

STATE OF MISSOURI

TWENTY-NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT



2016
YEAR END REPORT



STATE OF MISSOURI

TWENTY-NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

DAVID B. MOUTON
PRESIDING JUDGE

601 SOUTH PEARL AVENUE
JOPLIN, MISSOURI 64801

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February 8, 2017

Honorable David B. Mouton
Presiding Judge
601 S. Pearl Avenue
Joplin, Missouri 64801

Dear Judge Mouton:

On behalf of the Circuit Clerk, Juvenile Division and Court Services, I am proud to present the Twenty-Ninth Judicial Circuit's 2016 Year End Report. Each year the Circuit Court processes a high volume of cases which often poses challenges due to the limited number of resources. Despite these challenges, the judiciary strives to provide swift and effective administration of justice. To ensure this goal is met, more attention has been placed on docket management and reviewing data to ensure the court is performing at the highest level possible. In addition to focusing on court outcomes, we have implemented measures to help reduce the cost of doing business. All of these measures will be outlined in this report.

During this past year, the voters of Jasper County passed a sales tax referendum to renovate the Carthage Courthouse and to construct a new Juvenile Center. The Carthage Courthouse renovations were completed in November and the Juvenile Center construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2017. The Carthage Courthouse is the jewel of Jasper County and the renovations to this historical building will ensure county and court business will continue there well into the future. Once constructed, the Juvenile Center will be a state of the art facility designed to help deliver cutting edge juvenile justice practices for the youth of our county.

The judiciary has doubled down on expanding our problem solving courts to deal with the increased number of defendants with substance abuse and mental illness. Our treatment court programs have expanded dramatically. Currently we have four treatment court dockets consisting of Drug (Recovery) Court, DWI Court, Co-Occurring Disorders Court and Veteran's Court. At the end of 2016, we had a combined total of 124 participants in all our programs. The judiciary's involvement in these programs are paramount to achieving successful outcomes. There is a strong commitment to these courts from the community, treatment providers, prosecutors and law enforcement. This commitment is a testimony to the effectiveness of these courts.

Finally, our juvenile division has fully implemented the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative which has helped us to safely reduce the population of juveniles detained in secure detention. The division utilizes objective risk assessments to ensure the use of detention is used only for the right kids, at the right time and for the right purpose. Also by utilizing diversionary programs and evidence-based programming we anticipate better outcomes in improving offender accountability and rehabilitation thus reducing recidivism.

Respectfully,

Erik T. Theis
Court Administrator

CIRCUIT COURT:

For the fiscal year 2016, there were 15,714 filings in Jasper County. The breakdown is as follows:

	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>% Change in Filed FY15</u>
Circuit Civil	354	497	476	1.4%
Domestic	2490	2449	1015	1.5%
Assoc. Civil	3467	3491	967	8.3%
CIVIL TOTAL	6311	6437	2458	5.1%

	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>% Change in Filed FY15</u>
Probate				
Estates, MH Pet.	376	374	1826	12.2%
Simple Probate	1170	1426	57	-12.4%

	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>% Change in Filed FY15</u>
Juvenile	488	756	978	-4.4%

	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>% Change in Filed FY15</u>
Circuit Felony	775	713	651	8.4%
Assoc. Felony	1878	1819	1448	18.6%
Misd.	1260	1237	2081	4.0%
Traffic	3018	2877	2317	15.7%
Ordinance	433	504	290	-20.8%
Mun. Trial de Novo	5	18	4	-72.2%
CRIMINAL TOTAL	7369	7168	6791	10.2%

	<u>Filed</u>	<u>Disposed</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>% Change in Filed FY15</u>
GRAND TOTAL	15,714	16,161	12,110	5.7%

During this year, the judiciary have sought ways to reduce operational costs to Jasper County specifically as it relates to defendants in custody at the Jasper County Jail. In criminal cases, Divisions 1, 3, 4 and 5 routinely use poly-com to facilitate arraignments and first appearances on incarcerated individuals. Defense attorneys are now required to submit a request for an inmate to be transported (typically for a motion to be taken up, plea, preliminary hearing or for trial). Division 1 has reduced the number of pre-trial conference settings. Currently all associate level drug cases are now heard in Division 4 in Carthage. These measures have reduced the number of prisoner transports to Joplin, thus reducing the cost for transportation and the workload for transportation officers with the sheriff's office.

At a glance:

- In comparison to 2015, Division 1 has reduced the number of inmates transported to Joplin by 35%; Division 3 by 23%; and Division 5 by 9%
- In 2016, 1361 inmates were transported to Joplin compared to 1891 in 2015; a reduction of 28%.
- The number of inmates transported to the Carthage Courthouse has increased from 585 inmates in 2015 to 709 inmates in 2016; an increase of 21%.
- There has been a 94% increase in video arraignments from last year. In 2016, Division 1, 3, 4, and 5 conducted 1342 video arraignments up from 692 in 2015.
- The sheriff has indicated the transportation cost per inmate to Joplin is \$76.36 (which includes fuel, vehicle wear, personnel). A reduction of 530 inmates would equal \$40,470.80 in cost avoidance to the county.

The Court En Banc unanimously passed a measure to form a committee of all stakeholders to work toward the development of a pre-trial release program in Jasper County. This committee will be formed at the beginning of 2017. The goals of this program are to release lower risk defendants from custody pending trial, assure their appearance in court while keeping public safety in the forefront when making release decisions. In addition, another outcome of this program is to work in collaboration with the sheriff's office to reduce the overcrowding of the Jasper County Jail.

CIRCUIT CLERK:

The Circuit Clerk's office continues to be the administrative backbone of the circuit. The clerk's office under the leadership of Melissa Holcomb not only performs the required statutory functions, but continues to provide outstanding public service and administrative support.

The following are highlights:

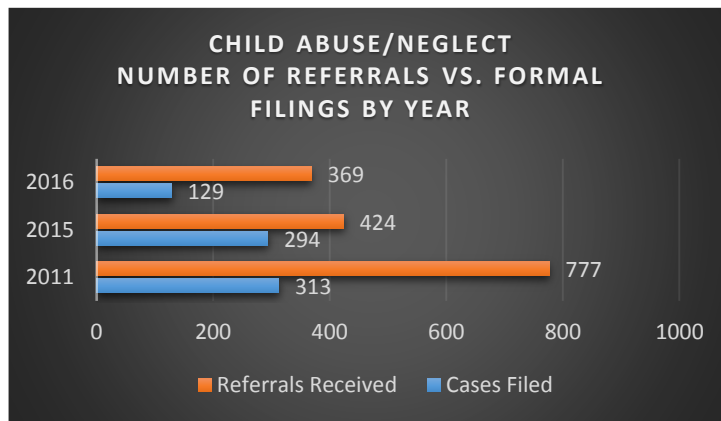
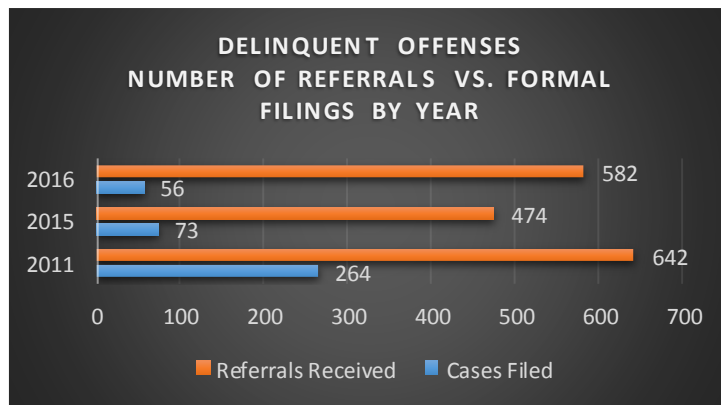
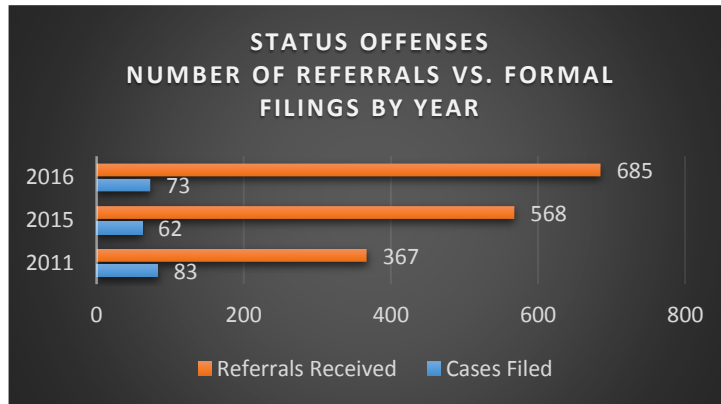
- Provided 3 full-time positions which provide administrative support for the Court Administrator, Presiding Judge and Treatment Court
- Provided 8 full-time positions for record preservation and destruction of records
- Streamlined financial accounts and records to aid in ease of use
- Scheduled poly-com hearings and provided technical support
- Coordinated the move of the Juvenile Office to their temporary location
- Provided ex-parte training to the Jasper County Sheriff's Office
- Collected \$468,292 in revenue for the county (Records received by the County Treasurer)

JUVENILE DIVISION:

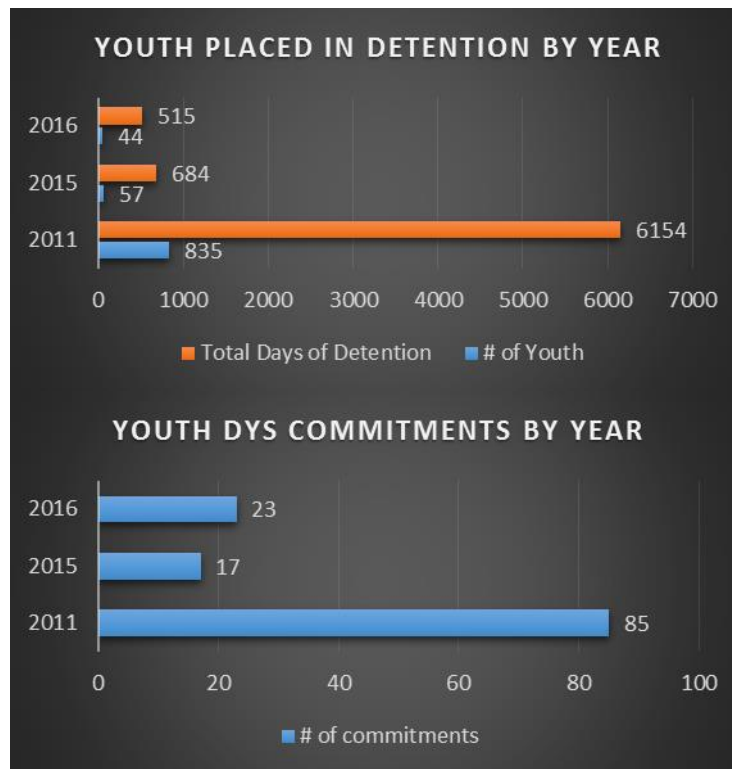
The following are highlights:

- Restructuring of the Juvenile Division at every level including personnel, mission and philosophy
- Juvenile Detention Alternatives have been fully implemented
- Evidence Based Practices and Motivational Interviewing are part of daily case work
- Improved docket management leading to increased efficiency
- Restorative Justice Principals guide all case decisions where applicable
- Developed systems to monitor and capture data so decisions can be made based on evidence
- Implemented a workload analysis tool to evaluate work and to make better administrative decisions regarding staffing resources
- Successful sales tax referendum for a new Juvenile Justice Center

The charts below show the number of formal case filings from referrals received by year. For a comparison, 2011 was included as the Juvenile Division had not yet implemented Juvenile Detention Alternatives (JDAI) principles.



The charts below show the number of youth detained and commitments to the Department of Youth Services by year. For a comparison, 2011 was included as the Juvenile Division had not implemented Juvenile Detention Alternatives (JDAI) principles.



Over the last six years:

- The juvenile division reduced the number of youth detained by 95%
- The juvenile division reduced the number of days youth are detained by 92%
- DYS commitments have dropped 73%
- The overall number of referrals to the Juvenile Office have declined 8%
- The number of delinquent referrals have dropped 9%
- The number of Child Abuse/Neglect petitions filed have declined 59%
- The total number of petitions filed for delinquent, status and child abuse/neglect have declined by 39%
- The number of status offenders have increased by 55%

The Juvenile Office handles the majority of referrals without court intervention. Research indicates that diverting as many children from formal adjudication show improved outcomes. With the implementation of Juvenile Detention Alternatives, Evidence Based Programming, and Diversionary Programs there have been significant reductions in youth detained and commits to DYS. Despite these reductions, we have seen an overall drop in delinquent referrals since 2011. In addition to positive outcomes, we have seen significant savings in tax dollars. The number of days youth spent in detention in 2016 has been reduced by 169 days in comparison to 2015. This reduction equals a cost savings of \$14,675.00. In addition to the reduction of youth detained, Jasper County's reduction in DYS commitments over the last two years show over a two million dollar savings to tax payers per year.

There was a decreased number of Child Abuse/Neglect referrals but an increase of status referrals since 2011. In Child Abuse/Neglect cases, the difference in these numbers could be attributed to the change of policy of the Children's Division and how they process and report investigations of abuse to the Juvenile Division. Regarding status cases, the Juvenile Division has partnered with all school districts in Jasper County and they jointly have made it a priority to target educationally at risk students. The goal is to keep them in school and to provide diversionary programs which are proving to be very successful. Because of this partnership, the school districts have increased the number of referrals to our diversionary programs.

TREATMENT COURT:

In 2016, our treatment court has continued to expand to include a Veteran's Court under the direction of Judge Nicholas. Currently there are 124 participants in DWI, Drug, Co-Occurring and Veteran's Court. This is a 254% increase since January 2015. These defendants are classified as "high risk/high need" offenders or in other words, the participants entering treatment court have a propensity for habitual involvement in the criminal justice system due to chronic substance abuse or mental health issues. In 2016, there were 1093 defendants charged with a felony alcohol or drug related offense. Of those 1093 cases, 66 defendants (6%) entered treatment court. Obviously we still have a long way to go in terms of dealing with substance abuse/mental health involved defendants becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

Treatment Court Highlights:

- 66 defendants were admitted into treatment court
- 28 participants successfully graduated
- 5393 urinalysis collected
- Participants completed 6922 hours of community service
- 720 hours of participant surveillance was conducted by the sheriff's office
- Graduation rate for Drug Court and Co-Occurring Disorders Court is 60%
- Graduation rate for DWI Court is 82%
- Between 01-01-2012 and 12-31-2015, 62 participants have graduated from treatment court. Of those participants, 14 recidivated with 36 months (23% recidivism rate)