

TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



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 is the court of general jurisdiction and has responsibility for probate matters (wills), civil actions in which the disputed amount exceeds \$30,000, 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 \$30,000 and small claims disputes (small claims court hears civil disputes in which the amount in dispute is \$8,000 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.



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 2019 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 this report informative and that it gives you a better understanding of how our programs and initiatives work in each county throughout the Circuit.

Criminal trials, family relations, and civil lawsuits may be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the courts, but there is plenty that goes on behind the scenes. This includes our programs in the civil and criminal divisions that have been implemented to help facilitate due process, streamline court processes, and provide case flow management. We, as judges, couldn't do the work that we do without those behind the scenes in the Administrative Office. The numbers in this report demonstrate the tremendous effort and work that is being done.

You're likely reading this report in 2020, a year when we are facing one of the greatest impacts to not only America, but also to our court system. As we moved into a new decade, many of us likely thought it would be a new beginning and a new year full of promise and hope. Not a year that would vastly impact the way the both the legal profession and courts operate. Fortunately, the wheels of justice never stopped and the courthouses remained open.

Looking back, 2019 was rather ordinary compared to what is happening throughout our circuit in 2020. We did experience some movement amongst our Judiciary with five new judges joining us at the beginning of 2019 (Hendry County Judge Darrell Hill, Circuit Judge Carolyn Swift, Collier County Judge Blake Adams, Collier County Judge Tamara Lynn Nicola, and Circuit Judge John McGowan). At the end of the year we had another new Judge join us in Collier County, Circuit Judge Shannon McFee was appointed at the end of the year by the Governor.

The Governor also signed into law a change to county court jurisdictional limits. House Bill 337 increased the threshold to \$30,000 effective January 2020 and then \$50,000 in January 2023. You can read more about this in the highlights section of this report.

I am proud to serve as the Chief Judge of the Twentieth Circuit. I know that I speak for all of our judges and court staff when I assure you that your judiciary will continue to strive to provide the highest quality of justice, respect, and accountability that the citizens of Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties deserve.

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



JOSEPH FOSTER
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



HUGH D. HAYES
CIRCUIT JUDGE



ELIZABETH KRIER
CIRCUIT JUDGE



RAMIRO MANALICH
CIRCUIT JUDGE



SHANNON H. MCFEE
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



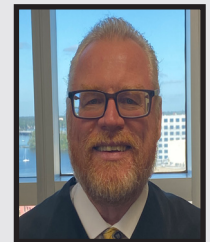
DEVIN S. GEORGE
COUNTY JUDGE



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

LEE COUNTY 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 Southwest Florida ADA Council monthly meetings, as well as, ADA training sponsored by OSCA. Operations Manager, Brooke Dean, received her ADA Coordinator Certification in July 2019.



There were a total of 67 ADA Requests for Assistance in Lee County in 2019.

Services Requested in Lee Co.	Total
C.A.R.T	8
HEARING DEVICE	21
SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER	38
MAGNIFIER	0
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.

16

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 Justice 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 390 applicants for our Court Volunteer Program. From that number, approximately **200** individuals have provided volunteer hours.

We currently have **15** active court volunteers on the roster to cover the Court Information desk.

5 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.



Mediation was moved to the second floor inside the Lee County Justice Center in early 2020.



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 2019

Type of Proceeding	Number of Events			Translation	
	Spanish	Haitian-Creole	Other	ASL	Pages
Circuit Criminal	3826	269	149	9	1085
County Criminal	7689	201	124	29	5
Family Court (Dependency/CINS/FINS)	710	89	65	2	89
Family Court (Delinquency)	1069	133	17	8	0
Baker/Marchman/Guardianship	78	11	0	1	0
Domestic Violence Injunction	229	15	17	7	0
General Magistrate/CSHO for Family Law - All Other Title IV-D	77	2	0	1	0
Other Case Types	215	2	1	1	18
TOTAL	13893	722	371	58	1197

Court Interpreter Services

From our home base office in Lee County, we provide interpreting services to all 5 counties in our circuit utilizing 5 full-time staff certified Spanish Court Interpreters. All supervised by a working and supervising certified staff Spanish Court Interpreter. A total of 30 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.

Languages Provided Circuit Wide 2019

(Other than Spanish, Haitian-Creole and Sign Language)

Chuj	Cantonese	Popti
Laotian	Acateco	Q'Anjobal
Arabic	Choctaw	Mixteco Alto
Quiche'	French Canadian	Russian
Japanese	Mandarin	Romanian
Polish	Acateco	German
Mam	Italian	Brasilian Portuguese
Q'eqchi	French	
Mandarin	Vietnamese	



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.

4,834

total defendants
ordered on county
probation



PROBATION STATS FOR FY 2018-19

17,433

hours of
community
service
completed

61%
success rate



\$1,026,053

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 2018-19



3,007

defendants
placed on
pretrial
supervision



51

days was the
average length of
supervision



95%

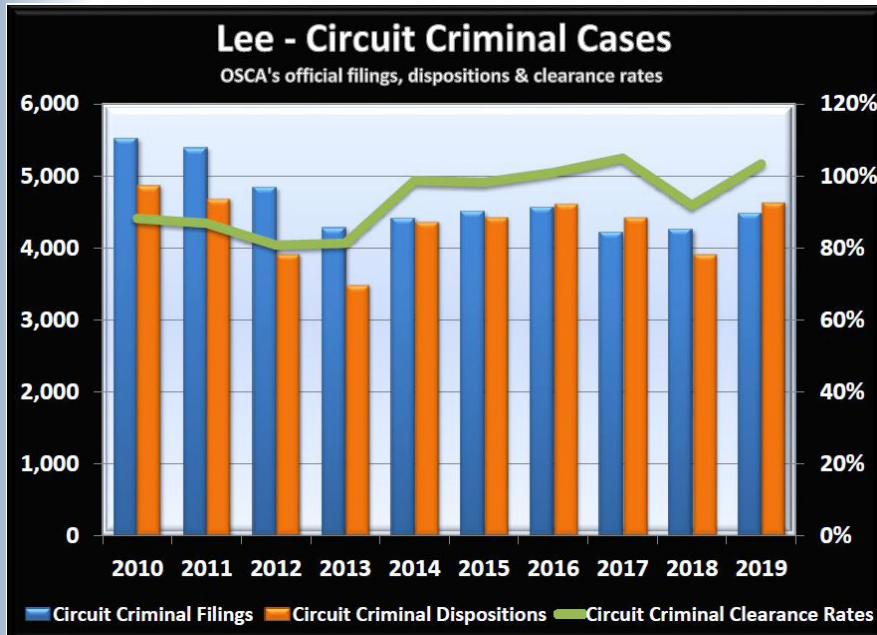
supervised defendants
were not charged with
new offense during
pretrial stage



78%
success rate

LEE COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



The judiciary
presided over

14,255

defendants at First Appearance
hearings during the fiscal year.

5,706

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 78% of expedited cases, 96% of standard cases and 83% of complex cases for time goals. Early Resolution Court pled or disposed of 1,093 cases.

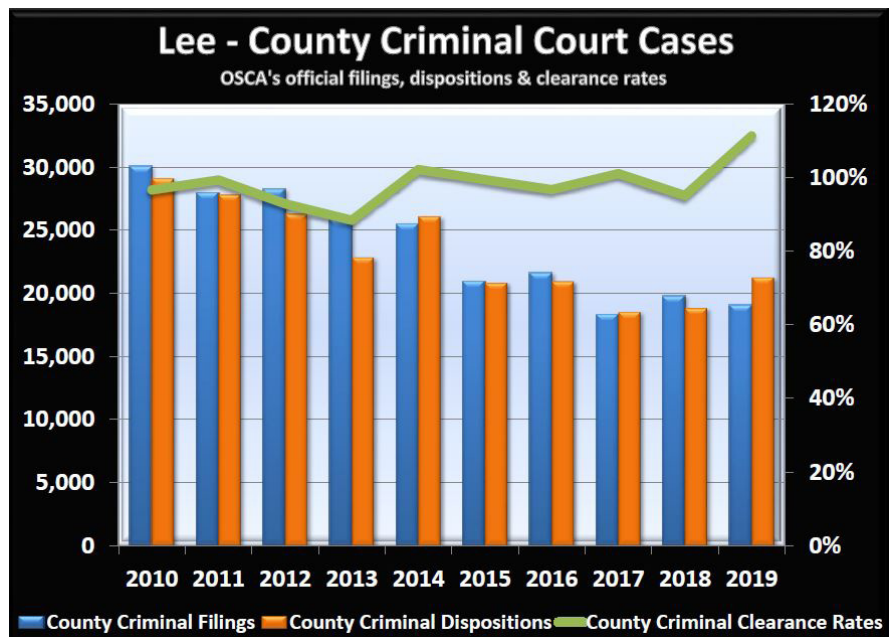
Case Clearance – Clearance rates are the number of outgoing cases as a percentage of the number of incoming cases. A total of 6,128 cases were opened and 5,850 were closed, resulting in a 96% clearance rate.

Trial date certainty was

51%



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

Every Hurricane Irma (Irma) case was ordered to Non-Biding Arbitration (NBA) within 120 days of the date of filing and required parties to schedule NBA within 10 days of the filing date. With each referral to ADR an order directing parties to arbitration needed to be prepared.

Arbitrations were scheduled both at the mediation offices and in offices of private attorneys. Due to a large number of NBA cancellations, three arbitrators stopped accepting NBA referrals on Irma cases.

IN 2019...

1,681

County
Small Claims
mediations held

42

County Civil
mediations held

1,493

Family Law
mediations held

373

Dependency
mediations held

ADR utilizes 56 volunteer mediators and 70 contracted Certified Mediators for small claims and mediations or non-biding arbitrations ordered through the Court's ADR program.

2019 Civil Case Management Conference

2,709 CMC's
scheduled

151 CMC's held

The Civil Case Management department underwent a great deal of change in 2019. The department gained two full time case managers; one to assist with the Irma docket and one for the Guardianship docket. Additionally, the department maintained separate tracks for Irma and foreclosure cases, executed an Auto Negligence Special Docket and developed and managed a Special Docket for contract and Indebtedness cases to occur in early 2020.

Civil Case Management

2019 Residential Foreclosure

1,074 cases filed

1,260 disposed

Civil case management achieved a one-to-one ratio of case managers to judges in 2018, however in 2019 another case manager was added so the Chief Judge had a case manager for the Irma docket. There were over 3,000 Irma cases filed in 2019, 355 of the total civil filings with an average of 251 cases a month. Civil non-Irma judges averaged 94 case filings a month.

Teen Court and Juvenile Arbitration

The Teen Court and Juvenile Arbitration Program has experienced a 22.5%% drop in referrals from the State Attorney's Office (SAO). In prior years, referrals were on a steady incline. Law Enforcement Officers have been encouraged to use the Civil Citation Program in lieu of arresting juveniles. This is equivalent to a "ticket" and juveniles must complete sanctions as ordered by the Sheriff's Department. If a juvenile fails to complete the sanctions they are ordered to Juvenile Arbitration. There was a marked decrease in Substance Abuse-related cases. The SAO slowed prosecution of the majority of substance abuse (Marijuana and THC oil) cases. Only 12% of referred cases were for Possession of Marijuana in 2019.

97%
success rate of
Teen Court

89%
success rate
of Juvenile
Arbitration

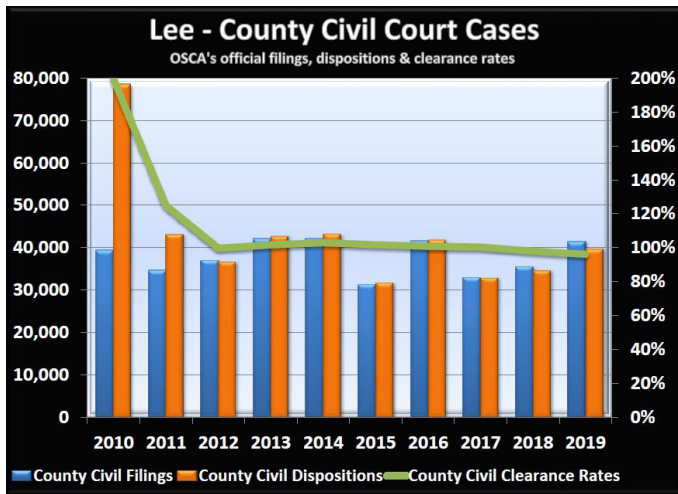
204
total referrals

In 2019, there
were **27** sessions of
Teen Court.

3,605
total volunteer
hours for 2019

LEE COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



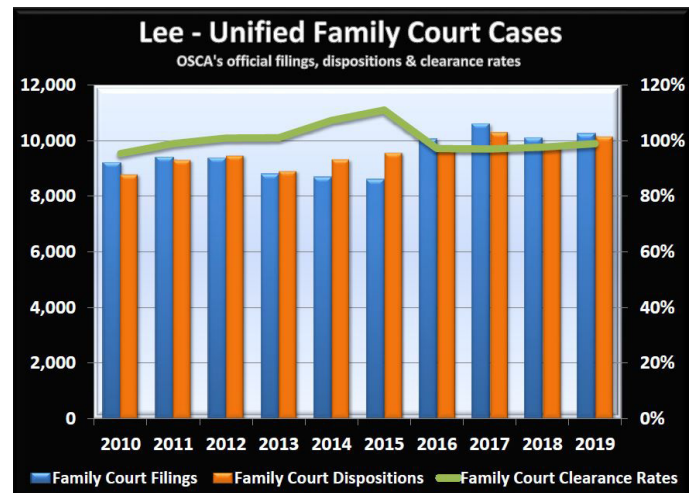
The overall clearance rate for all County Civil cases was approximately 96% through June 30, 2019.

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

Total County Civil Filings: 41,410

Total County Civil Dispositions: 39,797

1,410 case management conferences conducted by all five family case managers in 2019.

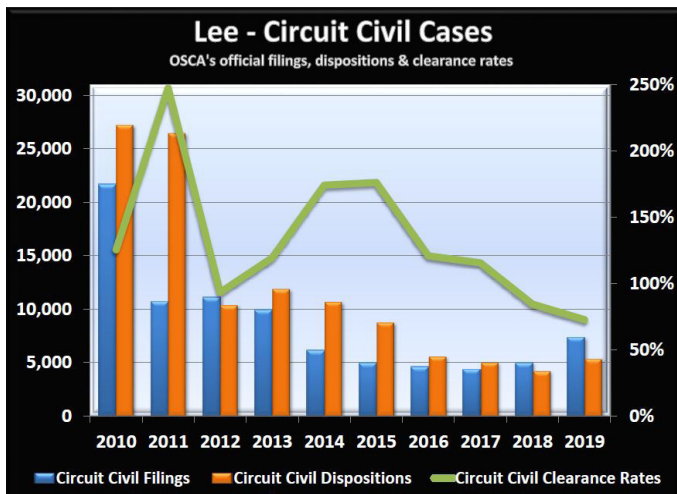


2,274 petitions for Domestic Violence filed in 2019
(excluding RPO and VA)

Intake Specialists in Family Court Services averaged

237 appointments/month in 2019 for a total of

2,844 /year.



The overall clearance rate for all Circuit Civil cases, with the exception of family cases, was approximately 73% through June 30, 2019.

Total Circuit Civil Filings: 7,339

Total Circuit Civil Dispositions: 5,333

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 2018-2019



96%

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



5,840

defendants screened for first appearance.



98%

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 2018-2019 PROBATION STATS



70%

success rate

1,479



total number of new probation cases



\$329,573.43

collected from the cost of supervision in a calendar year

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES

2019 Statistics

2,344

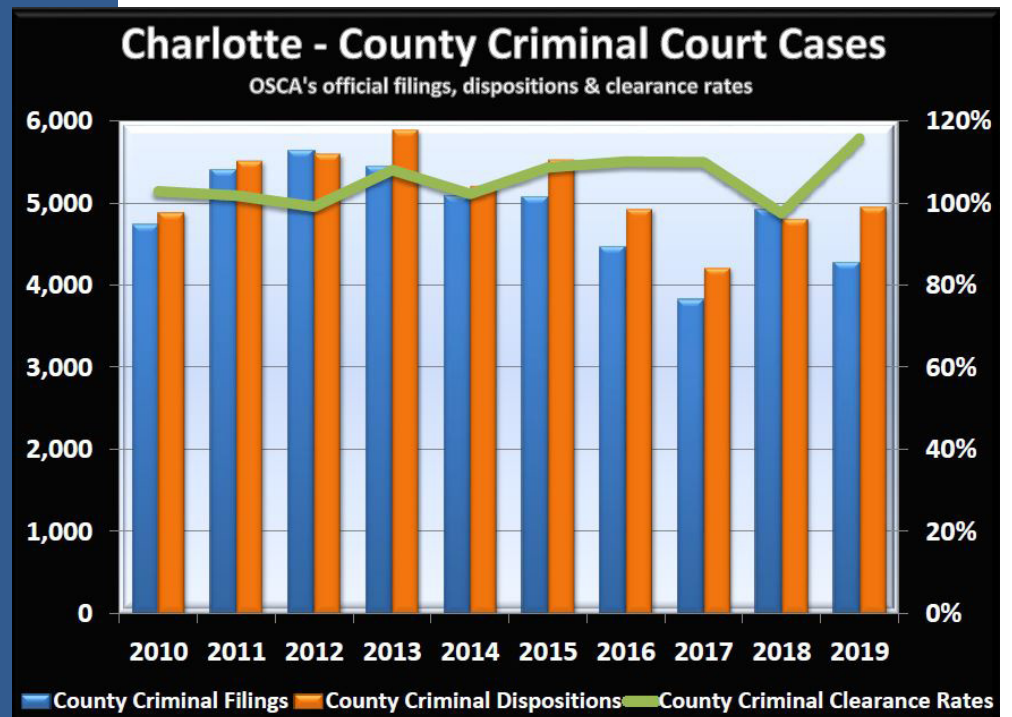
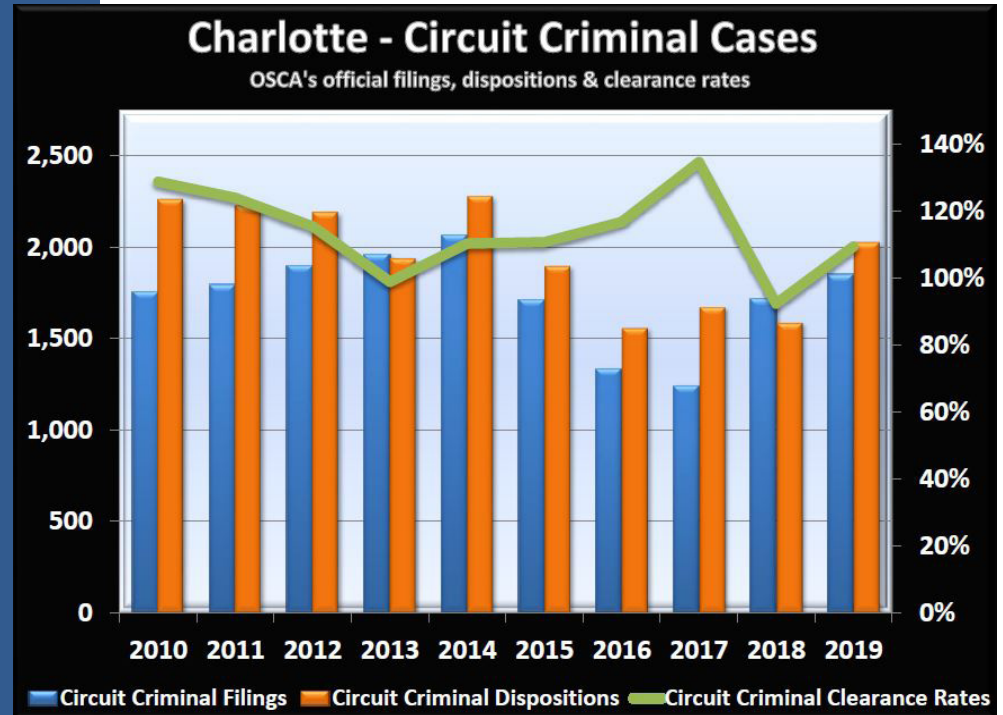
Criminal Felony Cases filed in
Charlotte County in 2019

42%

Continuance rate for cases
at case management
conferences in 2019

33%

Continuance rate for cases at
pretrial conferences in 2019



CHARLOTTE COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW

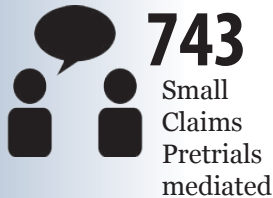
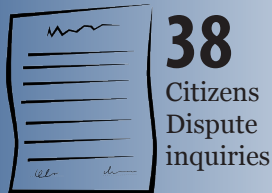
The Charlotte County Civil/Family division consists of the Civil Division Director, 11 Full time employees dedicated to assisting the Judiciary with moving cases through the system within the time periods set through unified courts.

Alternative Dispute Resolution & Court Mediation Programs

IN 2019...



190
cases resolved
(including partial and temporary agreements)



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

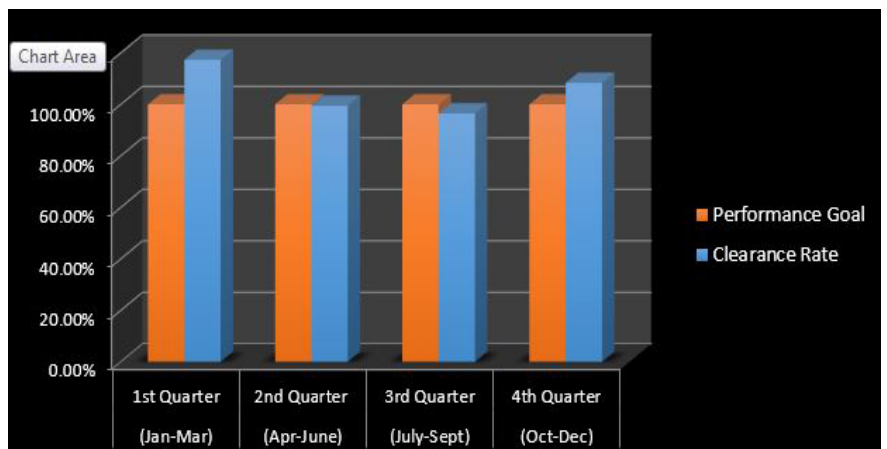
Circuit and County Court Mediation

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.

Family Case Management 2019 Clearance Report

In 2019, 693 Family Law cases identified in the Charlotte County Civil/Family Case Management Database were opened and 729 cases in the same year were disposed. This generated a clearance rate of 105% of the cases that were managed by the Family Law Case Managers in 2019 assigned to Judge Mary Evans.

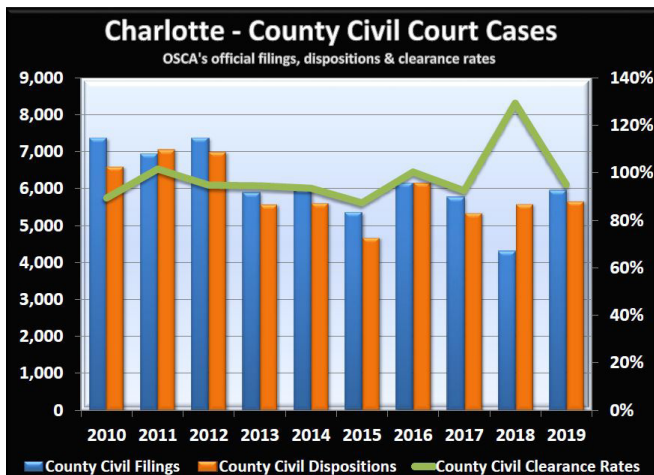
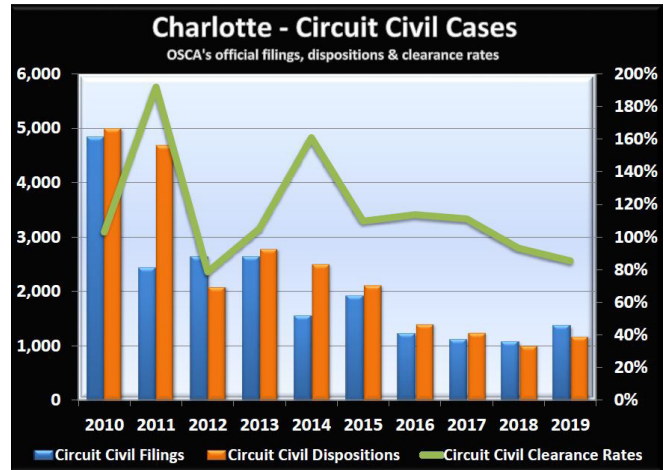


CHARLOTTE COUNTY

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 85% through June 30, 2019.

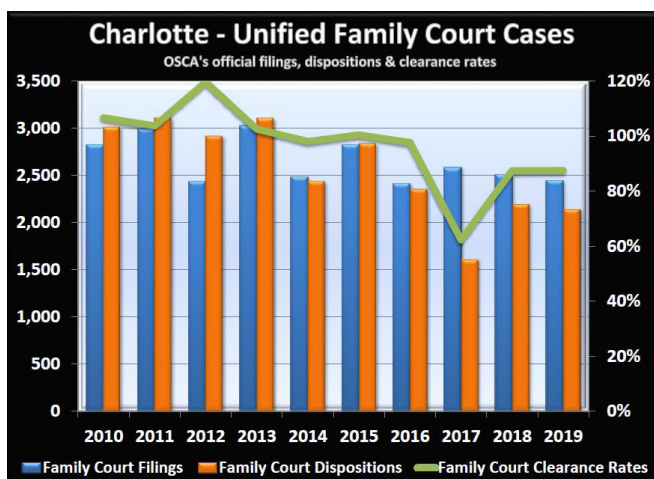
Total Circuit Civil Filings: 1,368
Total Circuit Civil Dispositions: 1,168



Total County Civil Filings: 5,953
Total County Civil Dispositions: 5,658

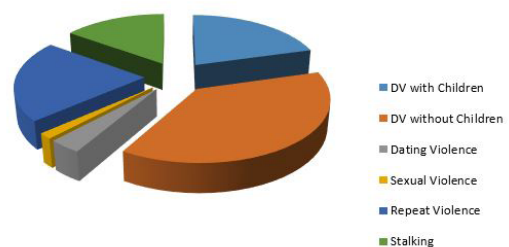
The overall clearance rate for all County Civil cases was approximately 95% through June 30, 2019.

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



In 2019, there were 713 Domestic Violence Petitions filed, this is a decrease from 866 filed in 2018. The decreases were with Domestic Violence with (and without) children and Stalking but an increase in Repeat, Dating & Sexual.

CHARLOTTE COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FILINGS 2019



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 2019...



994

violation of probation affidavits were submitted to the Court for review

80%

of defendants completed their conditions



889

offenders performed community service hours

\$812,750.57

**TOTAL AMOUNT COLLECTED BY
PROBATION DEPARTMENT IN 2019**

*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

181

participants a month

71%

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. Complex (360 days), Expedited (180 days) or Standard (240 days).

During the 2019 calendar year, a review of track goal compliance for closed cases within the division revealed...

Expedited

380

cases resolved within the 180 day time goal out of 479 cases

Standard

412

resolved within the 240 day time goal out of 850 cases

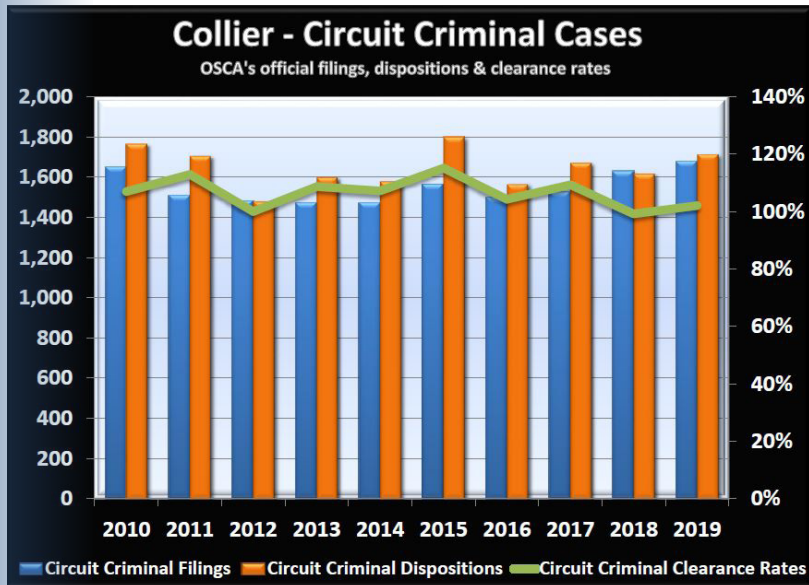
Complex

16

cases resolved within the 360 day time goal out of 53 cases

COLLIER COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



A review of the Felony Criminal Division pending cases as of December 31, 2019, reflects a total number of 985 pending cases. The age of case breakdown is as follows: 568 (58%) cases have been pending for less than 180 days, 231 (23%) cases have been pending between 181-365 days, and 186 (19%) cases have been pending over 365 days. This report does not specify differentiation by track and only identifies cases by age of case.

Collectively a total of 2,379 cases were filed and 2,321 cases were disposed in the Circuit Criminal Division during the CY 2019, for a combined clearance rate of 193%. This report does not specify differentiation by track and only identifies cases by age of case.

Circuit Criminal Cases

Calendar Year 2019

2,379
cases were
filed

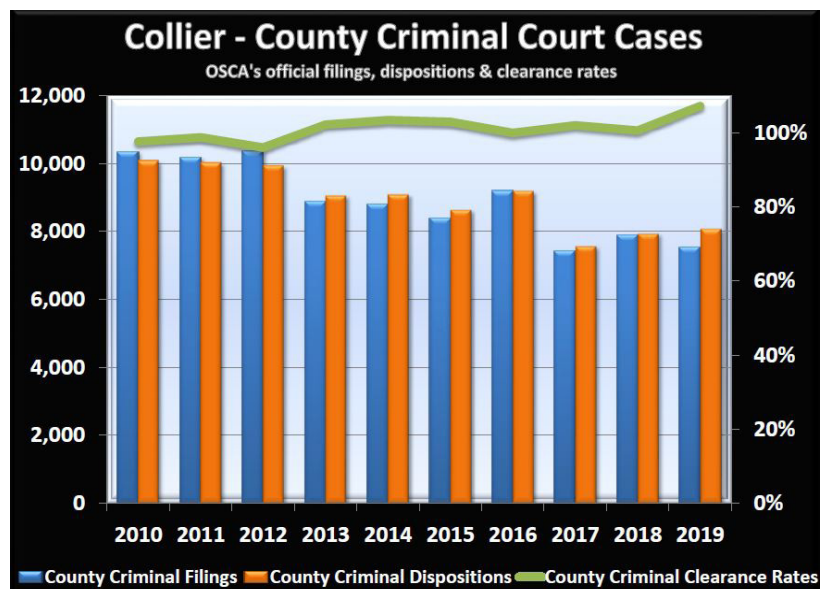
2,321
cases were
disposed

193%
combined
clearance rate

Pending Divisional Cases as of 12-31-19



■ >180 days ■ 181-365 days ■ < 365



COLLIER COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW

Unifed Family Court

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

One Family, One Judge

585 2019 JUDICIAL CASE
MANAGEMENT
CONFERENCES

2,865 2019 FAMILY
CASE FILINGS

Court Mediation Programs

2,965
number of cases
referred/ordered
to participate in
mediation in 2019

769 Small Claims
mediations were
held in 2019

69%
of the mediations
facilitated reached
settlement in 2019

1,089
mediations were
facilitated in resulting
in **751** settlement
agreements

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.

Civil Case Management

In 2019, Judges Hayes, Brodie and Krier were assigned to the circuit civil division. At that time, one Civil Case Manager supported all three judges (with assistance from the Division Director). The major accomplishment of 2019 was to get all three circuit civil judges' dockets in compliance with the terms of the Civil Case Management Administrative Order 1.13 and review each case older than 150 days to determine why an Agreed Plan was not submitted and whether the case needed to be set for a Case Management Conference and/or another court event. As the dockets continued to increase with new case filings in 2019, the Civil Case Managers diligently worked to accomplish this by increasing each of their dockets. The creation of a shared email for the submission of the Agreed Plan has greatly assisted with the accuracy and expedited the procedure to process from the attorneys to the Case Managers, then forwarded to the Judges for approval.



395

cases were dismissed or
settled prior to a CMC
in 2019

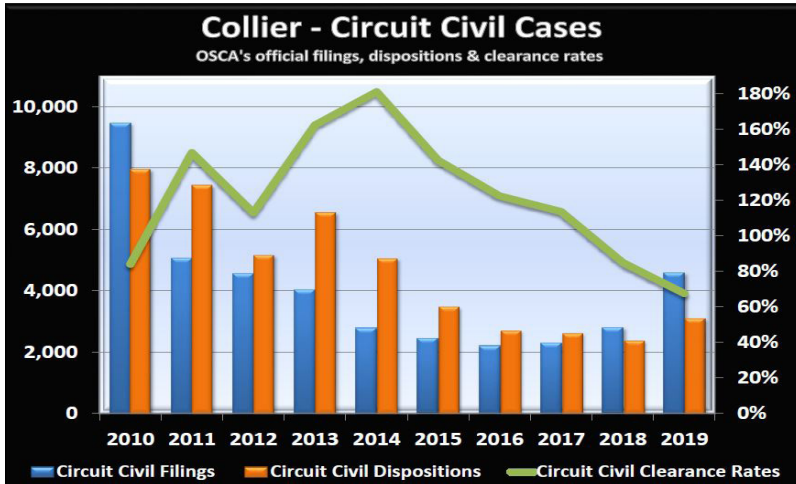


2,229

case
management
conferences
were set in
2019

COLLIER COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES

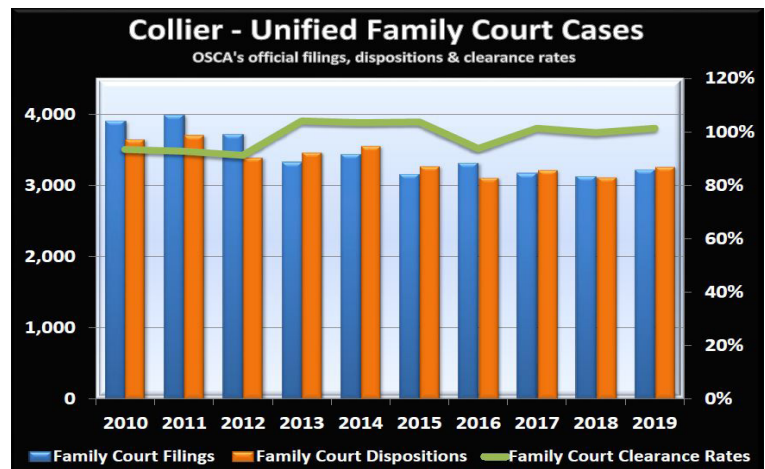
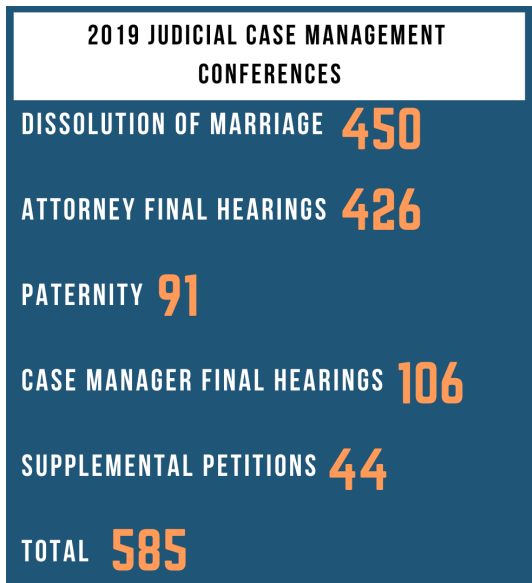


The overall clearance rate for all Circuit Civil cases, with the exception of family cases, was approximately 68% through June 30, 2019.

Total Circuit Civil Filings: 4,582

Total Circuit Civil Dispositions: 3,094

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

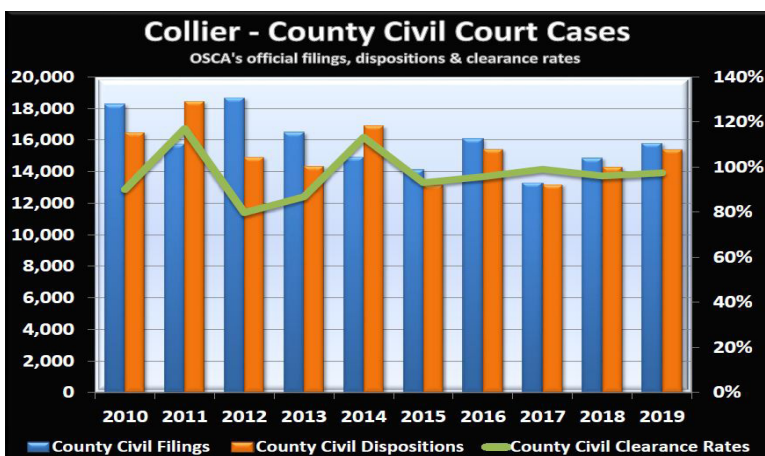


The overall clearance rate for all County Civil cases, with the exception of family cases, was approximately 97% through June 30, 2019.

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

Total County Civil Filings: 15,786

Total County Civil Dispositions: 15,382



HENDRY COUNTY CRIMINAL DIVISION OVERVIEW

Felony Case Management

Hendry 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 differing depending on the case's 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 2019, the process of identifying, monitoring, and expediting services to cases with an indicated issue of competence to proceed was evaluated and improved to ensure timely and effective management of these cases.

In 2019, a total of **726** cases were filed with **689** cases reaching disposition.

The clearance rate was **95%**

IN 2019...

293

new cases ordered to comply with conditions of supervision

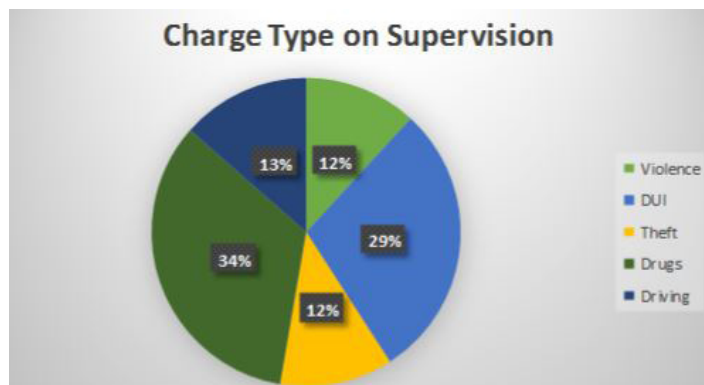
61%

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.

\$1,026,053 collected in probation fees



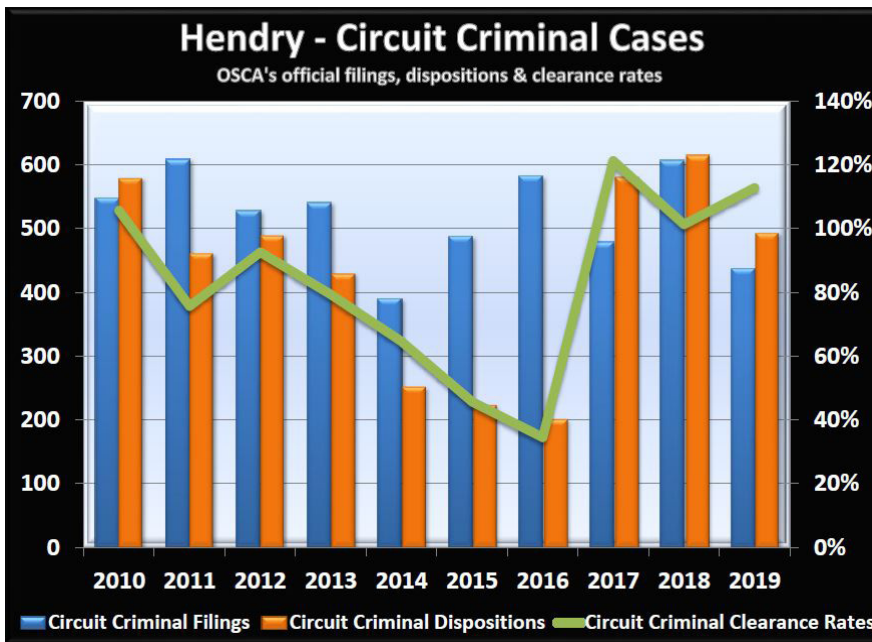
Out of the **90** participants that accepted and entered the diversion program, **72** successfully completed their court ordered sanctions and were not returned to the court for formal prosecution.

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 overall clearance rate for all Circuit Criminal cases was approximately 113% through June 30, 2019.

Total Circuit Criminal Filings: 437

Total Circuit Criminal Dispositions: 493

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

Calendar Year 2019 Filings

839
Criminal Traffic

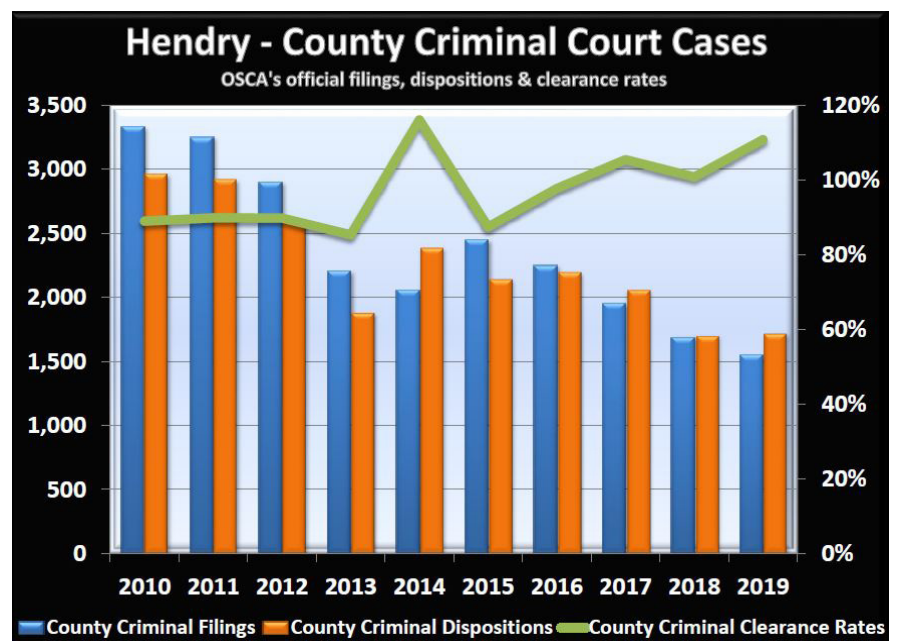
5,005
Civil Traffic

839
Misdemeanor

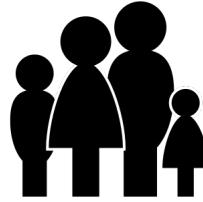
726
Felony

The Hendry County Circuit Criminal filings have decreased in 2019 by 3.5% from the previous year. A total of 689 felony cases were brought to a disposition in 2019 creating a clearance rate of 95%. Hendry County misdemeanor filings have also decreased in 2019 by 8.9%. In 2019 an increase was experienced in civil traffic cases by 24% from the previous year. Which is still a 30% decline from 2015. 105% of Civil Traffic cases were disposed of in 2019 or 5251 cases.

The Misdemeanor Pretrial Diversion Program had a 80% successful completion rate for 2019.



HENDRY COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW



The Family Court Program Magistrate conducted **496** court hearings and assisted in closing **198** newly filed cases in 2019.

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 182 cases. This number does not include Department of Revenue Child Support Cases.

75% 
clearance rate in 2019

264
Family Law cases
were filed not
including child
support cases in
2019.



Foreclosure Case Management

97 FORECLOSURE
CASES WERE
FILED IN 2019

DISPOSITIONS
WERE REACHED IN
94 CASES,
CREATING A CLEARANCE
RATE OF **97%**

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 manage foreclosure cases, the dependency docket, as well as some felony hearings to control the jail population. These hours are also utilized to case manage circuit civil cases pending over 10 months without activity.

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.

347

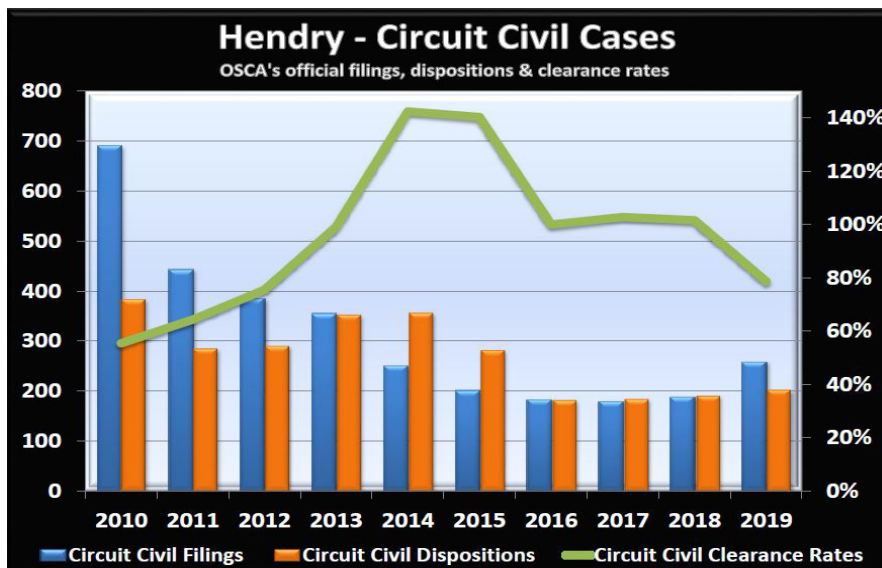
SMALL CLAIMS
CASES WERE
FILED IN 2019

33
mediation was
provided

18
resolved prior
to trial

HENDRY COUNTY

OVERVIEW OF CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



2019 Statistics

258

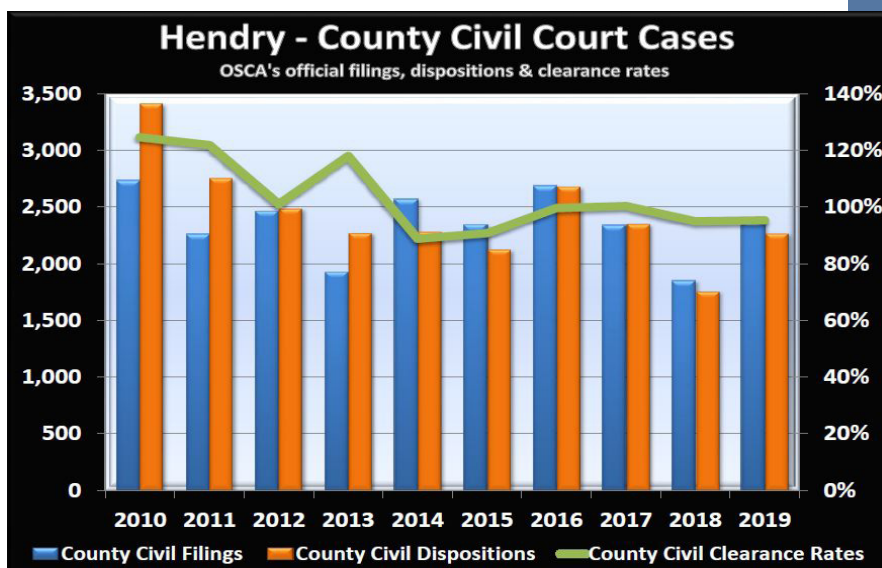
Circuit Civil cases filed through June
2019 in Hendry County

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

203

Circuit Civil cases disposed of
through June 2019 in Hendry County

The Hendry County and Circuit Courts Civil Division processed approximately 1,812 cases in 2019. Family Law filings make up an estimated 41% of the filings in the Civil Division at 734 filings to include child support. The overall Civil division's caseloads appears to have experienced a decrease. However, there were also 445 reopened cases for continued litigation. Overall, the Circuit Civil caseload decreased by 19% since the previous year. Dispositions were reached in 260 circuit civil cases creating a clearance rate of 98%. County civil demonstrated a decrease in filings at approximately 10%. Small Claims filings slightly decreased from the previous year. Clearance rates for both County Civil and Small Claims were similar at approximately 93%.



95%

County Civil case clearance rate
though June 2019 in Hendry County

(This includes small claims, civil, other
civil, evictions, and civil traffic infrac-
tions.)

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 2019...

190

new probation
referrals



127

completed their
court ordered
conditions

56

warrants were filed
by the Probation
Department



Calendar Year 2019 Statistics

251

new Circuit Court Criminal
Felony cases filed in 2019

Circuit Criminal cases
brought to disposition

281

112%

clearance rate
for Circuit
Criminal cases

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

440

new County Criminal
cases cases filed in 2019

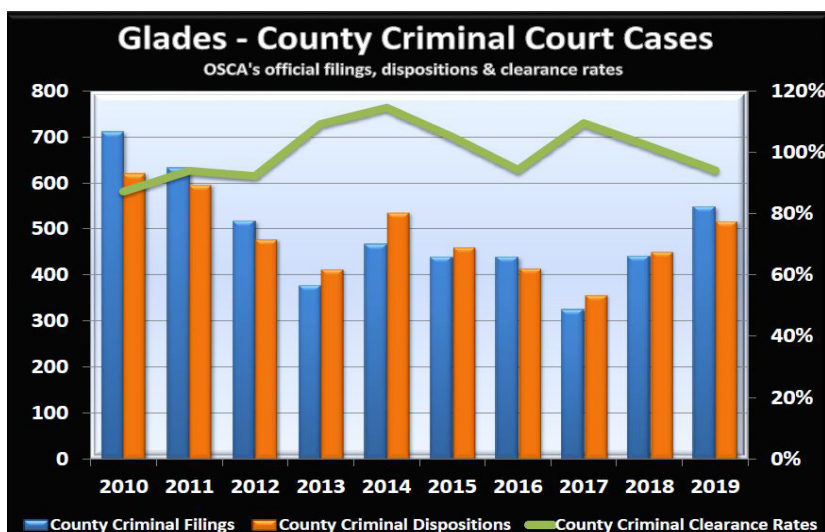
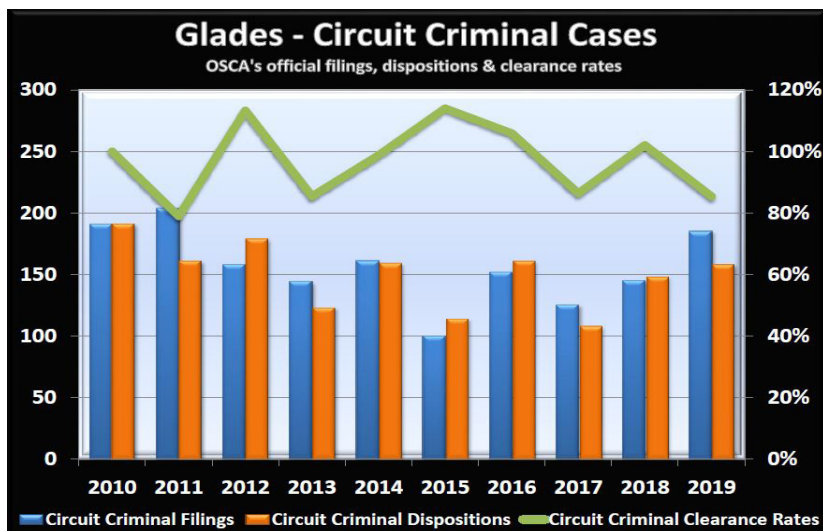
County Criminal cases brought
to disposition

408

97%

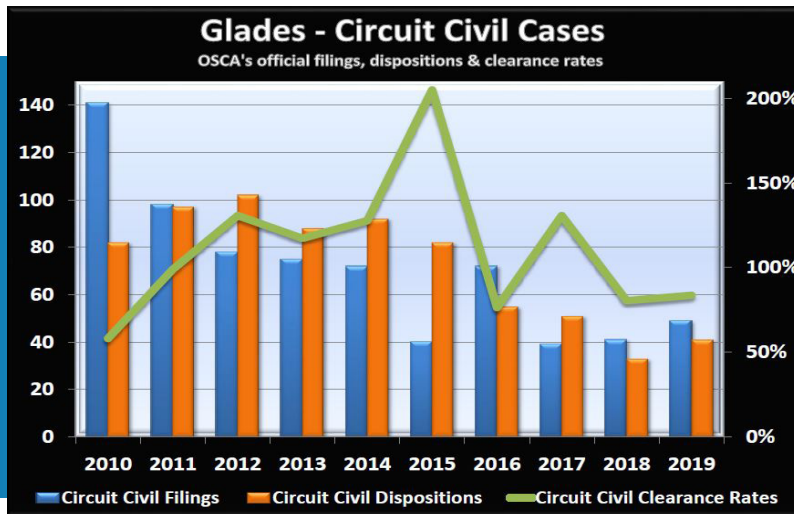
clearance rate
for County
Criminal cases

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



GLADES COUNTY

CIVIL CASE FILINGS, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE RATES



45

Circuit Civil cases filed in
Glades County in
2019

123

Domestic Relations
cases filed in Glades
County in
2019

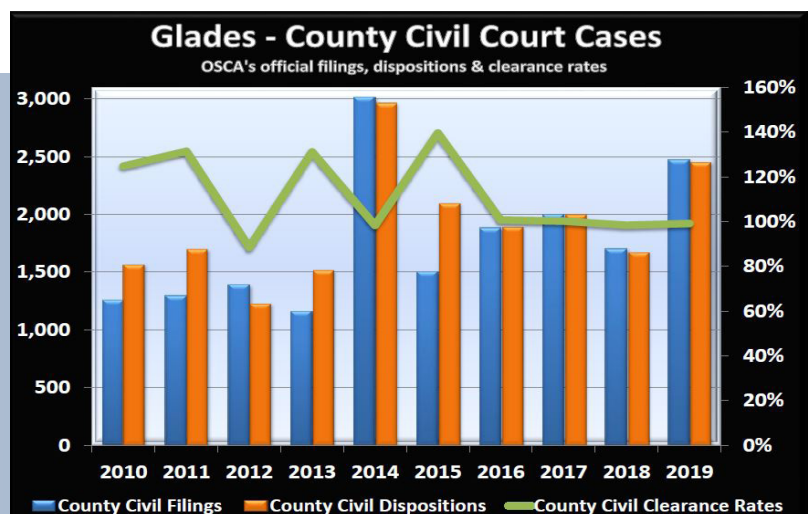
Glades County Circuit Civil filings experienced a 26% decrease in filings since 2018 per CCIS. The total number of Circuit Civil filings for 2019 were 230 cases. The filings for family law cases experienced a 16% decrease in 2019, which includes child support, dissolutions, and paternity cases. The Glades County Court Civil filings have remained constant over the last three years. However, small claims filings decreased by 44% in 2019, which has returned this caseload to a more normal filing level compared to the previous year. Dispositions were reached in 69 circuit civil cases creating clearance rate of 153%. County Civil resolved 83 cases with a 148% clearance rate.

56

County Civil cases filed
in Glades County in
2019

41

Small Claims cases filed
in Glades County in
2019



KEY NUMBERS

PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS

DRUG COURT, MENTAL HEALTH COURT, VETERANS COURT

Problem-solving courts address the root causes of justice system involvement through specialized dockets, multidisciplinary teams, and a nonadversarial approach. Offering evidence-based treatment, judicial supervision, and accountability, problem-solving courts provide individualized interventions for participants, thereby improving public safety, reducing recidivism, restoring lives, and promoting confidence and satisfaction with the justice system process.

13 participants successfully graduated from the Collier County Mental Health Court Program in 2019.

72% success rate for Charlotte County Mental Health Court Fiscal Year 2018-19.

92% safety rate for Fiscal Year 2018-19.

Average overall number of days in the program is **309**

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

In 2019,

57 participants were offered the opportunity to gain treatment through the Hendry County Felony Drug Court Program.

13 participants successfully completed the Collier County Mental Health Court Program in 2019.

33

participants
successfully
graduated from the
Collier County Drug
Court Program in
2019.

72%

success rate for Charlotte
County Drug Court Fiscal
Year 2018-19.

Average overall
number of days in the
program is **431**

72%

program completion
rate for Charlotte County
Mental Health Court Fiscal
Year 2018-19

In Lee County...

There were **1,564**
defendants identified for
the Mental Health Court
Program and **2,129**

for the Drug Court Program, with
focused efforts of identifying at
the earliest stage possible for
appropriate treatment court
options in FY 2018-19.

7

participants
successfully
graduated from
the Collier County
Veteran's Court
Program in 2019.

The overall success
rate for Lee County
Mental Health Court
since program
inception in 2002 is

71%

52 participants graduated from the Lee County
Drug Court Program in Fiscal year 2018-19.

The average number of
participants in the program on
average each month was **113**

20TH CIRCUIT HIGHLIGHTS

COLLIER COUNTY ADULT DRUG COURT CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF CHANGING AND SAVING LIVES!

Written by: Judge Janeice Martin



Judge William Blackwell



Judge Janeice Martin

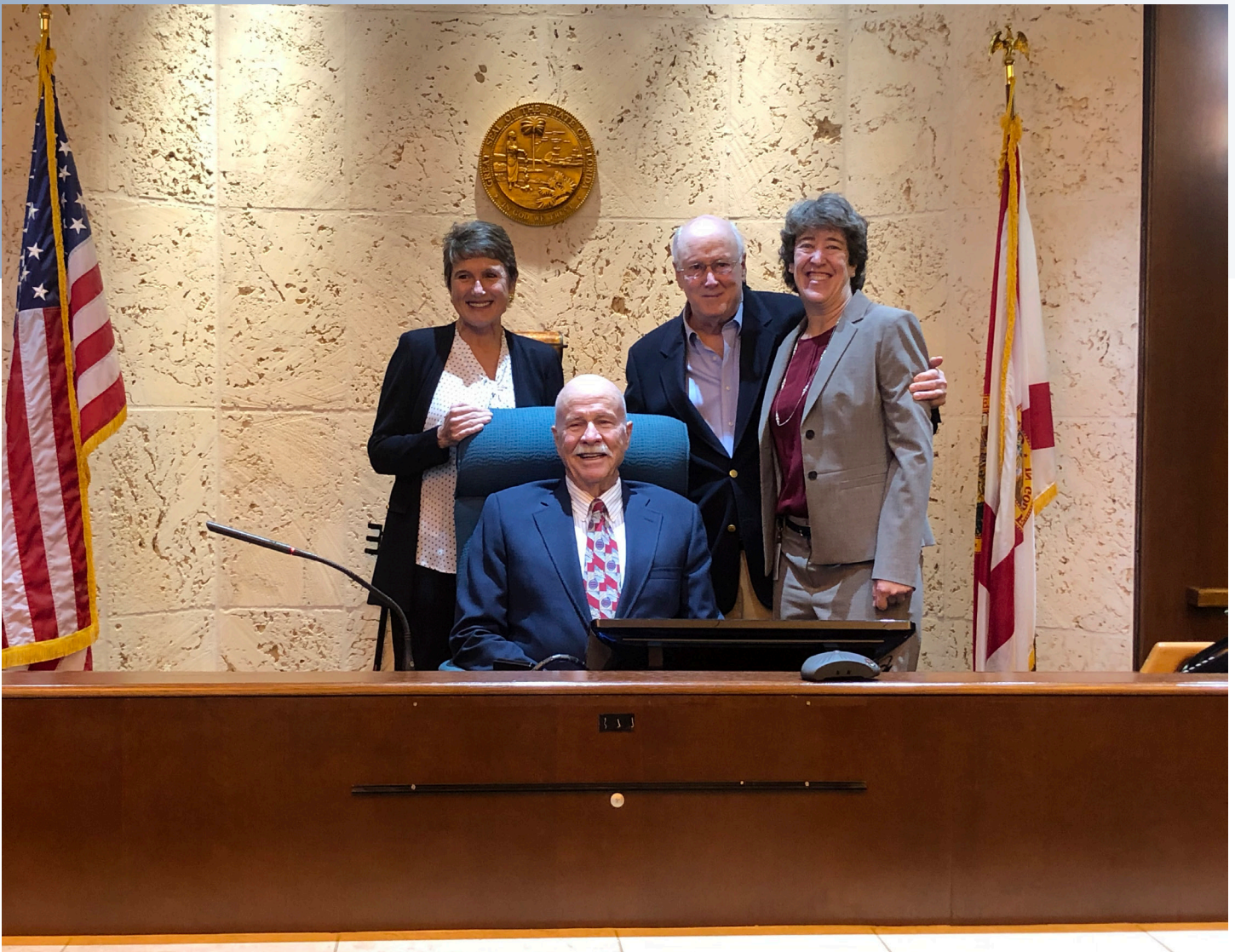
On Tuesday, October 15, 2019, Courtroom 2A of the Collier County Courthouse was filled to capacity with hope and gratitude. Dozens of community leaders joined Judges, lawyers, counselors, probation officers and citizens in a rousing celebration of the power of recovery.

Founded in 1999 by the honorable William L. Blackwell, then Chief Judge of the 20th Judicial Circuit, Collier county Adult Drug Court has had a singular mission and focus for all of these 20 years: to create an opportunity for persons suffering from addiction to get help, restore their lives and their families, and avoid prison in favor of a return to the community.

Judge Blackwell shared his story, both personally and professionally, as to why he insisted on the establishment of a drug court in the 20th Circuit. After years on the felony bench, he knew without a doubt that some of those men and women before him needed help, not prison.

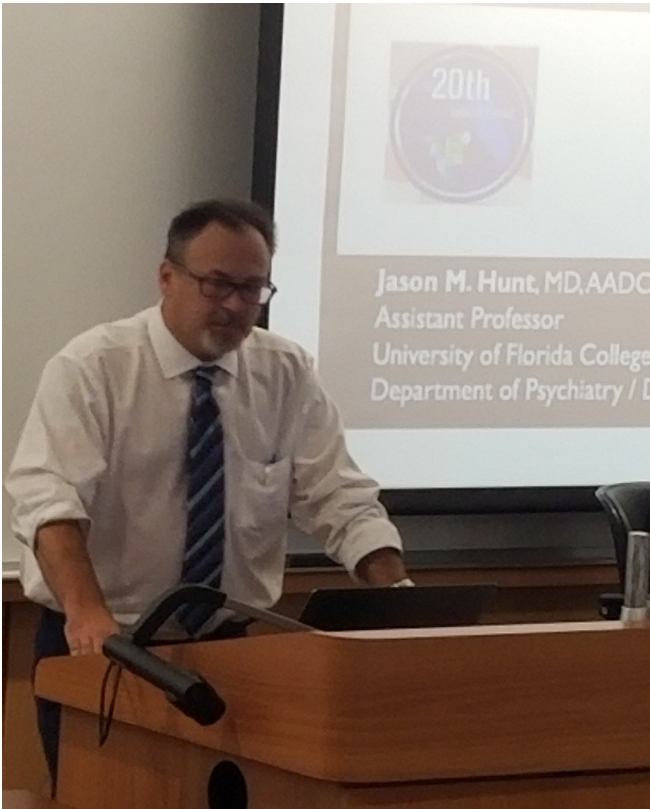
As proof that his vision for drug court was well taken, a succession of five former participants in drug court, from throughout its 20-year history, took to the podium to share their stories of experience, strength and hope. Their courage in sharing about felony charges, jails and prison cells, shame and hopelessness was met with applause and standing ovations from all in attendance, as those stories all shared one theme: drug court was the spark that put them on a path to a beautiful life as part of a community.

In my concluding remarks as the current presiding judge I was elated to share that Collier County adult drug court has recently been invited to serve as one of eight mentor courts working to assist other drug courts from around the country to establish and sustain their own programs. With that, court was adjourned with a renewed commitment by all to carry on this important work.



Judge Christine Greider, Judge William Blackwell, Judge Larry Martin, and Judge Janeice Martin

FIRST OPIOID AWARENESS TRAINING HELD AT FGCU



More than 70 people participated in the first Opioid Awareness Event at FGCU on July 26th, 2019. The keynote speaker was Dr. Jason Hunt (*above -L*) from the University of Florida, Department of Psychiatry, Division of Addiction Medicine. Dr. Hunt presented on neuroscience of addiction and medicated assisted treatment.

Participants also heard from Collier County Judge Janeice Martin (*above -R*), Nancy Dauphinais who is the Chief Operating Officer for the David Lawrence Center, Captain Anthony Maro from Collier County EMS, and Deb Comella from Drug Free SWFL.

The Florida Office of the State Courts Administrator spearheaded this initiative to bring awareness and training across the state about the opioid epidemic. Chief Justice Canady proclaimed July as Opioid Awareness Month for the State Court System.

AN ADVANCEMENT IN TREATMENT COURTS

The Lee County Mental Health Court Program receives funding to help its participants.

In FY 2019-20, the General Appropriations Act appropriated approximately \$11.3 million for problem-solving courts with a three-year funding strategy. After initial allocations were provided, approximately \$1.6 million in recurring funding was available for new allocations. In May 2019, the Trial Court Budget Commission initiated a circuit application process for new problem-solving court funding to allocate the remaining recurring funding balance of \$1.6 million.

A part-time clinician has been hired to clinically screen and diagnose active and pending Mental Health Court participants. The intention is to address a gap in services where defendants likely eligible for the MHC program remain in custody with no medical diagnosis on file and no means to get evaluated while incarcerated. Further, active participants in custody are in need of level of care assessments.

This position will be overseen by Treatment Courts Manager Joseph Rea.



COUNTY COURT JURISDICTIONAL CHANGES SIGNED INTO LAW

On May 24, 2019, Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law HB 337, which raised the county courts' maximum jurisdictional amount from \$15,000 to \$30,000 beginning in January 2020 and to \$50,000 on January 1, 2023.

Responding to recommendations from the Judicial Management Council's Work Group on County Court Jurisdiction, lawmakers earlier this year agreed to raise county court civil jurisdiction for the first time since 1992.

On November 14, the Florida Supreme Court approved new rules of civil procedure that, in addition to technical changes, raise the jurisdiction of small claims court from \$5,000 to \$8,000, also on January 1.

Also to note:

- Filers will be required to include a civil cover sheet specifying the dollar amount in dispute in cases exceeding \$8,000 in value.
- The new law maintains current rules that limits the provision of subsidized court mediation services to county court cases with an amount in controversy up to \$15,000.
- State law provides that on January 1, 2020, appeals of county court orders or judgments with an amount in controversy greater than \$15,000 will be heard by the district courts of appeal until January 1, 2023, when the provision repeals.



KNOW
— YOUR —
COURT
COURT JURISDICTIONAL CHANGES
COMING JANUARY 1, 2020

2019 TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT ANNUAL REPORT

LEE COUNTY JUSTICE CENTER
1700 MONROE STREET
FORT MYERS, FLORIDA 33901

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