



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

## News for Immediate Release

May 8, 2015

# Medical malpractice case filings reach 14-year low

**HARRISBURG** — The number of medical malpractice case filings dipped last year to the lowest point since statewide tracking began in 2000.

The latest available figures compiled by the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts show there were 1,463 new cases filed in Pennsylvania’s civil courts in 2014, marking the fewest ever recorded.

The latest filings represent a 46.5 percent decline from the number posted in the “base years” of 2000-2002. In Philadelphia, the state’s judicial district with the largest caseload, the decline has been 68.3 percent during the same period.

The base years are the period just prior to two significant rules changes made by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. The first change required attorneys to obtain from a medical professional a “certificate of merit” that establishes that the medical procedures in a case fall outside acceptable standards. A second change required medical malpractice actions to be brought only in the county where the cause of action took place — a move aimed at eliminating so-called “venue shopping.”

The number of jury verdicts grew slightly to 127 last year from 110 in 2013; however, that’s roughly a third of the 326 jury verdicts seen in 2000. It also was the third lowest number of jury verdicts in the 14-year reporting period.

The data also shows slightly more than 81 percent of the verdicts in 2014 were for the defense. One of the only two reported nonjury verdicts during the year was for the defense.

*For a more complete look at Pennsylvania’s medical malpractice case information, visit:*

<http://www.pacourts.us/news-and-statistics/research-and-statistics/statewide-civil-cases>

*and click on the **med mal dashboard** tab at the top of the page.*

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