



# Forty-Seventh District Court

## 2010 Annual Report

### Court Mission

*To provide a safe, neutral, and impartial forum for peaceful resolutions of public and private disputes.*

### Core Values

*The Court strives to ensure: Access to Justice; Expedition and Timeliness; Equality, Fairness and Integrity; Independence and Accountability; and Public Trust and Confidence.*

### Jurisdiction

As part of the Michigan's "One Court of Justice", the 47th District Court has jurisdiction over the following case types arising in the Cities of Farmington Hills and Farmington:

- Criminal felonies (through decision on probable cause)
- Criminal misdemeanors
- Traffic infractions
- Zoning infractions
- General Civil lawsuits up to \$25,000
- Landlord-Tenant disputes
- Small Claims lawsuits

### The Judges

**Judge Marla Parker** is the second longest serving judge in the history of the 47th District Court, trailing only the Court's original judge, Michael J. Hand, in years of service as a judge. First elected to the bench in 1992, Judge Parker was reelected to a 4th six year term in 2010. Prior to becoming a judge, she served as a magistrate for the Court and also maintained a private law practice in Farmington Hills. She serves as the Court's chief judge currently.

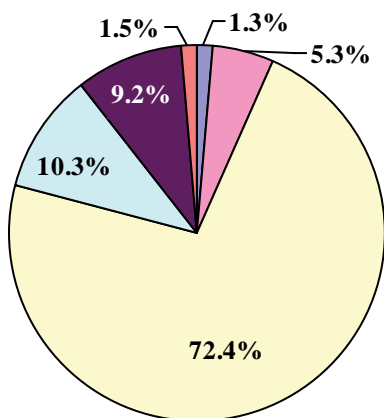


Judge Parker holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and a Juris Doctor degree from Wayne State University Law School.

**Judge James Brady** was elected district judge in November 2002 and reelected to a 2nd six year term in November 2008. He has served as the Court's chief judge twice, most recently for the 2008 - 2009 term. Prior to his election to the bench, he served the Court for 17 years as a magistrate. In addition, he was an assistant prosecutor for Oakland County from 1980 - 1984 and worked in the private practice of law from 1984 - 2002.



He holds a Bachelor of General Studies degree from the University of Michigan and a Juris Doctor degree from Wayne State University Law School.

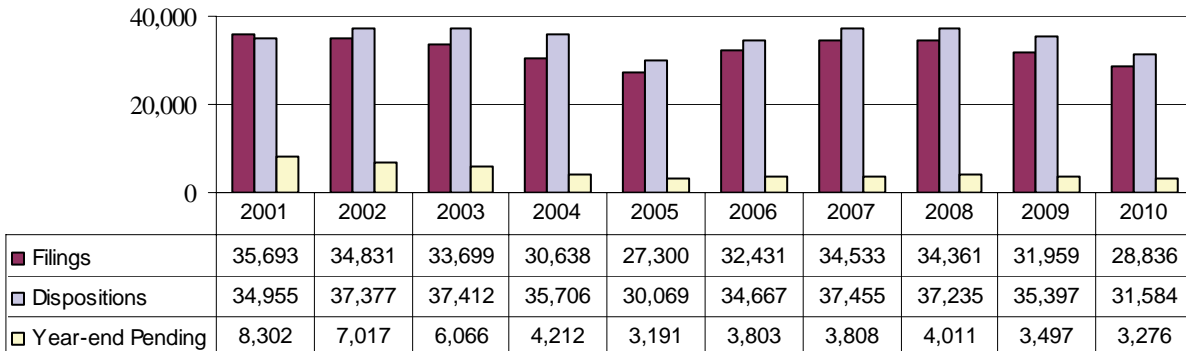


**2010 Case Type Breakdown**  
Total Case Filings = 28,836

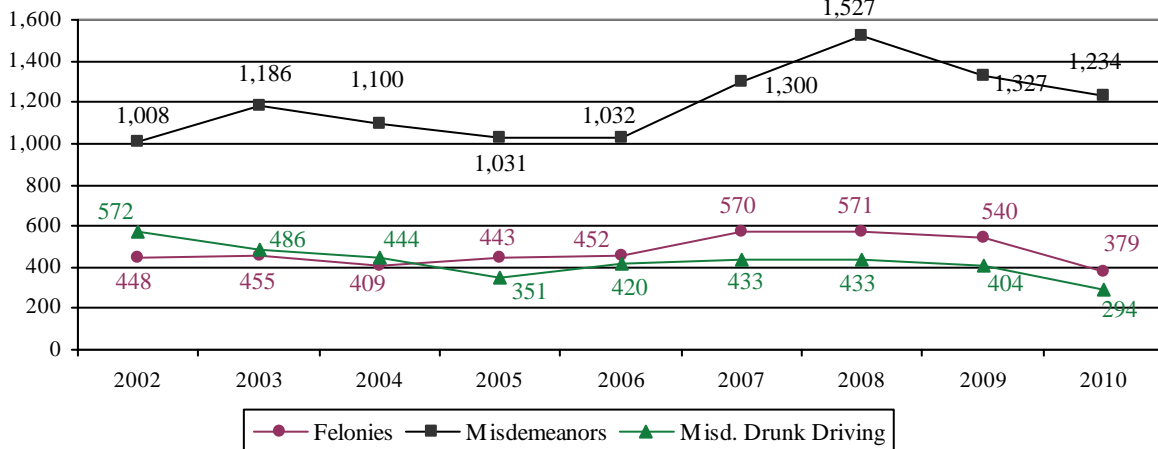
- Felonies
- Misdemeanors
- Traffic/Zoning
- General Civil
- Land-Tenant
- Small Claims

# Caseload Trends

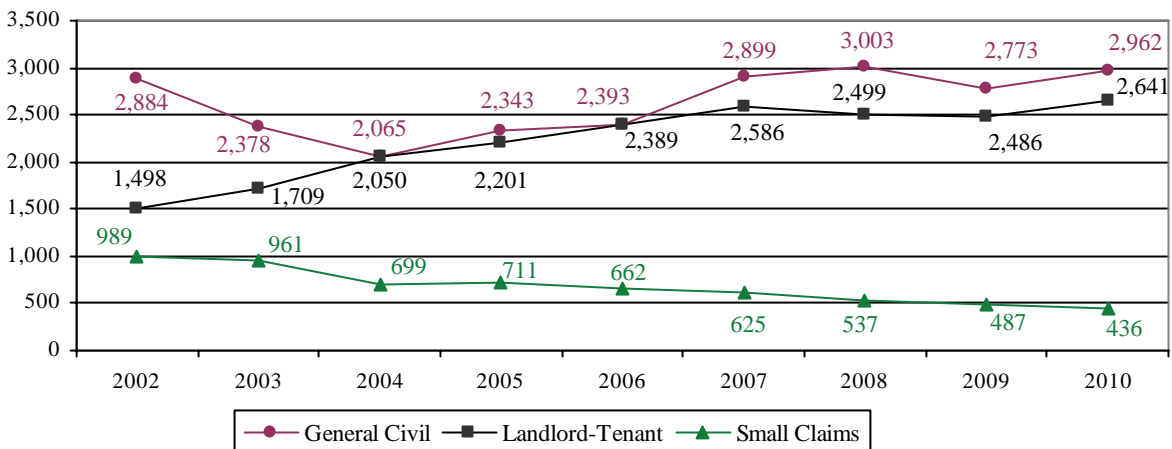
## New Filings, Dispositions & Year-end Pending 10 Year Comparison: 2001 - 2010



## Criminal Case Filing Trends By Type 2002 - 2010



## Civil Case Filing Trends By Type 2002 - 2010



# Expenditures & Revenues

## Sources of Court Funding

The **State of Michigan** contributes to the Court budget as follows:

- Judges Salaries: \$45,724 per judge outlay by local funding unit reimbursed by the State throughout the year. The remaining amount (\$92,548) is paid directly by the State.
- Drunk driving & drug case funds to help offset case processing costs (FY 2009-10 total: \$28,826).
- Jury fee reimbursement for local funding unit outlay exceeding \$15 per juror, per day.
- Since 2006, the Court has secured an annual reimbursement grant from the State Court Administrative Office for the Sobriety Court Program. The FY 2010-11 grant award is for \$3,000.

**ALL OTHER COURT FUNDING COMES FROM FARMINGTON & FARMINGTON HILLS.**

## Distribution of Court Revenue

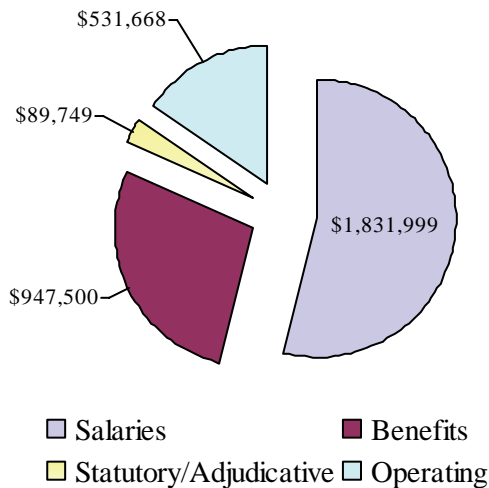
The **State of Michigan** receives the following revenues from court cases:

- \$40 from each traffic civil infraction.
- \$10 from each non-traffic civil infraction.
- \$48 - \$53 from each traffic or criminal misdemeanor.
- 56% - 79% from each civil case filing fee (depending on the case value).
- \$10 from each \$20 motion fee.

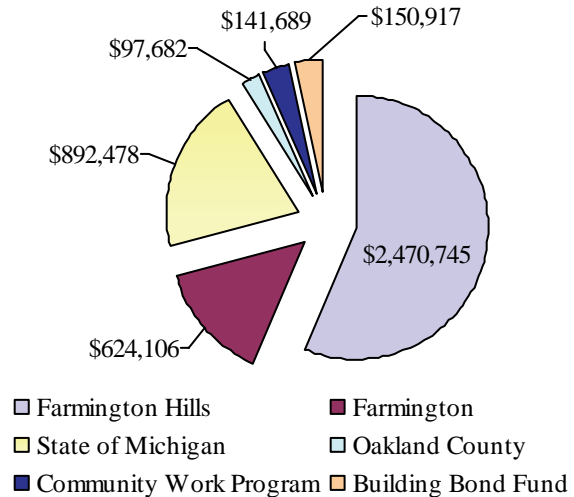
The **County Library Fund** receives the penal fine portion of assessments on all cases written under state law and 30% of the penal fine on motor carrier cases written under local ordinance.

**ALL OTHER COURT REVENUE GOES TO FARMINGTON & FARMINGTON HILLS.**

**Breakdown of Court Expenditures FY 2009-2010**  
Total Expenditures = \$3,400,916



**Distribution of Revenues Fiscal Year 2009-2010**  
Total Revenues = \$4,377,617



## Collections Program/Show Cause Docket

Since its inception in 2003, the Show Cause Docket, part of the Court's comprehensive collections strategy, has collected over 3 million in delinquent payments from nearly 21,700 cases. Each month, delinquent payers are noticed to appear in front of Judge James Brady to explain why they have not paid their delinquent fines and costs. Many defendants come in and pay upon receiving notice; others appear for the scheduled hearing and resolve their account. Those that fail to appear or respond are found in contempt of court by Judge Brady, who assesses an additional \$150 fee (increased from \$100 beginning in 2011) to their debt and issues a bench warrant for their arrest. Upon arrest on the bench warrant, the defendant is required to post the amount owed to gain release and close the case or, in the alternative, is brought before the Court. Since 2003, the Court has collected over \$500,000 in the added contempt of court fees alone.

# Projects and Programs

## Sobriety Court

Started in May 2005, the 47th District Court Sobriety Court is a post-plea, *four phase* program created to protect society and reduce crime by targeting substance abuse and addiction through intervention, treatment and offender accountability. Under strict court supervision, participants must comply with court-ordered requirements including substance abuse treatment, alcohol and drug testing, and education and life skill development. The program is designed to span 24 months.

To be eligible for Sobriety Court, a defendant must be charged with a drunk-driving offense, be a resident of either Farmington or Farmington Hills, and meet one or more of the following eligibility criteria:

- Blood-Alcohol Content (BAC) of .15% or greater at time of arrest
- Addiction assessment score of 3 or greater
- Prior record of alcohol related offense(s)
- Sobriety Court team discretion

The Court has secured a grant from the State Court Administrative Office each year of the program's existence, although the grant money continues to diminish each year. The Court designed the program in such a way that it will be able to sustain itself when grant money is no longer available. In 2010, the Court received \$5,600 in grant money.

At the end of the 2010 grant year (Sept. 30), 79 participants had been accepted into Sobriety Court. Of those, 35 have graduated, successfully completing the program requirements. Another 21 were still active the program, while 19 participants had been dismissed from the program and sentenced to a term in jail for failing to meet minimum program requirements. Three participants were on bench warrant status for failing to appear in court, and one participant had been transferred to another jurisdiction.

Of the 35 graduates, 29 have completed an exit interview and each of them indicated that they felt having been through the program will either greatly (23) or slightly (6) improve their chances of remaining clean and sober in the future. *More encouraging, based on available information, no graduate has had a new drunk-driving offense, and only one graduate has had a new arrest for an offense of any kind.*

## Community Work Program

The Community Work Program (CWP) was initiated in 1986 as a partnership between the Court and the Farmington Hills Police Department to provide a sentencing alternative to help address overcrowding at the Oakland County jail. The judges sentence qualifying misdemeanants to perform a certain number of work days to benefit the community.

During its first year of operation, 125 individuals participated in CWP as part of their sentence. In 2010, 536 defendants worked a total of 2,278 work days on projects in the communities. Quantifying the value at the 2010 minimum wage rate of \$7.40/hour, *the program provided a minimum labor value of nearly \$135,000.* In addition, the program paid insurance costs and supervisor fees (paid from the \$40/workday fee assessed to the defendants) of just over \$90,000, bringing *the total minimum value of the program to the communities to over \$225,000 for 2010.*

The program is operated out of the Court's Probation Department. Director Jackie Jones and her clerical staff coordinate the scheduling of defendants to meet requests from Farmington and Farmington Hills departments. Representatives from the departments requesting workers are responsible for providing staff to supervise their work crews. Workers are used annually for such projects as the set-up and tear-down of the Shiawassee sled hill, planting of the flower beds at the 47<sup>th</sup> District Court, road litter pick-up, public building painting and maintenance, and park maintenance.