

King County Superior Court  
2013 Annual Statistical Report

Department of Judicial Administration  
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January 20, 2014

Report #: YR-2013

## 2013 Highlights

This 2013 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 2013 was lower than that in 2012 (-4.8%). In 2013, the total filings (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) were 66,518 cases. However, the change in filings was non-uniform across filing categories. In 2013, criminal filings continued to be low, slightly higher than the level of 2012. The criminal filings (excluding criminal appeals) were 6,045 cases in 2013, showing an increase of only 1.7% from 2012. General civil filings (case type 2, excluding Clerk’s filings and civil RALJ) decreased significantly (-2103 cases, or -8.6%) from 2012. Domestic filings (case type 3) in 2013 showed an increase of 2.9% from 2012. Significant decrease in filings was observed in paternity (-19.8%), BECCA (at-risk youth, child-in-need of service, and juvenile truancy, -16.1%) and juvenile offender (-19.6%) in 2013 when compared with previous year. Juvenile offender filings reached another historically low volume of 1,808 cases in 2013. Mental Illness filings increased again in 2013, totaling 3,678 cases (+2.4%). In addition, there were 1,962 post-disposition modifications in the domestic and paternity cases in 2013.
- **Resolutions** (Table 2). The total resolutions (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) in 2013 were 67,622 cases, a 4% decrease from 2012. The total resolutions exceeded the total filings for general civil and MI cases in 2013. However, the resolution pace was slightly behind the filing pace of criminal and juvenile offender cases. No significant gap between the filings and resolutions was observed for other categories in 2013.
- **Pending Caseload** (Table 3). The overall pending caseload at the end of 2013 was 18,794 cases, showing an overall decrease of 3.1% from 2012 (-3.1%). The pending caseload in criminal, guardianship, and probate increased 3%, 22.2%, and 24.9%, respectively from 2012. Pending caseload in general civil (-6.7%) and Mental Illness (-67%) decreased from a year ago. No significant change was seen in the pending caseload in any other categories.
- **Trials**. Overall, there were 415 jury trials in 2013. There were 575 non-jury trials and 1002 juvenile fact-finders in 2013. In addition, there were 360 trials by affidavits and stipulated trials in 2013. These numbers are almost the same as that in 2012.
- **MRJC vs. SEA** (Table 4). Of the total 66,518 cases (including Matters filed with the Clerk) filed in 2013, 36% were MRJC cases. However, no cases in the following categories were assigned to MRJC: mental illness, juvenile offender. The MRJC resolutions (36%, as a percentage of total resolution in KCSC) in 2013 were the same as the filings at MRJC (36%). At the end of 2013, the MRJC pending caseload was 34% of that of the entire court, including all case categories. In 2013, filings at MRJC in criminal, civil and domestic cases were 43%, 42% and 37% respectively.

Table 1. Annual Filings

Category	Annual Filings										2012-2013 Change (%)
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Criminal	9,962	9,901	10,648	10,767	8,667	6,498	6,691	5,986	5,942	6,045	+1.7%
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	27,567	26,915	25,469	26,020	27,577	29,821	27,632	27,542	24,513	22,410	-8.6%
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	11,630	12,332	12,536	12,784	13,881	14,662	15,586	14,799	15,046	13,763	-8.5%
Domestic	7,507	7,837	7,750	7,720	7,254	7,673	7,850	7,865	7,678	7,897	+2.9%
Probate	5,082	4,876	5,136	5,363	5,373	5,110	5,203	5,417	5,492	5,844	+6.4%
Guardianship	832	831	875	885	901	841	893	837	879	884	+0.6%
Adoption	884	846	751	717	772	685	686	688	511	483	-5.5%
Paternity	1,508	1,394	1,199	1,421	1,147	1,233	1,189	1,039	1,161	931	-19.8%
Mental Illness	2,317	2,342	2,225	2,397	2,420	2,727	3,059	3,506	3,591	3,678	+2.4%
Juvenile At-Risk Youth and Child-in-Need-of-Service	478	399	413	411	417	341	347	303	242	203	-16.1%
Juvenile Dependency/Termination	968	887	945	971	888	903	1,038	1,060	1,050	1,102	+5.0%
Juvenile Truancy <sup>(2)</sup>	1,755	1,803	2,204	2,111	2,512	2,083	1,614	1,350	1,271	1,236	-2.8%
Juvenile Offender	4,788	4,085	4,178	3,954	3,803	3,967	3,356	2,496	2,249	1,808	-19.6%
Criminal RALJ	261	287	247	225	214	180	176	191	192	181	-5.7%
Civil RALJ	112	119	93	95	73	86	64	57	63	53	-15.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,651</b>	<b>74,854</b>	<b>74,669</b>	<b>75,841</b>	<b>75,899</b>	<b>76,810</b>	<b>75,384</b>	<b>73,136</b>	<b>69,880</b>	<b>66,518</b>	<b>-4.8%</b>
Post-disposition Modifications (domestic/paternity)	1,991	1,838	1,812	1,761	1,820	2,005	1,964	2,018	1,972	1,962	-0.5%

(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” consist 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										2012-2013 Change (%)
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Criminal	9,516	9,478	9,937	11,051	9,619	7,644	6,521	6,285	5,594	5,832	+4.3%
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	28,035	29,556	26,436	26,792	27,293	28,815	28,902	28,797	25,688	23,506	-8.5%
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	11,619	12,334	12,536	12,784	13,900	14,662	15,590	14,799	15,046	13,763	-8.5%
Domestic	7,659	7,689	7,825	7,705	7,194	7,530	7,781	7,952	7,713	7,915	+2.6%
Probate	4,984	4,688	4,864	5,438	5,704	5,036	5,222	5,435	5,356	5,770	+7.7%
Guardianship	821	743	793	971	1,027	911	947	824	874	847	-3.1%
Adoption	834	830	781	800	809	710	698	715	505	520	+3.0%
Paternity	1,791	1,344	1,429	1,344	1,279	1,167	1,289	1,110	1,037	988	-4.7%
Mental Illness	2,336	2,372	2,165	2,329	2,353	2,493	3,072	3,434	3,794	3,887	+2.5%
Juvenile At-Risk Youth and Child-in-Need-of-Service	526	423	426	404	400	365	437	317	233	233	0.0%
Juvenile Dependency/Termination	1,297	766	849	1,035	909	1,571	1,170	1,133	1,045	1,197	+14.5%
Juvenile Truancy <sup>(2)</sup>	2,149	1,412	1,856	2,293	2,828	2,725	2,211	1,765	1,135	1,187	+4.6%
Juvenile Offender	4,662	3,766	3,958	3,699	3,525	3,252	3,471	2,645	2,150	1,738	-19.2%
Criminal RALJ	304	260	268	238	226	198	218	187	186	179	-3.8%
Civil RALJ	137	104	112	89	96	79	76	53	55	60	+9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,670</b>	<b>75,765</b>	<b>74,235</b>	<b>76,972</b>	<b>77,162</b>	<b>77,158</b>	<b>77,605</b>	<b>75,451</b>	<b>70,411</b>	<b>67,622</b>	<b>-4.0%</b>

(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” consist 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 <sup>(2)</sup>										2012-2013 <sup>(3)</sup>
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Change
Criminal	3,377	3,227	3,828	4,154	3,338	2,582	2,791	2,549	2,780	2,865	+3.1%
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	11,838	9,625	8,941	8,719	9,262	11,299	9,969	9,238	8,507	7,936	-6.7%
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Domestic	3,695	3,698	3,641	3,773	4,084	4,375	4,453	4,421	4,458	4,486	+0.6%
Probate	821	915	1,082	994	621	635	579	559	615	768	+24.9%
Guardianship	525	552	617	512	380	304	248	261	248	303	+22.2%
Adoption	374	394	365	288	253	225	215	192	199	166	-16.6%
Paternity	624	689	468	558	442	523	436	377	500	446	-10.8%
Mental Illness	123	92	136	209	301	465	463	530	311	104	-66.6%
Juvenile At-Risk Youth and Child-in-Need-of-Service	98	83	69	100	150	153	68	94	104	94	-9.6%
Juvenile Dependency/Termination	330	457	557	620	853	424	446	522	516	507	-1.7%
Juvenile Truancy	938	1,224	1,339	1,327	1,529	690	313	165	308	326	+5.8%
Juvenile Offender	1,045	1,116	889	1,059	875	1,091	913	723	663	612	-7.7%
Criminal RALJ	204	230	207	195	187	171	126	132	142	143	+0.7%
Civil RALJ	56	71	49	58	34	42	31	34	45	38	-15.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,050</b>	<b>22,373</b>	<b>22,188</b>	<b>22,566</b>	<b>22,309</b>	<b>22,979</b>	<b>21,051</b>	<b>19,797</b>	<b>19,396</b>	<b>18,794</b>	<b>-3.1%</b>

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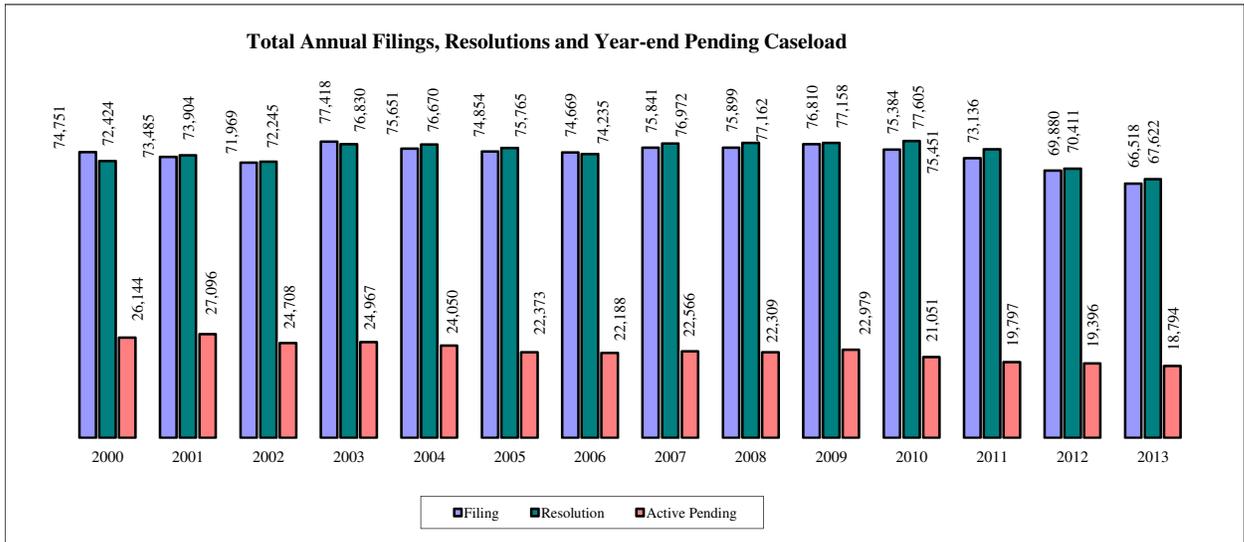
(2) Pending caseload does not include cases on suspense status.

(3) The percentage should be interpreted along with the number of cases. For those categories with small numbers, a large percentage does not necessarily indicate potential problem.

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

Category	2013 Filings			2013 Resolutions			2013 Year-end Pending Caseload		
	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)
Criminal	43%	57%	6,045	44%	56%	5,832	46%	54%	2,865
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	42%	58%	22,410	42%	58%	23,506	31%	69%	7,936
Civil Matters Filed with Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	40%	60%	13,763	40%	60%	13,763	NA	NA	0
Domestic	37%	63%	7,897	38%	62%	7,915	38%	62%	4,486
Probate	22%	78%	5,844	22%	78%	5,770	17%	83%	768
Guardianship	37%	63%	884	38%	62%	847	33%	67%	303
Adoption	29%	71%	483	30%	70%	520	21%	79%	166
Paternity	53%	47%	931	53%	47%	988	50%	50%	446
Mental Illness	NA	100%	3,678	NA	100%	3,887	NA	100%	104
Juvenile At-Risk Youth and Child-in-Need-of-Service	55%	45%	203	55%	45%	233	28%	72%	94
Juvenile Dependency/Termination	47%	53%	1,102	43%	57%	1,197	51%	49%	507
Juvenile Truancy <sup>(2)</sup>	61%	39%	1,236	61%	39%	1,187	40%	60%	326
Juvenile Offender	NA	100%	1,808	NA	100%	1,738	NA	100%	612
Criminal RALJ	9%	91%	181	7%	93%	179	9%	91%	143
Civil RALJ	11%	89%	53	13%	87%	60	8%	92%	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>66,518</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>67,622</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>18,794</b>

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## 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)

### ***Mental Illness Cases***

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

- Alcoholic Treatment (ALT)
- Mental Illness - Adult (MI)
- 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/EIFSA (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).