



Executive Office of the Trial Court Case Flow Metrics Report

Fiscal Year 2022

Honorable Jeffrey A. Locke
Chief Justice of the Trial Court

John A. Bello
Court Administrator

October 2022

MESSAGE FROM THE TRIAL COURT CHIEF JUSTICE AND COURT ADMINISTRATOR

To members of the public:

In FY 2022, amid continued challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, performance measures remained an important component of the Trial Court's commitment to justice with dignity and speed.

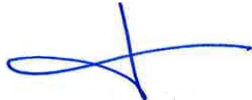
The success of the Trial Court's efforts to return to timely case processing is due to the commitment of all members of the court community – judges, clerks, registers, other Trial Court staff, and members of the bar. We thank you for your continued dedication to improving the delivery of justice through the Massachusetts court system.

We also dedicate the resumption of metrics reporting to the late Chief Justice Ralph Gants whose commitment to justice, with dignity and speed, continues on in this very important work.

For more information about Trial Court data, please visit the Court Data, Metrics and Reports webpage at the following link: <https://www.mass.gov/court-data-metrics-reports>.



Jeffrey A. Locke
Chief Justice of the Trial Court



John A. Bello
Court Administrator



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Timely and prompt case processing are key components in the Trial Court's mission and vision of the justice system. First implemented in 2006, case flow metrics reporting began as an initiative to collect statistics on case processing efforts across the Massachusetts Trial Court. Today, the results of metrics are used by court leaders to further improve court operations and services in user experience and resource allocation.

This report presents a year-over-year comparison of performance in the following case flow metrics:

Clearance Rate

A measure of outgoing cases to the number of incoming cases.

Time to Disposition

The rate of cases disposed or resolved within established time standards.

Age of Pending Cases

A measure of active, pending cases that are beyond the disposition date set by the time standards.

Event Date Certainty

A measure of events resulted to events held.

EVENT DATE CERTAINTY

The Trial Court implemented a new performance metric to track court performance in the scheduling of matters. During the pandemic, the capacity to hold case events became an important factor in a court's ability to reduce backlog. Adapted from the National Center for State Court's Trial Date Certainty metric, Event Date Certainty measures the number of events resulted to the number of events held before the court. There are reasons an event may be resulted but not held, including but not limited to, by request of a litigant or attorney, by agreement to an informal resolution, or for emergency or weather-related matters. Our hope with the implementation of this new metric is that it allows for more insight into best practices for scheduling matters across the Trial Court.

RESULTS

The results of the case flow metrics show that the Trial Court's efforts to return to pre-pandemic case processing are within reach:

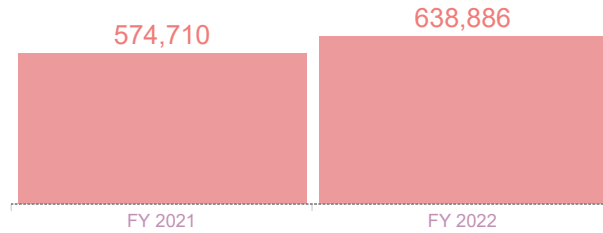
- New metric case filings increased by 11.2% from FY 2021 to FY 2022, from 574,710 to 638,886.
- In FY 2022, the Trial Court rescinded certain pandemic protocols which increased capacity to dispose of cases. The number of cases disposed of in FY 2022 increased by 44.7% over FY 2021.
- The clearance rate surpassed 100% at years-end for the first time since FY 2017. The FY 2022 rate was 23.4 percentage points higher than the FY 2021 clearance rate of 77.6%. A rate over 100% indicates a court has been disposing of its pending caseload.
- Because the Trial Court is disposing of older back-logged cases, time to disposition is longer for more recently disposed cases. Time to disposition dropped 3.7% to 63.0% in FY 2022.
- Pending cases totaled 358,037 while pending cases beyond time standards totaled 190,104. FY 2022 figures represent a drop of 21.3% in pending cases, and a 32.5% drop in cases pending beyond time standards. The pending caseload peaked in FY 2021 as a result of the pandemic and COVID-19 precautions.
- The percent of cases pending beyond time standards reduced from 62.0% in FY 2021 to 53.1% in FY 2022.
- Over 1.2 million events were held before the court, almost a 20% increase from last year. The event date certainty rate increased to 65.5% from 58.0% in FY 2021.

For more information about Trial Court data, please visit the Court Data, Metrics and Reports webpage at the following link: <https://www.mass.gov/court-data-metrics-reports>.

TRIAL COURT CASE FLOW METRICS, YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

Annual Change in New Metric Case Filings

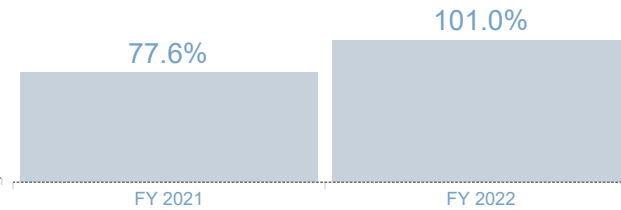
11.2%



How many cases have been filed?

Annual Change in Clearance Rate

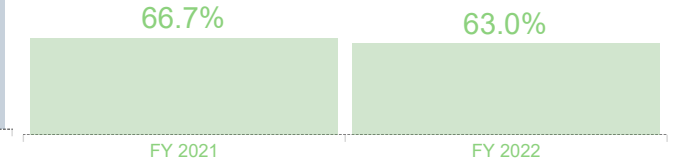
23.4% points



What percent of cases have been disposed?

Annual Change in Disposed W/I Time Standards

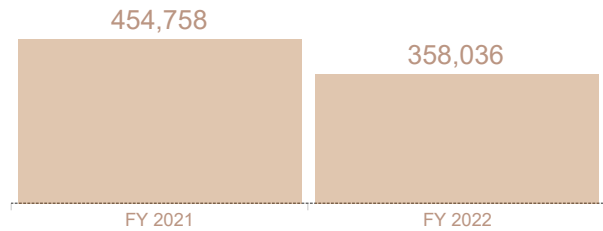
-3.7% points



What percent of disposed cases are current?

Annual Change in Pending Cases

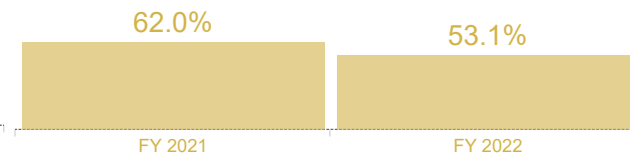
-21.3%



How many cases remain?

Annual Change in Pending Beyond Time Standards

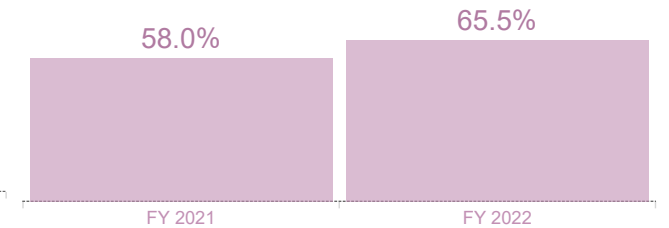
-8.9% points



What percent of cases are aged?

Annual Change in Event Date Certainty

7.5% points



What percent of events were held?

Footnote: Event Date Certainty measures the number of events resulted to the number of events held before the court. There are reasons an event may be resulted but not held, including but not limited to, by request of a litigant or attorney, by agreement to an informal resolution, or for emergency or weather-related matters.

Clearance Rate: New Metric Case Filings and Disposed Cases (Year-Over-Year)

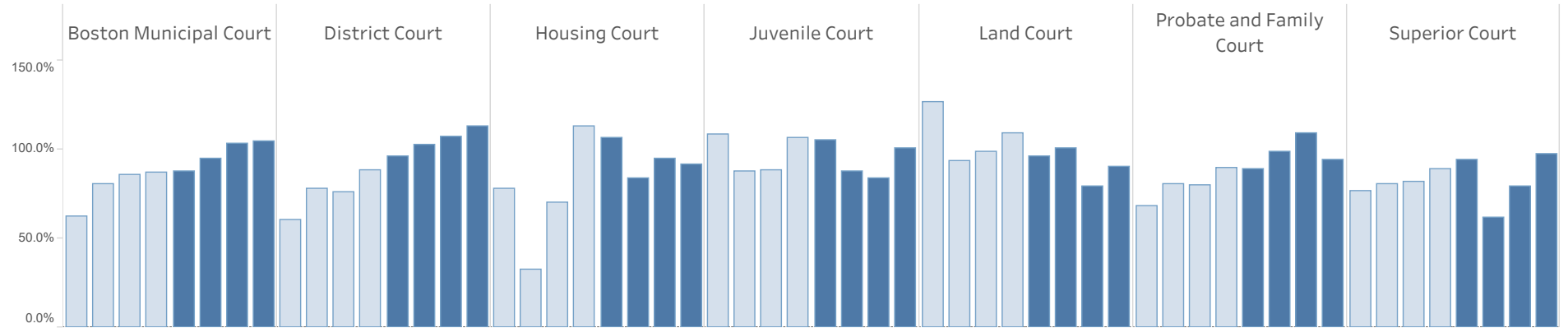
New Metrics Cases			Disposed Metrics Cases		Clearance Rate		
By Department	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Boston Municipal Court	47,405	53,872	37,280	52,444	78.6%	97.3%	18.7%
District Court	388,870	421,147	295,056	439,876	75.9%	104.4%	28.6%
Housing Court	20,702	27,722	14,354	26,034	69.3%	93.9%	24.6%
Juvenile Court	18,705	24,512	18,295	22,997	97.8%	93.8%	-4.0%
Land Court	5,531	7,347	5,833	6,667	105.5%	90.7%	-14.7%
Probate and Family Court	72,342	78,230	57,722	76,389	79.8%	97.6%	17.9%
Superior Court	21,155	26,056	17,399	20,910	82.2%	80.3%	-2.0%
Total	574,710	638,886	445,939	645,317	77.6%	101.0%	23.4%

New Metrics Cases			Disposed Metrics Cases		Clearance Rate		
By General Case Type	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Civil Matters	234,249	267,205	175,318	272,233	74.8%	101.9%	27.0%
Criminal Matters	251,779	275,856	195,965	273,400	77.8%	99.1%	21.3%
Domestic Relations	32,710	35,417	23,446	33,206	71.7%	93.8%	22.1%
Juvenile Matters	16,594	21,814	16,215	20,035	97.7%	91.8%	-5.9%
Traffic / Ordinance	39,378	38,594	34,994	46,443	88.9%	120.3%	31.5%
Total	574,710	638,886	445,938	645,317	77.6%	101.0%	23.4%

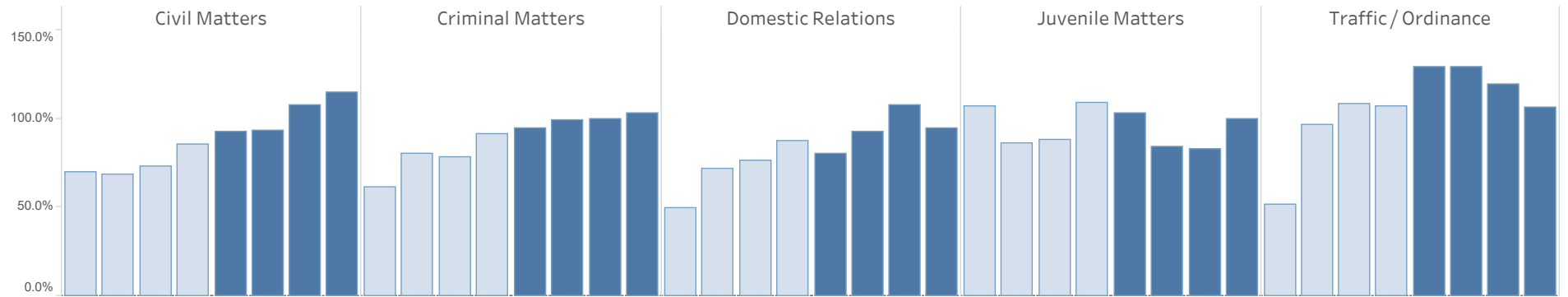
Clearance Rate

Color Legend: Fiscal Year
FY 2021 FY 2022

Clearance Rate by Court Department
Most Recent 8 Quarters



Clearance Rate by General Case Type
Most Recent 8 Quarters



Time to Disposition: Disposed Cases, Disposed Within Time Standards (Year-Over-Year)

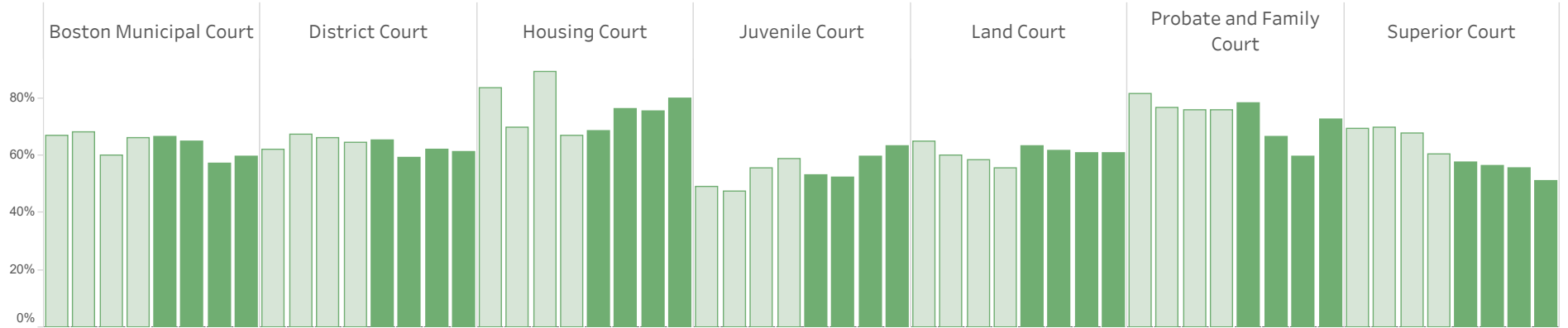
Disposed Cases subject to Time Standards			Disposed Within Time Standards		Timely Disposed Rate		
By Department	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Boston Municipal Court	28,059	35,074	18,271	21,686	65.1%	61.8%	-3.3%
District Court	230,083	327,183	149,357	202,378	64.9%	61.9%	-3.1%
Housing Court	14,354	26,034	10,942	19,546	76.2%	75.1%	-1.2%
Juvenile Court	11,226	13,864	5,959	7,958	53.1%	57.4%	4.3%
Land Court	1,633	1,646	971	1,012	59.5%	61.5%	2.0%
Probate and Family Court	47,549	60,804	36,703	41,725	77.2%	68.6%	-8.6%
Superior Court	14,132	17,543	9,382	9,639	66.4%	54.9%	-11.4%
Total	347,036	482,148	231,585	303,944	66.7%	63.0%	-3.7%

Disposed Cases subject to Time Standards			Disposed Within Time Standards		Timely Disposed Rate		
By General Case Type	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Civil Matters	191,794	261,279	127,093	155,182	66.3%	59.4%	-6.9%
Criminal Matters	92,710	139,995	71,741	104,932	77.4%	75.0%	-2.4%
Domestic Relations	17,088	23,616	9,472	11,157	55.4%	47.2%	-8.2%
Juvenile Matters	9,090	10,791	4,214	5,600	46.4%	51.9%	5.5%
Traffic / Ordinance	36,354	46,467	19,065	27,073	52.4%	58.3%	5.8%
Total	347,036	482,148	231,585	303,944	66.7%	63.0%	-3.7%

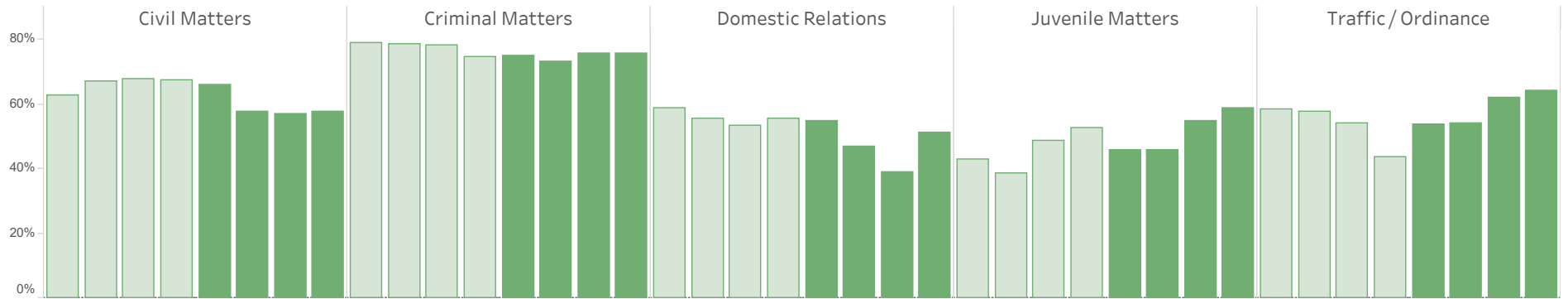
Time to Disposition

Color Legend: Fiscal Year
 FY 2021
 FY 2022

Percent of Cases Disposed Within Time Standards by Court Department
 Most Recent 8 Quarters



Percent of Cases Disposed Within Time Standards by General Case Type
 Most Recent 8 Quarters



Age of Cases: Pending Cases, Pending Beyond Time Standards (Year-Over-Year)

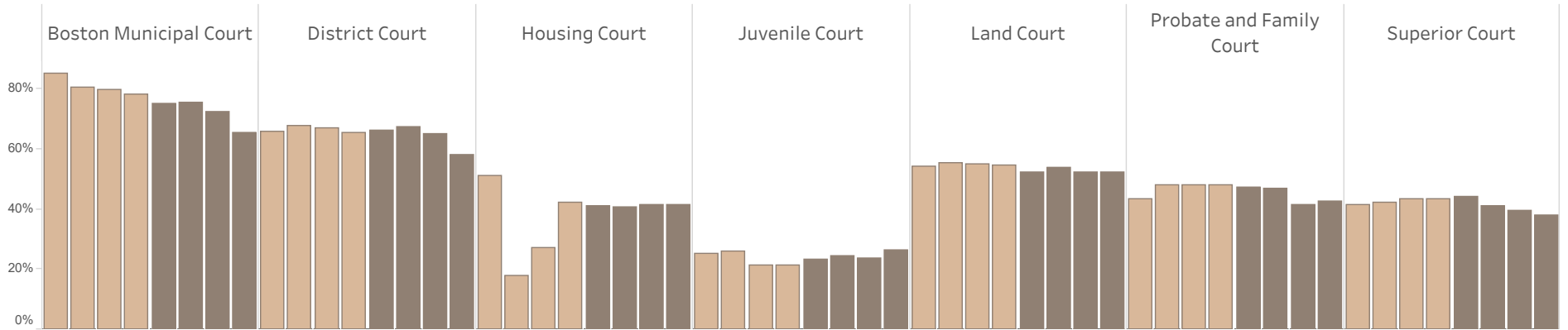
Pending Cases subject to Time Standards			Pending Beyond Time Standards		Pending Beyond Rate		
By Department	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Boston Municipal Court	48,177	33,616	37,668	21,954	78.2%	65.3%	-12.9%
District Court	304,442	213,356	198,695	124,025	65.3%	58.1%	-7.1%
Housing Court	9,045	10,938	3,824	4,517	42.3%	41.3%	-1.0%
Juvenile Court	6,484	9,890	1,389	2,598	21.4%	26.3%	4.8%
Land Court	4,032	4,362	2,192	2,281	54.4%	52.3%	-2.1%
Probate and Family Court	46,576	46,285	22,374	19,651	48.0%	42.5%	-5.6%
Superior Court	36,002	39,589	15,654	15,077	43.5%	38.1%	-5.4%
Total	454,758	358,036	281,796	190,103	62.0%	53.1%	-8.9%

Pending Cases subject to Time Standards			Pending Beyond Time Standards		Pending Beyond Rate		
By General Case Type	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Civil Matters	290,939	209,420	211,001	132,510	72.5%	63.3%	-9.2%
Criminal Matters	86,321	74,923	26,673	20,496	30.9%	27.4%	-3.5%
Domestic Relations	31,172	33,174	14,462	13,988	46.4%	42.2%	-4.2%
Juvenile Matters	5,260	8,739	859	2,179	16.3%	24.9%	8.6%
Traffic / Ordinance	41,066	31,780	28,801	20,930	70.1%	65.9%	-4.3%
Total	454,758	358,036	281,796	190,103	62.0%	53.1%	-8.9%

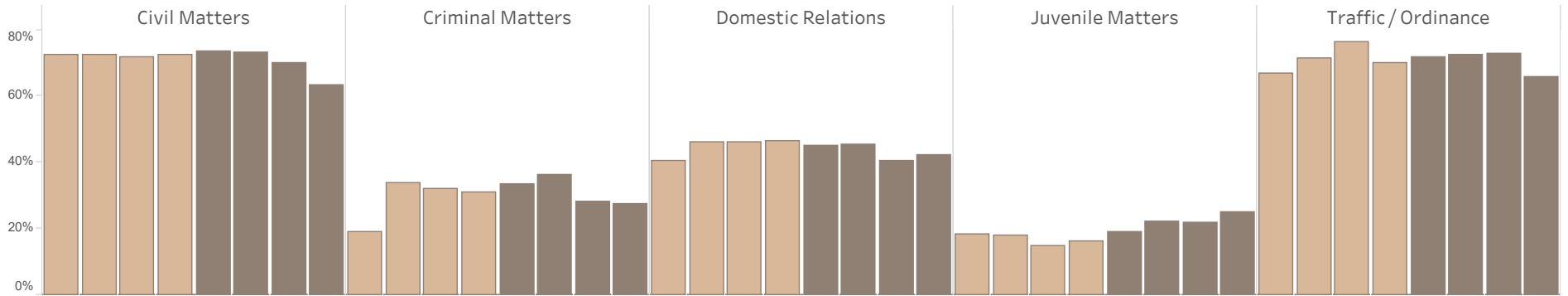
Pending Beyond Caseload

Color Legend: Fiscal Year
 ■ FY 2021 ■ FY 2022

Percent of Cases Pending Beyond Time Standards by Court Department
 Most Recent 8 Quarters



Percent of Cases Pending Beyond Time Standards by General Case Type
 Most Recent 8 Quarters



Event Date Certainty: Events Resulted, Events Held (Year-Over-Year)

Events Resulted			Events Held		Event Date Certainty		
By Department	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Boston Municipal Court	181,607	182,161	101,833	129,110	56.1%	70.9%	14.8%
District Court	1,134,802	1,187,398	639,786	766,890	56.4%	64.6%	8.2%
Housing Court	37,489	58,309	20,307	31,383	54.2%	53.8%	-0.3%
Juvenile Court	153,381	164,324	88,675	101,923	57.8%	62.0%	4.2%
Land Court	3,786	4,038	2,494	2,700	65.9%	66.9%	1.0%
Probate and Family Court	136,979	152,007	105,700	124,030	77.2%	81.6%	4.4%
Superior Court	125,308	132,447	70,047	75,613	55.9%	57.1%	1.2%
Total	1,773,352	1,880,684	1,028,842	1,231,649	58.0%	65.5%	7.5%

Events Resulted			Events Held		Event Date Certainty		
By General Case Type	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Change
Civil Matters	371,674	401,365	218,951	272,794	58.9%	68.0%	9.1%
Criminal Matters	1,112,372	1,168,263	620,539	734,882	55.8%	62.9%	7.1%
Domestic Relations	97,624	110,082	72,068	86,276	73.8%	78.4%	4.6%
Juvenile Matters	139,241	148,032	80,901	92,860	58.1%	62.7%	4.6%
Traffic / Ordinance	52,441	52,942	36,383	44,837	69.4%	84.7%	15.3%
Total	1,773,352	1,880,684	1,028,842	1,231,649	58.0%	65.5%	7.5%

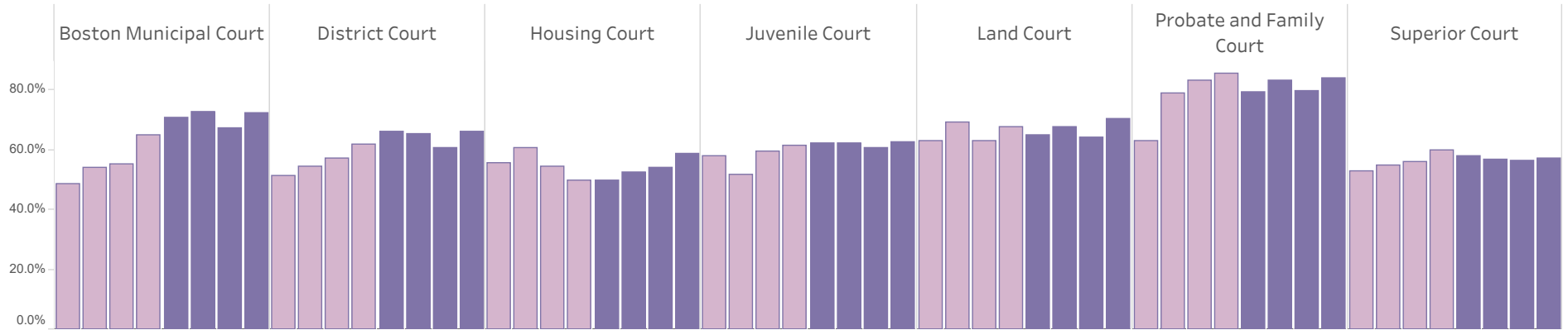
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Event Date Certainty

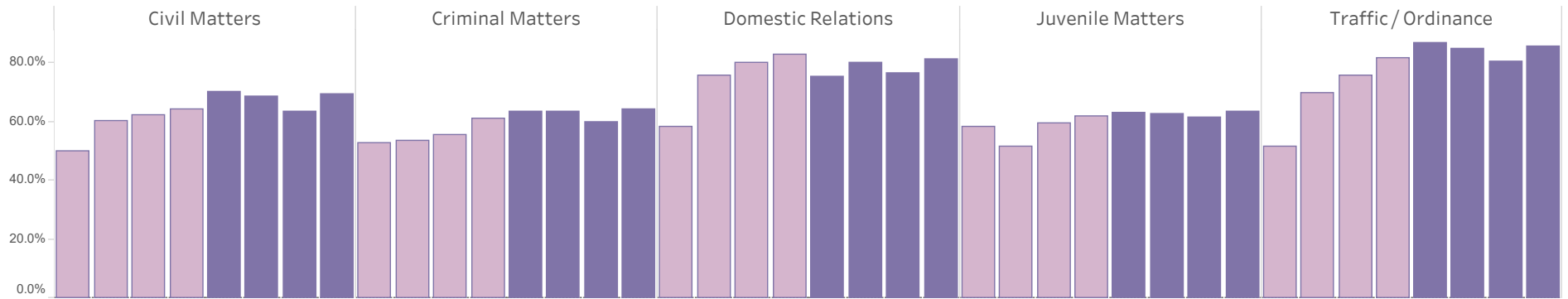
Color Legend: Fiscal Year

FY 2021 FY 2022

Event Date Certainty by Court Department
Most Recent 8 Quarters



Event Date Certainty by General Case Type
Most Recent 8 Quarters



Footnote: Event Date Certainty measures the number of events resulted to the number of events held before the court. There are reasons an event may be resulted but not held, including but not limited to, by request of a litigant or attorney, by agreement to an informal resolution, or for emergency or weather-related matters.

CASE FLOW METRICS, PERFORMANCE RATES, YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

By Department	By General Case Type	Clearance Rate		Timely Disposed Rate		Pending Beyond Rate		Event Date Certainty	
		Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year
Boston Municipal Court	Civil Matters	73.6%	100.9%	60.4%	53.1%	87.1%	80.1%	57.2%	73.3%
	Criminal Matters	78.8%	96.3%	73.0%	69.6%	31.3%	28.9%	55.4%	70.1%
	Traffic / Ordinance	107.4%	87.4%	64.7%	79.6%	85.9%	74.9%	71.3%	87.9%
District Court	Civil Matters	69.6%	106.1%	58.7%	51.7%	78.6%	73.0%	56.3%	70.2%
	Criminal Matters	78.0%	100.4%	79.5%	77.2%	27.8%	23.3%	55.7%	62.1%
	Juvenile Matters		1100.0%					39.4%	13.9%
	Traffic / Ordinance	87.4%	124.0%	51.3%	57.1%	69.0%	64.5%	69.2%	85.0%
Housing Court	Civil Matters	68.1%	94.3%	77.6%	76.8%	41.9%	39.4%	54.9%	54.8%
	Criminal Matters	84.1%	99.5%	61.2%	55.7%	58.1%	57.3%	41.2%	41.4%
	Traffic / Ordinance	106.0%	50.1%	57.6%	37.1%	35.8%	94.9%	65.4%	38.8%
Juvenile Court	Civil Matters	106.7%	119.5%	70.0%	66.6%	53.8%	44.1%	55.4%	56.2%
	Criminal Matters	66.2%	126.5%	58.4%	52.7%	23.6%	31.7%	32.4%	30.5%
	Domestic Relations	92.6%	95.0%	98.7%	97.5%	30.2%	23.0%	60.4%	64.4%
	Juvenile Matters	98.0%	91.8%	46.4%	51.9%	16.3%	24.9%	58.1%	62.7%
Land Court	Civil Matters	105.5%	90.7%	59.5%	61.5%	54.4%	52.3%	65.9%	66.9%
Probate and Family Court	Civil Matters	86.6%	100.7%	89.7%	82.6%	50.9%	42.7%	84.5%	89.0%
	Domestic Relations	71.0%	93.7%	52.9%	44.7%	46.6%	42.4%	74.0%	78.6%
Superior Court	Civil Matters	88.7%	83.7%	74.2%	61.7%	38.6%	33.6%	51.3%	50.8%
	Criminal Matters	69.0%	71.9%	14.2%	16.9%	70.9%	63.3%	57.8%	59.8%
	Juvenile Matters	66.7%	88.1%					58.5%	53.4%

Footnote: Event Date Certainty measures the number of events resulted to the number of events held before the court. There are reasons an event may be resulted but not held, including but not limited to, by request of a litigant or attorney, by agreement to an informal resolution, or for emergency or weather-related matters.