



2000

Rhode Island Report on the Judiciary 2000

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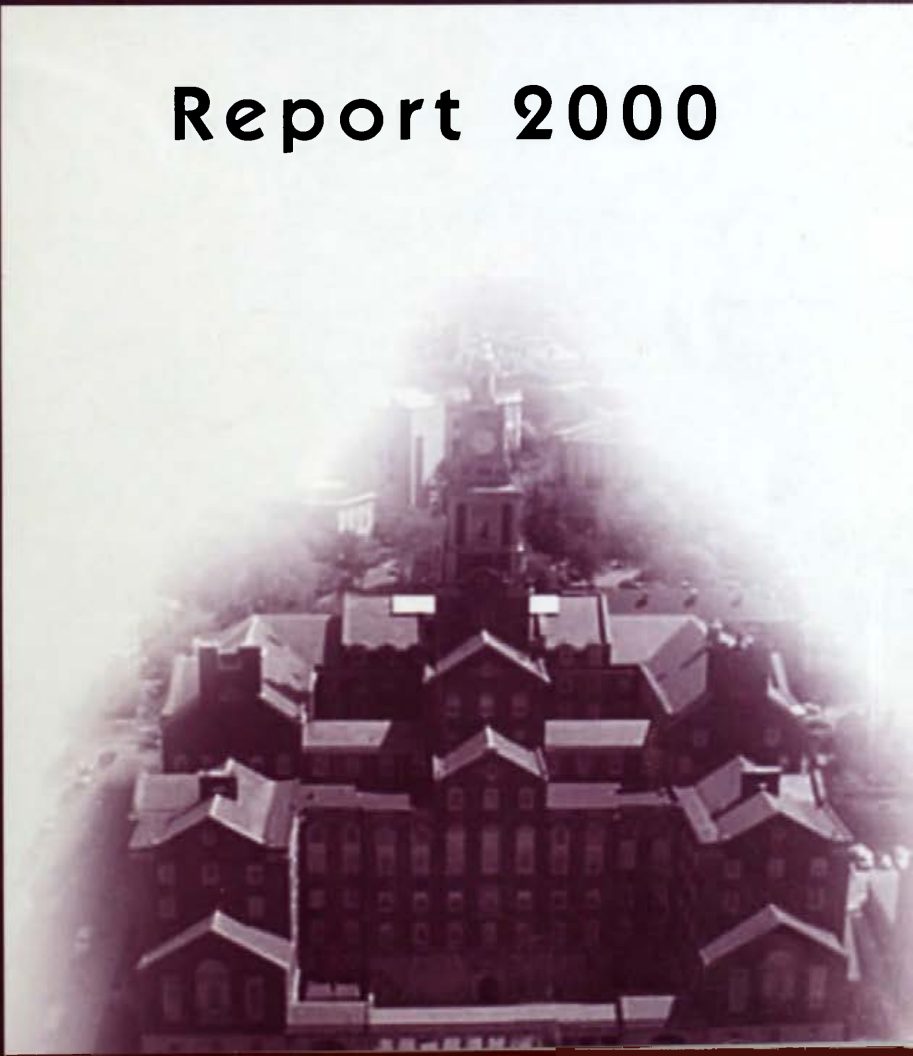
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Rhode Island Judiciary

Report 2000





Letter of Transmittal



John H. Barrette

Pursuant to G.L. 1956 (1997 Reenactment) § 8-15-7, it is with satisfaction that I submit the 2000 Report on the Rhode Island Judiciary.

The report outlines the activities of the state judicial system during the most recent calendar year and is a valuable source of information on the operation of the judiciary. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the staff members of the State Court Administrative Office, this year's annual report has been completed in record time.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Barrette
State Court Administrator



To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly

March 30, 2001

To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

The year 2000 was a busy year for the Rhode Island judicial system. We continued with the work of installing new computers and training employees in the use thereof in the Traffic Tribunal, in the District Court, in the Family Court, and in the Superior Court. Much progress has been made toward creating a smooth running system in utilizing this new technology.

The work of our various committees has gone forward. Particular emphasis has been placed upon the work of the Committee on Women and Minorities in the Courts in order to determine the perceptions of minorities of the fairness of our Rhode Island legal system. The committee is in the process of designing a survey to test public perception. Even more importantly the committee has undertaken the task of determining empirically whether racism or ethnic background has been a factor in the sentencing process in our criminal justice system. The members of the committee and the courts will strive to identify and eliminate any elements of racism or ethnic prejudice in the working of our legal system. There is no room for racism in the State of Rhode Island.

The Committee on Future of the Courts has continued in its analysis of our procedural rules, the relationship between judge and jury, and the distribution of jurisdiction among the various trial courts in our judicial system. A final report is expected from the committee during the year 2001. Many suggestions have been prepared for the consideration of the full committee. Subcommittees have been extremely active in formulating these suggestions for improvement of numerous aspects of our judicial system.

Other committees, such as the User-Friendly Committee and the Committee on Public Trust and Confidence in our Legal System, have been active in their efforts to enhance the public image of our judiciary and our legal system as a whole. Starting with a national conference on this issue in Washington, D.C. in 1999, our Rhode Island committee has sponsored several seminars to pursue the topic in our own jurisdiction. We are dedicated to the proposition that public trust and confidence may be enhanced by improvement in our performance and also the education of the public concerning the work of the judiciary as well as the contribution to that work of the members of the bar.

I write this letter with mixed feelings. My retirement as Chief Justice became effective February 24, 2001. This will be the last time that I have the honor to address you in that capacity on the state of the Rhode Island judiciary. I should like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the members of the General Assembly for their support of the judiciary in providing the necessary appropriations for the furtherance of our work and the improvements of our court facilities. Much remains to be done and I am confident that under the leadership of Chief Justice Frank J. Williams and with the cooperation of the General Assembly the improvement of court facilities will continue. I anticipate that a new courthouse will be constructed in Kent County pursuant to plans that have already been prepared. Work has also been advanced on the plan for a new facility for the Traffic Tribunal. This plan will hopefully be implemented within the reasonably foreseeable future.

It has been an honor to serve as a member of the judiciary for 45 years and as Chief Justice for the past six years. I bid you farewell and express my wish for all of God's blessings upon the work of our judicial system and upon the members of the General Assembly who support it.



**Chief Justice (Retired)
Joseph R. Weisberger**

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph R. Weisberger
Chief Justice (Retired)





To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly

April 6, 2001

To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

It has been six weeks since I have become the Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, and I wanted to update you as to some of the actions we have taken to date. As you know, our Rhode Island judiciary is comprised of able, capable, and efficient judges and staff who are committed to improving our service to the people of our great state. With your support, as well as that of our Governor and the good will of our citizenry, we can enhance and refine the positive and essential role of the third branch of government.



**Chief Justice
Frank J. Williams**

As we look forward to the future, the focus for our Rhode Island judicial system will be in the following areas: technology, communication between the judiciary and the public through improving public access and continued efforts at making our courts user friendly; infrastructure enhancements relating to the construction of new courthouses, as well as the rehabilitation and modernization of our existing facilities; security, and court practice and procedure. Some consider this focus as reform or "change," however, we should regard these efforts as necessary to ensure the judiciary's survival, and to make much-needed improvements of our judicial processes.

I have commenced cabinet meetings with the various division heads to determine the current state of affairs of our judiciary and to implement policies and practices. Between oral arguments and conferences, State Court Administrator John H. Barrette and I have visited with judges and staff at the District, Family, and Workers' Compensation Courts in Providence, as well as the Traffic Tribunal Court. We plan to visit the other judges, staffs, and judicial facilities in Providence and in the counties within the next few weeks. These visits have been informative and will assist in making much needed improvements in our judiciary.

The building on the strengths of the judiciary can only be effectuated if we have the staff to implement the new programs and improvements. As such, we have received authorization from the State Budget Office for our request for additional full time equivalent (FTE) positions for the Superior, Family, and District Courts. Our request for the positions essentially represents restoring to the judiciary the FTE number it maintained in 1997, a level approved prior to the employment freeze/FTE position reduction imposed by the Executive and Legislative branches. We hope for approval from the General Assembly on this matter.

We have devoted much time and many meetings to the financing and planning of the construction of the Kent County and the Howard Traffic Tribunal courthouses. I am pleased to report that plans for financing are forging ahead. Additionally, some rehabilitation and modernization of the Garrahy Judicial Complex will begin in May.

I wholeheartedly believe that we can become the best judiciary in the nation. Achieving this goal requires a team spirit and a can-do attitude in accomplishing our mission to deliver quality justice to all. As we can succeed only in concert, I have asked all 700 professionals in our judicial system to join me in giving their best effort. And I ask you, the honorable members of the General Assembly, for your support in ensuring that we deliver justice in the most effective way.

I hope, too, that I can begin delivering a state of the judiciary report to each chamber beginning with the 2002 session. You should also note that this annual report for 2000 has been produced in record time, thanks to a devoted and conscientious staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank J. Williams
Chief Justice





Report 2000

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Rhode Island Judiciary

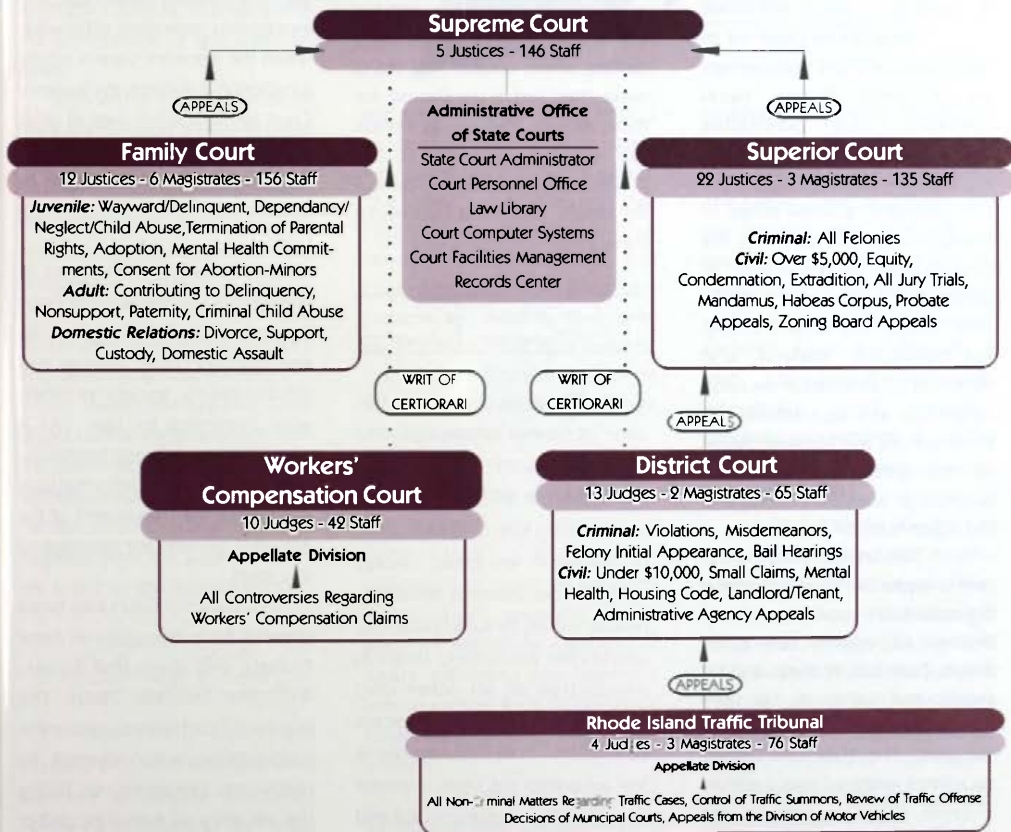
Report 2000



Court Structure

Rhode Island has six state-funded courts constituting a unified court system. The District, Family, and Workers' Compensation Courts, and the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal are trial courts of limited jurisdiction. The Superior Court is the general trial court, and the Supreme Court is the court of review. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is the executive head of the judicial system and has authority over the judicial budget. The Chief Justice appoints a State Court Administrator and staff to handle budgetary and administrative tasks. Each individual court also has its own chief judge and administrator to handle internal court management.

Rhode Island's Unified Court System



Note: As the descriptions in the diagrams are not exhaustive, the more common type of cases that are heard in the respective courts are listed.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court has final appellate jurisdiction over questions of law and equity, supervisory powers over other state courts, and general advisory responsibility to the legislative and the executive branches of state government concerning the constitutionality of legislation. The Supreme Court is also responsible for regulating admission to the Rhode Island Bar and disciplining its members.

The Supreme Court has an administrative office that oversees all personnel matters, fiscal concerns, and purchasing functions for the entire state court system. The administrative office also performs a wide range of managerial tasks, including the development and operation of automated information systems for all courts; long-range planning; the collection, analysis, and reporting of information on court caseloads and operations; the development and implementation of management-improvement projects in specified areas; and the supervision of facilities.

The State Law Library, which is also under the direction of the Supreme Court, provides reference materials and research services for judges, court staff, attorneys, and the public and serves as the only comprehensive public law library in the state. The State Law Library provides a variety of legal materials in print, CD-ROM, and on-line

formats. Additionally, the State Law Library maintains branch law libraries throughout the state.

The Rhode Island Supreme Court Judicial Records Center (JRC) serves as the central storage repository for the state's semi-active, inactive, and archival court records. As such, the JRC offers the state courts secure storage for all of its records, except for those that are necessary for the daily operation of the courts. The JRC has eased the clutter and workload in the various courthouses and has contributed to the efficient running of the courts. The JRC is more than just a warehouse for these records, however, as it offers full reference services to the courts, the bar, and to members of the public who need to research these public records.

Superior Court

The Superior Court is the trial court of general jurisdiction. The Superior Court has original jurisdiction of all civil actions at law involving title or some right to or interest in real estate, except actions for possession of tenements held at will or by sufferance, and possesses exclusive, original jurisdiction of all other civil matters involving claims in excess of \$10,000. In all other actions at law, whenever the claim is greater than \$5,000 and does not exceed

\$10,000, the Superior Court has concurrent jurisdiction with the District Court. With the Probate Court, the Superior Court also has concurrent, original jurisdiction over the change of names of persons 18 years or older who have been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony.

The Superior Court also has exclusive, original jurisdiction over equity proceedings. It retains its equity jurisdiction even during arbitration, notwithstanding agreements providing otherwise. When the Superior Court's equity jurisdiction is invoked, the Superior Court has jurisdiction over all other actions, including legal claims, arising out of the same transaction or occurrence pursuant to applicable rules.

Additionally, with respect to criminal matters, the Superior Court has original jurisdiction of all crimes and offenses, both felonies and misdemeanors, except as otherwise provided by law. As a consequence, all indictments by grand juries and informations charged by the Department of the Attorney General are returned to this court.

The Superior Court also hears appeals from decisions of local Probate and Municipal Courts. With the Probate Court, the Superior Court shares concurrent jurisdiction with respect to replacing, removing, or filling the vacancy of a trustee under





a trust established by will or with respect to tax minimization or estate planning. In addition, criminal and civil cases tried in the District Court, except as specifically provided by statute, are also brought to the Superior Court on appeal for a trial de novo. Other types of appeals and statutory proceedings, such as redevelopment, land condemnation, zoning appeals, administrative appeals, and enforcement of arbitrator's awards, also fall under the jurisdiction of the Superior Court.

Also within the jurisdiction of the Superior Court is the gun court calendar. Due to the growing number of gun related offenses, the gun court calendar was established to expedite the processing and disposition of criminal cases relating to the illegal possession and use of guns and other dangerous weapons.

Finally, the Superior Court shares concurrent jurisdiction with the Supreme Court over writs of habeas corpus and mandamus and certain other prerogative writs. Appeals from the Superior Court are heard by the Supreme Court.

Family Court

The Family Court was created to focus attention and address problems involving families and children. Its goals

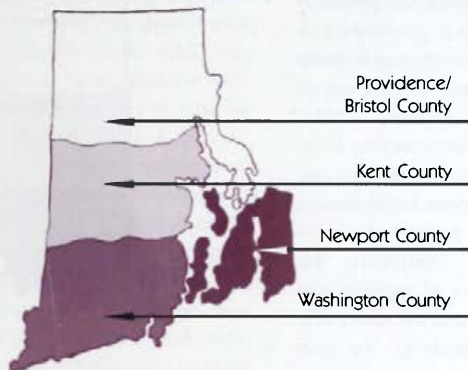
are to assist, protect, and if possible, restore families whose well being or unity is threatened. The court also ensures that children within its jurisdiction receive the care, guidance, and control conducive to their best interests and welfare. If children are removed from their parents, the court also seeks to provide them with the equivalent of high quality parental care.

The Family Court has jurisdiction to hear all petitions for divorce and any motions in conjunction with divorce proceedings, such as property distribution, alimony, child support, and child custody. It hears petitions for separate maintenance and complaints regarding support for parents and children.

The Family Court has jurisdiction over matters relating

to delinquent, wayward, dependent, neglected, abused, mentally deficient, or disordered children. The Family Court also hears and determines all petitions for guardianship of any child who has been placed in the care, custody, and control of the Department for Children, Youth, and Families. It also has jurisdiction over adoptions, child marriages, paternity proceedings, and other matters involving domestic relations and juveniles.

The Family Court has jurisdiction over all matters relating to the enforcement of laws regulating childcare providers and child placing agencies. It also coordinates statewide juvenile hearing boards and teen courts that handle noncriminal juvenile matters. Appeals from Family Court decisions are taken directly to the Supreme Court.



Superior and Family Courts

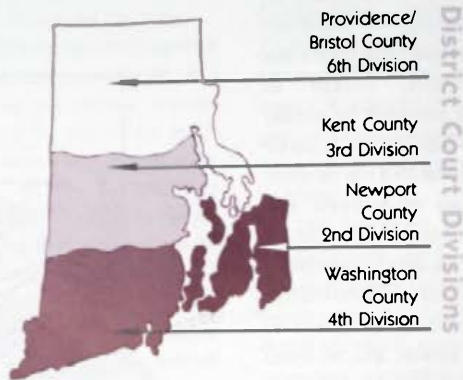
Workers' Compensation Court

The Workers' Compensation Commission was established in 1954 and functioned independently until it was made a court within the unified court system in 1991. The Workers' Compensation Court has jurisdiction over disputes between employees and employers in relation to compensation for occupational disabilities, the reasonableness of medical and hospital bills, and the extent and duration of a disability. The court also retains jurisdiction over disputes between an insurance carrier and an employer under a workers' compensation insurance contract.

The workers' compensation statutes establish that employers assume the cost of occupational disabilities without regard to fault.

Six basic objectives underlie workers' compensation laws:

- To provide sure, prompt, and reasonable income and medical benefits to work-accident victims or income benefits to their dependents, regardless of fault.
- To provide a single remedy and reduce court delays, costs, and work loads arising out of personal-injury litigation.
- To relieve public and private charities of financial drains incident to uncompensated occupational disabilities.
- To regulate payment of fees to lawyers and witnesses as well as time-consuming trials and appeals.
- To encourage maximum employer interest in safety and



rehabilitation through an appropriate experience-rating mechanism.

- To promote frank study of the causes of accidents (rather than concealment of fault), thereby reducing the number of preventable accidents and consequent human suffering.

Appeals from Workers' Compensation Court decisions are first heard by an appellate division within the court, a three-judge panel made up of any three judges of the court other than the trial judge. This panel first determines if a basis for appeal exists by reviewing the transcript and the record of the case along with any briefs or memoranda of law submitted by the appellant. If a basis is found, the panel hears oral argument and enters a final decision.

If either party is aggrieved by the decision of the appellate division, that party may petition the Supreme Court by writ of certiorari.

District Court

Since most people appearing before a court in this state initially appear in District Court, this court has been divided into four divisions to provide easy geographic access to the court system. The jurisdiction of the District Court includes small claims, violations of municipal ordinances and regulations, and misdemeanors when the right to a jury trial in the first instance has been waived. If a defendant invokes the right to a jury trial, the case is transferred to the Superior Court. Appeals from District Court decisions go to the Superior Court for a trial de novo.

Violations and hearings on involuntary hospitalization under the mental-health, drug-abuse, and alcoholism laws also fall under the District Court's jurisdiction. The District Court hears appeals from and orders compliance with the subpoenas





and rulings of the state tax administrator and several regulatory agencies and boards. The District Court hears all actions between landlords and tenants and all other actions for possession of premises and estates.

The District Court also hears violations of state and local housing codes except when a Municipal Court has been established to handle these matters. Decisions in all these areas are subject to review by the Supreme Court only.

Traffic Tribunal

The Traffic Tribunal succeeded the Administrative Adjudication Court under the Rhode Island Traffic Safety and Accountability Act of 1999, Chapter 8-8.2 of Title 8 of the General Laws. Although it is a separate entity, the Tribunal is supervised by the Chief Judge of the District Court.

Prior to 1975 all traffic offenses in Rhode Island, except parking, were criminal violations (misdemeanors or felonies) and were heard by the District Court. With the establishment of the Administrative Adjudication Division (AAD) under the Department of Transportation, most traffic offenses were decriminalized and placed under the jurisdiction of this quasi-judicial body. Those that were not decriminalized are still handled by the District Court and include

driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, reckless driving, driving without a valid license, and leaving the scene of an accident.

In 1992 the Administrative Adjudication Court (AAC) was established to succeed the AAD. Operating under Title 31, Chapter 43, of the General Laws, the AAC was responsible for hearing most traffic cases, for distributing and controlling traffic summonses, for operating driver retraining schools, and for maintaining accurate driver accident and violation records. The AAC previously heard appeals from the Division of Motor Vehicles and the Municipal Courts.

On the establishment of the new Traffic Tribunal, many changes occurred, both structural and procedural. The most pertinent changes are as follows:

- *The administrative functions of Operator Control and Driver Retraining were returned to the Registry of Motor Vehicles.*
- *A three-judge appeals panel continues to hear appeals within the Traffic Tribunal, but all appeals from the Tribunal are now heard in the District Court.*
- *The Traffic Tribunal has the authority to enforce its own judgments.*
- *The Traffic Tribunal's new judicial officers are magistrates. As present judges retire, they will be replaced by magistrates.*
- *New rules of procedure for the Traffic Tribunal were promulgated by the Chief Judge of the District Court and approved by the Supreme Court, effective March 31, 2000.*

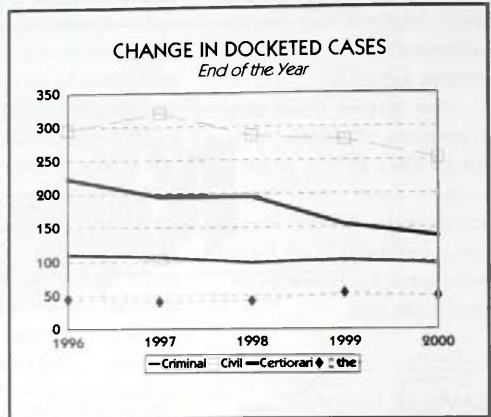


Supreme Court

Supreme Court Caseload

The Supreme Court results for the year 2000 showed a continuing decline in the number of cases docketed (see Rhode Island Supreme Court's Appellate Caseload Statistics to follow). The total number of cases docketed was at its lowest level in over twenty years with a decrease occurring in each case type. The two categories evidencing the greatest percentage decrease in docketed cases were petitions for writ of certiorari, dropping by 11 percent, and civil appeals, dropping by 10 percent. Criminal appeals and miscellaneous appeals recorded much smaller differences in docketing. Criminal appeals dropped by 5 percent while miscellaneous appeals dipped by 7 percent.

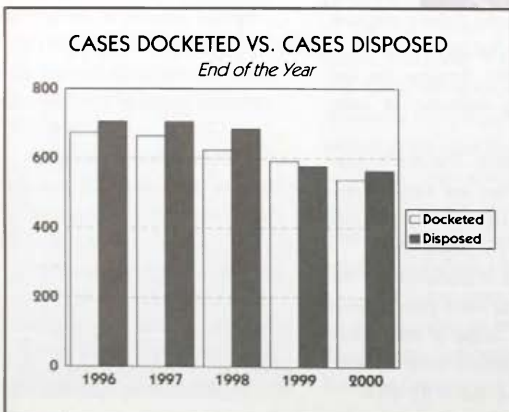
Once again, the Supreme Court disposed of more appeals than were docketed (see Rhode Island Supreme Court's Statistics on Manner of Disposition to follow). In 2000, dispositions totaled 564 cases and included 261 written decisions, of which 91 were full opinions, 105 were per curiam opinions, and 65 were orders. The appeals disposed of prior to oral argument on the motion calendar accounted for the greatest percentage re-



corded at 54 percent. The cases disposed of on the motion calendar accounted for 30 percent of the total, while the number disposed of after argument on the merits was approximately 16 percent. The Supreme Court has established a goal of disposing of appeals 300 days from the docketing of the case. In 2000, the court disposed of approximately 45 percent of the appeals within this guideline.

At the end of 2000, the number of appeals pending in the Supreme Court decreased (see Rhode Island Supreme Court's Appellate Caseload Statistics to follow). The overall decline was due to the reduction in petitions for writ of certiorari. Pending cases in this category decreased by 28 percent from last year and were reduced by over 50 percent compared to five years ago. Pending civil, criminal, and miscellaneous appeals increased only a negligible amount.

A review of the pending caseload relative to its stage within the appellate process demonstrated that the number of cases awaiting a pre-briefing conference decreased marginally from last year. On the other hand, the number of cases awaiting a show cause hearing rose by 20, while the cases pending at the oral argument stage increased by 27.





Rhode Island Supreme Court

Appellate Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Case Types					
Criminal					
Docketed	110	106	98	102	97
Disposed	103	98	79	98	95
Increase/Decrease	+7	+8	+19	+4	+9
Pending	115	124	141	147	148
Civil					
Docketed	296	321	287	281	253
Disposed	300	329	337	271	254
Increase/Decrease	-4	-8	-50	+10	-1
Pending	356	348	303	318	319
Certiorari					
Docketed	223	196	196	155	138
Disposed	244	228	215	160	167
Increase/Decrease	-21	-32	-19	-5	-29
Pending	151	119	102	100	72
Miscellaneous					
Docketed	45	41	42	54	50
Disposed	58	49	53	48	48
Increase/Decrease	-13	-8	-11	+6	+2
Pending	14	9	4	11	13
All Cases					
Docketed	674	664	623	592	538
Disposed	705	704	684	577	564
Increase/Decrease	-31	-71	-61	+15	-26
Pending	636	600	550	576	552
Notices of Appeal Pending					
Pending Greater Than 180 Days	21	140	129	54	19

Rhode Island Supreme Court

Statistics on Manner of Disposition

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Manner/Stage of Disposition					
Before Argument					
Withdrawn	98	81	87	89	71
Dismissed	106	97	128	70	83
Petition Granted	9	5	9	5	6
Petition Denied	160	147	139	114	126
Other	30	21	31	26	17
Total	403	351	352	304	303
After Argument/Motion Calendar					
Withdrawn	1	0	0	1	2
Affirmed	79	113	83	44	43
Modified	0	0	0	1	0
Reversed	14	22	19	3	6
Article I, Rule 16(g) - Affirm Order or Judgment Below	0	0	1	0	0
Article I, Rule 12A - Show Cause Orders	*	*	42	49	8
Other	87	104	88	5	6
Total Orders	*	*	114	103	65
Per Curiam	*	*	77	96	10
Total	181	239	191	199	170
After Argument/Merits					
Withdrawn	1	0	0	0	0
Affirmed	72	70	56	49	62
Modified	8	13	12	8	13
Reversed	40	31	31	17	16
Total	121	114	99	74	91
Total Dispositions	705	704	684	577	564
% Disposed of Within 300 Days of Docketing	*	*	*	47%	45%

*Not available.



Superior Court Caseload

Felony Cases

The Superior Court saw a slight increase in felony filings of 3.5 percent in 2000, but filings remained lower than the 1997 and 1998 levels (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Felony Caseload Statistics to follow). Felony dispositions exceeded filings in Providence/Bristol, Newport, and Washington Counties, while Kent County disposed of 87 percent of its filings.

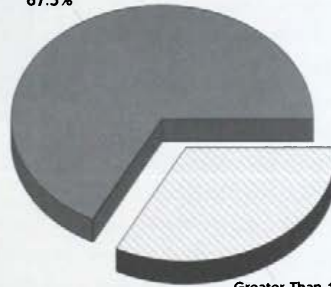
In both Kent and Newport Counties, 76 percent of all felony dispositions were handled within 180 days of the Superior Court filing (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Statistics on Manner of Disposition - Felonies to follow). In Washington County, 68 percent of the cases were disposed of within the 180-day guideline, while in Providence/Bristol County 65.6 percent were disposed of within 180 days.

By the end of 2000, 21 percent of the felony caseload in Washington County was pending over 180 days from the Superior Court

filing, while in Newport County the percentage over 180 days was 29 percent (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Felony Caseload Statistics to follow). In Kent County, the per-

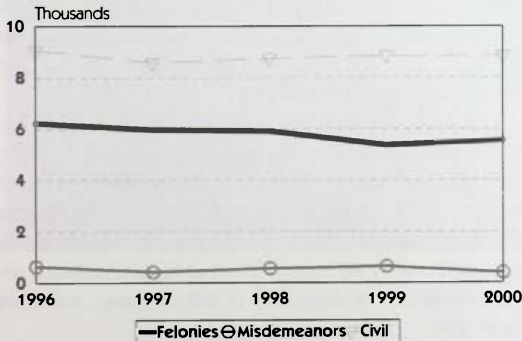
FELONY CASES DISPOSED OF WITHIN 180 DAYS OF SUPERIOR COURT ARRAIGNMENT

Less Than 180 Days
67.5%



Greater Than 180 Days
32.5%

CHANGE IN CASE FILINGS BY CATEGORY



centage of cases still pending over 180 days was 39 percent, and in Providence/Bristol County the figure was at 51 percent.

Misdemeanor Cases

Misdemeanor filings dropped sharply in 2000, as filings in Providence/Bristol County decreased by approximately 63 percent from the 1999 level (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Misdemeanor Caseload Statistics to follow). In the other three counties, misdemeanor filings increased from last year with Kent and Newport Counties seeing its highest level of filings in five years.

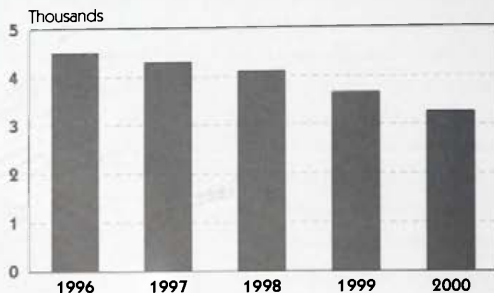
Misdemeanor dispositions exceeded filings in Providence/Bristol, Newport, and Washington Counties but fell short in Kent County where the disposition rate was 95 percent of the cases filed (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Misdemeanor Caseload Statistics to follow). Nevertheless, Kent County still had the highest percentage of misdemeanor cases disposed of within the Superior Court guideline of 90 days from filing, operating at 48 percent (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Statistics on Manner of Disposition - Misdemeanors to follow). In Newport County 47 percent of misdemeanor cases were disposed of within 90 days of filing, in Washington County the rate was 32 percent, and in Providence/Bristol County the rate was 18 percent.

By year-end, the total pending misdemeanor cases statewide were at 183 (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Misdemeanor Caseload Statistics to follow). Approximately 75 percent of the overall pending cases were in Providence/Bristol County. Of the 183 pending cases, 76 percent exceeded the 90-day guideline.

Civil Cases

Civil filings in 2000 were largely on par with the previous year as the total number of civil cases filed increased negligibly (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Civil Caseload Statistics to follow). The decrease in the number of cases added to the trial calendar evidenced a five-year low. Providence/Bristol and Washington Counties accounted for the

PENDING CASES ON CIVIL TRIAL CALENDAR



decline in cases added to the trial calendar, whereas the numbers increased in the other two counties. In Providence/Bristol County, the number of cases added to the trial calendar dipped below 1,800 for the first time in over a decade, and in Washington County, the number was the lowest in five years.

Three counties, Providence/Bristol, Kent, and Washington, were able to dispose of more cases on the trial calendar than were added this year (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Statistics on Manner of Disposition - Trial Calendars Only to follow for a further breakdown on dispositions). However, in Newport County the disposition rate of cases on the trial calendar was at 87 percent. In all counties, the median time frame to dispose of a case placed on the trial calendar was between 24 and 30 months.

In Providence/Bristol, Kent, and Washington Counties, the number of civil cases that were pending trial at the end of 2000 decreased compared to a year ago (see Rhode Island Superior Court's Civil Caseload Statistics to follow). Only Newport County showed an increase in civil cases pending trial at year-end. Additionally, the Superior Court arbitration/mediation program resulted in the disposition of 628 civil cases, a decrease from 1999.





Rhode Island Superior Court

Felony Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Felonies					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Cases Filed	4,765	4,633	4,606	4,130	4,100
Cases Disposed	4,536	4,629	4,672	4,491	4,570
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+229	+4	-66	-361	-470
Total Pending Cases	1,747	1,733	1,674	1,562	1,610
Cases Over 180 Days Old	757	854	812	678	828
% Greater Than 180 Days From Filing	(43.3%)	(49.3%)	(48.5%)	(43.4%)	(51%)
<i>Kent County</i>					
Cases Filed	646	632	689	575	671
Cases Disposed	749	704	786	590	581
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-103	-72	-97	-15	+90
Total Pending Cases	271	208	113	121	198
Cases Over 180 Days Old	134	93	30	35	78
% Greater Than 180 Days From Filing	(49.4%)	(44.7%)	(26.5%)	(29%)	(39%)
<i>Newport County</i>					
Cases Filed	409	359	276	305	314
Cases Disposed	470	426	316	265	334
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-61	-67	-40	+40	-20
Total Pending Cases	80	57	43	49	91
Cases Over 180 Days Old	30	19	15	20	26
% Greater Than 180 Days From Filing	(37.5%)	(33.3%)	(34.9%)	(40.8%)	(29%)
<i>Washington County</i>					
Cases Filed	402	342	342	352	386
Cases Disposed	355	391	375	328	405
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-47	-49	-33	+24	-19
Total Pending Cases	155	118	68	91	132
Cases Over 180 Days Old	74	49	17	23	28
% Greater Than 180 Days From Filing	(47.7%)	(41.5%)	(25%)	(25.3%)	(21%)
<i>Statewide</i>					
Cases Filed	6,222	5,966	5,913	5,362	5,551
Cases Disposed	6,110	6,150	6,149	5,674	5,540
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+112	-184	-236	-312	+11
Total Pending Cases	2,253	2,116	1,898	1,823	2,040
Cases Over 180 Days Old	995	1,015	874	756	960
% Greater Than 180 Days From Filing	(44%)	(48%)	(46%)	(41.5%)	(47%)

Statistics on Manner of Disposition - Felonies

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Felonies					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Plead	4,135	4,145	4,178	4,027	3,825
Filed	10	13	8	8	5
Dismissed	329	388	406	390	311
Trial	61	80	73	65	79
Other	1	3	7	1	0
Total	4,536	4,629	4,672	4,491	4,220
% Disposed of Less Than 180 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(65.6%)
<i>Kent County</i>					
Plead	653	600	699	517	492
Filed	9	11	17	23	26
Dismissed	49	59	37	43	48
Trial	36	34	30	6	14
Other	2	0	3	1	1
Total	749	704	786	590	581
% Disposed of Less Than 180 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(76%)
<i>Newport County</i>					
Plead	401	357	269	234	284
Filed	27	27	14	11	13
Dismissed	39	37	31	18	34
Trial	3	5	2	1	3
Other	0	0	0	1	0
Total	470	426	316	265	334
% Disposed of Less Than 180 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(76%)
<i>Washington County</i>					
Plead	309	332	320	295	341
Filed	9	2	9	9	14
Dismissed	23	32	34	19	45
Trial	9	21	11	4	5
Other	5	4	1	1	0
Total	355	391	375	328	405
% Disposed of Less Than 180 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(68%)
<i>Statewide</i>					
Plead	5,498	5,434	5,466	5,073	4,942
Filed	55	53	48	51	58
Dismissed	440	516	508	470	438
Trial	109	140	116	76	101
Other	8	7	11	4	1
Total	6,110	6,150	6,149	5,674	5,540
% Disposed of Less Than 180 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(67.5%)

*Not available.





Misdemeanor Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Misdemeanors					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Cases Filed	203	252	402	458	171
Cases Disposed	224	221	218	557	192
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-21	+31	+184	-99	-21
Total Pending Cases	126	138	248	188	135
Cases Over 90 Days Old	88	83	115	133	103
% Greater Than 90 Days from Filing	(69.8%)	(60%)	(46.4%)	(70.7%)	(76%)
<i>Kent County</i>					
Cases Filed	82	81	63	89	95
Cases Disposed	119	100	69	69	90
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-37	-19	-6	+20	+5
Total Pending Cases	44	26	14	31	15
Cases Over 90 Days Old	20	14	8	15	9
% Greater Than 90 Days from Filing	(45.4%)	(53.8%)	(57%)	(48.4%)	(60%)
<i>Newport County</i>					
Cases Filed	58	31	54	41	60
Cases Disposed	108	46	72	74	106
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-50	-15	-18	-33	-46
Total Pending Cases	17	12	18	23	18
Cases Over 90 Days Old	11	4	10	18	17
% Greater Than 90 Days from Filing	(64.7%)	(33.3%)	(56%)	(78.3%)	(94%)
<i>Washington County</i>					
Cases Filed	303	64	42	46	62
Cases Disposed	374	132	65	46	90
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-71	-68	-23	0	-28
Total Pending Cases	78	27	15	20	15
Cases Over 90 Days Old	55	19	4	2	10
% Greater Than 90 Days from Filing	(70.5%)	(70.4%)	(27%)	(10%)	(67%)
<i>Statewide</i>					
Cases Filed	646	428	561	634	388
Cases Disposed	825	499	424	746	478
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-179	-71	+137	-112	-90
Total Pending Cases	265	203	295	262	183
Cases Over 90 Days Old	174	120	137	168	139
% Greater Than 90 Days from Filing	(65.7%)	(59.1%)	(46.4%)	(64.1%)	(76%)

Statistics on Manner of Disposition - Misdemeanors

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Misdemeanors					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Plead	158	143	154	449	141
Filed	13	7	5	11	0
Dismissed	42	46	38	85	33
Trial	7	14	17	11	18
Other	4	11	4	1	0
Total	224	221	218	557	192
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(18%)
<i>Kent County</i>					
Plead	74	63	40	45	34
Filed	15	14	16	9	28
Dismissed	19	13	9	10	15
Trial	5	8	2	2	7
Other	6	2	2	3	6
Total	119	100	69	69	90
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(48%)
<i>Newport County</i>					
Plead	48	20	38	49	61
Filed	12	6	12	8	15
Dismissed	27	11	14	13	25
Trial	5	1	5	3	2
Other	16	8	3	1	3
Total	108	46	72	74	106
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(47%)
<i>Washington County</i>					
Plead	205	88	35	18	43
Filed	122	20	11	8	9
Dismissed	39	13	15	8	30
Trial	7	9	3	2	6
Other	1	2	1	10	2
Total	374	132	65	46	90
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(32%)
<i>Statewide</i>					
Plead	485	314	267	561	279
Filed	162	47	44	36	52
Dismissed	127	83	76	116	103
Trial	24	32	27	18	33
Other	27	23	10	15	11
Total	825	499	424	746	478
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	(31%)

*Not available.





Rhode Island Superior Court

Civil Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Civil Actions					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Total Cases Filed	6,695	6,226	6,479	6,643	6,700
<i>Trial Calendar Summary:</i>					
Cases Added	2,236	2,091	1,893	1,865	1,794
Cases Disposed	2,051	2,006	2,006	2,117	2,029
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+185	+85	-113	-254	-235
Pending at Year-End	3,244	3,272	3,142	2,798	2,422
<i>Kent County</i>					
Total Cases Filed	1,074	1,082	1,071	1,039	958
<i>Trial Calendar Summary:</i>					
Cases Added	399	374	276	266	328
Cases Disposed	371	478	240	395	452
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+28	-104	+36	-128	-124
Pending at Year-End	584	471	475	351	348
<i>Newport County</i>					
Total Cases Filed	605	568	543	543	564
<i>Trial Calendar Summary:</i>					
Cases Added	206	135	137	179	196
Cases Disposed	132	143	203	193	170
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+74	-8	-66	-14	+26
Pending at Year-End	337	317	225	204	231
<i>Washington County</i>					
Total Cases Filed	684	704	654	631	639
<i>Trial Calendar Summary:</i>					
Cases Added	236	216	243	201	181
Cases Disposed	311	302	220	180	220
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-75	-86	+23	+21	-39
Pending at Year-End	343	245	271	298	258
<i>Statewide</i>					
Total Cases Filed	9,058	8,580	8,747	8,856	8,861
<i>Trial Calendar Summary:</i>					
Cases Added	3,077	2,816	2,549	2,511	2,499
Cases Disposed	2,865	2,929	2,669	2,885	2,871
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+212	-113	-120	-375	-372
Pending at Year-End	4,508	4,305	4,113	3,651	3,259

*Not available.

Rhode Island Superior Court

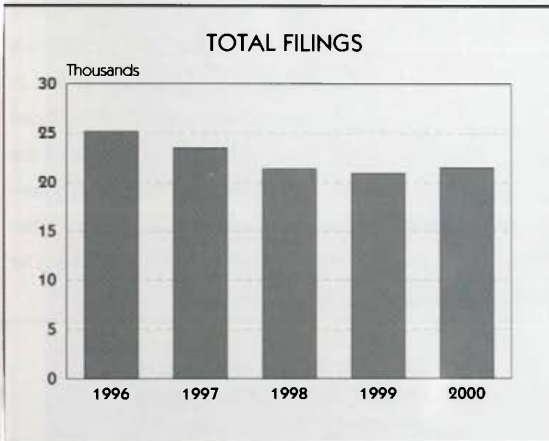
Statistics on Manner of Disposition - Trial Calendars Only

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Civil Actions					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Verdicts	104	90	117	118	148
Judicial Decisions	70	78	80	101	92
Total Trials	174	168	197	219	245
Dismissed/Settled/Other	1,554	1,477	1,485	1,530	1,449
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	323	361	324	368	335
Total Disposed	2,051	2,006	2,006	2,117	2,029
<i>Kent County</i>					
Verdicts	11	20	3	9	32
Judicial Decisions	18	21	8	22	22
Total Trials	29	41	11	31	54
Dismissed/Settled/Other	285	370	120	230	308
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	57	67	109	134	90
Total Disposed	371	478	240	395	452
<i>Newport County</i>					
Verdicts	4	9	1	7	9
Judicial Decisions	3	4	7	5	12
Total Trials	7	13	8	12	21
Dismissed/Settled/Other	108	116	175	168	132
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	17	14	90	13	17
Total Disposed	132	143	203	193	170
<i>Washington County</i>					
Verdicts	6	11	16	8	14
Judicial Decisions	11	23	8	6	10
Total Trials	17	34	24	14	24
Dismissed/Settled/Other	237	209	173	139	180
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	57	59	23	27	16
Total Disposed	311	302	220	180	220
<i>Statewide</i>					
Verdicts	125	130	137	142	203
Judicial Decisions	102	126	103	134	141
Total Trials	227	256	240	275	344
Dismissed/Settled/Other	2,184	2,172	1,953	2,067	2,069
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	454	501	476	542	458
Total Disposed	2,865	2,929	2,669	2,885	2,871



Family Court Caseload

The Family Court results for 2000 showed an upturn in filings in all categories after a steady decline between 1996 and 1999. A total of 21,511 cases were filed overall, an increase of 2.6 percent compared to a year ago. A 7 percent rise in juvenile filings and a 4 percent rise in divorce petitions contributed to the overall increase in filings. The two other major categories, abuse filings and child support petitions, were both slightly lower than last year.



Domestic Relations Cases

Divorce filings throughout the state varied greatly by county in the year 2000, with petitions in Kent County reaching their highest level since 1982, while filings in Providence/Bristol County exceeded 3,000 for the first time since 1990 (see Rhode Island Family Court's Domestic Relations Caseload Statistics to follow). Meanwhile, in Newport and Washington Counties, divorce filings were virtually unchanged from the previous year.

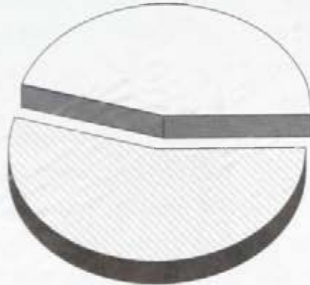
The Family Court continued to control the backlog of contested divorce cases throughout 2000. At the end of December 2000, there were no cases pending for more than a year on the contested calendars in Kent, Newport, and Washington Counties. Under the case management system, in Providence/Bristol County there were only 14 cases pending at the end of December that were over a year old. Additionally, 42 percent of the eligible cases on the nominal track were handled within three months of filing in Providence/Bristol County, and 98 percent of the eligible nominal and contested cases were disposed of within a year.

Juvenile Cases

Despite an overall increase in juvenile filings, the categories of adoption/guardianship and dependency/neglect/abuse petitions within the Family Court dipped to a five-year low (see Rhode Island Family Court's Juvenile Caseload Statistics to follow). Increased filings in 2000 were attributed to significant increases in wayward/delinquent petitions (10 percent) and termination of parental rights petitions (nearly 27 percent) compared to 1999. Moreover, the filing of termination of parental rights petitions reached its highest level in five years. Violations regarding court orders and terms of probation also reached a landmark by exceeding a total of 900 for the first time. A review of juvenile filings by location revealed that filings decreased in Newport County for the second year in

WAYWARD/DELINQUENT CASES ADJUDICATED WITHIN 90 DAYS

Less Than 90 Days
45.3%



Greater Than 90 Days
54.7%

a row, while elsewhere filings increased.

Disposition rates for wayward/delinquent petitions was led by Newport County at 93 percent, while the disposition rate in Providence/Bristol County was reported at 86 percent. Kent County disposition rates for wayward/delinquent cases were 82 percent with Washington County close behind at 81 percent.

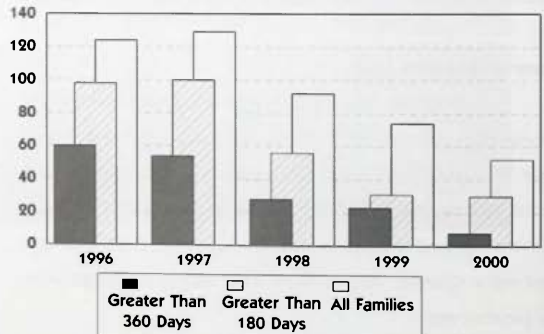
The Family Court has established a goal of adjudicating the wayward/delinquent cases within 90 days from the time of filing. This year Washington County adjudicated 49 percent of the wayward/delinquent caseload within the 90-day guideline, while Providence/Bristol County adjudicated 46 percent. Newport County adjudicated 43 percent within this time frame, and Kent County adjudicated 42

percent of its cases in this category within 90 days.

Another area closely monitored by the Family Court was the termination of parental rights caseload on the contested calendar in Providence/Bristol County. Progress was made in this area compared to 1999 as the total number of pending cases decreased by 15 percent in 2000, and the number of families (same mother, various children) in this caseload dropped by almost 30 percent. However, the most significant gains were made in eliminating the

backlog of contested termination of parental rights. The number of families with cases pending for more than a year was reduced by more than two thirds (from 23 to 8), and the number of their cases pending for more than two years was cut in half (from 8 to 4).

PENDING CONTESTED TERMINATION PARENTAL RIGHTS CALENDAR *Providence/Bristol County*





Rhode Island Family Court

Domestic Relations Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Divorce Petitions Filed					
Providence/Bristol County	2,813	2,679	2,785	2,942	3,062
Kent County	838	859	871	833	895
Newport County	362	393	369	353	361
Washington County	537	595	612	570	556
Statewide Total	4,550	4,526	4,637	4,698	4,874
Abuse Complaints Filed					
Providence/Bristol County	2,120	2,113	2,066	2,015	2,026
Kent County	367	396	358	332	342
Newport County	262	222	211	201	190
Washington County	227	257	183	221	177
Statewide Total	2,976	2,988	2,818	2,769	2,735
Contested Divorce Calendar Results					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Total Pending Cases	169	47[^]	24[^]	^	^
Cases Greater Than 180 Days From Calendaring	42	23	11	^	^
Cases Greater Than 360 Days From Calendaring	15	6	4	^	^
[^] Cases Greater Than 360 Days From Filing	*	2	26	47	14
<i>Kent County</i>					
Total Pending Cases	34	49	45	22	40
Cases Greater Than 180 Days From Calendaring	5	6	3	2	11
Cases Greater Than 360 Days From Calendaring	0	0	0	1	0
<i>Newport County</i>					
Total Pending Cases	11	14	12	2	18
Cases Greater Than 180 Days From Calendaring	4	2	2	0	1
Cases Greater Than 360 Days From Calendaring	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Washington County</i>					
Total Pending Cases	27	11	16	12	9
Cases Greater Than 180 Days From Calendaring	6	0	2	2	3
Cases Greater Than 360 Days From Calendaring	2	0	0	0	0
<i>Statewide</i>					
Total Pending Cases	241	121	97	^	^
Cases Greater Than 180 Days From Calendaring	57	31	18	^	^
Cases Greater Than 360 Days From Calendaring	17	6	4	^	^
Support Petitions Filed	6,407	5,124	3,370	3,998	3,743
Total Hearings Related to Support	17,627	20,864	23,974	22,889	22,987

* Not available.

[^] All new filings are handled under the case management process adopted in 1996.

Juvenile Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Juvenile Filings by Category					
Wayward/Delinquent	7,776	7,516	6,880	6,126	6,756
Dependency/Neglect/Abuse	1,606	1,523	1,770	1,486	1,445
Termination Parental Rights	396	358	396	324	411
Adoption/Guardianship	690	598	591	610	570
Violations	713	806	854	884	901
Other	57	70	64	71	76
Total Filings	11,238	10,871	10,555	9,501	10,159
Juvenile Filings by Location					
Providence/Bristol County	7,789	7,509	7,154	6,386	7,045
Kent County	1,377	1,503	1,446	1,425	1,487
Newport County	888	802	808	709	639
Washington County	1,184	1,057	1,147	981	988
Total Filings	11,238	10,871	10,555	9,501	10,159
Juvenile Calendar Results for Wayward/Delinquent Cases Only					
<i>Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Filed	*	4,870	4,366	3,820	4,444
Disposed	*	5,066	4,417	3,751	3,836
Increase/Decrease	*	-196	-101	+69	+608
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	(56%)	(46%)
<i>Kent County</i>					
Filed	*	1,174	1,050	1,044	1,146
Disposed	*	1,106	1,070	922	938
Increase/Decrease	*	68	-20	+122	+208
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	(47%)	(42%)
<i>Newport County</i>					
Filed	*	634	605	525	449
Disposed	*	706	562	494	416
Increase/Decrease	*	-72	43	+31	+33
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	(42%)	(43%)
<i>Washington County</i>					
Filed	*	838	859	737	717
Disposed	*	871	755	712	580
Increase/Decrease	*	-33	+102	+25	+137
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	(52%)	(49%)
<i>Statewide</i>					
Filed	*	7,516	6,880	6,126	6,756
Disposed	*	7,749	6,795	5,879	5,770
Increase/Decrease	*	-233	85	+247	+986
% Disposed of Less Than 90 Days From Filing	*	*	*	(53%)	(45%)

* Not available





Workers' Compensation Court

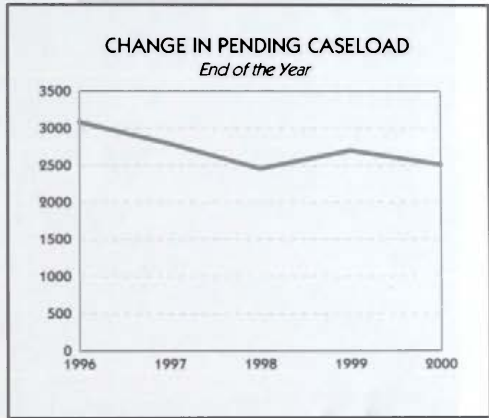
Workers' Compensation Court Caseload

Petitions continued to increase in 2000 for a second year in a row even though the number of new claims filed was still lower than the 1996 and 1997 levels (see Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court's Caseload Statistics to follow). The total petitions filed in 2000 were 7,827, an increase of approximately 4 percent from the previous year. The increase was primarily due to the 7 percent jump in the filing of employee petitions. The filing of miscellaneous petitions, such as lump sum settlements and medical payments, also increased slightly in 2000. On the other hand, the filing of employer petitions declined at a rate of approximately 6 percent.

With the exception of 1999, dispositions once again exceeded filings in the Workers' Compensation Court. The court disposed of 8,018 cases in 2000, 191 more cases than were filed. The rate of dispositions at the pretrial stage rose just slightly compared to last year but was significantly higher than in the past (see Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court's Statistics on Manner/Stage of Disposition to follow). The rate of dispositions in 2000 was 67 percent, while in 1999 the rate was at 66 percent. In previous years, dispositions at pretrial consistently fell between 58 and 59 percent. The numbers indicate that fewer trials occurred in both 1999 and 2000 than in previous years.

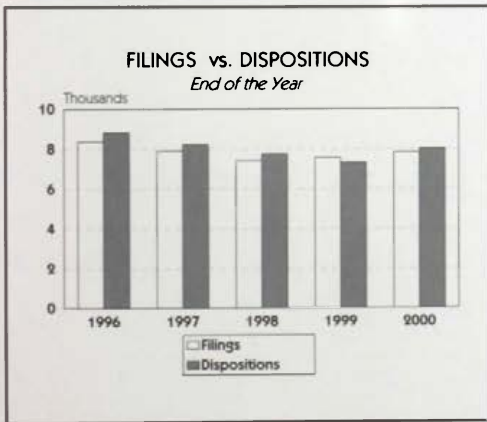
The percentage of pretrials that were disposed of within 30 days rose from 45 to 50 percent in 2000 but was still lower than the level in

1998, which was at 62 percent. However, trials that were disposed of within 270 days from the date of filing decreased from 75 to 70 percent in 2000, while the trials that were disposed of within a year declined from 84 to 79 percent. The fact



that the Workers' Compensation Court is currently operating with a full complement of ten judges, as opposed to eight in the previous year, has been a significant factor in both the decline in pending trials, decline in pending caseload, and the faster disposition of cases at the trial stage.

The Workers' Compensation Court decreased the pending caseload by 7 percent by year-end (see Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court's Caseload Statistics to follow). Although the number of petitions pending trial declined in 2000 by approximately 10 percent from 1999, the percentage of those cases pending trial that were greater than 270 days of filing increased from 38 to 41 percent. Additionally, the appellate panels disposed of 131 appeals by year-end, a reduction from the 1999 caseload by 37 (see Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court's Statistics on Manner/Stage of Disposition to follow).



Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court

Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Petitions Filed					
Employee Petitions					
Original	3,154	2,918	2,807	3,006	3,168
To Review	1,613	1,555	1,476	1,544	1,565
Second Injury	17	5	9	1	3
To Enforce	616	640	608	544	714
Total	5,400	5,118	4,900	5,095	5,450
Employer Petitions					
To Review	1,755	1,674	1,566	1,594	1,504
Other					
Lump Sum Settlement	931	877	836	742	754
Hospital/Physician Fees	44	38	*	*	*
Other	239	187	102	190	119
Total	1,214	1,102	938	862	873
Total Petitions	8,369	7,894	7,404	7,551	7,827
Total Dispositions	8,831	8,219	7,743	7,319	8,018
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-462	-325	-339	+232	-191
Total Pending Caseload	3,087	2,796	2,462	2,706	2,519
Total Cases Pending Trial	*	*	1,366	1,479	1,328
Cases Pending Trial Greater Than 270 Days	*	*	452	563	546

* Not available.





Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court

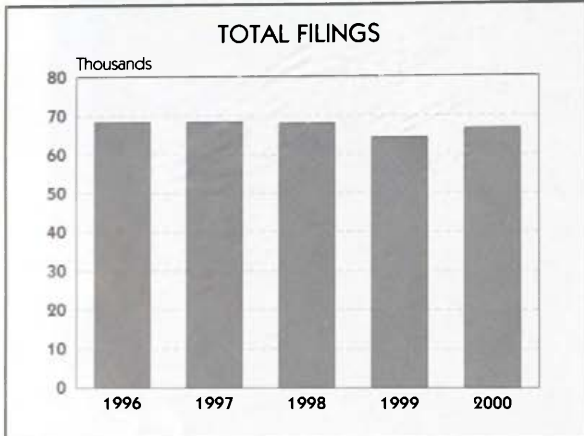
Statistics on Manner/Stage of Disposition

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Manner/Stage of Disposition					
<i>Pretrial</i>					
Pretrial Order	2,430	2,136	2,087	2,370	2,700
Order	11	4	23	14	18
Decree	20	12	31	47	49
Consent Decree	126	133	97	113	145
Major Surgery	62	60	24	47	29
Withdrawn	1,638	1,394	1,109	1,153	1,295
Discontinued	31	25	38	48	46
Dismissed	45	32	35	12	14
Other	743	882	968	925	956
Total	5,106	4,678	4,412	4,729	5,252
<i>Trial</i>					
Decision	814	804	777	505	577
Consent Decree	322	329	328	272	274
Trial Claim Withdrawn	694	679	685	579	686
Petition Withdrawn	264	329	206	139	141
Order	130	91	113	71	114
Dismissed	37	33	43	24	16
Discontinue	8	9	4	1	12
Other	1,063	1,005	900	820	814
Total	3,332	3,279	3,079	2,422	2,635
Appeals	393	262	252	168	131
Total Dispositions	8,831	8,219	7,743	7,319	8,018

District Court Caseload

District Court filings increased slightly in the year 2000, reaching a total of 66,713 cases, a rise of 3.6 percent compared to 1999. All but one division of the District Court recorded increased filings,

Additionally, felony filings in the District Court rose by almost 14 percent. Misdemeanor filings were higher in three of the four divisions, climbing by 16 percent in the Second Division, approximately 13 percent in the Fourth and Sixth Divisions, while the Third Division dropped 11.4 percent.



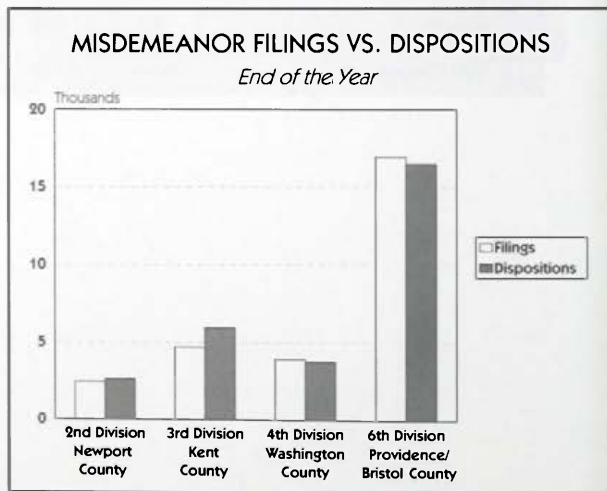
Misdemeanor dispositions exceeded filings in the Second and Third Divisions. However, the disposition rate of misdemeanor filings approached 100 percent elsewhere with a disposition rate of 96.4 percent in the Fourth Division, and a disposition rate of 97 percent in the Sixth Division.

The District Court had set a goal of disposing of all misdemeanors within 60 days from the date of filing. In the Fourth Division, 91 per-

with the Third Division recording a decline in case filings of 7.7 percent in 2000. Filings in the Second Division increased by 7.6 percent, while the Fourth Division recorded an increase of 15 percent, and the Sixth Division recorded an increase in filings of 5 percent.

Criminal Cases

Filings of misdemeanor cases increased overall in 2000 after declining steadily in each of the past four years (see Rhode Island District Court's Criminal Caseload Statistics to follow).





cent of the cases were handled within this time frame. In the Sixth Division, 84 percent of disposed cases met the 60-day goal. The Second Division disposed of 82 percent of the misdemeanor cases within the time guideline, while the Third Division recorded a rate of 72 percent.

Civil Cases

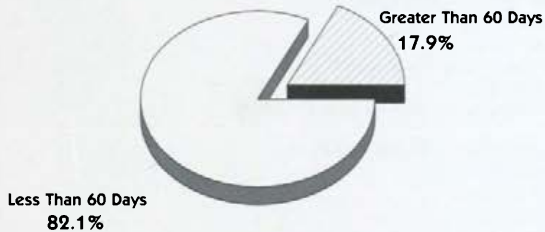
Civil filings also increased overall and were at their highest level in five years, due largely to a higher caseload in the Sixth Division (see Rhode Island District Court's Civil Caseload Statistics to follow). In the other divisions, civil filings declined slightly.

Civil case dispositions exceeded filings in the Second and Third Divisions, while the disposition rate was 97 percent in the Fourth Division and 72 percent in the Sixth Division.

Small Claims Cases

Small claims case filings have decreased

MISDEMEANOR CASES DISPOSED WITHIN 60 DAYS



for the second year in a row (see Rhode Island District Court's Small Claims Caseload Statistics to follow). The number fell by over 20 percent based upon declines in the Second, Third, and Sixth Divisions. Since 1998, small claims case filings have dropped by 21 percent in the Second Division, by 23 percent in the Third Division, and by 22 percent in the Sixth Division. Although small claims case filings in the Fourth Division dipped significantly in 1999, the number rebounded this year to the 1998 level.

Small claims dispositions exceeded filings in three of the District Court's four divisions, while the Fourth Division recorded a rate of 95 percent.

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Misdemeanors					
<i>Second Division - Newport County</i>					
Cases Filed	3,224	3,053	2,584	2,106	2,437
Cases Disposed	2,728	2,423	2,489	1,930	2,597
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-496	+630	+95	+176	-160
Total Pending	*	*	*	*	609
Pending Greater Than 60 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	476
<i>Third Division - Kent County</i>					
Cases Filed	5,539	5,610	5,236	5,288	4,687
Cases Disposed	6,642	5,624	5,050	5,162	5,971
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-1,003	-14	+186	+126	-1,284
Total Pending	*	*	*	*	489
Pending Greater Than 60 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	253
<i>Fourth Division - Washington County</i>					
Cases Filed	3,124	3,085	3,437	3,481	3,943
Cases Disposed	2,907	3,067	3,302	3,394	3,800
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+217	+18	+135	+87	+143
Total Pending	*	*	*	*	529
Pending Greater Than 60 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	279
<i>Sixth Division - Providence/Bristol County</i>					
Cases Filed	16,292	15,361	15,002	14,984	16,950
Cases Disposed	15,493	14,704	14,478	14,054	16,481
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+799	+657	+524	+930	+469
Total Pending	*	*	*	*	2,912
Pending Greater Than 60 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	1,770
<i>Statewide</i>					
Cases Filed	28,179	27,109	26,259	25,864	28,017
Cases Disposed	27,670	25,818	25,319	24,504	28,850
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+509	+1,291	+940	+1,360	-833
Total Pending	*	*	*	*	4,539
Pending Greater Than 60 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	2,778
Manner of Disposition					
Plead	14,664	*	14,224	12,742	19,632
Filed	4,435	*	4,214	6,126	1,133
Dismissed	6,631	*	5,977	4,166	5,942
Trials	412	*	256	245	473
Other	1,528	*	648	1,225	2,650
Total	27,670	*	25,319	24,504	28,850
% Disposed of Less Than 60 Days From Filing	*	*	*	*	83%
Felonies					
<i>Statewide</i>					
Filed	6,453	5,878	5,941	5,885	6,671
Felonies and Misdemeanors					
<i>Statewide</i>					
Charges Filed	48,002	44,273	42,574	*	*
Bail Hearings	934	922	622	583	*

* Not available

Note: Reported pending totals may be higher than actual number due to criminal program conversion issues.





Rhode Island District Court

Civil Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Second Division - Newport County					
Cases Filed	1,256	1,191	1,169	1,208	1,175
Cases Disposed	1,284	1,301	1,337	1,428	1,371
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-28	-110	-168	-220	-196
Third Division - Kent County					
Cases Filed	2,385	2,341	2,199	2,306	2,267
Cases Disposed	1,823	2,655	2,918	3,263	3,182
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+562	-314	-719	-957	-915
Fourth Division - Washington County					
Cases Filed	1,126	1,206	1,148	1,008	989
Cases Disposed	1,180	1,109	982	889	962
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-54	+97	-166	+119	+27
Sixth Division - Providence/Bristol County					
Cases Filed	12,379	11,635	11,969	12,083	12,996
Cases Disposed	10,706	9,952	8,885	8,814	9,296
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+1,673	+1,683	-3,084	+3,269	+3,700
Statewide					
Cases Filed	17,146	16,373	16,485	16,605	17,427
Cases Disposed	14,993	15,017	14,122	14,394	14,811
Manner of Disposition					
Defaults	5,535	6,421	5,827	5,539	5,510
Settlements	4,185	4,032	3,492	3,297	3,596
Judgements	5,263	4,554	4,794	5,538	5,259
Other	10	10	9	20	16
Total	14,993	15,017	14,122	14,394	14,811

Small Claims Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Second Division - Newport County					
Cases Filed	1,472	1,327	1,192	944	939
Cases Disposed	1,330	1,518	1,387	746	1,090
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-142	-191	-195	+198	-81
Third Division - Kent County					
Cases Filed	2,506	2,918	2,750	2,359	2,113
Cases Disposed	2,657	4,675	4,192	4,219	4,312
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-151	-1,757	-1,442	-1,860	-2,199
Fourth Division - Washington County					
Cases Filed	1,212	1,391	1,433	974	1,456
Cases Disposed	1,360	1,682	1,746	1,276	1,383
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-148	-291	-313	-302	+73
Sixth Division - Providence/Bristol County					
Cases Filed	10,075	12,178	12,962	10,842	10,090
Cases Disposed	10,937	11,917	14,225	11,735	13,642
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-862	+261	-1,263	-893	-3,642
Statewide					
Cases Filed	15,265	17,814	18,337	15,119	14,598
Cases Disposed	16,284	19,792	21,556	17,976	20,357
Manner of Disposition					
Defaults	9,029	10,193	12,285	9,447	10,504
Settlements	5,116	7,007	6,554	6,205	7,684
Judgements	2,139	2,592	2,717	2,324	2,169
Total	16,284	19,792	21,556	17,976	20,357

Other Categories

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Domestic Abuse	1,155	1,078	961	793	760
Administrative Appeals	163	143	67	130	140
Mental Health Hearings	*	755	537	629	624

* Not available.



Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal Caseload

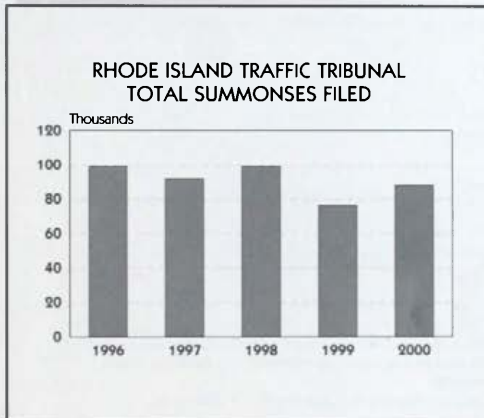
Although the number of summonses issued to the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal (RITT) in 2000 increased in comparison to 1999, the number was still lower than those in the previous three years (see RITT Caseload Statistics to follow). The summonses issued to RITT rose by 11,806 from 1999, an increase of approximately 15.5 percent.

RITT, a component part of the state judiciary, and the various Municipal Courts share concurrent jurisdiction over many traffic offenses with RITT having exclusive jurisdiction over certain offenses. The grand total of summonses issued in 2000, including those issued to RITT plus the Municipal Courts, increased from 1999 by 36,337, or 29.4 percent. In 2000, RITT represented 55 percent of the grand total of summonses issued for the year while in the previous four years it represented 59 to 62 percent of the grand total.

In a continuing effort to eliminate the backlog of cases, RITT once again succeeded in disposing of more summonses than were issued in 2000. RITT disposed of 123,673 summonses, equating to a disposition rate of 140 percent of the summonses issued. In evaluating the breakdown of disposed summonses in 2000, court hearings accounted for approximately 73 percent of the dispositions while the summonses paid by mail ac-

counted for the remaining 27 percent. As the type of offenses that qualified for the payment by mail option was expanded in 2000, RITT expects that the summonses disposed of under this method to increase substantially in 2001.

The increase in RITT summonses in 2000 was reflected in two categories where comparative data was available, breathalyzer refusal and insurance cases. In comparison to 1999, the filing of breathalyzer re-



fusals rose in 2000 by 8 percent, while the filing of insurance cases climbed approximately 18 percent. Nonetheless, dispositions in both categories, especially insurance cases, were significantly higher than the number filed and exceeded last year's totals. As a result of RITT's efforts, pending caseloads have been reduced to a very manageable calendar. At the end of 2000, pending breathalyzer cases totaled 78 and pending insurance cases totaled 2,318. Additionally, the number of appeals filed in RITT decreased by 49 percent, roughly an 8 percent reduction from 1999.

Caseload Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Total Summonses Issued	159,530	156,776	164,059	123,719	160,056*
RITT Summonses Issued	99,371	92,028	99,389	76,343	88,149
RITT Summonses Disposed	101,962	96,014	106,512†	128,862	123,673
Breakdown of Disposed Summonses					
Court Hearings	52,629	57,073	79,115	95,225	90,607
Pay by Mail	49,333	38,941	27,397†	33,637	33,066
Total	101,962	96,014	106,512†	128,862	123,673
Activity Summary for Certain Categories					
<i>Breathalyzer Refusals</i>					
Filed	1,823	1,861	1,687	1,570	1,643
Disposed	1,873	1,692	1,958	1,528	1,903
Caseload Increase/Decrease	-50	+169	-271	+42	-210
Pending	**	**	**	**	78
<i>Insurance</i>					
Filed	14,282	12,707	10,055	8,342	9,862
Disposed	8,582	15,817	17,221	16,249	18,014
Caseload Increase/Decrease	+5,700	-3,110	-7,166	-7,907	2,152
Pending	**	**	**	**	2,318
Appeals Filed	659	690	1,256	611	562

* Includes summonses issued to both RITT and Municipal Courts.

** Not available.

† Information incomplete due to a backlog in data entry.

Note: Reported pending insurance cases may be higher than actual number due to computer program conversion issues.





Report 2000

Summary of Court Caseload for the Year 2000

COURT	CASE TYPE	FILINGS	DISPOSITIONS
<i>Supreme Court</i>		538	564
<i>Superior Court</i>	Felonies	5,551	5,540
	Misdemeanors	388	478
	Civil	8,861	*2,871
<i>Family Court</i>	Juvenile	10,159	**5,770
	Domestic Abuse	4,874	4,580
	Child Support	2,735	2,169
	Support Related Hearings	***3,743	
		22,987	
<i>Workers' Compensation Court</i>		7,827	8,018
<i>District Court</i>	Misdemeanors	28,017	28,850
	Small Claims	14,598	20,357
	Civil	17,427	14,811
	Abuse	760	
	Other	764	
<i>Traffic Tribunal</i>		88,149	123,673
Totals		217,378	217,681

* Civil trial calendar only.

** Wayward/delinquent only.

*** Reciprocal filings stay open until age of majority of child unless otherwise ordered by court.

The Budget for the Rhode Island Courts

Five-Year Comparison

	FY 1997	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001
	<i>Audited</i>	<i>Audited</i>	<i>Unaudited</i>	<i>Revised</i>	<i>Recommended</i>
State Budget	\$2,780,597,810	\$3,792,993,024	\$4,119,405,179	\$4,562,204,584	\$4,650,110,661
Increase	160,352,232	942,395,214	396,412,155	442,799,405	87,906,077
Judicial Budget	54,056,428	57,321,708	60,902,247	59,952,222	60,581,063
Increase	2,559,674	3,265,280	3,580,539	(950,025)	628,841
Judicial Share	1.94%	1.53%	1.47%	1.31%	1.30%
Supreme Court	15,184,181	16,737,178	15,934,809	15,325,628	16,742,584
Superior Court	13,470,765	13,838,899	14,096,389	13,315,900	13,414,195
Family Court	10,324,351	11,006,316	11,616,099	12,189,528	11,848,997
District Court	5,956,121	6,042,967	6,360,100	6,514,250	6,484,734
Workers' Compensation Court	3,907,373	3,940,265	4,072,743	4,249,935	4,674,073
Traffic Tribunal	5,213,637	5,756,083	5,247,013	5,074,169	4,553,619
Justice Link	*	*	3,575,094	3,282,812	2,862,861
Total Expenditures	\$54,056,428	\$57,321,708	\$60,902,247	\$59,952,222	\$60,581,063
Expenditures by Object					
Personnel	39,800,286	42,538,094	44,626,338	46,422,641	46,712,623
Other State Operations	7,032,969	7,816,963	9,257,982	9,594,550	8,615,175
Assistance, Grants & Benefits	3,386,717	3,342,368	3,677,797	3,799,237	3,878,265
Subtotal:	\$50,219,972	\$53,697,425	\$57,562,117	\$59,816,428	\$59,206,063
Operating Expenditures					
Capital Improvements	*	*	*	135,794	1,375,000
Capital Debt Service	3,836,456	3,624,283	3,340,130	*	*
Total Expenditures	\$54,056,428	\$57,321,708	\$60,902,247	\$59,952,222	\$60,581,063
Expenditures by Funds					
General Revenue	48,631,270	49,851,805	51,779,503	50,817,175	50,531,561
Federal Grants	669,612	2,359,074	3,166,041	3,844,773	3,190,605
Restricted Receipts	4,755,546	4,812,849	5,710,477	5,154,480	5,483,897
Other	*	297,980	246,226	135,794	1,375,000
Total Expenditures	\$54,056,428	\$57,321,708	\$60,902,247	\$59,952,222	\$60,581,063

* Not available.





Rhode Island Judiciary

Programs, Boards, & Panels





Ad Hoc Task Force on Limited English Speaking Litigants

250 Benefit Street
Providence, R 02903
(401) 222-3272

Members:

- The Honorable O. Rogerie Thompson
Associate Justice, Superior Court, Chair
- The Honorable Joseph R. Weisberger
Chief Justice (Retired), Supreme Court
- The Honorable William J. McAtee
Magistrate, Superior Court
- The Honorable Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr.
Magistrate, District Court
- Dulce M. Bodden
- Michael Egan, *Esquire*
- Holly Hitchcock
- Theresa LaBonte
- Sandra Morra
- David Prior, *Esquire*
- Ana Cecelia Rosado
- William Shuey

The Rhode Island Supreme Court Ad Hoc Task Force on Limited English Speaking Litigants stems from the efforts of a community coalition. The establishment of this task force in 1991 not only reflected the prior success of the community coalition but also marked the firm commitment on the part of the Rhode Island judiciary to ensure constitutional rights for all litigants in the state. Since its implementation, the task force has moved steadily in advancing a certification process that will guarantee equal access to all persons.

With the passage of legislation on the use of language interpreters in legal proceedings, the courts, in cooperation with the Rhode Island Department of Higher Education, have embarked on a training and certification program. The Community College of Rhode Island will offer a certificate program to train potential interpreters in consecutive and simultaneous translation, as well as sight translation. Graduates from this program and persons presenting similar qualifications will be in the best position to become certified as court interpreters. The task force is currently investigating testing procedures for a proposed start date for the certification process in late 2001. A publicity campaign is slated for the spring of 2001.

As Rhode Island acknowledges its diverse citizenry, the courts, through the task force, are responding to the changing needs by moving toward the certification of interpreters.



Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Conduct

Fogarty Judicial Annex
24 Weybosset Street
Providence, R 02903
(401) 222-3270

(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article VI, Rule 1)

Members:

The Honorable Richard J. Israel
Associate Justice, Superior Court, Chair

The Honorable Gilbert V. Indeglia
Associate Justice, Superior Court

The Honorable Haiganush R. Bedrosian
Associate Justice, Family Court

The Honorable Patricia D. Moore
Associate Judge, District Court

The Honorable Janette A. Bertness
Associate Judge, Workers' Compensation Court

Elizabeth A. Del Padre, *Attorney for Committee*

The Code of Judicial Conduct (the Code) was established to provide standards for the ethical conduct of judges using broad statements called Canons and specific rules. In 1993, the Supreme Court adopted a rule to the Code that created the Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Conduct. The advisory committee was created to assist judges in complying with the Canons under the Code. Additionally, the advisory committee has authority to interpret the Canons and to provide an opinion regarding a proposed action by a judge and the propriety of such action under the auspices of the Code.

The Canons essentially restricted judicial participation in testimonials and fundraising and established criteria for determining whether a judge's involvement in these events was appropriate. Advisory opinions are often sought to determine whether recognition offered to a judge falls within the guidelines of the Code. These opinions also help judges communicate the restrictions imposed by the Canons to groups requesting their help in worthy causes. In addition, the advisory committee can respond to requests for advice on other Canons. In 1994, the Supreme Court ruled that judicial advisory opinions are a matter of public record and that confidentiality of the requesting judge's name is not required.

Committee members are appointed to staggered two-year terms and are drawn from several state courts. The Supreme Court usually appoints members for a single term ensuring that both the burden as well as the experience of this duty are shared widely by members of the judiciary.

The advisory committee received five requests for opinions in 2000. It issued four opinions and declined to render an opinion for one request.



Board of Bar Examiners

Rhode Island Supreme Court
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-4233

(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article II, Rule 5)

Members:

Michael R. Goldenberg, *Esquire, Chair*

Joseph V. Cavanaugh, Jr., *Esquire*

Joseph Houlihan, *Esquire*

Mary Louise Kennedy, *Esquire*

John A. MacFadyen, 3rd, *Esquire*

Dennis J. Roberts II, *Esquire*

Joseph Roszkowski, *Esquire*

Brian B. Burns, *Director of Bar Admissions*

Kathleen Cacchiotti, *Executive Secretary*

The Board of Bar Examiners tests the legal knowledge of bar applicants by administering the Rhode Island bar examination on the last Wednesday and Thursday of February and July. Prior to sitting for the two-day bar examination, applicants must have graduated from a law school approved and accredited by the American Bar Association and must have received a scaled score of at least 80 on the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam. The Multistate Bar Exam (MBE) is given on the first day, and twelve essay questions on Rhode Island law are given on the second day. To be admitted to the Rhode Island Bar, applicants must have received a scaled score of 140 on the MBE and successfully answered seven out of twelve essay questions, or they must have received a scaled score of 135 on the MBE and correctly answered nine out of the twelve essay questions.

The Supreme Court appoints seven attorneys to the board for five-year terms. Members of the board proctor the bar exam and score the responses to the essay questions. In 2000, the board processed 259 applications and recommended 159 individuals for admission to the Rhode Island Bar.

Commission on Judicial Tenure and Discipline

Fogarty Judicial Annex
24 Weybosset Street
Providence, RI 02903

Phone: (401) 222-1188; Fax (401) 222-1493

(Pursuant to G.L. 1956 (1997 Reenactment) § 8-16-1)

Members:

The Honorable Alice B. Gibney

Associate Justice, Superior Court, Chair

The Honorable Melanie Wilk Thunberg

Associate Justice, Superior Court

The Honorable Kathleen A. Voccola

Associate Justice, Family Court

The Honorable John J. Capelli

Associate Judge, District Court

The Honorable George E. Healy, Jr.

Associate Judge, Workers' Compensation Court

Senator M. Theresa Paiva-Weed

Representative Donald J. Lally

Representative Robert A. Watson

Richard S. Humphrey, *Esquire*

Jeanne E. LaFazia, *Esquire*

Raymond A. Maraccio, *Esquire*

George L. Santopietro, *Esquire*

Deming E. Sherman, *Esquire*

Deborah M. Tate, *Esquire*

The Commission on Judicial Tenure and Discipline was created in 1974 to provide a forum for complaints against any justice of the Supreme, Superior, Family, District, Workers' Compensation Courts, or the Traffic Tribunal. The commission reviews allegations of serious violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct, including willful and persistent failure to perform judicial duties; disabling addiction to alcohol, drugs, or narcotics; conduct that brings the judicial office into serious disrepute; or a physical or a mental disability that seriously interferes with, and will continue to interfere with, the performance of judicial duties.

Following a formal hearing, the commission determines whether the charges have been sustained. If eight members of the commission who were present throughout the hearing find that the charges have been sustained, the commission reports its finding to the Supreme Court and recommends either reprimand, censure, suspension, removal, or retirement of the judge. The commission may also recommend immediate temporary suspension of the judge during the pendency of further proceedings. If charges have not been sustained, the complaint is dismissed, and the judge and the complaining party are notified.

The fourteen-member commission represents a cross section of the population: six represent the Rhode Island Bar Association and the public at large and are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate; one is appointed by the Senate Majority Leader; two are appointed by the Speaker of the House, and five judges are appointed by the Supreme Court. All appointments are for three-year terms.





Committee on Character and Fitness

Rhode Island Supreme Court
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-4233

(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article II, Rule 3)

Members:

Steven M. Mcnnis, *Esquire, Chair*

Berndt W. Anderson, *Esquire*

William C. Clifton, *Esquire*

Gerald Coyne, *Esquire*

John A. MacFadyen, 3rd, *Esquire*

Kristen Rodgers Sullivan, *Esquire*

Barbara Margolis, *Legal Counsel*

Brian B. Burns

Kathleen Cacchiotti, *Executive Secretary*

Established by the Supreme Court in 1988, the Committee on Character and Fitness determines the moral fitness of Rhode Island Bar applicants by scrutinizing their finances, legal training, and criminal records, if any. Additionally, applicants must participate in a personal interview.

If further review is warranted following the interview, applicants may be referred to the full committee for a hearing. A recommendation is then made to the Supreme Court as to whether an applicant should be admitted to the bar or even allowed to take the bar examination. The Supreme Court may either grant the applicant's request or require the applicant to show cause why the court should grant the request.

The committee has seven members who are appointed by the Supreme Court. Members serve three-year terms.



Committee on Professionalism and Civility

250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-3272
(Pursuant to Executive Order 95-05)

Members:

The Honorable Joseph R. Weisberger
Chief Justice (Retired), Supreme Court

The Honorable John P. Bourcier
Justice, Supreme Court

The Honorable Joseph F. Rodgers, Jr.
Presiding Justice, Superior Court

The Honorable Jeremiah S. Jeremiah, Jr.
Chief Judge, Family Court

The Honorable Robert J. Rahill
Associate Judge, District Court

The Honorable Robert F. Arrigan
Chief Judge, Workers' Compensation Court

Bruce Kogan
Dean, Roger Williams University School of Law

John Blish, *Esquire*

David Cooper, *Esquire*

Michael H. Feldhuhn, *Esquire*

Lauren Jones, *Esquire*

Edwin Krause, *Esquire*

Lynette Labinger, *Esquire*

Beverly Ledbetter, *Esquire*

Peter McGinn, *Esquire*

Daniel A. Procaccini, *Esquire*

Aram Scheffrin, *Esquire*

Kelly Sheridan, *Esquire*

The Committee on Professionalism and Civility was established in 1995 to formulate standards and goals for promoting professional conduct within the judicial system. Retired Chief Justice Joseph R. Weisberger chairs the committee which includes members of the bar, the bench, and representatives of academia and the public.

The standards adopted are aspirational goals reflecting the consensus of the Rhode Island legal community concerning appropriate behavior by members of the bar and the bench. These standards address attorneys' obligations in dealing with clients, the court, and the public, as well as the obligations of judges in interacting with attorneys, litigants, witnesses, and one another.

The standards were promulgated by the Supreme Court on May 20, 1996, and have been published as an appendix to the Rules of Professional Conduct for attorneys.





Domestic Abuse Victim Advocacy Program

Since 1988 the Supreme Court has contracted with the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence to administer a court-based, domestic abuse victim advocacy program. The statewide program was established in accordance with G. L. 1956 §§ 12-28-10, 12-29-7 to help victims of domestic violence obtain protection in the Family, District, and Superior Courts.

The coalition is an association of six nonprofit, domestic violence prevention programs, including the Blackstone Shelter, the Elizabeth Buffum Chase House, the Newport County Women's Resource Center, Sojourner House, the Women's Center of Rhode Island, and the Women's Resource Center of South County.

The victim advocacy program has three components. Victim advocates are

assigned in each of the divisions of the District Court to assist victims of misdemeanor crimes involving domestic violence. Also, the advocates assist victims of domestic violence in obtaining civil protective orders in the Family and District Courts throughout the state. In addition to assisting victims through the court process, the advocates help victims to protect themselves and their children and obtain other support services.

In 2000, the member agencies of the coalition provided services to 9,121 individual clients, of which 78% were adults and 12% were children and teens. The advocates handled 4,782 cases in District Court and assisted 3,150 clients in obtaining Temporary Restraining Orders. The number of people calling for help continues to increase each year with a total of 17,772 individual callers receiving support, information, and referrals during 2000. Since the inception of the Victim Advocacy Program, the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence and its member agencies have provided comprehensive advocacy and support services in more than 89,000 cases.



Disciplinary Board

Fogarty Judicial Annex
24 Weybosset Street
Providence, RI 02903

Phone: (401) 222-3270; Fax: (401) 222-1191
(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article III, Rule 4)

Members:

Robert G. Jeffrey, *Esquire*, Chair
Nancy Fisher Chudacoff, *Esquire*, Vice Chair
Edward J. Bertozzi, Jr., *Esquire*
Phyllis Chase
Peter A. DiBiase, *Esquire*
Rosanna Ford
Lise M. Iwon, *Esquire*
Neil P. Philbin, *Esquire*
James J. Rubovits
Michael A. St. Pierre, *Esquire*
Viola M. Wyman

The Disciplinary Board consists of eight attorneys and four members of the public who are appointed by the Supreme Court. Members serve for a term of three years but may not exceed a total of six years on the board. The board oversees the Office of Disciplinary Counsel, which reviews and investigates all allegations of attorney misconduct received from complainants. The board must authorize the filing of formal charges against an attorney, and then it conducts hearings and makes recommendations for discipline, if such is deemed necessary. The board may petition the Supreme Court to place an attorney on inactive status if the attorney is mentally or physically incapacitated. The board may also ask attorneys to appear before it to clarify an alleged infraction of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

The Disciplinary Counsel maintains a screening process whereby any complainant may speak to a staff attorney prior to filing a complaint. This procedure increases the efficiency of the board by eliminating frivolous complaints and by bringing serious matters to the immediate attention of the board. Staff attorneys cannot provide legal advice to complainants; however, they may refer complainants to other agencies that may assist them in obtaining legal representation.

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel investigated 320 complaints in the year 2000. An additional 109 complaints were not opened for formal investigation as the complaints did not fall within the office's jurisdiction and/or allege a rule violation.

During 2000, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel received 19 notices of overdrafts on attorney trust accounts. The notices are transmitted pursuant to Article IV, Rule 2 of the Supreme Court. In each case of an overdraft notification, the attorney was requested to provide an explanation, in writing, and in some cases the Disciplinary Counsel interviewed the attorney. None of these matters resulted in a formal investigation of misconduct. However, the overdraft notification rule does act as a significant deterrent against the misappropriation of client funds.



Disciplinary Board Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Intake Screening and Complaint Processing					
Complaints Received	537	493	445	391	429
Complaints Opened for Investigation	254	212	176	164	156
Complaints Outside Jurisdiction of Disciplinary Board	110	77	88	81	109
Informal Complaints	167	187	174	133	151
Fee Disputes (No Misconduct Alleged)	6	8	7	10	13
Notice of Insufficient Funds	28	13	22	25	19
Nature of Complaints†					
Dissatisfaction	145	125	120	109	112
Fee Dispute	22	14	4	8	0
Neglect	6	2	0	1	0
Failure to Account for Funds	9	5	0	1	2
Conviction of a Crime	0	0	0	0	2
Conflict of Interest	7	2	4	2	3
Conduct Reflects Adversely on Bar	2	0	0	0	0
Other	94	79	58	54	45
Source of Complaints					
Client	202	158	143	135	131
Non-client	43	38	32	27	17
Judge	0	0	1	1	2
Opposing Counsel	6	6	2	0	2
Other Attorney	6	3	0	0	4
Chief Disciplinary Counsel	3	9	4	3	5
Creditor	1	0	0	0	0
Other	1	0	0	2	0
Board Actions					
Cases Presented Before Screening Panel	*	*	184	180	146
Complaints with Regular Dismissal	213	185	128	130	85
Complaints Dismissed with an Admonition	18	19	18	16	23
Complaints Dismissed with Conditional Letter of Dismissal	*	*	1	0	4
Complaints Dismissed with Cautionary Letter to Attorney	*	*	24	18	0
Letter of Reprimand Issued	3	2	6	5	9
Authorize Petition for Disciplinary Action	*	*	5	4	7
Referred to Court Under Rule 6(e)	0	4	1	4	4
Approve Decisions of Board and Transfer to the Court	*	*	11	3	5
Referred to RI Bar Association Fee Arbitration	3	29	0	0	0
Reconsider Complaint Prior to Reinstatement	*	*	3	1	0
Court Actions					
Ordered to Respond Pursuant to Rule 6(e)	0	4	1	4	4
Private Censure	1	1	0	0	0
Public Censure	2	3	3	1	0
Order Entered Requesting Attorney Under Supervision	*	*	1	1	1
Disbarment (Including Consent to Disbarment)	7	3	5	3	0
Petitions Dismissed	*	*	2	0	0
Reconsider Prior to Reinstatement After Hearing	*	*	1	1	0
Reciprocal Discipline	*	*	2	0	1
Suspensions	8	6	3	7	4
Petition Filed for Convictions of Crimes	*	*	2	1	2
Petitions for Reinstatement Filed	*	*	2	2	3
Petitions for Reinstatement Denied	*	*	1	0	1
Petitions for Reinstatement Granted					
w/ Attorney Under Supervision	*	*	1	1	4
Transferred to Inactive Status	0	1	0	1	0
Resignations	1	0	0	0	0
Special Magistrate Appointed	2	1	0	1	0

* Not available.

† The total will exceed the number of complaints opened for investigation because some complaints fall within more than one category.

Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit

The Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit (DVU) was created under the 1988 Domestic Violence Prevention Act, Rhode Island's first comprehensive domestic violence, criminal legislation.

Historically, the DVU has been active in policy and planning for domestic violence prevention, addressing issues relating to victim contact, advocacy, and education, and has served as liaison between victims and police. More recently, the DVU's role has expanded to include compilation of all data reporting by local police departments and the state police on the incidence of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child molestation. As a result of this role, the DVU has developed a comprehensive domestic violence/sexual assault database and is able to produce criminal justice statistics on this topic for Rhode Island.

The DVU has a new website (www.rhodeislanddomesticviolence.org) with some pages still "under construction." The web site contains anonymous domestic violence/sexual assault data, making it possible for researchers, students, and other interested parties to access this information. The DVU is currently working on "pages" specifically for law enforcement that include pertinent laws, yearly updates on legislative action, and a "training" section on how to fill out the various sections of the domestic violence/sexual assault data reporting form.

Numbers of cases and elements of cases represent data submitted to the DVU by Rhode Island Police Departments & Rhode Island State Police

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000*
Domestic Violence Incidents					
Total DV/SA Forms Received	2,510	6,808	6,452	7,202	7,260
Arrests	1,819	5,563	5,406	5,693	5,497
Non-Arrests	691	1,245	1,046	1,472	1,697
Cases Under Investigation	**	**	**	37	64
Both Parties Arrested (Dual Arrest)	**	227	293	317	200
Probable Cause Found	2,034	5,597	5,414	5,990	5,880
Violation of Protective Order	251	775	776	1,217	1,183
***Homicide Cases / Deaths	4 cases/ 10 deaths	3 cases/ 3 deaths	3 cases/ 4 deaths	5 cases/ 9 deaths	3 cases/ 3 deaths
Victim Stalked	**	**	**	54	50
Children Present	1,044	2,782	2,562	2,760	2,912
*Suspect on Probation	392	1,181	1,168	1,360	1,308
Weapons Involved	372	1,015	982	878	926
*Weapons Involved/Suspect on Probation	83	239	223	230	200
Firearms Involved	169	410	355	392	352
Firearms Involved/Suspect on Probation	18	74	38	62	58
*Alcohol or Other Drugs Involved	1,149	2,966	2,848	2,883	2,790
Previous Assaults on Victim/Same Suspect	1,183	3,217	3,102	3,402	3,486
Sexual Assault / Child Molestation Incidents					
Total DV/SA Forms Received	148	153	233	283	214
Arrests	91	109	203	202	122
Non-Arrests	0	0	0	54	41
Cases Under Investigation	**	**	1	27	52
Adult Victim	71	73	206	106	75
Child Victim	76	37	32	171	111
Cases with One Suspect - Multiple Victims	11	4	6	12	12
Cases with One Victim - Multiple Suspects	6	3	3	2	1
Children Present	43	47	81	66	51
Weapons Involved	12	36	23	20	13
Firearms Involved	4	13	12	15	9
Violation of Protective Order	14	19	14	11	5
Previous Assault (Mainly Child Molestation)	51	29	93	96	70

* 2000 data is not complete. At report deadline, police department's were still submitting DV/SA forms for 2000

** Data not available that year

*** Homicide data is from a special project done by the DVU, RICADV, and Silent Witnesses (not from DV/SA forms).



Ethics Advisory Panel

Fogarty Judicial Annex
24 Weybosset Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-3270

(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article V, Rule 9)

Members:

Edward H. Newman, *Esquire, Chair*

Robert Corrente, *Esquire*

Anthony F. DeMarco, *Esquire*

Lise Gescheidt, *Esquire*

Susan McGuirl, *Esquire*

Elizabeth A. DelPadre, *Attorney for Panel*

The Ethics Advisory Panel was established by the Supreme Court in 1986 to provide Rhode Island attorneys with confidential advice on prospective behavior based on the Rules of Professional Conduct. The Supreme Court appoints five Rhode Island attorneys to serve two or three-year terms. Although attorneys are not required to abide by panel opinions, those who do so are fully protected from any subsequent charge of impropriety.

Panel opinions are published in the *Rhode Island Bar Journal* and the *Rhode Island Lawyers Weekly*. The State Law Library maintains a set of panel opinions along with a topical index. The ABA/BNA Manual on Professional Conduct also indexes and publishes summaries of the panel opinions. In addition, Ethics Advisory Panel opinions are available on the judiciary's website (www.courts.state.ri.us).

The responsibilities of the panel's attorney include advising the panel on issues of legal ethics; drafting ethics opinions; rendering advice and guidance on a daily basis to attorneys making ethics inquiries, either in person or by telephone; and providing ethics research to the panel, to the members of the Rhode Island Bar, and to attorneys throughout the country. The panel's attorney also represents the panel in litigation.

The panel received 27 written requests from attorneys seeking advisory opinions in 2000. The panel issued nine advisory opinions and declined to render opinions for nine requests pursuant to Supreme Court Ethics Advisory Panel Rule 2 entitled "Jurisdiction." Six of the twenty-seven inquiries were withdrawn by the inquiring attorneys. At the close of 2000, there were three inquiries pending.

Future of the Courts Committee

Rhode Island Supreme Court
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-2500

Members:

The Honorable John P. Bourcier
Justice, Supreme Court, Chair
Joseph W. Walsh, *Esquire, Vice Chair*
The Honorable Bruce M. Selya
Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit
The Honorable Joseph F. Rodgers, Jr.
Presiding Justice, Superior Court
The Honorable Stephen P. Nugent
Associate Justice, Superior Court
The Honorable Peter Palombo, Jr.
Associate Justice, Family Court
The Honorable Albert E. DeRobbio
Chief Judge, District Court
The Honorable Robert K. Pirraglia
Associate Judge, District Court
The Honorable Janette A. Bertness
Associate Judge, Workers' Compensation Court
The Honorable Lillian M. Almeida
Associate Judge, Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal
The Honorable Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr.
Magistrate, District Court
Attorney General Sheldon Whitehouse
Maureen A. Aveno
John H. Barrette
Edward N. Beiser, *Ph.D., J.D.*
William Burgess
William C. Dimitri, *Esquire*
Vincent DiMonte, *Esquire*
Robin Feder, *Esquire*
Zygmunt J. Friedemann, *Ph.D.*
William Guglietta, *Esquire*
J. Michael Keating, Jr., *Esquire*
Beverly E. Ledbetter, *Esquire*
Eva Marie Mancuso, *Esquire*
Elizabeth McDonough Noonan, *Esquire*
Harvey Rishikof
Dean, Roger Williams University School of Law
Anthony J. Santoro
Leo Skenyon
Madis T. Suvari, *Esquire*
Deborah Tate, *Esquire*
Susan McCalmont, *Staff*
Stephen King, *Staff*

The Future of the Courts Committee was established in 1996 to determine the technologies, methods, and jurisprudential philosophies that will be needed in the operation of the judicial system of the 21st century. Specifically, the Chief Justice has tasked the committee with examining the present structure of the Rhode Island judiciary, the present jury system, alternative methods of dispute resolution, the interface of the courts with the public, caseflow management, and court technology in the future.

The committee has 30 members representing the state and federal judiciary, the bar, and the public. The committee is expected to complete its work in early 2001 and submit a final report with its findings and recommendations to the Chief Justice.



Judicial Performance Evaluation Committee

250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-2500

(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article VI, Rule 4)

Members:

The Honorable Victoria S. Lederberg
Justice, Supreme Court, Chair

The Honorable Joseph F. Rodgers, Jr.
Presiding Justice, Superior Court

The Honorable Jeremiah S. Jeremiah, Jr.
Chief Judge, Family Court

The Honorable Albert E. DeRobbio
Chief Judge, District Court

The Honorable Robert F. Arrigan
Chief Judge, Workers' Compensation Court

Lauren E. Jones, *Esquire*

John A. MacFadyen, 3rd, *Esquire*

William P. Robinson, *Esquire*

Milton H. Hamolsky, *M.D.*

The Judicial Performance Evaluation Committee was established in March 1993 pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 4. The rule was adopted in recognition of the fact that the periodic evaluation of a judge's performance was a reliable method for promoting judicial excellence and competence. The committee is responsible for developing and administering a program for the continuing evaluation of judicial performance under the Supreme Court's supervision.

The primary goals of performance evaluation are to promote the self-improvement of individual judges as well as the improvement of the judiciary as a whole. A secondary goal is the improvement of the design and the content of continuing judicial education programs.

The compiled performance evaluation data is periodically transmitted to the Chief Justice and the chief judges of each court. The chief judge of each court reviews the evaluations that were submitted during the year with each judge. In the Superior Court, either the Presiding Justice or one of several retired judges of that court may conduct this review with the judge under evaluation.

Law Day Committee

250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-3272

Members:

The Honorable Victoria S. Lederberg
Justice, Supreme Court, Co-Chair

The Honorable Maureen McKenna Goldberg,
Justice, Supreme Court, Co-Chair

The Honorable Albert E. DeRobbio
Chief Judge, District Court, Co-Chair

The Honorable Jeremiah S. Jeremiah, Jr.
Chief Judge, Family Court

The Honorable Francis J. Darigan, Jr.
Associate Justice, Superior Court

The Honorable Robert K. Pirraglia,
Associate Judge, District Court

The Honorable Bruce Q. Morin
Associate Judge, Workers' Compensation Court

The Honorable Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr.
Magistrate, District Court

Lynne Dawson
Rhode Island Bar Association

Gary Dias
Chief, East Providence Police

Holly Hitchcock
MCLE, Supreme Court

Edmond J. Lemoi
Principal, Cranston High School West

William McCombe
Chief, Block Island Police

Helen Desmond McDonald
Rhode Island Bar Association

Paul E. Pontarelli, Esquire
Legal Counsel, Department of Education

Harvey Rishikof
Dean, Roger Williams University School of Law

Deborah M. Tate, Esquire
President, Rhode Island Bar Association

The Rhode Island courts celebrate National Law Day on May 1st of each year. In 1996, Chief Justice Joseph R. Weisberger formally appointed a Law Day Committee to coordinate the activities of all Rhode Island judges on this annual occasion. Along with the Rhode Island Bar Association, Roger Williams University School of Law, the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association, the Law Day Committee arranges for programs in dozens of Rhode Island schools in celebration of Law Day. The programs emphasize the importance of law as a unifying force in our diverse society and provide students with opportunities for discussion with members of the legal community.

The Law Day program includes a statewide teleconference from the statehouse on legal issues that affect students as learners and citizens. Examples of some of the issues that have been addressed are searches of students and their lockers, breathalyzer testing at school events, and the enforcement of cigarette laws. Students in the studio audience may question panel members from the judiciary, legal profession, and law enforcement directly, while students watching via their school's cablevision may submit their questions and comments by telephone or e-mail.

Each year the Law Day Committee program reaches thousands of individuals. The committee's efforts have enabled members of the bench, bar, and law enforcement to visit classrooms and provide students in every corner of the state with information ranging from the death penalty, to student rights, to domestic violence. In addition, print media coverage, radio programs, and television coverage have enhanced awareness of the role of law in our society.

On May 3, 2000, a special session of the Rhode Island Supreme Court was held at the University of Rhode Island. Schools from the southern part of the state received a first-hand view of the court's appellate function. Actual cases were argued on admissibility of evidence, witness falsification, and language interpretation issues in cases involving drug offenses, robbery, and termination of parental rights. A total of 300 students were in attendance.

Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Commission

Rhode Island Supreme Court
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-4942
(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article IV, Rule 3)

Members:

The Honorable Robert G. Flanders, Jr.
Justice, Supreme Court, Chair

The Honorable Maureen McKenna Goldberg
Justice, Supreme Court

The Honorable Judith Colenback Savage
Associate Justice, Superior Court

The Honorable Gilbert V. Indeglia
Associate Justice, Superior Court

Patricia Buckley, *Esquire*

Richard Corley, *Esquire*

Dr. Judeth Crowley

Christopher DeSesto, *Esquire*

Bruce I. Kogan, *Esquire*

David L. Oliveira, *Esquire*

R. Kelly Sheridan, *Esquire*

Holly Hitchcock, *Executive Director*

Maria E. Salem, *Office Manager*

In January 1993, Article IV, Rule 3 of the Rhode Island Supreme Court was promulgated to establish a minimum standard of professional development as one of the criteria for ensuring ongoing lawyer competence. Under the rule, an eleven member commission is responsible for overseeing all mandatory continuing legal education (MCLE) regulations, administration, and compliance. Honorable Robert G. Flanders, Jr. chairs the commission which includes representatives of the bench, the bar, and academia.

For the year 2000, the Rhode Island MCLE Commission reported a 99 percent compliance rate by the 5,200 active attorneys who fall under the rule. Each attorney must receive ten approved, continuing legal education credits per year, including at least two in legal ethics.

The commission office develops curricula, accredits local and national legal education program sponsors, and assists attorneys with compliance. The office also mails out and processes official forms, carryover transcripts, and non-compliance notices on an annual basis.

Permanent Advisory Committee on Women and Minorities in the Courts

250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(Pursuant to Executive Order 99-09)

Members:

The Honorable Francis J. Darigan, Jr.
Associate Justice, Superior Court, Chair
The Honorable Edward C. Clifton
Associate Justice, Superior Court
The Honorable O. Rogeriee Thompson
Associate Justice, Superior Court
The Honorable Howard I. Lipsey
Associate Justice, Family Court
The Honorable Stephen P. Erickson
Associate Judge, District Court
The Honorable Aurendina G. Veiga
Magistrate, Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal
Jametta O. Alston, *Esquire*
Robert Barge, *Esquire*
Samnang Becker
Maria Garrido
Freda Goldman
Maria J. R. Goncalves, *Esquire*
John Hardiman, *Esquire*
Elizabeth Kelleher, *Esquire*
Illuminada LaFlamme
Joseph R. Le
Faynese Miller
Clifford Monteiro
Denise M. Lombardo-Myers, *Esquire*
Lidia Oster
Rafael Ovalles, *Esquire*
Harvery Rishikof
Dean, Roger Williams University School of Law
Jennifer Sternick, *Esquire*
William Shuey
Angela Nash Wade
Adjunct Members:
Susan L. Revens, *Esquire*
Susana Torres

The Permanent Advisory Committee on Women and Minorities in the Courts was established in October 1999 as an outgrowth of the Women in the Courts Committee. The role of the permanent advisory committee was expanded to address the issue of elimination of racial, ethnic, and gender bias. The purpose of the Committee on Women and Minorities in the Courts is to identify problems and make recommendations that ensure fair and equal treatment for all parties, attorneys, court employees, and other persons who come in contact with the state courts. To accomplish this goal, the committee is charged with examining all levels of the state judicial system, including a review of court statutes, rules, practices, and conduct, and raising awareness about the problems and effects of bias in the judicial process.

The committee has twenty-five members, including judges, representatives of the Department of Attorney General and the Office of the Public Defender, a representative of Rhode Island Legal Services, non-judicial employees of the courts, members of the bar, and members of the general public who are broadly representative of the community. Committee members are appointed for two-year terms.

As its initial focus, the committee will conduct surveys on how the public perceives the treatment women, minorities, and non-English speaking persons receive in the Rhode Island courts and on sentencing practices.





Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee

Rhode Island Supreme Court
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-3272
(Pursuant to Supreme Court Article V, Rule 5.5)

Members:

- Avram N. Cohen, *Esquire, Chair*
- Carolyn Barone, *Esquire*
- Henry V. Boezi, *Esquire*
- Linda Buffardi, *Esquire*
- Kenneth A. Colaluca, *Esquire*
- Richard P. D Addario, *Esquire*
- Michael K. Glucksman, *Esquire*
- Matthew L. Lewis, *Esquire*

The Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee was established in 1984 to work with the Office of the Attorney General in investigating and prosecuting alleged instances of unauthorized individuals practicing law. The Supreme Court appoints seven Rhode Island Bar Association members to the committee to review complaints from the bar, the public, and both the federal and the state judiciaries.

Since most litigation initiated by the committee requests injunctive relief, the chair of the committee is required to sign verified complaints and testify in court hearings. Although litigation is handled by the Office of the Attorney General, committee members, particularly the chair, draft the necessary pleadings and complete the required legal research.



The User-Friendly Courts Committee

250 Benefit Street
Providence RI, 02903
(401) 222-2500

(Pursuant to an Administrative Order of the Chief Justice)

Members:

The Honorable Robert G. Flanders, Jr.
Justice, Supreme Court, Chair
The Honorable Victoria S. Lederberg
Justice, Supreme Court
The Honorable Edward C. Clifton
Associate Justice, Superior Court
The Honorable Haiganush R. Bedrosian
Associate Justice, Family Court
The Honorable Robert K. Pirraglia
Associate Judge, District Court
The Honorable Carmine Rao
Associate Judge, Workers' Compensation Court
The Honorable Marjorie R. Yasher
Associate Judge, Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal
Jonathan Oster, *Esquire*
Richard Boren, *Esquire*
Tracy Breton
Frank A. Ciccone
John M. Cicilline, *Esquire*
Charlotte Cordeiro
Patricia E. Creamer
Ann Marie D'Alessio
James DeCastro, *High Sheriff*
Vincent A. DiMonte, *Esquire*
Chief James A. Dodd
Charles F. Haigh
James T. Higgins
Susan B. Iannitelli, *Esquire*
Rene M. Lafayette
Lynda L. Laing, *Esquire*
Joseph S. Larisa, Jr., *Esquire*
Thomas W. Lyons, *Esquire*
Anthony Mansolillo
Dorothy McCollough
Chief William A. McCombe
Matthew McGovern, *Esquire*
John Rao, *Esquire*
Elaine Rendine
Marc H. Richman, *MD*
John Ricottilli
Dave Russell
Maureen Spaight
Michael St. Pierre, *Esquire*
Susan McCalmont, *Staff Liaison*

The User-Friendly Courts Committee was first established in 1994. By an administrative order of the Chief Justice in 1997, the membership of the committee was expanded and its role redefined. The committee currently has thirty-one members representing the primary users of court services such as lawyers, litigants, jurors, witnesses, governmental entities, the media, law enforcement officials, and judges. The focus of the committee is to identify and recommend methods for the courts to meet the priority needs of these user groups. As set forth in the Order, these needs have been defined as follows:

1. the prompt resolution of cases,
2. minimal inconvenience in attending court;
3. respectful and courteous treatment by all court personnel;
4. receipt of adequate and clear information about what to do and what to expect in court;
5. receipt of information in plain English or in other primary languages;
6. assistance in understanding and using the courts;
7. access to fairly priced services;
8. flexibility in procedures and scheduling to accommodate the needs of users;
9. treatment with care and concern by court personnel, and
10. availability of personal amenities such as food, handicapped accommodations, parking, and clean and comfortable waiting areas and rest rooms.





Victim Services Unit

Justice Assistance, a private, nonprofit organization established in 1978, operates Project Restitution and Project Victim Services under a state court contract. These projects provide information, support, counseling, referral, and advocacy for Rhode Island crime victims.

Justice Assistance requests that each victim complete and return a victim impact statement recording physical, financial, emotional, or other

losses that have resulted from a criminal action. The statement becomes part of the court record and may be used to assess damages, restitution, fees, fines, or other terms of a sentence. Additionally, Justice Assistance answers victims' questions, prepares them for court proceedings, provides them with practical and emotional assistance, and monitors court ordered conditions when required.

The program assisted 11,792 crime victims in 2000. In addition to the court contract, Justice Assistance receives financial support from the State Justice Commission, the violent crimes indemnity fund, and private sector contributions and program fees.

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Enrollment	5,912	6,061	7,160	7,503	11,792
Disposition Outcome					
Bench Warrant Issued	361	464	219	414	201
Case Dismissed	26	22	17	44	27
Entered Diversion Program	44	38	20	40	102
Cases Filed	200	779	1,574	2,683	2,944
Cases Filed with Restitution	1,293	128	378	410	561
Guilty	1	1	0	3	3
Not Guilty	3	0	0	0	1
Nolo Contendre	1,011	939	3,125	3,949	3,531
Cases Passed for Trial	222	169	75	17	483
Cases Waived	25	9	7	68	4
Pending	2,816	3,512	5,052	4,842	8,561
Services Provided					
Case Status Notification	3,414	4,204	6,016	4,893	4,224
Court Escort	292	227	128	166	59
Crime Impact Statements	1,819	2,572	2,313	1,461	1,211
Crisis Counseling	477	9	4	5	5
Referral Service	176	394	506	414	492
Restitution Service	167	779	413	410	534
System Orientation	2,873	4,179	3,560	4,838	3,184
Monitoring Services					
Domestic Violence Counseling	*	168	469	491	593
Community Services	*	129	279	292	415
AIDS Testing	*	9	26	27	26
Substance Abuse Counseling	*	72	82	86	225
Mental Health Counseling	*	18	21	22	11

* Not available.



Rhode Island Judiciary

Appendices



2001 Judicial Roster

Supreme Court

Frank J. Williams
Chief Justice

Victoria S. Lederberg
Justice

John P. Bourcier
Justice

Robert G. Flanders, Jr.
Justice

Maureen McKenna
Goldberg
Justice

Joseph R. Weisberger
Chief Justice (Retired)

Donald F. Shea
Justice (Retired)

Superior Court

Joseph F. Rodgers, Jr.
Presiding Justice

Alice Bridget Gibney
Associate Justice

Robert D. Krause
Associate Justice

Melanie Wilk Thunberg
Associate Justice

Vincent A. Ragosta
Associate Justice

John F. Sheehan
Associate Justice

Ronald R. Gagnon
Associate Justice

Mark A. Pfeiffer
Associate Justice

Patricia A. Hurst
Associate Justice

Francis J. Darigan, Jr.
Associate Justice

Judith Colenback Savage
Associate Justice

Michael A. Silverstein
Associate Justice

Stephen J. Fortunato, Jr.
Associate Justice

Edward C. Clifton
Associate Justice

Netti C. Vogel
Associate Justice

William A. Dimitri, Jr.
Associate Justice

O. Rogeriee Thompson
Associate Justice

Gilbert V. Indeglia
Associate Justice

Stephen P. Nugent
Associate Justice

Edwin J. Gale
Associate Justice

Patricia L. Harwood
General Magistrate

William J. McAtee
Magistrate

Joseph A. Keough
Special Magistrate

Family Court

Jeremiah S. Jeremiah, Jr.
Chief Judge

Hajranush R. Bedrosian
Associate Justice

Pamela M. Macktaz
Associate Justice

Raymond E. Shawcross
Associate Justice

Michael B. Forte
Associate Justice

Kathleen A. Voccola
Associate Justice

Paul A. Suttell
Associate Justice

Howard I. Lipsey
Associate Justice

John A. Mutter
Associate Justice

Gilbert T. Rocha
Associate Justice

Francis J. Murray, Jr.
Associate Justice

Stephen J. Capineri
Associate Justice

John J. O'Brien, Jr.
General Magistrate

Debra E. DiSegna
Magistrate

Everett C. Sammartino
Magistrate

George N. DiMuro
Magistrate

Jeanne L. Shepard
Magistrate

Angela M. Bucci
Magistrate

Workers' Compensation Court

Robert F. Arrigan
Chief Judge

John Rotondi, Jr.
Associate Judge

Andrew E. McConnell
Associate Judge

George E. Healey, Jr.
Associate Judge

Debra L. Olsson
Associate Judge

Bruce Q. Morin
Associate Judge

Janette A. Bertness
Associate Judge

Edward P. Sowa
Associate Judge

Dianne M. Connor
Associate Judge

District Court

Albert E. DeRobbio
Chief Judge

John J. Cappelli
Associate Judge

Michael A. Higgins
Associate Judge

Robert K. Pirraglia
Associate Judge

Patricia D. Moore
Associate Judge

Stephen P. Erickson
Associate Judge

Robert J. Rahill
Associate Judge

Walter Gorman
Associate Judge

John M. McLoughlin
Associate Judge

Frank J. Cenerini
Associate Judge

Elaine T. Bucci
Associate Judge

Madeline Quirk
Associate Judge

Richard A. Gonnella
Associate Judge

Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr.
Magistrate

Raymond E. Ricci
Clerk/Magistrate

Traffic Tribunal

Majorie R. Yashar
Associate Judge

Lillian M. Almeida
Associate Judge

Edward C. Parker
Associate Judge

Albert R. Ciullo
Associate Judge

Aurendina G. Veiga
Magistrate

Domenic A. DiSandro III
Magistrate

William T. Noonan
Magistrate

2001 Court Directory

Supreme Court

Clerk/Administrative Offices

Licht Judicial Complex
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903

John H. Barrette
State Court Administrator 222-3263

Gail M. Valuk, Esquire
Assistant State Court Administrator 222-3266

Wayne Hannon
Acting Associate Administrator, State Courts 222-3266

Brian B. Burns
Supreme Court Clerk
Director of Bar Admissions 222-3272

Ronald A. Tutalo, Esquire
Administrative Assistant to Chief Justice 222-3073

Christine S. Jabour, Esquire
General Counsel 222-3267

John J. Goodman
Director of Public Information 222-3266

Kendall F. Svengalis
State Law Librarian 222-3275

Martha F. Newcomb, Esquire
Chief Staff Attorney 222-3297

Carol Bourcier Fagnoli, Esquire
Chief Law Clerk 222-6536

Tracy Williams
Executive Director, RIJSS 222-3000 (x321)

Susan W. McCalmont
Assistant Administrator, Policy and Programs 222-2500

Paul M. Petit
Executive Director, Facilities and Operations 722-4030

William A. Melone
Assistant Administrator, Employee Relations 222-2700

Holly Hitchcock
Director, Court Education, MCLE 222-4942

Judicial Record Center

5 Hill Street
Pawtucket, RI 02860

Stephen Grimes
Director 721-2640

Disciplinary Board

John E. Fogarty Judicial Annex
24 Weybosset Street
Providence, RI 02903

Neil P. Philbin
Chair 222-3270

David D. Curtin, Esquire
Chief Disciplinary Counsel 222-3270

Fugitive Task Force

Lieutenant Stephen J. Lynch
Acting Director 222-2018

Domestic Violence Training & Monitoring Unit

Janice B. Dubois
Executive Director/Administrator 782-4154

Superior Court

Providence County

Licht Judicial Complex
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903

Susan L. Revens, Esquire
Administrative Clerk 222-3288

Joseph V. Conley
Deputy Administrator/Clerk 222-3215

Henry S. Kinch, Jr.
Clerk, Providence/Bristol County 222-3220 (x2011)

Michael C. Kelleher
General Chief Clerk 222-3220 (x2021)

Henry G. Vivier
Jury Commissioner 222-3245

John O'Hara
Associate Jury Commissioner 222-3248

Evelyn A. Keene
Assistant Administrator, Management and Finance . 222-3215

Bonnie L. Williamson
Project Coordinator, Calendar Services 222-3602

Robert J. Johnson
Security and Program Manager 222-3292

Kathleen A. Maher McKendall
Administrator, Arbitration Program 222-6147

Kent County

Leighton Judicial Complex
222 Quaker Lane
Warwick, RI 02886

Jane M. Anthony
Clerk 822-1311

Eugene J. McMahon
Deputy Administrator/Clerk 822-0400

Jean Heden
Manager, Calendar Services (out counties).... 222-6645

Washington County

McGrath Judicial Complex
4800 Tower Hill Road
Wakefield, RI 02879

Courtland R. Chapman, Jr.
Clerk 782-4121

Newport County

Murray Judicial Complex
45 Washington Square
Newport, RI 02840

Charles Henry Hollis
Clerk 841-8330

Family Court

Providence County

Garrahy Judicial Complex
1 Dorrance Plaza
Providence, RI 02903

Earl J. Croft III
Director 458-3203

J. Joseph Baxter
Administrator/Clerk 458-3203

F. Charles Haigh, Jr.
Executive Assistant 458-3141

David Heden
Executive Director, Juvenile Services 458-3250

William Burgess
Deputy Administrator/Clerk, Child Support ... 458-3100

Louis Cairone
Supervisory Accountant 458-3100

Clotilde Edwards
Executive Director/Administrator
Domestic Relations 458-3200

Elaine Wood
Principal Supervisory Clerk, Juvenile 458-3290

Francis Pickett, Jr.
Director, CASA/GAL 458-3330

Kent County

Leighton Judicial Complex
222 Quaker Lane
Warwick, RI 02886

Frank P. DeMarco
Principal Supervisory Clerk 822-1600

Newport County

Murray Judicial Complex
45 Washington Square
Newport, RI 02840

Ellen F. Wilbur
Principal Supervisory Clerk 841-8340

Washington County

McGrath Judicial Complex
4800 Tower Hill Road
Wakefield, RI 02879

Denise Dupre
Principal Supervisory Clerk 782-4111

Workers' Compensation Court

Garrahy Judicial Complex
1 Dorrance Plaza
Providence, RI 02903

Dennis I. Revens
Administrator 458-3403

Kenneth D. Haupt
Deputy Administrator 458-5132

Arlene E. Maloney
Associate Deputy Administrator/Systems 458-3422

Maureen H. Aveno
Administrator, Medical Advisory Board 458-3461

Dennis R. Cooney
Senior Assistant Administrator 458-3418

Edward J. McGovern
Senior Assistant Administrator 458-3419

District Court

Sixth Division - Providence/Bristol County

Garrahy Judicial Complex
1 Dorrance Plaza
Providence, RI 02903

Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr.
Magistrate 458-5211

Raymond E. Ricci
Clerk/Magistrate 458-3153

Jerome Smith
Chief Clerk 458-5219

Patricia I. Dankievitch
Assistant Administrator, Finance Management 458-5214

Joan M. Godfrey
Assistant Administrator, Finance Management ... 458-5212

Alice Albuquerque
Sixth Division Administrative Clerk
Office Services 458-3144

Cynthia C. Clegg
First Division Supervisory Clerk 458-3156





Second Division - Newport County

Murray Judicial Complex
45 Washington Square
Newport, RI 02840

Susan M. Caldarone
Deputy Clerk I 841-8350

Third Division - Kent County

Leighton Judicial Complex
222 Quaker Lane
Warwick, RI 02886

Melvin J. Enright
Supervisory Clerk 822-1771

Fourth Division - Washington County

McGrath Judicial Complex
4800 Tower Hill Road
Wakefield, RI 02879

RoseMary T. Cantley
Deputy Clerk I 782-4131

Traffic Tribunal

345 Harris Avenue
Providence, RI 02909-1082

Leo Skenyon
Administrator (Clerk) 222-2636

Kevin Spina
Senior Policy Associate 222-3027

Raymond Denisewich
Supervisor of Management Services 222-1658

J. Ryder Kenney, Esquire
Assistant Legal Counsel 222-1170

**TDD/TTY
Numbers**

Licht Judicial Complex (401) 222-3269

Garrahy Judicial Complex (401) 458-5275

Leighton Judicial Complex (401) 822-1607

McGrath Judicial Complex (401) 782-4139

Murray Judicial Complex (401) 841-8331

Traffic Tribunal (401) 222-1566

Please Note:

TTY/text telephone users may also access court voice numbers through Relay Rhode Island at 1-800-745-5555 (TTY).



