

Message from the State Courts Administrator

February 2007

Dear Friends:



I am pleased to present the new edition of *Statistical Reference Guide to Florida's Trial Courts*. This is the sixth guide published since its inception. Incorporated in this Guide is statistical data maintained by the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA) from both the circuit and county court systems on filings, dispositions, and special proceedings for fiscal year 2005-2006, as reported by the sixty-seven clerks of court. The data contained in this publication is an essential reference for understanding the work of the State Courts System.

A long-standing goal of the court system has been sharing information about its work. Each year, OSCA staff examine, verify, compile, and distribute this information to policymakers, court users and the public. This mechanism for reporting court statistics is a necessary element in maintaining public trust and confidence in the judicial system.

The production of this Guide is the result of effective collaboration among justice system partners and I wish to again extend my appreciation to those who diligently worked with us to make this report a precise and reliable accounting of Florida's trial court activity.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth H. Goodner
State Courts Administrator

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Front Cover Photograph of the Florida Cases Court Rules by Phil Pollock

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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. The *Statistical Reference Guide* provides statistics pertaining to Florida's trial courts for Fiscal Year 2005-06 (July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006). These statistics were received and verified as of November 2006.

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. 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. In addition, all data can be accessed on the web at www.flcourts.org.

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 for each circuit and county. Additionally, this section provides an explanation for how the data are collected, maintained, and verified for accuracy.

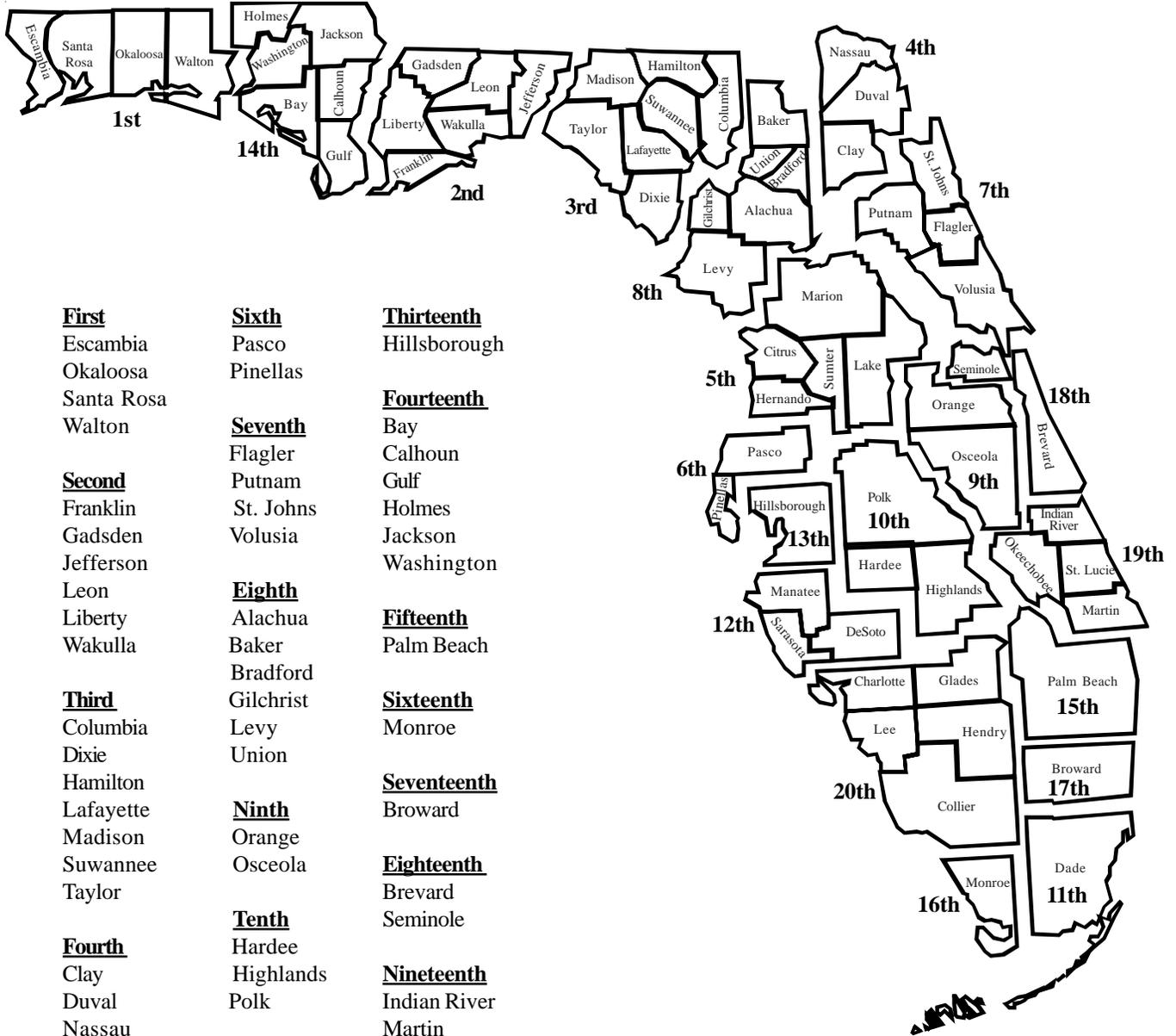
Overall Statistics - The Overall Statistics section provides a breakdown of the number and assignment of circuit and county judgeships for each judicial circuit. Also provided are statewide statistics for total circuit and county court filings and dispositions.

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 Family Court, Circuit Probate, County Criminal, and County Civil). Statewide, circuit, and county level data are furnished by various categories and case types that comprise each division.

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

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

JUDICIAL CIRCUIT MAP OF FLORIDA



First

Escambia
Santa Rosa
Okaloosa
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
Jackson
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

FLORIDA POPULATION*
by Circuit/County
as of January 2005 and January 2006

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2005)	Total Population (as of January 2006)	Percentage Change from 2005 to 2006
Circuit 1 (13)	686,640	689,194	0.4%
Escambia	309,586	303,063	-2.1%
Okaloosa	188,415	191,502	1.6%
Santa Rosa	136,610	139,037	1.8%
Walton	52,029	55,592	6.8%
Circuit 2 (16)	372,713	385,142	3.3%
Franklin	10,753	11,075	3.0%
Gadsden	47,196	48,248	2.2%
Jefferson	14,107	14,351	1.7%
Leon	267,122	275,876	3.3%
Liberty	7,391	7,705	4.2%
Wakulla	26,144	27,887	6.7%
Circuit 3 (19)	177,784	180,624	1.6%
Columbia	61,476	62,361	1.4%
Dixie	15,359	15,676	2.1%
Hamilton	14,389	14,355	-0.2%
Lafayette	7,586	8,202	8.1%
Madison	19,661	19,836	0.9%
Suwannee	38,264	38,626	0.9%
Taylor	21,049	21,568	2.5%
Circuit 4 (7)	1,083,739	1,115,973	3.0%
Clay	167,154	174,096	4.2%
Duval	850,218	875,224	2.9%
Nassau	66,367	66,653	0.4%

FLORIDA POPULATION*, Continued
by Circuit/County
as of January 2005 and January 2006

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2005)	Total Population (as of January 2006)	Percentage Change from 2005 to 2006
Circuit 5 (10)	905,149	952,166	5.2%
Citrus	131,092	135,121	3.1%
Hernando	147,670	154,458	4.6%
Lake	258,412	271,063	4.9%
Marion	299,332	312,941	4.5%
Sumter	68,643	78,583	14.5%
Circuit 6 (3)	1,345,108	1,369,482	1.8%
Pasco	396,959	418,024	5.3%
Pinellas	948,149	951,458	0.3%
Circuit 7 (11)	791,371	823,629	4.1%
Flagler	72,727	84,160	15.7%
Putnam	73,700	74,201	0.7%
St. Johns	153,808	162,878	5.9%
Volusia	491,136	502,390	2.3%
Circuit 8 (17)	361,063	366,788	1.6%
Alachua	239,577	244,031	1.9%
Baker	24,227	24,067	-0.7%
Bradford	28,027	28,387	1.3%
Gilchrist	16,273	16,507	1.4%
Levy	38,094	38,482	1.0%
Union	14,865	15,314	3.0%
Circuit 9 (4)	1,268,840	1,308,949	3.2%
Orange	1,035,143	1,066,085	3.0%
Osceola	233,697	242,864	3.9%

Trial Court System

FLORIDA POPULATION*, Continued
by Circuit/County
as of January 2005 and January 2006

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2005)	Total Population (as of January 2006)	Percentage Change from 2005 to 2006
Circuit 10 (14)	657,466	673,167	2.4%
Hardee	28,105	27,240	-3.1%
Highlands	93,223	94,567	1.4%
Polk	536,138	551,360	2.8%
Circuit 11 (1)	2,404,621	2,452,290	2.0%
Dade	2,404,621	2,452,290	2.0%
Circuit 12 (12)	698,373	717,530	2.7%
Desoto	34,520	32,140	-6.9%
Manatee	300,375	310,861	3.5%
Sarasota	363,478	374,529	3.0%
Circuit 13 (6)	1,126,151	1,149,939	2.1%
Hillsborough	1,126,151	1,149,939	2.1%
Circuit 14 (18)	280,949	288,021	2.5%
Bay	160,141	164,036	2.4%
Calhoun	13,677	14,139	3.4%
Gulf	16,282	16,671	2.4%
Holmes	19,071	19,265	1.0%
Jackson	49,076	50,290	2.5%
Washington	22,702	23,620	4.0%
Circuit 15 (5)	1,263,670	1,285,774	1.7%
Palm Beach	1,263,670	1,285,774	1.7%
Circuit 16 (20)	81,387	83,039	2.0%
Monroe	81,387	83,039	2.0%

FLORIDA POPULATION*, Continued
by Circuit/County
as of January 2005 and January 2006

Circuit/County (Circuit Ranking)	Total Population (as of January 2005)	Total Population (as of January 2006)	Percentage Change from 2005 to 2006
Circuit 17 (2)	1,747,258	1,759,040	0.7%
Broward	1,747,258	1,759,040	0.7%
Circuit 18 (9)	938,509	958,315	2.1%
Brevard	528,518	539,863	2.1%
Seminole	409,991	418,452	2.1%
Circuit 19 (15)	538,603	562,515	4.4%
Indian River	129,259	132,526	2.5%
Martin	139,643	143,520	2.8%
Okeechobee	38,395	37,770	-1.6%
St. Lucie	231,306	248,699	7.5%
Circuit 20 (8)	1,058,629	1,098,995	3.8%
Charlotte	159,707	153,831	-3.7%
Collier	315,541	327,197	3.7%
Glades	10,855	10,783	-0.7%
Hendry	38,755	39,088	0.9%
Lee	533,771	568,096	6.4%
State Total	17,788,023	18,220,572	2.4%

*January 2005 population figures were provided by the Office of Economic and Demographic Research of the Florida Legislature in March 2005. January 2006 population figures were provided by the Office of Economic and Demographic Research of the Florida Legislature in July 2006.

DESCRIPTION OF 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 measure of trial court activity in Florida. These data are not intended to measure the work of state attorneys or public defenders. Data for the SRS are 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 either manually or through the utilization of an automated program designed to detect anomalies. If anomalies are detected, the county is contacted to verify or correct the data. SRS data are 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 clerk of court offices. These audits are conducted to ensure compliance to the SRS reporting guidelines as specified in the *Florida Summary Reporting System Manual* (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 have 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 information in the permanent database are also utilized in the production of this *Statistical Reference Guide*.

As previously mentioned, the trial courts are composed of two levels and six different divisions. The circuit level includes criminal, civil, family court, and probate divisions and the county level consists of criminal and civil divisions. Within each division are several *categories* of cases. Moreover, within each of the *categories* are various *case types*. For instance, the Circuit Criminal division includes the following *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.

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