

Table 4.4
U.S. District Courts—Civil Cases Filed, by Nature of Suit,
During the 12-Month Periods Ending June 30, 1990, and September 30, 1995 Through 2018

| Nature of Suit | Fiscal Year | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2010 | 2005 | 2000 | 1995 | 1990 ¹ |
| Total Cases | 282,936 | 267,769 | 291,851 | 279,036 | 295,310 | 282,895 | 253,273 | 259,517 | 248,335 | 226,523 |
| Contract Actions, Total | 26,768 | 23,523 | 24,486 | 26,068 | 28,557 | 31,109 | 28,020 | 53,625 | 31,182 | 46,103 |
| Franchise ¹ | 308 | 263 | 342 | 382 | 456 | 357 | 171 | - | - | - |
| Insurance | 10,816 | 8,846 | 8,872 | 9,711 | 11,728 | 9,380 | 7,804 | 7,517 | 7,540 | 6,884 |
| Marine | 663 | 652 | 805 | 907 | 810 | 1,344 | 1,435 | 2,446 | 2,622 | 3,313 |
| Miller Act | 266 | 270 | 331 | 398 | 502 | 276 | 387 | 769 | 775 | 1,569 |
| Negotiable Instruments | 418 | 484 | 481 | 505 | 562 | 956 | 447 | 495 | 1,536 | 2,997 |
| Recovery of Overpayments and Enforcement of Judgments | 1,131 | 1,368 | 1,582 | 2,186 | 2,352 | 3,426 | 3,309 | 24,838 | 1,822 | 10,942 |
| Student Loans ² | 483 | 698 | 950 | 1,546 | 1,654 | 2,741 | 2,883 | 24,404 | 1,142 | 5,365 |
| Veterans' Benefits ³ | 6 | 25 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 16 | 8 | 43 | 253 | 4,963 |
| Other | 642 | 645 | 628 | 633 | 690 | 669 | 418 | 391 | 361 | 550 |
| Other Contract Actions | 13,166 | 11,640 | 12,073 | 11,979 | 12,147 | 15,370 | 14,467 | 17,560 | 16,887 | 20,398 |
| Real Property Actions, Total | 7,029 | 7,920 | 9,247 | 9,195 | 7,802 | 7,432 | 4,561 | 6,711 | 6,869 | 9,505 |
| Condemnation of Land | 595 | 210 | 568 | 339 | 149 | 173 | 251 | 1,243 | 334 | 462 |
| Foreclosure | 3,042 | 3,972 | 4,809 | 4,256 | 3,928 | 4,267 | 3,012 | 4,209 | 4,972 | 7,196 |
| Rent, Lease, and Ejectment | 1,016 | 1,072 | 970 | 688 | 773 | 254 | 154 | 175 | 310 | 349 |
| Torts to Land, Including Product Liability | 703 | 606 | 762 | 1,554 | 642 | 661 | 380 | 377 | 401 | 405 |
| Other Real Property Actions | 1,673 | 2,060 | 2,138 | 2,358 | 2,310 | 2,077 | 764 | 707 | 852 | 1,093 |
| Tort Actions, Total | 67,693 | 57,467 | 61,495 | 68,879 | 79,990 | 83,055 | 51,335 | 36,586 | 53,986 | 45,909 |
| Personal Injury, Total [4] | 63,564 | 53,609 | 55,283 | 61,093 | 76,463 | 78,350 | 47,364 | 32,621 | 50,565 | 42,743 |
| Personal Injury/Product Liability | 45,863 | 35,714 | 39,879 | 41,764 | 60,078 | 63,203 | 29,537 | 14,428 | 27,547 | 18,839 |
| Other Personal Injury, Total | 17,701 | 17,895 | 15,404 | 19,329 | 16,385 | 15,147 | 17,827 | 18,193 | 23,018 | 23,904 |
| Airplane | 192 | 208 | 185 | 191 | 214 | 300 | 351 | 747 | 683 | 834 |
| Marine | 1,465 | 1,476 | 1,515 | 1,125 | 1,166 | 1,393 | 1,667 | 2,006 | 2,277 | 2,961 |
| Motor Vehicle | 4,836 | 4,425 | 4,039 | 3,743 | 3,741 | 3,546 | 4,091 | 4,690 | 5,374 | 6,157 |
| Assault, Libel, and Slander | 612 | 550 | 559 | 591 | 495 | 559 | 647 | 801 | 826 | 644 |
| Federal Employers Liability Act | 413 | 379 | 316 | 296 | 330 | 480 | 748 | 1,108 | 1,903 | 2,741 |
| Medical Malpractice | 1,160 | 1,252 | 1,347 | 1,135 | 986 | 1,115 | 1,221 | 1,526 | 1,328 | 1,375 |
| Other | 9,023 | 9,605 | 7,443 | 12,248 | 9,453 | 7,754 | 9,102 | 7,315 | 10,627 | 7,202 |
| Personal Property Damage, Total | 4,129 | 3,858 | 6,212 | 7,786 | 3,527 | 4,705 | 3,971 | 3,965 | 3,421 | 3,166 |
| Fraud, Including Truth in Lending | 2,459 | 2,349 | 3,416 | 2,396 | 2,005 | 2,902 | 2,465 | 2,265 | 1,881 | 1,492 |
| Other Personal Property Damage | 1,670 | 1,509 | 2,796 | 5,390 | 1,522 | 1,803 | 1,506 | 1,700 | 1,540 | 1,674 |
| Actions Under Statutes, Total | 181,446 | 178,859 | 196,623 | 174,894 | 178,961 | 161,297 | 169,265 | 162,583 | 156,209 | 124,880 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Antitrust | 557 | 655 | 853 | 769 | 799 | 544 | 818 | 858 | 781 | 472 |
| Bankruptcy, Total | 2,144 | 2,122 | 2,304 | 2,814 | 2,651 | 2,696 | 3,000 | 3,361 | 5,046 | 5,056 |
| Appeal (28 U.S.C. 158) | 1,846 | 1,855 | 1,952 | 2,272 | 2,055 | 2,177 | 2,435 | 2,785 | 4,312 | 4,231 |
| Withdrawal (28 U.S.C. 157) | 298 | 267 | 352 | 542 | 596 | 519 | 565 | 576 | 734 | 825 |
| Banks and Banking | 144 | 191 | 262 | 237 | 294 | 647 | 258 | 205 | 432 | 700 |
| Civil Rights, Total [5] | 41,741 | 38,925 | 38,002 | 37,384 | 35,274 | 34,872 | 36,096 | 40,908 | 36,600 | 18,793 |
| Voting | 93 | 112 | 144 | 86 | 171 | 102 | 166 | 167 | 208 | 130 |
| Employment | 12,579 | 12,053 | 11,878 | 12,205 | 11,937 | 14,543 | 16,930 | 21,032 | 19,059 | 8,413 |
| Housing and Accommodations | 848 | 831 | 900 | 775 | 757 | 687 | 885 | 1,284 | 735 | 341 |
| Welfare | - | - | - | - | - | 58 | 54 | 80 | 116 | 129 |
| ADA -- Employment [6] | 2,624 | 2,353 | 2,231 | 2,076 | 1,894 | 1,522 | 586 | - | - | - |
| ADA -- Other [6] | 9,990 | 8,003 | 7,096 | 5,156 | 4,432 | 2,309 | 1,016 | - | - | - |
| Education | 745 | 606 | 548 | 525 | 455 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other Civil Rights | 14,862 | 14,967 | 15,205 | 16,561 | 15,628 | 15,651 | 16,459 | 18,345 | 16,482 | 9,780 |
| Environmental Matters | 1,956 | 988 | 1,755 | 845 | 614 | 942 | 714 | 886 | 1,081 | 958 |
| Deportation | 23 | 18 | 10 | 20 | 21 | 61 | 201 | 213 | 106 | 61 |
| Prisoner Petitions, Total | 54,134 | 57,685 | 73,725 | 52,531 | 60,675 | 52,583 | 61,238 | 58,257 | 63,550 | 42,630 |
| Motions to Vacate Sentence | 5,342 | 7,205 | 24,837 | 5,520 | 7,390 | 5,858 | 10,361 | 6,341 | 5,988 | 2,970 |
| Habeas Corpus--General | 16,964 | 17,336 | 17,356 | 18,448 | 19,185 | 19,825 | 24,633 | 24,945 | 14,975 | 12,790 |
| Habeas Corpus--Death Penalty | 161 | 220 | 202 | 194 | 165 | 208 | 240 | 274 | - | - |
| Mandamus and Other | 1,253 | 960 | 892 | 837 | 950 | 952 | 1,390 | 1,192 | 908 | 876 |
| Civil Rights | 18,842 | 18,986 | 20,622 | 17,829 | 18,991 | 16,951 | 16,005 | 14,151 | 41,679 | 25,992 |
| Prison Condition | 9,708 | 11,199 | 8,307 | 8,690 | 13,045 | 8,107 | 8,609 | 11,354 | - | - |
| Habeas Corpus--Alien Detainees | 1,674 | 1,502 | 1,134 | 670 | 736 | 682 | - | - | - | - |
| Civil Detainee--Conditions of Confinement | 190 | 277 | 375 | 343 | 213 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Forfeiture and Penalty, Total | 1,215 | 1,184 | 1,068 | 1,471 | 1,901 | 2,268 | 2,298 | 2,320 | 2,517 | 6,224 |
| Agricultural Acts | - | - | - | - | 2 | 32 | 27 | 57 | 155 | 84 |
| Food and Drug Act | - | - | - | - | - | 35 | 49 | 110 | 197 | 739 |
| Drug-Related Seizure of Property | 660 | 591 | 499 | 688 | 1,018 | 1,273 | 1,359 | 1,117 | 1,042 | 1,914 |
| Air Traffic Regulations | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 6 | 7 | 11 | 48 |
| Occupational Safety and Health Act | - | - | - | - | - | 15 | 5 | 4 | 33 | 61 |
| Other Forfeiture and Penalty Suits | 555 | 593 | 569 | 783 | 881 | 908 | 852 | 1,025 | 1,079 | 3,378 |
| Labor Laws, Total | 17,629 | 17,631 | 18,929 | 19,322 | 18,673 | 18,624 | 18,322 | 14,142 | 14,954 | 22,567 |
| Fair Labor Standards Act | 7,600 | 7,742 | 8,686 | 8,781 | 8,160 | 6,825 | 4,039 | 1,935 | 1,580 | 1,282 |
| Labor Management Relations Act | 660 | 596 | 675 | 690 | 812 | 1,094 | 1,674 | 1,542 | 1,984 | 2,342 |
| Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act | - | - | - | - | 1 | 70 | 88 | 101 | 161 | 181 |
| Railway Labor Act | 46 | 65 | 60 | 45 | 57 | 66 | 104 | 137 | 172 | 199 |
| Employee Retirement Income Security Act | 6,705 | 6,632 | 6,831 | 7,228 | 7,191 | 9,216 | 11,171 | 9,124 | 9,517 | 8,726 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Family and Medical Leave Act | 1,250 | 1,308 | 1,255 | 1,139 | 1,108 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other Labor Litigation | 1,368 | 1,288 | 1,422 | 1,439 | 1,344 | 1,353 | 1,246 | 1,303 | 1,540 | 9,837 |
| Immigration, Total [7] | 1,761 | 1,811 | 1,637 | 1,321 | 1,163 | 1,183 | - | - | - | - |
| Naturalization Applications | 350 | 271 | 307 | 260 | 277 | 402 | - | - | - | - |
| Other Immigration Actions | 1,411 | 1,540 | 1,330 | 1,061 | 886 | 781 | - | - | - | - |
| Intellectual Property Rights, Total | 12,690 | 10,768 | 12,111 | 13,751 | 13,420 | 8,966 | 12,184 | 8,738 | 6,866 | 5,700 |
| Copyright | 5,756 | 3,451 | 3,936 | 5,035 | 4,041 | 2,013 | 5,796 | 2,050 | 2,417 | 2,095 |
| Patent | 3,493 | 4,182 | 5,080 | 5,564 | 5,686 | 3,301 | 2,720 | 2,484 | 1,723 | 1,187 |
| Patent--Abbreviated New Drug Application | 337 | 137 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Trademark | 3,104 | 2,998 | 3,095 | 3,152 | 3,693 | 3,652 | 3,668 | 4,204 | 2,726 | 2,418 |
| Securities, Commodities, and Exchanges | 1,532 | 1,455 | 1,119 | 1,013 | 947 | 1,397 | 2,038 | 2,678 | 1,906 | 2,629 |
| Social Security Laws, Total [8] | 18,665 | 19,020 | 18,716 | 18,538 | 19,146 | 14,016 | 15,487 | 15,829 | 9,354 | 7,439 |
| Disability Insurance | 9,549 | 9,147 | 8,616 | 8,578 | 8,513 | 6,141 | 7,024 | 8,122 | 5,501 | 5,212 |
| Supplemental Security Income | 8,132 | 8,855 | 9,151 | 9,210 | 9,813 | 7,088 | 7,675 | 6,762 | 3,347 | 1,836 |
| Retirement and Survivors Benefits | 914 | 932 | 851 | 656 | 692 | 715 | 710 | 855 | 414 | 249 |
| Other | 70 | 86 | 98 | 94 | 128 | 72 | 78 | 90 | - | - |
| Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act | 2,244 | 684 | 771 | 678 | 735 | 993 | 781 | 829 | 900 | 1,214 |
| State Reapportionment Suits | 6 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 11 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 2,604 |
| Tax Suits | 925 | 1,016 | 938 | 989 | 941 | 1,190 | 1,385 | 907 | 2,202 | 38 |
| Customer Challenge | - | - | - | - | - | 9 | 21 | 12 | 33 | 38 |
| Consumer Credit [9] | 10,764 | 10,531 | 9,745 | 9,801 | 8,547 | 8,453 | 1,192 | - | - | - |
| Cable/Satellite TV [9] | 597 | 678 | 691 | 1,162 | 1,367 | 1,014 | 710 | - | - | - |
| Freedom of Information Act | 872 | 660 | 490 | 514 | 446 | 298 | 404 | 341 | 467 | 407 |
| Constitutionality of State Statutes | 338 | 484 | 358 | 383 | 323 | 329 | 310 | 288 | 309 | 315 |
| Other Statutory Actions | 11,509 | 12,349 | 13,133 | 11,348 | 11,013 | 10,206 | 11,800 | 11,809 | 9,098 | 8,211 |

Note: Due to a change in methodology, numbers for years prior to 2015 may not match numbers previously published in this table.

¹ Collection of data for this category began in 2008.

² Filings for recovery of defaulted student loans decreased from 1990 to 1995 due to a change in Department of Education (DOE) policy on collection of delinquent loans. Renewed growth peaked in 2000 as a result of streamlining of the loan-processing system. In 2001, DOE implemented new administrative measures that caused fewer student loan cases to be filed in federal courts.

³ Filings for recovery of overpayments of veterans' benefits have decreased significantly as the Department of Veterans' Affairs has used administrative actions and the Internal Revenue Service to recover overpayments rather than filing suit in district court. For additional information, see the 1991 Annual Report of the Director: Judicial Business of the United States Courts, page 86.

[4] The increase in personal injury filings between 1990 and 1995 was attributable mostly to breast implant cases and a large number of cases related to an oil refinery explosion in Louisiana. In 2006, personal injury/product liability filings rose 64 percent, primarily as a result of 15,000 additional asbestos cases, of which over 14,000 were multidistrict litigation filings in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

[5] Civil rights filings increased significantly after 1990 largely because of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

[6] Collection of data for this category began in 2005.

[7] Collection of data for this category began in 2006.

[8] Collection of data for this category began in 2005.

Source: Table C-2 for 1995 to present, *Annual report of the Director: Judicial Business of the United States Courts*.