



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

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Medical malpractice case statistics show steady in number of lawsuits statewide

HARRISBURG —Medical malpractice lawsuits in Pennsylvania have steadied and leveled off over the last 10 years, according to statistics released today in the judiciary’s new [data dashboards](#).

The data shows 1,546 med mal filings in Pennsylvania’s civil courts in 2013. That figure was slightly more than the 1,510 filings in 2012. The latest filings represent a 43.4 percent decline from the “base years” of 2000-2002. In Philadelphia, the state’s judicial district with the largest caseload, the decline has been by slightly more than 68 percent during the same period.

“These numbers reinforce the value of court rules in balancing new requirements for filing medical malpractice claims with the need for access and fairness in the state court system,” Chief Justice of Pennsylvania Ronald D. Castille said. “There has been real improvement in what was, just a few years ago, one of the Commonwealth’s more vexing challenges.”

The base years are the period just prior to two significant rule changes made by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. The first change required attorneys to obtain — from an appropriate medical professional well-versed in the area of alleged malpractice — 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 takes place — a move aimed at eliminating so-called “venue shopping.”

In comparison to earlier years, 2013 had fewer jury verdicts. For the second time in the last three years, there was the fewest number of jury verdicts in the decade of comprehensive statistics gathering. Slightly more than 77 percent of the jury verdicts in 2013 were for the defense. Two of the five nonjury verdicts in 2013 were for the defense.

For a more complete look at Pennsylvania’s medical malpractice case information, as well as other statistics, visit: www.pacourts.us.

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