

# 2008 Annual Report Maine Judicial Branch

## Mission:

To administer justice by providing a safe, accessible, efficient and impartial system of dispute resolution that serves the public interest, protects individual rights, and instills respect for the law.

## Message from Chief Justice Saufley and State Court Administrator Glessner

The State of Maine faced many challenges in 2008. During the fiscal crisis, many great ideas for increased efficiency and conservation of taxpayer dollars were created or implemented within the Judicial Branch. For example,



© Martha Mickles

**LEIGH I. SAUFLEY**

Chief Justice,  
Supreme Judicial Court



**TED GLESSNER**

State Court  
Administrator

- The Business and Consumer Docket completed its first year, with very positive results;
- The use of video conferencing was expanded throughout the state to save time and travel costs;
- Library costs were substantially reduced through electronic research capacity and local publishing;
- Plans for an increase in security personnel continued but were not fully realized because of lack of funding;
- The Family Drug Treatment Courts, with an emphasis on reunifying families, succeeded in child protection cases. The program is credited with supporting 6 mothers who gave birth to drug free babies in 2008.
- Twenty-two of forty-one clerks' offices have been consolidated into eleven streamlined offices;
- Renovation of the courthouse in Houlton provided the foundation for a consolidation of the courts into one building in mid-2009;
- Building of the new consolidated courthouse in Bangor progressed well. This environmentally responsible new courthouse will meet Maine Energy Conservation Building Standards and will open on time and on budget before the end of 2009.

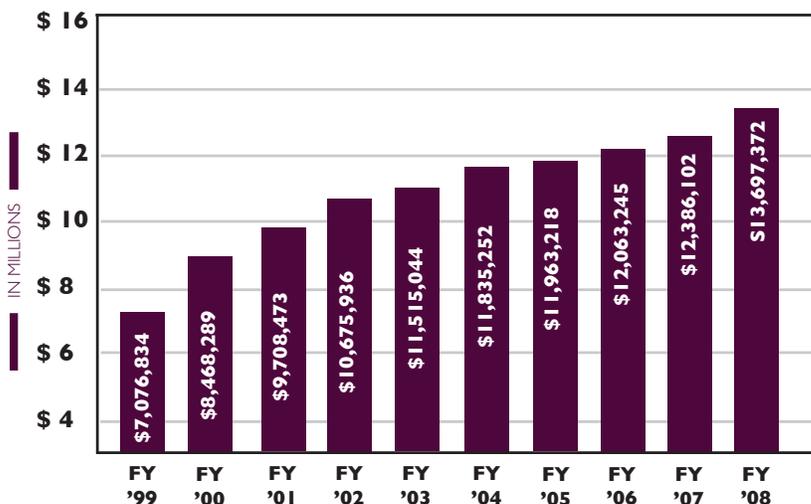


**THOMAS E. HUMPHREY**, Chief Justice, Superior Court  
**ANN M. MURRAY**, Chief Judge, District Court  
**CHARLES C. LAVERDIERE**, Deputy Chief Judge, District Court

2008 brought with it increased financial challenges, but with patience from the public and the dedication of the men and women of the Judicial Branch, we will weather the storm.

An expanded version of this annual report can be found on the Judicial Branch web site at:  
[http://www.courts.state.me.us/maine\\_courts/annual\\_reports/index.shtml](http://www.courts.state.me.us/maine_courts/annual_reports/index.shtml)

## Total Expenditures For Constitutionally Required Counsel



Over the past decade, costs for providing legal services to indigent citizens in criminal, child protective and mental health cases have nearly doubled. The funds, which include costs for attorneys and related expenses, account for about 22% of the entire Judicial Branch budget.

## MAINE STATE COURTS : AT A GLANCE

	POPULATION SERVED .....	1,316,727
	GEOGRAPHIC AREA .....	35,387 sq. mi.
	COURTHOUSES .....	40
	BUDGET .....	\$62,586,631
	% of State General Fund .....	2.0%
	JUDGES (Total) .....	60
	Supreme Judicial Court Justices .....	7
	Superior Court Justices .....	17
	District Court Judges .....	36
	FAMILY LAW MAGISTRATES .....	8
	STAFF (clerks, security & support) .....	440
	TOTAL 2008 CASES FILED .....	290,393
	Supreme Judicial Court .....	755
	Superior Court .....	19,272
	District Court .....	131,038
	Violations Bureau .....	139,328

# THE COURTS OF MAINE

© Don Johnson



The Supreme Judicial Court is the governing body of the Judicial Branch. Sitting as the Law Court, it is the court of final appeal.

## SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT NEW CASE FILINGS in 2008

Criminal.....	214
Civil.....	292
Worker's Comp.....	98
Family/Divorce.....	102
Child Protective.....	49
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>755</b>

© Don Johnson



The justices of the Superior Court serve the entire State, hearing both civil and criminal cases, including jury trials.

## SUPERIOR COURT NEW CASE FILINGS in 2008

Criminal.....	14,813
Civil.....	4,459
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>19,272</b>

© Don Johnson



The District Court hears both civil and criminal cases, in addition to exercising exclusive jurisdiction over family, juvenile, child protective, small claims, and traffic violation cases.

## DISTRICT COURT NEW CASE FILINGS in 2008

Criminal.....	56,411
Civil.....	19,743
Family/Divorce.....	9,036
Small Claims.....	8,842
Juvenile.....	3,976
Forcible Entry.....	4,943
Protection from Abuse.....	6,119
Protection from Harrassment.....	4,582
Child Protective.....	836
Mental Health.....	975
Civil Violations.....	15,575
Traffic Infractions.....	139,328
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>270,366</b>

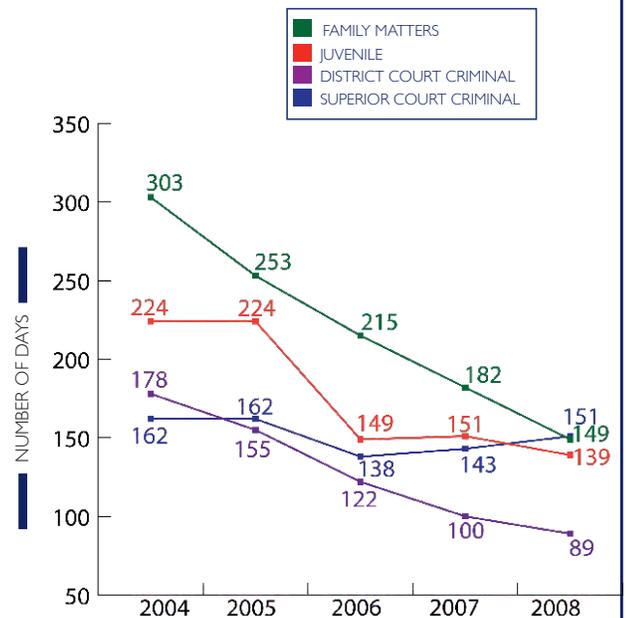
© Don Johnson



The Family Division has oversight of family matters in the District Court. There are 8 Family Law Magistrates who work in the Family Division.

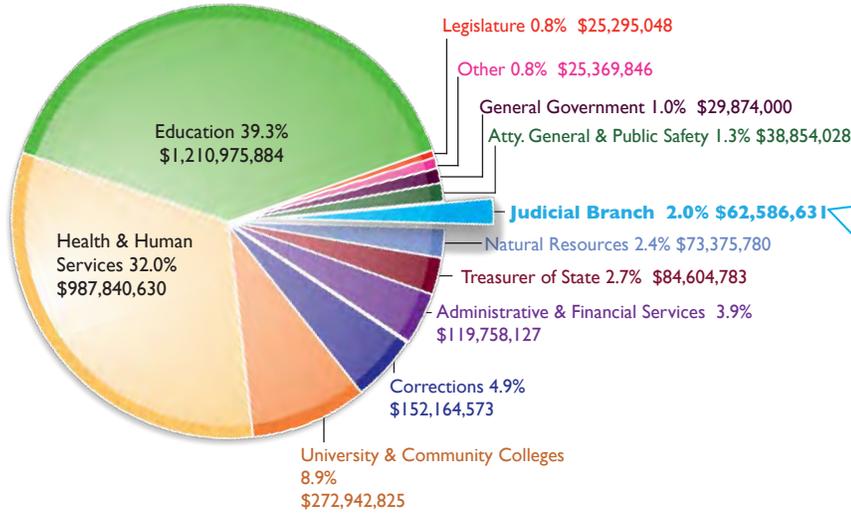
## TIME TO RESOLUTION OF CASES REDUCED SIGNIFICANTLY

Coordinated regional scheduling, implemented in the trial courts in 2004, has greatly reduced the time it takes to dispose of the most urgent cases – those dealing with violence, children, and families. For example, as illustrated by this graph, the average age of pending family cases has decreased significantly, from 303 days in 2004 to 149 days in 2008. Data provided in this graph reports the average number of days from filing date, for all cases that are open on June 30 each year.

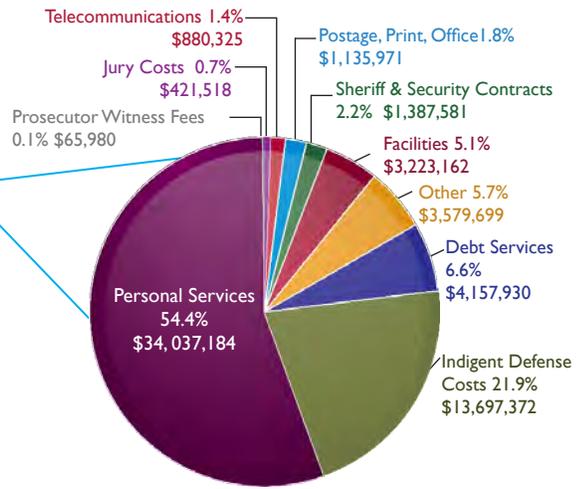


# FISCAL INFORMATION

## GENERAL FUND AND JUDICIAL BRANCH EXPENDITURES



**STATEWIDE GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES, FY'08**  
Total: \$3,083,642,155

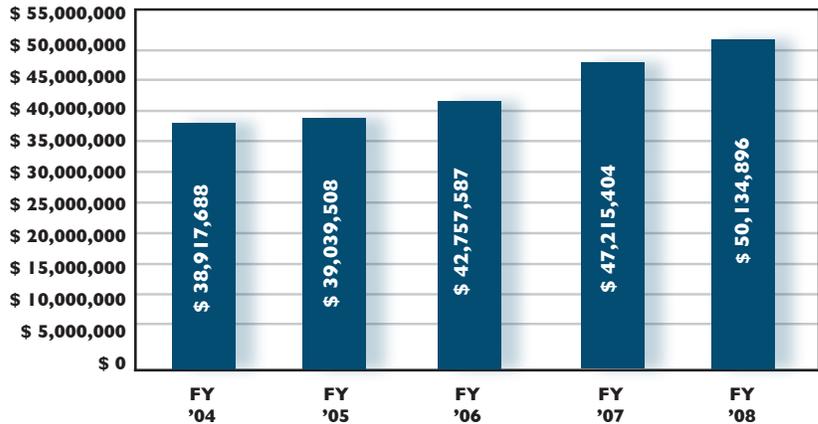


**JUDICIAL BRANCH GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES FY'08**  
Total: \$62,586,631

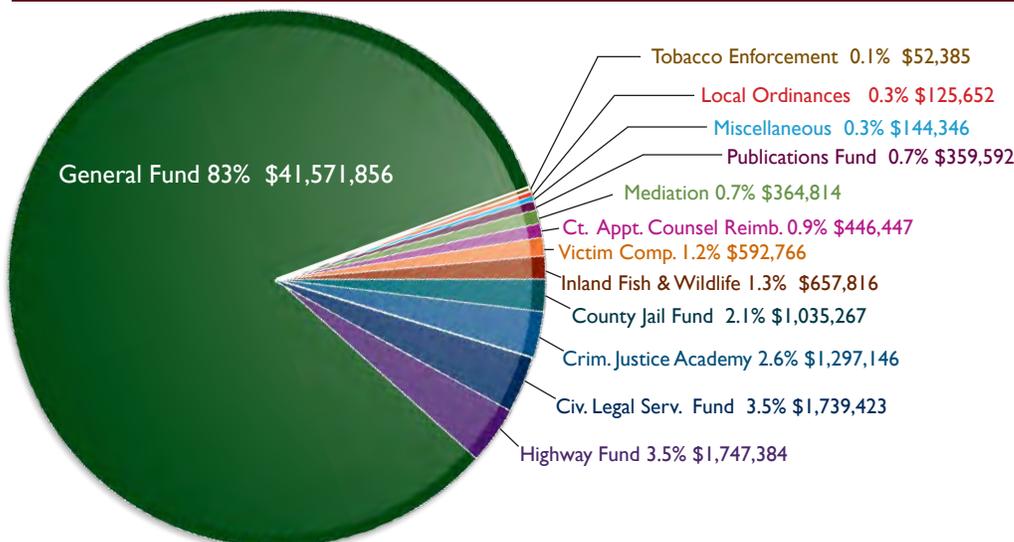
## REVENUE COLLECTED BY THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

FY'08 revenue collection exceeded \$50 million and was 29% higher than 5 years ago and more than 6% greater than in FY '07.

Throughout FY'08, the Judicial Branch conducted an assertive COLLECTION PROGRAM to collect unpaid fines.



## REVENUE DISTRIBUTED BY THE JUDICIAL BRANCH



Revenue collected by the Judicial Branch is deposited into the State's General Fund and to other dedicated accounts. Sources of revenue include fees, fines, and surcharges.

**FY'08 Revenue Distribution**  
Total: \$50,134,846

# COURT REGIONS AND CASES FILED

## REGION 5

CASE TOTAL ..... 20,342  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 165,612  
 COURTHOUSES..... 7

### PENOBSCOT

Bangor Superior..... 1,628  
 Bangor District..... 11,743  
 Newport District..... 2,523  
 Lincoln District..... 1,410  
 Millinocket District..... 1,132

### PISCATAQUIS

Dover-Foxcroft Superior..... 132  
 Dover-Foxcroft District..... 1,774

## REGION 4

CASE TOTAL ..... 20,561  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 172,336  
 COURTHOUSES..... 5

### SOMERSET

Skowhegan Superior..... 701  
 Skowhegan District..... 5,233

### KENNEBEC

Augusta Superior..... 1,672  
 Augusta District..... 7,338  
 Waterville District..... 5,617

## REGION 3

CASE TOTAL ..... 22,925  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 193,746  
 COURTHOUSES..... 7

### FRANKLIN

Farmington Superior..... 491  
 Farmington District..... 2,969

### OXFORD

South Paris Superior..... 771  
 South Paris District..... 2,600  
 Rumford District..... 2,203

### ANDROSCOGGIN

Auburn Superior..... 1,669  
 Lewiston District..... 12,222

## REGION 2

CASE TOTAL ..... 28,162  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 276,047  
 COURTHOUSES..... 2

### CUMBERLAND

Portland Superior..... 4,322  
 Portland District..... 20,211  
 Bridgton District..... 3,629

## REGION 1

CASE TOTAL ..... 24,736  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 201,686  
 COURTHOUSES..... 4

### YORK

Alfred Superior..... 3,878  
 Biddeford District..... 9,702  
 Springvale District..... 5,827  
 York District..... 5,329

## REGION 8

CASE TOTAL ..... 8,621  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 71,676  
 COURTHOUSES..... 6

### AROOSTOOK

Caribou/Houlton Superior..... 1,131  
 Caribou District..... 1,480  
 Houlton District..... 1,954  
 Presque Isle District..... 2,559  
 Fort Kent/Madawaska District... 1,497

## REGION 7

CASE TOTAL ..... 8,681  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 85,636  
 COURTHOUSES..... 3

### HANCOCK

Ellsworth Superior..... 507  
 Ellsworth District..... 4,719

### WASHINGTON

Machias Superior..... 363  
 Machias District..... 1,723  
 Calais District..... 1,369

## REGION 6

CASE TOTAL ..... 16,282  
 REGIONAL POPULATION..... 149,988  
 COURTHOUSES..... 6

### WALDO

Belfast Superior..... 448  
 Belfast District..... 2,880

### KNOX

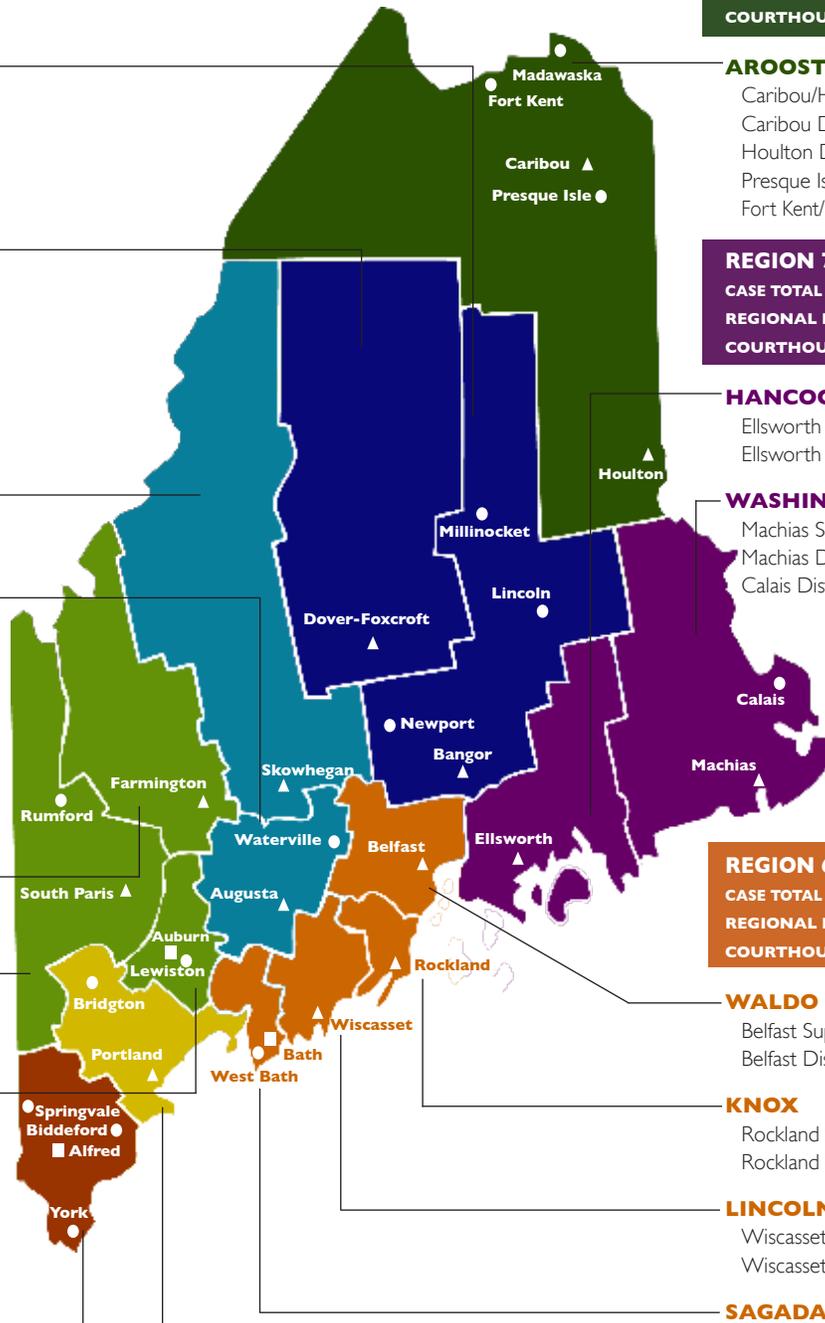
Rockland Superior..... 619  
 Rockland District..... 3,383

### LINCOLN

Wiscasset Superior..... 483  
 Wiscasset District..... 2,595

### SAGadahoc

Bath Superior..... 457  
 West Bath District..... 5,417



### KEY

- District Court
  - Superior Court
  - ▲ District and Superior in the same city/town.
- Counties grouped together by color are part of a single court REGION, where resources and scheduling are coordinated.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit the Court's web page at [www.courts.state.me.us](http://www.courts.state.me.us) where you'll find:

- PUBLICATIONS: *A Guide to Small Claims* • *A Guide to Protection from Abuse and Harassment* • *Citizens Guide to the Courts* • *Child Protective Handbooks*
- INFORMATION about court proceedings and offices
- LINKS to legal resources, volunteer opportunities, court rules, forms and opinions

#### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

PO Box 4820  
 Portland, ME 04112-4820  
 (207) 822-0792  
 (207) 822-0701 (TTY)

### TRAFFIC INFRACTIONS: Total: 139,328



\* Population Statistics source: US Census Bureau