

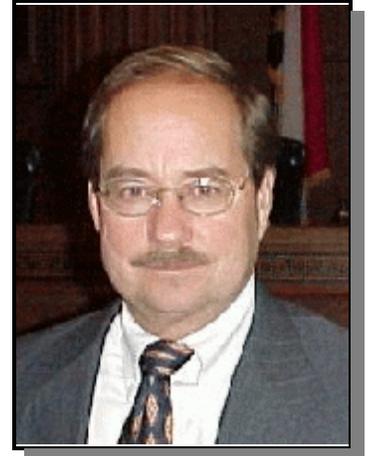
## Message from the State Courts Administrator

June 2002

Interested Parties:

The role of information and statistics in today's world is constantly evolving. This increasingly precious resource takes on more importance with each passing day and data pertaining to Florida's judicial branch is no exception. Decision-making by the judicial branch is often dependant upon the quality and scope of the statistics that it is able to produce.

With decisions regarding Revision 7 to Article V of the Florida Constitution, performance-based budgeting, and long-range program planning forthcoming, it is a priority for the Office of the State Courts Administrator to provide a timely and accurate accounting of judicial branch statistics. Consequently, I am extremely pleased to announce the first publication of the *Statistical Reference Guide to Florida's Trial Courts*.



This guide, pertaining to Florida's Trial Court System, is a compilation of data maintained by the Office of the State Courts Administrator, as reported by the sixty-seven clerks of court. The data contained in each annual update of the *Statistical Reference Guide* will support the continuing efforts of the Office of the State Courts Administrator to provide easy access to a comprehensive array of data about Florida's trial courts. For your convenience, this guide is also located at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org).

The Office of the State Courts Administrator sincerely appreciates those in the field that have diligently worked with us to make this report a precise and reliable accounting of Florida's trial court activity. We welcome suggestions and are happy to respond to questions regarding this guide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Robin L. Lubitz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Robin L. Lubitz  
State Courts Administrator

**This report can be found in its entirety  
at <http://www.flcourts.org>**

Cover designed by John Chalcraft

Cover Photograph of the Honorable Nikki Ann Clark, Circuit Judge, Second Judicial Circuit,  
by Doug Smith

# Table of Contents

## **Trial Court System Description**

Report Overview .....	v
Map of Florida’s Judicial Circuits .....	vi
Florida Population by Circuit .....	vii
Description of Trial Court Data .....	viii

## **Overall Statistics**

Circuit and County Judges by Circuit .....	1-1
Graphical Display of Statewide Filings .....	1-2
Graphical Display of Statewide Dispositions .....	1-4

## **Circuit Criminal Statistics**

Overview .....	2-1
Filings .....	2-2
Dispositions .....	2-9
Special Proceedings .....	2-20

## **Circuit Civil Statistics**

Overview .....	3-1
Filings .....	3-2
Dispositions .....	3-9
Special Proceedings .....	3-18

## **Circuit Domestic Relations Statistics**

Overview .....	4-1
Filings .....	4-2
Dispositions .....	4-9
Special Proceedings .....	4-17

## **Circuit Probate Statistics**

Overview .....	5-1
Filings .....	5-2
Dispositions .....	5-9
Special Proceedings .....	5-17

# Table of Contents

## **Circuit Juvenile Statistics**

Overview .....	6-1
Filings .....	6-2
Dispositions .....	6-9
Special Proceedings .....	6-17

## **County Criminal Statistics**

Overview .....	7-1
Filings .....	7-2
Dispositions .....	7-9
Special Proceedings .....	7-20

## **County Civil Statistics**

Overview .....	8-1
Filings .....	8-2
Dispositions .....	8-9
Special Proceedings .....	8-18

## **Additional Information**

Resources & Contacts .....	9-1
Acknowledgments .....	9-2

<b>Glossary</b> .....	10-1
-----------------------	------

## 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. This *Statistical Reference Guide* provides statistics pertaining to Florida's circuit and county courts for Fiscal Year 2000-01 (July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001) as of March 2002.

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. In Fiscal Year 2000-01, the OSCA's Court Services Division received approximately 200 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 and population ranking for each judicial circuit. Additionally, this section provides an explanation for how the data are collected, maintained, and audited for accuracy.

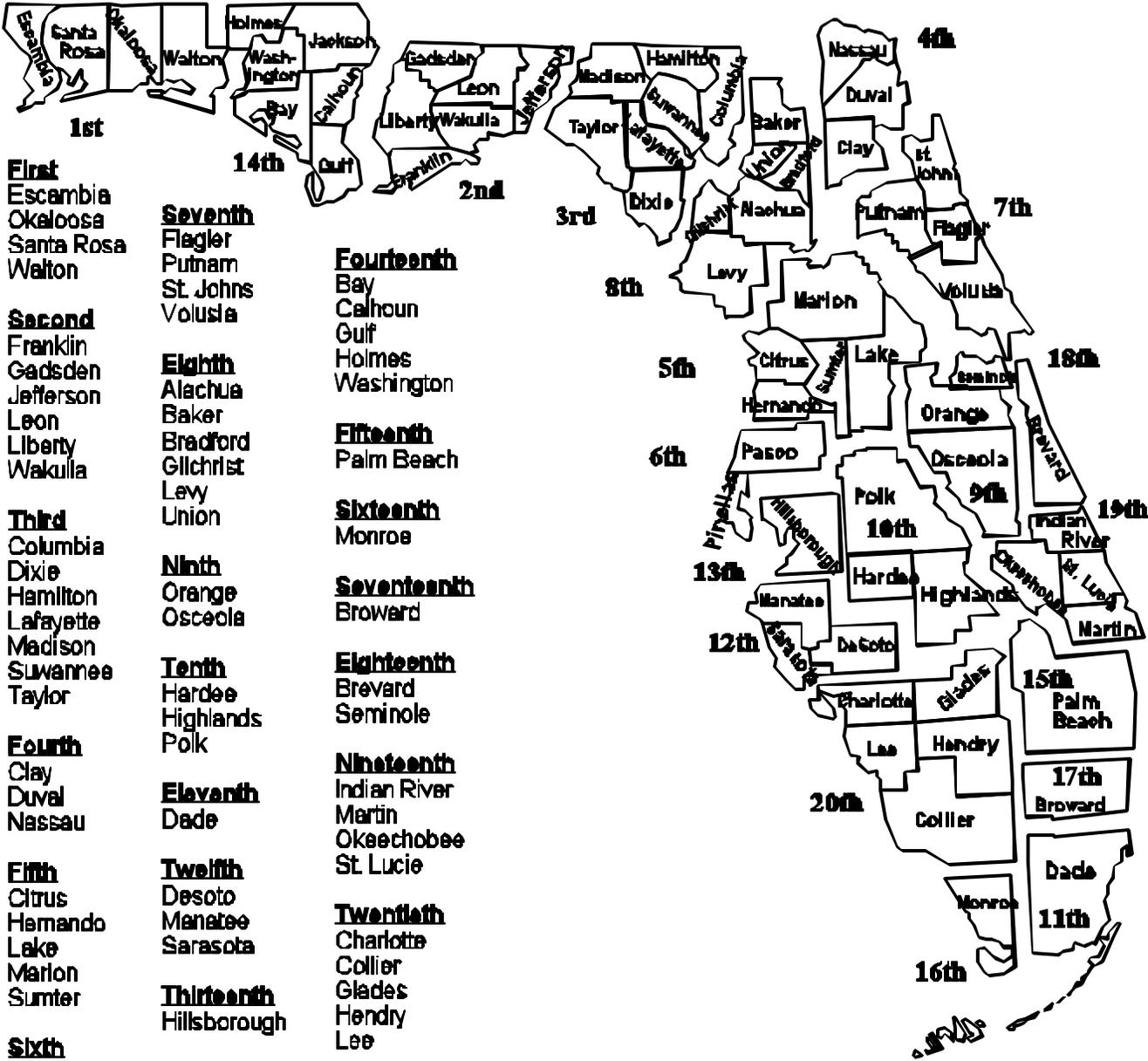
Overall Statistics - The Overall Statistics section provides a breakdown of the number of circuit and county judgeships for each judicial circuit. Also provided are statewide statistics for total circuit and county court filings and dispositions.

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 encompass each division.

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

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

**MAP OF FLORIDA**



**First**  
Escambia  
Okaloosa  
Santa Rosa  
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  
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*

<b>FLORIDA POPULATION by Circuit</b>		
<b>Circuit</b>	<b>Total Population* (as of January 2001)</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>First (Pensacola)</b>	631,364	13
<b>Second (Tallahassee)</b>	343,041	16
<b>Third (Lake City)</b>	165,452	19
<b>Fourth (Jacksonville)</b>	991,902	7
<b>Fifth (Tavares)</b>	789,346	10
<b>Sixth (Clearwater)</b>	1,277,859	3
<b>Seventh (Daytona Beach)</b>	700,418	11
<b>Eighth (Gainesville)</b>	333,596	17
<b>Ninth (Orlando)</b>	1,100,725	5
<b>Tenth (Bartow)</b>	608,209	14
<b>Eleventh (Miami)</b>	2,278,650	1
<b>Twelfth (Sarasota)</b>	633,942	12
<b>Thirteenth (Tampa)</b>	1,020,470	6
<b>Fourteenth (Panama City)</b>	264,717	18
<b>Fifteenth (West Palm Beach)</b>	1,149,172	4
<b>Sixteenth (Key West)</b>	80,286	20
<b>Seventeenth (Ft. Lauderdale)</b>	1,644,002	2
<b>Eighteenth (Sanford)</b>	857,883	9
<b>Nineteenth (Ft. Pierce)</b>	476,425	15
<b>Twentieth (Ft. Myers)</b>	903,643	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,251,102</b>	

\*Source: Office of Economic and Demographic Research, The Florida Legislature, 02/2002

## 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 workload measure for judges, although, these data are not intended to measure efficiency of the judiciary, state attorneys or public defenders. Data for the SRS is 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 with the data. If errors are detected, the county is contacted to assist in correcting the errors. SRS data is then 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 local clerk of court offices. These audits are conducted to ensure compliance to the SRS reporting guidelines, pertaining to filings and dispositions, as laid out in the *Florida Summary Reporting System Manual* ([www.flcourts.org](http://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 database (although amendments are still incorporated into the dynamic database). If any data has 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 is also utilized in the production of this *Statistical Reference Guide*.

As previously mentioned, the trial courts are comprised of two levels and seven different divisions. The circuit level is comprised of criminal, civil, domestic relations, probate, and juvenile divisions and the county level is comprised of criminal and civil divisions. Within each division are several *categories* of cases. Moreover, within each of the *categories* exist various *case types*. For instance, the Circuit Criminal division includes the *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.

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