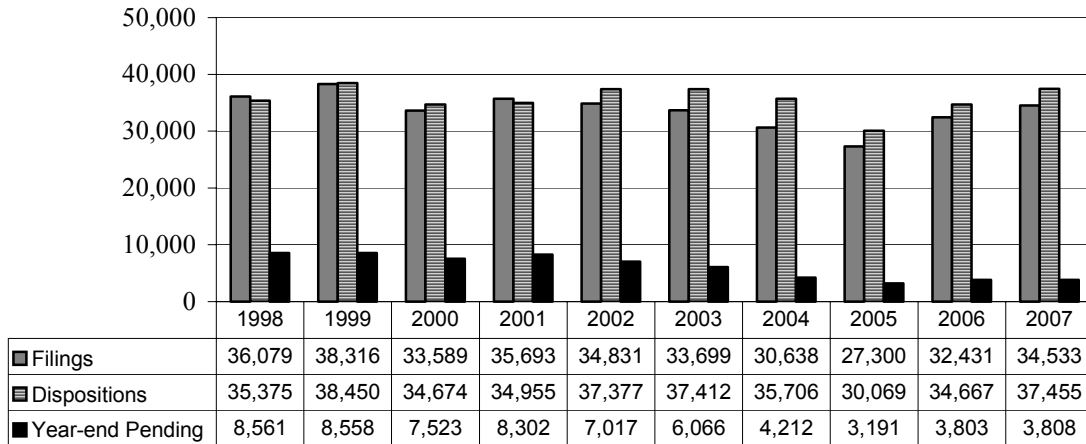


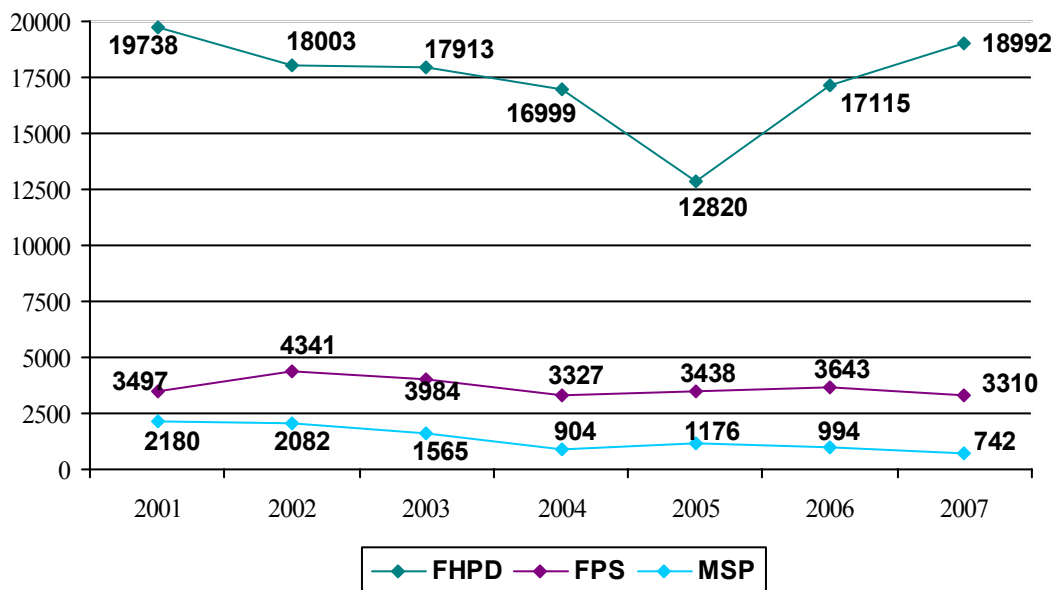
# Caseload Activity

## New Filings, Dispositions & Year-end Pending 10 Year Comparison: 1998 - 2007

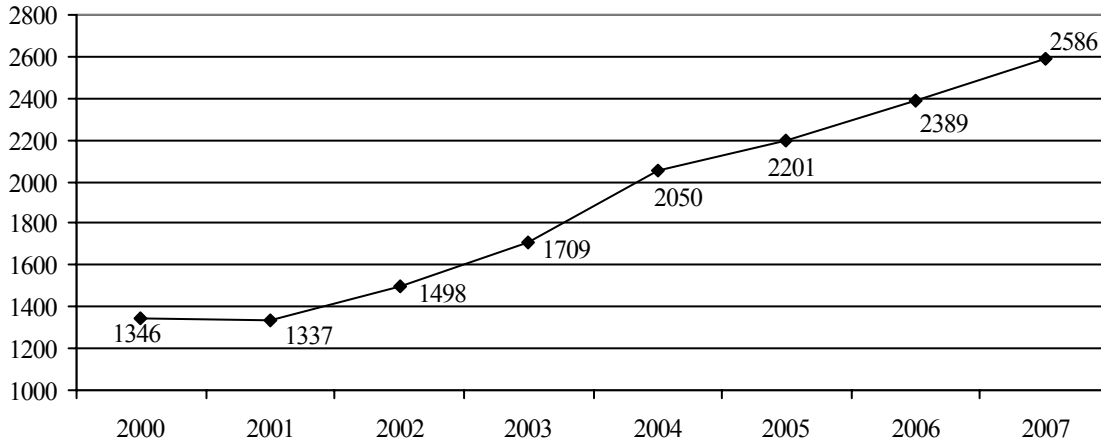


Annual new case filings have returned to traditional levels having increased significantly in each of the last two years. The total number of new filings in 2007 was the highest since 2002. The following graphs display trends this decade in key case filing categories.

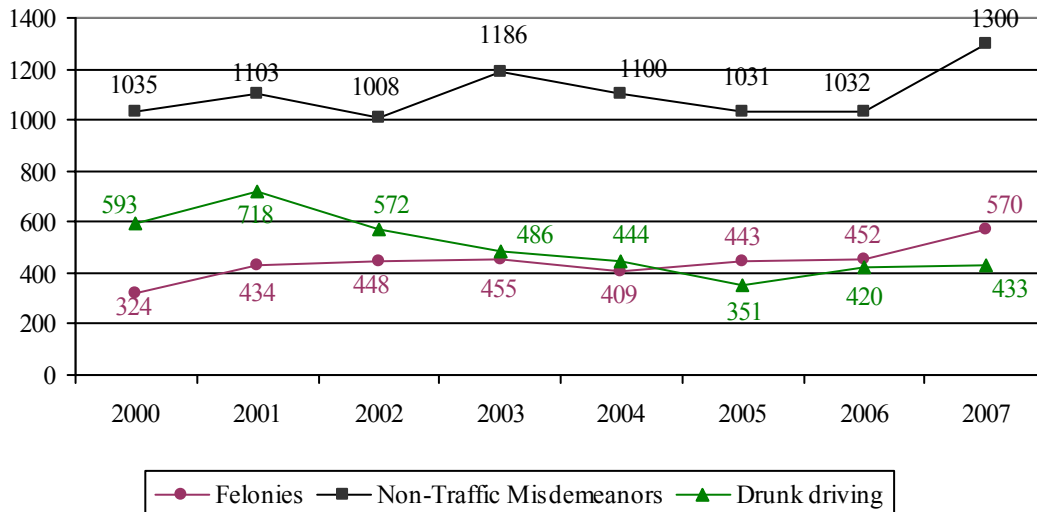
## Traffic Filings: 2001 - 2007



### Landlord-Tenant Case Filings 2000 - 2007



### Felonies, Misdemeanors & Drunk Driving Cases 2000 - 2007



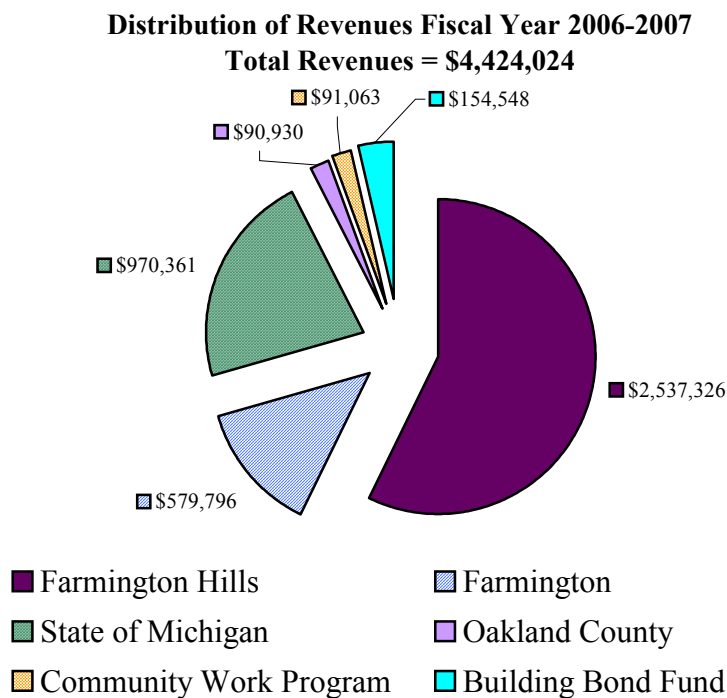
Landlord-tenant filings continued on an upward trend in 2007. Annual new filings in this case category have increased by 93 percent since 2001. A number of factors may be contributing to this trend including the state of the economy and the age of the rental properties in the community.

Although not a trend at this point, after years of relative consistency, both felony filings and non-traffic misdemeanor filings increased sharply in 2007. Again, there may be a number of factors contributing to this increase, including the current state of the economy.

## Budget and Finance

The 47<sup>th</sup> District Court is a third class district court, primarily funded through the general fund budgets of the Cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills. The amount each city pays to support the court budget is determined by caseload and population statistics and can vary from year to year. The State of Michigan funds the judges' salaries.

All revenues collected by the Court are transmitted to other government agencies. Overall revenues from the Court increased significantly in 2006-07 (\$330,972 or 8.1%) resulting in the highest overall revenue year in the Court's history. Following is a breakdown of the revenues collected and transmitted by the Court in fiscal year 2006-2007:



## Collections Program

The goal of the 47<sup>th</sup> District Court collections program is simple: to enforce outstanding court orders and close cases. The fine on a criminal case serves as a mechanism for rehabilitating offenders and deterring further illegal activity. On criminal and traffic cases, the fine is intended as both a penalty and a means of encouraging more responsible behavior in the future. Without compliance enforcement on outstanding fines and costs, the integrity and credibility of the judiciary is called into question because offenders believe that they can "beat the system". The public may view the criminal justice system as ineffective resulting in diminished public trust and confidence in the courts. Finally, the important symbolic value of a sentence may be lost.

In 2007, collections program efforts resulted in the payment of \$252,693 in revenue on approximately 2,408 delinquent cases. *Since the program's inception in 2003, the Court has realized over \$1,800,000 in revenue on over 14,067 delinquent cases.*

Deputy Administrator Stacy Parke manages the Court’s collections program. Each month, delinquent payers are noticed to appear in front of Judge James Brady to explain why they have not paid their debt. 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 \$100 fee 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 \$300,000 just in the added contempt of court fees alone.***

A second part of the Court’s collections program – expediting collection of current payments due – has been accomplished through the use of income withholding orders on criminal cases and “same day” payment policies on traffic cases. Many probationers have expressed that a voluntary income withholding order is a convenient way to keep current on their payments.

The 47<sup>th</sup> District Court collections program has generated significant results with a minimal increase in expenditures. The additional work to administer the program has been absorbed by current court staff along with assistance of unpaid student interns and citizen volunteers. The hard work and commitment of the staff along with the leadership of Judge Brady and Deputy Administrator Parke have made the program a model for other courts to emulate.

Since February 2005, as a means of increasing access, the Court has used a third-party credit card service through Government Payment Exp (GovPayEXP) (formerly Government Payment Services). The service offers customers a user-friendly credit card payment option available 24 hours per day, seven days per week via a toll-free number. A 5% service fee is paid by the cardholder to service.

The Court actually realizes more revenue from transactions through the service than from direct credit card transactions because it does not have to absorb bank fees on these third party transactions. GovPayExp transactions can be initiated by defendants either over the phone or online.



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or call 888-604-7888

**Its easy, all you need:**  
Your credit card or debit card

For Fines & Costs Pay Location Code 5042

Internet Service Fee = 5% (minimum \$3.50)  
Phone Service Fee = 5% (minimum \$5.00)



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<b>2007 Credit Card Payment Transactions by Type</b>	
Payments made at counter	\$619,431 (3,823 transactions)
GPS payments by telephone	\$181,928 (1,011 transactions)
GPS payments online	\$83,772 (549 transactions)

## 2007 Court Events and Activities

In 2007, the Court once again hosted the Forest Elementary School mock trials. The mock trials are based on fantasy courtroom scripts the Judge Parker obtained from the American Bar Association. In each play, fairy tale characters face off against each other in court. Year-after-year teachers and parents remark that this event is one of the highlights of the school year for the children.

Judge Parker's continued her "*Court in the High Schools*" program, where she holds a real day of court in each of the three Farmington high schools. Cases are specially selected to be on the calendar for the high school visits to ensure that case material is both appropriate and pertinent for the student audience. Parties involved in the cases are notified to ensure they do not object to having their hearing held in front of the student audience. Judge Parker and school administrators feel the exposure to the actual court process provides a real-life lesson on choices and consequences that can be an eye-opening experience for the students.

The judges and court staff continued several other ongoing programs with the Farmington Public Schools in 2007 including: hosting 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes from Longacre Elementary School for mock congressional hearings, the judges participating in a panel discussion at a North Farmington High School Parent Forum on teenage drug and alcohol use and the legal consequences, and administrative staff participating in mock job interviews with 8<sup>th</sup> graders from various Farmington middle schools.

The judges and staff of the 47<sup>th</sup> District Court continued to show their commitment to the community through their participation in community and charitable activities including their ongoing participation with the *United States Marine Corps Toys-for-Tots Program*, the *Farmington Area Goodfellows*, the *Farmington Hills/Farmington Community Foundation*, the *Call-to-Action Coalition*, the *Farmington Exchange and Optimist Clubs*, and the *Farmington Area Special Olympics Bowl-a-thon*.