

MUNICIPAL COURTS

ANALYSIS OF ACTIVITY FOR YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 1996

Each of the 844 Texas cities with a municipal court during the year ended August 31, 1996, was required by Section 71.035 of the Texas Government Code and Sections 171.1 and 171.2 of the Texas Administrative Code to submit a report each month to the Texas Judicial Council on activity in the court. Statewide, the Council received 9,314 reports out of a possible 10,128 for the year (92 percent).

court cases) held totaled 2,252, inquests conducted totaled 83, and drivers license suspension hearings totaled 2,960. There were 4,700 search warrants issued, 1,717,205 arrest warrants issued, and 176,996 defendants charged with county or district court offenses were given statutory warnings. In addition, 357 emergency mental commitment hearings were held and 10,566 matters relating to juveniles were conducted.

TRAFFIC CASES DOMINATE DOCKETS

Traffic cases comprised 83 percent, or 5,696,869 of the 6,846,145 total cases filed in the reporting courts during the year. Non-traffic criminal cases accounted for the other 17 percent of the cases filed.

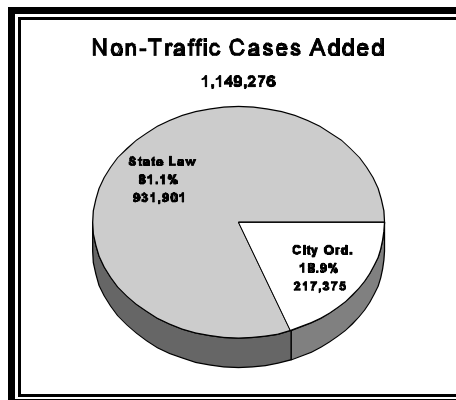
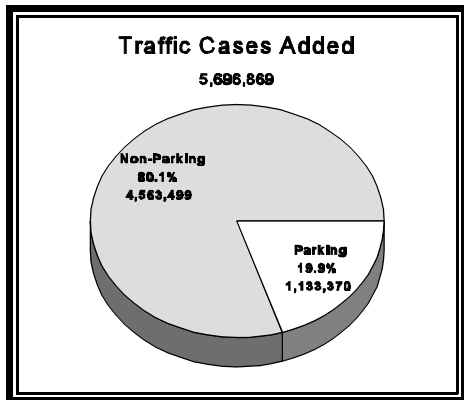
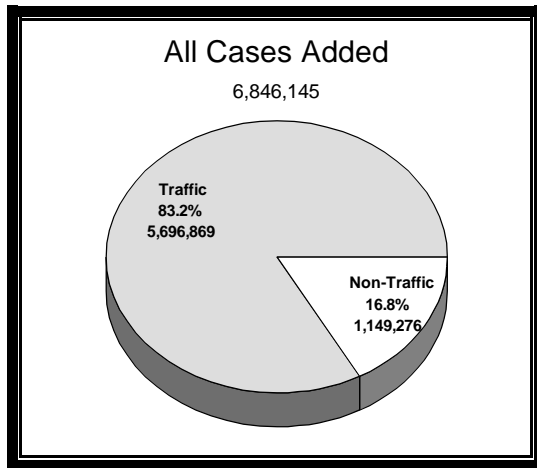
Municipal courts reported the disposition of cases in three major categories. Fifty-four percent of all cases were disposed of before trial; 27 percent at trial (after appearance before the judge); and 19 percent were dismissed after providing proof of insurance or after completing a driving safety course or other condition authorized for deferred disposition. Of all cases disposed, 2,181,637 (38%) were dismissed.

Of the traffic cases filed, 80 percent were for non-parking violations with the remaining 20 percent for parking-related offenses. Eighty-one percent of non-traffic cases filed were for state law violations with 19 percent related to local ordinances.

In the municipal judges' capacity as a state magistrate, the reporting judges accepted 62,676 complaints within the jurisdiction of the county court and 26,569 complaints within the jurisdiction of the district courts (felonies). Examining trials (preliminary hearings of district or county

Analyzing traffic cases only, 39 percent were dismissed and 18 percent went to trial. The remaining 43 percent were disposed of prior to trial, 98 percent of which were by payment of fine. Of the 18 percent that went to trial, 99.4 percent of the cases were tried before the judge alone and the rest before a jury. When traffic cases went to trial, the defendant was found guilty in 95 percent of the cases tried before the judge alone and in 83 percent of the cases tried before a jury.

Analyzing non-



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(CONTINUED)

traffic criminal cases, 39 percent were disposed of prior to trial by payment of fine or forfeiture of a deposit made to ensure appearance; 30 percent were disposed of at trial; and 31 percent were dismissed. Of those that went to trial, 99 percent were before the judge without a jury. Guilty findings were made in 96 percent of the trials before the judge alone and in 78 percent of the jury trials.

The courts reported disposing of 5,752,407 cases, which is 84 percent of the 6,846,145 filed. In the previous

year, 97.5 percent were disposed. Of the convictions, 33,460 cases were appealed to a higher court, 0.6 percent of the total cases disposed.

REPORTED REVENUES TOP \$302 MILLION

Total revenue collected by the reporting courts during the year ended August 31, 1996, was \$302,406,749, an 8 percent increase from the previous year. The average amount of revenue per disposition that was not a dismissal was \$84.69. This revenue becomes part of the treasury of the city in which the court has jurisdiction, except for certain court costs on each case which are remitted to the special funds of the State.

