

STATE OF MISSOURI

TWENTY-NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT



2018
YEAR END REPORT

The Twenty-Ninth Judicial Circuit continues the commitment of delivering quick and effective justice.

Every year the judiciary files, processes, and disposes a high volume of cases and this year was no different. Although in 2018, the judiciary has experienced a 1 percent decrease in the total number of cases filed from last year, the number of cases have increased 17 percent over the last five years. Despite the growth in cases filed with the court, the judiciary has disposed more cases than it received which prevents back-log and ensures the administration of justice. The judiciary is able to perform at the highest level possible because administration collects, interprets, and evaluates caseload data which gives the judicial officer information to make effective case management decisions.

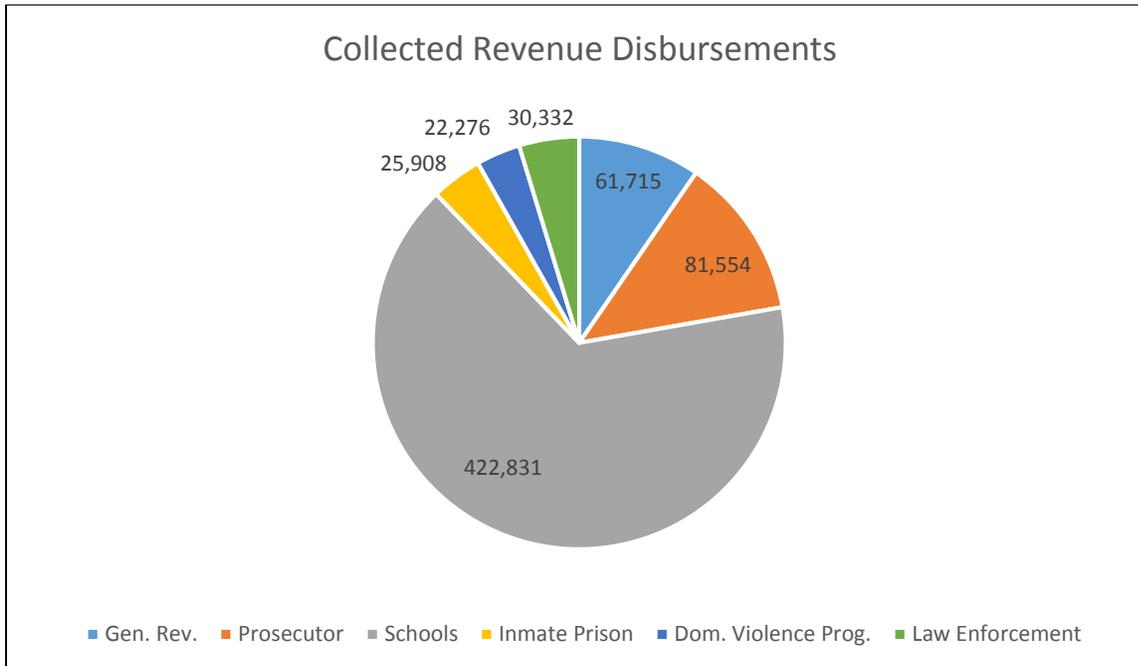
Table 1: Filed Cases by Type for CY 2018

	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>% Change in Filed CY 2017</u>
Circuit Civil	413	397	+3%
Domestic	2609	2701	+3%
Assoc. Civil	4684	4586	+12%
Civil Total	7706	7684	+8%
	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>% Change in Filed CY 2017</u>
Probate	546	513	-9%
	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>%Change in Filed CY 2017</u>
Juvenile	439	454	-7.7%
	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>%Change in Filed CY 2017</u>
Circuit Felony	906	951	+10%
Assoc. Felony	1977	2119	-7.7%
Misd.	1884	1736	+76%
Traffic	2331	2505	-31%
Ordinance	859	768	+45%
Criminal Total	7957	8079	-1%
GRAND TOTAL	16648	16730	-1%

The judiciary continues sound stewardship of taxpayer dollars

The Jasper County judiciary’s budget constitutes 1 percent of the county’s total operating budget. However, the Circuit Clerk’s office collected approximately \$644,616 which has been distributed schools, law enforcement agencies, and other community based programs as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Collected Revenue Estimates by Circuit Clerk 2018



The judiciary is committed to using resources as effectively as possible and are always seeking innovative ways to use technology and take other steps to achieve greater efficiency and enhanced performance. Jasper County is unique as it has two operating court facilities, one in Carthage, the other in Joplin. In an effort to manage the number of transports required by the sheriff's office, the judiciary continues the practice of using video conferencing in lieu of transporting inmates. In 2018, a total of 1569 video conferences were held which is up 11 percent from 2017. This practice is not only a cost-avoidance measure for the county, but it also increases public safety.

Transparency and access to the courts is a priority for the Missouri Judiciary and The Twenty-Ninth Judicial Circuit is leading the way. This year, with the assistance of grant funding, the Circuit Clerk's office electronically scanned over 8,000 cases including juvenile, criminal, and civil cases. In addition, our court is a pilot site for the new Show-Me Courts. Show-Me Courts provide citizen's unfettered on-line access to case information regarding most cases filed with the court. In addition, citizens can receive case notifications via email or text notifications about their case as well as make financial transactions on-line virtually anywhere. These services are not only convenient, but also save taxpayers time and money. As a part of the Show-Me Court initiative, our Circuit Clerks office trained and facilitated the implementation of Show-Me Courts in other counties across the state and were featured on statewide on-line training platforms.

Collaboration and Community Partnerships

The judiciary is committed to working with the community and other stakeholders to address the changing trends within the criminal justice system. For example, our treatment court programs, which have been in existence since 2005, continue to thrive and produce positive outcomes by breaking the cycle of addiction and reducing recidivism. These collaborative courts provide the

judicial officer with viable and effective alternatives to traditional sentencing practices. Additionally, with help from a grant from the Bureau of Justice, the judiciary, along with other stakeholders, implemented a mental health – justice collaboration project in conjunction with Jasper County’s Stepping-Up initiative. The program is designed to reduce the number of individuals with mental health at the county jail. The judiciary understands the importance of working with the community in an effort to pool resources to combat the number of justice involved individuals who suffer from substance use disorder or mental health issues. These individuals continually cycle through and inundate the criminal justice system. Working with community behavior health and the executive branch of the county, we have implemented a program where each individual booked into the jail receives a mental health and substance abuse screening. Once identified, inmates suffering from substance use disorder or mental illness receive a release plan and are linked to services and treatment once released from custody. Research shows these initiatives work to improve recidivism amongst this population, thus reducing the incarceration rate and saving taxpayer dollars.

The Juvenile Division continues its fundamental mission through three pillars: Prevention, Intervention, and Collaborative Partnerships. This year, the division signed a memorandum of understanding with the Joplin School District and implemented common sense discipline measures designed to decriminalize student misbehavior. The school district houses a Deputy Juvenile Officer (DJO) which allows the officer to work closely with school officials and school resource officers to quickly intervene and deal with issues at the school. As a result of this initiative, not only is the division seeing a dramatic drop in the number of formal referrals, we are also experiencing positive outcomes due to the relationships built by the DJO and students. This initiative is the first of its kind in the State of Missouri. Other jurisdictions around the state are looking to emulate these and other collaborate programs the division has implemented.

Treatment Courts continue to give the judiciary a viable alternative to incarceration

Substance use disorder in the United States is an on-going problem plaguing individuals and families, resulting in nearly 3 million arrests in 2016. Similarly, in Jasper County, more than 1,200 substance abuse related charges were filed in 2018 in the Twenty-Ninth Judicial Circuit Court, with the court ultimately removing 384 children from the home. A staggering 58% of those removals were the result of drugs and/or alcohol in the home.

Treatment Courts are special dockets in the court system designed to offer substance abuse treatment, combined with supervision and judicial oversight to provide non-violent addicts the tools they need to change their lives. Treatment Court Judges lead inter-disciplinary teams of professionals which include administration, prosecuting attorney, treatment providers, case managers, probation officers, and law enforcement. While participant eligibility and requirements differ with each Court, to graduate all participants must demonstrate abstinence from drugs and alcohol, satisfy treatment and supervision conditions, complete program requirements, pay applicable fees and restitution.

During the program participants attend treatment, undergo frequent random drug and alcohol testing, meet with their probation officer or caseworker, and appear before the Judge during regular court sessions. Prior to each court appearance the Treatment Court team meet in a non-adversarial staffing to review the progress of each participant. The Judge addresses each participant's level of success in open court and determines the appropriate course of action in each case.

Assessments and treatment plans are individualized to address the clinical needs of each person. In addition to substance abuse treatment, services may include trauma and mental health treatment, educational and vocation counseling, housing assistance, medical health referrals, and life skills building.

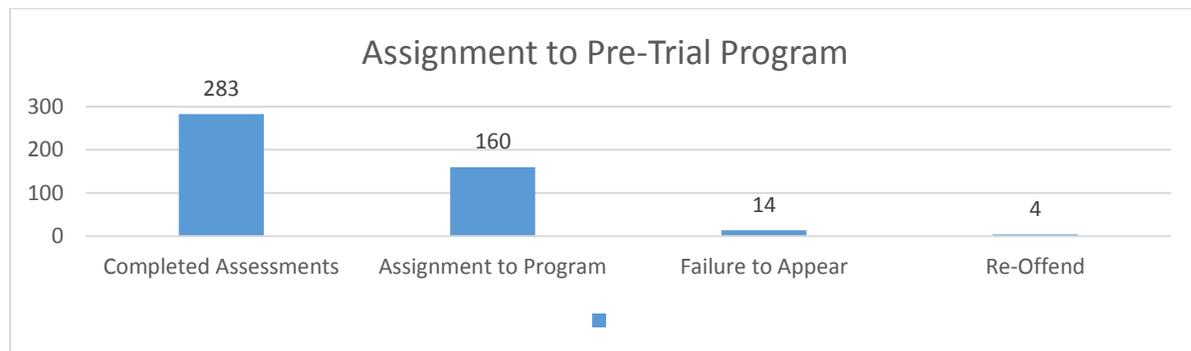
Table 3: Treatment Court At-A-Glance 2018

62 Defendants admitted into treatment court
22 Participants successfully graduated
6368 Urinalysis collected
Participants who graduated completed 4,485 hours of community service
Graduation rate for Drug Court and Co-Occurring Disorders Court: 50%
Graduation rate for Veteran’s Court : 75%
Graduation rate for DWI Court: 77%

Pre-Trial Release Program helps manage the jail population

Jail overcrowding continues to be a pervasive problem across the country. In an effort to address this issue and after extensive collaborative meetings between the judiciary, Jasper County Commission, prosecuting attorney’s office, state public defender’s office, and the Jasper County Sheriff’s Department, the county implemented a pre-trial release program. The program began in May 2017 and is designed to provide the judicial officer with an evidence-based risk assessment of inmates to determine their flight risk and danger to the community. If the inmate is determined to be lower risk, they are released from jail pending disposition of their criminal case. The defendant is monitored by a pre-trial officer who ensures the defendant appears for court and follows the conditions of bond. In addition, the program utilizes a variety of supervision strategies such as electronic monitoring, in-person reporting, treatment referrals, and home visits as an alternative to pre-trial incarceration. The program has been successful in managing the county jail population without compromising public safety.

Table 4: Pre-Trial Release Program 2018



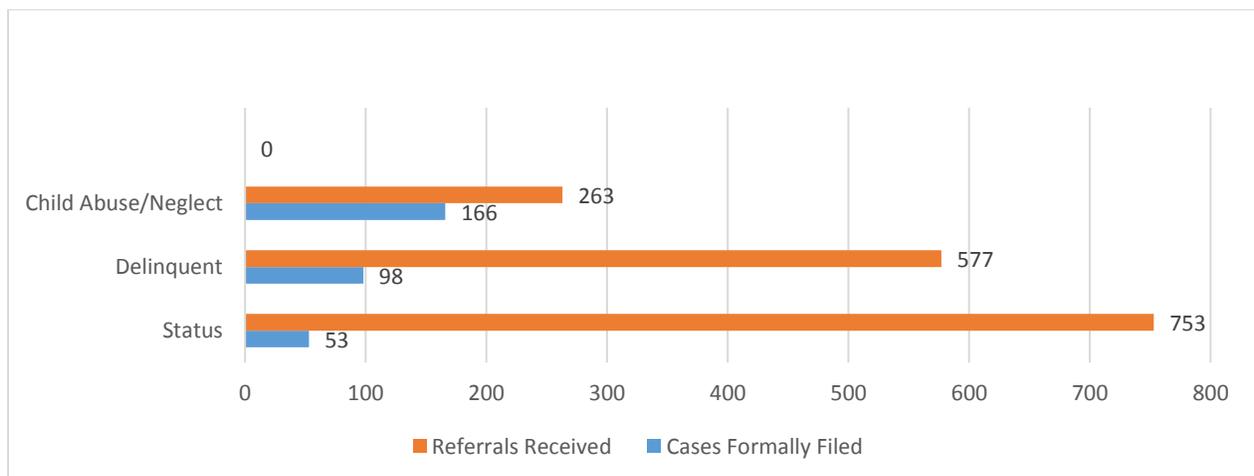
Juvenile Division providing groundbreaking services to youth

The juvenile division constitutes approximately 9 percent of the county’s operating budget. These tax dollars are judiciously used to enforce the law, safely detain youth, provide services, and ensure overall public safety. Over the last 4 years, the Juvenile Division has fundamentally changed the approach to juvenile justice. The drive has changed from punishment to proactive, treatment-based programs designed to address the root issues which cause the youth to become involved in the juvenile justice system. According to the Northwestern Juvenile Project, 92.5 percent of youth had experienced at least one trauma, and 84 percent had experienced more than one trauma, with witnessing violence at the top of the list. The study, conducted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, is the first large-scale, prospective longitudinal study of drug, alcohol, and psychiatric disorders in a diverse sample of juvenile detainees. And because of poverty and discrimination, racial and ethnic minority youth and families are more likely to be subjected to traumatic events.

Juvenile Division staff, officers, and supervisors receive training on assessing risk, criminogenic needs, and trauma of youth referred. These trained staff use these assessments to place youth in appropriate treatment programs, counseling, educational programs, life skills training, and pro-social interest classes. In fact, the division offers 27 separate programs, including community service, life-skills programming, alternative school, tutoring, gender specific programs, prevention programs, mentoring, diversion court, house arrest, educational programs, drug court, and interest-based programs (pro-social activities). In 2018, over 950 youth received in-house services at the Jasper County Juvenile Center.

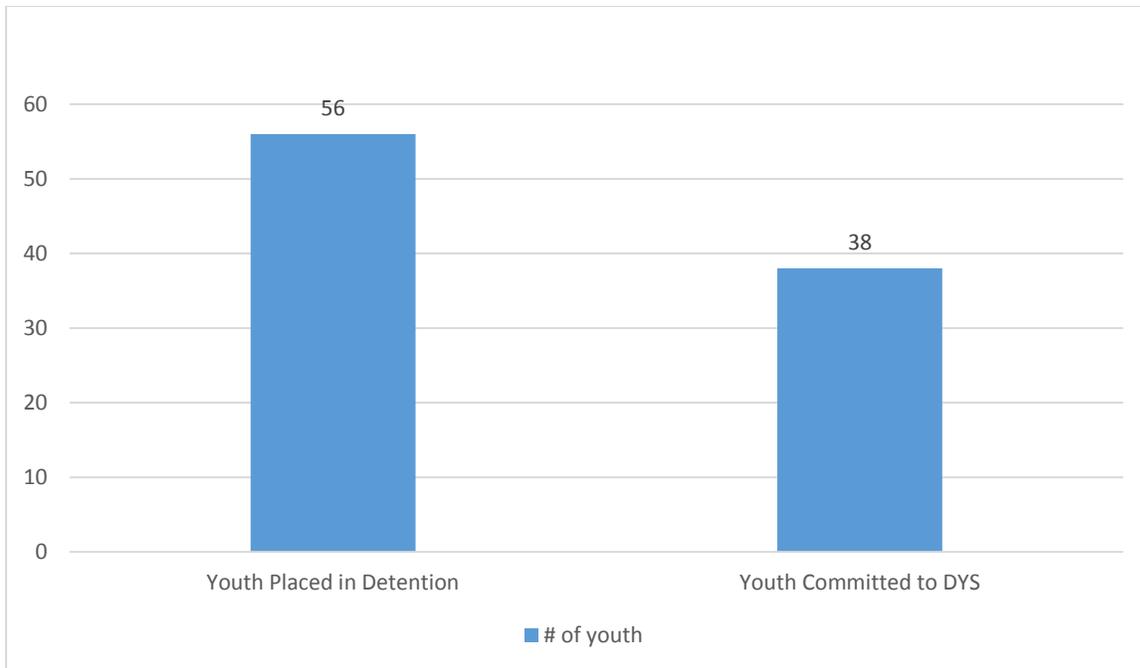
The division is committed to diverting as many youth as appropriate from formal court proceedings. Table 5 shows the number of referrals the division received versus the number of cases which were formally processed with court intervention. Nearly 83 percent of delinquent and 93 percent of status referrals received diversion. These youth were held accountable, placed in appropriate programs, and received services without formal court adjudication.

Table 5: Number of Referrals vs. Formal Filing



Since 2011, the Juvenile Division has been a part of the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI). Since become a part of this initiative, Jasper County has seen a dramatic drop in the number of youth detained and Division of Youth Services (DYS) commitments. Research shows that appropriately diverting children from formal adjudication, collaborating with service providers, providing treatment, and evidence-based programs show improved outcomes. Of the 577 youth referred, only 56 youth were placed into detention and 38 committed to DYS.

Table 6: Youth Placed in Detention and Commitments to DYS 2018



Conclusion:

The Jasper County Judiciary focuses on the individuals, families, and businesses who rely on the courts to achieve justice and resolve disputes. Strong courts are the foundation for strong communities. Thank you for taking your time to read this annual report. We have much to share with our executive branch, justice partners, and community. Should you want any additional information about your Jasper County Circuit Court, please visit us at <http://jaspercounty.org/courts/>. More importantly, we encourage you to visit us at either court location in Carthage or Joplin to see your court in person. We are proud to serve the citizens of Jasper County and strive to provide the most transparent, efficient, and productive court in Missouri.

Sincerely,

Erik T. Theis
Circuit Court Administrator