

Message from the State Courts Administrator

February 2004

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to present the *FY 2002-03 Statistical Reference Guide to Florida's Trial Courts*.

This guide is a compilation of Summary Reporting System (SRS) data provided by the sixty-seven clerks of court and maintained by the Office of the State Courts Administrator. Each year, staff of the Office of the State Courts Administrator work for several months examining and verifying the data exhibited in the guide. This publication not only improves access to trial court statistics; it also contributes to the quality and accuracy of the data providing a conduit for improving the management and oversight of the State Courts System.



As we implement Revision 7 to Article V of the Florida Constitution and navigate unexplored territory within the judicial branch, it is more important than ever to maintain a coordinated and consistent system for reporting court statistics. My staff and I sincerely appreciate the efforts of all judicial personnel who work daily, at the circuit and county level, to track and submit case related information. Thank you for your continued efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Elisabeth H. Goodner". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

Elisabeth H. Goodner
State Courts Administrator

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REPORT OVERVIEW

Florida's court system is organized in four different tiers, with a two-tier appellate court system and a two-tier trial court system. The appellate court system includes the Supreme Court of Florida and the five District Courts of Appeal. Additionally, the trial court system incorporates both circuit and county courts. The *Statistical Reference Guide* provides statistics pertaining to Florida's trial courts for Fiscal Year 2002-03 (July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003). These statistics were received and verified as of December 2003.

The Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA) publishes the *Statistical Reference Guide* annually as a resource for the judicial branch and others who often request information on Florida's trial courts. During Fiscal Year 2002-03, the OSCA's Court Services unit received approximately 250 requests for descriptive and analytical statistics. The majority of the requests deal with filing and disposition data and are received from those outside of the OSCA including: state and local government agencies, circuit court administration, private sector businesses and citizens, clerks of court, and the media.

The information and statistics contained in this report are organized as follows:

Trial Court System Description - The first section of the report provides a map of the state of Florida identifying the location of each of Florida's twenty judicial circuits and sixty-seven counties along with a table providing the population for each circuit and county. Additionally, this section provides an explanation for how the data are collected, maintained, and verified for accuracy.

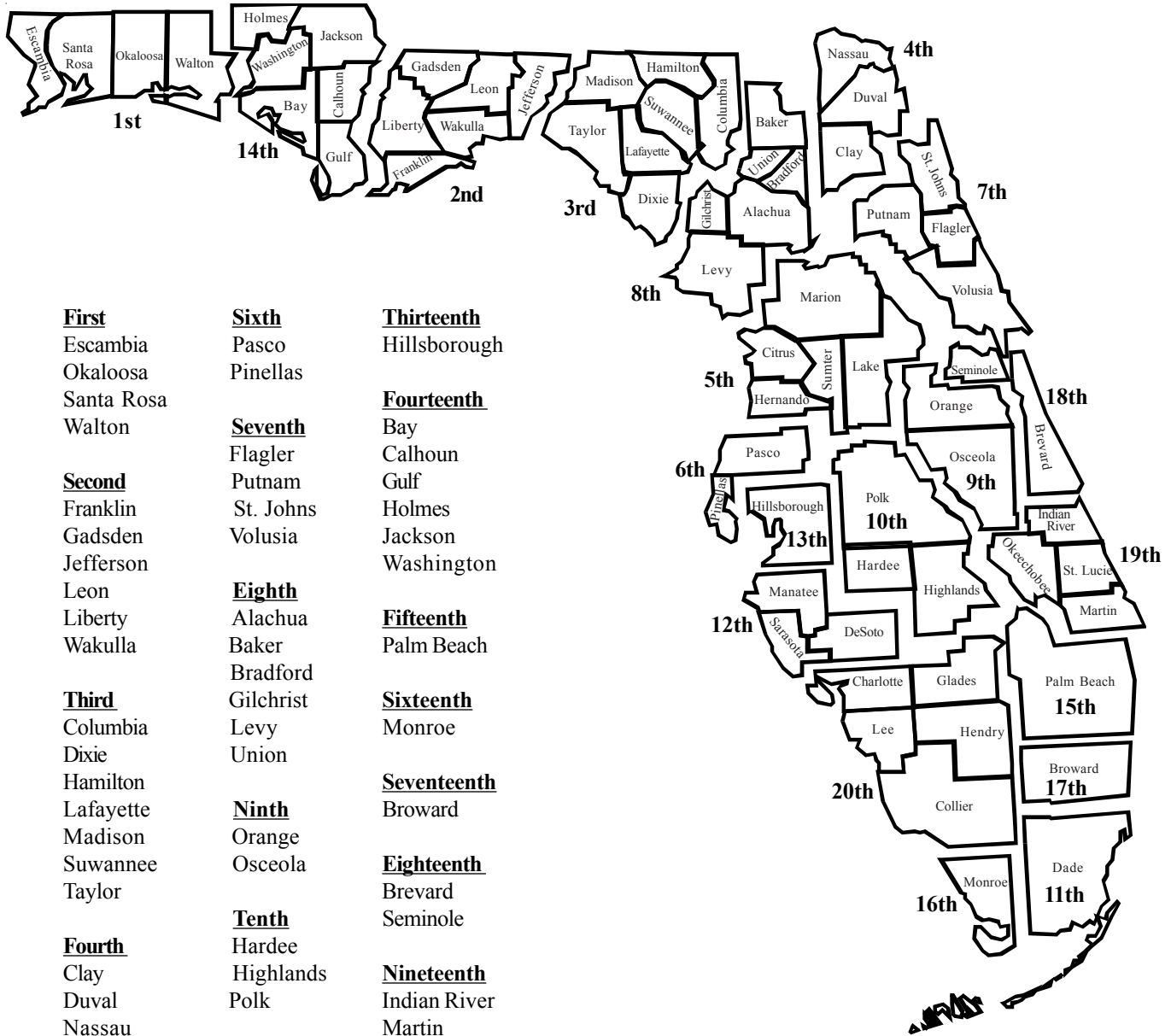
Overall Statistics - The Overall Statistics section provides a breakdown of the number of circuit and county judgeships for each judicial circuit. Also provided are statewide statistics for total circuit and county court filings and dispositions.

By-Division Statistics - The By-Division portion of the report displays filings, dispositions, and special proceedings data by each division of court (Circuit Criminal, Circuit Civil, Circuit Domestic Relations, Circuit Probate, Circuit Juvenile, County Criminal, and County Civil). Statewide, circuit, and county level data are furnished by various categories and case types that make up each division.

Additional Information - This section provides contact information for gaining access to further statistics. The web address is also provided for accessing the on-line version of the *Statistical Reference Guide* and other on-line court statistics.

Glossary - The glossary provides definitions for common terms used across every division of the trial courts and those terms specific to each division.

JUDICIAL CIRCUIT MAP OF FLORIDA



First

Escambia
Santa Rosa
Okaloosa
Walton

Second

Franklin
Gadsden
Jefferson
Leon
Liberty
Wakulla

Third

Columbia
Dixie
Hamilton
Lafayette
Madison
Suwannee
Taylor

Fourth

Clay
Duval
Nassau

Fifth

Citrus
Hernando
Lake
Marion
Sumter

Sixth

Pasco
Pinellas

Seventh

Flagler
Putnam
St. Johns
Volusia

Eighth

Alachua
Baker
Bradford
Gilchrist
Levy
Union

Ninth

Orange
Osceola

Tenth

Hardee
Highlands
Polk

Eleventh

Dade

Twelfth

DeSoto
Manatee
Sarasota

Thirteenth

Hillsborough

Fourteenth

Bay
Calhoun
Gulf
Holmes
Jackson
Washington

Fifteenth

Palm Beach

Sixteenth

Monroe

Seventeenth

Broward

Eighteenth

Brevard
Seminole

Nineteenth

Indian River
Martin
Okeechobee
St. Lucie

Twentieth

Charlotte
Collier
Glades
Hendry
Lee

Trial Court System

FLORIDA POPULATION*
by Circuit/County
as of January 2002 and January 2003

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2002)	Total Population (as of January 2003)	Percentage Change from 2002 to 2003
Circuit 1 (13)	641,587	657,380	2.5%
Escambia	298,400	302,432	1.4%
Okaloosa	175,494	180,193	2.7%
Santa Rosa	123,940	127,975	3.3%
Walton	43,753	46,780	6.9%
Circuit 2 (16)	347,678	355,905	2.4%
Franklin	10,003	10,426	4.2%
Gadsden	45,435	46,377	2.1%
Jefferson	13,157	13,483	2.5%
Leon	247,408	253,751	2.6%
Liberty	7,213	7,204	-0.1%
Wakulla	24,462	24,664	0.8%
Circuit 3 (19)	167,951	169,965	1.2%
Columbia	57,592	58,730	2.0%
Dixie	14,280	14,630	2.5%
Hamilton	13,932	14,003	0.5%
Lafayette	7,124	7,316	2.7%
Madison	18,964	19,082	0.6%
Suwannee	36,279	36,154	-0.3%
Taylor	19,780	20,050	1.4%
Circuit 4 (7)	1,008,658	1,040,110	3.1%
Clay	144,708	154,844	7.0%
Duval	803,360	822,621	2.4%
Nassau	60,590	62,645	3.4%

FLORIDA POPULATION*, Continued
by Circuit/County
as of January 2002 and January 2003

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2002)	Total Population (as of January 2003)	Percentage Change from 2002 to 2003
Circuit 5 (10)	810,467	844,836	4.2%
Citrus	122,196	125,106	2.4%
Hernando	134,440	139,776	4.0%
Lake	226,314	238,279	5.3%
Marion	268,415	278,980	3.9%
Sumter	59,102	62,695	6.1%
Circuit 6 (3)	1,292,008	1,310,491	1.4%
Pasco	357,541	372,257	4.1%
Pinellas	934,467	938,234	0.4%
Circuit 7 (11)	716,323	738,960	3.2%
Flagler	55,107	60,513	9.8%
Putnam	71,134	71,782	0.9%
St. Johns	132,179	138,522	4.8%
Volusia	457,903	468,143	2.2%
Circuit 8 (17)	339,060	346,568	2.2%
Alachua	225,796	230,760	2.2%
Baker	22,794	23,300	2.2%
Bradford	26,211	26,877	2.5%
Gilchrist	14,963	15,389	2.8%
Levy	35,640	36,520	2.5%
Union	13,656	13,722	0.5%
Circuit 9 (5)	1,135,880	1,182,868	4.1%
Orange	951,481	976,116	2.6%
Osceola	184,399	206,752	12.1%

Trial Court System

FLORIDA POPULATION*, Continued
by Circuit/County
as of January 2002 and January 2003

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2002)	Total Population (as of January 2003)	Percentage Change from 2002 to 2003
Circuit 10 (14)	619,812	626,639	1.1%
Hardee	27,074	27,418	1.3%
Highlands	89,082	90,036	1.1%
Polk	503,656	509,185	1.1%
Circuit 11 (1)	2,309,205	2,337,758	1.2%
Dade	2,309,205	2,337,758	1.2%
Circuit 12 (12)	647,414	663,576	2.5%
Desoto	33,247	33,461	0.6%
Manatee	275,235	283,543	3.0%
Sarasota	338,932	346,572	2.3%
Circuit 13 (6)	1,043,838	1,073,878	2.9%
Hillsborough	1,043,838	1,073,878	2.9%
Circuit 14 (18)	268,781	272,501	1.4%
Bay	151,770	154,204	1.6%
Calhoun	13,153	13,391	1.8%
Gulf	15,320	15,523	1.3%
Holmes	18,840	18,874	0.2%
Jackson	47,977	48,672	1.4%
Washington	21,721	21,837	0.5%
Circuit 15 (4)	1,172,056	1,204,907	2.8%
Palm Beach	1,172,056	1,204,907	2.8%
Circuit 16 (20)	81,064	80,670	-0.5%
Monroe	81,064	80,670	-0.5%

FLORIDA POPULATION*, Continued
by Circuit/County
as of January 2002 and January 2003

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2002)	Total Population (as of January 2003)	Percentage Change from 2002 to 2003
Circuit 17 (2)	1,671,413	1,684,645	0.8%
Broward	1,671,413	1,684,645	0.8%
Circuit 18 (9)	876,937	897,904	2.4%
Brevard	491,171	504,733	2.8%
Seminole	385,766	393,171	1.9%
Circuit 19 (15)	486,461	501,158	3.0%
Indian River	117,577	120,437	2.4%
Martin	130,590	133,671	2.4%
Okeechobee	36,406	37,076	1.8%
St. Lucie	201,888	209,974	4.0%
Circuit 20 (8)	931,217	979,402	5.2%
Charlotte	146,716	151,232	3.1%
Collier	273,024	288,653	5.7%
Glades	10,709	10,705	0.0%
Hendry	36,673	36,345	-0.9%
Lee	464,095	492,467	6.1%
State Total	16,567,810	16,970,121	2.4%

*January 2002 population figures were provided by the Office of Economic and Demographic Research of the Florida Legislature, in August 2002. January 2003 population figures were provided by the Office of Economic and Demographic Research of the Florida Legislature, in September 2003.

TRIAL COURT DATA

Pursuant to section 25.075, Florida Statutes, the Summary Reporting System (SRS) was developed to provide the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA) with data to assist the Supreme Court of Florida in its management and oversight role of the court system. The data are utilized as a measure of trial court activity in Florida, although, these data are not intended to measure efficiency of the judiciary, state attorneys or public defenders. Data for the SRS are submitted to the OSCA by the sixty-seven clerks of court monthly via electronic or hard-copy submission. Exceptions to this are county criminal traffic, driving under the influence, and civil traffic infractions data which are obtained from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles on an annual basis.

Upon receipt of the SRS reports from the clerks of court, the OSCA staff review the data for accuracy manually and through the utilization of an automated program designed to detect anomalies. If anomalies are detected, the county is contacted to verify or correct the data. SRS data are maintained in a dynamic database that is updated on a continual basis. Amendments to previously reported data may be submitted by the clerks up to three years after the original submission deadline. The OSCA also conducts field audits in clerk of court offices. These audits are conducted to ensure compliance to the SRS reporting guidelines as specified in the *Florida Summary Reporting System Manual* (www.flcourts.org).

Each fall, a permanent database is created for the previous fiscal year. Data amendments submitted by the clerks of court after the creation of the database are not incorporated into the permanent databases (although amendments are still incorporated into the dynamic database). If any data have not been submitted at the time the fiscal year database is generated, an automated program designed to estimate missing data may be utilized. The permanent database is utilized for reporting statistics in the certification of new judgeships and in standardized judicial branch reports regarding performance and accountability, long range program planning, and performance-based budgeting. The data in the permanent file are also utilized in the production of this *Statistical Reference Guide*.

As previously mentioned, the trial courts are composed of two levels and seven different divisions. The circuit level includes criminal, civil, domestic relations, probate, and juvenile divisions and the county level consists of criminal and civil divisions. Within each division are several *categories* of cases. Moreover, within each of the *categories* are various *case types*. For instance, the Circuit Criminal division includes the following *categories*: capital murder, violent crimes, crimes against persons, crimes against property, and drug crimes. The crimes against property category includes the following *case types*: burglary, theft, forgery, fraud, worthless checks, other crimes against property, and other felony offenses. The detailed

categories and case types pertaining to each division are provided in the By-Division portion of this report.

Note: All percentages provided in the report have been rounded. Therefore, totals may not equal 100%.