

Sourcebook of criminal justice statistics Online

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Table 1.84.2008

Duties performed by magistrate judges in U.S. District Courts

Activity	1990	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1990, 1998-2008												
Total	448,107	612,440	648,097	807,401	873,948	880,129	948,570	960,959	941,632	950,182	948,086	968,986
Trial jurisdiction cases	100,930	96,832	109,101	88,449	84,067	72,109	83,247	92,513	92,909	98,308	100,725	112,718
Class A misdemeanors	13,248	10,633	10,773	8,990	8,687	8,816	9,616	9,186	8,101	7,717	9,154	7,530
Petty offenses	87,682	86,199	98,328	79,459	75,380	63,293	73,631	83,327	84,808	90,591	91,571	105,188
Preliminary proceedings	157,987	241,031	259,153	264,997	286,299	293,002	315,455	321,642	321,164	325,475	322,852	338,113
Search warrants	20,672	30,371	32,607	29,824	31,571	29,929	32,539	33,457	34,246	32,467	33,632	37,634
Arrest warrants/summonses	18,972	26,252	28,749	26,880	29,891	30,541	31,291	29,824	32,882	38,325	39,822	44,160
Initial appearances	49,624	68,982	74,875	77,752	83,582	86,324	93,991	97,296	95,116	96,189	96,779	98,452
Preliminary examinations	7,145	14,436	16,059	16,589	18,067	19,279	20,062	19,880	19,935	20,711	20,357	19,539
Arraignments	34,311	45,524	48,132	49,740	54,687	54,339	57,977	59,920	56,827	57,537	57,498	60,934
Detention hearings	17,191	32,948	36,381	37,490	39,468	43,198	47,860	48,206	47,928	47,525	47,399	46,741
Bail reviews	7,858	10,250	10,833	10,741	11,557	11,052	11,397	10,879	11,031	11,545	10,768	10,500
Other ^a	2,214	12,268	11,517	15,981	17,476	18,340	20,338	22,180	23,199	21,176	16,597	20,153
Additional duties	171,127	234,726	235,803	405,661	450,639	461,848	490,617	487,871	470,840	468,319	463,661	456,753
Criminal	35,576	49,587	51,182	108,823	126,813	138,504	156,115	159,599	157,064	166,409	165,831	164,937
Motions ^b	26,509	24,071	24,623	67,099	78,450	85,693	98,299	100,325	96,334	99,612	100,502	94,317
Evidentiary hearings ^c	2,256	1,998	2,302	1,990	1,985	1,899	2,041	1,836	2,042	2,230	1,909	2,287
Pretrial conferences ^c	3,488	5,763	5,793	10,965	12,024	13,532	14,620	14,760	15,870	20,127	19,956	23,542
Probation/supervised release	529	2,960	3,007	3,109	3,570	3,948	4,570	4,213	4,033	3,220	2,949	2,246
Guilty pleas	NA	NA	NA	10,614	13,150	15,275	17,018	18,086	19,698	22,186	21,473	23,881
Other ^d	2,794	14,795	15,457	15,046	17,634	18,157	19,567	20,379	19,087	19,034	19,042	18,664
Civil	114,968	157,755	158,830	271,025	296,921	298,109	309,720	303,895	289,647	276,626	274,955	269,071
Settlement conferences	12,656	23,113	24,666	24,255	24,997	24,420	26,506	25,331	24,203	22,113	21,991	21,602
Other pretrial conferences ^c	32,545	40,107	39,265	49,724	50,776	55,371	55,632	55,845	53,937	50,917	52,485	49,915
Motions ^b	61,594	69,517	68,043	171,659	194,918	192,075	200,068	197,382	187,417	181,121	179,523	175,041
Evidentiary hearings	1,964	740	771	650	639	851	646	514	942	730	784	1,179
Social Security	5,112	5,261	6,132	5,516	5,514	6,654	6,472	6,160	5,486	5,588	4,730	4,779
Special masterships	1,097	886	753	734	677	504	550	578	518	472	417	450
Other ^e	NA	18,131	19,200	18,487	19,400	18,234	19,846	18,085	17,144	15,685	15,025	16,105
Prisoner litigation	20,583	27,384	25,791	25,813	26,905	25,235	24,782	24,377	24,129	25,284	22,875	22,745
State habeas corpus	6,078	9,261	9,692	10,125	10,180	9,503	9,482	9,044	8,350	8,995	8,882	8,927
Federal habeas corpus	2,339	4,024	3,406	3,469	4,256	4,441	3,837	3,516	4,866	4,047	2,905	2,632
Civil rights	12,166	13,151	11,922	11,419	11,403	10,531	10,766	11,067	10,360	11,663	10,589	10,716
Evidentiary hearings	NA	948	771	800	1,066	760	697	750	553	579	499	470
Civil consent	4,958	10,339	11,320	11,481	12,024	12,710	13,811	13,092	12,282	11,521	10,575	10,814
Without trial	3,950	8,791	9,822	10,181	10,945	11,751	13,044	12,440	11,669	10,944	10,065	10,290
Jury trial	495	892	850	750	590	472	479	422	399	379	322	313
Non-jury trial	513	656	648	550	489	487	288	230	214	198	188	211
Miscellaneous matters ^f	13,105	29,512	32,720	36,813	40,919	40,460	45,440	45,841	44,437	46,559	50,273	50,588

Note: The Federal Magistrates Act (28 U.S.C. 636(b)) provides the authority under which magistrate judges assist courts in the performance of "additional duties." This authority was both broadened and clarified by Public Law 94-577, Oct. 21, 1976, and by new procedural rules governing most habeas corpus proceedings in the district courts, effective Feb. 1, 1977. The changes make clear the ability of the parties of a civil case to consent to have the case referred to a magistrate for trial as a special matter; the changes also empower magistrates to conduct evidentiary hearings in prisoner petition cases. Additionally, the role of magistrates in providing pretrial assistance to district judges in both dispositive and non-dispositive matters has been clarified. Data for 1990 are reported for the 12-month period ending June 30. Beginning in 1998, data are reported for the Federal fiscal year, which is the 12-month period ending September 30. Some data have been revised by the Source and will differ from previous editions of SOURCEBOOK.

^aData for 1990 include material witness hearings only; data for 1998-2008 include material witness hearings and attorney appointment hearings.

^bPrior to 2000, data include contested motions only; beginning in 2000, data include both contested and uncontested motions.

^cPrior to 2000, data do not include status conferences; beginning in 2000, data include status conferences.

^dData for 1990 include writs only; data for 1998-2008 include writs, mental competency hearings, and motion hearings.

^eBeginning in 1998, data include fee applications, summary jury trials, and motion hearings. Beginning in 2006, data include early neutral evaluations.

^fPrior to 2000, this category included seizure/inspection warrants and orders of entry, judgment debtor exams, extradition hearings, contempt proceedings, Criminal Justice Act fee applications, naturalization proceedings, grand jury returns, civil and criminal IRS enforcement proceedings, calendar calls, and voir dire. Beginning in 2000, civil and criminal other jury matters, and international prisoner transfer proceedings were added.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts, *Judicial Business of the United States Courts: 2000 Annual Report of the Director*, pp. 66, 67; *2001 Annual Report of the Director*, pp. 62, 63; *2002 Annual Report of the Director*, pp. 61, 62; *2007 Annual Report of the Director*, pp. 69, 70; *2008 Annual Report of the Director*, pp. 65, 66 (Washington, DC: USGPO). Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff.