

Court Statistics



THE RHODE ISLAND JUDICIARY'S QUARTERLY CASEFLOW REPORT

Volume 35, Number 2, June 2014

HIGHLIGHTS

FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 2014

SUPREME COURT'S DISPOSITION RATE EXCEEDED 100% FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR.

IN **SUPERIOR COURT**, FELONY AND MISDEMEANOR FILINGS INCREASED COMPARED TO LAST YEAR.

FAMILY COURT'S DISPOSITION RATE FOR DIVORCE CASES WAS 100%.

DISTRICT COURT MISDEMEANOR FILINGS ROSE BY 4%.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION COURT HAD A 95% DISPOSITION RATE.

TRAFFIC TRIBUNAL SUMMONSES INCREASED BY 14%.

Supreme Court

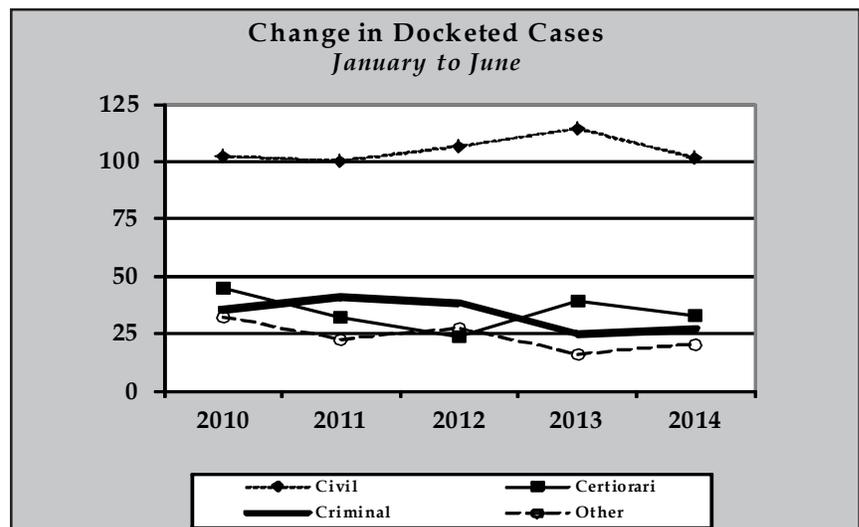
FILINGS

This report covers the first half of calendar year 2014. There were 181 Supreme Court cases docketed through the second quarter, down 13 from last year. Compared to last year, appeals decreased in both the civil and certiorari categories. Civil appeals dropped by 13 (11 percent) and certiorari appeals by 6 (15 percent). For the first half of 2014, both criminal and

miscellaneous appeals increased, rising by 2 and 4 (8 and 25 percent), respectively.

DISPOSITIONS

Like the past two years, dispositions exceeded new appeals filed for the first half of the year, resulting in a disposition rate over 100 percent. The total number of appeals disposed through June was 223 (42 more than docketed). As explained in more de-



tail below, 6 (3 percent) of the 223 dispositions occurred during some stage of the Appellate Mediation Program

(385) at the end of the period. Compared to last year, pending criminal appeals dropped by 22 (27 percent) and certiorari appeals decreased by 2 (3 percent). On the contrary, pending civil appeals increased by 8 (4 percent), while miscellaneous appeals rose by 2 (11 percent).

APPELLATE MEDIATION

Through the second quarter, there were 68 new cases screened through the AMP. Of the 68 cases screened, 42 were deemed either ineligible or inappropriate. During this time period, 6 cases were disposed at some stage in the mediation process, representing a 23 percent disposition rate. Of the 6 dispositions, 4 were settled at or after mediation, while the remaining 2

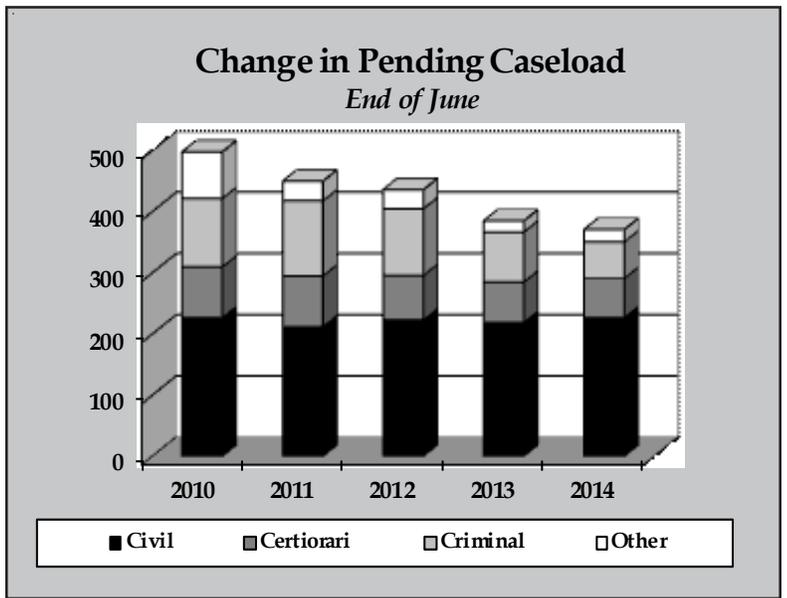
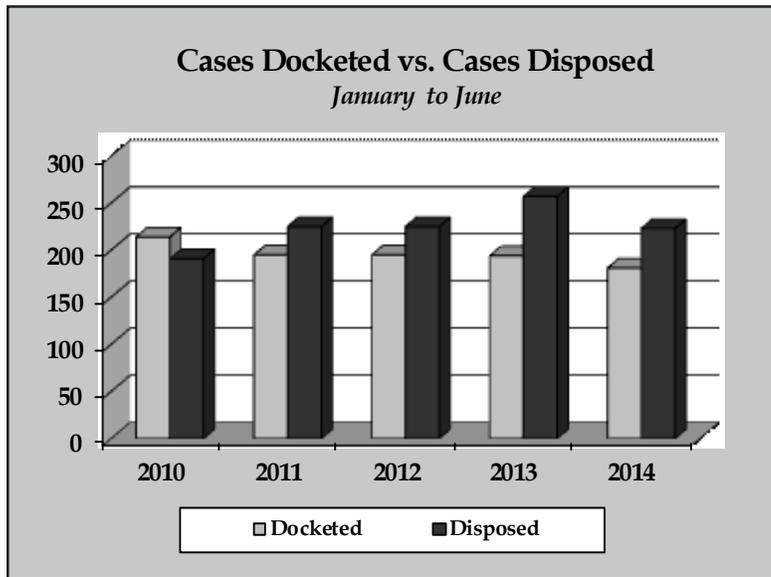
were dismissed or withdrawn at an earlier stage in the mediation process. As of June 30, 2014, there were 30 cases active in the program.

(AMP).

Of the 223 dispositions during the first half of the year, 114 (51 percent) of the appeals were disposed before oral argument, 64 (29 percent) were disposed after show cause, and the remaining 45 (20 percent) were disposed after full oral argument. During the first half of 2014, the Supreme Court published 109 written decisions, including 11 orders and 98 opinions. Of the 223 dispositions through June, 28 percent were disposed within 180 days, and a total of 37 percent were disposed within 300 days.

PENDING CASELOAD

As of June 30, 2014, the pending caseload was 371, a decline of 14 (4 percent) compared to last year



Superior Court

FELONY FILINGS

Statewide felony filings in Superior Court increased through the second quarter of 2014 compared to last year. The number filed rose by 91 (3 percent) from 2,689 to 2,780. Felony filings decreased in all counties, with the exception of Providence/Bristol, where they rose by 11 percent (203). In Kent County, felony filings dropped by 19 (5 percent); in Washington County by 72 (30 percent); and in Newport County by 21 (10 percent) compared to last year.

FELONY DISPOSITIONS

For the first half of the year, the statewide felony disposition rate was 98 percent. In Providence/Bristol County the rate was 99 percent, and in Kent County, it was 86 percent. Felony dispositions exceeded filings in both Washington and Newport Counties, resulting in disposition rates over 100 percent.

TIME TO DISPOSITION - FELONIES

The Superior Court established a goal of 180 days for the disposition of felonies and achieved this in 58 percent of the cases during the first half of 2014. This goal measures the time from when a felony is filed to the case disposition. Newport County disposed 71 percent of their

felony caseload within 180 days, and in Providence/Bristol County, it was 54 percent. Kent County met the 180 day guideline in 73 percent of the felonies disposed through June, and Washington County achieved it in 64 percent of the cases.

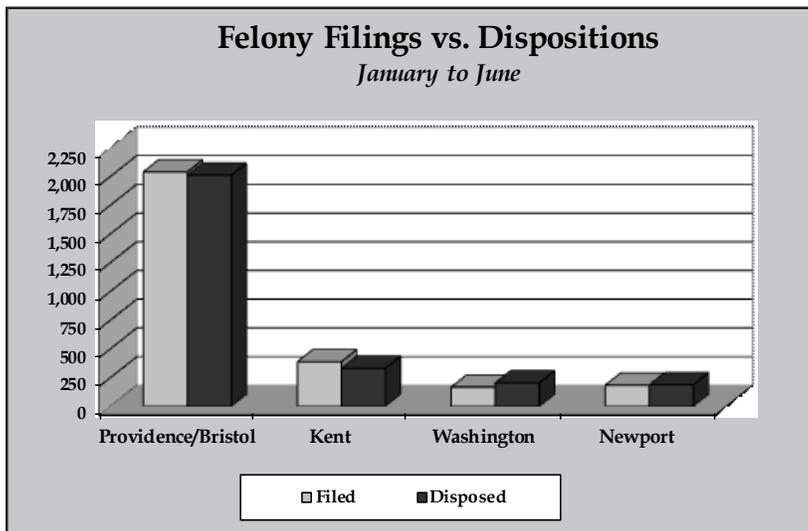
PENDING FELONY CASELOAD

The number of felonies pending statewide totaled 2,607 at the end of June, decreasing by 5 percent (132) from last year. Of the 2,607 felonies pending, 40 percent (1,036) were pending over 180 days from filing. Providence/Bristol County had 887 cases over 180 days old; Kent County had 79; Washington County had 49; and Newport County had 21.

MISDEMEANOR FILINGS

Misdemeanor filings through the second quarter increased by 38 (33 percent) from 116 last year to 154 in 2014. The rise in misdemeanors occurred in both Providence/Bristol and Washing-

<i>Felony Filings</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Providence/Bristol	2,153	2,029	1,992	1,836	2,039
Kent	319	500	409	407	388
Washington	315	190	229	240	168
Newport	221	162	165	206	185
Total	3,008	2,881	2,795	2,689	2,780
<i>Misdemeanor Filings</i>					
Providence/Bristol	61	54	57	63	92
Kent	26	22	24	14	13
Washington	14	12	20	29	42
Newport	36	10	15	10	7
Total	137	98	116	116	154
<i>Civil Filings</i>					
Statewide	5,715	5,425	4,553	4,297	4,291
<i>Civil Cases Added to the Trial Calendar</i>					
Providence/Bristol	533	432	320	247	262
Kent	134	111	95	81	90
Washington	90	70	57	36	38
Newport	43	47	31	21	39
Total	800	660	503	385	429



ton Counties, increasing by 29 and 13 (46 and 45 percent), respectively. In Kent County misdemeanor filings dropped by 1 (7 percent), and in Newport County, they declined by 3 (30 percent).

MISDEMEANOR DISPOSITIONS

For the first half of the year, misdemeanor dispositions exceeded filings statewide, resulting in a disposition rate over 100 percent. This occurred in all counties as well, with the exception of Kent County, where the disposition rate was 46 percent.

TIME TO DISPOSITION - MISDEMEANORS

The goal for disposing misdemeanor cases in Superior Court is 90 days, which is measured from filing to disposition. Statewide, Superior Court met this goal in 28 percent of cases. Washington County disposed 65 percent of their misdemeanors within 90 days. In Providence/Bristol County 11 percent of the misdemeanors were disposed within 90 days, while in Newport and Kent Counties, it was 27 and 50 percent, respectively.

PENDING MISDEMEANOR CASELOAD

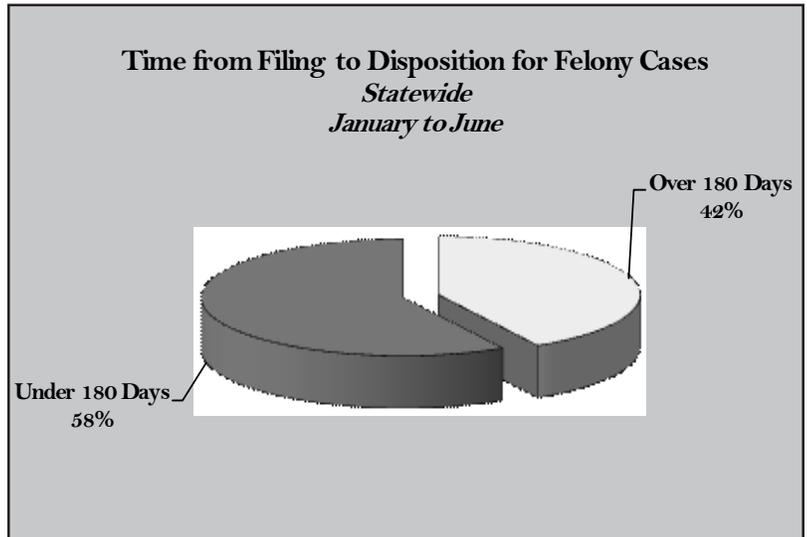
At the end of June, there were 134 misdemeanor cases pending statewide, and 59 percent (79) were over 90 days old.

CIVIL FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

Civil filings totaled 4,291 for the first half of 2014, declining by 6 (less than 1 percent) compared to last year. Through the second quarter, there was a total of 3,304 civil cases disposed, resulting in a 77 percent disposition rate.

CIVIL CASES ADDED AND DISPOSED - TRIAL CALENDAR

The number of civil cases added to the civil trial calendar statewide through June increased by 44 (11 percent) compared to the first half of last year. Cases added to the civil trial calendar increased in all counties. Kent County increased by 11 percent (9), while Newport County rose by 85 percent (18). For both Providence/Bristol and Washington Counties,

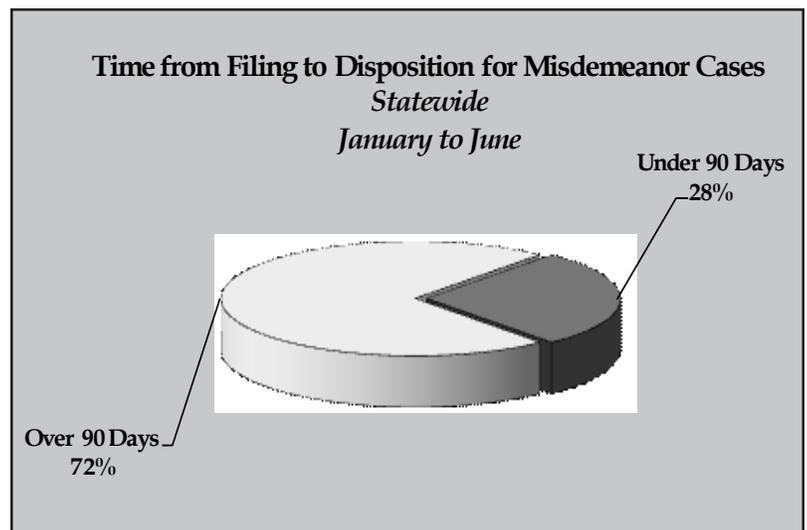


the number of civil cases added increased by 6 percent (15 and 2, respectively).

All four counties disposed more civil cases than were added to the trial calendar in the first half of 2014, resulting in disposition rates that exceeded 100 percent.

PENDING CIVIL CASELOAD - TRIAL CALENDAR

At the end of the period, the number of civil cases pending trial statewide declined by 185 (18 percent), compared to last year. In Providence/Bristol County, the number of cases pending dropped by 175 (21 percent); in Kent County by 2 (2 percent); in Washington County by 5 (7 percent); and in Newport County by 3 (8 percent), compared to the first half of 2013.



Family Court

JUVENILE FILINGS

In the first half of 2014, the Family Court held 41,781 hearings statewide. Juvenile filings decreased by 8 percent compared to last year, dropping by 308 from 3,682 to 3,374. Statewide there was a decline in wayward/delinquent petitions and violations filed. Wayward/delinquent filings decreased by 384 (17 percent), while violations dropped by 10 (3 percent). On the contrary, dependency/neglect/abuse (DNA) petitions rose by 4 percent (26), termination of parental rights (TPR) by 19 percent (20), and both adoption/guardianship and the general category of other increased by 17 percent (36 and 4, respectively), compared to last year.

When reviewing filings by location compared to a year ago, juvenile filings through the second quarter were lower in both Providence/Bristol and Kent Counties, both dropping by 11 percent (304 and 54, respectively). Filings increased in Washington County by 41 (14 percent), and in Newport County, they rose by 9 (4 percent), during the first half of the year.

<i>Juvenile Filings by Case Type</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Wayward/Delinquent	3,247	2,836	2,444	2,279	1,895
Violations	495	432	355	370	360
Dependency/Neglect/Abuse	833	730	780	695	721
Termination of Parental Rights	158	109	99	104	124
Adoption/Guardianship	245	245	230	210	246
Other	34	36	29	24	28
Total	5,012	4,388	3,937	3,682	3,374
<i>Juvenile Filings by County</i>					
Providence/Bristol	3,634	3,183	2,803	2,666	2,362
Kent	632	572	532	509	455
Washington	425	376	353	291	332
Newport	321	257	249	216	225
Total	5,012	4,388	3,937	3,682	3,374
<i>Divorce Filings by County</i>					
Providence/Bristol	1,594	1,588	1,658	1,583	1,580
Kent	415	427	399	373	306
Washington	307	278	241	229	208
Newport	176	175	154	178	158
Total	2,492	2,468	2,452	2,363	2,252
<i>Abuse Filings</i>					
Statewide	1,159	1,248	1,124	979	1,073

JUVENILE DISPOSITIONS

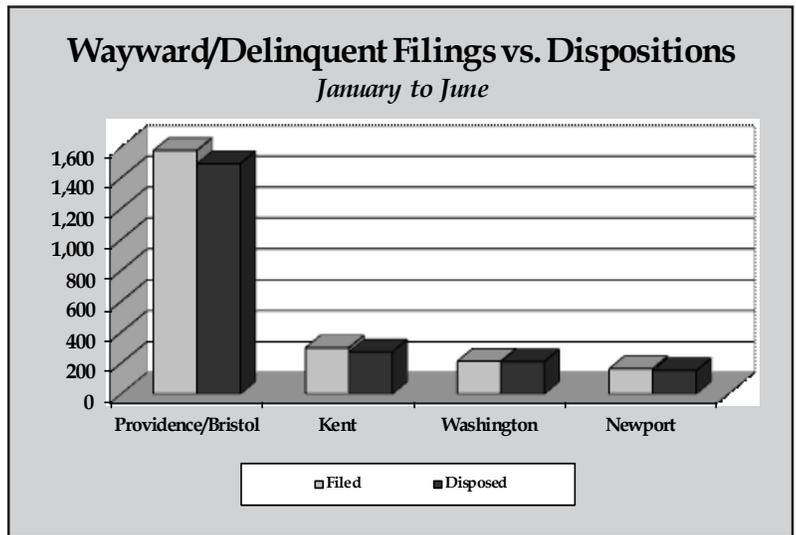
In the wayward/delinquent category, which includes violations of probation and court orders, the statewide disposition rate was 94 percent. In Providence/Bristol County the disposition rate was 95 percent; in Kent County, it was 91 percent; in Washington County, it was 99 percent; and in Newport County, it was 92 percent. In the child protection category, there was an 85 percent disposition rate with filings (1,119) exceeding dispositions (953) by 166.

TIME TO DISPOSITION - JUVENILE CASES

The Family Court has established a timeframe of 180 days as the goal for adjudicating juvenile cases. This

goal measures the time from filing until a finding is entered, not the time to final disposition of a case. Through June, Providence/Bristol County adjudicated 56 percent of its wayward/delinquent cases within 180 days (again with violations included), while in Newport County, it was 52 percent. In Washington and Kent Counties, 46 and 57 percent of their respective caseloads were adjudicated within the 180 day guideline. For wayward/delinquent cases handled informally, the goal is 45 days. Through the end of the period, 33 percent of the cases met this goal, while 58 percent were handled within 90 days.

In child protection cases statewide, Family Court met the 180 day guideline in 43 percent of the cases for TPR and in 36 percent of the cases for DNA matters. In Providence/Bristol County, 37 percent of the DNA cases and 44 percent of the TPR cases were adjudicated within 180 days.

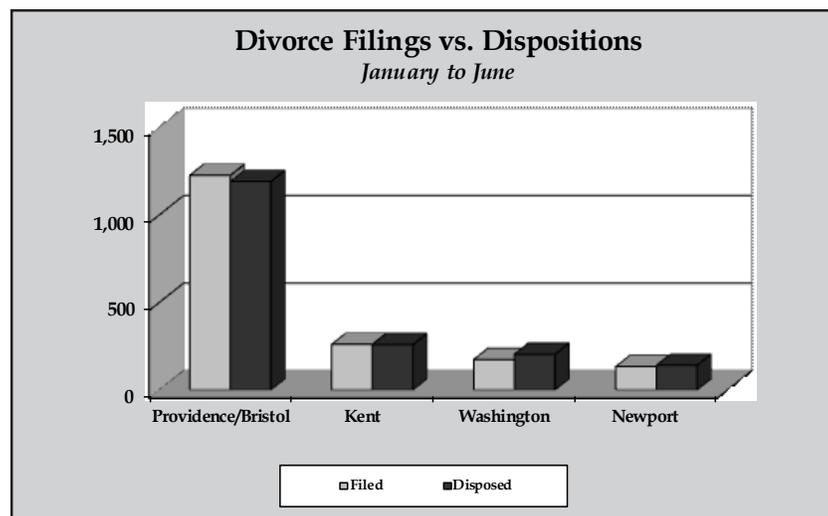


PENDING TPR CASELOAD

A specific area the court monitors closely is the cases pending on the contested TPR calendar in Providence/Bristol County. At the end of June, 27 cases representing 16 families remained on this calendar, and 12 cases representing 9 families were over 180 days old.

DOMESTIC FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

On the domestic side, divorce filings were lower than last year statewide, decreasing by 111 (5 percent).



Statewide, filings and dispositions were the same (1,794) for the first half of 2014, resulting in a disposition rate of 100 percent.

PENDING DIVORCE CASELOAD

At the end of June, the total number of divorce cases pending over a year was 34 statewide. Providence/Bristol County had 28 cases pending over a year, while Kent, Washington and Newport Counties each had 2.

District Court

MISDEMEANOR FILINGS

In District Court, statewide misdemeanor filings increased through the second quarter compared to last year. The total number filed rose from 12,336 last year to 12,763, an increase of 427 (4 percent). Similarly, filings increased in all divisions, with the exception of the Sixth Division, where they dropped by 50 (1 percent). In the Second Division, misdemeanors rose by 56 (5 percent); in the Third Division, they increased by 389 (8 percent); and in the Fourth Division by 32 (3 percent).

During the first half of 2014, the 12,763 statewide misdemeanor case filings were comprised of 16,936 individual counts. In the Second Division, the 1,121 misdemeanor cases filed represented 1,464 counts, while the Third Division misdemeanor case filings (5,246) resulted in 6,916 counts. Furthermore, the 1,206 misdemeanor cases filed in the Fourth Division included 1,569 counts, and in the Sixth Division, the 5,190 misdemeanor case filings were comprised of 6,987 counts.

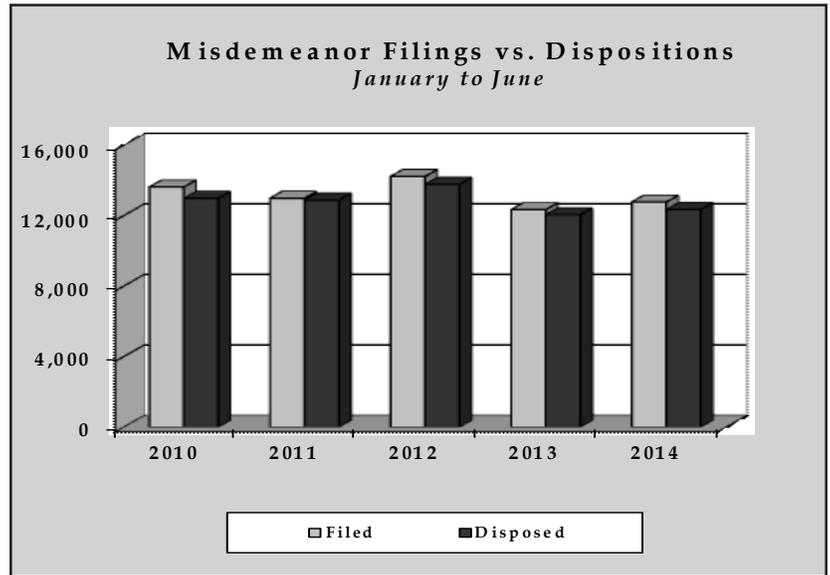
MISDEMEANOR DISPOSITIONS

In general, the District Court continued to handle its misdemeanor caseload in a timely and efficient manner. Overall, the statewide disposition rate for misdemeanors was 97 percent through June. The Third Division had a disposition rate of 98 percent, and in the Sixth Division, it was 96 percent. In both the Second and Fourth Divisions, the disposition rate was 95 percent for the first half of 2014.

TIME TO DISPOSITION - MISDEMEANORS

The court's goal is to dispose misdemeanors within 60 days of filing. This measures the time period between

filing a case and its disposition in the District Court. Statewide, 75 percent of misdemeanors met this goal. Through the second quarter, 73 percent of misdemeanors in the Third Division and 76 percent of misdemeanors in the Sixth Division were disposed within 60 days. In both the Second and Fourth Divisions, 77 percent of misdemeanors disposed met the 60 day guideline.



PENDING MISDEMEANOR CASELOAD

At the end of June, there were a total of 4,026 misdemeanors pending statewide; 50 percent were less than 60 days old, and another 15 percent were between 60 and 180 days old. In the Second Division, the number of misdemeanors pending more than 60 days was 56 (24 percent); in the Third Division, it was 663 (45 percent); it was 98 (32 percent) in the Fourth Division and 1,214 (60 percent) in the Sixth Division. The total number of misdemeanors over 60 days old was 2,031 (50 percent), an increase from 1,453 a year ago.

<i>Misdemeanor Filings</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Second	1,423	1,201	1,259	1,065	1,121
Third	3,920	3,638	5,645	4,857	5,246
Fourth	1,558	1,532	1,479	1,174	1,206
Sixth	6,719	6,608	5,836	5,240	5,190
Total	13,620	12,979	14,219	12,336	12,763
<i>Felony Filings</i>					
Courtwide	3,670	3,767	3,687	3,323	3,374
<i>Civil Filings</i>					
Second	660	697	618	535	608
Third	3,246	3,294	3,838	3,682	4,144
Fourth	974	805	549	523	606
Sixth	6,880	6,804	5,967	5,799	6,127
Total	11,760	11,600	10,972	10,539	11,485
<i>Small Claims</i>					
Second	398	400	282	350	362
Third	2,200	2,113	2,309	3,128	2,660
Fourth	466	555	368	405	366
Sixth	4,286	3,956	2,568	3,143	3,166
Total	7,350	7,024	5,527	7,026	6,554
<i>Abuse Filings</i>					
Courtwide	469	430	332	384	459

half of 2013 to 11,485 for the comparable time period in 2014. Filings increased in all divisions. Abuse filings rose by 75, representing a 20 percent increase over last year. The number of statewide small claims filed decreased by 472 (7 percent) from 7,026 to 6,554. Small claims increased by 3 percent (12) in the Second Division and by less than 1 percent (23) in the Sixth. In the Third Division small claims filings dropped by 15 percent (468), and in the Fourth Division, they declined by 10 percent (39), compared to last year.

CIVIL DISPOSITIONS

The statewide disposition rate for civil cases was 90 percent, while small claims dispositions exceeded filings for the first half of the year, representing a state-

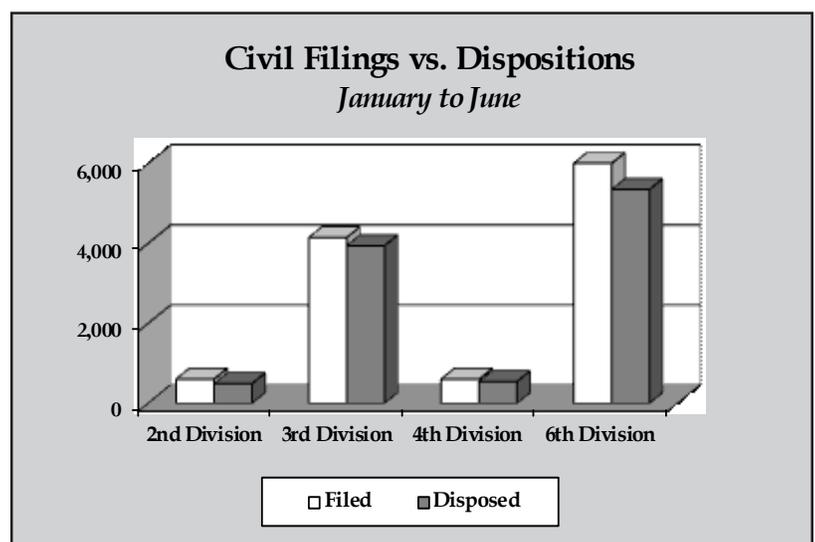
FELONY FILINGS

Statewide, felony filings in the first half of 2014 increased from last year's figures. Felony filings rose from 3,323 to 3,374, representing a 2 percent increase. The number filed increased in the Third Division (7 percent), but decreased in both the Second Division (5 percent) and the Fourth Division (7 percent). Felony filings remained virtually the same in the Sixth Division, decreasing by 1 (less than 1 percent).

CIVIL FILINGS

On the civil side, statewide filings through June increased by 946 (9 percent) from 10,539 in the first

wide disposition rate over 100 percent.



Workers' Compensation Court

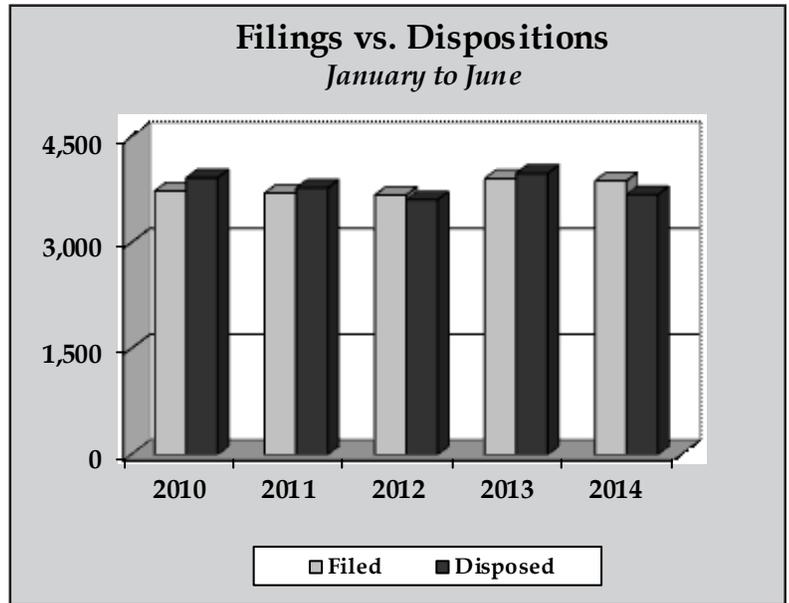
PETITIONS FILED

The number of petitions filed in the Workers' Compensation Court during the first half of 2014 decreased by 33 from last year. A year ago there were 3,905 petitions filed through June, and this year there were 3,872, a decline of only 1 percent.

Based on the type of case, some petitions increased compared to a year ago, while others decreased. Petitions to enforce declined by 2 (1 percent), while both employer petitions and petitions for medical dropped by 2 percent (13 and 1, respectively). Also, both lump sum settlements and miscellaneous petitions decreased by 11 percent (50 and 7, respectively). On the contrary, both employee petitions and original petitions increased by 2 percent (17 and 23, respectively).

PETITIONS DISPOSED

Through the second quarter, filings (3,872) exceeded dispositions (3,678), resulting in a 95 percent disposition rate. Cases disposed at the pretrial stage



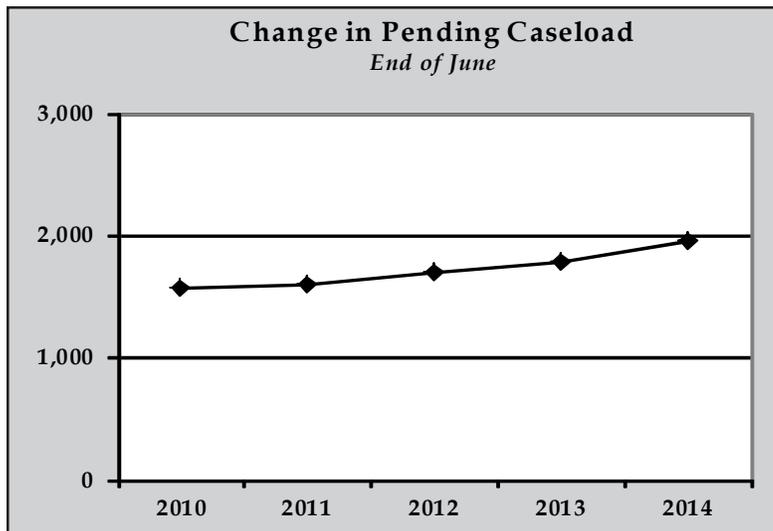
accounted for 76 percent of the total, while those disposed at trial represented 24 percent.

TIME TO DISPOSITION

The Workers' Compensation Court has established a goal of 90 days for cases to be disposed at pretrial and 360 days for those cases that go to trial. This measures the time from filing to disposition of a petition. The percentage of cases disposed at pretrial within 90 days of filing (87 percent) was the same percentage as last year. At trial, 89 percent of the cases were handled within 360 days, up from 86 percent last year.

PENDING CASELOAD

Compared to last year, the total number of petitions pending rose from 1,793 to 1,954, an increase of 161 (9 percent). The number pending trial rose by 120 from 755 last year to 875, an increase of 16 percent. The petitions pending trial over 270 days increased by 17 percent from 273 to 319, representing 36 percent of the total number pending trial.



Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal

SUMMONSES ISSUED

The number of summonses issued to the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal (RITT) increased during the first half of 2014, increasing by 14 percent from 39,875 last year to 45,627. Furthermore, the 45,627 issued included a total of 55,414 violations. RITT summonses accounted for 61 percent of the total summonses issued this period.

Similar to the overall increase in RITT summonses, there was an increase in insurance violations filed, rising by 77 (2 percent), while breathalyzer refusals decreased by 8 (1 percent), compared to last year.

SUMMONSES DISPOSED

During the first half of 2014, RITT had a disposition rate of 98 percent. Payments by mail, representing 25 percent of total dispositions, increased by 20 percent (1,844) over last year's figure. The remaining 75 percent were disposed by court hearings, which rose by 7 percent (2,185) compared to last year.

<i>Filings</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Summonses Issued *	75,656	73,661	88,205	72,001	75,239
RITT Summonses Issued	44,371	40,175	53,584	39,875	45,627
RITT Violations	54,355	49,345	64,272	50,396	55,414
<i>RITT Dispositions</i>					
Court Hearings	29,764	28,698	38,511	31,431	33,616
Payments by Mail	14,389	12,557	15,798	9,403	11,247
Total Disposed	44,153	41,255	54,309	40,834	44,863
* Includes summonses issued to both RITT and municipal courts.					

TIME TO DISPOSITION

The RITT has adopted 60 days as the goal for disposing summonses, which measures the time from the initial appearance to disposition. In the first half of the year, 96 percent of all dispositions met this guideline. Furthermore, 81 percent of breathalyzer refusals and 94 percent of insurance violations were disposed within the 60 day timeframe.

As in the past, the majority of dispositions took place before or at the arraignment stage, although the results were different for certain categories. Based on statistics relating to the number of violations (separate offenses), 19 percent of all violations disposed occurred prior to arraignment, while another 61 percent occurred at arraignment. Also, 80 percent of insurance violations and 26 percent of breathalyzer refusal matters were disposed at or before arraignment.

PENDING CASELOAD

The total number of summonses pending at the end of June increased by 45 percent (793), rising from 1,760 last year to 2,553. Of this number, 1,853 (73 percent) were pending over 60 days. Similarly, the number of appeals pending at the end of the period rose by 13 percent, from 56 last year to 63.

