

TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



CIRCUIT COURT COUNTY COURT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

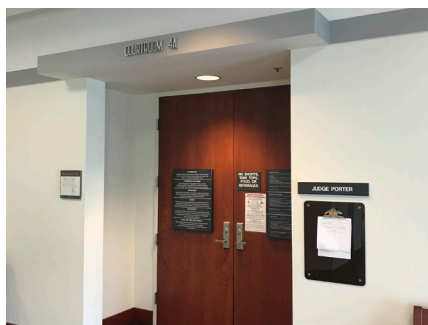
SERVING FIVE COUNTIES IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA: CHARLOTTE COUNTY,
COLLIER COUNTY, GLADES COUNTY, HENDRY COUNTY AND LEE COUNTY



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The Twentieth Judicial Circuit of Florida includes five counties in Southwest Florida:

- LEE COUNTY
- CHARLOTTE COUNTY
- COLLIER COUNTY
- HENDRY COUNTY
- GLADES COUNTY

Our Mission

The mission of the Administrative Office of the Courts is to provide the highest level of professional services with integrity, equality, and respect that supports the judiciary in their efforts to protect rights and liberties, ensure access to justice for all citizens, and provide for the peaceful resolution of disputes in a fair and timely manner.



20TH CIRCUIT COURT OVERVIEW

CIRCUIT COURT

Each county is served by the circuit court and the county court. The circuit court handled 43,045 cases through June 30, 2018 for the fiscal year. The circuit court is the court of general jurisdiction and has responsibility for probate matters (wills), civil actions in which the disputed amount exceeds \$15,000, and felony criminal cases which includes cases punishable by more than one year in state prison. Circuit court also hears cases in equity such as domestic relations (divorce, child custody, and injunctions for protection), juvenile proceedings and petitions for writs. The circuit court hears appeals from county court. Circuit judges are either elected or appointed and serve six year terms. Circuit judges are assigned throughout the Circuit as needed to handle the caseloads in the respective counties.

COUNTY COURT

County court is a limited jurisdiction court which hears misdemeanors (criminal offenses punishable by up to one year in county jail), violations of county and municipal ordinances, traffic matters, civil actions in which the amount in dispute does not exceed \$15,000 and small claims disputes (small claims court hears civil disputes in which the amount in dispute is \$5,000 or less). County court also hears all landlord and tenant proceedings relating to the right of possession. County judges are elected or appointed to six year terms and serve within the county of their election. County judges can be authorized under certain circumstances to handle circuit court cases. The county courts handled 92,923 cases across all five counties through June 30, 2018 for FY 2017-2018.



Our Vision

The Administrative Office of the Courts will provide professional, efficient, effective service to the Courts focusing on our core businesses:

Be fair, equitable, and conduct business with integrity.

Uphold the principles of judicial independence and accountability.

Be accessible, convenient, understandable and timely.

Be effective.

Be responsive and anticipate the needs of those we serve.



CORE MISSION AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

EXPEDITION AND TIMELINESS

THE TWENTIETH CIRCUIT WILL SEEK TO REDUCE UNNECESSARY DELAYS AND WILL SEEK TO RESOLVE ALL CASES IN A TIMELY WAY CONSISTENT WITH STATE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

THE TWENTIETH CIRCUIT WILL SEEK TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND THE AFFORDABILITY OF JUSTICE IN ALL CASE TYPES.

INDEPENDENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

THE TWENTIETH CIRCUIT WILL SEEK TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE AND TRANSPARENT MANAGEMENT OF ITS PUBLIC RESOURCES AND WILL SEEK TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY.

EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

THE TWENTIETH CIRCUIT WILL SEEK TO ENSURE INTEGRITY AND FAIRNESS IN INDIVIDUAL CASES AND WILL PROMOTE AND IMPLEMENT ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION, DIVERSION AND TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES.

Message from the Chief Judge



THE HONORABLE MICHAEL MCHUGH

I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report for the 20th Judicial Circuit. This report provides a snapshot of our programs, statistics, and other information about how our courts in Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades counties operate. I hope you find it interesting and informative.

In 2018, we said goodbye to four long-time members of our judiciary. Circuit Court Judges Frederick Hardt and John Duryea Jr. along with Collier County Judges Mike Carr and Jim McGarity. All four served both the 20th Circuit and the community with great honor. Unfortunately, at the time Florida Law required Judges to retire when they are at or near the age of 70. However in 2018, the mandatory retirement age for jurists increased to 75. It was one of three parts of Amendment 6 that was placed on the November general election ballot.

But with retirements, come elections and appointments. Five new Judges were welcomed to our Circuit spanning across three counties. Judge Darrell Hill became the newest Hendry County judge. Judge Carolyn Swift took the bench as a Circuit Judge in Lee County. Collier County added three new judges. They are County Judge Blake Adams, County Judge Tamara Lynne Nicola, and Circuit Judge John McGowan. You can read about each of their Investitures in the Highlights section. I want to thank everyone who assisted in ensuring a seamless transition.

Hurricane Irma was an event Southwest Florida will never forget. Although the category four storm hit Florida in 2017, Southwest Florida spent the beginning of 2018 recovering from the effects. To this day people are still trying to recover from losses. We soon began to see an uptick in filings related to Insurance claims and contract and indebtedness case filings. As of this report's publication, there has been a 201% increase in the number of Circuit-Civil pending cases that are attributable to the consequences of Hurricane Irma; the vast majority in Lee and Collier counties – representing more than 4,000 additional pending cases over average levels for the 20th. There has also been a 40% increase in the number of dispositions of these case types through FY2018-19. It is with a great sense of admiration to acknowledge the hard work and tireless effort that has been deployed by our Circuit Civil Judges. While a vast amount of Hurricane Irma related cases remain to be disposed, I know we can all work together and accomplish this feat.

The Administrative Office of the Courts continues efforts to provide efficient and effective services for our community. This includes our Problem-Solving Courts. In 2018, we saw our problem-solving courts expand with the addition of Drug Court in Hendry County. Currently, we have 13 participants enrolled in the program. In the Problem-Solving Courts section of this report, you'll find statistics related to our successes with Drug Court, Mental Health Court, and Veterans Court. I believe problem-solving courts are beneficial court programs helping citizens become productive members of society.

It has been a privilege to serve as the Chief Judge of the Twentieth Circuit. 2018 also marks the beginning of my third term as Chief Judge. It is an honor to serve with my judicial colleagues and our partners in justice.

Our strategic goals remain focused on improving our circuit's ability to meet our fundamental mission, most clearly outlined in the Florida Supreme Court's Long Range Plan for the Florida Judicial Branch for 2016-2021:

To be accessible, the Florida justice system will be convenient, understandable, timely, and affordable to everyone.

To be fair, the Florida justice system will respect the dignity of every person, regardless of race, class, gender or other characteristic, apply the law appropriately to the circumstances of individual cases, and include judges and court staff who reflect the community's diversity.

To be effective, the Florida justice system will uphold the law and apply rules and procedures consistently and in a timely manner, resolve cases with finality, and provide enforceable decisions.

To be responsive, the Florida justice system will anticipate and respond to the needs of all members of society, and provide a variety of dispute resolution methods.

To be accountable, the Florida justice system will use public resources efficiently and in a way that the public can understand.

THE JUDICIARY SERVING CHARLOTTE COUNTY

DONALD MASON
CIRCUIT JUDGE

CIRCUIT AND
COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
CHARLOTTE COUNTY



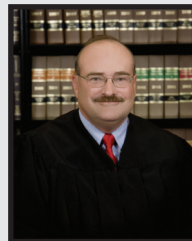
MARY EVANS
CIRCUIT JUDGE



LISA S. PORTER
CIRCUIT JUDGE



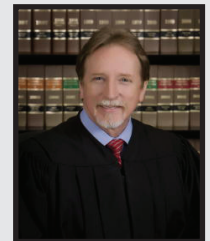
GEORGE RICHARDS
CIRCUIT JUDGE



PAUL ALESSANDRONI
COUNTY JUDGE



JOHN L. BURNS
COUNTY JUDGE



PETER B. BELL
COUNTY JUDGE

THE JUDICIARY SERVING COLLIER COUNTY



CHRISTINE GREIDER
CIRCUIT JUDGE

CIRCUIT
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
COLLIER COUNTY



ROB CROWN
COUNTY JUDGE

COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
COLLIER COUNTY



LAUREN L. BRODIE
CIRCUIT JUDGE



SCOTT CUPP
CIRCUIT JUDGE



JOSEPH FOSTER
CIRCUIT JUDGE



HUGH D. HAYES
CIRCUIT JUDGE



ELIZABETH KRIER
CIRCUIT JUDGE



RAMIRO MANALICH
CIRCUIT JUDGE



JOHN MCGOWAN
CIRCUIT JUDGE

THE JUDICIARY SERVING COLLIER COUNTY



BLAKE ADAMS
COUNTY JUDGE



MICHAEL BROWN
COUNTY JUDGE



JANEICE T. MARTIN
COUNTY JUDGE



TAMARA LYNNE NICOLA
COUNTY JUDGE

NOT PICTURED: COUNTY JUDGE MICHAEL J. PROVOST

THE JUDICIARY SERVING GLADES COUNTY

JACK LUNDY
COUNTY JUDGE
CIRCUIT AND
COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
GLADES COUNTY



JAMES SLOAN
CIRCUIT JUDGE

THE JUDICIARY SERVING HENDRY COUNTY

JAMES D. SLOAN
CIRCUIT JUDGE
CIRCUIT AND
COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
HENDRY COUNTY



DARRELL R. HILL
COUNTY JUDGE

THE JUDICIARY SERVING LEE COUNTY



MICHAEL T. MCHUGH
CHIEF JUDGE



G. KEITH CARY
CIRCUIT JUDGE

CIRCUIT AND
COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
LEE COUNTY



JOHN S. CARLIN
CIRCUIT JUDGE

FAMILY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
LEE COUNTY



ALANE LABODA
CIRCUIT JUDGE

CIVIL
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
LEE COUNTY



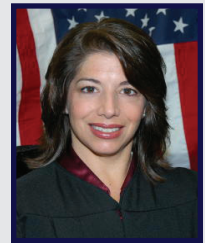
J. FRANK PORTER
CIRCUIT JUDGE

CRIMINAL
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
LEE COUNTY



JAMES ADAMS
COUNTY JUDGE

COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
LEE COUNTY



TARA PALUCK
COUNTY JUDGE

COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE
JUDGE FOR
LEE COUNTY



ELISABETH ADAMS
CIRCUIT JUDGE



ROBERT BRANNING
CIRCUIT JUDGE



JOSEPH C. FULLER
CIRCUIT JUDGE



GEOFFREY GENTILE
CIRCUIT JUDGE



AMY HAWTHORNE
CIRCUIT JUDGE



LEIGH F. HAYES
CIRCUIT JUDGE



BRUCE KYLE
CIRCUIT JUDGE



KEITH R. KYLE
CIRCUIT JUDGE



LEE A. SCHREIBER
CIRCUIT JUDGE



MARGARET STEINBECK
CIRCUIT JUDGE



CAROLYN SWIFT
CIRCUIT JUDGE



NICHOLAS THOMPSON
CIRCUIT JUDGE



JOSEPHINE GAGLIARDI
COUNTY JUDGE



MARIA E. GONZALEZ
COUNTY JUDGE



DEVIN S. GEORGE
COUNTY JUDGE



ZACHARY M. GILL
COUNTY JUDGE



ARCHIE HAYWARD
COUNTY JUDGE



H. ANDREW SWETT
COUNTY JUDGE

NOT PICTURED: CIRCUIT JUDGE JAMES SHENKO



20TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is organized based on functional responsibilities that are rooted in judicial administration and court operations areas. Although these responsibilities are carried out across the organization, certain roles and activities are department specific.

Court Administration Functions

- Caseflow Management
- Due Process Management
- Mediation/ADR Programs
- Diversion/Alternative Sanctions Programs
- Operations/Administration (Budget, HR, Technology, Court Facility Planning and Management)
- Pretrial Release
- Probation Services
- Public Guardian
- Court Security
- Staff Attorney Services



The AOC's Three Core Businesses

Adjudication

The 20th Judicial Circuit will fairly and timely resolve disputes brought before it

Due Process Services

The 20th Judicial Circuit will seek and secure adequate resources to support the needs to the court

Governance

The 20th Judicial Circuit will account for the prudent and efficient use of all allocated resources

Circuit Court Administration



SCOTT WILSKER,
TRIAL COURT
ADMINISTRATOR



LIZA FLECHA,
CHIEF DEPUTY COURT
ADMINISTRATOR



SUZANNE EDERR,
GENERAL COUNSEL



SARA MILES,
PUBLIC
INFORMATION
OFFICER



JON EMBURY,
CHARLOTTE
ADMINISTRATIVE
SERVICES MANAGER



CHUCK RICE,
COLLIER
ADMINISTRATIVE
SERVICES MANAGER



DAWN OLIVER
HENDRY & GLADES
ADMINISTRATIVE
SERVICES MANAGER



SHEILA JEROME,
LEE COUNTY
CIVIL/ FAMILY
DIVISION DIRECTOR



AMY KINSEY,
LEE COUNTY
CRIMINAL
DIVISION DIRECTOR



JEFF TORAIN,
DIRECTOR OF COURT
SECURITY



CRAIG MCLEAN,
INFORMATION
SERVICES DIRECTOR



LISA HARDER,
FINANCE AND
ACCOUNTING
MANAGER



ERIC FISHBECK,
OPERATIONS
CONSULTANT



BROOKE DEAN,
OPERATIONS
DIVISION
MANAGER



JULIO FERNANDEZ,
SUPERVISING COURT
INTERPRETER



SHARON SUHAR,
HUMAN RESOURCES
MANAGER

20TH CIRCUIT COURT LOCATIONS OVERVIEW



Lee Justice Center

East Entrance

1700 Monroe Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901

South Entrance

2075 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Charlotte Justice Center

350 E. Marion Avenue
Punta Gorda, FL 33950



Collier Government Complex

3315 Tamiami Trail East
Naples, FL 34112

Hendry Courthouse

25 E. Hickpochee Ave.
LaBelle, FL 33935



Glades Courthouse

Rt 27, 500 Avenue "J"
Moore Haven, FL 33471

COURT OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Court Connect American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Webpage is actively used by the circuit to record ADA requests for assistance. Through CourtConnect the public is able to submit electronic requests for assistance. The ADA line was the only access point in the past.

Staff attend South West Florida ADA Council monthly meetings, as well as, ADA training sponsored by OSCA.



There were a total of 49 ADA Requests for Assistance in Lee County in 2018.

Services Requested in Lee Co.	Total
C.A.R.T	3
HEARING DEVICE	16
SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER	29
MAGNIFIER	1
LUMBAR CHAIR	0

The Operations Division assists Court Technology by receiving and coordinating requests so that they may assist with the delivery, set-up, and take-down of equipment.

50

requests were received for audio-visual assistance.



The Administrative Office of the Courts started a Court Volunteer Program to provide court information at the Lee County Jusitce Center Court Information Desk. This coincided with the opening of the Justice Center Tower in June 2009. The desk operates with the assistance of volunteers. Since its inception, we have received over 300 applicants for our Court Volunteer Program. From that number, approximately **140** individuals have provided volunteer hours.

We currently have **20-25** active court volunteers on the roster to cover the Court Information desk.

6 volunteers have been with us since 2009.

Committed to Excellence

The Operations Division consists of Court Interpreter Services, Facilities Services, Senior Judge and Judicial Support Services, Judge Lynn Gerald Law Library, and Information Desks/Volunteers devoted to the unified service of the Court.



The Lee County Justice Center welcomed therapy dogs into the Courthouse in 2018. The program is offered in dependency court and is set to expand to criminal court. To make the dogs more recognizable, vests are provided to the Children’s Advocacy Center therapy teams coming to court to comfort children who may be called to testify.



20TH CIRCUIT COURT INTERPRETER SERVICES

Mission Statement

We are a team of professionally trained, certified court interpreters, and support personnel. We work in conjunction with each other, to carry out our common mission which is enabling the faithful and accurate interpretation of court proceedings, and in so doing, to facilitate the mission of the judicial branch, by placing those who use our services on equal footing within the court with those that speak the English language.

Circuit Wide Court Interpreter Services 2018

Type of Proceeding	Number of Events			Translation	
	Spanish	Haitian-Creole	Other	ASL	Pages
Circuit Criminal	3158	98	124	4	108
County Criminal	7671	260	132	21	104
Family Court (Dependency/CINS/FINS)	642	85	23	0	0
Family Court (Delinquency)	966	115	4	1	3
Baker/Marchman/Guardianship	45	11	2	0	0
Domestic Violence Injunction	360	33	20	1	10
General Magistrate/CSHO for Family Law - All Other Title IV-D	54	4	1	0	0
Other Case Types	354	16	1	19	0
TOTAL	13250	622	307	46	225

Court Interpreter Services

From our home base office in Lee County, we provide interpreting services to all five counties in our circuit. We have five full-time certified Spanish Interpreters who provide services circuit wide as needed. A total of 28 contract interpreters (individuals and/or agencies) also serve the courts in our circuit. The languages provided include Spanish, Haitian-Creole, American Sign Language and a variety of exotic languages and dialects.





LEE COUNTY CRIMINAL DIVISION OVERVIEW

Overview and Organization

The Lee County Criminal Division, including the Pretrial Services and County Probation Departments, provides case management support to the thirteen judges in the criminal division. Both departments have unique objectives but work together collaboratively under the direction of the Trial Court Administrator and the Criminal Division Director.

County Probation

The Lee County Probation Department was established in 1975. The mission is to promote public safety by enforcing court orders, supervising probationers and motivating positive behavioral change. The vision is to be a leader by enhancing working relationships with our criminal justice partners and utilizing evidence based practices and advancements in technology to proactively supervise, educate and redirect probationers to reduce recidivism. The deputy director oversees day-to-day operations for the department.

PROBATION STATS FOR FY 2017-18



5,411

total defendants
ordered on county
probation



27,225

hours of
community
service
completed



58%

success rate



\$2,617,348

collected from
probationers
through Clerk
of Court

Pretrial Services

The Lee County Pretrial Services Department was established in 1988. It is comprised of Intake and Investigation, Case Supervision and Case Management. The mission is to provide comprehensive case management services to the courts, from case inception through case closure, via professional staff committed to the highest standards of excellence. The vision is to be a leader within the court system by developing an empowered workforce that embodies integrity, excellence, and accountability delivering the highest quality of services. The deputy director oversees day-to-day operations for the department.

PRETRIAL SERVICES NUMBERS FOR FY 2017-18



3,252

defendants
placed on
pretrial
supervision



51

days was the
average length of
supervision



95%

supervised defendants
were not charged with
new offense during
pretrial stage

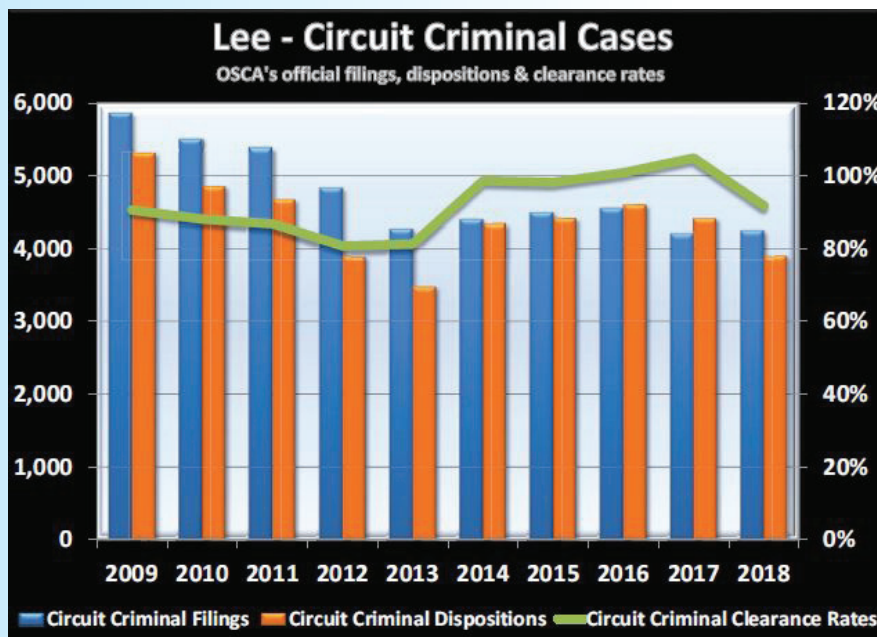


83%

success rate

LEE COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



The judiciary
presided over

16,025

defendants at First Appearance
hearings during the fiscal year.

6,926

defendants
bonded out
prior to First
Appearance via
the monetary
bail schedule.

**Information is from the Integrated Case Information System*

Case Management: Court Performance Outcome Measures

Time to Disposition - Time to disposition measures the percentage of cases disposed or otherwise resolved within established time frames and assesses the length of time it takes a court to process cases. In the 20th Judicial Circuit, time goals are established under Administrative Order 3.25. The goal is to resolve 90% of expedited cases within 180 days from the arrest date, standard cases within 240 days and complex cases within 360 days. According to the Lee Clerk of Court's Odyssey System, Lee County met 90% of expedited cases, 94% of standard cases and 93% of complex cases for time goals. Early Resolution Court pled or disposed of 1,694 cases.

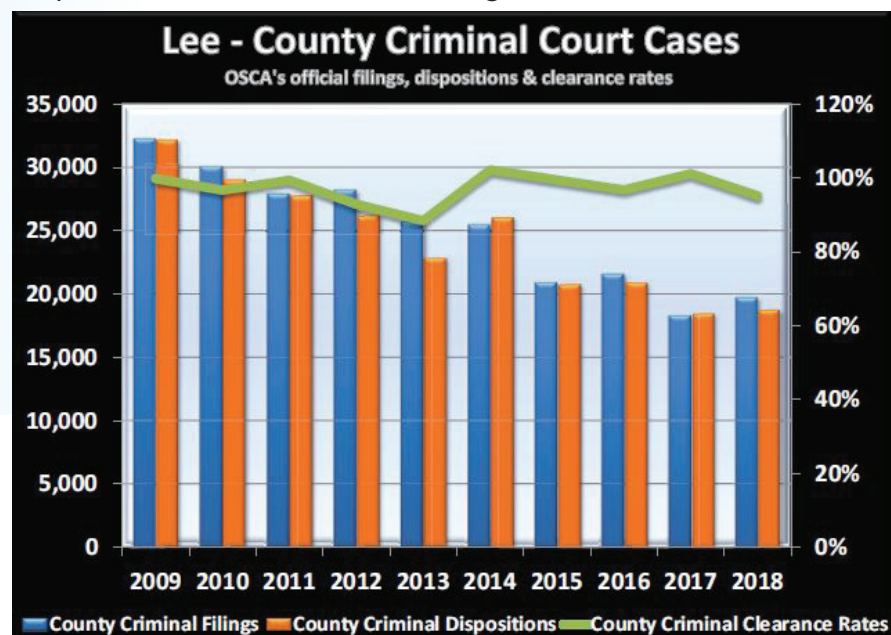
Case Clearance - Clearance rates are the number of outgoing cases as a percentage of the number of incoming cases. A total of 6,492 cases were opened and 5,472 closed, resulting in an 85% clearance rate.

Trial date certainty was

43%



The number of times cases disposed by trial are scheduled for trial. The ability of courts to hold trials when scheduled to be heard is closely associated with timely disposition.



LEE COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW

Alternative Dispute Resolution

The ADR program is comprised of four support staff with one assigned as the program manager for the small claims volunteer program. The other three staff review all cases referred to ADR, prepare the orders scheduling and assign the mediator or arbitrator from the list maintained and approved by the court.

IN 2018...

1,487

County
Small Claims
mediations held

44

County Civil
mediations held

1,546

Family Court
mediations held

398

Dependency
mediations held

Civil Case Management

2018 Civil Case Management Conference

2,354

CMC's set

346

CMC's held

2018 Residential Foreclosure

1,169

cases filed

1,061

disposed

Civil Case Management is comprised of five case managers for the five Civil court judges and one program assistant. The Civil Case Managers obtain a list of cases (non residential foreclosure) filed each month and set up alerts for 120 days from date of filing to check for service and 150 days to check for Agreed Case Management Plan's (ACMP) that have been submitted. If the ACMP was not submitted, case managers set a Case Management Conference (CMC) based on the time frames contained in the plan and an alert date to determine compliance with the plan. If the parties have not submitted a plan approved by the court, then at the CMC the case manager meets with the parties/attorneys to assist them.

As for the Residential foreclosure cases, the Case Managers obtain a list of all cases filed each month and send out a case plan, monitor the cases, set motions for hearings (if not scheduled by the parties within 30 days of filing), schedule Judicial CMC's, trials, and prepare orders for judges.

Teen Court and Juvenile Arbitration

There was a decrease in Juvenile Arbitration and Teen Court referrals from the State Attorney's Office. In 2018, the program had 263 referrals combined (237 for Juvenile Arbitration and 26 for Teen Court), whereas in 2017, the program recieved 301 referrals. The decrease in referrals can be attributed to the increase in Civil Citations. Local law enforcement are expected to use the Civil Citation Program as much as possible; however these cases are referred to Teen Court and Juvenile Arbitration if the teens are unsuccessful in the Citation Program.

3,985

total community
service hours for
2018

In 2018, there
were

29

sessions of
Teen Court.

2,622

total volunteer
hours for 2018



97%

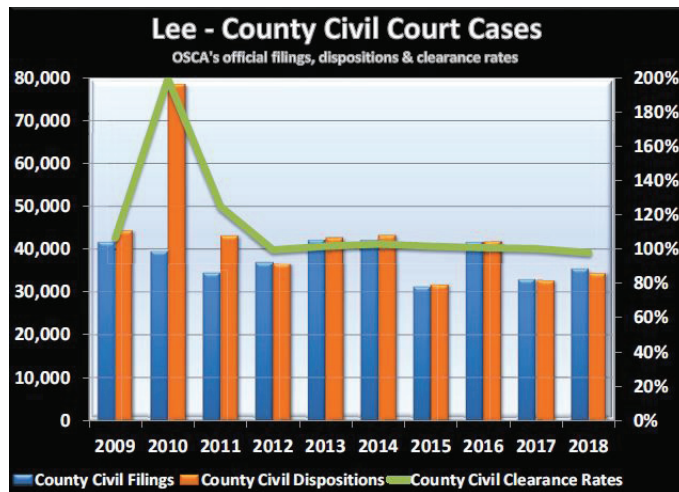
success rate of
the programs

18%

referred back
to the State
Attorney

LEE COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



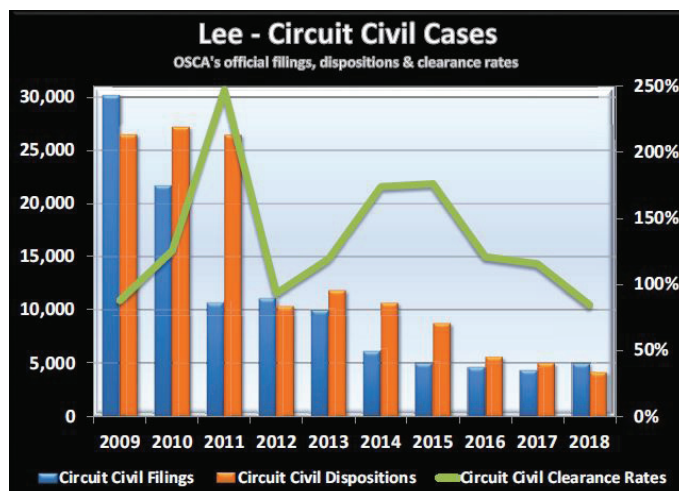
The overall clearance rate for all County Civil cases was approximately 98% through June 30, 2018.

(This includes small claims, civil, other civil, evictions, and civil traffic infractions.)

Total County Civil Filings: 35,484

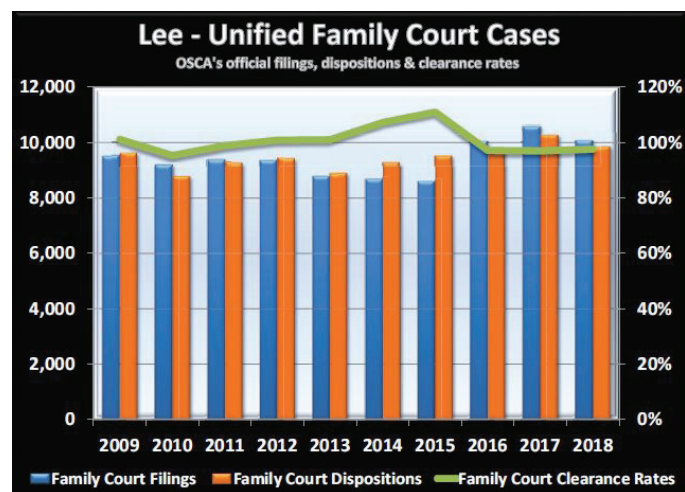
Total County Civil Dispositions: 34,753

In July 2016, Unified Family Court was implemented in the Domestic Violence division. The new procedures have impacted litigant process time for two reasons; intake must call judicial assistants to get dates on the judge's calendar and extra time is needed to review the related juvenile cases.



The overall clearance rate for all Circuit Civil cases, with the exception of family cases, was approximately 84% through June 30, 2018.

Total Circuit Civil Filings: 4,954
Total Circuit Civil Dispositions: 4,180



4,313 petitions for Domestic Violence filed in 2018

The DV clearance rate for 2018 was **99%**

5,938 total new cases filings in Family Court (does not include reopened or DOR cases)

The Family Law Division

maintained a

99%



Clearance rate for the year.

CHARLOTTE COUNTY CRIMINAL DIVISION OVERVIEW

Committed To Excellence

The Charlotte County Criminal Division consists of 16 employees devoted to the unified service of the Court as it pertains to enforcing the Court's orders while delivering fair and consistent treatment to defendants and a noticeable and positive contribution to the Charlotte County area.



Pretrial Services

The Pretrial Services Department is comprised of an Intake and Investigation Unit which works at the Charlotte County Jail, a Criminal Circuit Case Management Unit, a Diversion Unit, a Court Presenter/Pretrial Release Unit, a Specialty Court Coordinator and a Secretary. Each unit has specific core functions and work collaboratively to support the department's mission.

Pretrial Services Vision

We strive to exemplify the highest ideals and standards in community corrections, which include the pursuit of excellence through a supportive network that encourages empowerment, motivation, leadership and individuality.

PRETRIAL SERVICES NUMBERS FY 2017-18



92%

of defendants did not commit a new law violation while on supervision



6,664

defendants screened for first appearance.



99%

appearance rate

County Probation

The Charlotte County Probation Department is comprised of Probation Officers and Clerical Support Staff. The Probation Officers are encouraged to follow a rehabilitative supervision model while monitoring their assigned cases. The Clerical Staff plays a pivotal role in the department's ongoing progression. This process begins at intake; as the defendant enters the department for the first time. The tone is set at this juncture through an exchange of information that culminates in the preparation of the probation file. The information contained therein is constantly updated by the Probation Officer as the defendant completes their Court-ordered conditions.

Probation's Mission

Our mission is to ensure that the Orders of the Court are efficiently enforced, the community is protected, and that justice is fairly administered in compliance with Florida Statutes, rules and regulations.

FY 2017-18 PROBATION STATS



66%

success rate

1,039



total number of new probation cases



\$274,547.48

collected from the cost of supervision in a calendar year

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES

2018 Statistics

2,604

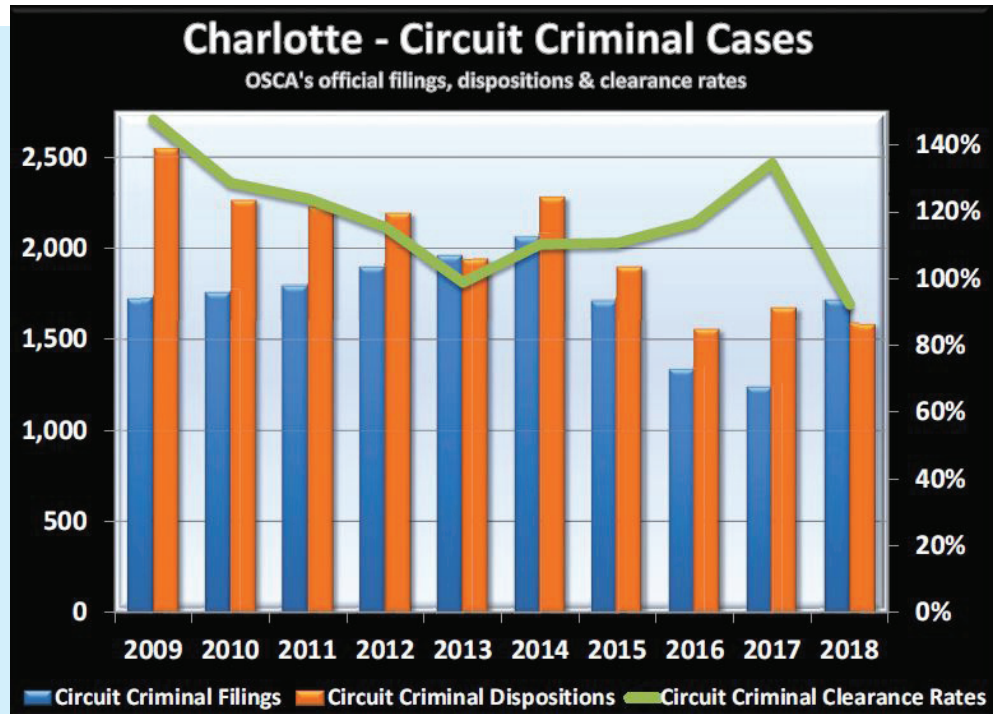
Criminal Felony Cases filed in Charlotte County in 2018

38%

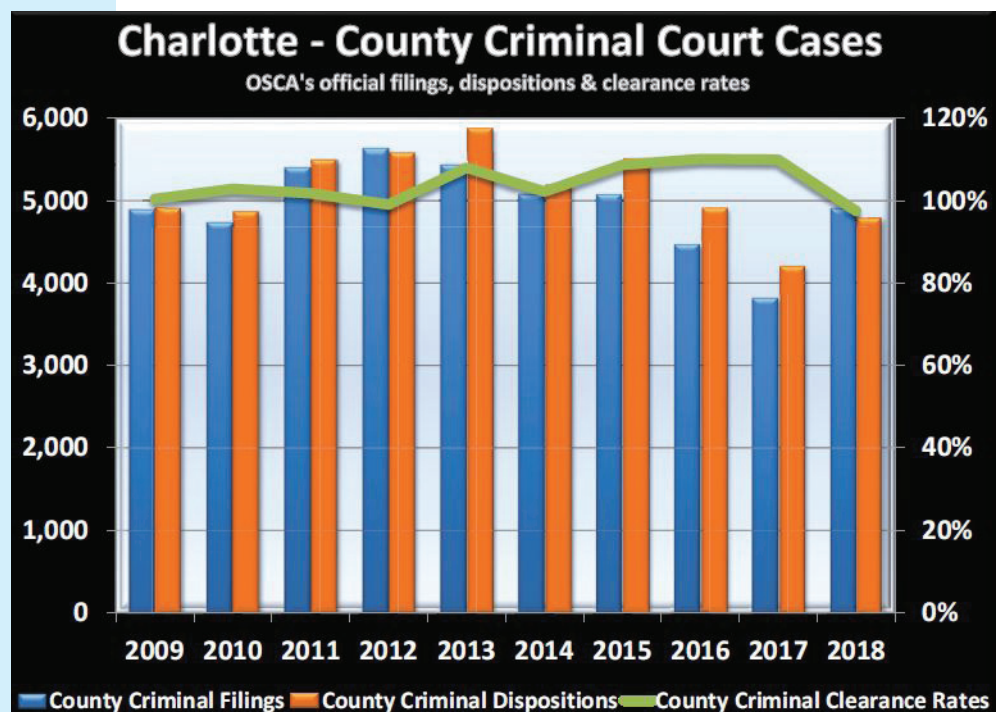
Continuance rate for cases at case management conferences in 2018

30%

Continuance rate for cases at pretrial conferences in 2018



Pretrial Case Managers monitor felony criminal cases at each stage as they move through the judicial system in an effort to ensure a timely disposition of cases. Case events are tracked and caseload status updates are provided to the court. These updates include pending caseload data, age of pending caseloads and identified delayed cases. Key goals are to ensure meaningful court events, increase dispositions against filings and improve early disposition rates. Pretrial officers attend all felony arraignments, case management conferences, pretrial conferences and trial calls to assist with the scheduling of cases, documentation of court events and tracking of continuances.



CHARLOTTE COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW

The Charlotte County Civil/Family division consists of the Civil Division Director, 11 Full time employees dedicated to assisting the Judiciary with moving cases through the system within the time periods set through unified courts.

Alternative Dispute Resolution & Court Mediation Programs

IN 2018...


457
total court
ordered
mediations




227
cases resolved
(including partial
and temporary
agreements)



74
Citizens
Dispute
inquiries



652
Small
Claims
Pretrials
mediated



Located in the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Court Mediation Program coordinates the Citizens Dispute Settlement Program and Court Ordered Mediation services to associated litigants utilizing Certified Volunteer and Professional Mediators. Professional mediators have signed a Vendor Contract with the State of Florida and are paid at the State mandated determined rate. Although not all cases can be completely resolved through mediation, the benefit of mediation before a trial is that many of the issues HAVE BEEN resolved, cutting down on Court's time needed to determine the outcome of the unresolved issues.

Court Mediation Programs:

Citizens Dispute Settlement Program

Small Claims Mediation

Family Mediation Program

Circuit and County Court Mediation

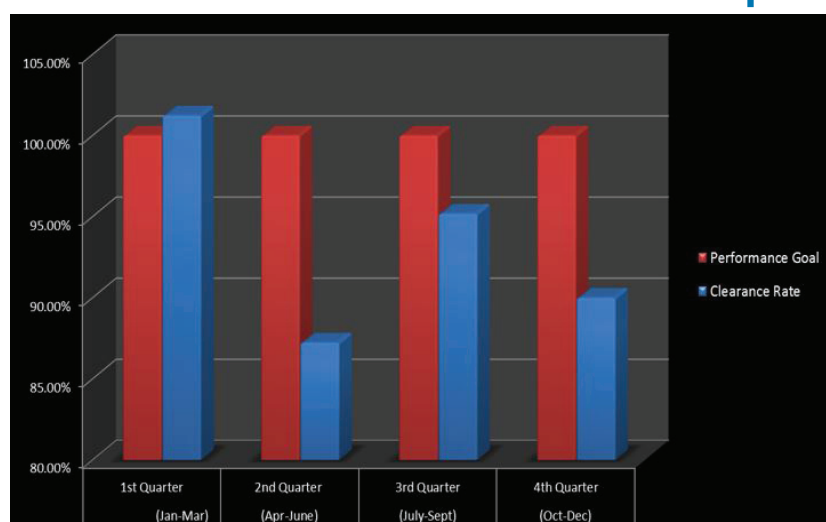
Family Case Management

In Charlotte County, the Family Law Case Management Team provides both Self-Help services and case management for the court. The role of the case manager is to ensure that cases move quickly and efficiently to a final disposition while providing pro se litigants with the resources they need to proceed in their cases. The case managers work closely with the Family Division Judge and Magistrate.

In 2018, 667 Family Law cases identified in the Charlotte County Civil/Family Case Management Database were opened and 622 cases in the same year were disposed. This generated a clearance rate of 93% of the cases that were managed by the Family Law Case Managers in 2018 assigned to Judge Mary Evans.

Family Case Management

2018 Clearance Report



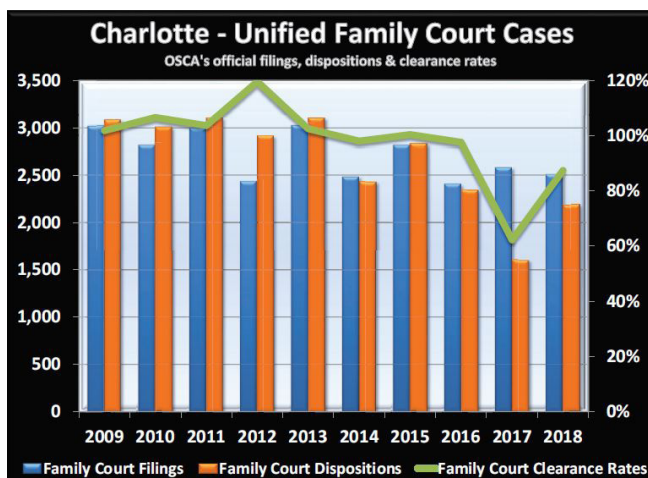
CHARLOTTE COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES

The overall clearance rate for all Circuit Civil cases, with the exception of family cases, was approximately 93% through June 30, 2018.

Total Circuit Civil Filings: 1,073

Total Circuit Civil Dispositions: 1,000

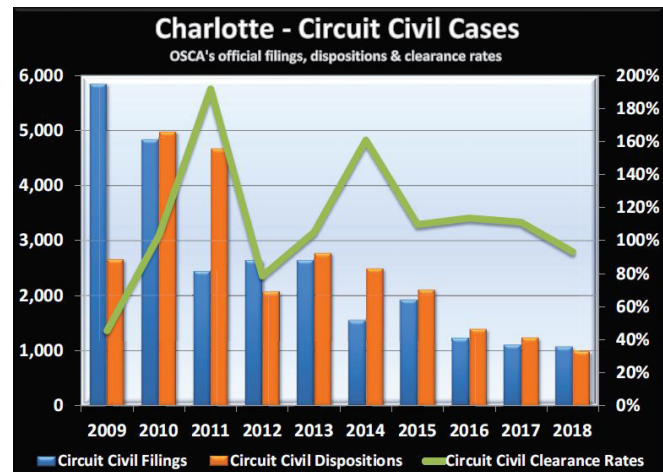


Total County Civil Filings: 4,313

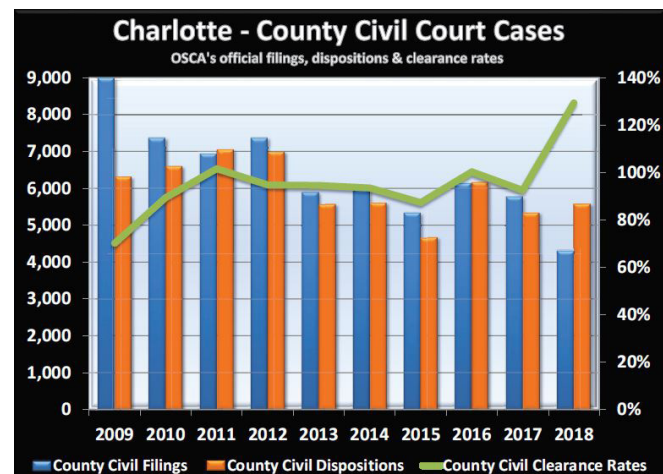
Total County Civil Dispositions: 5,580

The overall clearance rate for all County Civil cases was approximately 129.4%.

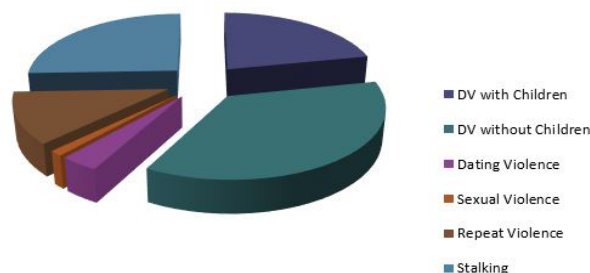
(This includes small claims, civil, other civil, evictions, and civil traffic infractions.)



The OSCA's official, audited caseload report for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2018 reveal that Charlotte County experienced an incline in circuit-court (up 7.1%), while declining in county-court (down 3.8%). The county experienced a significant divisional improvement in the unified-family court (up 36.4%). Across the counties, the highest year-to-year improvement was achieved in Charlotte County's unified-family court (up 40.4%) followed by Charlotte's county-civil division (up 39.8%).



CHARLOTTE COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FILINGS 2018



In 2018, there were 866 Domestic Violence Petitions filed, this is a decrease from 1000 filed in 2017. All but Repeat Violence (which stayed the same) decreased.

COLLIER COUNTY CRIMINAL DIVISION OVERVIEW

County Probation

The mission of the Collier County Probation Department is protecting the community by intervening in the lives of the offenders, holding them accountable and serving as a catalyst for positive change. Believing in the inherent dignity of all human beings, we respect one another, our correctional clients, others whom we serve and the public. We act in collaboration with the community and other justice partners. We provide services to the courts, give victims a voice in the justice system and help strengthen families.

IN 2018...



818

violation of probation affidavits were submitted to the Court for review

71%

of defendants completed their conditions



995

offenders performed community service hours

\$859,546.68

TOTAL AMOUNT COLLECTED BY PROBATION DEPARTMENT IN 2018.

THIS FIGURE REPRESENTS THE COMBINED FEES COLLECTED BY THE COUNTY PROBATION AND DEFERRED PROSECUTION PROGRAMS.



Deferred Prosecution

The Probation Department serves as Administrator for the State Attorney's Deferred Prosecution Program; otherwise known as Diversion. The program is generally made available to first time offenders and, in most cases, takes three months for the participant to complete. When the participant completes the program successfully, the State Attorney's Office does not file the original charge with the Clerk of Court. Should the participant fail to complete their requirements; the case is brought before the Court and a Judge determines the outcome.

The deferred prosecution program averaged

221

participants a month

73%

compliance rate in deferred prosecution

Felony Case Management

Differentiated Case Management (DCM) was instituted in Collier County on July 1, 2014 to address the backlog of felony criminal cases by encouraging meaningful court dates for all cases and goal date compliance as determined through the DCM system. Cases are split into three tracks based on projected disposition date.

During the 2018 calendar year, a review of track goal compliance for closed cases within the division revealed...

Expedited

458

cases resolved within the 180 day time goal out of 622 cases

Standard

390

resolved within the 240 day time goal out of 718 cases

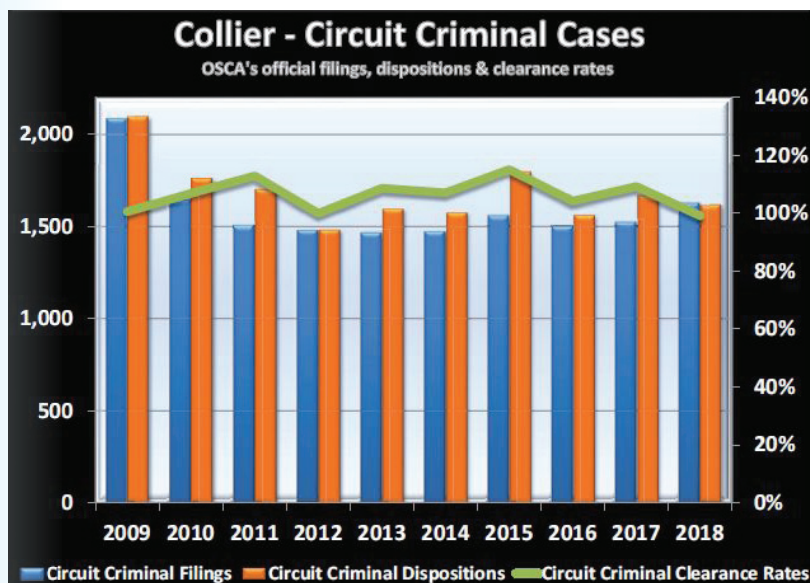
Complex

46

cases resolved within the 360 day time goal out of 141 cases

COLLIER COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



A review of the Felony Criminal Division pending cases as of December 31, 2018, reflects a total number of 1000 pending cases. The age of case breakdown is as follows: 560 (56%) cases have been pending for less than 180 days, 234 (23%) cases have been pending between 181-365 days, 206 (21%) cases have been pending over 365 days. This report does not specify differentiation by track and only identifies cases by age of case.

Pending Divisional Cases as of 12-31-18

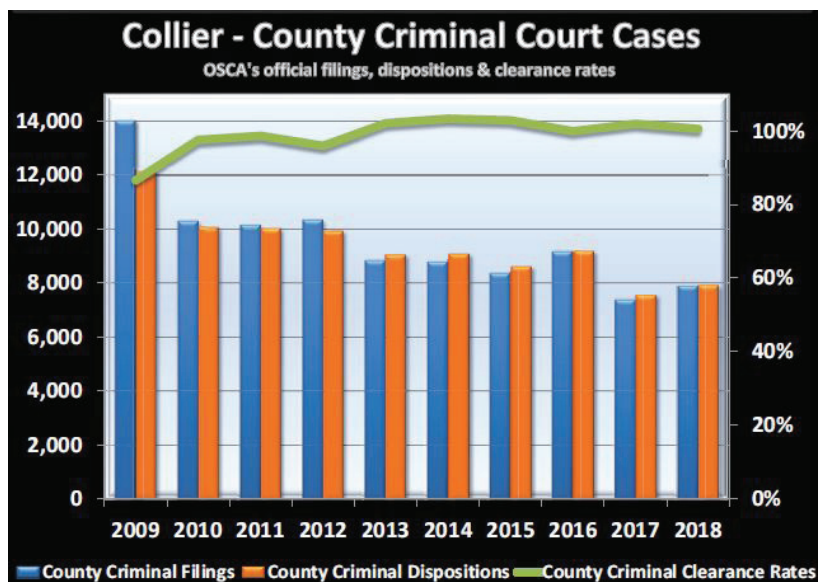


Calendar Year 2018

2,431
cases were
filed

2,350
cases were
disposed

97%
combined
clearance rate



COLLIER COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW

Unifed Family Court

Unifed Family Court includes Domestic Relations, Family Law Cases, Names Changes, Adoptions, Domestic Violence Cases, Dependency Cases and Delinquency Cases.

One Family, One Judge

506 2018 JUDICIAL CASE
MANAGEMENT
CONFERENCES

2,975 2018 FAMILY
CASE FILINGS

Court Mediation Programs

3,057
number of cases
referred/ordered
to participate in
mediation in 2018

739 Small Claims
mediations were
held in 2018

70%
of the mediations
facilitated reached
settlement

226 mediations were
facilitated in Family
law matters resulting in

139 settlement
agreements

Civil Case Management

The Civil Case Manager handles foreclosure and civil cases for three Circuit Judges (with some assistance of the Division Director). As of January 2018, the three circuit judges were Judge Brodie, Hayes and Shenko. As of July 1, 2018 Judge Shenko accepted an assignment to the Civil Division in Lee County and Judge Hardt acquired the Collier Civil Docket. The major accomplishment of 2018 was to be in compliance with the Civil Case Management Administrative Order 1.13, requiring a case plan within 150 days of the filing of the complaint. Due to the increase in case filings in 2018, the Civil Case Manager diligently worked to accomplish by increasing dockets per month per Judge. The creation of a shared email for the submission of the Agreed Plan in August 2018 greatly assisted with the accuracy and expedited the procedure to process to the Judges.

Overview and Organization

The Family and Civil Division Team consists of the following: three Unified Family Case Managers (one Dependency Case Manager; one Family Judicial Case Manager and one Family Magistrate Case Manager); one Civil Case Manager; one Mediator; three Magistrates and three Magistrate Administrative Assistants that all fall under the supervision of the Civil & Family Division Director except for the Magistrates (under the supervision of the Administrative Services Manager). The caseload the division supports is three Unified Family Circuit Judges and three Civil Circuit Judges.

Court Mediation Programs:

Small Claims Mediation

Family Mediation Program

Dependency Mediation

County Civil Mediation

The Court mediation program in Collier County continues to provide effective alternative dispute resolution to Collier County residents with one full-time Mediation Coordinator. The program empowers parties to seek resolution of their disputes without judicial intervention. Cases are referred to the Court- program by the Judiciary or by agreement of the parties to participate in mediation.



277

cases were dismissed or
settled prior to a CMC
in 2018

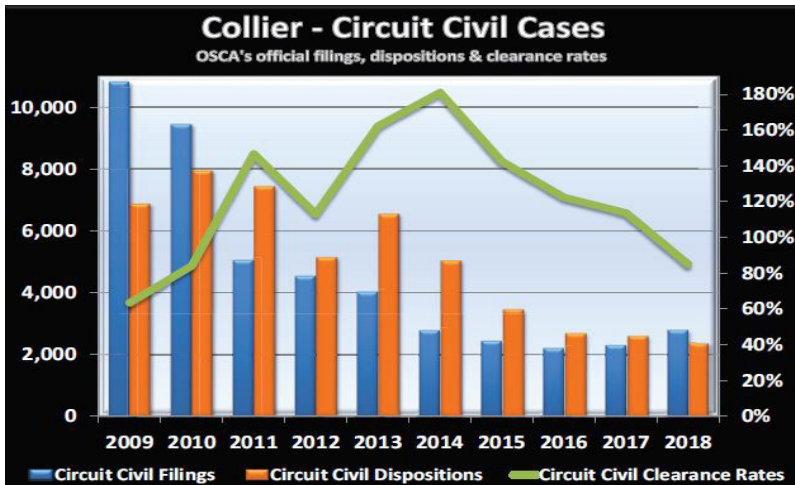


912

case management
conferences were set in
2018

COLLIER COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



The overall clearance rate for all Circuit Civil cases, with the exception of family cases, was approximately 85% through June 30, 2018.

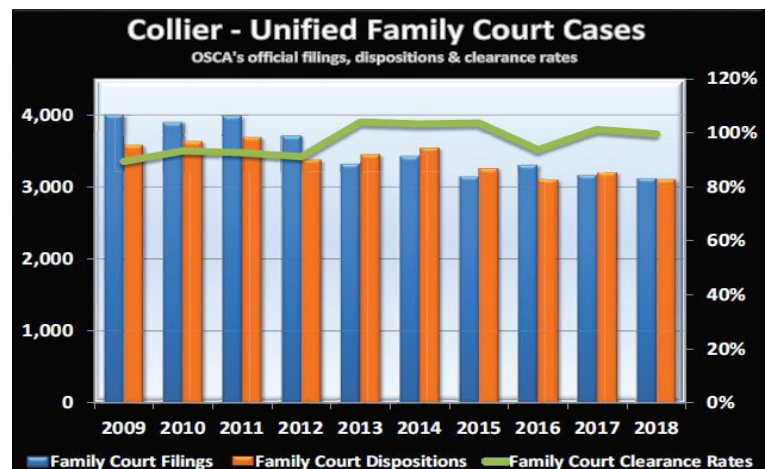
Total Circuit Civil Filings: 2,793

Total Circuit Civil Dispositions: 2,375

(This includes Prof. Malpractice & Prod. Liability, Auto & Other Negligence, Contracts & Real Property, and Other cases.)

Overall the Civil and Family Division had a successful as well as a challenging year in 2018. The Family (DR) caseload had an overall clearance rate of 104% and the Civil Division clearance rate 70%. The dramatic increase of 75% in the 2018 Civil caseload filings was due to the impact of Hurricane Irma (September 2017) that had a tremendous effect in Collier county.

Total Family Case Filings: 2,975

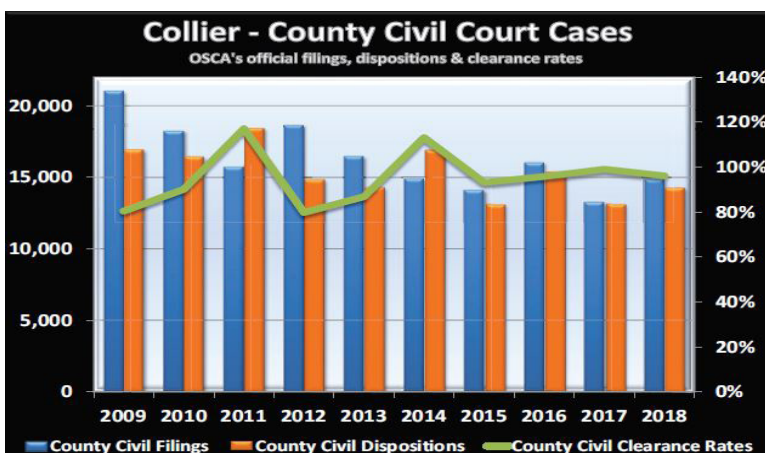


The overall clearance rate for all County Civil cases, with the exception of family cases, was approximately 96% through June 30, 2018.

(This includes small claims, civil, other civil, evictions, and civil traffic infractions.)

Total County Civil Filings: 14,850

Total County Civil Dispositions: 14,273



HENDRY COUNTY CRIMINAL DIVISION OVERVIEW

Felony Case Management

Hendry County Circuit Criminal Court utilizes differentiated Case Management methods to monitor and track all felony cases. The Criminal Case Manager maintains detailed case notes regarding all on-going discovery issues and assists in identifying cases that could be deferred into early intervention programs. Felony cases are managed based on time goals based on case complexity. The DCM Model of case management ensures early disposition in appropriate cases and allows for adequate time for trial preparation in the more complex cases,

IN 2018...

393

new cases ordered
to comply with
conditions of
supervision

66%

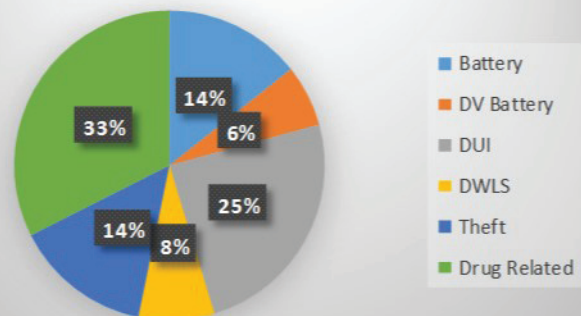
completed
their probation
successfully

Probation Department

The Hendry County Probation Department provides services to offenders adjudicated of misdemeanors who are court ordered to comply with conditions of probation. The Hendry County Probation Department has two locations, one office is in LaBelle and the other is in Clewiston. Due to the vast land area within Hendry County, probationers are supervised depending on where they reside. Currently, the office is comprised of two Probation Officers and a Secretary for support. One of the officers is designated as the team lead and oversees the day to day operations of the department. The Hendry County Probation Department has one Spanish-English bilingual officer. The language line was also implemented in 2018 to provide language interpretation services.

Out of the **113**
participants that accepted
and entered the diversion
program, **107** successfully
completed their court ordered
sanctions and were not returned to
the court for formal prosecution.

New Referral Case Types

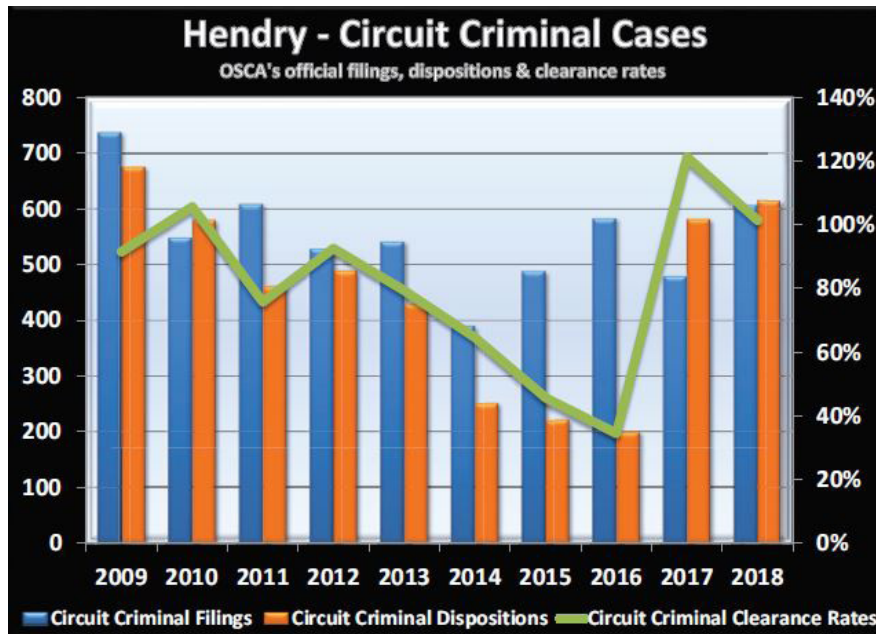


Misdemeanor Pretrial Diversion

The Misdemeanor Pretrial Diversion Program is a voluntary deferred prosecution option that allows first time offenders charged with misdemeanors to complete conditions and if successfully completed, these cases are not prosecuted further. This cooperative effort between the State's Attorney's Office and Hendry County Probation helps to expedite cases through the judicial system while holding defendants accountable for their actions.

HENDRY COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



The Hendry County Circuit Criminal filings have increased in 2018 by 2.3% from the previous year. However, they are still 30% lower than the amount of cases filed in 2012. A total of 986 felony cases were brought to a disposition in 2018 creating a clearance rate of 99%.

Total Circuit Criminal Filings: 607

Total Circuit Criminal Dispositions: 615

(This includes Capital Murder, Violent Crimes, Against Persons, Against Property, and Drug Crimes)

Calendar Year 2018 Filings

853
Criminal
Traffic

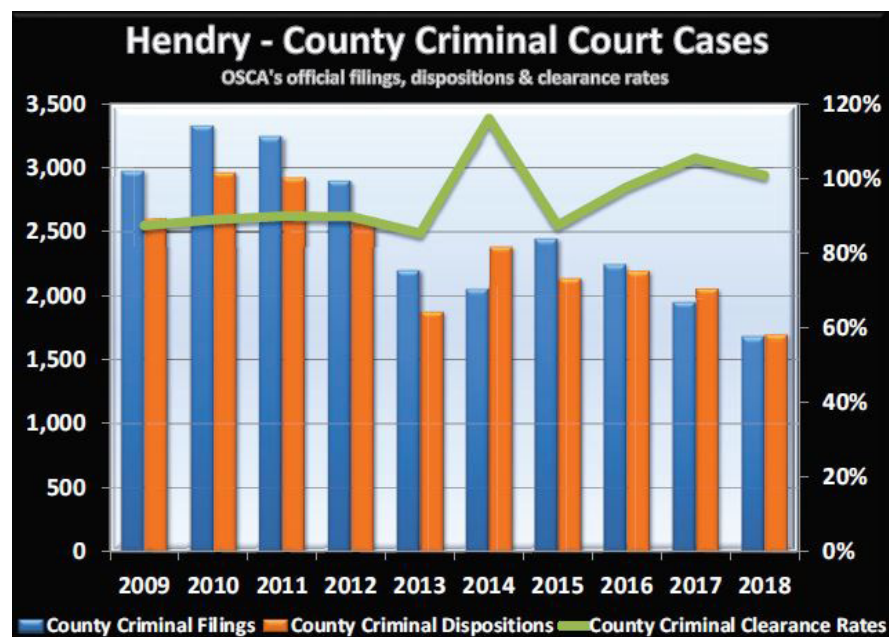
4,038
Civil
Traffic

921
Misdemeanor

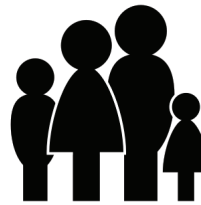
986
Felony

Hendry County misdemeanor filings have increased in 2018 by 7.1%. 1113 misdemeanor cases were brought to disposition in 2018 creating clearance rate of 121%. 1,074 misdemeanor cases were disposed of by plea and 14 cases were presented to a jury. Criminal traffic case filings increased by 1.9% since 2017, however filings are down 23% since 2016.

The Misdemeanor Pretrial Diversion Program had a 72% successful completion rate for 2018.



HENDRY COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW



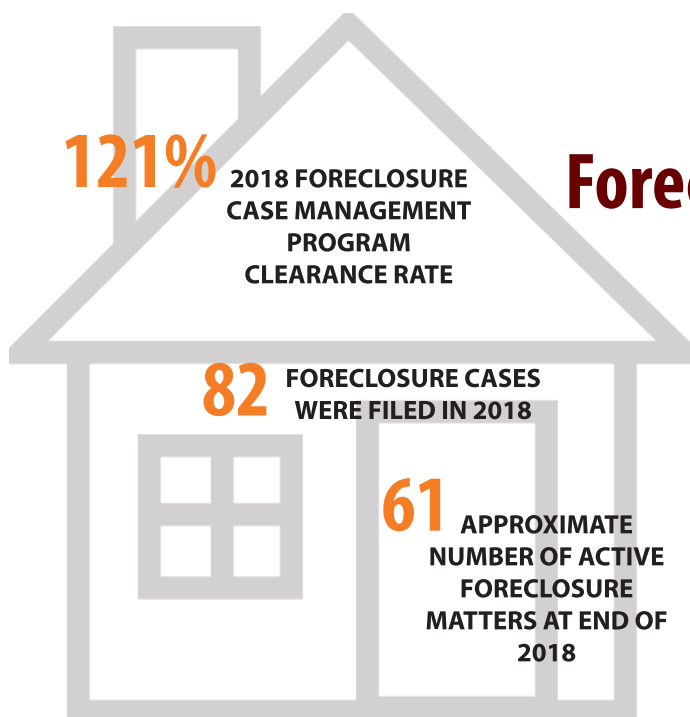
The Family Court Program Magistrate conducted **560** court hearings and assisted in closing **344** in 2018.

Family Court Program

The Family Court Program assists the Hendry Circuit Court Judge by case managing and hearing family law cases utilizing a Magistrate. Currently the Family Court Program is case managing and active caseload of approximately 168 cases. This number does not include Department of Revenue Child Support Cases but does include re-opened cases for modifications and motions.

99.4% 
clearance rate in 2018.

342
Domestic Relations
cases were filed
not including child
support cases in
2018.



Foreclosure Case Management

The Hendry County Foreclosure Case Management Program diligently works to reduce the number of pending foreclosure cases, with a main focus on disposing cases 18 months and older. These cases are heard by a Senior Judge every other month.

The Senior Judge time allocated to the Hendry County Court is utilized to hear and manage foreclosure cases and the dependency docket. These hours are also utilized to case manage circuit civil cases and felony pleas to reduced the number of pending cases.

County Civil Mediation Program

In 2015, the Hendry County Court began offering a dispute resolution option for County Civil and Small Claims cases. The Mediation Program affords all parties the opportunity to reach an agreement without a trial. The Hendry Small Claims Mediation Program currently has two Florida Supreme Court Certified Volunteer County Court Mediators that assist in resolving disputes free of charge.

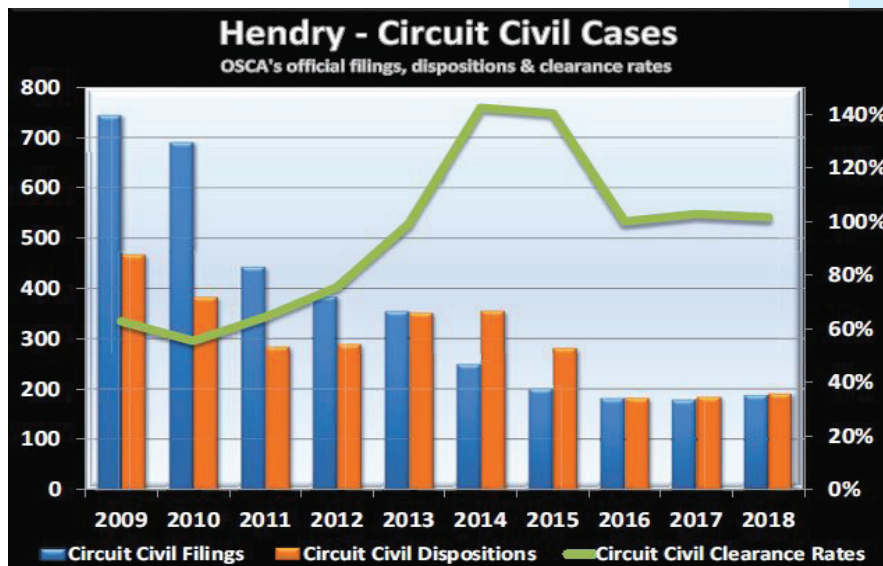
351
SMALL CLAIMS
CASES WERE
FILED IN 2018

19
mediation was
provided

8
resolved prior
to trial

HENDRY COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



2018 Statistics

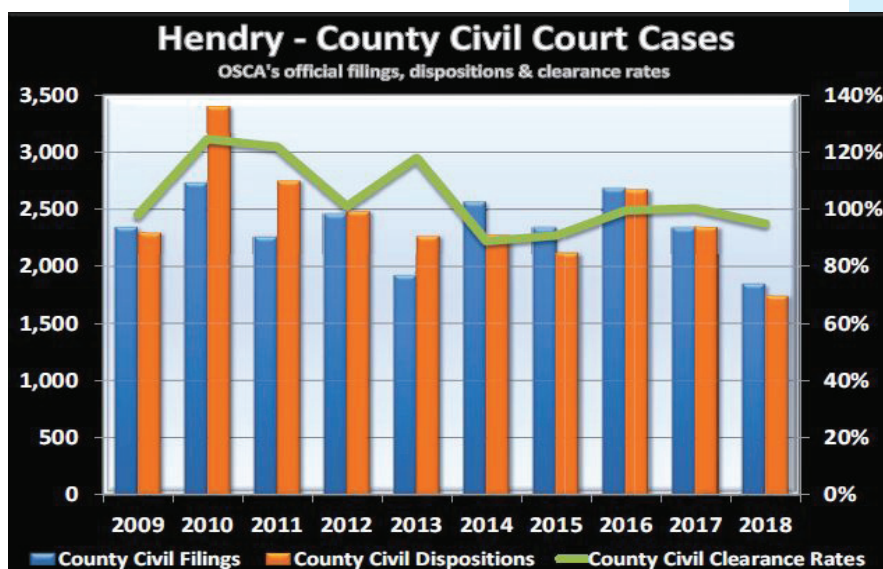
188

Circuit Civil cases filed through June 2018 in Hendry County

102%

Circuit Civil case clearance rate through June 2018 in Hendry County

The Hendry County and Circuit Courts Civil Division processed approximately 2,159 cases in 2018. Family Law filings make up an estimated 46% of the filings in the Civil Division at 987 filings to include child support and reopened cases for contempt and enforcement. Civil division's caseloads all experienced a filing increase in 2018 as depicted below. Overall, the Circuit Civil caseload increased 26% since the previous year. Dispositions were reached in 218 circuit civil cases creating a clearance rate of 90%. County civil also demonstrated an increase in filings at approximately 19%. Small Claims filings increased by 44%. Clearance rates for both County Civil and Small Claims were similar at approximately 83%.



191

County Civil cases disposed of through June 2018 in Hendry County

GLADES COUNTY CRIMINAL OVERVIEW

Probation Department

The Glades County Probation Department provides services to offenders adjudicated of misdemeanors who are ordered to comply with conditions of probation. The Glades County Probation Department also provides supervision for defendants ordered to comply with pretrial diversion, a deferred prosecution option offered by the court. The Misdemeanor Pretrial Diversion Program is a voluntary deferred prosecution option that allows first time offenders charged with misdemeanors to complete conditions and if successfully completed, these cases are not prosecuted further. This cooperative effort between the State's Attorney's Office and the Glades County Probation Department helps to expedite cases through the judicial system while holding defendants accountable for their actions.

CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES

IN 2018...

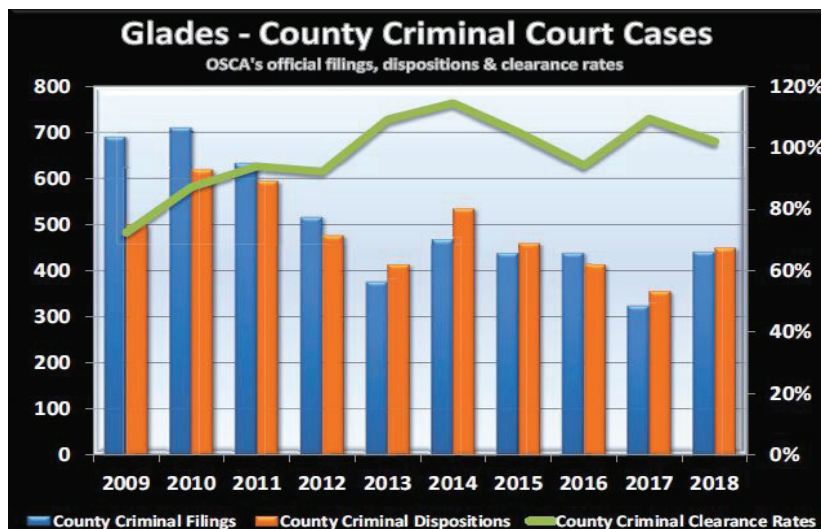
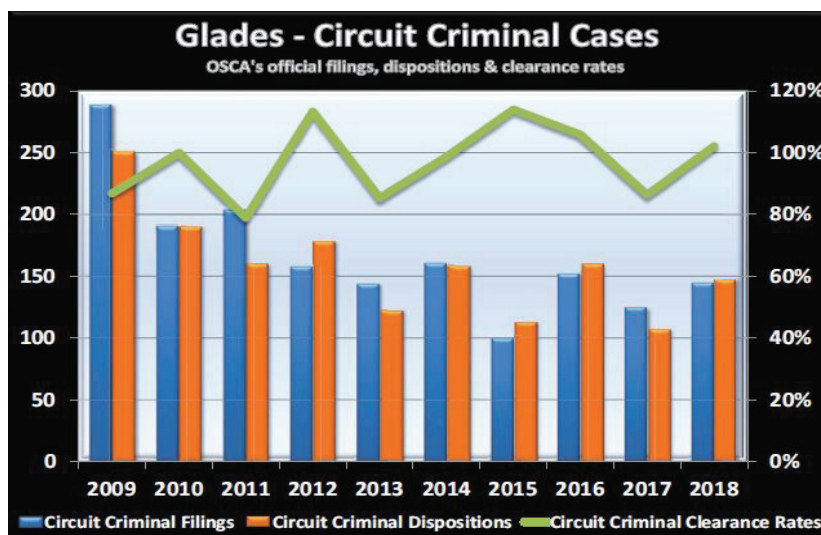
140
new probation
referrals



86 completed their
court ordered
conditions



53
warrants were filed
by the Probation
Department



Calendar Year 2018 Statistics

145 Circuit Criminal Felony cases
filed through June 30, 2018

Circuit Criminal cases brought
to disposition through June 30,
2018 **148**

102% clearance rate
for Circuit
Criminal cases

(This includes Capital Murder, Violent Crimes, Against
Persons, Against Property, and Drug Crimes)

441 County Criminal cases
cases filed through June
30, 2018

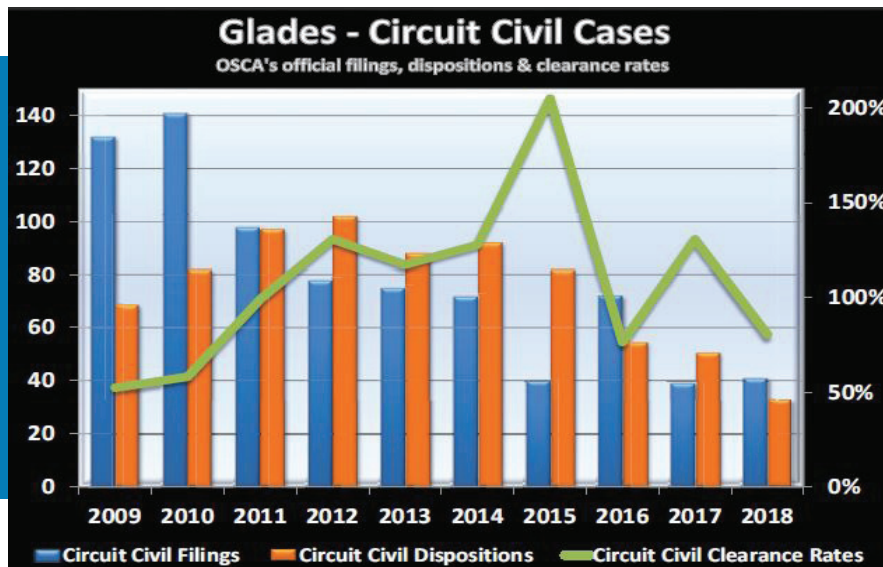
County Criminal cases brought
to disposition **450**

102% clearance rate
for County
Criminal cases

(This includes Misdemeanors & Criminal Traffic, County &
Municipal Ordinances, and Driving Under the Influence)

GLADES COUNTY

CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



58

Circuit Civil cases filed in
Glades County in
2018

185

Domestic Relations
cases filed in Glades
County in
2018

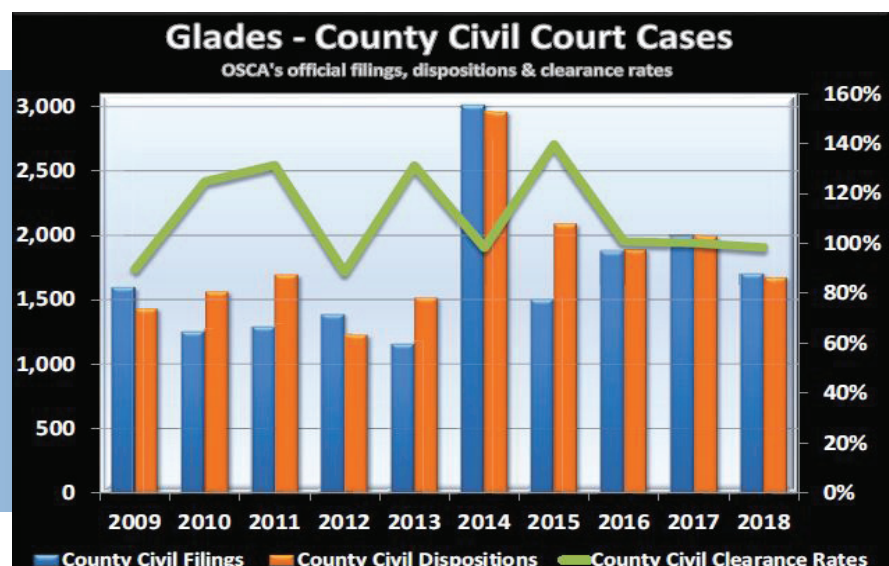
Glades County Circuit Civil filings decreased by 10.5% since 2016 per CCIS. The total number of Circuit Civil filings for 2018 were 314 cases. The filings for Family Law experienced a slight increase since the previous year at 185 cases, which includes child support, dissolutions, and paternity cases. In 2018, there were 13 foreclosure cases filed, while 14 cases reached a disposition creating a 108% clearance rate. There are currently 15 active foreclosure cases pending in Glades County, with only six being over 18 months or older. Senior Judge days were not utilized in 2018 to maintain and address the foreclosure caseload within Glades County Circuit Court. The Glades County Court Civil filings have remained constant over the last three years, however the small claims filings increased by 60% since 2017.

61

County Civil cases filed
in Glades County in
2018

73

Small Claims cases filed
in Glades County in
2018



PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS

DRUG COURT, MENTAL HEALTH COURT, VETERANS COURT

The State Attorney's Office determines eligibility for Specialty Court participants. Drug and Mental Health Court recognizes the challenges associated with addiction and mental illness. While Veteran's Court works in conjunction with the Collier County Jail to identify and provide services for Veterans. Participants benefit from the collaboration between the Courts and treatment providers. Participants must remain on a treatment plan while reporting to the Court as directed. The community benefits from the cost savings realized from keeping those who suffer from mental illness from repeatedly being arrested. The program assists the participants through a coordinated effort to provide medication, housing, employment referrals, and following their treatment plan with the Court and staff's supervision.

12 participants successfully graduated from the Collier County Mental Health Court Program in 2018.

70% success rate for Charlotte County Mental Health Court Fiscal Year 2017-18

89% safety rate for Fiscal Year 2017-18

Average overall number of days in the program is **310**

Safety rate= percentage of defendants who do not commit a new law violation while on supervision

In 2018,

7 participants began treatment through the Hendry County Drug Court Program, all of which are currently active and productively participating.

92% participants successfully graduated from the Collier County Veteran's Court Program in 2018.

18 participants successfully graduated from the Collier County Drug Court Program in 2018.

79% success rate for Charlotte County Drug Court Fiscal Year 2017-18

Average overall number of days in the program is **463**

79%
program completion rate for Charlotte County Mental Health Court Fiscal Year 2017-18

In Lee County...

There were **1,938** defendants identified for the Mental Health Court Program and **1,945**

for the Drug Court Program, with focused efforts of identifying at the earliest stage possible for appropriate treatment court options.

6 participants successfully graduated from the Collier County Veteran's Court Program in 2018.

The graduation rate for Lee County Mental Health Court in Fiscal Year 2017-18 is

69%

50 participants graduated from the Lee County Drug Court Program in Fiscal year 2017-18.

The average number of participants in the program on average each month was **156**

20TH CIRCUIT HIGHLIGHTS

NEW JUDGES WELCOMED IN 2019

It was a busy start to 2019 as we welcomed a handful of new judges across our five counties.

In February, Judge Carolyn Swift held her Investiture at the Old Lee County Courthouse in front of a packed room of family, friends and colleagues.

Judge Swift was sworn in by Circuit Judge G. Keith Cary. While a practicing attorney, she enjoyed appearing before Judge Cary because of his judicial demeanor, extreme patience, knowledge of the law and common sense approach. When she became a Magistrate, Judge Swift says Judge Cary became more than a referring judge, but instead a mentor, an advisor and a friend.

Magistrate Swift was appointed to her magistrate position in 2012 where she presided over family law matters in Lee County. Previously she worked at the Fort Myers law firm Insignares Swift, P.A. The retirement of Judge John Duryea left the position open for Judge Swift to then step in.

"I pledge to everyone here that I will respond to this opportunity and blessing by devoting myself to honoring my oath to uphold the rule of law and to be a faithful guardian of the law for all people in the State of Florida," said Judge Swift at her Investiture.

A week later kicked off a series of Investitures in Collier County. The first was the Investiture of Collier County Judge Blake Adams. Voters elected Judge Adams to replace Judge James McGarity in the November 2018 election.

"I am truly honored to be standing before you today wearing this black robe and being called Judge Blake Adams," said Judge Adams.

Judge Adams was previously Deputy Chief of the Collier County Office for the 20th Judicial Circuit Public Defender and also worked as a Staff Attorney for the Administrative Office of the Courts. Both of his guest speakers were attorneys who he worked closely with throughout his career. He was sworn in by Senior Judge Frederick Hardt. Judge Adams says he chose Judge Hardt to deliver the oath because he was the first Circuit Judge for whom he wrote proposed court orders as a Staff Attorney for the 20th Judicial Circuit. Judge Adams also practiced as an Assistant Public Defender in front of him longer than any other single judge while Judge Hardt was on the felony bench.

"He was always pleasant, courteous, and professional," said Judge Hardt. "And the best thing was...he was always prepared."

Judge Hardt's retirement opened the position for Circuit Judge John McGowan. He held his Investiture a week later on February 22nd at the Collier County Courthouse. McGowan began his legal career in 1994 with the Office of the State Attorney for the 20th Judicial Circuit. In 1997, he entered private practice concentrating on Criminal and Civil litigation. In addition to his private practice, Judge McGowan has worked with the Office of Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel, Second District.

"I have reflected on my roles as an attorney and as an elected official and the importance of public service," said John McGowan. "With my election to the bench, I have yet another opportunity to serve the public in an extraordinary way."

In addition to work inside the courtroom, Judge McGowan also held public office as the North Naples Fire Commissioner since 2006. He retired to run for Circuit Judge.

Collier County Judge Tamara Lynne Nicola's Investiture was held on March 8. She is a second-generation attorney following in the footsteps of her father, Richard Jones. She spent the first few years of her career practicing with him before opening her own firm, Nicola Family Law. Her practice focused on Unified Family Court matters and she also practiced in the area of criminal defense.

"It is important to have goals, to not be afraid to pursue those goals, and to always do your best," said Judge Nicola during her Investiture. "That is my promise to myself and that is my promise to you."

Judge Nicola chose fellow Collier County Judge Janeice Martin to perform the Oath of Office. Both Judge Nicola and Judge Martin grew up in Naples and their fathers both had the same dry sense of humor and quick wit. Judge Nicola says Judge Martin was instrumental in convincing her to run for Judge.

The final of the five Investitures took us to LaBelle. Hendry County Judge Darrell Hill held his investiture in the auditorium of LaBelle High School and followed up with a reception at the Quart House. Judge Hill has been a Magistrate in Hendry County since 2014. Hill has deep roots in the community having moved to Lee County in 1972. He graduated from the University of Florida and received his Juris Doctor from Cumberland School of Law of Samford University. He previously managed the Law Office of Darrell R. Hill, P.A. where he specialized in Criminal Law, Estate Planning, and Probate & Estate Administration.

"I will be independent and preserve the integrity of the judiciary," said Judge Hill. I will be faithful to the law and have respect for precedent. I will maintain order and decorum in the courtroom, while at the same time being patient and dignified to all that come before me."



CHANGING OF THE GUARDS IN COLLIER COUNTY



There is a changing of the guards coming to Collier County as three esteemed members of the Collier bench retire.

Judge Frederick Hardt was appointed to the Circuit bench in 2003 where he spent two years in Hendry before transferring to Collier County where he spent the majority of his career. Judge Hardt has been designated as a Senior Judge, effective January 1, 2019 and also plans on working both with private judging and as an arbitrator. While he is ready to move on to new career opportunities he will miss the friends and relationships he has made here in the Courthouse.

County Judge Jim McGarity was elected to the county bench in November, 2012 after a successful career at the Public Defender's Office and as a Magistrate. As a retired army Lieutenant Colonel, he remains committed and engaged with Veterans affairs and other philanthropic organizations. In retirement, he is off to circumnavigate the world with his wife. While he will miss the pulse and activity of the Court, he is content to cap his second career off here with his retirement.

Judge Michael Carr was elected to the county bench in 2007 after a successful career as both an Assistant State Attorney and criminal defense attorney. After his retirement, he plans to return to work with his wife in her law practice because he "likes getting up in the morning and having purpose." We wish all three Judges happiness in their retirement and thank them for their service to our Circuit.

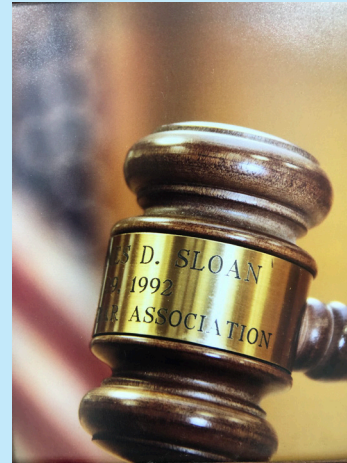


DRUG COURT RETURNS TO HENDRY COUNTY

In July of 2018, the Administrative Office of the Courts entered into a contract with the Center for Progress and Excellence, Inc., a division of Elite DNA Therapy to re-establish the Adult Felony Drug Court Program. The Adult Felony Drug Court Program is designed as a court supervised, comprehensive treatment program for felony offenders. This is a voluntary program, which includes regular court appearances and substance abuse treatment including drug testing, individual/group counseling, family counseling, and regular attendance at support meetings. Participants are also assisted with obtaining education, vocational, and life skills training. The program length is determined by each participant's progress and individualized treatment plan.

The Adult Felony Drug Court Program diverts non-violent offenders to a more individualized sentencing option in lieu of incarceration. In 2018, seven (7) offenders began treatment through the drug court program, all of which are currently active and productively participating in the drug court program.

In 2018, the Hendry County Drug Court Program received funding in the amount of \$24,400.00 from the State of Florida to fund substance abuse treatment services for 10 participants for nine months. The Problem Solving Court Funding was also provided to purchase the Florida Drug Court Case Management System (DCCM), which is a statewide database utilized in case management, as well as to maintain and evaluate program measures and outcome data. The program is currently in the process of implementing the new DCCM case management system. The Hendry Drug Court Team participated in DCCM training in December 2018, and the database should be fully functional within the first quarter of 2019.



CHARLOTTE COUNTY TEEN COURT CELEBRATES 25 YEARS



Teen Court of Charlotte County celebrated its Silver Anniversary this season! In 25 years, Charlotte County Teen Court volunteers have clocked in over 40,000 volunteer hours, sat in over 1,100 cases as Jurors, Attorneys, Shadow Attorneys, Bailiffs, and Clerks.

Judge Woodard and William Hayes IV began the program from the model they saw from the Sarasota Teen Court Program and it took off from there. Several judges and attorneys help train the students on proper court procedure and conduct. Unlike regular court, the jury is allowed to ask questions so they can fully understand how to render their sanctions when they deliberate. Some come in at 9th grade as Jurors and stay all four years as Jurors because they enjoy their role as a Juror. Some students go on to other roles as Bailiffs, Shadow Attorney, Clerk or Attorney because they want to try their hand out there.

They have options. Whatever they feel comfortable in is what we encourage them to do. I do challenge them to step out of their comfort zone, but I do tell them to do what makes them feel the most comfortable.

In these 25 years, former volunteers have come back to court as Assistant State Attorneys, Staff Attorneys, Psychologists, and Police Officers. Could they have accomplished these goals without Teen Court? Of course, but it's so rewarding to know that Teen Court was a part of their journey.

It's rewarding when a troubled youth sees you later in their life and remembers you and says thank you for giving them another chance. Not everyone can be "saved" but there is something about being "judged" by your peers that makes a difference in a young person's life and hopefully Teen Courts will be around for at least another 25 years!





2018 TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT ANNUAL REPORT

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