

45TH CIRCUIT COURT
2015 ANNUAL
REPORT

THE CIRCUIT COURT – TRIAL DIVISION

Honorable Paul Stutesman

While the Circuit Court encompasses many areas, such as all Juvenile Proceedings and Friend of The Court actions, this report will be based on the trial division only.

The Staff of the 45th Circuit Court Trial Division consists of Kathryn Griffin, Court Administrator, and Anita Buscher, Judicial Secretary/Court Reporter.



Technology Advancements

2015 we continued the development of imaging and the movement towards e-filing. We have expanded the Image Soft beyond the Friend of the Court Office and started all civil filings as well. Next addition will be the criminal cases.

SSSPP Program

Through a grant from State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), the Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program (SSSPP) during saw its second full year of development in 2015, and we are currently underway of the third. The grant was obtained again for 2016 and expanded to have the capacity to serve 45 defendants. This intensive probation program is with the intent to defer defendants from prison through counseling, substance abuse treatment and other forms of rehabilitation. This intensive probation is a joint collaboration with the Michigan Department of Corrections, Community Correction Coordinator, Community Mental Health, Twin County Probation Center, Day

Reporting Center and the St. Joseph County Sheriff's Department. The hope of the program is to give the individuals the tools they need to prevent recidivism.

Adult Drug Court Treatment Program

Through a grant from State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) and a Federal Grant from the Justice Department an Adult Drug Treatment Court (ADTC) was formed. To meet the requirements set forth by the Department of Justice, extensive training and development by the team was mandated. The ADTC team is comprised of the same departments as the SSSPP Program but requires more of a time commitment. There are weekly team meetings followed by weekly court sessions for the participants. This is a great collaboration between departments and hopefully will address the drug issue throughout the County.

Associations, Committees and Involvement

Judge Stutesman has been a member in the Michigan Judges Association (MJA) as an Executive Committee member and officer. In 2015, he was Vice-President.

Ms. Griffin is a long standing member of the Michigan Association of Circuit Court Administrators (MACCA) and is currently serving her third two-year term as President of the Association. In July she was elected to the Board of Directors for The National Association for Court Management (NACM) for a three-year term and has been selected to Chair various committees.

Both MJA and MACCA reviews and comments on legislation of importance to Michigan's judicial system, coordinates its efforts with the Michigan Supreme Court and works to promote adequate resources for the judicial branch of government.

Judge Stutesman is actively involved with the Michigan Judicial Institute and has been a speaker and presenter at many of their educational seminars. There are numerous other committees through State Court Administrative Office that he is also involved. At the end of 2014 he was appointed by Governor Snyder to be a part of the newly established Criminal Defense Commission.

Ms. Griffin is currently on four forms committees with the State Court Administrative Office. These committees meet once a year to develop new SCAO approved court forms or change existing forms due to changes in legislation. And is also on the State Court Administrative Office Court Administrator Committee which meets quarterly with the State Court Administrator.

Public Satisfaction Survey

For the second year in a row, Courts throughout the State were required to conduct a Public Satisfaction Survey. This survey rates the court's accessibility and public perception. The surveys were conducted over the course of one week. The results of the Circuit Court's survey were once again positive and exceeded the statewide average in all categories.

Revenue

While all revenue sources are handled through the County Clerk's Office, the Circuit Court orders and enforces fines and costs in all criminal cases. Additional revenue comes from the State, from filing fees and court costs assessed by the County Clerk's Office.

Through the cooperation and diligence by County Clerk deputies, the Court has a collection process in place and Order to Show Cause Hearings are conducted bi-monthly to enforce collection.

Case Management

The 45th Circuit strictly adheres to the Michigan Court Rules time guidelines and SCAO Orders regarding caseload management.

In civil cases (non-family), at the beginning of 2014 there were 69 cases pending. A total of 85 new filings and 4 reopened cases were filed. The Court disposed of 105 cases, leaving an ending caseload of 53 cases pending.

Divorce cases and other domestic relations began the year with a caseload of 160 open filings, 582 new cases were filed and 13 reopened, there

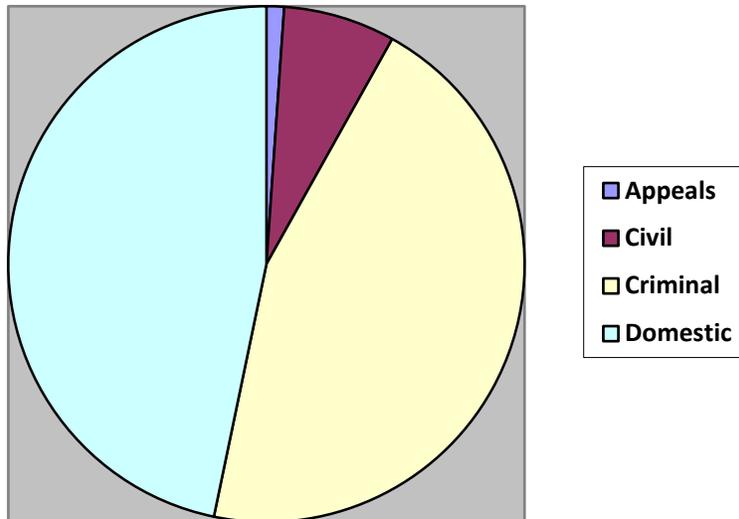
were 603 dispositions entered by the court leaving an ending caseload of 152 cases pending.

As you can see by the following attached graphs and statistics, the criminal caseload once again dominates the court's schedule. In 2015 we started with 133 cases, there were 537 felony cases filed along with 37 reopened, there were 557 depositions leaving a pending caseload of 150 cases.

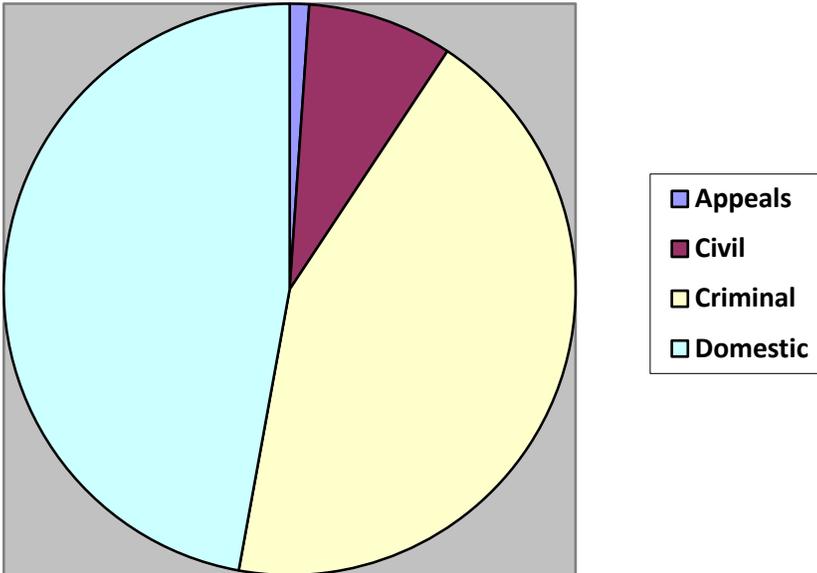
The Appeals division of Circuit Court began the year with 5 pending cases, 14 new cases were filed, there were 14 dispositions leaving a total pending caseload of 5 cases pending.

The following charts are a demonstration of the workflow within the trial division; the domestic category would only include divorce cases with no children involved.

TOTAL CASES FILED 2015



DISPOSITIONS 2015



PENDING AS OF 12/31/15

