

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 2020

Nature of Suit	Fiscal Year										
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2010	2005	2000	1995	1990 ¹
Total Cases	470,581	297,877	282,936	267,769	291,851	279,036	282,895	253,273	259,517	248,335	226,523
Contract Actions, Total	26,592	25,264	26,768	23,523	24,486	26,068	31,109	28,020	53,625	31,182	46,103
Franchise ¹	247	281	308	263	342	382	357	171	-	-	-
Insurance	11,630	10,757	10,816	8,846	8,872	9,711	9,380	7,804	7,517	7,540	6,884
Marine	745	676	663	652	805	907	1,344	1,435	2,446	2,622	3,313
Miller Act	264	260	266	270	331	398	276	387	769	775	1,569
Negotiable Instruments	356	431	418	484	481	505	956	447	495	1,536	2,997
Recovery of Overpayments and Enforcement of Judgments	669	969	1,131	1,368	1,582	2,186	3,426	3,309	24,838	1,822	10,942
Student Loans ²	41	260	483	698	950	1,546	2,741	2,883	24,404	1,142	5,365
Veterans' Benefits ³	4	-	6	25	4	7	16	8	43	253	4,963
Other	624	709	642	645	628	633	669	418	391	361	550
Other Contract Actions	12,681	11,890	13,166	11,640	12,073	11,979	15,370	14,467	17,560	16,887	20,398
Real Property Actions, Total	4,790	6,870	7,029	7,920	9,247	9,195	7,432	4,561	6,711	6,869	9,505
Condemnation of Land	341	352	595	210	568	339	173	251	1,243	334	462
Foreclosure	1,808	2,968	3,042	3,972	4,809	4,256	4,267	3,012	4,209	4,972	7,196
Rent, Lease, and Ejectment	710	1,156	1,016	1,072	970	688	254	154	175	310	349
Torts to Land, Including Product Liability	740	844	703	606	762	1,554	661	380	377	401	405
Other Real Property Actions	1,191	1,550	1,673	2,060	2,138	2,358	2,077	764	707	852	1,093
Tort Actions, Total	263,231	85,483	67,693	57,467	61,495	68,879	83,055	51,335	36,586	53,986	45,909
Personal Injury, Total [4]	259,385	81,530	63,564	53,609	55,283	61,093	78,350	47,364	32,621	50,565	42,743
Personal Injury/Product Liability	239,980	56,157	45,863	35,714	39,879	41,764	63,203	29,537	14,428	27,547	18,839
Other Personal Injury, Total	19,405	25,373	17,701	17,895	15,404	19,329	15,147	17,827	18,193	23,018	23,904
Airplane	224	271	192	208	185	191	300	351	747	683	834
Marine	1,377	1,400	1,465	1,476	1,515	1,125	1,393	1,667	2,006	2,277	2,961
Motor Vehicle	5,459	5,077	4,836	4,425	4,039	3,743	3,546	4,091	4,690	5,374	6,157
Assault, Libel, and Slander	598	594	612	550	559	591	559	647	801	826	644
Federal Employers Liability Act	355	434	413	379	316	296	480	748	1,108	1,903	2,741
Medical Malpractice	1,019	1,222	1,160	1,252	1,347	1,135	1,115	1,221	1,526	1,328	1,375
Other	10,373	16,375	9,023	9,605	7,443	12,248	7,754	9,102	7,315	10,627	7,202
Personal Property Damage, Total	3,846	3,953	4,129	3,858	6,212	7,786	4,705	3,971	3,965	3,421	3,166
Fraud, Including Truth in Lending	2,263	2,370	2,459	2,349	3,416	2,396	2,902	2,465	2,265	1,881	1,492
Other Personal Property Damage	1,583	1,583	1,670	1,509	2,796	5,390	1,803	1,506	1,700	1,540	1,674

Table 4.4 (2020—Continued)

Nature of Suit	Fiscal Year										
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2010	2005	2000	1995	1990 ¹
Actions Under Statutes, Total	175,968	180,260	181,446	178,859	196,623	174,894	161,297	169,265	162,583	156,209	124,880
Antitrust	672	521	557	655	853	769	544	818	858	781	472
Bankruptcy, Total	1,867	2,487	2,144	2,122	2,304	2,814	2,696	3,000	3,361	5,046	5,056
Appeal (28 U.S.C. 158)	1,633	2,233	1,846	1,855	1,952	2,272	2,177	2,435	2,785	4,312	4,231
Withdrawal (28 U.S.C. 157)	234	254	298	267	352	542	519	565	576	734	825
Banks and Banking	145	161	144	191	262	237	647	258	205	432	700
Civil Rights, Total [5]	41,044	43,155	41,741	38,925	38,002	37,384	34,872	36,096	40,908	36,600	18,793
Voting	234	117	93	112	144	86	102	166	167	208	130
Employment	11,174	12,456	12,579	12,053	11,878	12,205	14,543	16,930	21,032	19,059	8,413
Housing and Accommodations	752	970	848	831	900	775	687	885	1,284	735	341
Welfare	-	-	-	-	-	-	58	54	80	116	129
ADA -- Employment [6]	2,338	2,561	2,624	2,353	2,231	2,076	1,522	586	-	-	-
ADA -- Other [6]	11,273	11,833	9,990	8,003	7,096	5,156	2,309	1,016	-	-	-
Education	794	758	745	606	548	525	-	-	-	-	-
Other Civil Rights	14,479	14,460	14,862	14,967	15,205	16,561	15,651	16,459	18,345	16,482	9,780
Environmental Matters	442	590	1,956	988	1,755	845	942	714	886	1,081	958
Deportation	12	10	23	18	10	20	61	201	213	106	61
Prisoner Petitions, Total	56,195	55,018	54,134	57,685	73,725	52,531	52,583	61,238	58,257	63,550	42,630
Motions to Vacate Sentence	6,834	5,877	5,342	7,205	24,837	5,520	5,858	10,361	6,341	5,988	2,970
Habeas Corpus--General	15,960	16,902	16,964	17,336	17,356	18,448	19,825	24,633	24,945	14,975	12,790
Habeas Corpus--Death Penalty	120	154	161	220	202	194	208	240	274	-	-
Mandamus and Other	1,784	1,087	1,253	960	892	837	952	1,390	1,192	908	876
Civil Rights	18,820	19,350	18,842	18,986	20,622	17,829	16,951	16,005	14,151	41,679	25,992
Prison Condition	10,182	10,095	9,708	11,199	8,307	8,690	8,107	8,609	11,354	-	-
Habeas Corpus--Alien Detainees	2,261	1,346	1,674	1,502	1,134	670	682	-	-	-	-
Civil Detainee--Conditions of Confinement	234	207	190	277	375	343	-	-	-	-	-
Forfeiture and Penalty, Total	985	1,123	1,215	1,184	1,068	1,471	2,268	2,298	2,320	2,517	6,224
Agricultural Acts	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	27	57	155	84
Food and Drug Act	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	49	110	197	739
Drug-Related Seizure of Property	483	626	660	591	499	688	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

Table 4.4 (2020—Continued)

Nature of Suit	Fiscal Year										
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2010	2005	2000	1995	1990 ¹
Other Forfeiture and Penalty Suits	502	497	555	593	569	783	908	852	1,025	1,079	3,378
Labor Laws, Total	15,177	16,641	17,629	17,631	18,929	19,322	18,624	18,322	14,142	14,954	22,567
Fair Labor Standards Act	6,663	7,196	7,600	7,742	8,686	8,781	6,825	4,039	1,935	1,580	1,282
Labor Management Relations Act	470	537	660	596	675	690	1,094	1,674	1,542	1,984	2,342
Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	88	101	161	181
Railway Labor Act	71	60	46	65	60	45	66	104	137	172	199
Employee Retirement Income Security Act	5,253	6,096	6,705	6,632	6,831	7,228	9,216	11,171	9,124	9,517	8,726
Family and Medical Leave Act	1,274	1,316	1,250	1,308	1,255	1,139	-	-	-	-	-
Other Labor Litigation	1,446	1,436	1,368	1,288	1,422	1,439	1,353	1,246	1,303	1,540	9,837
Immigration, Total [7]	2,588	2,161	1,761	1,811	1,637	1,321	1,183	-	-	-	-
Naturalization Applications	357	391	350	271	307	260	402	-	-	-	-
Other Immigration Actions	2,231	1,770	1,411	1,540	1,330	1,061	781	-	-	-	-
Intellectual Property Rights, Total	9,964	12,582	12,690	10,768	12,111	13,751	8,966	12,184	8,738	6,866	5,700
Copyright	3,224	5,467	5,756	3,451	3,936	5,035	2,013	5,796	2,050	2,417	2,095
Patent	3,627	3,275	3,493	4,182	5,080	5,564	3,301	2,720	2,484	1,723	1,187
Patent—Abbreviated New Drug Application	282	314	337	137	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trademark	2,831	3,526	3,104	2,998	3,095	3,152	3,652	3,668	4,204	2,726	2,418
Securities, Commodities, and Exchanges	1,840	1,769	1,532	1,455	1,119	1,013	1,397	2,038	2,678	1,906	2,629
Social Security Laws, Total [8]	21,110	17,912	18,665	19,020	18,716	18,538	14,016	15,487	15,829	9,354	7,439
Disability Insurance	11,234	9,464	9,549	9,147	8,616	8,578	6,141	7,024	8,122	5,501	5,212
Supplemental Security Income	8,917	7,401	8,132	8,855	9,151	9,210	7,088	7,675	6,762	3,347	1,836
Retirement and Survivors Benefits	842	985	914	932	851	656	715	710	855	414	249
Other	117	62	70	86	98	94	72	78	90	-	-
Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act	991	1,810	2,244	684	771	678	993	781	829	900	1,214
State Reapportionment Suits	5	11	6	4	6	3	6	8	2	7	2,604
Tax Suits	537	728	925	1,016	938	989	1,190	1,385	907	2,202	38
Customer Challenge	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	21	12	33	38
Consumer Credit [9]	10,447	10,870	10,764	10,531	9,745	9,801	8,453	1,192	-	-	-
Cable/Satellite TV [9]	322	432	597	678	691	1,162	1,014	710	-	-	-
Freedom of Information Act	790	853	872	660	490	514	298	404	341	467	407
Constitutionality of State Statutes	420	341	338	484	358	383	329	310	288	309	315
Other Statutory Actions	10,415	11,085	11,509	12,349	13,133	11,348	10,206	11,800	11,809	9,098	8,211

Table 4.4 (2020—Continued)

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.

[9] Collection of data for this category began in 2008.

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