

JUSTICE INDEPENDENCE HONOR



RHODE ISLAND JUDICIARY

ANNUAL REPORT

2003

LETTER OF *TRANSMITTAL*



**Thomas G. Bowman, Esquire
State Court Administrator**

To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

As I near the completion of my first year as State Court Administrator, it is with both pleasure and pride that, pursuant to G.L. 1956 (1997 Reenactment) § 8-15-7, I submit the 2003 Annual Report on the Rhode Island Judiciary.

In twelve short months, we have accomplished a great deal. We have continued promoting the use of mediation and arbitration in appellate cases through the development of the Appellate Mediation Program. We have continued enhancing our jury system by providing free parking for those citizens called to jury service.

As you peruse this report, you will find information on the Judiciary's many initiatives and accomplishments. I am also excited to announce that for the first time, an expanded version of the Annual Report will be available on the Judiciary's website, www.courts.state.ri.us. Our website will serve as a bank of statistical data as well as information regarding judicial committees, task forces, and ancillary departments. Utilizing this online resource allows the Judiciary to provide a plethora of information in a format easily accessible to everyone.

Reflecting on our accomplishments thus far as we simultaneously advance toward the challenges of tomorrow, the Rhode Island Judiciary is ever vigilant in its mission of providing equal, accessible justice.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas G. Bowman". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Thomas G. Bowman, Esquire
State Court Administrator

LETTER TO THE *GENERAL ASSEMBLY*



Frank J. Williams
Chief Justice

To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

Over the past year, the Rhode Island Judiciary has continued to steadfastly tend the watchfires of justice for all citizens of this state. Even in tight financial times, the Rhode Island Judiciary pursues its core goal, the administration of justice with uncompromising honor and unquestioned judicial independence, with ingenuity and accountability. The Judiciary continues to cultivate a culture of efficient justice by disposing of hundreds of thousands of cases each year, fairly adjudicating disputes that change people's lives. The success of the Judiciary is a story told not only with numbers; rather, it is reflected in the eyes of those who come seeking justice. As the honorable Judge Learned Hand said, "If we are to keep our democracy, there must be one commandment: thou shall not ration justice."

Three words in our Rhode Island Constitution both confirm Judge Hand's philosophy and define the heart of our judicial mission – right to justice. The right to justice is not a matter of politics, or of generosity, or of charity, or of grace. It is a right equally bestowed upon all.

Our priorities reflect our citizens' needs and we have a proven track record of fiscal accountability. Our Truancy Court ensures that children remain in school. Our new Appellate Mediation Program finds neutral arbiters to assist parties in times of conflict. Our trial courts help individuals feel safe in their homes, communities, and on the streets. Every day, we accomplish these goals and, with our eye ever on the prize, we will continue marching toward a promising future for Rhode Islanders.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Frank J. Williams".

Frank J. Williams
Chief Justice

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Professional photographs taken by Constance Brown.

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Providence, Rhode Island 02903
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JUSTICE INDEPENDENCE HONOR

2003

RHODE ISLAND JUDICIARY

COURT INITIATIVES

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CULTIVATING PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE



OUT OF THE COURTHOUSE AND INTO THE CLASSROOM

The 2003 school year was one of growth for *Justice Rules*, the Rhode Island Judiciary's education initiative. As *Justice Rules* entered its first full year, it quickly exceeded developmental expectations. Piloted in two Providence schools during 2002, this program will have been introduced in nine communities, reaching 35,000 students by the end of the 2003 school year.

Endorsed by the Rhode Island Education Commissioner and enthusiastically received by school teachers and students, the *Justice Rules* curriculum incorporates literacy and hands-on learning techniques while teaching civics, legal concepts, and the intricacies of the justice system.

Dozens of legal teaching teams, made up of volunteer attorneys and judges, are paired with individual classrooms and teachers to enhance the *Justice Rules* curriculum. These legal teaching teams act as resources for the students and form

mentoring relationships with students. Field trips to the Licht Judicial Complex provide opportunities for students to see justice played out before their eyes. Students also participate in hypothetical trials, an exercise that promotes literacy, critical thinking, consensus building, and public speaking skills.

The *Justice Rules, Beyond the Classroom* initiative incorporates outreach to career fairs, school teachers, and after-school programs for troubled youth.

In addition, on May 1st, a record number of judges partnered with attorneys to visit classrooms across the state as part of the annual Law Day initiative.

INDIGENT DEFENSE

The Indigent Defense Task Force continues to examine the quality and cost of court-appointed legal services to indigent defendants. In 2003, the Task Force introduced programs to streamline the appointment process and reduce delay on certain, high volume calendars. A Superior Court pilot project assigned felony panel attorneys on a rotating basis to handle all public defender conflict



cases. Based on positive results for the first ninety days of the pilot, the program has been continued. Task Force subcommittees are working on the administration of the appointed counsel process, increasing the rates for court

actively recruiting bi-lingual applicants in the Hispanic community, the program enrolled three dozen students in 2003. The



Superior Court Associate Justice Alice B. Gibney reading Martin's Big Words to the second grade class at Charlotte Woods Elementary School in Providence.

appointed attorneys, creating an umbrella agency to administer indigent defense programs, and containing the cost of appointed counsel in Family Court.

Members of the Rhode Island Bar responded favorably to the *Call to Arms* Chief Justice Frank J. Williams issued in June 2003, asking attorneys to provide more pro bono services in order to address the growing demand for indigent representation.

CROSSING CULTURAL BOUNDARIES

Recognizing the dire need for certified court interpreters, and in order to comply with a legislative mandate, the Rhode Island Judiciary facilitated the design of a year long interpreter educational program at the Community College of Rhode Island. After

course of study incorporates legal, criminal, cultural and language issues. The Judiciary has designed and implemented a court interpreter certification exam to be administered to the first wave of students scheduled to graduate in May of 2004.

A Spanish radio judicial call-in program continued to gain popularity as it entered its second full year. Judges from all six courts have enthusiastically volunteered to participate in this Saturday morning program which encourages listeners to ask questions about the law, their rights, and the judicial process.

The Rhode Island Judiciary's Permanent Advisory Committee on Women and Minorities in the Courts offered introductory programs for court employees and attorneys to provide the tools to effectively serve a diverse public. The Committee also continued its work to recruit and hire more minorities for jobs in the Judiciary.

Key judicial forms, including the Superior Court Payment form, the Waiver of Indictment/Information form, and the Waiver of Extradition form, have been translated into Spanish.



TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

USING TECHNOLOGY TO BETTER SERVE CITIZENS

OUT OF THE DARK AGES AND PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

The Judicial Technology Center (JTC) achieved a major milestone in 2003 with completion of the first phase of converting civil computer files from the antiquated



WANG system to a database running on Compaq computers. Phase one was completed over the Veteran's Day weekend in November 2003 with over 52 million records merged. A single data repository was established for the Superior and District Court's criminal cases and the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal's summons records. Phase two is the conversion of the remaining civil applications still running on the Wang system. The conversion will allow the public Internet access to civil files and an easier sharing of information across courts.

CONVENIENT PAYMENTS

The Superior and District Courts and the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal began accepting credit cards for payments of fines, fees, and costs starting in April 2003.

TRACKING CRIMINALS

The Justice Link program is the interagency criminal information system allowing the timely tracking of criminals across the justice system. This multiyear, multi-agency initiative resulted in tremendous improvements in the criminal and juvenile justice systems' ability to enter data, access this information in a timely manner, and produce valuable management and planning reports.

The Court - Police Arrest Interface, currently operating in Coventry and West Warwick, allows the transmission of arrest information to the court from the local police departments.

Court personnel have worked with the Department of Children, Youth and Families to develop an interface to share appropriate information on juvenile cases. This interface is 90% complete and is expected to be completed by April 2004.

The Judiciary and the Department of Attorney General developed a report that provides statewide information on court

dispositions and sentences and have begun work on an interface to electronically submit the information.

The Department of Attorney General's restraining order-no contact order system is vital to providing police with the information necessary to protect victims of domestic violence. The Judiciary has designed and developed its side of an interface that will electronically send information on no contact orders (criminal cases) to the Bureau of Criminal Investigations.

EMPOWERING VICTIMS

The same information that is being collected by the police regarding the victims of crimes is being re-keyed by data entry staff at the courts for restitution tracking. This interface, which is being funded by a grant from the National Governor's Association, will enable the electronic transfer of victim information to the courts. This data interface is the first step in the construction of a Victim's Assistance Portal which will allow victims of crime to access the status of their case in a secured, password protected portal. This portal will give the victim of a crime a customized screen snapshot of notices they have been sent, status of the case in the courts, and the status of restitution if applicable.



BUILDING JUSTICE

C ONTINUING THE EVOLUTION AND MODERNIZATION OF THE JUDICIARY'S BRICK AND MORTAR

Since the enactment of the Rhode Island Constitution in 1843, the ideals of justice have remained the constant compass by which we navigate our judicial system. Yet, even as countless citizens turn to the courts for justice, the courthouses into which they step have gone through many evolutions.

We are in the midst of another such evolution – a modernization of the infrastructure of the courts which will change the public face of the Judiciary. Many facilities have simply outlived their ability to adequately serve the needs of Rhode Island citizens.

KENT COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Armed with the new design to replace the outmoded, retrofitted Kent County Courthouse, construction is near completion on a four deck parking garage which represents the first phase of the project. A new state of the art courthouse, designed to accommodate the growing population in Kent County will be constructed at the site of the existing courthouse parking lot.

TRAFFIC TRIBUNAL

In 2003, the Rhode Island Judiciary achieved a milestone in receiving approval from the Governor and the General



Assembly for construction of a new Traffic Tribunal. The designs call for a multiuse courthouse in Cranston to replace the aging existing facility which sits in the shadow of an adult entertainment facility and is not in compliance with ADA (American Disabilities Act) standards.

BLACKSTONE VALLEY

Chief Justice Frank J. Williams forwarded to the Governor and the General Assembly the newly completed Blackstone Valley Task Force study with its recommendation for a full service courthouse in northern Rhode Island. The construction of a new courthouse will serve to alleviate the strain on the Garrahy Judicial Complex in Providence which was originally designed to accommodate 1,500 court patrons each day but routinely services twice that number.



JUSTICE INDEPENDENCE HONOR

2003

RHODE ISLAND JUDICIARY

THE COURTS

THE SUPREME COURT

THE SUPREME COURT



The Honorable Frank J. Williams, Chief Justice (Center)

Appointed 12/15/95, Chief Justice since 2001

B.A. Boston University, School of Liberal Arts; J.D. Boston University, School of Law;
Masters in Taxation, Bryant College

The Honorable Francis X. Flaherty (Far Left)

Appointed 5/2/03

B.A. Providence College; J.D. Suffolk University Law School

The Honorable Paul A. Suttell (2nd from Right)

Appointed 6/29/03

B.A. Northwestern University; J.D. Suffolk University Law School

The Honorable Robert G. Flanders, Jr. (2nd from Left)

Appointed 3/29/96

B.A. Boston University; J.D. Harvard Law School

The Honorable Maureen McKenna Goldberg (Far Right)

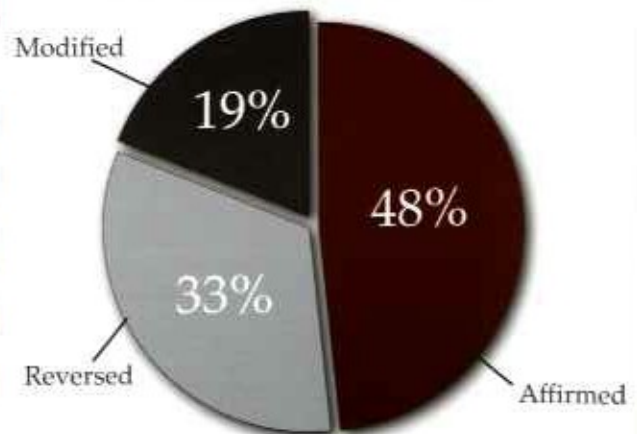
Appointed 5/3/97

B.A. Providence College; J.D. Suffolk University Law School

APPELLATE CASELOAD

	Docketed	Disposed	Pending
CRIMINAL	64	80	103
CIVIL	195	207	249
CERTIORARI	75	128	56
MISCELLANEOUS	339	299	67
TOTAL	673	714	475

AFTER ARGUMENTS



AT FULL STRENGTH

In 2003, the Rhode Island Supreme Court welcomed two new Justices to its ranks. After the deaths of Justice John P. Bourcier and Justice Victoria S. Lederberg, their seats remained vacant for nearly a year. With the appointments of Justice Francis X. Flaherty and Justice Paul A. Suttell, the Supreme Court was ready to start the fall session with a full complement of Justices.

INTO THE COMMUNITY

Over the past three years the Supreme Court has embarked on a journey of educating the public, and the Justices pursued this endeavor with renewed vigor in 2003. As has been the practice



Justice Maureen McKenna Goldberg talks with students after riding the circuit to hear cases in Westerly.

since Chief Justice Williams' appointment in 2001, the Supreme Court continued its tradition of riding the circuit and hearing oral arguments in various communities throughout the state. In March, the court sat in the historic East Greenwich Town Hall, one of the five original state houses. In October, the Supreme Court sat at Westerly High School in Washington County, marking the first time that cases were heard at a Rhode Island school.

THROUGH THE WEB

Furthering its goal of making the judicial system more accessible and "user friendly," the Supreme Court now e-mails its opinions and summaries of each case directly to the parties and makes them available on the Rhode Island Judiciary's website as soon as they are filed. This procedure affords attorneys, litigants, and the public almost instant access to the court's decisions.

WIDENING THE BOUNDRIES

In order to accommodate the ever widening boundaries of legal practice, the Rules of Appellate Procedure were also revised in 2003. The court promulgated a new rule regarding pro hac vice admissions and registration of in-house counsel. Out of state attorneys wishing to enter their appearance in a particular matter in Rhode Island must now directly petition the court before which the case will be heard. Copies of the new rule are available on the Judiciary's website.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION WITHOUT LITIGATION

Finally, efforts have also been made to provide parties with opportunities to mediate and invoke other innovative methods of alternative dispute resolution, even after a matter has been filed in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court initiated the Appellate Mediation Program in October 2003. This innovative program routes most civil case appeals through a process intended to encourage the parties to try to work out their differences among themselves, thereby avoiding the expense, time, and contention of extensive hearings and trial. Retired Supreme Court Chief Justice Joseph R. Weisberger and retired Justice Donald F. Shea have served as mediators at no cost to the state.

THE SUPERIOR COURT



Row 1 (Bottom) - Left to Right: Francis J. Darigan Jr., Melanie Wilk Thunberg, Alice Bridget Gibney, Joseph F. Rodgers, Jr. (Presiding Justice), Robert D. Krause, Vincent A. Ragosta, and Patricia A. Hurst. Row 2 - Left to Right: O. Rogeriee Thompson, Netti C. Vogel, Stephen J. Fortunato, Jr., Michael A. Silverstein, Judith C. Savage, Edward C. Clifton, Gilbert V. Indeglia, and William A. Dimitri, Jr. Row 3 - Left to Right: Joseph A. Keough, Susan L. Revens, Jeffrey A. Lanphear, Susan E. McGuirl, Patricia L. Harwood, Daniel A. Procaccini, Edwin J. Gale, Allen P. Rubine, and William J. McAtee. Not Pictured: Mark A. Pfeiffer and Stephen P. Nugent

THE SUPERIOR COURT

INNOVATION

THE BUSINESS CALENDAR

The Superior Court's Business Calendar, first initiated in June, 2001, is a highly successful specialty calendar devoted to non - routine business cases. When cases are assigned to this calendar, a single judge presides over all aspects of those civil actions - from motions,

pretrial matters, and temporary restraining orders through the actual trial of the case. While it is not necessary that matters assigned to the Business Calendar be complex, many do tend to be more complicated. The specialized, single judge system has allowed business related cases to be tracked and heard in an expeditious manner. The number of cases assigned to this exceptionally successful calendar increased over twenty-five percent in 2003.

CRIMINAL CASELOAD

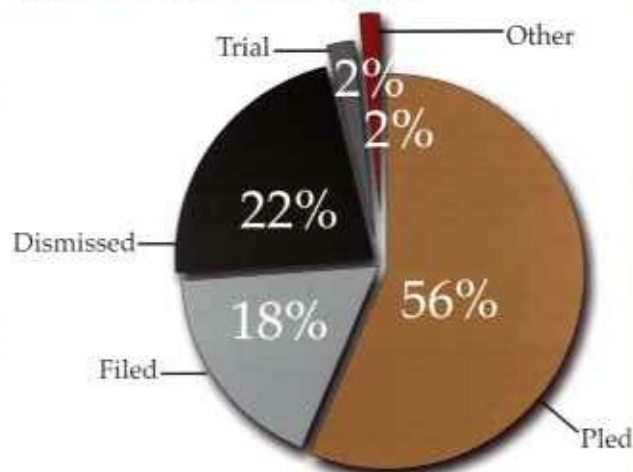
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
FELONIES					
PROVIDENCE/BRISTOL COUNTY					
Cases Filed	4,130	4,180	4,271	4,073	4,567
Cases Disposed	4,491	4,220	4,383	4,233	4,380
Total Pending Cases	1,562	1,619	1,761	1,535	1,683
% Over 180 Days Old	43%	51%	33%	33%	36%
KENT COUNTY					
Cases Filed	575	671	563	693	705
Cases Disposed	590	581	598	728	649
Total Pending Cases	121	198	195	141	192
% Over 180 Days Old	29%	39%	37%	26%	13%
WASHINGTON COUNTY					
Cases Filed	352	386	449	489	447
Cases Disposed	328	405	496	482	415
Total Pending Cases	91	132	78	61	103
% Over 180 Days Old	25%	21%	17%	23%	15%
NEWPORT COUNTY					
Cases Filed	305	314	311	366	307
Cases Disposed	265	334	343	405	247
Total Pending Cases	49	91	95	66	72
% Over 180 Days Old	41%	29%	25%	26%	35%
STATEWIDE					
Cases Filed	5,362	5,551	5,594	5,621	6,026
Cases Disposed	5,674	5,540	5,820	5,848	5,691
Total Pending Cases	1,823	2,040	2,129	1,803	2,050
% Over 180 Days Old	42%	47%	33%	32%	33%

AIDING JURORS

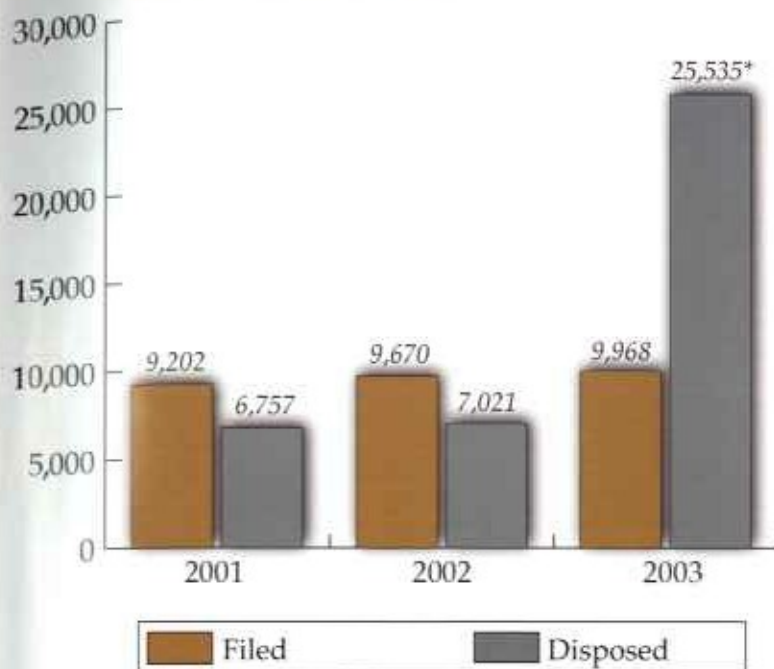
ORIENTATION VIDEO

In 2003, the Superior Court focused on improving services to those individuals chosen to serve as members

MISDEMEANOR DISPOSITIONS



CIVIL CASELOAD



*This total includes a mass dismissal of cases with no action in the past five years.

of a jury. In an effort to help the public better understand and appreciate the significance of jury service, the Rhode Island Judiciary applied for and was awarded an \$11,500 grant from the Rhode Island Foundation to produce a short video intended to inform Rhode Islanders about the jury process.

The video will include a brief historical background on the American jury system as well as an outline of the jury selection process, the stages in a jury trial, and jury deliberation. This video will provide an overview of the vital role that jurors play in helping to preserve our individual rights while protecting the public from criminal and civil mistreatment.

The jury video will be broadcast to members of the general public including schools, community organizations, and public television viewers. For individuals who are called to service as jurors, the video will complement the juror orientation program conducted under the direction of the Presiding Justice through the Office of the Jury Commissioner.

PARKING FOR JURORS

Aware of the fact that those chosen for jury service are actively participating in the democratic system and that parking is at a premium, the Rhode Island Judiciary recently initiated a system of free parking for jurors. In www.courts.state.ri.us

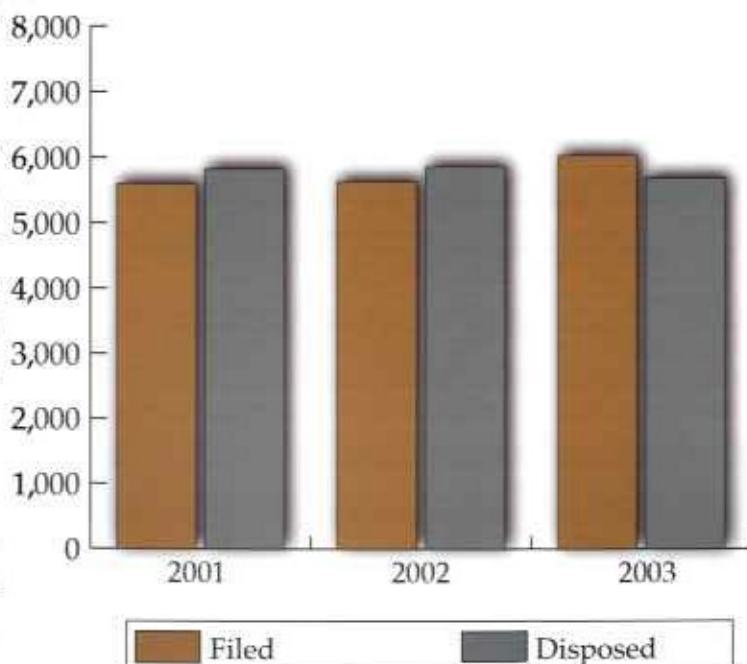
the short time since its inception, this new program already has proven to be extremely popular with those summoned to appear for jury service at the Licht Judicial Complex in Providence.

Jurors receive information and directions for the complimentary parking area along with their summons. To date, an average of 90 jurors per day are taking advantage of the shuttle bus which transports them to and from the courthouse at scheduled times throughout the day.

EXPANSION OF JURY POOL

As a result of legislation passed during the 2003 session of the General Assembly, the pool of eligible candidates for jury service was expanded to include anyone who has filed a Rhode Island state income tax return and anyone collecting unemployment compensation. In previous years, the potential jury pool consisted only of registered voters and citizens holding a Rhode Island driver's license or a Rhode Island identification card. The latest legislation significantly expands the pool to provide a greater representation of society and allow a wider segment of the population to serve.

FELONY CASELOAD



THE FAMILY COURT



Row 1 (Bottom) - Left to Right: Howard I. Lipsey, Michael B. Forte, Pamela M. Macktaž, Jeremiah S. Jeremiah, Jr. (Chief Judge), Haiganush R. Bedrosian, Raymond E. Shawcross, and Kathleen A. Voccola. Row 2 - Left to Right: Patricia K. Asquith, Francis J. Murray, Jr., John A. Mutter, Gilbert T. Rocha, Stephen J. Capineri, and Debra E. DiSegna. Row 3 - Left to Right: Jeanne L. Shepard, George N. DiMuro, John J. O'Brien, Jr., Angela M. Pauthus, and Edward H. Newman.

DOMESTIC CASELOAD

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
DOMESTIC					
PROVIDENCE/BRISTOL COUNTY					
Filed	2,942	3,062	3,172	3,212	3,120
Filed - Divorce Only	*	*	2,780	2,788	2,711
Disposed	*	*	2,853	2,826	2,783
Cases Greater than 360 Days Old	47	14	6	17	11
KENT COUNTY					
Filed	833	895	854	791	810
Filed - Divorce Only	*	*	749	717	731
Disposed	*	*	868	768	693
Cases Greater than 360 Days Old	1	0	15	5	12
WASHINGTON COUNTY					
Filed	570	556	595	581	539
Filed - Divorce Only	*	*	507	514	473
Disposed	*	*	530	551	458
Cases Greater than 360 Days Old	0	0	2	2	20
NEWPORT COUNTY					
Filed	353	361	396	407	380
Filed - Divorce Only	*	*	343	350	325
Disposed	*	*	379	394	307
Cases Greater than 360 Days Old	0	0	5	4	25
STATEWIDE					
Filed	4,698	4,874	5,017	4,991	4,849
Filed - Divorce Only	*	*	4,379	4,369	4,240
Disposed	*	*	4,630	4,539	4,241
Cases Greater-than 360 Days Old	48	14	28	28	68
ABUSE COMPLAINTS FILED					
Providence/Bristol County	2,015	2,026	2,064	2,126	1,849
Kent County	332	342	348	353	298
Washington County	221	177	167	145	134
Newport County	201	190	181	169	124
Statewide Total	2,769	2,735	2,760	2,793	2,405
SUPPORT PETITIONS FILED	3,998	3,743	3,857	3,839	4,801

FINDING OPTIONS THAT WORK

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT

The new Domestic Violence Court has been implemented in Providence/Bristol County since March 2003. The goals of this new specialty court are to promote victim and family safety and stability, offer meaningful assistance to families, and hold perpetrators responsible for their behavior.

This specialty court is a model for the effective and efficient processing of domestic abuse cases. It provides victims the opportunity to obtain the necessary skills to become strong, healthy, productive members of society while maintaining a safe and stable home environment.

JUVENILE RE-ENTRY COURT

Family Court developed the Juvenile Re-Entry Court in order to supervise the reintegration of juvenile offenders into the community. The goal of the Juvenile Re-Entry Court is to help juvenile offenders complete their education, obtain long-term employment, and to become industrious law abiding citizens. This

program is also intended to help juveniles maintain a permanent residence and, where necessary, remain successfully involved in a clinical treatment program.

FAMILY TREATMENT DRUG COURT

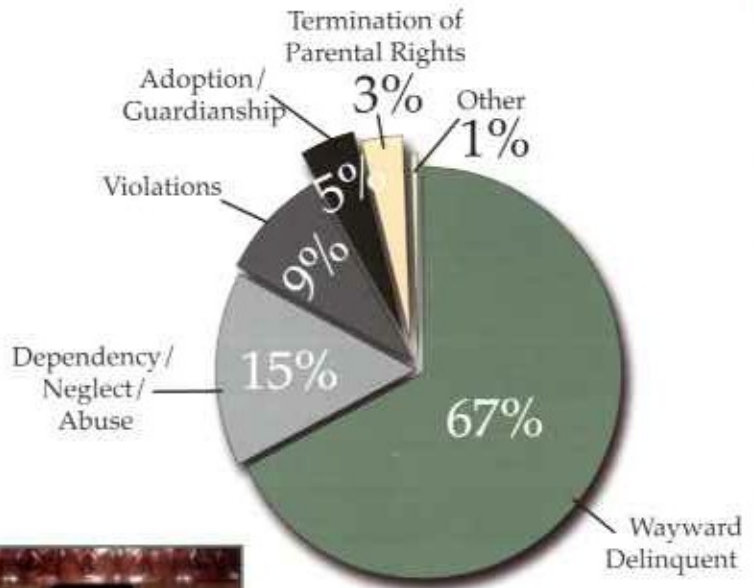
The Family Treatment Drug Court held its first graduation on September 4, 2003 and since then, a number of other participants have successfully completed the program. Intensive court supervision, court ordered substance abuse treatment services, and other ancillary services have all aided graduates in their pursuit of a drug free future.

JUVENILE DRUG COURT

The Juvenile Drug Court has expanded tremendously since the addition of the diversion program. Since its inception, over 500 juveniles have participated. Through May 2003, the program had a 70%



JUVENILE FILINGS BY CATEGORY

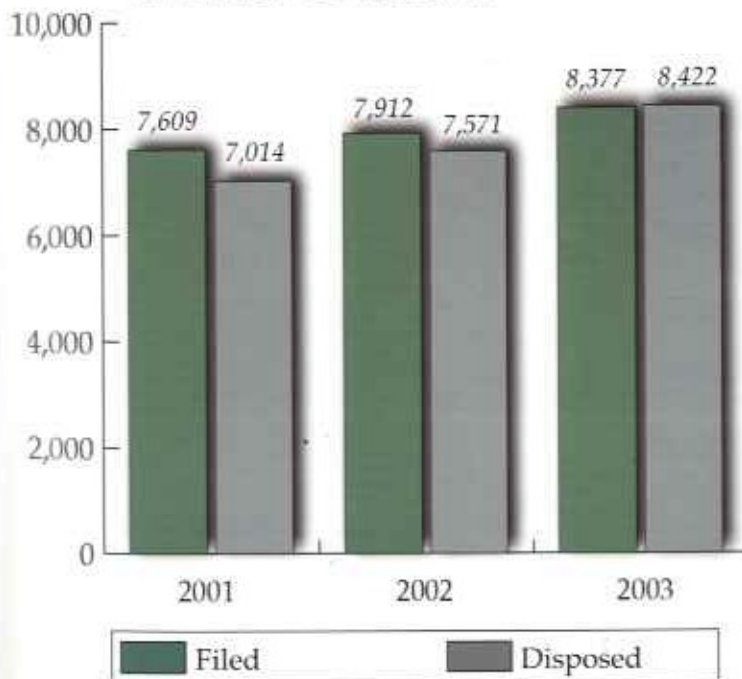


graduation rate. Upon program completion, 99% of those attending were back in school.

TRUANCY COURT

The Truancy Court has had remarkable success since its implementation in 1999. The court is now in 53 schools and in 21 different communities. Through participation in the Truancy Court program, over 800 children have been given an opportunity to turn their lives around and have a real chance for a successful future. Over the past two years, an average of 80% of the children involved in the program have increased their attendance in school and an average of 63% have shown an increase in academics.

JUVENILE CASELOAD



CASE MANAGEMENT / CASE FLOW

Another significant Family Court accomplishment is the implementation of a case management/case flow system for the wayward/delinquent cases. This system will allow the Family Court to have a target adjudication date of 180 days from filing.

THE DISTRICT COURT



Row 1 (Bottom) - Left to Right: Robert J. Rahill, Patricia D. Moore, Michael A. Higgins, Albert E. DeRobbio (Chief Judge), Robert K. Pirraglia, Stephen P. Erickson, and John M. McLoughlin. Row 2 - Left to Right: Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr., Richard A. Gonnella, Elaine T. Buccì, Frank J. Cenerini, Madeline Quirk, Jeanne E. LaFazia, and Christine S. Jabour. Not Pictured: Walter Gorman.

CRIMINAL CASELOAD

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
MISDEMEANORS					
SECOND DIVISION NEWPORT COUNTY					
Cases Filed	2,106	2,437	2,760	2,454	2,276
Cases Disposed	1,920	2,597	2,723	2,578	2,229
Total Pending	*	609	397	153	152
% Over 60 Days Old	*	*	*	17%	41%
THIRD DIVISION KENT COUNTY					
Cases Filed	5,288	4,687	4,786	4,879	4,893
Cases Disposed	5,162	5,971	4,858	4,984	4,708
Total Pending	*	489	273	197	351
% Over 60 Days Old	*	*	*	16%	31.6%
FOURTH DIVISION WASHINGTON COUNTY					
Cases Filed	3,481	3,943	4,508	4,271	4,222
Cases Disposed	3,394	3,800	4,443	4,314	3,940
Total Pending	*	529	528	205	450
% Over 60 Days Old	*	*	*	6%	38.7%
SIXTH DIVISION PROVIDENCE/BRISTOL COUNTY					
Cases Filed	14,984	16,950	18,298	18,384	17,827
Cases Disposed	14,054	16,481	18,159	18,383	17,578
Total Pending	*	2,912	2,622	1,833	1,037
% Over 60 Days Old	*	*	*	*	28.3%
STATEWIDE					
Cases Filed	25,864	28,017	30,352	29,988	29,218
Cases Disposed	24,504	28,850	30,183	30,259	28,455
Total Pending	*	4,539	3,820	2,388	1,990
% Over 60 Days Old	*	*	*	*	32%
MANNER OF DISPOSITION					
Plead	12,742	19,632	20,690	21,721	21,643
Filed	6,126	183	166	129	80
Dismissed	4,166	5,942	7,656	6,441	5,819
Trials	245	473	634	760	288
Other	1,225	2,620	1,036	1,208	625
Total	24,504	28,850	30,182	30,259	28,455
% Disposed of Within 60 Days of Filing	*	83%	88%	89%	88%
STATEWIDE FELONIES					
Filed	5,885	6,671	7,197	7,242	7,428

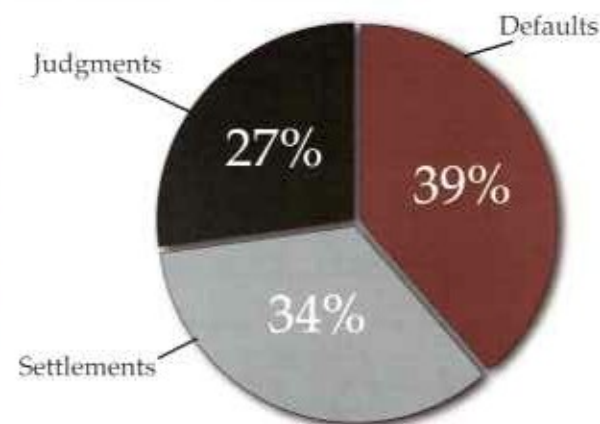
Under the leadership and guidance of Chief Judge Albert DeRobbio, the District Court effectuated major successes in 2003. Innovative ideas and an eagerness to ascertain equal justice and fair treatment for all offenders initiate the process of breaking down barriers between the community and the judicial system.

Over the past year, the District Court conducted groundbreaking research on the offender population; established a community network for the mentally ill and substance abusers to aid them in the pretrial stages of the criminal case process; and designed and implemented a drug testing program.

EFFECTIVE

The District Court Pretrial Services Unit, the mechanism judges utilize to monitor the terms of bail, also instituted

CIVIL CASELOAD MANNER OF DISPOSITION

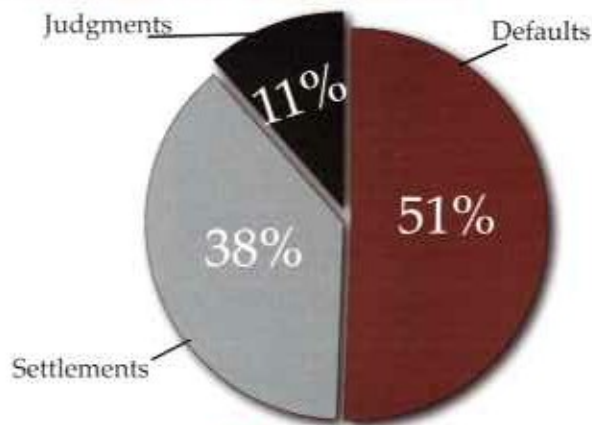


many successful changes. The Unit developed a more effective flow of information and referral between the court clerk and the pretrial staff resulting in a positive impact in capturing defendants with a conditional release.

Rhode Island lawmakers and community leaders continued to be interested in the Unit's information gathering on a defendant's background and its monitoring component. In November 2003, the District Court was awarded a grant from the State Justice Institute for technical assistance. This grant allowed the Pretrial Services Unit to continue working with a consultant/researcher who redesigned a database to more closely match the needs to the Unit, the court, and Rhode Island lawmakers and community leaders. The grant also allowed the Pretrial Services Unit to continue its analysis and efforts to determine whether there is any racial disparity in the bail decision process. Other research tasks



SMALL CLAIMS MANNER OF DISPOSITION



E DUCATING THE PUBLIC

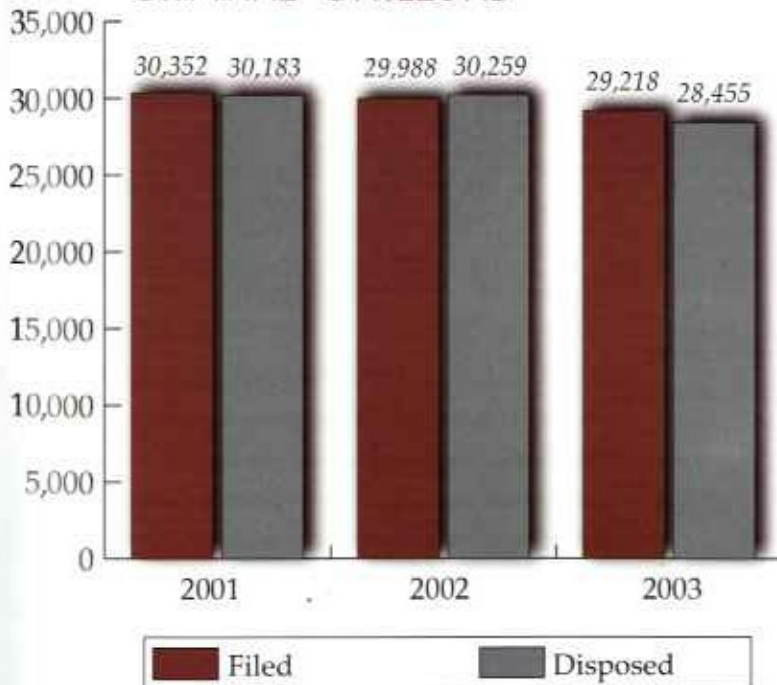
The Pretrial Services Unit also made a huge impact by educating the public on the many consequences of addiction. In partnership with Roger Williams Hospital Addiction Treatment Unit, the Pretrial Services Unit participated in a PBS program aired on May 12, 2003

intitl: "Addictions in the Workplace - The Price We All Pay." Special guests included Chief Justice Frank Williams of the Supreme Court and Chief Judge Albert DeRobbio of the District Court. The program's producers and camera crew visited the District Court to tape the initial court proceedings immediately following arrest to fully capture the role of the Pretrial Services Unit and the impact it has on providing information to judges, prosecutors, and defense counsel.

S AVINGS THROUGH MANAGEMENT

The Pretrial Services Unit delivered significant cost avoidance under tight fiscal constraints by verifying information and integrating an efficient monitoring component. With these efforts the District Court saved over \$80,000 in fiscal year 2003 by preventing unnecessary detentions at the Adult Correctional Institutions. Additionally, the court has saved over \$960,000 by providing intervention to defendants who would have otherwise been incarcerated after their bail hearings and motions to reduce bail.

CRIMINAL CASELOAD



included understanding the Unit's population in the context of the remaining Rhode Island pretrial population and the impact the Unit had on the population of defendants it supervises.

THE WORKERS COMPENSATION COURT



Row 1 (Bottom) - Left to Right: Debra L. Olsson, John Rotondi, Jr., Robert F. Arrigan (Chief Judge), George E. Healy, Jr., and Bruce Q. Morin. Row 2 - Left to Right: George T. Salem, Jr., Edward P. Sowa, Jr., Janette A. Bertness, Dianne M. Connor, and Hugo L. Ricci, Jr.

In 2003, the Workers' Compensation Court successfully responded to a series of new challenges.

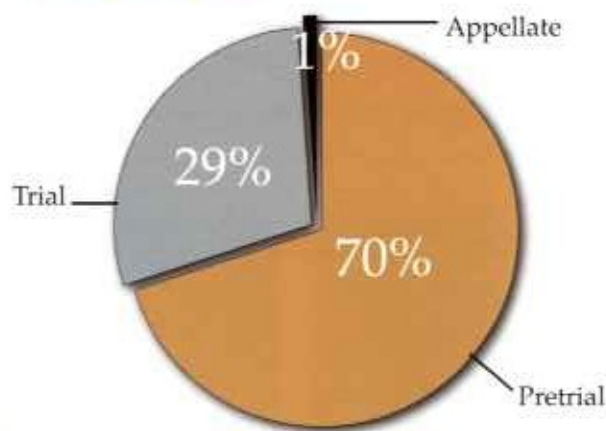
RESPONDING WITH CHANGE THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The tragedy caused by the fire at The Station nightclub on February 20, 2003 became poignant from a compensation standpoint when it was learned that the employer did not maintain the required policies of compensation insurance. The failure to carry the necessary

CASELOAD SUMMARY

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
EMPLOYEE PETITIONS					
Original	3,006	3,168	3,201	3,076	3,027
To Review	1,544	1,565	2,400	2,178	2,171
Total	4,550	4,733	5,601	5,254	5,198
EMPLOYER PETITIONS					
To Review	1,594	1,504	1,678	1,767	1,568
OTHER					
Second Injury	1	3	1	0	0
To Enforce	544	714	786	929	873
Lump Sum Settlement	742	754	713	856	780
Hospital/Physician Fees	21	28	42	70	161
Miscellaneous	99	91	143	106	104
Total	1,407	1,590	1,685	1,961	1,918
Total Petitions Filed	7,551	7,827	8,964	8,982	8,684
Total Dispositions	7,319	8,018	8,877	9,258	8,775
Total Pending Caseload	2,706	2,519	2,603	2,326	2,233
Total Cases Pending Trial	1,479	1,328	1,188	910	887
% Pending Trial More Than 270 Days	41%	41%	40%	29%	29%

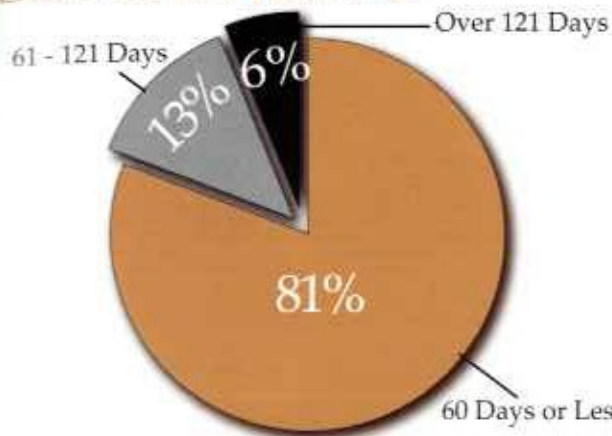
DISPOSITIONS



insurance, coupled with the devastating impact on the victims of the fire, prompted sweeping legislation which increased the penalties for the failure to carry the required insurance and redoubled efforts to police employers to ensure that they were in compliance.

As part of this legislation, the Workers' Compensation Court was given original jurisdiction over cases seeking to penalize noncompliant employers. Through this reform, the Department of Labor and Training was given the authority to issue immediate "Stop Work" orders to those employers who refuse to obtain the necessary insurance. The Workers' Compensation Court alone will hear all appeals of these orders.

DISPOSED AT PRETRIAL



The court is in the process of revising its Rules of Practice to address this new type of litigation. While the court anticipates a significant spike in the number of filings in response to this new legislation, there is also much hope that the increase will be temporary and will abate when employers realize that the costs inherent in the failure to carry insurance far exceed the premiums necessary to purchase a policy of insurance to comply with the law.

REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

In 2003, the court expanded its already extensive community outreach initiatives. Throughout the year, representatives from the court appeared on Radio Poder, a Spanish speaking radio station serving the Hispanic community. These appearances culminated in the inauguration of the Judiciary's Citizens' Summit which was held at the Feinstein High School in Providence. This forum allowed members of the Hispanic community to meet with the Judiciary, share their concerns, and obtain information about the workers' compensation process in an informal setting.

Associate Judge George E. Healy, Maureen H. Aveno, Administrator of the Medical Advisory Board, and Ronald H. Thompson, Esquire, gave a brief panel presentation about the workers' compensation law, the legal and medical processes resulting from work related injury, and possible immigration issues.



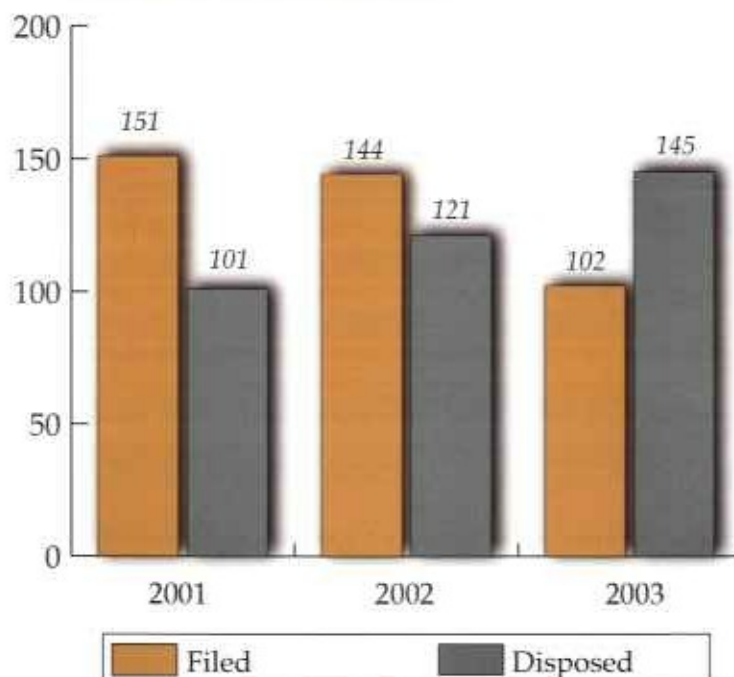
Ronald H. Thompson, Esquire, Maureen H. Aveno, Administrator of the Medical Advisory Board, and Associate Judge George E. Healy, Jr. presenting at the Citizens' Summit.

Following this presentation, the panel joined with other judges, physicians, and civic leaders in responding to numerous questions posed by audience members. The forum was extremely well received and will serve as the start of the Judiciary's continued community outreach project.

FOSTERING A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

In 2003, the court also held its first educational seminar for the medical community. More than eighty healthcare professionals from all areas of specialization attended an educational program provided by the court to address the provider's duty to assist their patients with the workers' compensation process and to familiarize the physicians with court procedures. The physicians expressed much appreciation for the educational program. It is hoped that meetings of this nature will foster a spirit of cooperation between the legal and medical community which will serve to make the litigation process more efficient.

APPELLATE CASELOAD



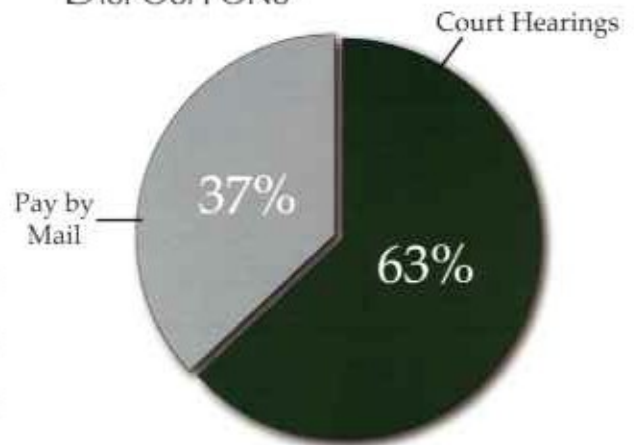


Row 1 (Bottom) - Left to Right: Lillian M. Almeida, Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr., Albert E. DeRobbio (Chief Judge), and Marjorie R. Yaskar. Row 2 - Left to Right: Aurendina G. Veiga, Albert R. Ciullo, Edward C. Parker, Domenic A. DiSandro III, and William T. Noonan.

UNIVERSAL SUMMONS INTERFACE AND ELECTRONIC SUMMONS

In 2003, the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal (RITT) began work on a data interface and computer generated universal summons project that would allow police officers to electronically generate a hard copy summons from their police cruiser while simultaneously transmitting data elements from the summons directly to the Judiciary's computer system. This interface will also electronically transmit pertinent summons data to the courts from police departments, state agencies, and municipal courts, thereby significantly reducing redundant data entry within-each department. In addition to expediting the court's receipt of summons information, it will improve the ability of the RITT to track accounts receivables and enhance the integrity and accountability of the entire summoning process.

DISPOSITIONS



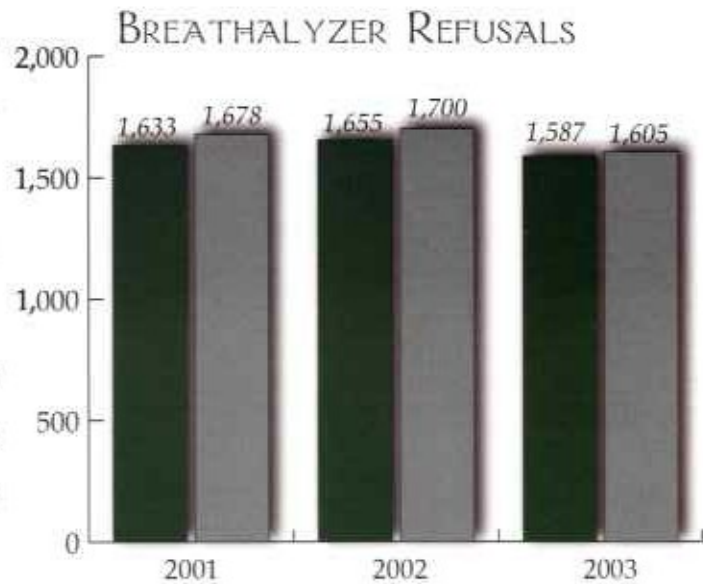
COMPUTER GENERATED WRIT OF EXECUTION/CITATION

Motorists who fail to pay court ordered fines and costs are now served with a computer generated Writ of Execution/Citation. These documents reflect the motorists' name, summons numbers, and outstanding

amounts due and owed to the State of Rhode Island. The introduction of this program in 2003 streamlined the Execution/Citation process and replaced a procedure that required many hours of manual research.

PAYMENT OF TRAFFIC TRIBUNAL FINES AND COSTS VIA THE INTERNET

Motorists who wish to pay their fines online may now do so quickly and easily at www.courtpayments.com. This website is specifically dedicated for the payment of RITT fines and costs.



CASELOAD SUMMARY

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total Summonses Issued	123,719	160,056*	152,525	163,390	187,429
RITT Summonses Issued	76,343	88,149	89,727	99,406	101,649
(Total Violations)		(116,309)	(128,449)	(130,576)	124,618
RITT Summonses Disposed	128,862	123,673	104,042	102,136	106,371
BREAKDOWN OF DISPOSED SUMMONSES					
Court Hearings	95,225	90,607	66,990	62,824	67,243
Pay by Mail	33,637	33,066	37,052	39,312	39,128
Total	128,862	123,673	104,042	102,136	106,371
% Disposed of Within 60 Days	**	**	**	98%	98%
BREATHALYZER REFUSALS					
Filed	1,570	1,693	1,633	1,655	1,587
Disposed	1,528	1,903	1,678	1,700	1,605
% Disposed of Within 60 Days	**	**	**	93%	91%
DUI / .08					
Filed	**	**	26	50	27
Disposed	**	**	27	50	33
% Disposed of Within 60 Days	**	**	**	88%	79%
INSURANCE					
Filed	8,342	9,862	9,539	10,143	10,940
Disposed	16,249	18,014	10,855	10,625	11,572
% Disposed of Within 60 Days	**	**	**	94%	94%
APPEALS					
Filed	611	562	513	565	700
Disposed	**	**	**	426	507
Pending	**	**	**	139	193

* Includes summonses issued to both RITT and Municipal Courts.

** Not available.

Note: Reported pending insurance cases may be higher than actual number due to computer program conversion issues.

JUSTICE INDEPENDENCE HONOR

2003

RHODE ISLAND JUDICIARY

COURT STATISTICS

At a Glance

Court Facts

2003 Caseload Year

Hearings/Filings	214,683
Disposed	230,228

Fiscal Year 2004 Budget-Enacted

	ALL FUNDS	General Revenue
Supreme Court	\$ 24,210,382	\$ 22,371,134
Defense of Indigent Persons	\$ 1,950,000	\$ 1,950,000
Superior Court	\$ 16,845,893	\$ 16,681,473
Family Court	\$ 15,719,734	\$ 12,621,565
District Court.....	\$ 7,923,671	\$ 7,923,671
Workers' Compensation Court	\$ 6,009,169 (restricted receipt)	-----
Traffic Tribunal.....	\$ 6,219,918	\$ 6,219,918
Total	\$ 78,878,767	\$ 67,767,761

Judges

66 Judges
16 Magistrates
(28 Female)
(3 Minority)

Employees

734.5
Full Time
Equivalent ("FTE")
Positions
(12.8 authorized but not funded)

Facilities

6 Courthouses
76 Courtrooms
(Including 4 Grand Jury rooms)

Fiscal Year 2003 Revenues - All Funds

	CIVIL	CRIMINAL/TRAFFIC/JUVENILE- FINES/FEES/COSTS	GRANTS
Supreme Court	\$ 1,087,714	\$ N/A	\$
Superior Court	\$ 1,295,084	\$ 3,186,008	\$
Family Court	\$ 522,850	\$ 97,511	\$
District Court.....	\$ 1,401,185	\$ 2,722,854	\$
Workers' Compensation Court	\$ 177,294	\$ N/A	\$
Traffic Tribunal.....	\$ N/A	\$ 9,309,242	\$
Total Revenues Generated	\$ 4,484,127	\$ 15,315,615	\$ 2,620,836

TOTAL REVENUES FISCAL YEAR 2003.....\$ 22,420,577

Summary

Judiciary's Caseload



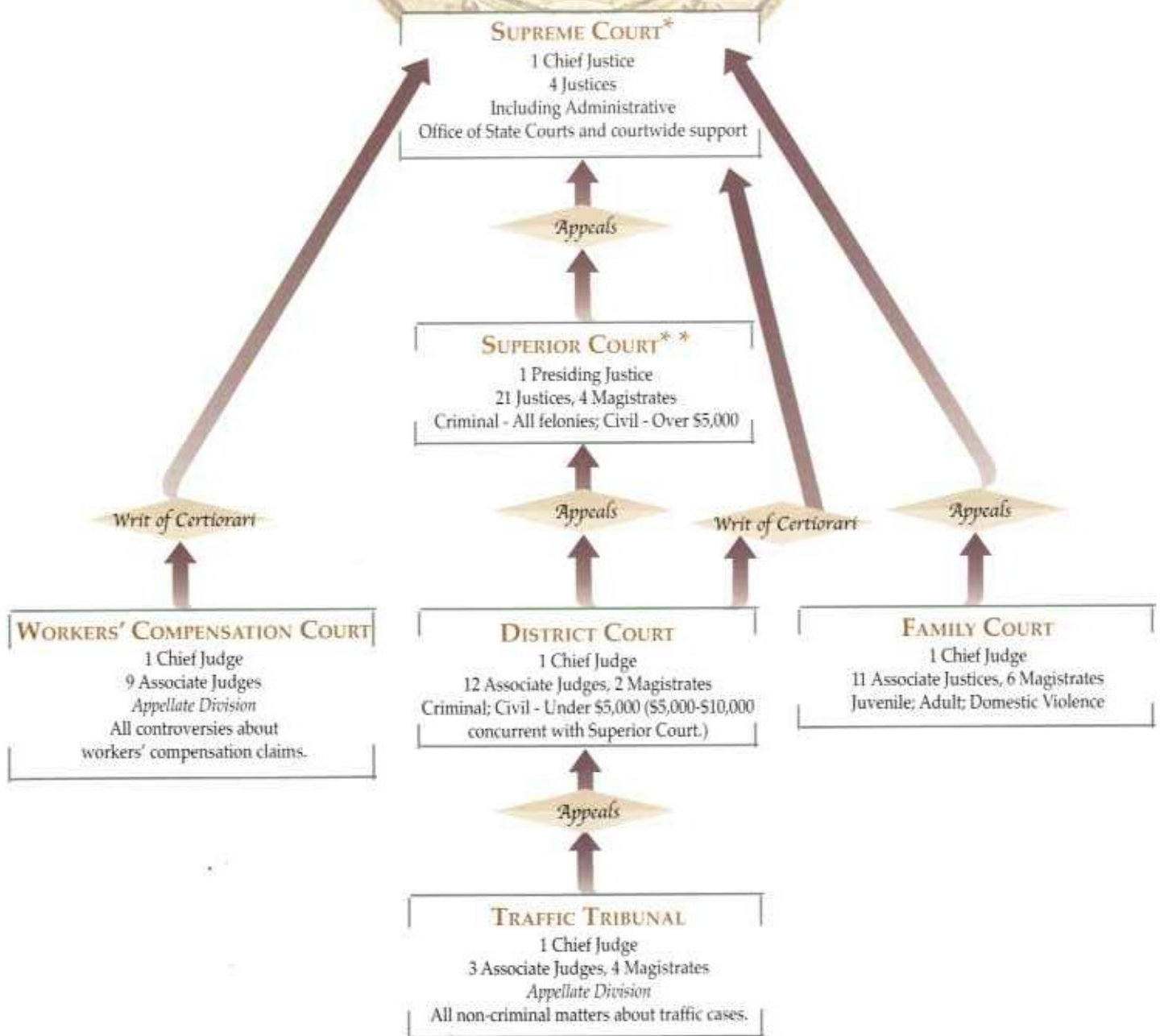
COURT	CASE TYPE	2002 FILINGS	2002 DISPOSITIONS	2003 FILINGS	2003 DISPOSITIONS
SUPREME		754	818	673	714
SUPERIOR	<i>Felonies</i>	5,621	5,848	6,026	5,691
	<i>Misdemeanors</i>	711	730	557	546
	<i>Civil</i>	9,670	[^] 7,021	9,468	[^] 25,535
FAMILY	<i>Juvenile</i>	10,693	[*] 10,612	10,950	[*] 11,019
	<i>Divorce</i>	4,369	4,539	4,240	4,241
	<i>Miscellaneous Petitions</i>	622		609	
	<i>Abuse</i>	2,793	^{**} 2,629	2,405	^{**} 1,975
	<i>Child Support</i>	^{***} 3,839		^{***} 4,801	
DISTRICT	<i>Misdemeanors</i>	29,988		29,218	28,455
	<i>Small Claims</i>	15,204	30,259	15,504	18,458
	<i>Civil</i>	19,053	17,905	18,377	18,448
	<i>Abuse</i>	926	19,016	926	
	<i>Mental Health/Other</i>	564		456	
	<i>Administrative Appeals</i>			140	
WORKERS' COMPENSATION		8,982	9,260	8,684	8,775
TRAFFIC TRIBUNAL		99,496	102,136	101,649	106,371
TOTAL FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS		213,285	210,773	214,683	230,228

[^] Civil trial calendar only. Civil dispositions in 2003 include a mass dismissal of cases with no action in five years.
^{*} Wayward / delinquent only.
^{**} County dispositions are estimated.
^{***} Reciprocal filings stay open until age of majority of child unless otherwise ordered by court.

Court Structure

Administrative Office of State Courts

State Court Administrator • Finance and Budget • Employee Relations • Law Library • Judicial Technology Center • Facilities and Operations • Judicial Records Center • Domestic Violence Training And Monitoring Unit • Rhode Island State Fugitive Task Force • Mandatory Continuing Legal Education • Public Relations/Community Outreach • Law Clerk Department • Judicial Planning Unit • General Counsel • Disciplinary Counsel • Clerk's Office • Appellate Screening • Administrative Assistant to Chief Justice



* Court of last resort

** Court of general jurisdiction

All other courts have limited jurisdiction.



Administrative Office of State Courts
250 Benefit Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903
(401) 222-3266