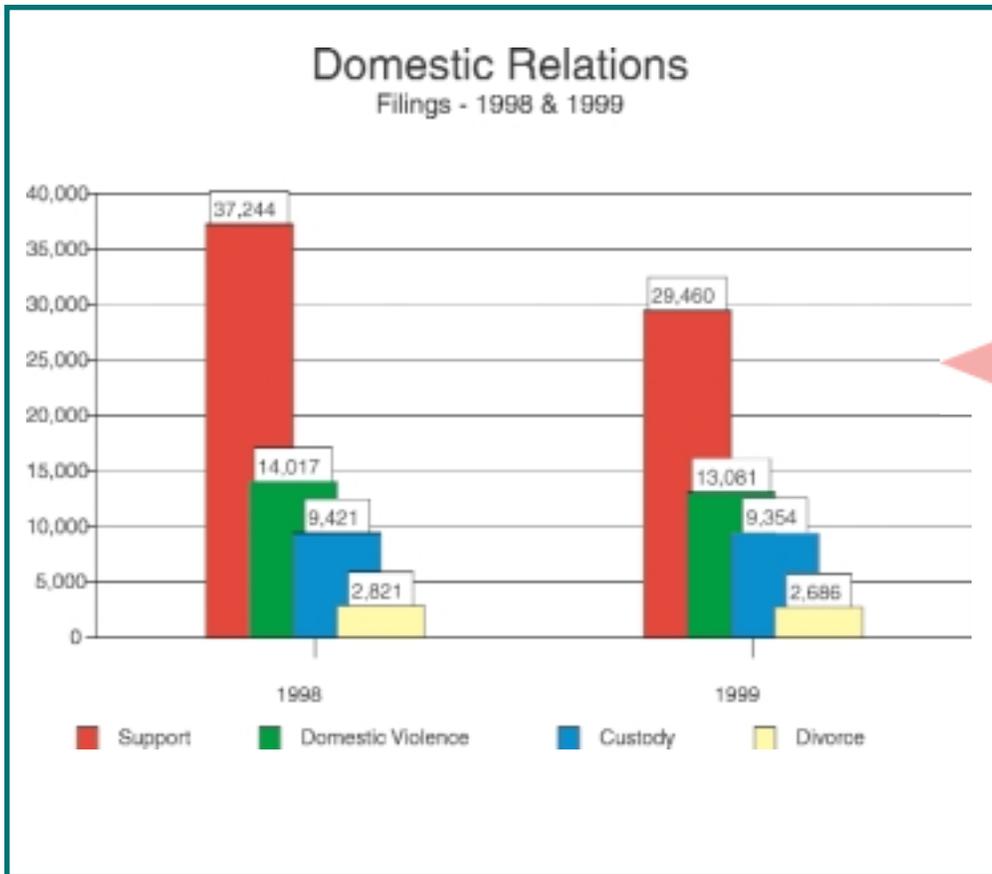


Of the total 8,983 dispositions shown in the chart at left, 7,192 or 80% were achieved through adjudicatory (trial) hearings. Assuming 250 Court days per year, the juvenile delinquency system disposes of an average of 36 cases every day.



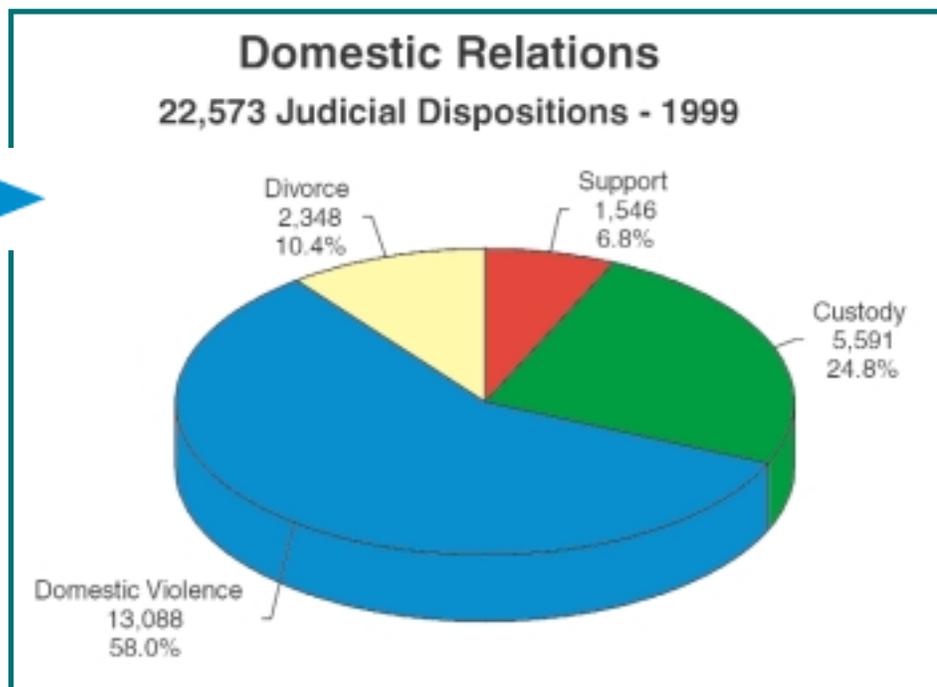
Common Pleas Court

FAMILY DIVISION - DOMESTIC RELATIONS

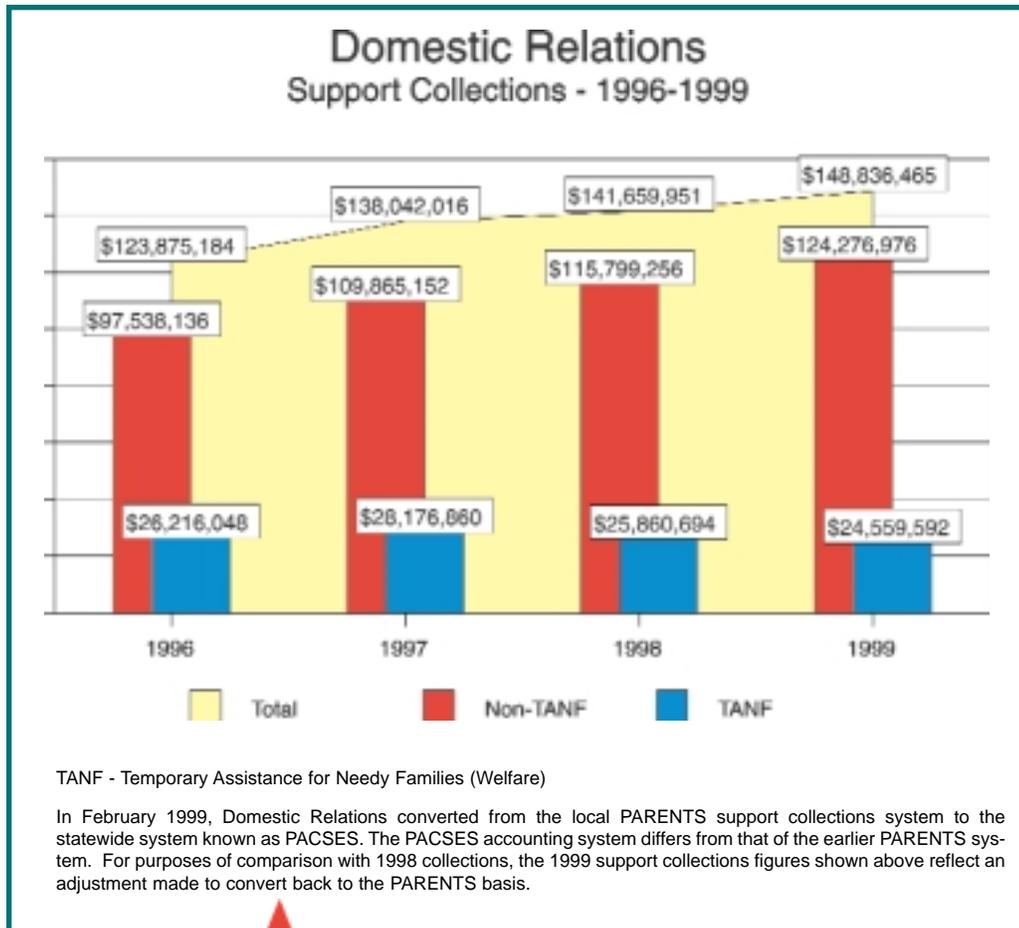


In 1999, the number of Domestic Relations filings fell by 8,922, or 14%. The major contributing factor to the decrease was the 20.9% reduction in support filings. Support filings represented well over half of the totals in 1998 (58.7%) and 1999 (54%).

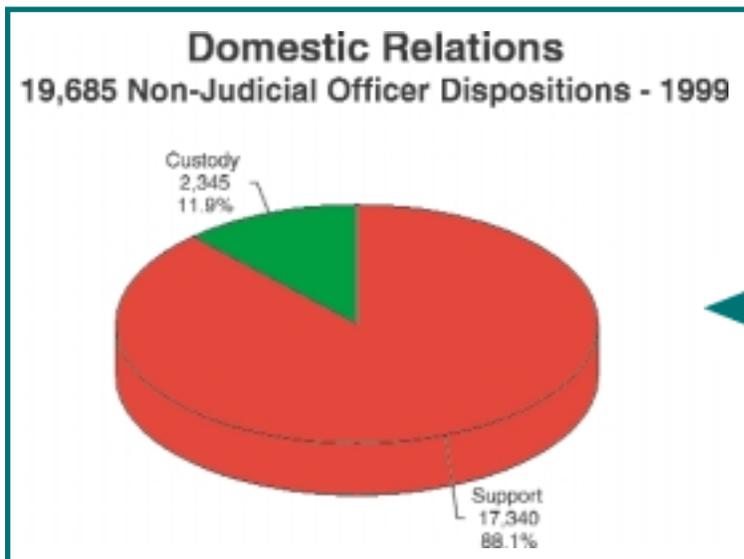
Even with the assistance provided by non-judicial officers, Domestic Relations judges nevertheless disposed of more than half (53.4%) of the 1999 dispositions.



FAMILY DIVISION - DOMESTIC RELATIONS *Pleas Court*



Domestic Relations support collections have increased every year since 1996 by an average of \$8,320,427. Support collections for 1999 totaled \$148,836,465 or 20.2% more than in baseline 1996.

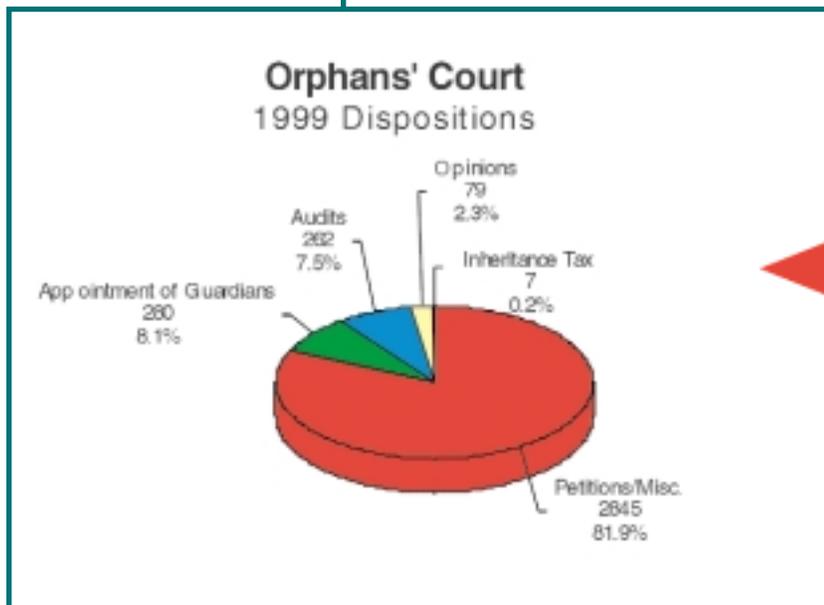
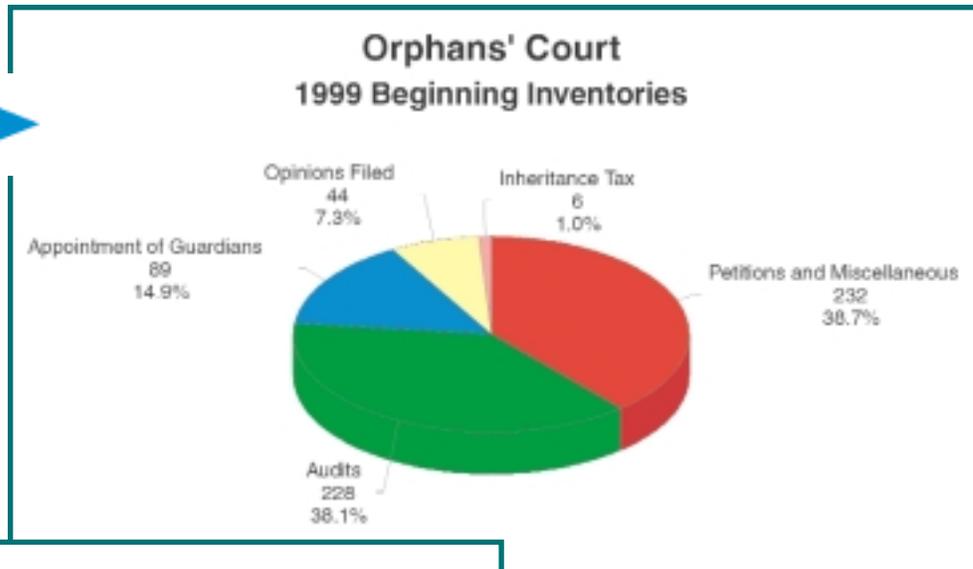


Non-judicial officers strive to resolve filings earlier and conserve judicial resources for matters that must be addressed by judges. Their dispositions account for 46.6% of the total 1999 Domestic Relations dispositions.

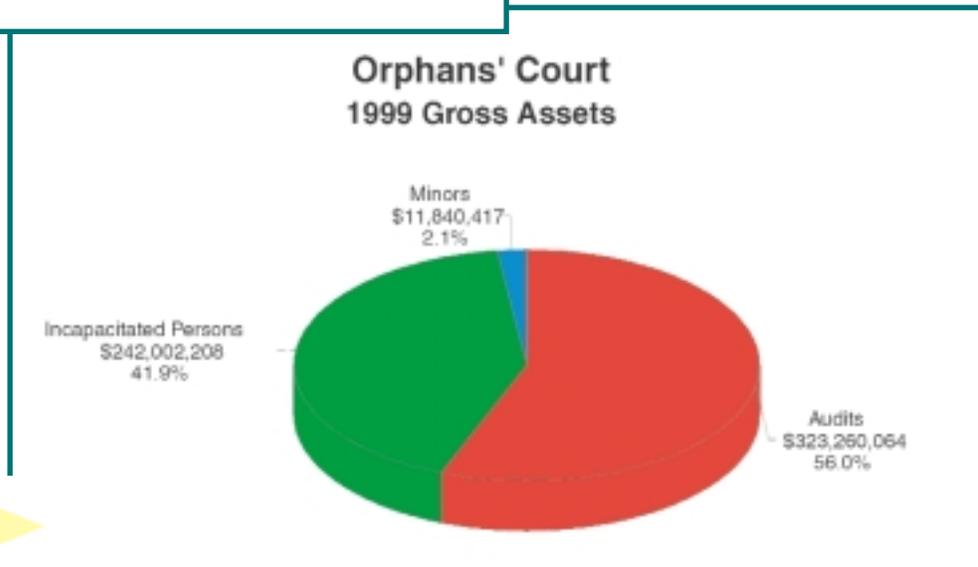
Common Pleas Court

ORPHANS' COURT

Because of the remarkably high 1998 Orphans' Court disposition rate, the Division began 1999 with a total of only 601 cases in the inventory.

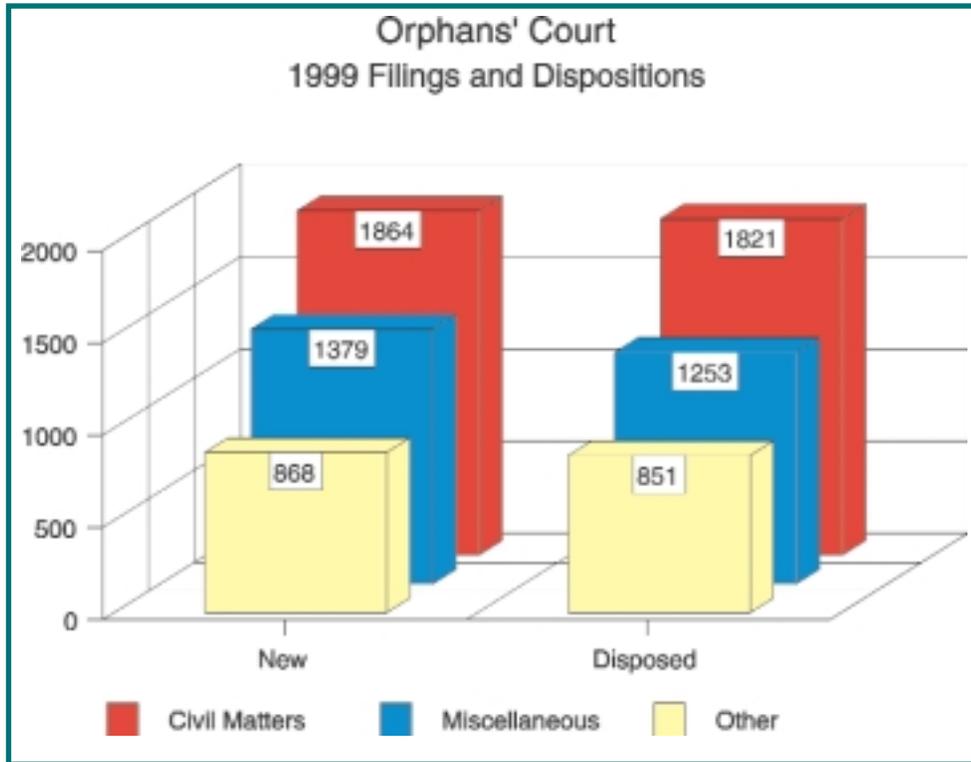


Dispositions of Petitions and Miscellaneous civil matters constituted the bulk of Orphans' Court dispositions in 1999. For comparison, there were 2,217 more Miscellaneous dispositions than in all other categories combined. There were 10 times more Miscellaneous dispositions than guardian appointments, and 406 times the number of inheritance tax case dispositions.



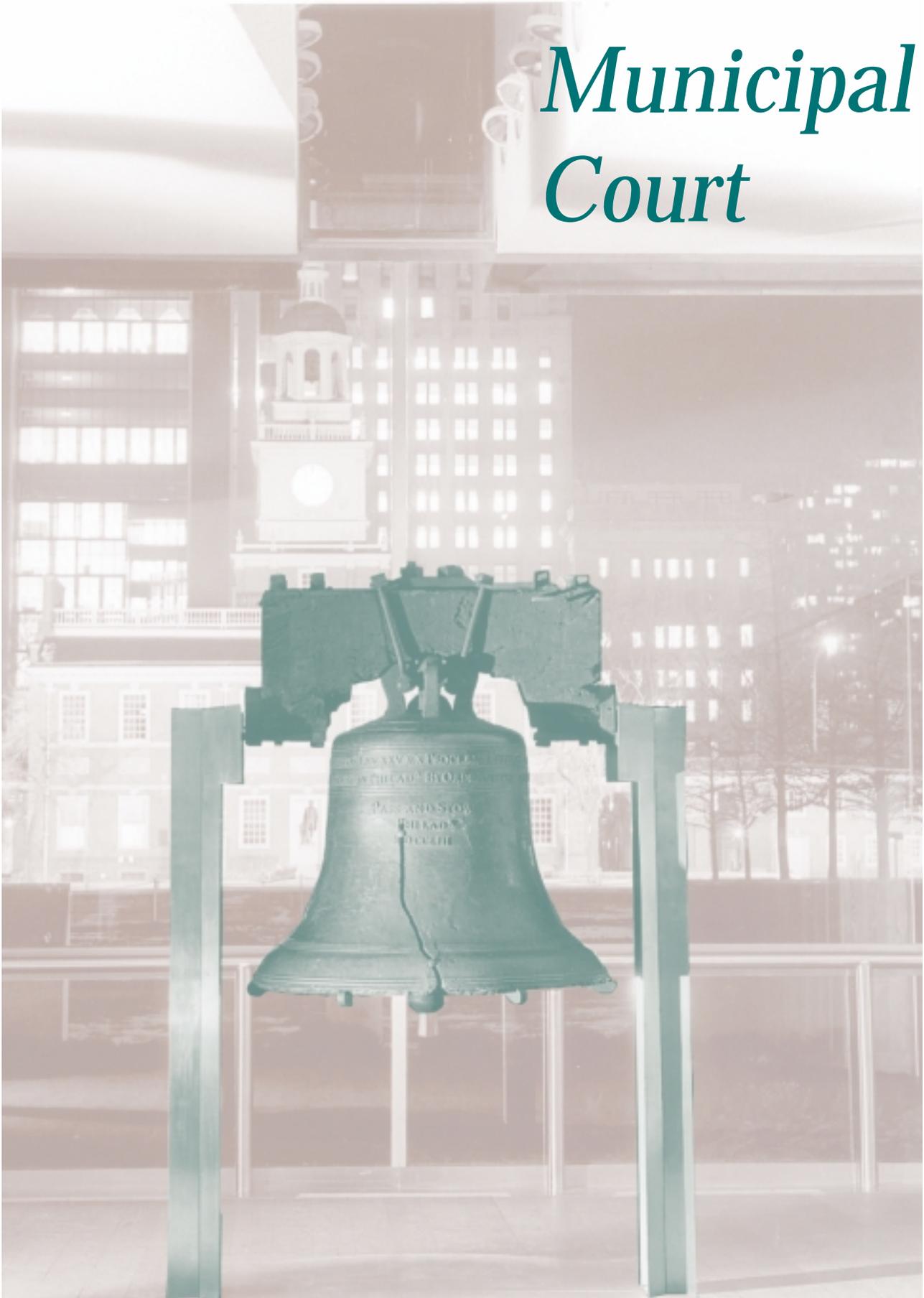
As indicated at right, gross assets under the management of the Court totaled over \$577 million.

ORPHANS' COURT *Common Pleas Court*



Beginning with only 601 cases in the Orphans' Court inventory, most of the dispositions for 1999 were for new cases. The following calculations compare dispositions to filings. The Orphans' Court Division of the Common Pleas Court achieved an overall "disposition rate" of 95% in 1999. The rate for Civil matters was calculated as 98%. The cases grouped as "Other" in the chart include Guardian Appointments, Opinions, Appeals, Citations and others. When comparing figures for the category marked "Other", the number of dispositions (851) is a 98% share of the number of filings (868). "Miscellaneous", a title for uncategorized case types, was recorded as having an impressive 91% "disposition rate."

Municipal Court



Municipal Court

PURPOSE

The Philadelphia Municipal Court was established through a 1968 amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Municipal Court is a court of limited jurisdiction with 25 judges. There are two divisions of Municipal Court: Criminal and Civil. The Court has jurisdiction over all criminal offenses (other than summary traffic offenses) which are punishable by a term of imprisonment not exceeding five years. Civil actions are limited to those cases where the amount claimed does not exceed \$10,000. The Philadelphia Municipal Court is the only special court of record in the Commonwealth. By statute, there is no right to a jury trial; however, there exists a right to a *de novo* appeal to the Court of Common Pleas.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Criminal Division provides service to the public, the Bar, criminal justice agencies and the judiciary. It processes felonies, misdemeanors, summary offenses, and private criminal complaints. The Division is organized into seven sections: Criminal Administration; Arraignment Court (Bail Commissioners); Criminal Listings; Summary Coding; Court Reporters; Private Criminal Complaints; and the Emergency Protection From Abuse Unit.

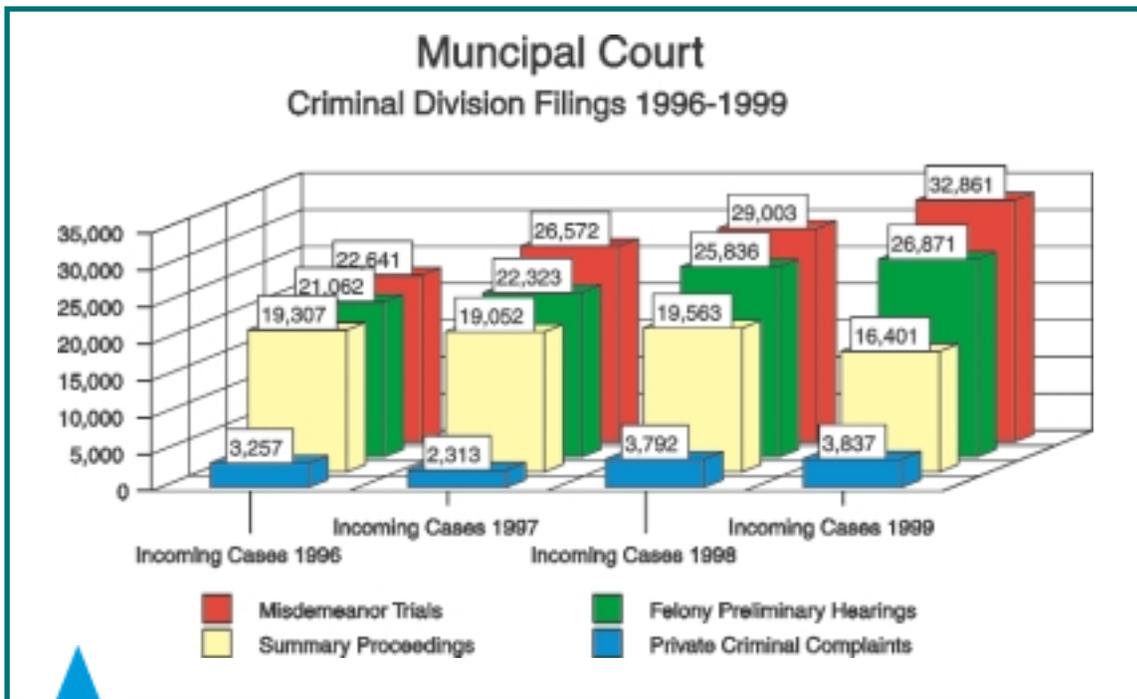
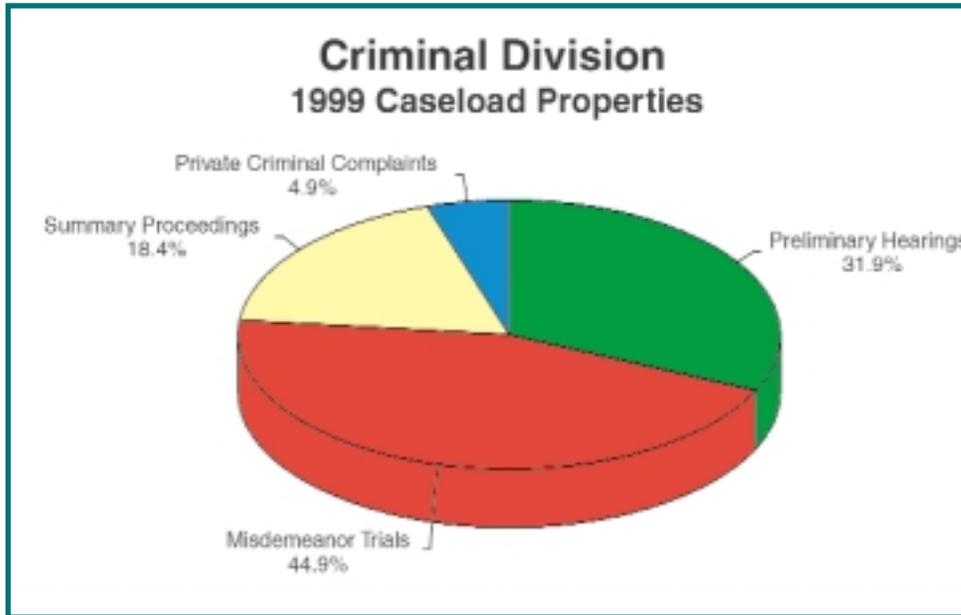
The Civil Division receives and processes Small Claims, Landlord/Tenant, Public Nuisance Complaints, and Code Enforcement filings. The Civil Division organizational structure comprises eight major branches: First Filing Unit; Civil Listings; Data processing; Writ Service; Dispute Resolution Program; Courtroom Operations; Court Recorders; and Judgments and Petitions.

Municipal Court works collaboratively with other Courts in the First Judicial District to provide the highest standard of justice possible to every citizen who interacts with the Court.

In 1999 ...

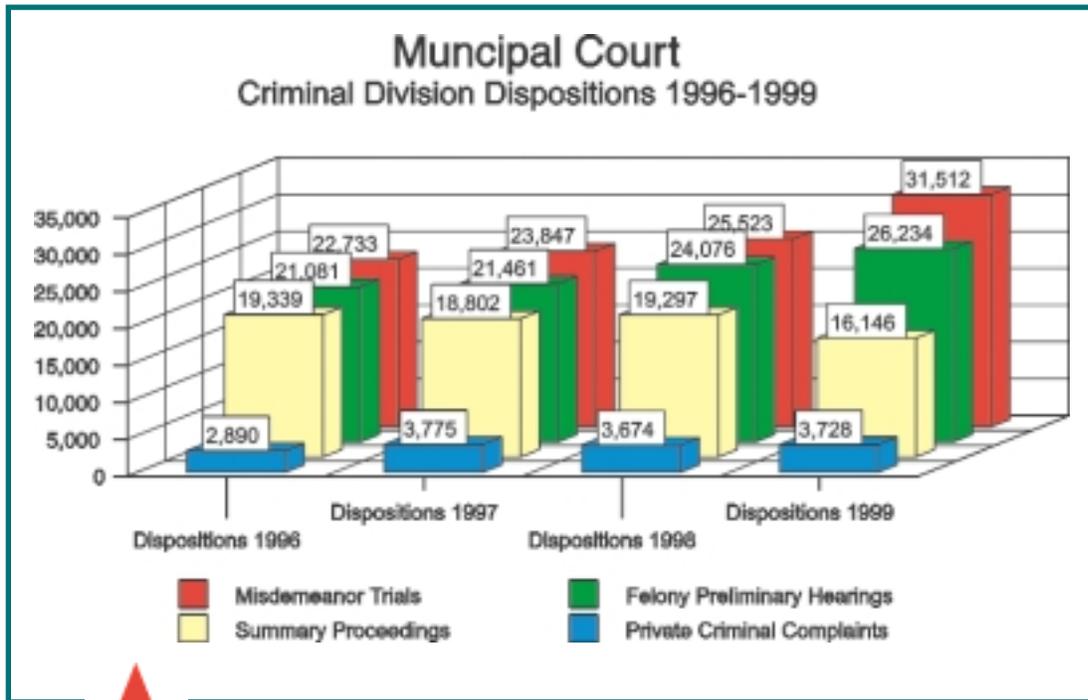
- ◆ Y2K contingency plans were undertaken to insure no disruption of criminal proceedings
- ◆ Emergency Protection From Abuse Unit held its first training seminar for clerks and Masters to deal with legal proceedings and sensitivity issues surrounding petitioners filing for emergency relief.
- ◆ The Pennsylvania Association of Drug Court Professionals was formed.
- ◆ A comprehensive MIS system for Treatment Court networked all participants from the Coordinating Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs, District Attorney, Defender, Coordinator and the Treatment Court Judge.
- ◆ Planning was undertaken to modernize the criminal case management system.
- ◆ Phase I of an automated civil case management system was implemented.
- ◆ A pilot program for E-Filings in the Civil Division was established.
- ◆ Mediation training of third year Widener University law students was completed
- ◆ All Civil Division employees participated in computer training courses.

Municipal Court **CRIMINAL SECTION**

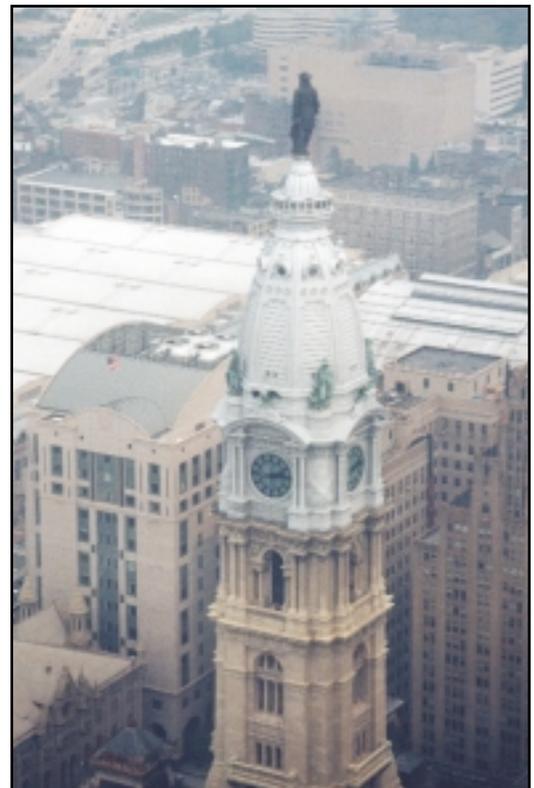


In 1999, there were a total of 79,970 filings in Municipal Court Criminal Division. Since 1996, just under 300,000 filings were received in the Criminal Division. The largest increase has occurred with Misdemeanor trials as a direct result of the Police Department's Operation Sunrise initiative. There were a total of 32,861 misdemeanor trials scheduled in 1999. This represents a 45% increase over base year 1996.

CIVIL SECTION *Municipal Court*

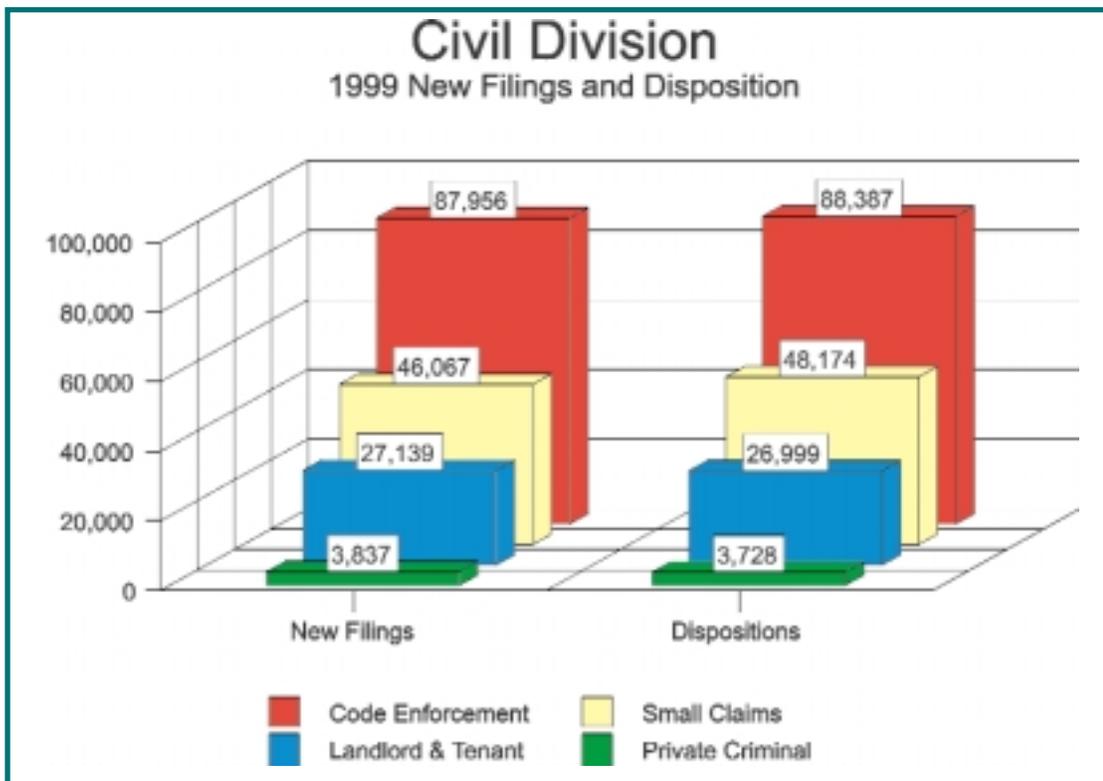
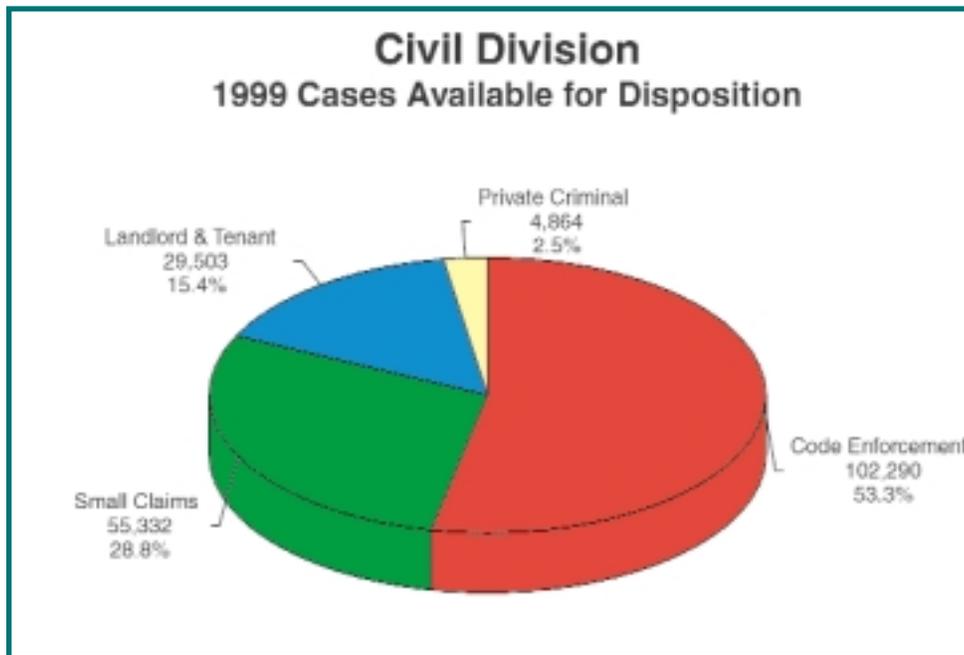


With the exception of summary proceedings, Municipal Court efforts produced substantial increases in dispositions for all case types. From 1996 to 1999, the overall ratio of criminal dispositions to criminal filings is 96.4%. There were a total of 11,577 more dispositions made in 1999 than in 1996. In 1999, the ratio between the number of dispositions and the number of filings was 97%. Increases in the 1999 misdemeanor trial dispositions (23%) outpaced the rise in the number of filings (13%).

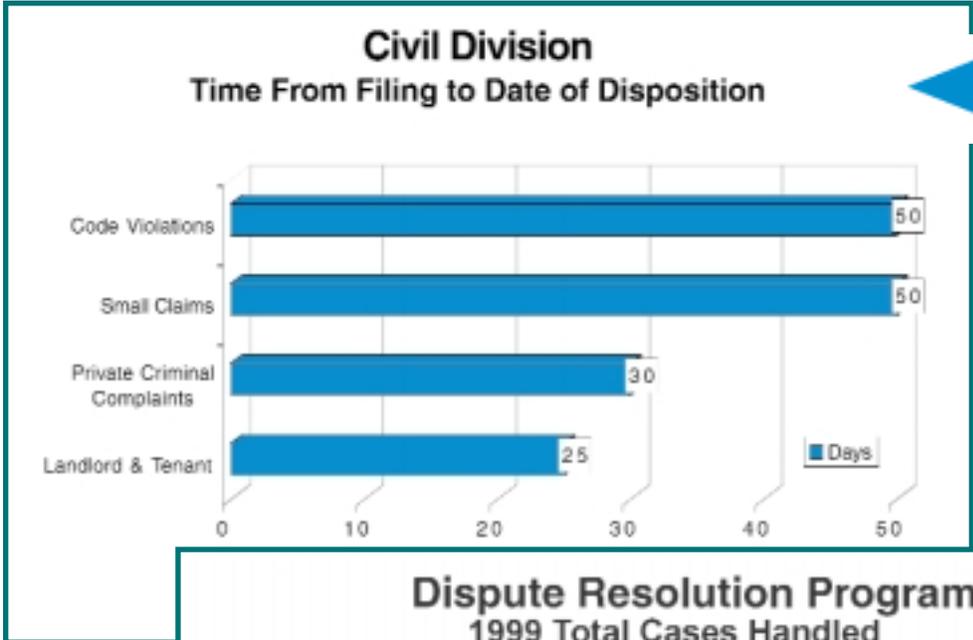


City Hall Tower with Criminal Justice Center in the background.

Municipal Court CIVIL SECTION

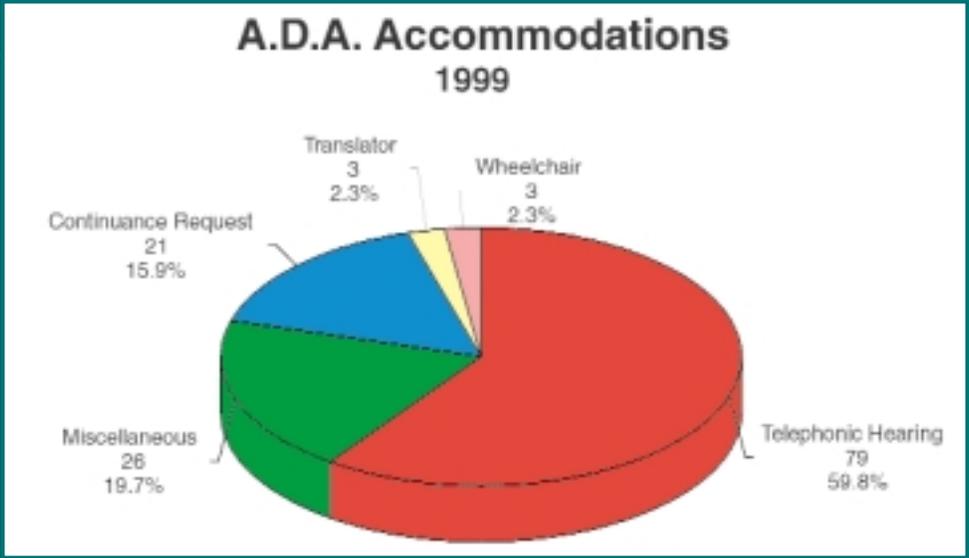
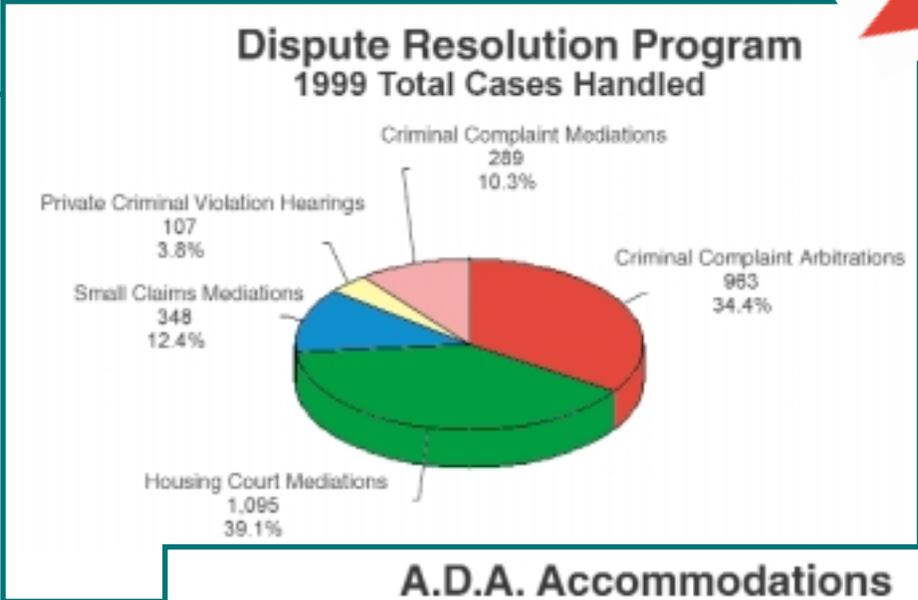


CIVIL SECTION *Municipal Court*

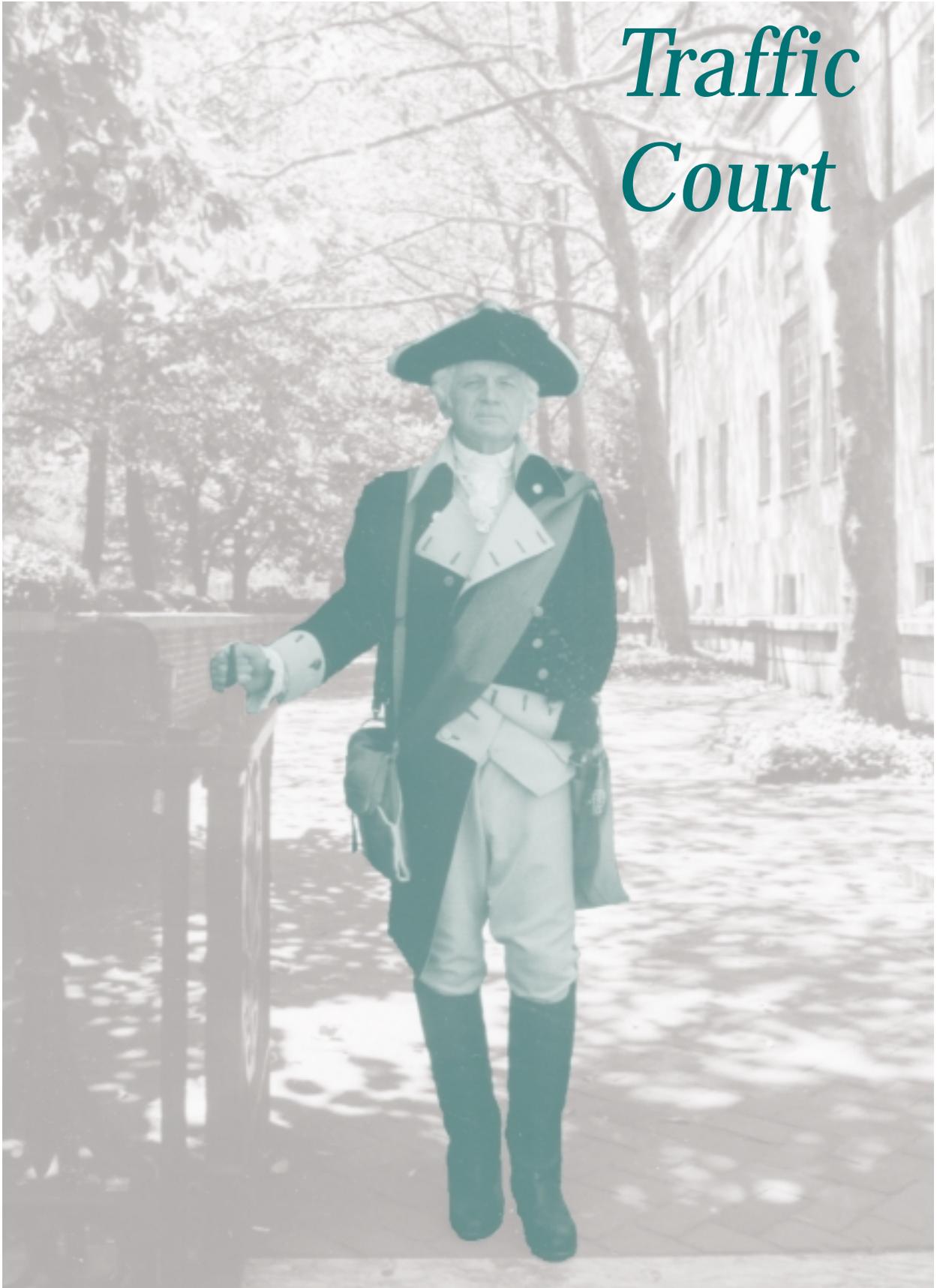


Most MC Civil Court cases are disposed within two months, 18% within 30 days

The agreement rate for Housing Mediations is 83%. For Small Claim Mediations, 62% of the 314 cases resulted in agreements (parties failed to appear in 31 cases and 3 cases were settled prior to court). Of the 963 cases forwarded for arbitration, the program successfully handled 930 cases (over 96%).



Traffic Court



Traffic Court

PURPOSE

The Traffic Court functions as the judicial vehicle responsible for the processing and adjudication of all motor vehicle violations charged within the County of Philadelphia. While President Judge Frank Little oversees the special needs of the Court, Administrative Judge Bernice DeAngelis directs all court policies, operations, and personnel. Traffic Court is the filing repository for all moving ; the adjudicative and dispositive agent of those proceedings; the enforcement arm for dispositions, statute and rules; and a receiver and disperser of revenues.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Traffic Court judges preside over six daily courts. These Judges are: Judge Willie Adams; Judge Joseph A. Howlett; Judge Francis E. Kelly; Judge Fortunato Perri; Judge Thomasine Tynes; and Senior Judge Lillian Podgorski. Trials are held daily, nightly, and each Saturday.

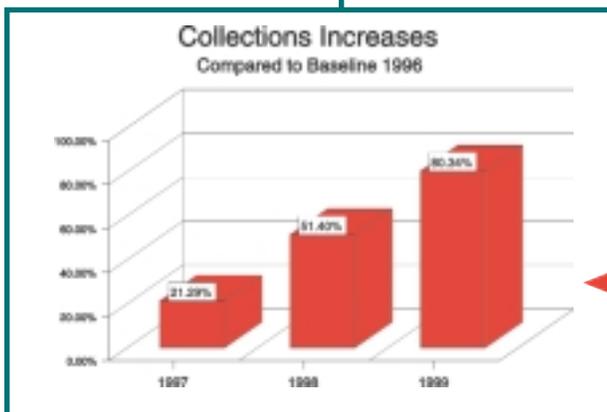
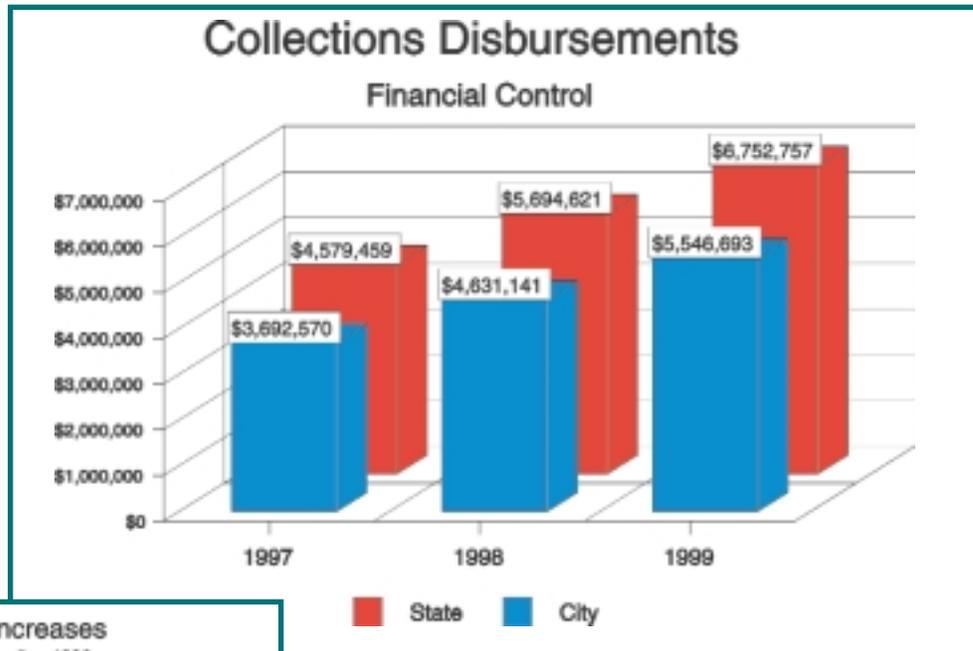
Court operations are sustained by experienced and knowledgeable personnel who staff such units as a multi-faceted, informational Customer Service Department, the Citation Control Unit, an Enforcement/Boot and Tow Unit, the Central Records Unit, the Financial Control Unit, and the Court Officers Department. Together, they receive citations from the Philadelphia police and maintain accurate records reflecting citations, customer histories, and collection and disbursement of funds. Employees respond to requests for information and pleadings, schedule hearings, facilitate the disposition of cases, and collect and properly disperse public funds geared toward the efficient administration of justice in the interest of public safety. Customer service representatives serve the public through the provision of information regarding citations and records; receipt of payments for violations; scheduling hearings; and providing assistance with other governmental entities concerning license suspension when requested. Access is afforded through scheduled hearings before capable judges who allow the public to state their defense and then render fair and equitable decisions.

Citizens who access the system are accorded fair and equitable treatment by judiciary and employees alike who realize that, for the majority, Traffic Court will be their only judicial experience.

In 1999 ...

- ◆ The Citation Control Unit processed 418,881 citations.
- ◆ The Enforcement/Boot and Tow Unit, working in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police Department to arrest unlicensed scofflaw drivers and to remove 8,670 unlawful vehicles from the streets of Philadelphia.
- ◆ Court Officers and employees of the Central Records Unit maintained courtroom operations for the approximate 8,000 citations that are scheduled weekly.
- ◆ The Financial Control Unit provided financial accountability – through the Payment Adjustment and Lockbox Departments – to both the city and state. For Calendar Year 1999, the Court disseminated an historic \$12,299,450 (\$13,204,000 for FY1999) in revenues.
- ◆ Since 1996, the Court has disseminated almost \$31 million to City and State authorities. Collections increased by an average of \$2,013,711 annually.

The Traffic Court continued to push the drive for dispositions in this, the busiest Court in the District. A full 48% of all the filings in the First Judicial District flow into Traffic Court. Here too, the largest number of citizens are directly involved in the Court's proceedings. To keep pace with the rising numbers of filings, dispositions have been increasing at healthy rates every year. From 1997 through 1999, the Court disposed of 857,896 cases. In 1999, 85,128 more dispositions were made than in baseline 1997. This is an increase in output of 36%.



The data in the chart at left depicts the steady increases in Calendar Year collections since 1996.

First Judicial District of Pennsylvania

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