

Public Service Announcement

Prepared by the Deschutes County Circuit Court

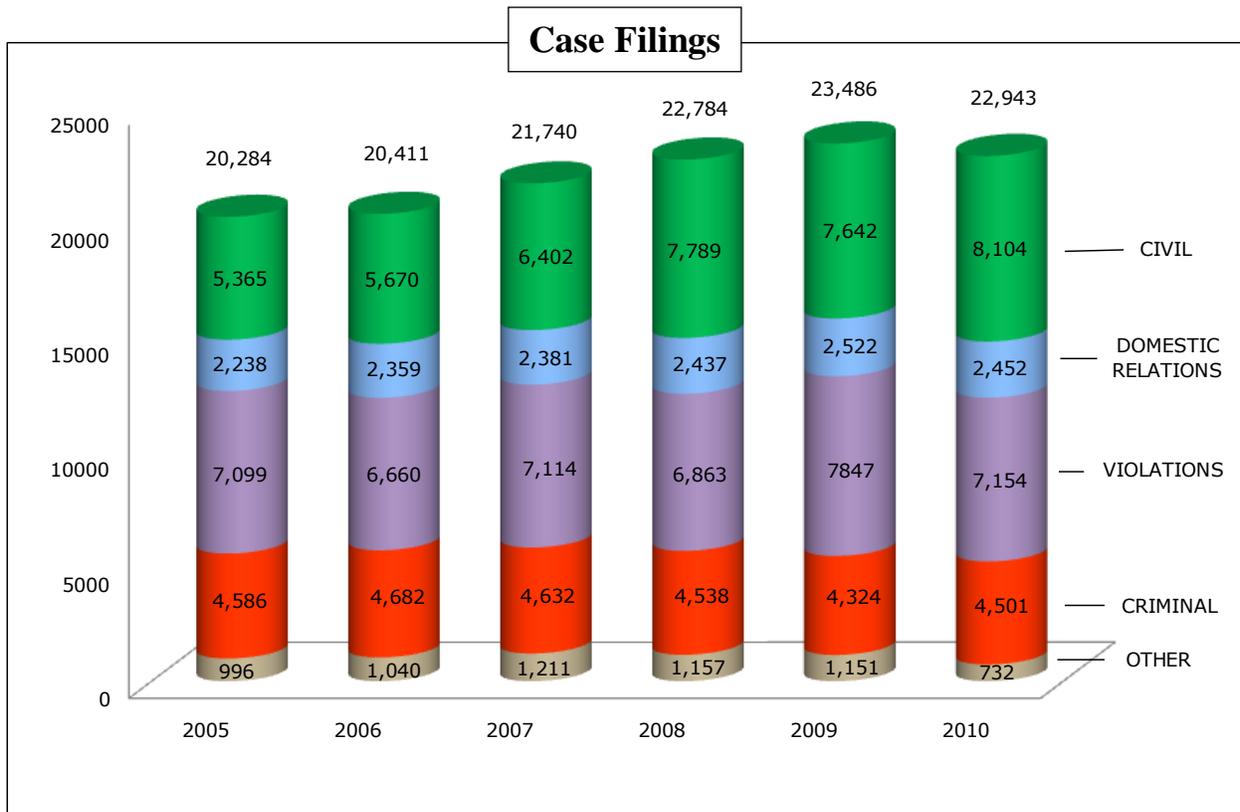
Effective August 15, 2011, telephone services and the public file viewing room at the Deschutes County Courthouse are closed daily from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. During this period, the public may not dial extensions, leave phone messages, fax documents or view case files. Public service counters will remain fully open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily at the Deschutes County Justice Building.

These steps must be taken due to on-going budget reductions since July 1, 2009. The Court has lost 8.78 positions when mandatory furloughs (unpaid time off) are included (15.7% of its total workforce). Mandatory furloughs are expected to continue. Positions were cut from administration, programs and operations. Unfortunately, due to the most recent loss of positions the Court can no longer remain fully open in two separate buildings and still meet the community's service needs and statutory requirements.

The Deschutes County Circuit Court conducts services in the Justice Building (1100 NW Bond) and the Courthouse (1164 NW Bond). The Justice Building contains seven circuit courtrooms; public service counters to file documents, make payments and obtain information; and operations to schedule cases, process traffic violations, financial record keeping, etc. The Courthouse contains a public file viewing room; operations to manage active court records, a 30 line telephone switchboard, mail processing/photo copy center, judgments/data entry, and support services.

To preserve legal requirements, courtrooms must continue to operate at near capacity. In addition, fully accessible service counters must remain open for those who attend court, file documents and make payments. To maintain these essential services, staff adjustments were required. These adjustments caused resource imbalances that compromised routine business operations and threatened the normal and timely flow of financial and case records. Service reductions were imposed to rebalance resources, so the community's legal matters could be processed and sustained. These steps were taken to minimize backlogs that threaten the administration of justice. If further reductions are imposed, adjustments beyond those noted above may be required.

The graph below depicts case filings trends for the past six years. Civil is up 51%; domestic relations is up 10%, and criminal is flat. To sustain this growth with less resources and aging technology, service reductions are required.



The Court recognizes the inconvenience this causes but the orderly pace of criminal, civil and domestic relations cases is essential to the well being of society. Keeping legal matters moving as efficiently as possible through the Court system addresses ever pressing public safety, children, family and business issues for the community. For this to remain possible, staff require dedicated time to process the significant volume of new and current filings so matters can be scheduled and court records properly maintained.

Questions regarding court services may be directed to:

Deschutes County Circuit Court
541-388-5300