



Highlights from the **2020** Annual Statistical Report



Change in Cases Added, FY 19 to 20

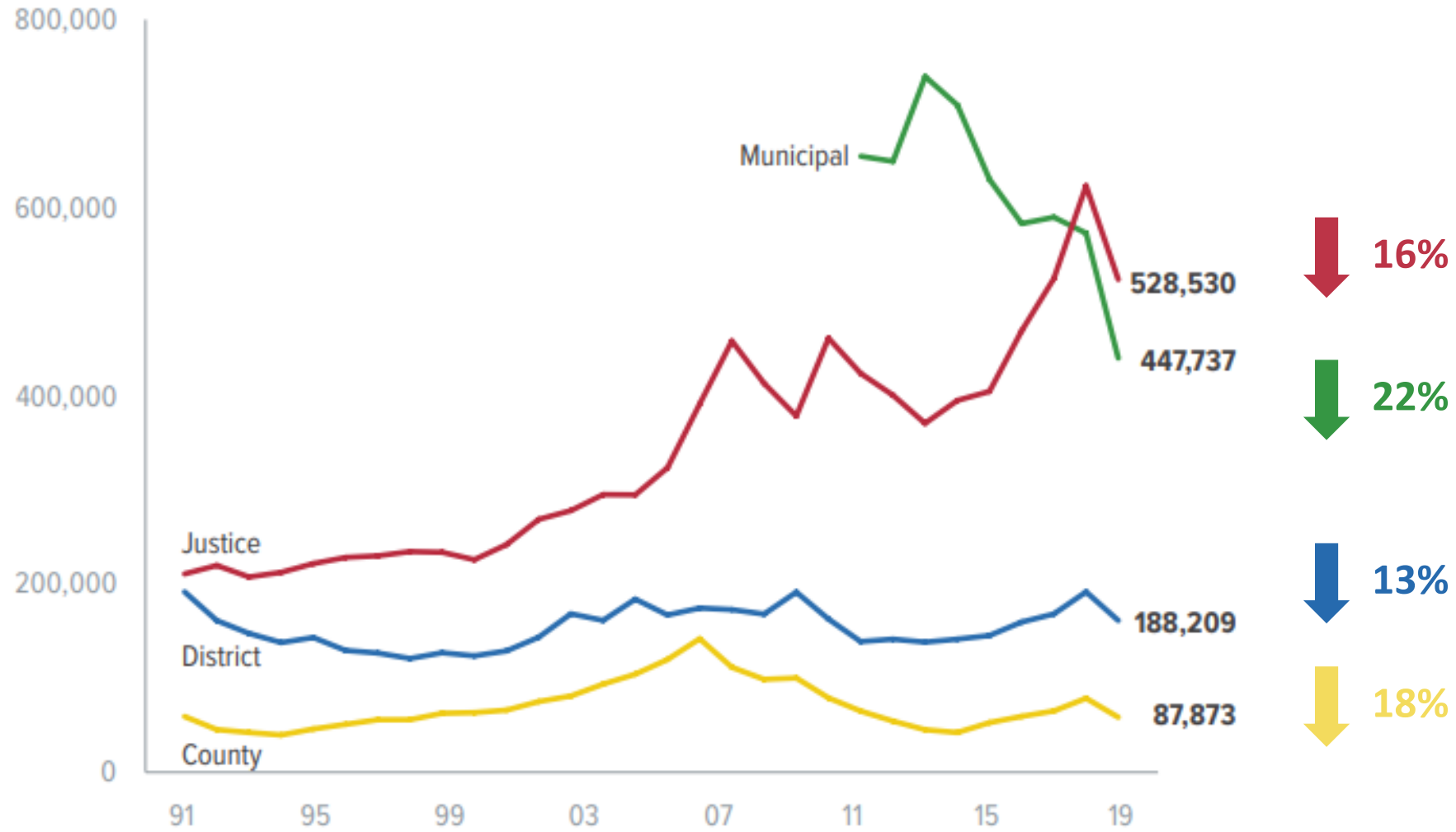
Supreme Court	↓	6 %	Court of Criminal Appeals	↓	6 %
Courts of Appeals	↓	16 %	District	↓	12 %
Statutory County	↓	19 %	Constitutional County	↓	14 %
Justice	↓	23 %	Municipal	↓	23 %



Civil



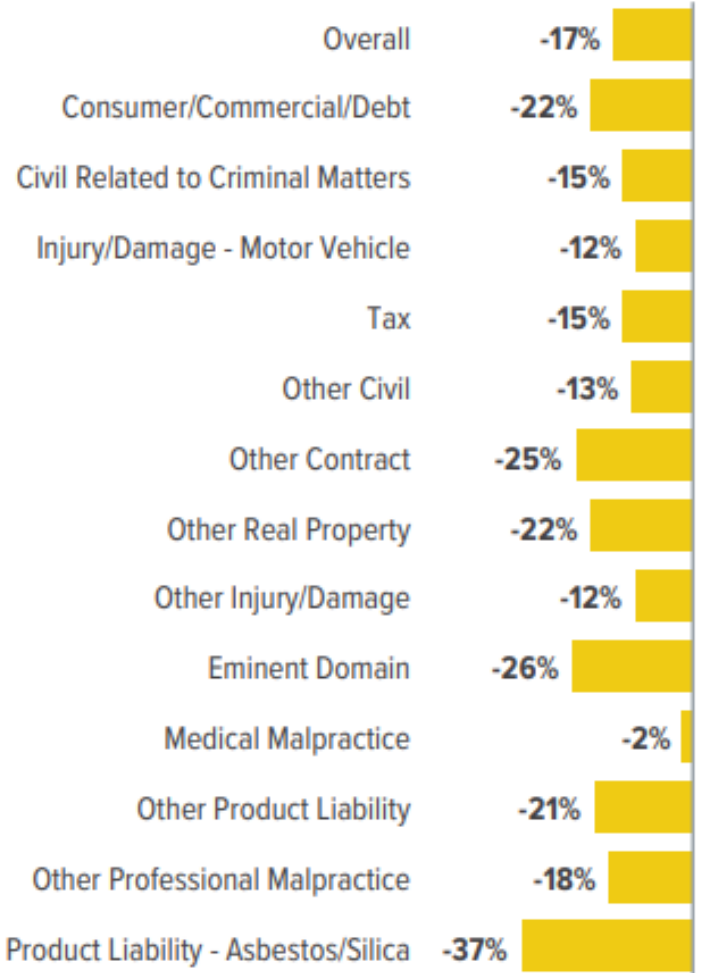
New civil case filings declined at every trial court level.



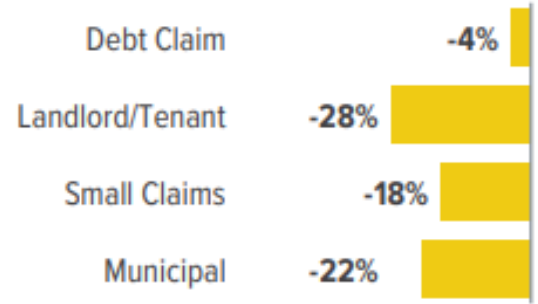


Filings declined in all case categories.

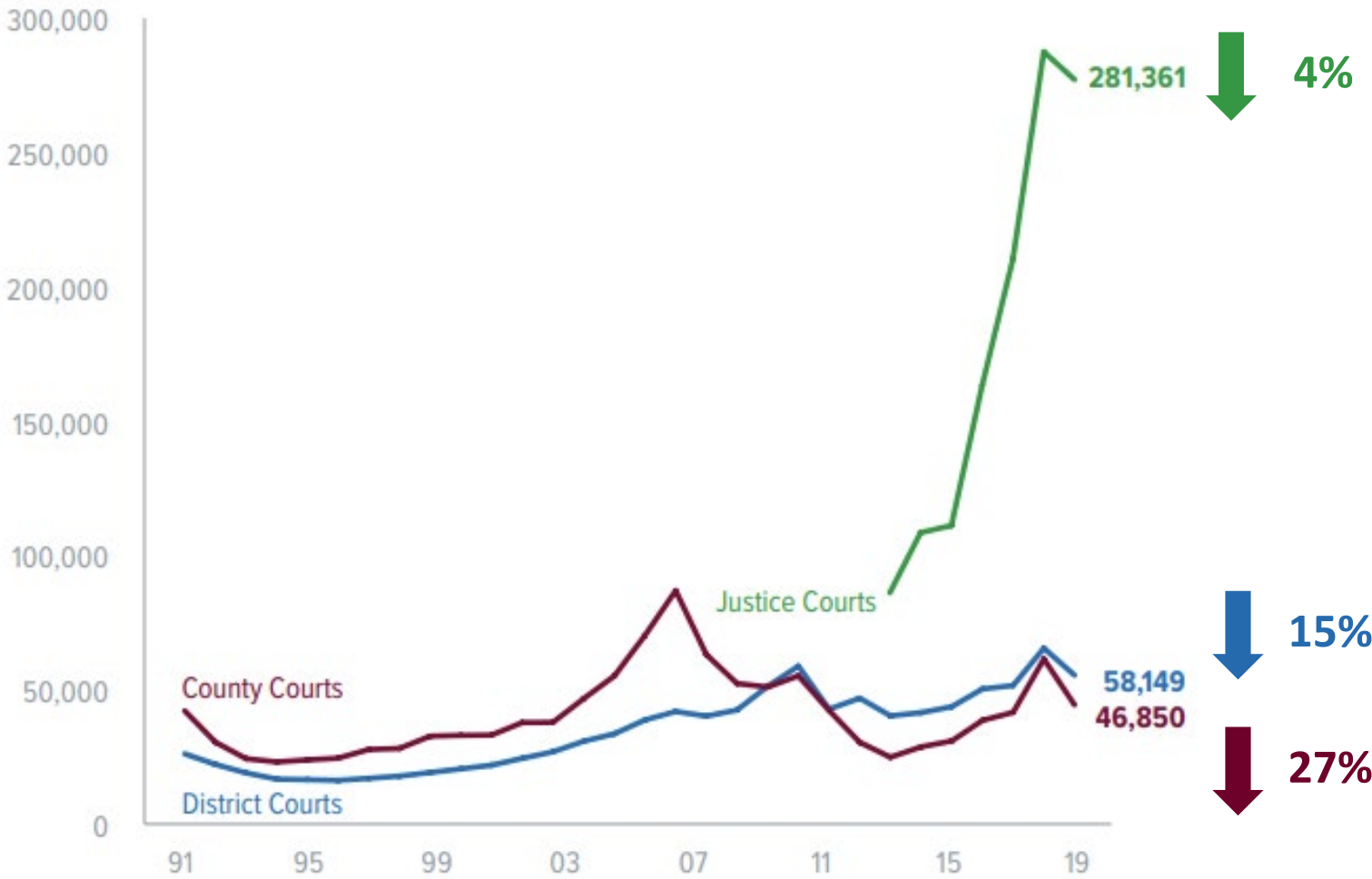
District and County Courts



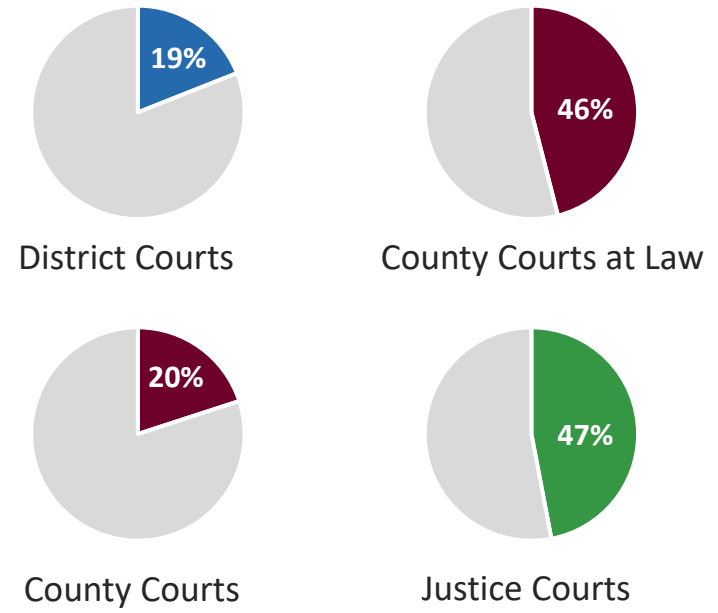
Justice and Municipal Courts



Despite declines in 2020, the number of **debt** cases filed still exceeded the number filed in 2018. Prior to the pandemic, debt cases accounted for nearly half of county court at law and justice court civil caseload and a fifth of district and county court civil caseload.



Debt Cases as % of Courts' Civil Caseload, 2019

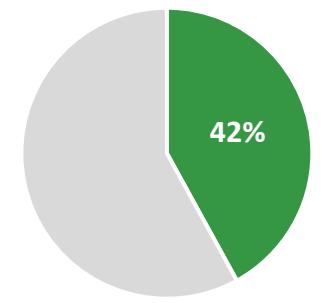




After reaching an all-time high in 2019, new **landlord/tenant** cases filed in justice courts fell 28 percent in 2020 due to the pandemic and restrictions placed on the filing of eviction cases beginning in March 2020.



Landlord/Tenant Cases as % of Justice Courts' Civil Caseload, 2019



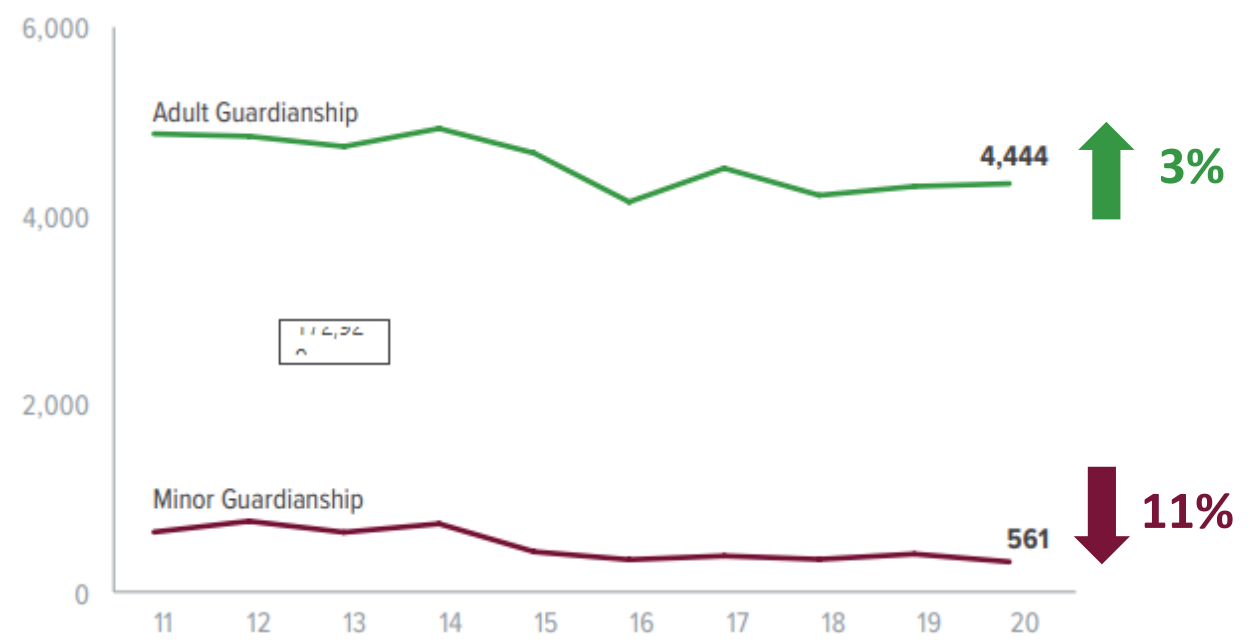
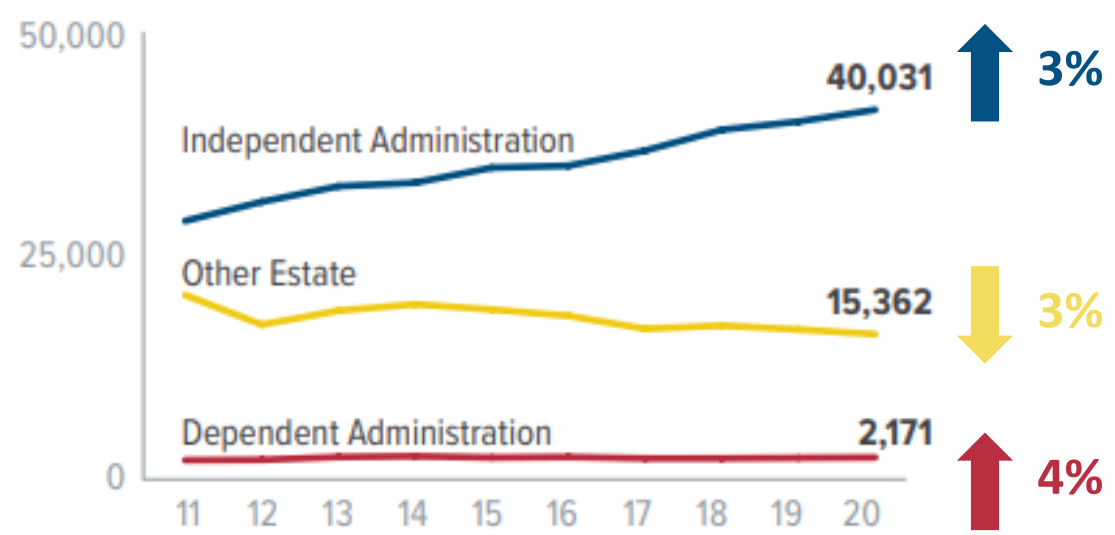


In contrast to the steep declines in other case types during the pandemic, the number of applications filed for **involuntary mental health commitment** declined very slightly in 2020.





Probate and guardianship cases were the only categories with growth in filings.

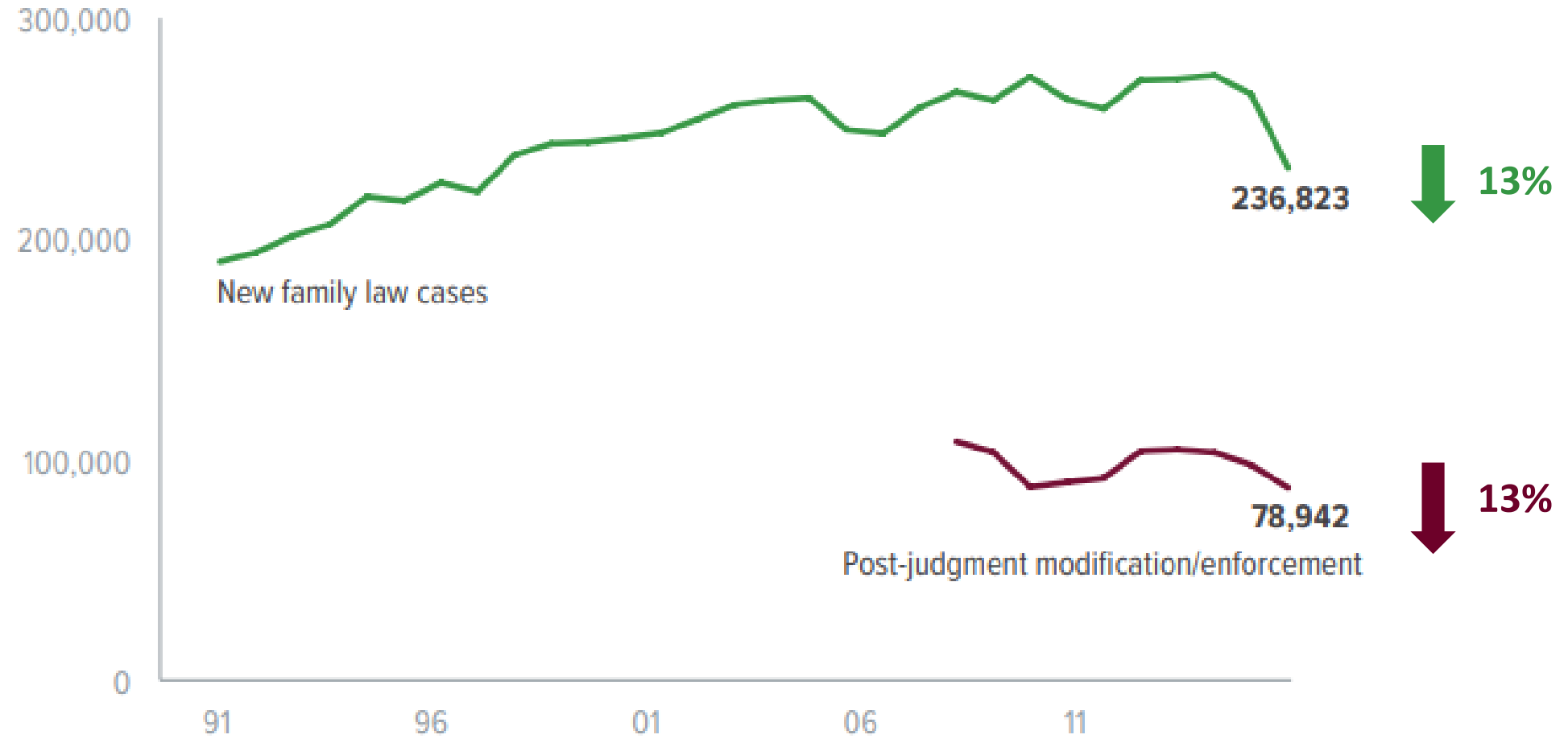


Family



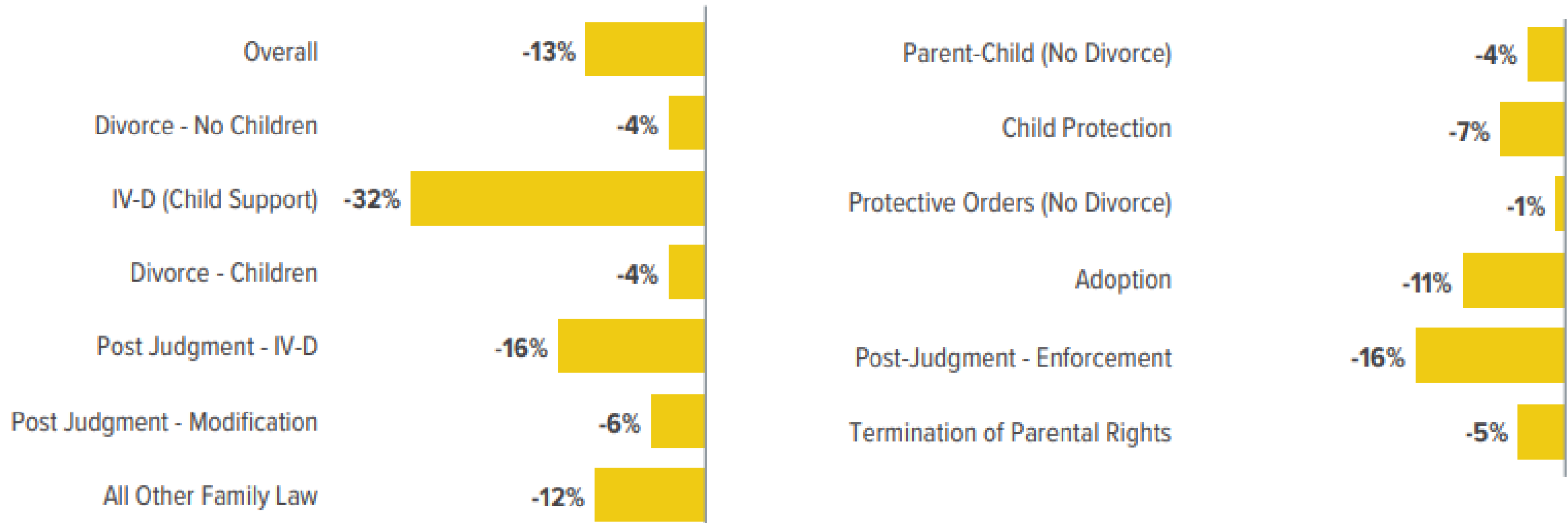


After reaching an all-time high in 2018, the number of new family cases filed declined in 2020 to the lowest level since 1998. The number of post-judgment suits for modification or enforcement also declined at an identical rate.



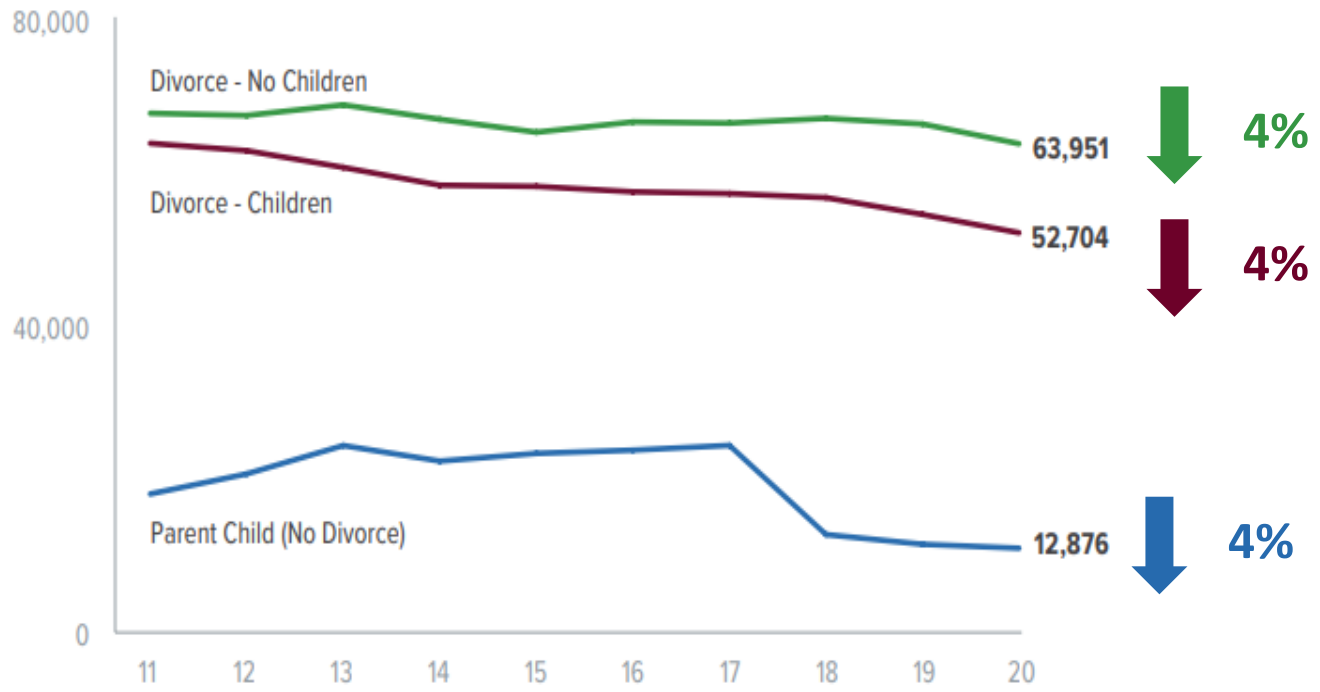


New filings decreased in all family case categories in 2020, but the most significant declines occurred in child support (IV-D) cases. Applications for a protective order in cases not involving a divorce declined at the lowest rate.





New **divorce cases not involving children** decreased by only a slightly higher rate than the year before, and divorce cases involving children declined at the same rate as the previous year.



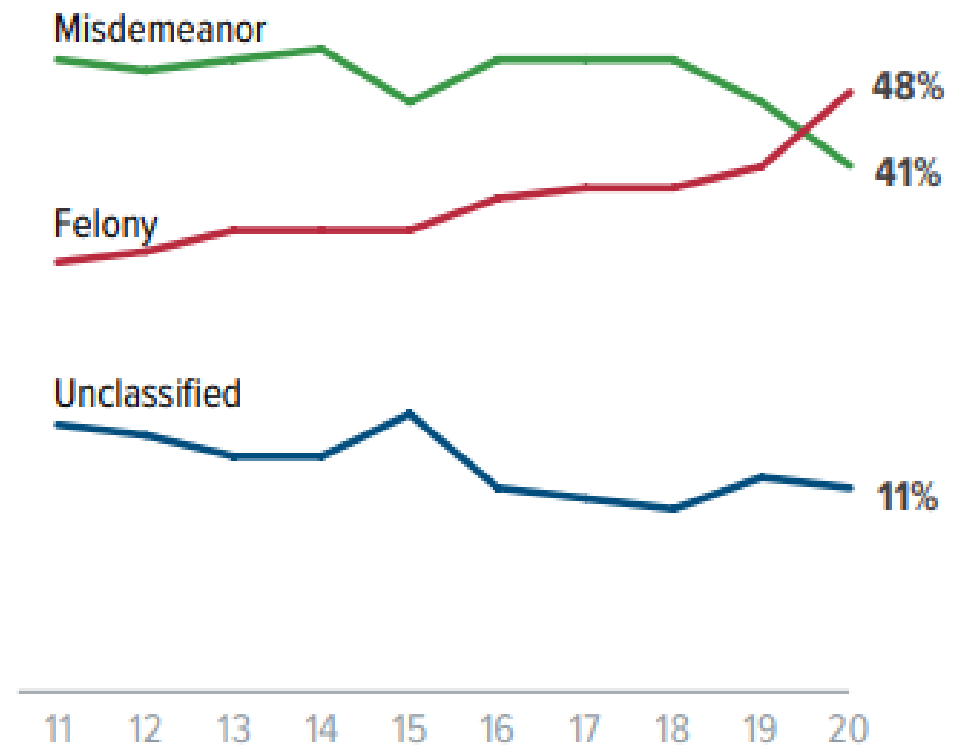
After 6 years of growth in **child protection** cases, filings were down 7% in 2019 and by an equal percentage in 2020.



Juvenile

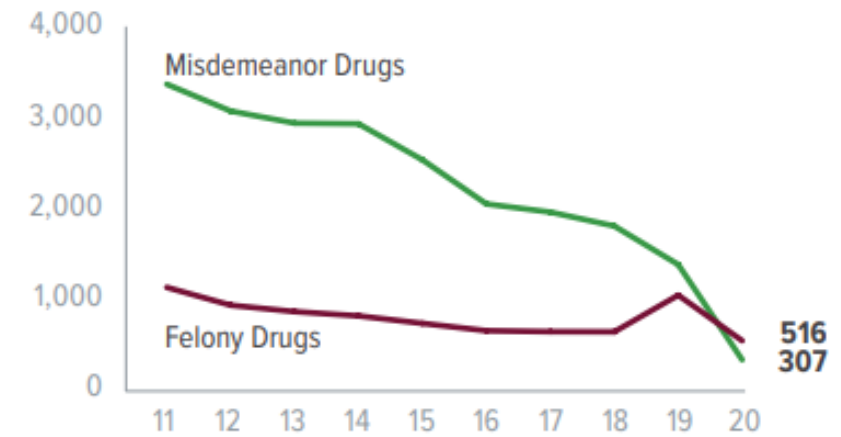
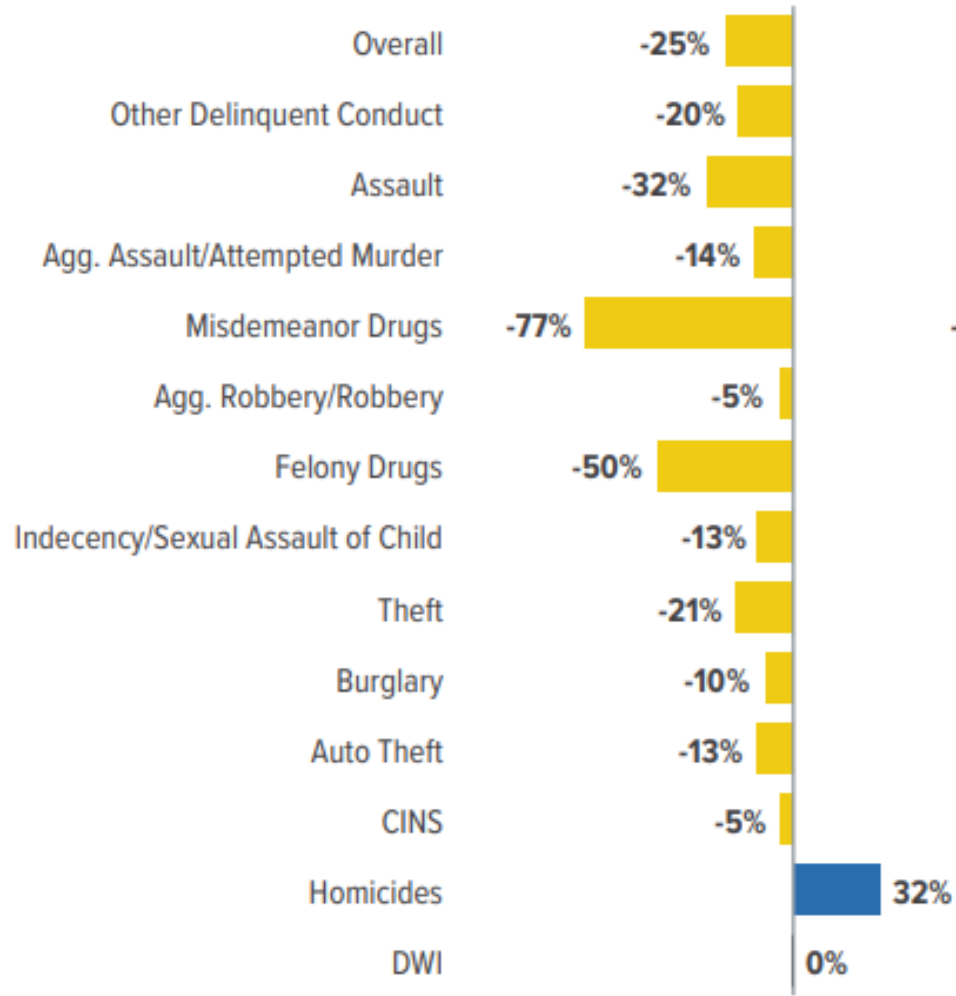


Since the peak in 2007, the number of total juvenile cases filed has fallen 60 percent to the lowest level since 1993. For the first time, new delinquent conduct cases involving a felony offense exceeded those involving a misdemeanor.

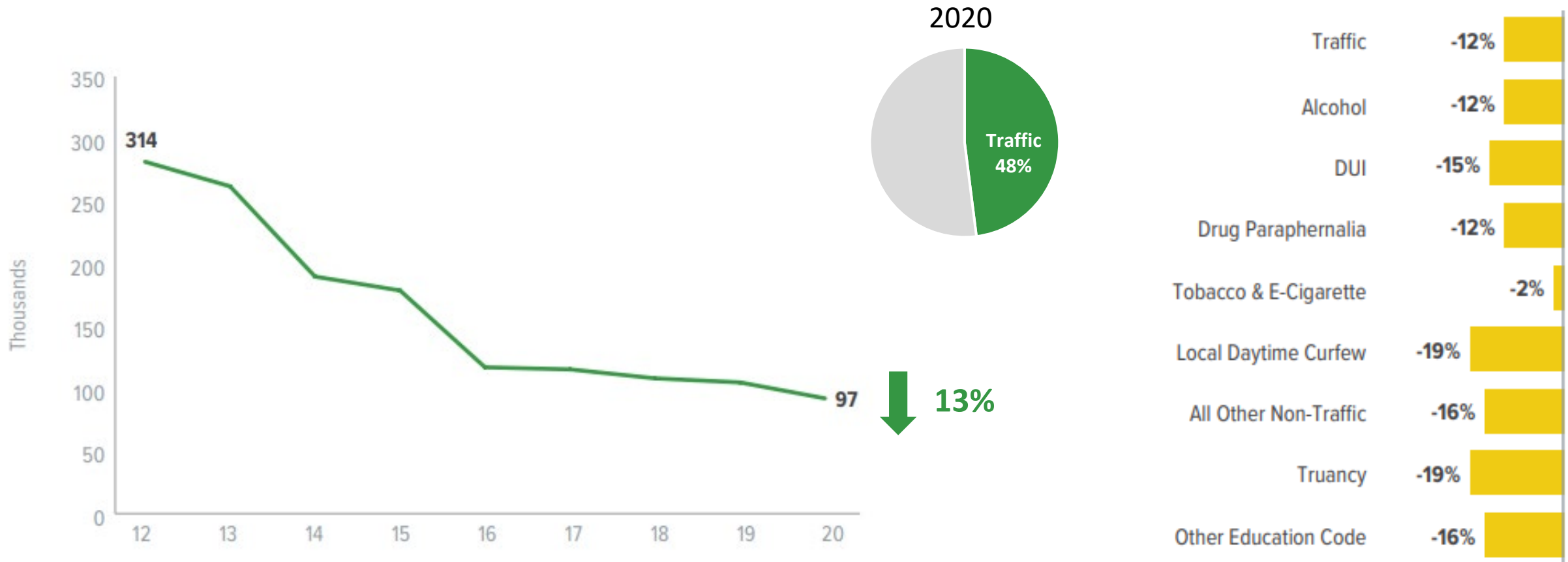




Homicides, including capital murder, was the only category to increase in 2020. Driving while intoxicated cases remained unchanged from 2019. For the first time, felony drug cases outnumbered misdemeanor drug cases.



Significant declines in **Class C** cases involving **juveniles or minors** occurred in all categories except tobacco/e-cigarettes.

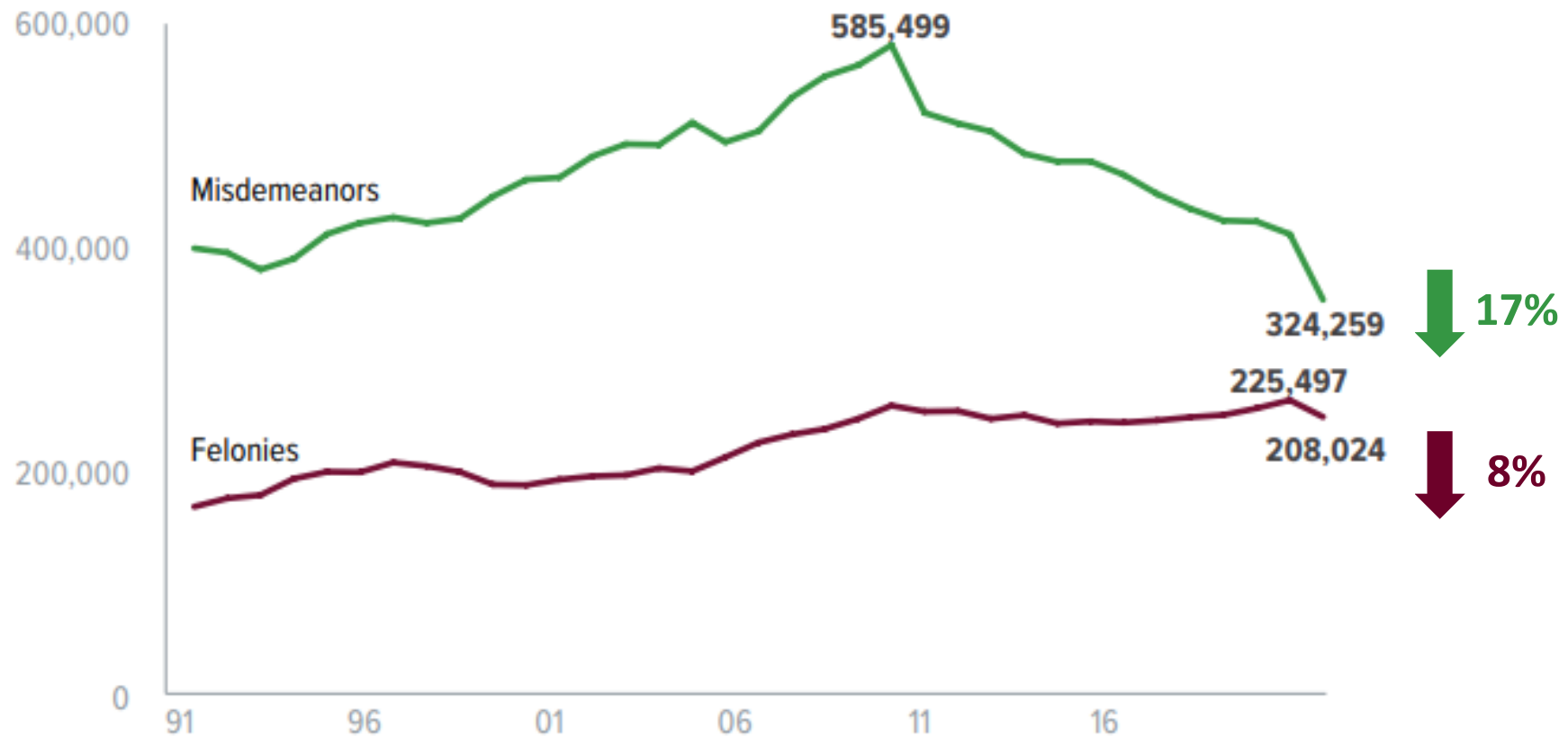


Criminal

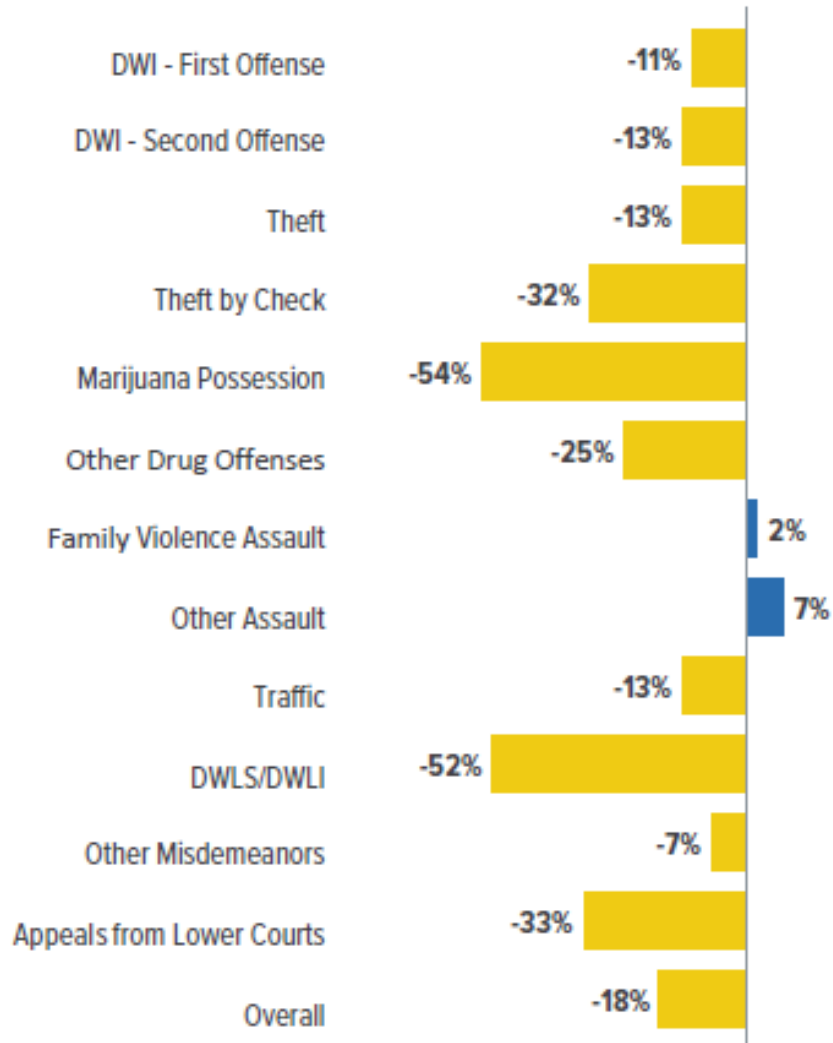




The number of new **misdemeanor** cases has been falling since 2007 and but took a steep dive in 2020 due to the pandemic and a significant decline in drug cases. Down 45 percent from the 2007 peak, the 2020 filing rate was the lowest since at least 1985. The number of new **felony** cases filed increased each year since 2014, reached an all-time high in 2019, but declined in 2020.

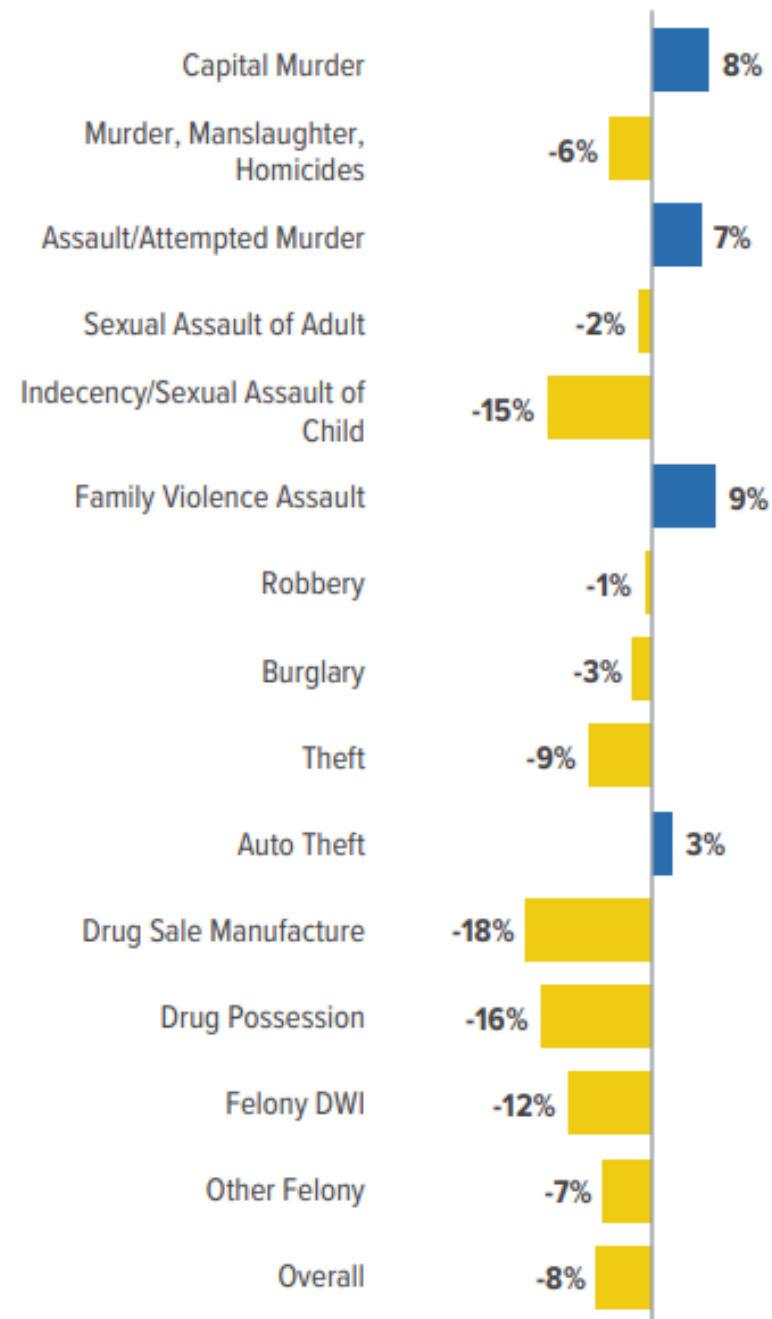
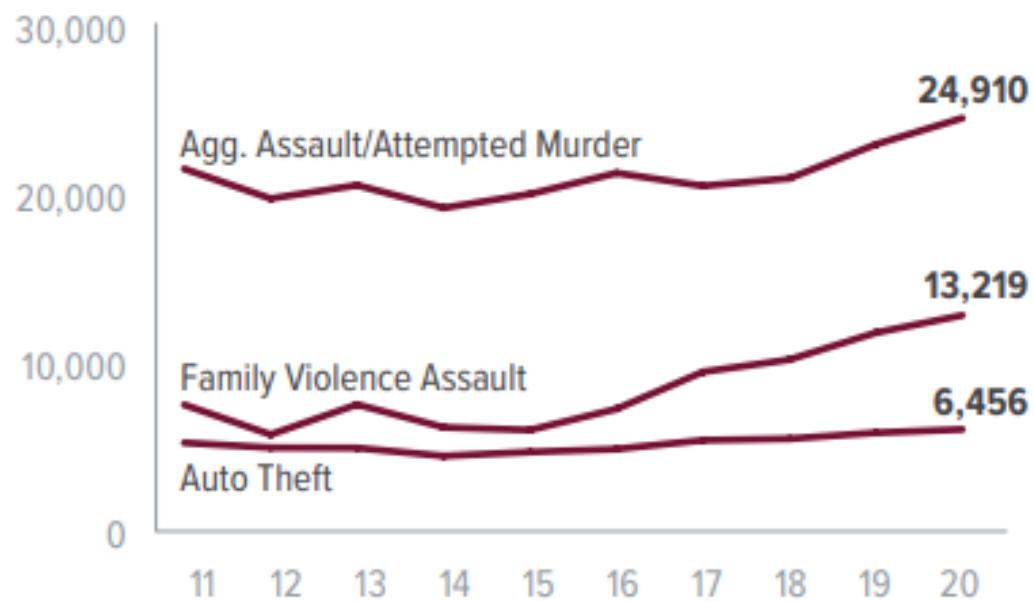


The most significant declines in **misdemeanor** cases occurred in marijuana possession and driving with a suspended or invalid license cases, while assault cases increased.



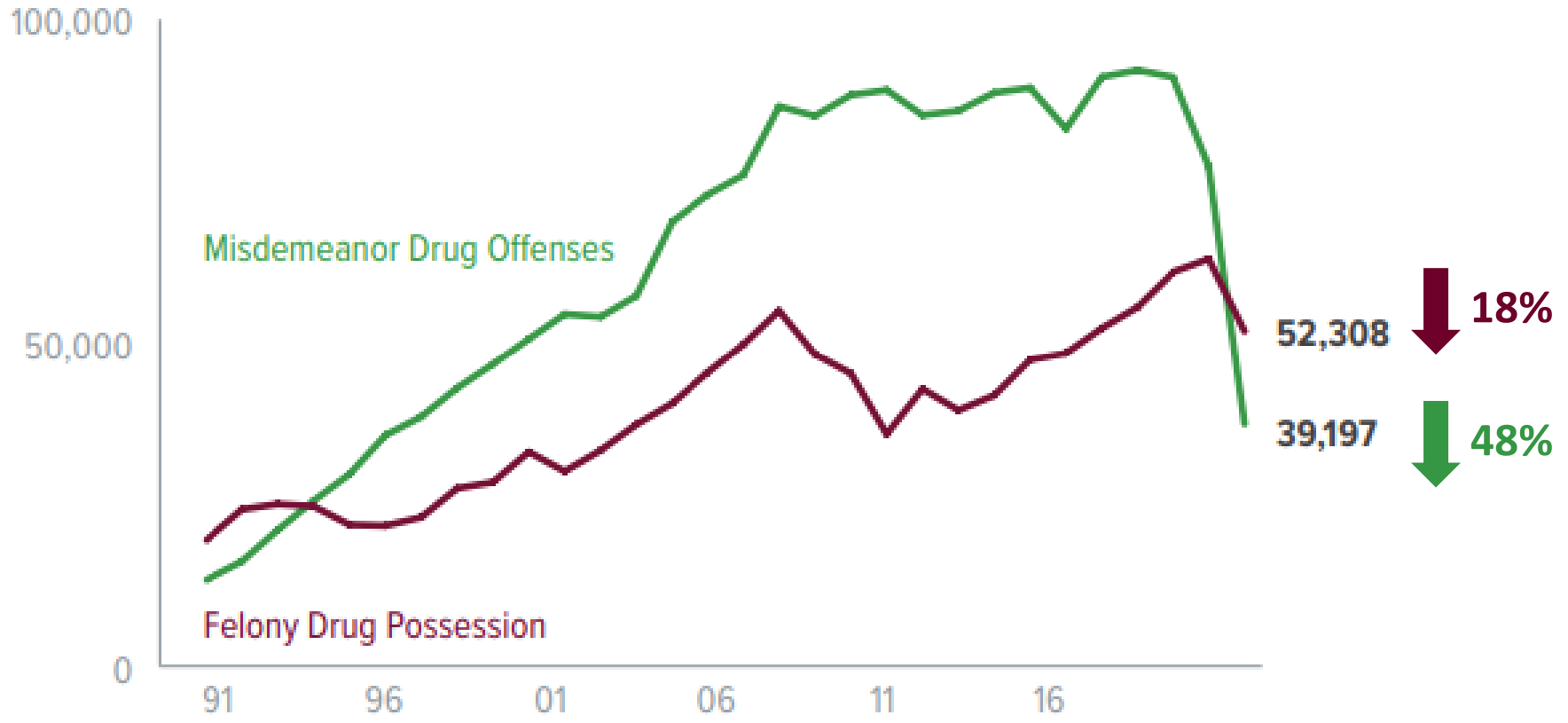
The steepest declines in **felony** cases occurred in drug cases and cases involving indecency or sexual assault of a child.

Aside from capital murder, aggravated assault/attempted murder, family violence, and auto theft were the only felony categories that increased in 2020.

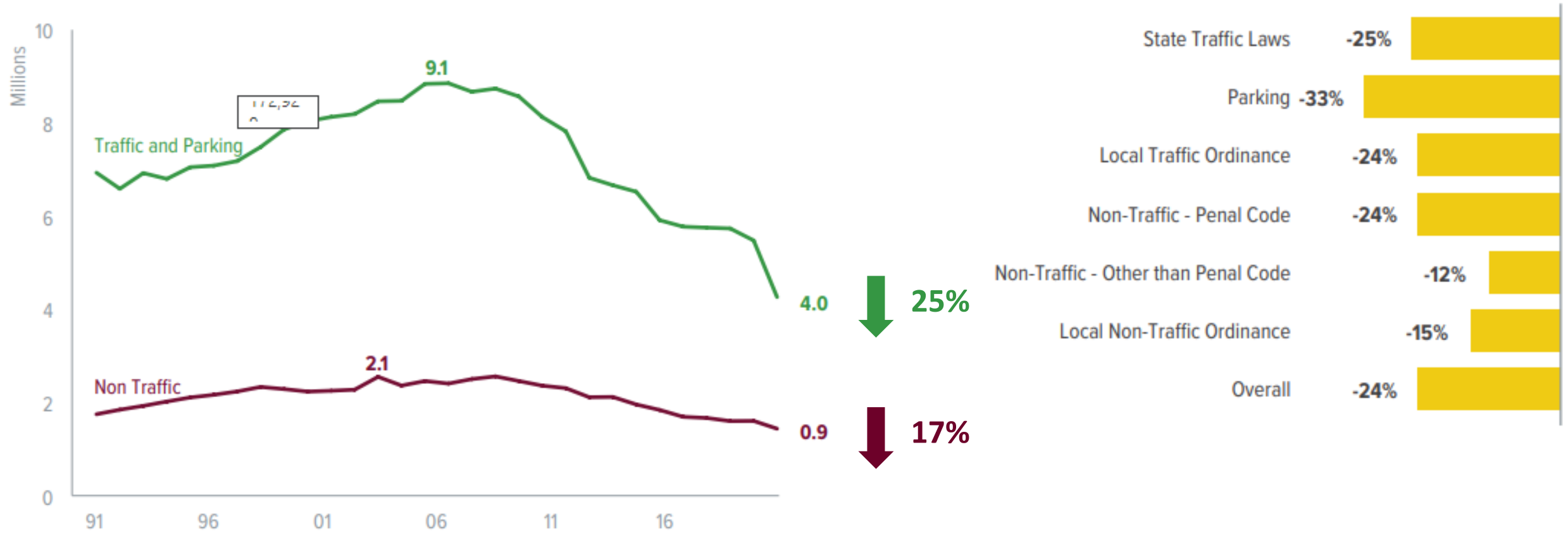




New **misdemeanor drug possession** cases fell by almost half in 2020 due to continued decline in the prosecution of marijuana cases as well as an overall steep decrease in filed misdemeanor cases due to the coronavirus pandemic. After reaching a peak in 2019, **felony drug possession** cases also declined but at a much slower rate and exceeded the number of misdemeanor drug cases filed for the first time since 1994.



Fine only misdemeanor case filings declined significantly in 2020. Traffic and parking cases declined for the 12th year in a row.



Appellate



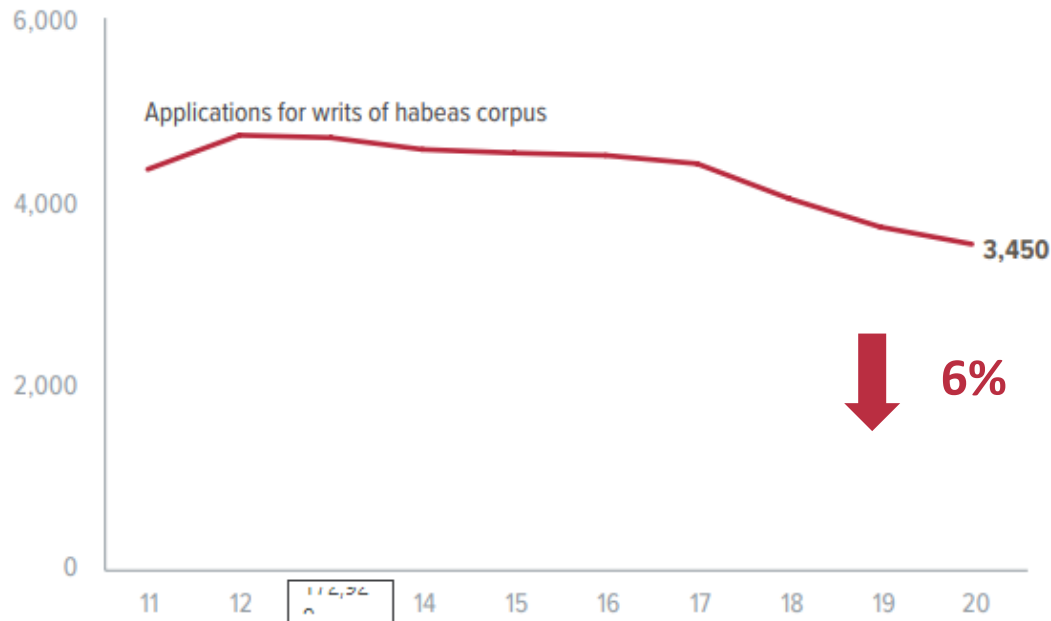


Although criminal cases had been declining for years in the **Courts of Appeals**, they fell sharply in 2020 due to the pandemic. After the highest civil filing rate in the history of the courts of appeals in 2019, the number of civil cases also declined in 2020 due to the pandemic.



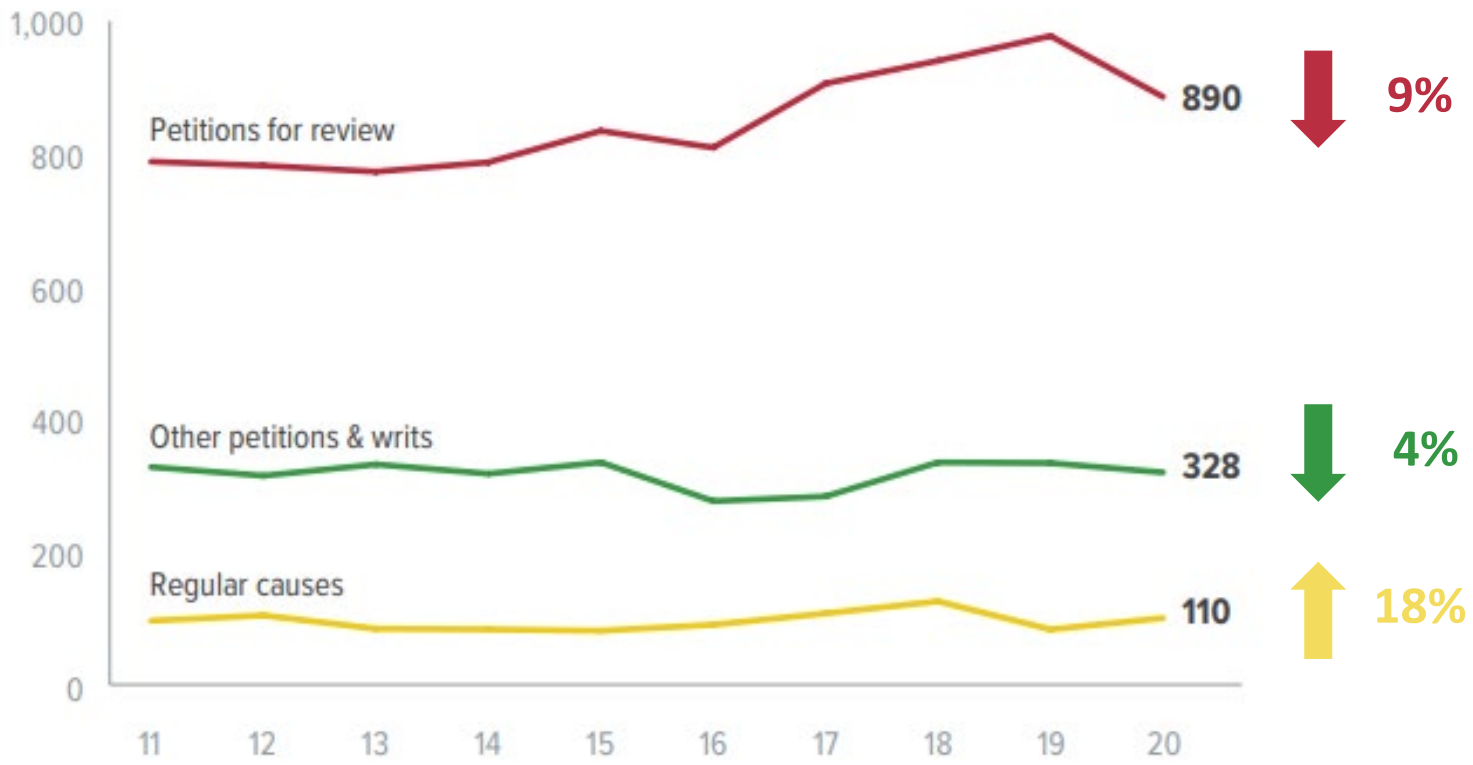


In the **Court of Criminal Appeals**, applications for writs of habeas corpus declined to the lowest level since at least 2001. Petitions for discretionary review decreased to the lowest level since at least 1989. Original proceedings remained steady.





After reaching the highest number filed since 2002, petitions for review, which account for the majority of the **Supreme Court's** caseload, decreased in 2020. The number of regular causes added to the docket increased by 18 percent, and the number of other petitions and writs fell slightly from the previous year.



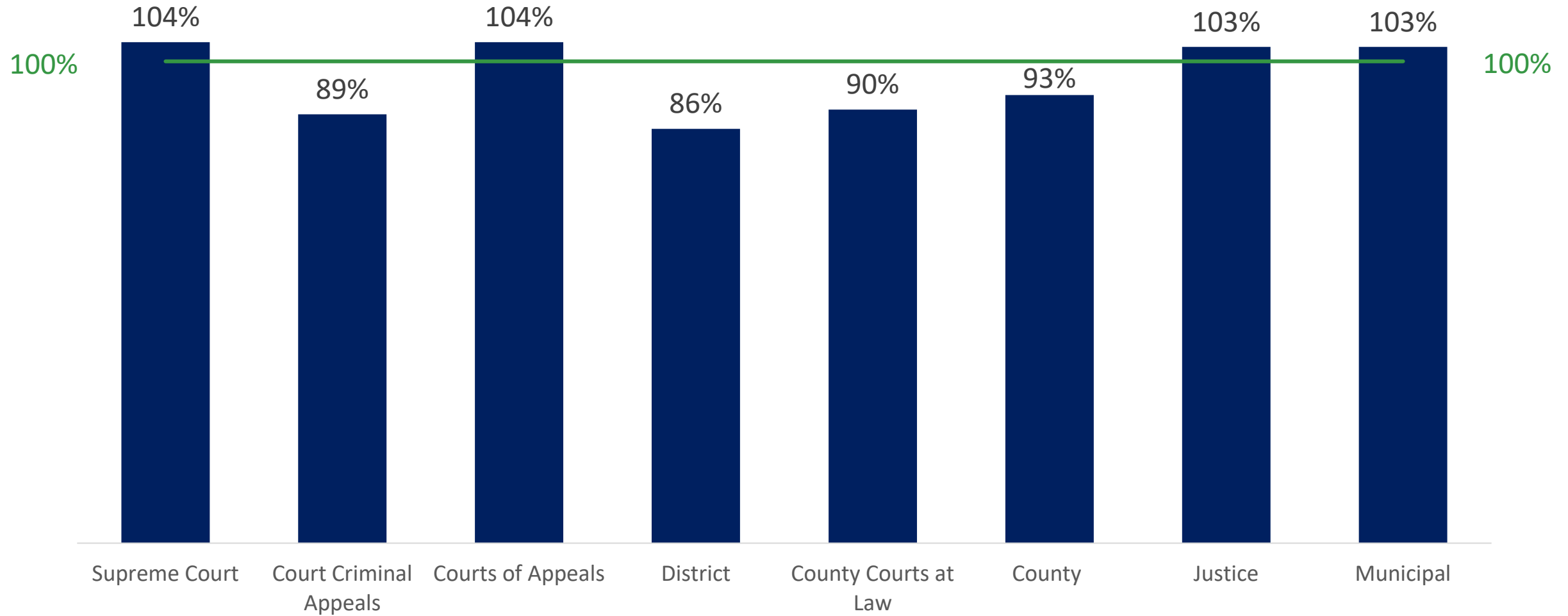
Clearance Rates and Pending Caseload





Clearance Rates

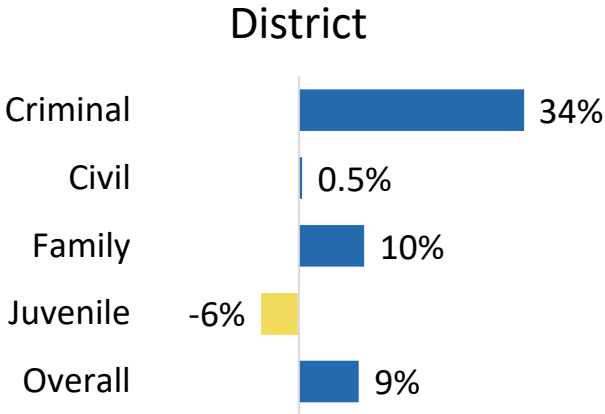
FY 2020



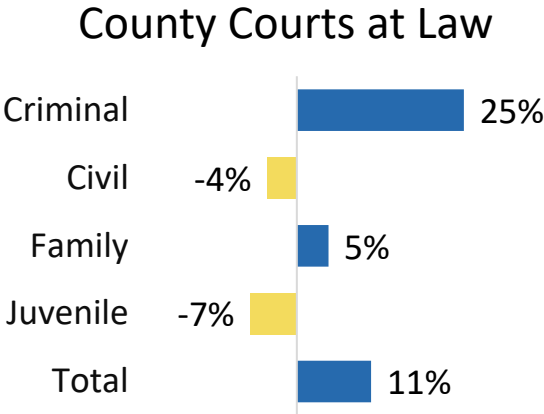


Change in Active Pending Caseload

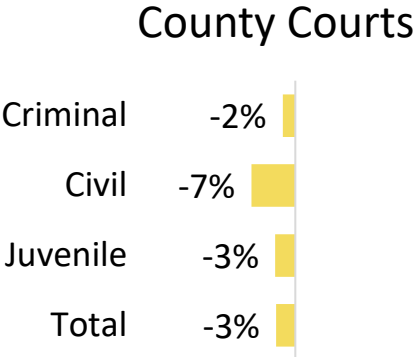
March 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021



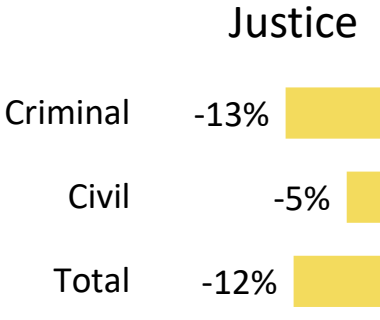
+ 81,955 Cases



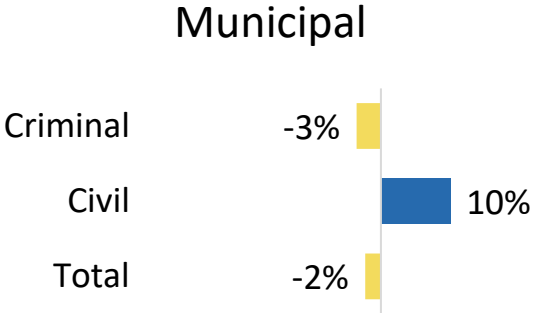
+ 57,168 Cases



- 2,754 Cases



-511,010 Cases



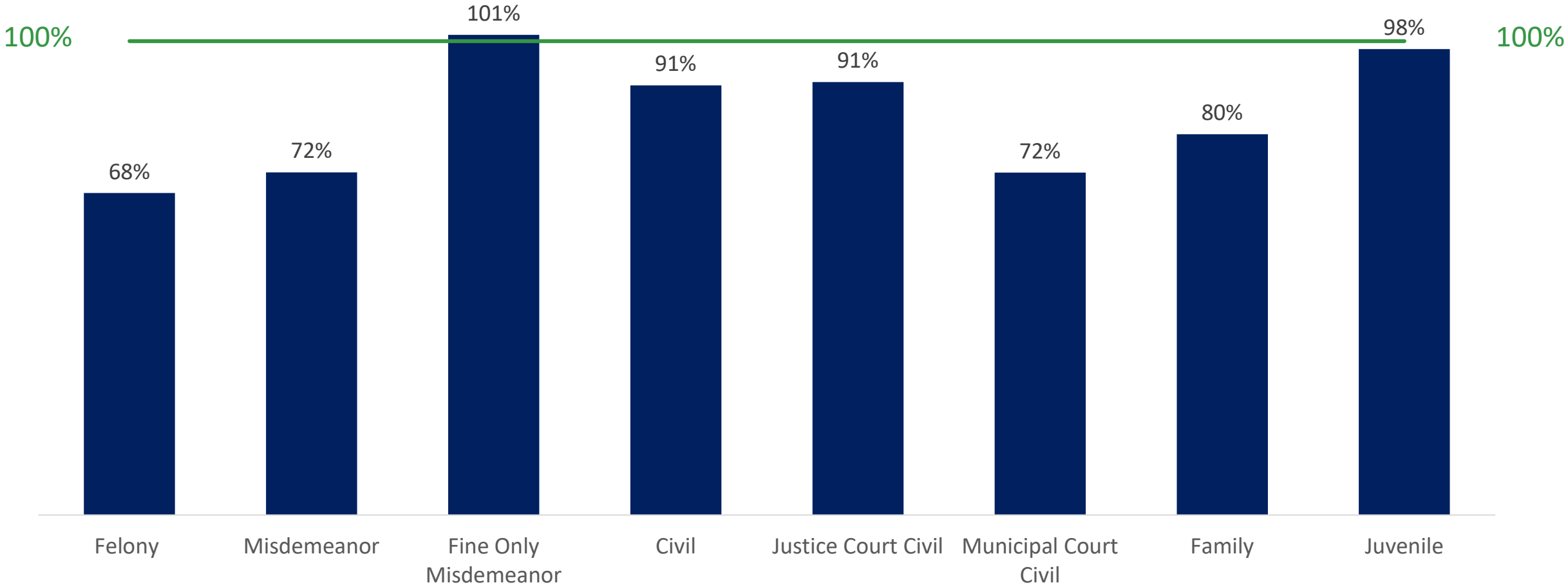
-167,116 Cases





Clearance Rates in Trial Court Case Types

March 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021

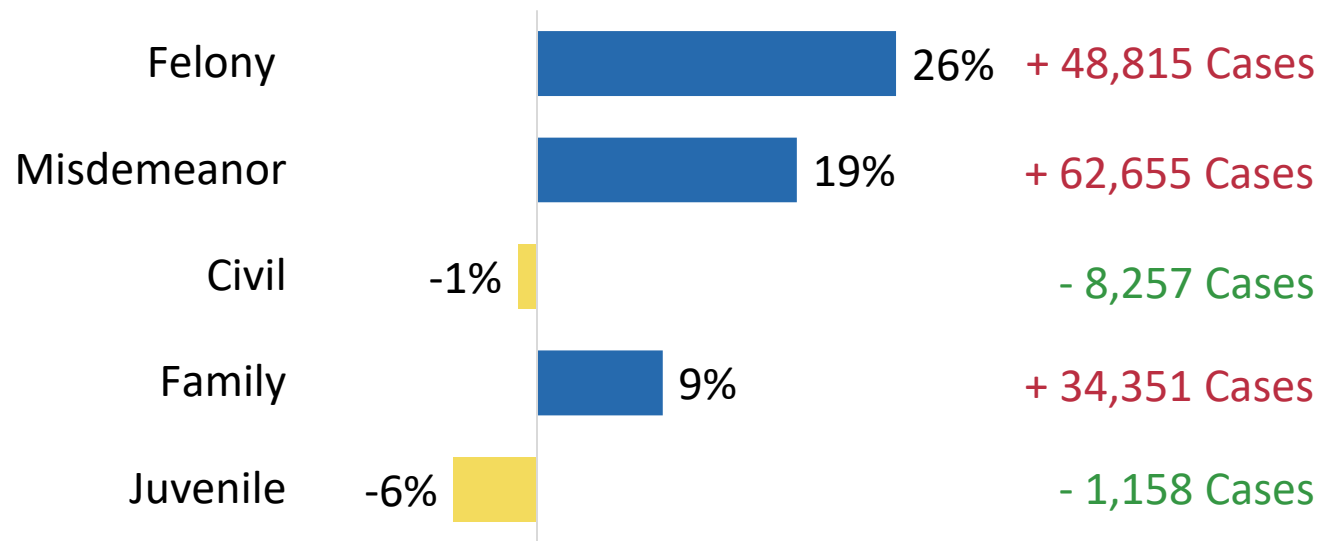




Change in Active Pending Caseload

March 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021

District and County Courts



Justice and Municipal Courts

