

Your Missouri Courts

2012 Annual Report

Missouri courts continue sound stewardship of taxpayer dollars

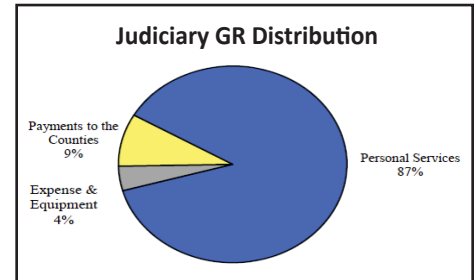
The judiciary continues to consume an extremely small portion of the state budget. In fiscal 2012, the judiciary – including the Supreme Court, three appellate court districts, 45 circuit courts serving 114 counties and the city of St. Louis, and state courts administrator's office – received a total general revenue appropriation of \$170.8 million. That number represents about 2 percent of Missouri's total general revenue budget of \$8 billion.

What is collected by the courts as court costs, fines and fees is more than double what the judiciary costs the state. In 2012, Missouri's circuit courts disbursed slightly less than \$400 million. Approximately two-fifths of this amount – almost \$160 million – went into the discretionary spending accounts of state, county or municipal governments. The remaining funds were divided among restitution; garnishments; and dedicated funds such as those for crime victims' compensation, domestic violence, independent living, law enforcement training, and others.

Of each general revenue dollar collected, only about two cents goes toward funding the judicial branch of government, and 87 percent of these funds are for personnel. The judiciary also continues to implement cost savings measures. While case filings have increased by 7 percent since 2000, no workload-based clerical staff has been added during that same time period. To absorb this growth, the courts have rededicated employee functions and used technology to improve productivity.

Videoconferencing has reduced costs associated with courtroom participation as well as prisoner and patient transportation costs. New Supreme Court rules require local plans for improved debt collection, and early results show these plans are making a difference in improving the state's bottom line.

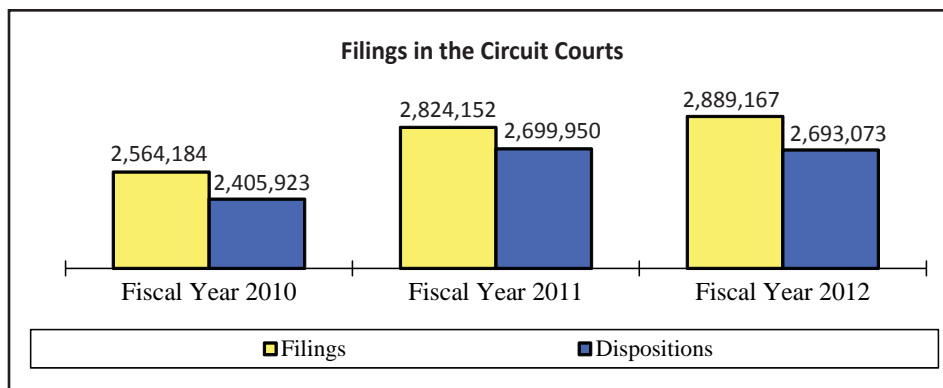
The flexibility granted to the courts by the legislature and governor has allowed the judiciary to absorb the costs of improving services to citizens without new



funds. In return, the judiciary continues to seek ways to improve efficiency in cooperation with the governor and legislature.

Moving from a paper-only system to an electronic court system is making case processing more efficient and maximizing the judiciary's use of state and county taxpayer dollars. The current process of transferring information from paper records to the court's case management system is extremely time-consuming. The electronic filing system is helping court clerks work more efficiently, and providing court users and the public with more immediate access to court files. Clerical staff also spends less time locating paper files and more time reviewing filings for accuracy and ensuring data integrity. The system also is reducing or eliminating costs for file storage, printing and binding, postage, couriers, and more.

In addition, public Case.net allows parties to cases to monitor court events, thereby reducing customer service demands on clerks – all without any additional charges or fees to the user.



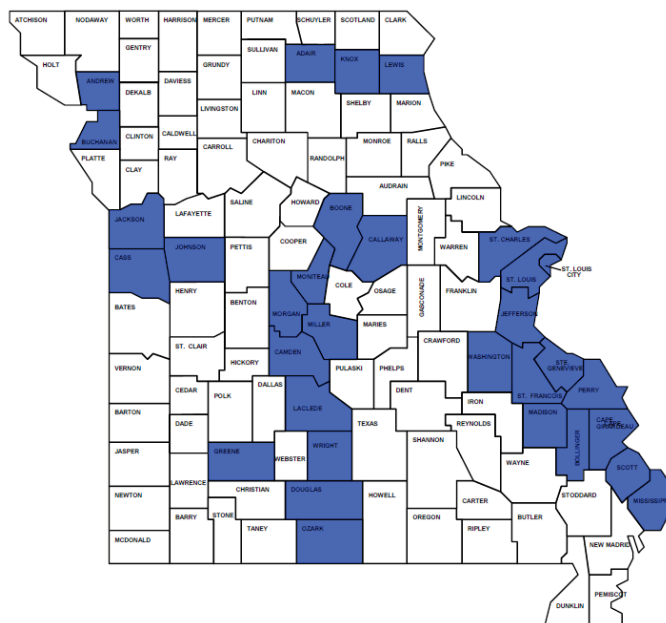
Alternatives to juvenile detention: improving public safety, helping youth, saving money

Juvenile detention reform is growing in Missouri. Initial efforts began with the launch of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in areas with large detention center populations – Greene, Jackson and St. Louis counties and the city of St. Louis. Because youth involved in the juvenile justice system often are detained unnecessarily or inappropriately at great expense with long-lasting negative consequences for both public safety and youth well-being, the vision of the initiative is that all youth will have opportunities to develop into healthy and productive adults. JDAI promotes new program alternatives, delinquency hearing time standards, detention center self-assessments, community collaboration teams and graduated sanctions.

St. Louis has reduced its detention center population by 50 percent and now operates a detention alternatives office to divert youth from secure detention. Greene County has reduced the number of admissions to juvenile detention by 35 percent and was one of the first sites to establish an after-school program that provides supervision, counseling and activities. St. Louis County has reduced its average daily population by 20 percent. Jackson County has reduced the number of admissions to juvenile detention by 63 percent and implemented a female-specific therapeutic program that is guiding young women to adulthood. All of these successes have been accomplished without an increase in juvenile delinquency. An additional 11 circuits – representing 12 sites with secure detention facilities that operate more as regional centers – have joined the initiative. The Missouri JDAI Replication Workgroup's strategic plan includes expansion of the project to the remaining circuits.

As part of the continuing reform effort, the Supreme Court has mandated statewide use by juvenile officers and detention intake staff of a standardized juvenile detention assessment to determine whether to hold youth in secure detention.

A newly formed detention standards committee is reviewing current standards for secure juvenile detention centers so Missouri facilities can provide the highest quality of supervision, safety, health, programming and education. Recommendations also are being made about staffing positions and ratios of staff to youth.

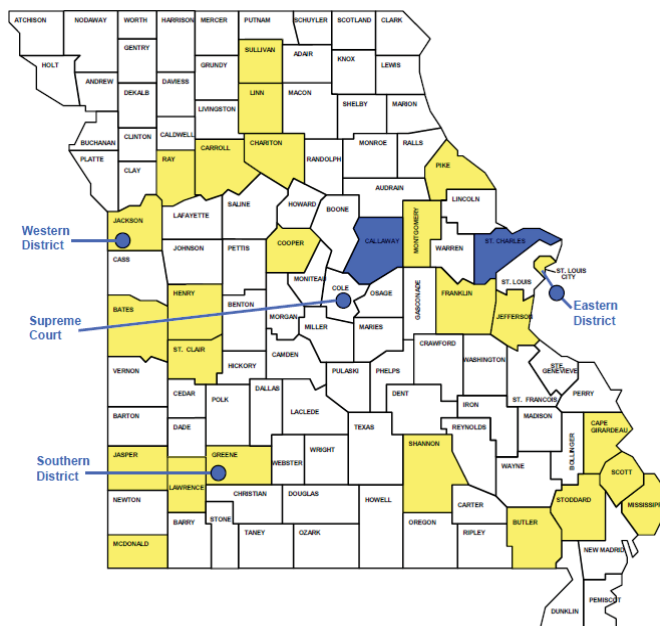


Additional counties to implement Missouri Electronic Filing (eFiling) System in 2013

Attorneys with cases in the Supreme Court of Missouri, Court of Appeals, or circuit courts of Callaway and St. Charles counties must use the Missouri eFiling System.

More than 10,000 attorneys are registered with the system. More than 150,000 electronic submissions or electronic packages have been received in the Supreme Court, court of appeals, and St. Charles and Callaway county circuit courts since electronic filing began Sept. 1, 2011.

The 25 counties noted in yellow on the map are scheduled to implement the system in 2013.



Treatment court programs provide support and resources for citizens, cost savings for state

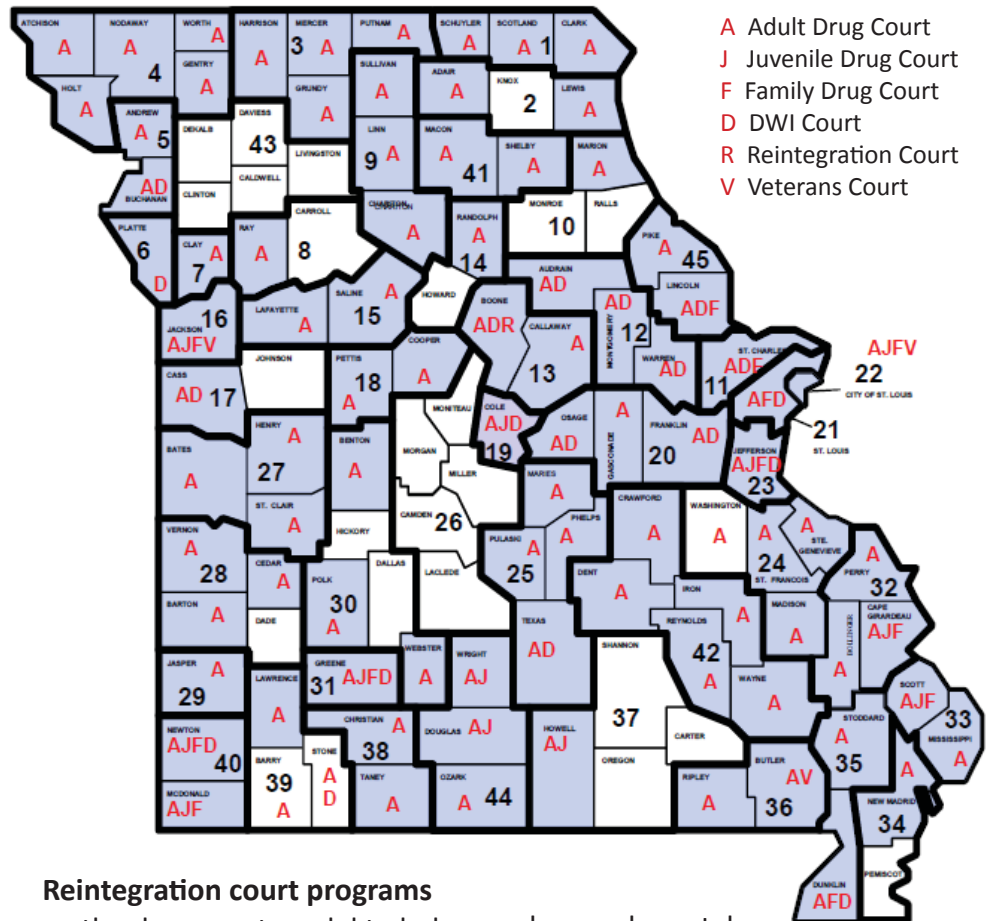
For more than 20 years, Missouri has been a leader in providing treatment court programs. Our programs have shown measurable success; however, there still is unmet need. In fiscal 2012 the treatment court programs requested \$8 million more in funding than received.

Adult, juvenile and family drug court programs seek to increase an offender's likelihood of successful recovery through continuous, intense judicially supervised treatment, mandatory periodic drug testing, community supervision, and use of appropriate sanctions and other rehabilitation services.

**Not incarcerating 3,000
adult offenders
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DWI court programs address the root cause of impaired driving – alcohol and drug abuse – to increase public safety by changing the behavior of the chemical-dependent repeat offender arrested for driving while impaired.

- The 136 current treatment court programs have more than 3,500 active participants. Not incarcerating 3,000 adult offenders in 2012 resulted in a cost savings of \$50 million.
- In the 20 years since the first treatment court began in Jackson County, more than 12,000 Missourians have graduated and



Reintegration court programs

use the drug court model to help drug-involved offenders return to the community after their release from prison through graduated sanctions and positive reinforcement.

Veterans court programs use the drug court model to serve veterans struggling with addiction, serious mental illness, and/or co-occurring disorders through collaboration with traditional partners found in

drug and mental health court programs and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs health care networks.

Truancy court programs are designed to increase school attendance, link families and youth with community services, improve academic achievement, build youths' character, prevent delinquent behavior, and increase involvement of parents in their children's academic lives.

574 drug-free babies have been born to participants.

- The 30-month recidivism rate for adult drug court and DWI court graduates is 7.1 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively. Recidivism rates for those who do not complete the program is 15 to 18 percent.

**"I get to stop
the cycle of addiction
in my family."**

- Dave Abner

Stone County Gazette
June 7, 2012

Judge Paul C. Wilson appointed to state's highest court



Jefferson City native Paul C. Wilson joined the Supreme Court of Missouri in December 2012. The son of two community leaders – his father was an associate circuit judge and his mother worked for health departments at the county and state levels – he grew up with a passion for public service.

"My father loved lawyers and the law," Wilson said. "He also revered the Court as an institution. It is such an honor for me to serve here. I hope I can live up to his expectations, both for me and for the institution he respected so much."

Wilson graduated cum laude and first in his class from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law, then clerked at the state high court and a federal appeals court. After two years at a New York law firm, Wilson returned home to join the Missouri attorney general's office and later served as a circuit judge. The governor named him Dec. 3 to the Court, and he began his official duties later that month.

Thank you for taking the time to read this annual report. We have much to share with all of our partners in justice. Should you want more information about your Missouri courts, please visit our website at courts.mo.gov. More importantly, we encourage you to visit a courthouse to see your Missouri courts in person. We are proud of the work of the approximately 5,000 Missouri court employees and trust that you are as well.

Sincerely,

Richard B. Teitelman
Chief Justice

Gregory J. Linhares
State Courts Administrator

Poverty study highlights legal needs of those most at risk

In *Examining Equal Access to Justice in Missouri* (September 2012), office of state courts administrator research staff detail alarming statistics about Missourians who are most at risk due to unmet legal representation.

Those living in poverty have many legal issues that *could* be resolved – especially those associated with housing, employment and family matters. Courts have tried to accommodate the needs of the poor by waiving some costs and facilitating self-representation, although *pro se* litigants may be at a disadvantage in reaching a favorable disposition for their cases.

Some highlights of the report include:

- The new poor are formerly middle class households dragged into poverty by unemployment, foreclosures and uninsured medical costs.
- The poverty rate for Missouri's children grew by 39 percent over the last decade. Almost 27 percent

of children live in households at 125 percent of poverty level. One in three children with a disability lives below the poverty level.

- The legal needs of Vietnam and Gulf War veterans are not being met adequately.
- About half of impoverished individuals work – almost 9 percent full-time and 35 percent part-time. They may have to choose between paying for legal representation and paying for basic necessities.
- Low-income households in Missouri have more than 625,000 legal problems requiring resolution.
- A 2009 study found the economic impact of legal-aid services in Missouri was \$33.1 million – or \$1.84 in benefits for every dollar invested. In 2011, legal aid offices were able to accept only 50 percent of the applications they received.
- Legal-aid offices helped clients obtain \$4.5 million in Medicare and Medicaid benefits and saved an estimated \$3.7 million in avoided costs associated with domestic violence.

The report is available online at
www.mobar.org/esq/nov16/Examining%20Equal%20Access%20to%20Justice%20in%20Missouri.Sept2012.pdf.

The Missouri Judiciary's website is www.courts.mo.gov.

This report and the fiscal 2012 annual statistical report are available online at www.courts.mo.gov/pagejsp?id=296.