



# King County

Department of Judicial Administration

*Barbara Miner*

*Director and Superior Court Clerk*

(206) 296-9300 (206) 296-0100 TTY/TDD

## King County Superior Court

# 2019 Annual Statistical Report

Department of Judicial Administration

February 14, 2020

Report #: YR-2019

**Seattle:**  
516 Third Avenue Room E609  
Seattle, WA 98104-2386

**Regional Justice Center:**  
401 Fourth Avenue North Room 2C  
Kent, WA 98032-4429

**Juvenile Division:**  
1211 East Alder Room 3015  
Seattle, WA 98122-5598

## 2019 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 2019 was essentially the same as that in 2018 (+0.1%), increasing by only 48 cases. In 2019, the total filings (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) were 62,919 cases. Total judicial filings (after excluding “Matters Filed with Clerk”) decreased by 1.8% from 2018, totaling 52,889 cases. However, the change in filings was non-uniform across case categories. In 2019, criminal filings were higher than that in 2018. The criminal filings (excluding criminal appeals) were 6,607 cases in 2019, showing a 10.3% increase from 2018. General civil filings (case type 2, excluding “Matters Filed with Clerk” and civil RALJ) in 2019 were lower than that in 2018 (-4.6%). Domestic filings (case type 3) in 2019 was also lower than that in 2018 (-4.7%). Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) filings increased slightly again in 2019 and continued the upward pattern, totaling 4,985 cases (+75 cases from 2018). In 2019, noticeable decrease in filings was observed in the following categories: guardianship (-27.7%), juvenile BECCA (-29.5%), juvenile termination (-34.6%), and juvenile offender (-8.8%).
- **Resolutions** (Table 2). The total resolutions (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) in 2019 were 61,812 cases, a 2.1% increase from 2018. The resolutions were notably lower than the filings in 2019 in the following categories: criminal cases, juvenile offender, and juvenile dependency cases. No significant gap between filings and resolutions was observed for other categories in 2019.
- **Pending Caseload** (Table 3). The overall pending caseload at the end of 2019 was 22,146 cases, showing an increase from that at the end of 2018 (+3%). At the end of 2019, significant increase in pending caseload was observed in criminal (+414 cases), general civil (+333 cases), and juvenile offender cases (+183 cases).
- **Trials**. Overall, there were 343 jury trials in 2019. There were 607 non-jury trials in 2019. These trial numbers were comparable to that in both 2017 and 2018. In addition, there were 179 other trials (mistrials, trial by affidavit and stipulated trials) in 2019.
- **MRJC vs. SEA** (Table 4). Of the total 62,919 cases (including Matters filed with the Clerk) filed in 2019, 37% 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 2019 were comparable to the filings at MRJC (37% of the total filings). At the end of 2019, the MRJC pending caseload was 37% of that of the entire court, including all case categories. In 2019, MRJC accounted for 39%, 45%, and 42% of total criminal, civil and domestic case filings, respectively.

Table 1. Annual Filings

Category	Annual Filings										2018-2019 Change
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Criminal	6,691	5,986	5,942	6,045	6,213	6,237	6,632	6,441	5,989	6,607	618
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	27,632	27,542	24,513	22,410	21,418	21,217	21,222	21,517	22,217	21,202	-1,015
Domestic	7,850	7,865	7,678	7,897	7,921	7,559	7,512	7,597	7,640	7,280	-360
Probate	5,203	5,417	5,492	5,844	5,920	6,022	6,073	6,418	6,382	6,804	422
Guardianship	893	837	879	884	928	969	1,008	949	977	706	-271
Adoption	686	688	511	483	470	460	458	546	445	483	38
Paternity	1,189	1,039	1,161	931	702	650	528	539	512	526	14
Involuntary Treatment Act	3,059	3,506	3,591	3,678	3,852	4,004	4,152	4,694	4,910	4,985	75
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	347	303	242	203	285	217	247	245	292	206	-86
Juvenile Dependency	806	838	853	893	940	848	727	793	788	811	23
Juvenile Termination	232	222	197	209	321	214	219	304	344	225	-119
Juvenile Truancy	1,614	1,350	1,271	1,236	1,233	1,369	1,222	1,547	1,925	1,706	-219
Juvenile Offender	3,356	2,496	2,249	1,808	1,802	1,649	1,295	1,324	1,229	1,121	-108
Criminal RALJ	176	191	192	181	172	180	111	136	117	146	29
Civil RALJ	64	57	63	53	47	57	66	65	68	81	13
<b>Total Judicial Filings</b>	<b>59,798</b>	<b>58,337</b>	<b>54,834</b>	<b>52,755</b>	<b>52,224</b>	<b>51,652</b>	<b>51,472</b>	<b>53,115</b>	<b>53,835</b>	<b>52,889</b>	<b>-946</b>
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	15,586	14,799	15,046	13,763	12,240	9,581	8,742	10,903	9,036	10,030	994
<b>Total Annual Filings</b>	<b>75,384</b>	<b>73,136</b>	<b>69,880</b>	<b>66,518</b>	<b>64,464</b>	<b>61,233</b>	<b>60,214</b>	<b>64,018</b>	<b>62,871</b>	<b>62,919</b>	<b>48</b>
Post-disposition Modifications (domestic/paternity) <sup>(2)</sup>	1,964	2,018	1,972	1,962	1,943	1,844	1,890	1,916	1,766	752	

(1) "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) Prior to 2019, the numbers included both "parenting" and "support only" modifications. Since 2019, only the "parenting" modifications are included.

Table 2. Annual Resolutions

Category	Annual Resolutions										2018-2019 Change
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Criminal	6,521	6,285	5,594	5,832	6,002	6,413	5,915	6,162	5,780	5,788	8
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	28,902	28,797	25,688	23,506	22,551	22,066	21,230	21,544	21,399	21,389	-10
Domestic	7,781	7,952	7,713	7,915	7,861	7,885	7,479	7,564	7,696	7,295	-401
Probate	5,222	5,435	5,356	5,770	5,842	5,874	5,948	6,182	6,134	6,764	630
Guardianship	947	824	874	847	948	910	988	906	915	656	-259
Adoption	698	715	505	520	486	466	472	525	419	472	53
Paternity	1,289	1,110	1,037	988	861	642	573	542	539	511	-28
Involuntary Treatment Act	3,072	3,434	3,794	3,887	3,836	4,015	4,178	4,632	4,672	4,980	308
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	437	317	233	233	272	222	286	239	230	183	-47
Juvenile Dependency	941	946	838	982	976	716	888	753	708	688	-20
Juvenile Termination	229	187	207	215	227	243	265	234	299	187	-112
Juvenile Truancy	2,211	1,765	1,135	1,187	813	948	1,385	1,535	1,300	1,632	332
Juvenile Offender	3,471	2,645	2,150	1,738	1,616	1,533	1,401	1,179	1,252	1,034	-218
Criminal RALJ	218	187	186	179	161	173	159	128	127	134	7
Civil RALJ	76	53	55	60	57	51	67	58	71	67	-4
<b>Total Judicial Resolutions</b>	<b>62,015</b>	<b>60,652</b>	<b>55,365</b>	<b>53,859</b>	<b>52,509</b>	<b>52,157</b>	<b>51,234</b>	<b>52,183</b>	<b>51,541</b>	<b>51,780</b>	<b>239</b>
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	15,590	14,799	15,046	13,763	12,240	9,581	8,737	10,905	9,027	10,032	1,005
<b>Total Annual Resolutions</b>	<b>77,605</b>	<b>75,451</b>	<b>70,411</b>	<b>67,622</b>	<b>64,749</b>	<b>61,738</b>	<b>59,971</b>	<b>63,088</b>	<b>60,568</b>	<b>61,812</b>	<b>1,244</b>

(1) "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.

Table 3. Year-end Pending Caseload

Category	Year-end Pending Caseload <sup>(2)</sup>										2018-2019
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change
Criminal	2,791	2,549	2,780	2,865	2,866	2,619	3,193	3,172	3,150	3,564	414
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup> )	9,969	9,238	8,507	7,936	7,148	6,747	7,798	7,203	8,243	8,576	333
Domestic	4,453	4,421	4,458	4,486	4,579	4,234	4,337	4,366	4,381	4,384	3
Probate	579	559	615	768	908	580	684	909	1,146	690	-456
Guardianship	248	261	248	303	301	311	329	376	409	235	-174
Adoption	215	192	199	166	149	147	135	155	174	184	10
Paternity	436	377	500	446	300	310	253	245	225	251	26
Involuntary Treatment Act	463	530	311	104	121	90	60	126	283	288	5
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service/Others	68	94	104	94	119	111	86	102	146	100	-46
Juvenile Dependency	337	376	394	386	414	474	300	357	434	647	213
Juvenile Termination	109	146	122	121	225	164	128	196	244	277	33
Juvenile Truancy	313	165	308	326	821	1,329	1,237	1,421	2,041	2,112	71
Juvenile Offender	913	723	663	612	677	581	441	504	464	647	183
Criminal RALJ	126	132	142	143	155	156	107	132	126	140	14
Civil RALJ	31	34	45	38	28	33	31	41	38	51	13
<b>Year-end Total Pending Caseload<sup>(2)</sup></b>	<b>21,051</b>	<b>19,797</b>	<b>19,396</b>	<b>18,794</b>	<b>18,811</b>	<b>17,886</b>	<b>19,119</b>	<b>19,305</b>	<b>21,504</b>	<b>22,146</b>	<b>642</b>

(1) The statistics in this table does not include “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk”. “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk” consists of those civil cases that require no or little judicial resources and are resolved at the time of filing. 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	2019 Filings			2019 Resolutions			2019 Year-end Pending Caseload		
	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)
Criminal	39%	61%	6,607	42%	58%	5,788	40%	60%	3,564
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	45%	55%	21,202	46%	54%	21,389	35%	65%	8,576
Domestic	42%	58%	7,280	41%	59%	7,295	42%	58%	4,384
Probate	28%	62%	6,804	28%	72%	6,764	33%	67%	690
Guardianship	36%	64%	706	35%	65%	656	38%	62%	235
Adoption	33%	67%	483	31%	69%	472	34%	66%	184
Paternity	55%	45%	526	53%	47%	511	63%	37%	251
Involuntary Treatment Act	---	100%	4,985	---	100%	4,980	---	100%	288
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	53%	47%	206	54%	46%	183	46%	54%	100
Juvenile Dependency	38%	62%	811	38%	62%	688	40%	60%	647
Juvenile Termination	37%	63%	225	36%	64%	187	36%	64%	277
Juvenile Truancy	56%	44%	1,706	56%	44%	1,632	46%	54%	2,112
Juvenile Offender	---	100%	1,121	---	100%	1,034	---	100%	647
Criminal RALJ	12%	88%	146	10%	90%	134	11%	89%	140
Civil RALJ	12%	88%	81	10%	90%	67	18%	82%	51
<b>Total Judicial Cases</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>52,889</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>51,780</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>22,146</b>
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	45%	55%	10,030	45%	55%	10032	---	---	---
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>62,919</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>61,812</b>	---	---	---

(1) “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 and paternity Cases (case type 5)**

ADP - Adoption  
CFI - Confidential Intermediary  
CHN - Confidential Change of Name  
DIP - Disestablishment of Parentage  
MDS - Modification/Support Only  
MOD - Modification  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
OAA - Open Adoption Agreement  
PAD - De Facto Parentage  
PAG - Pre Birth Establish Parentage Genetic  
PAS - Establish Parentage Gestational Surrogacy  
PAT - Parentage  
PPR - Initial Pre Placement Report  
PRC - Parentage Rescission/Challenge  
PUR - Parentage (URES/UFSA)  
REL - Relinquishment  
ROB - Relocation Objection  
TER - Termination of Parental Rights

## **Case**

A case is defined as a filing with an assigned case number.

## **Civil Cases (case type 2, no RALJ)**

ALR - Administrative Law Review  
ALRLI - L&I Administrative Law Review  
AOD - Assurance of Discontinuance  
ASB - Asbestos  
ASP - Asbestos Personal Injury  
ASW - Asbestos Wrongful Death  
BAT - Petition to Appeal/Amend Ballot Title  
CAA - Motion to Confirm/Compel Arbitration Award  
CFJ - Petition for Order Granting Judgment on Confession of Judgment  
CHN - Non Confidential Change of Name  
COL - Collection  
COM - Commercial  
CON - Condemnation  
CRP - Certificate of Restoration of Opportunity  
CRR - Petition for Certificate of Rehabilitation  
DOL - Appeal Licensing Revocation  
DSF - Notice of Deposit of Surplus Funds from Trustee's Sale of Real Property  
DVP - Domestic Violence  
ECP - Enforcement of Canadian Protection Order  
EOM - Emancipation of Minor  
FOR - Foreclosure  
FPO - Foreign Protection Order  
FVL - Motion to Show Cause /Fruivolous Lien  
HAR - Unlawful Harassment  
HSI - Application for Health & Safety Inspection  
INJ - Injunction  
IPL - Complaint for Interpleader  
LUP - Land Use Petition  
MAL - Other Malpractice  
MED - Medical Malpractice  
MER - Meretricious Relationships  
MHA - Malicious Harassment  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
MST - Minor Settlement  
MWP - Minor Work Permit  
NJF - Non Judicial Filing  
OSS - Petition to Issue Out of State Subpoena  
PBC - Petition for Birth Certificate Change  
PBJ - Petition for Justification /Bail Bond Company  
PCC - Petition for Civil Commitment

PFA - Property Fairness Act  
PIN - Personal Injury  
PPT - Petition for Perpetuation of Testimony  
PRA - Public Records Act  
PRG - Property Damage /Gangs  
PRP - Property Damage  
PVO - Petition for Vehicle Ownership  
QTI - Quiet Title  
RCV - Petition to Appoint Receiver  
RDR - Relief from Duty to Register  
RFR - Restoration of Firearms Rights  
RRC - Remove Restricted Covenant  
SCA - Small Claims Appeal  
SDR - School District /Required Action Plan  
SER - Subdivision Election Process Law Review  
SPC - Seizure of Property From Commission of a Crime  
SPR - Seizure of Property Resulting From a Crime  
STK - Stalking Protection  
SXP - Sexual Assault Protection  
TMV - Tort /Motor Vehicle  
TSS - Petition for Approval of Transfer of Structured Settlement  
TTO - Tort /Other  
UND - Unlawful Detainer  
VAP - Vulnerable Adult Protection Order  
VEP - Voter Election Process Law Review  
VVT - Victims of Motor Vehicle Theft /Civil Action  
WDE - Wrongful Death  
WHC - Writ of Habeas Corpus  
WMW - Miscellaneous Writs  
WRM - Writ of Mandamus  
WRR - Writ of Restitution  
WRV - Writ of Review  
XRP - Extreme Risk Protection Order

## **Civil Matters Filed with Clerk (case type 2)**

ABJ - Abstract of Judgment  
FJU - Foreign Judgment  
TAX - Tax Warrants  
TRJ - Transcript of Judgment

## **Civil RALJ Cases (case type 2)**

LCA - Lower Court Appeal /Civil  
LCI - Lower Court Appeal /Infractions

## **Completion**

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

## **Criminal Cases (case type 1, no 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  
Others

## **Criminal RALJ Cases (case type 1)**

CRJ - Criminal RALJ

### ***Domestic Cases (case type 3)***

CIR - Committed Intimate Relationship  
CUS - Child Custody  
DIC - Dissolution w/ Children  
DIN - Dissolution no Children  
DIS - Dissolution  
DPC - Dissolution of Domestic Partnership w/ Children  
DPN - Dissolution of Domestic Partnership /No Children  
FJU - Out of State Support Registration /Foreign Judgment  
INC - Annulment /Inv of Marriage w/ Children  
IND - Annulment /Inv of Domestic Partnership w/ Children  
INP - Invalidity, Domestic Partnership  
INV - Annulment /Invalidity  
MDS - Modification/Support Only  
MOD - Modification  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
MWA - Mandatory Wage Assignment  
OSC - Out of State Custody  
PPS - Parenting Plan / Child Support  
PSO - Petition for Entry of KC Support Order  
RCV - Relative Child Visitation  
RIC - Reciprocal, Resp in County  
ROB - Relocation /Objection  
ROC - Reciprocal, Resp out of County  
RVC - Relative Child Visits  
SDC - Legal Separation, Domestic Partnership w/ Children  
SEC - Legal Separation w/ Children  
SEP - Legal Separation  
SPD - Legal Separation, Domestic Partnership /No Children  
TSS - Structured Settlement

### ***Jury Trial***

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

### ***Juvenile BECCA Cases (case type 7)***

ARY - At Risk Youth  
CNS - Child In Need Of Services  
DDP - Developmental Disability  
DGN - Dependency Guardianship  
EFC - Extended Foster Care, Dependency  
GFC - Guardianship Foster Children  
RPR - Reinstatement of Parental Rights  
RVS - Relative Visitation  
TRU - Truancy  
VYG - Vulnerable Youth Guardianship

### ***Juvenile Dependency Cases (case type 7)***

DEP – Dependency  
TER - Termination of Parental Rights

### ***Juvenile Offender Cases (case type 8)***

Homicide  
Sex Crime  
Robbery  
Assault  
Theft/Burglary  
Motor Vehicle Theft  
Controlled Substance  
Others

### ***Involuntary Treatment Act Cases (case type 6)***

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

### ***Non-Jury Trial***

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

### ***Pending Case***

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

### ***Post-disposition Modifications***

Petition to modify parenting plan after the resolution of the original case, based on the modification schedule.

### ***Probate and Guardianship Cases (case type 5)***

ABS - Absentee  
AOS - Affidavit of Successor  
ASE - Affidavit of Small Estate  
DSC - Disclaimer  
EST - Estate  
FNW - Foreign Will  
G/E - Guardianship/Estate  
GDE - Guardianship of the Estate  
GDN - Guardianship  
GDP - Guardianship of the Person  
LGD - Limited Guardianship  
LGE - Limited Guardianship of the Estate  
LGP - Limited Guardianship of the Person  
MGD - Minor Guardianship  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
MST - Minor Settlement  
NJB - Non Judicial Binding/TEDRA Agreement  
NNC - Non Probate Notice to Creditor  
POA - Petition for Relief (RCW 11.94) /Power of Attorney  
RGR - Registration of Guardianship  
RTR - Registration of Trust /Trust Situs  
SNT - Special Needs Trust  
TDR - Trust/Estate Dispute Resolution  
TRS - Trust  
WLL - Will Only

### ***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).