

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. Four municipal courts still exist.

Jurisdiction

The district court has exclusive jurisdiction of all civil litigation up to \$25,000; all misdemeanors where potential punishment does not exceed one 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 six members. In civil cases, five of six 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 seven 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 six years. Qualifications are the same as for other judges. The legislature sets their salaries, which may be supplemented by local governments.

Caseload

In 2006, 3,659,252 cases (including parking tickets) were filed in district courts. Almost one-half (48.7%) were traffic civil infractions. However, the number of traffic civil infraction filings has remained relatively stable between 2002 and 2006, at more than 2 million per year.

Municipal and state civil infraction filings continued to increase. In 2006, 62,436 cases were filed, up 20.4% from 2005 and 92.2% from 2002.

Drunk driving case filings have decreased over the same time period. In 2006, 54,096 felony and misdemeanor drunk driving cases were filed, down 2.8% from 2005 and 10.9% from 2002.

Non-drunk driving felony cases decreased nominally in 2006, but have increased 4.7% since 2002. Non-drunk driving misdemeanor cases in 2006, at 577,072, increased for the first time since 2003.

Civil case filings increased in 2006, except for small claims cases. In 2006, 317,165 general civil suits were filed, up 9.8% from 2005 and 19.9% from 2002; 222,738 summary proceedings (landlord-tenant and land contract) were filed, up 4.3% from 2005 and 7.9% from 2002; and 89,167 small claims cases were filed, down 1.3% from 2005 and 14.4% from 2002.

TRENDS IN DISTRICT COURT CRIMINAL FILINGS, 2002-2006

Case Type	2002*	2003*	2004	2005	2006
Felony	79,284	78,632	81,535	83,271	83,044
Misdemeanor	762,596	775,884	560,298	552,907	577,072
Municipal and State Civil Infraction	32,481	43,850	44,164	51,866	62,436
Traffic Civil Infraction	2,064,472	2,085,352	2,046,218	2,513,434	2,253,534
DWI Misdemeanor and Felony	60,717	59,908	56,140	55,668	54,096
Total	2,999,550	3,043,626	2,788,355	3,257,146	3,030,182

TRENDS IN DISTRICT COURT CIVIL FILINGS, 2002-2006

Case Type	2002*	2003*	2004	2005	2006
General Civil	264,575	299,413	277,855	288,536	317,165
Small Claims	104,208	101,680	93,935	90,383	89,167
Summary Proceedings	206,502	217,886	211,213	213,535	222,738
Total	575,285	618,979	583,003	592,454	629,070

* Adjusted for the conversion of Eastpointe Municipal Court to 38th District Court on January 1, 2004.

DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

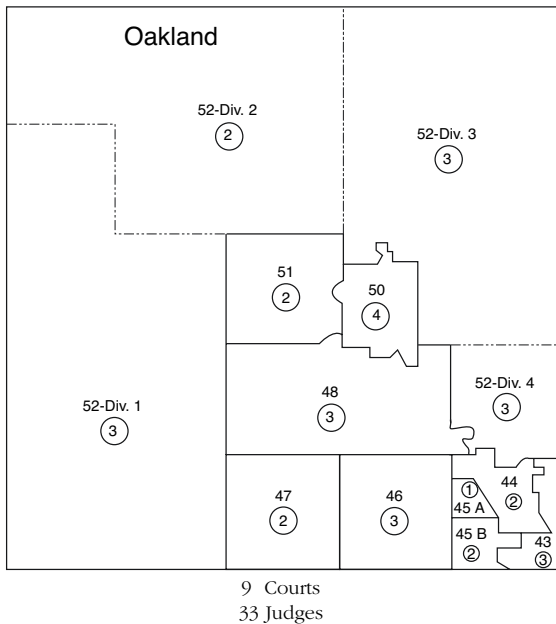
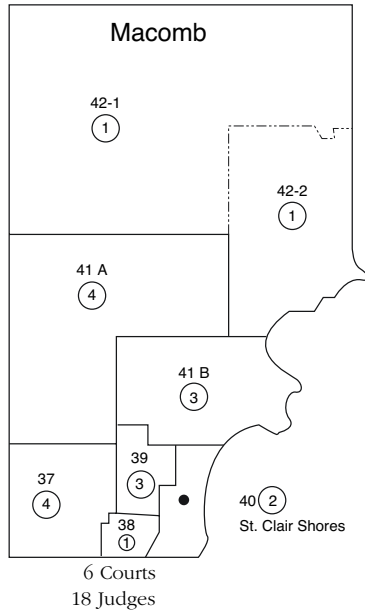


Unnumbered counties are shown in detail on the following pages.

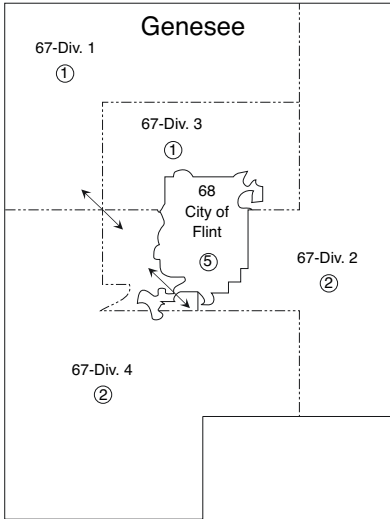
2006 Courts and Judgeships

LEGEND	TOTALS
# - District Court	258 - Judgeships
⊕ - Number of District Court Judgeships	105 - Number of District Courts

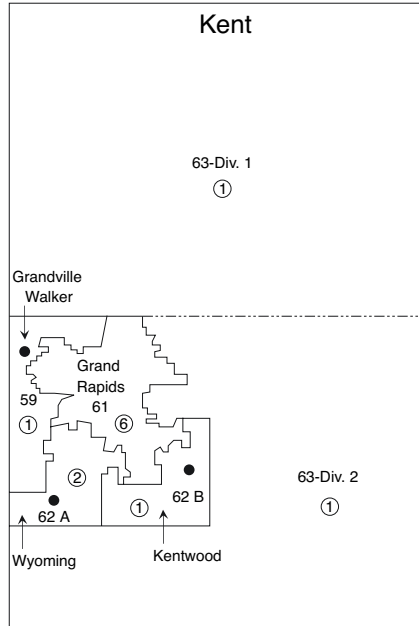
DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS *(Cont.)*



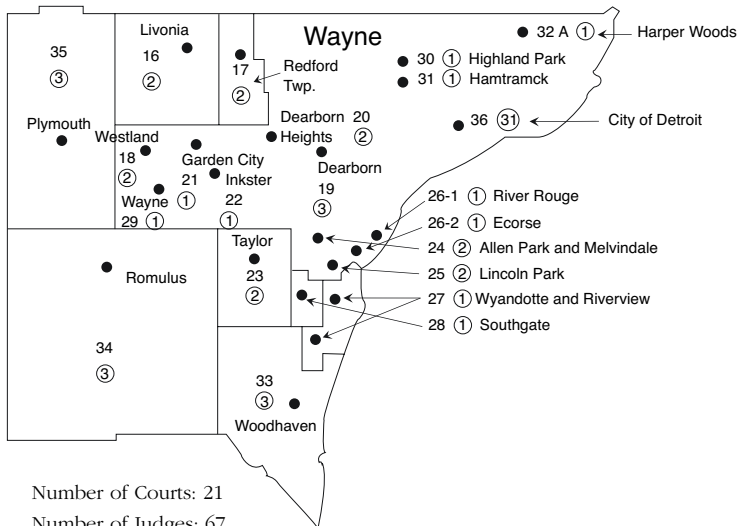
DISTRICT COURT — JUDICIAL DISTRICTS *(Cont.)*



Number of Courts: 2
Number of Judges: 11



Number of Courts: 5
Number of Judges: 12



Number of Courts: 21
Number of Judges: 67