



2010

# Rhode Island Report on the Judiciary 2010

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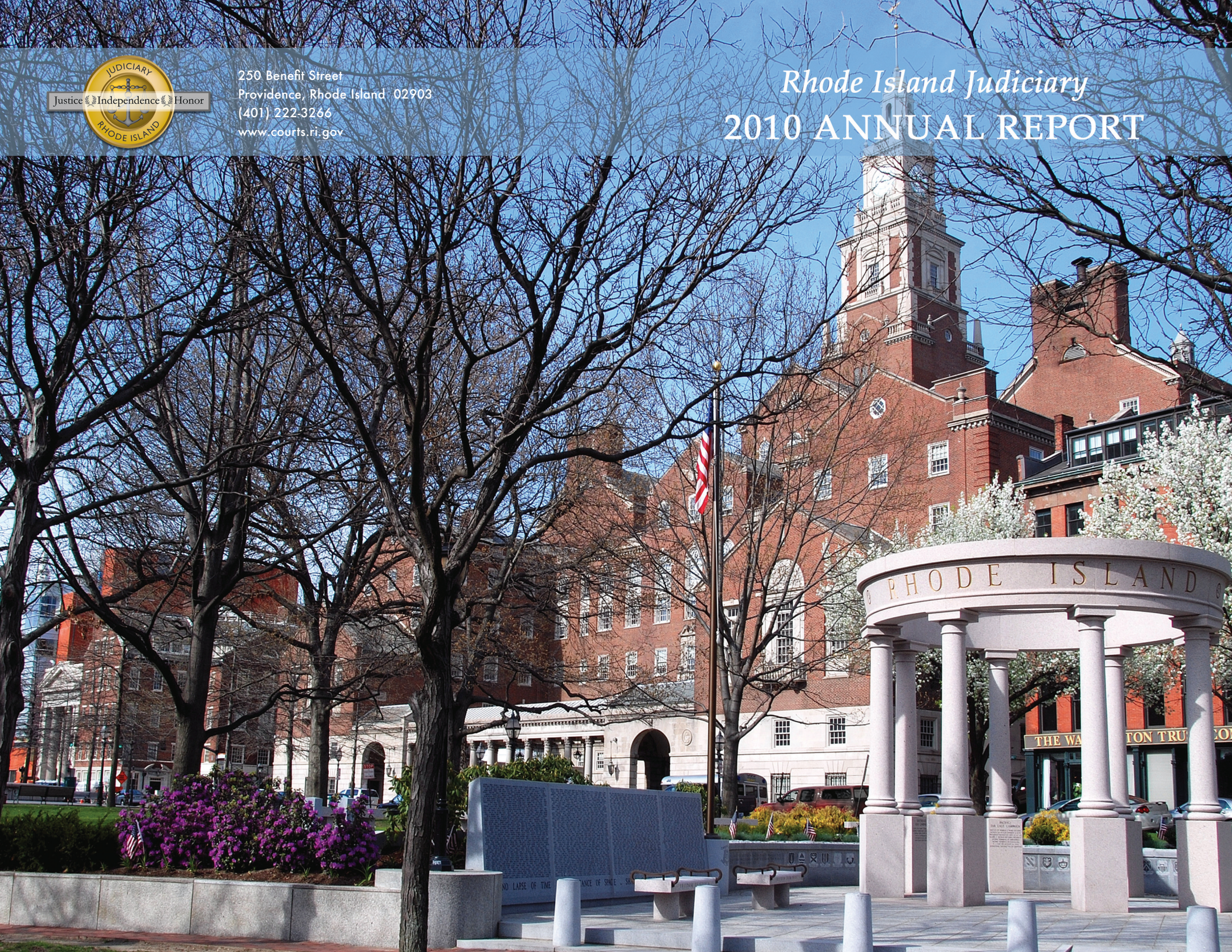
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# *Rhode Island Judiciary* 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



# LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

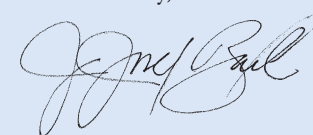
It is with pride that I present to you the 2010 Annual Report of the Rhode Island Judiciary, pursuant to G.L. 1956 (1997 Reenactment) § 8-15-7.

I am proud of the accomplishments of our judicial employees in these trying fiscal times. In our courts, we see reflections every day of the difficult economy and the troubles of society at large. Certainly, the vast majority of people who pass through our doors on a daily basis are not among us for pleasant reasons. The dedication exhibited day in and day out by our court employees to carry out our mission of providing justice to these people is second to none.

We continued to live within our means, something I am sure most taxpayers can and do appreciate. The challenge is to maintain excellence with what often are diminished resources. Rhode Island's financial state is not much different than it was one year ago. The Judiciary continues to save and cut wherever it can. The year 2010 saw continued commitment to refurbish our facilities so that we can maintain what we have for many years to come. We have made security enhancements to help further protect the public as well as our employees, and we have expanded our outreach programs.

I hope that you will find the court overviews and statistics in this Annual Report a valuable accounting of the services our judicial employees provide to the public each day.

Yours sincerely,



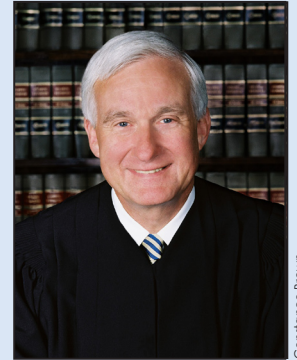
J. Joseph Baxter, Jr.  
State Court Administrator



# LETTER TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

On the pages that follow, you will find the Judiciary's Annual Report for 2010. It is worth pointing out that throughout 2010, the courts progressed into a new era of leadership. Just three months after I took office as Chief Justice in July 2009, Alice B. Gibney became Presiding Justice of the Superior Court, followed in 2010 by the appointments of Jeanne E. LaFazia as Chief Judge of the District Court and Haiganush R. Bedrosian as Chief Judge of the Family Court, respectively. It was only in 2008 that William R. Guglietta became Chief Magistrate of the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal. This makes Chief Judge George E. Healy, Jr., appointed in 2004 to head the Workers' Compensation Court, our longest-serving Chief Judge. All are making their imprints on policies, procedures, and caseload management in these rapidly evolving times.



The judicial budget request for Fiscal Year 2011 was reduced by \$4.7 million in general revenue funds. Almost one-third of that – some \$1.4 million – was saved with four pay reduction days and the six-month deferral for pay raises. To comply with the enacted budget, the Judiciary also realized an additional \$1.5 million in personnel turnover savings, keeping approximately 50 positions vacant on average through the year.

While you and our state's taxpayers can certainly view these savings and increased revenues favorably, prolonged vacancies are a cause for concern. Extended vacancies often result in clerical delays. As we all know, justice delayed is justice denied.

The Judiciary will continue to look for ways to streamline operations and keep costs as low as possible without sacrificing the quality of services that the public has a right to expect in the resolution of its disputes. We are mindful of our state's economic reality, and we look forward to communicating with the legislative and executive branches to do the best with the resources we have.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Suttell".

Paul A. Suttell  
Chief Justice



Since 2008, new Chief Judges have taken office in five of the six courts in Rhode Island's unified judicial system, bringing a fresh outlook to the leadership of the Judiciary. The six Chief Judges are, from left to right, Superior Court Presiding Justice Alice Bridget Gibney, installed in October 2009; Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell, installed in July 2009; Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal Chief Magistrate William R. Guglietta, installed in February 2008; Workers' Compensation Court Chief Judge George E. Healy, Jr., installed in August 2004; Family Court Chief Judge Haiganush R. Bedrosian, installed in December 2010; and District Court Chief Judge Jeanne E. LaFazia, installed in April 2010.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal	I
Letter to the General Assembly	III
Table of Contents	V

## THE COURTS

Supreme Court	2
Administrative Office of State Courts	4
Superior Court	10
Family Court	12
District Court	14
Workers' Compensation Court	16
Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal	18

## JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE

At a Glance	22
Judiciary's Caseload Summary	23
Statistical Tables for All Courts	24

## COURT STRUCTURE

Rhode Island Court Structure	42
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# *The Courts*





The Rhode Island Supreme Court, with Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell, seated, and standing, left to right, Maureen McKenna Goldberg, William P. Robinson III, Francis X. Flaherty, and Gilbert V. Indeglia.

## SUPREME COURT

### Appellate Mediation Program

The annual number of cases added to the Appellate Mediation Program for civil matters continued to hover around 200 for 2010. Ten mediator-justices were available to provide services to the program. The program increased its resolution rate to over 50 percent in 2010. More than 92 percent of participants indicated they would recommend the program to others.

### Clerk's Office

In May 2010, the Clerk's Office launched online attorney registration through the new Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal. From the portal, attorneys can update their contact information, pay annual attorney registration fees, and change their attorney status. Newly admitted attorneys can also use the portal to obtain a bar number. Online attorney registration has significantly reduced the administrative burden of manual processing. Prior to the portal's launch, the Clerk's Office manually entered attorney registration information for Rhode Island's 7,000 registering attorneys and manually recorded approximately \$1 million in registration fees each year. Attorneys can now update their contact information online and pay their registration fees electronically using a credit card or electronic check.

With the portal's launch, the Clerk's Office and the court administration also instituted bulk email communication with members of the bar. Through this new process, the Clerk's Office and the court administration can provide attorneys with immediate notification on the latest court news, including court calendar suspensions during bad weather.

### Law Clerk Department

For 2010, the Law Clerk Department had a very productive term. The department membership rose to 16 law clerks thus increasing its workload and versatility. The law clerks worked on approximately 177 Superior Court trial assignments in addition to their work with motion calendars, special calendars, the Family and District Courts, and the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal Appeals Panel. Overall, the law clerks provide legal research and writing assistance to the various trial courts of the Rhode Island Judiciary. Such assignments encompass civil, criminal, and administrative matters. Additionally, the law clerks assist in classrooms for Law Day and with the updating of bench books. Some law clerks also volunteer to serve as guardians ad litem in Mary Moe proceedings.

The Law Clerk Department continued its ongoing initiatives and had many accomplishments. At the outset of the judicial term, the law clerks participated in a comprehensive and updated orientation program, which is held during the week before the fall term. To enhance the orientation program and ensure continuity with existing assignments, each county and most special calendar law clerks now spend a day or so with the department's previously assigned clerk. This expanded orientation has achieved a smoother transition among the changing staff. Also, the Law Clerk Department has continued its use of interns from multiple law schools who often receive course credit for various internships during the academic year. Expansion of the intern program has effectively increased the production of the department.

Monthly department meetings are held at each of the courthouses to review new case law, discuss legal topics, and review procedures. These meetings now regularly include judges as speakers and include actual presentations in the courtrooms. Such monthly meetings promote consistency in work product and procedures, familiarity with the different courthouses, and cohesiveness among the department members. In 2010, the Law Clerk Department also assisted with the updating and expansion of a court bench book. Virtually all members of the department assisted with this project. Finally, our comprehensive and computerized case tracking system has now been fully implemented in the Law Clerk Department. This new, improved system has proven most efficient in the processing of assignments and the tracking of case files.

The overall goal of the department remains twofold. The Law Clerk Department strives to maintain a well-trained staff of law clerks to assist the Judiciary with legal research and writing requests. At the same time, the Law Clerk Department affords law school graduates an opportunity to work with the Rhode Island Judiciary to gain experience in diverse areas of the law and an understanding of the judicial process.

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF STATE COURTS

### Community Outreach and Public Relations

The Office of Community Outreach and Public Relations assisted the Chief Justice in forging partnerships with the Rhode Island Department of Education and the Rhode Island Bar Association to promote a civics education initiative for middle schools. The project – called iCivics – was founded by retired United States Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who was concerned that students were not getting the information and tools they needed to participate in society. To fill that void and to provide better materials and support, Justice O'Connor founded iCivics, which is a free program.

The Chief Justice became the state chair for the iCivics initiative, and the state court administrator and a member of the Bar Association are coordinators. The programs and materials were developed cooperatively among academic institutions and experts in the field of games and digital entertainment. Lesson plans that reinforce and expand on the games are intended to meet national and state education standards. A Rhode Island committee met regularly toward the end of 2010 to plan the introduction of iCivics to schools across the state in 2011.

The office continued its focus on promoting access to justice, user-friendly courts, and community outreach. It continued to work with the Department of Education to attend career fairs and to offer informative programs about the courts to public and private schools throughout the state. It helped to expand the Judiciary's "Your Day in Court" informational brochure, now printed in four languages. Relations with the scouting community grew last year to include an all-day workshop in the courts for a Law Merit Badge newly offered by the Narragansett Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

In 2010, the office assumed direction of the Judiciary's "Summer Institutes" program, which brings teachers into the courts for week-long seminars on behalf of the Rhode Island Legal/Educational Partnership. This program serves from 60 to 100 teachers each summer. The office partners with the state Department of Children, Youth, and Families, the Public Defender, the Attorney General, the Child Advocate, the Department of Corrections, and the Wyatt Detention Center for this annual program.

The office also continued its annual outreach with the Naval War College in Newport and arranged for the Supreme Court to continue its regular practice of "riding the circuit" to conduct oral arguments of actual cases in the outlying cities and towns. In 2010, the Court sat in Richmond at Charliho Regional High School.

### Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit

The Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit prepared in 2010 for the conversion of its records to an electronic database, expected to go live in 2011. After the conversion, the police will be able to enter case information electronically and no longer need to fill out lengthy paper forms that had to be mailed or hand-delivered to this office. Domestic violence, sexual assault, and child molestation cases will be automatically sent to the office, providing for greater accountability and the savings of time.

Statistics showed about a 5 percent increase in domestic violence cases from 2009 to 2010.

### Facilities and Operations

With a continued staffing shortage of 25 percent, the Facilities and Operations/Security Office's goal remains the same - improving building safety and security in all of our facilities. Daily operations at each of the courthouses have been greatly improved through efficient planning and execution of general and capital projects. Construction is always an ongoing endeavor to improve the safety of all court facilities as well as to preserve our older, historic courthouses.

The office continually strives to provide a safe environment for judges, employees, and members of the general public who visit the courthouses. At the Garrahy Judicial Complex, we completed the design and construction of a gun room which has greatly improved the safety to staff and law enforcement officers. Additionally, we have completed the design and engineering phase to upgrade surveillance cameras from digital to Internet Protocol (IP) cameras. The Garrahy Judicial Complex will be the first facility to receive the new Internet Protocol (IP) system. In April 2009, the Judiciary took over management of the employee parking lot located behind Garrahy. Security controllers were designed and installed, allowing remote access and management of the parking lot.

Many improvements have also been made to the fire alarm and suppression systems statewide. New systems have been installed to improve notification and suppression.

The office continues to strive to improve HVAC in all facilities. Our goal is to operate as efficiently as possible. The mechanical plant at the Licht Judicial Complex has been completed, making it more efficient and 100 percent gas. Improvements in the HVAC systems in the courthouses have yielded significant savings in operational costs. Engineering studies to increase efficiencies at the Fogarty Judicial Annex, the Garrahy Judicial Complex, and the Licht Judicial Complex are ongoing.



### **Judicial Education and Mandatory Continuing Legal Education**

All state court justices, judges, and magistrates attended the annual judicial conferences held in March, June, and September 2010. The highlight of this year's programming was a 54-year retrospective given by retired Chief Justice Joseph R. Weisberger, wherein he reflected on his experiences and inspirations from his career on the bench. Additionally, local and national guest speakers explored subjects that included: evidence, psychology, and the law; medical expert testimony; domestic violence and sexual assault; impartiality and recusal; interventions for the impaired attorney; and post-conviction relief.

The Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Commission chairman, the Honorable William P. Robinson III, its members, and staff contributed to the design phase of the attorney online portal which when launched in 2011 will allow attorneys to view, maintain, and manage their MCLE data through electronic access. The commission also participated in new lawyer introduction to practice, online curriculum expansion, and compliance advisory efforts on both an in-state and national level.

The commission's executive director, Holly Hitchcock, continued to play a leadership role in the implementation phase of the "Equipping our Lawyers" national project, sponsored by the American Law Institute – American Bar Association and the Association for Continuing Legal Education Administrators. The project facilitates greater continuity within the legal education continuum among law schools, bar admissions, and law practice. Current and future trends in legal education can be viewed through an online blog and monthly newsletter at [www.equippingourlawyers.org](http://www.equippingourlawyers.org).

### **Judicial Records Center**

The Judicial Records Center (JRC) provides secure storage for the semi-active, inactive, and archival records of the Rhode Island Judiciary. The JRC also provides efficient reference services for the courts, members of the bar, and members of the public who require court records for research purposes.

In 2010 the JRC accessioned 85,547 case files in 2,962 boxes. The JRC now stores over 4,882,858 case files in 92,447 cubic foot boxes and 5,124 manuscript court docket, minute, and record books. The JRC staff responded to over 64,000 requests for records during the year. These included over 36,000 individual records that were viewed at the JRC. Staff also provided access to an additional 15,000 case files for researchers for credit agencies and social policy institutes.

There were 9,746 archival requests for the pre-1900 court records in 2010. These include requests from genealogists as well as graduate students, lawyers, and professional historians. Scholars investigated a broad range of topics including:

divorce in colonial Rhode Island; African-American women in the New Republic; colonial naval history; coroners' inquests in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; dual citizenship; and slavery in Rhode Island. Graduate classes in history and historical preservation from the University of Rhode Island and Roger Williams University toured the judicial archives to learn about the value of the court records as a research resource.

Significant progress was made in enhancing the preservation of the court record books with the implementation of a grant project funded through the Rhode Island Supreme Court Historical Society Fund of the Rhode Island Foundation. Under the terms of this grant, custom fitting archival phase-boxes are being constructed for over 260 manuscript court record books that date from 1671 through 1900.

### **Judicial Technology Center**

In April 2010, the Judicial Technology Center (JTC) developed and implemented a new juvenile case management system. This system was custom designed according to the business processes of the Juvenile Department within our Family Court. Also included in the new system was an adoption registry.

Both the juvenile case management system and the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal are owned by the Rhode Island Judiciary. Since the JTC supports these systems, any yearly maintenance contracts or fees are minimal.

The JTC installed a network attached storage device. This has given the Judiciary increased online disk storage that can be used for archiving files. The JTC also installed more virtual machines in 2010. Since installing the application servers for juvenile, online attorney, and case management, the JTC has realized a much more efficient use of the servers and hardware.

The Judiciary implemented a JAVS CaseServer to maximize the digital recording systems that are currently utilized. The CaseServer allows a central management interface of users, groups, and courtrooms. The recordings can be shared across the Judiciary. A new web interface was installed for locating the recordings while events, location, or judge can be searched.

With the increased interest in video conferencing, the JTC has implemented an ISDN Gateway that will serve all of the video systems on the network. The Gateway utilizes a block of telephone numbers and converts the communications to Internet Protocol (IP). This has added more flexibility to the courts' video conferencing network.

In 2010, the Judiciary continued to work with the state Division of Taxation to intercept income tax refunds headed toward people who owe the courts money. The Judiciary collected \$358,700 from the tax intercept program and collected \$109,440.00 in sales of data and reports.

### **Office of Court Interpreters**

During 2010, the Office of Court Interpreters provided services to over 8,000 court users. These services were delivered during procedures in different civil and criminal court matters, from arraignments to trials and appeals. The office either performed or made arrangements to provide services in at least 18 languages.

Through a new statistical system set in place in 2010, the office is now able to track different services performed during court sessions. This statistical information includes the case type, the length of time a service was provided, who requested the service, and where and what type of service was provided.

In 2010, the interpreters' page on the Judiciary's website was translated into two more languages, Portuguese and Russian. Also, through this page, interested parties have been able to request language services by contacting the office at [interpreterfeedback@courts.ri.gov](mailto:interpreterfeedback@courts.ri.gov).

The office continued to collaborate with the Community College of Rhode Island by providing mentoring and internship opportunities for students in the bilingual judicial interpreter program. In addition, the Office of Court Interpreters held discussion groups for high school students regarding court interpretation and its importance in today's world.

### **State Law Library**

2010 was a year of innovation and rewards at the Rhode Island State Law Library. Extensive renovations to the library, underwritten by a generous grant from The Champlin Foundations, were completed in 2010. Thanks to Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell, an Open House was held in early May to showcase the library's restored beauty, gleaming paint and rich history. Judicial officers, attorneys, court and agency personnel and friends of the library attended the event, which featured fine food and festivities. A third phase of renovation began in the foyer area of the library in late 2010, with funds again received from a Champlin Foundations grant.

The library received a grant to convert a selection of its print resources into digital format. Funding for "Rhode Island Treasures" was awarded by the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services, using funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, under the federal Library Services and Technology Act. The State Law Library, in conjunction with the State Library, will undertake the digitization of some of its more valuable and unique state materials. The documents chosen for this project will be Rhode Island research materials of interest to students and historians, as well as attorneys. Digitization will protect these materials from overuse and deterioration while providing access and availability via the Internet.

The library continued its award-winning partnership with the Office of Community Outreach through the "Justice Rules" program. During the school year, interactive classes were held for school children, scouts, young adults and other groups. These tours introduced participants to the library, spotlighted the research tools available and provided them with firsthand knowledge of the judicial process.



Bottom - Left to right: Edward C. Clifton, Judith C. Savage, Patricia A. Hurst, Robert D. Krause, Alice Bridget Gibney (Presiding Justice), Melanie Wilk Thunberg, Francis J. Darigan, Jr., Michael A. Silverstein, and Netfi C. Vogel.  
 Second Row - Left to right: Brian P. Stern, Bennett R. Gallo, Allen P. Rubine, Daniel A. Procaccini, Edwin J. Gale, Stephen P. Nugent, Susan E. McGuirl, Jeffrey A. Lanphear, William E. Carnes, Jr., and Kristin E. Rodgers.  
 Top - Left to right: Gordon M. Smith, Patrick T. Burke, Patricia L. Harwood, Sarah Taff-Carter, Walter Stone, Brian Van Couyghen, William J. McAtee, and Susan L. Kenny.

## SUPERIOR COURT

### Master Criminal Calendar Call

The Superior Court conducted a Master Criminal Calendar Call on December 13 and December 14. Judges, magistrates, and attorneys from the offices of the Attorney General and Public Defender conferenced 150 cases. Determinations were made as to the specific trial attorneys, anticipated length of trials, numbers of witnesses, and unique issues. Each conference included discussions regarding case posture in terms of trial readiness and disposition potential.

Fifty-three cases were disposed of and 50 cases were deemed trial ready in early 2011. Forty-four cases involving domestic violence issues were addressed and given priority status. Fourteen of those cases were disposed of by plea or dismissal after conference. The remaining 30 cases will be managed by one judge as they progress toward trial.

### Civil Trials

Subsequent to the Civil Calendar Push of 2009, a major civil trial effort geared to disposing of older cases was conducted. Of the 1,068 cases conferenced the last quarter of 2009, 749, or 70 percent, were closed in 2010.

### Court Annexed Arbitration

The Court Annexed Arbitration Program, instituted in 1988, is a compulsory non-binding alternative resolution process for cases where damages sought are \$100,000.00 or less. The intent of the program is to provide an expeditious and cost effective way to resolve civil disputes while at the same time reducing the volume of cases assigned to the Civil Trial Calendar.

Arbitration Push Calendars were held on two days to determine case status. The calendars addressed 426 cases and 215, or 51 percent, were disposed.

### Civil Settlement Week

In December 2010, the Superior Court conducted its annual Settlement Week. Volunteer attorneys mediated 191 cases of which 112, or 60 percent, were settled.

### Adult Drug Court

The Rhode Island Adult Drug Court provides a mechanism by which nonviolent felony offenders suffering from addiction may be referred to the appropriate substance abuse counseling program and ultimately adopt a drug-free lifestyle. In 2010, the Adult Drug Court had 161 active participants and 85 people actively reviewed at any given time.

The defendants must comply with rigid terms and conditions set forth in the Adult Drug Court contract. The Adult Drug Court has proudly graduated 262 individuals who, among other accomplishments, have returned to school, gained meaningful employment, and re-established family connections, elements lost through their substance addiction.

### Gun Court

The Gun Court, which heard its first case in 1994, has been a tremendous success, emulated by as many as 20 other jurisdictions. All Providence/Bristol County criminal cases with firearms charges as specified in G.L. 1956 § 8-2-15.1 are assigned to the Gun Court. Trial is then scheduled within 60 days of the completion of discovery.

The dramatic impact on the prosecution of gun crimes is seen in the reduction of the disposition time, from 18 months to four months from the case filing date. In 2010, 205 cases were disposed of on the Gun Court Calendar, with an average time for disposition of 197 days. In addition, 1,519 jail terms have been imposed since the program's inception. Ninety-five percent of cases result in the imposition of a sentence.

### Medical Malpractice

The Superior Court has approximately 404 medical malpractice cases pending statewide. Inherent in these cases are unique scheduling issues which, historically, have resulted in significant expenditures of time and resources of both bench and bar.

In January 2010, the court addressed these concerns by designating a single judge to manage and address all scheduling issues. In addition, each of the cases would be conferenced and monitored by that judge to determine when it is ripe for meaningful mediation and trial assignment.



Bottom - Left to right: John A. Mutter, Michael B. Forte, Haiganush R. Bedrosian (Chief Judge), Kathleen A. Voccola, and Francis J. Murray, Jr.

Top - Left to right: Patricia K. Asquith, Armando Monaco II, John J. O'Brien, Jr., John E. McCann III, Laureen D'Ambra, Stephen J. Capineri, Debra E. DiSegna, Karen Lynch Bernard, Jeanne L. Shepard, George N. DiMuro, Angela M. Paulhus, and Edward H. Newman.

Not Pictured - Raymond E. Shawcross and Thomas Wright.

## FAMILY COURT

### National Adoption Day

The Rhode Island Family Court hosted the 7th Annual National Adoption Day on November 20, 2010 and welcomed over 225 participants. Rhode Island's celebration coincided with events being held across the United States to draw attention to the adoption process and the large number of children available for adoption. The court finalized 18 adoptions with 16 different families. The Rhode Island Judiciary has not only demonstrated how opening the doors of the court can change people's lives but, more importantly, how it can have a tremendous impact on the lives of so many children who need a place to call home.

### Court Appointed Special Advocate

The Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) received national certification recognizing the quality of its work on behalf of abused and neglected children. The National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association has rewarded the quality of advocacy by the CASA Office with certification. This certification recognizes that CASA has demonstrated a strong capacity to provide excellent services to the abused and neglected children within Rhode Island.

CASA operates with 200 sworn volunteers advocating for the neglected and abused children statewide in the custody of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). CASA volunteers are members of the community who step forward to be a voice for children in state care, undergo 30 hours of course training, and are asked to give an 18-month commitment to the program.

The CASA volunteers assist the full-time staff of 10 lawyers, five social caseworkers, and four support staff in representing approximately 3,000 children in the care of DCYF. Together the CASA staff and volunteers work to ensure that each child in state custody has a voice in the proceedings before the Family Court.

### Child Support/Collections

The Child Support/Collections Office collected \$84,157,851.27 for the calendar year 2010. During this time, magistrates heard 22,583 child support cases. The office continues to work with Child Support Enforcement in efforts to increase the amount of electronic fund transfers. Effective August 2010, the Family Court partnered with the Department of Human Services and the State of Connecticut to streamline child support payments.

### Mediation

The Family Court mediation program continued to be successful and expanded to include all counties last year. Over two-thirds of the cases referred to mediation are resolved without the need for a contested court hearing. Cases involving custody, visitation, and child support are now referred to a mediator within 24 hours, with the goal of engaging the litigants before the next court hearing. The ultimate goal is to allow all parties to address their issues and work together in being part of the solution.

### Juvenile Justice

In examining both national and local trends, there has been a favorable decline in juvenile arrests and filings. Although there is great hope that the decline will continue, experts agree that reform and innovation are still necessary steps to improve the juvenile justice system. One of the main efforts in the field is to create alternatives to the formal legal process.

Locally, Rhode Island has been at the forefront with judicial programs that serve as alternatives to the formal calendars. The Juvenile Drug Court, Re-Entry Court, the Truancy Diversion Program, and the Mental Health Clinic have all been successful innovations that address juvenile justice needs in a highly specialized manner.

In an effort to address issues of disproportionate minority contact, the court has partnered with Rhode Island Community Justice. Since 2004, the Family Court has been proactive to create policy and affect change in areas where ethnic disparities exist.

Finally, the Family Court has remained cognizant of the fact that a juvenile's involvement with education is essential for later success in life. To that end, the court has continued to refine its Truancy Calendar in order to provide a range of options for children with a pattern of unexcused absences. In its efforts to support prevention, the court has served on the Youth-At-Risk Committee. This interdisciplinary group consists of several state and community providers that have convened to reach the goal of implementing support at the earliest possible stages of truancy. In the last year, the committee rolled out a "Truancy Prevention Tool Kit" to educational professionals, parents, and community programs. This toolkit has provided an array of options to address truancy prior to filing a petition.



Bottom - Left to right: Madeline Quirk, Frank J. Cenerini, Jeanne E. LaFazia (Chief Judge), Elaine T. Bucci, and William C. Clifton.

Top - Left to right: Walter Gorman, Stephen M. Isherwood, Colleen M. Hastings, Anthony Capraro, Pamela Woodcock Pfeiffer, Raphael A. Ovalles, Mary E. McCaffrey, Joseph T. Houlihan, Jr., Christine S. Jabour, and Joseph P. Ippolito, Jr.

## DISTRICT COURT

### Pretrial Services Unit Expanded to Newport and Washington Counties

In 2010, the District Court's Pretrial Services Unit (PTSU) expanded to Newport and Washington Counties. Carol Giordano MSW, LICSW, has joined the District Court as director of pretrial services and will oversee all PTSU operations statewide. Ms. Giordano, formerly with The Kent Center, joined PTSU in September 2010. The expansion of the PTSU establishes a statewide system that will assist the court to better assess and address defendants who suffer from mental health, alcohol, or substance issues through early intervention while monitoring conditions of bail in order to ensure the public's safety.

### New Programs

The District Court implemented two innovative programs with the assistance of grants awarded through the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

District Court in Kent County is the pilot location for Rhode Island's first Jail Diversion Program for veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and for individuals diagnosed with trauma-related disorders. This SAMHSA grant was obtained through a partnership between The Kent Center and the state Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals. This pilot program will hopefully expand into other counties by 2012. The District Court is also working to

establish a statewide Veterans' Court as a designated calendar within District Court in order to address the increasing challenges now faced by veterans and active military as they return home and attempt to reintegrate into society.

The District Court, in partnership with Fellowship Health Resources, has obtained an additional grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to start an intensive pretrial diversion program for the nonviolent misdemeanor offender affected by mental illness and/or a co-occurring disorder. Planning is nearly complete and the program should be accepting referrals in the immediate future.

### Imaging Project

Chief Judge Jeanne E. LaFazia's directive regarding a paperless document system for the District Court began in 2010. The District Court, in conjunction with the Supreme Court's Judicial Technology Center, is in the early stages of this project.

### Online Payment System

The District Court, in conjunction with the Judicial Technology Center and the Supreme Court's Finance and Budget Office, are in the final testing phase of the online payment system. This system is expected to be operating in 2011.

### Renovation to Courtroom 3A in the Garrahy Judicial Complex

The District Court, in conjunction with the Supreme Court's Office of Facilities and Operations, has begun renovations to Courtroom 3A. The much needed restoration to this area will enhance security, provide more audience seating, and update the video conferencing area. Upon completion, this courtroom will be used for a variety of District Court hearings.

### Mental Health Calendar

In 2010, the District Court added Butler Hospital to the Eleanor Slater Hospital as a venue for mental health hearings on Fridays, alternating between the two facilities. The utilization of Butler and Eleanor Slater Hospitals provides the patients, doctors, and support staff a convenient location for the safe transportation of patients. The proximity of these two facilities also provides the patients and support staff of other hospitals options with similar transportation advantages.

In addition, the District Court is now digitally recording all mental health hearings. All hearings are currently downloaded and secured in the Judiciary's computer database, and copies are readily available on compact disc.

### District Court Welcomes Three New Associate Judges

In 2010, the District Court welcomed three new Associate Judges - Colleen M. Hastings, Christine S. Jabour, and Steven M. Isherwood.



Bottom - Left to right: Janette A. Bertness, Debra L. Olsson, George E. Healy, Jr. (Chief Judge), Bruce Q. Morin, and Edward P. Sowa, Jr.

Top - Left to right: Robert E. Hardman, George T. Salem, Jr., Dianne M. Connor, Hugo L. Ricci, Jr., and Robert M. Ferrieri.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION COURT

A review of the annual statistics demonstrates that the Workers' Compensation Court has again met its statutory charge to provide efficient case management in all disputes between an employer and an employee regarding work-related injuries. The number of petitions filed declined again in 2010 (7,712 cases received in 2009; 7,406 cases filed in 2010). The most significant decline in filings was in original petitions for compensation benefits. These cases involve disputes between the employer and the employee with respect to the initial liability for a workers' compensation claim. The decline in these filings roughly tracked the unemployment rate. Since less people are actively employed, less people are being injured on the job and fewer petitions ensue. While this is not a desirable method of case management, it is certainly a reliable explanation for the decline in filing activity.

One statistic that does raise some cause for concern is the increase in the number of petitions to obtain payment of medical expenses and petitions to enforce payment. These types of cases generally signal a breakdown in the benefit delivery system either because the insurer or self-insured employer has failed to make payment in accordance with the law or because a medical service provider has been providing excessive or inappropriate treatment. Since these petitions demand a place on the pretrial calendar and must be reached for pretrial within 21 days, this trend could adversely affect the

court's ability to handle the more complicated cases effectively. The court has created a special calendar to expedite the resolution of these matters but there is some concern that if these filings continue to increase, that calendar may be overwhelmed.

Fortunately, the efficiency with which the judges and staff have managed the caseload has been remarkably consistent. As it has in most years, the court disposed of more cases than it received (7,406 cases filed; 7,496 cases closed). In 2009, 65.8 percent of the cases filed with the court were closed within 30 days and 83.7 percent were resolved within 60 days. In the most recent year, the numbers are practically identical. It is also interesting to note the increase in the number of cases in which claims for trial have been filed. While the number of claims for trial does not create a significant cause for concern, it is supportive of the court's hypothesis that, as the system evolved and became more sophisticated, two types of cases would emerge. The court would receive a series of cases which could be resolved at the pretrial level in a rather perfunctory fashion. It would also be called upon to address increasingly more complex legal and medical issues which, by their nature, would not conclude at the pretrial stage of the proceedings.

While the efficient, equitable management of litigation is of paramount concern, the court's mission to serve goes far beyond that. The judges and staff of the Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court have long been committed to the principle that community outreach is an essential element of the court's mission. To that end, the court has been a leader in several community outreach initiatives. The court continues to actively support the Immigrant Workers' Project. This program brings judges and staff from the court into the community to instruct workers about the right to a safe workplace and their entitlement to workers' compensation benefits if injured on the job. Thus, judges and staff have appeared on Spanish radio and at community forums to meet with the state's newest citizens to teach them about their rights as workers. In the past year, the court has also appeared at several career day programs sponsored by local high schools and educational collaboratives to meet directly with high school students to discuss the numerous career opportunities available in the Judiciary.

The YES-RI Program remains the hallmark of the court's outreach effort. This program was created by court staff six years ago to teach young workers about safe work practices. Experience has shown that young people are often the most vulnerable to injury. They are unaware of safe work practices and are often misled into taking needless risks. The YES-RI program was devised to demonstrate to young workers that the choices they make as they begin their careers may have a profound impact on how they are able to live the rest of their lives. This program also teaches students that they are entitled to workers' compensation benefits in the event that a work-related injury occurs. This program has been extremely well received and the number of schools that request it continues to grow.



Left to right: Albert Ciullo, R. David Cruise, Lillian M. Almeida, William R. Guglietta (Chief Magistrate), Domenic DiSandro III, William T. Noonan, Alan R. Goulart, and Edward C. Parker.

## RHODE ISLAND TRAFFIC TRIBUNAL

For the seventh straight year, the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal (RITT) heard over 100,000 violations. In addition to these filings, the RITT also heard over 3,000 motion hearings and handled over 4,000 show cause hearings. The RITT's Appellate Division heard 117 traffic and municipal court appeals and 333 appeals from the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Despite the large number of cases filed with the RITT during 2010, the court was able to dispose over 104,000 violations, representing 104 percent of the cases that were filed. This continues the trend at the RITT of disposing more cases than are filed within a calendar year.

The RITT continued to be a major contributor to the general revenue fund for the State. In calendar year 2010, the RITT receipted as payments over \$13 million dollars. In conjunction with the Department of Revenue, the RITT was also a major contributor with the State of Rhode Island's Tax Intercept Program, collecting over \$358,000.

In addition to the amount of revenue raised by the RITT, there were several judicial functions that were expanded to assist the court in handling the thousands of citizens appearing on its calendars. In 2010 the Chief Magistrate expanded the accessibility of the Judges/Magistrates to the public by continuing the miscellaneous "2A" calendar. This calendar allows any "walk-in" motorist to have access to a Judge or Magistrate during the working hours of the RITT. The court also restructured its website and telephone payment processes to reduce costs to the motorist and provided an automated teller machine in the main concourse of the courthouse so that motorists may have access to funds to enable them to pay their fines and court costs.

The RITT played an increasing role in providing services to the community. Many Judges/Magistrates of the court participated in numerous training programs offered by the Rhode Island State Police Training Academy and the Municipal Police Training

Academy. These included presentations on court procedure as well as a moot court demonstration on motor vehicle violations. Additionally, the RITT was a major participant in the Rhode Island Legal/Education Partnership. This participation included hosting several moot court competitions for numerous middle and high school students of our State.

The RITT was a presenter at the 2010 Rhode Island Bar Association Annual Meeting. The seminar on Traffic Tribunal practice was attended by over 100 members of the Rhode Island Bar. It gave the court an opportunity to meet members of the Bar and discuss the many issues and challenges facing Traffic Courts in Rhode Island and across the country.

The primary focus of the RITT in 2010 was to establish an important relationship with the 25 Municipal Courts in our state. The RITT was a principal speaker at the Municipal Court Judges' Association Annual Meeting. The RITT visited six Municipal Courts in an effort to review their procedures and promote best practices for the administration of justice in those courts. The RITT staff worked with the Municipal Court clerks and their judges to create better lines of communication, ensure accurate reporting of fines and costs, reducing errors in reporting dispositions, and ensuring that payments are being made in a timely manner.

Consistent with the oversight function of the Municipal Courts, the RITT met with several representatives of five cities and towns which were interested in creating municipal courts in their jurisdictions. These meetings included discussions of reporting requirements, financial responsibility, and an accurate analysis of potential revenue generation by the RITT.

In addition, the RITT worked extensively on the implementation of the "Colin Foote Act." This legislation created new penalties for multiple moving offenses and was enacted to address the issue of individuals convicted of four separate and distinct offenses within an 18-month period of time.

The RITT has continued to implement the E-Citation program. In 2010, the Barrington, Charlestown, Glocester, Westerly, West Warwick, and Woonsocket Police Departments joined the State Police, Burrillville, East Providence, Narragansett, North Kingstown, Pawtucket, Portsmouth and Richmond as E-Citation agencies. In 2010, 62,755 E-Citations were issued. This represents an increase of 15,457 E-Citations over the previous year.

The RITT continued to implement an IBM FileNet Enterprise Content Management System (ECM). An integrated data entry application was implemented to allow for case entry using the scanned copy of the summons. This enhancement backfills the information where available and greatly improves the capabilities of the data entry staff and data quality. The RITT has scanned over 1,071,286 documents consisting of over 4.3 million images. The staff has completed scanning cases with outstanding balances back to 1997, as well as keeping current with new case scanning. The implementation of the ECM system has greatly improved operational efficiency and allows the RITT to be more responsive to public inquiries.

# Judicial Performance





## AT A GLANCE

### SUMMARY OF JUDICIAL BUDGETS

Description	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010 Enacted
Supreme Court Operations	23,993,244	23,380,828	25,316,693
Defense of Indigents	3,345,627	3,549,736	3,365,689
Superior Court Operations	17,928,481	17,968,386	18,733,995
Jury Operations	1,441,642	1,282,855	1,673,014
Family Court	17,416,346	15,433,016	17,506,835
District Court	9,983,612	9,776,172	10,248,515
Traffic Tribunal	7,456,121	7,368,034	7,620,894
Judicial Tenure and Discipline	97,166	106,404	109,620
<b>General Revenue Total</b>	<b>81,662,239</b>	<b>78,865,431</b>	<b>84,575,255</b>
Supreme Court	212,785	285,525	121,120
Superior Court	85,303	96,774	-
Family Court	1,328,486	2,448,684	2,205,407
<b>Federal Funds Total</b>	<b>1,626,574</b>	<b>2,830,983</b>	<b>2,326,527</b>
Supreme Court	1,252,257	1,369,463	1,308,353
Superior Court	-	277,841	312,000
District Court	264,916	358,644	424,421
Workers' Compensation Court	7,279,316	6,837,669	7,583,440
<b>Restricted Receipts Total</b>	<b>8,796,489</b>	<b>8,843,617</b>	<b>9,628,214</b>
Supreme Court	1,704,163	1,385,679	850,000
<b>Other Funds Total</b>	<b>1,704,163</b>	<b>1,385,679</b>	<b>850,000</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>93,789,465</b>	<b>91,925,710</b>	<b>97,379,996</b>
Percent of State Budget	1.44%	1.72%	1.24%
<b>Percent of State Budget General Fund</b>	<b>2.72%</b>	<b>2.75%</b>	<b>2.87%</b>

### REVENUE DATA

Description	Type	FY 2009	Calendar Year 2009
Supreme Court	Fees	18,551	18,730
Superior Court	Fines	83,074	75,401
	Fees	1,651,092	1,679,144
Family Court	Fees	527,442	554,707
District Court	Fines	2,764,477	2,685,359
	Fees	2,454,255	2,552,344
Traffic Tribunal	Fines	11,210,574	10,996,832
Probation and Parole	Fines	1,753,161	1,585,964
Warrant Fees	Fines	537,477	507,611
Writ of Execution	Fees	246,941	285,138
Miscellaneous Judicial Revenue	Miscellaneous	346,951	347,572
Domestic Violence Fines	Fines	37,118	29,170
Sex Offenders Fines	Fines	2,885	2,535
Department of Health	Fines	430,210	377,985
State Fire Marshal	Fines	1,750	2,500
<b>Total General Fund</b>		<b>22,065,957</b>	<b>21,700,993</b>
Department of Labor and Training	Fines	148,395	146,215
Disciplinary Counsel	Fees	1,123,245	1,146,610
Department of Environmental Management	Fines	562	902
Violent Crimes Compensation	Fines	1,750,241	1,554,012
<b>Total Restricted Receipt</b>		<b>3,022,443</b>	<b>2,847,739</b>
Rhode Island Legal Services	Fines/Fees	254,579	418,562
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Fines/Fees	45,039	114,329
Restitution	Fines	1,260,288	1,391,407
Municipalities	Fines	2,062,872	2,019,023
<b>Other Total</b>		<b>3,622,778</b>	<b>3,943,322</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>28,711,179</b>	<b>28,492,053</b>

## AT A GLANCE continued

JUDGES	EMPLOYEES	FACILITIES
65 Judges (1 vacancy)	FTE Count	6 Courthouses
3 Minorities	723.3 authorized	(2 administrative buildings)
25 Female	673.6 average filled	74 Courtrooms
21 Magistrates (2 vacancies)		(5 shelled courtrooms,
5 Female		4 Grand Jury rooms)

### JUDICIARY'S CASELOAD SUMMARY

COURT	CASE TYPE	FILING/ HEARINGS	DISPOSITIONS
Supreme Court	Appeals	418	334
	Appellate Mediation	*90	*47
Superior Court	Felony	5,543	5,410
	Misdemeanor	251	265
	Civil	11,286	7,387
Family Court	Juvenile	8,959	9,861
	Divorce	3,897	3,949
	Miscellaneous Petitions	826	
	Abuse	2,399	2,271
	Child Support	*5,737	
	Support Hearings	**22,583	
District Court	Misdemeanors	26,811	25,649
	Small Claims	13,932	16,782
	Civil	23,942	19,711
	Abuse	992	
	Mental Health/Other	962	
	Administrative Appeals	215	
Workers' Compensation Court		7,406	7,496
Traffic Tribunal		83,419	84,927
<b>Total Filings and Dispositions</b>		<b>196,995</b>	<b>184,042</b>
<i>Including Support Hearings</i>		219,578	

#### APPELLATE MEDIATION PROGRAM - January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010

- 334 appeals disposed by the Supreme Court
- 47 (14%) of the 334 cases were disposed at some stage in the mediation process (percent of total)
  - 24 of the 47 were disposed (settled/withdrawn) at or after mediation
  - 23 of the 47 were disposed (dismissed/withdrawn) at a stage in the process before mediation
- As of December 31, 2010 – 6 cases scheduled for mediation
- As of December 31, 2010 – 37 cases pending screening for mediation
- Currently 10 retired justices/judges available to mediate appeals

\* Appellate Mediation cases are included in the Supreme Court appeals and, therefore, are not counted in the total filings and dispositions.

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

\*\*\* Support hearings represent the number of hearings held. Therefore, the same case may be counted more than once.

## SUPREME COURT APPELLATE CASELOAD

	2009	2010
<b>All Cases</b>		
Docketed	366	418
Disposed	339	334
Pending	480	543
<b>Criminal</b>		
Docketed	63	69
Disposed	68	55
Pending	119	124
<b>Civil</b>		
Docketed	159	172
Disposed	147	136
Pending	215	248
<b>Certiorari</b>		
Docketed	67	82
Disposed	69	68
Pending	77	92
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Docketed	77	95
Disposed	55	75
Pending	69	79

## SUPREME COURT MANNER OF DISPOSITION

	2009	2010
<b>Total Dispositions</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>334</b>
% Disposed of Within 300 Days of Docketing	44%	55%
<b>Before Argument</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>215</b>
Withdrawn	71	64
Dismissed	26	35
Petition Granted	12	7
Petition Denied	39	48
Other	33	61
<b>After Argument/Motion Calendar</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>69</b>
Withdrawn	3	0
Affirmed	69	59
Modified	1	1
Reversed	13	5
Other	5	4
Orders	21	11
Opinions	70	58
<b>After Argument/Merits</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>50</b>
Withdrawn	0	3
Affirmed	39	33
Modified	6	5
Reversed	21	9
Other	1	0
Orders	7	4
Opinions	60	46

## SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL CASELOAD

CIVIL ACTIONS		
	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>		
Cases Filed	10,778	11,286
Cases Disposed	7,285	7,387
<b>Providence/Bristol County</b>		
Cases Filed	7,458	7,623
Cases Disposed	4,774	4,912
<b>Kent County</b>		
Cases Filed	1,729	2,012
Cases Disposed	1,158	1,268
<b>Washington County</b>		
Cases Filed	892	934
Cases Disposed	697	669
<b>Newport County</b>		
Cases Filed	699	717
Cases Disposed	656	538

## SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL TRIAL CALENDAR SUMMARY

CIVIL ACTIONS		
	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>		
Added	1,781	1,683
Disposed	1,814	1,833
Pending	2,022	1,858
<b>Providence/Bristol County</b>		
Added	1,216	1,160
Disposed	1,152	1,151
Pending	1,585	1,505
<b>Kent County</b>		
Added	289	269
Disposed	324	307
Pending	182	185
<b>Washington County</b>		
Added	169	159
Disposed	163	221
Pending	159	111
<b>Newport County</b>		
Added	107	95
Disposed	175	154
Pending	96	57

SUPERIOR COURT  
MANNER OF DISPOSITION CIVIL TRIAL CALENDAR

<b>FELONIES</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>1,814</b>	<b>1,833</b>
Trials	35	59
Dismissed/Settled/Other	1,243	1,321
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	536	453
Verdicts	11	29
Judicial Decisions	24	30
<b>Providence/Bristol County</b>	<b>1,152</b>	<b>1,151</b>
Trials	10	14
Dismissed/Settled/Other	755	873
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	387	264
Verdicts	5	9
Judicial Decisions	5	5
<b>Kent County</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>307</b>
Trials	9	11
Dismissed/Settled/Other	235	209
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	80	87
Verdicts	0	5
Judicial Decisions	9	6
<b>Washington County</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>221</b>
Trials	4	11
Dismissed/Settled/Other	119	144
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	40	66
Verdicts	2	4
Judicial Decisions	2	7
<b>Newport County</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>154</b>
Trials	12	23
Dismissed/Settled/Other	134	95
Arbitration/Other Exceptions	29	36
Verdicts	4	11
Judicial Decisions	8	12

SUPERIOR COURT FELONY CASELOAD

<b>FELONIES</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Statewide</b>		
Cases Filed	5,156	5,543
Cases Disposed	5,370	5,410
Total Pending Cases	2,660	2,613
% Over 180 Days Old	47%	48%
<b>Providence/Bristol County</b>		
Cases Filed	3,716	3,915
Cases Disposed	3,964	3,886
Total Pending Cases	2,232	2,154
% Over 180 Days Old	52%	50%
<b>Kent County</b>		
Cases Filed	776	775
Cases Disposed	712	671
Total Pending Cases	191	271
% Over 180 Days Old	23%	18%
<b>Washington County</b>		
Cases Filed	389	499
Cases Disposed	403	488
Total Pending Cases	129	100
% Over 180 Days Old	16%	26%
<b>Newport County</b>		
Cases Filed	275	354
Cases Disposed	291	365
Total Pending Cases	108	88
% Over 180 Days Old	41%	43%

SUPERIOR COURT  
MANNER OF DISPOSITION FELONIES

<b>FELONIES</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>5,370</b>	<b>5,410</b>
Pled	4,788	4,783
Filed	25	24
Dismissed	489	534
Trial	62	67
Other	6	2
% Disposed of Within 180 Days	69%	65%
<b>Providence/Bristol County</b>	<b>3,964</b>	<b>3,886</b>
Pled	3,532	3,441
Filed	15	10
Dismissed	369	391
Trial	42	42
Other	6	2
% Disposed of Within 180 Days	64%	60%
<b>Kent County</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>671</b>
Pled	666	604
Filed	3	2
Dismissed	34	57
Trial	9	8
Other	0	0
% Disposed of Within 180 Days	86%	79%
<b>Washington County</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>488</b>
Pled	362	407
Filed	1	5
Dismissed	34	65
Trial	6	11
Other	0	0
% Disposed of Within 180 Days	76%	78%
<b>Newport County</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>365</b>
Pled	228	331
Filed	6	7
Dismissed	52	21
Trial	5	6
Other	0	0
% Disposed of Within 180 Days	70%	76%

SUPERIOR COURT MISDEMEANOR CASELOAD

<b>MISDEMEANORS</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Statewide</b>		
Cases Filed	217	251
Cases Disposed	238	265
Total Pending Cases	153	147
% Over 90 Days Old	78%	68%
<b>Providence/Bristol County</b>		
Cases Filed	87	122
Cases Disposed	127	126
Total Pending Cases	118	119
% Over 90 Days Old	86%	73%
<b>Kent County</b>		
Cases Filed	25	49
Cases Disposed	25	44
Total Pending Cases	8	10
% Over 90 Days Old	38%	40%
<b>Washington County</b>		
Cases Filed	30	26
Cases Disposed	24	31
Total Pending Cases	11	8
% Over 90 Days Old	55%	62%
<b>Newport County</b>		
Cases Filed	75	54
Cases Disposed	62	64
Total Pending Cases	16	10
% Over 90 Days Old	56%	40%

SUPERIOR COURT  
MANNER OF DISPOSITION MISDEMEANORS

MISDEMEANORS	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>265</b>
Pled	149	160
Filed	24	22
Dismissed	55	68
Trial	9	15
Other	1	0
% Disposed of Within 90 Days	46%	36%
<b>Providence/Bristol County</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>126</b>
Pled	88	84
Filed	11	9
Dismissed	26	23
Trial	2	10
Other	0	0
% Disposed of Within 90 Days	18%	18%
<b>Kent County</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>44</b>
Pled	15	25
Filed	2	3
Dismissed	6	13
Trial	1	3
Other	1	0
% Disposed of Within 90 Days	83%	59%
<b>Washington County</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>
Pled	15	17
Filed	3	0
Dismissed	5	12
Trial	1	2
Other	0	0
% Disposed of Within 90 Days	83%	48%
<b>Newport County</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>64</b>
Pled	31	34
Filed	8	10
Dismissed	18	20
Trial	5	0
Other	0	0
% Disposed of Within 90 Days	67%	53%

FAMILY COURT DOMESTIC RELATIONS

DOMESTIC	2009			2010		
	Filed	Disposed	Pending over 1 year	Filed	Disposed	Pending over 1 year
<b>Divorce Statewide</b>	<b>3,721</b>	<b>3,809</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3,897</b>	<b>3,949</b>	<b>25</b>
Providence/ Bristol County	2,382	2,454	28	2,483	2,551	17
Kent County	648	647	3	672	675	0
Washington County	423	429	2	466	457	8
Newport County	268	279	0	276	266	0
<b>Abuse Statewide</b>	<b>2,292</b>	<b>2,328</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>2,399</b>	<b>2,271</b>	<b>NA</b>
Providence/ Bristol County	1,724	1,749		1,860	1,826	
Kent County	364	380		339	278	
Washington County	101	104		95	97	
Newport County	103	95		105	70	

OTHER FILINGS

Statewide	2009	2010
Miscellaneous	749	826
Child Support	*6,284	*5,737
Total Pending Cases	**22,926	**22,583

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

\*\*Support hearings represent the number of hearings held. Therefore, the same case may be counted more than once.

FAMILY COURT JUVENILE CASELOAD

	2009		2010	
	Filed	Disposed	Filed	Disposed
Statewide	9,350	10,325	8,959	9,861
Wayward/Delinquent	6,065	6,524	5,618	6,385
Dependency/ Neglect/Abuse	1,591	1,836	1,563	1,702
Termination of Parental Rights	301	399	290	343
Adoption/Guardianship	467	490	482	457
Violations	874	1,016	926	914
Other	52	60	80	60

FAMILY COURT JUVENILE CASELOAD CONTINUED

	2009			2010		
	Filed	Disposed	Over 180 days	Filed	Disposed	Over 180 days
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>9,350</b>	<b>10,325</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>8,959</b>	<b>9,861</b>	<b>66%</b>
Wayward/Delinquent and Violations	6,939	7,540	68%	6,544	7,299	67%
Dependency/Neglect/ Abuse	1,591	1,836	45%	1,563	1,702	46%
Termination of Parental Rights	301	399	67%	290	343	76%
Adoption/Guardianship	519	550	NA	562	517	NA
<b>Providence/ Bristol County</b>	<b>6,577</b>	<b>7,376</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>6,429</b>	<b>6,998</b>	<b>68%</b>
Wayward/Delinquent and Violations	4,792	5,256	68%	4,682	5,144	69%
Dependency/Neglect/ Abuse	1,167	1,425	46%	1,158	1,230	48%
Termination of Parental Rights	259	309	69%	228	271	78%
Adoption/Guardianship	359	386	NA	361	353	NA
<b>Kent County</b>	<b>1,353</b>	<b>1,507</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>1,155</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>66%</b>
Wayward/Delinquent and Violations	1,017	1,167	66%	846	976	64%
Dependency/Neglect/ Abuse	222	185	50%	169	218	50%
Termination of Parental Rights	22	57	92%	46	32	90%
Adoption/Guardianship	92	98	NA	94	84	NA
<b>Washington County</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>65%</b>
Wayward/Delinquent and Violations	667	685	73%	597	678	67%
Dependency/Neglect/ Abuse	100	111	48%	146	143	36%
Termination of Parental Rights	4	13	0%	9	16	0%
Adoption/Guardianship	46	46	NA	54	43	NA
<b>Newport County</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>53%</b>
Wayward/Delinquent and Violations	463	432	69%	419	501	53%
Dependency/Neglect/ Abuse	102	115	30%	90	111	23%
Termination of Parental Rights	16	20	20%	7	24	33%
Adoption/Guardianship	22	20	NA	53	37	NA

## DISTRICT COURT SMALL CLAIMS

### SMALL CLAIMS CASELOAD SUMMARY

	2009		2010	
	Filed	Disposed	Filed	Disposed
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>19,218</b>	<b>20,975</b>	<b>13,932</b>	<b>16,782</b>
Second Division - Newport County	521	661	730	661
Third Division - Kent County	9,871	9,092	4,208	6,984
Fourth Division - Washington County	1,002	1,043	979	942
Sixth Division - Providence/ Bristol County	7,824	10,179	8,015	8,195

### MANNER OF DISPOSITION

	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>20,975</b>	<b>16,782</b>
Defaults	13,818	10,397
Settlements	5,195	5,061
Judgments	1,962	1,324
<b>Second Division - Newport County</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>661</b>
Defaults	384	428
Settlements	229	203
Judgments	48	30
<b>Third Division - Kent County</b>	<b>9,092</b>	<b>6,984</b>
Defaults	6,601	4,522
Settlements	2,092	2,022
Judgments	399	440
<b>Fourth Division - Washington County</b>	<b>1,043</b>	<b>942</b>
Defaults	678	571
Settlements	152	242
Judgments	213	129
<b>Sixth Division - Providence/ Bristol County</b>	<b>10,179</b>	<b>8,195</b>
Defaults	6,155	4,876
Settlements	2,722	2,594
Judgments	1,302	725

### CASES FILED - OTHER CATEGORIES

	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>1,919</b>	<b>2,169</b>
Domestic Abuse	979	992
Administrative Appeals	211	215
Mental Health Hearings	729	962

## DISTRICT COURT CIVIL CASELOAD

### CIVIL CASELOAD SUMMARY

	2009		2010	
	Filed	Disposed	Filed	Disposed
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>23,805</b>	<b>20,147</b>	<b>23,942</b>	<b>19,711</b>
Second Division - Newport County	1,304	1,014	1,379	1,101
Third Division - Kent County	6,678	5,472	6,696	5,296
Fourth Division - Washington County	1,707	1,294	1,805	1,536
Sixth Division - Providence/ Bristol County	14,116	12,367	14,062	11,778

### MANNER OF DISPOSITION

	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>20,147</b>	<b>19,711</b>
Defaults	8,316	8,857
Settlements	5,219	3,913
Judgments	6,612	6,941
<b>Second Division - Newport County</b>	<b>1,014</b>	<b>1,101</b>
Defaults	417	451
Settlements	322	310
Judgments	275	340
<b>Third Division - Kent County</b>	<b>5,472</b>	<b>5,296</b>
Defaults	1,471	2,080
Settlements	1,327	874
Judgments	2,680	2,342
<b>Fourth Division - Washington County</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>1,536</b>
Defaults	672	768
Settlements	213	353
Judgments	409	415
<b>Sixth Division - Providence/ Bristol County</b>	<b>12,367</b>	<b>11,778</b>
Defaults	5,756	5,558
Settlements	3,363	2,376
Judgments	3,248	3,844



## DISTRICT COURT CRIMINAL CASELOAD

### CRIMINAL CASELOAD SUMMARY

	2009	2010
<b>Misdemeanors - Statewide</b>		
Filed	26,601	26,811
Disposed	24,350	25,649
Pending	4,952	2,874
% over 60 Days	64%	30%
<b>Second Division - Newport County</b>		
Filed	2,483	2,757
Disposed	2,351	2,604
Pending	656	289
% over 60 Days	70%	44%
<b>Third Division - Kent County</b>		
Filed	7,270	7,398
Disposed	6,695	7,311
Pending	1,791	721
% over 60 Days	69%	23%
<b>Fourth Division - Washington County</b>		
Filed	3,379	3,266
Disposed	3,212	3,121
Pending	384	386
% over 60 Days	36%	32%
<b>Sixth Division - Providence/ Bristol County</b>		
Filed	13,469	13,390
Disposed	12,092	12,613
Pending	2,121	1,478
% over 60 Days	64%	31%

## DISTRICT COURT CRIMINAL CASELOAD

### MANNER OF DISPOSITION - MISDEMEANORS

	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>24,350</b>	<b>25,649</b>
Pled	16,537	16,438
Filed	93	72
Dismissed	5,586	7,064
Trial	134	159
Other	2,000	1,916
% Disposed within 60 Days of Filing	81%	77%
<b>Second Division - Newport County</b>	<b>2,351</b>	<b>2,604</b>
Pled	1,370	1,628
Filed	27	12
Dismissed	717	711
Trial	7	6
Other	230	247
% Disposed within 60 Days of Filing	79%	80%
<b>Third Division - Kent County</b>	<b>6,695</b>	<b>7,311</b>
Pled	4,613	4,697
Filed	22	20
Dismissed	1,519	2,005
Trial	25	56
Other	516	533
% Disposed within 60 Days of Filing	84%	77%
<b>Fourth Division - Washington County</b>	<b>3,212</b>	<b>3,121</b>
Pled	2,084	1,951
Filed	31	18
Dismissed	831	926
Trial	30	16
Other	236	210
% Disposed within 60 Days of Filing	77%	76%
<b>Sixth Division - Providence/ Bristol County</b>	<b>12,092</b>	<b>12,613</b>
Pled	8,470	8,162
Filed	13	22
Dismissed	2,519	3,422
Trial	72	81
Other	1,018	926
% Disposed within 60 Days of Filing	80%	77%

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION COURT

CASELOAD SUMMARY	2009			2010		
	Filed	Disposed	Pending	Filed	Disposed	Pending
<b>All Cases</b>	<b>7,712</b>	<b>7,652</b>	<b>1,757</b>	<b>7,406</b>	<b>7,496</b>	<b>1,676</b>
<b>Employee Petitions</b>	<b>5,336</b>	<b>5,319</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>5,008</b>	<b>5,058</b>	<b>1,169</b>
Original	2,413	2,439	576	2,180	2,206	553
To Review	2,065	2,025	531	2,034	2,033	534
Second Injury	0	1	0	0	0	0
To Enforce	858	854	107	794	819	82
<b>Employer Petitions</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>1,273</b>	<b>1,316</b>	<b>343</b>
To Review	1,276	1,230	384	1,273	1,316	343
<b>Other</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>1,103</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>1,125</b>	<b>1,122</b>	<b>164</b>
Lump Sum Settlement	724	719	89	775	785	79
Hospital/Physician Fees	162	157	12	173	156	30
Miscellaneous	214	227	58	177	181	55
Pending Trial	NA	NA	737	NA	NA	675
% Pending > 210 Days	NA	NA	34%	NA	NA	30%

## MANNER/STAGE OF DISPOSITION

	2009	2010
<b>TOTAL DISPOSITIONS</b>	<b>7,652</b>	<b>7,496</b>
<b>Pretrial</b>	<b>5,763</b>	<b>5,541</b>
Pretrial Order	2,815	2,749
Order	4	6
Decree	110	108
Consent Decree	154	150
Withdrawn	2,608	2,486
Discontinued	11	6
Dismissed	61	36
Other	0	0
% Disposed within 90 Days	90%	89%
<b>Trial</b>	<b>1,852</b>	<b>1,924</b>
Pretrial Order	1,047	1,120
Order	23	12
Decree	138	125
Consent Decree	547	555
Withdrawn	62	70
Discontinued	0	2
Dismissed	4	8
Other	31	32
% Disposed within 360 Days	89%	87%
<b>Appeals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>31</b>

## RHODE ISLAND TRAFFIC TRIBUNAL (RITT) CASELOAD

RITT CASELOAD SUMMARY	2009	2010
<b>RITT Summonses - Statewide</b>		
Issued	85,790	83,419
Disposed	89,841	84,927
Disposed in 60 Days	96%	96%
Pending	2,229	2,164
<b>Breathalyzer Refusals</b>		
Issued	1,694	1,663
Disposed	1,814	1,730
Disposed in 60 Days	80%	83%
Pending	142	140
<b>Insurance Violations</b>		
Issued	8,300	8,944
Disposed	8,623	9,145
Disposed in 60 Days	93%	94%
Pending	194	187
<b>Appeals</b>		
Issued	432	450
Disposed	395	447
Disposed in 60 Days	NA	NA
Pending	59	62
<b>Total Summonses*</b>		
Issued	150,533	143,982
Disposed	NA	NA
Disposed in 60 Days	NA	NA
Pending	NA	NA
<b>Total Violations</b>		
Issued	104,395	102,115
Disposed	NA	NA
Disposed in 60 Days	NA	NA
Pending	NA	NA

\* Includes summonses for both the RITT and municipal courts.

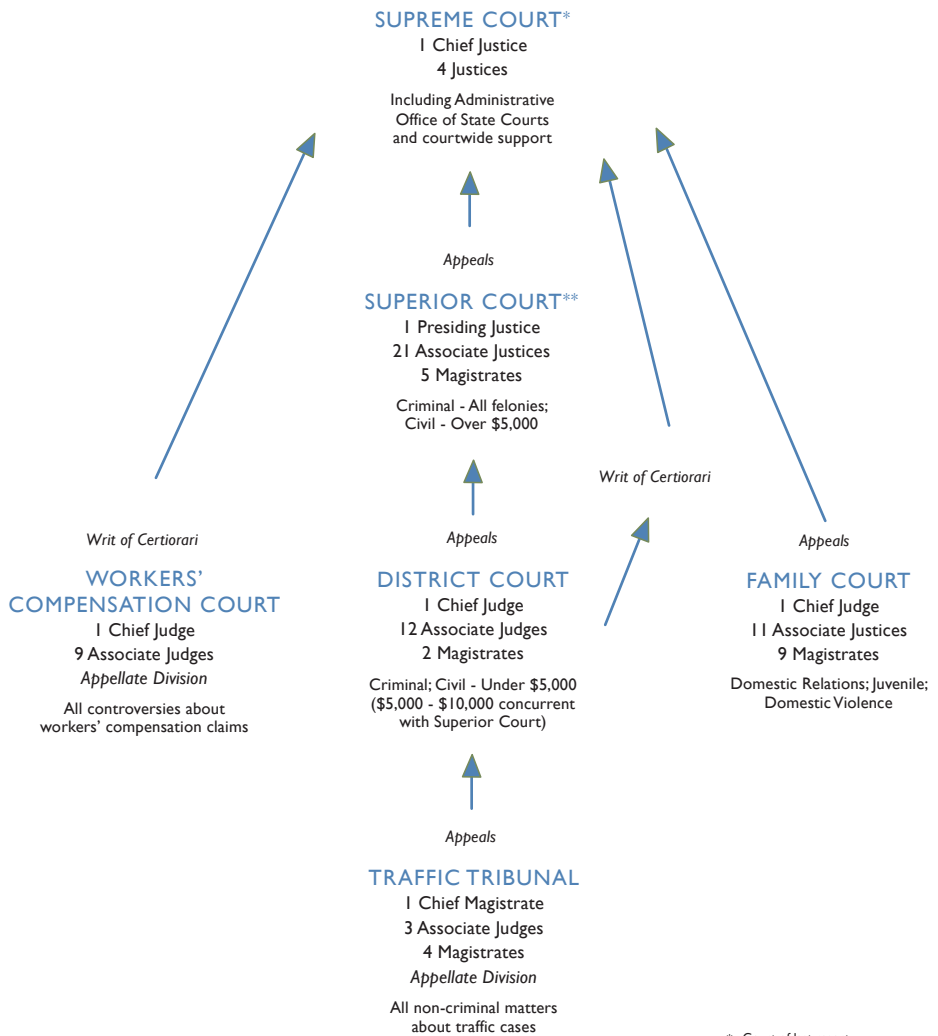
## BREAKDOWN OF DISPOSITIONS

	2009	2010
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>89,841</b>	<b>84,927</b>
Court Hearings	59,491	57,286
Pay by Mail	30,350	27,641

# Rhode Island Court Structure

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF STATE COURTS

State Court Administrator • Finance and Budget • Employee Relations  
 State Law Library • Judicial Technology Center • Facilities and Operations/Security  
 Judicial Records Center • Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit  
 Mandatory Continuing Legal Education • Community Outreach and Public Relations  
 Law Clerk Department • Judicial Planning • General Counsel and Alternative Dispute Resolution  
 Disciplinary Counsel • Supreme Court Clerk's Office • Appellate Screening  
 Administrative Assistant to Chief Justice • Interpreters' Office



\* Court of last resort  
 \*\* Court of general jurisdiction  
 All other courts have limited jurisdiction