

Judicial Business

This report provides statistical information on the caseload of the Federal Judiciary for the 12-month period ending March 31, 2012. In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 604(a)(2), the report presents data on the work of the appellate, district, and bankruptcy courts and on the probation and pretrial services systems.

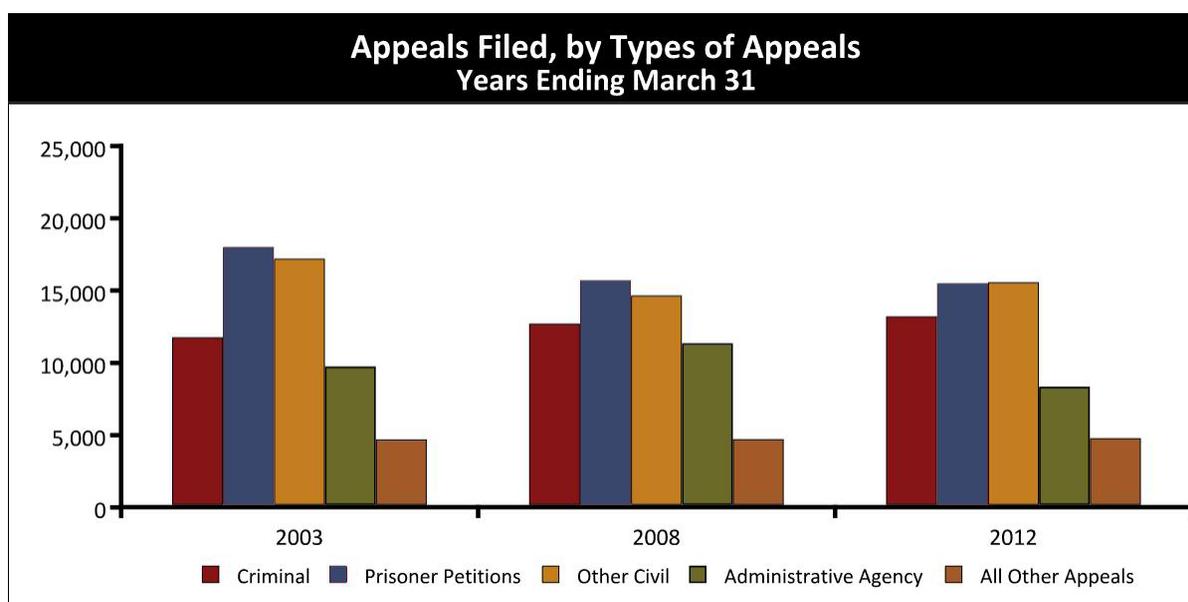
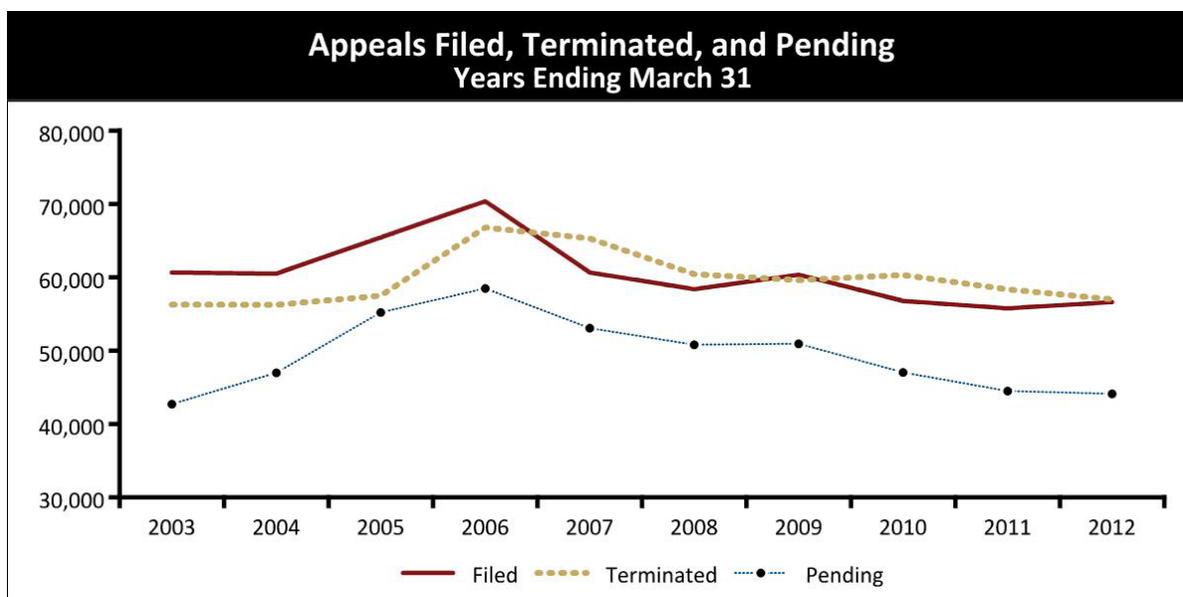
Caseload activity was mixed in the key areas of the federal court system during this reporting period. Growth occurred in the U.S. courts of appeals, where filings rose 2 percent. In the U.S. district courts, civil case filings declined 3 percent, and defendants charged with criminal offenses fell 4 percent. Filings in the U.S. bankruptcy courts dropped 13 percent. Nearly 3 percent more persons were under supervision by the federal probation system on March 31, 2011, than one year earlier. The number of pretrial services cases activated in the past 12 months decreased 1 percent.

U.S. Courts of Appeals

Filings in the 12 regional courts of appeals grew 2 percent to 56,624. The increase stemmed from criminal appeals, appeals of administrative agency decisions, and bankruptcy appeals.

- Criminal appeals rose 4 percent to 13,045, largely in response to a 14 percent jump in appeals related to drugs other than marijuana.
- Seventy-seven percent of criminal appeals involved four offense categories: drugs, immigration, firearms and explosives, and fraud.
- Administrative agency appeals climbed 6 percent to 8,188, mainly because appeals of decisions by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) rose 5 percent.
- BIA appeals accounted for 83 percent of administrative agency appeals and constituted the largest category of administrative agency appeals in each circuit except the D.C. Circuit.
- Bankruptcy appeals increased 5 percent to 722.

Appeals Court Filings Percent Change Over Time			
	Since 2003	Since 2008	Since 2011
Total Filings	- 6.7	- 3.0	1.6
Civil Appeals	- 11.9	2.3	- 0.3
Criminal Appeals	12.3	3.9	3.7
Administrative Agency Appeals	- 14.6	- 26.8	6.5
Bankruptcy Appeals	- 17.4	- 18.4	5.2
Original Proceedings	- 6.6	6.2	- 1.2



Civil appeals remained stable, falling by 81 appeals to 30,767.

- Prisoner petitions dropped 3 percent. However, this reduction was largely offset by a 2 percent rise in civil appeals not filed by prisoners.

Original proceedings declined 1 percent to 3,902.

- Sixty-five percent of original proceedings involved second or successive motions for writs of habeas corpus. Thirty-two percent of original proceedings involved writs of mandamus.

Terminations of appeals declined 2 percent to 57,002. Pending appeals fell 1 percent to 44,114.

For data on the activity of the appeals courts, see the B series of the appendix tables.

Bankruptcy Appellate Panels

The Bankruptcy Appellate Panels (BAPs) reported that filings increased 25 percent to 1,177 (up 234 appeals). Appeals rose for two of the five circuits with BAPs.

- The Ninth Circuit received 219 more appeals (up 38 percent). The growth resulted from the large number of bankruptcy petitions filed in previous years following the housing market collapse, particularly in Arizona, Nevada, and California.
- The Tenth Circuit received 37 more appeals (up 40 percent), mainly because of one bankruptcy case in Utah that affected 39 separate adversary proceedings.
- Filings dropped by 13 appeals in the Sixth Circuit (down 14 percent), by 7 appeals in the First Circuit (down 7 percent), and by 2 appeals in the Eighth Circuit (down 2 percent).

For data on the activity of the BAPs, see Tables B-10 and B-11 in the appendix.

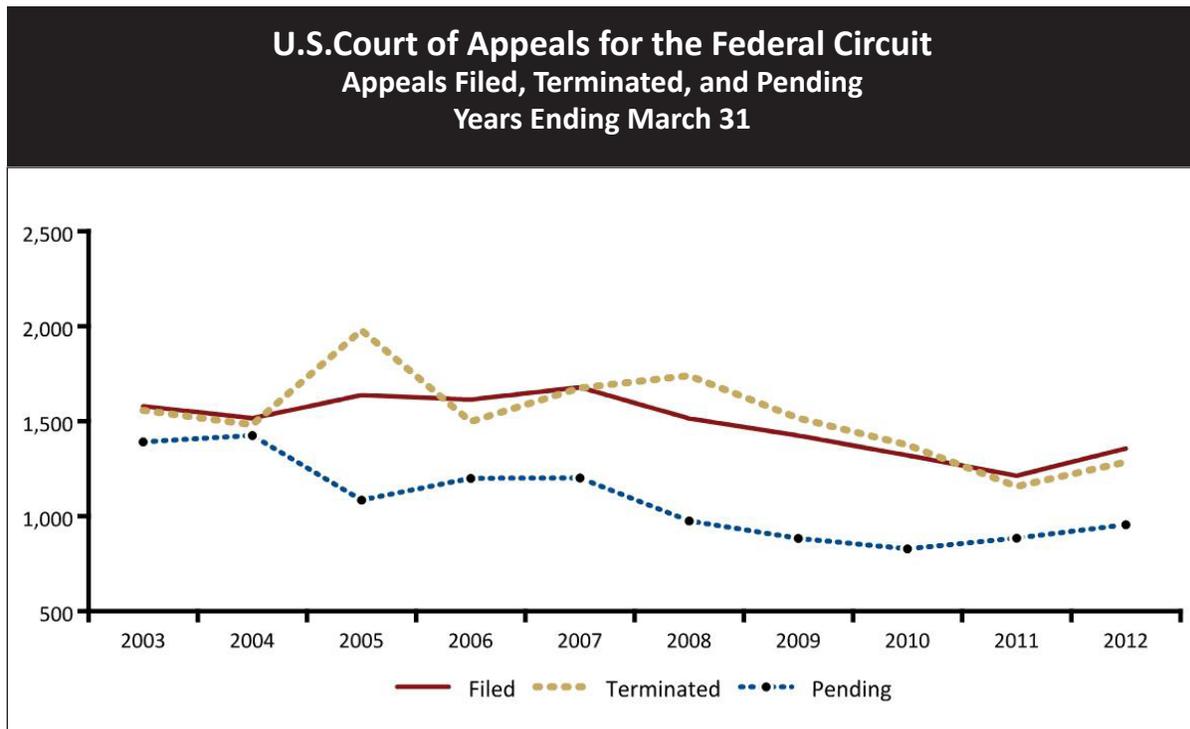
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

Filings in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit rose 12 percent to 1,356 appeals.

- Appeals of decisions by the Merit Systems Protection Board had the largest numeric growth, an increase of 59 appeals to 272 (up 28 percent).
- Filings involving the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims had the largest numeric decrease, a reduction of 14 appeals to 147 (down 9 percent).

Terminations of appeals grew 12 percent to 1,285. The pending caseload rose 8 percent to 955.

For data on the activity of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, see Table B-8 in the appendix.



Federal Circuit Filings Percent Change Over Time			
	Since 2003	Since 2008	Since 2011
Total Filings	- 14.1	- 10.4	11.9

U.S. District Courts

Combined filings for civil cases and criminal defendants in the U.S. district courts fell by 13,531 (down 3 percent) to 384,443. Terminations dropped by 34,018 (down 8 percent) to 389,303. As terminations exceeded filings, the total for pending cases and defendants decreased by 6,021 (down 2 percent) to 375,589.

Civil Filings

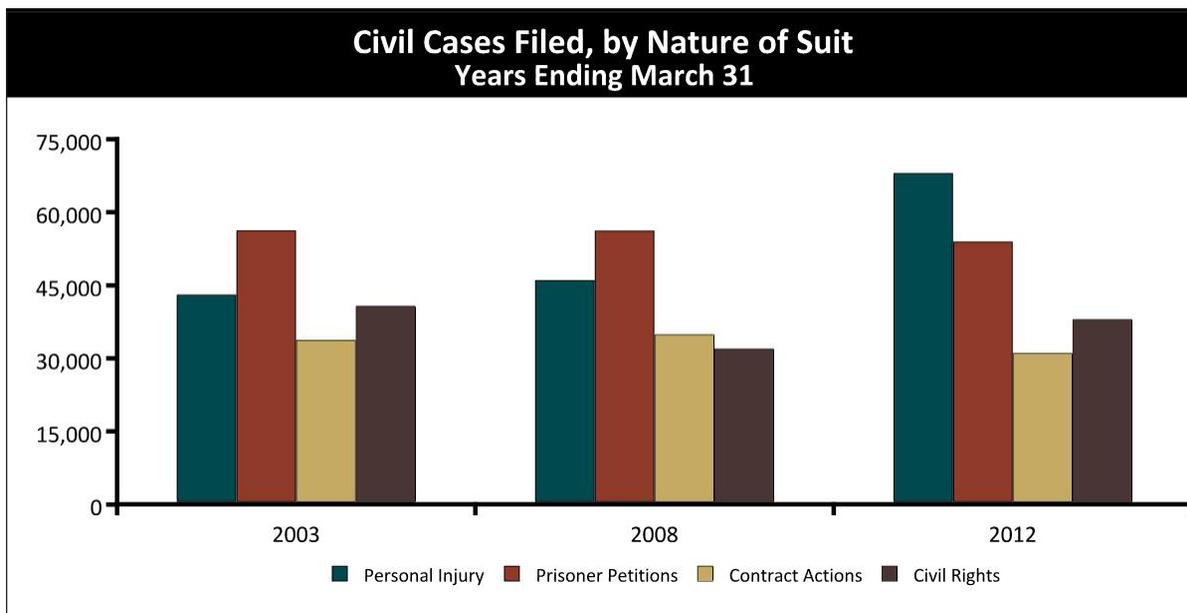
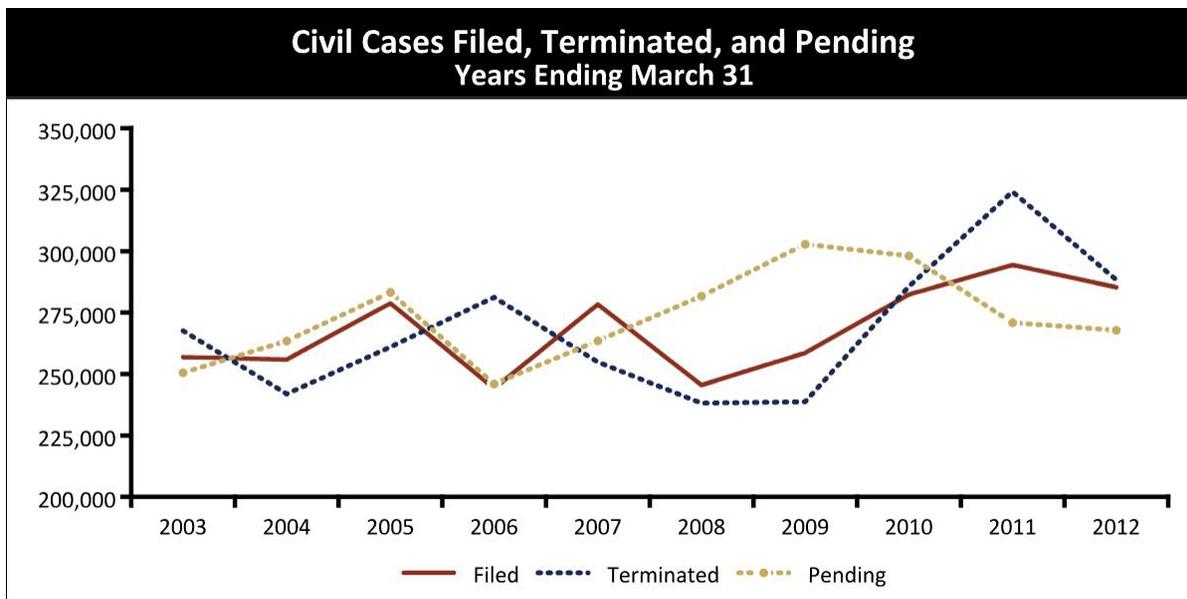
Civil case filings in the U.S. district courts declined 3 percent (down by 9,076 cases) to 285,260. This occurred mainly because filings based on diversity of citizenship (i.e., cases between citizens of different states) dropped 12 percent to 95,604.

- Diversity of citizenship filings involving personal injury/product liability fell 20 percent (down by 13,373 cases).
- Reductions occurred in multidistrict litigation filings in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania that involved asbestos, in the Eastern District of Arkansas that involved hormone replacement therapy, and in the Southern District of Illinois that involved contraceptives.

Federal question filings increased 2 percent to 143,042.

- Consumer credit cases rose 9 percent (up by 704 cases).
- Patent cases climbed 16 percent (up by 625 cases).

Civil Case Filings Percent Change Over Time			
	Since 2003	Since 2008	Since 2011
Total Filings	11.1	16.2	- 3.1
Federal Question Cases	- 0.1	7.6	1.5
Diversity of Citizenship Cases	56.6	44.2	- 11.5
U.S. Defendant Cases	- 8.4	- 0.1	1.3
U.S. Plaintiff Cases	14.9	5.7	8.2



- Civil rights cases alleging violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act grew 11 percent (up by 445 cases).
- Filings with the United States as plaintiff increased 8 percent to 10,317.
- Cases involving defaulted student loans jumped 17 percent.
- Filings with the United States as defendant rose 1 percent to 36,297.
- Social Security filings rose 6 percent as supplemental security income claims grew 11 percent (up by 874 cases).
 - Prisoner petitions increased 7 percent as motions to vacate sentence went up by 789 petitions.
- Civil case terminations declined 11 percent to 288,330.

- This year, far fewer personal injury/product liability cases dealing with asbestos, the terrorist-related aircraft crashes of September 11, 2001, trailers provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the arthritis drug Vioxx were terminated than during the previous year.

Pending civil cases fell 1 percent to 267,784.

For data on activity related to civil cases in the U.S. district courts, see the C series of the appendix tables.

Criminal Filings

Filings for criminal defendants (including transfers) in the U.S. district courts declined 4 percent (down 4,455 defendants) to 99,183. Defendants charged with immigration offenses, which accounted for 27 percent of all criminal defendant filings, dropped 10 percent to 26,572, and traffic offense defendants fell 19 percent to 3,679 (these data do not include the 99,224 defendants charged with immigration and traffic crimes in petty offense cases disposed of by magistrate judges).

- Seventy-five percent of immigration defendant filings were in the five southwestern border districts. They decreased 29 percent in the Southern District of Texas, 13 percent in the District of New Mexico, and 5 percent in the District of Arizona. Filings increased 8 percent in the Western District of Texas and 4 percent in the Southern District of California.

Defendants charged with property offenses declined 9 percent to 16,432.

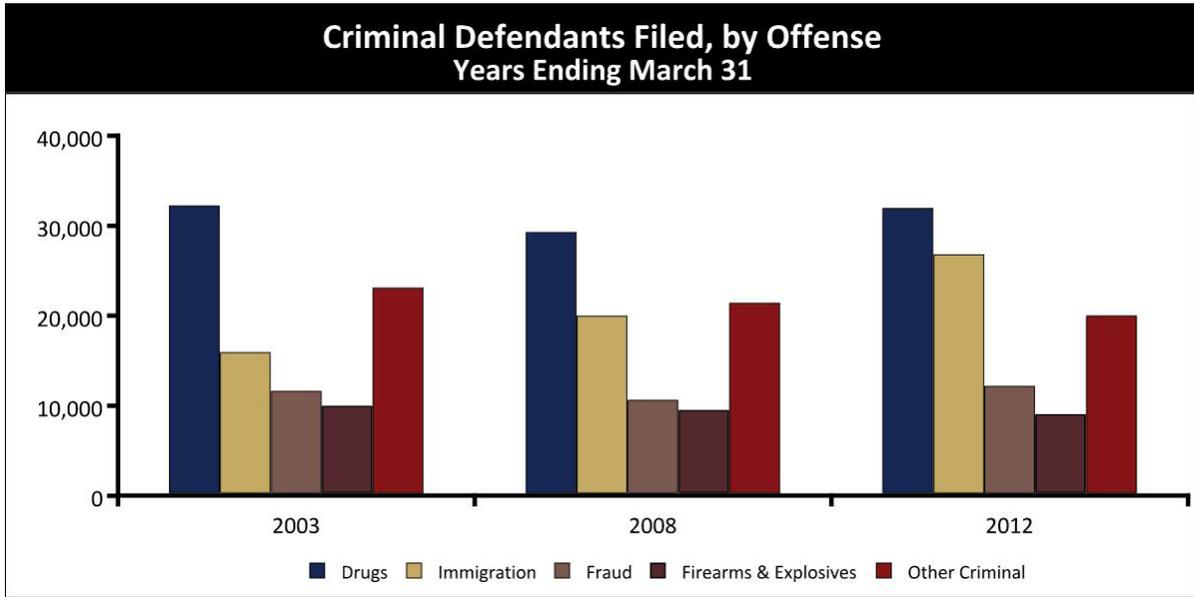
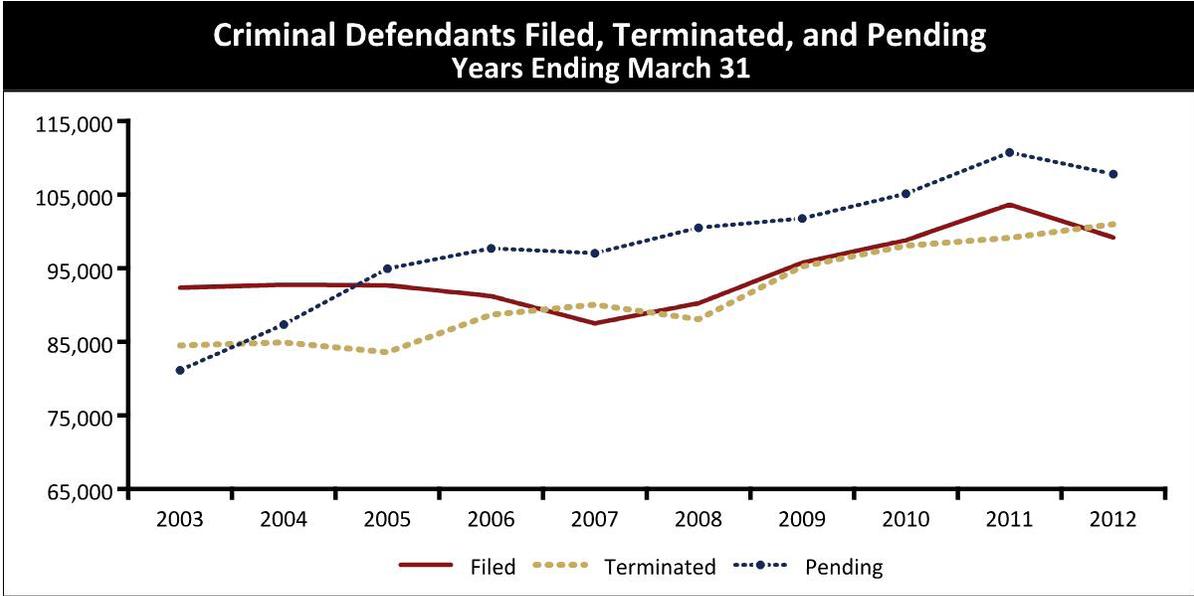
- Fraud defendant filings dropped 10 percent to 11,938.

Defendants charged with general offenses (i.e., public-order crimes considered contrary to social norms, such as prostitution) declined 10 percent to 2,326. Filings for violent crimes decreased 8 percent to 2,665. Defendants charged with justice system offenses (i.e., crimes related to judicial proceedings, such as obstruction of justice or failure to appear) dropped 5 percent to 936.

Filings for drug offenses, which constituted 32 percent of total defendant filings, rose 3 percent to 31,739.

- Defendants charged with marijuana offenses grew 5 percent to 8,193.
- Defendants charged with crimes involving drugs other than marijuana climbed 2 percent to 23,451.

Criminal Defendant Filings (Excluding Transfers) Percent Change Over Time			
	Since 2003	Since 2008	Since 2012
Total Defendants Filed	7.7	10.2	- 4.3
Immigration Defendant	69.1	34.5	-10.0
Property Defendants	- 8.4	3.0	- 8.7
Sex Offense Defendants	167.4	27.3	7.5
Drug Defendants	- .0.9	9.2	3.1
Firearms and Explosives Defendants	- 9.6	- 5.1	3.3



Filings for firearms and explosives offense defendants increased 3 percent to 8,814. Defendants charged with sex crimes rose 7 percent to 3,479. Regulatory offense filings grew 1 percent to 2,203.

Terminations for criminal defendants rose 2 percent to 100,973. As terminations exceeded filings, the number for defendants pending declined 3 percent to 107,805.

For data on activity related to criminal defendants in the district courts, see the D series of the appendix tables.

U.S. Bankruptcy Courts

Filings of bankruptcy petitions declined 13 percent to 1,367,006 (down 204,177 petitions). Reductions occurred in 89 of the 90 U.S. bankruptcy courts. The bankruptcy court in Delaware was the only one where filings increased.

Fewer petitions were filed under all four major chapters of the bankruptcy code.

- Filings under chapter 7 fell 14 percent to 958,757.
- Filings under chapter 13 fell 10 percent to 396,175.
- Filings under chapter 11 fell 13 percent to 11,339.
- Filings under chapter 12 fell 18 percent to 606.

Filings of petitions involving predominantly nonbusiness debts (i.e., consumer cases) decreased 13 percent to 1,320,613.

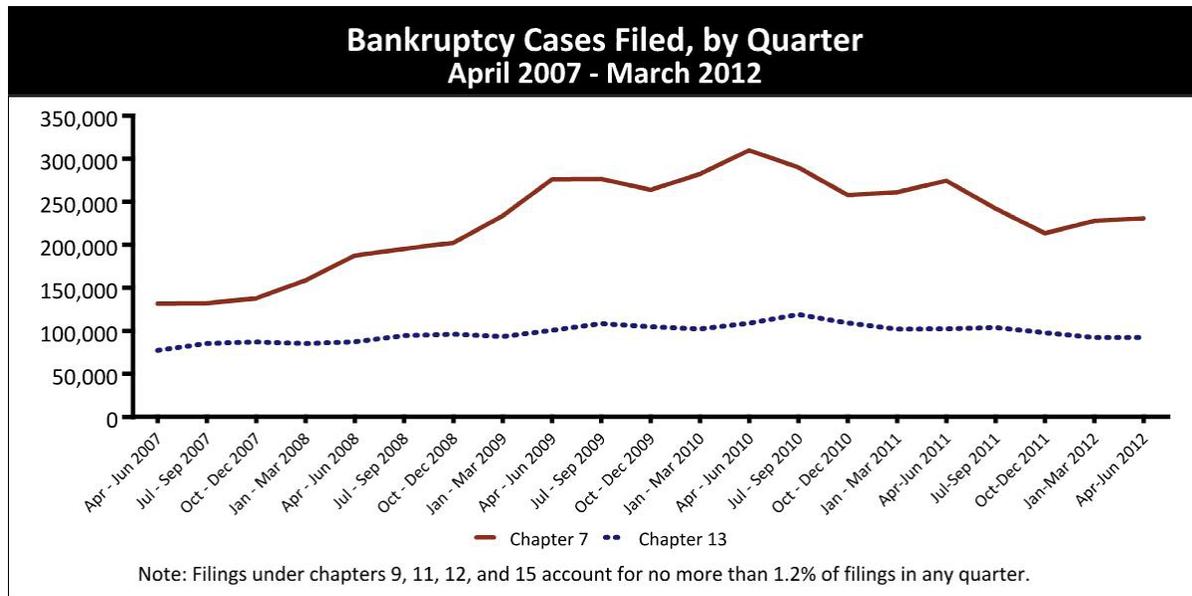
- Nonbusiness petitions accounted for 97 percent of bankruptcy filings, the same percentage as the previous year.

Filings of petitions involving predominantly business debts went down 14 percent to 46,393.

Terminations of bankruptcy cases dropped 8 percent to 1,385,725. Because the number of cases terminated exceeded the number filed, pending bankruptcy cases fell 1 percent to 1,641,127.

After the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005 took effect on October 17, 2005, bankruptcy filings fell sharply. Thereafter, filings rose considerably from 695,575 in the 12 months ending March 31, 2007, to 1,571,183 for the same period in 2011. The total of 1,367,006 petitions filed in 2012 was nearly twice as large as the total for 2007.

For data on the activity of the bankruptcy courts, see the F series of the appendix tables.



Bankruptcy Case Filings Percent Change Over Time			
	Since 2003	Since 2008	Since 2011
Total Filings	-15.2	51.6	- 13.0
Chapter 7	-15.6	71.2	- 14.3
Chapter 11	5.8	62.7	- 13.1
Chapter 13	-14.7	18.4	- 9.7

Adversary Proceedings

Adversary proceedings are separate civil lawsuits that arise in bankruptcy cases, including actions to object to or revoke discharges, to obtain injunctions or other equitable relief, and to determine the dischargeability of debt. Adversary proceedings may be associated with consumer bankruptcy cases, but most arise in cases filed under chapter 11. They generally reflect the level of chapter 11 bankruptcy petitions filed two years earlier.

During the 12-month period ending March 31, 2012, filings of adversary proceedings decreased 19 percent to 60,533 (down 14,521 proceedings).

- The largest numeric reduction occurred in the District of Delaware, where filings dropped by 4,201 to 2,880 (down 59 percent). This represented a return to more typical filing levels for the district, which had seen a surge in adversary proceedings the previous year, before the expiration of deadlines for filing recovery actions in some chapter 11 cases involving large amounts of assets and creditors.

Terminations of adversary proceedings increased 9 percent to 71,652. Pending adversary proceedings fell 13 percent to 71,804.

For data on adversary proceedings in the bankruptcy courts, see Table F-8 in the appendix.

Post-Conviction Supervision

The number of persons under post-conviction on March 31, 2012, rose 2.5 percent to 132,329 (up by 3,255 persons). Persons serving terms of supervised release on that date following release from a correctional institution increased 4 percent to 107,947.

- Eighty-two percent of persons under post-conviction supervision were serving terms of supervised release on March 31, 2012, compared to 81 percent one year earlier.
- Seventeen percent of persons under post-conviction supervision were under supervision following the imposition of sentences of probation, and 1 percent were on parole.

Persons Under Post-Conviction Supervision Percent Change Over Time			
	Since 2003	Since 2008	Since 2011
Under Supervision	20.4	11.8	2.5
Serving Terms of Supervised Release	44.5	16.9	3.5
On Probation	- 27.7	- 3.3	- 0.8
On Parole	- 56.0	- 33.6	- 12.6

Cases open on March 31, 2012, that involved probation imposed by district and magistrate judges decreased 1 percent from the previous year's total to 22,489.

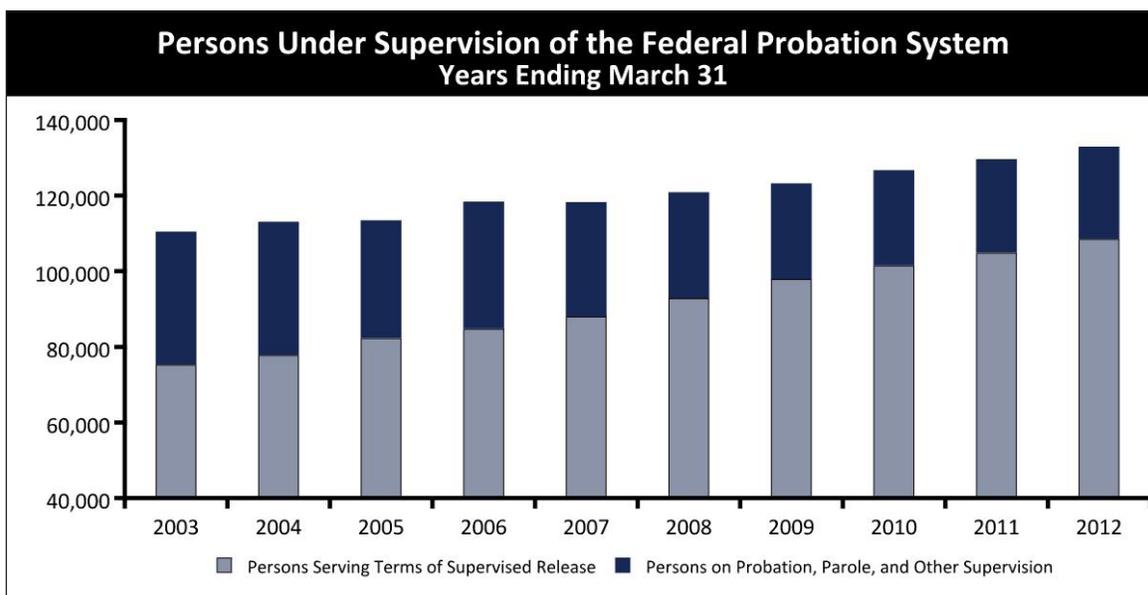
Persons on parole, special parole, military parole, and mandatory release on the last day of the reporting period declined 13 percent to 1,713.

A total of 66,874 persons were received for post-conviction supervision in 2012, an increase of 5 percent over the previous year's total. The number of post-supervision cases closed (excluding those involving transfers out and deaths) climbed 4 percent to 54,355.

In addition to their supervision duties, probation officers conduct investigations and prepare comprehensive reports to aid judges in sentencing convicted defendants. The officers' presentence reports contain detailed background information on defendants and discuss issues related to the advisory sentencing guidelines.

- In 2012, probation officers wrote 80,110 presentence reports, an increase of 1 percent over the number written in 2011. Ninety-six percent of this year's presentence reports (76,882 reports) addressed offenses for which the U.S. Sentencing Commission has promulgated sentencing guidelines.

For data on post-conviction supervision activity, see the E series of the appendix tables.



Pretrial Services

The number of cases opened in the pretrial services system, including pretrial diversion cases, equaled 112,460, a 1 percent decrease from the previous year.

- A total of 927 pretrial diversion cases were activated, a reduction of 7 percent.

The number of defendants received for supervision in the pretrial services system was 30,044, 2 percent below the number received in 2011.

- Defendants received for pretrial services supervision fell 2 percent to 28,715.
- Defendants received for pretrial diversion supervision increased less than 1 percent (up by 7 defendants) to 1,329.

A total of 110,719 pretrial services cases were closed, an increase of 5 percent.

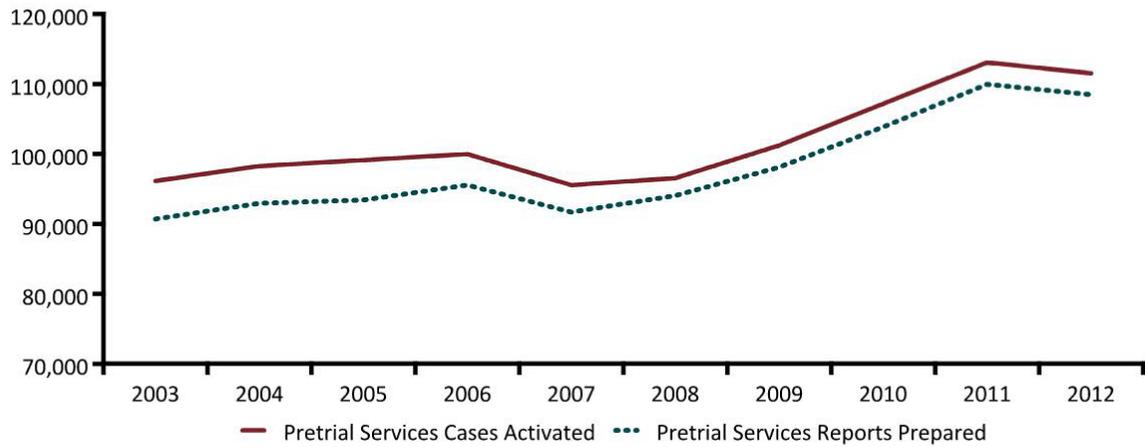
For persons under pretrial services supervision, officers monitored compliance with the release conditions set by the courts, provided necessary support services (such as substance abuse treatment), and informed the courts and U.S. attorneys of apparent violations of release conditions.

Pretrial services officers prepare reports for judges to use in determining whether to order the release or detention of defendants. They also provide judges with information useful for establishing appropriate conditions for released defendants.

- Pretrial services officers prepared 108,475 pretrial services reports in 2012 (down 1 percent from 2011).

Pretrial Services Filings Percent Change Over Time			
	Since 2003	Since 2008	Since 2011
Total Cases Activated	17.0	14.6	- 1.4
Pretrial Services Cases Activated	18.2	15.5	- 1.4
Reports	19.6	15.4	- 1.4
Pretrial Diversion Cases Activated	- 48.8	- 41.4	- 6.6
Released on Supervision	- 15.5	- 7.8	- 1.6
Pretrial Supervision	- 14.6	- 7.8	- 1.7
Diversion Supervision	- 30.5	- 7.3	0.5

Federal Pretrial Services Cases Activated And Reports Prepared* Years Ending March 31



*Includes both regular pretrial services cases and pretrial diversion cases.

- In preparing these reports, pretrial services officers interviewed 58,931 defendants (down 7 percent from 2011).

For data on pretrial services activity, see the H series of the appendix tables