



THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

The Supreme Court of Ohio is established by Article IV, Section 1, of the Ohio Constitution, which provides that “the judicial power of the state is vested in a Supreme Court, Courts of Appeals, Courts of Common Pleas and divisions thereof, and such other courts inferior to the Supreme Court as may from time to time be established by law.” Article IV, Section 2, of the Constitution sets the size of the court at seven — a chief justice and six justices — and outlines the jurisdiction of the court.

The Supreme Court is the court of last resort in Ohio. The court may grant leave to appeal criminal cases from the courts of appeals and may direct any court of appeals to certify its record on civil cases found to be “cases of public or great interest.”

The court must accept appeals of cases that originated in the courts of appeals, cases involving the death penalty, cases involving questions arising under the U.S. Constitution or the Ohio Constitution and cases in which there are conflicting opinions from two or more courts of appeals. The court also must accept appeals from such administrative bodies as the Board of Tax Appeals and the Public Utilities Commission.

The court has original jurisdiction for certain special remedies that permit a person to file an action in the Supreme Court. These extraordinary remedies include writs of habeas corpus (involving the release of persons allegedly unlawfully imprisoned or committed), writs of mandamus and procedendo (ordering a public official to do a required act), writs of prohibition (ordering a lower court to cease an unlawful act) and writs of quo warranto (against a person or corporation for usurpation, misuse or abuse of public office or corporate office or franchise).

The Supreme Court makes rules governing practice and procedure in Ohio courts. Procedural rules adopted by the Supreme Court become effective unless both houses of the General Assembly adopt a concurrent resolution of disapproval. The Supreme Court also exercises general superintendence over all Ohio courts through its rule-making authority. The rules of superintendence set minimum standards for court administration. Unlike procedural rules, rules of superintendence do not require General Assembly review or approval to become effective.

The chief justice assigns judges to trial and appellate courts for temporary duty in cases of a court overload, when a judge is removed from a case because of an affidavit of disqualification and when judges recuse themselves from a particular case.

The court has authority over the admission of attorneys to the practice of law in Ohio and may discipline admitted attorneys who violate the rules governing the practice of law.

The chief justice and six justices are elected to six year terms on a nonpartisan ballot. Two justices are chosen at the general election in even-numbered years. In the year when the chief justice runs, voters pick three members of the court. A person must be an attorney with at least six years of experience in the practice of law to be elected or appointed to the court. The governor makes appointments for vacancies occurring between elections.

Caseloads

The Supreme Court reports detailed caseload statistics each year in its annual report. Readers are encouraged to review those reports to gain further insight into the work of the court. In the court’s annual report, and here, the court presents performance-related statistics concerning the time to dispose of various case types.

For purposes of this analysis, the court’s overall case filings are presented under four categories: All Case Types Combined, Jurisdictional Appeals, Merit Cases and Practice of Law Cases.

All Case Types Combined

For all case types combined, the court saw the filing of 2,107 new cases in 2015, representing a nearly 7 percent decrease from the 2,255 cases filed in 2014. (See **Table 1** and **Figure 1**).

Jurisdictional Appeals

In 2015, a total of 1,529 new jurisdictional appeals were filed, a 6-percent decrease from the 1,623 cases filed in 2014. (See **Figure 2**).

Merit Cases

These are cases the court must hear and render a decision on the merits. The general categories of merit cases consist of the following:

- Original actions
- Habeas corpus cases
- Direct appeals (cases originating in courts of appeals)
- Direct appeals involving termination of parental rights/adoption
- Certified conflicts

TABLE 1

The Supreme Court of Ohio New Filings

Case Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Jurisdictional Appeals	1,667	1,629	1,492	1,623	1,529
Merit Cases	408	424	451	513	457
Practice of Law Cases	132	134	112	119	121
Disciplinary Cases	119	125	96	107	109
All Other	14	9	16	12	12
All Case Types	2,207	2,187	2,055	2,255	2,107

FIGURE 1

All Case Types Combined New Filings

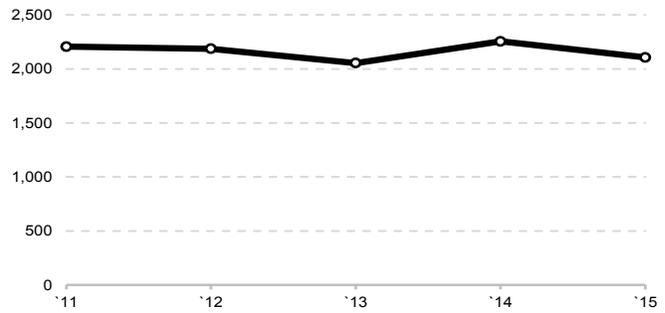


FIGURE 2

Jurisdictional Appeals New Filings

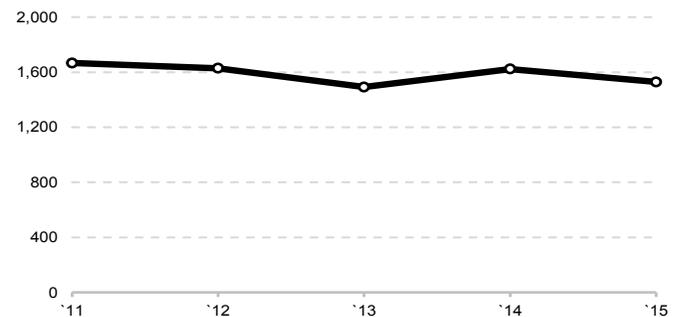


FIGURE 3

Merit Cases

New Filings

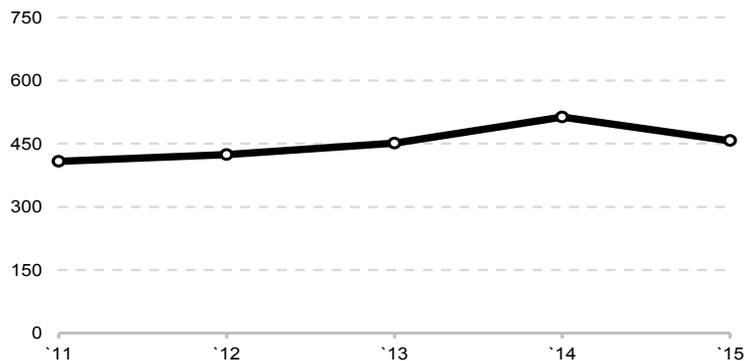
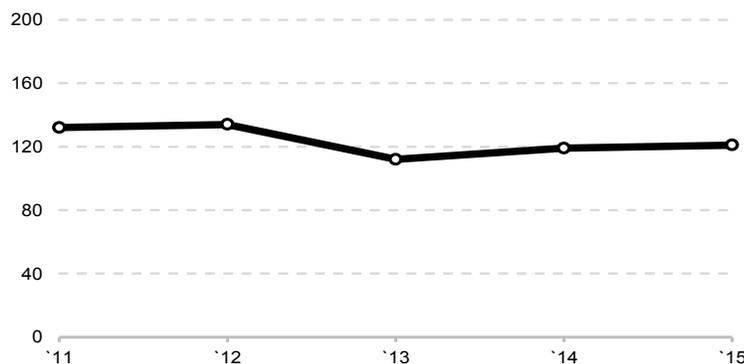


FIGURE 4

Practice of Law Cases

New Filings



- Certified conflicts involving termination of parental rights/adoption
- Appeals from Board of Tax Appeals
- Appeals from Public Utilities Commission
- Appeals for Power Siting Board
- Death penalty cases
- Certified questions of state law
- Appeals from App.R. 26(B) application in death penalty cases
- Other merit cases

In 2015, a total of 457 merit cases were filed, nearly an 11 percent decrease from the 513 cases filed in 2014. This is the first decrease in new filings of merit cases in the past five years. (See **Figure 3**).

Practice of Law Cases

These cases arise from the court’s responsibility to govern the practice of law in Ohio. Included in this category are disciplinary cases involving allegations of ethical misconduct by attorneys and judges, bar admissions cases involving applications from people seeking admission to the Ohio bar, and cases alleging the unauthorized practice of law. The vast majority of practice of law cases involve attorney discipline. In 2015, a total of 121 practice of law cases were filed, a small 2-percent increase over 2014. Of the 121 cases filed in 2015, a total of 109 (or approximately 90 percent), were disciplinary cases. (See **Figure 4**).

Time to Disposition Analyses

All Cases

From Filing to Final Disposition

In 2015, the court disposed of 2,256 cases. The mean number of days a case was pending before the court in 2015 increased by 8 percent over 2014 (from 154 days to 167 days). (See **Figure 5**).

Jurisdictional Appeals Accepted for Merit Review

From Filing to Final Disposition

Decisions in 57 jurisdictional appeals following full merit review were released in 2015. The time to disposition averaged 534 days. (See **Figure 6**).

Jurisdictional Appeals Not Accepted for Merit Review

From Filing to Final Disposition

The mean number of days taken by the court to consider and dispose of a jurisdictional appeal not accepted increased to 129 days in 2015 from the 2014 mean of 92 days. (See **Figure 7**).

FIGURE 5

All Cases

Days from Filing to Final Disposition

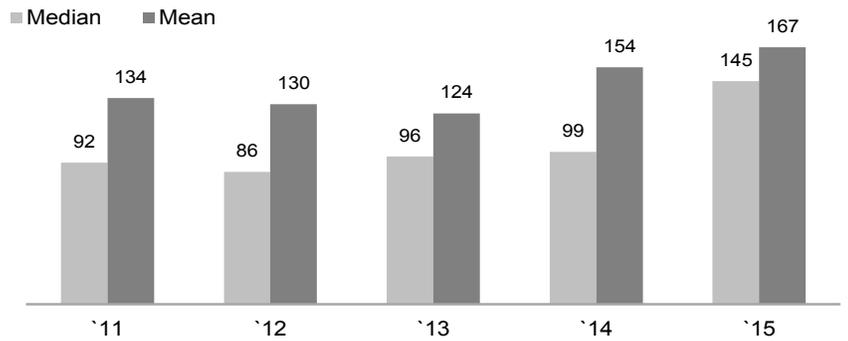


FIGURE 6

Jurisdictional Appeals Accepted for Full Merit Review

Days from Filing to Final Disposition

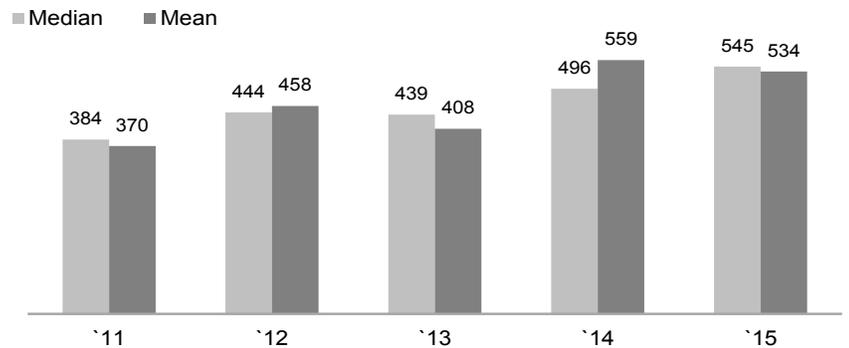


FIGURE 7

Jurisdictional Appeals Not Accepted for Full Merit Review

Days from Filing to Final Disposition

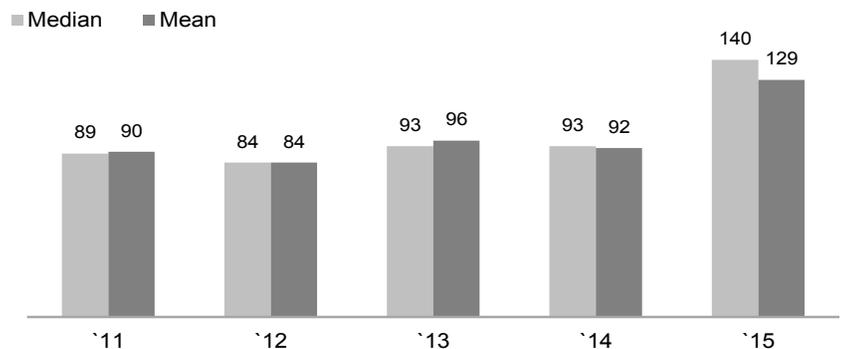
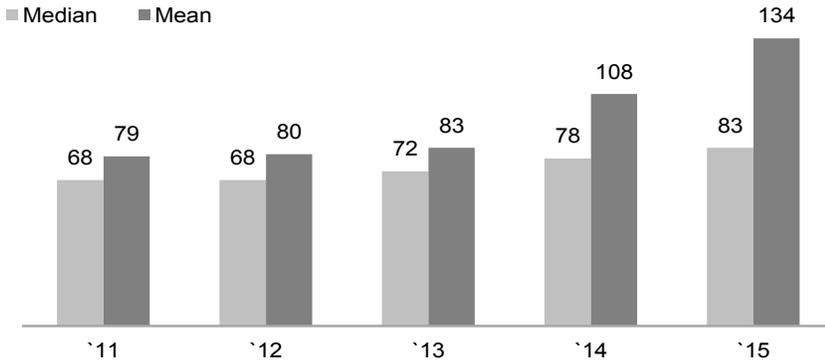


FIGURE 8

Original Actions

Days from Filing to Final Disposition



Original Actions

From Filing to Final Disposition

During 2015, a total of 193 original actions were disposed of in an average of 134 days. (See **Figure 8**).

**All Cases Decided with an Opinion
From Submission to Final Disposition**

The number of cases decided with an opinion decreased slightly between 2014 and 2015. In 2015, the court decided 237 cases with an opinion, 10 percent fewer cases than in 2014. The average number of days to issue an opinion was 163 days. (See **Figure 9**).

FIGURE 9

All Cases Decided with an Opinion

Days from Submission to Final Disposition

