

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FY 2006-07

Florida's Population

Florida is the fourth largest state in the nation with a population approaching 19 million. Florida's population continues to expand at a steady rate and experienced a 2.1% increase from 2006 to 2007. Nineteen of the sixty-seven counties in Florida grew by 4% or greater over the last year. Growth was heavily concentrated in Northeast and Central Florida, with the most dramatic increases in population occurring in Sumter County, Franklin County, and Flagler County.

Florida's Trial Courts

Florida's trial court system is comprised of 20 circuit courts and 67 county courts. Currently there are 599 circuit judges and 322 county judges to handle cases flowing through the trial court system. The six divisions of court in which these cases are filed include circuit criminal, circuit civil, family court, probate, county criminal and county civil. Total statewide filings from all divisions for FY 2006-07 equaled 4,078,500 (918,676 in circuit court and 3,159,824 in county court). These totals represent a 7% increase in circuit court filings and a 3% increase in county court filings from FY 2005-06. The total number of cases disposed statewide for FY 2006-07 equaled 3,535,095.

**Statewide Filings Increased
by 4% During FY 2006-07**

Circuit Civil Filings: Mortgage Foreclosures

Historically, filings in the circuit civil division, have grown on average at a rate of 1% per year. However, this year, circuit civil filings grew by an astonishing 38%, representing an increase of 62,043 filings. The main contributing factor to this increase is the considerable rise in mortgage foreclosures. In February 2007, Florida was leading the nation in the number of foreclosures filed.* Real property/mortgage foreclosure filings statewide have nearly doubled from the previous fiscal year, with the most dramatic increases occurring in the southern regions of Florida. It is expected that the high number of foreclosure filings will continue and possibly increase over the next year.*

*Source: Realty Trac Inc.

Real Property/Mortgage Foreclosure Filings Year Comparison

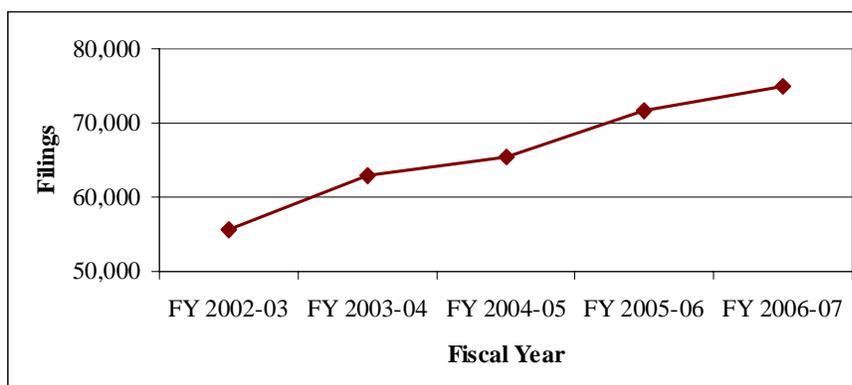
Location**	FY 2005-06	FY 2006-07	Percent Change
North Florida	9,949	14,006	40.8%
Central Florida	14,499	24,982	72.3%
Southwest Florida	15,975	31,944	100.0%
Southeast Florida	9,684	24,720	155.3%
South Florida	7,165	17,188	139.9%
State	57,272	112,840	97.0%

**North Florida - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 8th, and 14th Circuits
 Central Florida - 5th, 7th, 9th, and 18th Circuits
 Southwest Florida - 6th, 10th, 12th, 13th, and 20th Circuits
 Southeast Florida - 15th, 17th, and 19th Circuits
 South Florida - 11th and 16th Circuits

Circuit Criminal Filings: Five Year Perspective

The circuit criminal division has experienced significant growth over the last five years. Total filings have increased by 26%, from 182,893 in FY 2002-03 to 230,417 in FY 2006-07, representing an average growth of 6% per year. The highest number of filings in this division are associated with drug crimes. Filings of this type have increased considerably over the last five years and are the driving force behind the overall growth in the circuit criminal division. This trend is consistent with national statistics regarding the number of arrests for drug abuse violations. According to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports, Crime in the United States Annual, between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available) violations have increased by 22% for adults. The National Center for State Courts reported in *Examining the Work of State Courts, 2006* that the increase in felony caseloads appears correlated with the continuing sharp rise in arrests of adults for drug crimes. “Other” felony offenses, which include weapons charges, resisting arrest, contempt of court, etc, have more than doubled since FY 2002-03, thus providing another major contribution to overall growth.

**Circuit
Criminal Filings
Increased by
26% Over the
Last 5 Years**

Executive Summary**Drug Filings in Florida****Circuit Criminal Filings
Five Year Perspective**

Case Type	FY 2002-03	FY 2003-04	FY 2004-05	FY 2005-06	FY 2006-07	Percent Change FY 2002-03 to FY 2006-07
Capital Murder	469	427	420	398	464	-1.1%
Non Capital Murder	1,492	1,138	1,092	1,256	1,537	3.0%
Sexual Offenses	4,006	3,813	3,794	3,986	3,859	-3.7%
Robbery	5,917	5,467	5,015	5,333	6,721	13.6%
Other Crimes Against Persons	30,331	29,115	27,951	28,296	28,491	-6.1%
Burglary	18,165	18,399	17,550	18,800	21,521	18.5%
Theft, Forgery, Fraud	40,175	40,052	39,179	42,277	45,140	12.4%
Worthless Checks	4,977	5,872	5,500	4,776	3,831	-23.0%
Other Crimes Against Property	1,483	1,611	1,601	3,112	2,146	44.7%
Drugs	55,681	62,846	65,469	71,580	75,017	34.7%
Other	20,197	25,130	31,438	39,343	41,690	106.4%
State	182,893	193,870	199,009	219,157	230,417	26.0%

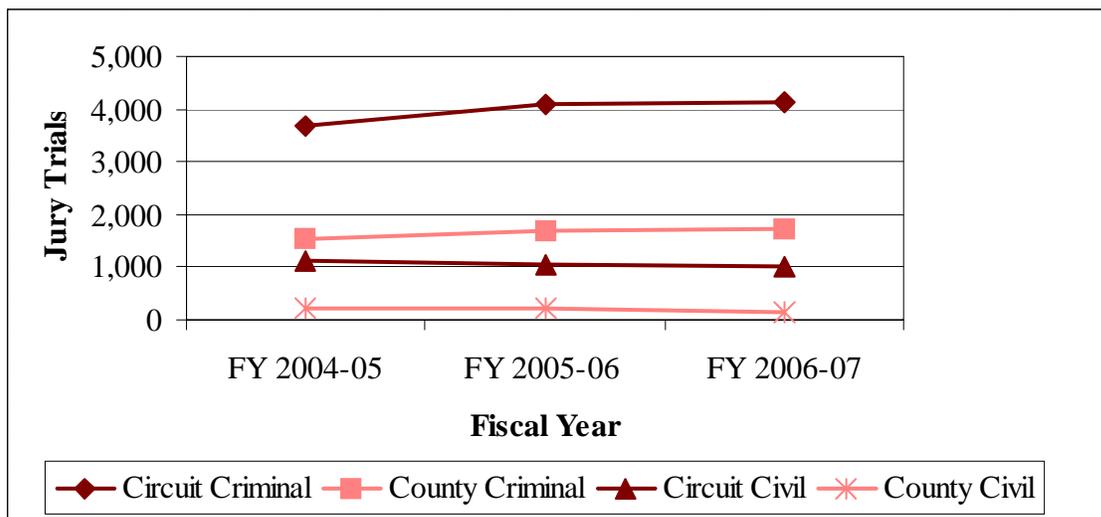
Jury Trials

National studies show that the rate of civil jury trials, the percentage of total cases disposed by jury trial, has steadily declined in recent years.** However, in Florida, jury trial rates for both the criminal and civil divisions have remained constant since FY 2004-05, with relatively small changes occurring annually, usually within +/- 0.1%.

** National Center for State Courts Civil Action, Vol.6 No.1, Summer 2007

The actual number of jury trials in the state have been on the rise in the criminal divisions over the last several years. Total criminal jury trials equal almost 6,000 statewide in FY 2006-07, with the largest number of trials conducted in circuit criminal, 4,140. Unlike the criminal divisions, jury trials in both the circuit and county civil divisions have been declining, with the most significant decrease seen in county civil from 212 trials in FY 2004-05 to 138 trials in FY 2006-07.

Cases Disposed by Jury Trial Three Year Comparison



Further Information

On-line versions of the *Fiscal Year 2000-01 through 2006-07 Statistical Reference Guides to Florida's Trial Courts*; the *Summary Reporting System Manual* and other detailed Summary Reporting System statistics may be accessed at www.flcourts.org.

For further information regarding judicial branch statistics or the Summary Reporting System, please contact:

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