



# 2002 Annual Judicial Report

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State of Missouri



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The Annual Judicial Report is distributed by:  
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## Judges of the Supreme Court of Missouri

The Honorable Stephen N. Limbaugh, Jr.  
Chief Justice

The Honorable Ronnie L. White  
The Honorable Michael A. Wolff  
The Honorable Duane Benton

The Honorable Laura Denvir Stith  
The Honorable William R. Price, Jr.  
The Honorable Richard B. Teitelman

## Welcome and Introduction



**Chief Justice**  
**Stephen N. Limbaugh, Jr.**

On behalf of the Supreme Court of Missouri, I am pleased to present the Annual Judicial Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002. As you will see from the pages that follow, fiscal year 2002 was remarkable for the judiciary in terms of both our challenges and accomplishments. Despite a deteriorating state budget situation, the judiciary made significant advances in improving the administration of justice. We continued to move forward with our court automation program, albeit at a reduced level, to better manage court cases, make court information more accessible to the public, and improve public safety through the immediate electronic dissemination of critical information to state and local law enforcement officials. We initiated a program to physically examine our courthouses both to improve facility security in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> and to make our courthouses more accessible to citizens with disabilities. Through the Drug Court Coordinating Commission, we assumed major funding responsibility for our state's many drug courts to ensure that limited resources are used both efficiently and effectively, thus containing growing costs of incarceration while improving the lives of the many participants. And, we continued to implement case processing standards in order to promote the timely disposition of litigation. This is but a small sampling of the many programs, activities and initiatives of the Missouri judiciary. As we continue to move forward, let each of us rededicate ourselves to the high ideals that exemplify a system of justice renowned around the world.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Stephen N. Limbaugh, Jr.".

Stephen N. Limbaugh, Jr.  
Chief Justice

## Governor Appoints New Judge to Supreme Court



**Judge Richard B. Teitelman**

On February 21, 2002, Governor Bob Holden appointed Judge Richard B. Teitelman to the Supreme

Court to replace retiring Judge John C. Holstein. Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court, Judge Teitelman served for four years on the Eastern District of the Court of Appeals. He is a graduate of Washington University School of Law in St. Louis and served for many years as the director of Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, an organization dedicated to providing legal assistance to low-income citizens. Judge Teitelman is the first legally blind judge and the first Jewish judge to serve on the state's high court.

Judge Holstein announced his retirement after nearly 27 years of judicial service, the last 12 as a judge on the Supreme Court. He is the only judge in the history of Missouri to serve at all levels of Missouri's court system. He retired effective March 1, 2002.

## Supreme Court Tours Provide Education About Judicial System

Educational tours of the Supreme Court increased almost 43 percent over the previous two fiscal years. More than 21,000 people—some from as far away as Belgium, Japan, Korea, and Russia—visited the Supreme Court during fiscal year 2002. The tours enabled visitors ranging from schoolchildren to international legal staff and judicial personnel to civic leaders from throughout the state to visit the historic 95-year-old building and learn more about the Missouri Judiciary. Some visiting groups also had the opportunity to attend oral arguments before the Court.

In addition to its regular tours, the Court began a new program featuring Missouri's rich legal heritage through a series of judicial history exhibits on display in the lobby of the Supreme Court Building. Exhibits included a focus on tensions between Native Americans and early French settlers; early commerce cases; vigilante justice; women's rights; the founding of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art; Missouri's most famous slander case; legal ramifications of the state's old "loyalty" oath; the last trial of Jesse James' brother, Frank; and the downfall of "Boss" Tom Pendergast. All exhibits were on loan from the Missouri State Archives' "Verdict of History" exhibit.

## Chief Justice Focuses on Professionalism, Public Service

The events of September 11 threatened to put on hold the annual meeting of the Judicial Conference, the organization of all Missouri state judges. After finishing the morning's oral argument docket, the Court decided to do as President Bush had suggested and press on with the business of the day. During the joint meeting of the Judicial Conference and The Missouri Bar, which began as scheduled the next day in Springfield, Chief Justice Limbaugh urged lawyers and judges alike to define their standing in their communities through professionalism and public service.

In his State of the Judiciary address to a joint session of the General Assembly in January 2002, Chief Justice Limbaugh focused on the honor of serving the public, either as judges or as legislators. He described the difficult kinds of cases judges must decide every day and invited the members of the general assembly to visit courthouses around the state so they might see first-hand the administration of justice in Missouri.



## Judiciary Tackles Legislative Redistricting

In September 2001, after both chambers of the state's General Assembly were unable to redraw district maps in accordance with the population changes evidenced by the 2000 census figures, the Court, as required by the constitution, appointed a reapportionment commission to redraw the legislative districts. The Court appointed six judges from the Court of Appeals to this commission: Kathianne Knaup Crane; George Draper; Phillip R. Garrison; Ronald R. Holliger; James K. Prewitt; and Robert G. Ulrich. The reapportionment commission completed its task in December 2001.

# The Missouri Court of Appeals

## Court of Appeals Takes Arguments on the Road

To help the general public and particularly students in high school and colleges learn more about Missouri's judicial system, the Court of Appeals took oral arguments on the road throughout fiscal year 2002, hearing cases at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, Missouri Western State College in St. Joseph, William Woods University in Fulton, and the law schools of St. Louis University, the University of Missouri-Columbia, the University of Missouri-Kansas City and Washington University in St. Louis. The Court also heard cases at the county courthouses in Cape Girardeau, Columbia, Hannibal, Kirksville, and, for the first time ever, at the county courthouses in Palmyra, Ste. Genevieve, and Trenton. Indeed, traveling throughout the state not only afforded rural citizens a unique opportunity to observe the appellate courts in action but also helped to reduce legal costs to litigants by eliminating their attorneys' travel time.

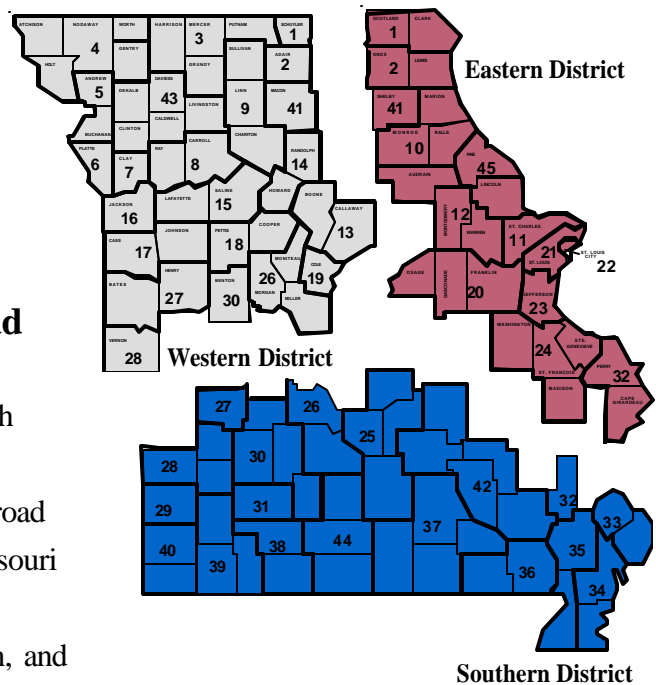
In addition, both the Eastern and Western Districts of the Court of Appeals produced educational brochures that outline the work of the Missouri appellate court system. These brochures are available to the public on request, and they are distributed when court is held at locations other than St. Louis and Kansas City.

## Governor Appoints New Judge to the Court of Appeals



Judge Glenn A. Norton

From a slate of nominees submitted by the Appellate Judicial Commission, Governor Holden appointed Glenn A. Norton to fill the vacancy created on the Court of Appeals, Eastern District, when Judge Richard B. Teitelman was elevated to the Supreme Court. Judge Norton practiced law for several years before serving as an associate circuit judge in the 10<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit (Ralls County) from January 1, 1995, through December 31, 2000. Most recently, Judge Norton served as chief legal counsel to the Governor.





## **Courts Begin Using Digital Sound Recording Equipment**

Recognizing the many benefits of digital sound recording of court proceedings, the Circuit Court Budget Committee made funds available to replace old tape machines with the latest technology in computerized digital sound recording. Among its many benefits, digital sound recording allows for: fast and efficient creation of an annotated log that is stored with the audio record; easy access to previously recorded testimony;

continuous recording while portions of the proceedings are being replayed; avoidance of the “mechanical” failures of tape-based technology; reduction in the amount of space required for storage of audio recordings; less deterioration than that produced on magnetic tape; and high quality sound reproduction. In fiscal year 2002, the Committee funded installation in 34 courtrooms in 21 counties.

## **Courthouses Receive Security Assessments**

The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> spurred greater awareness of the need for improved court security. As a result, the Office of State Courts Administrator implemented a security assistance program that conducted 13 on-site assessments of courthouse security during fiscal year 2002. Each assessment incorporated a review of existing policies and procedures to identify potential vulnerabilities and provided recommendations for maintaining a safer, more secure environment for judicial operations.

Because education is also a key ingredient to improving courthouse security, the assistance program also presented security courses at the spring and fall clerk colleges and at conferences of the Missouri Sheriffs’ Association, Missouri Association of Court Administrators, and the Missouri Associate and Municipal Judges’ Association.

## **Circuit Courts Take Measures to Ensure Access to Justice**

To ensure that Spanish-speaking persons can communicate with their lawyers and the court during court proceedings, the Office of State Courts Administrator implemented an interpreter certification program. Certification is a two-part process consisting of a two-day interpreter orientation workshop plus a test for certification. Missouri now has seven court-certified Spanish interpreters whom courts are encouraged to use whenever possible.

On another front, the Access to Justice Program continued conducting accessibility assessments to aid local courts and county officials in improving court facilities to meet the needs of disabled citizens. Assessments were completed in eight circuit courts, two appellate courts, and the Supreme Court, all under the direction of the Supreme Court’s Commission on the Courts and the Disabled.

As part of an ongoing effort to improve access to the courts for persons with disabilities, the Access to Justice Program also developed a disability awareness-training course for circuit court and juvenile staff. The course focuses on the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, methods for eliminating barriers to participating in court procedures, and proper etiquette for addressing persons with disabilities. The course was offered regionally and is available on request.

## Counties Weigh In With Workload Study

In recognition that the work of court clerks has changed remarkably in recent years in both scope and volume, the Circuit Court Budget Committee appointed the Clerical Weighted Work Load Steering Committee to evaluate definitions of work units; define the workload survey instrument and methodology; and oversee the analysis of the survey results. Membership on the Steering Committee included judges, clerks, and court administrators from courts of different sizes and structures.

With the assistance of a nationally renowned expert, the Committee undertook an extensive time survey, collecting more than 3 million minutes of time from 19 counties for a one-month period between February and March 2002. Participating counties included: Barton, Boone, Callaway, Carter, Cooper, Dade, Dent, Jackson, Mercer, Mississippi, Montgomery, Platte, Putnam, Reynolds, St. Charles, St. Francois, Shannon, Stoddard, and Vernon. The information from this survey will be used to develop a new model for comparing court clerk needs.

## Former Employees Provide Temporary Assistance

Under the Resources of Professional Staff Program, courts benefit from the valuable experience of former employees. The Program works by matching former court staff who are willing to work on a temporary basis with courts that qualify for temporary assistance. These staff, all of whom retired or resigned in good standing with at least four years of experience, are paid an hourly rate equivalent to the pay step and range occupied when the employee retired or resigned.

Thirty-two former employees provided approximately 9,800 hours of service in fiscal year 2002, helping clerks' offices keep pace with heavy demands caused by vacancies, training needs, conversion to automated case management systems, and other short-term situations requiring additional resources. Both former employees who have provided assistance and the courts that have hired them give top ratings to the program.

## Center Collects \$6.8 Million in Fines

Currently, 57 Missouri counties are voluntary members in the Fine Collection Center (FCC). The FCC now processes traffic offenses for all member counties as well as conservation and watercraft offenses for counties that opt for that additional service. During fiscal year 2002, the FCC processed some 105,000 traffic citations and collected nearly \$6.8 million in fines and costs. Since

its inception on July 1, 1999, the FCC has collected a total of \$15.6 million in fines and costs and has processed a total of 250,000 cases. One key feature of the Justice Information System utilized by the FCC and most member counties is the electronic transfer of case information that eliminates duplicative case processing efforts and vastly improves efficiency.



## **Courts Offer Alternative Dispute Resolution Services**

For many years, the Missouri Judiciary has been actively involved in promoting the use of alternative dispute resolution, particularly in dispute resolution cases. Under the auspices of the Supreme Court, the Commission on Alternative Dispute Resolution reviews and makes recommendations for effective alternative dispute resolution services for domestic relations cases. Recently, the Commission developed a plan to establish and evaluate two pilot project courts that will allow the Commission to assess the impact of ADR in a variety of family law-related matters. A statewide proposal was distributed to all courts with selection and implementation of the two court projects to occur in fall 2003.

In addition, working with the Division of Child Support Enforcement, 12 family courts are providing free mediation services to more than 1,200 Title IV-E eligible parents or parents who otherwise are not able to afford these services. The free mediation service helps parents solve child custody and visitation issues, which, when left unresolved, often interfere with child support obligations. Services may include an education component for parents and families designed to help them understand the effects of divorce on children.

## **Circuits Use Nationally Validated Juvenile Classification System**

In fiscal year 2002, the Missouri judiciary moved a step closer to implementing a state-of-the-art risk and needs classification system for juveniles. The system is designed to help judges and juvenile officers assess and classify juvenile delinquents and at-risk youth so that individualized programs can be designed for each child. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency recently completed a validation study of Missouri's Juvenile Offender Risk & Needs Assessment and Classification System and made several recommendations that were incorporated into the system. Twenty-four circuits currently are using the system. Results from periodic quality assurance questionnaires sent to juvenile officers in those circuits will help identify issues and concerns with future system implementation.



## **Circuits Work for Timely Placement of Abused and Neglected Children**

The 2<sup>nd</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup> Judicial Circuits continued a pilot project aimed at improving case management in child abuse and neglect cases. This project, funded in part by the federal government under its court improvement project, seeks to place abused and neglected children in permanent homes in a more timely manner. The program also is designed to assess the impact of federal and state legislative reforms and to make recommendations for improving the system.

## Judiciary Develops Specialized, Problem-Solving Courts

The Judiciary actively is developing and operating new types of problem-solving courts that use a variety of tools in helping people address behaviors that are self-destructive, costly to society, and fiscally expensive for state government. Among the tools these courts use are specialized dockets, treatment programs, performance standards, and rapid court intervention, all designed to prevent persons from sinking deeper into the justice system.

The Missouri Judiciary has been a national leader in implementing problem-solving courts, particularly in the areas of drug courts, mental health courts, and family courts. Utilizing a wide range of treatment programs and early court intervention, drug courts provide an effective alternative to the incarceration of chemically dependent defendants. The success of drug courts is measured not

only in terms of money saved, but more importantly in lives saved. For instance, because of drug courts, Missouri can boast that last year, 11 drug-free babies were born who otherwise would have started life chemically addicted at a great cost to society. In fiscal year 2002, Missouri increased the number of operational drug courts by 11, bringing the total to 45 statewide.

Similarly, the number of mental health courts doubled during fiscal year 2002, with St. Louis County and Jackson County leading the way. St. Louis County holds mental health court in three different municipalities, while Jackson County operates in two municipalities and one division of the circuit court. The mental health court concept is receiving tremendous support from local communities, thanks to innovative dispositions for mentally disturbed persons who most often are charged with

public-order offenses constituting little more than a nuisance. Without the mental health court option, these defendants likely would be incarcerated.

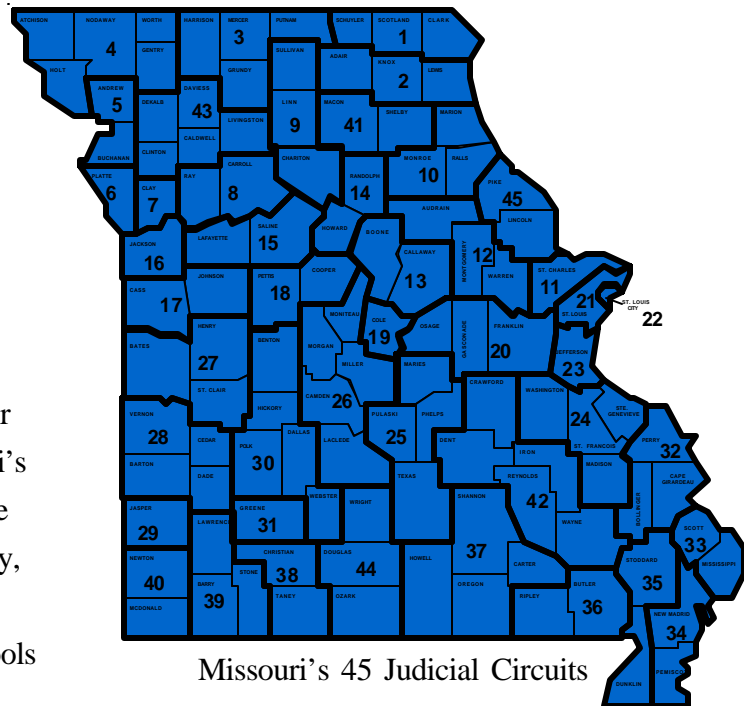
Finally, the integrated family court—a one-judge, one-family approach to decision making—is providing essential continuity to the judicial process. These courts are designed to ensure that, to every extent possible, the same judge is handling all the judicial matters involving a family, whether they be divorce, separation, child custody, abuse, delinquency, or otherwise. Utilizing the one-judge, one-family approach with a wide variety of treatment and intervention programs allows the courts to respond more precisely to specific needs of individual family members as well as the family as a whole.

### Reference Guide Created for Best Practices in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases

The Best Practices Work Group of the Supreme Court's Family Court Committee created, published, and distributed the first installment of the Missouri Resource Guide for Best Practices in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases. This guide provides a concise, comprehensive, and practical reference tool for the juvenile and family court judges and commissioners who hear such cases. The Resource Guide includes a user-friendly, Missouri-specific bench card for protective custody orders and protective custody, adjudication, and disposition hearings. Work is underway on the remaining bench cards, which will address such diverse matters as permanency review, termination of parental rights, adoption hearings, the Indian Child Welfare Act, the Interstate Compact on Child Placement, the Multiethnic Placement Act, and the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

## Time Standards Help Courts Become More Efficient

Supreme Court Operating Rule 17 establishes case processing time standards to ensure the prompt and fair disposition of criminal and civil cases filed in Missouri's circuit courts. The standards provide litigants with time frames during which they can, with reasonable certainty, expect to have their case decided by the court or otherwise resolved. These standards are designed as tools to help courts achieve the overall goals of efficiency, productivity, and quality of justice. Of course, because some cases present unique and extreme circumstances, the time standards are not absolute requirements applicable to every case.



Case Processing Time Standards Age of Case At Disposition FY 2002				
Time Standard Category	Standard for Age of Case at Disposition in the State	Actual Performance Statewide	Percent Change from FY 2000	Circuits Meeting Both Standards in FY 2002
Circuit Civil				
In 18 months	90%	78%	0%	19
In 24 months	98%	87%	0%	
Domestic Relations				
In 8 months	90%	82%	1%	5
In 12 months	98%	89%	0%	
Circuit Felony				
In 8 months	90%	89%	4%	3, 13, 14, 36
In 12 months	98%	94%	2%	
Associate Civil				
In 6 months	90%	86%	1%	1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 23, 26, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 41, 44, 45
In 12 months	98%	96%	0%	
Associate Criminal				
In 4 months	90%	78%	1%	32, 35
In 6 months	98%	89%	1%	

As shown in the Case Processing Time Standards chart, in fiscal year 2002, the actual performance toward meeting the time standards improved in six categories. The standards, though rigorous, are achievable, as evidenced by the fact that at least one circuit meets the standards for each case type. Steady progress continues to be made statewide.



## **Judiciary Provides Continuing Education to All Court Personnel**

During fiscal year 2002, the Division of Judicial Department Education continued to provide exceptional educational services for court personnel, reaching 2,759 judiciary employees enrolled in 464 classes. In addition, 403 judiciary employees, many of whom also participated in classroom courses, accessed 67 different Web-based training courses.

The annual Judicial College continues to be the centerpiece of the program and has drawn national recognition for the quality and the substantive content of its presentations. The college allows judges from across the state to gather and learn together about everything from the latest changes in state and national law to judicial ethics to the use of courtroom technology to techniques for better management of dockets and courtrooms.

Continuing education services also were provided to juvenile court personnel, court clerks, and court reporters. Highlights included a family violence “how-to” seminar for multidisciplinary court teams of judges, juvenile officers, and circuit clerks from 14 circuits; a week-long Court Clerk College for court clerks from across the state; state-of-the-art training on new technologies and Internet research for court reporters; implementation of a year-long certification management training program for judges and senior court managers; and an advanced judicial studies course on genetics for trial and appellate judges, featuring national experts in the field.

## **Courts Harness Technology for Education**

The Education Division’s technology section is supporting and expanding educational opportunities by harnessing the power of technology. Through the blending of traditional delivery methods and technology, the Division provided education services to court personnel at the local level, saving both time and money for the state and counties. Two major accomplishments in particular were the development of a statewide judicial education website and the development of Web courses on case management software skills for courts using the state’s case management information system.

# Court Automation Program

## Courts Continue to Automate

Under the leadership of the Supreme Court and statutory Missouri Court Automation Committee, the Judiciary continues to invest substantial resources to automate the courts. The goal of the automation program is to provide courts throughout the state with a family of automated systems that improve service, increase public access, and provide fair and equitable justice. Twenty-two additional courts received the Judiciary's case management program, the Justice Information System (JIS), during fiscal year 2002, and the system is now in place in more than half of the state. JIS continues to be a cornerstone of the Court Automation Program, helping courts manage their case information and financial reporting more effectively and providing the public with Web access to public case records. Courts using JIS also benefit from its ability to transfer pertinent information electronically to state law enforcement agencies. One significant example is the electronic transfer of adult protection orders to the Missouri State Highway Patrol, thus improving victim and officer safety by making the information immediately available to law enforcement officers throughout the state.

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... court automation  
provide(s) ... patrons  
of Missouri courts  
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## Case.net Continues to Expand Public Access to Courts

Courts using JIS to manage their caseloads also offer the public the opportunity to track most case information via the Internet through the Case.net system. This state-developed system enables anyone with Internet access to search for public case information, thus reducing workload on clerks and eliminating many inconveniences previously encountered when information could only be obtained by physically going to a local courthouse. This fiscal year, an additional 22 courts began posting their information to the Internet through the Case.net system.

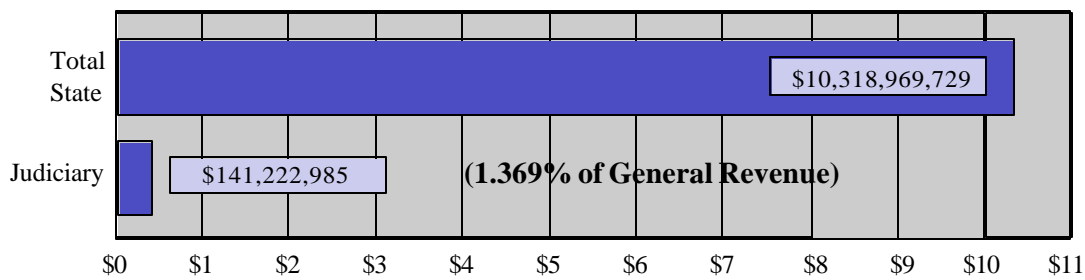
## Courts Receive Jury Management Software

The right to be tried by a panel of our peers is a pillar of the American justice system, but locating and selecting panels for trials is a critical and growing challenge for courts. To aid in the process of managing and impaneling juries, 51 courts received the Jury Management System (JMS) during fiscal year 2002. JMS allows for the electronic transfer of drivers license information from the Department of Revenue, enhancing the courts' ability to provide better jury pools. The system also allows courts to issue jurors checks in payment for their service on the day their service is completed, thereby eliminating administrative delays associated with processing and hand-mailing payments. In total, 63 Missouri courts are using JMS.

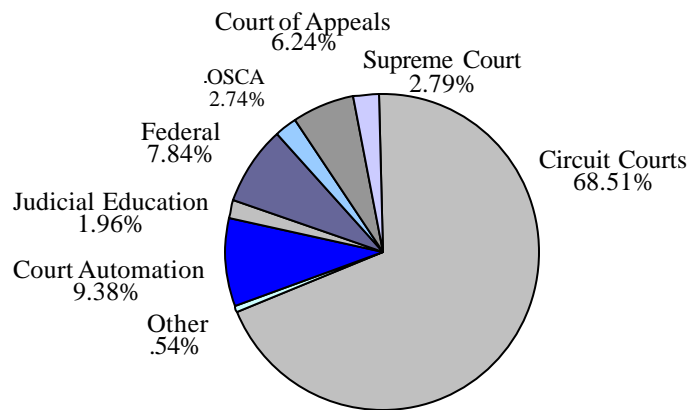


# Missouri Judiciary State Revenue and Expenses

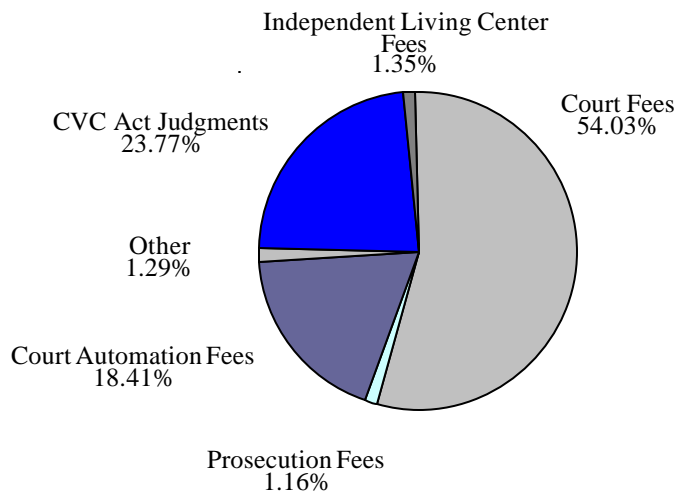
## FY 2002 General Revenue Expenditures



## Judiciary Budget Breakdown



## Distribution of Revenue for the State



Approximately 62,108 Crime Victims Compensation Act judgments were assessed in fiscal year 2002.

# Judiciary Summary Case Information

Fiscal Year 2002					
	Filed	Disposed	Pending End	Disposed/ Filed Ratio	Pending/ Disposed Ratio
<b>SUPREME COURT</b>					
Appeals	93	80	57	0.86	0.71
Writs	204	197	44	0.97	0.22
Applications to Transfer	473	467	64	0.99	0.14
Supervisory Matters	62	65	33	1.05	0.51
<b>APPELLATE COURT</b>					
Appeals	3,246	3,196	2,718	0.98	0.85
Writs	468	465	50	0.99	0.11
<b>CIRCUIT COURT</b>					
<b>CIVIL</b>					
General Civil	33,087	29,873	35,141	0.90	1.18
Domestic Relations	102,956	101,297	51,856	0.98	0.51
Chapter 517	146,648	140,446	46,819	0.96	0.33
Small Claims	18,356	18,403	4,831	0.99	0.26
Subtotal	301,047	290,019	138,647	0.96	0.48
<b>CRIMINAL</b>					
Felony	36,519	33,521	26,927	0.92	0.80
Felony Preliminaries	57,762	52,555	45,145	0.91	0.86
Misdemeanors	127,645	119,340	121,212	0.93	1.02
Traffic*	255,469	260,240	185,637	1.02	0.71
Ordinance	18,652	18,202	9,350	0.98	0.51
Municipal Cert./TDN	3,856	3,699	1,609	0.96	0.43
Subtotal	499,903	487,557	389,880	0.98	0.80
<b>JUVENILE</b>					
	36,920	36,609	17,202	0.99	0.47
<b>PROBATE</b>					
Decedents' Estates	5,384	5,260	9,518	0.98	1.81
Incap./Disabled Estates	2,931	2,335	26,009	0.80	11.14
Minor Estates	2,721	1,852	12,827	0.68	6.93
Mental Health Petitions	2,388	2,697	603	1.13	0.22
Probable Cause Petitions	18	12	53	0.67	4.42
Subtotal	13,442	12,156	49,010	0.90	4.03
<b>FINE COLLECTION CENTER</b>					
Traffic/Watercraft/Conservation	104,963	104,983**	7,753	1.00	0.07

\*Traffic caseload does not include cases reported by the Fine Collection Center.

**\*\*Manner of Disposition:**

Guilty Plea: 64,683

Returned to Court - Not Guilty Plea: 20,663

Returned to Court - No Response: 19,637

Detailed 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.

# Organization of the Courts

## Supreme Court

7 judges, 12-year terms

Chief Justice elected by judges of the Supreme Court for 2-year terms

Non-Partisan Court Plan

The Supreme Court's authority, as established in the Missouri Constitution, includes:

- Exclusive appellate jurisdiction in all cases involving the validity of a treaty or statute of the United States, or of a statute or provision of the state constitution, the construction of state revenue laws, the title to any state office, and in all cases where the death penalty is involved. (Mo. Const. art. V, § 3)
- The power to issue and determine remedial writs. (Mo. Const. art. V, § 4.1.)
- General superintending control and supervisory authority over all courts and tribunals. (Mo. Const. art. V, § 4.1.)
- The power to establish rules relating to practice and procedure before all courts and administrative tribunals, which have the force and effect of law. (Mo. Const. art. V, § 5)

## Court of Appeals

12-year terms

Western District - 11 judges

Eastern District - 14 judges

Southern District - 7 judges

Non-Partisan Court Plan

The Court of Appeal's authority, as established in the Missouri Constitution, includes:

- General appellate jurisdiction over all cases not within the exclusive appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. (Mo. Const. art. V, § 3)
- The power to issue and determine remedial writs. (Mo. Const. art. V, § 4.1.)
- General superintending control over all courts and tribunals within the district.

## Circuit Court

The Circuit Court's authority, as established in the Missouri Constitution, includes:

- Original jurisdiction over all cases and matter, civil and criminal, including the issuance and determination of remedial writs. (Mo. Const. art. V, § 14)

45 circuits with court in each county

134 Circuit Judges, 6-year terms

175 Associate Circuit Judges, 4-year terms

361 Municipal Judges, terms designated by municipality

15 Family Court Commissioners

1 Family Court Referee, 1 Family Court Hearing Officer, 1 Drug Commissioner

4 Probate and 3 Deputy Probate Commissioners

Non-Partisan Court Plan - St. Louis City; St. Louis County; Jackson; Platte, & Clay Counties

Partisan elections - rest of state

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