

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.

On April 1, 2003, several changes in district court boundaries took effect. Alcona and Oscoda counties moved from the 82nd District to the 81st District; Crawford County moved from the 83rd District to the 87th District; Lake County moved from the 78th District to the 79th District; and Oceana County moved from the 79th District to the 78th District.

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 2002, there were 3,241,663 new filings in Michigan district courts.

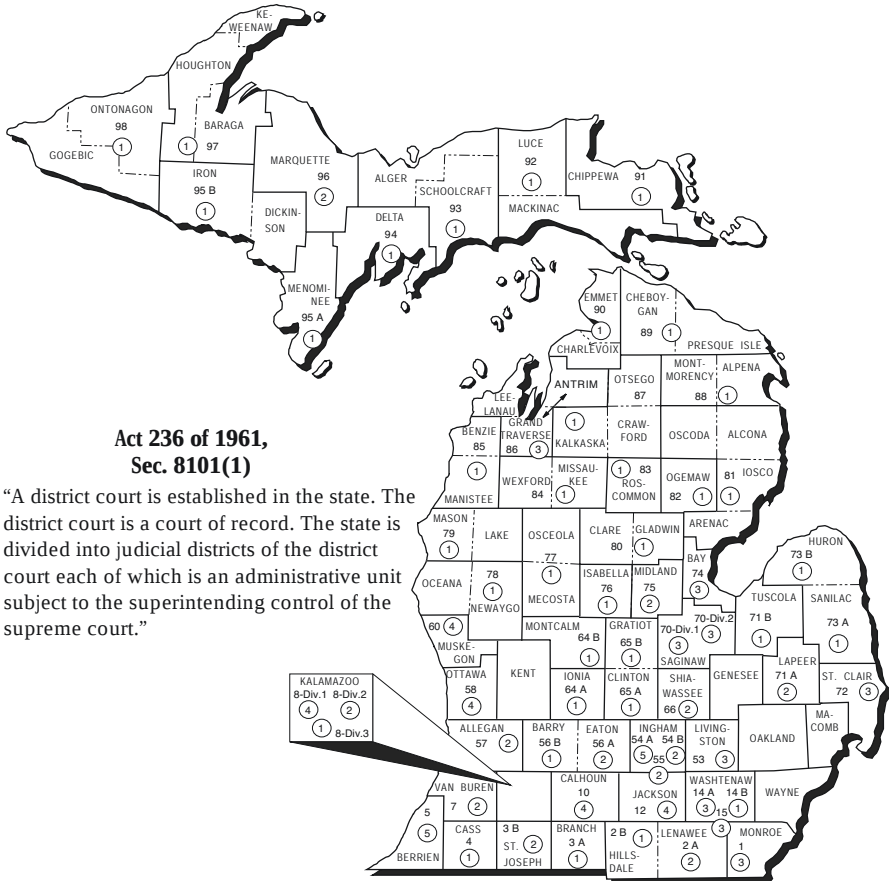
TRENDS IN DISTRICT COURT CRIMINAL FILINGS, 1999-2002

Case Type	1999	2000	2001	2002
Felony	68,327	71,356	76,816	78,772
Misdemeanor	266,245	312,788	336,114	319,721
Civil Infraction	15,300	17,649	24,792	32,428
OUIL Misdemeanor and Felony	65,466	63,687	61,369	60,572
Total	415,338	465,480	499,091	491,493

TRENDS IN DISTRICT COURT CIVIL FILINGS, 1999-2002

Case Type	1999	2000	2001	2002
General Civil	176,413	185,710	216,165	264,061
Small Claims	89,842	98,173	106,798	104,208
Summary	181,565	183,480	201,637	206,276
Total	447,820	467,363	524,600	574,545

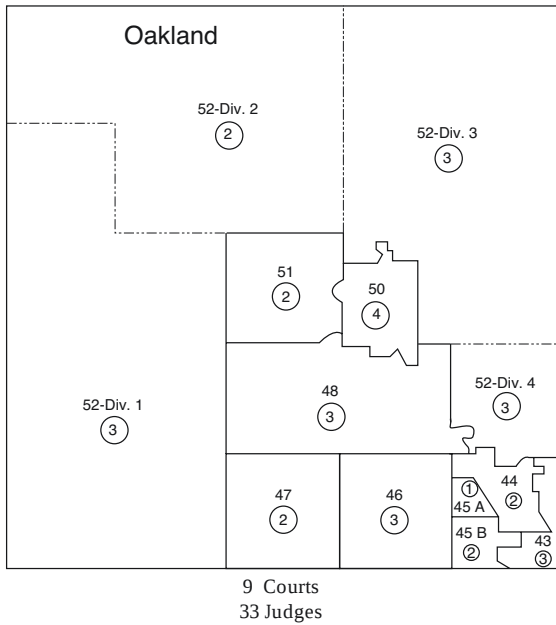
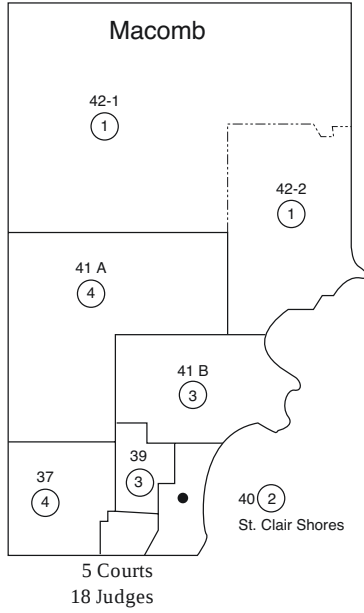
DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

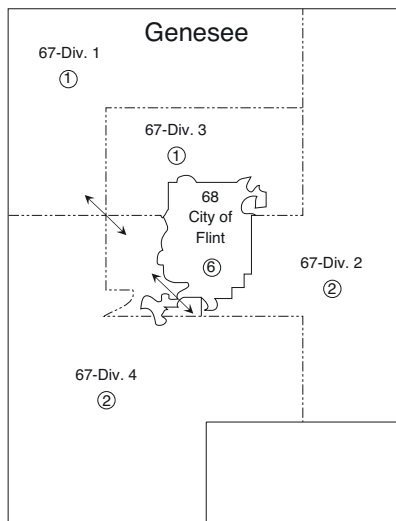


Unnumbered counties are shown in detail on the following pages.

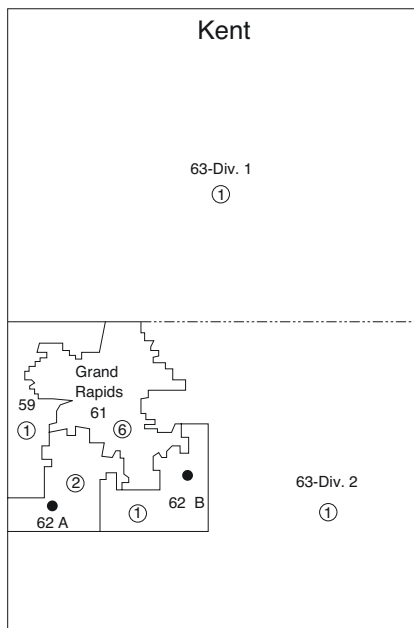
LEGEND	TOTALS
# - District Court	258 - Judgeships
Ⓝ - Number of District Court Judgeships	104 - Number of District Courts

DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS *(Cont.)*

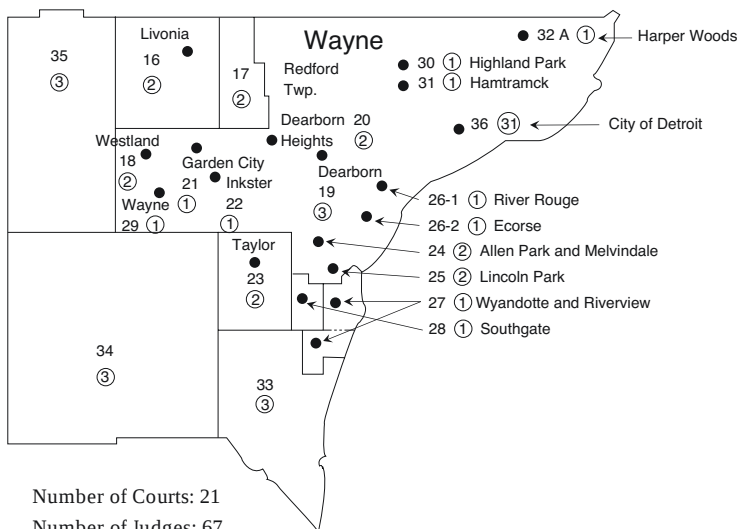


DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS (Cont.)

Number of Courts: 2
Number of Judges: 12



Number of Courts: 5
Number of Judges: 12



Number of Courts: 21
Number of Judges: 67