

TEXAS COURT SECURITY INCIDENTS REPORT



FISCAL YEAR 2013

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Background

Article 102.017(f), Code of Criminal Procedure, requires a local administrative judge to submit a written report to the Office of Court Administration (OCA) regarding any incident involving court security that occurs in or around a building housing a court. A security incident is defined as any adverse event that threatens the security of a person or property, or causes or may cause significant disruption to functions of the court due to a breach in security.

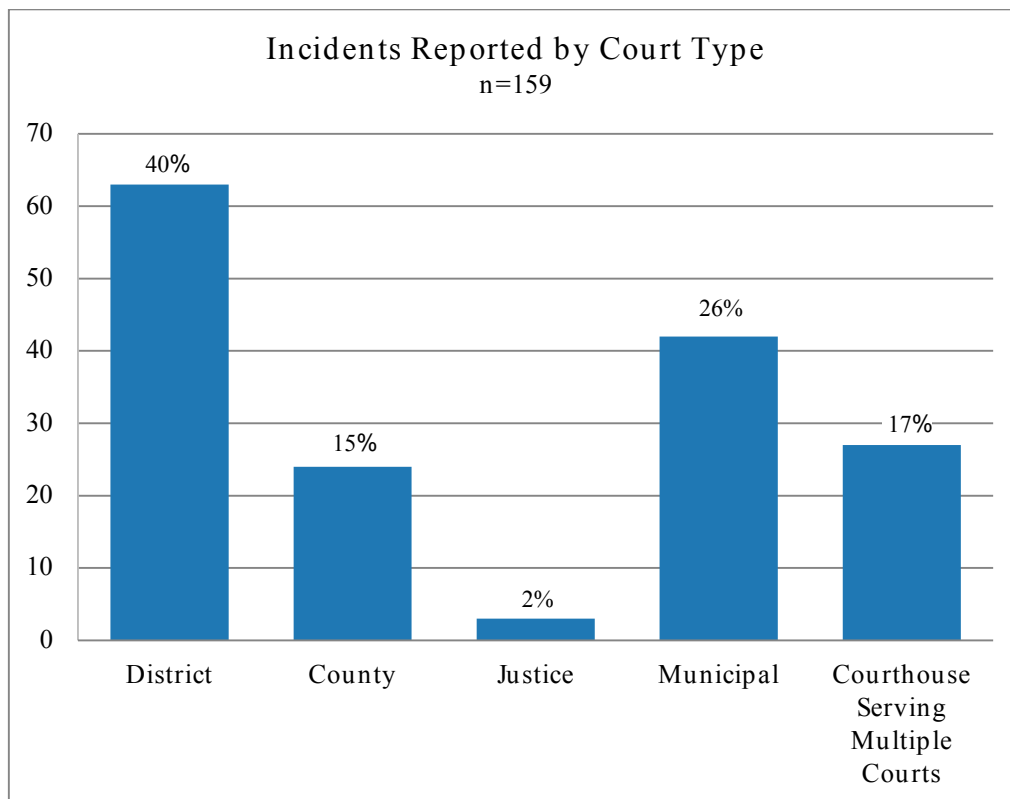
The purpose of the Security Incident Report is to collect concrete, quantitative information about the frequency and nature of the security threats facing the judiciary.

Total Incident Reports for FY 2013

Between September 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013, **159 incident reports** were submitted to OCA. This corresponds to an **average of 13 incidents per month**. In comparison, 130 incidents were reported during the previous fiscal year.

Incidents Reported by Court Type

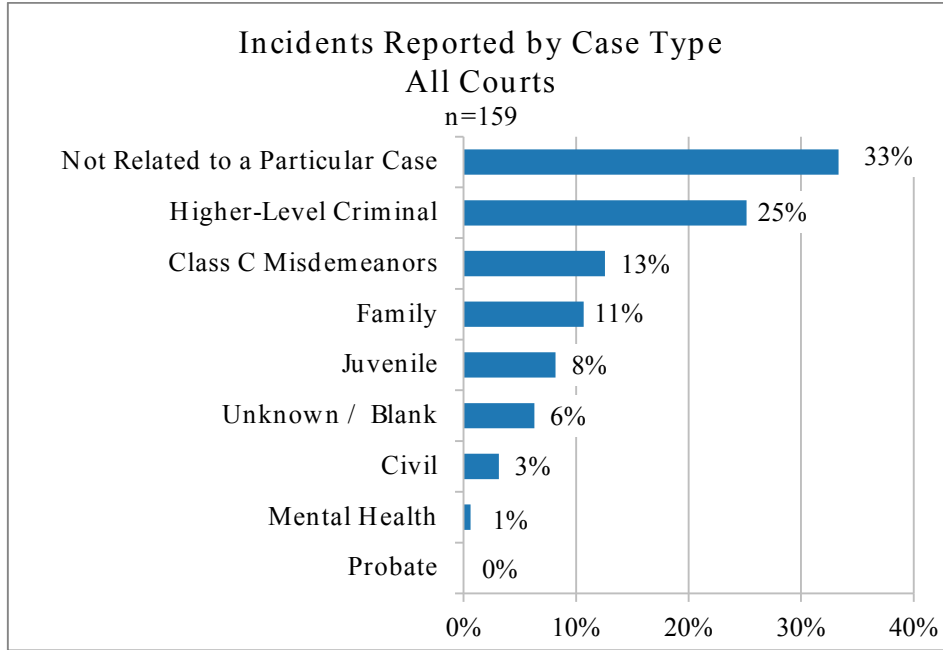
Of the 159 incident reports submitted, 40 percent were submitted by **district courts** (63 incidents), 15 percent by **county-level courts** (24 incidents), two percent by **justice courts** (three incidents), 26 percent by **municipal courts** (42 incidents), and 17 percent by a **courthouse serving multiple court types** (27 incidents).



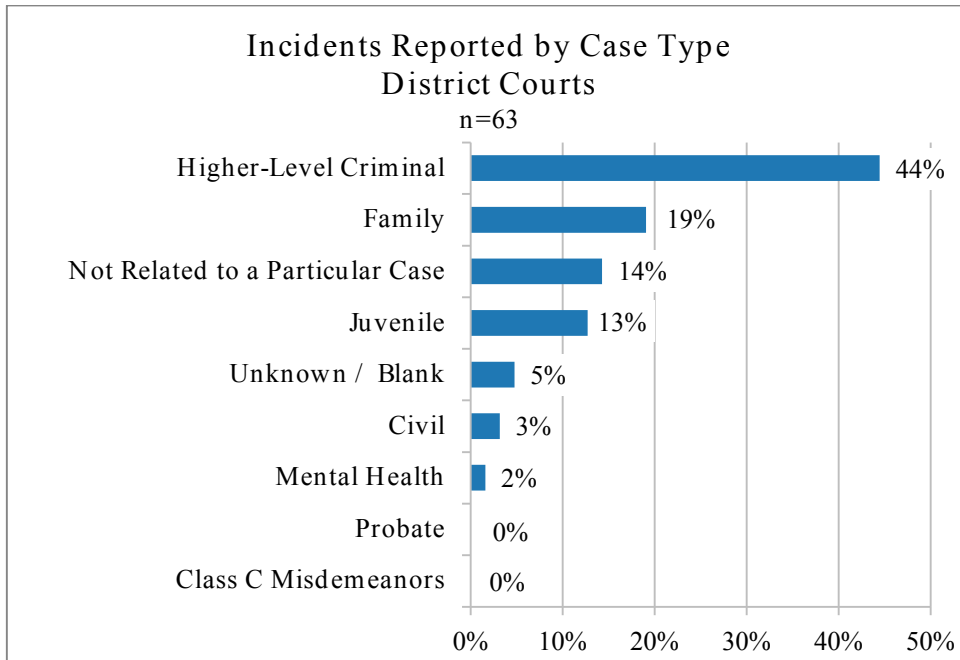
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Incidents Reported by Case Type

Thirty-three percent of all reported incidents were **not related to a particular case** (53 incidents). Twenty-five percent of all reported incidents involved **felony and higher level misdemeanor criminal cases** (40 incidents) while **Class C misdemeanor offenses** constituted 13 percent (20 incidents) of reported incidents.

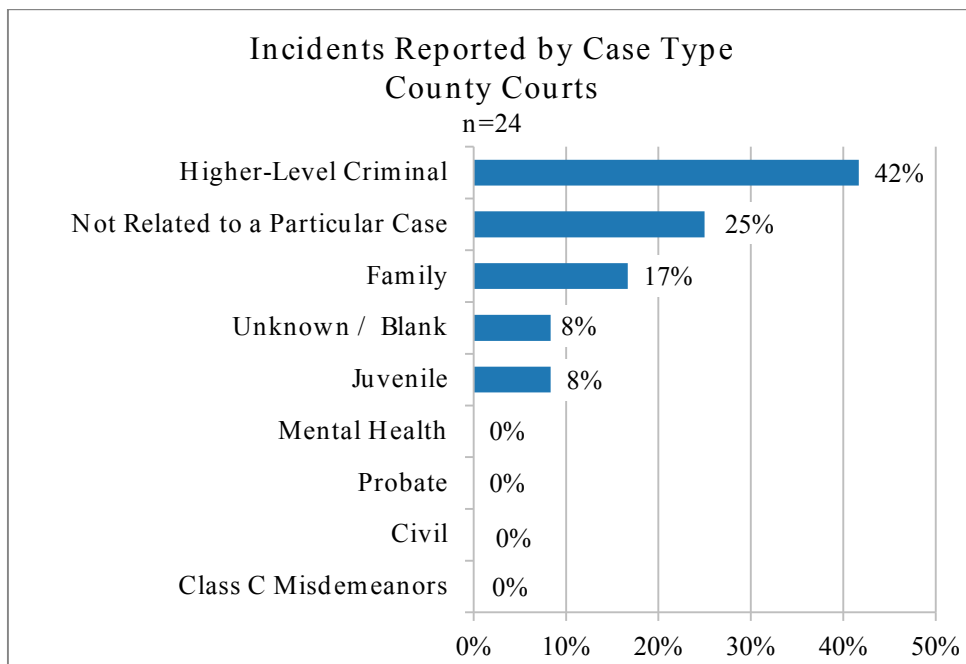


Of the incidents reported by district courts, 44 percent were related to **criminal cases** (28 incidents), and 19 percent involved **family cases** (12 incidents).



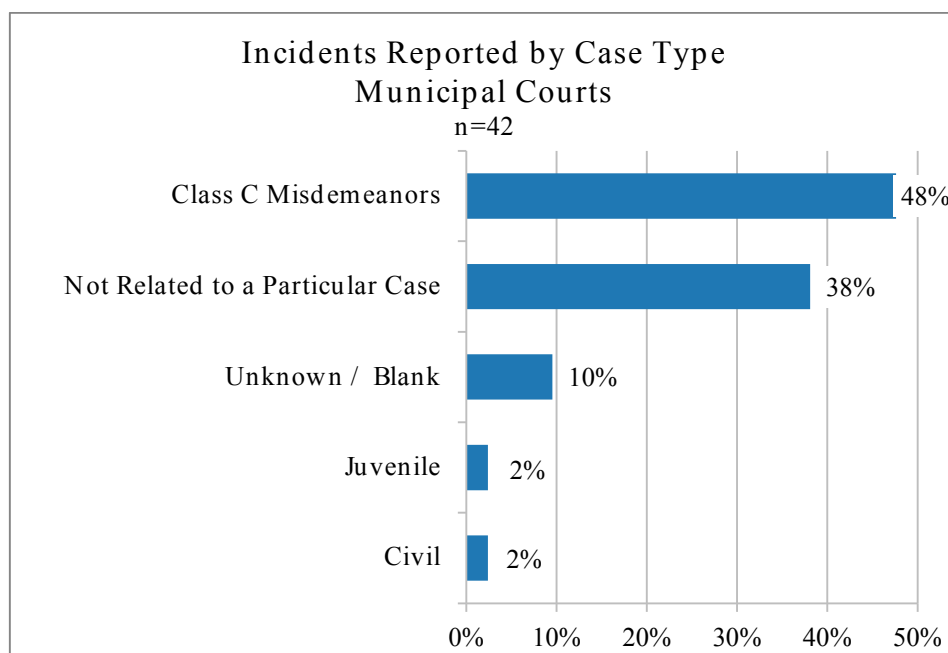
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Incidents reported by county-level courts were most often related to **higher-level misdemeanor cases** (42 percent, or 10 incidents).



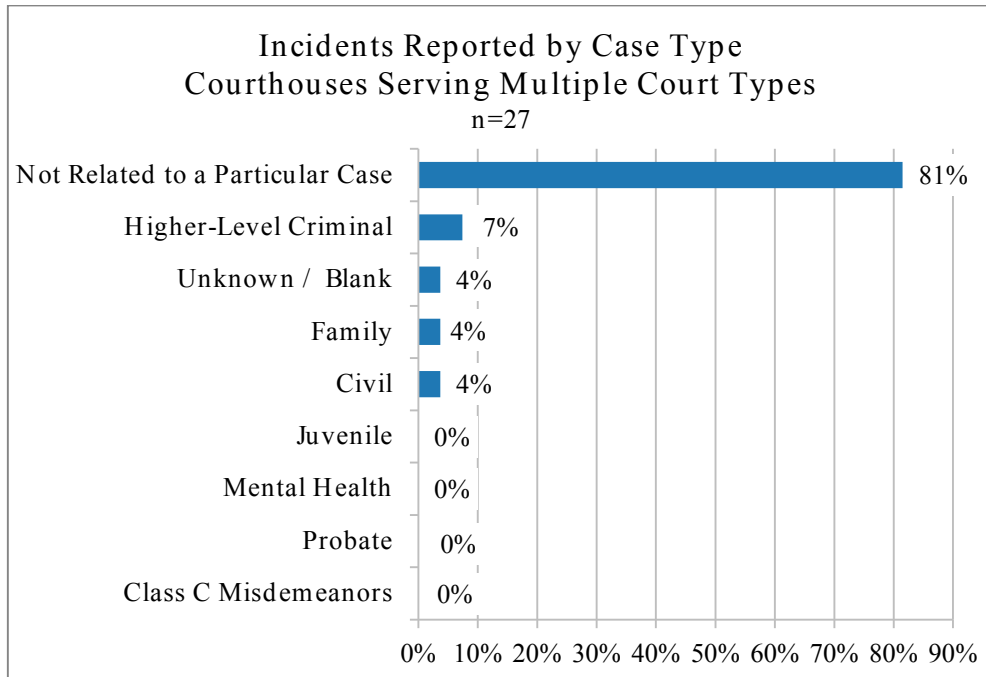
Only 3 incidents were reported by **justice courts**. One incident was related to a civil case, and two were related to juvenile cases.

Most incidents reported by municipal courts were related to **Class C misdemeanors** (48 percent, or 20 incidents), or **not related to a particular case** (38 percent, or 16 incidents).



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For courthouses that serve more than one court type, most incidents were **not related to a particular case** (22 incidents).

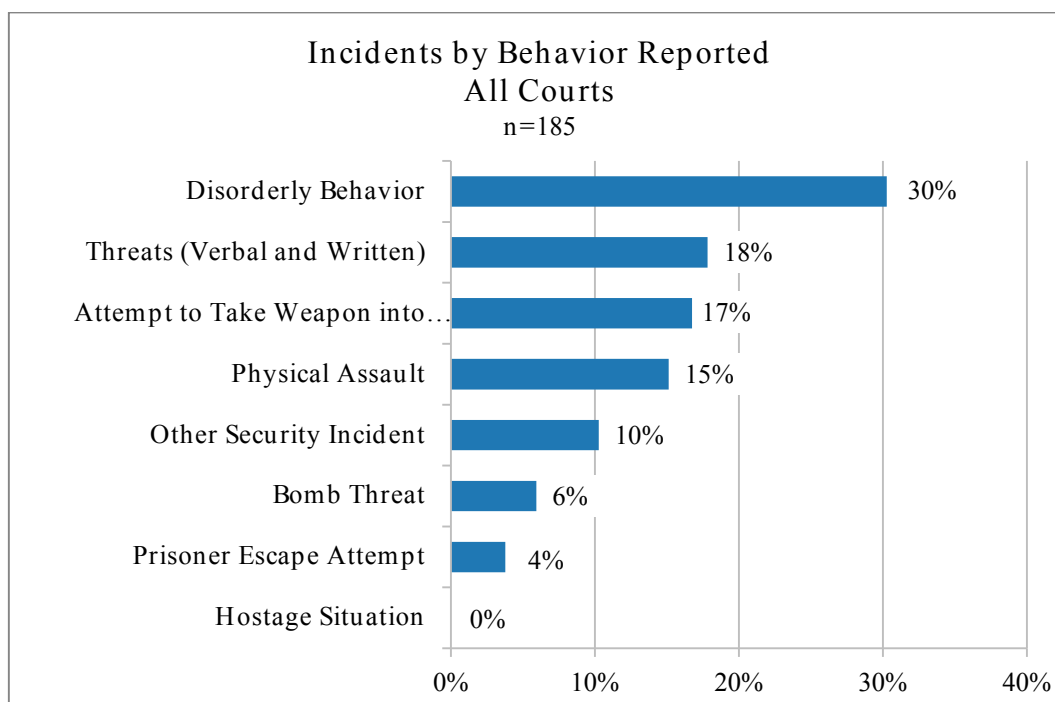


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Incidents by Behavior Reported

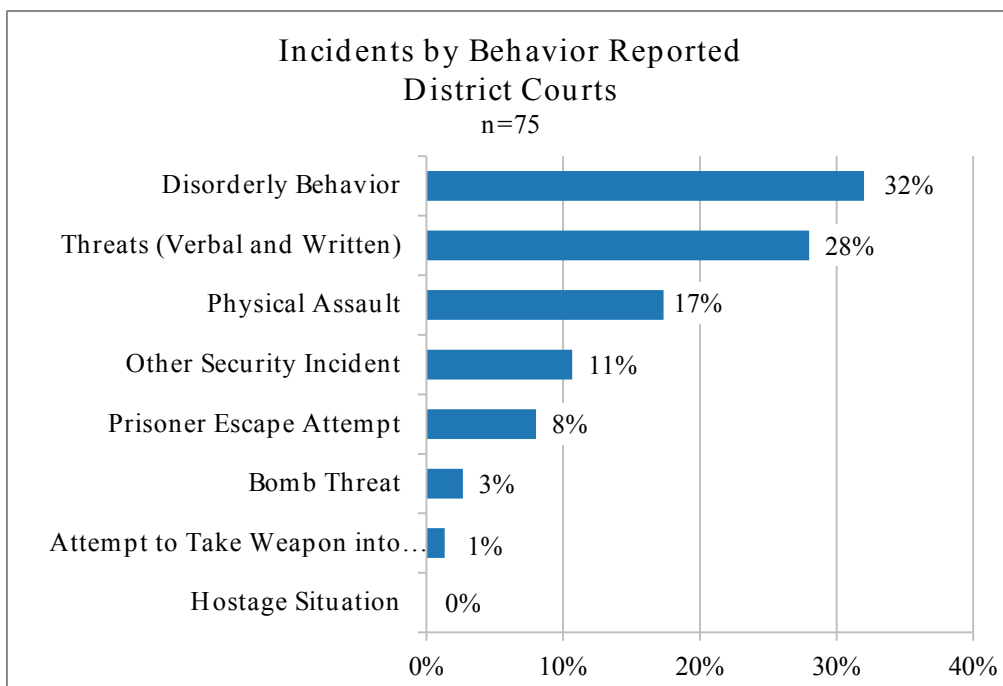
The following charts summarize the security incidents by type of behavior reported. Incidents may involve multiple behaviors; for example, a security incident may involve both a verbal threat and a physical assault. Therefore, the number of behaviors reported is more than the number of reported incidents (159 incidents).

Disorderly behavior (56 reports) accounted for 30 percent of all reported behaviors. The next most common behavior reported was **written or verbal threats** (18 percent, or 33 reports), followed closely by **attempts to take a weapon into a courthouse** (17 percent, or 31 reports) and **physical assault** (15 percent, or 28 reports).



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In district courts, **disorderly behavior** (24 reports) accounted for 32 percent of reported behaviors. The next most common behavior reported by district courts was **written or verbal threats** (28 percent, or 21 reports).



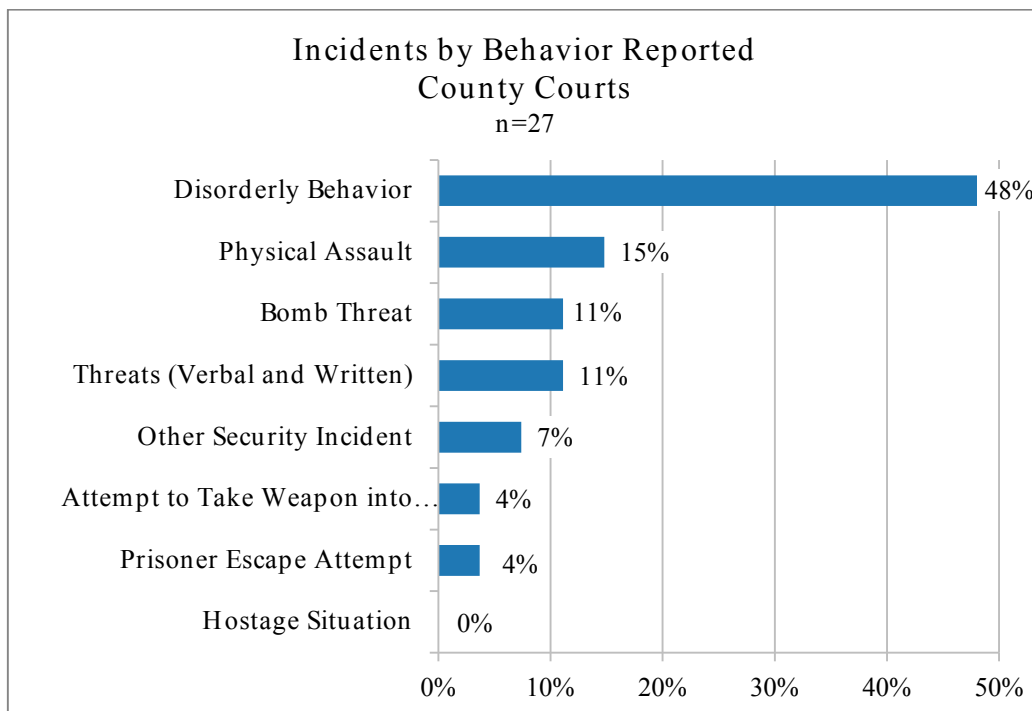
The following are examples of incidents that occurred in district courts during the year:

- The perpetrator in an incident was sentenced by a district judge to life in prison for murder. He sent a hand-written threatening letter to the judge indicating that he had resources on the outside.
- An attorney before a judge was asked if he knew the location of his client, a suspect for murder. The attorney repeatedly stated he did not know his client's location but was later observed by an undercover officer calling the client on his personal cell phone. The attorney was then followed down the courthouse stairs to the basement where the suspect was waiting. The suspect was arrested.
- An inmate called before a judge refused a restraint belt and would not place his hands behind his back before entering the courtroom as instructed. When he displayed a balled fist as a sign of aggression, the officer administered a burst of pepper spray. The perpetrator was subdued by officers and escorted to the nurse's station for treatment.
- After being sentenced, the defendant, a confirmed member of the Texas Syndicate, attempted to run at the judge while shouting that the court was "going to pay." The defendant further threatened physical violence against the court while trying to get loose from the bailiff to get to the judge. The defendant was successful in breaking away and smashed his shoulder through the glass door of the courtroom, shattering the glass. The defendant was again restrained by the bailiff and taken out of the courthouse. While exiting, the defendant managed to shatter the glass doors of the courthouse while

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continuing to threaten violence against the judge. The defendant's family then became aggressive and had to be removed from the courthouse property.

In county-level courts, **disorderly behavior** (13 reports) accounted for 48 percent of reported behaviors. The next most common behavior reported was **physical assault** (15 percent, or four reports).



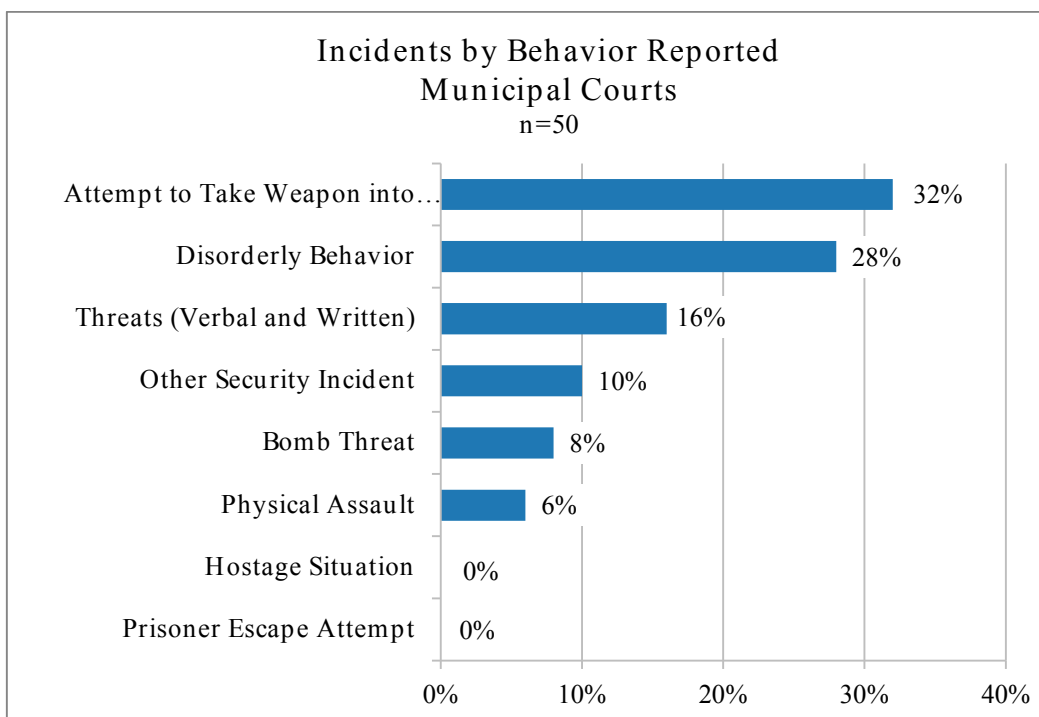
The following are examples of incidents that occurred in county-level courts during the year:

- A man involved in a child custody case with his ex-wife and her husband removed his shirt and threatened a physical confrontation with the couple while issuing verbal threats outside of the courtroom. He was apprehended on another floor of the courthouse when he attempted to flee.
- A juvenile in custody attempted to remove his restraints while waiting for the judge's order. A bailiff attempted to restrain the juvenile and a struggle ensued. The bailiff sustained injuries, including a broken wrist and dislocated shoulder.
- A district clerk's office received a call from an unknown male stating that there would be an explosion at the courthouse. The clerk who received the call stated that the caller's voice appeared to be disguised by a computerized device. Officers conducted a cursory check of the interior and exterior of the courthouse building; no suspicious packages were found.

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Only three incidents were reported from **justice courts**. Two incidents involved **disorderly behavior**, and the other concerned an **attempt to take a weapon into the courthouse**.

In municipal courts, an **attempt to take a weapon into the courthouse** accounted for 32 percent of reported behaviors (16 reports). The next most common behavior reported was **disorderly behavior** (28 percent, or 14 reports).

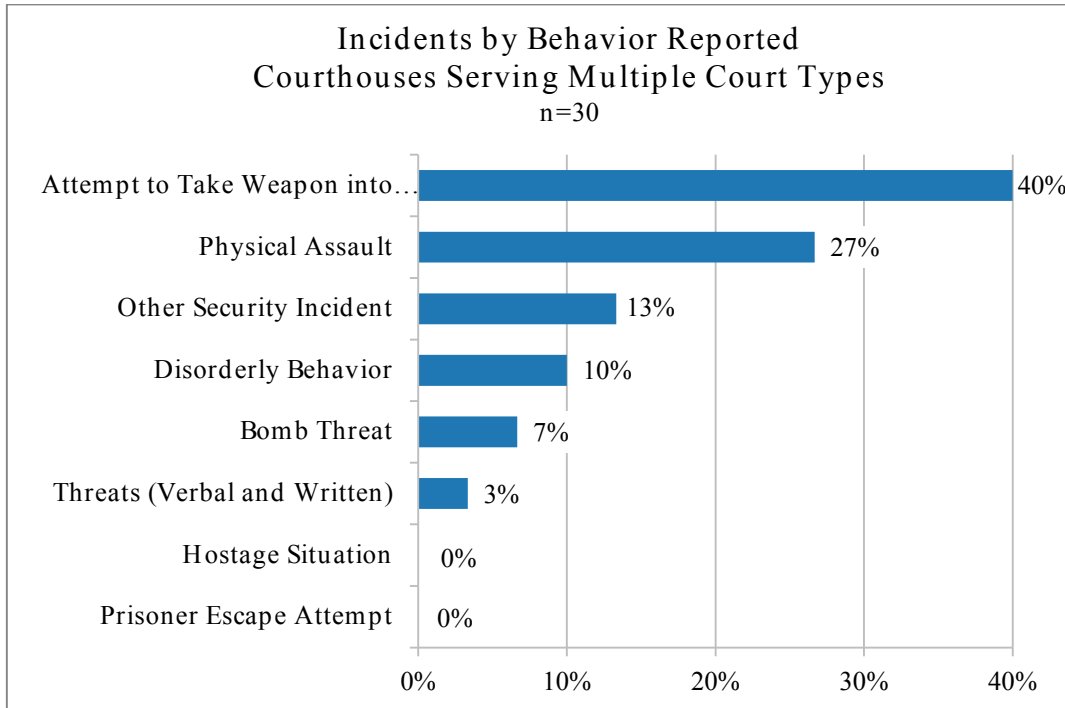


The following are some examples of incidents that occurred in municipal courts during the year:

- A defendant was stopped at a security checkpoint and told he could not enter the court room because of his ripped jeans. He became loud and disruptive but left the building only to return ten minutes later to continue arguing with the court security officers. The defendant was placed under arrest for outstanding warrants. He resisted arrest and struggled with the arresting officer, falling to the ground while handcuffed in an attempt to bring the officer down. The defendant was booked at the county jail.
- Two unrelated defendants engaged in a physical fight in the parking lot of a municipal court. One individual sustained minor injuries and the assault was documented by the local police department.
- A city employee handling a firearm in his vehicle in the court parking lot accidentally discharged the weapon as court employees were exiting the building. No injuries occurred.

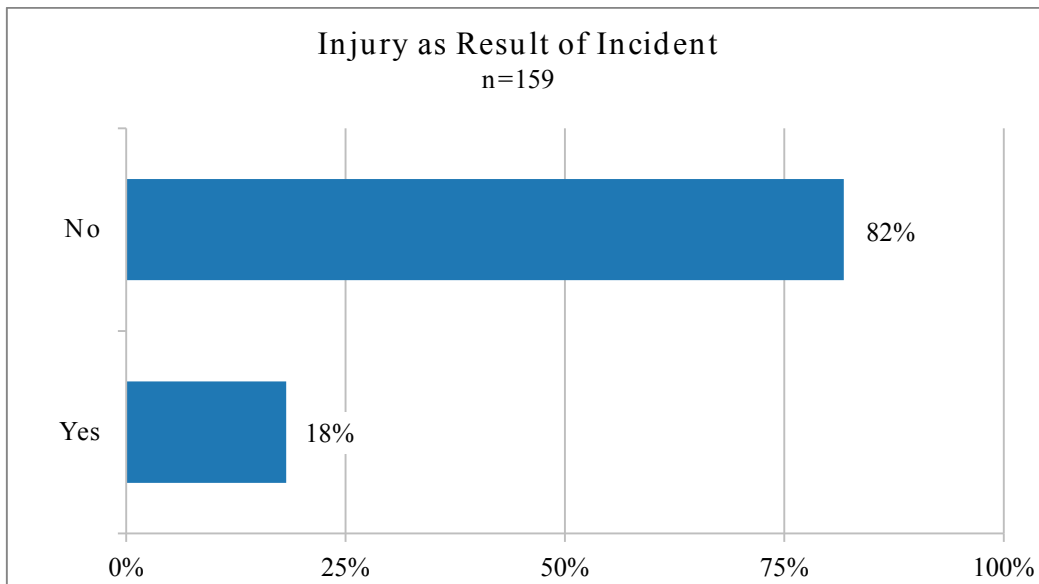
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In incidents involving courthouses serving multiple court types, an **attempt to take a weapon into the courthouse** accounted for the majority of reported behaviors (40 percent, or 12 reports).



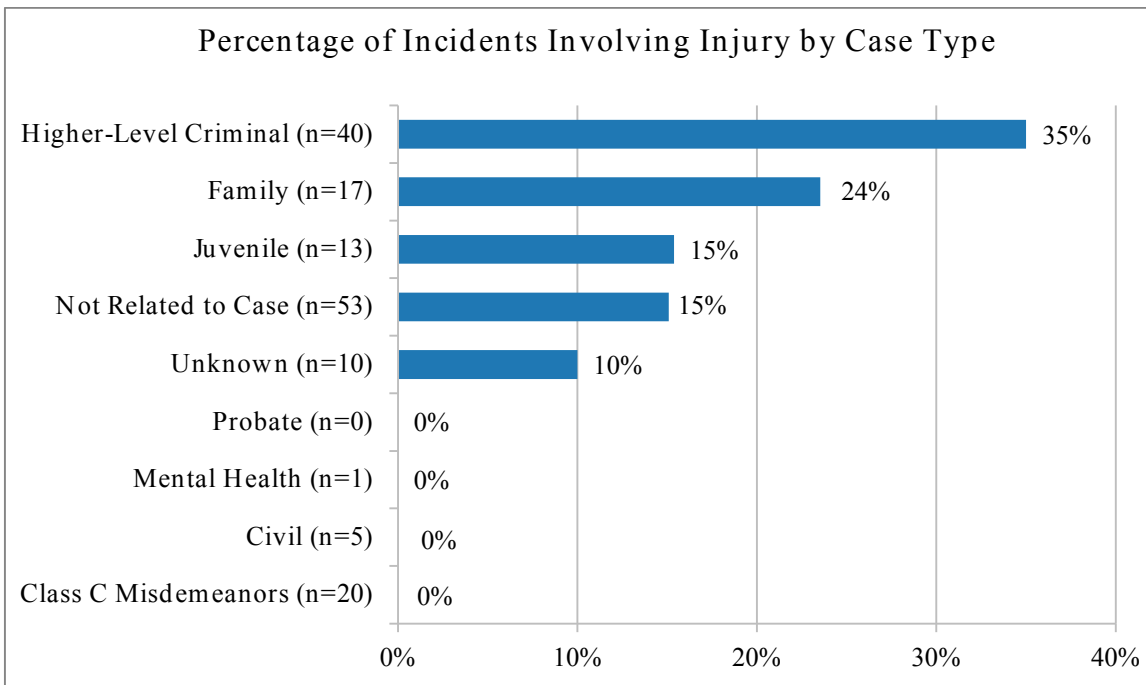
Incidents Resulting in Injury

Eighteen percent of the reported incidents resulted in **injury** (29 incidents). In 82 percent of incidents, **no injuries** were reported (130 incidents).

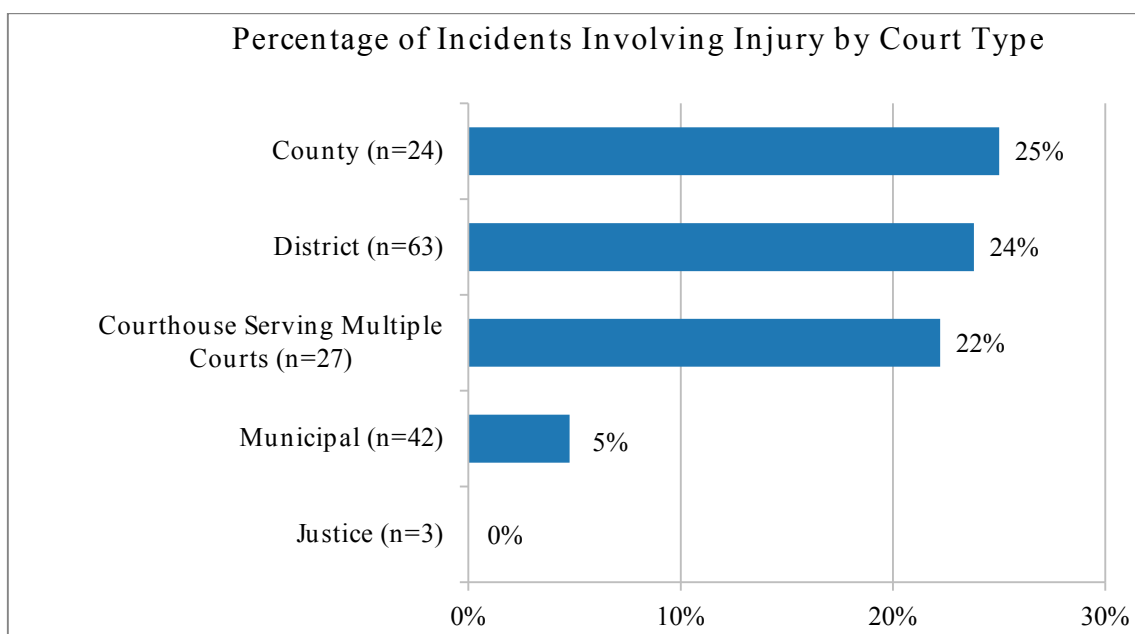


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More than a third (35 percent) of incidents related to a **felony or class A or B misdemeanor** case resulted in an injury, as did nearly a quarter (24 percent) of incidents related to **family** cases. Fifteen percent of incidents related to **juvenile** cases and incidents **not related to a particular case** resulted in an injury.



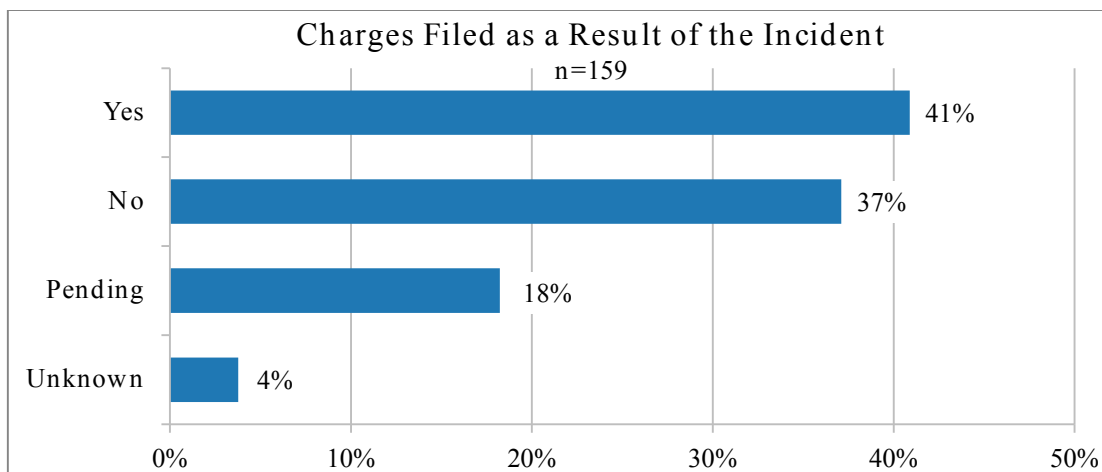
Approximately one-quarter of incidents reported from **county** and **district** courts involved injury, as did 22 percent of incidents reported from **courthouses serving multiple court types**. An injury occurred in five percent of incidents reported from **municipal** courts.



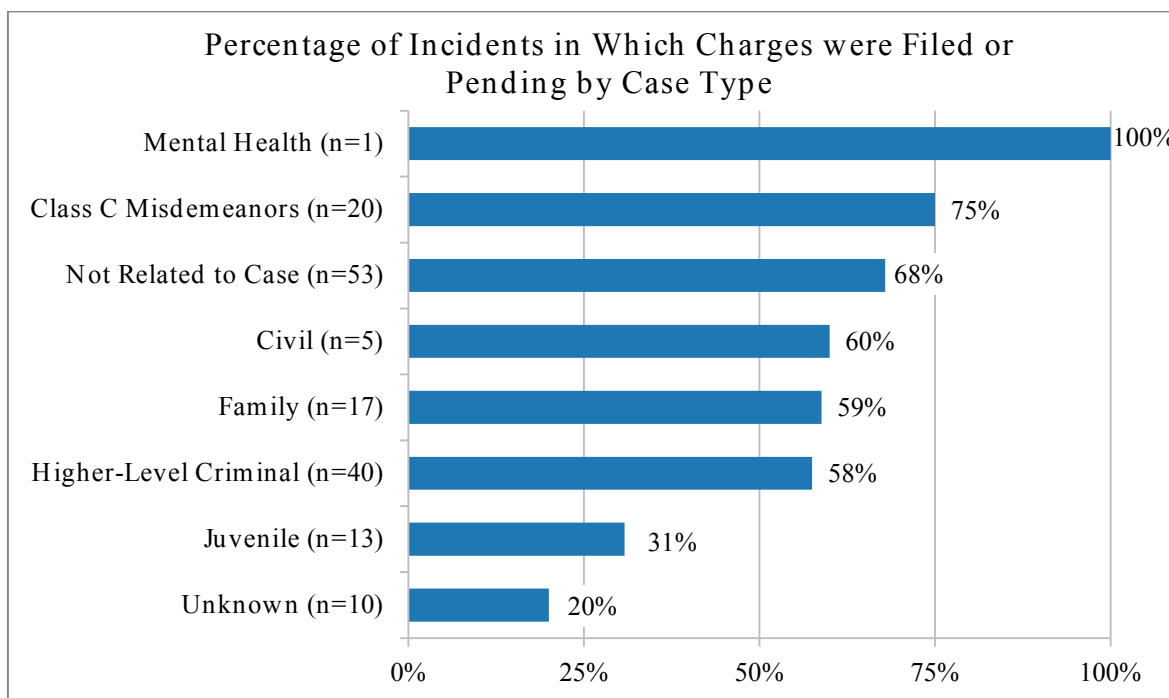
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Incidents Resulting in Charges Filed

Charges were filed in 41 percent of reported incidents (65 incidents). In 18 percent of the incidents, **charges were pending** (29 incidents). **Charges were not filed** in 37 percent of the incidents (59 incidents).

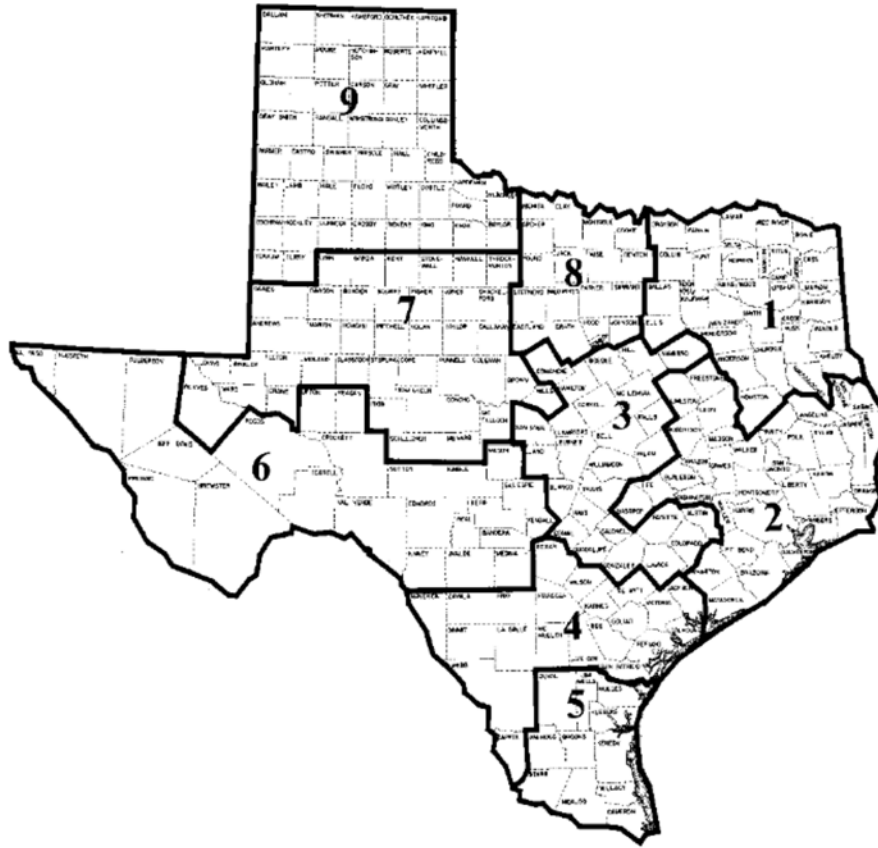


Charges were most frequently filed in cases related to **mental health** (100 percent, but involved only one case) and **class C misdemeanors** (75 percent).



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Incidents Reported by Administrative Judicial Region (AJR)



Incidents Reported by Administrative Judicial Region		
Region	Number of Incidents	Percentage of All Incidents
1	28	18%
2	30	19%
3	37	23%
4	37	23%
5	2	1%
6	6	4%
7	6	4%
8	9	6%
9	4	3%
Total	159	100%

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Incident Reports Submitted by District Courts				
County	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Bell	4	1	3	8
Bexar	25	16	12	53
Bowie	2	0	0	2
Chambers	1	0	0	1
Clay	1	0	0	1
Collin	1	0	1	2
Coryell	0	0	1	1
Dallas	20	13	12	45
Eastland	1	0	0	1
Fannin	0	0	2	2
Fort Bend	1	1	1	3
Galveston	0	0	1	1
Gonzales	1	1	0	2
Gray	1	0	0	1
Guadalupe	1	0	1	2
Harris	0	0	9	9
Harrison	0	1	1	2
Hill	3	0	0	3
Hood	0	2	0	2
Hunt	1	0	0	1
Jefferson	6	3	0	9
Johnson	0	0	1	1
Kleberg	0	0	1	1
Lubbock	3	0	1	4
Matagorda	1	3	1	5
Midland	3	0	0	3
Montgomery	11	2	1	14
Nueces	0	1	0	1
Rockwall	1	0	0	1
Rusk	0	1	1	2

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Incident Reports Submitted by District Courts (continued)				
County	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Starr	1	0	0	1
Tarrant	1	5	5	11
Tom Green	1	2	3	6
Travis	6	1	3	10
Van Zandt	0	0	1	1
Victoria	0	1	0	1
Webb	2	2	1	5
Wilson	2	0	0	2
Total	101	56	63	220

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Incident Reports Submitted by County-Level Courts				
County	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Bell	1	0	0	1
Bexar	4	5	4	13
Caldwell	0	0	1	1
Cass	0	1	0	1
Collin	0	1	0	1
Dallas	1	4	6	11
El Paso	0	3	3	6
Fort Bend	0	2	0	2
Gray	0	1	0	1
Guadalupe	1	0	0	1
Harris	0	0	5	5
Hill	1	0	0	1
Jefferson	4	1	0	5
Matagorda	0	1	0	1
Midland	0	0	2	2
Montgomery	1	0	0	1
Rockwall	1	0	0	1
Tarrant	0	1	0	1
Travis	3	0	3	6
Webb	4	0	0	4
Total	21	20	24	65

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Incident Reports Submitted by Justice Courts				
County	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Aransas	0	0	1	1
Harris	3	0	1	4
Hood	0	1	0	1
Kaufman	1	1	0	2
Lubbock	0	0	1	1
Titus	1	0	0	1
Total	5	2	3	10

Incident Reports Submitted by Municipal Courts				
City	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Angleton	0	1	0	1
Arlington	0	1	0	1
Austin	11	10	24	45
Balch Springs	0	0	1	1
Baytown	0	1	0	1
Beaumont	0	0	1	1
Brazoria	0	1	0	1
Bryan	6	1	3	10
College Station	1	0	0	1
Conroe	0	0	1	1
Corsicana	0	1	0	1
El Paso	2	0	1	3
Eules	1	1	0	2
Ferris	1	0	0	1
Forney	4	1	0	5
Fort Worth	1	6	1	8
Frisco	0	0	1	1
Gun Barrel City	1	0	0	1
Houston	2	0	4	6

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Incident Reports Submitted by Municipal Courts (continued)				
City	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Hurst	1	0	1	2
La Marque	0	1	0	1
Lockhart	1	0	0	1
Longview	0	1	0	1
Mercedes	0	0	1	1
Mission	1	0	0	1
Missouri City	0	2	0	2
North Richland Hills	0	1	0	1
Pearland	0	0	1	1
Rockwall	0	2	0	2
Round Rock	0	1	0	1
San Angelo	2	1	1	4
San Antonio	1	0	0	1
Tom Bean	0	0	1	1
Yoakum	1	0	0	1
Total	37	33	42	112

Incident Reports Submitted—Not Related to a Particular Court				
County	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Bexar	17	18	19	54
El Paso	0	0	2	2
Fannin	0	0	1	1
Lubbock	1	0	2	3
Montgomery	0	0	1	1
Tarrant	0	1	1	2
Travis	2	0	1	3
Total	20	19	27	66

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