

MISSOURI JUDICIAL REPORT



FISCAL YEAR 1999



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF JUSTICE



Chief Justice William Ray Price, Jr.

I am pleased to present the Missouri Judicial Report for the year ending June 30, 1999. In these pages, you will read about our efforts to improve the court system in a number of ways, ranging from automation to the implementation of drug courts to judicial education. Of course our primary task is the resolution of lawsuits. The Missouri judiciary is dedicated to the just and impartial resolution of legal disputes promptly and efficiently. For Missouri's citizens, Justice First.

COURT ACCESS

CONSORTIUM FOR STATE COURT INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

In May 1999, the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA) joined the Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification, a national organization of state courts established to pool resources among the states for developing and administering foreign language court interpreter test and training programs.

The functions of the Consortium are to:

- Establish court interpretation test development and administration standards;
- Provide testing materials;
- Develop education programs and standards; and
- Facilitate information sharing to implement certification programs.

The courts will be notified as foreign language interpreters are tested and certified in Missouri through this program.

ASSISTIVE LISTENING TECHNOLOGY FOR THE COURTS

During Fiscal Year (FY) 1999, portable infrared Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) were purchased and distributed to 37 courts.

- Assistive Listening Devices are mostly used by hard of hearing individuals with mild to severe hearing losses in various listening situations and can be worn with or without hearing aids, depending on the type of receiver accessory used.
- The main function of an ALD is to increase the loudness of specific sounds (in most cases the speaker) and reduce the background noise, allowing the person to better understand and hear speech.

In the courts, witnesses, litigants, jurors, attorneys, court reporters, clerks, or the judge may use these systems. The portable system may be moved from courtroom to courtroom or used in other locations such as the clerk's office when assisting a person with a hearing loss.



COURT AUTOMATION

CASE MANAGEMENT

Project staff are working with 14 Courts and the Fine Collection Center to implement Banner Courts, the statewide case management system that will help court staff process cases more efficiently for public access and information exchange, eventually resulting in a completely integrated justice system for Missouri.

- Pilot Court implementations complete. The Court of Appeals - Eastern District, Jackson County-Civil Division, and Montgomery County are fully operational using the Banner case management system.
- FY 1999 included work on two phases of Banner implementations. Barton County - Civil and Probate Divisions, the Court of Appeals - Southern District, and the Court of Appeals - Western District are fully operational using the Banner case management system. The Supreme Court Banner implementation is scheduled for completion the end of September 1999.
- Y2K: Seven courts with identified Year 2000 compliance issues (Boone, Cole, Franklin, Platte, St. Charles, Taney, and Warren Counties) have begun the implementation process and will be operational with Banner before the end of 1999.
- Software vendor SCT Government Systems delivered an upgraded version of the Banner case management software. Banner version 3.0 contains several new features that court staffs are eager to employ and is also certified as Y2K compliant by the vendor.

LOTUS NOTES

Lotus Notes is a program that uses databases and e-mail for group communication. For Missouri, it provides an inexpensive communication link between courts and a constant resource of pertinent court information for judges and court staffs. In today's court system, with judges covering several locations, Lotus Notes allows users remote access to their mail, court dockets, and other information.

- A total of 1,187 Lotus Notes users were added in FY 1999. There are approximately 3,000 total users.

- All Supreme Court and Appellate Judges, Juvenile Officers, Administrators, and Appellate Clerks have access to Lotus Notes. Ninety-nine percent of Circuit Judges, 79% of Associate Circuit Judges, and 73% of Circuit Clerks have access to Lotus Notes.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Before a court is able to use court automation applications, such as Banner, it is required to have the standardized computers, software, phone lines, and other hardware that are capable of supporting and working with the court automation applications. As of June 30, 1999:

- Sixty-five courts have completed infrastructure; and
- Twenty-five courts are currently planning to receive infrastructure.

JUVENILE COURT AUTOMATION

- Thirteen juvenile courts, offices, or residential facilities now have workstations, LAN and WAN connections, printers, and software.
- The award of a \$6 million Community Oriented Policing Services Technology Grant has secured installation of more hardware and software for juvenile courts, offices, and residential facilities.
- The initial design and development for integration of juvenile case-processing and case-management into the Banner software is underway.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Missouri is at the forefront of a visionary court program that has drawn the interest of many international guests who are seeking the same benefits for their court users.

- The Okayama Family Court from Japan visited Missouri to research America's leading court automation project. Visitors from the New South Wales Attorney General's office and the District Court of Sydney, Australia, came to discuss Missouri's unique approach to automation and to obtain information on case management system selection, installation in large locations, and statewide implementation.



COURT AUTOMATION

CASE.NET PUBLIC CASE ACCESS

In keeping with the automation vision to provide improved service, justice and access for Missouri court users, enhanced access to public case information from the judiciary website (www.osca.state.mo.us) is now available. Courts that have converted to the statewide case management system may request that their public case information be made accessible through Case.net. As more courts become automated, Missouri court users will be able to receive more complete information about cases using the Internet instead of traveling to their local courthouse.

- As of June 30, 1999, the Jackson County - Civil Division, Court of Appeals - Eastern District, Montgomery County, Court of Appeals - Southern District, and Court of Appeals - Western District, were providing access to cases through this system.

ADULT ABUSE ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM - QUICKFILE

On January 13, 1999, the 16th Judicial Circuit processed the first remote adult abuse electronic filing using the court's Internet web site.

"Quickfile" provides victims the benefits of:

- Remotely filing a petition for order of protection from one of three Jackson County domestic violence shelters;
- Electronically forwarding the petition to the court; and
- Electronically receiving an ex parte order of protection (in most cases the same day); without:
 - Leaving the safety of a domestic violence shelter;
 - Acquiring transportation to and from the court; or
 - Arranging for child care.

It is anticipated that, with necessary modifications and acquisition of additional funding, "Quickfile" will be implemented statewide in the future.

STANDARDIZED COURT FORMS

- The standardized forms inventory consists of adult abuse, child protection, child support, civil, criminal, general, municipal, probate, small claims, and summons forms. All forms are reviewed and approved by the State Judicial Records Committee.
- Standardized court forms were made available in electronic format for the first time during FY 1999.
- Word processing templates make it possible for court personnel to complete and print forms directly from the computer.

Y2K

- More than 1,500 workstations and servers in the courts were individually tested during FY 1999 for Y2K compliance.
- Information management software developed, or deployed by OSCA, were modified to be Y2K compliant and are in the final stages of deployment.
- A Y2K lab was developed for testing the readiness of court applications and networks. As closely as possible, the lab emulated a typical court system. Its' purpose was to test software and hardware interaction as though it were running in the year 2000 and beyond.
- Every effort has been made to ensure a smooth transition into the year 2000 for the courts' computer systems.

The Missouri Judicial Report is prepared by:

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Caseload statistics for the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and Circuit Court, by county and judicial circuit, are published separately in "The Missouri Judicial Report Supplement," which is available upon request from the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA). Also available from OSCA is the "Summary of Selected Bills Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed by the 90th General Assembly," First Regular Session.



IMPROVED SERVICE

DRUG COURTS

- Enabling legislation for drug court operations became effective (Sections 478.001-478.005 RSMo).
- Ten new drug courts became operational bringing the total of Missouri drug courts to 18.
- OSCA received a grant award from the United States Department of Justice, Drug Courts Program Office to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of 14 operational drug court programs.

COURT CONSOLIDATION

- Goal: Increased efficiency by combining clerical functions under a single appointing authority.
- Sixteen courts are now consolidated.
- Incentives include:
 - Increased salary for clerks in consolidated offices if, through consolidation, staffing needs are reduced; and
 - Financial assistance based on what the court needs to achieve a successful consolidation.

REGIONAL JUSTICE CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY

- Funding for Study: Grant from the Missouri Department of Public Safety with state match.
- Participants: Circuits 24 and 28.
- The Concept:
 - Provides a facility serving more than one county which houses multiple organizations/operations involved with the provision of justice services;
 - Involves pooling of resources to provide state of the art facilities and programs that jurisdictions operating independently may not be able to afford; and
 - Is unique in the cooperation of multiple jurisdictions.
- Components: Jail, primary court facilities, public defender, probation and parole staff, and perhaps others.
- Due Date for Study Results: June 2000.
- If feasible, funding to establish a prototype will be sought.

JUVENILE OFFENDER RISK & NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

- Juvenile and Family Courts in six circuits - Circuits 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, and 22 - are using the Juvenile Offender Risk & Needs Assessment Classification System. This system provides a standardized method for assessing the relative likelihood that a juvenile will reoffend and identifies the treatment needs of these youth.
- A software product known as Juvenile Tracking Referral Assessment and Classification (J-TRAC) was developed by OSCA to automate the Assessment and Classification System.
- The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) provided training to juvenile court personnel. NCCD also made recommendations for refinements to the system.

JUVENILE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

- The Juvenile Court Improvement Project is a federally funded project being piloted in the 2nd and 23rd Circuits. It focuses on the mandates of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 that required permanency planning for abused and neglected children placed in foster care.
- The Missouri Juvenile Court Improvement Project for Child Abuse and Neglect Cases, Fourth Annual Report detailing the processes and accomplishments of the project for the period of March 1998 to February 1999 was completed.
- Preliminary findings from the project show the average length of stay in out-of-home care decreased by 280 and 425 days in the pilot circuits, and the number of adoptions increased.

CONVERSION OF JUVENILE COURT STAFF

- HB 971, passed in 1998, required the state to assume the payroll for juvenile court employees working 1,000 hours or more per year in the 35 multi-county circuits, effective July 1, 1999.
- On July 1, 1999, 466.3 full time equivalents were converted to state employees.



IMPROVED SERVICE

MEDIATION

- Nine courts provided free mediation to approximately 500 Title IV-D eligible parents with fifth year funding from Child Support Enforcement.
- Judges, family court commissioners, court administrator staff, prosecuting attorneys, juvenile office staff, mediation program staff, and mediators attended Best Practices-A Workshop for Missouri Mediation Programs. OSCA IV-D and Mediation Achieving Results for Children (M.A.R.C.H.) Custody/Visitation Mediation court project sites shared successful mediation program processes and practices currently in place. Interactive workshops were provided on referral and intake procedures, mediation agreements/parenting plans, mediation and court issues, and program administration issues relating to both the courts and the clients they serve.

FINE COLLECTION CENTER

The Fine Collection Center was established pursuant to statute by the Missouri Supreme Court to accept pleas of not guilty or guilty and payments of fine and costs for various minor violations. The Center:

- Is authorized to process most non-contested traffic, conservation, and watercraft offenses for counties that voluntarily join the program. During FY 1999, the Fine Collection Center handled only traffic offenses;
- Began operation at pilot sites in Boone and Callaway Counties in July 1999 with ten additional counties joining in October 1999;
- Plans to expand the program to additional counties during FY 2000; and
- Saves prosecutor and court personnel time required to process up to 80 percent of a county's current traffic tickets.

TIME STANDARDS

- Progress was made in three of the five time standards categories during FY 1999.
- Both standards in the circuit civil category improved by one percent statewide, while the first and second standards in the circuit felony category increased by two percent and one percent respectively.
- The most improvement was made in the associate civil category where the first standard increased by five percent and the second standard increased by two percent.
- The state was within one percent from achieving both associate civil time standards, something that has not been accomplished since Administrative Rule 17 was revised in January 1997.

Case Processing Time Standards Age of Case At Disposition FY 1999				
Time Standard Category	Standard for Age of Case at Disposition in the State	Actual Performance Statewide	Percent Change from FY 1998	Circuits Meeting Both Standards in FY 1999
Circuit Civil				
In 18 months	90%	80%	1%	19
In 24 months	98%	88%	1%	
Domestic Relations				
In 8 months	90%	83%	0%	14
In 12 months	98%	90%	0%	
Circuit Felony				
In 8 months	90%	87%	2%	5, 13, 14, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36
In 12 months	98%	94%	1%	
Associate Civil				
In 6 months	90%	89%	5%	1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 23, 28, 32, 34, 36, 39, 42, 44, 45
In 12 months	98%	97%	2%	
Associate Criminal				
In 4 months	90%	77%	-2%	2, 14, 35
In 6 months	98%	88%	-1%	



EDUCATION

Fiscal Year 1999 was an exciting and productive year for Judicial Department Education. Accomplishments were made in three key areas.

SERVICES

- The first automated version of the Bench Book for Trial Judges was released.
- A new Juvenile Officer Handbook was published.
- A Lending Library Catalog, featuring over three hundred new publications, was distributed to court personnel.
- A total of 5,220 participants attended 452 education programs.

FACILITIES

- The Judicial Department Education Center opened its doors on March 1, 1999, featuring a state-of-the-art presentation system and the latest technology for delivery of distance education services. The Center, located in Jefferson City, houses three large classrooms,

a dedicated computer training lab, a production studio, two conference rooms, and offices for education staff.

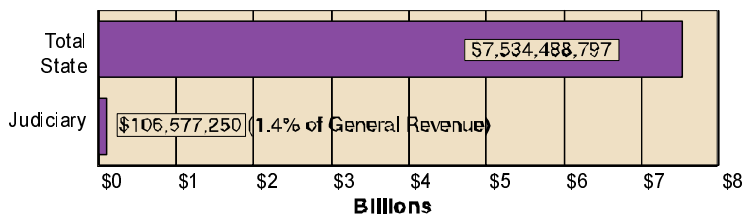
- Five regional training facilities for use in automation training are in operation. They are located at St. Charles, Springfield, Jefferson City, Cape Girardeau, and Liberty. In addition, training is also provided at five telecommunications centers located at Reeds Spring, Nevada, Poplar Bluff, Mexico, and Kirksville.

EDUCATION PROGRAM INFRASTRUCTURE

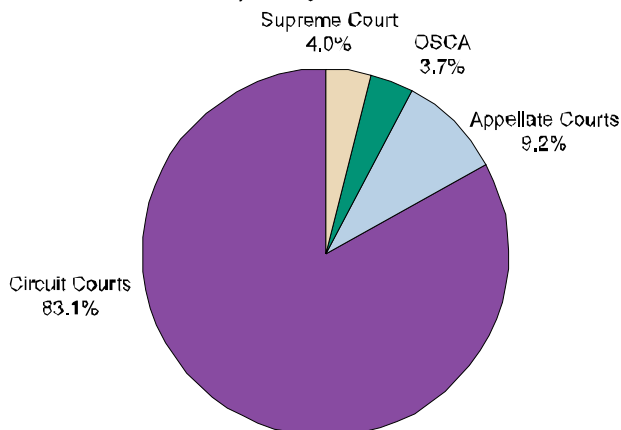
- The Supreme Court appointed a Coordinating Commission for Judicial Department Education to provide oversight for education services.
- The Commission and the six education committees operating under its auspices engaged in a year-long strategic planning process, culminating in a strategic plan and policy document for the Commission and a "Master Operating Plan" for all education committees.

FINANCIAL

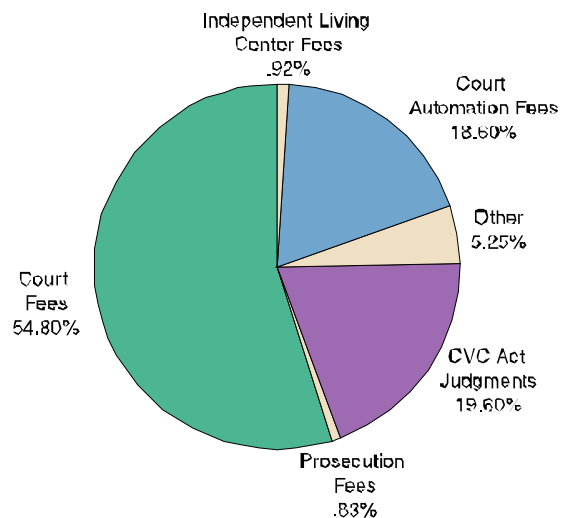
FY 1999 General Revenue Expenditures



Judiciary Budget Breakdown



Collections by the Judiciary



Approximately 62,075 Crime Victims Compensation Act judgments were assessed in FY 1999.

Case Load Statistics - FY 1999					
	Filed	Disposed	Pending End	Disposed/ Filed Ratio	Pending/ Disposed Ratio
CIVIL					
General Civil	32,046	30,741	33,837	0.96	1.10
Domestic Relations	94,573	91,450	58,213	0.97	0.64
Chapter 517	128,138	123,455	43,023	0.96	0.35
Small Claims	19,388	18,619	6,355	0.96	0.34
Subtotal	274,145	264,265	141,428	0.96	0.54
CRIMINAL					
Felony	32,904	31,616	21,071	0.96	0.67
Felony Preliminaries	47,985	48,015	40,657	1.00	0.85
Misdemeanors	123,387	117,553	104,721	0.95	0.89
Traffic	414,574	405,564	220,353	0.98	0.54
Ordinance	20,180	19,284	7,879	0.96	0.41
Municipal Cert./TDN	3,552	3,375	1,417	0.95	0.42
Subtotal	642,582	625,407	396,098	0.97	0.63
JUVENILE					
	33,261	31,918	15,802	0.96	0.50
PROBATE					
Decedents' Estates	5,801	5,711	13,817	0.98	2.42
Incap./Disabled Estates	2,709	2,182	21,524	0.81	9.86
Minor Estates	2,098	1,337	10,356	0.64	7.75
Mental Health Petitions	2,377	2,360	257	0.99	0.11
Probable Cause Petitions*	13	3	10	0.23	3.33
Subtotal	12,998	11,593	45,954	0.89	3.96
TOTAL	962,986	933,183	599,282	0.97	0.64

* Began collecting probable cause petitions as of January 1, 1999

<p>BULK RATE U.S. POSTAGE PAID JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101 PERMIT NO. 283</p>
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