

# Essex County, Massachusetts

## Summary Report: Felony and Misdemeanor Cases District Court



### Project Overview

The goal of the ECCM project is to discover, document, and disseminate effective criminal case management practices in state trial courts to help reduce delay and cost and improve the quality of justice. More than 90 courts are participating. Case-level information from the most recent 12-month period available was collected from each court for disposed felony and/or misdemeanor cases.

### Case Types

Cases were classified into a set of case types determined by the most serious charge at filing. In order of severity, the case types are:

- Homicide (e.g., murder, manslaughter)
- Person offense (e.g., assault, robbery)
- Property offense (e.g., burglary, larceny)
- Drugs (e.g., manufacture, sale, use)
- Weapons (e.g., illegal possession)
- Driving While Intoxicated (e.g., DUI)
- Other motor vehicle (e.g., reckless driving)
- Legal process (e.g., bail, probation violation)
- Public order (e.g., disorderly conduct, vagrancy)
- Other felony/other misdemeanor

### Case Counting Rules

A case is defined as a single defendant and all charges arising from a single incident. The data set includes a single record for each case. For cases involving multiple charges against a single defendant, the data was condensed to produce a single record based on the most serious charge at filing and disposition.

### Active Time to Disposition

The recommended measure of case processing time excludes those time periods over the life of a case where the case is out of court control and no progress can be made (inactive time). For criminal cases this typically arises when a defendant fails to appear in court. When possible, we show active time to disposition, calculated by subtracting the inactive time from the total case processing time.

### Essex Court Description

Population of County (2015): 776,043

Population Rank: 80th largest by population of the 3,142 U.S. counties

Type of Court & Data Available: Two-tier/LJ: misdemeanor data only

Judge Selection: Gubernatorial appointment

### Measuring Case Processing Time using the National Model Time Standards

#### Felonies

- 90% within 180 days
- 98% within 365 days

#### Misdemeanors

- 90% within 90 days
- 98% within 180 days

Time standards set expectations for timely case processing and provide a benchmark for assessing court performance. The **National Model Time Standards** (NCSC, 2011) for felony and misdemeanor cases are used here to provide time goals for resolving 90% and 98% of cases. In addition, the *mean* (average) and *median* (midpoint) days to disposition give insight into the more typical time taken to resolve cases. The *overall mean* for all ECCM sites is also included for comparison. When the % of cases within 90/180/365 days are the same, only one value is shown.

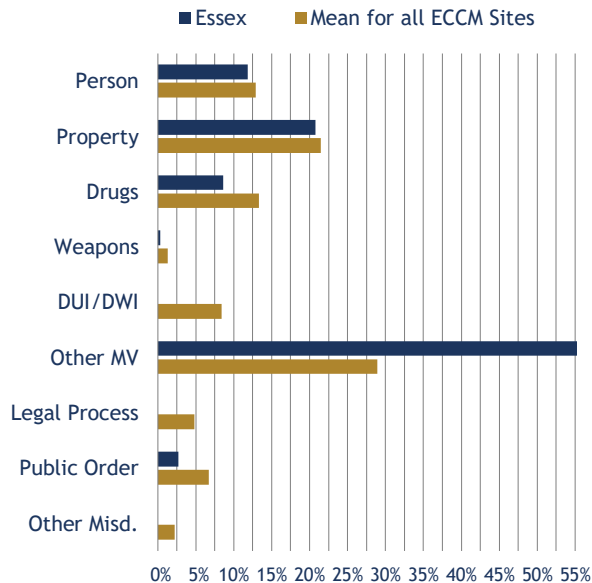
# Essex County, Massachusetts

## District Court - Misdemeanor Cases

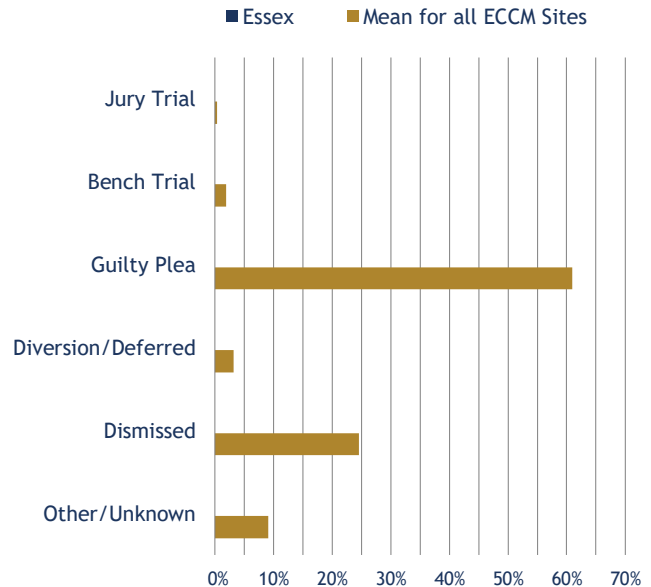


Total Misdemeanor Cases: 17,248

### Caseload Composition



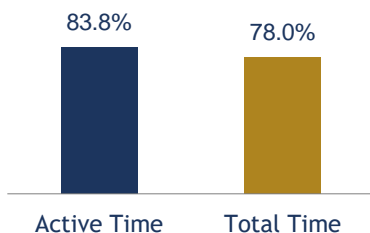
### Manner of Disposition



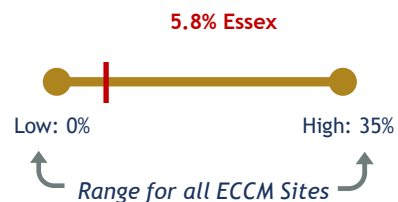
### Active Time from Filing to Disposition All ECCM Sites in Massachusetts

County/Site	Total Cases	% within 90 days	% within 180 days	Mean # of days	Median # of days
Bristol	14,428	55%	75%	140	77
Essex	17,248	66%	84%	101	51
Hampden	13,429	51%	81%	119	86
Middlesex	21,873	59%	77%	133	70
Norfolk	10,169	56%	75%	139	70
Worcester	21,582	65%	84%	99	56
<b>Mean for All ECCM Sites</b>	<b>12,186</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>91</b>

### % Disposed within 180 Days Active Time vs. Total Time



### % Difference between Active and Total Time



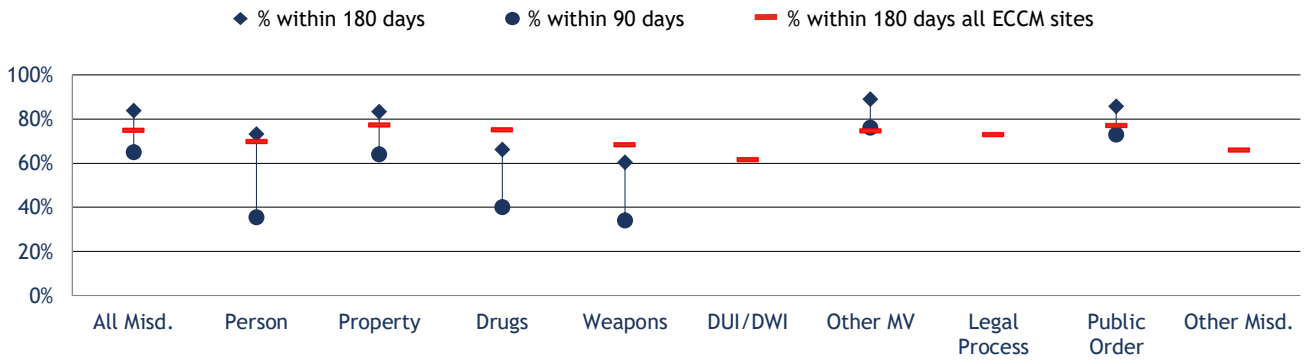
# Essex County, Massachusetts

## District Court - Misdemeanor Cases

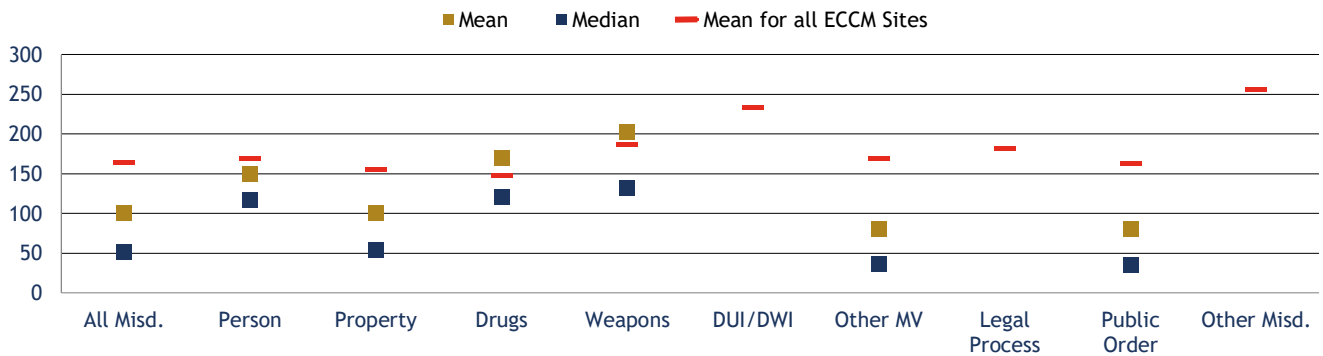


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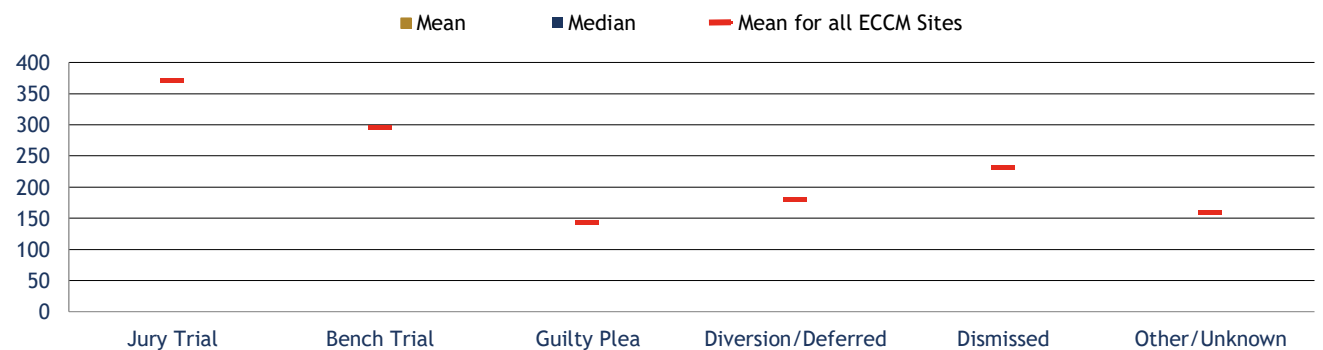
**% Disposed Within 90 and 180 Days by Case Type (Active Time)**



**Disposed Cases: Mean and Median Days by Case Type (Active Time)**



**Mean and Median Days by Manner of Disposition (Active Time)**

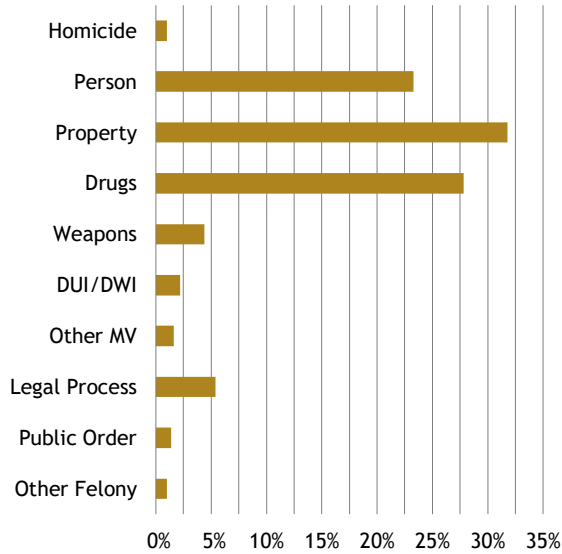


# Aggregate Findings for All ECCM Sites

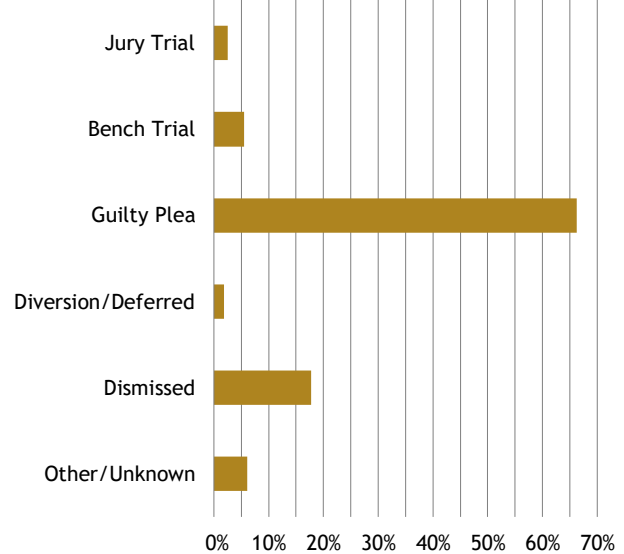
## Felony Caseloads



Caseload Composition



Manner of Disposition



Active Time from Filing to Disposition

County/Site	Average # of Cases per Site	% within 180 days	% within 365 days	Mean # of days	Median # of days
All ECCM Sites	3,676	63%	86%	213	135

Percentage of Felony Cases Resolved Within:

Case Type	180 Days	365 Days
Homicide	26%	53%
Person	55%	83%
Property	65%	87%
Drugs	63%	86%
Weapons	63%	88%
DUI/DWI	62%	85%
Other MV	64%	87%
Legal Process	71%	91%
Public Order	60%	87%
Other Felony	56%	83%
All Felonies	63%	86%

Number of Active Days from Filing to Disposition

Manner of Disposition	Mean Days	Median Days
Jury Trial	452	375
Bench Trial	422	357
Guilty Plea	202	143
Diversion/Deferred Adj.	250	204
Dismissed	280	148