



ANNUAL REPORT
of the
NEVADA JUDICIARY

Fiscal Year 2009

Annual Report of the Nevada Judiciary Fiscal Year 2009

The Work of Nevada's Courts
July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009



SUPREME COURT OF NEVADA

Administrative Office of the Courts

201 South Carson Street

Carson City, NV 89701

Supreme Court of Nevada

JAMES W. HARDESTY, Chief Justice

RONALD D. PARRAGUIRRE, Associate Chief Justice

MICHAEL L. DOUGLAS, Associate Justice

MICHAEL A. CHERRY, Associate Justice

NANCY M. SAITTA, Associate Justice

MARK GIBBONS, Associate Justice

KRISTINA PICKERING, Associate Justice

**Prepared by the
Administrative Office of the Courts
November 2009**

**RON TITUS, State Court Administrator
ROBIN SWEET, Deputy Director
HANS JESSUP, Lead Court Research Analyst
and
BILL GANG, Public Information Officer**

**www.nevadajudiciary.us
aocmail@nvcourts.nv.gov**

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Nevada Supreme Court
Seated (l to r): Justice Mark Gibbons, Chief Justice James Hardesty,
Justice Kristina Pickering, and Justice Michael Douglas.
Standing (l to r): Associate Chief Justice Ronald Parraguirre,
Justice Michael Cherry, and Justice Nancy Saitta.

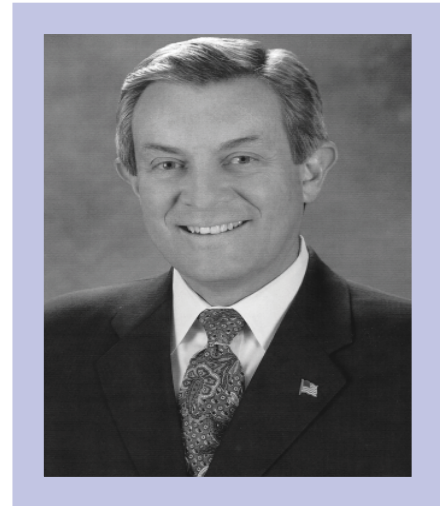
A Message from the Chief Justice



Ten years ago, the Nevada Supreme Court approved the Uniform System for Judicial Records, a rule requiring the collection and reporting of judicial statistics by every court. For a decade now, courts throughout the state have provided information for caseloads, dispositions, and other data related to case processing. While the reporting process hasn't been easy, and many improvements in statistical gathering have been made along the way, it is clear that the Annual Report of the Nevada Judiciary has become an invaluable tool for the courts, the Legislature, the Executive Branch and local governments to assess our work and plan for the future of the Nevada judicial system. This tool would not have been possible without the hard work of the court staff that compile (sometimes manually) and report the extensive data that is presented in the Annual Report. On behalf of my colleagues on the Supreme Court, our 72 District Court Judges, 65 Justices of the Peace and 21 Municipal Court Judges, we offer our profound thanks and appreciation to these dedicated public servants.

The information contained in this year's Report will, once again, confirm the extraordinary work of the justices, judges, senior justices and judges, quasi-judicial officers, and court personnel in our state. By working together, Nevada's judicial system provides fair and accessible justice, upholds the rights of the parties, and preserves community welfare and safety.

Caseloads in all of our courts continue to grow at an alarming pace. Without question, the number of cases filed per judicial position substantially exceeds the level of cases handled by most courts in America. But, the true measure of the work of our court system can be found in the disposition and clearance rates of the cases. I'd like to offer some context. For fiscal year 2009, the District Courts disposed of over 127,000 cases, the Justices of the Peace resolved over 210,000* non-traffic cases, the Municipal Courts concluded over 62,000 non-traffic misdemeanor cases, and the Supreme Court decided over 2,100 cases. Nevada's Judiciary resolved more than



401,000 non-traffic cases this fiscal year. Furthermore, the clearance rates, show statewide that District Courts cleared 96 percent of their cases, Justices of the Peace cleared 85 percent, Municipal Courts 104 percent, and the Supreme Court clearance rate reached 101 percent. Remarkably, Nevada's Judiciary as a whole cleared 92 percent of the all cases filed. In addition, 1,418 lives were changed through drug and mental health court.

Case numbers, though, do not tell the entire story because each case requires sensitivity to the needs of our citizens and involves the resolution of someone's rights, or the custody of someone's children, or the disposition of someone's property, or in some cases, the restraint of someone's liberty and freedom. The Annual Report, therefore, includes a summary of the many initiatives and innovations by Nevada's Judiciary to provide access to our courts, accountability for our decisions, and transparency in all that we do. With the continued support of our partners in local government, and the Legislative and Executive Branches, Nevada's judicial system will continue to provide fair and impartial justice in a fiscally responsible manner.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James W. Hardesty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James W. Hardesty
Chief Justice
Supreme Court of Nevada

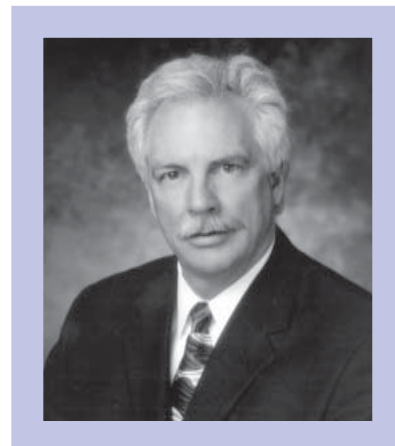
*Las Vegas Justice Court (LVJC) dispositions were omitted due to case management system inabilities; using clearance rates we reasonably estimate the LVJC criminal dispositions to be 47,000.

Report from the Administrative Office of the Courts

A mere 10 years ago we published the first Annual Report of the Nevada Judiciary. As expected, that report covered a short history of the Nevada judiciary, the structure of the Nevada court system and a summary of the year's activity. For the first time, however, the report included statistics about the workload of Nevada's courts. That report was the culmination of 2½ years of work developing reporting requirements and standards, and collecting the necessary statistics.

During the past 10 years, we have improved our data collection, the scope of information our courts report, and the accuracy of our statistics. The first report included only case filings. Dispositions were added the next year and during the ensuing years we have gathered additional statistics on alternative dispute resolution programs, drug court programs, the use of quasi-judicial positions (masters and commissioners), and the senior judge program.

This year's report not only focuses on the activities of the judicial branch and court statistics during the last fiscal year (July 2008–June 2009), but provides an opportunity to look back at the work of the courts for the past decade. Our first report, of course, was our statistical starting point since uniform statistics simply had not been kept before that time. Five years ago, we were able to take a look at the historical 5-year trends in growth of the court system. That has continued every year since, and for the first time this year, we have included a chart showing the growth in filings since our first report, a 10-year growth analysis.



This report includes an expanded section on our Specialty Courts, which include drug courts, mental health court, DUI courts, and other problem solving courts. During fiscal year 2009, three new specialty courts were added, bringing the total to 43, with drug courts now available in every Nevada county. The expanded report on Specialty Courts includes information on funding, participants, and the 1,418 graduates during the year. One amazing statistic—a direct result of our drug courts—58 drug-free babies were born during the fiscal year.

We continue to strive to improve our annual report each year, documenting the strides taken by the Judiciary to better serve the residents of Nevada. Please feel free to contact us with your comments about this report through the email address on page 2, and visit our website for up-to-date information concerning the Nevada Judiciary.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Titus".

Ron Titus
State Court Administrator
Supreme Court of Nevada

State of the Judiciary Message

Presented by Chief Justice James W. Hardesty
to the Legislature of Nevada,
Seventy-Fifth Session, March 24, 2009

Thank you for the warm reception for the Judicial Branch of Nevada's government. Governor Gibbons, Lt. Governor Krolicki, Speaker Buckley, Senator Horsford, Senator Raggio, Assemblywoman Gansert, distinguished members of the Senate and the Assembly, honorable constitutional officers and honored guests.

I have been looking forward to today with great anticipation. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to spend the next four or five hours talking about the State of the Judiciary in Nevada. No, I will try to keep my remarks shorter as admonished earlier by the Governor.

It is my privilege to speak on behalf of my friends and colleagues on the State Supreme Court—Associate Chief Justice Ron Parraguirre, Justice Michael Douglas, Justice Michael Cherry, Justice Nancy Saitta, Justice Mark Gibbons, and Justice Kris Pickering. I am also privileged to speak for our 72 District Court Judges, our 65 Justices of the Peace, our 21 Municipal Court Judges, and the nearly 2,000 court staff throughout the state that serve in Nevada's Judiciary. Together we work to provide fair and accessible justice, protect the rights of individuals, and preserve community welfare and safety. I am proud to serve with these dedicated public servants and I offer my profound thanks for their service to all Nevadans and those who visit and do business in our state.

With us today are several of the state's judges including the Chief Judges from our two urban Judicial District Courts—Chief Judge Arthur Ritchie and Chief Judge Connie Steinheimer, and Las Vegas Justice Court Chief Judge Ann Zimmerman. I also want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank Supreme Court Clerk Tracie Lindeman, State Court Administrator Ron Titus, the staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Supreme Court's legal staff for their tireless work on behalf of the Judicial Branch of this State.

I would particularly like to thank the Legislature for your recognition today of former Justice Bill Maupin. As you noted in the proceedings this morning, he has made a lasting contribution to the rule of law and to the remarkable progress the Judiciary has

experienced during his years on the bench. I spoke with Bill prior to today's ceremonies. He was so excited to receive this recognition that he offered to buy all of the legislator's lunch if you would stay for my speech.

Today, I will offer a vision for the future of Nevada's Judiciary, describe a handful of the many accomplishments of Nevada's courts, and conclude by commenting on the impact that decisions made in this 75th Session of the Nevada Legislature might have on the face of justice in Nevada.

The core function of the Judiciary is to resolve cases brought before the courts in a fair, impartial, and timely fashion—simple dispute resolution. But the Judiciary is now being called upon to do so much more.

A judge's duty is to do the right thing for the right reasons. That is the hallmark of justice. As Mark Twain commented in 1868, “. . . judges have the Constitution for their guidance. They have no right to any politics save the politics of rigid right and justice when they are sitting in judgment upon the great matters that come before them.”

Of course, a few years later Twain would say with a wry wit, “Do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.”

In today's environment, though, what is the right role for Nevada's Judiciary? Over the years, and more so in recent times, the responsibilities of the Judiciary have increased in ways we would not have imagined just two decades ago. Increasingly, our citizens are turning to the courts to secure assistance in a variety of complex civil and even social problems. The population growth in Nevada certainly has added pressure to our judicial system, as it has to state and local governments. Who among us could have seen 15 years ago, that the courts would be inundated with construction defect cases that can tie up judges for months at a time? Or envisioned a single medical malpractice case that can affect the lives of thousands of our citizens in Clark County? During that same period, we have witnessed family court dockets grow to nearly 50 percent of all civil filings in District Court. In 65 percent of those cases, both parties are self-represented, inevitably requiring more hearings and more judicial time. Our criminal courts are seeing a growing number of defendants who are committing increasingly serious crimes. The result is that during the past 13 years, our prison population grew almost 60 percent, adding 5,000 inmates to Nevada's prisons.

*Together we work to
provide fair and acces-
sible justice, protect the
rights of individuals,
and preserve community
welfare and safety.*

State of the Judiciary Message (cont.)

To paraphrase the Chief Judge for the State of New York, “Whether we like it or not, the state courts are in the eye of the storm; we have become the emergency room for society’s worst ailments—substance abuse, family violence, mental illness, mortgage foreclosures, and so many more.” This reality has forced the courts to approach cases in entirely new ways.

For many citizens, the only contact they have with government is through the courts. They may get a traffic ticket, be asked to serve as a juror, be called as a witness, or get a divorce. The courts should always remember, though, that each case involves someone’s rights, someone’s children, someone’s property, or in some cases, someone’s freedom. In criminal cases, the Judicial Branch protects a defendant’s constitutional right to a fair trial and preserves the victim’s interest in the outcome of the case.

But I wish to remind everyone our duty to hear and resolve all of these cases is not optional. The courts are required by our constitution and statutes to decide such matters, often within legally mandated deadlines—and always timely, fairly, and efficiently.

Therefore, in my view, the vision for Nevada’s Judicial Branch, today, is to be proactive in the management of its cases, innovative in its approach to dispute resolution, creative in its efforts to provide access to our courts, sensitive to the needs of people who come before us, accountable for our behavior and our decisions, fiscally responsible and transparent in all that we do. If we can meet these goals, modern day courts will continue to earn the public’s trust and confidence.

Despite our challenges, I would maintain that the State of the Judiciary in Nevada is sound. Let me report on some of the many accomplishments of Nevada’s courts since you last convened.

Our courts continue to labor under escalating caseloads, but for the first time in some years, District Court criminal case filings have declined marginally. However, we have seen an increase in civil case filings in District and Justice Courts. These civil filings and the criminal case filings in Justice Courts and most urban Municipal Courts continue to overwhelm the system. And at the Supreme Court, filings set new records every year. The most recent Annual Report of the Nevada Judiciary adequately summarizes these statistics. But what do these statistics mean to the lives of real people and Nevada businesses? Let

me give you one example. If you have an average civil case in the District Court in Clark County, you will have to wait 3 years and 6 months for your case to come to trial. Is that acceptable? The answer is a resounding “no.” Nevertheless, you should know, and I am very impressed, that our District Courts disposed of over 103,000 cases. The Justice Courts resolved 235,000 non-traffic cases. The Municipal Courts concluded 60,000 non-traffic misdemeanor cases, and the Supreme Court decided nearly 2,000 matters. That is a total of more than 400,000 cases resolved by Nevada’s Judiciary in the last fiscal year.

Throughout the state, judges are using technology and innovative case management techniques to keep our most complex cases from being lost in a sea of uncertainty and expense. At the Complex Litigation Center in the Eighth Judicial District, Judges Allan Earl, Susan Johnson, and Timothy Williams supervise 291 construction defect cases affecting thousands of Clark County residents and hundreds of construction companies and developers. The work of these judges brings order to chaos, has promoted settlements in many cases, and assured the parties that an ultimate resolution of their case will occur.

The Judiciary is facing another case management crisis in Clark County—the well publicized endoscopy litigation. Through February of this year, 446 cases involving thousands of individuals have been filed, presenting a significant challenge to the judicial system. Proactively, the Judges of the Eighth Judicial District have consolidated these cases for management purposes under the able supervision of Judge Allan Earl. I feel it is important

for the Legislature to understand exactly what the court is dealing with here. Millions of pages of documents are being filed with the court, hundreds of motions are being presented, and weekly tracking is necessary to keep the cases progressing. Like the construction defect cases, all of these matters involve Nevadans—their lives, their families, their businesses, and their futures. We cannot afford to delay justice in these cases—or any other case.

And while we are on the subject of medical malpractice cases, you should also know that more than 400 such cases are pending today in Clark County. While the courts would like to have taken these cases to trial within the timeframes established by the

State courts are in the eye of the storm; we have become the emergency room for society’s worst ailments—substance abuse, family violence, mental illness ...

State of the Judiciary Message (cont.)

Supreme Court and the Legislature, that simply could not be accomplished in nearly a quarter of these cases because there are not enough judges or courtrooms to do so. One of my favorite success stories are business courts. These courts are there to expedite the resolution of legal disputes that might increase the cost of doing business in Nevada or force a business to close. In short, business courts keep companies in business and Nevadans working. Two years ago, the Supreme Court made a number of changes governing business court. Through the very capable efforts of Judges Elizabeth Gonzalez, Mark Denton, and Brent Adams, the business courts in Nevada are no longer an experiment. We can all be truly proud of their success. Clark County's business court docket has grown from 226 cases on June 30, 2006, to 543 cases on June 30, 2008. Recently, a Las Vegas attorney told me about a complex corporate and insurance regulatory issue she handled last year. The Nevada Insurance Commissioner ordered the parties to resolve the dispute by a date certain, and through the stewardship of Judge Gonzalez, the parties were able to settle the case well before the Commissioner's deadline. Your Legislative Commission subcommittee found that Nevada's business courts are preferable to the creation of a chancery court. The subcommittee also recommended some additional improvements in the business court. Assuming adequate resources can be provided, the Nevada Supreme Court is prepared to enact rules addressing the recommendations of your subcommittee.

Nevada's drug courts and other specialty courts continue their incredible journey, begun in 1992 when Nevada launched the nation's fifth drug court. It is a journey that saves lives and families and even the futures of unborn babies. The Legislature's continued support of these courts has enabled dedicated Specialty Court Judges and staff to achieve successes that no one thought possible. The efforts of you in this room today have now extended the benefits of specialty courts to our rural communities.

Last fiscal year, the Specialty Court Judges around the state served more than 2,200 participants and witnessed 1,235 graduates. Seventy-six drug-free babies were born to participants—that is 76 babies who now have a chance to grow up without the limitations imposed on them prenatally by drug-addicted mothers. The success of these courts is illustrated by two stories,

Trials in medical malpractice ...could not be accomplished in nearly a quarter of these cases because there are not enough judges or courtrooms to do so.

one out of Elko and one out of White Pine County. In Elko, Judge Andrew Puccinelli supervised a young woman I shall call Samantha. An abusive relationship followed by the death of her husband left Samantha alone with three children. She turned to drugs and lost her three children to the system. Ultimately and predictably, she ended up in the criminal justice system. After 32 months in drug court, Samantha is a changed woman with a vibrant and exuberant. She is an employed, taxpaying, productive member of society and has regained her custody rights. The second

story demonstrates the imagination and dedication of Judges Steve Dobrescu and Dan Papez in White Pine County. The story involves a young couple whose two children were taken away by the Division of Child and Family Services because the parents could not overcome their frequent use of marijuana and methamphetamine. The parents loved their children but repeatedly violated the case plans for reunification with their children because of their continuing

drug addictions. Even though no criminal charges were pending, Judges Dobrescu and Papez ordered the parents to participate in drug court as part of the most recent case plan. Last June, the children were returned to their parents, and in December, mom and dad both graduated from drug court. Now, I must emphasize that these are but two of the hundreds of similar stories made possible by the specialty courts of our state. And I must also emphasize that were it not for the drug courts, many of these success stories would otherwise be passing through that revolving door in and out of prison at a considerable cost to society.

And then there is District Judge Jackie Glass, who supervises Clark County's Mental Health Court and the relatively new Competency Court. The Competency Court manages cases pretrial of defendants who may lack competency to go to trial. The expense and delay to the system caused by such cases is enormous. The success of Judge Glass's efforts is underscored by the case of former NFL football player Cole Ford. He came to the District Court after being on the streets for some time, was talking nonsense, uncooperative, and clearly mentally ill. Through the concerted efforts of Judge Glass, doctors at Lake's Crossing, and both attorneys in the criminal case, Mr. Ford regained competency and was reunited with his family as a productive member of society.

State of the Judiciary Message (cont.)

In Las Vegas Municipal Court, Judges Bert Brown and Cedric Kerns and their colleagues continue to make history. Judge Brown supervised the Court's Women in Need, or WIN, program. A 21-year-old woman I shall call Laura had a history of arrests for solicitation, two felony convictions, and a drug abuse problem. She came to Las Vegas and for 2 years walked the streets selling herself to pay for her drugs. She was brutally beaten and frequently fell into abusive relationships. At age 23, Laura was arrested for solicitation and placed into the WIN court program, which requires that participants abstain from drugs and alcohol, get drug tested regularly, and stay out of legal trouble. Under Judge Brown's supervision, Laura graduated from the program, is employed, and attending school where she is maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Judge Kerns supervises the HOPE Court, which deals with those who—because of homelessness or for other personal problems—find themselves repeatedly in the criminal justice system. HOPE stands for Habitual Offender Prevention and Education. Bernard is a 52-year-old man with an extensive criminal history who has served three prison terms. From 1998 to 2007, he was arrested 65 times and served a total of 656 days in jail. He was doing a life sentence on the installment plan. He had no hope. When he entered the HOPE Court as a result of yet another misdemeanor arrest, he had been homeless for over 10 years. Under Judge Kerns' supervision, Bernard graduated from HOPE Court on January 15, 2009. By that time, he had been clean and sober and off the streets for two-and-a-half years with no arrests.

I thought this Legislature would be particularly interested in the results of your efforts to codify the DUI Court program. This specialty court deals with serious and chronic DUI offenders who have failed to appreciate their actions after prior jail or prison terms. These are the offenders I would expect will eventually kill or injure themselves or someone else while driving drunk. The DUI Court has been remarkably successful in breaking the destructive cycle of these offenders. As you know, the Nevada Supreme Court recently upheld the constitutionality of the legislation creating these courts. We also ordered that the opportunities of DUI Courts be extended to our rural communities. Because of your legislation and the Judiciary's implementation of DUI Courts, we can all be proud that we are making a difference in this troubling area.

The DUI Court has been remarkably successful in breaking the destructive cycle of these offenders.

All of us recognize that crime prevention starts with our young people. I would like to highlight three efforts in this area. Judge Ken Howard operates Kids Court in the Reno Municipal Court. Every month 30 fifth graders and their parents visit his court to see how justice is done at that level. There is a mock trial in the case of "BB Wolf vs. Curly Pig." There is an "Ask the Inmate" program and a discussion on issues from drug or alcohol abuse, to peer pressure, to choices young people must make, and of course, the value of staying in school. I also want to commend Judge William Voy's efforts to create the Nevada Safe House for Sexually Exploited Children. Judge Voy sees 150 girls each year come through the juvenile detention center in Clark County who are victims of sexual exploitation. Judge Voy's vision will work to intercept these girls and restore their lives.

Over the last 4 years, the Judiciary has improved juvenile justice court practices and services for youth while protecting public safety through the application of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Judge William Voy in Clark County and Judge Frances Doherty in Washoe County have, along with many others, developed alternatives to the over reliance on secure detention facilities for many juvenile offenders. Instead, healthy alternatives targeting the needs of individual children and families have been created. Using these alternatives, in Clark County the average daily population of detained juveniles has decreased by 31 percent. In Washoe County, the average daily detention population has decreased by 28 percent. Judge David Gamble in Douglas County and Judge Puccinelli in Elko County, operating with limited resources, have also applied JDAI principles and practices to create detention alternatives in their jurisdictions. Together, these collective efforts have taken the pressure off the need to construct new juvenile detention centers throughout the state.

The family mediation programs in Clark and Washoe Counties have provided an alternative avenue for families to resolve their domestic disputes. These families get an opportunity to work out their own differences and take control of their own lives with the assistance of trained mediators. In the process, families can avoid the expense, delays, and animosity that often accompany prolonged litigation in Family Courts. Since 2003, over 21,000 cases went through Clark

State of the Judiciary Message (cont.)

County's Family Mediation Center. During the same time, Washoe County's Family Mediation Program accepted over 3,400 cases. More than three-quarters of all of these mediation cases were resolved to the mutual benefit of mothers, fathers, and their children.

I am particularly proud of the Supreme Court's continuing efforts to open the doors of the justice system to the eyes and ears of all Nevadans. The Nevada Supreme Court recently enacted rules prohibiting the sealing of files in civil cases. We have made our oral arguments available to the entire state via webcasts and podcasts. We

have also successfully implemented electronic filing in all criminal cases, which will allow easier access to those records. On March 1, 2009, a Supreme Court rule went into effect that I believe will have a profound impact on the ability of litigants and lawyers to access our courts. The rule, which allows parties to appear in court telephonically or via video connections, should have its most dramatic impact on the civil legal needs of litigants in our rural communities. On March 29, the Court will launch a redesigned and expanded user-friendly website offering increased information about the court, its committees and commissions, its schedule, arguments, and decisions.

One of the roles of the Supreme Court is to establish commissions to study the justice system and make recommendations about how we can do our jobs better. The work of three commissions stands out. The Indigent Defense Commission chaired by Justice Cherry has been recognized nationally for its sweeping recommendations to improve indigent defense in criminal cases in Nevada. The Article 6 Commission, co-chaired by William Dressel and Paula Gentile, has made substantial recommendations to improve the judicial discipline system and the speed with which the Commission on Judicial Discipline processes complaints against judges. And finally, the Access to Justice Commission, which I co-chair with Justice Douglas, has recently issued a report concluding that the serious civil legal needs of the underprivileged in Nevada are not being met. We were stunned to learn that there is only one legal aid attorney for every 5,000 eligible persons in Nevada with civil legal needs. The Access to Justice Commission is pursuing increased funding and a statewide approach to address this serious crisis. I would like to take this

...civil legal needs of the underprivileged in Nevada are not being met...there is only one legal aid attorney for every 5,000 eligible persons in Nevada with civil legal needs.

opportunity to thank the 15 banking institutions in this state that, in the past 5 months, have increased their interest rates that they pay on lawyer trust accounts, which help fund legal aid services in Nevada.

And I cannot conclude a discussion of the Judiciary's accomplishments without mentioning the efforts of the courts to offer some help in the state's budgetary struggles. On this subject, two areas are particularly noteworthy. The Las Vegas Township Justice Court has completed a Traffic Amnesty Program, which gave individuals the opportunity to

resolve their unpaid traffic citations and avoid late fees and penalties.

When the program ended on February 13, 2009, nearly 10,000 individuals had paid outstanding fines, bringing in \$5.4 million for Clark County and the State of Nevada. An additional 9,600 individuals established payment plans to pay \$5.8 million in outstanding fees and fines. Another 10,000 individuals, apparently fearing the Justice Court was headed their way, have requested traffic

court dates to deal with their outstanding tickets. The Justice Court has contracted with a collection agency and has issued arrest warrants in pursuit of millions of additional dollars that are owed. I want to congratulate and recognize Chief Judge Zimmerman, her colleagues, and Court Administrator Ed Friedland. They deserve recognition for this effort.

At the state level, the Nevada Supreme Court reverted almost \$2 million to the General Fund for fiscal year 2008. That was 23 percent of the general fund appropriation to the Court excluding statutorily set judicial compensation. We are projecting that we could revert another \$2.2 million for fiscal year 2009. That would amount to 24 percent of the Court's general fund.

The list of these accomplishments is by no means exhaustive and cannot include our many other achievements. I believe, however, that it provides a substantial illustration of the invaluable work being performed every day by judges and staff throughout Nevada.

In all of these programs, I see an important partnership among the Judicial, Legislative, and Executive Branches. The Judiciary's ability to carry these programs forward is dependent, of course, upon the resources this Legislature can provide. I would like, therefore, to discuss the impact that

State of the Judiciary Message (cont.)

decisions of the 75th Legislature may have on the future of the Judicial Branch and our ability to meet the growing needs of our citizens.

As you know, the Judiciary has proposed a plan to help address the crucial need for additional judicial resources in Nevada. The complexity and volume of the caseload clearly demonstrates the need for new judges in Clark and Washoe Counties. In our rural courts, the need for technology, support staff, facilities, and other judicial resources cannot be questioned. This is why we have urged you to consider increasing the fees on civil case filings in District Court. Nevada has not revised many of these fees since 1993, and in these harsh economic times, this is a logical alternative. Those who use the courts should rightfully take a greater role in funding those courts. We have taken great care to calibrate the increases in the filing fees to distribute the burdens as fairly as possible. The fees, as proposed, would be comparable to or below those charged by surrounding states. This measure has received broad-based support from county officials, trial lawyers, and members of the State Bar, all of whom recognize the pressing need for increased judicial services in civil cases. The sad reality, as I noted earlier, is that the Judicial Branch cannot effectively and timely respond to the needs of citizens and businesses without the added resources our plan will provide. Neither can we adopt the legislative recommendations for rule changes to our business courts without your help. I urge your support for measures pending in the Legislature to implement this plan.

The Senior Judge Program has become essential to the delivery of judicial services in Nevada. During fiscal year 2008, our Senior Judges spent more than 12,000 hours conducting settlement conferences, running specialty courts, and handling the calendars of District Judges so that trials could proceed unabated. I would like to introduce two of our Senior District Judges—Peter Breen and Archie Blake. These two judges continue to manage the drug and mental health courts in Washoe County and ride the circuit to bring the benefits of the drug courts to the rural communities in Western Nevada. We could not do it without them. I would urge your continued funding of the Senior Judge Program.

I would like to thank the Legislature for its continued support of SJR9, which hopefully will result in the creation of an Intermediate Appellate Court

to meet the growing needs of litigants in our state. The State Senate has passed SJR9 for a second time, and I would urge the Assembly to follow suit. The Supreme Court currently is responsible for all appellate matters, and we are one of the busiest appellate courts in the country. Nevada is by far the largest of the 11 states without an Intermediate Appellate Court. I believe it is time for this state to take this step.

We are all concerned about the financial health of our state. I would urge the Legislature to consider two proposals that could have a significant impact on our fiscal needs. First, as many of you know, I have asked United States Senators Harry Reid and John Ensign to support federal legislation that would allow Nevada to intercept federal tax refunds of people who have not paid their financial obligations ordered by the courts. The State of Oregon estimated that a federal tax intercept program in that state would generate up to \$61 million. I submit that we are not far off with that number in our state. I ask you to adopt a resolution calling upon our federal delegation to support the federal tax intercept bill proposed during the 110th Congress.

Second, the Advisory Commission on the Administration of Justice has suggested that the responsibility for the collection of court-ordered fees, fines, and victim restitution be centralized under the Administrative Office of the Courts. In this plan, the courts would partner with State Controller Kim Wallin, who has increased her efforts to collect much of the debt owed to our state. These initiatives would not only pay for themselves, but provide badly needed resources to the entire state.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Legislature, I am excited about the future of the Judicial Branch in Nevada. I am proud that our courts continue to meet the challenges placed before us and are providing real solutions for today's problems. Nevada's judges and court staff are motivated, enthusiastic, innovative, and engaged in making this branch of government the best that it can be.

Our duty as Judges is to deliver fair, impartial, principled, scholastic justice, and to do so with character and integrity. Our citizens should expect nothing less. But we in the Judiciary can, and should, expect of ourselves much more.

Thank you.

*The sad reality ...
is that the Judicial
Branch cannot effec-
tively and timely
respond to the needs
of citizens and busi-
nesses without the
added resources.*

The Work of the Courts

COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

Judicial Selection Commission Interviews and Deliberations Opened to the Public

The Nevada Commission on Judicial Selection opened its doors to the public for the first time during fiscal year 2009. Three judicial vacancies have been filled using this revised process.

While Nevada has a system of electing judges at every level, when a judge vacates the bench mid-term, it is the Commission's constitutional role to determine the three top applicants from whom the Governor will appoint a successor.

Not only were the interviews and deliberations public, but the Commission also allowed any individuals with an interest to directly address the Commission about the qualifications of the candidates. The interview and deliberation process had previously been confidential; however, the seven-member Commission agreed that, with few exceptions, the entire process would be public.

The screening process for appointment to judgeships includes gathering extensive background information on applicants and conducting comprehensive interviews.

Supreme Court's Article 6 Commission Issues Final Report Recommending Changes to Judicial Discipline

The Article 6 Commission of the Nevada Supreme Court issued its final report on the judicial discipline system in Nevada during fiscal year 2009, recommending ways to improve the procedures used to address ethical complaints against judges and judicial candidates throughout the state.

Among the recommendations from the blue ribbon Commission were calls for increased transparency in the process and quicker disposition of cases handled by the Commission on Judicial Discipline, the constitutional body responsible for enforcing ethical rules for judges. The Article 6 Commission also recommended that all formal discipline be made public.

The Legislature enacted many of the Commission's recommendations in passing Assembly Bill 496, which revises Nevada's judicial discipline statutes, and enhances the transparency of the discipline process.

The Commission is named after Article 6 of the Nevada Constitution, which established the Judicial Branch. The long-term mission of the Commission is

to take a broad look at matters affecting the judiciary and make recommendations for improvements.

The Commission, which is composed of private citizens as well as judges and attorneys, also is addressing such issues as judicial performance evaluations, campaign contributions, the perception of the judicial system, and specialty courts.

Nevada Judicial Conduct Code Commission Makes First Evaluation of Canons of Judicial Conduct in 17 Years

The Nevada Supreme Court created the Commission to Amend the Nevada Code of Judicial Conduct to make the first comprehensive evaluation of the rules that govern Nevada's judges since 1991.

The Commission, chaired by former Nevada Supreme Court Justice William Maupin, held its first meeting in fiscal year 2009 to begin the process of proposing a new Code of Judicial Conduct for Nevada. That first meeting was held in Las Vegas and videoconferenced to Carson City so Commission members and citizens in northern and southern Nevada could participate.

The Commission evaluated the American Bar Association's 2007 Model Code of Judicial Conduct and on April 2, 2009, issued a report proposing a series of revisions to the Nevada Code of Judicial Conduct. The report is posted on the Supreme Court website (www.nevadajudiciary.us).

Records Commission Takes On a New Task

The Nevada Supreme Court's Commission on Preservation, Access and Sealing of Court Records took on a new task in fiscal year 2009 to update the court record retention procedures.

The Commission, which was established in 2007, already recommended new rules to ensure that court records in civil cases will be open to the public with few exceptions.

In July 2008, the Supreme Court reconstituted the Commission because of concerns about the lack of standardized policies and procedures concerning the retention of court records.

The Commission worked throughout the year on new statewide policies and procedures about storing court records and the preservation and destruction of evidence.

The Work of the Courts

Indigent Defense Performance Standards Ordered By Supreme Court

During fiscal year 2009, the Nevada Supreme Court approved performance standards recommended by the Indigent Defense Commission chaired by Justice Michael A. Cherry, which was created in 2007 to examine how the justice system treats criminal defendants who cannot afford to hire their own attorneys.

The performance standards recommend that criminal defense attorneys take specific steps in handling cases of indigent defendants, including regular contact with their clients and comprehensive investigations of the allegations.

In addition to the performance standards, the Commission examined caseload limits for public defenders in Nevada.

The Indigent Defense Commission Rural Subcommittee also issued a report making several recommendations to improve the delivery of defense services across the state, including a recommendation that the State of Nevada accept its constitutionally mandated responsibility to fund all aspects of indigent defense. The subcommittee further recommended that counties be allowed to choose the delivery method that is best suited to their populations; that an independent oversight board be set up to ensure independence, accountability, and quality; and that the State Public Defender's Office be adequately and completely funded by the State and become an independent agency.

The Subcommittee also recommended a new rule to govern the appointment of conflict counsel in rural counties to allow for more efficient court operations.

Access to Justice Commission Helps to Boost Pro Bono Services

Funding for pro bono services in Nevada received a boost during fiscal year 2009 through the work of the Nevada Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission, chaired by Chief Justice James W. Hardesty and Justice Michael L. Douglas.

The Nevada Law Foundation, which raises funds to support legal assistance in civil cases for those without the means to hire their own attorneys, is funded in part by interest earned on attorney trust accounts. Notwithstanding historically low interest rates, funding on lawyer trust accounts (IOLTA) rose.

Acting on the recommendation of the Access to Justice Commission, more than 15 banks agreed to

increase the interest rates they were paying to help ensure that the work of the Nevada Law Foundation and legal aid organizations throughout the state could continue.

Access to Justice Commission Expanding the Availability of Legal Services

The Access to Justice Commission took a step forward in understanding the need for civil legal services in Nevada by completing a "Civil Legal Needs Assessment for the State of Nevada." The assessment was conducted by experienced consultants, and was paid for by the Supreme Court, Clark County Bar, Nevada Judges of Limited Jurisdiction, Washoe County Access to Justice Foundation, Washoe Senior Law Project, Clark County Legal Services, Nevada Legal Services, Washoe Legal Services, State Bar of Nevada, Washoe County Bar, Nevada Law Foundation, Senior Law Project, and Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevada. The remaining funding for the project was obtained by the AOC in a grant from the State Justice Institute. The assessment found that there is a tremendous need in Nevada's counties for additional civil legal services for vulnerable and already underserved populations. With this quantified knowledge in hand, the Access to Justice Commission has launched, and will launch, a number of programs and initiatives to expand the availability of legal services across the state.

Judicial Public Information Committee Continues to Provide a Voice for the Court

The Supreme Court's Judicial Public Information Committee created the Legacy of Justice Award during fiscal year 2009 as part of its role to provide an educational and informational voice for the courts.

The first Legacy of Justice Award was presented to former Nevada Supreme Court Justice Robert Rose by Chief Justice James W. Hardesty at a Washoe County Bar Association luncheon as part of the judiciary's Law Day activities in May 2009.

The Judicial Public Information Committee was instrumental in the redesign of the Supreme Court website that facilitates access to court records and information.

Court Improvement Program (CIP)

The Nevada Court Improvement for the Protection and Permanency of Dependent Children, better

The Work of the Courts

known as the CIP Select Committee, is chaired by Justice Nancy M. Saitta. The mission of CIP is to improve the lives of children and families who enter the child welfare system by improving court and agency collaboration to make the system more efficient, reducing the amount of time children spend in foster care, and working to place abused and neglected children into permanent homes as quickly as possible.

Funds from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), were awarded to CIP under the provisions of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993. The funds are used by the State of Nevada, through the Supreme Court, to address areas within our family court system that require improvement. The funds are disbursed through subgrants, contracts, and training to further the CIP mission.

Some of the successful projects piloted in various locations throughout the state during fiscal year 2009 as a result of cooperation between the courts and state, local, and federal partners include:

- Children's Attorneys Project (CAP)
- CAP Pro Bono Lawyers
- CAP Surrogate Education Advocacy
- CAP Adoption Subsidy
- Early Representation
- Nevada Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association, Inc.
- Great Basin CASA
- Northeastern Nevada CASA
- Licensed Kinship Caregivers
- Parent to Parent Mentoring

PROMOTING PUBLIC ACCESS

Supreme Court Panels Hold Oral Arguments In Educational Settings

For the fourth year in a row, the Southern Panel of the Nevada Supreme Court held oral arguments at the William S. Boyd School of Law on the UNLV campus, continuing a tradition begun in 2005.

This was the first year the arguments were held in the law school's new Moot Court facility – a mock courtroom constructed at UNLV to give students the opportunity to practice courtroom procedures in an authentic setting.

More than 120 law school students, faculty, and spectators filled the new facility on October 17, 2008,

to hear the arguments in two criminal cases and one civil case.

The justices on the panel and attorneys who had argued the cases fielded questions from the students.

In an effort to further open the judicial process to citizens of the State, the Court's Northern Panel held oral arguments at Elko High School on May 7, 2008, and at Lowry High School in Winnemucca on May 8, 2008.

The arguments offered an opportunity for students to ask questions of the Court, and to learn about the legal process from the Court and lawyers on each case. Local officials and dignitaries, as well as members of the public, attended the arguments in each community.

Supreme Court Launches New Website

The Nevada Supreme Court has launched an expanded, more user-friendly website that provides more information about the high court and the state's entire court system.

The redesigned website has not only a new face, but a new name—the Nevada Judiciary website—and a new web address: www.nevadajudiciary.us, although the old web address, www.nvsupremecourt.us, also provides access.

Webcasting Oral Arguments

The Nevada Supreme Court began webcasting all oral arguments, and most public hearings, over its website from its courtrooms in Carson City and Las Vegas in its continuing effort to provide more public access to court processes.

Permanent cameras and sound systems were installed in both courtrooms to facilitate the live streaming of the arguments. To facilitate an understanding of cases, synopses of the cases and legal issues are routinely posted on the website.

Oral arguments are held in only the most important and legally complex cases and the Supreme Court decisions in those cases set legal precedent that can affect many people. Live webcasts will allow everyone with Internet access, no matter where they are, to watch and listen to court proceedings. The public can access the webcasts on the Supreme Court's website at www.nevadajudiciary.us.

The Work of the Courts

ACHIEVEMENTS

Supreme Court Returns Another \$2.5 Million to State General Fund to Help Budget Shortfall

The Nevada Supreme Court returned another \$2.5 million to the state General Fund at the end of fiscal year 2009 to help ease the State budget shortfall.

The \$2.5 million is more than 28 percent of the eligible funding that could be targeted for cuts and is in addition to the 4.6 percent budget cuts made by the Supreme Court during the 2009 session of the Nevada Legislature.

The Supreme Court and its staff conserved resources and implemented efficiencies in Court operations while still meeting the Judiciary's constitutional and statutory duties to provide access to justice to our state's residents and businesses.

In fiscal year 2009, Governor Gibbons sought the return of 7.9 percent of funding. The \$2.5 million reverted by the Supreme Court was more than three times the percentage sought.

At the end of fiscal year 2008, the Nevada Supreme Court returned almost \$2 million to the State General Fund, which was 27 percent of the state funding targeted by Governor Gibbons for cuts. Governor Gibbons had requested that all state government entities revert 4.5 percent of previously allocated funds.

Business Courts Keep Business in Nevada

One of the Nevada judiciary success stories has been the Business Courts in Clark and Washoe Counties, which are designed to expeditiously resolve business disputes and prevent interruptions in business operations because of prolonged litigation.

Chief Justice James W. Hardesty said Business Courts keep companies in business and Nevadans working.

Patterned after chancery courts in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, the mission of the Business Courts is to provide avenues for businesses to bring their legal troubles to judges experienced in business law. The judges offer early case management, opportunities for innovative judicial resolution through settlement, close management of complex litigation, and consistent decisions to enable business planning.

In the Second Judicial District Court (Washoe County) 102 cases were filed in Business Court dur-

ing fiscal year 2009. District Judge Brent Adams has presided over Business Court cases since the specialized court was created. District Judge Patrick Flanagan has been added as a Business Court judge.

In the Eighth Judicial District Court (Clark County), District Judges Elizabeth Gonzalez and Mark R. Denton presided over Business Court cases during fiscal year 2009. District Judge Kathleen Delaney was added as a third judge late in the year. New Business Court cases filed during the fiscal year in Clark County totaled 614.

Important Legislative Changes Related to Judiciary

The Nevada Judiciary worked closely with the 2009 Nevada Legislature, and collaboratively, made several important changes to the Nevada Revised Statutes.

First and foremost, under the leadership of the Chief Justice, the Judiciary was able to work with the Legislature to secure nine new judges in the Eighth Judicial District, with seven of those having exclusively civil caseloads to meet the ever growing demand. The same bill, Assembly Bill 64, also added the first general jurisdiction judge to the Second Judicial District in 20 years. These new judges are funded in Clark and Washoe Counties by increases in the civil filing fees authorized by the Legislature in Assembly Bill 65. However, the fee increase, which was agreed upon by many members of the justice community, will also benefit the rural district courts in Nevada. The revenue collected under the new filing fees can be used by the rural jurisdictions to improve court facilities, technology, security, and to provide for general improvement of courts and their ability to provide access to justice for citizens.

The second major achievement of the Court, working with the Legislature, was the passage of Senate Joint Resolution 9 from the 74th Session for the second time, which will put the question of allowing the Legislature to authorize the creation of a Nevada Court of Appeals on the 2010 General Election Ballot. The Nevada Supreme Court is one of the busiest courts in the country as it hears all appeals. The creation of an appellate court would significantly increase the speed at which decisions that affect the lives of Nevada's citizens are made.

A third significant piece of legislation from the 2009 Session that affects the courts is Senate Bill 34.

The Work of the Courts

This legislation allows Justice Courts across the state to use quality recording systems to document preliminary hearings on felony and gross misdemeanor charges, bringing these hearings that require a low burden of proof into parity with felony trials, which can be recorded. During discussion surrounding this bill, it became apparent to the Court that more work must be done in the area of making and transcribing the court record, and the Chief Justice plans to appoint a Commission to study this issue and make substantive recommendations.

Senior Judges Are a Cost Effective Way to Resolve Cases

The Nevada Senior Judge Program has proven to be a cost effective way to keep the wheels of justice rolling in a court system that is overburdened and facing ever more complex cases.

During fiscal year 2009, Nevada's 21 senior judges served the District and Supreme Courts in a variety of assignments, providing assistance equivalent to more than eight full-time judges and saving millions of dollars in the process.

Senior judges generally are called on when elected judges are occupied with lengthy trials or other matters, or are unavailable to sit because of illness, training, or vacation. During fiscal year 2009, senior judges also presided over drug and mental health courts, short trials, and settlement conferences, or took on special assignments that reduced backlogs of cases or facilitated rapid resolution of family law cases.

Family Court Settlement Conferences

One successful effort by senior judges was in conducting settlement conferences and short trials in 71 cases at the Family Court in Clark County.

Every two weeks, a senior judge was assigned to handle Family Court cases that were either ready for settlement or involved parties not represented by counsel. The senior judges worked to settle the cases or conduct half day trials to resolve issues. The resolution rate was 77 percent, allowing many families to complete their divorces and settle child custody issues quickly rather than through prolonged litigation.

Diverting these cases from crowded court calendars also allowed the Family Court judges to concentrate on more complex matters.

Medical Malpractice Settlement Marathon

The Nevada Supreme Court used senior judges in an aggressive step to resolve a lingering backlog of medical malpractice cases. During May 2009, senior judges conducted settlement conferences in medical malpractice cases at a rate of two per day. Eighteen or more conferences were set each week. Of the 75 settlement conferences held, 38 were settled.

This innovative process, referred to as the "medical malpractice settlement marathon," targeted the 216 oldest cases. The marathon is scheduled to be repeated during fiscal year 2010.

The settlement conferences must be attended by all parties and attorneys, plus an insurance carrier representative "with full settlement authority – not an adjustor or some person who has no independent decision making authority."

A week before a settlement conference, parties must submit a confidential settlement brief including facts of the case, a history of the case, a confidential analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the case, any unusual legal issues, and a bottom line settlement figure.

Foreclosure Mediation Process Begins

With the passage of a new law providing for mediations in foreclosure cases to forestall the loss of home ownership, the Nevada Supreme Court began the difficult process of establishing formal rules and creating forms and procedures for the legislatively mandated Nevada Foreclosure Mediation Program.

The Supreme Court began drafting rules during the spring for the Foreclosure Mediation Program in anticipation of the passage of Assembly Bill 149 at the end of the 2009 Legislative Session.

Mediations are not a formal court process. In mediations, the homeowner and the lender sit down with a trained mediator to try to reach a mutually agreeable resolution.

AB149 only affects owner-occupied residential housing and currently applies only to foreclosures filed after July 1, 2009. The program is self funded through fees and will not require the expenditure of any taxpayer dollars.

Judicial Education

The Judicial Education Unit promotes the competency and professionalism of Nevada's judges and court staff through a comprehensive system of

The Work of the Courts

continuing legal education and training. The Judicial Education Unit is funded entirely through administrative assessments—fees charged to defendants in misdemeanor criminal and traffic cases.

During fiscal year 2009, the Judicial Education Unit funded more than 180 judges and court staff to attend individual educational courses to meet their unique professional development needs. The training is especially significant for newly elected or appointed judges, who are mandated to attend certain statutory or Supreme Court ordered courses. As the expansion of the judiciary continues to meet the growing caseload in Nevada's courts, the role of funding for this independent education will become increasingly important.

The Judicial Education Unit undertook more education and training in fiscal year 2009 than ever before, providing 22 education programs for Nevada judges and court staff. In addition to four on-going educational programs for general, family, and limited jurisdiction judges throughout Nevada, educational offerings included six regional trainings to roll out the second phase of the Uniform System of Judicial Reporting process, legal writing and editing sessions for the legal staff of the Supreme Court, orientation and training for 14 newly elected District Court judges, eviction training for limited jurisdiction judges and court staff, and training in evidence-based sentencing for general jurisdiction judges.

The Unit continued its partnership with the National Institute for Court Management (ICM) to provide training through its Court Management Program (CMP) certification courses offered to Nevada trial court executives and supervisors. In fiscal year 2009, 35 court executives graduated from the six-program series.

Two graduates from the Nevada CMP certification program, Ms. Terri March, Court Administrator of North Las Vegas Justice Court, and Ms. Robin Sweet, Deputy Director for Judicial Programs and Services of the Administrative Office of the Courts, graduated from the ICM Court Executive Development Program (CEDP) in May 2009. Ms. March was recognized with the ICM Vice President's Award of Merit for Applied Research for her paper, *Planning for the Future: The Link Between Caseload Growth and Rapid Population.*

Supreme Court Initiates Comprehensive Study Regarding CLE Rules

The Nevada Supreme Court initiated a comprehensive study of the rules pertaining to continuing legal education (CLE). The court determined that such a review would serve the fair and efficient administration of justice, by streamlining procedures and reducing the administrative burden caused by delinquent attorneys. Consequently, the court instructed the CLE Board to review the rules and propose amendments that would accomplish the court's goals. It is anticipated that in fiscal year 2010 the court will hold public hearings and consider adopting sweeping changes to the CLE rules.

The court's action was in response to a request by Chief Justice James W. Hardesty in which he noted that the CLE rules—first enacted in 1982—had been amended piecemeal over the years but had never been subjected to across-the-board review. He further noted that, as bar membership has increased over the years, delinquent and habitually delinquent attorneys have become an increasing administrative burden on the CLE Board. Yet the penalties currently imposed on these attorneys are not commensurate with the increased time and expense involved in attempting to obtain their compliance with the CLE requirements. Accordingly, more stringent rules are needed.

TECHNOLOGY

Supreme Court Establishes E-Filing System for Criminal Cases

The Nevada Supreme Court took a major step during fiscal year 2009 to cut down on the number of its paper documents by implementing an electronic filing system.

The Supreme Court began accepting electronic filings, or e-filing, of all criminal cases at the Court. E-filing is scheduled to be expanded to all civil cases during fiscal year 2010.

The new process is designed to save time and money for the Supreme Court, as well as for attorneys and their clients. No longer will attorneys in criminal appeals have to ship or deliver supporting documents to the Supreme Court.

The Work of the Courts

Supreme Court Allows Remote Appearances By Attorneys

On March 1, 2009, a new Nevada Supreme Court rule allowed attorneys and other parties to appear in court for many matters by telephone conference or other electronic device, such as a videoconference link. The rule applies only in civil cases, including family law cases.

The rule was enacted because of complaints from lawyers who practice in courthouses throughout the state about the costs and time demands of traveling to other counties for what are often brief and routine hearings in civil cases. Sometimes lawyers have not taken cases because clients cannot pay for all the travel and time involved for the numerous court appearances that many cases require.

Telephonic appearances are particularly useful in rural counties, where few attorneys practice. They are expected to increase the availability of pro bono attorneys for litigants in Nevada's rural courts.

As a result of the rule, the Supreme Court worked during fiscal year 2009 to establish an array of videoconference equipment and sites around Nevada that can be used for remote access court hearings. The Supreme Court also required that courts throughout the state have basic telephone conferencing equipment available to comply with the rule.

While the new rule allows opportunities for court appearances by attorneys and others, it generally does not allow remote appearances for such matters as trials involving witnesses, hearings on temporary restraining orders, or settlement conferences. However, judges have the discretion to allow remote appearances in these types of situations "if the court determines that a communication equipment appearance is appropriate."

Supreme Court Case Management System

The Nevada Supreme Court is one of the busiest appellate courts in the nation and faces a growing and increasingly complex caseload. To deal with that caseload effectively and to better serve the public, bench, and bar, it became necessary to upgrade the Supreme Court's case management system (CMS).

During fiscal year 2009, the Nevada Supreme Court and Legislature worked together to move the new CMS project forward by securing the necessary state funding.

The new CMS project began in November 2008. Phase One is scheduled for formal user acceptance testing in the middle of January 2010. Currently, the project team is working on collecting the requirements and creating the functional specifications for Phase Two. The entire project is scheduled to be completed by September 2010. Once the new CMS goes live, members of the public will be able to access the court's docket in order to determine the status of Supreme Court cases, and review and obtain copies of public documents.

Trial Court Activities

The Nevada Court System (NCS) program was launched in 2001 to address the needs of Nevada's rural courts. These courts typically have minimal staff and judicial support to meet the unique challenges of administering justice in remote areas. The objective of this program is to provide affordable and efficient technology solutions to Nevada courts that may not have the funds and resources available to purchase and support such technology independently. For courts that choose to participate, the NCS program includes the implementation of a user friendly automated case management system as well as training and technical support services. The success of this project has led to its expansion into several urban courts.

A NCS users conference was held in Reno in September 2008, which provided training and networking opportunities. However, the major accomplishment this year was the outreach, collaboration, and modifications that took place to meet the Uniform System for Judicial Records Phase II criminal requirements.

One way the courts have been working to exchange information has been through the Multi-County Integrated Justice Information System (MCIJIS), a computer interface project developed at the Administrative Office of the Courts that allows different computers to communicate with each other.

The MCIJIS program continues to expand, and is processing about 19,000 electronic documents per month. Exchanges include electronic citations, electronic Department of Motor Vehicles convictions, electronic dispositions, and electronic booking documents. The AOC has also been working cooperatively with the Department of Public Safety and Clark County on an electronic warrant project.

Jurisdiction of the Nevada Judicial System

The Nevada Judiciary is one of three branches of government—the other two are the Executive and Legislative branches. The responsibility of the Judiciary is to provide impartial, efficient, and accessible dispute resolution in legal matters.

Most of the public is familiar with or has had contact with the Municipal and Justice Courts; these are the courts that handle traffic and parking citations and lower value civil filings. Both of these courts have limited jurisdiction.

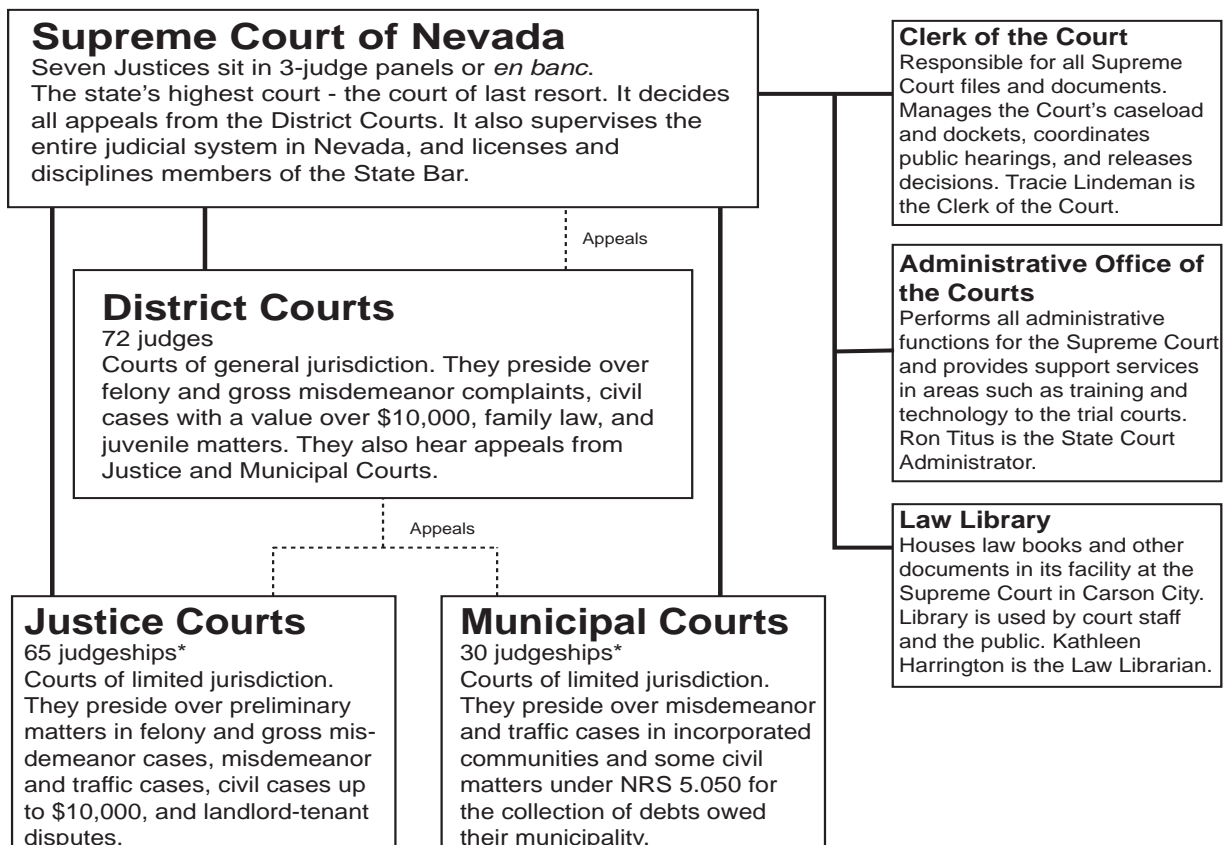
The Municipal Courts hear cases involving violations of traffic and misdemeanor ordinances that occur within the limits of incorporated municipalities. Funds collected by Municipal Courts go into each municipality’s general fund. During fiscal year 2009, Nevada had 17 Municipal Courts that were presided over by 30 Municipal Court Judges with 9 of them also serving as Justices of the Peace.

The Justice Courts primarily hear misdemeanor criminal and traffic matters, small claims disputes, evictions, and other civil matters of \$10,000 or less. The Justices of the Peace also preside over felony and gross misdemeanor arraignments and conduct preliminary hearings to determine if sufficient evidence exists to hold defendants for trial in District Court. Funds collected by Justice Courts go to their

respective county treasurer for disbursement to county and state entities. During fiscal year 2009, Nevada had 43 Justice Courts presided over by 65 Justices of the Peace with 9 of them also serving as Municipal Court Judges.

The District Courts have general jurisdiction over all legal disputes. These courts hear criminal, civil, family, and juvenile matters, which are generally resolved through arbitration, mediation, and bench or jury trials. District Court Judges also hear appeals from Justice and Municipal Court cases. Funding for District Courts is split between the State and each county with the State paying the District Court Judges’ salaries and counties paying for staff and court facilities. The 17 county courts in Nevada are divided into 9 Judicial Districts presided over by 72 Judges.

The Supreme Court is the state’s highest court and its primary responsibility is to review and rule on appeals from District Court cases. The Supreme Court has seven Justices who hear cases *en banc* or in panels of three. The court does not conduct fact-finding trials; rather, the Justices determine if legal or procedural errors were committed. Generally, the Supreme Court is funded almost equally from the State general fund and administrative assessments.



* Nine limited jurisdiction judges serve their communities as both justice of the peace and municipal judge.

Uniform System for Judicial Records

The Uniform System for Judicial Records (USJR) reporting requirements were established in June 1999 by Supreme Court order. The USJR requires trial courts to submit information defined in the Nevada Courts Statistical Reporting Dictionary (Dictionary) to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) monthly. The information in the Dictionary is divided into four case categories: criminal, civil, family, and juvenile. Caseloads and dispositions for each case category have been defined and consistently categorized therein. In fiscal year 2009 (July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009), two types of statistics were collected in each of these categories. The two types were cases filed (cases initiated with the court) and cases disposed (cases adjudicated or closed). Courts report these data counts by case type.

As technology and resources allow, future phases of USJR will be defined and data will be collected. The next phase will include events in court case processing and the status of pending cases.

This annual report provides caseload inventory (filing) and disposition statistics for the Supreme Court and all 77 trial courts in the state—17 District Courts, 43 Justice Courts, and 17 Municipal Courts. Where court information varies from the Dictionary or is incomplete, explanatory footnotes are provided.

This year, the detailed appendix tables are excluded from the printed version of the report. The appendix tables are available on the Supreme Court of Nevada website (www.nevadajudiciary.us) in the documents section.

The Supreme Court caseload continued to increase with more than 2,100 cases filed during the fiscal year, while the Court disposed of nearly as many cases during the same period.

Table 1. Reported Total Nevada Statewide Trial Court Caseload, Fiscal Years 2005-09.

Court	Fiscal Year	Criminal ¹	Civil ²	Family ²	Juvenile	Total Non-Traffic caseload	Traffic and parking ³
District	2009	13,606	41,011	63,791	13,771	132,179	8,518
	2008	14,729 ^r	34,579 ^r	62,405 ^r	14,606 ^r	126,319 ^r	9,206 ^r
	2007	15,049	31,320	61,729	15,889	123,987	6,536
	2006	14,865 ^r	29,091 ^r	59,573 ^r	15,093	118,622 ^r	7,095
	2005	14,056	29,447	58,111	15,177 ^r	116,791 ^r	7,417
Justice	2009	89,246	160,430	NJ	NJ	249,676	555,254
	2008	86,894 ^r	148,471	NJ	NJ	235,365 ^r	564,089 ^r
	2007	82,305 ^r	141,212	NJ	NJ	223,486	532,087 ^r
	2006	80,438 ^r	126,111 ^r	NJ	NJ	206,549 ^r	466,698 ^r
	2005	80,996	123,716	NJ	NJ	204,712	410,153
Municipal	2009	57,458	0	NJ	NJ	57,458	368,440
	2008	55,040	4	NJ	NJ	55,044	348,169 ^r
	2007	58,849 ^r	7 ^r	NJ	NJ	58,856 ^r	324,225 ^r
	2006	58,264 ^r	7	NJ	NJ	58,271 ^r	281,346 ^r
	2005	58,521	0	NJ	NJ	58,521	241,529
TOTAL	2009	160,310	201,441	63,791	13,771	439,313	932,212
	2008	156,663 ^r	183,054 ^r	62,405	14,606 ^r	416,728 ^r	921,464 ^r
	2007	156,203 ^r	172,532	61,729	15,889	406,329 ^r	862,848 ^r
	2006	153,567 ^r	155,206 ^r	59,573 ^r	15,093 ^r	383,442 ^r	755,139 ^r
	2005	153,573	153,163	58,111	15,177 ^r	380,024 ^r	659,099

NJ Not within court jurisdiction.

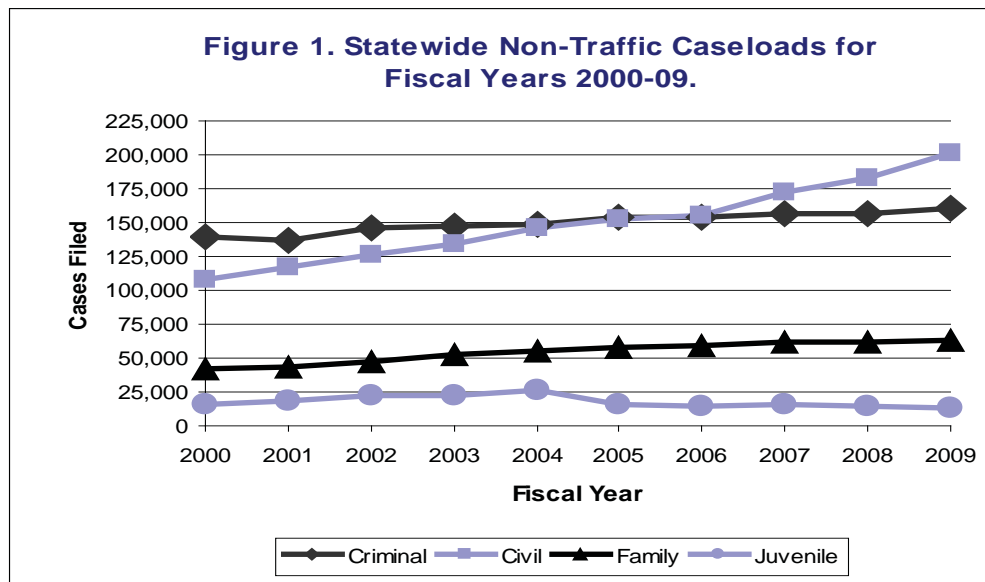
^r Data totals revised from previous annual reports owing to improved data collection.

¹ Criminal includes felony, gross misdemeanor, and nontraffic misdemeanor filings and is counted by defendants.

² Reopened cases are included in totals.

³ Traffic and parking filings are counted by charges, not defendants. Not all courts process parking violations. District Court traffic data are juvenile related.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.



Statewide, the total non-traffic caseload increased overall, with the amount of change varying among the three jurisdictional levels as seen in Table 1. In fiscal year 2009, the civil caseload increased to 201,441 cases filed. Criminal filings also increased to 160,310 cases filed. The trends in each case category, including civil, for the last 10 years can be seen in Figure 1. Interestingly, the overall civil caseload is increasing at a much faster rate than the other three case categories.

For fiscal year 2009, the District Courts' total non-traffic caseload increased in two case categories and decreased in two case categories. The civil caseload saw the largest increase (19 percent). Family case filings increased just over 2 percent, while criminal and juvenile case filings decreased over 7 and 5 percent, respectively. The total change in overall statewide District Court non-traffic caseload was an increase of nearly 5 percent.

For fiscal year 2009, the Justice Court total non-traffic caseload increased in both categories – criminal (3 percent) and civil (8 percent). Overall, this represents a statewide increase of 6 percent in Justice Court non-traffic cases. Meanwhile, traffic filings decreased just over 1 percent.

For fiscal year 2009, the Municipal Court criminal non-traffic caseload shows an increase of 4 percent. Civil filings are rare in Municipal Courts and are usually for the recovery of unpaid city utility bills. This fiscal year no civil cases were filed. Traffic filings in municipal court increased 6 percent from the previous fiscal year.

USJR Looks Into Courts for 10 Years

For 10 years, the courts throughout the state have come together in partnership with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to meet the requirements of this order. Throughout the last 10 years, our world, nation, and this great State of Nevada have changed. With its order requiring the capture of statistics from all courts throughout the state, the Supreme Court provided a great tool for tackling challenges it would face over the next 10 years. Since its inception, USJR statistics have allowed us to present information to legislators; state, national, and local governments; and the citizenry of Nevada. During legislative sessions, USJR statistics have helped in important decisions regarding changes in the law that have affected the citizens of Nevada and the workload of the courts. By capturing relevant data on all Nevada courts, the AOC has been able to respond to requests for information on court workloads from state, county, and community leaders. This information has helped make certain our courts are properly staffed and funded so that the citizens of Nevada are given fair and equal access to justice. Additionally, the capturing of statistics has allowed all Nevadans an open look at the work of the Nevada courts on an annual basis.

In the first year statistics were captured, the entire Nevada judiciary reported just under 1 million new cases or filings, including traffic matters. For fiscal year 2009, Nevada courts reported more than 1.3 million filings, a 38 percent increase from fiscal year 2000. These numbers represent a challenging caseload, and all courts throughout the state are working

to meet these challenges with innovation, new technologies, and a dedicated Judiciary. The tackling of these challenges with new technologies and innovation has allowed courts to capture large amounts of data with more specificity than was possible when USJR models were put into place 10 years ago. The AOC has begun putting together work groups to update the USJR models to capture more specific statistical information on the workload of the courts. Fiscal year 2010 will mark the beginning of a new phase in statistical reporting as changes are implemented in criminal statistical reporting. In the next few years, similar changes will be implemented in family, juvenile, and civil case types. As the Nevada Judiciary moves forward into the next 10 years of statistical reporting, the citizens of Nevada will see a clearer representation of the work being performed with the reliability that they have come to expect from the Nevada Judiciary.

Supreme Court

The Nevada Supreme Court is the court of last resort and the only appellate court in the state. Nevada does not have an intermediate appellate court. The main constitutional function of the Supreme Court is to review appeals from the decisions of the District Courts. The Supreme Court does not conduct any fact-finding trials, but rather determines whether procedural or legal errors were made in the rendering of lower court decisions. As the ultimate appellate court in the state, the Supreme Court hears all filed cases. The Nevada Constitution does not provide for

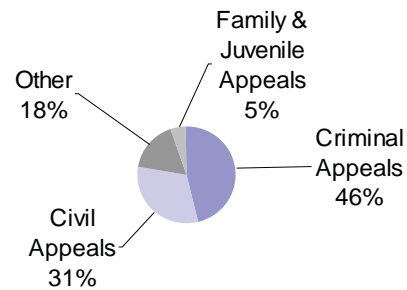
Table 2. Nevada Supreme Court Cases Filed and Disposed, Fiscal Years 2005-09.

	Fiscal Year 2005	Fiscal Year 2006	Fiscal Year 2007	Fiscal Year 2008	Fiscal Year 2009
Cases Filed					
Bar Matters	40	28	39	38	42
Appeals	1,646	1,735	1,751 ^r	1,842	1,759
Original Proceedings	317	305	323	334	327
Other	8	6	7	4	7
Reinstated	11	12	12	20	17
Total Cases Filed	2,022	2,086	2,132^r	2,238	2,152
Cases Disposed					
By Opinions	93	122	98	90	98
By Order	1,887	2,007	2,095	1,869	2,069
Total Cases Disposed	1,980	2,129	2,193	1,959	2,167
Cases Pending	1,570	1,464	1,403	1,682	1,667

^r Revised from previous publication.

Source: Nevada Supreme Court Clerk's Office.

Figure 2. Distribution of Case Types for Supreme Court Caseload¹, Fiscal Year 2009.



¹Juvenile and family statistics are a subset of civil filings for the Supreme Court. They are detailed here for comparison with the trial court statistics.

discretionary review of cases in the court of last resort.

As can be seen in Table 2, the Supreme Court had 2,152 filings during the last fiscal year; a slight decrease of almost 4 percent or 86 filings from the year before. The Justices disposed of 2,167 cases; an increase of nearly 11 percent from the prior year. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the appeals by case type for the Supreme Court. The criminal appeals provide the majority of the Court's caseload at 46 percent.

The breakdown of appeals of District Court cases by Judicial District is provided in Table 3. As can be expected for the largest District Court in the state, the Eighth Judicial District (Clark County) recorded the most appeals, increasing by only 2 cases from last fiscal year. The second largest District Court in the state, the Second Judicial District (Washoe County) recorded the next highest number of appeals, though decreasing by 18 percent (69 cases) from last fiscal year.

Appellate Court Comparisons

Recently, Nevada has studied the addition of a Court of Appeals. Legislation was passed during the 2007 session, and again during the 2009 session, that will provide for the Constitutional amendment needed to add a Court of Appeals, which will now go before the voters. A comparison of caseload and related information for selected appellate courts with some similarities to Nevada is provided in

Table 3. Nevada Supreme Court Appeals Filed by Judicial District, Fiscal Years 2005-09.

Fiscal Year	Judicial Districts										Total ¹
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	Ninth		
Civil Appeals Filed											
2009	45 6%	115 15%	17 2%	13 2%	8 1%	7 1%	10 1%	549 70%	16 2%	780 100%	
2008	43 5%	126 15%	14 2%	10 1%	15 2%	10 1%	13 2%	577 70%	17 2%	825 100%	
2007	34 4%	125 16%	16 2%	7 1%	14 2%	10 1%	13 2%	535 70%	13 2%	767 100%	
2006	24 3%	120 17%	8 1%	11 2%	9 1%	3 0%	17 2%	509 71%	16 2%	717 100%	
2005	47 7%	139 19%	9 1%	5 1%	9 1%	7 1%	8 1%	475 66%	20 3%	719 100%	
Criminal Appeals Filed											
2009	33 3%	191 20%	14 1%	12 1%	16 2%	25 3%	36 4%	648 66%	4 0%	979 100%	
2008	38 4%	249 24%	24 2%	21 2%	19 2%	28 3%	15 1%	618 61%	5 0%	1,017 100%	
2007	24 2%	234 24%	20 2%	20 2%	22 2%	18 2%	19 2%	621 63%	6 1%	984 100%	
2006	21 2%	251 25%	19 2%	20 2%	16 2%	14 1%	25 2%	644 63%	8 1%	1,018 100%	
2005	11 1%	240 26%	16 2%	17 2%	20 2%	11 1%	17 2%	591 64%	4 <1%	927 100%	
Total Appeals Filed											
2009	78 4%	306 17%	31 2%	25 1%	24 1%	32 2%	46 3%	1,197 68%	20 1%	1,759 100%	
2008	81 4%	375 20%	38 2%	31 2%	34 2%	38 2%	28 2%	1,195 65%	22 1%	1,842 100%	
2007	58 3%	359 21%	36 2%	27 2%	36 2%	28 2%	32 2%	1,156 66%	19 1%	1,751 100%	
2006	45 3%	371 21%	27 2%	31 2%	25 1%	17 1%	42 2%	1,153 66%	24 1%	1,735 100%	
2005	58 4%	379 23%	25 2%	22 1%	29 2%	18 1%	25 2%	1,066 65%	24 1%	1,646 100%	

¹ Total of percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. See Figure 3 for list of counties within districts.

Source: Nevada Supreme Court Clerk's Office.

Table 4. Information about some states with courts of appeals is included also. Compared with the two other states in Table 4 without courts of appeals, Nevada has almost three times the filings per Justice.

When comparing court of appeal filings to supreme court filings, generally, the appellate courts have a much higher number of new case filings.

Specifically, Arizona and Oregon have more than 3,000 new filings per year. These comparisons suggest that a new Court of Appeals will provide greater access to justice for the citizens of Nevada and should result in quicker resolution of cases. In addition, courts of appeal provide supreme courts the ability to focus on cases of precedence.

Table 4. Characteristics of Nevada and Other Selected Appellate Courts With and Without Courts of Appeals. All data from respective states' most recent annual report or web page (2007 or 2008).

	Nevada	Montana ^a	Maine ^a	Arizona ^{a,b}	Arkansas ^a	Oregon ^b	Utah ^{a,b}
Population rank ^c	35	44	40	14	32	27	34
Court of Appeals							
Justices				22	12	10	7
En banc or panels				Panels	Both	Both	Panels of 3
Cases filed & granted ^d				3,510 ^f	1,351 ^f	3,312	875 ^f
Cases per justice				160	113	331	125
Supreme Court							
Justices	7	7	7	5	7	7	5
En banc or panels	Both	Both	En Banc	Both	En Banc	Both	En Banc
Cases filed & granted ^d	2,152	656	755 ^f	1,164 ^f	396 ^f	1,314 ^f	569 ^f
Cases per justice	307	94	109	233	57	188	114

^a Supreme Court has discretion in case review.

^b Court of Appeal has discretion in case review.

^c Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program: September 2009 website <http://factfinder.census.gov>

^d Includes mandatory cases and discretionary petitions filed and granted, unless otherwise noted.

^f Includes mandatory cases and total discretionary petitions filed. Number of filings granted for review not available.

District Courts

The District Courts are general jurisdiction courts, meaning their caseload encompasses all case types (criminal, civil, family, and juvenile) and mandates prescribed by the Nevada Constitution and Nevada Revised Statutes. Criminal cases include felony and gross misdemeanor cases, and civil cases involving disputes exceeding \$10,000. Family and juvenile cases are defined by the parties involved in the action or proceedings.

Nevada's 9 Judicial Districts encompass its 17 counties (Figure 3), each of which maintains a District Court and provides court staff. The 9 Judicial Districts are served by 72 District Court Judges who are elected and serve within the Judicial District in

which they reside; however, they have statewide authority and may hear cases throughout the state. The sparse population of rural Nevada has necessitated that five of the Judicial Districts encompass multiple counties. Judges in these rural Judicial Districts must travel within the multiple counties on a regular basis to hear cases.

Statistical Summary

The District Court case filing information for the last two fiscal years is summarized in Table 5. The detailed information for fiscal year 2009 is available in the appendix located on the Supreme Court website (www.nevadajudiciary.us) under the Administra-

Figure 3. District Court Judges and the Judicial Districts of Nevada as of June 30, 2009.

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Carson City and Storey County
Judge James Todd Russell
Judge James Wilson, Jr.

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Washoe County
Judge Brent Adams
Judge Janet Berry
Judge Frances Doherty
Judge Steve Elliott
Judge Patrick Flanagan
Judge Linda Gardner
Judge David Hardy
Judge Steven Kosach
Judge Bridget Robb Peck
Judge Robert Perry
Judge Jerome Polaha
Judge Deborah Schumacher
Judge Connie Steinheimer
Judge Chuck Weller

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Churchill and Lyon Counties
Judge Leon Aberasturi
Judge David Huff
Judge William Rogers

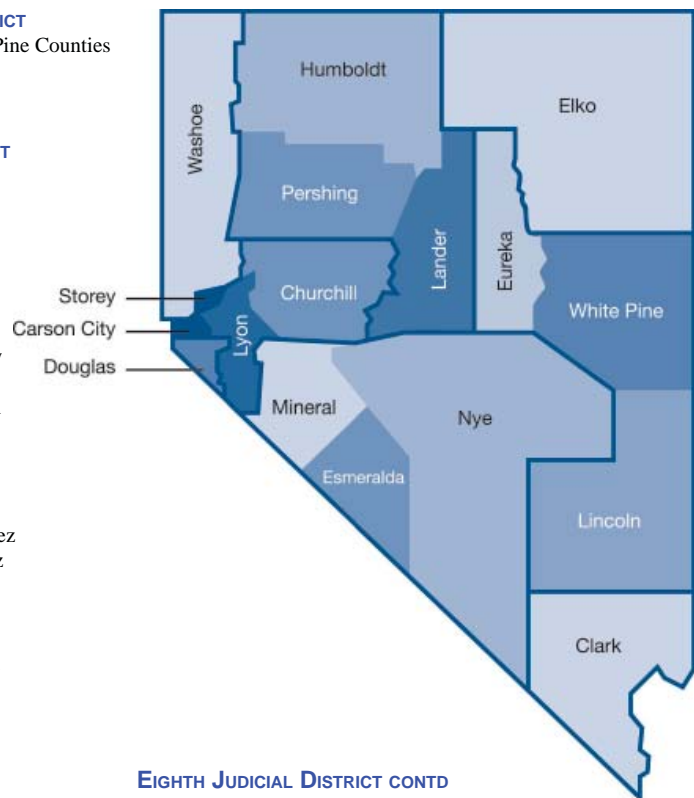
FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Elko County
Judge Michael Memeo
Judge Andrew Puccinelli

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Esmeralda, Mineral, & Nye Counties
Judge John Davis
Judge Robert Lane

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Humboldt, Lander, & Pershing Counties
Judge Michael Montero
Judge Richard Wagner

SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Eureka, Lincoln, & White Pine Counties
Judge Steven Dobrescu
Judge Dan Papez

EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Clark County
Judge Valerie Adair
Judge David Barker
Judge Linda Bell
Judge James Bixler
Judge Elissa Cadish
Judge Kenneth Cory
Judge Kathleen Delaney
Judge Mark Denton
Judge Bryce Duckworth
Judge Allan Earl
Judge Jennifer Elliott
Judge Cynthia Giuliani
Judge Jackie Glass
Judge Elizabeth Gonzalez
Judge William Gonzalez
Judge Kathy Hardcastle
Judge Mathew Harter
Judge Bill Henderson
Judge Douglas Herndon
Judge Charles Hoskin
Judge Susan Johnson
Judge Steven Jones
Judge Michelle Leavitt
Judge Stefany Miley
Judge Donald Mosley
Judge Cheryl Moss
Judge Kenneth Pollock
Judge Sandra Pomrenze
Judge William Potter
Judge Arthur Ritchie, Jr.
Judge Gloria Sanchez
Judge Abbi Silver
Judge Douglas Smith
Judge Cynthia Dianne Steel
Judge Frank Sullivan
Judge Robert Teuton



EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CONTD
Judge Jennifer Togliatti
Judge Valorie Vega
Judge Michael Villani
Judge William Voy
Judge David Wall
Judge Jessie Walsh
Judge Timothy Williams

NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Douglas County
Judge David Gamble
Judge Michael Gibbons

tive Office of the Court documents area. Summary disposition information is included in Table 6.

The distribution of case types within the District Courts is shown in Figure 4. Family cases make up the largest percentage of the court caseload at 49 percent. Civil cases make up 31 percent while criminal and juvenile (non-traffic) cases follow with 10 percent each.

Statewide, the District Court criminal non-traffic filings for fiscal year 2009 showed a decrease of 8 percent from the previous year (see Table 5). Clark County District Court criminal filings decreased by 8 percent (818 cases); however, many of the District Courts in less populous areas reported increases in caseload including Elko, Douglas, Lander, Lincoln, Mineral, and Nye Counties. Lander and Mineral Counties had two of the largest percentage increases with 60 percent (from 20 to 32 cases) and 54 percent (from 41 to 63 cases), respectively.

Figure 4. Distribution of Case Types for Statewide District Court Caseload, Fiscal Year 2009.

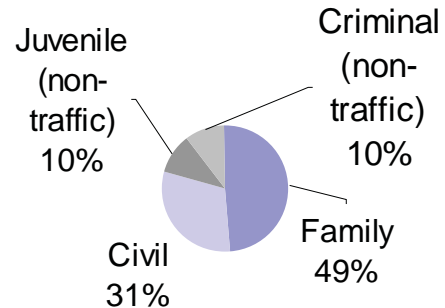


Table 5. Summary of District Court Cases Filed, Fiscal Years 2008-09. (See Table 14 for Juvenile Traffic.)

Court	Criminal Cases Filed		Civil Cases Filed		Family Cases Filed		Juvenile Non-traffic Cases Filed		Total Non-traffic Cases Filed	
	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008
	First Judicial District									
Carson City District Court	252	289	775	682	952	737	303	507	2,282	2,215
Storey County District Court	25	35	37	36	37	33	11	25	110	129
Second Judicial District										
Washoe County District Court	2,679	3,008	4,749	4,219	11,248	12,060	2,084	2,287	20,760	21,574
Third Judicial District										
Churchill County District Court	125	155	150	167	556	612	353	299	1,184	1,233
Lyon County District Court	209	235	376	353	604	560	452	308	1,641	1,456
Fourth Judicial District										
Elko County District Court	326	265	849	679 ^r	987	1,102	423	495	2,585	2,541 ^r
Fifth Judicial District										
Esmeralda County District Court	0	4	11	18	7	2	0	0	18	24
Mineral County District Court	63	41	28	26	69	65	76	43	236	175
Nye County District Court	373	304 ^r	485	456 ^r	1,602	1,357 ^r	409	459 ^r	2,869	2,576 ^r
Sixth Judicial District										
Humboldt County District Court	88	94	115	102	356	299	301	373	860	868
Lander County District Court	32	20	28	48	44	46	12	1	116	115
Pershing County District Court	62	82	97	116	108	67	26	40	293	305
Seventh Judicial District										
Eureka County District Court	13	14	23	13	13	6	12	10	61	43
Lincoln County District Court	50	43	33	36	29	37	12	27	124	143
White Pine County District Court	73	92	145	128	134	140	189	181	541	541
Eighth Judicial District										
Clark County District Court	9,076	9,894	32,597	27,091	46,280	44,583	8,946	9,384	96,899	90,952
Ninth Judicial District										
Douglas County District Court	160	154	513	409	765	699	162	167	1,600	1,429
Total	13,606	14,729^r	41,011	34,579^r	63,791	62,405^r	13,771	14,606^r	132,179	126,319^r

^r Revised from previous publication.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

Table 6. Summary of District Court Cases Disposed, Fiscal Years 2008-09. (See Table 14 for Juvenile Traffic.)

Court	Criminal Cases Disposed		Civil Cases Disposed		Family Cases Disposed		Juvenile Non-Traffic Cases Disposed		Total Non-Traffic Cases Disposed	
	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008
	First Judicial District									
Carson City District Court	261	213	397	335	705	513	361	250	1,724	1,311
Storey County District Court	10	32	18	4	28	25	8	13	64	74
Second Judicial District										
Washoe County District Court	2,504	3,058	2,481	2,369	6,967	7,939	5,120	5,650	17,072	19,016
Third Judicial District										
Churchill County District Court	110	137	101	92	433	455	517	448	1,161	1,132
Lyon County District Court	207	249	171	141	220	198	467	223	1,065	811
Fourth Judicial District										
Elko County District Court	286	263	206	191	1,180	1,032	296	330	1,968	1,816
Fifth Judicial District										
Esmeralda County District Court	2	2	0	3	2	6	0	0	4	11
Mineral County District Court	56	33	15	9	114	122	47	34	232	198
Nye County District Court	323	240 ^r	287	274 ^r	1,745	1,364 ^r	438	400 ^r	2,793	2,278 ^r
Sixth Judicial District										
Humboldt County District Court	137	173	41	52	143	138	200	215	521	578
Lander County District Court	12	16	14	16	47	36	93	106	166	174
Pershing County District Court	56	111	8	23	319	224	53	44	436	402
Seventh Judicial District										
Eureka County District Court	16	23 ^r	9	13	9	9	11	18	45	63 ^r
Lincoln County District Court	22	30	17	23	19	42	15	54	74	149
White Pine County District Court	82	79	135	97	167	195	131	142	515	513
Eighth Judicial District										
Clark County District Court	12,581	13,447	23,272	22,364	51,819	31,151 ^r	10,274	3,481	97,946	70,443 ^r
Ninth Judicial District										
Douglas County District Court	132	140	419	283	678	604	123	131	1,352	1,158
Total	16,798	18,246^r	27,602	26,289^r	64,595	44,053^r	18,154	11,539^r	127,149	100,127^r

^r Revised from previous publication.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

District Court civil filings continued to show an increase since 2006, including an increase of almost 19 percent statewide from fiscal year 2008. Civil filings in Clark and Washoe Counties, the two most populous counties, increased 20 percent and 13 percent, respectively. Less populous areas with percentage increases in filings included Elko County with a 25 percent (from 679 to 849 cases) and Eureka County with 77 percent (from 13 to 23 cases).

Family-related cases are handled only at the District Court level. Statewide, the total family caseload for the fiscal year increased just over 2 percent from last fiscal year. Caseloads in more than half of all District Courts increased. Of the two major urban District Courts, Clark County's family case filings increased 4 percent while Washoe County's decreased nearly 7 percent. Several rural District Courts experienced double-digit percentage increases over their previous year. District Courts with large percentage increases included Carson City, 29 percent (from 737 to 952 cases); Esmeralda County, 250 percent (from

2 to 7 cases); and Pershing County, with 61 percent (67 to 108 cases).

Juvenile case filings reported by District Courts for fiscal year 2009 decreased nearly 6 percent (835 cases). Clark County saw nearly a 5 percent decrease while Washoe County saw a decrease of 9 percent. District Courts with large percentage increases included Churchill County, 18 percent (from 299 to 353 cases); Lyon County, 47 percent (from 308 to 452 cases); and Mineral County, with 77 percent (from 43 to 76 cases).

Disposition information for District Courts is provided in Table 6. This is the ninth year for the collecting and reporting of disposition information, which is a complex process for the courts. Most courts count data manually. Some courts were unable to provide accurate and complete information. In addition, some case management systems have become obsolete. For example, the Clark County case management system is being replaced—a process that could take several years to complete. A new case

management system was implemented for most family court cases in fiscal year 2008 and civil cases this fiscal year.

The overall change in District Court dispositions was an increase of 27 percent. However, the criminal case category saw a decrease (8 percent). The total increase in family case dispositions was 47 percent, civil case dispositions increased 5 percent, and juvenile case dispositions increased more than 57 percent.

A standard measure of performance in the courts is the clearance rate. This measure can be calculated by dividing the number of dispositions by the number of filings and multiplying by 100. This number can be calculated for any and all case types and allows the same case categories to be compared across courts. Courts should aspire to dispose of at least as many cases as have been filed, reopened, or reactivated in a period, according to the National Center for State Courts.

Cases Per Judicial Position

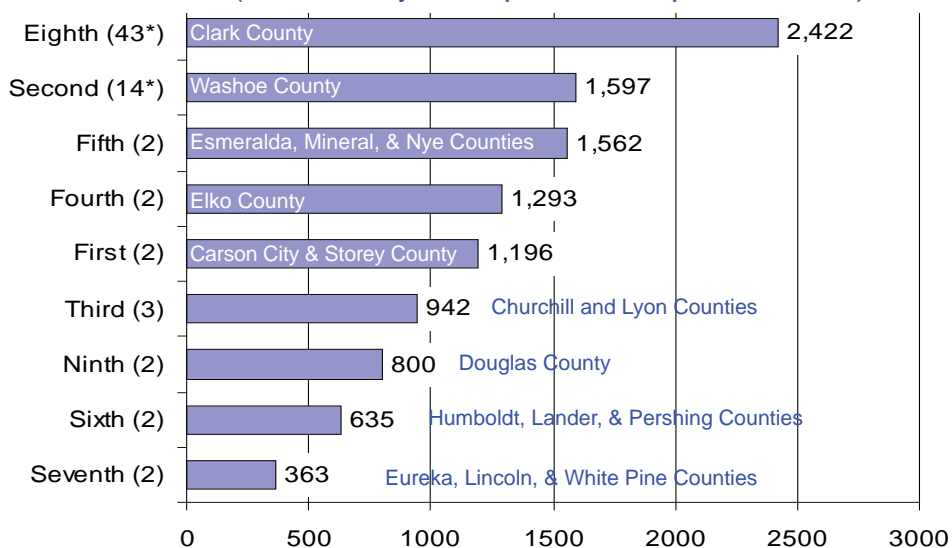
The number of non-traffic cases filed per judicial position for all District Courts in Nevada for fiscal year 2009 is shown in Figure 5. In the Judicial Districts that contain more than one county (First, Third, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh), the cases from those counties are averaged between the Judges.

To make the comparisons more consistent between court types, juvenile traffic charges were removed from the totals before calculating the amount of cases filed per judicial position. In the Justice and Municipal Courts, traffic charges are not included in the determination of cases filed per judicial position because they may be resolved by payment of fines; precluding judicial involvement. In District Court, juvenile traffic cases are handled predominately by Juvenile Masters and occasionally by District Court Judges.

The statewide average of non-traffic cases filed per judicial position for District Courts is 1,944, a decrease of 20 cases per Judge over last fiscal year (1,964), which was largely a result of adding new judges. As has been the case for the last few years, the Eighth Judicial District (Clark County) has the largest number of non-traffic cases per judicial position at 2,422, a decrease from last year (2,458) following the addition of six full-time Judges whose terms began midway through fiscal year 2009 on January 1, 2009. The Second Judicial District (Washoe County) follows with 1,597 cases per judicial position, a decrease from the previous fiscal year (1,798). This decrease is attributed in part with the addition of two full-time Judges starting on January 1, 2009. The Fifth Judicial District (Esmeralda, Mineral, and Nye Counties) was next with 1,562 cases per judicial

Figure 5. Non-Traffic Cases Filed per Judicial Position by Judicial District, Fiscal Year 2009.

(Number of judicial positions in parentheses.)



Statewide average of cases filed per judicial positions for District Courts is 1,944.

* Total judges fiscal year end. Calculations adjusted, based on start date of new judges on January 1, 2009.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

position, a large increase over last fiscal year (1,058) of more than 500 cases per judge, largely owing to the incomplete reporting of last year's statistics.

District Court Judges with smaller caseloads may assist the busier District Courts through judicial assignments made by the Supreme Court. Also, in multi-county Judicial Districts, Judges are required to travel hundreds of miles each month among the counties within their districts to hear cases. A 2005 study¹ indicates these judges average at least 1 day a week on the road, which reduces their availability to hear cases.

Judicial Assistance

The AOC and the courts quantify the judicial assistance provided to the courts by Special Masters and Senior Justices and Judges who help dispose of cases. These Special Master positions are termed quasi-judicial because they have limited authority and are accountable to an elected Judge. Individuals in these positions are appointed by courts to help with the adjudication process.

Table 7. Estimated Full-time Equivalent Quasi-Judicial Assistance Provided to Judicial Districts, Fiscal Year 2009.

Court & County	Quasi-Judicial Positions as FTE
First Judicial District Carson City Storey	1.00
Second Judicial District Washoe	8.00
Third Judicial District Churchill Lyon	0.58
Fourth Judicial District Elko	2.00
Fifth Judicial District Esmeralda Mineral Nye	1.50
Sixth Judicial District Humboldt Lander Pershing	0.46
Seventh Judicial District Eureka Lincoln White Pine	0.10
Eighth Judicial District Clark	13.00
Ninth Judicial District Douglas	0.50

Quasi-Judicial Assistance

The courts were asked to provide an estimate of the full-time equivalent assistance provided during the year. A summary is provided in Table 7.

The quasi-judicial assistance provided during fiscal year 2009 was equivalent to about 27 full-time judicial officers. In District Courts, most of the quasi-judicial officers are commissioners, referees, and masters for alternative dispute resolution, family, and juvenile cases. Additionally, in a few Judicial Districts, such as the Fifth and Seventh, Justices of the Peace serve as the Juvenile Masters for juvenile traffic cases. These quasi-judicial assistance positions are not included in Figure 5.

Senior Justice and Judge Program

Alternative methods used to provide intermittent judicial assistance to courts include the Senior Justices and Judges Program and temporary assignment of District Court Judges. Supreme Court Rule 10 governs the Senior Justices and Judges Program. In brief, any former Supreme Court Justice or District Court Judge who qualifies for retirement and who was not removed, retired-for-cause, or defeated for retention in an election for a particular level of court may apply to become a Senior Justice or Judge. The Senior Justices and Judges are eligible for temporary assignment by the Supreme Court to any State trial court at the level of their previous judicial service with a minimum of 2 years of service in that office.

Summary information on Senior Justice and Judge assignments per judicial district during fiscal year 2009 is provided in Table 8. The table includes the types of assignments requested in each district as well as the number of assignments and number of hours for each assignment. Senior Justice or Judge assignments are made through a judicial assistance memorandum of assignment, which is a document that assigns a specific Senior Justice or Judge to a specific court or case. Each judicial assistance memorandum is counted as one assignment. Judicial assistance memoranda may also provide for multiple days or cases, depending on the assistance requested. When a judicial vacancy occurs, such as when a

¹ Sweet, R.L., and Dobbins, R., 2005, *Miles Driven by Rural District Court Judges in Nevada, Fiscal Years 2000-04*: Supreme Court of Nevada, Administrative Office of the Courts, Planning & Analysis Division Research Review, 4 p.

Table 8. Senior Justices and Judges Assignments for Fiscal Year 2009.

Judicial District (JD)	Assignment Type	Number of Assignments	Number of Hours
First JD (Carson City & Storey Co.)	Case Assignment	17	269.65
	Settlement Conference	4	32.00
Total for First JD		21	301.65
Second JD (Washoe Co.)	Case Assignment	6	78.00
	Durational	8	223.00
	Durational – Family Court	32	499.25
	Settlement Conference	10	115.50
	Short/Trial Settlement – Family	12	425.30
	Specialty Court – Urban	13	1,532.00
Total for Second JD		81	2,873.05
Third JD (Churchill Co. & Lyon Co.)	Case Assignment	8	139.00
	Durational	5	56.50
Total for Third JD		13	195.50
Fourth JD (Elko Co.)	Case Assignment	19	200.55
	Settlement Conference	1	8.00
Total for Fourth JD		20	208.55
Fifth JD (Nye Co, Esmeralda Co., & Mineral Co.)	Case Assignment	8	68.85
	Durational	2	20.90
	Durational – Family	1	12.00
Total for Fifth JD		11	101.75
Sixth JD (Humboldt Co., Pershing Co., & Lander Co.)	Case Assignment	3	30.80
Total for Sixth JD		3	30.80
Seventh JD (White Pine Co, Eureka Co., & Lincoln Co.)	Case Assignment	31	456.05
	Durational	1	27.80
Total for Seventh JD		32	483.85
Eighth JD (Clark Co.)	Case Assignment	23	448.55
	Durational	53	2,650.75
	Durational – Family	68	2,731.50
	Settlement Conference	26	1,023.15
	Short Trial/Settlements – Family	32	1,105.50
	Specialty Court – Urban	5	412.50
Total for Eighth JD		207	8,371.95
Ninth JD (Douglas Co.)	Case Assignment	15	93
	Durational	2	19
	Settlement Conference	1	9.50
Total for Ninth JD		18	121.50
Western Region (First, Third, Fifth, and Ninth JDs)	Specialty Court Rural	10	500.00
Supreme Court	Supreme Court Appeals	6	119.50
Grand Total		422	13,308.10

Judge is temporarily absent (due to catastrophic illness or attendance at mandatory judicial education classes), or otherwise recused or disqualified, a Senior Justice or Judge may be assigned for a period of time to hear all cases previously calendared, or for an individual case. A Senior Justice or Judge may continue to hear motions on a case assigned in a

previous fiscal year. Without this assistance, hearings would have to be vacated or reassigned, creating burdensome delays and frustration for litigants.

The Senior Justices and Judges also hear civil settlement conferences on a regular basis. Additionally, Senior Justices and Judges hear short trials and settlement conferences every 2 weeks in the Eighth

Judicial District Family Court and once a month in the Second Judicial District Family Court.

The Senior Judges conduct specialty court programs in the District Courts. In the Second, Third, Fifth, and Ninth Judicial Districts, Senior Justices and Judges conduct the drug and mental health courts and in the Eighth Judicial District they conduct the mental health court. These programs have great success in providing alternatives to jail time for certain offenders and in assisting these offenders to become productive members of society.

In addition to the assignments in the District Court, Senior Justices are also assigned to assist in the Supreme Court. During fiscal year 2009, the three qualified Senior Justices in the program worked the equivalent of almost 16 days in the Supreme Court.

During fiscal year 2009, there were 21 Senior Justices or Judges actively serving the District and Supreme Courts. Their combined efforts provided assistance equivalent to more than eight full-time Judges for the State.

Business Courts

The Business Court dockets for Nevada were created during fiscal year 2001 in the Second and Eighth Judicial Districts. They were created and are managed through the court rules for these two judicial districts. Recently, the Supreme Court requested the Business Courts to provide data on their efforts during the fiscal year.

The goal of the Business Court is to identify disputes among business entities that will benefit from enhanced case management. The additional focus on the case is expected to help avoid business interruption during the time of litigation, provide an opportunity for innovative case resolution, and realize consistent decisions that will enhance business planning.

Settlement conferences conducted by the Business Court judges are an effective tool for resolution of these business cases. Settlement rates during this fiscal year for these conferences were 90 percent as reported by the Second Judicial District, for example.

Information for fiscal year 2009 follows this paragraph. In future reports, data will be added to this table so the long-term influence of the Business Court may be seen.

Fiscal year	New Case Filings	Cases Transferred	Cases Disposed	Pending Cases at Year End	Average Time to Disposition (months)
Second Judicial District					
2009	102	100	45	94	11
Eighth Judicial District					
2009	614	149	468	838	15

Alternative Dispute Resolution Program

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Programs began on July 1, 1992, after passage of Senate Bill 366 by the 1991 Legislature. The legislation required the Second and Eighth Judicial Districts (Washoe and Clark Counties) to implement ADR Programs. The First and Ninth Judicial Districts (Carson City, Storey County, and Douglas County) subsequently adopted the program voluntarily. Arbitration Commissioners administer the programs in each Judicial District.

Initially, the ADR Programs focused on certain civil cases with probable award value of less than \$25,000. A later statutory revision increased the amount to \$40,000, and during the 2005 Legislative session the maximum amount was increased to \$50,000 per plaintiff for mandatory programs. The Ninth Judicial District, in the program voluntarily, opted to keep the initial amount.

Caseload and Settlement Rate

During fiscal year 2009, in three of the four participating Judicial Districts more cases entered the arbitration programs than their respective 10-year averages. The Second Judicial District (Washoe) was the only court whose new cases were below the 10-year average. The caseload and settlement rates for the fiscal year and the long-term annual average for the most recent 10 years for each district program are provided in Table 9.

Two of the four courts had settlement rates this fiscal year that were higher than their long-term program averages. The settlement rate can vary greatly from one year to another for each District Court and can be affected by the increase or decrease in the number of arbitrators, training sessions, and support staff. The settlement rate is the number of cases settled or dismissed after entering the arbitration program, compared with those cases requesting trials de novo (actual bench or jury trials).

Table 9. Alternative Dispute Resolution Caseload and Settlement Rates, Fiscal Year 2009.

	First Judicial District Court		Second Judicial District Court		Eighth Judicial District Court**		Ninth Judicial District Court	
	Fiscal Year 2009	Long-Term Average (10 years)	Fiscal Year 2009	Long-Term Average (10 years)	Fiscal Year 2009	Long-Term Average (10 years)	Fiscal Year 2009	Long-Term Average (10 years)
Civil Caseload Cases Entered *	812	235	4,749	508	32,597	3,771	513	156
Cases Removed	41	53	644	121	349	392	32	34
Cases Settled or Dismissed	137	158	181	364	3,161	1,965	19	33
Settlement Rate	99%	95%	72%	81%	84%	71%	86%	89%
Trials De Novo requested	2	9	70	88	594	809	3	4
Trials De Novo request rate	1%	5%	28%	19%	16%	29%	14%	11%

* First, Second, and Eighth Judicial District Courts have a \$50,000 maximum for cases to be in the program; Ninth Judicial District has a \$25,000 maximum. Cases that qualify are automatically included in the program and parties have to request to be removed. The 2005 Legislature passed Assembly Bill 468 revising the maximum to \$50,000.

** The case management system used by the Eighth Judicial District Court is not designed to track data within these statistical categories. As noted previously, Clark County is in the process of obtaining a new case management system that should better provide this information. Manual counting of this information is not cost effective. The actual settlement rate for the Eighth Judicial District Court may be slightly higher or lower.

One specific type of alternative dispute resolution is the Short Trial Program as defined in the Nevada Court Rules. A Short Trial follows modified rules, which include having only four jurors and limiting each party (plaintiffs and defendants) to 3 hours for presentation of their case. The verdict must be agreed upon by three of the four jurors.

This fiscal year the Second Judicial District Court reported that 50 new cases stipulated to the Short Trial Program. Of the pending caseload, 29 were dismissed or settled and 10 short trials were completed this fiscal year. Of the remaining cases, 46 have been scheduled for trial.

For fiscal year 2009, the Eighth Judicial District Court reported 239 new cases stipulated to the Short Trial Program. Of the total cases currently in the program, 433 cases were dismissed or settled, 118 completed the short trial, and 231 cases were scheduled for trial.

Each of these District Courts collect fees (\$5 per civil case filing, except Clark County which collects \$15 per case filing) for the administration of their arbitration programs, including staff and technology expenses. All four District Courts have expenses that exceed the amount collected in filing fees. However, the courts continue to find the programs to be successful alternatives to traditional trials. The programs are well-received by litigants, the public, and members of the bar since cases are processed expeditiously and at reduced expense.

Justice Courts

The Justice Courts are limited jurisdiction courts, meaning their caseload is restricted to particular types of cases or actions prescribed by the Nevada Revised Statutes. Justice Courts determine whether felony and gross misdemeanor cases have enough evidence to be bound over to District Court for trial. They hear misdemeanor non-traffic cases as well as general civil cases (amounts up to \$10,000), small claims (up to \$5,000), summary eviction cases, and requests for temporary protective orders (domestic violence or stalking and harassment).

The Justices of the Peace are elected and serve within the townships in which they reside. In fiscal year 2009, the 43 Justice Courts were served by 65 Justices of the Peace (Figure 6). They may hear cases in other townships within their county or as visiting Justices of the Peace in neighboring counties under special circumstances. Those Judges who retire or resign and have been commissioned as Senior Justices of the Peace by the Supreme Court may serve temporarily in any Justice Court in the State.

Statistical Summary

The Justice Court case filing information for the last two fiscal years is summarized in Table 10. Detailed information for fiscal year 2009 is provided in the appendix located on the Nevada Supreme Court website (www.nevadajudiciary.us) under the Administrative Office of the Court documents area.

Figure 6. Justices of the Peace by County and Judicial Townships in Nevada as of June 30, 2009
(except where otherwise noted).

HUMBOLDT COUNTY

Union Township
Judge Gene Wambolt

PERSHING COUNTY

Lake Township
Judge Carol Nelsen

WASHOE COUNTY

Incline Village Township
Judge Alan Tiras

Reno Township

Judge Harold Albright
Judge Barbara Finley
Judge Patricia Lynch
Judge Jack Schroeder
Judge Pete Sferrazza

Sparks Township

Judge Susan Deriso
Judge Kevin Higgins

Wadsworth Township

Judge Terry Graham

STOREY COUNTY

Virginia City Township
Judge Annette Daniels

CARSON CITY

Carson City Township
Judge John Tatro
Judge Robey Willis

DOUGLAS COUNTY

East Fork Township
Judge James EnEarl
Tahoe Township
Judge Richard Glasson

LYON COUNTY

Canal Township
Judge Robert Bennett
Dayton Township
Judge Camille Vecchiarelli
Walker River Township
Judge Michael Fletcher

LANDER COUNTY

Argenta Township
Judge Max Bunch
Austin Township
Judge Joseph Dory

CHURCHILL COUNTY

New River Township
Judge Mike Richards

ELKO COUNTY

Carlin Township
Judge Teri Feasel
East Line Township
Judge Reese Melville
Elko Township
Judge Alvin Kacin
Jackpot Township
Judge Phyllis Black
Wells Township
Judge Patricia Calton

EUREKA COUNTY

Beowawe Township
Judge Susan Fye
Eureka Township
Judge John Schweble

LINCOLN COUNTY

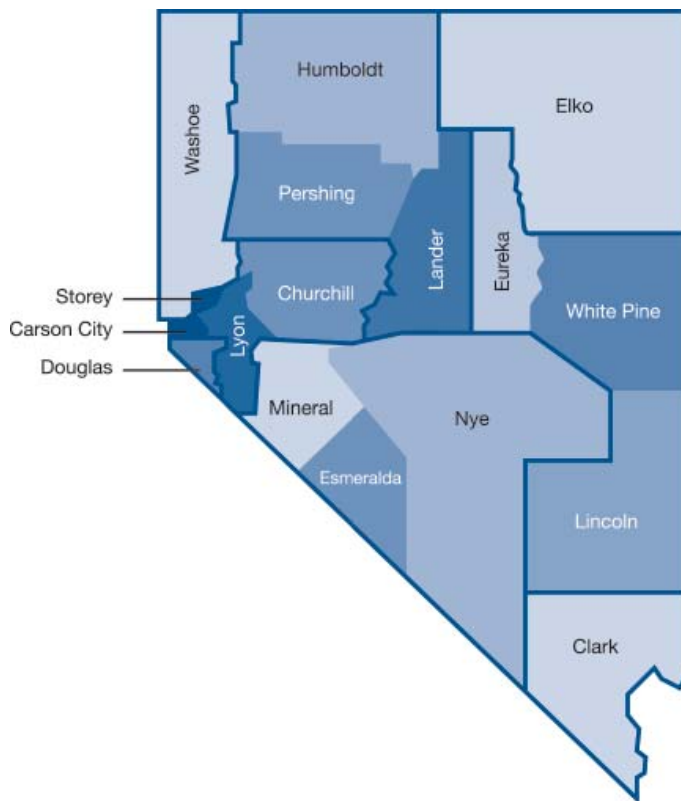
Meadow Valley Township
Judge Mike Cowley
Pahrnagat Valley Township
Judge Nola Holton

WHITE PINE COUNTY

Ely (No. 1) Township
Judge Ronald Niman
Lund (No. 2) Township
Judge Russel Peacock

CLARK COUNTY

Boulder Township
Judge Victor Miller
Bunkerville Township
Judge Darryll Dodenbier
Goodsprings Township
Judge Dawn Haviland
Henderson Township
Judge Rodney Burr
Judge Stephen George
Judge David Gibson, Sr.
Las Vegas Township
Judge Anthony Abbatangelo
Judge Melanie Andress-Tobiass
Judge Karen Bennett-Haron
Judge Joe Bonaventure
Judge Eric Goodman
Judge William Jansen
Judge Deborah Lippis
Judge Nancy Oesterle
Judge Melissa Saragosa
Judge Joseph Sciscento
Judge Diane Sullivan
Judge Ann Zimmerman
Laughlin Township
Judge Tim Atkins
Mesquite Township
Judge Ron Dodd
Moapa Township
Judge Ruth Kolhoss
Moapa Valley Township
Judge Lanny Waite
North Las Vegas Township
Judge Stephen Dahl
Judge Natalie Tyrrell
Judge Chris Lee
Searchlight Township
Judge Wendell Turner
(died during term)



MINERAL COUNTY

Hawthorne Township
Judge Jay Gunter

ESMERALDA COUNTY

Esmeralda Township
Judge Juanita Colvin

NYE COUNTY

Beatty Township
Judge Gus Sullivan
Pahrump Township
Judge Christina Brisebill
Judge Kent Jaspersen
Tonopah Township
Judge Joe Maslach

Table 10. Summary of Justice Court Cases Filed, Fiscal Years 2008-09. (See Table 14 for traffic data.)

	Criminal Cases Filed		Civil Cases Filed		Total Non-traffic Caseload	
	FY09	FY08	FY09	FY08	FY09	FY08
First Judicial District						
Carson City						
Carson City Justice Court	2,207	2,198	5,068	5,441	7,275	7,639
Storey County						
Virginia City Justice Court	131	253	70	77	201	330
Second Judicial District						
Washoe County						
Incline Village Justice Court	840	1,049	232	269	1,072	1,318
Reno Justice Court	7,895	7,144	16,037	16,613	23,932	23,757
Sparks Justice Court	2,852	2,932	6,056	6,484	8,908	9,416
Wadsworth Justice Court	77	84	31	82	108	166
Third Judicial District						
Churchill County						
New River Justice Court	658	589	1,304	1,658	1,962	2,247
Lyon County						
Canal Justice Court	693	657	1,371	1,567	2,064	2,224
Dayton Justice Court	539	509	830	913	1,369	1,422
Walker River Justice Court	172	173	462	575	634	748
Fourth Judicial District						
Elko County						
Carlin Justice Court	252	164	144	214	396	378
East Line Justice Court	129	131	125	153	254	284
Elko Justice Court	1,364	1,481	1,626	1,923	2,990	3,404
Jackpot Justice Court	82	110	28	35	110	145
Wells Justice Court	124	95	85	75	209	170
Fifth Judicial District						
Esmeralda County						
Esmeralda Justice Court	21	29	13	20	34	49
Mineral County						
Hawthorne Justice Court	544	377	224	219	768	596
Nye County						
Beatty Justice Court	133	157	36	67	169	224
Pahrump Justice Court	1,325	1,772 ^r	1,636	1,563	2,961	3,335 ^r
Tonopah Justice Court	266	239	109	135	375	374
Sixth Judicial District						
Humboldt County						
Union Justice Court	976	826	717	771	1,693	1,597
Lander County						
Argenta Justice Court	288	251	254	611	542	862
Austin Justice Court	36	173	12	7	48	180
Pershing County						
Lake Justice Court	194	331	310	353	504	684
Seventh Judicial District						
Eureka County						
Beowawe Justice Court	44	44	9	17	53	61
Eureka Justice Court	61	62	31	55	92	117
Lincoln County						
Meadow Valley Justice Court	83	65	53	36	136	101
Pahrangat Valley Justice Court	135	128	36	23	171	151
White Pine County						
Ely (No. 1) Justice Court	185	178	460	420	645	598
Lund (No. 2) Justice Court	0	2	3	1	3	3
Eighth Judicial District						
Clark County						
Boulder Justice Court	136	88	327	418	463	506
Bunkerville Justice Court	23	23	7	17	30	40
Goodsprings Justice Court	284	266	78	93	362	359
Henderson Justice Court	3,904	4,338	6,354	6,755	10,258	11,093
Las Vegas Justice Court	55,882	53,193	108,755	93,221	164,637	146,414
Laughlin Justice Court	917	714	255	378	1,172	1,092
Mesquite Justice Court	126	197	212	379	338	576
Moapa Justice Court	55	78	17	30	72	108
Moapa Valley Justice Court	128	143	22	36	150	179
North Las Vegas Justice Court	3,485	3,652	5,850	5,152	9,335	8,804
Searchlight Justice Court	91	73	9	8	100	81
Ninth Judicial District						
Douglas County						
East Fork Justice Court	1,079	1,104	1,007	1,427	2,086	2,531
Tahoe Justice Court	830	822	165	180	995	1,002
Total	89,246	86,894^r	160,430	148,471	249,676	235,365^r

^r Revised from previous publication.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

Summary disposition information for the last two fiscal years is included in Table 11.

Statewide, the number of Justice Court non-traffic (criminal and civil) cases filed during fiscal year 2009 increased 6 percent (14,311 cases) from fiscal year 2008.

Justice Court criminal case filings statewide increased almost 3 percent. Some rural Justice Courts experienced large percentage increases in criminal filings [Hawthorne (44 percent), Meadow Valley (27 percent), and Searchlight Justice Courts (25 percent)] or decreases [Austin (79 percent), Lake (41 percent), and Pahrump (25 percent) Justice Courts].

As can be expected for the most populous Justice Court township, the Las Vegas Justice Court had the highest criminal caseload with nearly 63 percent of the Justice Court statewide total. Reno Justice Court was next with almost 9 percent.

Justice Court civil filings for fiscal year 2009 increased 8 percent statewide over last year. Las Vegas Justice Court had the highest percentage of civil cases statewide (68 percent). Reno Justice Court was next the next highest (10 percent).

Disposition information for Justice Courts is provided in Table 11. Overall, total non-traffic dispositions increased 35 percent over last year. Criminal case dispositions increased 11 percent and civil case dispositions increased more than 42 percent. Most of the large increase in civil case dispositions can largely be attributed to the Las Vegas Justice Court, which reported a significant increase in dispositions due to an administrative review and closure of outstanding civil cases.

A standard measure of performance in the courts is the clearance rate. This measure can be calculated by dividing the number of dispositions by the number of filings and multiplying by 100. This number can be calculated for any and all case types and allows the same case categories to be compared across courts. Courts should aspire to dispose of at least as many cases as have been filed, reopened, or reactivated in a period, according to the National Center for State Courts.

Cases Per Judicial Position

The comparison of the Justice Court non-traffic cases per judicial position information requires some considerations unique to its jurisdiction. For instance,

many of the Justices of the Peace work part time.

Cases in Justice Courts (limited jurisdictions) tend to be less complex than cases in District Courts (general jurisdictions), thus a Justice Court can handle a larger number of cases per judicial position. Traffic charges are not included in the determination of cases filed per judicial position because charges may be resolved by payment of fines, precluding judicial involvement.

To simplify the presentation in Figure 7, only those Justice Courts with 1,000 or more non-traffic cases per judicial position are shown; the remaining courts are listed in a footnote. The break at 1,000 was arbitrary. The caseload information for Carson City Justice and Municipal Court, a consolidated municipality, is provided in Figure 7 and Tables 10-11 with Justice Courts.

In Figure 7, nine courts have more than 2,000 non-traffic cases filed per judicial position. Las Vegas had the most at 14,967, an increase from the previous year (14,641) even with the addition of a new judicial position in January. Next was Reno Justice Court with 4,786 cases filed per judicial position, a slight increase from last year (4,751). The statewide average of non-traffic cases filed per judicial position for Justice Courts is 3,995, an increase from last fiscal year (3,921).

Judicial Assistance

The AOC and the courts quantify the judicial assistance provided to the courts by special masters who help dispose cases. These are special master positions who assist the adjudication process, but are not elected officials. The courts were asked to provide an estimate of the full-time equivalent (FTE) assistance provided during the year.

Carson City and Las Vegas were the only Justice Courts that reported quasi-judicial positions to help with their non-traffic caseload. Carson City Justice Court reported 0.40 FTE in other quasi-judicial positions that helped with small claims and domestic violence protection cases. Las Vegas Justice Court reported 0.33 FTE in other quasi-judicial positions that helped with small claims cases and 1.10 FTE in traffic judges. Quasi-judicial officers, such as small claims referees, make recommendations or judgments that are subject to review and confirmation by sitting Justices of the Peace; juvenile masters in Justice Court are traffic judges whose decisions are final unless appealed.

Table 11. Summary of Justice Court Cases Disposed, Fiscal Years 2008-09. (See Table 14 for traffic data.)

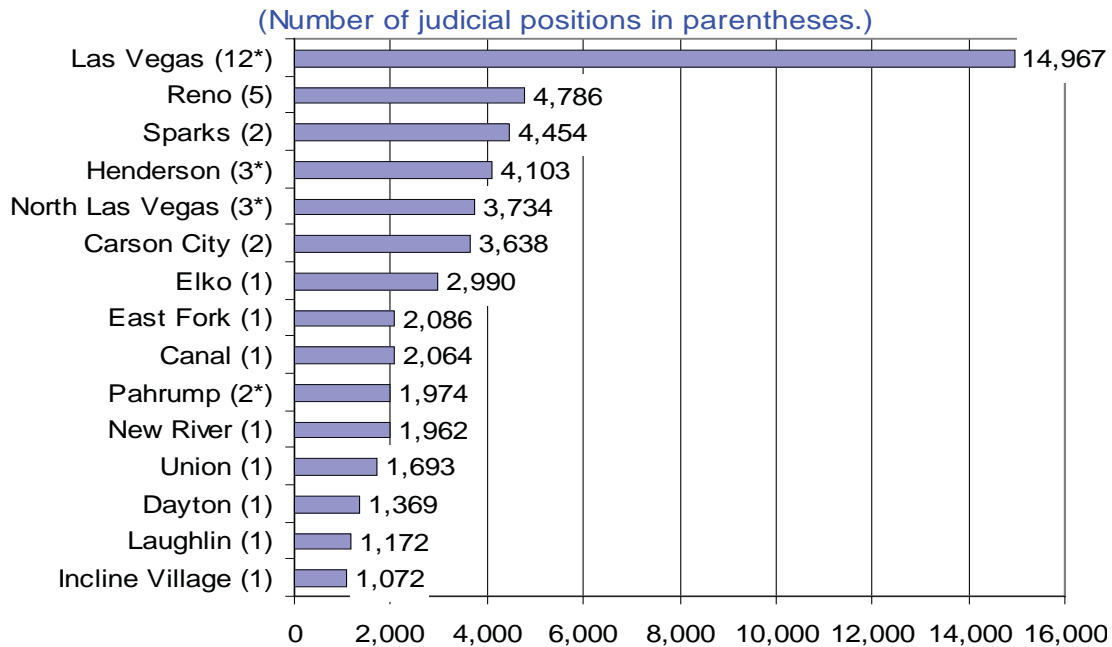
	Criminal Cases Disposed		Civil Cases Disposed		Total Non-traffic Cases Disposed	
	FY09	FY08	FY09	FY08	FY09	FY08
First Judicial District						
Carson City						
Carson City Justice Court	2,325	2,009	3,389	3,290	5,714	5,299
Storey County						
Virginia City Justice Court	182	282	62	82	244	364
Second Judicial District						
Washoe County						
Incline Village Justice Court	935	1,000	193	206	1,128	1,206
Reno Justice Court	7,979	6,056	7,981	8,911	15,960	14,967
Sparks Justice Court	2,724	2,813	4,186	3,761	6,910	6,574
Wadsworth Justice Court	67	67	8	36	75	103
Third Judicial District						
Churchill County						
New River Justice Court	644	790	914	1,006	1,558	1,796
Lyon County						
Canal Justice Court	664	553	1,450	1,319	2,114	1,872
Dayton Justice Court	502	556	785	798	1,287	1,354
Walker River Justice Court	182	193	418	454	600	647
Fourth Judicial District						
Elko County						
Carlin Justice Court	193	127	88	76 ^r	281	203 ^r
East Line Justice Court	206	210	62	53	268	263
Elko Justice Court	1,298	1,301	972	1,019	2,270	2,320
Jackpot Justice Court	61	137	15	26	76	163
Wells Justice Court	270	97	46	26	316	123
Fifth Judicial District						
Esmeralda County						
Esmeralda Justice Court	7	17	10	16	17	33
Mineral County						
Hawthorne Justice Court	341	239	74	3	415	242
Nye County						
Beatty Justice Court	189	186	28	83	217	269
Pahrump Justice Court	1,283	1,051 ^r	1,231	1,186	2,514	2,237 ^r
Tonopah Justice Court	254	283	123	153	377	436
Sixth Judicial District						
Humboldt County						
Union Justice Court	879	806	661	656	1,540	1,462
Lander County						
Argenta Justice Court	256	229	169	651 ^r	425	880 ^r
Austin Justice Court	25	96	5	6	30	102
Pershing County						
Lake Justice Court	229	314	167	150	396	464
Seventh Judicial District						
Eureka County						
Beowawe Justice Court	28	30	5	9	33	39
Eureka Justice Court	52	50	20	86 ^r	72	136 ^r
Lincoln County						
Meadow Valley Justice Court	124	71	52	15	176	86
Pahrangat Valley Justice Court	114	85	13	5	127	90
White Pine County						
Ely (No. 1) Justice Court	190	161	406	358	596	519
Lund (No. 2) Justice Court	0	2	3	2	3	4
Eighth Judicial District						
Clark County						
Boulder Justice Court	95	131	258	288	353	419
Bunkerville Justice Court	72	93	6	7	78	100
Goodsprings Justice Court	145	131	57	37	202	168
Henderson Justice Court	4,062	3,066	3,896	3,827	7,958	6,893
Las Vegas Justice Court	NR	NR	98,087	58,384	98,087	58,384
Laughlin Justice Court	519	1,508	188	274	707	1,782
Mesquite Justice Court	215	316	139	138	354	454
Moapa Justice Court	303	374	7	7	310	381
Moapa Valley Justice Court	91	99	6	18	97	117
North Las Vegas Justice Court	2,349	1,244	4,951	4,183	7,300	5,427
Searchlight Justice Court	39	50	3	2	42	52
Ninth Judicial District						
Douglas County						
East Fork Justice Court	1,120	1,116	601	824	1,721	1,940
Tahoe Justice Court	847	835	122	111	969	946
Total	32,060	28,774^r	131,857	92,542^r	163,917	121,316^r

NR Not reported.

^r Revised from previous publication.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

Figure 7. Non-Traffic Cases Filed per Judicial Position by Justice Court, Fiscal Year 2009.



Statewide average of cases filed per judicial positions for Justice Courts is 3,995.

* Total judges fiscal year end. Calculations adjusted, based on start date of new judges on January 1, 2009.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

* Remaining Justice Courts and their nontraffic cases filed per judicial position (each court has one judicial position). Asterisk indicates judicial position is part-time.

Tahoe Justice Court	995	Goodsprings Justice Court	362	Jackpot Justice Court*	110
Hawthorne Justice Court*	768	Mesquite Justice Court*	338	Wadsworth Justice Court*	108
Ely Justice Court	645	East Line Justice Court*	254	Searchlight Justice Court*	100
Walker River Justice Court	634	Wells Justice Court*	209	Eureka Justice Court*	92
Argenta Justice Court	542	Virginia City Justice Court	201	Moapa Justice Court*	72
Lake Justice Court	504	Pahranagat Valley Justice Court*	171	Beowawe Justice Court*	53
Boulder Justice Court*	463	Beatty Justice Court*	169	Austin Justice Court*	48
Carlin Justice Court*	396	Moapa Valley Justice Court*	150	Esmeralda Justice Court*	34
Tonopah Justice Court	375	Meadow Valley Justice Court*	136	Bunkerville Justice Court*	30
				Lund Justice Court*	3

Municipal Courts

Municipal Courts are city courts and only handle cases that involve violation of city ordinances. Their jurisdiction includes non-traffic misdemeanors, traffic violations and, in some cities, parking. Although they generally do not handle civil cases, Nevada Revised Statute 5.050 provides limited jurisdiction to hear them.

Most Municipal Court Judges are elected and serve within the municipality in which they reside (Figure 8); however, some are appointed by their city council or mayor. Those appointed by the city council or mayor are Caliente, Ely, Fallon, Fernley, Mesquite, and Yerington. In fiscal year 2009, the 17 Municipal Courts were served by 30 Municipal Court Judges.

Statistical Summary

The Municipal Court non-traffic caseload information (filing and dispositions) for the last two fiscal years is summarized in Table 12.

Statewide, Municipal Court criminal filings in fiscal year 2009 increased 4 percent from last fiscal year. Some Municipal Courts experienced increases [Yerington (40 percent), Ely (24 percent), and Henderson (8 percent)] while eight municipal courts experienced decreases in criminal case filings.

No civil filings were reported in any Municipal Court in fiscal year 2009. On occasion, municipalities may seek collection through the courts of unpaid utility bills. This is the type of limited jurisdiction civil case a municipal court may handle.

Figure 8. Municipal Court Judges by County and Incorporated City in Nevada as of June 30, 2009 (except where otherwise noted).

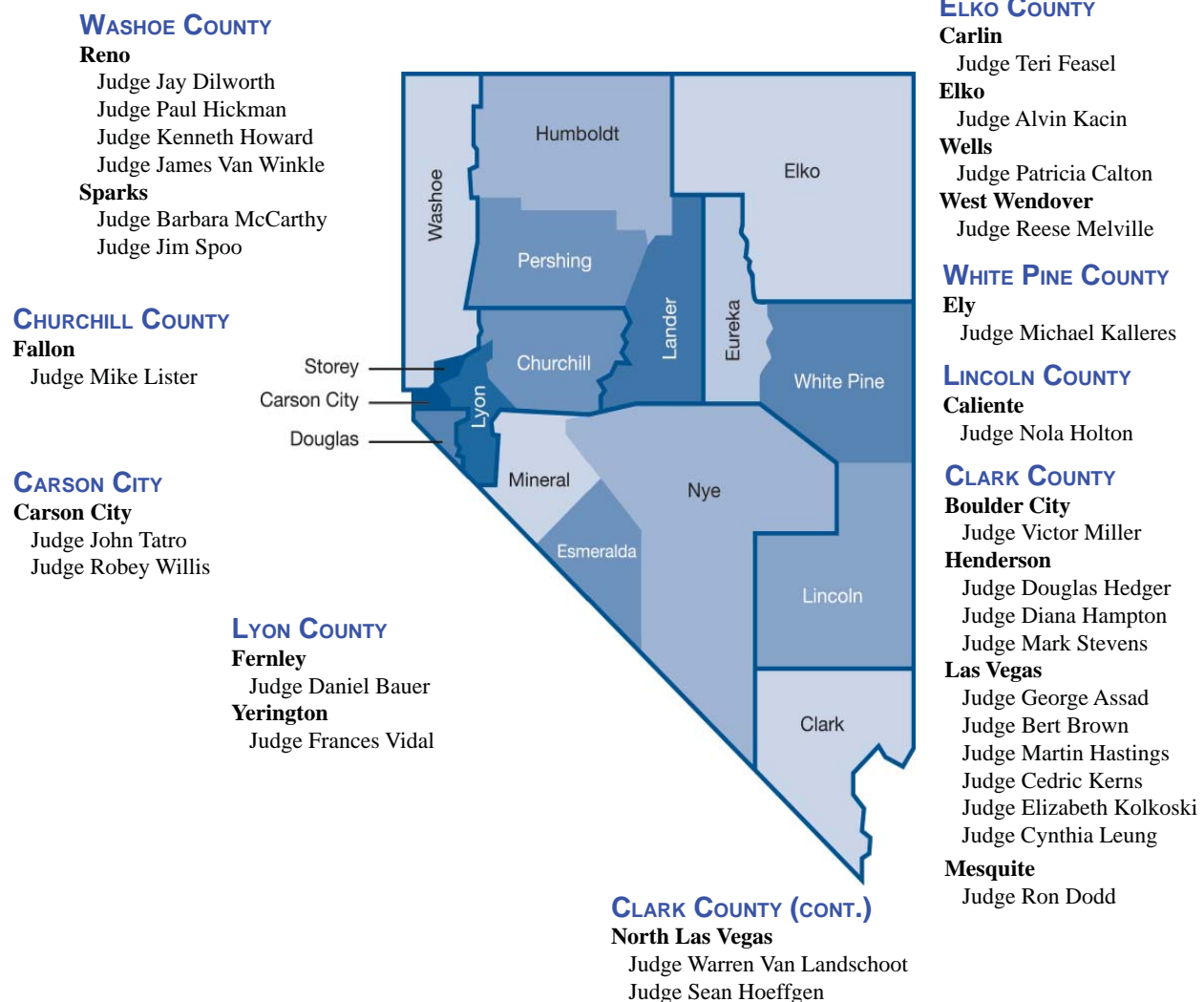


Table 12. Summary of Municipal Court Cases Filed and Disposed, Fiscal Years 2008-09. (See Table 15 for traffic data.)

Court	Non-traffic Misdemeanors				Civil Cases			
	Defendants Charged		Cases Disposed		Filed ^a		Disposed	
	FY09	FY08	FY09	FY08	FY09	FY08	FY09	FY08
Boulder Municipal Court	549	538	968	814	NR	NR	NR	NR
Caliente Municipal Court	34	26	12	12	0	4	1	3
Carlin Municipal Court	35	61	46	56	0	0	0	0
Carson City Municipal Court	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
Elko Municipal Court	646	793	530	561	NR	NR	NR	NR
Ely Municipal Court	203	163	306	209	NR	NR	NR	NR
Fallon Municipal Court	281	322	241	275	0	0	0	0
Fernley Municipal Court	181	205	394	512	NR	NR	NR	NR
Henderson Municipal Court	8,163	7,548	9,919	8,991	NR	NR	NR	NR
Las Vegas Municipal Court	27,494 ^c	25,262 ^c	29,803 ^c	28,732 ^c	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)
Mesquite Municipal Court	689	715	886	913	NR	NR	NR	NR
North Las Vegas Municipal Court	8,860	8,922	8,738	8,650	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)
Reno Municipal Court	7,619	8,001	7,031	7,272	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)
Sparks Municipal Court	2,404	2,200	3,205	2,560	NR	NR	NR	NR
Wells Municipal Court	36	34	40	46	NR	NR	NR	NR
West Wendover Municipal Court	169	182	264	386	NR	NR	NR	NR
Yerington Municipal Court	95	68	97	115	NR	NR	NR	NR
Total	57,458	55,040	62,480	60,104	0	4	1	3

NR Not reported.

^a Municipal Courts have limited civil jurisdiction.

^b Municipal Court data combined with Justice Court data (Tables 10 and 11) for the consolidated municipality of Carson City.

^c Court reported non-traffic misdemeanor numbers by charges so total charges were divided by the statewide Municipal Court average of 1.5 charges per defendant so more appropriate comparisons can be made.

^d Cases are handled administratively by the city.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

Non-traffic dispositions also increased 4 percent over last fiscal year with varying changes among the courts. For example, dispositions in West Wendover Municipal Court decreased by 31 percent and Fernley Municipal Court by 23 percent while dispositions in Boulder Municipal Court increased by about 19 percent and Henderson Municipal Court by 10 percent.

A standard measure of performance in the courts is the clearance rate. This measure can be calculated by dividing the number of dispositions by the number of filings and multiplying by 100. This number can be calculated for any and all case types and allows the same case categories to be compared across courts. Courts should aspire to dispose of at least as many cases as have been filed, reopened, or reactivated in a period, according to the National Center for State Courts.

Cases Per Judicial Position

The number of cases filed per judicial position for Municipal Courts in fiscal year 2009 is shown in Figure 9. In the Justice and Municipal Courts, traffic charges are not included in the determination of cases filed per judicial position because they may be resolved by payment of fines, precluding judicial involvement, and the providing a more equal comparison.

North Las Vegas and Las Vegas Municipal Courts, again top the list for most non-traffic cases filed per judicial position. Las Vegas (4,582) and then North Las Vegas (4,430) were followed by Henderson (2,721), Reno (1,905), and Sparks (1,202). The statewide average of non-traffic cases filed per judicial position for Municipal Courts is 2,052, an increase from the previous fiscal year (1,966). The caseload information for Carson City Justice and Municipal Court, a consolidated municipality, is provided in Figure 7 and Tables 10 and 11 with Justice Courts.

Judicial Assistance

Quasi-judicial assistance may be used by Municipal Courts as well as District and Justice Courts. The AOC and the courts, in fiscal year 2001, began quantifying the judicial assistance provided to the courts to help dispose cases. These are positions that help with the adjudication process but are not elected judicial officials. The courts were asked to provide an estimate of the full-time equivalent (FTE) assistance provided during the year.

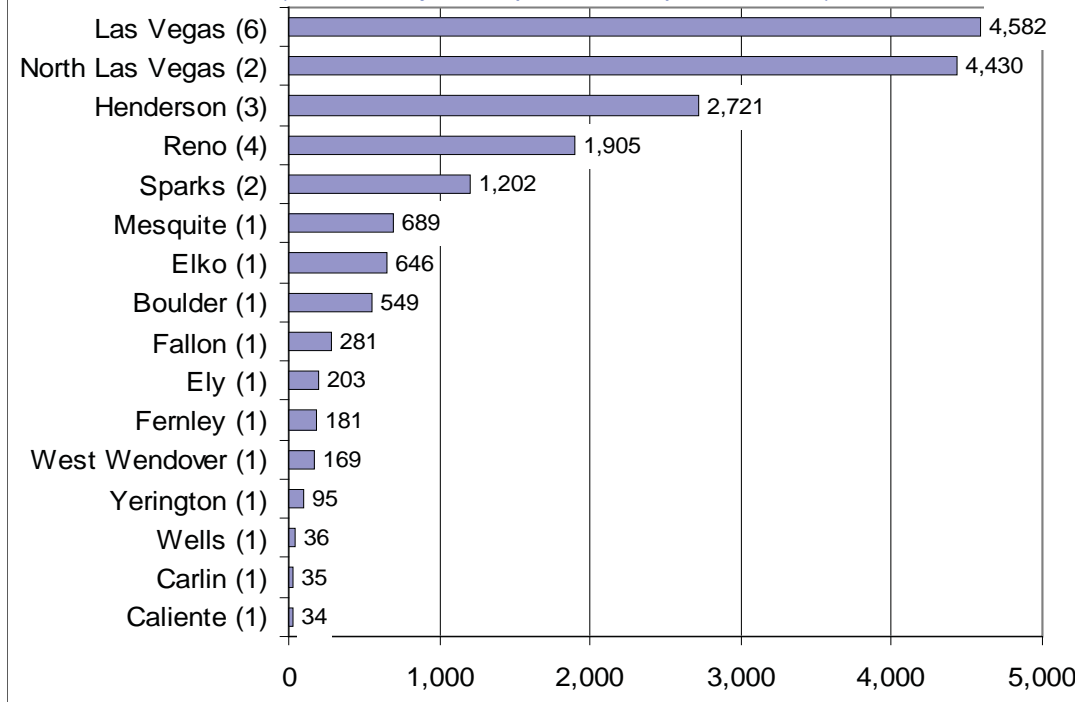
Las Vegas Municipal Court reported 1.00 FTE in other quasi-judicial positions as a traffic commissioner that helped process traffic cases.

Traffic Violations

Traffic violations comprise a substantial portion of the judicial caseload. These violations are handled at all three jurisdictional levels (District, Justice, and Municipal) of the Nevada trial courts. By separating non-traffic data from traffic data, the information is more readily comparable and has been done, in part, in anticipation of a change in counting procedure (from charges to defendants/cases) beginning fiscal year 2010. Detailed statistics for traffic cases are included in the appendix posted on the Nevada Supreme Court website (www.nevadajudiciary.us) in the Administrative Office of the Court documents area.

In addition to their non-traffic caseloads, District Courts also hear juvenile traffic cases. Justice and Municipal Courts have jurisdiction over adult traffic and parking cases as misdemeanor violations. A few jurisdictions do not hear parking tickets, as they are handled administratively by the local governments (executive branch).

Figure 9. Non-Traffic Cases Filed per Judicial Position by Municipal Court, Fiscal Year 2009.
(Number of judicial positions in parentheses.)



Statewide average of cases filed per judicial position for Municipal Courts is 2,052.
Carson City Justice Court judicial positions are noted in the municipal jurisdiction as a consolidated municipality but are not included in per judicial position calculations.
Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

A standard measure of performance in the courts is the clearance rate. This measure can be calculated by dividing the number of dispositions by the number of filings and multiplying by 100. This number can be calculated for any and all case types and allows the same case categories to be compared across courts. Courts should aspire to dispose of at least as many cases as have been filed, reopened, or reactivated in a period, according to the National Center for State Courts.

District Court Summary

Juvenile traffic filings in District Courts decreased almost 7 percent from last fiscal year. The juvenile traffic charge and disposition information for the last two fiscal years is summarized in Table 13. Detailed statistics for juvenile traffic filings are included in the appendix posted on the Nevada Supreme Court website (www.nevadajudiciary.us) in the Administrative Office of the Courts documents area.

Some District Courts saw increases in their juvenile traffic charges [Elko County (16 percent) and Washoe County (10 percent)], while others saw decreases [Humboldt County (42 percent), Churchill (25 percent), and Carson City (17 percent)]. Lyon County experienced a large decrease, which was the result of an administrative correction in statistical reporting. Notably, Clark County has fewer traffic citations than Washoe County because the Justice Courts in Clark County handle and report their juvenile traffic separate from the District Court. In Washoe County, all juvenile traffic citations are handled at the juvenile justice facility. At the District Court level, Juvenile Masters or District Court Judges handle juvenile traffic cases, which may be counted at the District or Justice Court level depending on the processes within the judicial district. The cases are listed in the respective District or Justice Court tables.

District Court juvenile traffic violation dispositions reported by District Courts decreased by more

Table 13. Summary of Juvenile Traffic Cases Filed and Disposed in District Court, Fiscal Years 2008-09.

Court	Juvenile Traffic			
	Total Charges		Total Disposed	
	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008
First Judicial District				
Carson City District Court	701	846	719	841
Storey County District Court	1	9	1	9
Second Judicial District				
Washoe County District Court	3,558	3,226	NR	NR
Third Judicial District				
Churchill County District Court	175	233	183	273
Lyon County District Court	400 ^a	1,119	331 ^a	1,055
Fourth Judicial District				
Elko County District Court	815	701	946	992
Fifth Judicial District				
Esmeralda County District Court	13	22	12	13
Mineral County District Court	1	16	1	2
Nye County District Court	198	241	236	255
Sixth Judicial District				
Humboldt County District Court	117	203	110	136
Lander County District Court	108	134	22	55
Pershing County District Court	0	0	0	0
Seventh Judicial District				
Eureka County District Court	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
Lincoln County District Court	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
White Pine County District Court	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
Eighth Judicial District				
Clark County District Court	2,044	2,057	NR	NR
Ninth Judicial District				
Douglas County District Court	387	399	344	315
Total	8,518	9,206	2,905	3,946

NR Not reported.

^a Decrease is in part by improved statistical reporting processes.

^b Juvenile traffic violations handled and reported by Justice Courts.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

Table 14. Summary of Justice Court Traffic Cases Filed and Disposed, Fiscal Years 2008-09.

	Traffic and Parking			
	Total Charges		Violations Disposed	
	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008
First Judicial District				
Carson City				
Carson City Justice Court	19,939 ^a	22,836 ^a	19,787	21,025
Storey County				
Virginia City Justice Court	1,041	1,754	1,180	1,782
Second Judicial District				
Washoe County				
Incline Village Justice Court	2,361	2,734 ^r	2,377	2,527
Reno Justice Court	46,250	45,084	36,128	31,895
Sparks Justice Court	11,878	11,398	10,472	8,211
Wadsworth Justice Court	4,701	4,322	4,326	4,180
Third Judicial District				
Churchill County				
New River Justice Court	5,143	4,705	4,804	4,596
Lyon County				
Canal Justice Court	5,224	4,498	4,799	4,213
Dayton Justice Court	4,730	5,074	4,894	4,624
Walker River Justice Court	1,585	1,892	1,517	1,848
Fourth Judicial District				
Elko County				
Carlin Justice Court	342	412	266	389
East Line Justice Court	686	1,434	405	622
Elko Justice Court	9,486	7,562	7,110	5,390
Jackpot Justice Court	2,339	1,342	2,259	1,199
Wells Justice Court	8,049	6,460	6,894	4,962
Fifth Judicial District				
Esmeralda County				
Esmeralda Justice Court	4,141	6,139	2,697	4,391
Mineral County				
Hawthorne Justice Court	6,557	4,623	4,742	3,902
Nye County				
Beatty Justice Court	2,650	3,086	2,589	3,168
Pahrump Justice Court	5,197	5,970 ^r	4,804	4,964
Tonopah Justice Court	2,212	2,614	1,982	2,909
Sixth Judicial District				
Humboldt County				
Union Justice Court	8,088	8,855	7,235	8,392
Lander County				
Argenta Justice Court	3,266	3,046	2,844	2,766 ^r
Austin Justice Court	1,601	1,938	1,476	2,032
Pershing County				
Lake Justice Court	1,214 ^a	1,095 ^a	1,064	971
Seventh Judicial District				
Eureka County				
Beowawe Justice Court	690	470 ^r	686	412 ^r
Eureka Justice Court	1,481	903 ^r	1,309	906 ^r
Lincoln County				
Meadow Valley Justice Court	1,454	1,022 ^r	1,491	1,109 ^r
Pahrangat Valley Justice Court	3,108	3,654 ^r	2,616	3,438 ^r
White Pine County				
Ely (No. 1) Justice Court	3,854	2,948 ^r	3,284	2,463 ^r
Lund (No. 2) Justice Court	654	98	563	93
Eighth Judicial District				
Clark County				
Boulder Justice Court	525	477 ^r	424	554 ^r
Bunkerville Justice Court	1,504	908 ^r	1,381	878
Goodsprings Justice Court	11,883	12,689	10,887	11,512
Henderson Justice Court	10,146	9,513 ^r	9,230	8,200 ^r
Las Vegas Justice Court	324,321	339,941 ^r	173,047	161,584 ^r
Laughlin Justice Court	8,351	8,434 ^r	7,613	7,534 ^r
Mesquite Justice Court	15	7	2	0
Moapa Justice Court	3,554	3,811 ^r	3,397	3,636 ^r
Moapa Valley Justice Court	1,670	844	1,628	762
North Las Vegas Justice Court	2,003	2,094	1,701	1,861 ^r
Searchlight Justice Court	7,168	6,334 ^r	6,236	6,607 ^r
Ninth Judicial District				
Douglas County				
East Fork Justice Court	10,105	8,058	9,621	6,568
Tahoe Justice Court	4,088	3,011	3,628	2,755
Total	555,254	564,089^r	375,395	351,830^r

^a Municipal Court data included in totals

^r Revised from previous publication.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

than 25 percent from fiscal years 2008 to 2009, most of which is due to the administrative correction in Lyon County statistics reporting.

Justice Court Summary

In the Justice Courts, the number of traffic violations are more than double the total non-traffic filings. Parking violations are included in the Justice Court traffic numbers but makeup less than 1 percent of the total traffic filings. Traffic filing and disposition information for Justice Courts for the last two fiscal years is summarized in Table 14.

Statewide, Justice Court traffic violations decreased just over 1 percent. Some rural Justice Courts still saw large percentage increases in their traffic violations [Lund (567 percent)], Moapa Valley (98 percent), and Jackpot (74 percent), or decreases [East Line (52 percent), Virginia City (41 percent), and Esmeralda (33 percent)]. The large increase in traffic filings in Lund Justice Court can be attributed to the increase in state and local law enforcement officers and patrols. The overall statewide decrease in filings this fiscal year may be due to the economic factors limiting the amount of travel to and through Nevada.

As can be expected for the court with the most populous township, the Las Vegas Justice Court had the highest traffic caseloads with 58 percent of the statewide total. Reno Justice Court was next with 8 percent of the traffic caseload. Carson City Justice and Municipal Court followed with more than 3 percent of the traffic caseload.

Justice Court traffic violation dispositions also increased nearly 7 percent from last fiscal year.

Municipal Court Summary

In the Municipal Courts, the number of traffic violations has historically been more than four times the total non-traffic filings. This fiscal year was no different as the number of violations reached six times the number of total non-traffic filings. Parking violations are included in the Municipal Court traffic numbers but are only 1 percent of the total filings.

Municipal Court traffic violations increased about 6 percent from the previous fiscal year. Traffic filings are heavily dependent on the number of local law enforcement positions filled or vacant.

Some Municipal Courts saw increases [Carlin (77 percent), North Las Vegas (12 percent), and Henderson (6 percent)], or decreases [Caliente (44 percent) and Fernley (30 percent)] in traffic and parking violations.

The disposition information for Municipal Court traffic violations is provided in Table 15. The municipal traffic violation dispositions increased more than 9 percent over last fiscal year.

Specialty Court Programs

This section covers Specialty Court programs funded during fiscal year 2009 from administrative assessments (AA) per NRS 176.0613. Not all Nevada programs may be represented in this report, as courts may have a Specialty Court program for which they do not receive funding from NRS 176.0613.

What are Specialty Courts?

Criminal Specialty Courts are problem-solving courts designed to address the root causes of criminal activity by coordinating efforts of the judiciary, prosecution, defense bar, probation, law enforcement, treatment, mental health, social services, and child protection services. Together, they maintain a critical balance of authority, supervision, support, and encouragement. Specialty Court programs are rigorous, requiring frequent drug testing and court appearances, along with tightly structured regimens of treatment and recovery services.

The goal of a Specialty Court is to break the cycle of the “revolving door” syndrome and support participants in achieving total abstinence from drugs and/or alcohol, by promoting responsibility and ac-

Table 15. Summary of Municipal Court Traffic Cases Filed and Disposed, Fiscal Years 2008-09.

Court	Traffic and Parking			
	Total Charges		Violations Disposed	
	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008
Boulder Municipal Court	7,871	7,559	7,688	6,675 ^r
Caliente Municipal Court	131	234	141	188
Carlin Municipal Court	152	86	98	73
Carson City Municipal Court	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Elko Municipal Court	2,525	2,336	1,472	1,367
Ely Municipal Court	613	694	681	903
Fallon Municipal Court	1,145	1,182	1,126	934
Fernley Municipal Court	1,233	1,773	1,128	1,800
Henderson Municipal Court	49,524	46,830 ^r	48,248	42,650 ^r
Las Vegas Municipal Court	189,209	176,977	179,432	158,776
Mesquite Municipal Court	3,687	4,191	3,665	3,749
North Las Vegas Municipal Court	55,628	49,648	54,958	49,676
Reno Municipal Court	43,311	41,764	41,503	41,419
Sparks Municipal Court	11,798	12,811	11,288	12,231
Wells Municipal Court	282	304	185	228
West Wendover Municipal Court	1,121	1,547	664	1,058
Yerington Municipal Court	210	233	214	204
Total	368,440	348,169^r	352,491	321,931^r

^a Municipal Court data combined and presented with Justice Court data for the consolidated municipality of Carson City.

^r Revised from previous publication.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

countability, and teaching participants to become productive law abiding citizens, which in return reduces criminal recidivism and provides for better, healthier communities.

The result, Specialty Courts go beyond the goal! Specialty Courts increase the probability of the participant's success by providing a wide array of ancillary services such as counseling, mental health treatment, family therapy, job skills training, and other life-skill enhancement services. In addition, families are reunified and parents regain or are able to retain custody of their children. Most significantly, many of the judges who serve as a Specialty Court Judge continue to serve in the capacity after retirement as a Senior Judge and some sitting judges have requested an extension of their assignment. Many judges have taken on Specialty Court duties in addition to their normal docket responsibilities.

History of Nevada's Specialty Courts

The first drug court in the State was established in 1992 by the Eighth Judicial District Court in Clark County. The program was created due to the enormous caseload involving drug related crimes. Since the program was created in a non-legislative year, this program was primarily funded by the county through funds obtained by the courts' traffic and driving under the influence (DUI) schools and by funds collected from participants in the drug court. Since this program provided an alternative to incarceration, it seemed logical to approach the Legislature to provide funding for this very successful program.

During the 1993 Legislature, the Eighth Judicial District Court submitted Senate Bill 175, which would have appropriated \$250,000 for the biennium to the Clark County Drug Court. Senate Bill 175 was not approved, however Assembly Concurrent Resolution 71 was approved, which directed the Legislative Commission to conduct an interim study of drug and alcohol abuse among criminal offenders. The interim study committee adopted 28 recommendations; the majority of the recommendations were for legislation related to the collection of statistics, civil commitment, funding, eligibility requirements, establishment of other similar programs, deferred prosecution, treatment for first-time DUI offenders, mandatory minimum sentences, inpatient treatment services, sanctions for juvenile drug and alcohol offenders, the creation of a substance abuse program director for the Department of Prisons, funding to study the progress of treated substance abusers, and encourage the Governor of Nevada to appropriate funds in the 1995-97

budget for treatment programs. The final report of the committee can be found at on the legislative website (Bulletin 95-09).

Additional legislation that supports Specialty Courts includes:

- In 1995, Assembly Bill 88 authorized \$350,000 in appropriations to the Second and Eighth Judicial District for programs of alcohol or drug abuse treatment.
- In 1997, Senate Bill 135 also appropriated \$350,000 to the Second and Eighth Judicial Districts for the biennium for their programs.
- In 1999, Senate Bill 184 appropriated just over \$1 million to the Second and Eighth Judicial District Courts for the biennium.
- In 2003, Assembly Bill 29 provided an additional \$7 assessment to misdemeanor convictions in Justice and Municipal Courts, to provide additional funding for Specialty Courts throughout the State. Additionally, this fund receives 10 percent of felony bail forfeitures. AB29 (NRS 176.0613) became effective July 1, 2003.
- In 2007, Assembly Bill 625 re-distributed the allocation of administrative assessment fees for use by the Supreme Court to provide additional funding to Specialty Courts. AB625 (NRS 176.059) became effective July 1, 2008.
- In 2009, Assembly Bill 187, Assembly Bill 102, and Assembly Bill 497 were introduced related to Specialty Courts. AB187 authorizes District Courts to establish a program for treatment of certain offenders who are veterans or members of the military and became effective July 1, 2009. Assembly Bill 102 authorizes a court to establish a program of treatment for problem gambling and became effective July 1, 2009. Assembly Bill 497 provides for the collection and sharing of statistical information and it becomes effective July 1, 2010.

DRUG COURT GRADUATION FEATURES 500TH DRUG-FREE BABY

On May 15, 2009, Drug Court Judge Jennifer Elliott honored graduates from the Court's various Drug Courts, as well as the mother of the court's 500th Drug Free Baby.

<http://lvcourtsblog.com/2009/05/13/drug-court-graduation-features-500th-drug-free-baby/>

Table 16. Summary of Specialty Courts Revenue and Allocations for Fiscal Year 2009

Revenue	
Balance forward from previous fiscal year	\$1,717,992
Administrative assessments NRS 176.0613	4,213,885
Bail forfeitures NRS 178.158	135,082
Court assessment NRS 176.059	1,949,596
Total revenue received	\$8,016,555
Allocations	
Total Specialty Court Program	\$5,842,552
Training and education ¹	100,000
Balance forward to the next fiscal year ²	\$2,063,595

¹ Training and education funds are retained by the Administrative Office of the Courts. Programs may have eligible employees apply to attend national and/or other trainings that relate to the program. Funds that are not expended each year are carried forward to the following fiscal year.

² Balance forward is required to fund the first quarterly distribution of the following fiscal year.

Funding

Specialty Courts obtain funding from a wide variety of sources, including NRS 176.0613, local government, federal grants, and community support. Many of the programs became operational through state general funds, federal grants, and city/county support. In those jurisdictions where federal grants expired, innovative ways to replace the funds have been created through collaborative efforts with local governments or providers. Not all jurisdictions have been successful in finding other funds to meet program needs.

All specialty court participants are charged a program fee. The fee amount, how it is collected, and how it is distributed differs from program to program. Some courts collect the fee to offset treatment and other operational costs while in other courts, especially in the rural areas where resources are scarce, the treatment provider collects and retains the fee.

Funding for Specialty Courts is authorized from NRS 176.0613, 176.059, and 178.518. Funds generated in fiscal year 2009 totaled \$6,298,563. In addition to this amount, \$1,717,992 was carried forward from the previous fiscal year. The balance brought forward from the previous fiscal year is a critical component as this provides the first quarterly distribution for the following fiscal year. In addition, an amount equal to 10 percent of administrative assessment receipts was reserved should future revenues fall short. Table 16 represents the amount of revenue generated and how funds were allocated for fiscal year 2009.

In fiscal year 2009, funding was authorized for 41 programs by the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada on recommendations of the Specialty Court

Funding Committee. All Specialty Court programs receive quarterly distributions (July, October, January, and April). Table 17 represents program distributions approved by the Specialty Court Funding Committee and authorized by the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada for fiscal year 2009.

Current Status of Programs

Nevada's programs have from 10 to 900 participants at any time. As noted in Table 18, Specialty Courts programs in fiscal year 2009 served more than 3,400 defendants and more than 1,400 of them graduated. Of those 3,400 participants, 58 gave birth to drug-free babies during the year.

Currently, Nevada has 43 Specialty Court programs operating in all judicial districts (41 receive funding). There are 26 urban programs and 17 rural. The 43 programs are comprised of 18 adult drug courts (including diversion and child support); 2 family drug courts; 3 mental health courts; 5 juvenile drug courts; 2 prison re-entry courts; 3 felony DUI courts; 3 DUI courts; 4 alcohol and other drug courts; 2 habitual offender courts; and 1 female prostitution court. These programs would not be possible except for the passage of Assembly Bill 29 in 2003. Prior to AB29, three courts were known to operate a Specialty Court program. AB29 has provided a stable funding source so Nevada could add new programs and expand existing programs. The passage of AB29 was due to the efforts of judges, district attorneys, public defenders, as well as many key legislators.

**Table 17. Summary of Specialty Court Program Distributions,
Fiscal Year 2009**

Court	Fiscal Year 2009
<i>Programs of General Jurisdiction</i>	
Adult Drug Courts (Urban Counties)	
Second Judicial District (Includes Diversion)	\$570,103
Eighth Judicial District	1,771,127
Adult Drug Courts (Rural Counties)	
Western Region (5 programs - Carson City/Storey, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, & northern Mineral Counties)	\$384,840
Eastern Region (3 programs - Elko, Lincoln, and White Pine Counties)	135,720
Fifth Judicial District	125,678
Sixth Judicial District (Humboldt County)	136,172
Sixth Judicial District (Pershing County)	88,000
Sixth Judicial District (Lander County)	20,480
Felony DUI Courts (Urban Counties)	
Second Judicial District	\$62,760
Eighth Judicial District	199,497
Felony DUI Courts (Rural Counties)	
Carson City	\$60,184
Mental Health Courts (Urban Counties)	
Second Judicial District	\$20,300
Eighth Judicial District	463,645
Family Drug Courts (Urban Counties)	
Second Judicial District	\$74,250
Eighth Judicial District	309,187
Juvenile Drug Courts (Urban Counties)	
Second Judicial District (Drug/Mental Health)	\$44,100
Eighth Judicial District	492,435
Juvenile Drug Courts (Rural Counties)	
First Judicial District	\$9,000
Eastern Region	77,300
Fifth Judicial District	5,920
Other Drug Courts (Urban Counties)	
Eighth Judicial District Child Support	\$40,542
<i>Programs of Limited Jurisdiction</i>	
Adult Drug Courts (Urban Counties)	
Las Vegas Justice Court	\$236,420
Mental Health Courts (Rural Counties)	
Carson City Justice/Municipal Court	\$67,120
Other Programs (Urban Counties)	
Henderson Municipal Court ABC Program	\$6,700
Las Vegas Justice DUI Court (2 programs)	175,303
Las Vegas Municipal Drug Court	37,400
Las Vegas Municipal DUI Court	13,500
Las Vegas Municipal Female Prostitute Prevention Program	13,500
Las Vegas Municipal HOPE Court	106,544
Reno Justice Adult Drug, Alcohol, & Domestic Violence Court	100,275
Reno Municipal Alcohol & Other Drug Court (2 Programs)	44,000
Sparks Municipal Alcohol & Other Drug Court	30,550
TOTAL SPECIALTY COURT DISTRIBUTIONS	\$5,842,552

Table 18. Summary of Specialty Court Information, Fiscal Year 2009.

Jurisdiction	Court Type	New Participants/ Admissions	Terminations*	Graduates	Active Cases at Year End	Drug Free Babies Born
Western Region						
Western Regional Drug Court	Adult Drug (5 programs)	178	147	97	176	2
Carson City & Storey County	Felony DUI Court	7	2	0	24	0
First Judicial District	Juvenile Drug	9	1	5	14	0
Carson City Justice Court	Mental Health	33	17	19	25	1
	TOTAL	227	167	121	239	3
Washoe Region						
Second Judicial District (Includes Diversion)	Adult Drug (Includes Diversion)	376	271	203	667	10
	Felony DUI Court	67	10	0	82	0
	Family Drug	28	14	17	30	1
	Mental Health Court	167	67	85	201	9
	Juvenile Drug	22	14	10	20	0
	Prison Re-entry	17	6	8	18	0
Reno Justice	Alcohol & Drug Court	161	11	86	211	0
Sparks Municipal	Alcohol & Drug Court	49	15	34	86	1
Reno Municipal (2 Programs)	Alcohol & Drug Court	33	7	25	76	0
	TOTAL	920	415	468	1,391	21
Eastern Region						
Elko County	Adult Drug	25	5	22	40	4
	Juvenile Drug	21	13	6	17	1
White Pine County	Adult Drug (2 Programs)	18	8	17	26	1
	TOTAL	64	26	45	83	6
Fifth Judicial District						
Nye County	Adult Drug	29	19	20	29	5
	Juvenile Drug	5	5	0	13	0
	TOTAL	34	24	20	42	5
Central Region						
Humboldt County	Adult Drug	15	3	9	29	1
Lander County	Adult Drug	4	1	4	8	1
Pershing County	Adult Drug	9	4	9	18	1
	TOTAL	28	8	22	55	3
Clark Region						
Eighth Judicial District	Adult Criminal Drug	647	342	343	559	8
	Felony DUI Court	176	31	59	287	0
	Child Support	17	12	7	17	0
	Dependency	119	103	66	60	8
	Juvenile Drug	74	55	31	72	2
	Mental Health Court	37	11	20	76	0
	Prison Re-entry	16	6	17	23	0
Las Vegas Justice	Drug Court	148	56	62	176	1
	DUI Court (2 Programs)	135	38	102	167	0
Las Vegas Municipal	Adult Drug	12	6	5	5	0
	DUI Court	67	13	16	87	1
	Female Prostitution	36	44	3	13	0
	Habitual Offender	42	33	9	51	0
Henderson Municipal	Habitual Offender	8	8	2	13	0
	TOTAL	1,534	758	742	1,606	20
ALL SPECIALTY COURTS - GRAND TOTAL		2,807	1,398	1,418	3,416	58

* Includes remands/removals, transfers to other specialty courts, and deceased participants.

Source: Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts, Specialty Courts Program.

Courts with Incomplete Data

Courts that did not provide all of their monthly data for fiscal year 2009 are listed in Table 19, as are the specific elements of the data missing during the year.

Once again, all courts provided caseload information. However, three courts are missing some of their disposition information. Reporting by the courts continues to improve and all the courts are to be commended for their efforts to meet the Uniform System for Judicial Records reporting requirements.

The disposition data are harder for court staff to collect than the filing information. Many courts throughout Nevada do not have automated case management systems and court staff manually collect the information from each case or citation.

The Administrative Office of the Courts is working with the courts on technology projects that has put case management systems in many of the rural courts and some urban courts. Case management systems provide the courts with an automated mechanism to prepare their monthly statistical reports while also improving court processes and procedures.

During fiscal year 2009, Meadow Valley Justice Court began using the state-sponsored case management system (commonly referred to as Courtview) in its entirety. This brings the total number of courts using all or part of the new system to 39. More courts are scheduled to go to the new system during the next fiscal year.

Table 19. Data Non-Reporting by Judicial District, Fiscal Year 2009.

Court	Case Type¹	Filings/ Cases	Charges	Dispo- sitions	Table
Second Judicial District					
Washoe County District Court	Juvenile Traffic			NR	A8
Third Judicial District					
Churchill County District Court	Reopened Civil Cases	NR			A3
	Reopened Family Cases	NR			A4
Lyon County District Court	Reopened Civil Cases	NR			A3
	Juvenile Traffic	NR			A8
Fourth Judicial District					
Carlin Justice Court	Felony & Gross Misdemeanor	NR			A6
East Line Justice Court	Adult Parking	NR	NR		A9
	Felony & Gross Misdemeanor	NR			A6
Jackpot Justice Court	Adult Parking	NR	NR		A9
	Re-opened Civil Cases	NR			A7
	Felony & Gross Misdemeanor	NR			A6
Wells Justice Court	Re-opened Civil Cases	NR			A7
	Adult Parking	NR	NR		A9
	Felony & Gross Misdemeanor	NR			A6
Wells Municipal Court	Adult Parking	NR	NR		A9
W. Wendover Municipal Court	Adult Parking	NR	NR		A10
Seventh Judicial District					
Beowawe Justice Court	Juvenile Traffic	NR	NR		A9
Eighth Judicial District					
Clark County District Court	Juvenile Traffic			NR	A8
Boulder Justice Court	Juvenile Traffic	NR	NR		A9
Bunkerville Justice Court	Juvenile Traffic	NR	NR		A9
Las Vegas Justice Court	Felony, Gross Misd., Misdemeanor			NR	A6
Mesquite Justice Court	Adult Parking	NR	NR		A9
	Re-opened Civil Cases	NR			A7
Moapa Justice Court	Juvenile Traffic	NR	NR		A9
Las Vegas Municipal Court	Adult Traffic	NR			A10

NR Not Reported

¹ Municipal Civil cases are not included here. Civil filings and dispositions are infrequent in municipal courts.

Source: Uniform System for Judicial Records, Nevada AOC, Research and Statistics Unit.

***All appendix tables are available online at the
Supreme Court of Nevada website
www.nevadajudiciary.us.***

***Click on the Administrative Office of the Courts and
then Documents and Forms.***