
Report to the Community

The 2013 Annual Report of the Minnesota Judicial Branch



MINNESOTA
JUDICIAL
BRANCH

Letter from the Chief Justice



Dear fellow Minnesotans,

On behalf of the judges and employees of the Minnesota Judicial Branch, I am pleased to present the 2013 Annual Report to the Community. This report highlights the efforts of the Minnesota Judicial Branch to improve and enhance the delivery of justice in our state.

The past year saw improved Branch performance in the area of case disposition timeliness. Surveys conducted in 2013 also indicated increased customer and employee satisfaction over the past five years.

Self-help services were expanded in 2013 to assist the growing number of parties proceeding without a lawyer in court cases. The Branch also made significant advancements in the effort to convert records from paper to electronic format, including electronic filing of cases.

The Branch also enhanced and expanded its information-sharing with justice partners last year, and launched a reform effort aimed at speeding up the resolution of civil litigation. Efforts to expand the availability of drug and other problem-solving courts also took steps forward, thanks in part to new funding approved by the Legislature.

Additional details on these and other justice system improvements are included in the main section of this report.

All of these efforts build upon our strategic priorities for the future. We are proud of the accomplishments of our judges and employees, and remain committed to our mission to provide equal access for the timely resolution of cases and controversies. We hope you find this report informative and useful.

Sincerely,

Lorie S. Gildea
Chief Justice
Minnesota Supreme Court

The Minnesota Judicial Branch

By the Numbers

The Judicial Branch Mission

*To provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the
fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.*

Judicial Branch FY2013 Budget

\$235,170,000 - District Courts
\$30,608,500 - Supreme Court/State Court Administration/State Law Library
\$10,166,500 - Court of Appeals
\$275,945,000 - Total

Judicial Branch Staff and Judges

Approximately 2,500 permanent employees
315 - Number of authorized judgeships
Supreme Court- 7
Court of Appeals- 19
District (Trial) Courts- 289

Judicial Districts: 10

Number of Judicial Branch hearing facilities: 101

Oldest Courthouse: Washington County Courthouse, 101 West Pine Street, Stillwater, 1869

Number of Courthouses on the National Register of Historic Places: 62

2013 Report to the Community

The Judicial Branch strives to provide a fair, timely, and accessible forum for the resolution of legal matters. In 2013, we worked to achieve this goal by:

- improving Branch performance,
- expanding self-help services,
- moving to electronic court records,
- increasing data-sharing with our justice partners,
- expediting civil litigation,
- expanding drug courts,
- consolidating appeal preparation, and
- improving monitoring of conservator accounts.

Improving Branch Performance

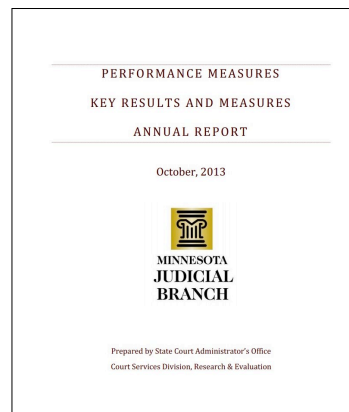
Since 2008, the Branch has assessed its performance through a number of indicators, including customer satisfaction, case disposition timeliness, and employee satisfaction. The results are tabulated annually in, “Performance Measures – Key Results and Measures Annual Report,” which is available on the Judicial Branch website, www.mncourts.gov.

The report, published in October 2013, details results in six key areas: Access to Justice, Timeliness, Integrity and Accountability, Excellence, Fairness and Equity, and Quality Workplace Environment.

A number of case processing areas are reviewed twice a year, including time to disposition, age of pending cases, length of time to determination of a permanent placement for children placed under court protection, and length of time to adoption for children under state guardianship. Results show:

- Statewide clearance rates continue to improve.
- The backlog index has been declining for all major case groups since 2008, except for Major Criminal, which has increased slightly.
- All 10 judicial districts disposed of more civil cases in calendar year 2012 than were filed.
- The number of pending cases has decreased since 2008 in all major case groups except Dependency/Neglect, which has remained flat.

Every five years, the Branch conducts a survey of court customers. The Access and Fairness Survey was conducted at 105 court locations between January and April 2013. More than 4,700 surveys were completed. Respondents reported a high level of approval for courthouse access (90 percent agree/strongly agree) and for being treated with courtesy and respect by staff and judges (88 percent agree/strongly agree). The Quality Court Workplace Survey, which was conducted in October 2012, is the Judicial Branch's measure for employee and judicial officer satisfaction with their positions. The survey generated nearly 2,000 responses from justices, judges, and staff. Employees reported the highest levels of agreement with questions related to their understanding of how their job relates to the overall mission of the Minnesota Judicial Branch and the statement: "On my job, I know exactly what is expected of me," with 86 percent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing. An equally high number of respondents, 88 percent, reported that, "I am proud I work in my court."



Progress on performance measures is reviewed twice a year by the Judicial Council, the policy-making body of the Branch. The use of performance measures has become a regular part of doing business in district and appellate courts. Judicial districts review results at bench meetings and court administrator meetings, and report that the regular review of their performance measures has led to increased collaboration with criminal justice partners, local bar associations, and others in search of new ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness in case-processing.

Expanding Self-Help Services

Courts across the country are experiencing high numbers of parties proceeding without a lawyer. Minnesota is no exception; however, our state courts are recognized nationally for providing services to self-represented litigants through Self-Help Centers and collaborations with bar associations, legal services organizations, and law libraries.

Several district courts operate Self-Help Centers, including the state's highest volume court, Hennepin County District Court. In 2013, walk-in Self-Help Centers at the Hennepin County Family Justice Center and Hennepin County Government Center provided assistance to 37,131 people. Approximately one in 10 of those served required assistance in a language other than English. The Hennepin County District Court Self-Help Center employs bilingual staff to address language needs in a timely, effective, and cost-efficient manner.

Increasingly, Self-Help Center customers are using computers to work on their legal matters. The Minnesota Judicial Branch provides a number of services for these customers, including on-line assistance for litigants seeking divorce and restraining orders. Our program generates the required court forms by guiding litigants through a series of questions

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Utilizing grants from the State Justice Institute and the Legal Services Corporation, and through partnerships with Central Minnesota Legal Assistance and Pro Bono Net, electronic filing, or “eFile” service, was expanded in 2013 to include requests for restraining orders and remote access to court documents via a personal court account. The project will be evaluated for possible expansion to other courts in 2014.

To provide help in all counties, the Judicial Branch also funds and manages a centralized “virtual” Self-Help Center. Information, forms, tools to assist with completing forms, videos and tutorials, links to legal advice, and more are available on the Judicial Branch website at www.mncourts.gov/selfhelp.

Self-Help Center website users are supported by phone, e-mail, and co-browsing. Virtual Self-Help Center personnel are attorneys who provide general information and guidance; not legal advice. In 2013, virtual Self-Help Center staff responded to 3,879 e-mails and 18,676 phone calls, and remotely reviewed court forms for 1,228 people.

Partnering with law libraries and district court personnel, Virtual Self-Help Center staff helped maintain courthouses’ public access computer workstations and updated website content to improve usability and address law changes. The Volunteer Lawyer’s Network offered virtual legal advice clinics through a partnership with the Self-Help Center.

The Self-Help Center website is heavily used. In 2013, there were more than 1,050,000 visits to the home page; a 127 percent increase over the 461,000 visits in 2008. The website is used mainly by the public, but also serves as a central source of accurate information for court staff. During 2013, Self-Help Center staff converted approximately 400 court forms designed for the general public into a fillable, savable Portable Document Format (PDF) format, which will be available in early 2014. This will make it easier for the public to fill out forms and ensure that the information they provide is legible. It is also another step toward eFiling for self-represented litigants.

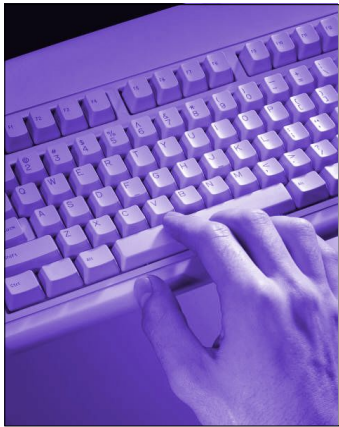
Moving to Electronic Court Records

The 11 counties chosen to lead the Branch’s transition from paper to electronic case records completed their pilot phase in 2013 with the approval of the requirement for mandatory electronic filing (eFiling) of most family and civil cases. For other types of cases, eFiling was initiated on an optional basis. District courts in the following counties participated: Cass, Clay, Cook, Dakota, Faribault, Hennepin, Kandiyohi, Lake, Morrison, Ramsey, and Washington.



Work continues throughout the Branch to prepare for eFiling in the remaining courts in 2014 and 2015. Since July 2013, some district courts began scanning paper documents filed in new cases to create digital images stored in the court case management system. As courts have completed that process, those documents have been made viewable on public access terminals in all Minnesota courthouses statewide. Confidential and sealed documents are not available, and cases filed before July 2013 will not be scanned. By the end of 2013, accessible case documents were viewable in 44 courthouses in Minnesota. A map of courthouses with viewable documents is available on the Judicial Branch website, www.mncourts.gov.

Data-Sharing With Justice Partners



Since completion of the Minnesota Court Information System (MNCIS), the primary case management system for Minnesota's district courts, the Judicial Branch has worked to identify new ways to share case information with law enforcement agencies, corrections departments, county attorneys, and other justice system partners. By the end of 2013, the Judicial Branch was exchanging more than 2.5 million data messages each month with partner agencies. These largely automated information exchanges save time for court staff, reduce errors, and speed case processing. Three examples include:

The Stearns County Attorney's Office began receiving electronic court notices in 2008. This has allowed the office to have a completely electronic court calendar for hearings associated with cases in its case management system. Receiving hearing notifications electronically saves about two hours per day in calendar management and eliminates the need to manually create calendar events in a case management system or Outlook calendar. It has also eliminated the need to file paper notifications in each physical file and allows the office to begin using the information almost immediately. Electronic notifications are received throughout the day as modifications are made to calendar events. By handling notice information electronically, there is no opportunity for the human error sometimes associated with staff entering events manually. The office reports that it looks forward to reaping these same benefits from other electronic notifications, including case dispositions, which the office will be working on in the coming months.

Real-time data transfer of warrants issued from MNCIS to the Saint Louis County Sheriff's Office has improved warrant enforceability. By eliminating the time gap between data entry in one system and paper routing and data entry in another system, law enforcement has made earlier arrests and retained inmates that otherwise might have gone free.

Integration with MNCIS has provided numerous benefits to Ramsey County Community Corrections by: 1) eliminating inefficient or redundant business practices; 2) improving decision-making based on accurate and complete information; and 3) reducing paper processing, phone calls, and redundant data entry. With immediate notification that a pre-sentence investigation has

been ordered, the wait time to interview defendants has been reduced. This has resulted in reduced jail time, reduced time interviewing offenders, and faster turnaround for report submissions to courts. Agents are notified when warrants are issued or cleared for clients, enabling them to respond faster to offender misconduct and prepare probation violation reports for courts sooner. It has also eliminated phone calls to the sheriff or courts to track information. The agency's risk assessment instrument for the Juvenile Detention Center conducts real-time queries to MNCIS for client and case information and displays for the screener when a youth is brought to the facility. This feature allows the agency to process and calculate risk scores to determine the need to detain, refer the client to an alternative location, or release to home.

Expediting Civil Litigation

The Expedited Litigation Track (ELT) Pilot began on July 1, 2013. An expedited civil litigation project was one of the recommendations of the 2012 Supreme Court Civil Justice Reform Task Force. Operating in Dakota and St. Louis (Duluth) counties, ELT Pilot case types include contract, consumer credit, personal injury, and miscellaneous civil. Expedited Litigation Track cases receive early judicial attention through a case management conference within 45-60 days of case filing, involve limited discovery, and have trials within four to six months of case filing. The goal of the pilot is to see if an expedited process improves the way trial courts process civil cases in furtherance of the court's mission "to provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies." The pilot will continue through at least July 2014.

Expanding Drug Courts

Currently, there are 41 drug and mental health courts in Minnesota – 39 under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Judicial Branch and two under the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court of the White Earth Nation. These courts service 36 of the state's 87 counties.

In 2012, the State Court Administrator's Office completed a two and one half year study of over 500 Adult Drug Court participants that indicated positive outcomes for participants and the criminal justice system. The study showed reduced recidivism and incarceration. From drug court entry through two and one half years later (on average, participants graduate from drug court approximately one and one half years after entering the program), one-quarter (26 percent) of drug court participants had new charges compared to 41 percent of the comparison group. Drug court participants spent half as much time in prison as the comparison, and two-thirds as much time incarcerated overall. Drug court participants in almost all courts spent less time in jail over the two and one half years than the comparison group.

In 2013, three new problem-solving courts were approved: Saint Louis County Mental Health Court, Mahnommen County-White Earth Nation DWI Court, and the Fifth Judicial District Veterans' Treatment Court. Additionally, the Pennington County DWI Court was expanded to include Marshall County, and the Ramsey County Adult Substance Abuse Court added a track focused specifically on the needs of veterans.

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The 2013 Legislature increased the FY14-15 Drug Court base budget by \$1.75 million, resulting in a total of \$4.65 million available to maintain and expand drug courts.

In response to the increased funding, the Branch solicited applications from local jurisdictions in two areas: funding for at-risk courts and funding to implement new courts. The at-risk court funding was provided to ensure that courts where grant funding expired or was about to expire would receive funding to remain open. Eight courts were funded under this priority. The State Court Administrator's Office received seven applications from local jurisdictions to implement a new court. The seven applications approved include: Eighth Judicial District Drug Court, Steele-Waseca Multi-County Drug Court, Rice County Drug Court, Carlton County Drug Court, Ramsey County Veterans' Treatment Court, Morrison County Drug Court, and North St. Louis County Mental Health Court.

The Branch's Drug Court Initiative Advisory Committee created a five-year plan to expand drug courts throughout the state and reach rural populations where a single drug court may not be efficient. The goal is to implement multi-county efforts to make drug courts available to all Minnesotans, rather than have a drug court in every county. In August 2013, the Judicial Council approved phase one of the Statewide Implementation Plan which will:

- Use crime and court data to determine where the need for drug courts exists;
- Use judicial resource information to determine where multi-county collaborations make sense;
- Use treatment admission data to identify trends;
- Examine and potentially revise policies, procedures, and rules to enable easier access to drug courts statewide;
- Strengthen existing collaborations and build new partnerships at the local and state level;
- Execute a phased rollout plan for preparation, training, implementation, and technical assistance; and

Conduct Drug Court Planning Initiative trainings in three judicial districts.

Operational Drug Courts

Adult Drug

Crow Wing County
Dakota County
Hennepin County
Ramsey County
St. Louis County - South
Stearns County
Winona County

Multi-County Adult Drug

Brown-Nicollet-Watonwan Counties
Clay-Becker Counties
Cornerstone Drug Court (Cottonwood-Pipestone-Murray-Rock-Nobles Counties)
Southwest Community Drug Court (Lincoln-Lyon-Redwood Counties)

Juvenile Drug

Brown County
Dakota County

Family Dependency

Blue Earth County
Dakota County
Stearns County

DWI Court

Beltrami County
Cass County
Crow Wing County
Hennepin County
Otter Tail County
Pennington-Marshall Counties
Ramsey County
Roseau-Kittson Counties
St. Louis County – South

Drug/DWI Hybrid

Aitkin County
Blue Earth County
Itasca County
St. Louis County - North
Wabasha County

Drug/Family Dependency Hybrid

Faribault-Martin-Jackson Counties

Drug/DWI/Family Dependency Hybrid

Dodge County
Borderland Substance Abuse Court:
Koochiching County - Drug/DWI/Family &
Lake of the Woods County - Drug/DWI

Veterans' Treatment Court

5th Judicial District (Blue Earth-Brown-Faribault-Jackson-Martin-Nicollet-Watonwan Counties)
Hennepin County

Mental Health Court

Hennepin County
Ramsey County
St. Louis County - Duluth

Consolidating Appeal Preparation

Effective November 4, 2013, the preparation of eAppeals for all district courts was consolidated at the Hennepin County District Court.

Under the plan, local courts prepare the electronic case record, including back-scanning of any existing paper files and scanning exhibits. The new Centralized eAppeals Unit in Hennepin County District Court then creates the electronic appellate record and enters an integration event in the Minnesota Court Information System (MNCIS). This notifies the appellate courts as to the availability of that record for their use, and provides record transmission to the parties of record.



This strategy allows for specialization of staff and is expected to streamline and expedite the appeals process.

Improving Monitoring Conservator Accounts

Since 2012, the Conservator Account Auditing Program (CAAP) has been assisting courts in their oversight of over 5,000 conservatorship cases, with more than \$650 million of assets under court jurisdiction. Conservators use the required Conservator Account Monitoring Preparation and Electronic Reporting (CAMPER) system to record and send their inventory and annual accountings to the court. This electronic system provides a number of benefits to courts and conservators, including the reduction of errors and improved auditing ability.

CAAP audits the first annual accounts and periodic accounts thereafter to provide guidance to conservators. Auditors work with conservators to ensure they are fulfilling their reporting obligation to the court and that they understand the responsibilities they have undertaken. CAAP also audits accounts that are referred by the courts. CAAP audit findings are reported to the court and provided to the conservator. If an auditor determines assets of a protected person are unaccounted for or were not used appropriately, those audits reflect a concern of loss. The percentage of cases in 2013 deemed as loss concerns has varied between 12 and 15 percent. A concern of loss determination is a trigger for the court, which will hold a hearing to address the issues that were identified.

The 2013 goals of the CAAP program were to audit conservator account filings and develop a more user-friendly electronic filing program for conservators, called MyMNConservator (MMC). With the assistance of a grant from the State Justice Institute (SJI), MMC will be launched in spring 2014.

eCharging

In another effort to promote the use of labor-saving technology in case initiation, the Branch has been working with the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) to promote electronic filing of criminal charges by county and city attorneys. Electronic filing of charges (eCharging) speeds the processing of criminal charges and greatly reduces the amount of judge, court staff, and law enforcement time required to complete the charging process. By the end of 2012, eCharging was occurring in 44 counties, with the goal of achieving 100 percent participation by county prosecutors.

Electronic Court Reporting

Many courts in Minnesota now produce the official record of a court proceeding using electronic recording tools instead of the more traditional stenographic court reporter. The use of recording technology has enabled courts to reduce their need for court reporters and devote the savings to other needs.

The Fourth Judicial District Court Reporter Unit operates out of a central control room from which court reporters can monitor several courtrooms at once. In 2012, the Unit digitally recorded an average of 38 courtroom calendars daily using nine or 10 court reporters. Prior to the creation of the Unit in 2006, as many as 40 court reporters would have been required to produce the official court record for the same number of courtrooms. By the end of 2012, there were 48 court reporters serving 75 judicial officers in the Fourth District.

Community Outreach

The commitment to improving the public's trust and confidence in the judiciary is highlighted in the Strategic Priorities of the Minnesota Branch. Each year, the Branch undertakes a number of initiatives aimed at reaching out to and educating the citizens of the State of Minnesota. In 2013, judges and court staff reached more than 15,000 Minnesotans by speaking at hundreds of school, civic, and community events.

Supreme Court Traveling Oral Argument Program

Each spring and fall the Supreme Court travels to a high school in Minnesota to hear oral arguments and meet with students, staff, and community members. The program begins with arguments in a real case, followed by a question and answer session with students, lunch with students and school staff, and visits to classrooms. There are also opportunities for the members of the Court to meet with local officials and dignitaries. During the fall visit, the Court hosts a community dinner open to the public in order to reach out to citizens in the community they are visiting.

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In May 2013, the Supreme Court's traveling oral argument program was held at Roseville Area High School. In October, the court visited Wadena-Deer Creek High School. A community dinner attended by 180 area citizens was held at St. Anne's Church in Wadena in conjunction with that visit. More than 1,500 students participated in these two events.



Members of the Minnesota Supreme Court, special guests, and student hosts pose for a photo outside at Roseville Area High School.

The Court also holds oral arguments at area law schools, giving law students an opportunity to observe the Court in action and interact with the justices. In 2013, the Court visited the University of St. Thomas Law School in April and William Mitchell College of Law and Hamline University Law School in October.

Supreme Court Oral Arguments Online

Since 2005, all Supreme Court oral arguments have been recorded and made available for viewing on the Judicial Branch public website, www.mncourts.gov. This effort aims to expand the public's understanding of the Court's work, and allow those who would not otherwise be able to visit the courthouse to have an opportunity to view the Court in session. In 2013, Supreme Court oral argument videos were viewed more than 13,500 times.

Partnerships Bring Understanding

The Judicial Branch partners with several organizations throughout the year, providing support through use of court facilities and judge and staff volunteers. During the 2013 YMCA Youth in Government Model Assembly program held at the Minnesota Capitol complex, Supreme Court justices and Court of Appeals judges helped prepare students for service as judges and administered oaths of office to Youth Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branch officials. Supreme Court Associate Justice Paul Anderson was recognized for his many years of service to the program with a special resolution on the floor of the House during the opening Joint Convention.

For more than fifteen years, Supreme Court justices and Court of Appeals judges have spoken to high school juniors participating in the Minnesota House of Representatives High School Legislative Page Program. Students from across Minnesota learn about the Third Branch of government and are given the opportunity to ask questions. Throughout the 2013 Legislative Session, justices and judges spoke to more than 170 students.

Law Day 2013

Established in 1957 by the American Bar Association (ABA), Law Day on May 1 is a national day set aside to celebrate our legal system. District courts around the state recognized Law Day in various ways:

- The Dakota County Law Library and District Court hosted events at the Hastings and Apple Valley courthouses. In Hastings, the Law Library gave away copies of the Constitution and Girl Scout troops met in chambers with District Judge Patrice Sutherland and visited with court staff. At the Apple Valley location, the Law Library hosted a “Meet the Judges” event with First Judicial District Chief Judge Edward Lynch and District Judge Arlene Asencio Perkkio.
- Goodhue County District Court offered a free legal advice clinic, an informational booth, a trivia quiz, and prize drawings for quiz participants.
- Scott County recognized Law Day with an open house in the Law Library.
- In Hennepin County, court staff spoke to the public at Law Day booths in the Hennepin County Government Center and at the Brookdale Court location.
- Judge Kristine DeMay and staff welcomed fifth-graders from Forest View Middle School to the Crow Wing County Courthouse for mock trials.
- Ninth Judicial District courts in two counties, Kittson and Roseau, invited second, third, and fourth grade students from local schools to visit the county courthouses and participate in mock trials.
- Anoka County District Court invited several school groups to the courthouse for question and answer sessions with judges, courtroom tours, law enforcement demonstrations, and over a dozen local stakeholder booths.
- Pine County District Court Judge Krista Martin visited third- and sixth-graders at Pine City Elementary School and used a book, “Victoria Goes to Court,” to begin a discussion with students about what happens at a courthouse. Judge Martin also wrote an article about her visit, which was published in the Pine City Journal.
- The Washington County Courthouse had a Law Day booth with staff to greet people and hand out information and materials about the courts.



Dana Ahlness, Washington County Guardian ad Litem Office, speaks with the public about Law Day at the Washington County Courthouse.

Outreach in the Community

Minnesota Supreme Court justices and Court of Appeals judges, senior judges, law clerks, and court staff served lunch to more than 600 people at the Dorothy Day Center in St. Paul on May 24, 2013.



Court volunteers serve lunch at Dorothy Day Center in St. Paul.

“We consider it an honor to be able to participate in this event and we look forward to it each year,” said Court of Appeals Judge Jill Flaskamp Halbrooks, who co-chairs the event with Supreme Court Associate Justice Wilhelmina Wright. The lunch allows members of the courts and court staff to reach out to the community and provide a special meal for people in need. Judges and staff have served almost 6,000 meals during these events over the past 11 years.

Constitution Day 2013

Constitution Day, September 17, is a federally recognized day that celebrates the signing and adoption of the United States Constitution in 1787. In support of this educational opportunity, informational materials about the Constitutions of the United States and the state of Minnesota were made available in the “For Teachers and Students” section of the Minnesota Judicial Branch website, www.mncourts.gov.

To mark Constitution Day 2013, Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea delivered a special online video message to teachers and students in which she recognized Constitution Day. The video message from the Chief Justice was posted on the Minnesota Judicial Branch YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/mnjudicialbranch.

Judges in Print

In 2013, judges in the Sixth and Seventh judicial districts published regular monthly columns in local newspapers explaining how the courts work and making the legal process more understandable to citizens. More than one million subscribers to various newspapers across Minnesota were able to learn more about their justice system through these columns.

Around the Branch in 2013

First Judicial District

Veterans Program Planned for Carver County

In 2013, development continued on the Carver County Veterans Program, which will help veterans working their way through the criminal justice system.

The goal of the non-adversarial courtroom atmosphere is to promote accountability, sobriety, recovery, and stability through a coordinated response that breaks the cycle of drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, and criminal behavior. The program, scheduled to launch in December 2014, will recognize veterans who face unique difficulties following their service and provide specialized treatment and support. Carver County District Court, the Carver County Attorney, the defense bar, law enforcement, probation, and Veterans Affairs are collaborating on the effort to offer a blend of treatment and intensive services to vets who commit crimes.

The Carver County Attorney's Office will determine which cases qualify for the volunteer program. Veterans with no prior criminal history that have suffered through a traumatic brain injury, PTSD, chemical dependence, or a similar diagnosed medical issue will likely see their cases qualify for the program.

Qualifying veteran cases will be heard every other Monday afternoon in First Judicial District Judge Janet Cain's courtroom.

First Judicial District Assistant Chief Judge Kathryn D. Messerich Elected ASTAR Fellow



*First Judicial District Assistant
Chief Judge Kathryn Messerich*

First Judicial District Assistant Chief Judge Kathryn D. Messerich was elected as a Science and Technology Fellow in 2013 by the Advanced Science and Technology Adjudication Center (ASTAR) following a three-year course of study in adjudicative sciences.

Among the topics that Judge Messerich studied were DNA analysis, radiation science and environmental disasters, forensic psychiatry, genetics, neuroscience and child development, and emerging issues with computer forensics. The course work also presented national perspectives on how science is implicated in sentencing decisions, civil litigation, expert challenges, and designing court programs.

Judge Messerich will serve as a resource judge for the Minnesota judiciary and will work to develop Minnesota programs for judges on scientific topics.

First Judicial District Employees Receive Minnesota Association for Court Management Awards

The Minnesota Association for Court Management (MACM) announced the recipients of its 2013 awards at its annual meeting in October 2013.

Assistant First Judicial District Administrator Brian Jones received the 2013 MACM Distinguished Service Award for his leadership of the First Judicial District. Jones is also the chair of the Communications Team for the Minnesota Judicial Branch eCourtMN initiative. He has provided valuable insight and guidance on the goals and expectations of eCourtMN, and has given presentations throughout the Minnesota courts on the initiative.



Assistant First Judicial District Administrator Brian Jones



Dakota County Court Administrator Carol Renn

Dakota County Court Administrator Carol Renn received the MACM 2013 Coach/Mentor of the Year Award for her outstanding mentoring, coaching, and development of her employees. Throughout Renn's career, she has also volunteered her county to participate in many pilot projects in order to advance all Minnesota courts.

Second Judicial District

Ramsey County Family Court Self-Help Service Center Satisfies Customers

The staff of the Ramsey County Family Court Self-Help Service Center (SHSC) scored very high marks for knowledgeability, listening skills, explaining things clearly, and treating parties respectfully on a customer satisfaction survey conducted by the Family and Juvenile courts of the Second Judicial District in March 2013. A total of 94 self-represented litigants agreed to complete the survey. Respondents were asked to rate statements on a scale from one to four. The overall average score was 3.76 for staff knowledge, 3.75 for listening skills, 3.72 for explaining things clearly, and 3.77 for treating parties respectfully.

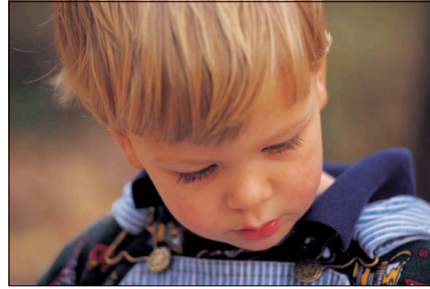
Also in 2013, SHSC staff conducted a Family Court Workshop at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Stillwater in September and November, during which 16 offenders received assistance with Family Court filings.

SHCS and volunteer law students in 2013 held 10 child support clinics in 2013, which were attended by 92 self-represented litigants. The classroom-style clinics are held on the first and third Fridays of each month, during which litigants can receive assistance with completing motion to modify child support court forms.

The SHSC is currently working on expanding the scope of its services to include third-party child custody actions and step-parent adoptions. The SHSC supervisor and the staff attorney have drafted versions of local third-party child custody court forms, which will go before the Juvenile and Family courts' bench for approval in 2014.

Second Judicial District Sees Improved Time to Permanency

The number of child protection cases reaching permanency within 18 months in the Second Judicial District increased from 86 percent in 2011 to 92 percent in 2013. To accomplish this, judges consulted a monthly report combining information about the pending caseload and out of home placement, which improved their ability to track cases. Second District judicial officers have generally taken a more active role in managing their permanency cases by scheduling nine-month review hearings and, in some instances, ordering permanency petitions to be filed by a certain date.



Another effort to improve time to permanency commenced in June 2013 with the first quarterly review of the 10 cases in the District with the longest out-of-home placement and an identification of the greatest obstacles to permanency in those cases.

The most recent effort regarding permanency was the creation of a pilot program in October 2013 by the Branch's Children's Justice Initiative (CJI). The program calls for facilitated meetings between the parties as well as intensive judicial involvement very early in the case to tailor a case management plan.

Minnesota Supreme Court Convenes at Roseville Area High School

The Minnesota Supreme Court convened at Roseville Area High School in Roseville, Minn., on May 6, 2013, in an effort to educate the public about the Judicial Branch.

The state's highest court heard oral arguments of an actual case.

"The Minnesota Supreme Court thoroughly enjoyed visiting Roseville Area High School," said Associate Justice Christopher Dietzen, traveling oral argument liaison for the Court. "Members of the high school and district staff were committed to making this a meaningful learning experience for Roseville area students. I am grateful for their hard work. This was a wonderful opportunity for both the Court and the young people involved."

The program included more than 600 high school students from Roseville Area High School. The program was streamed live via the Internet by District Cable TV and CTV.

The Court partnered with the Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society and the Minnesota State Bar Association to arrange for volunteer attorneys to visit classrooms at Roseville Area High School prior to the visit in order to help prepare students and staff for the oral arguments.

Following the arguments, the justices answered students' questions on a wide variety of topics. Justices also ate lunch with and visited the classes of Roseville Area High School students.

Third Judicial District

Timely Handling of Cases

The Third Judicial District used nearly 450 days of senior judge coverage in 2013. The use of these resources assisted the district in keeping calendars moving and resolving cases in a timely manner throughout the district.

Partnering for Success

Olmsted County District Court worked with justice partners to develop and implement an Olmsted Justice Council, which works collaboratively within the justice system to strengthen local planning, analysis, coordination and decision-making processes to improve the local justice system.

Winona County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) continues to be very active. The Winona CJCC's success is a result of acceptance from justice partners and their collaboration with community members. During the year, they engaged in numerous legislative and community outreach efforts, developed a pre-trial services program, initiated a safe haven program for individuals being released from jail or prison, and began a safe haven program offering supervised visitation.



Olmsted County Government Center

The Winona County Drug Court celebrated the first anniversary of its first hearing on Dec. 11, 2013.

Olmsted and Winona counties continue to utilize the services of pro bono attorneys as Conciliation Court referees. Dodge County has also begun using Conciliation Court referees.

Fourth Judicial District

Hennepin Veterans Court Marks 100th Graduate

The Veterans Court in Hennepin County, launched in July 2010, presented a medallion in 2013 to its 100th graduate. The intensive 12-18 month program requires participants to successfully complete court-ordered chemical dependency treatment and/or domestic abuse programming, and work with the VA Medical Center or community-based resources on other programming as indicated in their case plan in order to graduate.

Veterans Court promotes sobriety, recovery, and stability through a collaborative effort of:

- the Fourth Judicial District,
- the Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR)
- the Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center
- VA Benefits Administration, and
- volunteer veteran mentors coordinated through the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living.

The Hennepin County Veterans Service Office and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development also provide direct services to the veterans in this court program.

This problem-solving court serves veteran defendants struggling with addiction, mental health issues, and/or co-occurring disorders, and is a hybrid of the drug court and mental health court models. Participation in the voluntary program requires the consent from the Veterans Court judge, the prosecutor, the defense attorney, and the defendant.

Fourth Judicial District Creates One-Stop for Hennepin Court Records at Government Center

The Fourth Judicial District centrally-located its court records in the Hennepin County Government Center on July 8, 2013. The public may now look up all civil, conciliation, criminal, housing, and probate/mental health case information in one location.

“The Fourth Judicial District is pleased to offer a streamlined process to court users,” Fourth Judicial District Administrator Mark Thompson commented. “The centralized record center demonstrates the court’s commitment to improving customer court access, transparency, and efficiency through the use of technology.”

The centralized court record center features:

- 13 computer terminal stations,
- electronic access to case records,
- cash or check payment for copies (no credit cards).

The Family Justice Center, the Juvenile Justice Center, and the suburban locations continue to maintain records at their respective locations. Copies of documents previously available at other locations in the Government Center, such as at the violations counter on the skyway level or on other floors of the building, have been relocated to the centralized records center in the B Vault on the B level of the Government Center.

Fourth Judicial District Judge William Koch Presides Over Fourth Grade Mock Trials

Fourth Judicial District Judge William Koch presided over mock trials held by fourth graders in April 2013. The students from Hillcrest Community School in Bloomington were able to experience what it is like to be in a real courtroom. The trials involved the Big Bad Wolf and Yertle the Turtle.



*Fourth Judicial
District Judge
William Koch*

Hennepin County Celebrates National Adoption Day

Fourth Judicial District judges united 20 children with 14 new families during adoption finalization hearings on Nov. 23, 2013, at the Hennepin County Juvenile Court in downtown Minneapolis. The event was held in honor of National Adoption Day, which is an annual effort to raise awareness of the more than 100,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families.

2013 Annual Report

The annual event in Hennepin County has made the dreams of hundreds of Minnesota children come true over the past 17 years by finalizing their adoptions and celebrating their new adoptive families.

Free Valentine's Day Wedding Ceremonies Performed by Fourth Judicial District Judges

Ten Fourth Judicial District judges united 17 military, first responder, and civilian couples in matrimony at no charge at the Hennepin County Government Center on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, 2013.

Fourth Judicial District Judge William Koch commented, "As a bench, we wanted to help celebrate the holiday in a unique way – and to help people easily remember their anniversaries in the future! This was a fun event for us, and allowed us to give a little back to our military members and first responders, as well as members of the general public."



Hennepin County District Court Judge Luis Bartolomei performs a marriage in Spanish on Valentine's Day.

Fourth Judicial District Highlights Self-Help Center on Law Day



Hennepin County District Court Self-Help Center staff assist a customer.

The Fourth Judicial District joined justice stakeholders across the country to celebrate Law Day on May 1, 2013, commemorating the role of the judiciary and the rule of law in American society. The 2013 theme, "Equality for All – Realizing the Dream," marked the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and the 50th anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech, "I Have a Dream." Judges and court staff provided an information booth, presented a slideshow, and hosted trivia games for court visitors.

Fourth Judicial District Family Court Selected to Pioneer New Approaches to Custody Decision-Making

On November 12, 2013, the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) announced the selection of the Fourth Judicial District Family Court as one of four courts in the nation to participate in the Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP).

The FCEP, which will last through 2015, is a collaborative effort of the OVW, the NCJFCJ, the Battered Women's Justice Project (BWJP), and the National Institute for Justice (NIJ) to address concerns that family courts are struggling to adequately consider the physical and emotional

safety of children (and their parents) in child custody cases where domestic violence is present. The national partners selected FCEP sites from a competitive pool of applications.

The project goals of the Hennepin County Family Court are to:

- develop and implement comprehensive judicial training on domestic violence;
- identify and bridge philosophical differences regarding domestic violence as it appears in the family court;
- improve consistency in the handling of cases among judicial officers; and
- assess whether victims experience pressure in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Early Neutral Evaluation (ENE) processes to reach agreements that are not in their best interest.

Warrants Now Provided Electronically

The Fourth Judicial District implemented a new process in 2013 that eliminated the practice of printing individual bench warrants. Warrants are now provided electronically to the Hennepin County Sheriff's Warrants Division. This process has reduced the need to print up to 500 sheets of paper per week.

Fifth Judicial District

Fifth Judicial District Audit Results are Best Ever for Branch

A 2013 financial audit of the Fifth Judicial District by the Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) resulted in the best report the Branch has received from the OLA regarding one of the Branch's 10 districts. Also, the Fifth District financial risk assessments were better than any the OLA had ever seen in any audit of a state agency.

Four OLA representatives spent time in the Fifth Judicial District administrative office throughout the summer to conduct the audit. They also visited six of the district's 15 counties.

The OLA concluded that the Fifth Judicial District:

- had adequate internal controls to safeguard its financial resources,
- accurately paid employees and vendors in accordance with managements authorizations,
- complied with finance-related legal requirements, and
- produced reliable financial information.

First Multi-County Veterans Court Opens

The first multi-county Veterans Court in the state, serving seven counties, began operations in July 2013 with a grant from the MN Department of Human Services - Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division. Fifth Judicial District Judge Bradley Walker, who is a retired United States Marine Corps colonel, presides over the court. Team meetings and court are held twice a month in Blue Earth County.



*Blue Earth County
District Court Judge
Bradley Walker*

2013 Annual Report

The Veterans Court is a collaboration of the Fifth District, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, county veterans affairs offices, and other community-based service providers. All Veterans Court participants are assigned mentors who are volunteers with military experience. The mentor's role is to provide support to the participant while they complete the 12-18 month program.

Fifth Judicial District Selected as Ignition Interlock Pilot Site

The Fifth Judicial District received a MN Department of Public Safety grant in 2013 to implement a judicially-administered program to expand the use of ignition interlock devices (IID). An IID is an alcohol breath-testing unit that is linked to the ignition switch of a motor vehicle. The vehicle cannot be started until the driver provides a breath sample. If the device detects alcohol in the breath sample, the device locks the vehicle's ignition, preventing the person from driving that vehicle.

Faribault-Martin-Jackson Adult Drug Court Selected as Mentor Court

In 2013, the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) designated the Faribault-Martin-Jackson Adult Drug Court as one of only 10 national mentor courts. It is the only multi-county court in the nation to achieve this status. The drug court will host visitors from across the country who are interested in learning more about implementing a multi-county drug court.

Sixth Judicial District

Lessons Learned from Courthouse Violence

In 2013, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) hosted a forum on courthouse violence. Participants represented six courts across the country that had experienced courthouse violence, and included representatives from the 2011 Cook County Courthouse shooting in Minnesota. The participants shared their collective experiences to identify lessons learned and offer hard-earned advice to their counterparts in courthouses throughout the country. The resulting report, "Courthouse Violence in 2010-2012 – Lessons Learned," was published by the NCSC in November 2013.



Cook County Courthouse in Grand Marais, MN

2013 Annual Report

Meanwhile, the Sixth District implemented a districtwide order in July 2013 that prohibits all bags from being brought into courtrooms and gives law enforcement the authority to search bags at their discretion. Also, consistent signage was installed in all Sixth District courthouses regarding prohibited items.

Problem-Solving Courts Alive and Well

The Sixth District continued to support its problem-solving courts in 2013.

The Duluth Mental Health Court started the year without funding and was operating only on volunteer time until it received a two-year grant from the State of Minnesota Office of Justice Programs. The grant will pay for drug testing, participant incentives, team training, program evaluation, chemical dependency and mental health assessments, and case management.

The Duluth DWI Court celebrated its fifth anniversary in February 2013. The Court has served 109 participants and enjoys a 2.75 percent recidivism rate since it was established.

2013 saw the planning for a hybrid Drug/DWI Court in Carlton County District Court that will open this summer. In addition, a steering committee has been meeting to explore the implementation of a Mental Health Court in the Sixth District.

The Duluth Drug Court has been in operation for 11 years. In 2013, the Court served more than 70 individuals charged with a felony-level drug offense.

The Range Hybrid Court has processed felony-level DWI and drug cases for the Hibbing and Virginia courthouses since 2006. Twenty-two people have successfully completed the program, and 69 people were served by the Court in 2013.

Seventh Judicial District

Minnesota Supreme Court Convenes at Wadena Memorial Auditorium

The Minnesota Supreme Court convened at Wadena Memorial Auditorium in Wadena, Minn., on October 9, 2013, in an effort to open the doors of the Judicial Branch to the public.

The state's highest court heard oral arguments of an actual case.

"Reaching out to the people we serve is one of the Court's highest priorities," said Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea. "Visiting high schools is especially important because we can engage young people at a time



Members of the Minnesota Supreme Court answer questions from students in the Wadena Memorial Auditorium

2013 Annual Report

when they are learning their role in our democracy and what it means to live in a society governed by laws.”

The program included more than 700 students from Wadena-Deer Creek High School, M State, and schools in New York Mills, Verndale, Bertha-Hewitt, Sebeka, and Staples-Motley.

Local attorneys volunteered to review the case with students and help them prepare for the oral arguments.

Following arguments, the justices answered students’ questions on a wide variety of topics. Justices also ate lunch with high school students and visited classes at the high school, middle school, and elementary school in Wadena.

Seventh Judicial District Court Reporter Mary Krawiecki Receives Distinguished Service Award

Seventh Judicial District Court Reporter Mary Krawiecki received the Distinguished Service Award from the Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters and Captioners (MAVRC) in 2013.

The annual award recognizes one Minnesota court reporter for outstanding contributions to the court reporting community. Nominations are submitted by MAVRC members and then a committee appointed by the MAVRC president votes for the winner.

Eighth Judicial District

Eighth Judicial District Steps Up for the Branch

The Eighth Judicial District has much to report when it came to helping others at both the district and state levels in 2013.

In particular, Eighth District staff contributed greatly to the Judicial Branch’s eCourtMN initiative announced in 2012 to move from a paper to an electronic environment.

eFiling and eService are two of the first components of the initiative to be rolled out, and the Eighth District provided one full-time employee equivalent to staff the eFile and eServe Help Desk call center from October 2012 through July 2013.

eFiling and eService also requires ongoing statewide training for the attorneys and representatives of government agencies who will be using the system. Eighth District staff volunteered to develop and provide training on eFiling and eService via live WebEx sessions and recorded sessions that are available at www.mncourts.gov. Sessions are offered at least once a week, and the live sessions allow for questions and interaction. To date, more than 1,300 people across Minnesota have been trained to eFile and eServe by Eighth District staff.

Several Eighth District employees have also provided assistance to other judicial districts with data clean-up efforts necessitated by the eCourtMN initiative, including the review of cases and reports to make sure the electronic record was correct.

Eighth District judges starting providing caseload assistance to Seventh District judges in summer 2013. This effort recognizes the judicial need in the Seventh District and the capacity of Eighth District judges to receive routine out-of-district assignments. Each Eighth District judge serves approximately one week per year on the master criminal calendar in the Seventh District's Stearns County Courthouse. The arrangement will be considered for renewal in June 2014.

The Eighth District also helped the entire Branch in 2013 by providing subject matter experts to test various functions in three new case management system releases to ensure that they did not affect other functions. Previously, the Branch had to pay overtime to employees at the state level to perform the testing in addition to their regular full-time duties. The Eighth District volunteered the services of the subject matter experts to perform the testing during the course of normal work hours.

Ninth Judicial District

Students Invited to Law Day Events



*Roseau County District
Court Judge Donna
Dixon*

Ninth Judicial District courts in two counties, Kittson and Roseau, celebrated Law Day on May 1, 2013, by inviting second, third, and fourth grade students from local schools to visit the two county courthouses. The students met with the court administrators, went on tours of county offices, and were brought into a courtroom to participate in a mini mock trial coordinated by Roseau County District Judge Donna Dixon and volunteer attorneys. The mock trial was based on the well-known children's story of Goldilocks, who was fictionally charged for breaking into and entering the bears' house. The students played all of the roles in the courtroom, including the witnesses, the jurors, the attorneys, the bailiff, and the judge.

Domestic Violence Court Launched in Beltrami County

The Beltrami County Domestic Violence Court held its first proceedings on September 6, 2013. Ninth Judicial District Judges Paul Benshoof, John Melbye and Shari Schluchter preside over the weekly court sessions.

The goals of the Domestic Violence Court are to increase offender accountability, enhance victim safety, and develop a coordinated community response to domestic violence.

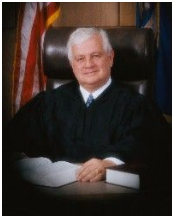
Drug/DWI Court Grant Benefits Participants

Participants of nine Drug/DWI Courts operating in 11 counties in the Ninth District continued to be the beneficiaries in 2013 of a Federal Bureau of Justice Programs Enhancement grant of \$181,000 from 2011. The grant provided dental and mental health services for participants, and

provided legal and affordable transportation, which is very difficult to arrange for after having lost a driver's license. Transportation is particularly important for Drug/DWI court participants because their attendance is required at multiple chemical dependency treatment and court sessions. The transportation part of the grant supported 101 participants in their efforts to maintain sobriety and function as law abiding, productive members of society.

Tenth Judicial District

Tenth Judicial District Judges and Administrators Receive State and National Honors in 2013



*Chisago County
District Court
Judge Robert
Rancourt*

Chisago County District Court Judge Robert Rancourt was inducted into the Stanley Goldstein Drug Court Hall of Fame by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP). The Stanley Goldstein Drug Court Hall of Fame is the highest honor bestowed upon people who work in drug courts.



*Isanti County
District Court
Judge James Dehn*

Isanti County District Court Judge James Dehn received The Century Council's 2013 Kevin E. Quinlan Award for Excellence in Traffic Safety. The Council is a coalition of distillers focused on "fighting drunk driving and underage drinking."



*Anoka County
District Court
Judge Jenny Walker
Jasper*

Anoka County District Court Judge Jenny Walker Jasper received the 2013 Robert H. Robinson Service Award from the Minnesota Community Corrections Association for her support of female clients who entered and successfully completed the Anoka County Enhanced Treatment Program.

Tenth Judicial District Administrator Michael Moriarity received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Minnesota Association for Court Management. Mike was honored for his many contributions to the court management profession and for his years of service to the court community.

Tenth Judicial District Equal Justice Committee Holds Mental Illness Training

The Tenth Judicial District Equal Justice Committee collaborated with the National Association of Mental Illness in 2013 to provide training on responding effectively to persons with serious mental illness. More than 120 people who work in and with the Tenth Judicial District attended. Justice partners who were invited included county attorneys, corrections officials, public defenders, Guardians ad Litem, and sheriffs.

District Collaborations

Somali Community Dialogue Session Held

The Equal Justice committees of the Seventh and Tenth judicial districts collaborated in hosting a Community Dialogue Session for members of central Minnesota's Somali community on October 26, 2013, in St. Cloud, MN. Approximately 110 people attended the listening session. It was an opportunity for representatives of the judicial system to listen to the concerns of the Somali community and continue efforts for improved communications.

Remote Court Reporting Implemented

Remote Court Reporting was implemented across counties in the Seventh and Eighth judicial districts in 2013. This technology allows staff to digitally record and monitor multiple court sessions from multiple locations. It is used to provide coverage for court reporters who are on leave and it eliminates the unnecessary travel of court reporters. Remote monitoring has been particularly helpful in capturing the court record for Eighth District judges covering the master criminal calendar in the Seventh District's Stearns County Courthouse.



Stearns County Courthouse, Saint Cloud, MN

District Courts

289 Judgeships, 10 Judicial Districts

Jurisdiction: Civil Actions, Criminal Cases, Family, Juvenile, Probate, Violations of City Ordinances

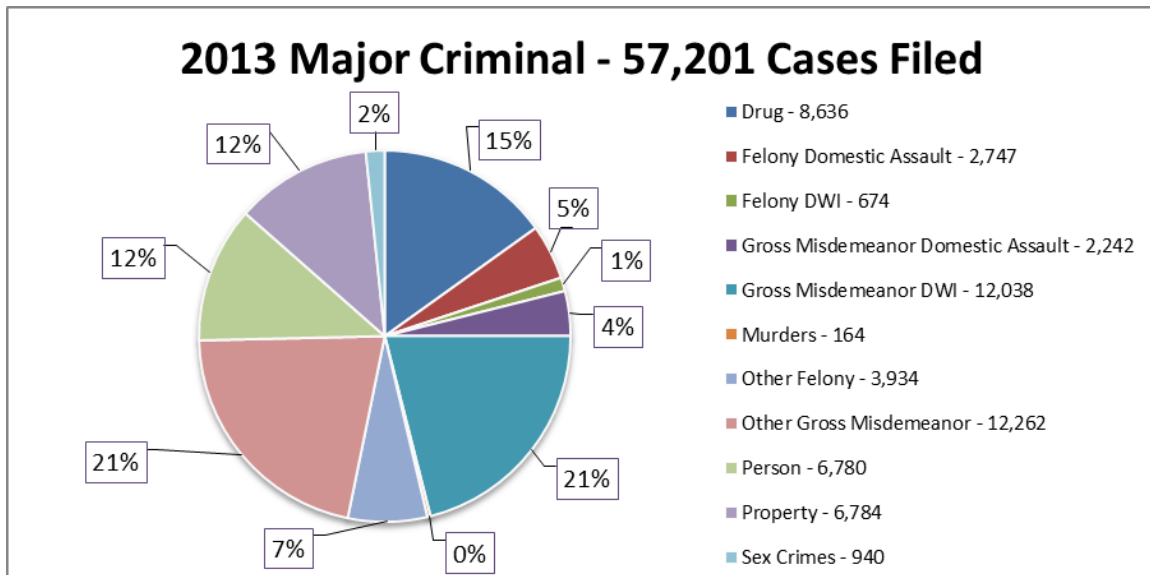
Appeals from: Conciliation Court*

Conciliation Division: Civil Disputes up to \$10,000

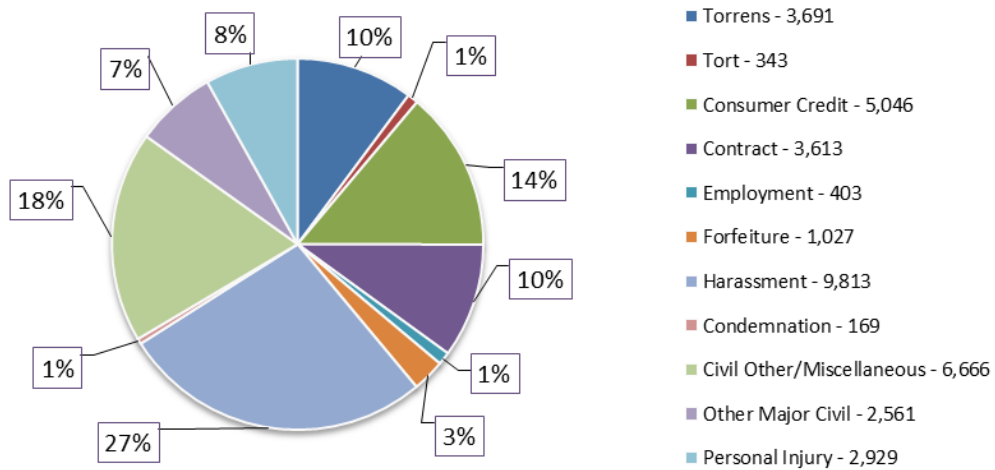
*Called trial de novo - actually a new trial, not just a review of the conciliation court

The district courts handled over 1.4 million cases that entered the judicial system in Minnesota in 2013. For administrative purposes, the district courts are organized into 10 judicial districts with a total of 101 hearing facilities across the state.

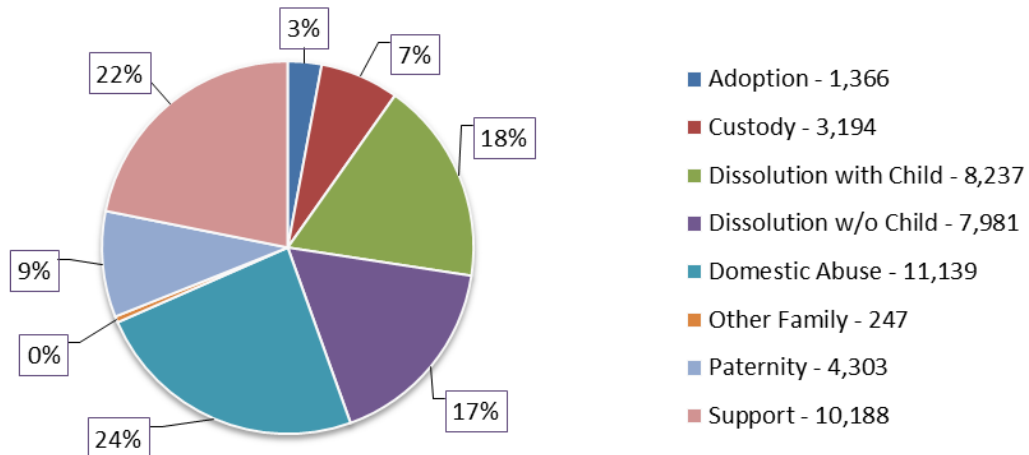
Note that data totals for 2013 are preliminary.



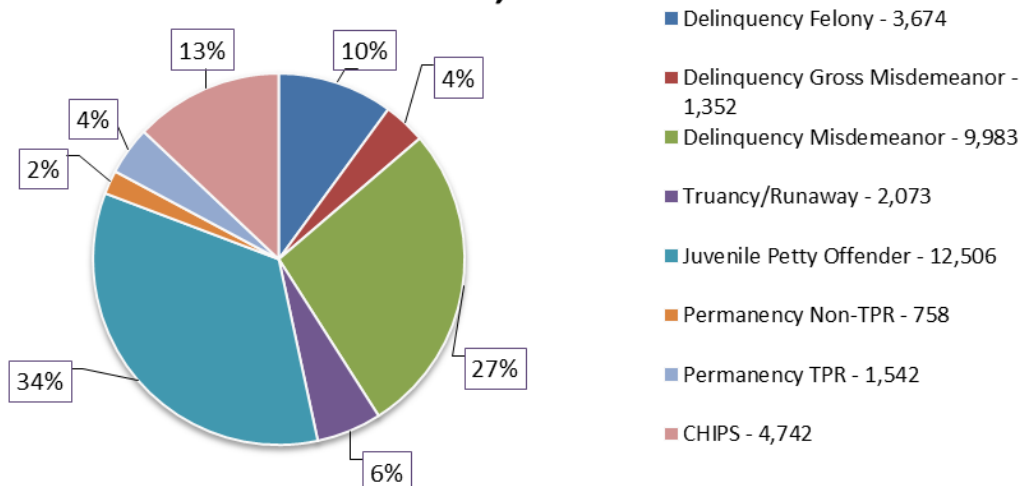
2013 Major Civil - 36,261 Cases Filed



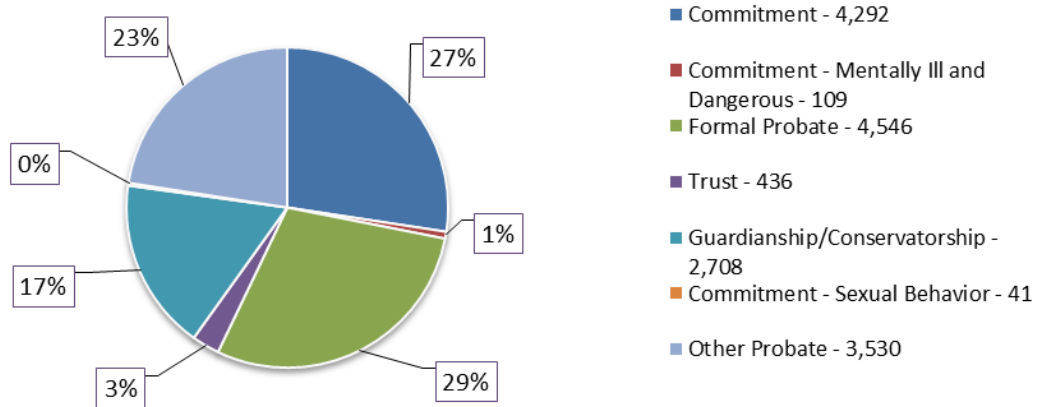
2013 Family - 46,655 Cases Filed



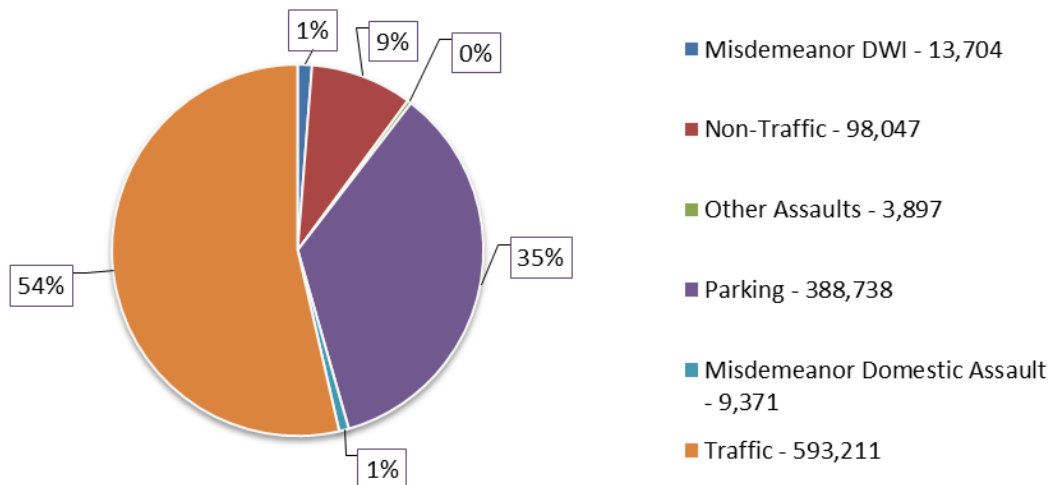
2013 Juvenile - 36,630 Cases Filed



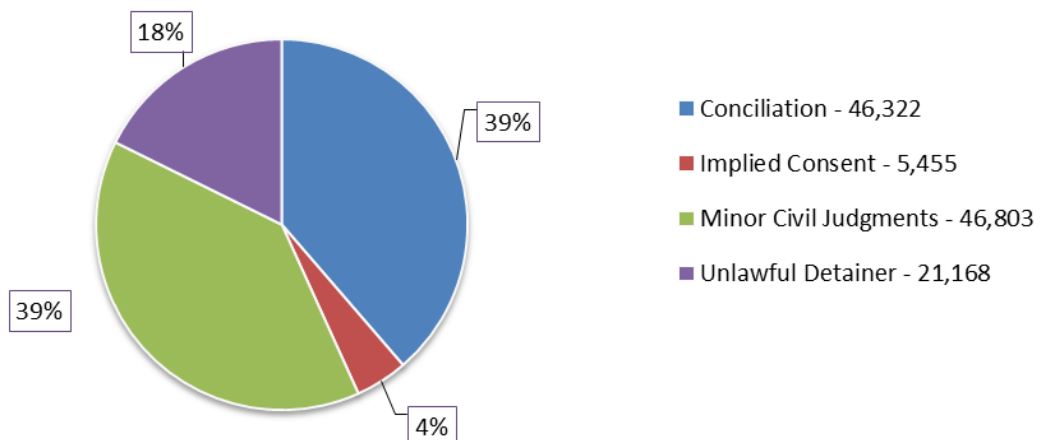
2013 Probate/Mental Health - 15,662 Cases Filed

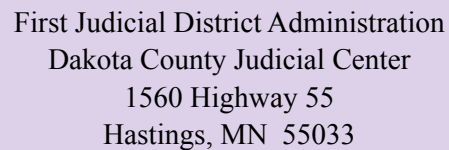


2013 Minor Criminal - 1,106,968 Cases Filed

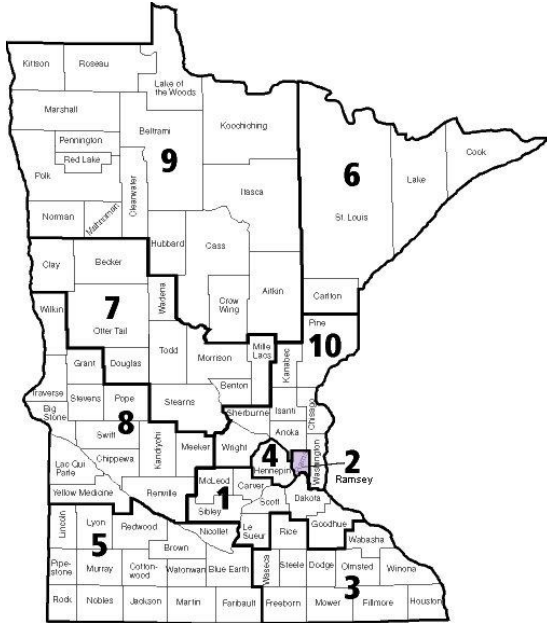


2013 Minor Civil - 119,748 Cases Filed





Second Judicial District



1 County: Ramsey

29 Judgeships

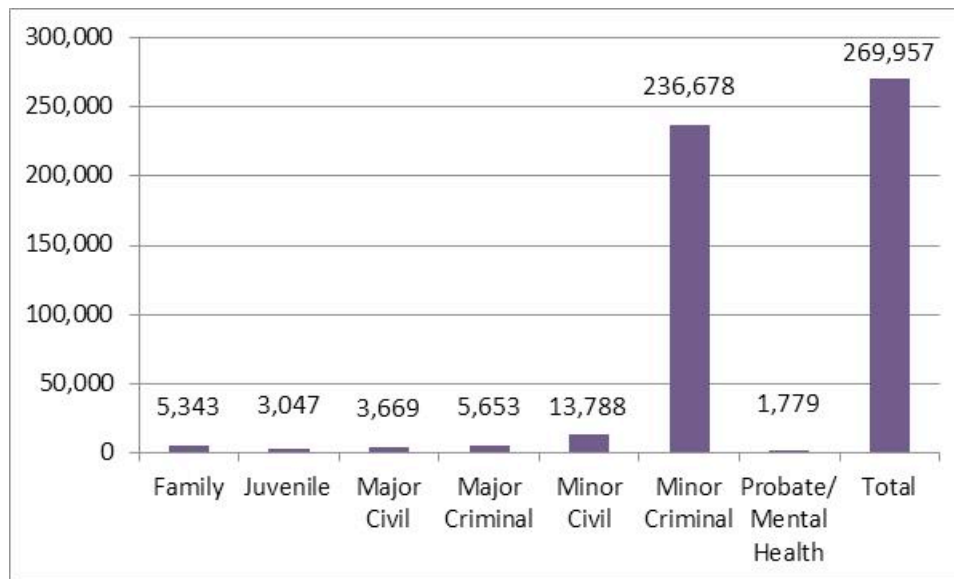
Hon. Teresa R. Warner, Chief Judge

Hon. George T. Stephenson,
Assistant Chief Judge

Larry Dease, District Administrator

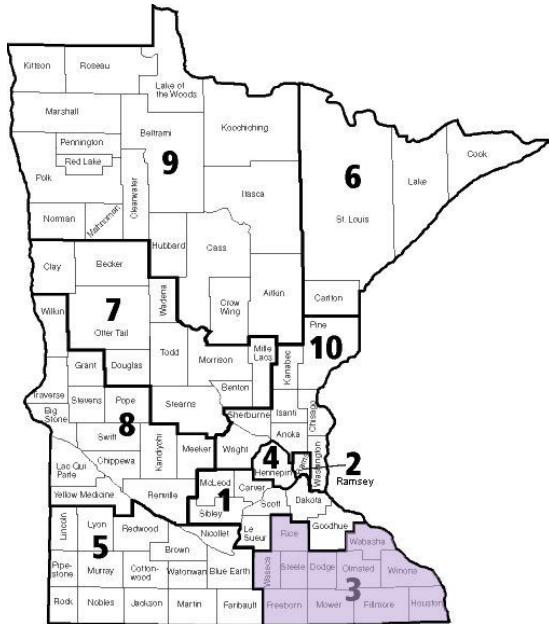
Second Judicial District Administration
1700 Ramsey County Courthouse
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

2013 Case Filings for the Second Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Third Judicial District



11 Counties: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Winona

23 Judgeships

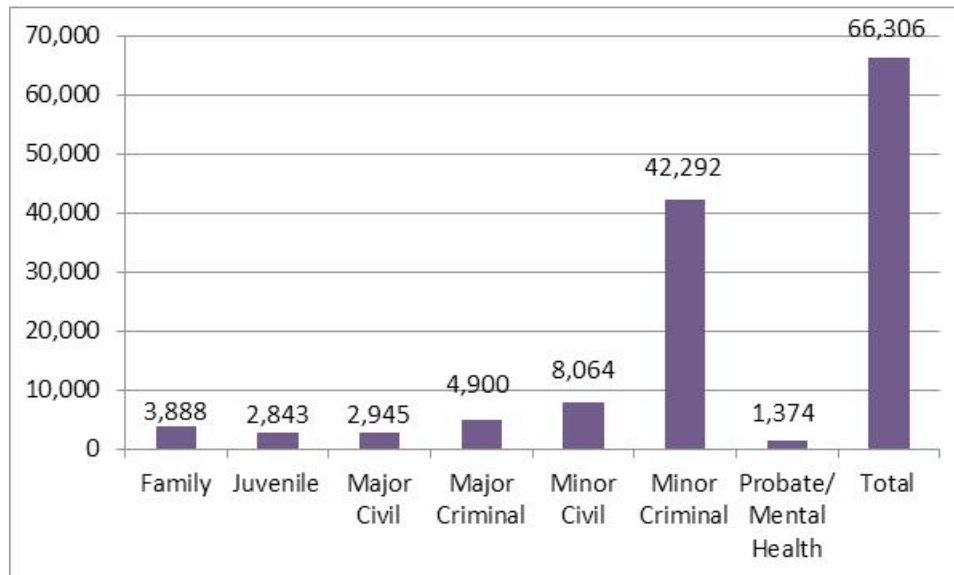
Hon. Jeffrey D. Thompson, Chief Judge

Hon. Robert Birnbaum,
Assistant Chief Judge

Shelley Ellefson, District Administrator

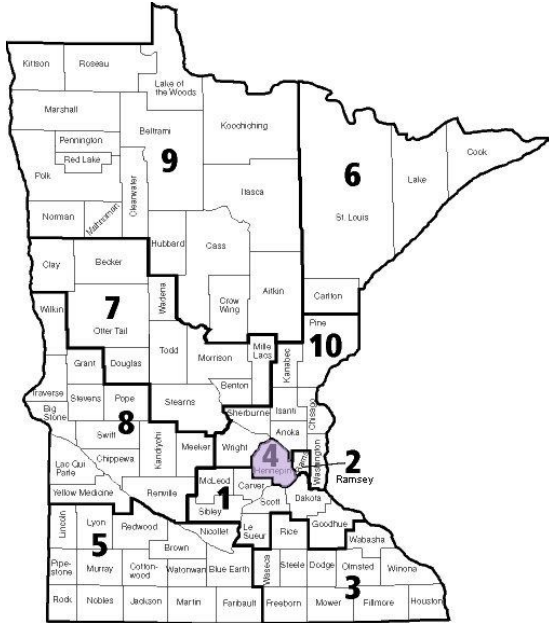
Third Judicial District Administration
1696 Greenview Drive SW
Rochester, MN 55902

2013 Case Filings for the Third Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Fourth Judicial District



1 County: Hennepin

62 Judgeships

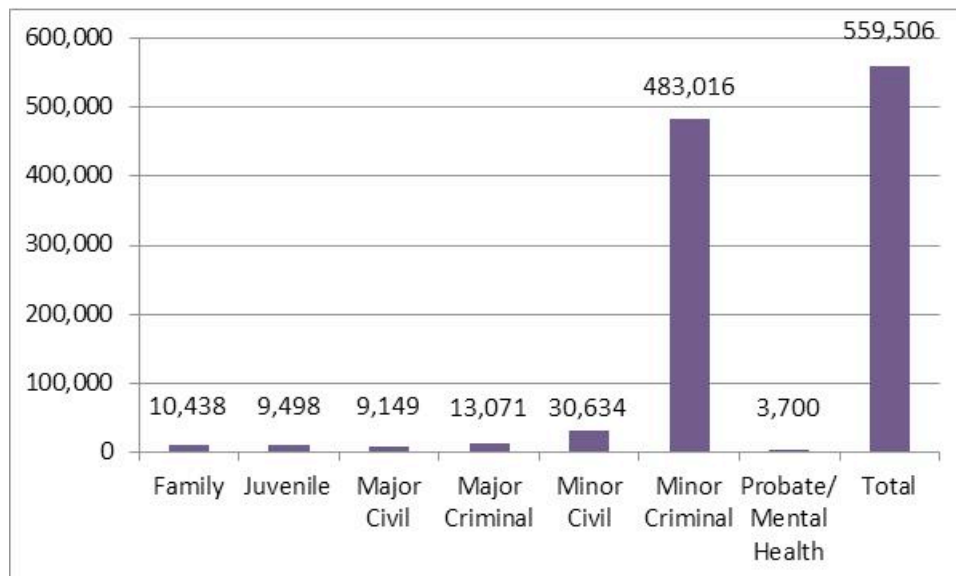
Hon. Peter A. Cahill, Chief Judge

Hon. Ivy S. Bernhardson, Assistant Chief Judge

Mark S. Thompson, District Administrator

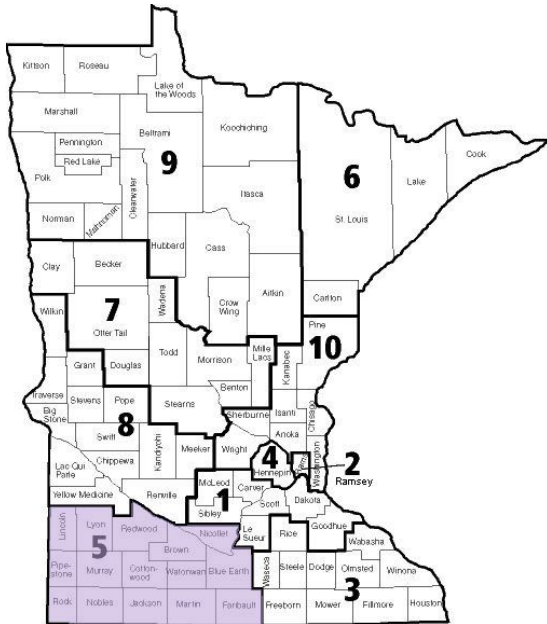
Fourth Judicial District Administration
12-C Government Center
300 South Sixth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55487

2013 Case Filings for the Fourth Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Fifth Judicial District



15 Counties: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Watonwan

16 Judgeships

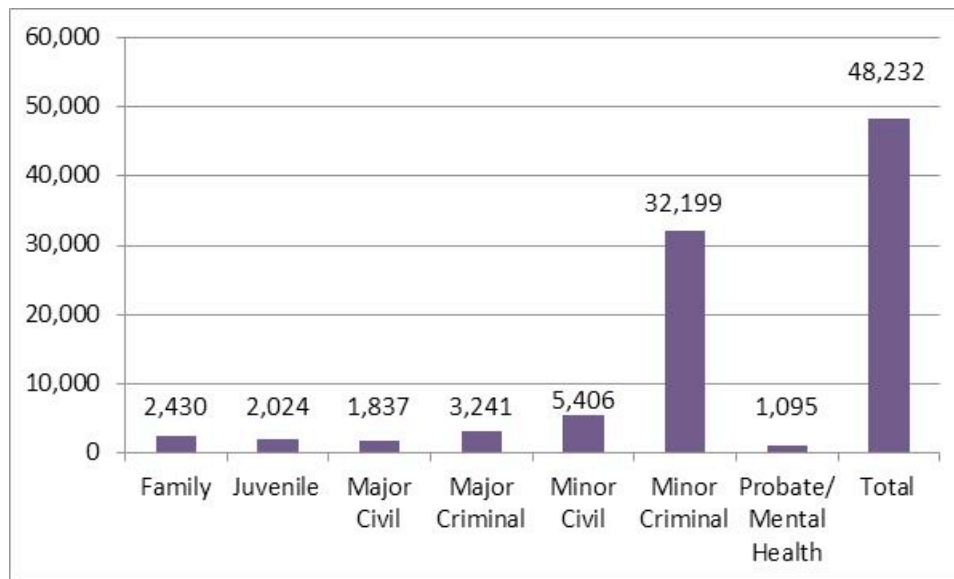
Hon. Bradley C. Walker, Chief Judge

Hon. Michelle A. Dietrich,
Assistant Chief Judge

Richard Fasnacht, District Administrator

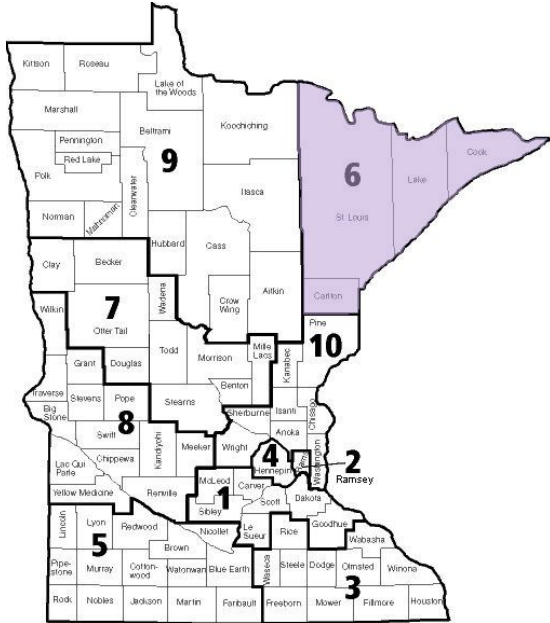
Fifth Judicial District Administration
11 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 205
Mankato, MN 56001

2012 Case Filings for the Fifth Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Sixth Judicial District



4 Counties: Carlton, Cook, Lake, St. Louis

16 Judgeships

Hon. Shaun R. Floerke, Chief Judge

Hon. Gary J. Pagliaccetti,
Assistant Chief Judge

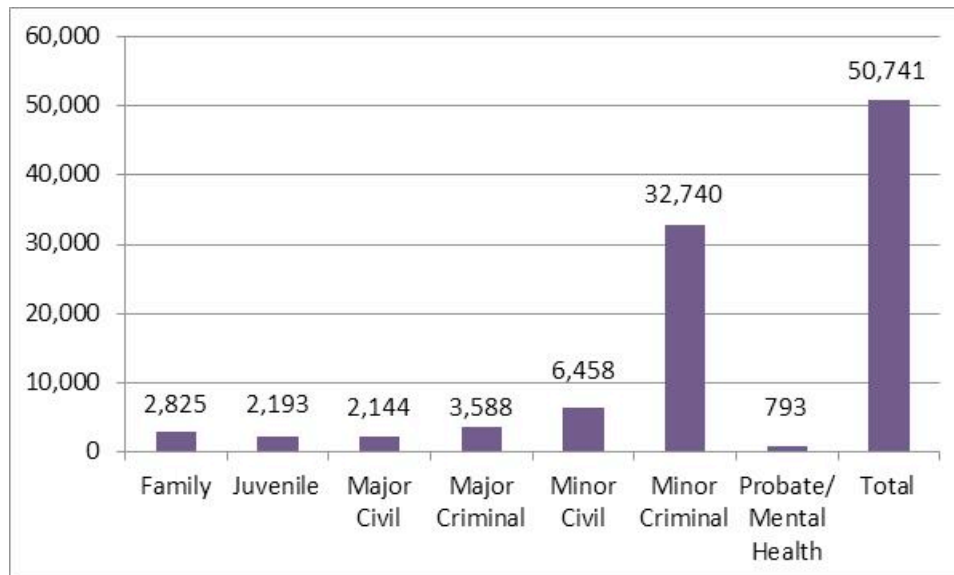
Marieta Johnson, Acting District Administrator

Sixth Judicial District Administration

St. Louis County Courthouse

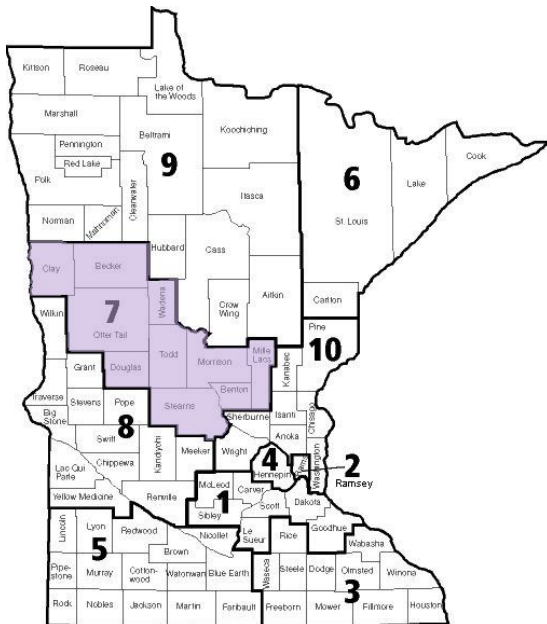
100 North Fifth Avenue West, #139
Duluth, MN 55802

2013 Case Filings for the Sixth Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Seventh Judicial District



10 Counties: Becker, Benton, Clay, Douglas,
Mille Lacs, Morrison, Otter Tail, Stearns, Todd,
Wadena

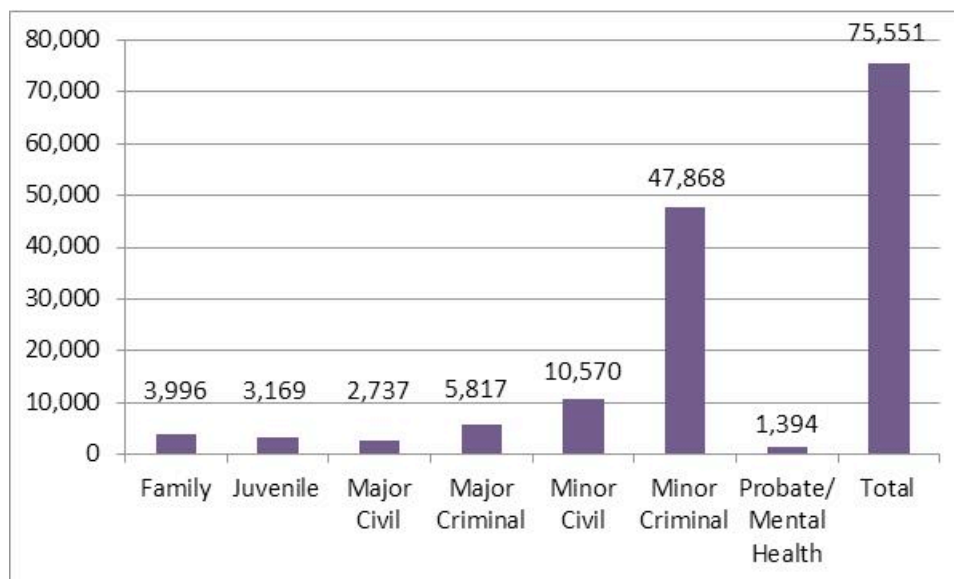
28 Judgeships

Hon. John H. Scherer, Chief Judge
Hon. Ann L. Carrott, Assistant Chief Judge

Timothy Ostby, District Administrator

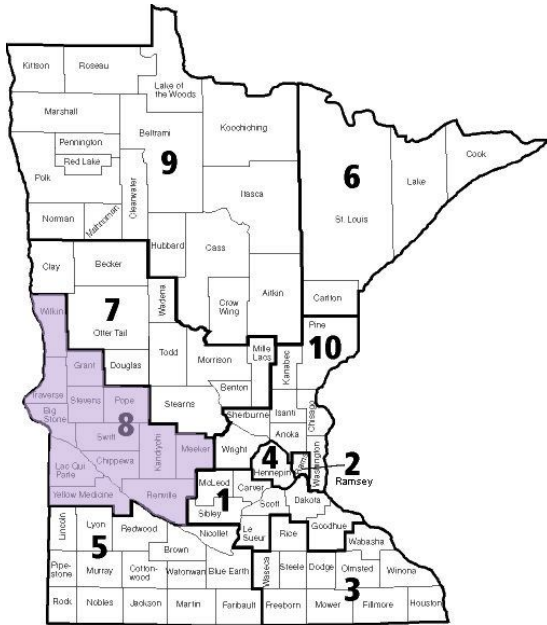
Seventh Judicial District Administration
Stearns County Courthouse
725 Courthouse Square #406
Saint Cloud, MN 56303

2013 Case Filings for the Seventh Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Eighth Judicial District



13 Counties: Big Stone, Chippewa, Grant, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Meeker, Pope, Renville, Stevens, Swift, Traverse, Wilkin, Yellow Medicine

11 Judgeships

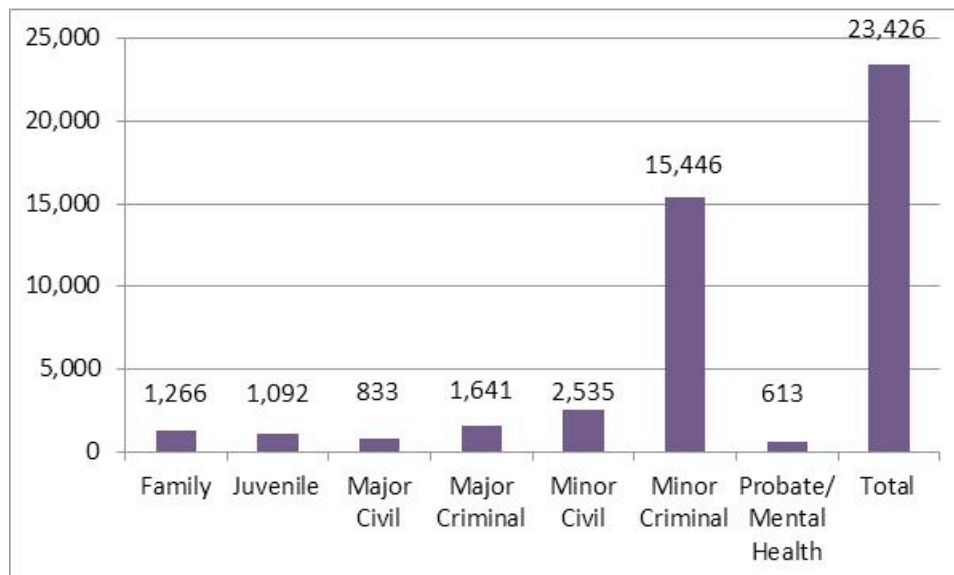
Hon. Donald M. Spilseth, Chief Judge

Hon. Michael J. Thompson,
Assistant Chief Judge

Timothy Ostby, District Administrator

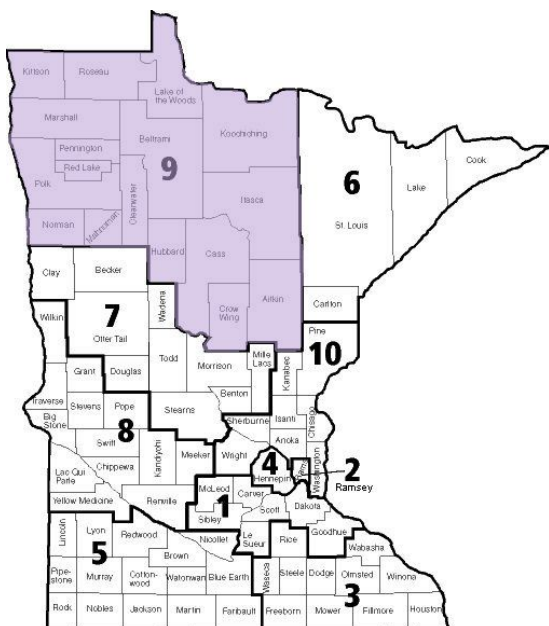
Eighth Judicial District Administration
Kandiyohi County Courthouse
505 Becker Avenue SW, Suite 107
Willmar, MN 56201

2013 Case Filings for the Eighth Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Ninth Judicial District



17 Counties: Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods, Mahanomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, Roseau

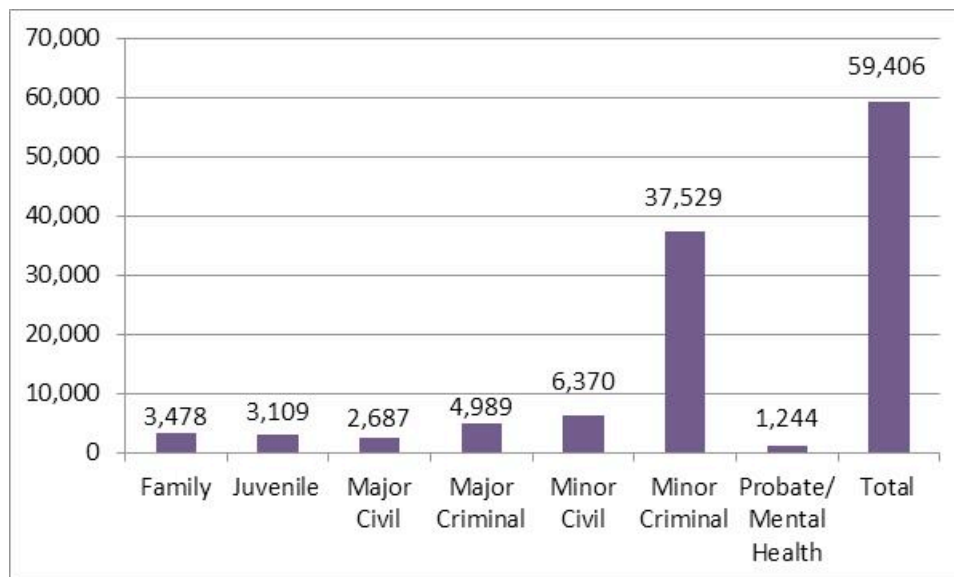
23 Judgeships

Hon. Kurt J. Marben, Chief Judge
Hon. Paul T. Benshoof, Assistant Chief Judge

Paul Maatz, District Administrator

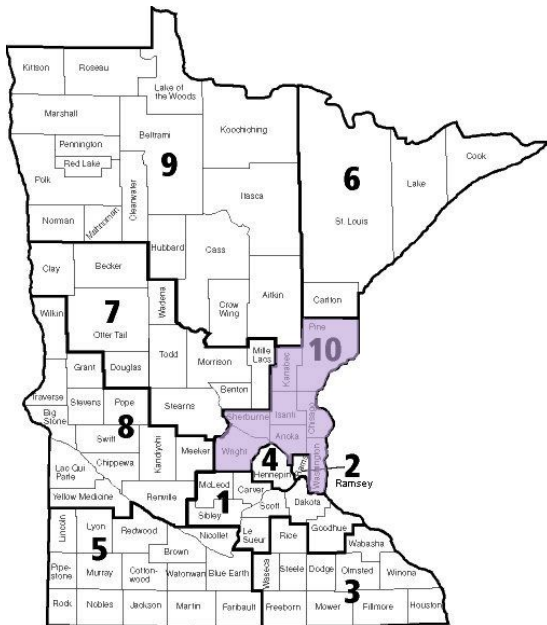
Ninth Judicial District Administration
Community Services Building
616 America Avenue NW #250
Bemidji, MN 56601

2013 Case Filings for the Ninth Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Tenth Judicial District



8 Counties: Anoka, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, Sherburne, Washington, Wright

45 Judgeships

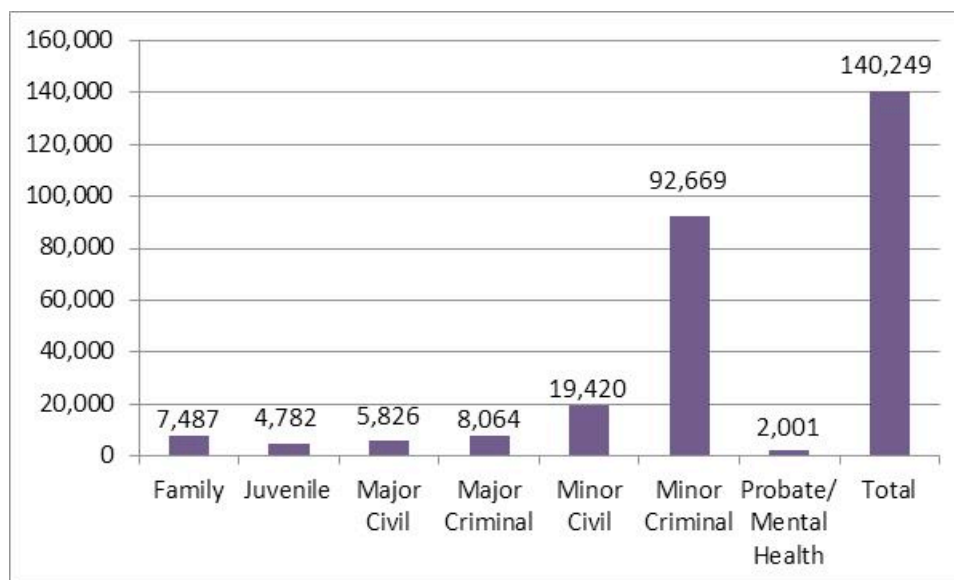
Hon. John C. Hoffman, Chief Judge

Hon. Douglas B. Meslow,
Assistant Chief Judge

Michael Moriarity, District Administrator

Tenth Judicial District Administration
7533 Sunwood Drive NW, Suite 306
Ramsey, MN 55303

2013 Case Filings for the Tenth Judicial District*



*Data totals for 2013 are preliminary.

Court of Appeals

19 Members, Three-Judge Panels

Chief Judge Edward Cleary December 2011 - October 2013, Chief Judge: Nov. 2013 - present
Judge Thomas Kalitowski 1987 - present
Judge Randolph Peterson 1990 - present
Judge Jill Flaskamp Hallbrooks 1998 - present
Judge Terri Stoneburner 2000 - present
Judge Natalie Hudson 2002 - present
Judge Renee Worke 2005 - present
Judge Kevin Ross 2006 - present
Judge Heidi Schellhas 2008 - present
Judge Francis Connolly 2008 - present
Judge Matthew Johnson Judge: 2008 - Nov. 2010, Nov. 2013 - present Chief Judge: Nov. 2010 - Oct. 2013
Judge Michelle Larkin 2008 - present
Judge Larry Stauber, Jr. 2008 - present
Judge Louise Bjorkman 2008 - present
Judge John Rodenberg February 2012 - present
Judge Margaret Chutich February 2012 - present
Judge Carol Hooten June 2012 - present
Judge Michael Kirk August 2012 - present
Judge John P. Smith Jan. 2013 - present

Appeals from:

District court decisions (except first-degree murder convictions), administrative agency decisions (except Tax Court & Workers' Compensation Court), decisions of local governments

Original Actions:

Writs of mandamus or prohibition, which order a trial judge or public official to perform a certain act or not perform

2013 Court of Appeals Case Information		
	Cases Filed	Dispositions
General Civil	496	511
Criminal	854	814
Administrative Rule	4	4
Economic Security	241	262
Writs – Certiori	62	63
Habeas / Certified Questions	23	21
Commitment	63	53
Family	212	230
Juvenile Delinquency	19	26
Juvenile Protection	70	71
Implied Consent	119	39
Discretionary Review / Writs	93	91
Probate	21	23
Unlawful Detainer / Eviction	41	43
Total	2,318	2,251

Court of Appeals in 2013



*Court of Appeals Chief
Judge Edward Cleary*

The Minnesota Court of Appeals provides citizens with prompt, deliberate review of final decisions of the district courts and some decisions of state agencies and local governments. The decision of the Court of Appeals is the final judicial resolution in more than 96 percent of cases filed, with review being granted by the Supreme Court in less than 4 percent of cases.

The Court of Appeals is comprised of 19 judges who hear cases in three-judge panels at the Minnesota Judicial Center in St. Paul and at various locations around the state. Judge John Smith joined the Court in January 2013, filling the vacancy left by the 2012 appointment of Judge Wilhelmina Wright to the Minnesota Supreme Court. On November 1, 2013, Judge Edward Cleary succeeded Judge Matthew Johnson as the seventh Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals.



*Court of Appeals Judge
John Smith*

The Court disposed of more than 2,250 cases in 2013, filing opinions in more than 1,400 cases, issuing almost 2,300 orders, hearing oral arguments in more than 700 cases, and considering another 730 cases at non-oral conferences. Filings in 2013 were up about five percent over 2012, with significant increases in the number of implied consent and criminal appeals. On average, there were about 1,230 cases pending before the Court at any one point in 2013. Despite the filing increases, over 90 percent of civil cases and 100 percent of juvenile delinquency and juvenile protection cases were disposed in less than 10 months, from filing to decision.

In 2013, the Court registered hundreds of attorneys and litigants for e-notification, providing free and instantaneous notice by e-mail of orders and opinions filed in their cases. The Court also benefited from the implementation of a statewide initiative to prepare electronic records for all appeals from district court decisions, which reduced delays and expenses related to shipping files to and from 87 counties. The Court continued development of an eFiling pilot project in 2014. Once eFiling has been implemented at the appellate level, attorneys and litigants will be able to serve and file documents relating to pending appeals 24 hours a day, even when the Appellate Clerk's Office is not open. eFiling will also substantially reduce the expense of making and serving extra paper copies of many documents, while still ensuring that all judges and court staff have convenient access to electronic copies.

2013 Annual Report

With 19 judges, approximately 2,300 new filings per year, and strict deadlines for issuing written decisions, the Court of Appeals has always been a very busy place. Because of the dedication of the judges and staff and their commitment to initiatives that enhance efficiency and ensure that every case receives timely consideration and review, the Court of Appeals will continue to provide meaningful access to appellate review to thousands of citizens every year.



Minnesota Court of Appeals, April 2013

Supreme Court



7 members, En Banc panel

Appeals from:

Court of Appeals decisions
 Trial court decisions if Supreme Court chooses to bypass the Court of Appeals
 Tax Court decisions, Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals decisions
 Review of all first-degree murder convictions

Original Actions:

Writs of Prohibition, Writs of Habeas Corpus, Writs of Mandamus
 Election disputes; attorney and judicial discipline

Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea Associate Justice: 2006 - June 2010, Chief Justice: July 2010 - present
Associate Justice Alan C. Page 1993 - present
Associate Justice G. Barry Anderson 2004 - present
Associate Justice Christopher J. Dietzen 2008 - present
Associate Justice David R. Stras 2010 - present
Associate Justice Wilhelmina M. Wright 2012 - present
Associate Justice David L. Lillehaug June 2013 - present
Associate Justice Paul H. Anderson 1994 - May 2013

2013 Supreme Court Case Information		
Direct Appeals		
	Cases Filed	Dispositions
Workers' Compensation	15	20
Civil	6	4
Tax Court	6	16
Attorney/Judge Discipline	54	66
Writs	0	1
First Degree Homicide	26	35
Total Direct Appeals	107	142
Petitions for Further Review (PFR)		
Filed		671
Denied		611
Granted Further Review		76
Other		14
Dispositions		
Affirmed		34
Mixed		3
Remand / Reverse		23
Other Decision / Dismissal		17
Total		77

Supreme Court in 2013

Associate Justice Paul H. Anderson Retires



Associate Justice Paul Anderson

Supreme Court Associate Justice Paul H. Anderson retired from the state's highest court on May 31, 2013. Justice Anderson joined the Judicial Branch in 1992, when he was appointed to serve as the Chief Judge of the Minnesota Court of Appeals. He was appointed to the Supreme Court by Governor Arne Carlson, joining the court on July 1, 1994, and was elected in 1996, 2002, and 2008.

Over the course of his service to the Judicial Branch, Justice Paul Anderson authored over 400 opinions. He served as the Court's liaison to the Third and Ninth judicial districts and as the liaison to several administrative committees, including the Rules of Criminal Procedure Committee, the Board of Law Examiners, the Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board, and the Legal Services Advisory Committee. Justice Anderson also served as the Court's ambassador to judicial and other government officials from foreign countries that visited the state.

David L. Lillehaug Joins Supreme Court

David Lillehaug became an Associate Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court on June 3, 2013. His current term expires in January 2015. Prior to his appointment by Governor Mark Dayton, Justice Lillehaug was an officer/shareholder at Fredrikson & Byron, P.A., where he focused on public law and complex litigation, including civil, criminal and regulatory proceedings.



Associate Justice David Lillehaug

"He has one of the most brilliant minds I have ever encountered; yet he can also put very complex legal issues into very understandable writings," Governor Dayton said in announcing the appointment. "Mr. Lillehuag will bring a perspective to the Court, which I believe will carry forward the high standards established by Justice Paul Anderson, who has served our state with the greatest distinction."

Civil Justice Reform

In 2013, the Supreme Court adopted amendments to the Rules of Civil Procedure and the General Rules of Practice, recommended by the Civil Justice Reform Task Force, to improve the manner in which Minnesota's state courts process civil cases. Notable changes include an early case management conference with the court, a separate track for complex cases, revisions to discovery procedures, and a pilot program for expedited cases. The rule amendments, which were effective July 1, 2013, are intended to promote timely, efficient, and more cost-effective processing of civil cases.

Appellate Clerk's Office

The Clerk of Appellate Courts' Office continues to transition to paperless records management and storage. During FY13 the eAppeals project was piloted in 10 counties. The pilot led to a significant reduction in the paper trial court records that are sent to, handled by, and stored in the Clerk's Office. On November 4, 2013, the project moved from pilot phase to statewide implementation and, with the exception of records or exhibits not suitable for imaging, paper records are no longer submitted to the Clerk's Office by district courts.

The Clerk's Office is also engaged in the E-MACS initiative, which will provide eFiling, ePayment, and eService capabilities to appellate practitioners and self-represented litigants. The testing phase is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2014. It is anticipated that the pilot phase will begin in June 2014. Since eFiling will be optional, the Clerk's Office is augmenting the initiative by imaging all incoming mail to ensure that appellate records from January 1, 2014, forward, are electronic in their entirety. Appellate filings, including briefs, submitted on or after January 1, 2014, are already available electronically to internal court personnel. The feature has been the subject of significant positive feedback. As the project progresses, the public will have additional electronic and remote access to appellate court records via P-MACS, the public access Appellate Case Management System.

State Law Library

The Minnesota State Law Library, which is located on the ground floor of the Minnesota Judicial Center in St. Paul, provides legal information to the courts, attorneys, self-represented litigants and the general public on a statewide basis. The Library supports the legal research needs of the appellate and district courts, and court staff.

The Library is open to the public and assists attorneys and the public in finding legal materials via e-mail, over the phone, and in person. In 2013, Library staff answered over 6,800 questions. Additionally, over 3,700 people visited the Library and utilized its resources without requiring Library staff assistance.

The Library provides access to state and federal laws, legal treatises, practice materials, and self-help materials. In addition, patrons can access public computers, current awareness materials, and online legal research resources such as Westlaw and Lexis.

Through collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Corrections, the State Law Library also provides legal resources to inmates of the state prisons. In 2013, the Library provided over 33,000 items to inmates through this program.

In addition to the State Law Library, every Minnesota county has a law library. The [Directory of Minnesota County Law Libraries](#) contains a list of all county law library locations.

Minnesota Judicial Council

As of December 31, 2013

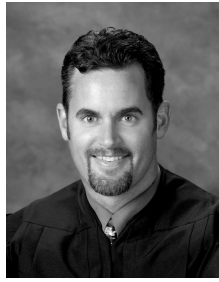
Hon. Lorie S. Gildea (Chair) Chief Justice, Supreme Court	Hon. John H. Scherrer Chief Judge, Seventh District
Hon. James B. Florey (Vice-Chair) Judge, Sixth District	Hon. Shari R. Schluchter Judge, Ninth District
Hon. G. Barry Anderson Associate Justice, Supreme Court	Hon. Donald M. Spilseth Chief Judge, Eighth District
Hon. Edward J. Cleary Chief Judge, Court of Appeals	Hon. Kurt J. Marben Chief Judge, Ninth District
Hon. Thomas J. Kalitowski Judge, Court of Appeals	Hon. John C. Hoffman Chief Judge, Tenth District
Hon. Terrence E. Conkel Chief Judge, First District	Jeffrey G. Shorba State Court Administrator
Hon. Thomas W. Pugh Judge, First District	Dawn Torgerson Deputy State Court Administrator
Hon. Teresa R. Warner Chief Judge, Second District	Mark Thompson District Administrator, Fourth District
Hon. Jeffrey D. Thompson Chief Judge, Third District	Paul Maatz District Administrator, Ninth District
Hon. Peter A. Cahill Chief Judge, Fourth District	Michael Moriarity District Administrator, Tenth District
Hon. Jeannice Reding Judge, Fourth District	Chuck Kjos Court Administrator, Olmsted County
Hon. Bradley C. Walker Chief Judge, Fifth District	Hon. Gregg E. Johnson MDJA President, Second District
Hon. Shaun R. Floerke Chief Judge, Sixth District	

Minnesota Judicial District Chief Judges

As of December 31, 2013



Hon. Kurt J. Marben
9th Judicial District



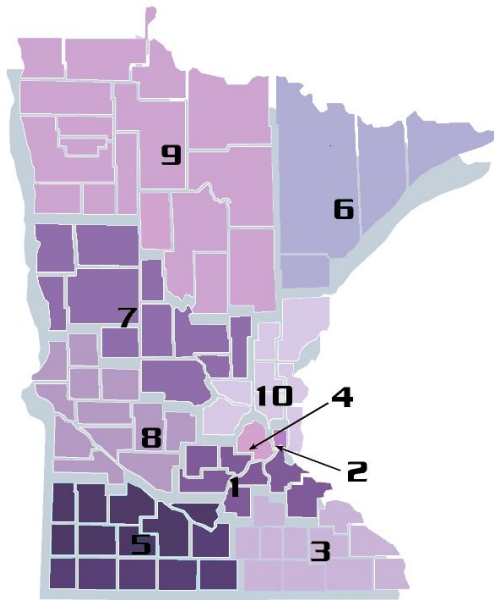
Hon. Shaun R. Floerke
6th Judicial District



Hon. John C. Hoffman
10th Judicial District



Hon. John H. Scherer
7th Judicial District



Hon. Teresa R. Warner
2nd Judicial District



Hon. Donald M. Spilseth
8th Judicial District



Hon. Peter A. Cahill
4th Judicial District



Hon. Bradley C. Walker
5th Judicial District



Hon. Terrence E. Conkel
1st Judicial District



Hon. Jeffrey D. Thompson
3rd Judicial District



2013 Annual Report to the Community
Produced by the State Court Administrator's Office
March 2014