

District Court of Tulsa County

Family Court – Families in Transition

Year End Report

2009

Report by:
Nicole W. Kirkland, MSW
Family Court Case Coordinator

Tulsa County Courthouse
500 S. Denver Ave., Room 109
Tulsa, OK 74103
(918) 596-5410

Families in Transition website:
www.familiesintransition.com

Tulsa County Family Court

Domestic Judges

FD Docket A
The Honorable Carl Funderburk
Clerk: Nikki Godwin

FD Docket B
The Honorable Wilma Palmer
Clerk: Kimberlee Rutledge

FD Docket C
The Honorable Mark Barcus
Clerk: Linda McMurray

FD Docket D
The Honorable William Musseman, Jr.
Clerk: Suzi Collins

FD Docket E
The Honorable Rodney Sparkman
Clerk: Shana Grandstaff

Protective Order Judge

The Honorable Charles Hogshead
Clerk: Kimberly Wiley

Referee

The Honorable Russell Anderson
Clerk: Kimberly Wiley

Family Court Case Coordinator

Nicole W. Kirkland, MSW

Family Resource Coordinator

Cheryl Conklin

DHS Child Support Services

Ross Aston

Family Court – Families in Transition

2009 Year End Report

Tulsa County's Family Court, Families In Transition (FIT), provided triage for the Family Court Judges by reducing court involvement and providing services and resources to over 15,000 litigants. The following report illustrates the specialized dockets and services in place for Tulsa County.

Parenting Plan Conference Docket

All Dissolution of Marriage, Legal Separation, and Paternity cases involving minor children are scheduled on the PPC docket two to three weeks after the petition is filed. This docket is managed by the Referee.

Total PPC dockets:	Total litigants on dockets:	Total self-represented litigants:
1 st Quarter: 25	1 st Quarter: 1,168	1 st Quarter: 36%
2 nd Quarter: 27	2 nd Quarter: 892	2 nd Quarter: 38%
3 rd Quarter: 29	3 rd Quarter: 1,264	3 rd Quarter: 33%
4 th Quarter: 27	4 th Quarter: 1,134	4 th Quarter: 32%
Total: 108	Total: 4,458	Total: 33%

1. Referee:

- a. Helped families understand the effects of divorce and conflict on their children and encouraged families to create a Temporary Order Agreement;
- b. Self-represented cases without an attorney on either side were sent to the Family Resource Coordinator for mediation services;
- c. Cases with at least one attorney involved, that could not reach an agreement, conferenced with the Referee Judge. If an agreement could not be reached the Referee referred the case to their Assigned Judge to schedule a Temporary Order Hearing:

Case data (4th Quarter data only):

- Total cases stricken/passed: 54%
- Total self-represented cases sent to the Family Resource Coordinator: 9%
- Temporary Order (TO) to be submitted: 12%
- Submitted TO without a conference: 7%
- Conferenced with the Referee: 18%
 - TO submitted after conference: 43%
 - Referred to Temporary Order Hearing: 40%
 - Passed: 17%

2. Family Resource Coordinator:

- a. Provided community resources to all litigants;
- b. Distributed the Parenting Plan Conference Survey to all litigants. Results on page 5;
- c. Worked with self-represented litigants to achieve financial and visitation agreements through mediation:

Total mediations with self-represented litigants:

3rd Quarter: 47

4th Quarter: 61

Total: 108

Total temporary agreements:

3rd Quarter: 98%

4th Quarter: 92%

Total: 95%

This resulted in 95% of self-represented litigants coming to financial and visitation agreements.

3. Family Court Case Coordinator:

- a. Verified services with the Department of Human Services (DHS) on all cases scheduled for the Parenting Plan Conference docket;
- b. Case data submitted to the DHS – Child Support Enforcement offices each week:

Total cases verified by DHS:

(Verification on PPC Docket started 2/1/09. ** 1st Quarter data is incomplete. **)

1st Quarter: 453

2nd Quarter: 534

3rd Quarter: 554

4th Quarter: 499

Total: 2,040

Of the cases verified, total disclaimers signed and filed by the Family Court Case Coordinator (family did not have services with DHS):

1st Quarter: 295

2nd Quarter: 367

3rd Quarter: 352

4th Quarter: 359

Total: 1,375

Of the cases verified, total cases sent to DHS for review/signage (family had services with DHS):

1st Quarter: 158

2nd Quarter: 167

3rd Quarter: 203

4th Quarter: 137

Total: 665

Parenting Plan Conference 2009 Survey Totals – Year End

Year End 2009

	Yes	No	N/A	Blank
1. I received a Families in Transition packet at the beginning of my divorce process. **New question as of 3/11/09. Incomplete year end data. **	1252 47.99%	544 20.85%	220 8.43%	36 1.38%
2. The instructions I received in the Families in Transition packet were useful.	1649 63.20%	50 1.92%	669 25.64%	242 9.28%
3. The Judge did a good job of reminding us to keep conflict away from our children.	2578 98.81%	5 0.19%	8 0.31%	18 0.69%
4. Did the DVD show how children are affected when parents do not work together?	2564 98.28%	21 0.80%	10 0.38%	14 0.54%
5. The Family Resource Coordinator was beneficial.	2503 95.94%	10 0.38%	74 2.84%	22 0.84%
6. I learned about community resources that are available to help me.	2504 95.98%	45 1.72%	38 1.46%	19 0.73%
7. I am willing to work with my co-parent to develop a plan for parenting our children.	2479 95.02%	32 1.23%	69 2.64%	29 1.11%
8. I am willing to agree to a Temporary Order.	2310 88.54%	63 2.41%	160 6.13%	76 2.91%
9. I am represented by an attorney.	1685 64.58%	862 33.04%	45 1.72%	17 0.65%
10. My relationship with my co-parent may improve because of the information I learned at the PPC.	2051 78.61%	271 10.39%	202 7.74%	85 3.26%
11. I plan to use the information I received today to help my children.	2558 98.05%	11 0.42%	18 0.69%	22 0.84%

Gender:

Male: 46.99%
Female: 51.82%

Age:

18 and under: 1.80%
19 to 35: 57.84%
36 to 64: 38.83%
65 and up: 0.04%

Race:

African American: 8.51%
Asian: 1.03%
Hispanic: 5.56%
Native American: 8.55%
White: 71.33%
Other: 3.49%

Total Surveys: 2609

Total Litigants Surveyed: 4458

Percent Complete: 58.52%

Protective Order Docket

All Protective Order cases are scheduled on the Protective Order docket. This docket is managed by the Protective Order Judge:

- Assisted the Domestic Judges by ruling on all Protective Order cases;
- The Family Resource Coordinator provided community resources to all litigants;
- Averaged 16 dockets per month.

Protective Orders filed at the Family Safety Center:	Protective Orders filed at the Courthouse:	Total Protective Orders filed:
1 st Quarter: 342	1 st Quarter: 670	1 st Quarter: 1,012
2 nd Quarter: 395	2 nd Quarter: 783	2 nd Quarter: 1,178
3 rd Quarter: 438	3 rd Quarter: 888	3 rd Quarter: 1,326
4 th Quarter: 343	4 th Quarter: 646	4 th Quarter: 989
Total: 1,518	Total: 2,987	Total: 4,505

Agreed-To Docket

All Dissolution of Marriage, Legal Separation, or Paternity cases where both parties agree or do not contest may attend the Agreed-To Docket. The five (5) Domestic Judges rotate the daily Agreed-To docket each week. This docket is held once a day and averages 28 cases per week.

Family Resource Coordinator:

1. Assisted the Family Court Judges, using a check list to sort self-represented litigant paperwork before seeing the Judge.

Total self-represented cases agree:

3rd Quarter: 398

4TH Quarter: 336

Total: 734

Total self-represented cases processed to the Judge:

3rd Quarter: 78%

4th Quarter: 68%

Total: 74%

This resulted in 74% of the cases being processed to the Judge and preventing 26% from seeing the Judge with incorrect or missing paperwork.

2. Distributed the Family Court Survey to all self-represented litigants with minor children only. Results on page 7.

Family Court Survey

2009 Survey Totals - Quarterly

4th Quarter

	Yes	No	N/A	Blank
1. During the PPC, the Judge clearly described the divorce procedure.	46 93.88%	2 4.08%	1 2.04%	0 0.00%
2. The Families in Transition process was helpful.	47 95.92%	1 2.04%	1 2.04%	0 0.00%
3. The Families in Transition process helped in making the divorce process easier for our children.	42 85.71%	4 8.16%	3 6.12%	0 0.00%
4. We participated in mediation.	11 22.45%	28 57.14%	3 6.12%	7 14.29%
5. The mediation process was helpful.	10 90.91%	1 9.09%		
6. We participated in a custody evaluation.	5 10.20%	33 67.35%	4 8.16%	7 14.29%
7. The custody evaluation was helpful.	4 80.00%	1 20.00%		
8. We participated in the process of Parent Coordination.	10 20.41%	26 53.06%	6 12.26%	7 14.29%
9. The process of Parent Coordination was helpful.	10 100.00%	0 0.00%		
10. We were able to resolve most of our parenting problems on our own.	45 91.84%	1 2.04%	2 4.08%	1 2.04%
11. I was treated with respect by the courthouse staff.	47 95.92%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 4.08%
12. Did anyone help you prepare legal documents during this process?	37 75.51%	12 24.49%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%

Total Surveys: 49

(Distributed the Family Court Survey to litigants with minor children only).

Total litigants on Agreed-To Docket: 336

Total litigants with minor children: 75

Total litigants without minor children: 261

High Conflict/Complex Cases

High conflict/complex cases are identified at the PPC docket by the Referee or by the five (5) Domestic Judges. The Family Court Case Coordinator is assigned to a case by Court Order and only works with cases involving minor children.

The Family Court Case Coordinator (FCCC):

1. Provided case management, mediation, and resources to high conflict/complex families;
2. Assisted the Family Court Judges by communicating with attorneys and litigants to move high conflict cases to resolution;
3. Decreased conflict, number of court appearances, and time involved with the court:

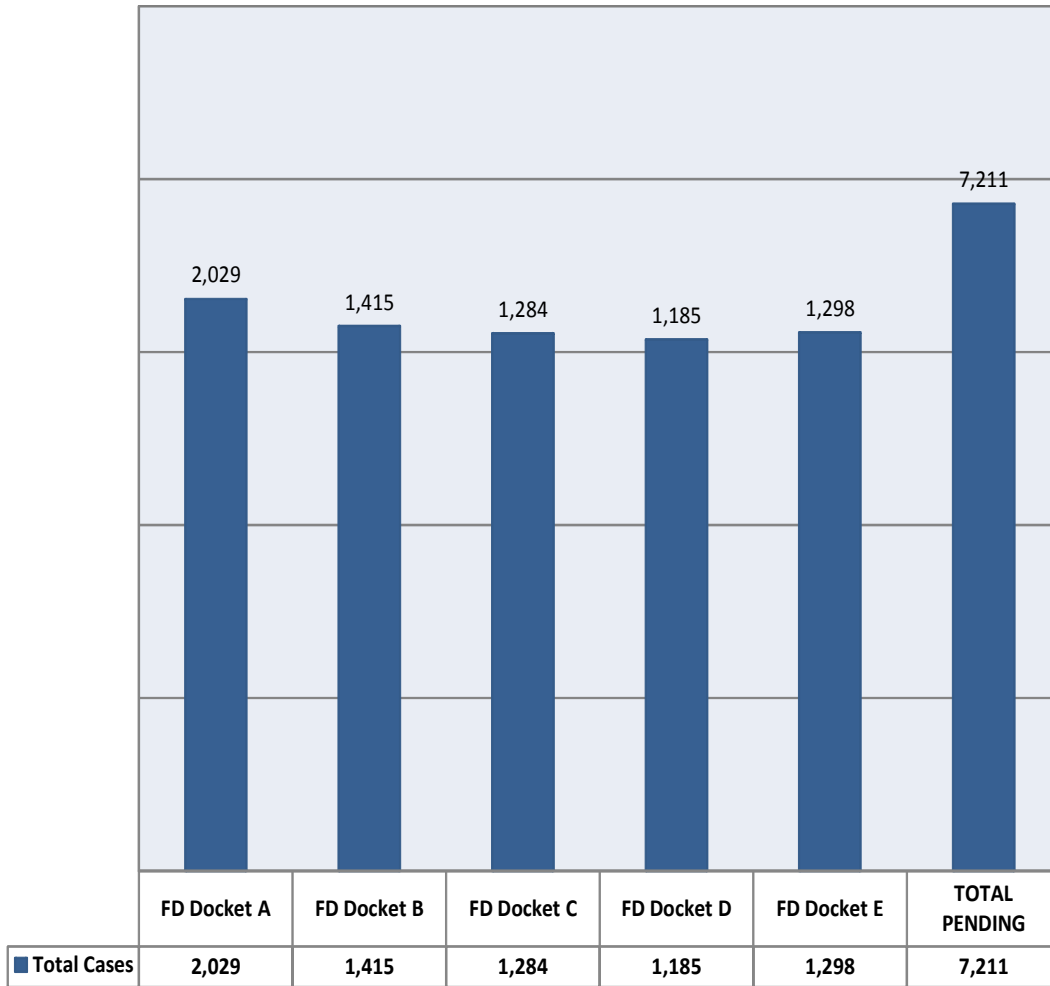
Case Data (3rd and 4th Quarter data only):

- Cases ordered to FCCC: 30
 - Temporary Order Agreements filed and working towards Final Order: 50%
 - Temporary Order Agreements in progress: 24%
 - Temporary Order Hearings since referred to FCCC: 10%
 - Cases closed (final decree filed): 6%
 - Cases dropped (parties reconciled): 10%

These services helped reduce conflict for 30 families, including 59 minor children. The FCCC helped reduce conflict by providing the litigants with information and resources and facilitated communication amongst the parties.

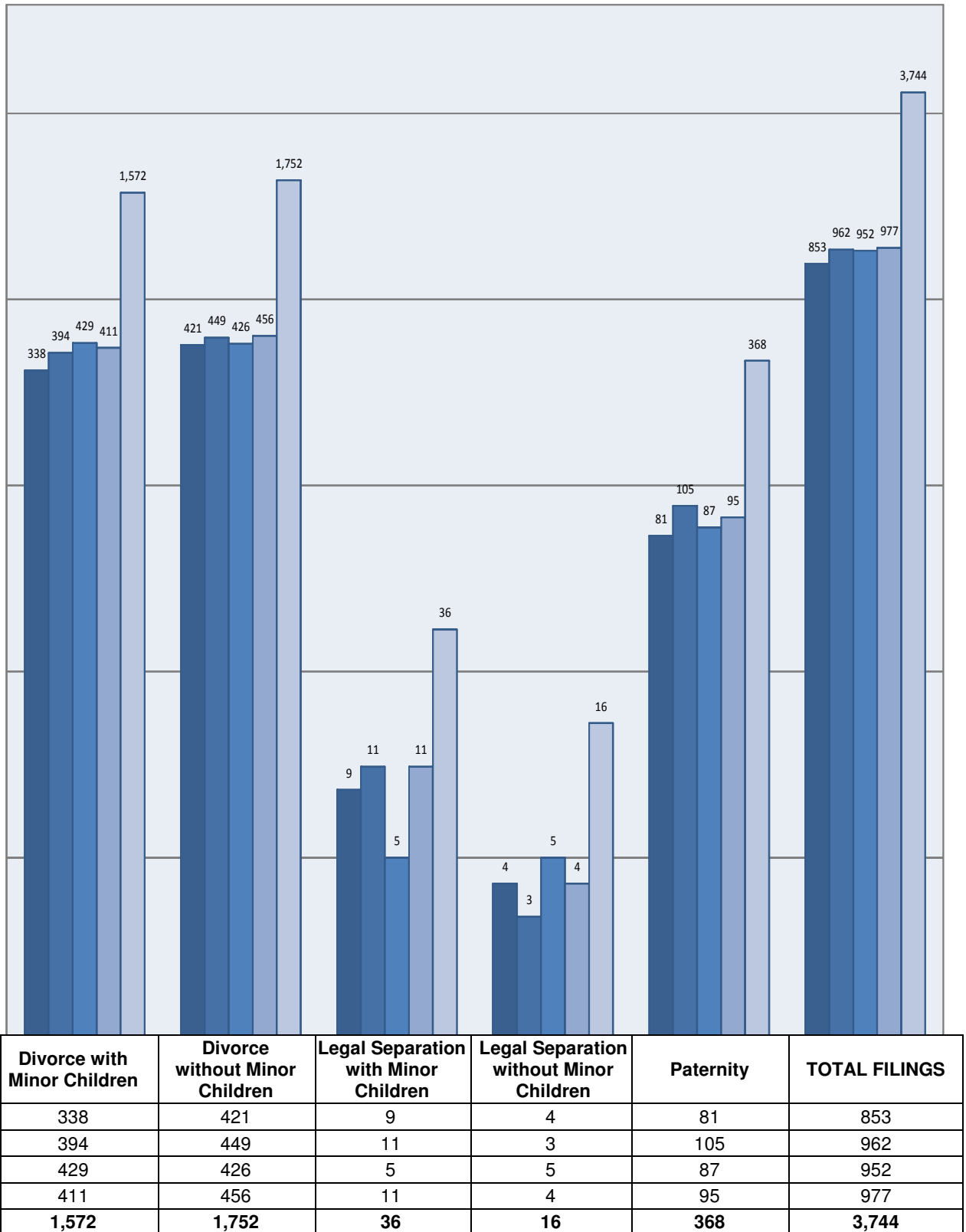
The following data was compiled from The Oklahoma State Courts Network (OSCN).

2009 FAMILY COURT Pending Cases by Judge



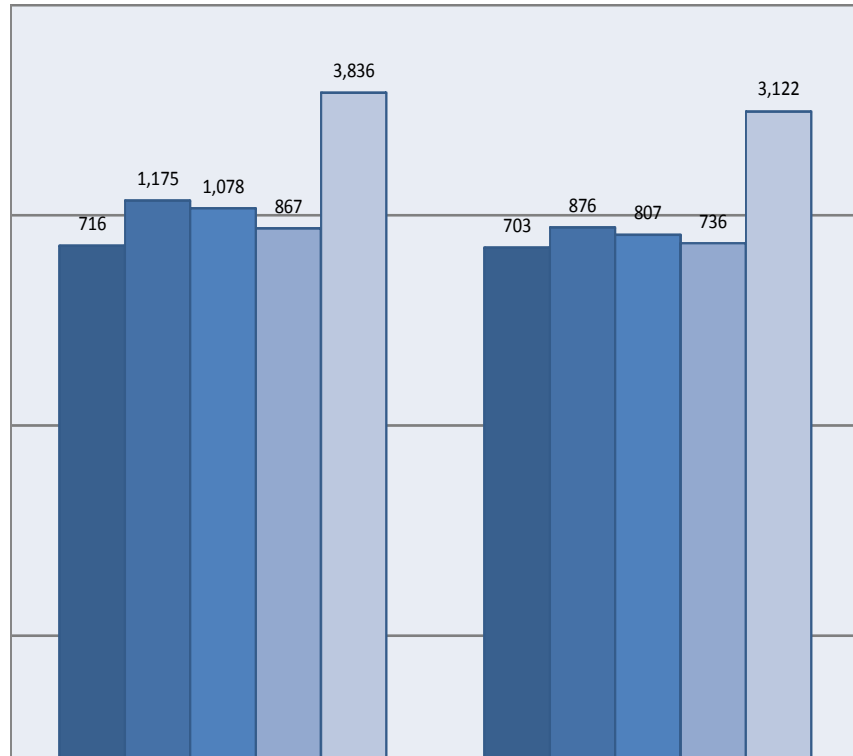
2009 FAMILY COURT FILINGS

Dissolution of Marriage (Divorce), Legal Separation, and Paternity Cases



2009 FAMILY COURT FILINGS

Marriage Licenses Filed vs. Divorces Granted



	Marriage Licenses Filed/Returned	Divorces Granted
4 th Quarter	716	703
3 rd Quarter	1,175	876
2 nd Quarter	1,078	807
1 st Quarter	867	736
Total Filings	3,836	3,122