



ANNUAL REPORT

NEBRASKA
Administrative
Office of the
Courts and Probation

Fiscal Year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015



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Chief Justice Mike Heavican

Message From Chief Justice Mike Heavican

On behalf of the Nebraska Supreme Court, I am honored to present the Annual Report of the Nebraska Judicial Branch. This report details the efforts of the branch to improve and enhance the delivery of justice in our state during FY 2015 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015) and highlights the special contributions of the outstanding people working in our branch.

Nebraska's judiciary continues to grow at a rapid pace, but providing fair treatment and excellent services to all Nebraskans remains our top priority. Our judges and staff are committed to upholding the values of equal protection, due process of law, and equal access to justice for all. We recognize the importance of transparency and accountability and will continue to promote the public's understanding and confidence in the Nebraska Judicial Branch.

We are proud of the many accomplishments of our branch this past fiscal year. These accomplishments reflect the dedication of the individuals who work in our courts and probation system, and we understand that their efforts have far-reaching impacts upon the lives of those depending on the courts to resolve disputes and ensure justice.

The ability to fulfill our mission depends on our cooperation and collaboration with the legislative and executive branches of government. I extend our sincere appreciation to the Legislature and to the Governor for their continued support of our budgetary needs and initiatives.

Judicial Leadership

The Nebraska Constitution provides that general administrative authority over all the courts in the state is vested in the Supreme Court and shall be exercised by the Chief Justice (Nebraska Const. art. V). The Chief Justice is the executive head of the courts and may appoint an administrative director to oversee the operations of the branch.

At the local level, trial court judges are responsible for the overall operation of the court system. Their effectiveness in dispensing justice and their willingness to provide leadership within their judicial district enhances the well-being of the court system.



Intrabranh communication is maintained through regularly scheduled conference calls between the Chief Justice, administrative staff, and district and county court judges. Attendance at annual court and probation meetings is also an essential communication channel. In addition, each summer the Chief Justice devotes several days to traveling outside the Lincoln area to meet with judges and court and probation staff and to visit local programs.

The Court supports a number of leadership commissions and committees consisting of citizens, judges, and lawyers who work together to improve the delivery of justice throughout the state. A complete listing of committees and their members can be found on the Judicial Branch Website under the Administration section.

Judicial Associations

While the Chief Justice provides leadership for the branch as a whole, each trial level of the court system has an association providing leadership for its judges. The presidents of the associations for the 2014-15 fiscal year are:

- District Court Judges' Association: Hon. Peter C. Bataillon, Omaha
- County Court Judges' Association: Hon. Kurt T. Rager, Dakota City
- Separate Juvenile Court Judges' Association: Hon. Douglas F. Johnson, Omaha

Annual Leadership Conference

Each spring, the Chief Justice convenes an Annual Leadership Conference which includes the chairs of the commissions and committees of the Supreme Court. The conference is designed to enhance the leadership skills of trial court judges and is supported through the Nebraska Supreme Court Judicial Leadership Development Program. Participants discuss current trends and emerging issues affecting the court and probation systems, helping them prepare for leadership positions within the branch.



In conjunction with the Chief Justice's Annual Leadership Conference, Judicial Branch Education sponsors a judicial leadership development program bringing together judges of all levels to consider creative ways of providing leadership for the Nebraska Judicial Branch. These judges meet regularly over the course of a year to develop an understanding of ways the courts can work for the betterment of the branch.

Leadership Development Program Graduates

The inaugural group of Leadership Development Program graduates received their commemorative awards on May 21, 2015. The group included:

- Susan M. Bazis, County Court, Omaha
- Michael P. Burns, County Court, Hastings
- Russell W. Harford, County Court, Chadron
- Marcela A. Keim, County Court, Omaha
- Kris D. Mickey, County Court, Scottsbluff
- Anne M. Paine, County Court, McCook
- Ross A. Stoffer, County Court, Madison
- Michael E. Piccolo, County Court, North Platte
- Timothy P. Burns, District Court, Omaha
- Leo P. Dobrovolny, District Court, Scottsbluff
- Jeffrey J. Funke, District Court, Plattsmouth
- James G. Kube, District Court, Norfolk
- Leigh Ann Retelsdorf, District Court, Omaha
- Paul J. Vaughan, District Court, Dakota City
- Derek C. Weimer, District Court, Sidney



Nebraska Judges

Judicial Excellence

Distinguished judges recognized for their contributions to the Nebraska Supreme Court in FY 2015 include:

- Service to the Community: Judge Steven D. Burns
- Service to the Judiciary: Judge Gary B. Randall

Judge Burns earned his honor for his many and varied civic and community outreach efforts at both the local and international levels. Judge Randall's outstanding service award came through years of active involvement in committee work and projects promoting fairness in the legal system at the state and national levels.

Judicial Appointments FY 2014-2015

- Linda A. Bauer Jefferson County Court, Fairbury 11/17/2014
- Holly J. Parsley Lancaster County Court, Lincoln 12/23/2014
- Julie A. Martin Workers' Compensation Court, Omaha 1/21/2015
- Mark J. Young Hall County District Court, Grand Island 1/23/2015
- Michael O. Mead Adams County Court, Hastings 6/30/2015

All dates represent the date the judge took the bench on their respective court.

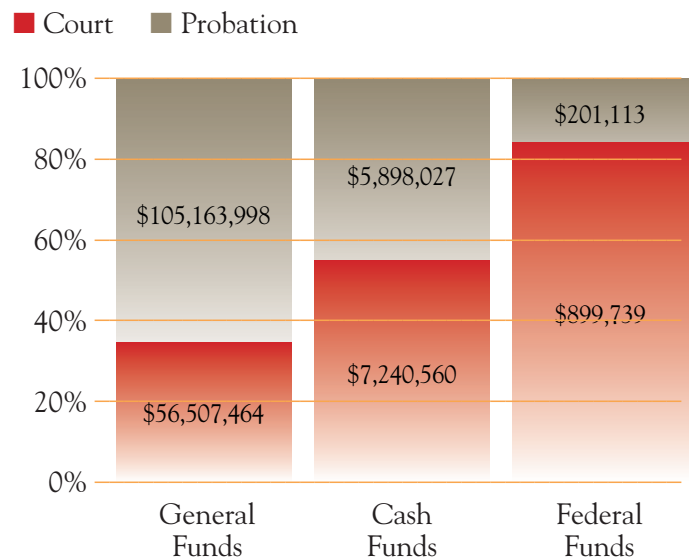


FY 2015 Judicial Branch Finances

FY 2015 Expenditures by Fund Source

	Court	Probation	Total
General Funds	\$56,507,464	\$105,163,998	\$161,671,462
Cash Funds	\$7,240,560	\$5,898,027	\$13,138,587
Federal Funds	\$899,739	\$201,113	\$1,100,852
Total	\$64,647,763	\$111,263,138	\$175,910,901

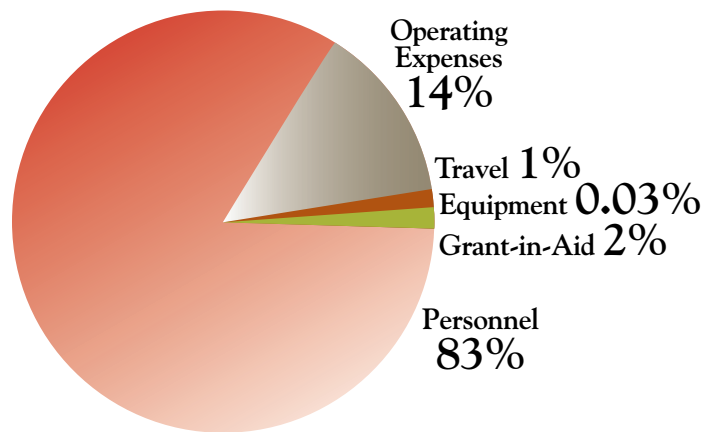
Expenditures by Fund Source FY 2015



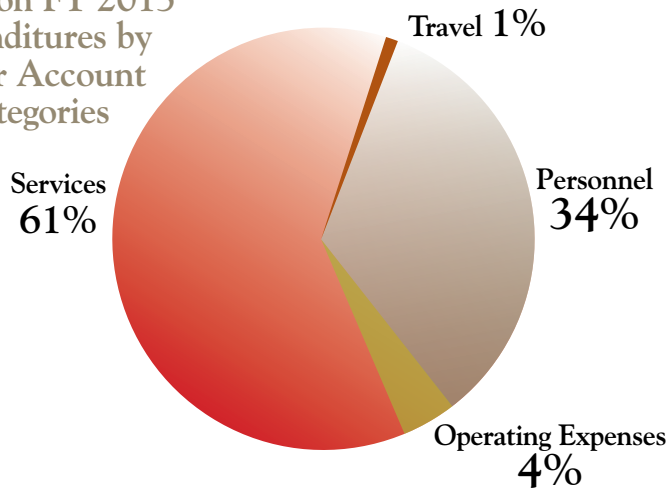
FY 2015 Expenditures by Major Account Category

	Court	Probation	Total
Personnel	\$53,945,904	\$37,885,616	\$91,831,520
Operating Expenses	\$8,877,127	\$4,663,831	\$13,540,958
Services		\$67,518,738	\$67,518,738
Travel	\$765,467	\$1,194,953	\$1,960,420
Equipment	\$16,370		\$16,370
Government Aid	\$1,042,895		\$1,042,895
Total	\$64,647,763	\$111,263,138	\$175,910,901

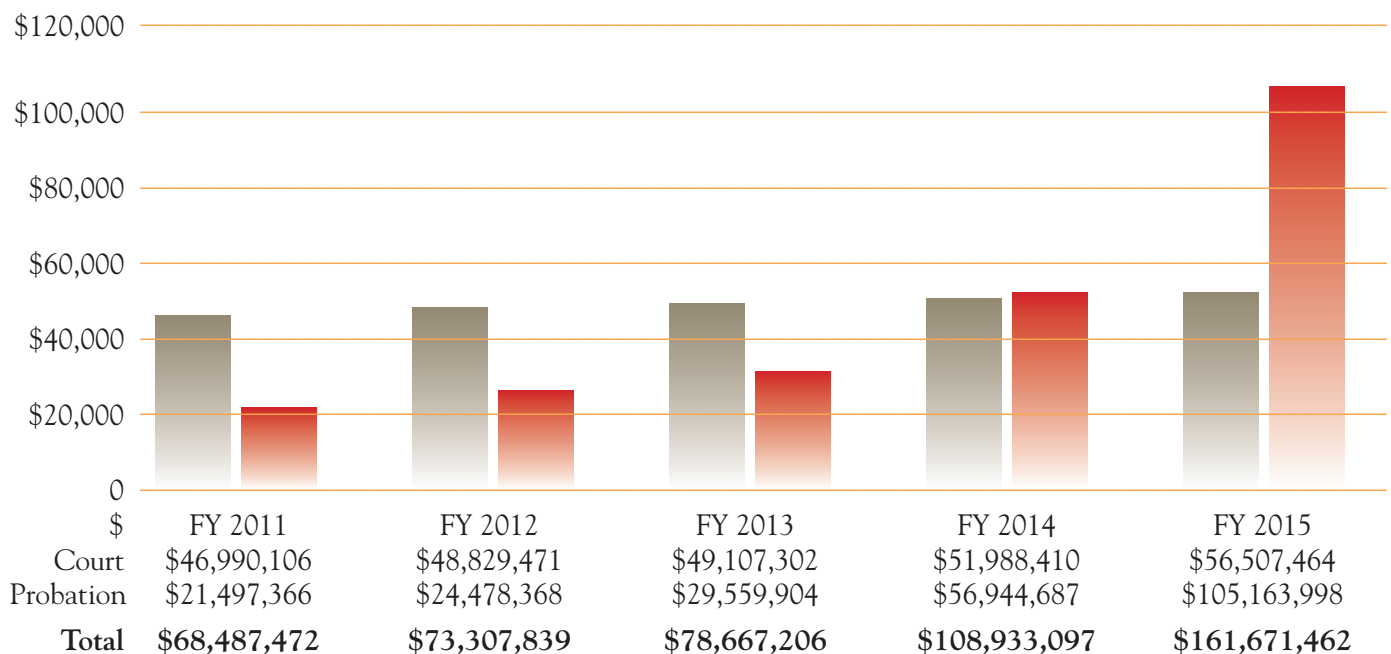
Court FY 2015 Expenditures by Major Account Categories



Probation FY 2015 Expenditures by Major Account Categories



General Fund Expenditures for Judicial Branch Operations



Program Growth and Expansion in 2014-2015

Attorney Services Division

The Nebraska Supreme Court's December 2013 opinion *In re Petition for a Rule Change to Create a Voluntary State Bar of Nebraska* led to the creation of the Supreme Court Attorney Services Division. The opinion transferred all functions dealing with the regulation of the legal profession to the Court and also supported the creation of a mandatory membership assessment.

The Attorney Services Division manages admission to the practice of law, annual licensure, and mandatory continuing legal education for lawyers. The Court expanded online services to permit electronic collection of mandatory annual dues and the processing of required annual trust account and liability insurance reports, thus minimizing the potential for error in the licensure renewal process. By combining the functions of lawyer admissions, licensure, mandatory education, discipline, and the Unauthorized Practice of Law, the Nebraska Supreme Court more effectively administers all aspects of attorney practice and maximizes public protection.

In addition to hosting licensing functions, the division has taken on the responsibility of oversight of the mandatory education of

Guardians Ad Litem as directed by Supreme Court rule. Through the Office of Judicial Branch Education, the Attorney Services Division has established a required course for attorneys wanting to be added to the list of approved Guardians Ad Litem.

Court Improvement Project

The Nebraska Court Improvement Project was established to study the steps necessary within the judicial system to ensure that the courts are responsive for children involved in court cases. It is also tasked with investigating system concerns, researching more effective and efficient approaches to cases, and recommending changes when warranted.

In spring 2015, the Nebraska Supreme Court made the decision to transition the Court Improvement Project into the Office of the State Court Administrator to more efficiently make use of judicial branch resources.

The project is guided by the Supreme Court's Commission on Children in the Courts. The Commission meets twice each year to review the responsiveness of the court system in this area.

Legislative Initiatives

Juvenile Justice Reform Implementation

Beginning with the passage of LB561 in May 2013 and LB464 in July 2014, the Administrative Office of Probation has completed the process of transitioning delinquent and status youth (e.g., truancy, ungovernable) from the Department of Health and Human Services to Probation. In order to successfully complete this process in the first year of transition, Probation Administration hired and trained staff at all levels statewide, developed policies and procedures, and expanded technology capacity.

The goal of juvenile justice reform in Nebraska is to ensure that youth and families receive services and support that are grounded in juvenile justice best practice research. Nebraska's reform efforts span the continuum of the system, and Probation has worked collaboratively at the local, state, and national level to build access to evidence-based in-home and out-of-home programming and services that best support youth and families in their communities.

Justice Reinvestment

Justice reinvestment is a data-driven approach to improving public safety, reducing the use of prisons and the related criminal justice spending, and reinvesting the savings in strategies that can decrease crime and reduce recidivism.

This past fiscal year, the Justice Reinvestment working group has worked diligently to provide judges with more sentencing options through the support of re-appropriation of funds to the Supreme Court budget. The Judicial Branch is now responsible for qualified payment

of mental health services and expansion of Probation's reporting centers in order to provide additional services and programs.

The Nebraska Justice Reinvestment working group, made up of members selected by Nebraska's Chief Justice, Governor, and Speaker of the Legislature, works to develop innovative options and cost estimates for addressing prison overcrowding. Probation continues to increase services and open new reporting centers. Expansion and system refinement will continue throughout the upcoming years.

Office of Public Guardian

The Public Guardianship Act established the Office of Public Guardian under the authority of the Nebraska State Court Administrator beginning January 1, 2015.

The office is designed to serve as a last resort for situations where no family member or other suitable individual is available to act as a guardian or conservator. Four programs are contained within the Office: Court Appointed Guardians and Conservators; Successor Guardians and Conservators; Education, Support, and Information; and the Court Visitor Program.

Twelve Associate Public Guardians have been hired and assigned service areas across the state. Systems to handle the accounting and monitoring responsibilities for the programs are currently under development. Provision of service to the public is slated to begin at the end of the 2015 calendar year.

Administrative Leadership for Courts and Probation

Court Administration

Vision:

Be a trusted, collaborative, and respected catalyst for and provider of professional court administrative services.

Message from the State Court Administrator, Corey R. Steel

This report highlights only a few of the many activities and achievements of the Nebraska Judicial Branch during Fiscal Year 2015 (July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015).

I extend my sincere thanks to all of the Judicial Branch officers and employees who, through their efforts to provide equal justice throughout the state, made this a productive year for our court system.

I encourage you to visit our Website at www.supremecourt.ne.gov for up-to-date information on the Nebraska court system and to learn more about the Judicial Branch.



Corey R. Steel

Administrative Office of the Courts

Mission: Under the direction of the Nebraska Supreme Court, the Administrative Office of the Courts' mission is to ensure the public has equal access to justice using leadership, education, technology, and administrative services to implement consistent, efficient, and effective court practices.

The office is organized into three divisions:

- Attorney Services and Judicial Branch Education
- Court Services
- Information Technology

Plus two specialized offices:

- Nebraska Court Improvement Project
- Office of Public Guardian



Judicial Branch Education and Attorney Services

Carole McMahon-Boies

Administrator for Judicial Branch Education and Attorney Services Division

Office of Judicial Branch Education

Provides essential continuing education for judges and judicial branch employees with the goal of increasing professional competence in order to ensure the delivery of quality judicial services to the people of the State of Nebraska. In-house programming for court staff, probation, and judges is guided by the Judicial Branch Education Advisory Committee with project leadership from each employee group within the branch. Nebraska Supreme Court rules outline minimum continuing education requirements for all Nebraska judges, clerks, probation officers, and other branch employees bound by the Judicial Branch Education Standards. Judicial Branch Education is also tasked with providing education for attorneys in specific areas of the law and for certain individuals who serve the courts in a volunteer capacity or through appointment by the court.

Attorney Services Division

Oversees the regulation of the legal profession and the provision of services by the Supreme Court to all attorneys licensed in Nebraska.

- **Mandatory Continuing Legal Education:** Oversight of programming to ensure that active attorneys obtain mandatory continuing legal education each year. The division ensures that attorneys comply with all mandatory annual licensing rules and approves vendors of continuing legal education. Annual attorney license renewals are obtained through the division's online portal. Attorneys are able to maintain their

personal information, trust account, and malpractice coverage information and print an annual membership or license card as part of the annual license renewal.

- **Counsel for Discipline:** Investigation of disciplinary complaints against attorneys for alleged violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct as adopted by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

Spotlight

Newly added programs in Fiscal Year 2015 include:

- **Admission to the Practice of Law:** Review of all applicants wanting to become Nebraska lawyers remains under the jurisdiction of the Nebraska State Bar Commission which makes recommendations to the Nebraska Supreme Court for admission. Administration of the Uniform Bar Exam in Nebraska and review of applicants who may apply for admission from another state and want to transfer an examination score.
- **Annual Licensure:** Renewal process for licensed lawyers designed to maintain current personal information, trust account information, and malpractice insurance coverage.
- **Unauthorized Practice of Law:** Investigation of complaints of individuals not authorized by the Nebraska Supreme Court to act as a lawyer or give legal advice, guided by the Nebraska Commission on the Unauthorized Practice of Law.
- **Guardian Ad Litem Education:** Management of attorney enrollment in court-designed Guardian Ad Litem education and oversight compliance with the Nebraska Supreme Court rule.



Court Services

Judy Beutler

Deputy State Court Administrator for Court Programs and Services

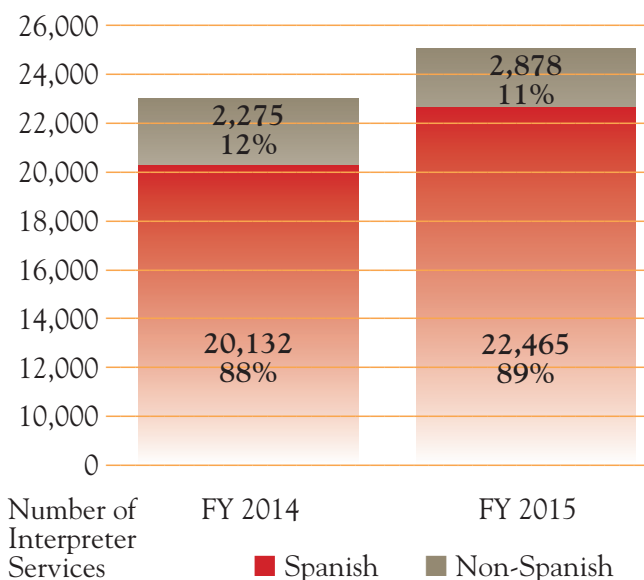
The Court Services Division oversees both court and internal programs and services for the public. The division is responsible for communicating Supreme Court administrative policy, providing procedural standards for court operations, and providing publications and procedural manuals along with standard court forms for use in daily operations within the courts.

Programs and services for the public include:

- **Children in District Court:** Program development and management of resources designed for the protection and care of children involved in the court system through divorce. Services include parenting plans, mediation, and education.
- **Community Outreach and Public Education:** Special events and community outreach planning for citizens of all ages with student-focused programs designed for each educational level from grade school to law school.
- **Dispute Resolution and Mediation:** Management of the state organization of nonprofit mediation centers in providing alternative dispute resolution and conflict resolution in every area of the state, including education, training, and consultation.
- **Interpreter Services:** Coordination of services for Nebraska courts and probation offices to provide qualified interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing and those with limited English language proficiency.
- **Jury Service:** Publication of materials and information designed to enhance the understanding of the petit and grand jury systems throughout the state.
- **Problem-Solving Courts:** Development and oversight of drug and other specialized problem-solving court programs within each judicial district in Nebraska.
- **Self-Represented Litigants/Pro Se Resources:** Development of resources enabling nonlawyers to access the court system using online forms, instructions, and resource listings.

Spotlight

Interpreter Services in Nebraska FY 2014 and FY 2015



Non-Spanish Court Languages in Nebraska FY2015

Language	Number of Services	Percentage of Non-Spanish Services
Vietnamese	454	16%
Karen	376	13%
Nuer	366	13%
Arabic	296	10%
Sign	287	10%
Somali	249	9%
Kurdish	167	6%
Juba Arabic	124	4%
Burmese	94	3%
Nepali	73	2.5%
Dinka	62	2%
French	57	2%
Russian	45	1.5%
Chinese	37	1%
Bosnian	30	1%
29 Additional Languages	161	6%
Total	2,878	100%

Information Technology

Jennifer Rasmussen

Deputy State Court Administrator for Information Technology

The Information Technology Division provides support and enhancement for the case management systems and other court technology projects. The division fulfills the technology needs of all offices, including those that provide accounting services, human resources, legal support, policy direction, and education and training.

- **JUSTICE:** Management and updating of the Judicial Users System to Improve Court Efficiency (JUSTICE) case management system for trial courts throughout the state.
- **SCCALES:** Management and updating of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals Legal Entries System (SCCALES) case management system for the appellate level courts in Nebraska.
- **Specialized Court Technology:** Day-to-day support of technology for all county, district, and separate juvenile courts using digital recording and video conferencing in the courtroom and document scanning within the court office.
- **Online Services:** Coordination with the state’s network manager to provide online services such as eFiling, ePayment, and court case information search. Development of new and better solutions to help courts run more efficiently in delivering information and services to the public and the legal community.



Spotlight

In summer 2015, the IT division’s JUSTICE team received a court statistics project award from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and the Conference of State Court Administrators. The 2015 “Reporting Excellence Award” was given to Nebraska for exemplary contribution to the NCSC national statistical database.

During FY 2014-2015, the IT division worked hard to enhance the eFiling program across the state. Every eFiling saves the courts

between two and five minutes of staff time and significantly reduces the possibility of data entry errors. Implemented in January 2015, eNotice requires all attorneys to register for eFiling. The indirect effect of eNotice was a 29% increase in total cases eFiled from December 2014 to June 2015. eFiling increased by 10% for civil cases, 38% for criminal cases, 159% for juvenile cases, and 31% for probate cases.

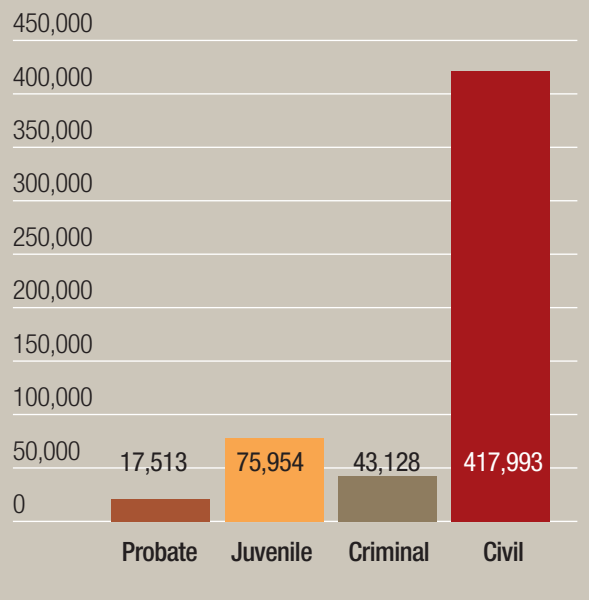
Total eFilings by Case Type

(New and Existing Cases) FY 2015

Year	Month	Civil	Criminal	Juvenile	Probate	Total
2014	July	35,876	3,141	2,253	1,322	42,592
2014	August	32,278	3,042	3,194	1,314	39,828
2014	September	33,024	3,152	3,483	1,326	40,985
2014	October	33,633	3,320	3,978	1,582	42,513
2014	November	31,364	3,135	4,061	1,256	39,816
2014	December	33,175	3,205	4,555	1,324	42,259
2015	January	34,874	3,611	5,742	1,361	45,588
2015	February	35,666	3,923	7,278	1,495	48,362
2015	March	37,557	4,125	8,956	1,555	52,193
2015	April	39,150	4,145	9,931	1,678	54,904
2015	May	34,797	3,897	10,731	1,569	50,994
2015	June	36,599	4,432	11,792	1,731	54,554
FY 2015 Total Cases		417,993	43,128	75,954	17,513	554,588

Total eFilings by Case Type

(New and Existing Cases) FY 2015



Specialized Offices

Court Improvement Project

Katie McLeese Stephenson

Director for Nebraska Court Improvement Project

The Nebraska Court Improvement Project is a longstanding program of the Nebraska Supreme Court that operates under the guidance of the Supreme Court Commission on Children in the Courts. The goal of the Nebraska Court Improvement Project is to improve court processing of child welfare and juvenile justice cases. Through the Court Improvement Project, the commission identifies areas of concern, looks for more efficient and effective approaches to case processing, and recommends changes to the Nebraska Supreme Court to ensure the court system is responsive to the needs of the children who interact with it.

- **Child Welfare:** Children who come to the attention of the court due to a child abuse or neglect finding for their parents or guardians are considered child welfare cases. The desired outcomes in child welfare focus on the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child or children.

- **Juvenile Justice:** Children who have violated the law or have come to the attention of the courts due to a status offense are part of the juvenile justice population. The desired outcomes in juvenile justice are to treat and rehabilitate court-involved youth, prevent juveniles from returning to the juvenile justice system or entering the criminal justice system, and ensuring community safety.

Office of Public Guardian

Michelle J. Chaffee

Director of the Office of Public Guardian

A Public Guardian is designed to serve as a means of last resort for those situations where no family member or other suitable individual is available to act as guardian or conservator. The Office of Public Guardian is designed to provide four distinct services:

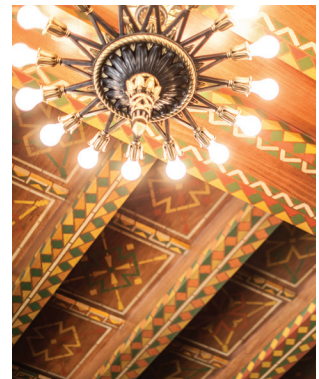
- **Court-Appointed Guardians and Conservators:** Responsible for general and specific community supports and services to individuals served by the Office of Public Guardian as appropriate to each ward.

- **Successor Guardians and Conservators:** Location of individual community members with a variety of backgrounds who are willing to serve as guardians and conservators.

- **Education, Support, and Information:** Support for private guardians and conservators with resource information and skill development.

- **Court Visitor Program:** Location of individual community members with backgrounds in law, nursing, social work, mental health, gerontology, intellectual disability, developmental disabilities, drug abuse, or alcoholism to serve as volunteer court visitors.

Program-specific annual reports can be found on the Judicial Branch Website (supremecourt.nebraska.gov) under Administration > Publications and Reports or supremecourt.nebraska.gov/publications-and-reports.



Administrative Leadership for Courts and Probation

Probation Administration

Vision:

Be a nationally recognized leader in the field of justice, committed to excellence and safe communities.

Message from State Probation Administrator Ellen Fabian Brokofsky

It is an understatement to say that FY 2014-2015 has been a busy time for all of us working in the probation system. We have moved forward with the implementation of sweeping changes to the juvenile justice system, including hiring and training over 200 new staff, while continuing to provide effective high quality services and programming which positively impact our clients and our communities.

My sincere thanks goes to each officer, administrator, and staff member throughout the system who has worked long hours with the sustained intensity required to achieve our overarching goals of community protection, offender accountability, and competency development. The probation system makes lasting changes in each local community by supporting juveniles and adults in their efforts to become productive members of society. We strive to provide an environment where individuals can safely reside in the community while abiding by the court's orders. When participating in probation programming, individuals improve not only their lives, but also the lives of those around them.

Our continued success requires the cooperative efforts and commitment of all three branches of government. I am truly grateful for all the past hard work and look forward to our ongoing collaborative efforts to serve the people of Nebraska.



Ellen Fabian Brokofsky

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen Fabian Brokofsky".

Administrative Office of Probation

Mission: We, the leaders in community corrections, and juvenile and restorative justice, are unified in our dedication to delivering a system of seamless services which are founded on evidence-based practices and valued by Nebraska's communities, victims, offenders, and courts. We create constructive change through rehabilitation, collaboration, and partnership in order to enhance safe communities.

The office is organized into three divisions:

- Administration and Operations
- Community-Based Programs and Field Services
- Juvenile Services



Administration and Operations

Steve Rowoldt

Deputy Probation Administrator for Administration and Operations

The Administration and Operations Division is responsible for policies and procedures, quality assurance, information technology, and state-owned inventory along with oversight of the interstate and intrastate transfers necessary for probation supervision. The goal of this division is to enhance the structure of the probation system for both juvenile and adult populations involved with the court system.

- **Policies and Procedures:** Development of uniform policies and procedures following goals and operational procedures as approved by the Supreme Court.
- **Quality Assurance:** Regular review of existing processes within each probation district as applied to the qualitative systematic approach to case management set by the courts. In addition, supervisory and officer skills are assessed in accordance with established quality assurance measures.
- **Interstate and Interdistrict Transfer Cases:** Authority over interdistrict movement of individuals from probation district to probation district within the state and movement of probationers living in other states when moving to Nebraska.
- **Information Technology:** Responsible for the improvement and maintenance of Nebraska Probation Applications for Community Safety (NPACS) case management system and the Problem-Solving Court Management Information System (PSCMIS) along with the technology used to support the efficient operation of probation, including applications to manage vouchers, register service providers, and deliver online training. Promotion of full utilization of video conferencing and TeleServices to reduce travel time and expense, and to provide services where they would otherwise not be available.
- **State-Owned Inventory:** Handling of statewide equipment inventory, including communication technology, officer safety devices, video conferencing equipment, and state-owned vehicles.

Community-Based Programs and Field Services

Deb Minardi

Deputy Probation Administrator for Community-Based Programs and Field Services

The Division of Community-Based Programs and Field Services develops, trains, implements, and conducts quality assurance for all adult and some specialized juvenile programs and services provided to the courts for probationers. The division oversees a continuum of evidence-based programs ranging from presentence investigations, assessments, and supervision, including specialized domestic violence and sex offender/youth who sexually harm. Specialized services offered include reporting centers, financial assistance for individuals in need of treatment, RISE (Rural Improvement for Schooling and Employment), and behavioral health services guided by the Standardized Model for the Treatment of Substance Abusing Offenders.

- **Specialized Substance Abuse Supervision (SSAS) Program:** An intensive supervision and treatment focused program targeted at high risk substance-using offenders who would otherwise be in prison.
- **Problem-Solving Courts:** Staffing of Nebraska Drug and Problem-Solving Courts for adult, young adult, juvenile, and family courts.
- **Specialized Supervision Caseloads:** Individualized case management for specific targeted populations such as sex offenders, domestic violence offenders, gang members, and those with significant mental health issues to assist in providing risk reduction strategies for unique populations.
- **Probation Reporting Centers:** Development and ongoing building of a continuum of services for clients under one roof through the pooling of state and county resources providing a means by which clients' time is structured. Reporting centers assist in engaging clients in rehabilitative services while simultaneously providing enhanced supervision through probation. Services range from employment and educational opportunities to life skills and cognitive programming that meet the needs of probationers within the community.
- **TeleServices:** Allowing programming that would not otherwise be available in certain parts of the state.
- **Victim-Centered Approach:** Providing a specialized approach to the investigation and supervision for domestic violence and sex offenders while taking into account victim safety and restitution.
- **Rural Improvement for Schooling and Employment (RISE):** Leveraging additional programming through AmeriCorps to increase support services and educational opportunities for probationers.
- **Standardized Model for Delivery of Substance Use Disorder Services:** Providing guidance to providers and probation officers alike on substance use evaluations and treatment services obtained through registered service providers.
- **Fees for Service Voucher Program:** Financial assistance programming designed to help individuals mitigate financial barriers preventing access to substance abuse, mental health, sex offender and other evaluations, treatment, or other programming needs.

Juvenile Services

Jeanne K. Brandner

Deputy Probation Administrator for Juvenile Services

The Juvenile Services Division is responsible for statewide administration of intake and detention alternatives, investigations, assessments and evaluations, case management/supervision and services, placement, reentry, and funding for juveniles in addition to providing leadership for the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative and Crossover Youth Practice Model (a program with specific practices designed to reduce the number of youth who “cross over” between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems).

The juvenile probation system goals for reducing recidivism by preventing juveniles from returning to the juvenile justice system or entering the criminal justice system are:

- Engaging juveniles and their families in the juvenile court process,
 - Eliminating barriers to accessing effective treatment and services, and
 - Partnering with educational and community stakeholders.
-
- **Intake:** Utilization of a standardized tool when law enforcement request a youth is detained which assesses the youth’s risk of reoffending before the next court hearing and the risk of failing to appear in court.
 - **Detention Alternatives:** Creation of a continuum of alternatives to detaining youth throughout the state with the assistance of communities, families, and other stakeholders.
 - **Investigations/Assessment and Evaluation:** Use of a validated risk assessment, motivational interview skills, and investigation formats to assist in the establishment of proper recommendations for the court. Additionally, focused evaluations are identified during this process to assist the youth and family in behavior change.
 - **Juvenile Case Management/Supervision and Services:** Engagement of youth and families as an “agent of change,” creating plans focused on risk and need and how to move a youth through stages of change and successful completion of probation.
 - **Placement:** Location of out-of-home settings when care and treatment are necessary away from the family home due to youth’s risk level and/or behavioral health needs with immediate transition planning to help children successfully return to their communities.
 - **Reentry:** Preparation of youth and families for return from the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers (YRTC) back to communities. Activities and communications prior to discharge strengthening the connection between the youth in placement with their family, home, and community.
 - **Funding:** Allocation of public money for the cost of placement, treatment, or detention considering parental funds, private or public insurance, entitlements, grants, and other resources prior to the authorization of state appropriated monies.
- Program-specific annual reports can be found on the Judicial Branch Website under Administration > Publications and Reports or supremecourt.nebraska.gov/publications-and-reports.

Court and Probation Combined Internal Services

In order to effectively utilize Judicial Branch resources, probation and court internal and operational services are merged into the following service divisions:

- **Domestic Violence/Sex Offender:** Single point of contact for the Judicial Branch on domestic violence, sexual assault, and victim-specific issues including review and maintenance of protection orders.
 - **Financial Division:** Oversight of all financial transactions and budget management for the Judicial Branch.
 - **Interpreter/Translation:** Coordination of interpreters and translations for the trial courts and probation offices to provide qualified interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing and those with limited English language proficiency.
 - **Information Systems:** Management of administrative office business technology solutions including computer equipment, software procurement, and end user support
 - **Judicial Branch Education:** Provider of required and enhanced educational services for all judges and employees of the Judicial Branch.
 - **Personnel Services:** Oversight of payroll, benefits, and all other personnel functions for the approximately 1,500 employees and judges of the Judicial Branch.
 - **Public Information and Communications:** Management of both external and internal communications and related programming for the court system.
- Program-specific annual reports can be found on the Judicial Branch Website under [Administration > Publications and Reports](#) or supremecourt.nebraska.gov/publications-and-reports.
-

Exemplary Employees of the Nebraska Judicial Branch

Chief Justice Mike Heavican presented 11 Employee Recognition Awards to individuals and team members during the Nebraska Supreme Court's 2014 Nebraska Judicial System recognition event.

The 2014 Award Recipients include:

- **Employee of the Year:** Linda Leatherman, JUSTICE Senior Business Analyst, Administrative Office of the Courts, Lincoln.
- **Outstanding Probation Employee:** Linda Zabel, Administrative Office of Probation, Lincoln.
- **Outstanding Probation Officer:** Julie Smith, District 5 Probation, Seward.
- **Outstanding Administrative Employee:** Diona Hartwig, Judicial Branch Education, Administrative Office of the Courts, Lincoln.
- **Outstanding Probation Supervisor:** Beverly Hoagland, District 3J Probation, Lincoln.
- **Outstanding Customer Service in the Courts:** Dianne Lana, County Court Clerk Magistrate in District 12, Scotts Bluff County.
- **Outstanding Trial Court Personnel:** Julie Hurley, Court Reporter 4th Judicial District, Omaha.
- **Outstanding Clerk of the District Court presented posthumously to Marjorie Schaffer,** Former Clerk of the District Court 7th Judicial District, Madison County.
- **Diversity Leadership Award:** Teri Deans, County Court Clerk Magistrate in District 11, Dawson County.
- **Outstanding Team Award: Guardian/Conservator Clerk Specialists**
 - Cathy Reiman, Rock/Boyd County Court.
 - Darla Schiefelbein, Platte County Court.
 - Linda Hanak, Dakota County Court.
- **Innovation Award: Leadership Institute 2014 graduate team**
 - Gene Cotter, Chief Probation Officer District 3, Lincoln.
 - Joseph Budnick, Chief Probation Officer District 10, Hastings.
 - Shane Stutzman, Chief Probation Officer District 5, Columbus.
 - Steve Ortmeier, Chief Deputy Probation Officer District 6, Fremont.
 - Julie Micek, Administrative Office of Probation, Lincoln.

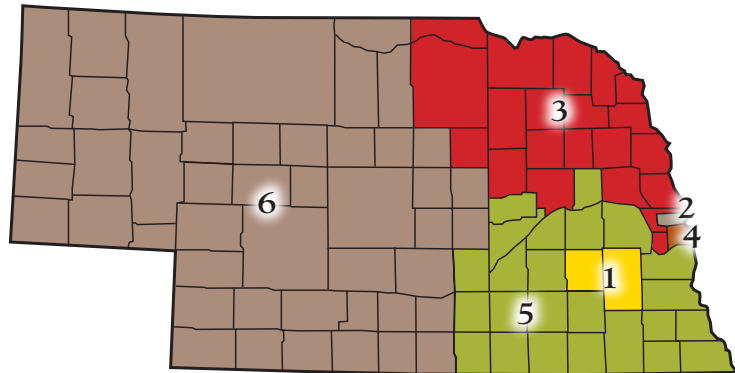


Nebraska Court Case Filings

The Constitution of the State of Nebraska distributes the judicial power of the state among the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, district courts, and county courts. All state courts operate under the administrative direction of the Supreme Court.

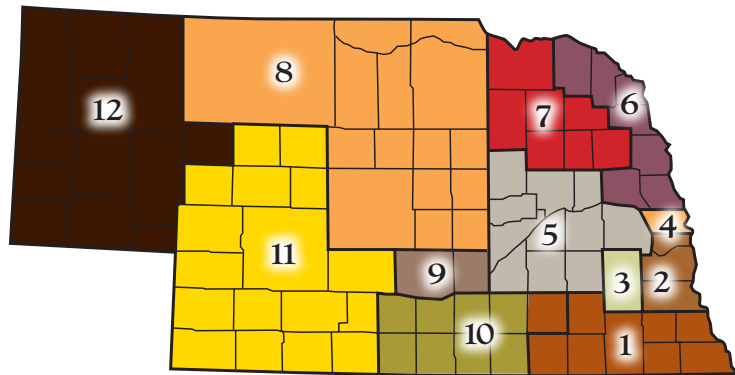
- There were a total of 1,135 cases filed in the Nebraska appellate courts in FY 2015.
- There were a total of 376,874 cases filed in the Nebraska trial courts in FY 2015.

Supreme Court & Court of Appeals Judicial Districts

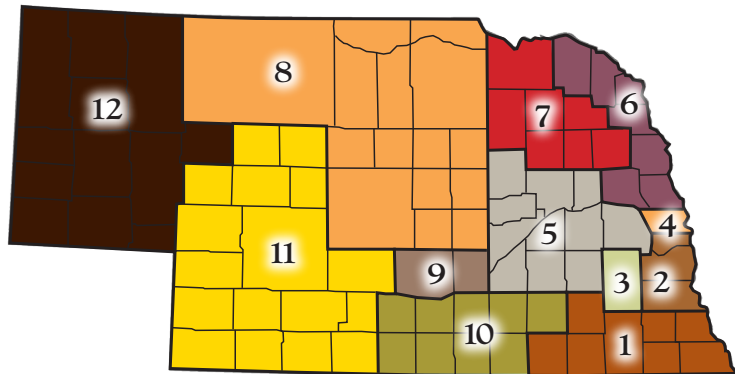


District Court Judicial Districts

Note: County courts have the same district boundaries except the First Judicial District where Fillmore, Clay, and Nuckolls are included in the 10th District.

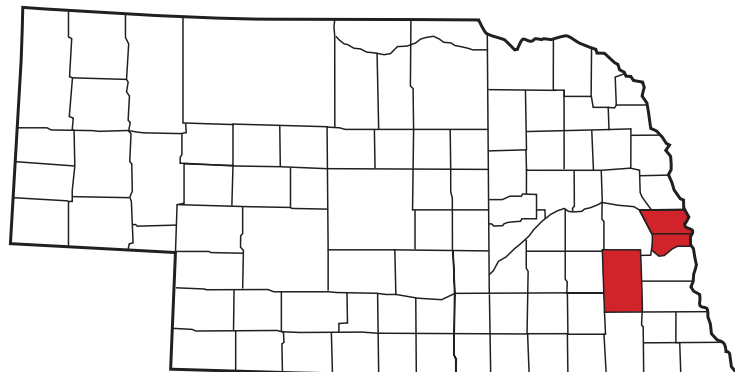


County Court Judicial Districts



Separate Juvenile Courts

Note: Sarpy, Douglas, and Lancaster.



Appellate Courts

All arguments before the Nebraska Supreme Court are streamed live and preserved on the Oral Argument Archive of the Nebraska Judicial Branch Website. Available arguments include the court sessions held at the University of Nebraska College of Law and Creighton University School of Law.

Court of Appeals arguments heard at the State Capitol in Lincoln are streamed live and archived. When the court hears arguments in communities across the state, the audio recording is archived on the Website.



Caseload Nebraska Supreme Court

	FY 2014	FY 2015
New Cases Docketed	49	50
• Petitions to Bypass Filed	84	52
• Petitions to Bypass Granted	19	30
• Petitions to Bypass Denied	65	22
Cases Transferred from Court of Appeals	151	155
• Petitions for Further Review Filed	394	298
• Petitions for Further Review Granted	19	32
• Petitions for Further Review Denied	375	266
Cases Disposed by Opinion	188	255
Cases Disposed Without Opinion	32	31
Total Cases Disposed	220	286

Caseload Nebraska Court of Appeals

	FY 2014	FY 2015
New Cases Docketed	1,096	1,085
• Transferred to Supreme Court	151	155
• Petitions to Bypass Granted	28	30
Cases Disposed by Opinion	425	467
Total Cases Disposed	955	1,031



District Courts

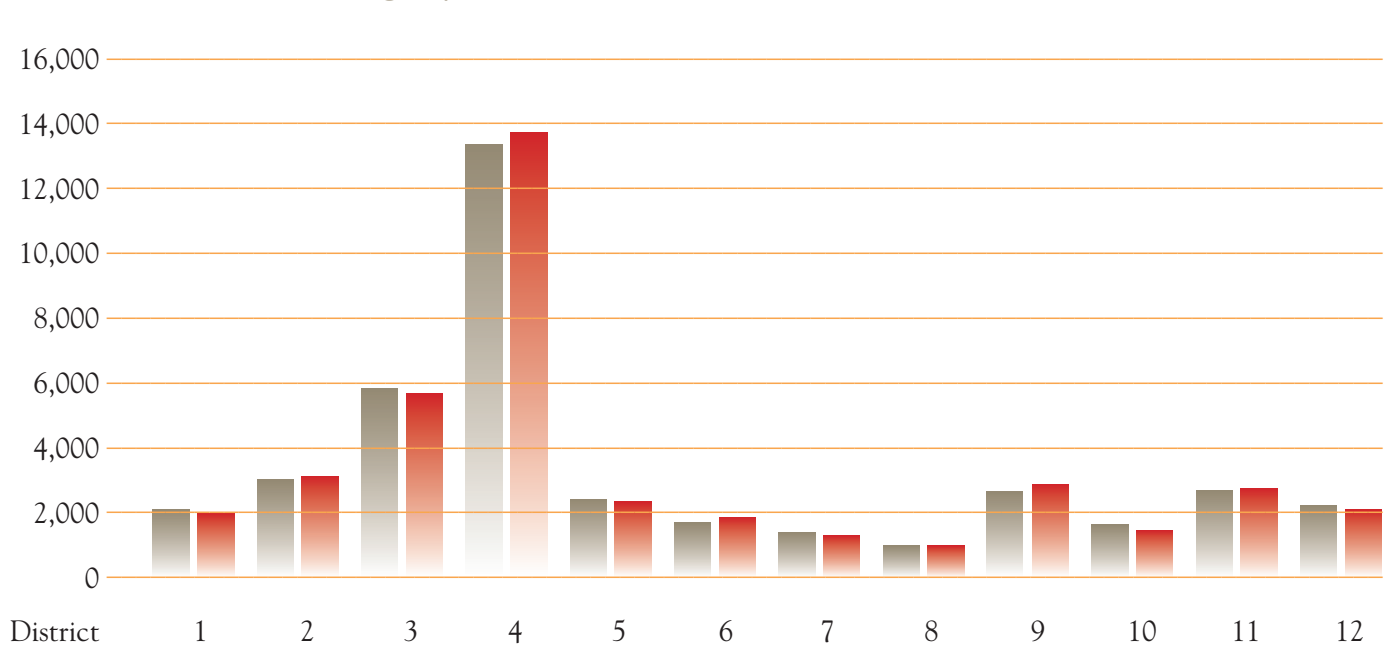
While the statewide number of cases filed in district courts increased in 2015 by a scant 0.4%, District 9 experienced a 7.0% increase (178 cases) in case filings in 2015 and District 4 saw an increase of 2.8% (370 cases). Districts experiencing a decrease in cases over the year include District 5 (5.6% or 136 cases), District 10 (4.3% or 53 cases), and District 3 (4.2% or 253 cases)

District Court Case Filings by District

Number of Cases and Percent Change

District	2014	2015	Numeric Change	% Change
District 1	1,929	1,880	-49	-2.5%
District 2	3,138	3,182	44	1.4%
District 3	5,965	5,712	-253	-4.2%
District 4	13,294	13,664	370	2.8%
District 5	2,437	2,301	-136	-5.6%
District 6	1,835	1,869	34	1.9%
District 7	1,219	1,202	-17	-1.4%
District 8	784	786	2	0.3%
District 9	2,537	2,715	178	7.0%
District 10	1,232	1,179	-53	-4.3%
District 11	2,658	2,705	47	1.8%
District 12	2,146	2,132	-14	-0.7%
Statewide Case Filings	39,174	39,327	153	0.4%

District Court Case Filings by District FY 2014 and 2015



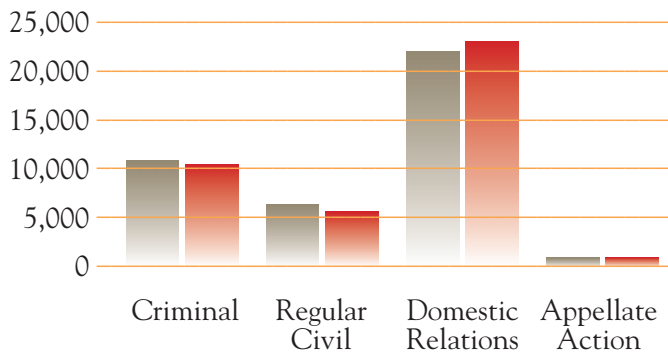
The number of regular civil new cases filed decreased by 6.0%, or 362 cases, in 2015, while Domestic Relations cases experienced a 2.9% increase (650 cases) in new case filings in 2015. Appellate Action and Criminal cases experienced a decrease of 1.3% and 1.2% respectively.

District Court Case Filings by Case Type Number of Cases and Percent Change

Case Type	2014	2015	% of Total	Numeric Change	% Change
Appellate Action	451	445	1%	-6	-1.3%
Domestic Relations	22,216	22,866	58%	650	2.9%
Regular Civil	6,055	5,693	14%	-362	-6.0%
Criminal	10,452	10,323	26%	-129	-1.2%
Total Case Filings	39,174	39,327	100%	153	0.4%



District Court Case Filings by Case Type FY 2014 and FY 2015



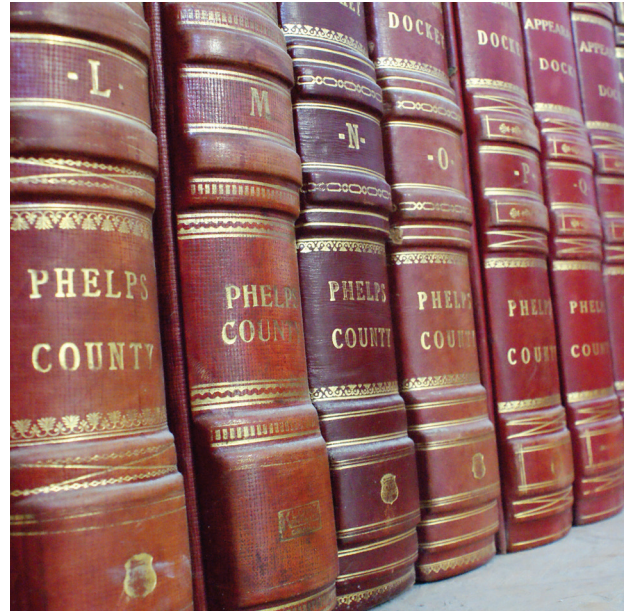
County Courts

Over the year, County Court case filings decreased by 3.9% from 2014 levels, with the greatest decreases in Districts 10, 8, 4, and 3 which had decreases of 6.6%, 6.5%, 6.3% and 6.4% respectively. Districts that experienced an increase in case filings include District 12 (6.3%), District 6 (2.9%), and District 5 (0.1%).

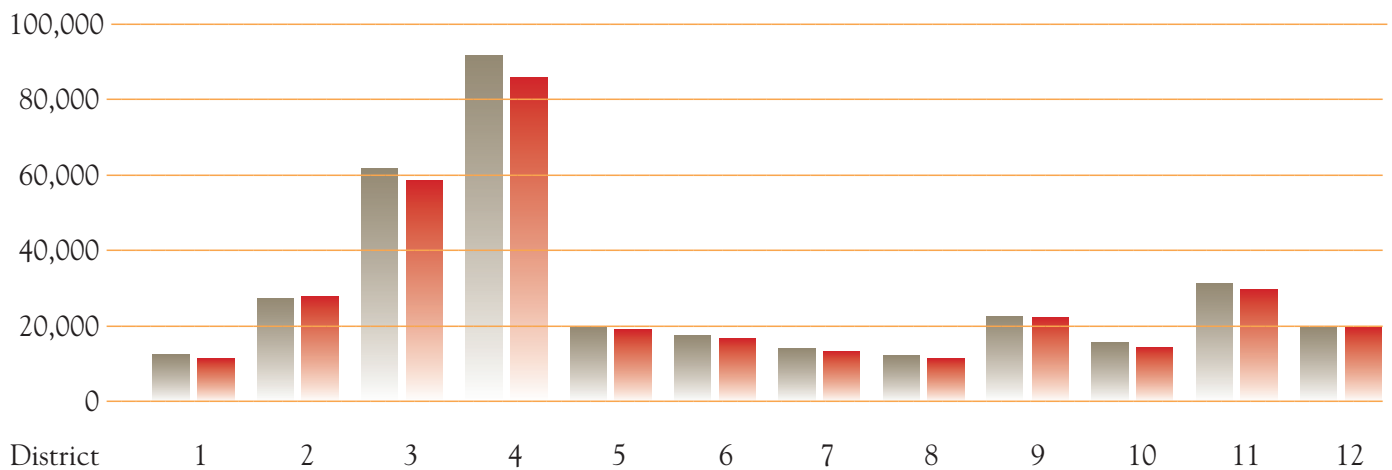
County Court Case Filings by District

Number of Cases and Percent Change

District	2014	2015	Numeric Change	% Change
District 1	12,781	12,195	-586	-4.6%
District 2	27,757	27,030	-727	-2.6%
District 3	61,812	57,878	-3,934	-6.4%
District 4	92,251	86,439	-5,812	-6.3%
District 5	19,476	19,487	11	0.1%
District 6	17,030	17,524	494	2.9%
District 7	12,690	12,263	-427	-3.4%
District 8	11,241	10,508	-733	-6.5%
District 9	22,751	22,217	-534	-2.3%
District 10	13,867	12,949	-918	-6.6%
District 11	29,997	28,602	-1,395	-4.7%
District 12	19,403	20,619	1,216	6.3%
Statewide Case Filings	341,056	327,711	-13,345	-3.9%



County Court Case Filings by District



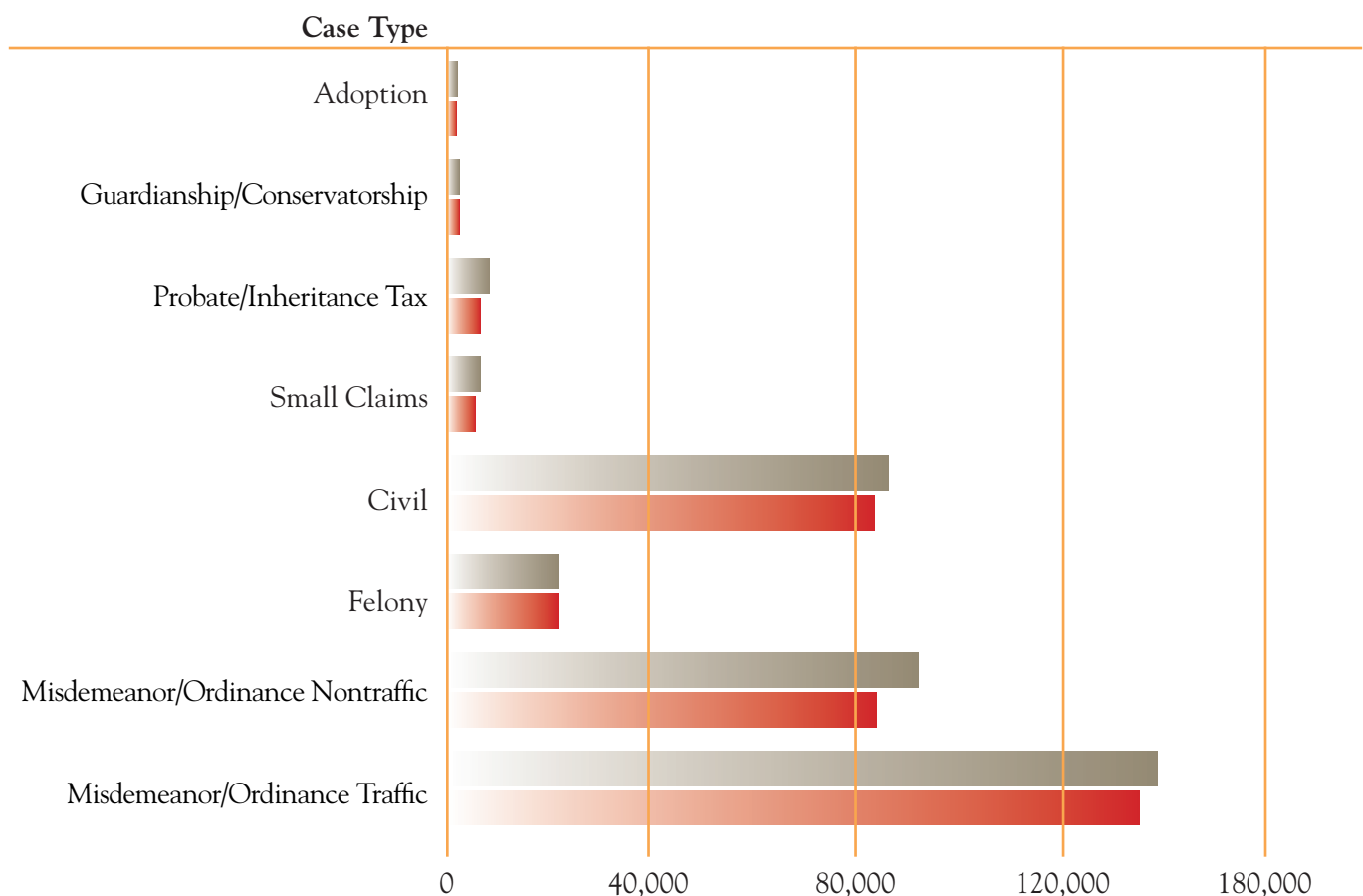
New case filings for Adoptions declined by 9.3% over the year, a decrease of 84 cases, while Misdemeanor/Ordinance Nontraffic new cases declined by 8.9% or 8,232 cases. Case types with increased case filings are Felony cases, which increased by 0.4% (65 cases), and Guardianship/Conservator cases, which increased by .03%, or 6 cases.

County Court Case Filings by Case Type

Number of Cases and Percent Change

District	2014	2015	Numeric Change	% Change
Misdemeanor/Ordinance Traffic	134,417	132,868	-1,549	-1.2%
Misdemeanor/Ordinance Nontraffic	92,153	83,921	-8,232	-8.9%
Felony	14,532	14,597	65	0.4%
Civil	87,053	83,851	-3,202	-3.7%
Small Claims	4,328	3,999	-329	-7.6%
Probate/Inheritance Tax	5,893	5,873	-20	-0.3%
Guardianship/Conservatorship	1,772	1,778	6	0.3%
Adoption	908	824	-84	-9.3%
Total Case Filings	341,056	327,711	-13,345	-3.9%

County Court Case Filings by Case Type



Juvenile Jurisdiction Case Filings

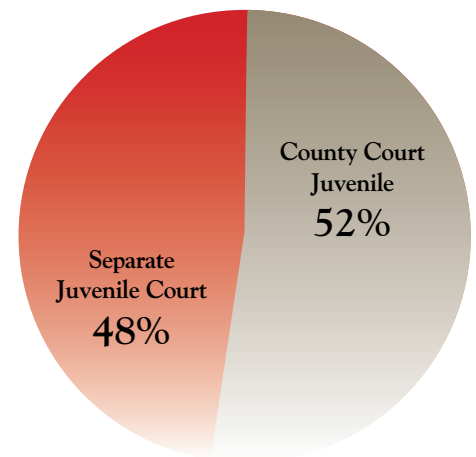
From 2014 to 2015 juvenile case filings increased 7.7% (368 cases) in County Court and decreased 5.7% (283 cases) in Separate Juvenile Court, an overall 0.9% increase of 85 new case filed.

Juvenile Case Filings by Court Type

Number of Cases and Percent Change

Court	2014	2015	Numeric Change	% Change
County Court Juvenile	4,783	5,151	368	7.7%
Separate Juvenile Court	4,968	4,685	-283	-5.7%
Total Juvenile Cases	9,751	9,836	85	0.9%

Juvenile Case Filings 2015

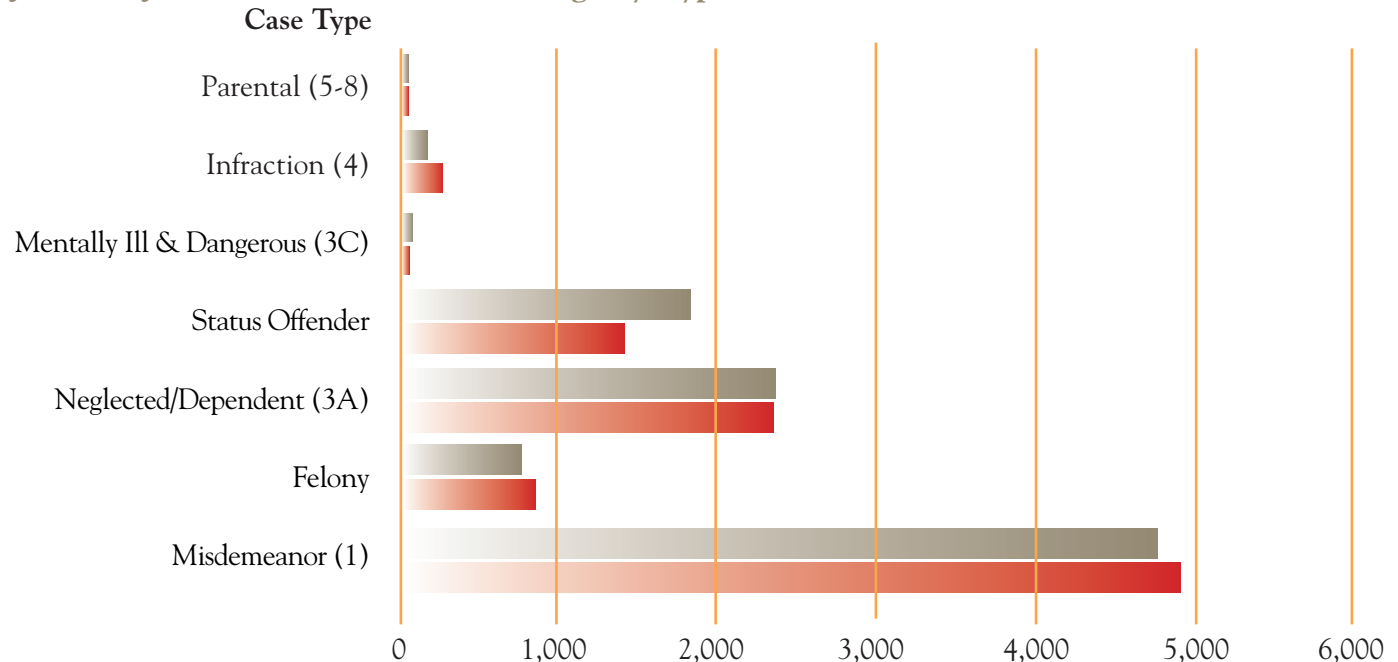


Juvenile Jurisdiction Case Filings by Type of Case

Number of Cases and Percent Change

Juvenile Total	2014	2015	Numeric Change	% Change
Misdemeanor (1)	4,602	4,948	346	7.5%
Felony (2)	733	859	126	17.2%
Neglected/Dependent (3A)	2,305	2,286	-19	-0.8%
Status Offender (3B)	1,861	1,371	-490	-26.3%
Mentally Ill & Dangerous (3C)	51	36	-15	-29.4%
Infraction (4)	187	331	144	77.0%
Parental (5 - 8)	12	5	-7	-58.3%
Total Juvenile Cases	9,751	9,836	85	0.9%

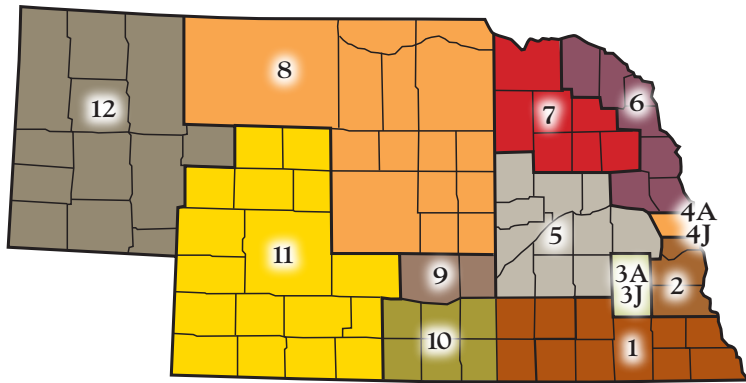
Juvenile Jurisdiction New Cases Filings by Type of Case



Status Offenders' new case filings decreased 26.3% (490 cases) in 2015, while Mentally Ill and Dangerous (3C) cases declined 29.4% (15 cases) and Parental cases declined 58.3%, a decrease of 7 cases. Case types that increased in 2015 are Infractions, (77.0%, 144 cases) Felony Cases (17.2%, 126 cases), and Misdemeanors (7.5%, 346 cases).

Probation Case Statistics

Nebraska's probation districts mirror the areas outlined by the district courts. Districts 3 and 4 (Lincoln and Omaha) have separate adult and juvenile offices within each district.



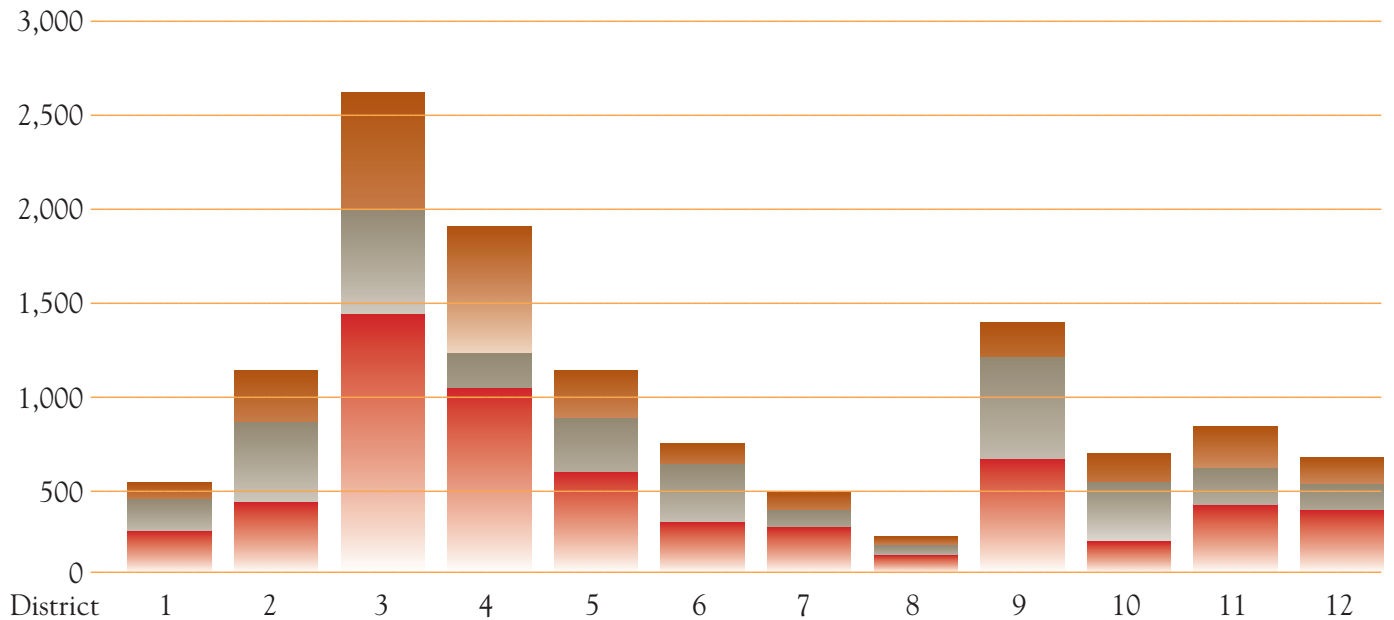
Number of Probation Investigations (PSI for Adults and PDI for Juveniles) Completed by Court Type FY 2015

Number of Cases and Percent Change

	District	County	Juvenile	Total
District 1	298	172	83	553
District 2	442	443	249	1,134
District 3	1,472	519	648	2,639
District 4	1,035	196	581	1,812
District 5	577	371	253	1,201
District 6	340	300	119	759
District 7	287	91	87	465
District 8	130	38	54	222
District 9	654	525	164	1,343
District 10	173	387	164	724
District 11	406	211	177	794
District 12	430	134	126	690
Total	6,244	3,387	2,705	12,336

Number of Probation Investigations Completed by Court Type FY 2015

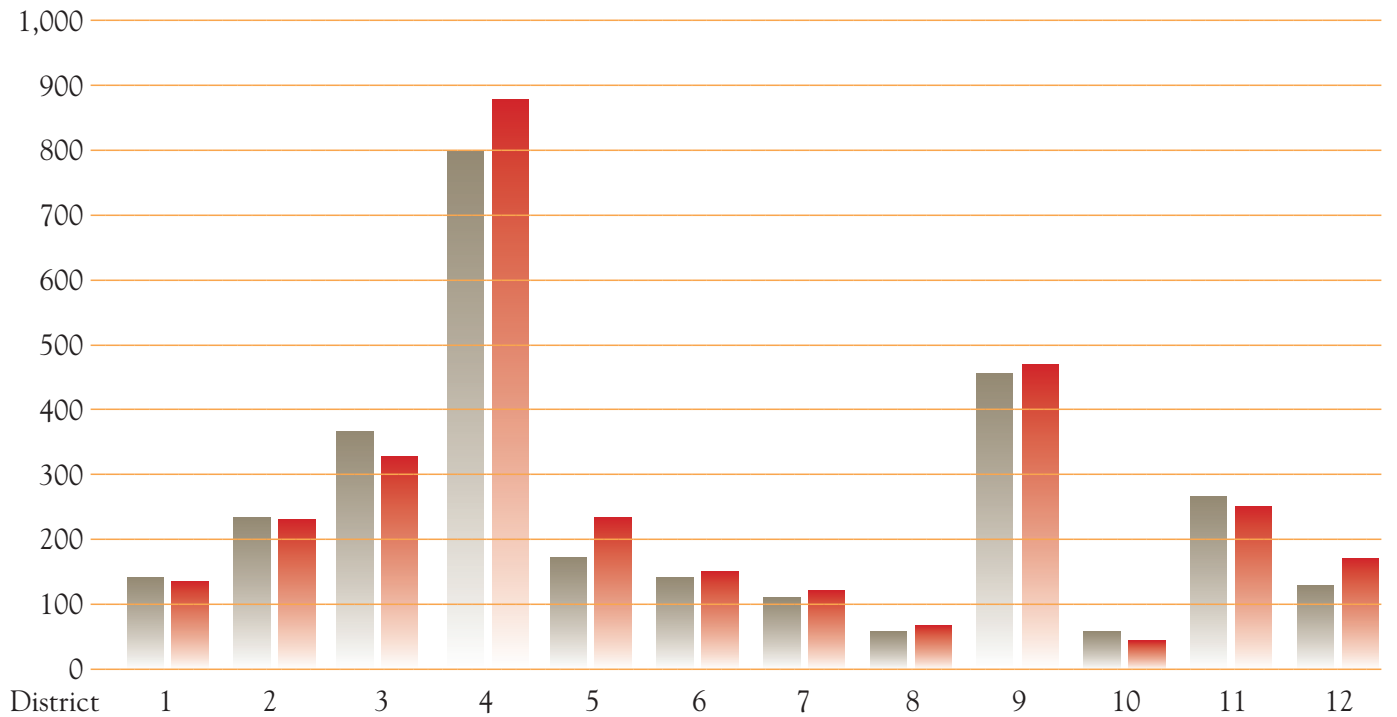
■ District ■ County ■ Juvenile



Nearly 50% of the investigations ordered during FY 2015 were ordered by the District Court, while 27% were ordered by the County Court and 23% were ordered in Juvenile Court.

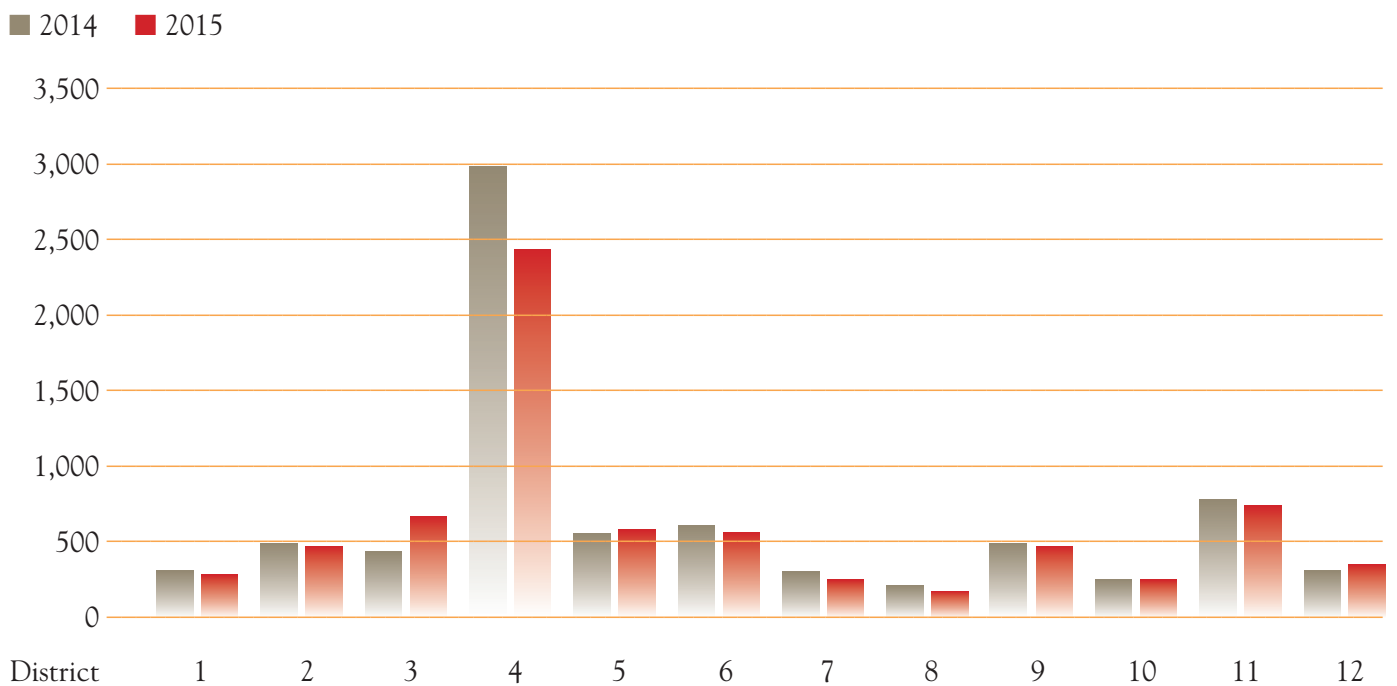
Expanded statistical information for Probation is available on the Nebraska Judicial Branch Website > Publications > Semi-Annual Reports.

District Court Cases With Disposition of Probation FY 2014 and FY 2015



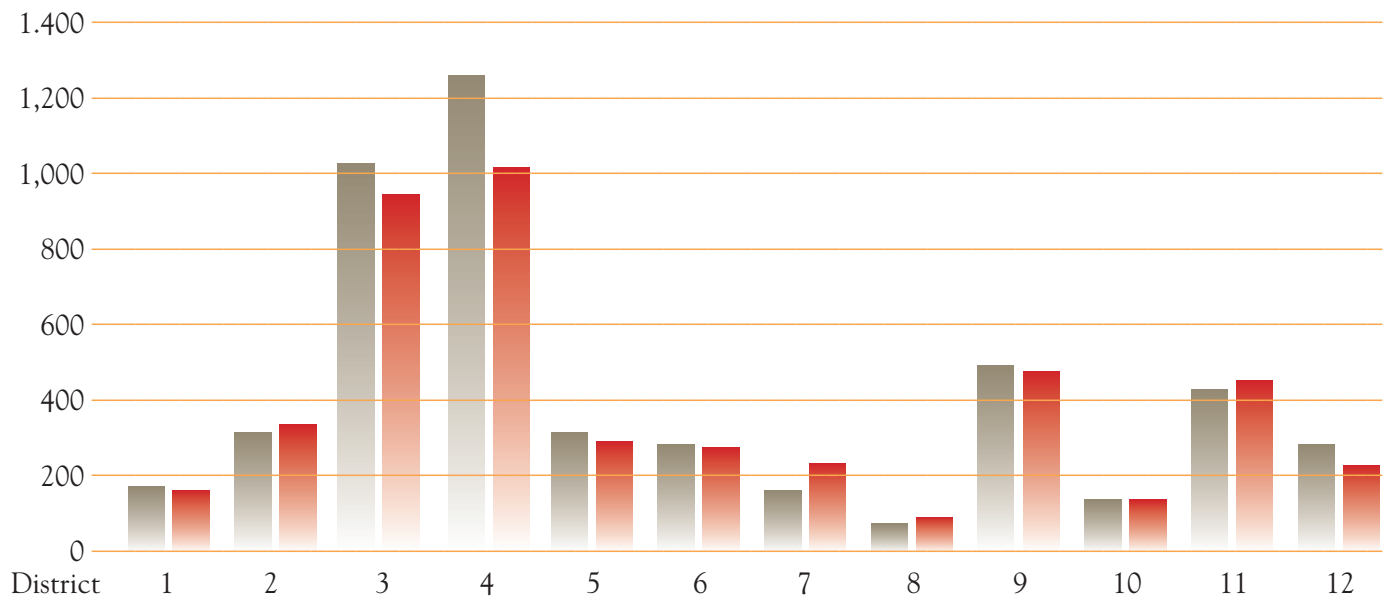
There was a 6% increase in District Court cases resulting in probation between FY 2014 and FY 2015

County Court Cases with Disposition of Probation FY 2014 and FY 2015



Overall probations from County Court cases decreased by 8% from FY 2014 to FY 2015.

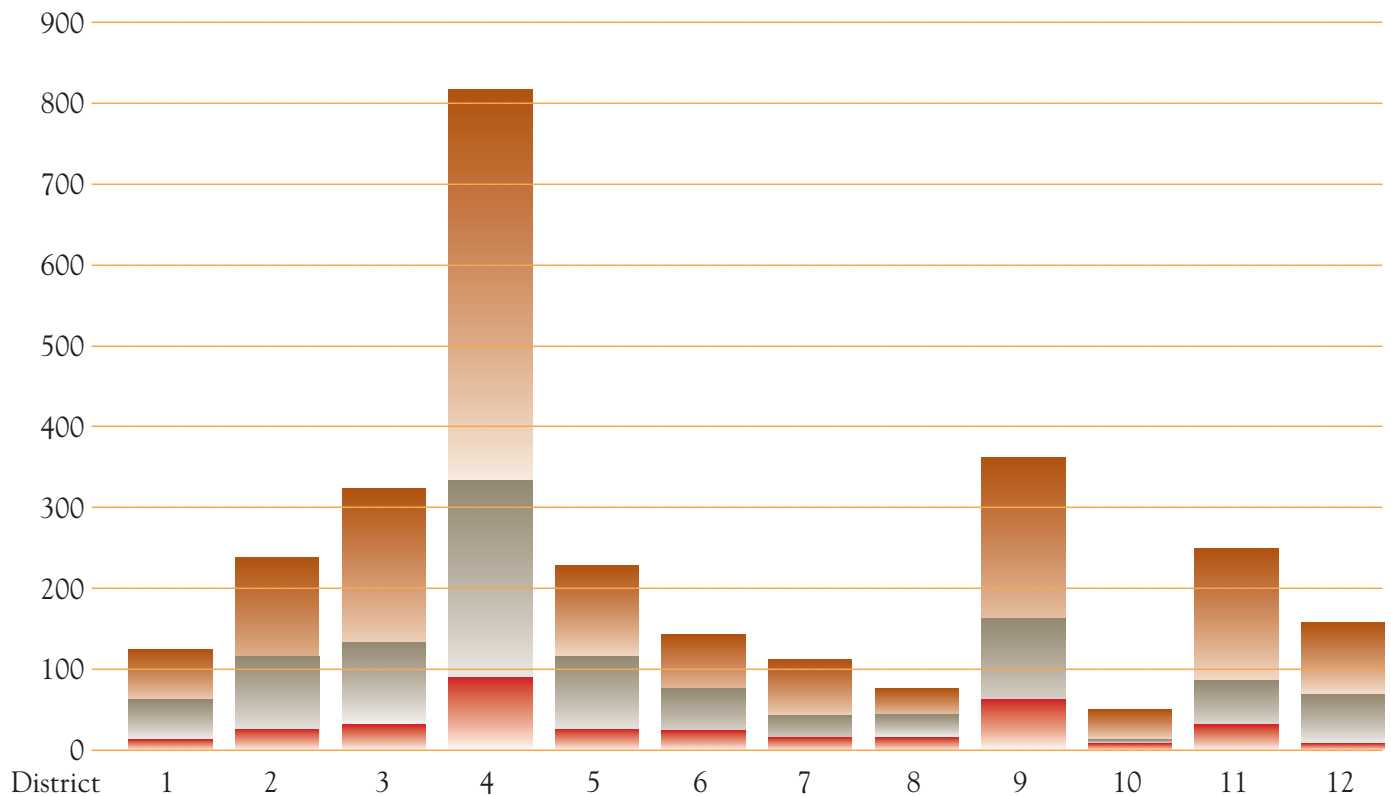
Juvenile Court Cases with Disposition of Probation FY 2014 and FY 2015



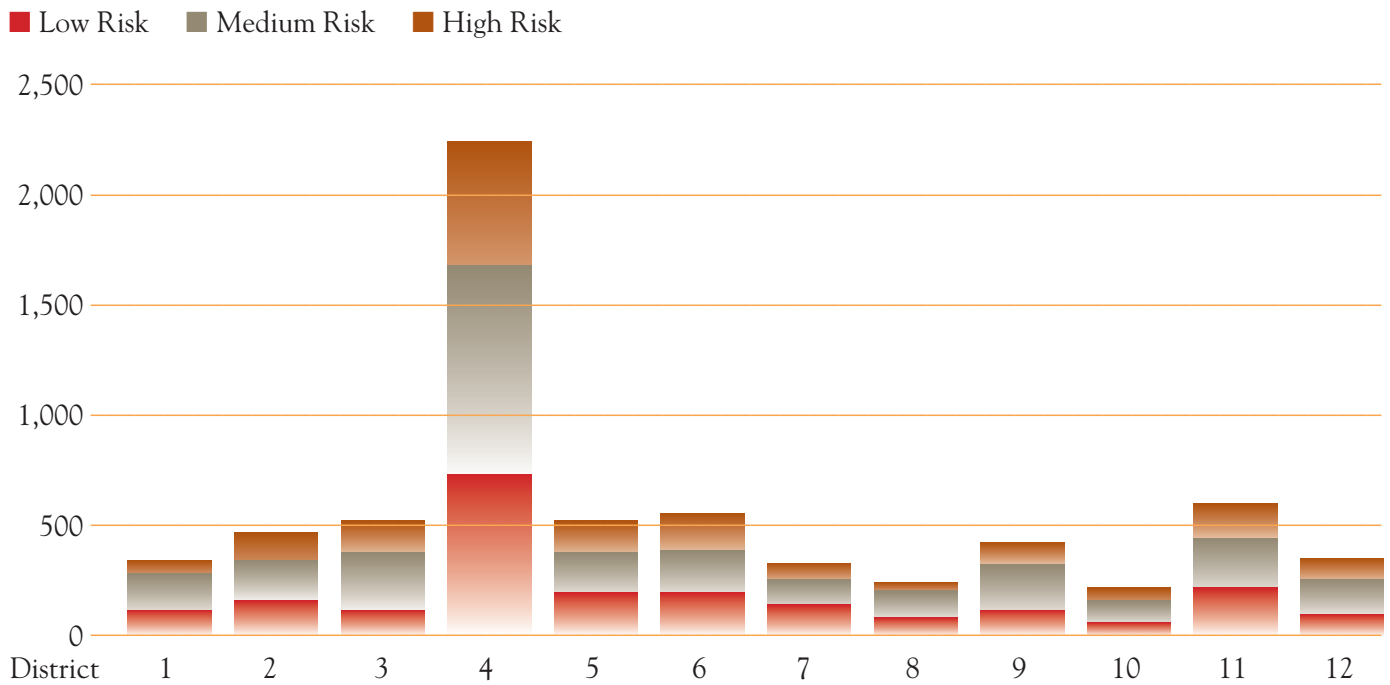
Overall, probations from Juvenile Court cases decreased 6% from FY 2014 to FY2015. This decrease could be attributed to the use of Preadjudication and Predisposition supervision diverting cases from undergoing a traditional probation supervision period.

District Court Probation Cases by Risk to Reoffend FY 2015

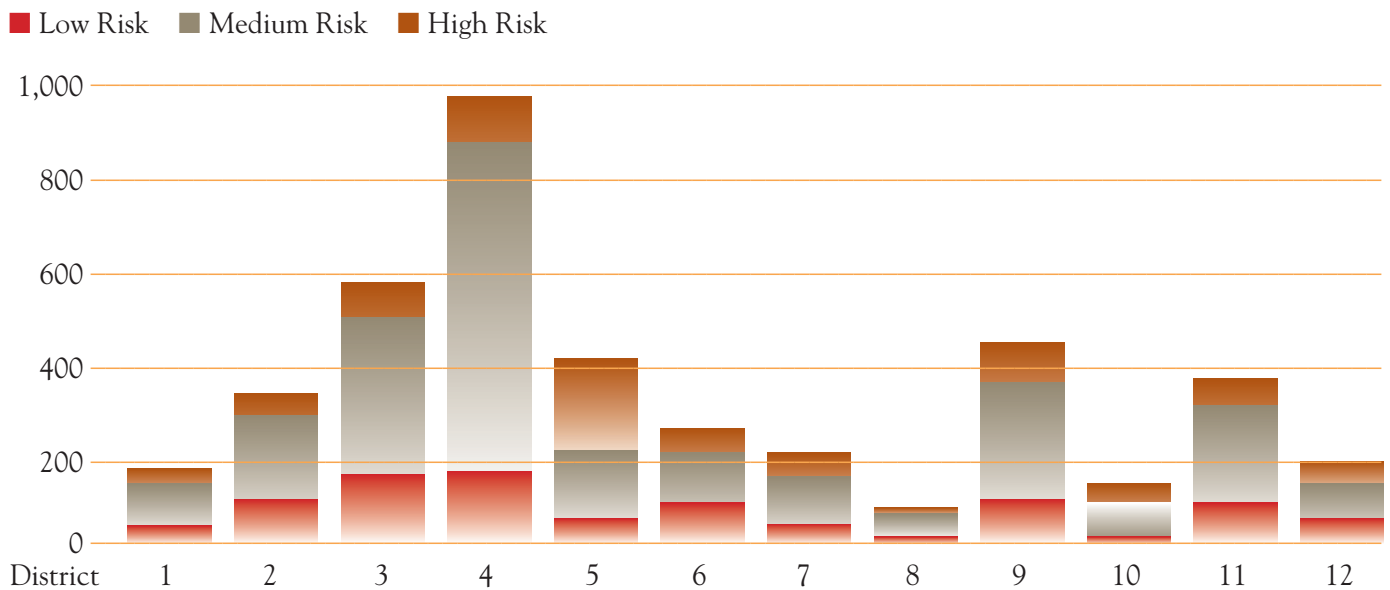
■ Low Risk ■ Medium Risk ■ High Risk



County Court Probation Cases by Risk to Reoffend FY 2015



Juvenile Court Probation Cases and Risk to Reoffend FY 2015



It is important to note that not all cases receive a risk assessment. Risk assessment numbers are determined by using the results of the earliest risk assessment associated with a given case. Individuals with more than one court case are represented only one time regardless of the number of cases in a single district.

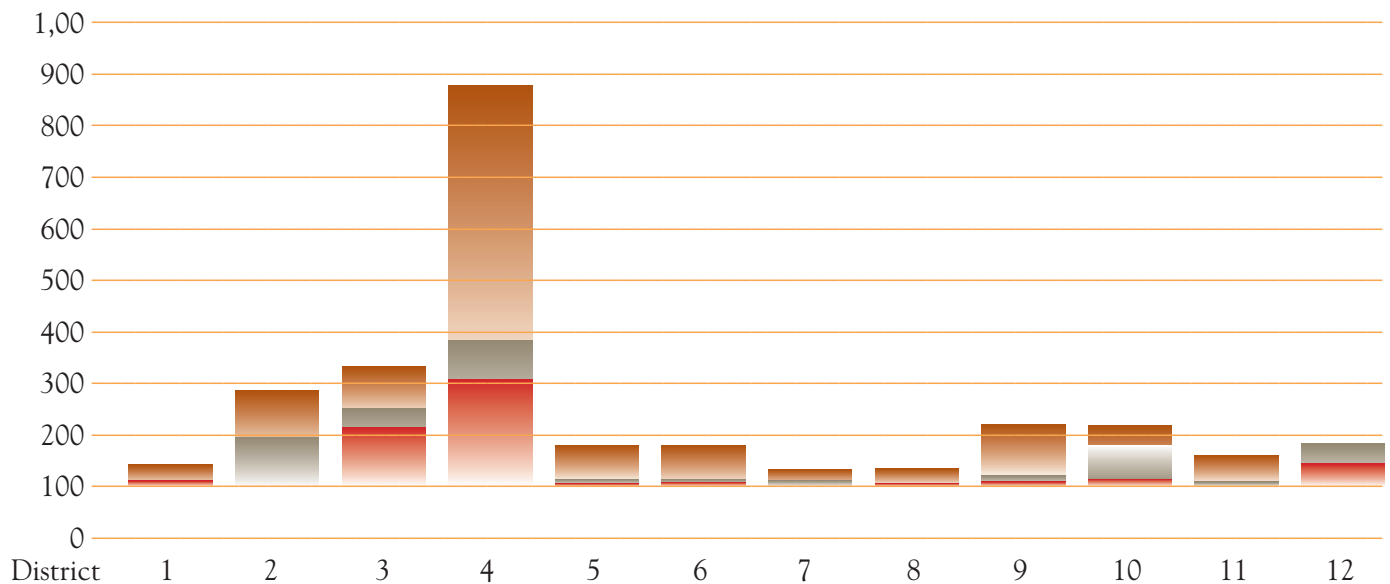
Probation Juvenile Intakes and Detention Decisions FY 2015

Judicial District	Secure Detention	Staff Secure Facility	Other Alternative
District 1	4	0	40
District 2	3	88	94
District 3	115	36	86
District 4	306	79	490
District 5	6	8	64
District 6	9	5	62
District 7	3	9	18
District 8	6	1	25
District 9	10	13	96
District 10	5	6	43
District 11	15	5	26
District 12	33	0	38
Total	515	250	1,082



Probation Juvenile Intakes and Detention Decisions by District FY 2015

■ Secure Detention ■ Staff Secure Facility ■ Other Alternative



Nebraska State Probation had a total of 1,847 juvenile intakes during Fiscal Year 2015. Of those, 515 youth were sent to secure, locked detention facilities and 250 were sent to staff secure units where there are unlocked doors on rooms (versus cell doors). In both secure detention facilities and staff-secure facilities, youth enter and exit through locked doors that are controlled. In addition, 1,082 juveniles were given alternatives to detention which could potentially include: Shelter care, non custodial parent or responsible adult supervision, mental health placement, or electronic monitoring.



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