

DISTRICT COURT

District court was created by Act 154 of 1968, to commence functioning January 1, 1969. These courts replaced justice of the peace courts and circuit court commissioners, as mandated by the Constitution of 1963. The act also abolished municipal and police courts, but contained provisions allowing certain municipalities to retain their municipal courts. Five municipal courts still exist. The city of Detroit was not affected by the District Court Act of 1968 and the common pleas court of Detroit continued to function until abolished by Act 438 of 1980.

Jurisdiction

The district court has exclusive jurisdiction of all civil litigation up to \$25,000; all misdemeanors where potential punishment does not exceed 1 year in jail; and the arraignment, setting and acceptance of bail, and conduct of preliminary examinations in felony cases. The district court also handles garnishments as well as eviction proceedings, land contract and mortgage foreclosures, and other proceedings. Juries in district court are limited to 6 members. In civil cases, 5 of 6 jurors must agree on a verdict while in criminal cases verdicts must be unanimous. District court became a court of record in 1973 and a verbatim record is kept of most court proceedings. All appeals from district court decisions are made to the circuit court.

District judges may appoint magistrates. Magistrates may set bail and accept bond in criminal matters; accept guilty pleas; and sentence for many traffic, motor carrier, and snowmobile violations and dog, game, and marine law violations. The magistrate may also issue arrest and search warrants authorized by the prosecutor or municipal attorney. Attorney magistrates may hear small claims cases. Magistrates may, at the direction of the chief judge, perform other duties allowed by statute. Appeals from magistrate decisions are made to a district court judge for de novo review.

A small claims division for civil cases up to \$3,000 is provided for in district court. In these cases litigants agree to waive their right to a jury, rules of evidence, representation by a lawyer, and the right to appeal from the district judge's decision. Small claims cases may also be heard by attorney magistrates whose decisions become final if not appealed to a district judge within 7 days. If either party objects, the case will be heard by the general division of the district court. Traffic bureaus may also be set up in district court to handle traffic offenses.

District judges are elected on nonpartisan ballots for terms of 6 years. Qualifications are the same as for other judges. The legislature sets their salaries, which may be supplemented by local governments.

Caseload

In 2000, there were 3,264,545 new filings in Michigan district courts.

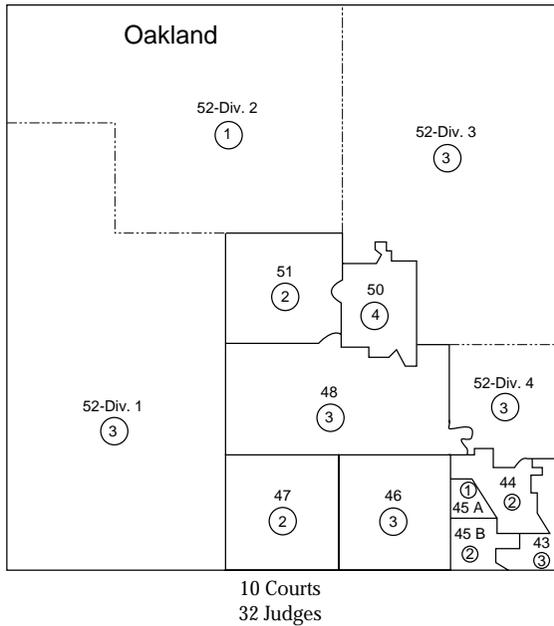
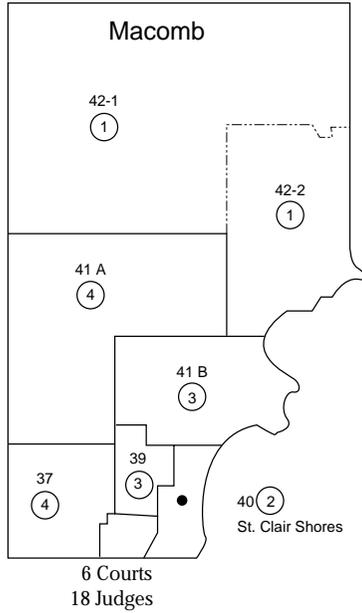
TRENDS IN DISTRICT COURT CRIMINAL FILINGS, 1997-2000

Case Type	1997	1998	1999	2000
Felony	76,018	76,858	68,327	71,356
Misdemeanor	249,221	264,720	266,245	312,788
Civil Infraction	12,327	14,263	15,300	17,649
OUIL Misdemeanor	60,035	61,021	61,744	57,445
OUIL Felony	3,047	3,234	3,722	6,242
Total	400,648	420,096	415,338	465,480

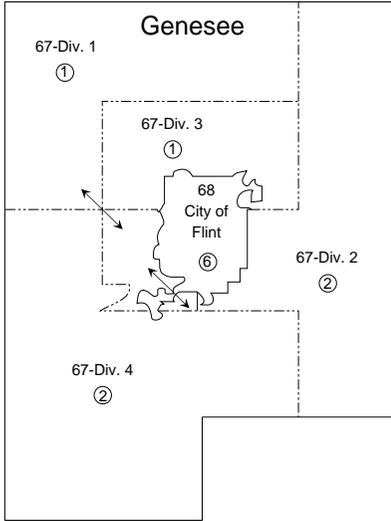
TRENDS IN DISTRICT COURT CIVIL FILINGS, 1997-2000

Case Type	1997	1998	1999	2000
General Civil	160,441	175,580	176,413	185,710
Small Claims	99,824	95,059	89,842	98,173
Summary	168,913	174,094	181,565	183,480
Total	429,178	444,733	447,820	467,363

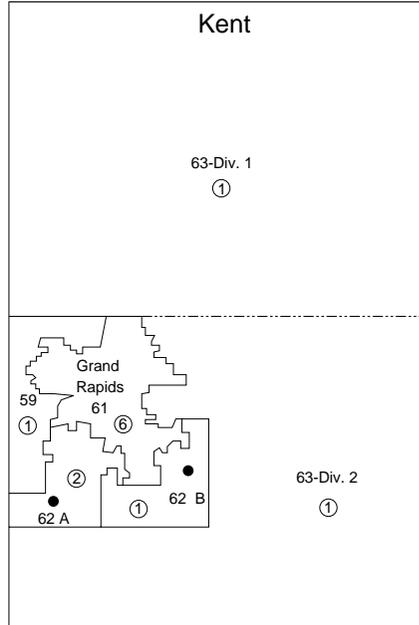
DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS (Cont.)



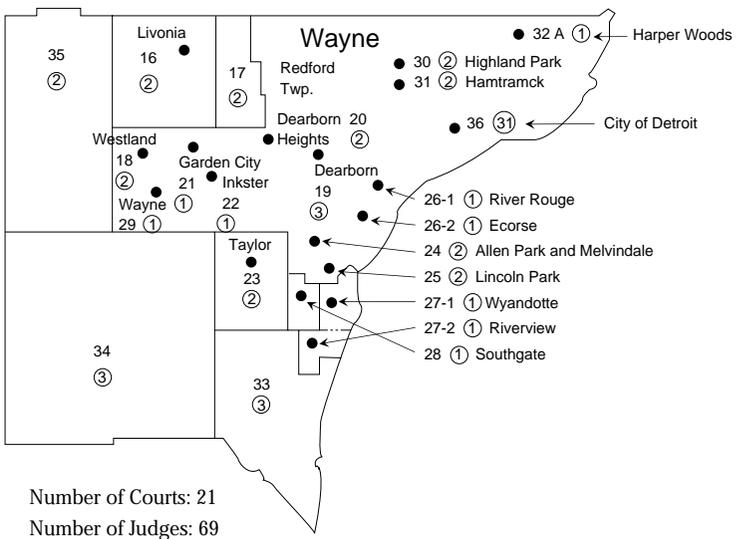
DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS *(Cont.)*



Number of Courts: 2
 Number of Judges: 12



Number of Courts: 5
 Number of Judges: 12



Number of Courts: 21
 Number of Judges: 69