



# Utah State Courts



## JUVENILE COURT REPORT CARD TO THE COMMUNITY 2015

When citizens are asked what they would like the juvenile justice system to accomplish, the message is clear. Citizens expect the justice system to further community safety, hold offenders accountable, and protect the constitutional rights of juveniles, while at the same time providing justice to victims. They also expect juvenile offenders to stop criminal behavior and become responsible and productive citizens.

Taxpayers invest significant resources in the justice system and should expect a sound return on this investment. The purpose of this report card is to provide taxpayers with an update on how Utah's juvenile justice system is performing. The Juvenile Court has established benchmarks, which are listed in this report, to inform the community on its progress in furthering safety, restoring justice for victims, and reducing the risk of re-offending.

The Juvenile Court can and should be held accountable for its performance on these measures. Through the sound use of tax dollars and the involvement of the community, greater public safety can be achieved. Working together we can build a safer and more just community.

# DELINQUENCY REFERRALS



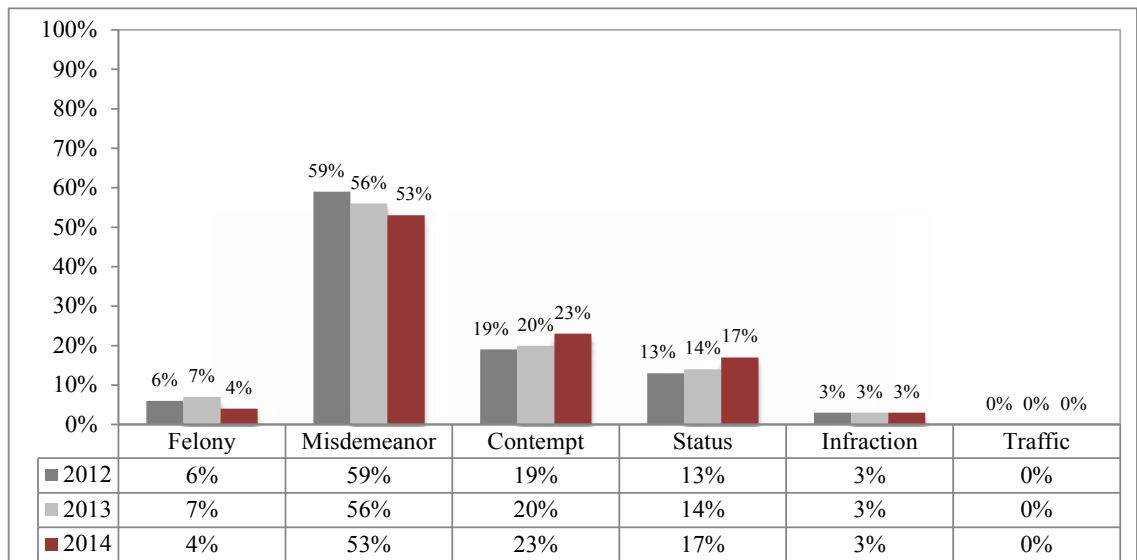
Delinquency referrals are an important measure of juvenile crime. When a juvenile commits an offense in the community, he or she may be referred to the Juvenile Court by a number of different agencies, such as the local police department or school. The type of crime determines the severity of the referral to the Juvenile Court.

There are five major severity categories for delinquency referrals: felonies, misdemeanors, contempt of court, status, and infraction. Felony-level offenses, such as burglary or robbery, are the most severe. These offenses are defined as those punishable with more than one year in prison, if committed by an adult. Misdemeanor-level offenses, such as theft or shoplifting, are less severe offenses that would be punishable with up to one year in jail and/or a fine, if committed by an adult. Status offenses, such as truancy or tobacco possession, are offenses that would not be a violation of the law but for the age of the offender. Infractions, such as disorderly conduct or criminal trespass, are lesser offenses that are not punishable by imprisonment. Certain traffic offenses are also referred to the Juvenile Court when committed by a juvenile. In 2011, traffic offenses were re-categorized to reflect their specific offenses severity. For more information on the classification of offenses, please see the Utah Code.

Most delinquency cases referred to the Juvenile Court in 2014 were misdemeanor offenses or contempt offenses. Misdemeanor offenses accounted for 53 percent of delinquency referrals, and contempt offenses accounted for 23 percent of delinquency referrals. Felonies, the most severe type of offense, accounted for 4 percent of delinquency referrals.

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## DELINQUENCY REFERRALS

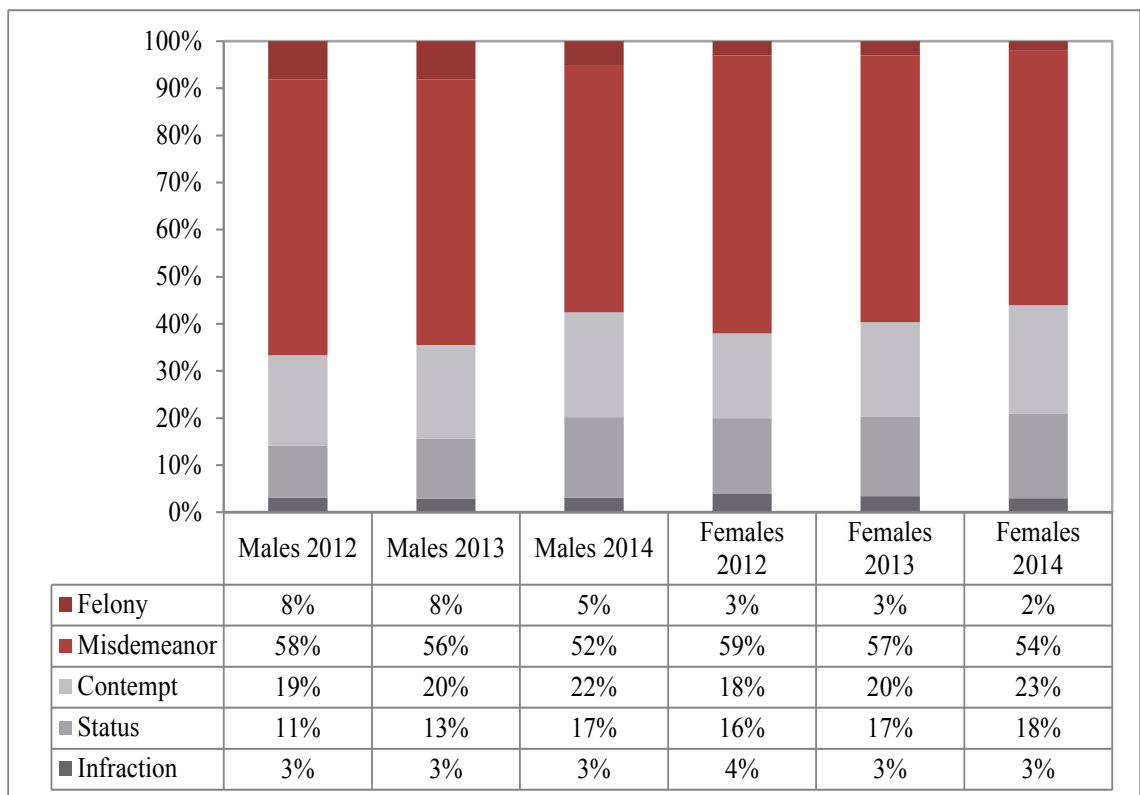


Delinquency referral rates vary for male and female juveniles. For example, in 2014 there were a higher percentage of status offense referrals for females than there were for males. While 17 percent of referrals for males were for status offenses, 18 percent of female referrals were for status offenses. In contrast, there was a higher percentage of felony offense referrals for males than there were for females. Five percent of referrals for males were for felony offenses while just 2 percent of referrals for females were for felony offenses. Five percent of referrals for males were for felony offenses while just 2 percent of referrals for females were for felony offenses.

When examining cross year trends for males, the percentage of referrals for misdemeanors decreased and the percentage of referrals for status offenses increased. For females, the percentage of referrals for misdemeanors also decreased, and the percentage of contempt referrals increased 5 percent between 2012 and 2014.



#### DELINQUENCY REFERRALS BY GENDER



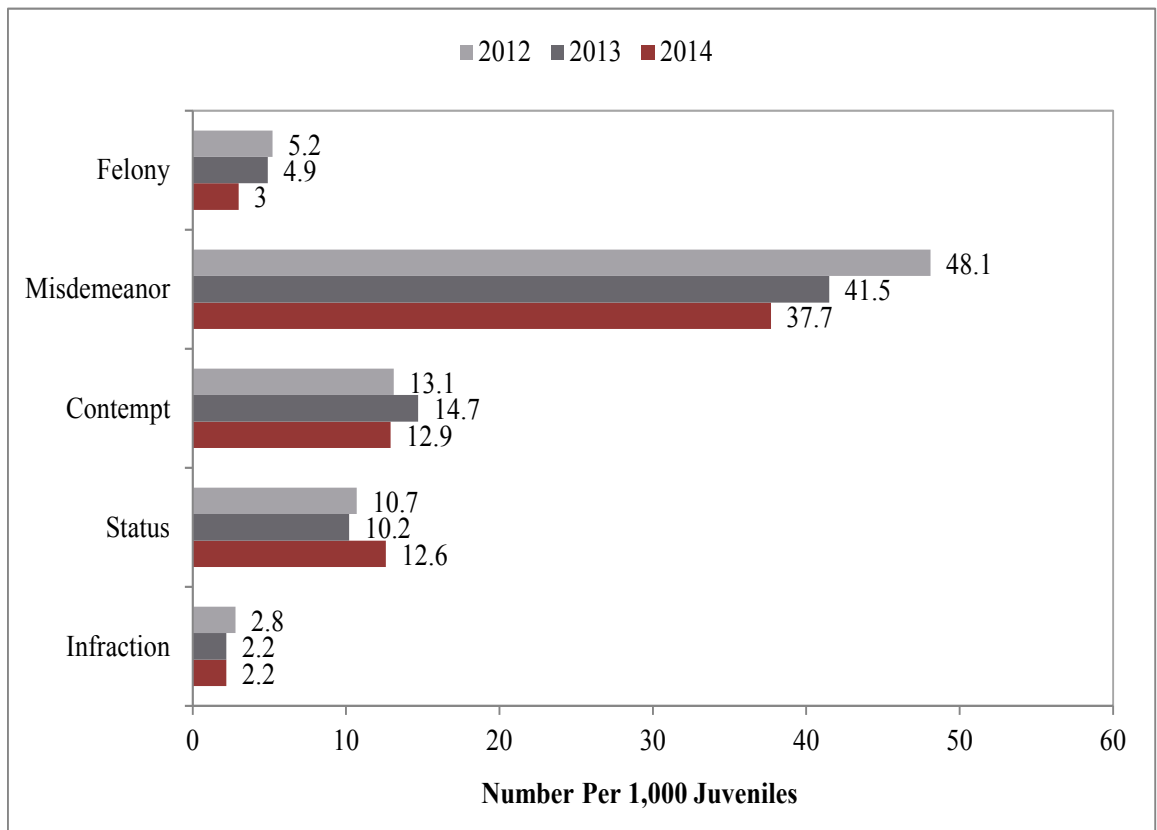
# JUVENILE CRIME

Another key indicator of juvenile delinquency is the per capita rate of delinquency referrals. The per capita referral rate examines the number of delinquency referrals for youth 10 to 17 years of age per 1,000 members of the Utah population of the same age range. This measure compares juvenile crime referral trends across years while controlling for changes in the juvenile population size.



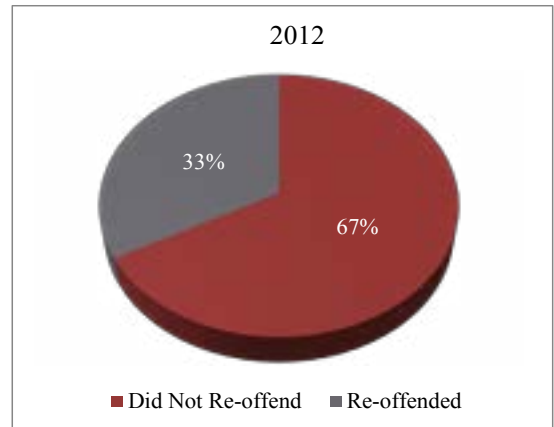
The per capita rate of felony referrals in 2014 was 3 per 1,000 youth, which was lower than the rate in 2013 of 4.9 felony referrals per 1,000 youth. The per capita rate of misdemeanor and contempt referrals also declined between 2013 and 2014. The only measure to increase between 2013 and 2014 were referrals for status offenses. These referrals increased from 10.2 per 1,000 youth to 12.6 per 1,000 youth. During this time period, referrals for infractions remained the same at 2.2 per 1,000 youth.

PER CAPITA REFERRAL RATES



# LAW ABIDING BEHAVIOR

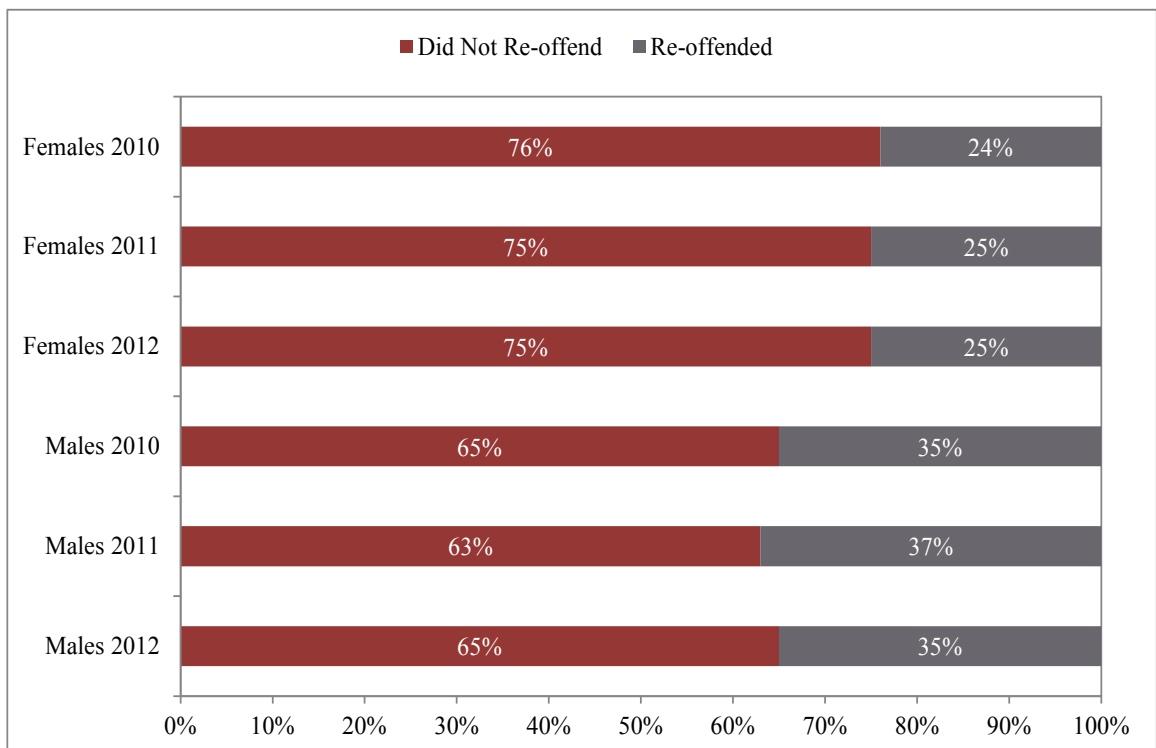
Whether or not a youth re-offends after being involved with the Juvenile Court is a valuable gauge of juvenile crime. In 2011, 67 percent of youth involved with the juvenile court for a misdemeanor or a felony did not reoffend. In 2012, this percentage remained the same, with 33% of youth reoffending and 67% of youth not reoffending within 1 year of their original offense.



Females reoffended at lower rates than males in 2012. Twenty-five percent of females, compared with 35 percent of males, reoffended. This was the same rate as the previous year for females. Males had a slightly lower rate than the previous year which had a reoffense rate of 37 percent.

Felony-level and misdemeanor-level findings or admissions of guilt in 2012 were used as the baseline for this measure. Re-offense was defined as a new felony-level or misdemeanor-level finding, or admission of guilt, within one year of the original adjudication date. An additional one year follow-up period was required for the processing and adjudication of all new offenses occurring within the re-offense time period. Technical violations were not included in this measure.

## RE-OFFENSE RATES BY GENDER

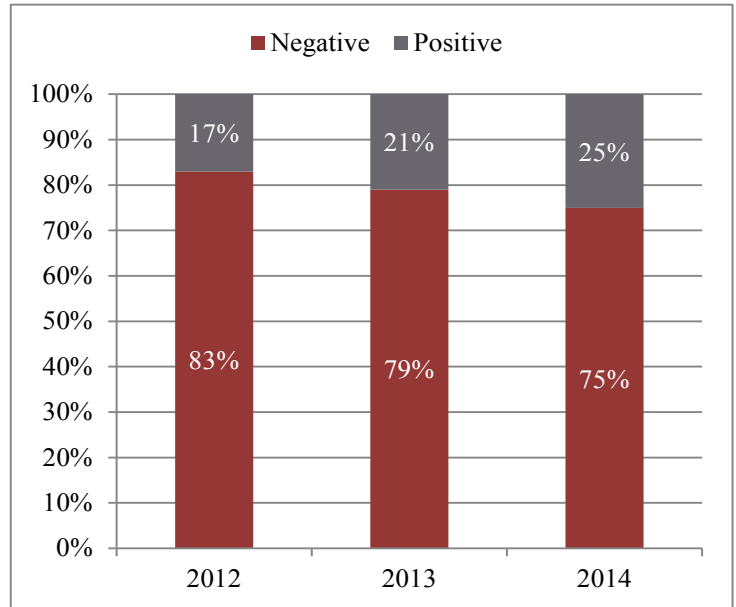


# DRUG TESTING

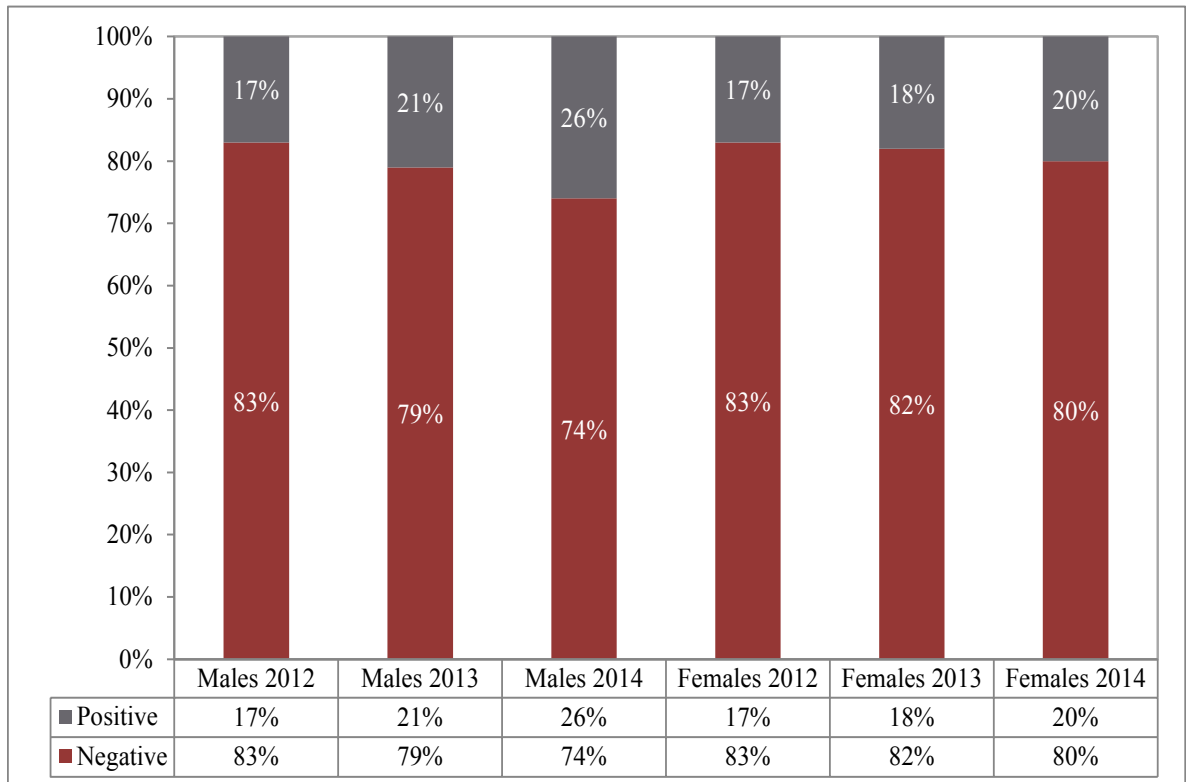
A juvenile offender's resistance to drug use helps the court determine the progress these youth are making toward law abiding behavior. In 2014, 25 percent of drug test results were positive and 75 percent were negative. This was higher than in 2013 when 21 percent of drug test results were positive and 79 percent were negative.

Males tested positive at a higher rate than females in 2014. The graph below shows that 80 percent of drug test results for females were negative and 20 percent of drug test results for males were positive.

From 2013 to 2014, the percentage of positive drug tests increased by five percent for males and two percent for females.



## DRUG TEST RESULTS BY GENDER



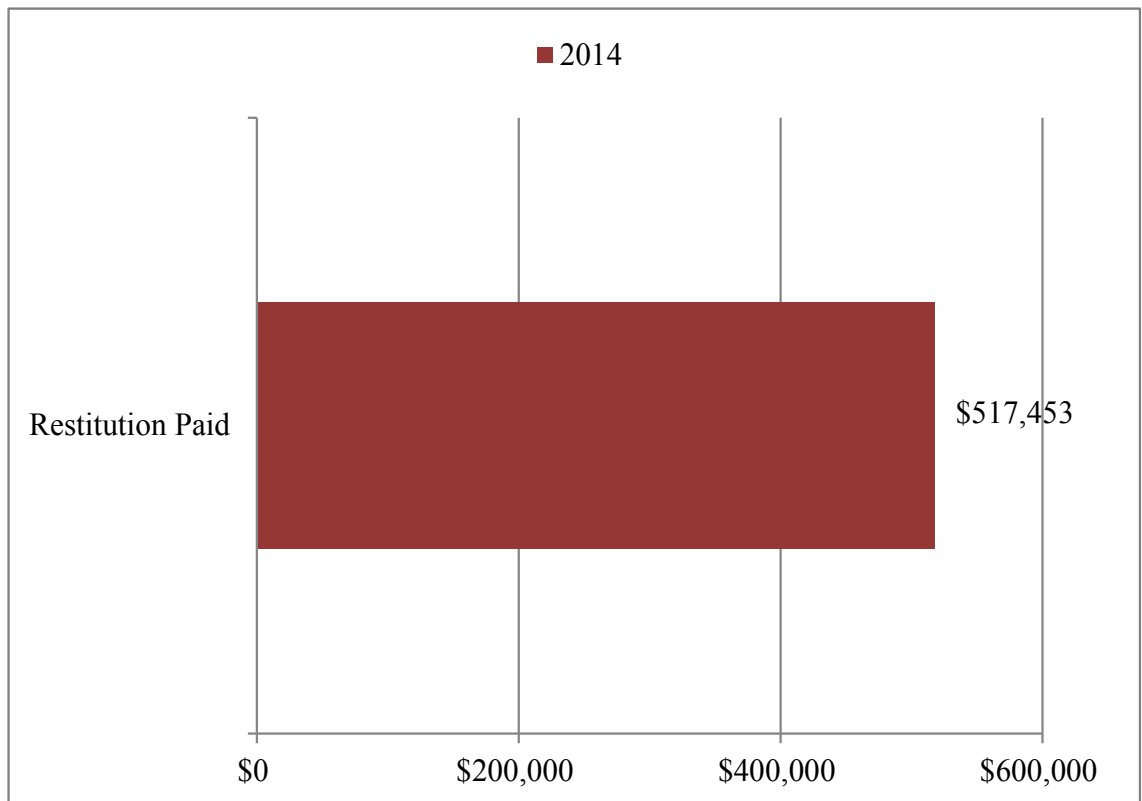
# RESTITUTION PAID

An important aspect of holding offenders responsible and providing justice to individuals harmed by crime is the payment of restitution to victims. The payment of restitution is a priority that takes precedence over the payment of all other types of fees or fines ordered by the Juvenile Court.

In 2014, offenders paid more than \$517,000 in restitution to the victims they had harmed. To find out more about the payment of restitution, fines, and fees, please visit our website at [www.utcourts.gov/courtools/](http://www.utcourts.gov/courtools/) and click on the Juvenile Court restitution, fines and fees tab.



## RESTITUTION PAID



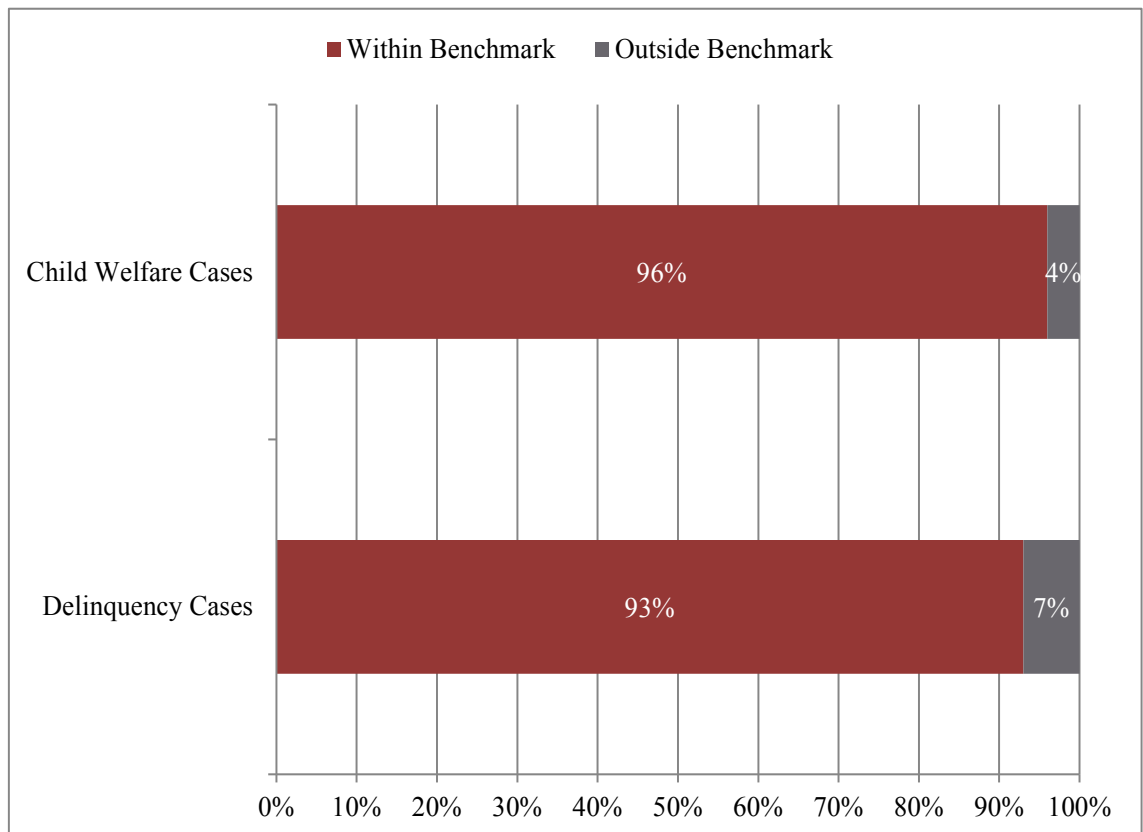
# TIMELINESS OF CASES

Resolving cases in a timely manner is an important measure of the Juvenile Court's efficiency and effectiveness. During 2014, 93 percent of delinquency cases were adjudicated within 45 days of the first hearing, meeting the timeliness benchmark for delinquency cases.

In addition to delinquency cases, the Juvenile Court also hears and resolves child welfare cases, which involve children who have been abused or neglected. During 2014, 96 percent of child welfare cases were adjudicated within 60 days of the shelter hearing, meeting the timeliness benchmark for child welfare cases.



TIMELINESS OF CASES





*A safe home and safe community for all*



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