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## Judicial Council Releases *Annual Court Statistics Report*

San Francisco—Total case filings in California trial courts increased by 2.5 percent to almost 9.5 million filings, according to the Judicial Council's *2008 Court Statistics Report (CSR)*. The growth in filings was driven primarily by an increase in criminal and juvenile filings and by "limited civil case" filings—those civil cases with a value under \$25,000.

The report provides detailed statewide caseload data for fiscal year 2006–2007 and 10-year trend data on a wide range of court business.

Comprehensive individual county data also are published in the online version of the report, posted on the California Courts Web site at [http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/3\\_stats.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/3_stats.htm).

Article VI, section 6 of the California Constitution requires the Judicial Council to survey the condition of business in the state courts and to report and make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.

A snapshot of the court caseload data in the *CSR* follows.

### **Supreme Court\***

- The Supreme Court issued 113 written opinions in fiscal year 2006–2007.
- Filings totaled 8,988, and dispositions totaled 9,247.
- Automatic appeals arising out of judgments of death totaled 17 cases, and dispositions of automatic appeals numbered 23.
- The Supreme Court ordered 19 Court of Appeal opinions depublished.

### **Courts of Appeal**

- Filings for the state's six Courts of Appeal totaled 24,934 (15,527 notices of appeal and 9,407 original proceedings).

(over)

- Dispositions of original proceedings by written opinion totaled 768, and original proceedings disposed without written opinion totaled 8,387.
- Dispositions of appeals by written opinion totaled 10,560, and appeals disposed without written opinion totaled 4,821.
- Statewide, 9 percent of Court of Appeal majority opinions were published.

### **Superior Courts**

Total filings in the trial courts grew by 2.5 percent in fiscal year 2006–07. The growth in trial court filings was concentrated primarily in the area of criminal and juvenile law, although there was also growth in “limited civil case” filings—those civil cases valued under \$25,000.

The growth in filings represents the continuation of an upward trend that began in fiscal year 2001–02, and filings are now at their highest level in more than a decade and a half. Some highlights follow:

- In the last five years, since fiscal year 2001–02, total filings in the trial courts have grown by a cumulative total of 12 percent, an increase of over a million filings.
- Misdemeanor and infractions filings were both up over last year—4 and 3 percent, respectively—and have grown by 16 and 20 percent, respectively, in the last five years.
- Felony filings are up by 12 percent in the last five years.
- Juvenile delinquency filings declined slightly last year but have grown by 10 percent over the last five years.
- Juvenile dependency filings grew by 5 percent last year and are up 11 percent in the last five years.

The growth in criminal law filings more than made up for declining filings in family, juvenile, and most civil law case types, which tend to be a smaller proportion of the total filings in the trial courts. Here are more highlights:

- Filings of “unlimited civil cases”—those with a value of \$25,000 or more—declined by 2 percent last year and are down by 23 percent in the last five years.
- Family law filings—marital separation—fell by 2 percent, while family law petitions, including petitions for domestic violence restraining orders and enforcement of child support payments, grew by 2 percent last year. In the last five years, marital separation filings and family law petitions have declined by 4 and 7 percent, respectively.

- Small claims filings declined by 5 percent in the most recent year and by 30 percent in the last five years.
- Limited civil filings increased by 11 percent last year and are up 11 percent over the last five years.

*\* Since 1996, the California Supreme Court has issued workload statistics using a reporting period of September 1 through August 31 of the following year. This time frame best corresponds to the filing of the Supreme Court's opinions. To view the court's September 1, 2007-August 31, 2008 annual statistics, please see [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/presscenter/newsreleases/nr49-08.pdf](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/presscenter/newsreleases/nr49-08.pdf).*

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*The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.*