



King County

Department of Judicial Administration

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King County Superior Court

2018 Annual Statistical Report

Department of Judicial Administration

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Report #: YR-2018

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2018 Highlights

This annual statistical report presents information on filings, resolutions, pending caseload, and trials in King County Superior Court (KCSC). Because of the year-end update and adjustment, a slight difference may exist between the statistics in this annual report and the statistics in the quarterly reports.

- **Filings** (Table 1). The total number of cases filed in 2018 was slightly lower than that in 2017 (-1.8%), decreasing by 1,147 cases. In 2018, the total filings (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) were 62,871 cases. Total judicial filings (after excluding “Matters Filed with Clerk”) increased by 1.4% from 2017, totaling 53,835 cases. However, the change in filings was non-uniform across case categories. In 2018, criminal filings were lower than that in 2017. The criminal filings (excluding criminal appeals) were 5,989 cases in 2018, showing a 7% decrease from 2017. General civil filings (case type 2, excluding “Matters Filed with Clerk” and civil RALJ) in 2018 were higher than that in 2017 (+3.3%). Domestic filings (case type 3) in 2018 remained comparable with that in 2017 (+0.6%). Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) filings increased significantly again in 2018 and continued the upward pattern, totaling 4,910 cases (+4.6% from 2017). In 2018, noticeable decrease in filings was observed in the following categories: adoption (-18.5%), and juvenile offender (-7.2%).
- **Resolutions** (Table 2). The total resolutions (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) in 2018 were 60,568 cases, a 4% increase from 2017. The resolutions were lower than the filings in 2018 in the following categories: criminal cases, general civil cases, probate cases, and juvenile BECCA cases. No significant gap between filings and resolutions was observed for other categories in 2018.
- **Pending Caseload** (Table 3). The overall pending caseload at the end of 2018 was 21,504 cases, a considerable increase from that at the end of 2017 (+11.5%). At the end of 2018, significant increase in pending caseload was observed in general civil (+13.3%), probate (+34.6%), juvenile dependency (+25.7%), termination (+37.5%), and truancy cases (+50.1%).
- **Trials**. Overall, there were 319 jury trials in 2018. There were 599 non-jury trials in 2018. These trial numbers were comparable to that in 2017. In addition, there were 244 other trials (mistrials, trial by affidavit and stipulated trials) in 2018.
- **MRJC vs. SEA** (Table 4). Of the total 62,871 cases (including Matters filed with the Clerk) filed in 2018, 38% were MRJC cases. However, no cases in the following categories were assigned to MRJC: involuntary treatment act and juvenile offender. The MRJC resolutions (38%, as a percentage of total resolution in KCSC) in 2018 were the same as the filings at MRJC (38% of the total filings). At the end of 2018, the MRJC pending caseload was 38% of that of the entire court, including all case categories. In 2018, MRJC accounted for 42%, 46%, and 40% of total criminal, civil and domestic case filings, respectively.

Table 1. Annual Filings

Category	Annual Filings										2017-2018
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change
Criminal	6,498	6,691	5,986	5,942	6,045	6,213	6,237	6,632	6,441	5,989	-452
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	29,821	27,632	27,542	24,513	22,410	21,418	21,217	21,222	21,517	22,217	700
Domestic	7,673	7,850	7,865	7,678	7,897	7,921	7,559	7,512	7,597	7,640	43
Probate	5,110	5,203	5,417	5,492	5,844	5,920	6,022	6,073	6,418	6,382	-36
Guardianship	841	893	837	879	884	928	969	1,008	949	977	28
Adoption	685	686	688	511	483	470	460	458	546	445	-101
Paternity	1,233	1,189	1,039	1,161	931	702	650	528	539	512	-27
Involuntary Treatment Act	2,727	3,059	3,506	3,591	3,678	3,852	4,004	4,152	4,694	4,910	216
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	341	347	303	242	203	285	217	247	245	292	47
Juvenile Dependency	619	806	838	853	893	940	848	727	793	788	-5
Juvenile Termination	284	232	222	197	209	321	214	219	304	344	40
Juvenile Truancy	2,083	1,614	1,350	1,271	1,236	1,233	1,369	1,222	1,547	1,925	378
Juvenile Offender	3,967	3,356	2,496	2,249	1,808	1,802	1,649	1,295	1,324	1,229	-95
Criminal RALJ	180	176	191	192	181	172	180	111	136	117	-19
Civil RALJ	86	64	57	63	53	47	57	66	65	68	3
Total Judicial Filings	63,891	59,798	58,337	54,834	52,755	52,224	51,652	51,472	53,115	53,835	720
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk	14,662	15,586	14,799	15,046	13,763	12,240	9,581	8,742	10,903	9,036	-1,867
Total Annual Filings	62,148	75,384	73,136	69,880	66,518	64,464	61,233	60,214	64,018	62,871	-1,147
Post-disposition Modifications (domestic/paternity)	2,005	1,964	2,018	1,972	1,962	1,943	1,844	1,890	1,916	1,766	-150

- (1) The statistics in this table include “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk”, which are reported separately in the quarterly report. “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk” consists of those civil cases that require no or little judicial resources. This category includes the following cause codes of civil actions: Abstract of Judgment, Foreign Judgment, Tax Warrant, and Transcript of Judgment.
- (2) Juvenile truancy filing became mandated on 10/1/1995.

Table 2. Annual Resolutions

Category	Annual Resolutions										2017-2018
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change
Criminal	7,644	6,521	6,285	5,594	5,832	6,002	6,413	5,915	6,162	5,780	-6.2%
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	28,815	28,902	28,797	25,688	23,506	22,551	22,066	21,230	21,544	21,399	-0.7%
Domestic	7,530	7,781	7,952	7,713	7,915	7,861	7,885	7,479	7,564	7,696	1.7%
Probate	5,036	5,222	5,435	5,356	5,770	5,842	5,874	5,948	6,182	6,134	-0.8%
Guardianship	911	947	824	874	847	948	910	988	906	915	1.0%
Adoption	710	698	715	505	520	486	466	472	525	419	-20.2%
Paternity	1,167	1,289	1,110	1,037	988	861	642	573	542	539	-0.6%
Involuntary Treatment Act	2,493	3,072	3,434	3,794	3,887	3,836	4,015	4,178	4,632	4,672	0.9%
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	365	437	317	233	233	272	222	286	239	230	-3.8%
Juvenile Dependency	1,097	941	946	838	982	976	716	888	753	708	-6.0%
Juvenile Termination	474	229	187	207	215	227	243	265	234	299	27.8%
Juvenile Truancy	2,725	2,211	1,765	1,135	1,187	813	948	1,385	1,535	1,300	-15.3%
Juvenile Offender	3,252	3,471	2,645	2,150	1,738	1,616	1,533	1,401	1,179	1,252	6.2%
Criminal RALJ	198	218	187	186	179	161	173	159	128	127	-0.8%
Civil RALJ	79	76	53	55	60	57	51	67	58	71	22.4%
Total Judicial Resolutions	64,228	62,015	60,652	55,365	53,859	52,509	52,157	51,234	52,183	51,541	-1.2%
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk	14,662	15,590	14,799	15,046	13,763	12,240	9,581	8,737	10,905	9,027	-17.2%
Total Annual Resolutions	62,496	77,605	75,451	70,411	67,622	64,749	61,738	59,971	63,088	60,568	-4.0%

- (1) The statistics in this table include “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk”, which are reported separately in the quarterly report. “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk” consists of those civil cases that require no or little judicial resources. This category includes the following cause codes of civil actions: Abstract of Judgment, Foreign Judgment, Tax Warrant, and Transcript of Judgment.
- (2) Juvenile truancy filing became mandated on 10/1/1995.

Table 3. Year-end Pending Caseload

Category	Year-end Pending Caseload ⁽²⁾										2017-2018
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change
Criminal	2,582	2,791	2,549	2,780	2,865	2,866	2,619	3,193	3,172	3,150	-22
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	11,299	9,969	9,238	8,507	7,936	7,148	6,747	7,798	7,203	8,243	1,040
Domestic	4,375	4,453	4,421	4,458	4,486	4,579	4,234	4,337	4,366	4,381	15
Probate	635	579	559	615	768	908	580	684	909	1,146	237
Guardianship	304	248	261	248	303	301	311	329	376	409	33
Adoption	225	215	192	199	166	149	147	135	155	174	19
Paternity	523	436	377	500	446	300	310	253	245	225	-20
Involuntary Treatment Act	465	463	530	311	104	121	90	60	126	283	157
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service/Others	153	68	94	104	94	119	111	86	102	146	44
Juvenile Dependency	291	337	376	394	386	414	474	300	357	434	77
Juvenile Termination	133	109	146	122	121	225	164	128	196	244	48
Juvenile Truancy	690	313	165	308	326	821	1,329	1,237	1,421	2,041	620
Juvenile Offender	1,091	913	723	663	612	677	581	441	504	464	-40
Criminal RALJ	171	126	132	142	143	155	156	107	132	126	-6
Civil RALJ	42	31	34	45	38	28	33	31	41	38	-3
Year-end Total Pending Caseload	22,979	21,051	19,797	19,396	18,794	18,811	17,886	19,119	19,305	21,504	2,199

(1) The statistics in this table include “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk”, which are reported separately in the quarterly report. “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk” consists of those civil cases that require no or little judicial resources. This category includes the following cause codes of civil actions: Abstract of Judgment, Foreign Judgment, Tax Warrant, and Transcript of Judgment.

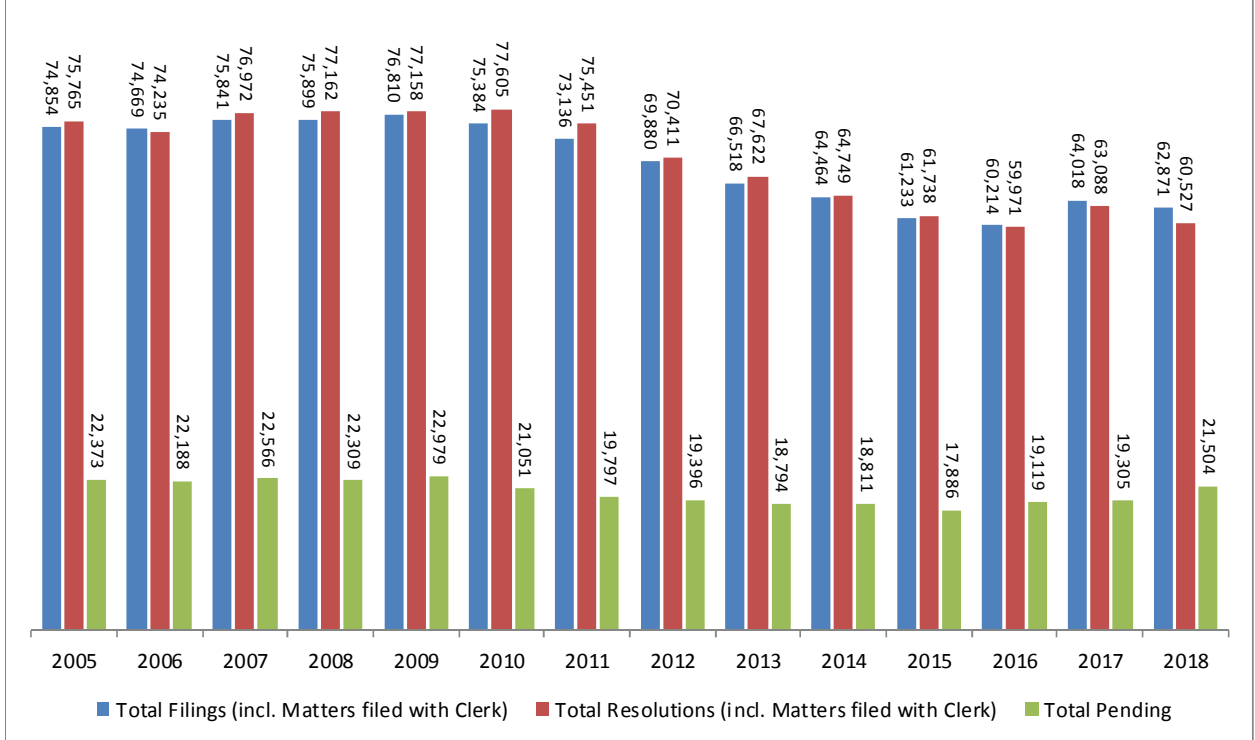
(2) Pending caseload does not include cases on suspense status.

Table 4. Statistics by Location (SEA vs. MRJC)

Category	2018 Filings			2018 Resolutions			2018 Year-end Pending Caseload		
	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)
Criminal	42%	58%	5,989	42%	58%	5,780	45%	55%	3,150
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	46%	54%	22,217	45%	55%	21,399	37%	63%	8,243
Domestic	40%	60%	7,640	41%	59%	7,696	42%	58%	4,381
Probate	25%	75%	6,382	26%	74%	6,134	20%	80%	1,146
Guardianship	40%	60%	977	37%	63%	915	42%	58%	409
Adoption	25%	75%	445	25%	75%	419	26%	74%	174
Paternity	56%	44%	512	56%	44%	539	60%	40%	225
Involuntary Treatment Act	---	100%	4,910	---	100%	4,672	---	100%	283
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	53%	47%	292	36%	64%	230	45%	55%	146
Juvenile Dependency	34%	66%	788	40%	60%	708	40%	60%	434
Juvenile Termination	37%	63%	344	57%	43%	299	34%	66%	244
Juvenile Truancy	51%	49%	1,925	60%	40%	1,300	47%	53%	2,041
Juvenile Offender	---	100%	1,229	---	100%	1,252	---	100%	464
Criminal RALJ	12%	88%	117	13%	87%	127	10%	90%	126
Civil RALJ	13%	87%	68	24%	76%	71	16%	84%	38
Total Judicial Cases	36%	64%	53,835	37%	63%	51,541	38%	62%	21,504
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk	44%	56%	9,036	44%	56%	9,027	---	---	---
Total Cases	38%	62%	62,871	38%	62%	60,568	---	---	---

(1) The statistics in this table include “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk”, which are reported separately in the quarterly report. “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk” consists of those civil cases that require little or no judicial resources. This category includes the following cause codes of civil actions: Abstract of Judgment, Foreign Judgment, Tax Warrant, and Transcript of Judgment.

King County Superior Court - Annual Filings, Resolutions and Year-end Pending



Appendix Definition

Active Status

A case is active if it is not on suspense status (see Suspense Status).

Adoption Cases

This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 5:

- Relinquishment (REL)
- Termination of Parent/Child Relationship (TER)
- Adoption (ADP)
- Miscellaneous (MSC)
- Name Change - Confidential (CHN)
- Initial Pre-Placement Report Filed with Clerk (PPR)

Annual Filings

Total number of new case filings during the calendar year (January 1 to December 31).

ANTRIAL

An “Assigned - No Trial” is a trial that has pre-trial motion time (PTM) and possibly voir dire time (VDT), but the trial was ended by plea, settlement or other dispositions before the opening statement or the impanel of a jury.

Case

A case is defined as a filing with an assigned case number (or a case number plus a defendant connection code in pre-1990 criminal filings).

Civil Cases (excl. RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)

Civil cases, excluding appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction and “Matters Filed with Clerk”. Civil cases include small claims as identified by the “Small Claim Track”. This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 2:

- Administrative Law Review (ALR)
- Change of Name - Non-Confidential (CHN)
- Collection (COL)
- Commercial (COM)
- Condemnation (CON)
- Appeals of Department of Licensing Revocation (DOC)
- Domestic Violence Protection (DVP)
- Emancipation of Minor (EOM)
- Foreclosure (FOR)
- Civil Harassment (HAR)
- Injunction (INJ)
- Other Malpractice (MAL)
- Medical Malpractice (MED)
- Meretricious Relationship (MER)
- Malicious Harassment (MHA)
- Miscellaneous (MSC)
- Minor Settlement (MST) - *as of 10/1/96, under Guardianship*
- Petition of Civil Commitment- Sexual Predator (PCC)
- Property Fairness (PFA)
- Personal Injury (PIN)
- Property Damage (PRP)
- Quiet Title (QTI)
- Small Claims (LCA/LCI on “Small Claim Track”)
- Seizure of Property from the Commission of a Crime (SPC)
- Seizure of Property Resulting from a Crime (SPR)
- Tort Motor Vehicle (TMV)
- Tort Other (TTO)
- Unlawful Detainer (UND)
- Wrongful Death (WDE)
- Writ of Habeas Corpus (WHC)
- Miscellaneous Writ (WMW)
- Writ of Mandamus (WRM)
- Writ of Restitution (WRR)
- Writ of Review (WRV)

Civil Matters Filed with Clerk

Filings with clerk (case numbers assigned), but requiring little or no judicial action. This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 2:

- Abstract of Judgment (ABJ)
- Foreign Judgment (FJU)
- Tax Warrant (TAX)
- Transcripts of Judgment (TRJ)

Civil RALJ Cases

Civil appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction (excluding small claims as identified by the “Small Claim Track”). Civil RALJ includes the following “cause-of-action” reporting categories:

- Lower Court Appeal - Civil and “Not a Small Claim”
- Lower Court Appeal - Infraction and “Not a Small Claim”

Note: The Civil RALJ cases are determined based on both SCOMIS “cause-of-action” code (LCA and LCI) within SCOMIS case type 2 and the “Small Claim Track”.

Completion

A case is completed when dispositive document is filed with the court following resolution.

Criminal Cases (excl. RALJ)

Adult criminal cases, excluding appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction. This reporting category includes the following crime categories within SCOMIS case type 1:

- Homicide
- Sex Crime
- Robbery
- Assault
- Theft/Burglary
- Motor Vehicle Theft
- Controlled Substance
- Other Felony
- Others (Misdemeanor, Non-charge Case)

Criminal RALJ Cases

Criminal appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction. This reporting category includes all SCOMIS case type 1 cases that have an appeal from lower court field of “Yes”.

Domestic Cases

This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 3:

- Child Custody (CUS)
- Dissolution with Children (DIC)
- Dissolution without Children (DIN)
- Foreign Judgment (FJU)
- Annulment/Invalidity (INV)
- Modification (with a new case number) (MOD)
- Miscellaneous (MSC)
- Mandatory Wage Assignment (MWA)
- Out-of-State Child Custody (OSC)
- Reciprocal, Respondent-in-County (RIC)
- Reciprocal, Respondent-out-of-County (ROC)
- Legal Separation (SEP)

Guardianship Cases

This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 4:

- Guardianship/Estate (G/E)
- Guardianship (GND)
- Limited Guardianship (LGD)
- Minor Settlement (MST)

Jury Trial

A hearing is reported as a jury trial if the jury is impaneled.

Juvenile At-risk Youth/Child-in-Need of Service Cases

Juvenile dependency cases, excluding truancy cases. This reporting category includes following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 7:

- Alternative Residential Placement (ARP)
- At-Risk Youth (ARY)
- Child in Need of Service (CNS)
- Other cases (excl. DEP/TER /ARY/CNS/ARP)

Juvenile Dependency Cases

Juvenile dependency cases, excluding truancy cases. This reporting category includes following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 7:

- Dependency (DEP)
- Termination (TER)

Juvenile Offender Cases

This reporting category includes the following crime categories in SCOMIS case type 8:

- Homicide
- Sex Crime
- Robbery
- Assault
- Theft/Burglary
- Motor Vehicle Theft
- Controlled Substance
- Other Felony
- Others (Misdemeanor, Non-charge Case)

Juvenile Truancy Cases

Mandatory truancy filings started on 10/01/1995. This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” code within SCOMIS case type 7:

- Truancy (TRU)

Involuntary Treatment Act Cases

This reporting category includes all “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 6:

- Alcoholic Treatment (ALT)
- Mental Illness - Adult (MI)
- Mental Illness - Family (MIF)
- Mental Illness - Juvenile (MIJ)

Non-Jury Trial

A hearing is reported as a non-jury trial if an opening statement is made, waived, or reserved.

Number of Trials

Occurrences of trials. If a case has multiple trials, all trials are reported. If multiple cases are tried together, it is reported as one trial where possible (see “Number of Cases Tried” for difference). The number of trials refer to number of jury and non-jury trials (including juvenile fact-findings).

Paternity Cases

This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 5:

- Modification (MOD)
- Paternity (PAT)
- Paternity/URES/UFSA (PUR)

Pending Case

A case is defined as pending if it is unresolved and active (not in suspense).

Post-disposition Modifications

Petitions to modify parenting plan and/or support after the resolution of the original cases, based on the modification tracks opened during the reporting period.

Probate Cases

This reporting category includes the following “cause-of-action” codes within SCOMIS case type 4:

- Absentee (ABS)
- Disclaimer (DSC)
- Estate (EST)
- Foreign Will (FNW)
- Miscellaneous (MSC)
- Non-Probate Notice to Creditors (NNC)
- Will Only (WLL)

Resolution

A case is resolved if all issues in the complaint are fully adjudicated.

Suspended Case

A case is placed in suspense status from active status during the reporting period.

Suspense Status

A case is on suspense status if it is on warrant, appeal, stay, mediation, arbitration (“Deferred Prosecution” is not a suspense status, but is treated as a resolution).

Trial

A hearing set before a judge or jury in which all the issues in the case are meant to be resolved. A trial normally includes opening statements to the court or jury stating what evidence will show, introduction of witnesses and exhibits for direct and cross examination, final arguments to the court or jury in which counsel argue both the evidence and the law, and judgment by the court or jury stating what the facts of the case are and what law applies to the facts. In a jury case, it also includes the selection of the jury. A trial can be held for one or more cases. A single trial may be held to adjudicate more than one case (as defined above).