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Neighborhood Justice Centers Field Test

Final Evaluation Report

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**NEIGHBORHOOD JUSTICE CENTERS
FIELD TEST**

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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ABSTRACT

This report presents the findings of the National Evaluation of the Neighborhood Justice Centers (NJs), organizations designed to provide mediation services for resolving interpersonal disputes as an alternative to going to court. The main purpose of the evaluation was to describe and assess the processes and impact of the three Neighborhood Justice Centers located in Atlanta, Kansas City, and Los Angeles (Venice/Mar Vista).

The results showed that the NJs handled a sizable number of cases (3,947) during their first 15 months of operation. A wide variety of types of disputes from several different referral services were successfully processed by the NJs. Nearly half of all the cases referred to the NJs were resolved; six months later the large majority of disputants reported that the agreements still held and that they were satisfied with the process. The NJs appear to handle most interpersonal cases more efficiently than the courts -- the NJC process is faster and more satisfying to the disputants. Although the NJs did not appear to have a significant impact on court case loads, judges and other justice system officials held a positive view of the NJs and believed that they facilitated court processes. Cases of a civil/consumer nature reached hearing less often than those of a more clearly interpersonal nature, but the interpersonal disputes tended to show a less satisfactory resolution rate upon follow-up. There were indications that the costs per case at the NJs may become competitive with those of the courts. It was concluded that the Neighborhood Justice Centers provide a needed and effective alternative mechanism for the resolution of minor disputes.

It is recommended that (1) governments support the continued development of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, (2) a program of research and development should be conducted on outreach methods, (3) workshops on such mechanisms should be offered to criminal justice officials, and (4) a national research/evaluation program should be launched to assess current dispute resolution approaches.

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PREFACE

This report represents the product of a twenty-four month evaluation of NIJ's Neighborhood Justice Centers Field Test. The Field Test was created as an experimental alternative to the courts for resolving minor interpersonal dispute cases via third party mediation. The program model was based on similar projects such as the Columbus Night Prosecutor Program, The American Arbitration Association's 4-A projects, The Miami Citizen Dispute Settlement program, and The Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution's Dispute Resolution Program in New York City.

The Neighborhood Justice Centers (NJC's) were established in the cities of Atlanta, Georgia, Kansas City, Missouri, and Los Angeles, California, and were to operate during a demonstration period of eighteen months. Concurrently, a grant was awarded to the Institute for Social Analysis (formerly the Institute For Research) to conduct a national evaluation of the NJC Field Test. The evaluation project contained three major elements: (1) an implementation study to document the events which took place during early phases of the program; (2) a process study to assess the case handling procedures and the outcomes of the mediation sessions; and (3) an impact study to assess the program's impact on the disputants, the courts, and the community. The implementation study findings as well as some of the initial process study results were presented in an earlier report: An Interim Evaluation of the Neighborhood Justice Centers Field Test (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1979).

This final report of the evaluation project focuses on both the process and impact studies. Data relevant to NJC operations and disputant follow-up are presented, rather than the mediation process itself. Chapter I discusses some of the conceptual issues related to dispute resolution and outlines the methodological approach. The second chapter briefly describes the organization and operations of the three NJCs. The next two chapters present the results of the process and impact studies. Chapter V discusses the issues and implications of the NJC evaluation, and the last chapter presents conclusions and recommendations relevant to future program development of Neighborhood Justice Centers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The national evaluation of the Neighborhood Justice Centers Field Test and this report could not have been completed without the support and cooperation of many people across the country. To say that this was a cooperative endeavor is an understatement -- there was a commitment at both the federal and local levels to the goals of the evaluation project. Below we attempt to acknowledge those who have been directly involved in the evaluation.

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At each of the three NJC field test sites several persons should be acknowledged. In Atlanta, Ms. Edith Primm, current Executive Director of the NJC and Mr. Linwood Slayton, former Executive Director, and their staff provided a congenial and supportive working environment for the project. Mr. David Crockett and Mr. Jack Ethridge of the Atlanta NJC Board of Directors were most helpful.

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Last, but certainly not least, the project's Advisory Panel provided direct input to the evaluation over a period of two years. They reviewed the initial work plan as well as the interim and final products of the evaluation. Without their assistance in providing both first-hand knowledge of dispute center operations and methodological expertise, this project would not have achieved its goals. Our Panel included:

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

People having disputes with friends, relatives, or neighbors generally cannot find an alternative to taking their case to court. Moreover, the judicial process is often costly, time-consuming and confusing for those involved. An example of this type of case is as follows:

The Johnsons and Browns were friends and neighbors until spring 1977; their children, ages three to five, played together regularly and had several disagreements. Eventually, apparently as a result of differing values and approaches to rearing children, the Johnsons' mother began arguing with the grandmother of the Brown family. The children were prohibited from playing together but physical and verbal abuse among the adult members of the families continued and worsened. After weeks of frequent altercations, several phone calls to the police, and damages to both houses and cars, the two families filed charges of assault, disturbing the peace, and destruction of property against each other. Within days of filing charges, this neighborhood dispute was resolved in a manner satisfactory to both parties.

At the first court date for this case, an attorney for one family and the presiding judge recommended the two families take their case to the Neighborhood Justice Center. An NJC intake worker immediately gathered information from both parties and scheduled a mediation hearing at the NJC within two days. Fifteen members of the two families attended the hearing, which was led by a team of three mediators who were from the community and specially trained in mediation skills. For six and one-half hours, the mediators heard each family's side of the dispute, facilitated communication among the parties, and held private caucuses with disputing individuals to work out a resolution of the problem. A multi-term agreement was reached between the two parties, calling for as little contact between the families as possible, an end to the physical and verbal abuse, and a structured communication process for squelching any future problems that might arise before one family's planned move in several months. Telephone follow-up interviews were conducted with central persons in each family six months after the hearing and both reported no further problems had occurred before the move, indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the NJC process, and expressed relief that the ordeal of a court trial and possible jail sentence was avoided.

The Johnson-Brown neighborhood dispute is an example of one type of case handled by Neighborhood Justice Centers (NJC's) in Atlanta, Kansas City, and Los Angeles. The three Centers are the central components of a Field Test program developed and funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (which became the National Institute of Justice in December 1979) to test the use of mediation and arbitration in resolving minor disputes among citizens. Developmental work on the Justice Centers began in late 1977, they opened for business in March 1978, and have been processing cases ever since.

Overview of the Report

This report presents the results of a two-year evaluation of the NJCs, an effort which started at a point prior to the NJC openings and continued through their first 15 months. The evaluation study provided a comprehensive picture of the implementation and operations of the NJCs and assessed their impact on the disputants, community, and criminal justice system. For complete information on the implementation activities and a full description of project processes, the reader is directed to two previous reports (Sheppard, Roehl, and Cook, 1978; and Sheppard, Roehl, and Cook, 1979). The major portions of this report are devoted to a full presentation of the NJC caseloads; an assessment of the impact of the projects on the disputants, courts, and community; a discussion of the findings; and conclusions and recommendations based on the evaluation results. In order to view these findings in the proper light, it is important to be aware of the context -- both conceptual and methodological -- in which the evaluation is embedded.

Dispute Resolution: A Brief History

For many citizens, the urban judicial system is a foreboding, somewhat mysterious institution whose costs and arcane workings make it practically inaccessible. If the citizen steps into this system, he may find that the costly adjudication process moves at a disturbingly slow pace and that the control of events falls into other hands. Any sense that justice has been delivered is often overwhelmed by feelings of frustration and powerlessness; that one has been dealt with by strangers rather than served by a segment of the community (Danzig, 1973). Such negative experiences seem particularly frustrating and inappropriate for the handling of disputes among citizens. For disputes between couples or neighbors, etc., the traditional adjudication routes seem especially cumbersome and alienating, given that the problem is largely interpersonal and somewhat routine. In recent years, however, both prosecutors and judges have attempted to break away from the inflexible, one-track approach to adjudicating personal disputes by attempting to negotiate a settlement among the parties prior to or even during a formal court appearance. Options available to the court include deferred prosecution, pre-trial diversion programs, or a conviction with expunged records. The difficulty, however, is that these options are not available in many jurisdictions and their application is left to individual prosecutors and judges who use their own criteria for placing defendants in these programs. Moreover, there are doubts about the ultimate appropriateness of the courts as mechanisms to settle interpersonal disputes.

The courts have not actively sought to become the central institution for dispute resolution; rather the task has fallen to them by default as the significance and influence of other institutions has waned over the years, although the Small Claims Courts in some areas appear to be capable of handling interpersonal disputes in a competent manner (Yngvessen and Hennessey, 1976). Many of the disputes which are presently brought to the courts would have been settled in the past by the family, the church or the informal community leadership (Sander, 1976). While the current role of these societal institutions in resolving interpersonal disputes is in doubt, many citizens take their cases to the courts.

Problems with courts-based dispute resolution. The current use of the

courts to process disputes presents several problems, including (1) limited access and utilization, (2) delays and dismissals, (3) inappropriate use of adjudication, and (4) the centralized bureaucracy.

The citizen who wishes to use the courts to resolve a dispute must be willing and able to pay for legal fees and court costs and to absorb the loss of wages for court appearance. For a broad band of the American populace, such an economic sacrifice is unthinkable, particularly if the dispute does not involve substantial property or payment (Nader and Singer, 1976). Once in the system, the individual can experience lengthy delays of months and sometimes years for the resolution of disputes, both civil and criminal. These delays can be unbearable for the disputant, but they are also reflective of the severe difficulties which courts experience in attempting to process the dispute cases. Often cases are partially processed through the system only to have the charges dismissed. Even in felony arrests for crimes against the person, a large proportion of charges are dismissed because the complainant had an ongoing relationship with the defendant (Vera Institute, 1977).

For many disputes, the question is not a simple one of who is right or wrong, but rather which compromises and accommodations each party is willing to make. The conventional adjudication process is highly adversarial in nature, a competitive winner-take-all procedure which is not conducive to compromise and agreement. The average citizen does not view the urban court as an integral, valued element of his neighborhood or community, staffed by recognizable friends and neighbors. Instead, the court is often seen as another impersonal government agency, populated by unknown individuals who may have never visited the citizen's neighborhood. He or she may be very reluctant to turn to a collection of strangers with a personal or interpersonal problem.

This rather pessimistic view of the criminal courts in America is not shared by everyone, however. Eisenstein and Jacob point out in their study of felony justice in three cities that much of what the general public believes about criminal courts is not accurate (Eisenstein and Jacob, 1977). They state that the judge does not always play a dominant role in case processing and that plea bargaining is not universal. Their findings indicate that minorities are not treated worse than whites, that public defenders are not less effective than retained counsel, and that delays in processing cases do not deny a fair trial for defendants.

Alternative dispute resolution techniques. When a dispute arises, there are basically three options which an individual may exercise to settle the dispute: (1) unilateral actions on the part of a disputant, (2) dyadic options in which the two disputants confront one another, and (3) third-party techniques (McGillis and Mullen, 1977). Adjudication is included in category (3), as are mediation and arbitration.

Unilateral actions include self-help, such as cognitive redefinition of the problem, but also include inaction and active avoidance. Felstiner (1974), points out that complaints by individuals against large organizations are often "lumped" because the average individual has no influence on the organization and, in fact, is somewhat dependent on the organization. He distinguishes between inaction, where the relationship between the disputants continues, and active avoidance, where the individual does not attempt to resolve the dispute, but makes an effort to avoid future disputes by withdrawing from the rela-

tionship. Danzig and Lowy (1975) have contended that such responses to disputes exact high personal and societal costs. Indeed, inaction may encourage the continuance of irresponsible organizational practices toward individuals and active avoidance can erode the cohesiveness of communities and institutions. Thus, these unilateral actions do not appear to be satisfactory alternatives to adjudication. The dyadic options of coercion and negotiation would appear to be less common responses to disputes. Coercion requires that a disputant can credibly threaten an opponent into compliance. Negotiation is a rather attractive avenue for dispute resolution, but it usually requires that the disputants are mutually dependent, willing to compromise, and able to conduct negotiations without the presence of a third party.

Although the unilateral and dyadic responses to disputes may be workable and effective approaches to dispute resolution under certain circumstances, they do not appear to offer the stable forum required for an alternative to conventional adjudication. In this regard, third party resolution techniques -- short of adjudication -- have been viewed as the most feasible and satisfactory alternatives to the traditional judicial system. Specifically, conciliation, mediation, and arbitration have been proposed (and adopted in a limited fashion) as appropriate techniques for dispute resolution. The major distinction among the three types of strategies is made along a continuum of third party involvement (McGillis and Mullen, 1977). In conciliation, the third party has a very limited role, mediation involves the active participation of the third party, and arbitration incorporates a third party decision regarding the matter in dispute. These strategies appear to fulfill most of the desired attributes of a dispute resolution process. Little formal training is required, so many lay members of a community can be used as mediators or arbitrators. The process itself is rapid, typically requiring no more than two or three hours of informal hearings. Agreements are usually written which involve some compromise from each disputant, rather than attempting to determine guilt or innocence. In short, third party resolutions appear to be the most attractive techniques for dispute resolution, seemingly exhibiting advantages over both adjudication and the unilateral and dyadic options.

The development of the Neighborhood Justice Center concept. The dissatisfaction with traditional adjudication as a means of resolving disputes has led to considerable discussion regarding the nature of the mechanism or body which would most effectively perform the function. The foundation for the concept of Neighborhood Justice Centers was laid by Danzig (1973) in his proposal to establish community moots, neighborhood-based non-coercive forums which would settle a variety of disputes without attempting to establish guilt or innocence. These moots would be accessible -- even attractive -- mechanisms for all classes of citizens. The major criticisms leveled at the concept of community moots is that without some coercive power, they are likely to be unworkable. In recognition of this deficiency, Fisher (1975) has proposed community courts composed of elected community members who would exercise a variety of sanctions, from restitution to eviction. Sander (1976) proposed the development of Dispute Resolution Centers, which would provide an intermediate option between Danzig's non-coercive community moots and Fisher's highly coercive community courts. These Centers would be similar to community moots but would be government agencies with close ties to the courts and could also provide binding arbitration when mediation failed.

Recent Approaches to Dispute Resolution

While alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as mediation have been available to the courts, police and other criminal justice agencies for decades, it is only in the past ten years that formal programs have been developed utilizing the concepts noted above. At least 100 or so of these mediation-type projects similar to the Neighborhood Justice Centers are in operation at this time; several hundred more can be included if the definition is broadened to cover programs specifically focused on single issues such as housing or consumer problems. These projects generally employ the methods of conciliation, mediation, and arbitration for dispute resolution. They have unique characteristics -- sponsors, organizational structures, relationships with the criminal justice system, etc. -- which distinguish them from one another.

Unlike small claims and other specialty courts, such as family courts, these programs do not attempt to adjudicate cases; rather, they have their origins in the conflict resolution approaches of the social sciences (Felstiner and Williams, 1978). The third party mediators meet with the disputants informally, and they are eager to explore all pertinent aspects of the problem that confronts the parties. Mediators are less concerned about rules, procedures, and consistency than in assisting the parties in reaching a satisfactory resolution of their dispute.

One of the earliest established programs was the Arbitration-as-an-Alternative (4-A) project developed in Philadelphia in 1969 by the National Center for Dispute Settlement of the American Arbitration Association. The 4-A project was designed to work directly with the Municipal Court, handling cases of harassment, minor assaults, and malicious mischief. The Philadelphia project is still in operation under the management of the Municipal Court and funded by the City.

The Night Prosecutor Program in Columbus, Ohio, started in 1971, was the first formal program with local LEAA funds to attempt to mediate interpersonal and bad check disputes. The Night Prosecutor Program has continued to grow and expand and, in addition to holding hearings for a wide range of criminal and civil disputes, it processes special cases for the Columbus Health Department and Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

These pioneering programs paved the way for many dispute resolution programs developed in the early and middle 1970s. Two additional 4-A projects were developed by AAA in Rochester, New York, and San Francisco, California, and two projects were established in New York City by the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution (IMCR). Other programs which served as models for the Neighborhood Justice Center concept are Boston's Dorchester Urban Court Program established in 1975, Miami's Citizen Dispute Settlement Program (1975), Cincinnati's Private Complaint Program (1974), and the Community Mediation Center on Long Island (1976). One project, the San Francisco Community Board Program, stands out from the others because of its intensive efforts to penetrate target neighborhoods in that city. Funded completely by private foundations, the Community Board Program has limited ties to the courts, solicits cases primarily from the community, and devotes its resources to dispute resolution within local neighborhoods using multi-member panels to hear cases in open sessions.

Over the past three years, the state of Florida has become a leader in dispute resolution programming. At least 12 Citizen Dispute Settlement Programs, including the Miami project (which was developed by the American Bar Association in 1975), are currently operating in Florida. These programs share a common name and strong support at the state level, but vary significantly in size, sponsor, structural organization, operating procedures, and funding source. In 1977, the Florida Supreme Court announced as one of its major priorities the study and expansion of the CDS program and established a special Advisory Committee on Dispute Resolution Alternatives. This statewide initiative provided research, technical assistance, and training mechanisms for CDS programs through the Judicial Planning Coordination Unit of the Office of the State Courts Administrator.

Thus, the dispute resolution projects funded through the early and middle 1970s can be viewed along a broad spectrum representing affiliations with either the courts and criminal justice agencies, or with the communities in which they are located. With very few exceptions, all the projects accept cases from many different sources of referral including walk-ins and private agencies, as well as those that are court processed. Most of the projects affiliate themselves with the police, prosecutors, courts, housing authorities, legal aid, and other criminal justice and social service agencies. Projects such as the Columbus Night Prosecutor, the Miami Citizen Dispute Settlement Program, the Dorchester Urban Court Program, and IMCR's Brooklyn Court Program are essentially extensions of the courts with which they are affiliated. Other dispute programs are closely linked to one or more courts but receive referrals from other criminal justice or social service agencies and process some walk-in (self-referral) cases; these projects are exemplified by IMCR's Dispute Resolution Center in New York, Cincinnati's Private Complaint Program and the Community Mediation Center in Suffolk County, New York. Very few dispute settlement programs rely heavily on cases generated from the community itself. A notable exception, however, is the San Francisco Community Board Program which has been attempting to solicit cases involving community conflicts from selected target neighborhoods in the city. The Community Board Program, which is privately funded and operated, has established citizen panels that conduct open community meetings to hear cases. Disputes involving vandalism in the schools, or conflicts among neighborhood groups are discussed at these sessions and the panel facilitates resolution of these conflicts. A cadre of community workers are active in each target neighborhood, reflecting the resources required to generate support for and confidence in the program. This intensive effort in the selected neighborhoods of San Francisco is an innovative approach to community development and self help, but appears to be distinctly different from the mainstream of dispute resolution programs. Disputes are mediated in open session by panels of mediators and rarely involve the more intimate interpersonal disputes such as marital disputes, couples living together, etc. Furthermore, caseload data from the Community Board Program (Shonholtz, 1979) reveal that it mediates less than 100 cases a year. Unlike the dispute resolution programs discussed above, it appears to emphasize the strengthening of institutions and neighborhoods rather than the resolution of interpersonal disputes.

With few exceptions, there has been very little formal evaluation conducted with the dispute resolution programs to date. Since many of the projects were funded with local LEAA block grant monies, there usually was not a requirement to perform a comprehensive evaluation of the programs. The Night

Prosecutor Program of Columbus, Ohio, underwent extensive review when it was being considered as an exemplary project by NILECJ (1974). An evaluation approach as well as program operations were outlined for those interested in replication. An evaluation was conducted of Philadelphia's 4-A project by Blackstone Associates (Anno and Hoff, 1975). The Citizen Dispute Settlement Center in Miami, Florida, was evaluated by members of the Dade County Criminal Justice Planning Unit (Moriarty and Norris, 1977), and was also reviewed as a candidate for LEAA's Exemplary Projects (1978). The Orlando, Florida, project was investigated by a team of evaluators funded through the American Bar Association (Conner and Surette, 1977).

Three recently completed research studies provide comprehensive information on the process and impact of mediation programs and on the comparative effects of community dispute resolution and more formal judicial systems. The data on the caseloads and impact of the programs studied will be compared to the Neighborhood Justice Center evaluation results in a subsequent chapter of this report. The Victim Services Agency of New York conducted an evaluation of IMCR's Brooklyn project, based on an experimental design of randomly assigning felony cases to court or mediation (Davis, Tichane, and Grayson, 1979). The Social Science Research Institute at the University of Southern California conducted an in-depth evaluation of the Dorchester Urban Court project in Boston, as part of a larger, international study of alternatives to adjudication (Felstiner and Williams, 1980). The Office of the State Courts Administrator in Florida recently completed a study of five Citizen Dispute Settlement Programs in Broward, Dade (the Miami project), Doral, Orange (Orlando), and Pinellas counties (Dispute Resolution Alternatives Committee, 1979).

The Neighborhood Justice Center Field Test

During 1977, the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ - now the National Institute of Justice), in coordination with the Office for Improvements in the Administration of Justice (OIAJ), developed a program for an experimental field test of Neighborhood Justice Centers. The Centers, located in Atlanta, Kansas City and Los Angeles (Venice/Mar Vista), were designed to resolve minor disputes among citizens using the processes of mediation and/or arbitration in lieu of going to court.

At the 1976 meeting of the National Conference on the Causes of Popular Dissatisfaction with the Administration of Justice, much of the discussion centered around developing alternatives to dispute resolution, in order to relieve the courts of a burden that they are not really equipped to satisfactorily handle. In a follow-up task force to the Conference, it was recommended that the development of neighborhood justice centers be encouraged as a means of providing an alternative mechanism to adjudication. Soon after becoming Attorney General, Griffin Bell directed that a pilot implementation program for the neighborhood justice center concept be developed. Initial conceptualization of the program was turned over to the newly created Office for Improvements in the Administration of Justice (OIAJ), and the final design and field test implementation was turned over to the National Institute's Office of Development, Testing, and Dissemination.

The staff of NILECJ analyzed existing research and the experiences of six

selected dispute centers, identifying several aspects of project operations which guided the structure and development of the NJC model (McGillis and Mullen, 1977). These key aspects address the issues of the project objectives, community served, sponsoring agency, location, case criteria, referral sources, intake, resolution techniques, staffing and case follow-up and evaluation.

The overall objectives of the NJCs, as stated in the NILECJ guidelines were (1) to establish a mechanism in the community to resolve minor criminal and civil disputes through the mediation process, (2) to impact court caseload processing by resolving disputes which are inappropriate for the adversarial process, (3) to enable the disputing parties to arrive at fair and lasting solutions, and (4) to serve as an information and referral source for disputes which would be more appropriately handled by other services or agencies.

It was also suggested that the grantee be either a public agency or a private non-profit organization with prior experience in managing government grants, and that the Field Test was to operate for a period of 18 months within each site. The specific office location of the NJC was to be within a neighborhood, identifiably separate from the formal court system, and easily accessible to the community population.

Methodology

The NJC evaluation had three major components: (1) an implementation study, designed to document the initial phase of program development and operation; (2) a process study, intended to describe the NJC procedures and caseload; and (3) an impact study, which assessed the impact of the NJCs on the disputants and the community agencies. (Appendix A provides a full description of the methodology used in this evaluation, including a complete list of the project's goals and objectives.) The evaluation approach utilized in this project was designed to capture as much relevant data as possible; however, some research methods could not be employed. There were limitations dictated by available resources as well as program design; for example, random assignment of subjects to primary activities was not feasible. Considering these restraints, however, the resulting methodology was both comprehensive and rigorous.

The sequence of events by which the NJCs were implemented was documented as part of the evaluation in order to record and assess this critical phase of program development and operation. Implementation activities included locating project sites, recruiting and training staff and mediators, establishing referral relationships with the courts and other elements of the local criminal justice system, developing linkages with community agencies, developing mechanisms of case processing -- outreach, intake, case assignment and disposition -- and addressing internal organizational and management concerns.

The process study was designed to: (1) identify the target population that participates in the NJC services; (2) fully describe the types of disputes handled by the NJCs and referral sources; (3) assess the dispute resolution procedures and the immediate outcomes of the mediation sessions (i.e., whether or not an agreement was reached); and (4) examine the movement of cases from the source of referral through the Centers' intake process to final disposition. The core of the process study was the development of a routinized data collection system which gathered data on the source of client (disputant)

referrals to the NJCs, the nature of the dispute and the relationship between the parties, the characteristics of the disputants, the disposition of cases referred to the Center, and the nature of the hearing sessions. The data collection and analysis system was used to provide periodic feedback on NJC operations to project management and to NILECJ program monitors.

The impact study assessed the impact of the NJCs on the disputants themselves; the courts, prosecutors, police, and social service agencies referring clients to the NJCs; and the communities in which the Centers were located. It assessed the degree of resolution permanence and disputant satisfaction through case follow-up interviews; measured the impact of the NJC on the criminal justice system through interviews with appropriate personnel, analyzed NJC caseloads and outcomes, and analyzed a cohort group of cases in the court system; and studied community impact through interviews and a community survey. The costs of the NJC dispute resolution process were also examined. Within each of these major studies, several specific data collection activities were undertaken (see Appendix A).

NJC Goals

As part of the initial evaluation activities of the Field Test, six major program goals were identified by key program administrators in the National Institute (NILECJ) and the Office for Improvements in the Administration of Justice (OIAJ) in the Department of Justice. In addition, the three NJC project staffs assisted in identifying programs goals; each of these groups (the NJCs, NILECJ, and OIAJ) then weighted each of the six goals so that evaluation resources could be allocated according to the priorities of the federal decision-makers and the individual projects.

Table I-1 lists each of the six project goals, their average weights and the evaluation activities that were developed to measure how well they were achieved. The first goal, to establish an effective community mechanism for the resolution of citizen disputes, was rated the highest. The second goal, attracting a variety of cases from diverse sources, was rated second. Rated less important were the NJCs' contribution to the reduction of conflict in the community and a favorable response to the NJCs from the community. As reflected in Table I-1, a large percentage of the resources available for the evaluation were allocated to the first two goals, having received average weights of 36% and 18% respectively. The remaining goals were evaluated using resources in approximate proportion to the weights they received. There were differences among the three Centers in weighting the importance of the goals. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC placed a higher value on community impact, putting more emphasis on generating community referrals and developing an effective public relations program, and they also de-emphasized generating a large caseload. On the other hand, the Atlanta and Kansas City NJCs placed greater emphasis on a criminal justice system orientation, weighting the generation of criminal justice system referrals and a favorable response from criminal justice system agencies higher.

The evaluation procedures were developed and implemented recognizing the differences among the three NJCs in their approaches, as reflected by each Center's weightings of specific evaluation objectives. Special studies were undertaken at all three NJC sites reflecting differences in project operations

TABLE I-1

NEIGHBORHOOD JUSTICE CENTERS FIELD TEST
EVALUATION GOALS, WEIGHTS AND METHODS

<u>Goals</u>	<u>Weights</u>	<u>Evaluation Methods</u>
To establish an effective community mechanism (NJC) for the relatively inexpensive, expeditious and fair resolution of citizen disputes through the process of conciliation, mediation, and/or arbitration. The Centers are expected to enhance the quality of justice delivered to the community without diminishing the effectiveness of the existing criminal justice system.	36%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Process Study</u>-Focusing on disputant characteristics and case processing time. ● <u>Disputant followup</u>-to obtain their reactions to the mediation process, and the extent to which their agreements lasted over time. ● <u>Court comparison study</u>-to develop estimates of court processing time, complainant reactions to the processing of their cases in court, and the impact the court had on resolving their cases. ● <u>Cost data</u>-to examine the NJC processing costs involved in handling and mediating cases. ● <u>Impact interviews</u>-with judges, court administrators, prosecutors, and police to determine what effect the NJC's had on their agencies.
The Centers should attract a variety of civil and criminal dispute cases drawn from different sources in the community and the criminal justice system.	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Process study</u>-to develop data on disputant characteristics, sources of case referrals, types of cases handled, and final case dispositions.
To contribute to the reduction of tension and conflict in the community.	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Implementation study</u>-to review the public outreach efforts of the NJC's. ● <u>Out-referral study</u>-to followup referrals to determine if other community services were used by those contacting NJCs.
To institutionalize the Neighborhood Justice Center concept and procedures.	12%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Implementation study</u>-to examine how the three NJC's were organized and what linkages were developed with other community and criminal justice agencies. ● <u>Impact interviews</u>-with NJC project directors, staff and governing board members to describe what steps were being taken to continue the Centers.
To provide information to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration and the Department of Justice on the progress and effectiveness of the Centers as this relates to future planning for the expansion of the NJCs and their concept.	16%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Implementation study</u>-to describe the structure and organization of the three NJC's. ● <u>Feedback reports</u>-monthly data summaries for each Center were made available to NILECJ and OIAJ staffs. ● <u>Monthly progress memos</u>-a series of short reviews of NJC activities were distributed to NILECJ and OIAJ program planners.
The key elements of the community--the residents, the criminal justice agencies, the other major community organizations--should be aware of and have a positive view of the Neighborhood Justice Center.	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Community survey</u>-a random survey of community residents to examine the extent to which the project was known, and to determine if the community knew what services the NJC provides. ● <u>Impact interviews</u>-with community agency representatives and criminal justice personnel to assess their reactions to the NJC program.

and focus. In Kansas City and Atlanta, extensive court comparison studies were initiated that were designed to provide court case processing data as well as assess the reactions of those participating in the court process. These studies were developed since both Kansas City and Atlanta developed close working relationships with their local courts, and received a major portion of their cases from the court system.

In Venice/Mar Vista two unique studies were undertaken recognizing that this Center was attempting to attract referrals from the community and provide useful services to those who contacted the project for help. The Venice/Mar Vista project conducted an extensive public relations campaign to inform the public of their program and to solicit case referrals. One study was a random survey of the community, approximately one year after the NJC opened, to determine if the residents knew about the Center and the services they provided. A second study was designed to follow-up a group of individuals who called or came into the Center, but discovered that their cases were not appropriate for the mediation program. Many times these individuals were referred to other available services in the community. A survey of these "out-referrals" was conducted to determine if they had followed up their referral and received the help needed.

Special Evaluation Approaches

Two special components of the evaluation deserve mention. First, virtually all on-site data collection was conducted by three Evaluation Analysts hired and supervised by the evaluator. They worked full-time in the NJCs from February 1978 through June 1979. The Analysts were crucial to the evaluation by providing the needed link between the central evaluation staff and the activities in the NJCs. They began their work by attending the training of the first group of mediators, closely observed and recorded implementation activities and ongoing project processes, extracted all disputant and case data from the NJC case files, and conducted all long-term follow-up interviews with disputants. They conducted special studies (community survey, court comparison study, etc.), provided feedback to the Centers, and kept the evaluation project staff fully informed of all NJC events.

The second evaluation component of special note was the use of monthly feedback to the NJCs and program decision-makers. Major case data -- sources of case referral, what they were like, and what happened to them in the Center -- along with disputant characteristics data were collected monthly by the Analysts and sent to the evaluation project for analysis and interpretation. A feedback report was prepared to summarize the case information and sent back to the NJCs. This routinized data collection and analysis system provided the NJC staffs with ongoing results on how their Centers were operating.

CHAPTER II: NJC DESCRIPTIONS

This chapter will summarily describe the three Neighborhood Justice Centers. Its purpose is to give the reader an overview of the structure, orientation, and operations of each Center, to provide a context for understanding the process and impact results which follow. It is not intended to provide a detailed picture of the NJCs or their implementation and ongoing activities -- this information is contained in two previous evaluation reports (Sheppard, Roehl, and Cook, 1978; Sheppard, Roehl, and Cook, 1979). The chapter concludes with a summary of the dispute resolution processes (referral, conciliation, mediation, and mediation/arbitration) of the NJCs.

The NJCs were created from a set of guidelines which provided room to develop three programs which could be different from each other and existing programs, in order to test a variety of approaches to dispute resolution. In some instances, the NJCs adopted elements of existing programs; in others, they broke new ground and explored innovative approaches to operating dispute resolution programs. The Field Test has been successful in testing a range of approaches and options available to beginning justice centers.

NJC Project Descriptions

Each of the Neighborhood Justice Centers developed their programs along the lines suggested by the National Institute's grant guidelines, which outlined possible resolution techniques, staffing patterns, case selection criteria, referral sources, and procedures for intake, public relations, and follow-up. The three Centers had much in common, particularly the ways in which they were organized and staffed and the methods by which they resolved disputes. However, there were many important differences among them, the most significant of which was probably the orientation the projects had regarding their relationships with the criminal justice system and the community. This orientation had substantial impact on the project's referral sources, types of cases, staff responsibilities, and daily operations. While this was by far the most important difference among the NJCs, they also had a healthy diversity of sponsorship, Board structure and responsibility, and management style. Each NJC will be briefly described below.

Neighborhood Justice Center of Atlanta

The Atlanta NJC was a completely independent program; it operated under the guidance of a Board of Directors composed of court officials, attorneys, and a few representatives from the police department and community agencies. The NJC and Board functioned under the auspices of the Neighborhood Justice Center of Atlanta, Inc., a non-profit organization created specifically to sponsor the program and manage the federal grant which supported it. The Board of Directors was the sole policy-making body for the NJC; it had no advisory council or similar group to serve in an advisory or support capacity. The Board was chaired by a well-known former judge and included influential court officials and attorneys with close ties to the local judicial system; these individuals were

instrumental in establishing relationships between the NJC and the courts. The Board members were very active throughout the Field Test period, providing the NJC Director and staff with a substantial amount of support and guidance.

The Atlanta NJC was headed by a Project Director who managed a full-time staff of 4-5 persons, a committed group of volunteers, and several student interns who helped out on a temporary basis. The mediation services were provided by a large group of mediators (55), who primarily conducted hearings but also assisted with outreach activities, media presentations, and other project tasks. A stable, reliable group of approximately 20 volunteers was recruited from the Junior League, other community organizations, and local colleges to screen and conduct intakes in court for cases referred to the NJC by judges and court clerks. The volunteers and mediators were viewed as valuable project resources and were extensively and effectively used. There was no staff turnover during the NJC's first 18 months of operation; the Center appeared to be efficiently and capably managed.

The NJC was located in a carefully selected target community in the eastern section of Atlanta, but served the entire city without regard to disputants' residence. The Center was an older, remodeled, two-story house near the center of the target area; it was on the edge of a small business district and next door to a high school. The atmosphere of the office was business-like but non-bureaucratic, busy, informal and characterized by personal attention delivered in a professional manner.

The Neighborhood Justice Center of Atlanta was foremost a court-related program which relied on cases referred by judges and court clerks, yet it also solicited cases from the community-at-large, local government and community agencies, and the police. The Center received most of its court referrals from the State Court of Fulton County and also maintained referral relationships with the Municipal (Police) Court, Juvenile Court, State Court of DeKalb County, and Superior Court. Nearly half of all its cases were referred via court clerks (primarily those in the small claims/civil warrants division, but referrals were also made by the criminal warrants court clerks); close to a quarter of the cases were referred by judges conducting bindover hearings. The remaining cases (31%) were referred by (in descending order) disputants themselves (self-referrals), government agencies, legal aid organizations, community agencies, and police officers.

Throughout the Field Test, the Atlanta Center carefully cultivated its relationships with court officials. In addition to the intake workers stationed in court (volunteers, interns, mediators, and staff members as needed), the NJC staff visited the courts often and kept the judges and clerks informed of the Center's activities, progress, and processing of court-referred cases. The staff also continued to conduct outreach activities, presenting mock mediations before community groups and soliciting media coverage of Center events. After initial training sessions were held for police officers, little attention was given to the police as referral sources.

Primarily as a result of the Center's dependence on referrals from the civil warrants desks, over half of the caseload involved civil disputes between landlords and tenants, consumers and merchants, and employees and employers. Interpersonal disputes between persons with a fairly close relationship (couples, neighbors, friends, families) made up approximately 40% of the cases

and tended to be referred by judges and criminal court clerks. The Atlanta NJC closely monitored its progress; it was the only Center to collect and analyze caseload figures on a routine basis, outside of the feedback system provided by the evaluation.

The Atlanta NJC rapidly built and maintained a high caseload throughout the Field Test period. In their second month, April 1978, the NJC processed 105 cases and mediated 42 of them. The Center handled between 150 and 200 cases each month; on the average, 55 were mediated (with an agreement rate of 81%) and 25 were resolved through a conciliation process. The Atlanta Center did not use arbitration at all, but referred a small number of cases to other agencies for assistance.

Kansas City Neighborhood Justice Center

When the Kansas City NJC was developed late in 1977, its structure and sponsorship were unique in the field of dispute resolution programs. The official sponsor of the NJC was the city government and the Center was operated by the Community Services Department as one of its eleven major programs. Policy formulation was accomplished through the interaction of the NJC Project Director and key officials from the Community Services Department and the city manager's office; the city government also provided the NJC with accounting services. Being part of the city government had both advantages and disadvantages. The city sponsorship was a legitimizing force for the Justice Center and provided the structure and support which allowed the NJC to move quickly through the implementation stage (the Kansas City Center was the first to open, on March 6, 1979) and establish relationships with key referral sources in the local judicial system. On the other hand, the Justice Center was part of a typical bureaucracy, bound by its paperwork requirements, inflexible personnel policies, and standard approaches to project operations. Support and guidance from outside the city government was obtained through the creation of a 23-member Advisory Board composed of community, agency, and city government representatives. The Board met monthly to advise the NJC staff on the problems and needs of the community, police, courts, and local agencies, and served as a source of knowledge, expertise, and assistance.

The NJC was headed by a Project Director who managed a staff of 4-5 persons augmented by volunteer workers and student interns on a sporadic basis. At the end of the Field Test, approximately 45 mediators were available to conduct mediation hearings. The NJC had a fairly high level of staff turnover among its direct service staff. This problem was exacerbated by city personnel regulations, which made it difficult to assign individuals permanently to a position in a short period of time. As in many small organizations, the NJC had some management and administrative problems, but these did not seem to have a significant negative impact on the Center's operation.

Like the Atlanta NJC, the Kansas City Center identified a target area in which to focus its activities, but from the outset actually served the entire Kansas City area. The Kansas City NJC was located on the third floor of a bank building in the central business district of the "mid-town" area. When conducting mediation hearings, the NJC tried to create a formal, serious atmosphere for dispute resolution by having disputants sign an affidavit stating they were not carrying weapons, administering oaths to the mediators

before conducting hearings, and notarizing all mediated agreements. During regular business hours, the Center was busy, informal, and service-oriented.

The Kansas City NJC was patterned after a dispute resolution program operated by the police department for a brief period in 1974. The NJC Project Director had headed the 1974 program and several experienced mediators joined the NJC also; the NJC target area was an extension of the target community covered by the previous program. The NJC also adopted the 1974 program's referral sources and mechanisms for obtaining cases from the prosecutor's office and police department. This earlier project had an extended influence on the Kansas City NJC -- initial support from key city government, court, and police officials was readily obtained due to their awareness and acceptance of mediation gained through their experience with the 1974 program.

The Kansas City NJC had strong linkages to the criminal justice system; two-thirds of the cases were referred by (in order) the prosecutor's office, police department, and judges. The Center worked primarily with the Kansas City Municipal Court, with only a few cases referred by court personnel in Juvenile Court, Superior Court, and the County Magistrate Court. The Center's second largest source of cases was the community (agencies who made referrals and individuals who came in on their own), followed by government agencies and legal aid organizations.

The referral arrangement with the prosecutor's office (stationing an intake worker there to screen cases) was a carryover of the referral process used by the 1974 dispute resolution program. The NJC staff in the prosecutor's office also conducted intakes for cases referred to the Center by judges in the criminal division of the Municipal Court. Police officers were viewed as valuable referral sources; three hour training sessions were held with small groups of officers in three patrol divisions to train the police officers to refer appropriate cases to the Center. Late in the Field Test period, a retired officer was hired to encourage police referrals and provide ongoing support and feedback to the officers. The number of police-referred cases increased noticeably after the training and feedback efforts.

Because of the NJC's strong ties to the criminal courts and police department, the caseload was dominated by interpersonal cases, especially neighborhood disputes. Over 70% of the cases involved disputes between domestic couples, relatives, neighbors, and friends; the rest were civil cases, primarily landlord/tenant and consumer/merchant disputes.

During the 15 months of data collection of the Field Test, the Kansas City NJC had a moderate caseload; an average of 60 cases were processed each month with approximately 22 mediated and 10 resolved without a hearing. The Kansas City NJC was the only Center to try to resolve cases through arbitration. Disputants volunteered for mediation/arbitration, which meant that a hearing would start as a mediation but if no agreement was reached, an arbitrated decision would be made by the mediator. Only 25 cases (8% of all cases with hearings) ended in arbitration. The Center relied primarily on mediation, conciliation, and to a small extent, referrals to other agencies, to resolve disputes.

The Neighborhood Justice Center of Venice/Mar Vista

The NJC in the Venice/Mar Vista area of Los Angeles was strongly oriented to a community approach to dispute resolution, in contrast to Atlanta's and Kansas City's criminal justice system orientation. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC was sponsored by the Los Angeles County Bar Association. A Board of Directors was formed to monitor the NJC and serve as its policy-making body; the Board was composed of Bar Association personnel, community and public agency representatives. The NJC had no other advisory or support group. The NJC Board of Directors was very active early in the project, creating numerous subcommittees to address special issues including staff and mediator recruitment and hiring, target area and office location selection, the use of arbitration, confidentiality, standards and ethics, and case selection criteria. The Board became less active as the Field Test proceeded, delegating most policy and decision-making responsibilities to the Project Director and leaving the Board somewhat unaware of the dynamics and activities of the Center.

The Venice/Mar Vista Center was staffed and operated much like the other two NJCs. A Project Director managed a small full-time staff of 5-6 persons and several part-time staff who worked sporadically on an as-needed basis. A small group of mediators (25) conducted mediation hearings and also extensively assisted in outreach activities and media presentations. Like the Kansas City Center, the Venice/Mar Vista NJC had some management problems and a high rate of staff turnover. Of note was a minor rebellion from a vocal minority of the mediators; after a large investment of time in training, they mediated few cases in the early project months and their high expectations were not met. Ultimately, they wanted to have a voice in Center policies and operations. A form of participative management was maintained throughout the Field Test period, and both the staff and mediator problems became less salient over time.

The NJC identified the Venice and Mar Vista communities as its target area and adhered to the policy of concentrating its services in these areas. The target area was selected for its strong sense of community and representative mix of ethnic and income groups. The Venice/Mar Vista staff concentrated outreach activities in the target community by speaking before many local organizations; conducting an extensive media campaign in local newspapers, radio, and television, focused on the broadcasting of public service announcements; and distributing NJC literature in shopping malls, beach areas, community organizations, etc. The NJC was located in a remodeled store-front facility on a primarily residential street near the center of the two target neighborhoods. In keeping with the high priority of soliciting cases from the community, the atmosphere was very relaxed and casual, with an emphasis on personal service.

When selected, the Venice/Mar Vista area appeared to be a good place for testing the community approach; the neighborhoods were well-defined, had a strong sense of community, and were populated with politically active and socially aware people. In retrospect, however, the target area, especially Venice, may have been a poor choice. The area included several ethnic groups without common goals and values, there were many community agencies fighting for turf and who resented the intrusion of "yet another federal program," and the population was very transient. It was very difficult for the NJC to overcome the skepticism and wait-and-see attitude of the target area population. Community

agencies, thought to be excellent sources of cases, were resistant to the NJC, unwilling to refer their clients (and ultimate source of income) to the Center; community agencies accounted for only 6% of the total NJC caseload.

The community-at-large was the Venice/Mar Vista NJC's primary source of cases -- over 50% of the cases were brought to the Center by individuals on their own initiative. A small number of cases were received from local community, legal aid, and government agencies. Approximately a third of the cases came from the justice system, from judges and clerks in small claims courts and police officers.

The NJC was blocked from developing referral relationships with the criminal court system because of the presence of the Hearing Officer Program in Los Angeles. This program was operated by the District Attorney's office and processed cases received from the court system and police department; it diverted cases (usually misdemeanor cases involving people with ongoing relationships and other minor disputes) from the formal adjudication process and resolved them via a mediation-like hearing. The courts and police officers referred cases to this established program and did not use the NJC services. The presence of the Hearing Officer Program (and an institutionalized domestic violence program also) made the Los Angeles area a very difficult place to establish a traditional court-related mediation program.

The NJC had referral relationships with small claims courts in Compton, West Los Angeles, and Santa Monica at different times during the Field Test. Two referral processes were implemented: (1) letters from the NJC were attached to all small claims filing forms introducing and recommending the Center as an alternative, and (2) mediators were stationed in court to conduct on-site mediations for small claims disputes referred by judges. The relationship with the Compton Court was a short-term experimental effort to try out the referral procedures and give the mediators some experience. The NJC worked with the West Los Angeles Small Claims Court for three months; mediation in court was not successful there, primarily because approximately 40 judge pro tems conducted court sessions in rotation for short periods of time, making the development and maintenance of working relationships difficult. The Center developed referral arrangements with the Santa Monica Small Claims Court in March 1979 which were maintained throughout the rest of the Field Test period.

Landlord/tenant and consumer/merchant disputes comprised over half of the Venice/Mar Vista NJC caseload; nearly all the cases were civil/small claims disputes. Very few cases were of a criminal nature; most disputes between people with an ongoing relationship involved disagreements over money, property settlements, and other civil matters. The NJC's sizable number of self-referred cases were apparently due to the extensive use of public service announcements on television and radio. The time-consuming outreach activities appeared to be less effective than the PSAs in attracting cases and increasing community awareness of the NJC.

The NJC processed approximately 50 cases each month, mediating 16 and conciliating seven, on the average. The caseload fluctuated substantially, rising when a new court relationship began or when public service announcements were renewed, and decreasing again after the initial impact of these activities. The Center also placed great emphasis on referring disputants to other agencies for help outside the NJC's purview. Because of the NJC's media outreach, many

calls were received at the Center each month which the NJC could not attempt to resolve, and callers were referred on for appropriate assistance. Mediation was the only formal dispute resolution process used by the Center.

.The Dispute Resolution Process

Each Center approached the dispute resolution process in a similar manner. Their goal at all times was to have two parties volunteer to participate in mediation, a process in which a neutral third party, the mediator, attempts to facilitate the resolution of the dispute within a structured hearing. Two-thirds of all cases resolved by the NJCs were resolved through mediation. Each Center employed mediation in a similar manner -- differences in conducting a hearing were individual, not Center-related. Once a mediable complaint was brought to the attention of the NJC, a hearing was scheduled at the convenience of the two parties. A single mediator usually heard each case, except in the Kansas City NJC, where two mediators were used often for neighborhood cases and training and learning experiences. The mediators used individual caucuses with each party to negotiate terms; the goal of the hearing was for the parties to reach an agreement regarding the resolution of the immediate problem and hopefully initiate a forum for preventing or resolving future problems. The mediator had no power to force a solution on the parties, except in the hybrid form of mediation/arbitration practiced by the Kansas City NJC. The day-to-day business of each NJC focused around identifying and attracting appropriate disputes for mediation, working with the parties to schedule a hearing, and providing the place and mediator for the hearing.

The conduct of hearings was generally based on the procedures used by the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution and American Arbitration Association. These two groups conducted training sessions at the early NJC workshops for staff members and provided much of the mediator training; mediator training developed by NJC staff was also patterned after the IMCR and AAA approaches. A typical hearing progressed in the following fashion:

- (1) The mediator made an opening statement, introducing self, explaining the mediator's role, and describing the mediation process.
- (2) Each disputant was allowed to tell his or her side of the dispute without interruption.
- (3) The disputants and mediator discussed the issues, with the mediator asking clarifying questions and attempting to move the parties toward agreement.
- (4) Individual private caucuses may have been held with each disputant.
- (5) The joint session continued with fact-finding, review of the issues, and negotiation between the parties until an agreement was reached or it appeared there would be no agreement. Additional individual caucuses may have been held.

- (6) If an agreement was reached, it was written and signed by both parties and the mediator. Copies were made for each disputant and the signed original was retained in the case file.
- (7) Mediator thanked the parties for their participation.

In the process of gathering information on the dispute from both parties and attempting to schedule a mediation hearing, the NJC staffs often precipitated or facilitated a resolution of the problem. Many cases (16.5%) accepted by the NJCs were resolved before a hearing took place (representing a third of all resolved cases). In some cases, the parties resolved the dispute themselves without outside intervention and reported this to the Center. In others, a single phone call from the NJC to the respondent to report the complaint and request the respondent's participation in mediation brought about action which effectively resolved the problem. In a small number of cases, the NJC staff made several information-gathering calls and inquiries and actively facilitated an agreement between the parties. Thus, the involvement of the third party in these conciliated cases ranged from none to active participation, but there was always less involvement than the third party mediator in a hearing.

The Kansas City Center was the only NJC to move third party involvement one more step by employing mediation/arbitration, in which the mediator/arbitrator had the power to impose the conditions of a resolution of the dispute on the parties. The intake procedures in the Kansas City NJC required the disputants to volunteer for mediation/arbitration, meaning that if mediation failed to bring about an agreement the mediator could turn arbitrator and, based on the stories already presented in the hearing, make a judgment in the case. Thus, a single hearing could begin as a mediation and end with an arbitrated award. Only a very small number of cases (25 -- less than 1% of all NJC cases) were arbitrated in this manner. The mediation/arbitration process as used by the Kansas City NJC was not always well-received by disputants. Approximately 10 disputants did not realize they were volunteering for arbitration if mediation failed, and some walked out of the hearing when arbitration became apparent. (It is not known at what point an individual mediator decided a mediated agreement was not forthcoming and chose to arbitrate.) Some disputants were unhappy with the awards made (this was often when they lost), and in some cases, there was little hope that the award would accomplish anything. Others deplored the NJC's lack of enforcement power and were unhappy that they had no recourse; the NJC maintained that a case could not be reopened in court if it was arbitrated. In at least one case, however, legal action did take place and the judge ruled without considering the NJC award. It was also apparent that the NJC did not handle arbitrations well. As mentioned, disputants did not fully understand the process; other problems with the mediation/arbitration process led the Kansas City NJC to cease using arbitration as a method of dispute resolution toward the end of the Field Test.

The NJCs offered assistance in many disputes which they were unable to resolve, by referring one or both parties to other agencies for help. Many referrals were made for persons who contacted the Centers for assistance with problems inappropriate for the NJC services. Disputants were referred to court, legal aid, counseling services, and helping agencies of all kinds. The Venice/Mar Vista Center adopted the referral-out process as an important service for a community program of its nature. The Center staff researched and compiled an extensive list of local resources available to offer assistance in

many areas. The Center's outreach and media activities brought a wealth of inquiries to the Center and many people asking for help in resolving a problem. The NJC averaged about 200 such calls a month which did not involve a mediable dispute, and made referrals for more than half of them.

Mediator Selection and Training

Each NJC recruited and trained an initial group of mediators in February and March 1978. This initial recruitment and selection of mediators was very carefully done, to obtain a group which was representative of the target area community. Care was taken to have all races, ages, backgrounds, and occupations represented among the mediators. The NJC staffs recruited and selected the mediators with the help of their governing or advisory boards, who primarily identified candidates and provided advice on selection criteria. Demographic data on the mediators are presented in the evaluation's Implementation Study Report (Sheppard, Roehl, and Cook, 1978). Additional information was collected from the mediators via personality and vocational interest tests in an attempt to identify characteristics of effective mediators; however, the analyses did not reveal meaningful relationships among the variables.

The mediators were to be paid a small stipend to defray any personal expenses involved in participating in the program, yet were to be considered volunteers. The Atlanta NJC paid its mediators \$15 per case, regardless of length; the Kansas City Center often used two mediators per case, with the primary (or single) mediator receiving \$25 per case and the secondary mediator receiving \$15; and the Venice/Mar Vista NJC paid mediators \$6 per hour for any and all work done for the Center, including mediation. Each Center paid its mediators around \$5 when the mediator showed up for a hearing but the disputants did not. It is questionable that the mediators can be considered volunteers in a strict definition of the term.

The three Centers each initially approached the mediator training program in different ways. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC created their own 70-hour curriculum package utilizing local mediation training consultants and drawing minimally on nationally recognized resources such as the American Arbitration Association (AAA). The Kansas City Center contracted jointly with the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution and AAA to conduct their training effort over a 48-hour, two-weekend period. The Atlanta NJC worked with a local mediation training organization and AAA to conduct the program in a 40-hour, two-weekend period. In addition, an eight-hour follow-up session was held 60 days after the initial training.

After operating for some months, each Center decided to train a second group of mediators because some attrition had occurred, there was an unanticipated need for more mediators available in the daytime, and more representativeness was needed (for example, the Atlanta Center felt more black males should be available for certain types of cases). Each Center also decided to do the training in-house, using NJC staff and experienced mediators augmented by local experts if necessary. This decision was primarily due to the high cost of hiring training consultants, but also because the staff felt confident that they could tailor training materials and presentations to meet their individual Center's needs and do a good job of training the new group. Each training program was designed and conducted primarily by the Deputy Director; training

was held in September 1978 in Atlanta and Kansas City and in April-May 1979 in Venice/Mar Vista.

The training in Atlanta and Kansas City appeared to be successful. At the end of the Field Test, Atlanta's second group of mediators had conducted 27% of the hearings. In Kansas City, the second group mediated 9%, primarily because a city personnel policy caused a long delay in using the new people (city regulations required that taxes, social security, etc., be taken out of the mediators' stipends, but the NJC finally circumvented the problem). There were reports that the training in Venice/Mar Vista was not well planned or executed; the mediators were to do extensive role-playing and observation of hearings and the training process extended over a long period of time. Half of the group, who were carefully screened, did not complete the training; the mediators had not conducted hearings by the end of the Field Test.

CHAPTER III: NJC CASE CHARACTERISTICS

The process study of the evaluation was designed to provide detailed information on the number and types of cases processed by the Neighborhood Justice Centers and information on how each case was handled. The study was based on a routinized data collection and analysis system which gathered extensive data on case characteristics (referral source, type, etc.), disputant characteristics (age, sex, race, etc.), and the handling of the cases by the NJCs (disposition, number of processing days, etc.). This chapter presents the major case information of source, type, and disposition and their interrelationships for the NJCs together and each Center separately, along with disputant characteristics, detailed information on the resolution and handling processes, and monthly caseload trends.

Overview of the NJC Caseload

The Neighborhood Justice Centers demonstrated that they are capable of attracting and processing a sizable number of cases. During the 15-month Field Test period the Centers handled close to 4,000 cases; 60% of the cases were processed by a single Center, the Atlanta NJC. The process data also indicate that a single justice center can attract and process a wide variety of case types from both criminal justice and community sources of referral. A majority of the NJC cases (62%) were referred from the criminal-civil justice system -- judges, court clerks, public attorneys, other court officials, and police officers. The remainder were self-initiated by individuals or referred from a variety of community, private, and government organizations. The cases were fairly evenly divided between two broad categories of (1) interpersonal disputes in domestic, neighbor, family, and other close relationships which may be civil or criminal in nature and (2) civil disputes between tenants and landlords, consumers and merchants, employees and employers, and others. Forty-five percent of all the NJC cases were in the first category and 55% in the second. Generally, the interpersonal disputes were referred by criminal court judges and officials, and law enforcement officers, while the civil cases tended to be self-initiated or be referred by small claims courts and community and other agencies.

The Justice Centers attracted a large number of different case types from a variety of sources. Measures of NJC effectiveness include the number of cases which reach a hearing and the number which are resolved. Over a third of the cases reached a hearing and 82% of them were resolved by mutual agreement; another 17% of the cases were resolved prior to a hearing. Overall, 45% of the cases were resolved before or as a result of a mediation hearing. Two major factors affect whether a case is mediated or not and resolved or not -- they are the type of case and the referral source.

Interpersonal disputes were more likely to reach a hearing ($\chi^2=310^1, p <$

¹ It should be noted that the high n (3,947 cases) tends to produce significant chi-squares even when actual differences are small. The results here, however, do appear to be substantial and meaningful.

.001) than civil cases and were more apt to be resolved ($\chi^2=97$, $p < .001$) via mediation or conciliation. Half of the interpersonal cases were mediated and approximately 10% more were resolved before a hearing, resulting in a resolution of 54% of the total number of interpersonal cases. In contrast, only 23% of the civil cases reached a hearing but many were resolved prior to a hearing, with an overall resolution rate of 38%. The source of referral had an effect on whether a hearing was held for a case or not ($\chi^2=928$, $p < .001$). Hearings were held for 82% of the judge-referred cases; however, the majority of the cases did not reach a hearing. For all other referral sources only 14-36% were mediated, yet almost as many cases were resolved prior to a hearing as through a hearing. Referral source and resolution rate are also related ($\chi^2=263$, $p < .001$); 71% of judge-referrals were ultimately resolved, as were 35 to 45% of the cases from other sources.

The characteristics of the disputants varied among the three NJCs, reflecting the different demographic compositions of the three cities. In Atlanta, both complainants and respondents (not representing corporations) were predominately black with median annual incomes below \$6,000. The majority of corporate respondents (e.g., landlords, merchants, etc.) were white. In Kansas City complainants and respondents were nearly evenly divided between blacks and whites, with a small number of hispanics; median annual income of disputants was also under \$6,000. In Los Angeles (Venice/Mar Vista), the majority of complainants and respondents were white, with the others a fairly even mix of hispanics and blacks. Median income of disputants was between \$6,000 and \$12,000. In short, the disputants tended to reflect the racial composition of the communities which the NJCs served, but the Centers appear to attract a disproportionate number of lower income people. Nearly half of the respondents in the Atlanta and Venice/Mar Vista NJCs were representing a business, usually a small concern they owned. These corporate representatives tended to have fairly high incomes, but they were almost always respondents, not complainants, and rarely brought a dispute to the NJC on their own initiative.

Detailed Description of NJC Cases, Referral Sources, and Case Disposition

The process study of the evaluation provides detailed information on the nature and handling of all cases in the NJCs during the Field Test data collection period of March 1978 to May 1979. It is important to understand what constitutes a case in the Centers. A case (interchangeable with referral -- a police referral, for example, is a case referred by a police officer) is defined as a mediable dispute that has been brought to the attention of the Center by a previously defined referral source (including the community-at-large). This definition does not include disputes which the NJC learned of yet found inappropriate for its services; these cases were referred to other agencies or simply not accepted. In most cases, the NJC initially learned of the dispute from the complainant only and subsequently may have been unable to handle the case because the responding party did not agree to participate. Thus, as indicated in Table III-1, the NJCs handled 3,947 cases; if the respondent-refused cases (1,297) are excluded from the total pool, 2,650 hearing-eligible cases were processed by the Centers. Throughout this report, the term "case" will refer to disputes initially accepted for processing by the NJC, whether or not both parties had agreed to participate.

There were three broad dispositions or immediate outcomes of the NJC cases:

they were mediated in a hearing session, resolved prior to a hearing, or remained unresolved with no hearing taking place. Table III-1 depicts the disposition of cases in each individual Center and Figure III-1 illustrates the progression of cases through the NJCs.

A mediation hearing was held for nearly 35% (1,377 of 3,947) of the cases handled by the NJCs. Eighty-two percent of these mediated cases were resolved at the hearing by an agreement between the disputing parties. A sizable number of cases were resolved before a hearing took place, often during the process of contacting the respondent to solicit his or her participation in mediation; 650 cases, 16.5% of the total caseload, were resolved in this manner, which is a form of conciliation. Thus, about half of the cases (45%) were resolved by the NJCs via mediation or conciliation prior to a hearing. The reader should be cautioned that the term "resolved" here indicates that an agreement was reached in a hearing or the complainant and/or respondent reported the dispute was settled prior to a hearing. The actual extent and permanence of the resolutions are described in the following chapter.

The rest of the cases were closed by the NJCs without any apparent resolution of the problem. These cases were divided into two categories depending on the reason they remained unresolved: (1) the most common reasons were the respondent's refusal to participate in mediation or the inability of the NJC to contact the respondent due to inadequate information regarding the person's telephone number and/or address; and (2) a host of other reasons, including either or both parties failing to appear for the mediation hearing, the complainant withdrawing the case, and the NJC losing contact with the disputants.

The three Centers had significantly different hearing and resolution rates ($\chi^2=13$, $p < .01$ and $\chi^2=74$, $p < .01$, respectively). The Kansas City NJC heard and resolved proportionately more cases than the other two Centers. The Kansas City NJC held hearings for 39% of its caseload and, combining successful mediations and conciliations, resolved 56%. In contrast, the Atlanta NJC heard 35% of its cases and ultimately resolved 44%; the corresponding figures for Venice/Mar Vista were 31% and 35%. The Kansas City NJC also had a higher rate of hearings which ended in resolutions -- 95% of the hearings ended in an agreement or arbitrated award (25 cases with hearings were arbitrated). In Atlanta and Venice/Mar Vista, the agreement rates were 81% and 66%, respectively. These hearing and resolution rate differences are probably due to the Centers' referral sources, casetypes, and screening processes. The small number of arbitrations conducted by the Kansas City Center had minimal impact.

Tables III-2 and III-3 depict the major referral sources and types of cases handled by the NJCs during the Field Test, cross-tabulated with the case disposition. Table 10 in Appendix B provides updated information on the NJC caseloads; it presents the disposition of cases processed by the Centers in the months following the Field Test, from June through October 1979. A full explanation of each referral source and casetype category is provided below in the process of describing the NJC case characteristics and their relationships to case disposition. The case and disputant characteristics of each Center follows, accompanied by detailed information on the individual Center's processing of the cases.

Referral sources. As indicated in Table III-2, the majority of the NJC cases were referred from the criminal-civil justice system (62%), although a

**TABLE III-1: CASE DISPOSITION
IN ALL THREE NJCS**

	Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista	Total
Cases with hearings, resolved	657 (27.9)	316 (37.4)	154 (20.5)	1127 (28.6)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	156 (6.6)	16 (1.9)	78 (10.4)	250 (6.3)
Cases resolved without a hearing	384 (16.3)	158 (18.7)	108 (14.4)	650 (16.5)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	436 (18.5)	81 (9.6)	106 (14.1)	623 (15.8)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	718 (30.5)	274 (32.4)	305 (40.6)	1297 (32.9)
Total	2351 (59.6)	845 (21.4)	751 (19.0)	3947 (100.0%)

FIGURE III-1
CASE DISPOSITION FLOW

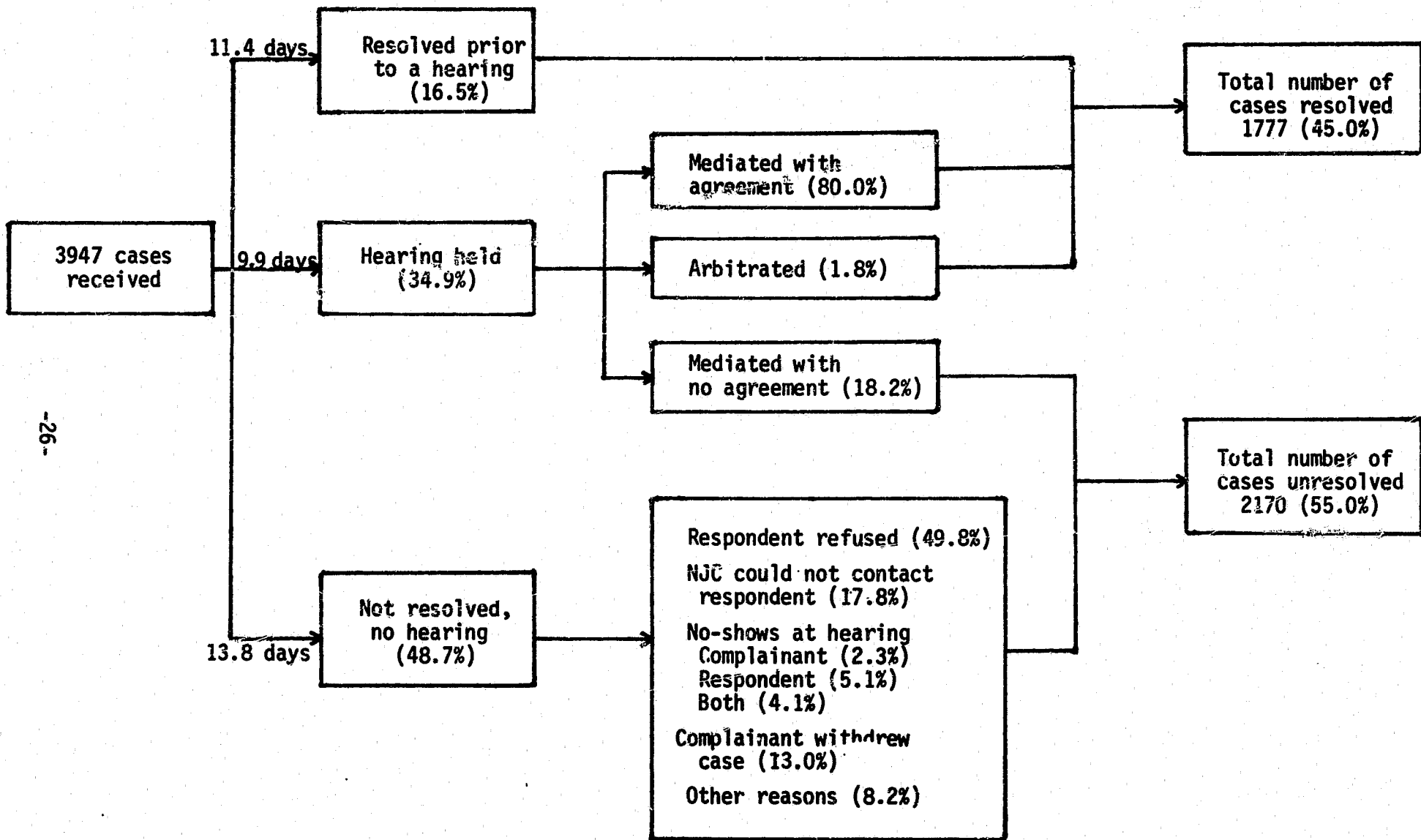


TABLE III-2: ALL NJCs
CASE DISPOSITION BY REFERRAL SOURCE

	Judges (Bench Referrals)	Pros. Office or Civil/ Criminal Warrants Desks	Police	Community Agencies	Self	Legal Aid Organizations	Government Agencies	Others	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	515 (69)	279 (20)	94 (33)	33 (18)	99 (15)	29 (15)	29 (12)	46 (24)	1124 (28.7)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	95 (13)	68 (5)	8 (3)	7 (4)	32 (5)	18 (9)	4 (2)	17 (9)	249 (6.4)
Cases resolved without a hearing	15 (2)	260 (19)	33 (12)	34 (19)	147 (22)	39 (20)	76 (32)	36 (18)	640 (16.4)
Cases unresolved, no hear- ing (no-shows, with- drawals)	89 (12)	226 (16)	48 (17)	37 (20)	106 (16)	35 (18)	42 (17)	29 (15)	612 (15.6)
Cases unresolved, no hear- ing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	31 (4)	559 (40)	99 (35)	71 (39)	295 (43)	73 (38)	90 (37)	68 (35)	1286 (32.9)
Total	745 (19.0)	1392 (35.6)	282 (7.2)	182 (4.7)	679 (17.4)	194 (5.0)	241 (6.2)	196 (5.0)	3911 (100%)*

*Missing data on 36 cases.

TABLE III-3: ALL NJCs
CASE DISPOSITION BY TYPE OF CASE

	Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	181 (56)	111 (40)	88 (45)	147 (48)	86 (31)	169 (43)	77 (12)	152 (18)	31 (9)	80 (31)	1122 (28.6)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	20 (6)	26 (9)	12 (6)	8 (3)	18 (6)	20 (5)	25 (4)	77 (9)	19 (5)	22 (8)	247 (6.3)
Cases resolved without a hearing	23 (7)	18 (7)	16 (8)	32 (10)	47 (17)	40 (10)	176 (26)	185 (22)	87 (24)	23 (9)	647 (16.5)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	57 (18)	57 (21)	36 (18)	38 (12)	38 (14)	80 (20)	115 (17)	103 (12)	56 (15)	35 (13)	615 (15.7)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	44 (14)	66 (24)	45 (23)	82 (27)	92 (33)	89 (22)	279 (42)	323 (39)	172 (47)	101 (39)	1293 (33.0)
Total	325 (8.3)	278 (7.1)	197 (5.0)	307 (7.8)	281 (7.2)	398 (10.1)	672 (17.1)	840 (21.4)	365 (9.3)	261 (6.7)	3924 (100%)*

*Missing data on 23 cases.

sizable percentage of cases (38%) were referred by other agencies. The justice system agencies were broken down into three primary categories:

- (1) Judges: these referrals were made by judges on the bench in criminal or civil court. With the exception of the small claims courts the Venice/Mar Vista NJC worked with, the judge continued the case for 30 days; if it was successfully mediated, the judge dismissed the case or, in some instances, entered the terms of the agreement as a judgment.
- (2) Court clerks and prosecutors referred cases to the NJCs prior to filing charges in the court system. The majority (79%) were referred by civil or small claims court clerks (a small number of cases were referred by criminal warrants court clerks) and the rest (21%) were referred from the prosecutor's office. Court clerks served as referral sources for the Atlanta and Venice/Mar Vista NJCs, while most of the prosecutor referrals were for the Kansas City NJC.
- (3) Police officers, in lieu of arrest, referred disputants to the NJCs.

Over one-third of the NJC cases did not originate in the criminal-civil justice system or law enforcement agencies. They were referred to the NJCs by the following sources:

- (4) Community agencies: this category covers a wide range of community organizations, including social service and other helping agencies such as the Council for Battered Women, Venice Drug Coalition, and senior citizen centers.
- (5) Disputing parties: seventeen percent of the NJC cases were initiated by the disputing parties themselves (or more accurately, usually one party, designated the complainant), via a phone call or visit to the center. In 17% of all self-referrals, how the disputants came to know of the NJC is unknown. For the remainder, however, nearly half (47%) became aware of the NJC through the media -- 7% through newspaper or magazine articles, 15% by radio and 25% by television announcements and interview shows. Another quarter of the people (27%), heard of the Center by word-of-mouth, through family or friends (it is not known how these secondary referral sources became familiar with the NJC). The remaining self-referrals knew of the NJC because of actually seeing the Center office (11%), seeing an NJC poster or brochure (8%), attending an NJC activity such as a presentation to a local organization (4%), and other miscellaneous ways (3%).
- (6) Legal aid organizations: approximately three-fourths of the cases from these sources were referred by legal aid agencies and lawyer referral services. The rest (23%) were referred to the NJCs by private attorneys.
- (7) Government agencies: includes all county, city, state, and federal agencies, such as the Governor's Office of Consumer

Affairs and Housing and Urban Development offices.

- (8) Other sources: this catch-all category includes cases referred by former NJC disputants (49%), NJC staff or mediators (21%), consumer advocate programs (7%), and other sources (23%; includes school principals, business owners, etc.).

Case types. The types of cases the NJCs handled have been classified into ten categories according to the relationship between the parties and the nature of their dispute (where more than one problem was evident, a judgment was made as to which seemed to be the primary issue in dispute). The first six categories refer to cases in which the parties had a fairly close, ongoing relationship; their disputes may be criminal (assault, harassment) or civil (money or property settlements) in nature. Because of the relationship between the parties, these cases will be referred to as interpersonal cases. While it is extremely difficult to identify a case as criminal or civil due to differing laws and statutes and lack of an objective assessment of the legality of the situation, approximately 65% of the interpersonal cases might be considered criminal and 35% civil. A few of the cases involved primarily extra-legal problems, such as domestic relationship problems with no criminal intent. The last four categories contain cases where the parties for the most part had more casual relationships (such as landlord/tenant relationships) and are virtually entirely civil in nature; these will be referred to as civil cases throughout the report. Because of the similarities and significance of the interpersonal and civil categories, most of the analyses use these breakdowns. Forty-five percent of the NJC cases were in the former category, and 55% in the latter. However, as fully explicated below, a detailed analysis of the nature of the disputes indicates that a 30-70 split between criminal and civil cases may be a more accurate description of the NJCs' caseload. The kinds of cases in each category are fully explained below:

- (1) and (2) Domestic cases: under the rubric of "domestic cases" are a variety of disputes between couples with an ongoing legal or non-legal relationship. Approximately 58% of these cases involved couples who were married or divorced, 37% were currently or formerly living together, and a handful (5%) involved romantic triangles (for example, a dispute among a man, his current live-in companion, and his ex-girlfriend). In the NJC cases, leaving seemed to cause slightly more problems than staying. Among those with a legal domestic relationship, 35% were separated, 20% were divorced, and 45% were currently married. Among those who lived together outside marriage, 54% were couples who had split up and 46% were currently cohabitating.

- (1) Domestic assault and harassment: this category includes married and living together couples as described above; 78% involved allegations of assault and battery where actual physical violence had occurred. In the rest of the cases, harassment was the primary problem, which included threats of physical harm and situations where one party was continually annoyed or bothered by the other.

- (2) Domestic settlements and other disputes: again, this

category includes married and living together couples as described above. The types of disputes included here were primarily disagreements regarding the division of property and money settlements in domestic break-ups (38%), child support and visitation rights (35%), and general relationship problems of various sorts (25%).

- (3) Family disputes: this category covers all disputes between relatives. Thirty-five percent were parent-child disputes, 17% were between siblings, and 47% were between other relatives. The nature of the disputes was wide ranging, from minor parent-child problems and disputes among siblings to all-out brawls among extended family members and children stealing from their parents. Twenty-six percent of these cases involved charges of assault (involving actual physical contact meant to harm) and 10% involved harassment. Many of the disputes (33%) were disagreements over money or goods; the rest involved a variety of family problems.
- (4) Assault and harassment among neighbors: this category is self-explanatory. It involves assault (41%) and harassment (59%) charges between neighbors.
- (5) Neighborhood nuisances: this category covers a range of neighborhood problems. Typical nuisances, such as barking dogs, encroaching tree limbs, and disputes over shared driveways, accounted for 66% of the cases in this group. Disagreements over property, and to a lesser extent, money, were the central disputes in 24% of the cases and 9% involved neighborhood problems such as vandalism or group complaints against a gang of young people.
- (6) Disputes between friends: this category covers all disputes between current or former girlfriend-boyfriends (34%), close friends (29%), acquaintances (26%), and current or past roommates (11%). These cases involved money and/or property disagreements (44%), assault (31%) and harassment (16%).
- (7) Landlord/tenant disputes: these cases were almost equally split between shelter issues (upkeep of property, primarily, and eviction) and disagreements over money (return of security deposits, rent increases, failure to pay rent). In most cases (89%), the tenant was complaining against the landlord, but 11% were brought to the NJC by the landlord. Landlord/tenant cases included complaints from apartment and public housing dwellers, and tenants who rent private houses from individuals.
- (8) Consumer/merchant disputes: all of these cases involved consumer problems. Money was an issue in 75% of the cases -- usually the consumer wanted money back or at least a reduction in payment due to unacceptable service or goods; in a few instances the merchant complained the consumer had not paid in full (although bad check complaints were very rare). The remaining 25% of the cases did not involve money demands, but rather

consumer demands for additional service or replacement or repair of goods. Ninety percent of the consumer/merchant cases were brought to the NJC by the consumer. Merchants who participated in the NJC process range from mom and pop grocery stores to huge corporations such as Sears (although local small businesses account for the majority of the NJC cases). Complaints against automobile repair shops and dry cleaners were common, as were problems arising from in-the-home services such as roofing, plumbing, and carpentry work.

- (9) Employee/employer disputes: these cases were primarily between employers and their ex-employees. The majority of them were disagreements over money owed in salary, unused vacation, sick leave, etc., when an employee left the job; however, 11% involved other problems such as charges of discrimination or employee theft. Almost all of these cases (94%) were initiated by the employee.
- (10) Other: this category is for any case which does not fit above, primarily due to the relationship between the parties. The majority of these cases (78%) involved disagreements over money or property and 13% involved assault or harassment charges. Two-thirds of the cases (67%) were between strangers and were usually the result of car accidents, 11% were between people with a business relationship, and 7% involved parents who came to the NJC to resolve a problem which was actually between their kids. The rest of the cases (15%) were between people with an unknown or very complex relationship.

Neighborhood Justice Center of Atlanta

Appendix B contains tables which provide data on the referral source, disposition, and case type for the cases handled by the Neighborhood Justice Center of Atlanta (Tables 1, 2, and 3). The Atlanta Center processed 2,351 cases during the Field Test period. Almost half of these cases were resolved either at a mediation hearing or prior to a hearing. Hearings were held for 813 cases (35%) and agreements were reached in 81% of the hearings. Half of the total cases remained unresolved after NJC contact, primarily due to the respondent's refusal to participate in mediation.

Referral sources. The majority of Atlanta's cases (68.6%) originated in the criminal-civil justice system. The Atlanta NJC's primary referral source was the clerks in the small claims court, followed by the judges in criminal court. The community itself was the third largest referral source -- nearly 9% of the caseload were self-referrals and 4% were referred by various community agencies. Cases referred by judges were most likely to reach a hearing (78.3% were mediated); 31.5% of police-referred cases reached the hearing stage and the mediation rate of cases from all other referral sources was lower. Except for police and judge referrals, nearly as many cases were resolved before a hearing as in a hearing.

The Atlanta Center established relationships with the State Court of Fulton County, Municipal Court (Police Court), Juvenile Court, State Court of

Dekalb County, and Superior Court. Judges from all the courts referred cases, but Fulton County State Court and Municipal Court judges accounted for 97% of the judge-referred cases (72.1% and 25.2%, respectively). Virtually all (98.5%) of the cases referred by court clerks originated in the Fulton County State Court, and nearly all of them were from the civil warrants clerks in small claims court rather than the criminal warrants desks. A few cases were referred from clerks in Municipal and Juvenile Court. A handful of cases (28 total) were referred by other court officials, including prosecutors, public defenders, probation and parole officers, and counselors (in Juvenile Court). Thus, the State Court of Fulton County referred 1,417 cases to the NJC (89% of the court system referrals), 9% came from Municipal Court, 2% from Juvenile Court, and less than 1% from Dekalb County State Court and the Superior Court.

Of the 200 people who brought their cases to the Atlanta NJC on their own initiative (self-referrals), 75 (38%) had heard of the NJC by word-of-mouth; 25% through the media, primarily television talk shows; 17% had seen the Center or its sign; and 13% were informed via NJC activities. Most of the NJC's government agency referrals came from the Governor's Office for Consumer Affairs. Of the 133 cases referred by legal aid organizations, 20% were from attorneys in private practice and the rest came from legal aid services. The "other" referral sources break down as follows: 54% (75 cases) were the result of former disputants referring people to the NJC, 15% were referred by NJC staff or mediators, and the rest came from miscellaneous sources.

Types of cases. The Atlanta caseload was dominated by cases of a civil nature (58.7% were of this type). The consumer/merchant cases were the most frequent type, accounting for 23.7% of all cases, followed by landlord/tenant (16.3%) and employee/employer disputes (13.2%). These cases were least apt to be mediated; while 21 to 30% of them were resolved without a hearing taking place, nearly half of them remained unresolved after NJC contact. The cases involving disputants with a close relationship (domestic, neighbors, etc.) were more apt to be mediated -- 47 to 72% of these cases involved a hearing and few of them were resolved without a hearing. Whether or not a case was mediated depended partially on the nature of the dispute and partially on the referral source. Judges and police officers tended to refer cases involving a close interpersonal relationship, while the court clerks and other agencies referred cases of a civil nature.

In terms of the specific relationships between disputants, Atlanta's cases reflected the three NJCs as a whole as described previously. The Atlanta cases involved slightly more estranged domestic couples than presently together ones, and a small number of parent-child (2% of the total caseload) and stranger-to-stranger cases (4%). In civil disputes, an overwhelming number of "little people" brought disputes against the "big people" (landlords, merchants, and employers).

Mediated cases. The Atlanta Center mediated 813 cases and 657 (81%) ended with an agreement between the parties. Seventeen cases (2.1%) required more than one hearing -- two hearings were held for 16 cases and one case required three hearings. In four cases, additional information was needed and a second hearing was scheduled to allow time to obtain it. Three second hearings were simple continuations, one was held to enable a disputant to fully review the agreement, and four were held for unknown reasons. In five cases, the first agreement broke down and a second hearing was held to try to resolve the dispute.

Even with a second hearing, disputants in seven out of the 17 cases did not reach an agreement. Both the first and any subsequent hearings in the NJC had an average length of one hour, 15 minutes, with a range of five minutes to five hours, 15 minutes. The pattern in the Atlanta Center was to have a single mediator conduct the hearing; only three of all the hearings had two mediators. It was rare for mediations to end with verbal rather than written agreements - less than one percent of the mediated cases ended with verbal agreements.

On the average, a hearing was held nine days after intake, with a range of 0 to 93 days. Second hearings were held 11 days after the first hearing, on the average, with a range of two to 53 days. Mediators or staff members made referrals for disputants in 37 cases; most of these ended without an agreement. Referrals were made for both parties in 14 cases -- 12 were referred to counseling agencies and two to other social services. Fifteen complainants received referrals; nine to court, two to landlord/tenant agencies, and four to other agencies. Eight respondents received referrals, six to counseling and two to other social services.

Cases resolved prior to hearing. The Atlanta Center resolved 384 (16%) cases prior to hearing; these were predominately civil disputes. These cases were resolved in an average of eight days after intake, with a range of 0 to 79 days. Only four referrals were made in these cases and all four were made for complainants.

Cases closed without a hearing or resolution. Cases were closed without resolution for a variety of reasons. The majority (62%) were not resolved because the respondent refused to participate (47%) or the NJC was unable to contact the respondent (15%). One or both disputants did not show up at the hearing in 174 cases (15%) and 153 complainants (13%) withdrew their cases. The NJC lost contact with the disputants in 53 cases (5%) and subsequently judged another 18 to be unsuitable for NJC processing. The remaining 62 cases were unresolved for a wide variety of other reasons.

The average length of time between intake and closing was ten days, with a range of 0 to 93 days. A total of 121 referrals were made for the unresolved cases; in two cases, both parties were advised to seek out a legal solution in court. Of the 119 complainants who were referred elsewhere by the NJC, 94 (79%) were sent to court, 12 (10%) to counseling or other social services, 10 (8%) to legal aid organizations, and three to other helping agencies.

Kansas City Neighborhood Justice Center

Appendix B provides information on the disposition, referral source, and type of case for all the cases handled by the Kansas City Center during the Field Test period (Tables 4, 5, and 6). Of the 845 cases handled by the Kansas City NJC, 332 (40%) involved hearings and 95% were resolved via an agreement between the parties or an arbitrated award. The Kansas City NJC also resolved 158 cases prior to a hearing (18.7%); bringing the total number of cases resolved either at or before a hearing to 474, or 56% of the total caseload.

Referral sources. The criminal justice system was the primary source of the Kansas City cases, with 67.8% of the cases originating there. The prosecutor's office referred the most cases (270 or 32.4%), followed by the police

with 191 (22.9%), and judges with 104 (12.5%). The community was the next largest source of cases, with 101 (12%) cases initiated by citizens themselves and 48 (6%) referred by local agencies.

As was the case in Atlanta, the criminal justice system referrals were most apt to reach a hearing, with judge-referred cases leading the way. Eighty-two percent of judge-referred cases were mediated, followed by police referrals (45%), other unclassified sources (41.7%), and prosecutor office referrals (36.7%). Cases referred by community and government agencies and those brought in by the disputants themselves were more apt to be resolved prior to a hearing than through a hearing.

The Kansas City NJC worked primarily with the Kansas City Municipal Court, where an intake worker was stationed in the prosecutor's office to accept and conduct intakes for both prosecutor and judge-referred cases. The Center also received a few cases from judges in Juvenile Court, the County Magistrate Court, and Superior Court.

Disputants who brought their cases directly to the Center learned of the NJC primarily through the media -- 50% of the self-referrals said television, radio, or newspaper articles (in that order) alerted them to the NJC. Another quarter of the self-referrals heard of the NJC through family or friends, and the rest learned through various other means. The primary government agency which referred cases to the NJC was an office of the Housing and Urban Development agency, which contracted with the NJC to have the Center manage its grievance procedures for disputes between contractors and owners. Of the 35 cases referred by legal aid organizations, 14 were from attorneys in private practice. Disputants in 18 cases came to the NJC after learning about it from others who had their disputes handled by the Center.

Types of cases. In contrast to the Atlanta and Venice/Mar Vista NJCs, the Kansas City Center handled primarily interpersonal cases involving criminal and, to a lesser extent, civil disputes. These types of cases comprised 73% of the total cases, while 27% were civil disputes between landlord/tenants, consumer/merchants, employer/employees, and others. The relationships between disputants reflected those described earlier. As shown in Table 6 in Appendix B, the type of case was related to the referral source. Referrals from both police officers and the Municipal Court judges and prosecutor's office primarily involved neighbors and domestic couples, while self and community agency referrals tended to be landlord/tenant and consumer/merchant cases.

The mediation rate for the cases involving families, friends, and neighbors was much higher than the rate for the primarily civil cases (37-53% vs. 6-20%). Forty-two percent of "other" cases were mediated; half of these cases were between strangers involved in civil disputes and half were between people who knew each other. Landlord/tenant and consumer/merchant cases were often resolved without a hearing -- 38% and 34%, respectively, were resolved in this manner.

Mediated cases. The Kansas City NJC held hearings for 332 cases; 25 were arbitrated and 291 (95%) of the 307 mediated cases ended with an agreement. Multiple hearings were held for 19 cases (one required three hearings; the rest two), 14 of which were successfully mediated, four were ultimately arbitrated, and one ended with no apparent resolution. Second hearings were held for the

following reasons: additional information needed (six cases), simple continuations (three), one party wanted to review the agreement (two), the first agreement was broken and re-mediation was appropriate (three), and other reasons (five).

The Kansas City NJC often used two mediators for two reasons: (1) the complex nature of the case or the number of disputants involved and (2) to allow the relatively new mediators to learn and gain experience before conducting a hearing alone. In 28% of the initial mediations, two mediators were present (this was the case for 53% of the second hearings). First hearings lasted an average of nearly two hours (117 minutes), with a range of 15 minutes to six and one-half hours; second hearings also averaged two hours in length, with a range of five minutes to four and one-half hours. On the average, first hearings were held 13 days after intake (range: 0-69 days), and second hearings were held 16 days after the first (range: 2-73 days).

The referrals made for disputants in mediated cases were primarily for counseling services -- six respondents and both parties in 14 cases received referrals to counseling agencies. Ten additional referrals were made (five for respondents to other social services, employment help, and landlord/tenant agencies), two for complainants (social services and employment help), and three for both parties (two to court and one to legal aid).

Arbitrated cases. The Kansas City NJC was the only Center which attempted to use mediation/arbitration as a dispute resolution method. Of its total 845 cases, 25 (3%) were arbitrated; these cases represent 8% of all the cases with hearings. Of the 25 cases, the majority (22) involved interpersonal disputes -- five were domestic assault or harassment, seven were assault/harassment between neighbors, three were neighborhood nuisances, four were family problems, and three were assault/harassment between friends. There were also two landlord/tenant cases and one consumer/merchant dispute. Most of the arbitrated cases (19) were criminal justice system referrals: seven from judges, six from the prosecutor's office, five from police officers, and one from juvenile court. The other cases were self (3), community agency (2), and government agency (1) referrals. Thus, the arbitrated cases were primarily interpersonal cases referred by the criminal justice system, a reflection of Kansas City's total caseload. They were not significantly different from mediated cases in terms of the complexity or nature of the disputes, but did involve a substantial amount of conflict between the parties and very disparate views regarding the resolution of the dispute.

The use of arbitration by an independent dispute resolution program was not rigorously tested by the mediation/arbitration hearings conducted by the Kansas City NJC. Besides the small number of cases arbitrated, there were no uniform procedures followed by the Center staff or mediator/arbitrators in conducting the arbitrations. Many of the disputants did not realize their case would be arbitrated if a mediated agreement was not reached -- they became aware of this during the hearing. It is not known at what point during the hearing the mediator decided arbitration was necessary. The mediation/arbitration hearings ranged from 30 minutes to six hours in length, with an average of nearly three hours (one hour longer than the average length of a mediated case). Other procedures of the mediation/arbitration process were unorthodox -- for example, some awards were made in the absence of one party and a few cases ended with a mediated agreement covering some issues and an arbitrated decision regarding

others. While a few cases were well conducted and received by the parties (at least one was arbitrated from the start with the informed consent of both parties), for the most part the mediation/arbitration process did not produce satisfactory, long-lasting resolutions. The Kansas City NJC ceased conducting mediation/arbitrations by the end of the Field Test.

Cases resolved prior to a hearing. The Kansas City NJC staff resolved 157 cases (19%) without holding a hearing. These cases were primarily civil disputes between landlords and tenants and consumers and merchants, but neighborhood disputes were also a sizable minority. The NJC resolved these cases 15 days after intake, on the average, with a range of 0 to 97 days. Referrals for additional assistance were made in five cases, to counseling, legal aid, and other helping agencies.

Cases unresolved after NJC contact. The Kansas City NJC closed 356 cases without any apparent resolution due to: respondent refusals (57%), no contact with the respondent (20%), disputant no-shows at scheduled hearings (9%), complainant withdrawals of the case (6%), and miscellaneous reasons (8%). These case files were closed 21 days after intake, on the average, with a range of 0 to 91 days. The Kansas City NJC made a number of referrals (55) in these unresolved cases, mostly for complainants. Both parties were referred to the court in ten cases; complainants were primarily referred to court (14) and legal aid organizations (14).

Venice/Mar Vista Neighborhood Justice Center

Tables 7, 8 and 9 in Appendix B provide data on the referral source, case type, and immediate disposition of the cases handled by the Venice/Mar Vista Neighborhood Justice Center during the Field Test period. Of the 751 cases processed, hearings were held for 232 (31%) cases, 108 (14%) cases were resolved prior to a hearing, and 411 (55%) remained unresolved following NJC contact.

Referral sources. The Venice/Mar Vista Neighborhood Justice Center's community orientation was reflected in their primary referral source. Over half of the cases opened in the NJC were initiated by the disputants themselves. Community organizations, contributing 6% of the caseload, were not a major referral source, however. The small claims courts and police officers followed self-referrals in number of cases referred, with 111 cases (15%) referred by judges, 83 cases (11%) from the court clerks' offices (62) or prosecutor's office (21), and 56 cases (8%) referred by the police.

The Venice/Mar Vista Center worked with three small claims courts in the Los Angeles area; they had no relationship with the criminal court divisions. The NJC stationed mediators in the court during small claims actions proceedings who accepted cases from the judge on the bench, mediated on-the-spot in a nearby room, and returned the case to the judge for its final disposition. Thus, all cases originating in the courtroom were mediated. The NJC worked in this way with the Compton Court, a court well outside the NJC target area, on a 30-day experimental basis in August 1978. Mediators were stationed in West Los Angeles small claims court for approximately three months, and entered Santa Monica court in March 1979.

The Venice/Mar Vista NJC's media coverage accounted for a large number of self-referrals -- 58% of the disputants who brought cases to the Center on their

own initiative reported they became aware of the NJC through the media. TV announcements were most frequently mentioned, followed by radio and newspaper and magazine articles. Eighteen percent of the disputants reported they had heard of the NJC through family or friends; others learned of the NJC by seeing a poster or brochure (12%), seeing the Center itself (9%), or attending an NJC activity such as a presentation to a community group (3%). Five of the 26 cases referred by legal aid organizations were actually sent to the NJC by private attorneys. The other unclassified sources included four cases by former disputants and 14 by NJC staff and mediators.

Types of cases. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC caseload was dominated by disputes of a civil nature between landlords and tenants, consumers and merchants, employees and employers, and others (67% of "others" were strangers and 11% had a business relationship); these civil cases were 73% of the total caseload. Furthermore, landlord/tenant and consumer/merchant cases were by far the most common cases in the Venice/Mar Vista NJC -- they accounted for 56% of the total caseload. The NJC handled very few criminal-type cases, with only 15 cases involving assault or harassment among neighbors and domestic couples. Twenty-seven percent of the total caseload involved disputes between people with a close relationship (domestic couples, families, neighbors, and friends).

Different sources consistently referred certain types of cases to the NJC. Consumer/merchant and unclassified cases (mostly car accident cases between strangers) tended to be the cases mediated in small claims court. Landlord/tenant cases were apt to be referred to the Center via the small claims court clerk's office, police, community and government agencies, and disputants themselves (who also brought a large number of consumer/merchant cases to the NJC). The interpersonal cases tended to be referred by police officers and disputants themselves.

Mediation rates were highest for "other", consumer/merchant, family disputes, and domestic settlement cases (45%, 41% and 40% were mediated, respectively). In the first two categories, the high rate is due to the fact that the cases originated and were mediated in the court. Consumer/merchant, landlord/tenant, and neighborhood nuisance cases were often resolved without a hearing being held.

For the most part, the relationships between the parties in the Venice/Mar Vista NJC cases reflect those for all the NJCs, but with several significant differences. Twenty-one percent of the landlord/tenant cases were brought by the landlord against the tenant rather than vice-versa. These cases usually involved complaints that tenants were behind in rent or utility payments. The same situation existed in the consumer/merchant cases also, where merchants initiated 21% of the cases (again, these tended to involve charges that consumers were behind in payments). All employee/employer cases were brought to the NJCs by the employees. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC also handled a sizable number of stranger-to-stranger cases, which comprised 8% of the total caseload.

Mediated cases. Of the 231 cases mediated at the Venice/Mar Vista NJC, only seven required two hearings -- three were simple continuations, in two cases additional information was needed, and in two cases the parties wanted to review the agreement. Agreements were reached in 156 (68%) of the first hearings, and in four out of seven of the second hearings. Nine agreements were verbal; the remainder were written down and signed by both parties. The Venice

NJC rarely used two mediators per case -- two mediators were assigned to only six out of the 238 first and second hearings.

Both first and second hearings in the Venice/Mar Vista NJC averaged one hour, 15 minutes in length, with a range of ten minutes to seven hours. Hearings were held seven days after intake on the average, with a range of 0 to 74 days (111 cases were mediated on-the-spot in court). Second hearings were scheduled 17 days after the first mediation, with a range of 0 to 55 days.

Both parties in the 38 judge-referred cases which ended without an agreement returned to court for resolution of their case. Referrals were made by the NJC for both parties in five cases -- four were sent to counseling and one to other social services. In addition to these referrals, nine complainants were referred to court, three to legal aid organizations, and two to landlord/tenant agencies. One respondent was referred to counseling.

Cases resolved prior to hearing. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC conciliated 108 cases without holding a hearing; 83 (77%) of these were landlord/tenant and consumer/merchant disputes. Cases were resolved without a hearing approximately 15 days after intake, with a range of 0 to 97 days. Only three referrals were made by the NJC in these cases, all for complainants, to legal aid, tenant help, and social service agencies.

Unresolved cases. Half of these cases were not resolved by the NJC because the respondent refused to participate in mediation. In another 24%, the NJC was unable to contact the respondent to solicit his or her participation. Complainants withdrew the case in 67 instances (16%) and the rest of the cases remained unresolved due to no-shows at scheduled hearings (3%), loss of contact with the disputants (2%), and other reasons (5%). The case files for unresolved cases were closed 18 days after intake on the average, with a range of 0 to 98 days.

A large number of referrals were made by the NJC in these unresolved cases, mostly for complainants. Complainants were referred to court (56), legal aid (29), landlord/tenant agencies (22), social services (5), consumer help agencies (4), counseling (3), and elsewhere (3). One respondent was referred to legal aid, and both parties in four cases were referred to court (2), social services (1), or legal aid (1).

NJC referral process. The Venice/Mar Vista Center developed a referral system to assist people who contacted the NJC with a problem that was not amenable to the mediation process. The NJC outreach activities and media coverage generated a lot of attention and inquiries to the Justice Center, resulting in a large number of phone calls and walk-ins asking for help. As a community service, the NJC made referrals for additional assistance for these people. After the first two months of operations, in which the total number of inquiries was 75, the NJC received an average of 200 inquiries for assistance each month. This figure is probably an underestimation of the total number of calls, due to the difficulty in recording each inquiry. The NJC staff made referrals in approximately two-thirds of these situations. The bulk of the disputants were referred to two primary types of agencies -- tenant help agencies (primarily Westside and Central Tenants Action Centers) and legal assistance (the Los Angeles County Bar Association's Lawyer Referral Service and Venice, Santa Monica, and Centro Legal Aid offices). A small number of cases

were referred to the court system and to all types of social service agencies. The data presented in the following chapter indicate that these referrals do have an impact on resolving the disputes -- two out of five of the people followed up the NJC referral and one out of five received help from the referral agency.

Disputant Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of complainants and respondents, the target community, and surrounding area for each of the three NJCs are presented in Appendix C. The disputant characteristics are the disputants' race, income, sex, age, residency in the NJC target area, marital status, current employment status, and occupation (whether or not currently employed). The NJC disputant characteristics are contrasted with those of the entire city and original target area. For all three Centers, the respondent group has been divided to discriminate between individuals representing themselves and corporate representatives. Respondents representing businesses or other public or private organizations typically appeared in civil matters such as tenant vs. landlord and consumer vs. merchant disputes; their demographic profile is quite different from that of individual respondents. For the Atlanta and Kansas City NJCs, corporate representatives comprised 2-3% of the total number of complainants and have been grouped with them. In Venice/Mar Vista, however, complainant corporate representatives made up 12% of the total group (due to the number of landlord vs. tenant and merchant vs. consumer cases) and separate presentations of their characteristics have been included.

The amount of information missing on the disputants is presented in the tables in the Appendix. Respondents tend to have more missing data than do the complainants since the NJC had less contact with them, especially in the unresolved cases. Percentages have been omitted from the tables where they could be misleading due to missing data; for example, 97% of the income data for Atlanta's respondent corporate representatives is missing and no percentages are computed.

Atlanta NJC. Atlanta's complainants were predominately black (70%) and had relatively low incomes -- 51% made under \$6,000 annually, with 83% of all complainants under \$12,000. A third of the complainants were unemployed. Female complainants outnumbered males (57 to 43%) and about a third were married. The two-thirds who were single included 495 (22% of the total) who were divorced or separated, 3% widowed, and 3% reported they were living with someone outside of marriage. The complainants' average age was 33; the youngest was 12 and the oldest 88. Seventeen percent of the complainants resided within the Atlanta NJC target area.

The Atlanta NJC's individual respondents were similar to complainants in many ways. The majority (76%) were black and had similarly low incomes and blue collar occupations. They had an average age of 33 and 32% were married. The major difference between individual respondents and complainants was that the majority of respondents (69%) were male. Comparing corporate representatives to individuals, the corporate group contained more white males employed in predominately white collar occupations (76% were reported to be business owners) who were slightly older on the average than individual respondents. While 97% of the data was missing, indications are that corporate representa-

tives had a higher annual income. Twelve percent of all respondents resided in the original target area.

As discussed previously, the Atlanta NJC accepted cases from the entire city, with only 12 to 17% of the disputants living in the original target area. Income and race data for Atlanta and the target area are available for comparison purposes. The NJC disputants had median incomes similar to those of the city-wide and target area population -- about \$6,000 per year. The NJC did have higher proportions of blacks than the target area or city. The NJC disputants primarily reflected the population which appears in the court system -- black, low income persons.

Kansas City NJC. As with the Atlanta NJC disputants, the Kansas City complainants and individual respondents representing themselves had similar demographic characteristics. Half were white and half were black, with approximately 5% other minorities (99% of all disputants speak English as their primary language). Over half made under \$6,000 per year, with 79-85% under \$12,000; 27% to 30% were presently unemployed and over half worked in blue collar occupations. Complainants were 36 years old on the average and individual respondents were 33; 41-45% were married and 20-22% of the single people were divorced or separated. Also, like the Atlanta disputants, respondents tended to be male (63%) and complainants were apt to be women (62%).

Corporate representatives, as a group, were not like individual respondents; again, the differences were similar to those found in the Atlanta NJC. Respondents who were corporate representatives tended to be whiter, richer, older, more male, more married, and more employed in higher status occupations than were individual respondents.

Like Atlanta, the Kansas City NJC did not adhere to the original target area design; 21% of the disputants resided in the target community. However, the disputant characteristics match the target area demographics -- blacks and whites were equally represented, along with a small number of hispanics, as were males and females, when complainants and respondents are combined. The Kansas City NJC does appear to attract lower income people than represented in the target area, which may be a reflection of the court caseload.

Venice/Mar Vista NJC. As mentioned above, 12% of the Venice/Mar Vista NJC complainants were representing corporate entities and their characteristics have been separated from the others. Sixty-five percent of the individual complainants were white, 20% were black, and 11% hispanic (96% of all the disputants spoke English as a primary language). Twenty-three percent of these complainants were unemployed and 46% had incomes of under \$6,000 per year. Half of the group were female, and 40% were married, 40% were single, and an additional 13% were divorced or separated.

Individual respondents were fairly similar to individual complainants. Sixty-eight percent were white, 16% black, and 10% hispanic. Less than a third had incomes of less than \$6,000, and another 30% reported incomes of \$6,000-\$12,000. Fewer respondents (17%) were unemployed, 41% were married and 39% single, and they averaged 36 years old. Sixty-two percent were male and 31% lived in the original Venice/Mar Vista target area.

The complainant and respondent corporate representatives had similar

characteristics, and also were different from individual disputants in similar ways. The corporate representative group, as found in Atlanta and Kansas City also, tended to contain more whites; more males; and more older, married, and employed persons. The corporate representatives in Venice/Mar Vista tended to hold managerial positions. Interestingly, the respondent corporate representatives displayed more of these qualities than did the complainant corporate representatives. For example, 77% of the complainant corporate representatives were white and 66% were male, versus 85% and 79%, respectively, for respondent corporate representatives. While sex differences may explain this finding and the general overall differences between complainants and respondents, further inquiry is necessary to provide a full explanation.

The Venice/Mar Vista NJC focused on their original target area to a greater extent than the other two Centers, but did accept cases from anywhere in the area. Thirty-one to 36% of the individual disputants and 16-24% of the corporate representatives resided in Venice and Mar Vista; in addition, another 13% of the disputants resided in the extended target area surrounding Venice/Mar Vista. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC disputants reflected the target area characteristics for the most part, especially in income and occupation categories. The Center and target area population were 75% white; however, the Center serviced fewer hispanics and more blacks than their representative numbers in the target area. Also, there were more male disputants (61% of the total) than found in the target area population. The Venice/Mar Vista Center had a large number of disputants who were corporate representatives and influenced the demographic profiles.

Monthly Trends

Month-to-month trends in case disposition, referral source, and type for each NJC during the Field Test period are presented in Appendix D. Case disposition has been broken down to illustrate the number of hearings held, cases resolved prior to a hearing, and unresolved cases. Hearings include mediation sessions which ended in an agreement and those which did not; overall, agreements were reached in 82% of the hearings. The referral sources cover the primary sources of judges, court clerks or prosecutor's office, and community agencies and self-referrals. Police referrals have been depicted for the Kansas City NJC because they were their second largest referral source. Case types have been dichotomized into the broad categories of interpersonal/criminal and civil cases. Monthly totals are based on the actual calendar month of the hearing or closing of the case and thus are partially dependent on the number of working days in the month, especially for February.

Atlanta NJC. Except for a large decrease in August-September 1978 and other minor fluctuations, the Atlanta NJC caseload slowly increased during the Field Test period. Unresolved cases always outnumbered those mediated and resolved prior to a hearing. The dip in caseload in September 1978 was probably attributable to the NJC training of the second group of mediators -- not only were many in the group former volunteers pulled away from their court stations, but the training was held during office hours and kept staff members from their regular tasks. This one-two month decrease is especially evident in referrals from the court clerks, which were highly dependent on the volunteer intake workers. All major referral sources -- judges, clerks, and community -- basically increased over time. The civil types of cases go up and down along

with the court clerk referrals, while interpersonal/criminal cases reflect the level of judge referrals.

Kansas City NJC. As shown in all three graphs, the Kansas City NJC caseload was highest in the summer of 1978 and was slightly erratic after that point. While all case dispositions peaked at that time, the major increase in unresolved cases may have been due to an extra push to increase the caseload. The large number of cases in June was the result of an increase in referrals from the prosecutor's office, while the August peak is attributable to police and community referrals. The decline in cases after these months may have been due to the original Prosecutor Specialist, who worked with the police department also, leaving the NJC. It was several months before she was replaced with a full-time staff person.

The number of mediations was especially low in January and February 1979, when the severe winter weather hit, staff turnover was high, and the court caseloads were generally down. Police referrals began to rise toward the end of the Field Test period, as judge referrals decreased. The police referrals were the result of a second wave of intensive training sessions with the officers and the addition of a police liaison person on the NJC staff. Kansas City's caseload was dominated by interpersonal cases, which fluctuated along with the major referral sources (prosecutor and police).

Venice/Mar Vista NJC. The number of hearings held in the Venice/Mar Vista NJC peaked at the beginning of the NJC's referral arrangement with each small claims court. The judge referrals coincided with these peaks -- the Compton Court experiment was in August 1978, West Los Angeles small claims court mediations began in late September and October 1978, and the NJC's relationship with Santa Monica court began in March 1979. The high point of referrals through the court clerks office in November 1978 may also be attributable to the NJC beginning working relationships with the courts. The caseload, especially cases which are not resolved by the NJC, tend to reflect the level of self-referrals, the Center's primary referral source, and those from community agencies. Self and community referrals began to rise late in 1978 and reached a high point in March 1979. The Venice/Mar Vista Center was able to have public service announcements broadcast on radio and TV stations for relatively short periods of time. Each time the PSAs were on the air *en masse*, self-referrals greatly increased, which happened in March 1979. Civil cases dominated the Venice/Mar Vista caseload, largely because of the primary referral sources -- disputants themselves and small claims court clerks and judges.

Summary

The major findings of the process study are:

- The NJCs attracted a sizable number of cases and variety of case types, from civil disputes involving little or no money to serious criminal cases, from both criminal justice system and community sources.
- The NJCs resolved nearly half (45%) of their cases via mediation or conciliation.
- Cases referred via judges on the bench were most likely to reach

a mediation hearing; cases from all other sources were as likely to be resolved without a hearing, through conciliation, as through a hearing.

- Interpersonal cases involving primarily criminal disputes between persons with a fairly close, ongoing relationship were more apt to be resolved through mediation than were cases of a civil nature.
- Civil disputes between landlords and tenants, consumers and merchants, and employees and employers were more likely to be resolved prior to a hearing. However, half of these cases remained unresolved after NJC contact.
- There were significant differences among the Centers, notably in size, variety, and source of the caseloads. The Atlanta NJC processed 60% of the total caseload, with the remaining split between Kansas City and Venice/Mar Vista. Atlanta and Kansas City were closely connected to the criminal justice system, while Venice/Mar Vista adopted a community approach. Civil cases dominated the Atlanta and Venice/Mar Vista caseloads, while interpersonal cases were the large majority in Kansas City.
- The NJC disputants reflected the ethnic characteristics of the surrounding community, but the Centers attracted disproportionately more low income residents.

CHAPTER IV: NJC IMPACT

In this chapter, evidence will be presented on the impact of the Neighborhood Justice Centers. The potential areas of impact are many, ranging from the anticipated benefits to disputants to improved dispute resolution mechanisms in governmental and civic institutions. But within this breadth and variety of potential impact, there is also a clear hierarchy of importance: the Centers must first assist citizens in resolving disputes. If they perform that function well, it is reasonable to look for broader impact on systems and society. Accordingly, the focus of attention in our impact analysis and in this chapter is the impact of the NJCs on disputants after their experience at the Centers. These analyses attempt to determine whether the elements of the resolution process (1) were satisfying to the disputants and (2) resulted in lasting resolutions. After addressing these important questions about overall disputant impact, a variety of analyses were conducted to assess the sources of observed variation in disputant satisfaction and resolution stability: what are the characteristics of the case which determine how satisfactory and lasting the NJC experience is?

The second major section in this chapter will address the issue of NJC impact on the justice systems in each of the three locations. Data from the court comparison studies will shed light on the crucial question of how the NJCs compare to the courts in satisfaction, resolution and processing speed. In addition, the results of interviews with key officials in the justice system (judges, prosecutors, etc.) will provide information on how the Centers were perceived and utilized by the elements of the local justice system.

The last part of the chapter will present information relating to the impact of the NJCs on the community -- residents and community agencies and organizations.

Impact on Disputants

The long-term impact of the NJCs on disputants was assessed mainly through follow-up telephone interviews conducted approximately six months after NJC contact (mean number of months = 6.26; SD = 2.48 months). The interviews collected the following information from the disputants:

1. Are you satisfied with the terms of the agreement?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Somewhat

2. Have you kept all terms of the agreement?
 - Yes (one-time)
 - Yes (ongoing)
 - No
 - Partially
 - No terms

3. Has the other party kept all terms of the agreement?
 - Yes (one-time)
 - Yes (ongoing)
 - No
 - Partially
 - No terms
4. Have you had any more problems with the other party?
 - Yes
 - No
 - No contact
5. Were you satisfied with the mediation process?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Somewhat
6. Were you satisfied with the mediator?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Somewhat
7. Were you satisfied with the overall experience at the NJC?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Somewhat
8. Where would you go in the future with a similar dispute?
 - NJC
 - Court
 - Attorney
 - Nowhere
 - Other

Interviews were conducted with the complainant and/or respondent in 1,301 (44%) of the 2,990 cases handled by the NJCs during the period spanning Center opening in March of 1978 through February of 1979. The follow-up interviews were conducted by the on-site Analysts, who identified themselves as representatives of an independent, private research firm which had no affiliation with the Justice Center. The interview data presented below are organized into the following categories:

- Mediated cases: The mediation process is the primary vehicle by which Centers attempt to resolve disputes. One or both disputants were interviewed in 63% of all mediated cases.
- Cases resolved prior to a hearing: These are cases which came into the Centers and were recorded as resolved without reaching a hearing. One or both disputants were interviewed in 48% of all the cases which were resolved prior to a hearing.
- Unresolved cases: One or both disputants were interviewed in 28% of the cases which were unresolved after some NJC contact.

The sampling plan called for exhaustive sampling of mediated cases in Venice/Mar Vista and Kansas City, and 50% sampling of mediated cases in Atlanta. The lower sampling percentage in Atlanta was a result of the large caseload; time and resources did not permit the sampling of all 657 mediated cases in Atlanta. (See Appendix A for details on the sampling plan and actual percentages interviewed by Center.)

The longer label of "cases resolved prior to hearing" is used for the category heading rather than the term "conciliated" because the ways in which these cases were resolved varied considerably (some cases were resolved by phone, some appeared to require only a presentation of the dispute to a third party, etc.), and many of these resolution procedures might not meet accepted definitions of conciliation (see McGillis and Mullen, 1977).

There were several reasons for interviewing unresolved cases. Although they cannot be construed as a control group, they can serve as a rough sort of baseline against which the results of resolved cases might be compared. For example, the proportion of these cases which became resolved during the follow-up period can serve as an indication of the proportion of mediated cases which would have been resolved anyway, perhaps by other means. Similarly, the satisfaction indices for the unresolved cases provide some indication of the extent to which citizens appreciate the mere existence of this alternative process. Finally, it is of interest to determine how the NJC experience was perceived by citizens whose disputes were not resolved through NJC contact.

Within each of these categories, overall interview results are first presented for complainants and respondents. These data are followed by the results of analyses designed to assess differences in satisfaction and resolution stability as a function of (a) case type, (b) referral source, and (c) Center. Case type analyses were conducted mainly on the ten categories described in Chapter III (and listed in Table IV-3, below). These analyses were supplemented in some instances with analyses which used categories of case type which were collapsed into two types: (1) interpersonal/criminal (domestic, family, neighbor, and friends disputes), and (2) civil/consumer (landlord/tenant, consumer/merchant, employee/employer, and "other"). In most instances, these dual category analyses showed no differences, and are not discussed below. Only in the analyses of unresolved cases did the collapsed categories show differences; those effects are discussed in the presentation of results on unresolved cases.

At the end of this section, the results of two special data collection efforts are presented. A small sample (N=46) of the disputants who were interviewed on the telephone were also interviewed in face-to-face household interviews, mainly to validate the information collected via the telephone interviews. And in Los Angeles, where unaccepted cases were often referred to other community agencies, 50 of these "out-referrals" were interviewed to assess the effectiveness of the referral process.

Mediated Cases

The indices of disputant satisfaction and the stability of the agreement for mediated cases are displayed in Tables IV-1 and IV-2, respectively. When asked if they were satisfied with the overall experience at the Center, 88% of

**TABLE IV-1
DISPUTANT SATISFACTION
FOR MEDIATED CASES**

Index/Response		Disputant		Total
		Complainant	Respondent	
Satisfied with overall experience at NJC?	Yes	428 (88%)	347 (88%)	775
	No	43 (9)	30 (8)	73
	Somewhat	18 (4)	17 (4)	35
Satisfied with mediation process?	Yes	414 (84)	335 (89)	749
	No	61 (12)	41 (10)	102
	Somewhat	15 (3)	21 (5)	36
Satisfied with mediator?	Yes	432 (88)	348 (88)	780
	No	39 (8)	26 (7)	65
	Somewhat	19 (4)	21 (5)	40
Satisfied with terms of agreement?	Yes	335 (80)	296 (83)	631
	No	65 (15)	45 (13)	110
	Somewhat	20 (5)	17 (5)	37

**TABLE IV-2:
STABILITY OF THE AGREEMENT
FOR MEDIATED CASES**

Index/Response		Disputant		Total
		Complainant	Respondent	
Have you kept all terms of the agreement?	Yes	316 (79%)	303 (87%)	619
	No	9 (2)	20 (6)	29
	Partially	14 (3)	21 (6)	35
	No Terms	63 (16)	7 (2)	70
Has other party kept all terms of the agreement?	Yes	287 (69)	236 (67)	523
	No	77 (18)	47 (13)	124
	Partially	49 (12)	24 (7)	73
	No Terms	8 (2)	47 (13)	55
Any more problems with other party?	Yes	135 (28)	87 (22)	222
	No	341 (72)	307 (78)	648
Where would you go in future with a similar problem?	NJC	345 (72)	285 (73)	631
	Court	79 (16)	45 (12)	124
	Attorney	20 (4)	17 (4)	37
	Nowhere	15 (3)	22 (6)	37
	Other	20 (4)	19 (5)	39

both complainants and respondents said they were satisfied; less than 10% of disputants were not satisfied. Similarly, 84% and 88% of disputants were satisfied with the mediation process itself and with the mediator, respectively. Slightly fewer disputants were satisfied with the terms of the agreement (80% of complainants and 83% of respondents). When asked whether they had kept all the terms of the agreement, only 2% of complainants and 6% of respondents admitted not having kept all terms, although an additional 3% and 6% admitted to partial adherence to the agreement. Perhaps a more accurate indicator of agreement stability is the response to the question of whether the other party had kept all the terms. In response to this question, 18% of complainants and 13% of respondents answered negatively. About one-fourth of complainants and respondents said that they have had more problems with the other party. Finally, when asked where they would go in the future with a similar dispute, 72% of complainants and 73% of respondents said that they would return to the NJC.

These overall follow-up data on mediated cases (excluding potential effects of case type and Center for the moment) show that a substantially high proportion of both complainants and respondents were satisfied with their overall experience, the mediation process and the mediator, and the agreement terms. A slightly lower, yet not unimpressive, proportion of disputants indicated that the agreement held, and that they would return to the NJC with a similar problem.

Effects of case type. Disputant satisfaction and agreement stability varied with case type, but case type effects were not particularly strong or widespread. There were no substantial differences across case types in satisfaction with the overall experience at the NJC (chi-squares are non-significant for both complainants and respondents on this index). Respondent satisfaction with the mediation process varied by case type ($\chi^2=29.20$, $df=18$, $p=.046$), attributable mainly to the larger percentages of dissatisfied respondents in cases involving family disputes, neighborhood nuisance, and domestic assault/harassment (see Table IV-3). Complainant satisfaction with the mediation process also reflected these case type differences, but did not reach significance ($\chi^2=26.06$, $df=18$, $p=.098$). Case type shows no influence on disputant satisfaction with the mediator or with the agreement terms (all $\chi^2=N.S.$). Agreement stability showed no effects of case type (χ^2 non-significant across all indices of agreement stability).

Effects of referral source. Disputant satisfaction varied slightly as a function of the source of referral, but agreement stability appeared unaffected by referral source. Complainant satisfaction with the mediation process did not vary with referral source, but complainant satisfaction with the mediator did show significant effects of referral source ($\chi^2=28.00$, $df=14$, $p=.014$). Walk-in cases and referrals from legal aid show no dissatisfied cases, while prosecutor/clerk and "other" referrals show 12% and 15% dissatisfied (see Table IV-4). Respondent satisfaction with mediation varied with referral source ($\chi^2=26.70$, $df=14$, $p=.02$) with police referrals showing higher rates of dissatisfaction, reflecting the higher proportion of interpersonal dispute cases from this source. No other indices of satisfaction show significant effects of referral source.

Differences among Centers. There are a number of significant differences among Centers in disputant satisfaction and agreement stability. However, it should be understood that the differences among Centers are in large part a

**TABLE IV-3:
DISPUTANT SATISFACTION BY
TYPE OF CASE: MEDIATED CASES**

Satisfied with the mediation process?		Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Complainant responses (a)	Yes	54 (92)	32 (84)	28 (88)	58 (75)	49 (89)	48 (84)	27 (79)	66 (82)	12 (86)	36 (92)	410 (84.4)
	No	4 (7)	3 (8)	4 (13)	18 (23)	6 (11)	6 (11)	4 (12)	11 (14)	2 (14)	3 (8)	61 (12.6)
	Somewhat	1 (2)	3 (8)	0	1 (1)	0	3 (5)	3 (9)	4 (5)	0	0	15 (3.1)
Respondent responses (b)	Yes	29 (72)	32 (87)	20 (65)	57 (92)	37 (77)	43 (94)	29 (85)	54 (83)	12 (100)	19 (91)	332 (84.3)
	No	5 (13)	2 (5)	9 (29)	4 (7)	9 (19)	2 (4)	3 (9)	6 (9)	0	1 (5)	41 (10.4)
	Somewhat	4 (11)	3 (9)	2 (7)	1 (2)	2 (4)	1 (2)	2 (6)	5 (8)	0	1 (5)	21 (5.3)

(a): $\chi^2 = 26.06$, $df = 18$, N.S.
(b): $\chi^2 = 29.20$, $df = 18$, $p < .046$

**TABLE IV-4:
DISPUTANT SATISFACTION BY
REFERRAL SOURCE: MEDIATED CASES**

		Judges (Bench Referrals)	Pros. Office or Civil/ Criminal Warrants Desks	Police	Community Agencies	Self	Legal Aid Organizations	Government Agencies	Others	Total
Satisfied with mediator? (Complainant) (a)	Yes	186 (90%)	111 (86%)	37 (84%)	11 (85%)	39 (91%)	14 (88%)	16 (94%)	16 (80%)	430
	No	16 (8)	16 (12)	2 (4)	1 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (6)	3 (15)	39
	Somewhat	4 (2)	2 (2)	5 (11)	1 (8)	4 (9)	2 (12)	0 (0)	1 (5)	19
Satisfied with mediation process? (Respondent) (b)	Yes	136 (89)	92 (82)	36 (80)	9 (75)	25 (78)	10 (83)	13 (87)	18 (86)	335
	No	9 (6)	14 (13)	8 (20)	2 (17)	1 (3)	2 (17)	2 (13)	3 (14)	41
	Somewhat	8 (5)	6 (5)	0 (0)	1 (8)	6 (19)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	21

(a): $\chi^2 = 28.00$, $df = 14$, $p = .014$

(b): $\chi^2 = 26.70$, $df = 14$, $p = .02$

function of the variation in context, case type, and referral source across Centers, and not simply due to differences in Center approach and operations.

Complainant satisfaction rates by Center are shown in Table IV-5. Across the four satisfaction indices (all of which show statistical significance), the Atlanta NJC consistently displays the highest proportion of satisfied complainants; the Kansas City NJC, the highest dissatisfied; and Venice/Mar Vista, the highest number of "somewhat satisfied" complainants. Although these differences are consistent and significant, they are not large in absolute terms: the large majority of complainants in all three Centers were satisfied. Satisfaction results for respondents show a pattern which is nearly identical to the data on complainants (Table IV-6).

Similar results were found on complainant indices of agreement stability (also statistically significant; see Table IV-7). The Atlanta NJC shows the highest proportion of complainants who claimed to have kept the agreement terms themselves and who said that the respondent had kept the terms of the agreement (differences on these indices are statistically significant). The Venice/Mar Vista NJC shows the lowest rates of agreement maintenance (81.0% and 52.4%), but the highest percentage of "partially" kept agreements. When asked if there had been any more problems with the respondent, complainants from Kansas City claimed the lowest rates of additional problems. When asked where they would go with a similar dispute in the future, the largest proportion of complainants who said they would return to the NJC were those from Venice/Mar Vista. This finding probably reflects the community walk-in orientation of Venice/Mar Vista. It is likely that fewer of these complainants would be aware of (or have experience with) the more conventional forms of dispute resolution.

The pattern of respondent data on agreement stability is roughly congruent with the complainant data, but the apparent differences reach statistical significance only on the last index. In some contrast to the complainant data, more Atlanta NJC respondents would prefer to return to the NJC (see Table IV-8).

With remarkable consistency, these data show that mediations in the Atlanta NJC resulted in higher proportions of satisfied disputants and stable agreements. But while the differences among Centers are consistent and statistically significant, they are not large. The Kansas City NJC and the Venice/Mar Vista NJC yield fairly impressive indices of satisfaction and agreement stability. In the search for significant differences, one can too easily lose sight of similarities. A good indicator of the degree of uniformity in the follow-up data across case type, referral source, and Center is the statistic lambda (λ). Lambda is a measure of association which shows the percentage of improvement in our ability to predict the value of one variable once we know the value of the other. We found that even where differences were highly significant (statistically), the lambdas were still very small. For example, differences among Centers in complainant satisfaction with the mediation process were highly significant, but the lambda was only .045: our ability to predict whether the complainant was satisfied or not is improved only 4.5% by knowing which Center handled the dispute. Most of the lambdas are around 1% to 2%. Taken together, the results of the chi-square tests and the lambda calculations mean that the above-mentioned differences (for mediated cases) across case types, referral sources and Centers are reliable -- they are highly likely to occur if we collected follow-up data again -- but they are not large.

**TABLE IV-5:
COMPLAINANT SATISFACTION BY
CENTER: MEDIATED CASES**

Index/Response		Center			Total
		Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista	
Satisfied with overall experience at NJC? (a)	Yes	207 (88.8%)	142 (87.1%)	78 (84.8%)	427
	No	19 (8.2)	20 (12.3)	4 (4.3)	43
	Somewhat	7 (3.0)	1 (0.6)	10 (10.9)	18
Satisfied with mediation process? (b)	Yes	205 (88.7)	127 (77.4)	81 (86.2)	413
	No	23 (10.0)	33 (20.1)	5 (5.3)	61
	Somewhat	3 (1.3)	4 (2.4)	8 (8.5)	15
Satisfied with mediator? (c)	Yes	211 (90.6)	137 (84.6)	83 (88.3)	431
	No	21 (9.0)	15 (9.3)	3 (3.2)	39
	Somewhat	1 (0.4)	10 (6.2)	8 (8.5)	19
Satisfied with terms of agreement? (d)	Yes	167 (86.1)	119 (74.4)	48 (73.8)	334
	No	22 (11.3)	34 (21.3)	9 (13.8)	65
	Somewhat	5 (2.6)	7 (4.4)	8 (12.3)	20

(a): $\chi^2 = 21.87$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$

(b): $\chi^2 = 25.86$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$

(c): $\chi^2 = 18.26$, $df = 4$, $p = .001$

(d): $\chi^2 = 17.27$, $df = 4$, $p = .002$

**TABLE IV-6:
RESPONDENT SATISFACTION BY
CENTER: MEDIATED CASES**

Index/Response		Center			Total
		Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista	
Satisfied with overall experience at NJC? (a)	Yes	163 (92.1%)	133 (88.7%)	51 (76.1%)	347
	No	10 (5.6)	16 (10.7)	4 (6.0)	30
	Somewhat	4 (2.3)	1 (0.7)	12 (17.9)	17
Satisfied with mediation process? (b)	Yes	155 (90.6)	124 (80.5)	56 (77.8)	335
	No	12 (7.0)	24 (15.6)	5 (6.9)	41
	Somewhat	4 (2.3)	6 (3.9)	11 (15.3)	21
Satisfied with mediator? (c)	Yes	152 (89.4)	139 (90.8)	57 (79.2)	348
	No	12 (7.1)	10 (6.5)	4 (5.6)	26
	Somewhat	6 (3.5)	4 (2.6)	11 (15.3)	21
Satisfied with terms of agreement? (d)	Yes	134 (87.0)	122 (81.9)	40 (72.7)	296
	No	16 (10.4)	24 (16.1)	5 (9.1)	45
	Somewhat	4 (2.6)	3 (2.0)	10 (18.2)	17

(a): $\chi^2 = 39.45$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$

(b): $\chi^2 = 25.13$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$

(c): $\chi^2 = 17.55$, $df = 4$, $p = .002$

(d): $\chi^2 = 28.36$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$

**TABLE IV-7:
COMPLAINANT AGREEMENT STABILITY
BY CENTER: MEDIATED CASES**

Index/Response	Center			Total	
	Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista		
Have you kept all terms of the agreement? (a)	Yes	160 (95.2%)	138 (92.6%)	17 (81.0%)	315
	No	5 (3.0)	4 (2.7)	0 (0.0)	9
	Partially	3 (1.8)	7 (4.7)	4 (19.0)	14
Has respondent kept all terms of the agreement? (b)	Yes	143 (74.1)	110 (70.5)	33 (52.4)	286
	No	35 (18.1)	31 (19.9)	11 (17.5)	77
	Partially	15 (7.8)	15 (9.6)	19 (30.2)	49
Any more problems with other party? (c)	Yes	61 (28.1)	38 (23.2)	35 (37.2)	134
	No	156 (71.9)	126 (76.8)	59 (62.8)	341
Where would you go in future with a similar problem? (d)	NJC	172 (72.9)	102 (66.7)	71 (78.9)	345
	Court	37 (15.7)	25 (16.3)	17 (18.9)	79
	Attorney	13 (5.5)	7 (4.6)	0 (0.0)	20
	Nowhere	7 (3.0)	6 (3.9)	2 (2.2)	15
	Other	7 (3.0)	13 (8.5)	0 (0.0)	20

(a): $\chi^2 = 14.66$, $df = 4$, $p = .005$

(b): $\chi^2 = 24.58$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$

(c): $\chi^2 = 5.84$, $df = 4$, $p = .05$

(d): $\chi^2 = 18.44$, $df = 8$, $p = .02$

**TABLE IV-8:
RESPONDENT AGREEMENT STABILITY
BY CENTER: MEDIATED CASES**

Index/Response	Center			Total	
	Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista		
Have you kept all terms of the agreement? (a)	Yes	132 (89.8%)	128 (87.7%)	43 (84.3%)	303
	No	10 (6.8)	8 (5.5)	2 (3.9)	20
	Partially	5 (3.4)	10 (6.8)	6 (11.8)	21
Has complainant kept all terms of the agreement? (b)	Yes	118 (81.9)	105 (73.9)	13 (61.9)	236
	No	19 (13.2)	22 (15.5)	6 (28.6)	47
	Partially	7 (4.9)	15 (10.6)	2 (9.5)	24
Any more problems with other party? (c)	Yes	28 (16.8)	40 (26.0)	19 (26.0)	87
	No	139 (83.2)	114 (74.0)	54 (74.0)	307
Where would you go in future with a similar problem? (d)	NJC	138 (78.9)	102 (68.9)	45 (69.2)	285
	Court	15 (8.6)	17 (11.5)	13 (20.0)	45
	Attorney	8 (4.6)	8 (5.4)	1 (1.5)	17
	Nowhere	10 (5.7)	7 (4.7)	5 (7.7)	22
	Other	4 (2.3)	14 (9.5)	1 (1.5)	19

- (a): $\chi^2 = 5.29$, $df = 4$, N.S.
(b): $\chi^2 = 7.15$, $df = 4$, N.S.
(c): $\chi^2 = 4.76$, $df = 2$, N.S.
(d): $\chi^2 = 19.10$, $df = 8$, $p = .01$

These results are in contrast to the case processing results presented in the preceding chapter, where differences were not only statistically significant, but substantial as well.

Cases Resolved Prior to Hearing

As indicated in the preceding chapter, over one-third (37%) of all resolved cases were resolved prior to a hearing. Although mediation is the primary resolution technique utilized, these data serve as a reminder that the NJCs also provide conciliations and similar means of dispute resolution outside the hearing room. But are these disputes actually resolved, and if so, does the resolution last? Follow-up data on these cases show that, with a few important exceptions, such resolutions were effective. Table IV-9 displays the data on the stability of the resolution. Only 12% and 9% of complainants and respondents, respectively, claimed that the dispute was unresolved. When asked if the NJC helped resolve the dispute, 40% of complainants and 68% of respondents said that the NJC did not help resolve the dispute. However, these figures may reflect disputant understanding of "help" as some form of active intervention. When asked if there were any more problems with the other party, 83% of complainants and 89% of respondents said there have been no more problems. Most of the disputants did not use other resources after the NJC; if they did, it was most likely to be the court.

The perceptions of the NJC by these disputants reflect satisfaction with the NJC experience -- more so with complainants than respondents. However, a majority of the complainants felt that mediation would have been better (only one-fourth of respondents felt this way). The large majority of complainants (88%) said they would return to the NJC for a similar dispute, whereas only 46% of respondents would return. However, 31% of respondents said they would go "nowhere" with a similar dispute: many respondents are probably reluctant participants in the resolution process (see Table IV-10 for disputant perceptions).

Effects of case type and referral source. The effects of case type and referral source on disputant satisfaction and agreement stability were slight. When complainants were asked if there had been problems with the other party, 38.9% of neighbor nuisance cases and 32.7% of landlord/tenant cases said yes, in contrast to the 17.1% average across case types ($\chi^2=25.57$, $df=9$, $p=.002$). The only referral source effect detected was in the complainants' response to the question, "Would mediation have been better?" The effect of referral source was significant ($\chi^2=39.97$, $df=21$, $p=.008$), a function primarily of the high proportion of walk-ins who responded negatively (60% of walk-ins, as opposed to 31.7% of cases from other sources).

Differences among Centers. Among the cases resolved prior to hearing, several differences emerge among the Centers in disputant satisfaction and stability of the resolution. As in other analyses, findings from the Atlanta NJC appear distinct from the other two Centers, but in a less positive light. As Table IV-11 indicates, the large majority of complainants in Atlanta would have preferred mediation (despite a 94.5% overall satisfaction rate), while the majority of the complainants in Kansas City and Venice/Mar Vista did not think mediation would have been better. Interestingly, the lambda value reaches 0.51 on this index; prediction accuracy is improved 51% by knowing which Center

**TABLE IV-9:
STABILITY OF RESOLUTION
FOR CASES RESOLVED PRIOR TO HEARING**

Index/Response		Disputant		Total
		Complainant	Respondent	
What happened to the dispute after NJC?	Resolved	170 (81%)	88 (89%)	258
	Unresolved	26 (12)	9 (9)	35
	Partially	16 (8)	2 (2)	18
Did NJC help to resolve the dispute?	Yes	93 (50)	20 (22)	113
	No	75 (40)	62 (68)	137
	Partially	18 (10)	9 (10)	27
Any more problems with other party?	Yes	37 (17)	11 (11)	48
	No	175 (83)	88 (89)	263
Did you use other resources after the NJC?	Court	39 (18)	7 (7)	46
	Attorney	8 (4)		8
	Police	9 (4)	1 (1)	10
	Gov't. Agency	6 (3)	1 (1)	7
	Social Serv. Agency	11 (5)	1 (1)	12
	None	131 (62)	84 (82)	215
	Other	7 (3)	8 (8)	15

**TABLE IV-10:
PERCEPTIONS OF NJC
FOR CASES RESOLVED PRIOR TO HEARING**

Index/Response		Disputant		Total
		Complainant	Respondent	
Satisfied with overall experience at the NJC?	Yes	198 (94%)	68 (72%)	266
	No	9 (4)	17 (18)	26
	Somewhat	4 (2)	10 (10)	14
Would mediation have been better?	Yes	125 (62)	22 (25)	147
	No	60 (30)	48 (55)	108
	Uncertain	17 (8)	18 (20)	35
Where would you go in the future with a similar dispute?	NJC	180 (88)	41 (46)	221
	Court	15 (7)	3 (3)	18
	Attorney	2 (1)	13 (15)	15
	Nowhere	6 (3)	28 (31)	34
	Other	2 (1)	4 (4)	6

**TABLE IV-11:
PERCEPTIONS OF NJC FOR CASES RESOLVED PRIOR TO
HEARING: COMPLAINANT RESPONSES BY CENTER**

Index/Response		Center			Total
		Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista	
Satisfied with over- all experience at the NJC? (a)	Yes	104 (94.5%)	44 (89.8%)	32 (97.0%)	180
	No	4 (3.6)	5 (10.2)	0 (0.0)	9
	Somewhat	2 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (3.0)	3
Would mediation have been better? (b)	Yes	93 (85.3)	16 (34.8)	1 (3.4)	110
	No	4 (3.7)	27 (58.7)	28 (96.6)	59
	Uncertain	11 (10.1)	3 (6.5)	0 (0.0)	14
Where would you go in the future with similar dispute? (c)	NJC	99 (92.5)	34 (72.3)	30 (93.8)	163
	Court	8 (7.5)	5 (10.6)	1 (3.1)	14
	Attorney	0 (0.0)	2 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	2
	Nowhere	0 (0.0)	4 (8.5)	1 (3.1)	5
	Other	0 (0.0)	2 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	2

(a): $\chi^2 = 6.38$, $df = 4$, N.S.

(b): $\chi^2 = 111.14$, $df = 6$, $p < .001$

(c): $\chi^2 = 23.70$, $df = 8$, $p = .002$

handled the dispute. The reasons for these differences may be seen, at least in part, from the data in Table IV-12 on resolution stability. Most of the complainants from Atlanta stated that the NJC did not help them resolve their dispute -- in contrast to complainants in Kansas City and Venice/Mar Vista -- and considerably more Atlanta complainants used other resources, particularly the courts, than did complainants from the other Centers.

These findings are further reflected by the respondent data. When asked if the NJC helped to resolve the dispute, 89.7% (N=39) of Atlanta respondents said no, 55.2% (N=29) of Kansas City respondents said no, and only 15.4% (N=13) of Venice/Mar Vista respondents said no ($\chi^2=46.34$, $df=4$, $p<.001$; $\lambda =0.30$). When asked if mediation would have been better, 43% of Atlanta respondents, 7.1% of Kansas City respondents, and none of the Venice/Mar Vista respondents said yes ($\chi^2=34.27$, $df=4$, $p <.001$; $\lambda =.32$). It appears then that although a substantial number of cases in Atlanta were labeled "resolved prior to a hearing," most of these disputants felt that the Atlanta NJC did not really help in the resolution, that mediation would have been better, and many went on to use other resources.

Unresolved Cases

Disputants whose cases did not reach a hearing and were not resolved were also followed up to determine how their dispute had fared and how they viewed their limited experience with the NJC. The great majority of disputants interviewed were complainants; not at all surprising since the most frequent reason for a case not reaching a hearing was the lack of respondent participation and cooperation. The results of the follow-up interviews are shown in Table IV-13.

The majority (60%) of complainants said that their dispute remained unresolved, while only 47% of respondents claimed that it was unresolved. Of course, respondents are probably less likely than complainants to think that there is a dispute in the first place or that it has not been subsequently resolved. Most disputants did not use other resources after their contact with the NJC; if they did, it was most likely to be the courts or an attorney. Most disputants said they were not having any more problems with the other party, although such a result may be mainly a function of interviewees interpreting "more problems" as additional problems beyond the precipitating one. Not surprisingly, most complainants would have preferred mediation, while most respondents would not. Responses to the last two questions are especially interesting in light of the unresolved status of the cases. A large majority of both complainants (83%) and respondents (78%) were satisfied with the overall experience at the NJC, and 70% of the complainants would go back to the NJC in the future.

Effects of case type. The interpersonal/criminal case types differed from the civil/consumer cases on several indices. When complainants were asked what happened to their dispute after contact with the NJC, 46.8% of the interpersonal/criminal cases claimed to be resolved; only 26.7% of civil/consumer cases were claimed as resolved ($\chi^2=21.16$, $df=2$, $p<.001$). Yet when asked if there were any more problems with the other party, 33.1% of the interpersonal/criminal complainants said yes, and only 18.1% of civil/consumer complainants said yes ($\chi^2 =8.98$, $df=1$, $p=.003$). As mentioned above, this difference may be a function of

TABLE IV-12:
STABILITY OF RESOLUTION FOR CASES RESOLVED PRIOR TO
HEARING: COMPLAINANT RESPONSES BY CENTER

Index/Response		Center			Total
		Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista	
What happened to the dispute after NJC? (a)	Resolved	95 (85.6%)	37 (75.5%)	27 (81.8%)	159
	Unresolved	10 (9.0)	6 (12.2)	3 (9.1)	19
	Partially	6 (5.4)	6 (12.2)	3 (9.1)	15
Did NJC help to resolve the dispute? (b)	Yes	37 (36.3)	33 (82.5)	20 (66.7)	90
	No	56 (54.9)	7 (17.5)	2 (6.7)	65
	Partially	9 (8.8)	0 (0.0)	8 (26.7)	17
Any more problems with other party? (c)	Yes	22 (20.0)	6 (12.0)	5 (15.2)	33
	No	88 (80.0)	44 (88.0)	28 (84.8)	160
Did you use other resources after the NJC? (d)	Court	24 (21.8)	4 (8.2)	4 (12.1)	32
	Attorney	6 (5.5)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	7
	Police	2 (1.8)	5 (10.2)	2 (6.1)	9
	Gov't. Agency	4 (3.6)	2 (4.1)	0 (0.0)	6
	Social Serv. Agency	8 (7.3)	0 (0.0)	1 (3.0)	9
	None	61 (55.5)	37 (75.5)	24 (72.7)	122
	Other	5 (4.5)	0 (0.0)	2 (6.1)	7

(a): $\chi^2 = 2.94$, $df = 4$, $p = N.S.$

(b): $\chi^2 = 45.73$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$

(c): $\chi^2 = 1.65$, $df = 2$, $p = N.S.$

(d): $\chi^2 = 22.63$, $df = 12$, $p = .03$

**TABLE IV-13:
FOLLOW-UP RESULTS FOR
UNRESOLVED CASES**

Index/Response		Disputants		Total
		Complainant	Respondent	
What happened to dispute after contact with the NJC?	Resolved	121 (34%)	37 (50%)	158
	Unresolved	217 (60)	35 (47)	252
	Partially Resolved	27 (7)	2 (3)	29
Did you use resources after the NJC?	Court	76 (21)	3 (4)	79
	Attorney	38 (10)	6 (8)	44
	Police	6 (2)	1 (1)	7
	Gov't Agency	9 (2)		9
	Social Serv. Agency	10 (3)	2 (3)	12
	None	215 (59)	62 (81)	277
	Other	12 (3)	3 (4)	15
Any more problems with other party?	Yes	84 (24)	13 (16)	97
	No	268 (77)	66 (83)	334
Would mediation have been better?	Yes	261 (77)	24 (32)	285
	No	46 (14)	39 (53)	85
	Uncertain	30 (9)	11 (15)	41
Were you satisfied with NJC overall?	Yes	300 (83)	47 (78)	347
	No	36 (10)	9 (15)	45
	Somewhat	25 (7)	4 (7)	29
Where would you go in the future with a similar dispute?	NJC	244 (70)	18 (25)	262
	Court	41 (12)	9 (13)	50
	Attorney	21 (6)	7 (10)	28
	Nowhere	33 (10)	31 (44)	64
	Other	8 (2)	6 (8)	14

the complainants' interpretation of "more," with civil/consumer disputes being single event disputes and the interpersonal disputes having more of an ongoing nature. Indeed, 46.0% of the consumer/civil complainants state that there had been "no contact" with the respondent, whereas only 31.4% of interpersonal/criminal cases claimed "no contact." Thus, it seems probable that because of the greater degree of continuing contact between interpersonal/criminal disputants, there is greater opportunity both to resolve the dispute and to have more problems. (Respondent data parallel the complainant data on these indices.) When asked if mediation would have been better, more civil/consumer complainants said yes (84.9%) than did interpersonal/criminal complainants (63.5%; $\chi^2=8.30$, $df=2$, $p=.02$).

Effects of referral source. The effects of referral source on unresolved cases are concentrated in the judge/prosecutor referrals. Referrals from the justice system, especially from judges and prosecutors or clerks, were more likely to return to that system for assistance ($\chi^2=85.06$, $df=42$, $p < .001$) than were referrals from other agencies. And only 55.6% of bench referred complainants felt that mediation would have been better, compared to the 77.1% average ($\chi^2=35.07$, $df=21$, $p < .03$). Similarly, only 50% of referrals from judges would prefer to return to the NJC, compared to the 70% average.

Differences among Centers. When complainants in unresolved cases were asked about their attitudes toward the NJC, the Venice/Mar Vista NJC tended to be perceived most favorably, with Atlanta second. The complainants from the Kansas City NJC were consistently the least satisfied. In Venice/Mar Vista, 84.7% of complainants felt that mediation would have been better, and 89.0% of them would prefer to return to the NJC in the future; in Kansas City these respective percentages were only 62.9% and 50.9% ($\chi^2=23.73$, $df=6$, $p < .001$; $\chi^2=33.67$, $df=8$, $p < .001$). When asked if they were satisfied with the NJC, 86.6% of complainants answered affirmatively in Atlanta, 81.4% in Venice/Mar Vista, and 74.2% in Kansas City ($\chi^2=17.06$, $df=4$, $p < .002$).

Interviews with Referral Cases in Venice/Mar Vista

The Venice/Mar Vista NJC received many telephone calls and visits from local residents seeking help for a dispute they were involved in or simply inquiring about the NJC services. These contacts were primarily in response to the NJC's outreach activities in the community, which included television and radio public service announcements, newspaper articles, and direct outreach functions conducted by the Center's staff. When possible, the case was accepted and scheduled for a mediation hearing. In most cases, however, the dispute was judged to be inappropriate for mediation. The NJC had decided not to accept problems involving eviction and rent increases (of which there are many in the target area); others were considered inappropriate because they involved non-mediabile issues such as divorce, child custody, insurance claims, authorship rights, welfare payments, voter registration, etc. For these unaccepted cases, the caller was given information and often referred to another agency which may be of more help. As part of the impact evaluation study, a follow-up of these "out-referrals" made by the NJC was conducted to investigate if the referrals made were utilized, and if so, if they were helpful in resolving the dispute. Data were also collected regarding if the dispute was in fact resolved, the agencies contacted for help, and the caller's reaction to the NJC. A small sample of callers who had received information only (no referral) were also

followed up.

Between November 1978 and February 1979, the Venice/Mar Vista NJC logged 910 contacts with non-mediabile cases and made referrals for 525 (58%) of them. A sample of those referrals for which telephone numbers were available was drawn and follow-up phone calls were made by ISA's Evaluation Analyst in the Venice/Mar Vista NJC. Calls were made during the daytime and evening hours in May 1979 and an interview was conducted with the person who had originally contacted the NJC.

Fifty people who had received referrals from the NJC and 26 who were given information only were contacted and interviewed by phone. In the process, unsuccessful attempts were made to reach 60 people; contact was not made primarily due to disconnected phones and the person moving out. Many of these had called regarding eviction problems and rent increases and may be unreachable because they ultimately "resolved" their dispute by leaving.

Results of referral interviews. Of the 50 people provided referrals by the NJC, 21 followed up by calling the agency to which they were referred. Of these 21, 10 reported that they received the help needed; 11 said the referral agency was of no help to them. Six people contacted the Westside Tenants Action Center -- five received the housing information they needed regarding their dispute and one was connected with an attorney who resolved the problem efficiently. Three people were put in touch with attorneys (two through the Los Angeles County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service and one through the Family Law Center) who were working on their case. One person contacted Centro Legal, who referred her on to the appropriate government agency to handle her problem regarding immigration records.

The 11 people who were not helped when they did contact the agency they were referred to were not helped for a variety of reasons. Venice Legal Aid was called by two people and both reported the organization could not do anything. Three people called the L.A. County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service: one dispute was resolved by other means and obviated the need for the service, one person was advised not to pursue their employee/employer dispute, and one person opted not to hire a lawyer to deal with his \$6 dispute. Two people were referred on to additional agencies (by the Clare Foundation and Department of Public Social Services) which was viewed as a runaround rather than help. Four people were advised the following: to get a private lawyer (by Grey Law), which the person did not want to do; that they (Santa Monica Lawyer Referral Service) had no information which would help; that the voter registration problem was too small to be meaningful (by the American Civil Liberties Union); and that the person should move out of their residence (by the landlord/tenant court).

Of the 29 people who did not follow-up the referral provided by the NJC, 17 did not remember that a referral was given. Other reasons for not contacting the referral agency included: it was too much trouble and would take too much time, the problem had lessened or the person had decided to live with the situation, two persons had called the agency previously with no results, and several others devised their own solutions.

Thirty-eight people said they would return to the NJC in the future if another dispute arose even though only 12 fully understood what the NJC services were (10 others had partial knowledge). This appears to be due to the callers'

satisfaction with having a sympathetic ear -- comments made refer to the people being happy that someone was concerned and listened to their problem and offered help in the form of information and referral.

Of the 50 people who received referrals 14 reported that their dispute was still unresolved. Eighteen people said their dispute was successfully resolved; 12 others no longer had a dispute, but the problems were not truly resolved. Five tenants ended up paying the rent increase they disputed, and four others were evicted. The other disputes were resolved by happenstance. Six disputes were still pending at the time of the interview, with court dates set, lawyers working on cases, divorces in progress, etc.

These results are encouraging, although only modestly positive and based upon a small number of cases. They indicate that Neighborhood Justice Centers can serve purposes and needs beyond their primary function of directly resolving disputes; that they can also serve as a helpful information and referral center for a variety of justice matters. This broader role for Justice Centers -- that of serving as a point of entry into the justice system -- was a key element in some of the original thinking about the potential functions of Justice Centers. These data would indicate that such an expanded role should receive more attention.

Personal Household Interviews with Disputants

In Kansas City and Venice/Mar Vista, disputants from 44 mediated cases which had been followed up by telephone were also visited personally (typically in their homes) by an interviewer to discuss in detail the case and their experience with the NJC. (The high caseload in Atlanta did not permit resources to be allocated to this task.) The purpose of these household interviews was to validate the findings of the telephone interviews. Although the recent methodological studies on telephone surveys have generally shown them to be effective data collection techniques, virtually free of bias in most cases, it was decided that some validation of the telephone findings would be appropriate, since so much of the NJC impact results were based on the telephone interview data. The personal interviews also served as a source of descriptive material on the nature of the cases, how they were processed, and what had happened with them since NJC contact.

In Venice/Mar Vista 21 personal interviews were completed from cases in the NJC files. The interviewed sample included 11 mediations, seven telephone conciliations and three unresolved/inactive cases. In Kansas City 23 interviews were conducted, all with mediated or arbitrated cases.

Results confirmed the data from the telephone interviews. Only in one interview in Venice/Mar Vista and one interview in Kansas City did the personal interview data conflict in any way with the telephone interview data. These data serve to support the validity of the telephone-based results. Just as meaningful -- perhaps more so -- are the detailed descriptions of disputant perceptions and attitudes which came from these interviews. The following sample comments are excerpted from the interviews in Kansas City and Los Angeles. In Kansas City:

Mr. S. described his experience with the court as lousy, as

opposed to his feeling the people at the NJC were fair. Also, the people at the NJC were cooperative and helpful, as opposed to the general lack of cooperation at the court. In court he did not get any say.

Mr. R. (who had been in court one time previously with his wife) said that he was satisfied with his overall experience at the NJC. In comparison to the court, he felt that the NJC people were trying to resolve their differences, whereas the court was a frightening experience. Going to court is a contest between lawyers, not a way of solving problems between people.

Mrs. S. has been involved with the courts system before (as a community activist) and feels that she understands quite well how it operates. She feels it is a very insensitive system. She thought that more people should be aware of the NJC...the masses have humanistic values -- and power -- if they are only made aware of them.

Interestingly, when negative comments were made, they were typically about the lack of enforcement powers of the NJC: some part of an agreement breaks down and the NJC can do little about it. But even in these situations, there is typically a positive view of the process itself. Comments from Venice/Mar Vista disputants:

Complainant (a businessman) very satisfied with process and with mediator...takes less time than courts -- only 20 minutes -- and he got his money.

Complainant very positive about the whole experience...mediator skillful...respondent lived up to terms of agreement. Previous court experience was "scary", judge rules without consideration or thought.

Complainant had called NJC on phone about property maintenance (tree trimming), NJC intervened, the tree was trimmed. Complainant was very positive about the NJC experience: less time consuming than court...personal basis is much more rewarding.

These comments reveal much about the power and potential of the NJCs as humanizing forces in the overall system of justice. One might speculate that to the degree that they are viewed as part of the justice system, the overall public image of the system must be enhanced. To the extent that the NJCs are viewed as separate institutions, the courts might appear even less responsive.

Summary of Impact on Disputants

The results of the follow-up interviews with the disputants may be briefly summarized by the statements below:

- A high proportion of the agreements mediated or conciliated by the NJCs were still holding six months later. Regardless of the type of case, its source of referral, or in which Center it was

handled, a large majority of agreements continued to hold.

- A high proportion of the disputants were satisfied with the overall experience and the mediation process, and would return to the NJC with a similar dispute.
- All types of disputes resulted in lasting, satisfactory resolutions. While there are indications that some of the interpersonal/criminal cases (domestic, neighbors, etc.) performed slightly less well than the consumer/civil cases (landlord/tenant, consumer/merchant, etc.), the uniformity of positive results across all the cases supports the contention that NJCs can effectively handle a broad variety of minor disputes.
- A high proportion of disputes thought to be resolved prior to reaching a hearing actually were resolved and have not recurred.
- There are many differences among Centers in the extent of agreement stability and disputant satisfaction. Atlanta performed rather consistently above the other two Centers across the follow-up indices (although less well on cases resolved prior to a hearing). Yet, while the differences were several and consistent, they were not large: all three NJCs yielded fairly impressive follow-up data.
- In addition to direct dispute resolution services, NJCs might also perform the valuable functions of referring citizens to other justice-related agencies and of helping to improve the image of the system of justice in the community. These indirect functions of referral and public awareness deserve increased attention in the future.

These results and their implications are discussed in more detail in Chapter V.

Impact on the Courts

Much of the impetus in developing and implementing the Neighborhood Justice Centers Field Test stemmed from research findings which have suggested that the courts are probably not the best mechanisms for resolving certain disputes. The NJCs, as an experimental alternative to traditional litigation, were to test the concept that resolving disputes via mediation can be faster and more effective than our present judicial system. In addition, there was some concern that most of the cases the Centers were to handle would not have been filed by a prosecutor or court clerk at a case screening desk; or if these cases were filed, they would have soon been dropped or dismissed. This concern evolved from research which has shown that there is a high dropout rate for those cases involving disputes among parties who have ongoing personal relationships, such as husband and wife, those living together, family members, etc. (Vera Institute of Justice, 1977). These disputes make up a large percentage (about 45%) of the cases referred to the Centers, as noted in Chapter III.

It was recognized that unidimensional measures of court case processing,

such as changes in total caseloads, would be insufficient in assessing the program's impact on the judicial system. More importantly, there are other measures available to examine points in the processing flow at which cases are dropped by either the complainant party or by a representative of the court, the prosecutor, or judge. Disputant reactions to their court experiences could also be obtained as a useful index to contrast to the experiences of those individuals utilizing the services of the Centers. The result, therefore, was the development of a data collection plan for the courts that had two major components:

- (1) Case processing data, with an emphasis on those points at which cases similar to those found in the NJC either drop out of the courts or are adjudicated.
- (2) Individual case tracking and follow-up data, interview data from the complainant parties regarding their experiences while in court.

The Kansas City Municipal and Fulton County State courts were selected for this phase of the evaluation since they were primary sources of case referral for the Kansas City and Atlanta NJCs.² In addition, the City Prosecutor in Kansas City and court administrators and judges in both courts agreed to cooperate with the national evaluation, thus providing a helpful climate during the data collection activities.

These two courts were referring cases to the Centers that involved lesser criminal charges such as minor assaults and destruction of personal property.³ The research strategy called for identifying cases that were similar in all possible respects to those handled by the NJCs, but for one reason or another were not referred to them. Many times the complainants (prosecuting witnesses) did not want the NJC alternative, and felt that they could only resolve their problem in the courts.

Regardless of the reasons, there were a number of cases available for cohort analysis that were similar to those processed at the Centers. However,

² A Los Angeles court was not included in the data collection methodology since the NJC was not receiving referrals from the criminal courts in their area. Their case referral efforts were concentrated on community and self-initiated referrals. Since these court studies were initiated, the Los Angeles NJC has set up experimental referral programs with a few local small claims courts.

³ Even though the three NJCs also were handling cases of a civil nature, such as consumer/merchant disputes, only Atlanta's Fulton County State Court was referring cases directly from its Civil Division. The Kansas City NJC was not handling cases from the Magistrate Court, which adjudicates small claims cases in the city; and the Los Angeles Center was just developing an experimental short-term small claims mediation program with the nearby West Side Court. Moreover, the resources required to track and contact small claims complainants and respondents was beyond the scope of this evaluation. Thus, research in the courts was focused on criminal cases.

the degree to which these cases closely matched those in the NJCs is subject to speculation since there were very limited data available on which to identify corresponding characteristics. For example, in many instances gathering information from court records did not provide much, if any, description of the nature of the relationship between the disputing parties or of their dispute, other than the legal language of a criminal charge (i.e., "Mr. Smith did willfully strike Ms. Jones about the head with his fists on 4/18/78."). Thus, much of the detail regarding the case was unavailable unless personal contact was established with one or both of the parties.

Court Processing and NJC Referrals

The Kansas City Municipal Court is operated by the City of Kansas City, Missouri. It serves as the court of jurisdiction for handling city ordinance and traffic violations. During 1978 the Court processed over 54,000 general ordinance violations.⁴ The court employs seven judges, a court administrator, and over 40 support staff members. The Municipal Court has an information system capability linked to the police department's computer system which allows for real time monitoring of cases being handled by the city prosecutor, as well as case status while being processed in the court. The Municipal Court handles only misdemeanor charges.

In Kansas City the city prosecutor is responsible for issuing all general ordinance violation warrants at a case screening desk in that office. Citizens wanting to file a case with the city prosecutor must come to the warrants desk and present their case to a deputy prosecutor on duty. If, in his judgment, the case is acceptable, a GOS (summons) is issued authorizing the police to arrest the defendant. The deputy may also decide that the case does not meet the necessary requirements, thus dismissing it at that point. Referrals to the Kansas City NJC can be made from the prosecutor's screening desk, and the deputy prosecutor has discretion in suggesting that complainants take their case to the Center. Normally a representative of the NJC is present during the time the prosecutor is screening cases, and if a referral is made, the representative is available to complete an intake form. Trials are expected to take place anywhere from two weeks to three months following the defendant's arrest. There is no separate formal arraignment; that procedure is performed as a part of the trial itself. Judges also have the option of referring cases to the NJC at this

⁴ During the course of the court comparison study the State of Missouri implemented a court reorganization effort throughout the state. The major thrust of the program was court unification within the various Circuit areas. The major impact of the unification effort in Kansas City was that the Magistrate's Court, previously autonomous, became a division of the State Circuit Court, and the Municipal Court became a more formal part of the state court system. Formerly, the Municipal Court was self directed and even though much of that autonomy was retained, the court became a part of the state's judicial system. Another significant event that took place during the course of the court comparison study was that the City Prosecutor left office and was replaced. The impact of these changes was minimal on both the NJC as well as the research effort since the new prosecutor was even more supportive of these activities.

point. Using this procedure, the judge will ask an NJC representative at the court to conduct an intake and a date for the mediation session is set. Complainants may, of course, withdraw their charges at the prosecutor's office during the pre-trial period, or at the trial itself. Research conducted in other courts has shown that a large percentage of these types of cases are withdrawn by the complaining party (Vera Institute of Justice, 1977).

The State Court of Fulton County handles both civil and criminal cases, and a large proportion of landlord/tenant matters (Fulton County occupies most, but not all, of the City of Atlanta). Based on projections for the remainder of 1979, the annual caseload of the Fulton County Court is expected to exceed 88,500 cases, including both civil and criminal matters. In regard to criminal cases, the Fulton County Court handles misdemeanor charges filed at the criminal warrants desk or cases that have been bound over from the City's Police Court (Municipal Court).

The case processing procedure in Atlanta's Fulton County Court begins at the Criminal Division Warrants Desk. Complainants may appear at the desk, and a clerk of the court will meet with them and decide if a warrant should be issued. Three or four clerks are normally available to screen cases, and they have discretion in deciding whether or not to file a warrant, dismiss the charges, or refer the case to the Neighborhood Justice Center. In the latter instance, a volunteer representative of the Center is available to orient the complainant to the NJC mediation concept and to fill out an intake form if the individual wishes to pursue this alternative. If a defendant is arrested, a Bindover Hearing date is set, normally within a few days following an arrest. The Bindover Hearing is the first key step in processing criminal cases at the County Court. The judges in the court rotate the Bindover Hearing Docket which lists about 50-70 cases per day. This procedure serves as a preliminary hearing for those cases bound over to the court's Criminal Division and, in addition, as a primary source of case referrals for the Atlanta NJC. Typically, an NJC representative is present during the Bindover Hearing each day. As cases are presented to the judge, he or she may feel that the case might be handled better by the Center. The judge may then ask or request that the disputant parties meet with the NJC representative.

For those cases bound over to the court's Criminal Division, arraignment and trial dates are set. The County Solicitor's Office (Prosecutor) then reviews the case to determine if they want to continue to press charges against the defendant or dismiss the case. If the case makes it beyond the arraignment, the defendant has the option of requesting a jury or bench trial. Non-jury trials outnumber jury proceedings by two to one, with approximately 450 trials or motions being handled each month.

Findings From the Court Comparison Studies

As a brief review of the methodology used, to gather both the case processing and individual case follow-up data in the Kansas City and Atlanta courts, Figure IV-1 has been prepared to illustrate the primary data collection procedures (a full description of the Court Comparison methodology is presented in Appendix A).

Court processing rates. Data analyzed from the Kansas City Municipal Court

**FIGURE IV-1:
COURT DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES
IN KANSAS CITY AND ATLANTA**

	Kansas City Municipal Court	Atlanta-Fulton County State Court
Case Processing Data	<p>1. 228 Prosecutor initiated and 233 police initiated cases sampled from over the 6,000 case filings during 1977. These cases had similar ordinance violation charges as those referred to the NJC.</p>	<p>2. 2,040 cases tracked from court clerk filing through the initial Bindover Hearing. This represented all the cases in 1978, which were similar to those referred to the NJC.</p>
Case Tracking and Follow-Up	<p>3. 42 cases were flagged at the City Prosecutor's Warrants Desk from 12/78 through 4/79, and followed in the court.</p> <p>24 of the above complainant parties were located and interviewed regarding their experiences in court.</p>	<p>4. 107 of the above cases (1/78-4/78) were tracked from the Bindover to final disposition in the Criminal Division of the Court.</p> <p>43 of the above 107 complainant parties were located and interviewed regarding their experiences in court.</p>

computer records and from interviews with a cohort sample of complainants are illustrated in Figure IV-2. Cases sampled for this analysis included the following violations:

- Disturbing the peace -- 85%
- Simple assault -- 2%
- Destruction of property -- 13%

Beginning with cases filed during 1977 it took an average (median) of 16 days until the defendant was arrested. Another 36 days were needed to get the case to a final disposition, and some cases required up to 361 days. When considering the total time from initial filing to disposition, 63 days were needed, with some cases lasting as long as one year in the Municipal Court system.

When a sample of police cases was contrasted with those initiated by complainants at the prosecutor's screening desk it was found that they required only 30 days (rather than 36 for complainant-filed cases) from arrest to final disposition. Complainant-initiated cases may require more time because procedures involved in prosecuting these disputes are more difficult to develop since a law enforcement officer was not present at the time.

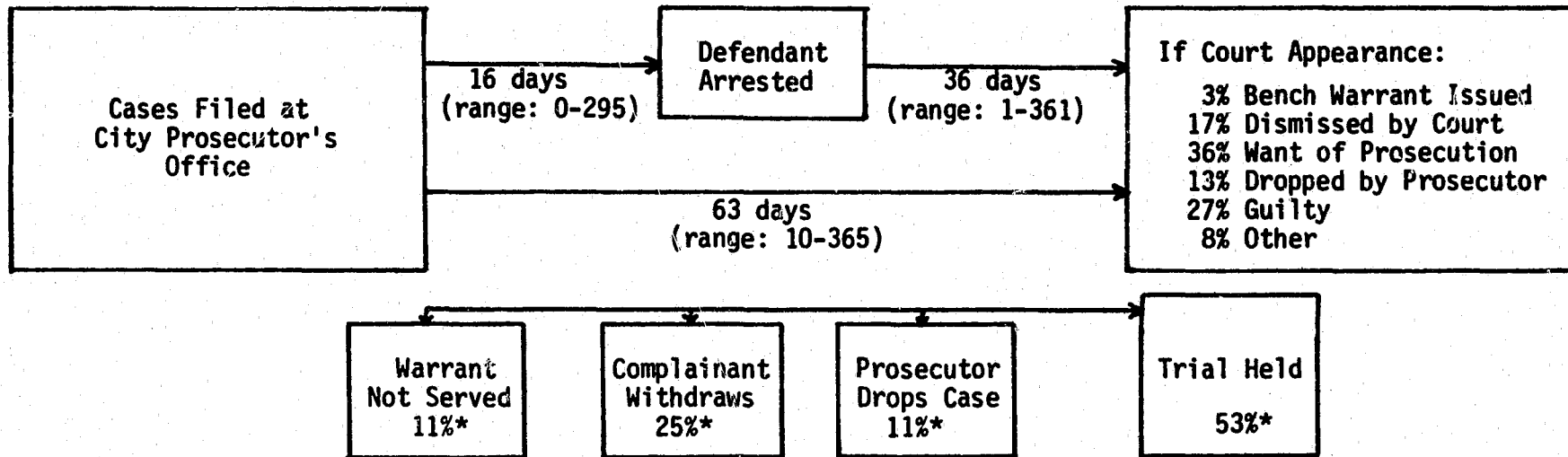
Examining data gathered from the 43 cases tracked individually through the court processing system, estimates were developed reflecting the percentage of cases that drop out of the process, and those for which a court appearance takes place.⁵ As Figure IV-2 illustrates, about 11% of the warrants were not served, at least during the time period of this study -- approximately 10 months. Complainants reported that they had withdrawn charges in 25% of the cases that were tracked, and the prosecutor dropped another 11% of the cases prior to an appearance in court. This left approximately 53% of the cases to appear before a judge.

The average case required more than one court appearance, and some cases went before a judge nine or more times before reaching a final disposition. In three percent of the cases the defendant failed to appear and a bench warrant was issued. A large number of cases were dropped or dismissed at a court appearance. The judges dismissed 17% of the cases, and the prosecutors 13%. Another 36% were dismissed for want of prosecution, which generally indicated that the complainant did not appear in court to testify. There were guilty verdicts for 27% of the cases appearing in Municipal Court.

Data gathered from the case records at Fulton County State Court were analyzed and the findings are presented in Figure IV-3. A sample of 456 cases filed at the warrants screening desk during 1978 were tracked through the Bindover Hearing and final disposition for the following offense categories:

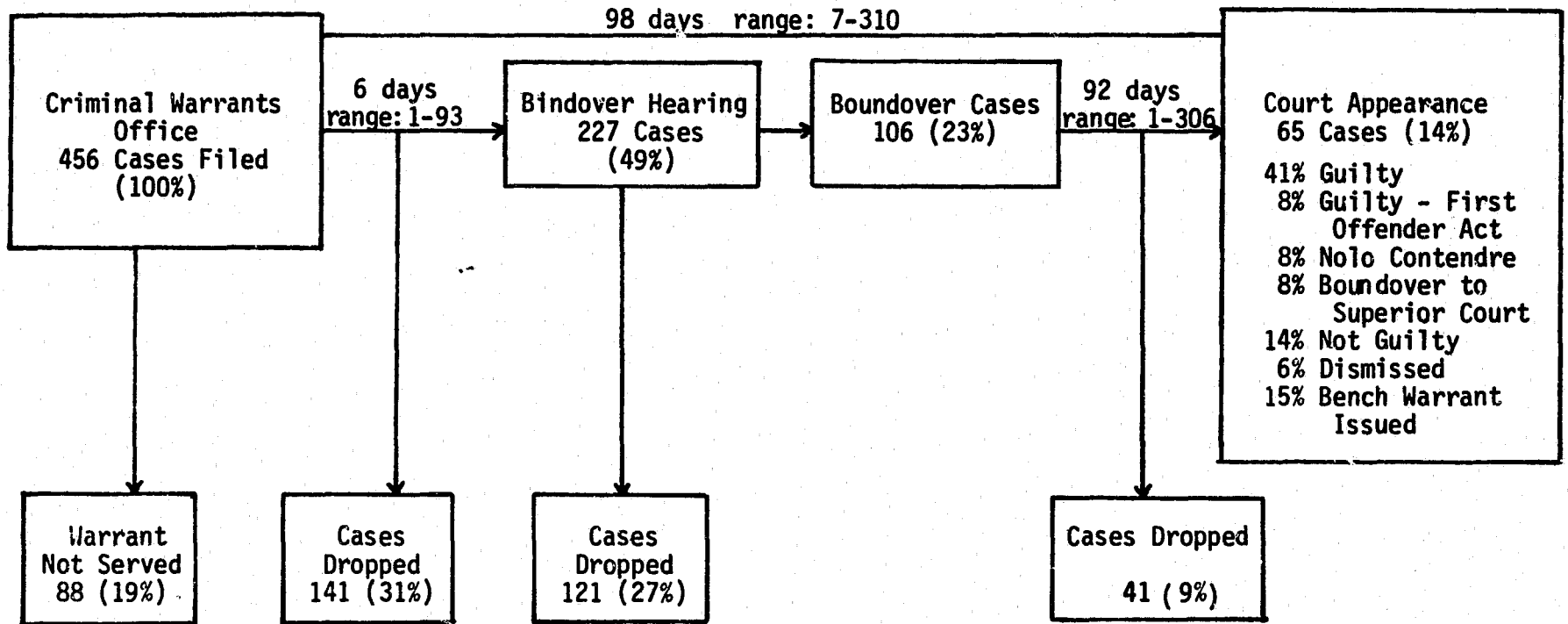
⁵ It is important to note that these estimates have been prepared from a limited sample of cases, and details regarding the court processing activities were pieced together from incomplete court records and complainant interviews. However, these court processing estimates provide some insights into case disposition.

**FIGURE IV-2:
CASE PROCESSING RATES FOR
KANSAS CITY MUNICIPAL COURT**



* Estimated figures based on 42 individual case follow-ups from City Prosecutor's Office.

FIGURE IV-3:
CASE PROCESSING RATES FOR
ATLANTA'S FULTON COUNTY STATE COURT



- Simple assault/battery -- 65%
- Criminal trespass -- 21%
- Criminal damage to property -- 2%
- Pointing a pistol -- 5%
- Theft -- 7%

The average time required from filing to the Bindover Hearing was six days; however, another 92 days were required to reach a final disposition. When tracking individual cases that were filed and went to trial, an average of 98 days was needed. Approximately 19% of the warrants issued were not served, and another 31% were dropped prior to the Bindover Hearing.⁶ For those cases that were dropped before the initial hearing, 11 days passed before the case was dismissed. The records also indicated that 27% of all the defendants arrested were jailed for some period of time prior to Bindover. The remainder of the sample made bail or were released on recognizance.

A total of 227 (49%) cases went to the Bindover Hearing, and as a result 121 of those were dropped. The most frequent reason for dropping a case at the Hearing was want of prosecution, or failure of the complainant to appear, and about 20% of the cases were withdrawn by the complainants themselves. One hundred six cases were bound over for arraignment and trial, or 23% of the original sample. Of those cases bound over, 41 (9%) were dropped prior to or at a court appearance. The most frequent cause for dropping a case at that point was withdrawal of charges by the complainant, and in these cases they had to pay court costs of \$41.50. Only about 7% of the cases were dropped at the request of the County Solicitor's Office. Of the 65 (14%) cases that went to trial, 57% were found guilty or the defendants pleaded nolo contendere. About 14% of the defendants were found not guilty and 15% failed to appear and a bench warrant was issued. For those cases where a guilty verdict was reached, a fine, suspended jail sentence, and/or probation were the typical sentences by the court. In only 2% of the cases did the defendant receive a jail sentence, generally less than 90 days.

Individual case tracking and follow-up. A second major data collection procedure with the courts in Kansas City and Atlanta involved tracking individual cases through the court systems and conducting personal interviews with complainants after their cases had been adjudicated or dropped. Twenty-three (54%) of the 42 complainant parties flagged in Kansas City were contacted by telephone and interviewed, and 43 (40%) of the 106 complainants whose cases had been bound over to the court's Criminal Division were interviewed in Atlanta. In Kansas City the interviews were conducted one to six months after the case had been dropped or adjudicated, whereas in Atlanta, the interviews were done six to 18 months following final disposition. Results of the complainant follow-up interviews are presented in Table IV-14 and the findings are presented below.

⁶ Data pertaining to case processing and dropout rates were developed from several different sources of court records. These records were located in a manual system, and the degree of accuracy in following cases through the court cannot be assessed, thus the reader is cautioned to interpret these percentages as estimated rates.

TABLE IV-14
Responses to the Follow-up Interviews with
Complainants from the Kansas City Municipal Court
and Atlanta's State Court of Fulton County

Interview Items	Kansas City Responses N=23	Atlanta Responses N=43
1. What had you done previously about this dispute?		
• Tried to talk with other party	27%	45%
• Called police	64	33
• Went to court	9	21
2. Was the Prosecutor/Court File Clerk helpful?		
• Yes	50	93
• No	50	7
3. If your case was dropped, was your dispute resolved?		
• Yes	70	71
• No	30	29
4. If your case was adjudicated--		
4a. Did you feel the verdict/sentence was fair?		
• Yes	insufficient cases	33
• No		67
4b. Did it resolve your dispute with other party?		
• Yes	insufficient cases	69
• No		31
5. Reactions to the following:		
5a. Satisfied with prosecutor?		
• Yes	insufficient cases	59
• No		41
5b. Satisfied with Judge?		
• Yes	64	69
• No	36	31
5c. The way your case was handled?		
• Good	33	42
• Average	10	28
• Poor	57	30
5d. Keeping you informed about case?		
• Good	13	38
• Average	10	22
• Poor	77	40
5e. Your treatment in the courtroom?		
• Good	55	62
• Average	10	20
• Poor	35	18
6. If your dispute was resolved, what happened?		
• Respondent doesn't see/bother me anymore	36	50
• Respondent paid me for damages	28	21
• We worked it out together	36	29
7. Would you take a similar case to court again?		
• Yes	64	81
• No	36	19

When the complainants (prosecuting witnesses) were asked what they had done about their dispute in the past, a majority (64%) in Kansas City had called or talked to the police.⁷ The interviewees reported that most often the police said that there was nothing they could do, and the complainants could or should go file a warrant. In Atlanta only 33% reported they had called the police, but 45% stated they had tried to work out the problem by talking with the other party(s). This proved to be unsuccessful, however, and in many instances they felt that the court was their last resort. Interestingly, 9% of the complainants in Kansas City and 21% in Atlanta had gone to court previously, and had talked with a prosecutor or court clerk. In a few cases warrants had been filed and respondents arrested, but the interviewees felt that this had accomplished very little in resolving their problems with the other party(s). When asked if the prosecutor or court clerk had been helpful, over 90% said yes in Atlanta, but only half said yes in Kansas City. In Kansas City there is only one deputy prosecutor who screens cases, while Atlanta has three or four court clerks on duty to review cases and file warrants.

After tracking this sample of cases through the court process it was noted that the disputes were dropped prior to an initial court appearance at about the same rate as those studied in the aggregate case processing analysis -- about 50% were dismissed before going to a hearing or trial. The most frequent reason for cases being dropped was that the complainants had withdrawn the charges. They had dropped the charges because they had been paid back for damages the respondent had caused, or they felt that the respondent had gone through enough trouble after being arrested, and they did not really want them to go to trial and be sentenced. When the interviewees were asked if after dropping the case their dispute with the other party(s) had been resolved, 70% in both Kansas City and Atlanta said yes. A majority of the complainants said that subsequent to filing their case and having the warrant served, their relationship with the respondents had improved or they had no further contact with them. Thus, it appears that if some legal action is initiated by the complainant it can be a significant factor in helping resolve a dispute.

Complainants whose cases went on to court and were later adjudicated were asked if they felt the sentence was fair. Of those interviewed only Atlanta had a sufficient number of adjudicated cases to analyze, and interestingly, about 67% felt that the sentence was unfair. In most of those cases the respondent was convicted and sentenced, but some of the complainants were still vindictive as noted in the comments below:

"Should have gotten more. It would teach him a better lesson."

"If the judge would have known her better, he might have given her a stronger reprimand."

⁷ It is important to note at this point that the data and results reported from the complainant interviews are questionably representative since only those individuals who could be contacted easily by telephone were interviewed, given the limitations of time and effort required. However, these findings do reflect the attitudes and opinions of 66 people who took a case to court seeking what they felt to be justice. In that context their comments can provide practical insights to the manner in which many courts handle minor dispute cases.

CONTINUED

1 OF 2

And, when the Atlanta interviewees were asked if the verdict resolved the dispute with the respondent, about 70% said it had helped -- even though most of the complainants said they felt the sentence was unfair, many of them also said the court's decision helped solve their problem.

The interviewees were asked for their reactions to the prosecutor, judge, and case handling processes in the court. In Atlanta, where a sufficient number of complainants had some interaction with a prosecutor, over half felt that they had done a good job, although a few prosecutors were criticized because the complainants felt that they did not have enough time to review their case. Some said that the prosecutors only talked to them about their case in the hallway before going into the courtroom. A majority of those interviewed whose cases went to a court appearance did not really know who the prosecutor was, or they were unable to recall if a prosecutor was present at the time their case was before the judge. About two-thirds of the interviewees were satisfied with the judge in their case and felt that he or she was fair and impartial. Even though many of the complainants thought the verdict was unfair it did not affect their positive opinion of the judge. In regard to the manner in which their case was handled in court, the majority of the complainants in Kansas City felt that it was poor, although almost half said it was good or average. In Atlanta, 30% felt their cases were handled poorly, but 42% felt the handling of their case was good. When asked how well the court kept them informed about their cases, the interviewees in both Atlanta and Kansas City thought it was poor. Many of them said either they were not notified to appear in court, or they were not contacted until the day the trial was to take place. Some of the complainants took it upon themselves to call the court and find out what was happening to their cases. In other instances, however, those interviewed said they were notified well in advance of the court date, and were kept informed about continuances and other activities affecting their cases. Those complainants who appeared before the bench were asked about their treatment in the courtroom. The large majority of complainants felt that they were treated fairly and given an opportunity to tell their side of the story. In only a few instances did the interviewees feel that they did not receive fair treatment, or that they were embarrassed by the proceedings by having to tell everyone in the courtroom their personal problems.

Those complainants who said that their dispute had been resolved as a result of bringing their case to court were asked what happened to alleviate their problem with the other party. The most frequent response was that the respondent did not see or bother the complainant any longer. In other words, there was little or no further contact between the disputants. Another reason given for resolving the problem was that the respondent paid for property damages or medical bills resulting from the situation that caused the complainant to go to court. Often a dispute focused on the financial losses of the complainant rather than on the criminal charges against the defendant. If the respondent paid for the damages he or she caused, many complainants dropped the criminal charges and the dispute was resolved. A third category of reasons for a dispute being resolved is that the disputant parties attempted to work out a solution themselves. Comments from the interviewees, when this approach was cited, centered around a feeling that the court experience had made a real impact on the respondent. These complainants said that going to court resulted in the parties getting together and seriously discussing the problems. As a result, the dispute was resolved or the situation got much better (as one complainant reported, "he doesn't harass me as much anymore").

When the complainants were asked if they would take a similar case to court again, a large majority said they would (81% in the Atlanta cases, 64% in Kansas City). However, the reasons that were given for taking another case to court in the future varied greatly among the interviewees:

"Yes, I would go to court, but next time I would have my own attorney."

"Yes, if I had to, but I wouldn't like to go through that procedure again. It takes too much time."

"Yes, sometimes it takes this kind of drastic action. Law is supposed to protect you."

"Yes, I would take a similar case to court again -- even though I had a negative experience. I know other women who give up because of the futility of it all. I'm a fighter, and I'm going to keep on fighting until he leaves me alone."

There was a smaller group of complainants who would not go back to court again, and their comments reflect many of their frustrations:

"No, I wouldn't go to court again; it's not worth the trouble, time and money."

"I don't think so. I didn't get justice the first time."

"Not sure, it takes too much time between the crime and court date. I had almost forgotten everything by the time it got to court."

"No, it takes too much time and aggravation. I'm too old for this kind of thing."

One final area covered during the complainant interviews was the costs they incurred while processing their cases through the courts. The interviewees were asked to provide estimated costs for such items as transportation to and from court, any court or filing fees, legal fees, and lost salary or wages for court appearances. In Kansas City the average cost to the complainant in our survey was \$25.60, with a range of \$3 to \$160. For the complainant sample in Atlanta the average cost was \$67.07, with a range of \$1 to \$750. Normally, higher costs were associated with lost salaries and legal fees. Complainants must pay a \$5 fee in Kansas City and \$41.50 in Atlanta to have charges withdrawn.

Judicial response to the NJCs. Judges and other court administrative personnel were interviewed in Kansas City and Atlanta regarding their reactions to the Neighborhood Justice Centers Field Test. They were to describe how they use the NJC services, and what impact, if any, the NJCs have had on the cases they see in court. Five judges at the Kansas City Municipal Court were interviewed, as well as four judges and the Chief Clerk and Criminal Warrants Clerk from the Fulton County State Court in Atlanta.

The judges' overall reaction to the Neighborhood Justice Centers concept was very favorable. While most of the judges were highly supportive, even

describing the mediation alternative in one instance as a "godsend", others felt that the Centers can help some disputes, but they should not, or are not, equipped to handle other cases. Their comments included:

"Most of these [minor dispute] cases don't belong in the criminal justice system."

"The courts are failing to solve person problems, and that's why we need programs like this."

"We didn't have this type of service previously, it filled a void."

"I like the services [of the NJC], people can work out their problems. It would take me a long time to create the desire in the parties to get together."

"They [the NJC] remove the stigma of a criminal record. They get to the real heart of the problem. The judges can't take time for that."

The judges were asked how they made referrals to the Centers and what type of feedback they expected regarding outcomes of the mediation sessions at the NJC. The referral process was very diverse among those interviewed, even for those in the same court. The range of referral procedures varied from one judge who said, "I don't ask them [the disputants], I just send them," to another in the same court who believed that a verdict must be rendered before a referral can be made. More typical, however, were the judges who made referrals by first talking with the parties and asking them if they would like to try the mediation alternative. If either party said no, then the case went on to a hearing or trial; if they agreed, the case was referred to the NJC.

There was a problem in the Fulton County Court in Atlanta regarding the different referral procedures that were being employed. Some judges were dismissing the cases at the time the referral was made, while others continued the cases and expected the parties to report back to the court following their mediation sessions at the NJC. The judges finally decided that it would be best if all referrals to the Center were "continued cases" so that the court could maintain control in case an agreement between the parties could not be worked out. As a result, the disputants were to report back to the court and show the judge a copy of their agreement. At that point the case was dismissed.

Most of the judges in Kansas City expected some form of feedback on the cases they referred to the NJC. Feedback varied from a letter explaining what happened to the parties when they went to the Center, to a 90-day summary report on the referred cases.

The judges were asked which types of cases they felt the Centers were best equipped to mediate, and conversely, what types should not be handled. While there were some differences noted among the judges regarding the types of cases that should be referred to the program, generally they agreed on this issue. There was a consensus on the matter of violence; the opinion was that if the case involved excessive violence, it was not appropriate for the NJC project. One category that almost all the judges felt the Centers were best equipped to

handle is neighborhood disputes. There was a mixed response from the judges when family and domestic disputes were to be referred. Some judges thought that the Centers handled these cases extremely well; others, however, felt that these cases were inappropriate for the NJCs. A general impression among the judges was that if disputants have an issue to negotiate between them (property, visitation rights, etc.), then the mediation process is a better alternative than court. However, if the case involves a long history of harassments and threats, then it is very difficult for either the court or an NJC to resolve these problems.

The judges and court personnel were asked what impact they thought the NJC program had on their caseload and their effectiveness in processing cases. Nearly all of those responding said the NJC program had not reduced to any noticeable extent the caseload that they handle. However, several judges in Kansas City mentioned that the number of neighborhood disputes had been reduced. They felt that they were seeing fewer of these cases than previously. While total caseloads were not affected, judges who made referrals to the Centers were unanimous in saying that the Neighborhood Justice Centers facilitated the processing of all cases through the courts. When the judges were able to refer what they felt were some of their most difficult and time consuming cases to the NJCs, then they were freed to devote more time and consideration to the remaining cases. These judges felt that the net result was a higher quality of justice for most of those people who brought a case to court. Comments such as, "it has lightened my load," or, "it helps move cases along," suggest that the NJC program is providing benefits to the judiciary.

Impact on Community

The impact of the NJCs on the community residents and agencies was assessed in two ways: (1) through a random sample telephone survey of residents in Venice/Mar Vista, and (2) through impact interviews with representatives of community agencies in the three cities. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, significant impact of the NJCs on the community-at-large was not viewed as very probable. In the hierarchy of importance, the assessment of community effects ranked a distant third behind disputants themselves and the criminal justice system. Although community impact was included as a goal at the outset, it received understandably low weight by the NJCs and by the Department of Justice officials (see Appendix A). These limited expectations were less a function of collective perceptions of eventual impact of NJCs on the community than a recognition that one small test program cannot realistically hope to achieve observable impact on the community, particularly in its first year.

The Community Survey in Venice/Mar Vista

Limited evaluation resources did not allow the conduct of community surveys at each NJC site. Since it was thought that the Venice/Mar Vista NJC had probably engaged in more community outreach activities (see Chapters III and IV) than the other Centers, it was decided that a survey of Venice/Mar Vista would provide a "best case" test of community awareness and attitudes.

As indicated in Table IV-15, 52 (30%) of the people reached were aware of the Venice/Mar Vista NJC. There were no notable differences between the two

**TABLE IV-15:
VENICE/MAR VISTA COMMUNITY SURVEY**

	<u>Venice</u>		<u>Mar Vista</u>		Total
	Residence	Business	Residence	Business	
Number aware of NJC	15	5	31	1	52 (29.9%)
Number unfamiliar with NJC	42	7	67	6	122 (70.1%)

communities. Of the 52 people with some awareness of the NJC, 39 knew where the Center was located and 38 knew roughly what services were offered. While most knew that the NJC was a mediation service of some kind, 11 thought the NJC provided legal aid for low income groups.

The respondents learned of the NJC from a variety of sources: 12 had driven by the Center and knew it by sight, 11 read of it in newspapers, 11 were informed by television and two by radio announcements, 10 had knowledge of the NJC through friends, and six persons knew through community outreach functions conducted by NJC staff and mediators.

Only two of the 52 respondents had ever called the NJC. One called out of curiosity, with no real dispute to be resolved, and received information. The other person called representing a community service agency and received a mediation type service -- NJC staff attended a large group meeting of community residents and facilitated the communication process in their group dispute. All but one of the respondents with knowledge of NJC services said they thought it was a good method for dispute resolution and would use it in the future if necessary.

A 30% recognition rate for a new community program may be judged according to several standards. In an absolute sense, it falls short of the ideal by 70%. But such an assessment is neither fair nor particularly instructive; it is unlikely that much older established social service agencies would fare much better (if at all) than 30%. On balance, it is probably more of a mark of achievement than of failure. On the other hand, the Venice/Mar Vista staff devoted considerable time and effort to promoting public awareness of the NJC, and it may be somewhat disheartening to see such efforts result in only a 30% rate. More importantly, for purposes of evaluation, it provides a helpful benchmark. We now have a basis for estimating what kind of effort is required to achieve some recognition in the community -- and that effort is considerable. Moreover, the data show the value of media-based public awareness/education campaigns. Few people learned of the NJC through direct staff outreach activities such as presentations to community organizations; rather, the media seemed to have the most impact on public awareness.

Impact Interview Results

Interviews were held with five representatives of community agencies; three in Los Angeles, one in Kansas City, and one in Atlanta. In Los Angeles, interviews were held with a representative of a tenants rights organization on Westside Los Angeles (Venice and Mar Vista are located in West Los Angeles), the director of a neighborhood housing rights organization in Venice, and a key official on the Mayor's staff (who was also a member of the NJC Board). In Kansas City, an interview was held with the assistant director of a black rights organization, who also served as a mediator. In Atlanta, a local attorney (and city councilman) who specializes in legal services to the poor was interviewed. The semi-structured interviews covered a series of questions designed to determine the following:

- (a) Was the NJC beneficial and helpful to you and your organization?

- (b) What changes would you like to see in the NJC operations?
- (c) What is your overall opinion of the value of the NJC?

Without exception, all interviewees perceived the NJCs as beneficial and of excellent value to their organizations and to the community. However, it appeared in each instance that their positive view was non-specific and not based upon intimate knowledge of NJC operations or performance. Two of the three interviewees in Los Angeles mentioned that they would like to have more routine feedback about cases which they referred to the NJCs. One of these two agency representatives also stated that she thought the NJC should engage in more outreach activities. With these exceptions, virtually all of the comments of the interviewees were positive.

CHAPTER V: ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a discussion and interpretation of the central findings of the NJC evaluation. Most of the discussion will be structured by the goals and objectives which were articulated at the onset of the study, addressing the general question of how well the NJCs performed relative to these goals and objectives. Within this structure the key issues which emerged from the study will be discussed, followed by an examination of additional salient topics.

This study was intended as an evaluation of the Neighborhood Justice Centers, represented by three centers which were separate and in many ways distinct. Thus, these findings are most relevant to those three centers, indeed, some results are pertinent only to a specific center. Yet underneath the distinctiveness and the differences there were also common concepts and a mechanism of alternative dispute resolution (as described in Chapter II) which were shared by the NJCs and which are found in a growing number of dispute resolution programs across the nation. Thus, the NJCs and the findings discussed below may also be considered in a limited sense, as representative of that general concept which is found in all three NJCs and in other similar programs.

Overall Effectiveness of the NJCs

The main goal of the NJC Field Test -- the one which was most heavily weighted by all parties -- was that the NJCs provide for "the relatively inexpensive, expeditious and fair resolution of disputes...and enhance the quality of justice delivered to the community." Objectives under this goal stated that the Centers should be "utilized by a cross-section of the community," cost and speed of resolution should compare favorably with "selected existing adjudication procedures," resolutions should be "fair, long-lasting and satisfactory," and the Centers should have a beneficial impact on "the ability of the formal justice system...to handle its workload." (See Appendix A for full goals and objectives.)

In a general sense, this central goal was well met: the NJCs were quickly established, and, as shown by the impact data, they provided for the expeditious and fair resolutions of disputes. Almost 4,000 cases were processed during the first year of Center operations. Resolutions were reached in 45% of these cases, and of those which reached a hearing, 82% were resolved.

The NJCs also performed well across the specific objectives. They were utilized by a clientele which varied in ethnicity and sex, but less so in income. Complainants tended to be people with low incomes (respondents were more widely varied, mainly because of the participation of "corporate representatives" -- merchants, landlords, etc.). The main reason for the disproportionate number of low income people is probably twofold. First, disputants reflect the income characteristics of those who find themselves in the courts from which many of the cases are referred. Second, low income citizens can seldom afford legal counsel to help them settle disputes, as do many higher income people. Nonetheless, the Centers offer a service which is intended not only for low-income people; NJCs should be providing benefits to higher income people who are

interested in the rapid, fair resolution of disputes. But the more traditional legal approaches are probably well ingrained in the middle classes, and one suspects that they are not likely to be supplanted without special efforts to alter citizen views about alternative ways to resolve disputes.

In Atlanta, costs of NJC cases compare favorably with estimates of court case processing, but costs per case at the other Centers appear considerably higher. (The cost issue is discussed separately in more detail below.) On the criteria of speed, stability of resolutions and satisfaction, the Centers performed very well. Hearings were typically held within one to two weeks of first contact and required only about two hours. Six months after the hearing most of the agreements were still holding, and the large majority of the disputants were satisfied with the process.

Accurate, hard data are not available on the impact of the Centers on the ability of the justice system to handle its workload, but certainly the interviews with judges, prosecutors, etc., showed that the response of these officials was overwhelmingly positive. Indeed, it appears that one of the NJC's main benefits for the justice system is that they take away cases which may be seen as inappropriate for adjudication; as time consuming and frustrating (e.g., they may be dropped or dismissed only to appear again six months later); wasteful of the valuable time of judges and prosecutors, time which could be better spent on more appropriate cases; and wasteful of the time of the police, who often do not have the time, resources or desire to help resolve recurring disputes. To these justice officials, a facility which relieves them of such cases and appears to resolve them fairly and effectively is a helpful resource.

These findings on NJC resolution effectiveness parallel results from studies of other similar dispute resolution programs around the nation. The work of Felstiner and Williams (1980) in Massachusetts; Davis, Tichane, and Grayson (1979) in New York; and the Dispute Resolution Alternatives Committee (1979) in Florida are most relevant to this study. Their research methodologies were similar to those used in this study and the programs assessed used mediation or arbitration to resolve interpersonal disputes referred mainly from the justice system.

Felstiner and Williams studied a court-connected dispute resolution program (the Urban Court Program) in Dorchester, Massachusetts, analyzing case data from 1975 to 1977. From the 500 cases referred to the program during this period, 81 mediated cases (164 disputants) were sampled for follow-up. At least one disputant in this sample was interviewed in 48 (59%) of the cases. In the follow-up interviews conducted 8 to 14 months after mediation, disputants were asked if their situation had improved, and if the other party lived up to all of the agreement. Eighty-three percent of the disputants said that there had been some improvement, 68% said that the other party had lived up to all of the agreement (compared to 68% in the present study), and 93% said that they had lived up to all of the agreement (compared to our 82%). Similarly, 78% were glad they used mediation, and 65% said they would use it again. The sample size in the Dorchester study was less than one-tenth the size of the present follow-up study (and the sampling plan and procedures are somewhat unclear) yet the results are highly similar.

The research of Davis and his associates on the Brooklyn Dispute Resolution Center involved a randomized design, wherein felony cases (involving a victim-

offender relationship) which were approved for mediation were randomly assigned to either mediation (n=259) or the court (n=206). Follow-up interviews were conducted with complainants or defendants four months after case disposition. In the mediation cases, 49% of the complainants and 34% of the defendants were followed up. In court cases 43% of the complainants and 22% of the defendants were followed up. Of complainants whose cases were mediated, 79% said they had not had problems with the defendant, and 62% said that the defendant's behavior had improved. In contrast, only 61% of the complainants in court cases said that they had no problems with the defendant, and only 40% said that the defendant's behavior had changed (both figures are significantly different from the mediated cases). Significantly, more complainants in mediated cases felt satisfied (73%) and that the outcome was fair (77%) than did complainants in court cases (54% and 56%, respectively). Thus, the rates of satisfaction and the stability of resolutions in the Brooklyn study, again approximate (they are slightly lower) those in the present evaluation -- and, interestingly, are in some contrast to the court follow-up data.

The study of five Citizen Dispute Settlement programs in Florida produced similar findings. In this study, mail questionnaires were sent to all disputants (n=2,368) who had participated in a mediation during a six-month period. The response rate was 31.7% for complainants and 25.9% for respondents. Seventy-nine percent of the complainants said that they were satisfied or partially satisfied with the dispute settlement process; 82.5% of respondents were satisfied or partially satisfied. When asked if their problem had been resolved or partially resolved, 74.1% of complainants and 82.8% of respondents answered affirmatively.

There is, then, a striking similarity in the degree to which the basic mechanism (use of conciliation, mediation and arbitration to resolve interpersonal disputes) operates successfully across locations and types of dispute resolution organizations. An impressively high proportion of the users of the mechanism claim to be helped by it and are satisfied with the experience. Certain disputes and conditions are less appropriate for this approach to dispute resolution; they will be discussed below.

Given that the NJC dispute resolution mechanism works well, an obvious question is why it is so effective. First, it is probably true that in most of the cases which are resolved the dispute is not tremendously complex or deeply rooted. It may, of course, be connected in some way with complex interpersonal processes, but the resolvable dispute is typically one which requires only the relatively brief intervention of a skilled third party. This view is supported by the evidence (herein and elsewhere) which shows that when the dispute involves individuals with strong ongoing bonds or for whom there are rather serious underlying problems, the likelihood of achieving a lasting resolution diminishes (Felstiner and Williams, 1980; Report of the Dispute Resolution Alternatives Committee, 1979). A list of the 25 types of agreement terms from the NJCs are shown in Table V-1. The large majority of these terms involve fairly straightforward agreements -- return of property, no contact, resolve nuisance, etc. -- which do not typically require addressing underlying personal or interpersonal dynamics. This view is not meant to relegate the NJC to the role of mere catalyst. Carefully selected mediators must handle emotional disputes with aplomb; staff must perform the tasks of outreach, intake, scheduling of hearings, and follow-up with delicate perseverance. But in most instances, mediators do not have to perform as therapists or counselors in the

**TABLE V-1:
AGREEMENT TERMS**

Type of Agreement Terms	Number of Mediated Cases
1. Adults will supervise children	53
2. Resolve nuisance	21
3. No verbal abuse or harassment	110
4. Structured communications	11
5. No physical violence	31
6. No contact between parties	128
7. Domestic separation	30
8. Return of property/property division	35
9. Establish child support, visitation rights	57
10. Monetary restitution, less than \$100	115
11. Monetary restitution, \$101 - \$500	140
12. Monetary restitution, over \$500	38
13. Non-monetary restitution	46
14. Designate care/use of property	33
15. Drop legal charges	46
16. Vacate premises	20
17. Stay off property	10
18. Participate in counseling	31
19. Other	40
20. Continue to communicate to resolve dispute	24
21. Agree to have 2nd hearing	4
22. Reconciliation	16
23. No eviction	3
24. Specify behavior, relationship	79
25. Get estimate and pay damage	13

complete sense. In this regard, Felstiner and Williams (1978) have stated that although "it may be beyond the powers of lay mediators in a single two-hour session to employ the codified techniques developed by psychotherapists to improve communications skills between intimates," they believe that "a greater contribution could be made by a mediation process that would encourage direct communication between warring intimates instead of defining the agreement as the sine qua non of success in mediation." As stated, that perspective is difficult to argue against. But the strong suggestions that mediated dispute resolution shares a continuum with psychotherapy, and further, that movement toward the therapeutic approach is desirable, are dubious positions. Although there are similarities between therapy and mediation, one of the strengths of mediation may well be that it focuses on specific, behavioral resolutions of the conflict without becoming entangled in "underlying causes." It is ironic that as certain types of psychotherapy have become more behaviorally oriented (Corsini, 1973), it is proposed that mediation look more closely at deeper dynamics. Indeed, the suggestion to focus less on agreements and more toward therapy-like concerns sounds somewhat like the exhortations of Freudians that behavioral therapy will not be effective because it deals with symptoms (behavior) and not causes (underlying psychological dynamics).

Another reason for the effectiveness of dispute resolution centers, particularly as reflected in disputant satisfaction rates, is that they offer a service that is quick, responsive, and humanistic -- a powerful and, one suspects, increasingly rare combination in the lives of many citizens. As indicated in the statements of interviewed disputants (see Chapter IV), the clients of NJCs occupy the center of attention, they are treated with care and respect, they are able to maintain some control over the process, and -- perhaps most important -- they are able to tell their side of the story to someone who listens.

Case Variation

The second most highly weighted goal was that the "Centers should attract a variety of civil and criminal dispute cases drawn from different sources in the community and the criminal justice system." Objectives under this goal stated that disputes should include "a variety of interpersonal disputes, including...landlord/tenant disputes and appropriate consumer complaints"; that dispute cases should be referred from the justice system, social service agencies and "self-referrals"; and that information should be generated on the forms of dispute resolution and on the types of cases and disputants which are most appropriate for the Centers.

With the attraction of nearly 4,000 cases in the first year of operations, the Centers collectively demonstrated that they could attract a sizable and varied caseload. Referrals from community social service agencies were lower than anticipated; representing only 4.7% of all cases -- the lowest category of referral source. Impact interviews indicated that the rather high level of competition among social service agencies in the community tended to inhibit referrals from those agencies to the NJCs. In the world of social programs, the NJCs are often perceived as competitors rather than resources. Recent research by Hardin and Baden (1977) and by Cass and Edney (1978) indicates that the more selfish concerns of territoriality and turf will often supersede the motivations for cooperative effect among community groups and organizations,

particularly as programs struggle to survive in the early stages. In contrast, the NJCs were particularly successful in attracting landlord/tenant and consumer cases.

The variation in case types and referral sources across the three Centers was considerable; within each Center, variation was less evident. Atlanta drew most of its cases from the courts, and a large proportion were of the civil/consumer type. Kansas City drew most of its cases from the prosecutor's office and the police, and most of its cases were of the criminal/interpersonal type. In Venice/Mar Vista, the majority of cases were walk-ins involving civil/consumer disputes. Collectively, they demonstrated that variation in case type and referral source can be accomplished. Individually, however, they demonstrated that, while variation occurs (all Centers had some representation in all categories of case type and referral source), situational circumstances appear to dictate the particular emphasis of case type and referral source. Atlanta received hundreds of court referrals; Venice/Mar Vista received few. Venice/Mar Vista received many self-referrals; Kansas City attracted only a small number. Obviously, the NJC mechanism can effectively handle a variety of disputes, but the characteristics of the local situation will determine to a considerable extent where the cases come from and, consequently, the type of disputes it will in fact handle -- but not entirely. For example, in Venice/Mar Vista it is doubtful that the NJC could ever receive many cases from the City Attorney's Office because of the presence of the Hearing Officer Program. However, they might well have received more police referrals if they had cultivated and trained the police with the intensity and constancy that was displayed in Kansas City. And although the Kansas City NJC's connections with the prosecutor's office led to a preponderance of interpersonal/criminal cases, they could probably have generated more self-referrals if they had mounted the kind of outreach campaign that characterized the Venice/Mar Vista NJC.

The ability of dispute resolution centers to attract a varied caseload from several sources is further supported by the caseload data from the statewide study of Citizen Dispute Settlement Programs in Florida. Across the five programs, 40.0% of the cases were criminal, and 59.4% were civil. They included assault and battery (18.7%), landlord/tenant (13.6%), neighborhood disputes (11.3%), consumer cases (7.0%), and other case types similar to those handled by the NJCs. As with NJC cases, the large majority of cases were referred from criminal justice agencies: 31.5% came from law enforcement agencies, and 31.1% came from the state attorney. The Florida data also show considerable variation in caseload characteristics among the five programs demonstrating again that the caseload of any specific dispute center will be strongly determined by differing local dynamics. One program received 98.9% of its cases from the state attorney; another, only 9.9% from that source. Two programs received 10.0% and 7.7% of their cases from the court clerk; two other programs received none from the court clerk.

Effects of case type and referral source. There are several reasons why cases of an interpersonal nature involving an ongoing relationship were more likely to reach a hearing than the civil/consumer type. Interpersonal cases are referred from officials in the justice system and, particularly for cases referred from the bench, disputants probably feel more coercion, at least implicitly, than do disputants referred from other sources. Felstiner and Williams suggest that for interpersonal disputes which might be of a continuing and damaging nature, there is a greater sense of urgency to resolve the dispute.

Perhaps the greatest source of this difference between the two broad types of cases is that in the cases of a civil nature, the respondent -- the landlord, the merchant, the employer, etc. -- is less likely to participate. The fact that civil cases reach a hearing less frequently is not as serious a problem as it might appear at the outset; such disputes are much more likely to be resolved via conciliation and not require a hearing. Nonetheless, it would be desirable to increase the rate of respondent participation in civil/consumer cases, perhaps through specific appeals to the business community or through public education efforts.

Although the interpersonal cases reach a hearing more often, they tended to perform slightly less well in terms of disputant satisfaction with the process. Agreements tended to hold six months later regardless of case type or referral source. Indeed, the central message of these data is one of consistently high performance across case types and referral sources.

Yet the suggestion of somewhat poorer performance of interpersonal cases is generally supported by the data from Brooklyn, Dorchester, and Florida. The Brooklyn Center took only felony cases involving a victim-offender relationship, but found that when disputants had an intimate relationship and a pattern of hostilities, complainants' reports of new problems were over four times higher than in cases involving a weaker relationship and no report of hostilities. Felstiner and Williams (1978) categorized cases into three levels according to the degree to which the dispute is judged to be serious and continuing. Not surprisingly, the more serious the dispute, the more frequently the agreement broke down. In the Florida study, follow-up data revealed that property disputes were more likely to be "totally resolved" (64.9%) than neighborhood disputes (36.9%), but that personal disputes were totally resolved in 55.7% of the cases. They further found that "as the level of formal and emotional involvement decreased, the likelihood of long-term resolution increased." One of the main reasons that these rates are both lower and more varied than the NJC impact data on mediated cases is that they include all cases which reached mediation, including those which were not resolved at a hearing (in effect combining the latter stages of process analysis with follow-up impact analysis).

Collectively, these data indicate that most types of cases which come to dispute resolution centers are resolved in a satisfactory and lasting fashion (certainly that appears true of the NJC cases) but that a specific subset of disputes which involve more complex interpersonal dynamics do not fare as well. The response to such cases by future NJCs might be to try to screen them out or to bring more resources to bear on these difficult cases. The former strategy does not seem appropriate -- except perhaps in the most serious of cases -- since the dispute resolution process appears at least partially effective in most cases. Instead, more work needs to be conducted on ways in which present dispute resolution mechanisms may be supplemented with other forms of assistance; e.g., marital counseling, alcohol abuse rehabilitation, etc. And perhaps the NJCs could schedule one or two return visits in such cases.

Institutionalization

The institutionalization of the NJC concept and procedures was a significant, if less highly weighted, goal of the NJCs. The objectives under this goal

reveal broader concerns than the generation of alternative sources of funding. They also included an expansion of services beyond the target area, the adoption of NJC-like concepts and procedures by other communities, providing information on the problems and procedures of developing an NJC, and providing information on the forces and events which contribute to or oppose institutionalization.

Only the Kansas City NJC appears to have achieved institutionalization (including funding) within the city government. Atlanta has secured 10% local match funds as part of continuing federal support; Venice/Mar Vista has not yet generated any substantial alternative sources of funding.

Although the institutionalization of the Kansas City NJC is not unrelated to the accomplishments of that Center, the fact that they were part of the city government at the outset -- their grant was to the City of Kansas City -- had much to do with their success in eventually gaining financial support. From a pragmatic perspective, these results indicate that placing a Center in the local government is a critical factor in gaining continued funding. Key local officials make public commitments, however subtle and implicit, at an early stage, as they speak in support of the program -- their program -- with other officials and citizens. But since the other Centers have not been institutionalized, it is difficult to point to any other approaches or events which proved instrumental in achieving institutionalization in the form of being supported by sources other than the federal government.

The Centers expanded their services beyond the target area almost immediately (with the exception of Venice/Mar Vista), but this decision was based on the fact that cases being referred from the courts came from all over the city, not just the target area. Indeed, the notion of restricting services to a neighborhood or section of the city does not seem feasible or desirable for NJCs with justice system referral networks. However, the target area concept may be helpful (as it seemed to be in Venice/Mar Vista) in focusing outreach efforts to residents.

The concepts and procedures of the Centers have been, and continue to be, adopted by other communities such as Denver, Portland, Honolulu, etc. To some extent these newer centers are simply a part of the same movement as the NJCs, drawing on similar common resources and approaches. Yet, there have also been specific instances of local government officials and staff members of dispute resolution centers contacting the NJCs (and the evaluation team) for information and guidance. There is no doubt that the NJCs have contributed to the adoption of such procedures and concepts.

Impact on the Community

The two remaining goals, both of which were given low importance weights (nine points out of 100), were that (1) the NJCs "contribute to the reduction of tension and conflict in the community," and that (2) the "key elements in the community...be aware of and have a positive view of the Neighborhood Justice

As stated in Chapter IV, the thrust of the NJCs was toward the resolution of disputes between individual citizens. It was seen as much less likely that a single pilot project in its first year of operation could significantly reduce the overall level of conflict in the community; or, as stated in the objectives beneath that goal, "prevent the occurrence of serious interpersonal conflicts and assaults..." "...facilitate communication and understanding among different...segments in the community," or "help community residents to feel that community institutions are more responsive to their particular needs and problems." Although it is probable that these effects occurred at the individual level for many disputants, it is not likely that the NJCs had the kind of sweeping effect implied in this goal. Because of the low weight attached to this goal, and because of the difficulties of attempting to detect such effects, few evaluation resources were allocated to this goal. These community-wide effects might more appropriately be assessed at such time when several centers have been operating in a single community for several years.

The impact interviews and the community survey showed that significant progress was made toward the goal of developing a positive reputation among residents and key agencies. The NJCs enjoyed a highly favorable reputation among those agencies and residents whom they served. Certainly the local justice officials had positive views of the NJCs, and follow-up data indicated that the residents had little difficulty in distinguishing the NJC from the existing legal/judicial system, thus meeting two of three objectives under that goal. Yet, it was not at all clear that many community residents were aware of the NJC. Although a 30% recognition rate is not insignificant, particularly in light of the limited resources, it indicates that most citizens within the target area were not aware of the NJC. To the extent that self-referrals ("walk-ins") are sought by future NJCs, more effective techniques of public relations and community outreach are needed.

Differences Among Centers

The case process data documented enormous differences in caseload size and types of disputes among the Centers. Of smaller magnitude were the consistent Center differences in disputant satisfaction and resolution stability. The difficulty, from the standpoint of evaluation design, is that with only three Centers there is a heavy confounding of potential treatment variables: each Center differs not only in location and context, but in approach, staff, mediator training, etc. Logically, differences among the Centers' performance may be attributed to any one or more of these confounded variables. Despite these constraints, we believe that the differences are largely a function of (1) the Center philosophy and approach, (2) the Center socio-cultural context, and (3) Center organization and management.

⁸ One additional and somewhat distinctly different goal of the evaluation was "to provide information to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration and the Department of Justice on the progress...of the centers..." This report and several other reports and meetings were designed to meet that goal.

The differences in Center philosophy were discussed in the Interim Report on the NJCs. Although somewhat lengthy, this description still held at the end of the demonstration period; thus, it is reprinted below:

...Center philosophy appears to influence the goals and objectives of the NJC, the mediator training methods, the development of referral sources, and the methods of dispute resolution. To some extent, it also appears to have affected the selection of the office space and the establishment of the organizational climate of the NJC. Through all these elements of the implementation process, three different philosophies or perspectives may be detected. For convenience we shall call these philosophies orthodox (Kansas City), innovative (Venice/Mar Vista), and eclectic (Atlanta) -- recognizing the shortcomings of such convenient labels.

The Kansas City NJC appears to have espoused an orthodox approach to the implementation tasks, showing a preference for methods which have been tried before, and which carry some evidence of past success. In the specification and weighting of goals and objectives, the Kansas City NJC gave a higher priority to the goal of institutionalization than did the other two Centers. Their training of mediators was conducted by the organizations most widely recognized as experts in mediation training who emphasized traditional mediation/arbitration skills. The main referral source is the courts (actually the prosecutor's office) -- the most "proven" source of cases for dispute centers over the years. The organizational climate of the Kansas City NJC is somewhat formal and clearly oriented toward assisting the established criminal justice agencies. Certainly, this system orientation can be explained, at least partially, as a natural consequence of the Center's position in the City government, as may the other elements of its predilection for the safer, proven methods. However, it may very well be a result of the city's previous experience with a dispute center a few years ago. This short-lived center had the same Project Director, a focus on the city prosecutor's office, and used the same organizations for mediation training.

The Los Angeles NJC seems to have adopted an innovative, experimental stance, exemplified by their orientation toward the development of community referrals rather than (but not to the exclusion of) the courts and police. Of the three Centers, they gave the highest priority to the goal of providing "information to LEAA and the Department of Justice on the...effectiveness of the Centers as this relates to future planning." At each step, they seem to have chosen the risky-but-promising route instead of selecting the safer route with a track record of some success. Their mediator training methods were specially tailored and somewhat unorthodox, with an emphasis on personal growth and interpersonal skills. They have assiduously avoided any trace of coercion in attracting cases and have yet to use arbitration in their hearings. In addition to the handling of interpersonal disputes, they view themselves as a vehicle for the solution of inter-group problems and disputes in the community. We should note, however, that their community orientation may be a function of the presence of the hearing officer programs in the city, as well as a manifestation of Center philosophy.

The eclectic, pragmatic philosophy of the Atlanta NJC is manifested in several ways. In the training of mediators they used established resources (AAA), but also drew on a local group with a more interpersonal skills orientation. They are developing a wide range of referral sources in an attempt to generate a sizable caseload. They have also recruited a sizable corps of volunteers and student interns to assist them in outreach and intake.

Thus, it was evident very early in the demonstration period that there was a discernable philosophy evinced in the rather consistent ways in which each Center established itself and developed policies and procedures. And these particular philosophical stances appear to have continued comparatively unchanged through the first year of operations with significant consequences for Center performance.

Atlanta's eclectic, pragmatic philosophy was probably instrumental in their attracting the large number of cases of varied types, and in performing well on indices of satisfaction and agreement maintenance. From the very outset, the Atlanta NJC was clearly embarked on an intentional campaign to build a sizable caseload, and they worked hard to do just that -- not, we should add, to the detriment of overall quality of service: On the major indices of disputant satisfaction and agreement stability for mediated cases they consistently outperformed the other Centers (although usually by small margins). However, their performance level dropped somewhat on cases resolved prior to a hearing, a result, perhaps, of their concern with generating a high caseload (e.g., less time devoted to the cases which do not reach a hearing).

The innovative, experimental philosophy of the Venice/Mar Vista NJC seemed to lead to a more community-oriented program with a strong humanistic streak. As mentioned in Chapter III, this orientation was probably heavily influenced by the presence of the Hearing Officer Program in Los Angeles, but the NJC began very early to cultivate the community as a source of referrals. However, it should be noted that the Center was not heavily involved in "community-building" -- attempts at strengthening the abilities of institutions and organizations within the community to deal effectively with conflict -- so much as it was oriented toward simply generating self-referrals from a broad spectrum of residents. Such an orientation tends to attract cases one at a time, as opposed to the more efficient method of tapping an institutional referral source (such as the courts) which, once established, yields a flow of cases. Yet their humanistic emphasis (staff and mediator training was oriented heavily toward personal growth and interpersonal skills) was probably somewhat responsible for the high rates of satisfaction with cases that did not reach a hearing. Apparently, staff took considerable care and time to assist disputants through conciliations and even with disputes that were eventually unresolved.

The orthodox approach of the Kansas City NJC yielded a comparatively moderate caseload, and performance indices that typically fell between Atlanta and Venice/Mar Vista. They performed very well on the ratings of resolution efficiency, and their work with the police was promising. Somewhat puzzling, however, was their limited caseload size and variety given their niche in the city government.

It is clear that the Centers with connections to the local justice system attracted and resolved more disputes than Centers without such referral

sources. With strong bonds to the courts, the Atlanta NJC handled over three times as many cases as did the Venice/Mar Vista NJC, with few and comparatively tenuous ties to the justice system. This is not to suggest that the criterion of caseload size should be elevated to a position of dominance; on the contrary, arguments against its importance are many and cogent (Sheppard, Roehl and Cook, 1979). But if a government is interested in providing dispute resolution services to a large number of citizens, there seems little doubt that its dispute resolution center should have referral agreements with the formal justice system.

The location and the socio-cultural context of the Centers also contributed to the differences in performance. In particular, the Venice/Mar Vista NJC operated in a very difficult context. The justice system in Los Angeles was not especially supportive (due at least in part to the presence of the Hearing Officer Program). The community is highly diverse and fragmented with many social service agencies vying for clients. Several members of the Venice/Mar Vista NJC Board (including the Chairman) stated flatly in impact interviews that they believed that the Venice community was inappropriate as a test site, and in retrospect, they would have placed the NJC in a more stable, conventional community. It is ironic that the Center which attempted a community approach was situated in perhaps the most "difficult" community.

A key difference among the Centers -- perhaps the most important one -- was in the way the Centers were organized and managed. From all indications, the Atlanta NJC displayed a management style and an organizational climate that was exemplary. They had no staff turnover, unlike the comparatively high turnover at the other two Centers. There were no reports of internal staff problems. Indeed, impact interviews with staff in Atlanta revealed virtually no dissension among the Atlanta staff, in contrast to the other Centers. The Project Director in Atlanta maintained his own count of up-to-date caseload data (apart from the evaluator's) so that he would know precisely how referral sources and case processing were performing. Similarly, the Deputy Director closely organized, managed, and nurtured the valuable volunteer cadre. The Board was active and supportive, and the Chairman, in particular, used his time and influence to assist the NJC. Although the other Centers were managed well enough to perform at the levels described throughout this report, their management capabilities did not match those of Atlanta. These findings strongly suggest that the capabilities of the NJC management can be influential in determining its eventual success. It must be recognized that fledgling community service programs require strong, perhaps even gifted, management. There are typically few established guidelines; the director must create the policies and procedures, define program direction, deal with internal staff problems, work constantly with diverse elements of the community and the governmental structure, etc. The successful management of an NJC appears to require a director with this broad set of skills.

Among these differences, however, one should not lose sight of important similarities across the three Centers. The impact data (as well as the observations of the evaluation team) indicated that despite the differences in context and philosophy, the Centers employed virtually the same dispute resolution mechanism. Hearings were conducted almost solely through mediation sessions of similar form and length, some agreements were arrived at without requiring a hearing, etc. -- with the result that highly similar proportions of disputes were settled in lasting and satisfactory fashion. The differences in

Center approach appeared to be manifested in the variations in caseload size and type; the constancy of the mechanism itself seemed to effect a uniformity in stability and satisfaction.

Comparisons of NJCs with the Courts

Processing time. A comparison of processing times for the courts in Kansas City and Atlanta with the NJCs in those two cities indicates that case processing in the courts can take five to ten times longer than in the Justice Centers. The length of time required to process court cases in Atlanta from filing to trial was 98 days; if the case was dismissed at the Bindover Hearing, it was in the court system for only six days. Mediated cases at the Atlanta Neighborhood Justice Center, on the other hand, required an average of only nine days between intake and hearing, and those that were resolved without a mediation hearing were processed in an average of eight days. In the Kansas City Municipal Court, cases took an average of 63 days from filing to final disposition if they went to a court hearing. In contrast, the NJC in Kansas City mediated cases within an average of 13 days from the time of referral. On the average, cases that were resolved without a mediation hearing require an additional two days of NJC time. Thus, court cases similar to those handled by the NJCs can take up to ten times longer to reach a final disposition in court than through the NJC process.

Comparison of court and NJC follow-up results. Reactions of the complainants who took their cases to court are contrasted with results from the long-term follow-up interviews with complainants who had cases mediated in the NJCs (Table V-2). The interview findings were contrasted in five major areas: (1) resolution of the dispute, (2) satisfaction with the process (fairness), (3) satisfaction with the handling of the case, (4) satisfaction with the mediator or the judge, and (5) future preference for dispute resolution.

There were not substantial differences between NJC and court complainants in terms of whether or not the dispute had been resolved, but on satisfaction indices, there were numerous differences -- all in favor of the NJC. Although these findings are not to be considered in any way conclusive -- sample sizes and other methodological limitations of these court studies preclude such a view -- they generally parallel the data from the more rigorous study (discussed above) in which Davis and his associates compared follow-up data from a Brooklyn court and a dispute resolution center. These comparisons tend to support the statements above concerning the overall effectiveness of the NJCs: The NJC process appears to be a faster and more satisfying experience than the courts for the resolution of these types of disputes.

Center Costs

Of critical concern to any potential sponsor of a dispute resolution center, particularly elements of state or local government, is the issue of cost. In these times of shrinking local revenues, it becomes increasingly important to display prudence in the expenditure of public funds. Although this evaluation was not intended to perform a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis, cost data were sought on (1) costs per case at each NJC, (2) comparisons of NJC

**TABLE V-2:
COMPARISON OF FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW
RESPONSES OF NJC AND COURT COHORT COMPLAINANTS
IN KANSAS CITY AND ATLANTA**

NJC Complainants	Court Complainants
<p>69-90% reported they or the other party kept the agreement</p> <p>74% reported no more problems with the other party</p>	<p>70% reported dispute resolved, whether dropped or adjudicated</p>
<p>86% satisfied with the terms of the agreement (Atlanta only)</p>	<p>33% felt the adjudicated sentence was fair (Atlanta only)</p>
<p>84% satisfied with the mediation process</p> <p>88% satisfied with their overall NJC experience</p>	<p>33-42% said their case was handled well in court</p> <p>40-77% were not kept well informed about their case</p> <p>55-62% felt they were treated well in the courtroom</p>
<p>88% satisfied with the mediator</p>	<p>64-69% satisfied with the judge</p>
<p>71% would return to the NJC for resolution of a similar dispute</p> <p>(16% would go to court)</p>	<p>64-81% would take a similar case to court again</p>

costs to those of dispute resolution programs, and (3) comparisons of NJC costs to those of the courts.

Based upon the yearly budgets of the NJCs, the costs of each case are the following:

Atlanta NJC:	\$ 62 per case referred 142 per case resolved
Kansas City:	\$172 per case referred 309 per case resolved
Venice/Mar Vista:	\$202 per case referred 589 per case resolved

Of course, since the budgets of the NJCs are virtually the same, the variation in costs per case are a function of caseload differences. Thus, it is highly likely that the Kansas City and Venice/Mar Vista Centers could greatly reduce costs per case simply by increasing caseload. And although the Atlanta NJC may be reaching its caseload limits with present staff, staff requirements should not rise linearly with caseload. Only the mediator time must rise linearly with caseload. For example, it is possible that if the Atlanta NJC could double its caseload and increase its staff by only 50% and maintain the same facility, its costs per case resolved could drop below \$100.

In comparison to these figures, McGillis and Mullen (1977) reported the following costs for other dispute resolution centers:

	<u>Cost/Referral</u>	<u>Cost/Hearing</u>
Boston:	\$300.00	\$372.00
New York City:	79.00	270.00 ⁹
Rochester:	98.00	142.00
Miami:	36.00	69.00
Columbus:	6.69	12.36

Accurate court comparison data for minor disputes are very difficult to obtain; as yet, no accurate reliable data have been gathered. Felstiner and his associates conducted a careful (though limited) examination of cost savings in the Dorchester courts. They estimated the court cost savings for resolved cases to be \$148. Similarly, an earlier evaluation of a dispute resolution program in Philadelphia (Hoff, 1974) estimated the costs of a case going to the Municipal Court rather than through the program at \$144 per case. Both authors caution that their estimates cannot be automatically applied to other mediation projects or to other criminal courts, since they are affected by type of case, form of mediation or arbitration, point of referral, etc. Nonetheless, the closeness of their estimates indicates that they might serve as a very rough point of comparison for this evaluation, and it is interesting that both slightly exceed the present cost per resolution of the Atlanta NJC. Whether an

⁹ Recent data from the New York City program indicate that costs are approximately one-half of this earlier estimate.

NJC can "pay for itself" will probably depend on the extent to which such court costs are saved -- both in reality (in terms of actual budget items) and/or in the eyes of city officials. Until accurate cost benefit studies are completed, potential sponsors must recognize that establishing such services will require additional funds, but that the cost of the mechanism might well be competitive with those of the courts.

Coercion

Concerns have been expressed that, to the extent that disputants are in some fashion coerced to participate in the NJC process, individual rights of citizens may be endangered (Hofrichter, 1977; Singer, 1979; Snyder, 1978). As Snyder has stated, when a judge, prosecutor or a court clerk believes in alternatives like community mediation, "it is inevitable that subtle coercive pressures will be brought to bear against the individual to accept the alternative." And certainly subtle coercion has been present on occasion within the NJC process (Sheppard, Roehl and Cook, 1978). Hofrichter has been particularly concerned about the possibility that the NJCs may damage the segments of the population which they are intended to assist:

...the NJCs may indirectly weaken the rights of low and moderate income groups and their ability to use the regular courts as protection against the increasingly institutionalized and concentrated power of organizations with vast resources, e.g., landlords, creditors, and government bureaucracies.

Hofrichter then asked: "Will NJCs be used by landlords for non-payment of rent? Probably not. Landlords need not be accommodating..." (In fact there were such cases at the NJCs.) He concluded that NJC-like alternatives "cannot truly transform the quality of justice...Power is not easily challenged through the law." Singer's concern is that "where diversion to community centers occurs in the early stages of the criminal process, without a trial to determine whether the defendant has violated the law, there is at least the potential for applying sanctions without proper concern for due process protections." (Singer, 1979).

It is, of course, imperative that potential participants understand, as fully as possible, the dispute resolution process which they are being offered, and that participation is voluntary. It is not entirely clear that this explanation was always provided to NJC disputants. Also, the coercive element seems strongest and most serious in instances where arbitration is used, and disputants sign a form consenting to binding arbitration. Among the NJCs, only Kansas City used arbitration (rather unsuccessfully) for a small number of cases, and they have recently ceased its use.

Yet the subtle forms of coercion, e.g., "recommendations" from prosecutors or judges, appear to be very important elements in building sizable caseloads, and it is difficult to envision a program which receives referrals from the justice system completely eschewing all forms of subtle coercion. By the same token, to the extent that true informed consent is an integral part of the case recruitment process, and arbitration is not used (as it is in other programs), the level of coercion in NJCs does not appear to be a serious threat to the rights of citizens. Indeed, although the situation bears watching, the evidence that any deprivation of rights has occurred in the NJCs is not convincing.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the major differences between evaluation research and other research endeavors is that evaluation research requires a set of conclusions and recommendations which government can use to make decisions about policies and programs. This evaluation is intended to assist the National Institute of Justice, LEAA, and the Department of Justice to assess the effectiveness of Neighborhood Justice Centers and to make decisions about the direction of future policies with respect to dispute resolution mechanisms. Similarly, these results should provide guidance to states and cities as they consider the development of Neighborhood Justice Centers and similar dispute resolution mechanisms. This chapter presents the main conclusions of the evaluation along with a brief discussion of each conclusion. The second section of this chapter contains a series of recommendations for future models and research in the area of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. At this point it may be appropriate to reiterate the view expressed at the beginning of the previous chapter: the conclusions of this study are most relevant to the three NJCs studied, and are therefore stated in reference to those Centers. However, the conclusions and recommendations also have distinct implications for the other dispute resolution mechanisms which share the concepts and procedures of the NJCs. (The conclusions are presented below as "bulleted" statements followed by the discussion material.)

- Neighborhood Justice Centers provide a needed and effective alternative mechanism for the resolution of minor disputes.

According to nearly all indices of effectiveness, the NJCs perform a needed service in an effective fashion. Our process and impact data show the following about the NJCs:

- The Centers attracted and handled a respectable -- and in Atlanta, quite large -- number of cases during their first year of operations. These caseloads indicate that the NJCs are responding to a genuine public need.
- A wide variety of cases from many different sources were processed effectively by the NJCs.
- Nearly half of all cases referred to the NJCs reached an agreement through mediation or conciliation.
- Cases were processed quickly and efficiently: hearings typically occurred within one-two weeks of intake and required only about two hours.
- A large majority of both complainants and respondents found virtually all aspects of the NJC experience satisfactory -- the mediation process, the mediators, the agreement terms, and the overall experience -- and would return to the NJC if they should have a similar dispute in the future.

- A large majority of agreements were still holding six months after the agreement was established, and most disputants reported having no more problems with the other party.
- Nearly all the officials from the courts and from social service agencies in the community viewed the NJCs as a helpful service and one which has helped them perform their job better. In particular, judges were unanimous in stating that the NJC facilitated the processing of cases in their courts.

Reviewing the goals and objectives of the NJCs, as articulated by the Centers and by the Department of Justice at the outset of the NJC Field Test, it must be concluded that the Neighborhood Justice Centers have, in an overall sense, been successful. The NJCs are not without their flaws and uncertainties, both in concept and execution, but it must be said that this is a concept and a process that works: it meets a clear public need with indices of performance and satisfaction that are rather extraordinary. On the negative side, it appears that the NJCs' observable impact on reducing court case loads and community tensions has been negligible; although we hasten to add that in the current effort, the impact in these areas (particularly the latter) has not been assessed with the appropriate level of resources.

- Neighborhood Justice Centers need to develop more effective ways for improving public awareness about NJCs, and for bringing cases to mediation or conciliation.

Although 18% of the cases which reach a hearing do not result in an agreement (and this rate can probably be reduced as we learn more about mediation techniques and approaches), the mediation/conciliation process -- the raison d'être of the NJCs -- yields a high proportion of efficient, satisfactory, and lasting resolutions. The weak links in the mechanism exist at points prior to a hearing.

Perhaps the first problem lies in the attitude and awareness of the public. As the community survey indicated, even after a year of public service announcements, television appearances, and several other community outreach efforts, approximately 70% of the Venice/Mar Vista residents had not heard of the Neighborhood Justice Center. But even these outreach efforts were sporadic and limited by meager resources; the NJCs simply did not have sufficient staff time or funds to mount an effective public awareness/education campaign. Such a campaign would be directed at two stages of citizen consciousness. Citizens should first be aware of the NJC and the purposes it serves, so that if they have a dispute, the NJC occurs to them as a salient option. Beyond this level of awareness is a more difficult stage to reach: the understanding that an effective way to resolve a minor dispute between two parties is to attempt to work out an agreement with the assistance of a neutral third party rather than either avoiding the problem or taking the dispute to court. This perspective requires both disputants to confront the problem directly (when they may prefer avoidance) and to understand that negotiation and compromise may be preferable to a declaration of a winner and a loser. Such an understanding requires a fairly basic shift in the attitudes of most citizens -- although it is not so difficult a shift that thousands of NJC disputants could not make it. In order to attract and resolve more civil/consumer cases, the awareness and attitudes of

the corporate respondent must be improved; the landlord, the merchant, the employer, and others must be persuaded that it can be in their own best interest to use the NJC rather than ignoring the complainant or engaging in litigation. It would seem that this cost-conscious group might be swayed by evidence that they can save personal time and legal costs by using the NJC for minor complaints.

The second broad audience toward which more intensive outreach efforts might be directed are the relevant segments of the justice system and other community agencies. The NJCs devoted tremendous amounts of staff time to cultivating the courts personnel (prosecutors, clerks, judges, etc.) and, particularly in Kansas City, to the training of police. In Atlanta, their continued overtures to the Fulton County Court eventually paid off in large numbers of referrals, but only after considerable and rather precious staff time had been devoted to the task, and to the relative exclusion of other potential referral systems. The Kansas City NJC staff devoted similar attention and resources to police training, with the result that they received many more police referrals than the other Centers. It is interesting that the three Centers focused their outreach efforts in three very different areas (community, police, court) and, although the effects were muted in Venice/Mar Vista, their efforts produced substantial numbers of cases from those sources. Of course, the NJCs consciously decided to direct outreach efforts toward the audience where the probability of success was greatest. Nonetheless, the results may also be interpreted as indicating that potential cases reside in diverse locations, awaiting sufficiently forceful outreach efforts to dislodge them. In addition to some necessary personal contact which NJC staff must make with officials from these justice agencies, it would seem that offering a series of special workshops (local, state or regional) on Neighborhood Justice Centers for the courts and police personnel would greatly assist the drawing of cases from the justice system.

- Neighborhood Justice Centers appear to handle most minor interpersonal disputes more efficiently than the courts.

These results indicate that NJCs resolve disputes more quickly -- one to two weeks, on the average -- than the courts. NJCs typically require only one hearing of less than two hours in duration, as opposed to the several visits often required for court processing. The data also suggest that citizens who use the NJCs are more satisfied than those who use the courts. The follow-up data from the small sample of court complainants showed that while they were satisfied with some aspects of their experience, they also felt that the court did not keep them informed, and many felt that the case handling was poor. Research conducted on small claims courts showed that the satisfaction of the disputant with the court depended on whether he or she won the case (Ruhnka and Weller, 1978). Most winning complainants/defendants are satisfied with all aspects of the process regardless of the outcome. (Although rates varied by case type, source, etc., satisfied disputants were always in the clear majority.) These findings were generally supported by those of Davis and his associates (1979).

Perhaps the most striking difference between the NJC and the courts is illustrated by the responses of the NJC disputants in the follow-up interviews in households. These comments are in contrast to complainants' remarks about

the courts (see preceding chapters). It seems clear that at the Justice Centers, citizens are listened to, respected, even cared for. As a citizen steps into the Justice Center and proceeds through the resolution process, it appears that he or she is assisted and supported, kept informed of the procedures and alternatives, and does not lose control of the dispute or the decisions about how to resolve it. It is typically a positive experience for both the complainant and respondent. Even in the most responsive court systems these experiences -- certainly in any overall sense -- rarely occur. On the other hand, the courts do effectively resolve disputes -- even when cases are dropped or dismissed, most complainants report that the problem has been resolved.

- Neighborhood Justice Centers with connections to the local justice system will attract and resolve more disputes than Centers without such referral sources.

To the extent that a dispute resolution center is interested in building a sizable caseload -- providing services to the maximum number of citizens -- it appears essential that it develop strong bonds to the courts and other elements of the local justice system. A modest caseload can be built on self-referrals and referrals from other community agencies (as the Venice/Mar Vista NJC illustrated), but such a community oriented stance increases the difficulty of attracting cases.

- Neighborhood Justice Centers are capable of handling a wide variety of minor interpersonal disputes, including interpersonal/criminal cases as well as civil/consumer cases.

There were only small differences between interpersonal/criminal disputes (domestic conflicts, neighbor conflicts, and family and friend disputes) and civil/consumer disputes (landlord/tenant, consumer/merchant, employer/employee, etc.) in the number of cases which were attracted or referred to the NJCs. And although there were substantial differences in the mix of case types across the Centers, all three NJCs handled cases from both categories. However, a considerably higher percentage of interpersonal disputes reached a hearing than did the civil cases. A larger proportion of the civil cases were resolved prior to a hearing, but the overall resolution rate for civil cases was still less than that for the interpersonal cases. Thus, in terms of getting a case to mediation or conciliation, the NJCs seem to do better with interpersonal cases than with civil cases.

There were also some differences between the broad case types in the degree to which they achieve a satisfactory and lasting resolution after their contact with the NJC, but these differences were of lesser magnitude and meaning than the pre-hearing differences. However, the data indicated (and the results of other studies more strongly support this contention) that interpersonal cases involving complex underlying problems tend to achieve lasting resolutions somewhat less frequently than other types of cases. With the exception of this small subset of cases, one would be hard pressed to identify any of the types of cases herein represented that appear inappropriate for NJCs. Perhaps the most meaningful differences among case types occur at the pre-hearing stage and have implications for outreach strategy rather than for resolution techniques.

- Reliable analytical data are not yet available on the costs of processing cases through Neighborhood Justice Centers as compared to court processing costs; however, available data indicate that NJC costs for at least some cases may become competitive with the courts.

Available data indicate that the costs of processing dispute cases through the courts are between \$144 and \$148 per case (although this figure can vary according to type of case, point of referral, etc.). The Atlanta NJC already resolves cases at a rate of \$142. Thus, until more accurate estimates can be constructed -- through comprehensive cost-benefit analysis -- it must be concluded that the NJC mechanism might very well be competitive with the courts in the near future, if not at present in Atlanta.

- The three Neighborhood Justice Centers differed in caseload size, type of disputes handled, and, to a lesser extent, in resolution effectiveness. The most probable sources of these differences are (a) Center philosophy/approach, (2) Center socio-cultural context, and (3) Center organization and management.

The differences in Center philosophy, context, and management were probably responsible for the substantial differences in the size of caseload and the type of disputes handled. Despite such differences, indices of resolution effectiveness were remarkably similar across Centers. These findings indicate that Center differences (in philosophy, context and management) have major impact on pre-resolution events -- types of referral sources, case types, and caseload size -- but that when a case reaches conciliation or mediation, the uniformity and effectiveness of the mechanism produces highly similar rates of agreement stability and satisfaction.

- Neighborhood Justice Center disputants tend to reflect the ethnic characteristics of its surrounding community, but represent a disproportionate number of low income people.

The information gathered on disputants indicates, with the exception of individuals representing businesses, that the people who use the NJCs are generally representative of the community in terms of ethnicity. However, it appears that the NJCs attract primarily low income residents. This may be partially a reflection, at least in Kansas City and Atlanta, of the characteristics of litigants in the court system. It may also be the case that middle- and upper-income people tend to hire third parties (attorneys, counselors, etc.) to resolve their disputes. On the one hand, this finding indicates that the NJCs are providing dispute resolution services to poor people, some of whom may have had less access to the justice system in the past. But if, as originally intended, the Centers are to serve a cross-section of their communities, they will have to attract more higher income citizens.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future policy, practices, and research on Neighbor-

hood Justice Centers are discussed below at two levels. First, recommendations for broad national policies and activities will be discussed. These recommendations are directed specifically at the National Institute of Justice and the Department of Justice, other federal agencies whose purview includes the resolution of disputes among citizens, and interested university research centers and private foundations. More specific recommendations will be made with respect to the development and establishment of NJCs and other dispute resolution mechanisms.

Recommendations for Broad Policy

1. It is suggested that federal, state and local governments support the continued development of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, particularly those which are similar to the Neighborhood Justice Centers. The NJC is the rare example of the experimental government-sponsored program that not only works but which is comparatively inexpensive -- indeed, it might even eventually save taxpayer monies. Moreover, it is an approach which meets important public needs while serving to humanize the system of justice in this country. Governmental support for NJCs and similar mechanisms may be realized in several ways. A bill recently passed by Congress provides for the establishment of many dispute centers around the nation, and provides for a dispute resolution research and development center. The passage of this bill is a significant stride toward more effective government support, but in addition to the bill's provisions, we believe that federal and state governments should make every effort to assist the establishment of NJCs.

2. A program of research, evaluation, and demonstration should be conducted on strategies and techniques (including media) to improve the effectiveness of dispute center outreach methods. Additionally, a modular set of media materials and strategies that educate citizens about alternative dispute resolution techniques should be developed centrally, to be used in any city where dispute centers are established. At present, the most difficult obstacle facing NJCs is the lack of understanding of dispute resolution alternatives. Citizens must be educated in the benefits of third party resolution techniques short of adjudication, and in the existence and use of dispute resolution programs. It is not known which of the traditional outreach methods (presentations at local meetings, newspaper coverage, public service announcements, radio and television appearances, personal contacts, etc.) is most effective in educating the community in the existence and benefits of dispute resolution programs. At this point, NJC staffs devote an enormous amount of time and energy to community outreach with no knowledge of the effectiveness and efficiency of their efforts. A program of research should be conducted to explore new strategies and techniques for using them to enable local programs to reach their target population.

Media coverage has informed many citizens of the alternative dispute resolution mechanisms available in their community; currently, however, each new dispute center must develop its own mass media strategy and materials designed to make the public aware of the dispute center and to mold new attitudes about how citizens can resolve disputes. Individual local programs simply do not have the time or resources to develop adequate media materials or campaigns. More appropriately, high quality materials (video tapes, radio messages, pamphlets, etc.) would be developed once for use by any dispute resolution

center. Periodic national media campaigns might be undertaken as well. In this manner, local centers would be able to devote their resources to other important efforts and gain the benefit of an effective mass media effort.

3. A series of regional or local training workshops should be offered on Neighborhood Justice Centers and other alternative dispute resolution mechanisms for judges, police, prosecutors and other relevant criminal justice officials. Many officials in local criminal justice systems are essentially unfamiliar with the purpose and workings of NJCs and similar mechanisms; others have predictable concerns about due process. The probability of centers establishing effective referral relations with local justice agencies would be considerably improved if key officials from the agencies were to attend workshops on the topic and learn detailed information about the advantages (and possible disadvantages) of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Again, it would seem both more effective and ~~much~~ more efficient to conduct such orientation/training efforts in a concentrated series of workshops, rather than individual NJCs attempting to do so.

4. A broad, comprehensive research/evaluation program should be launched to document and assess the approaches and performance of NJC-like dispute resolution centers across the nation. During the past few years the number of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms has increased at a geometric rate. Unfortunately, each center is developing its routinized data system -- or none at all -- and there is no central documentation of project approaches, organization, or performance. In short, valuable information is being lost. Thus, it is recommended that a program of research and evaluation be initiated to develop new knowledge about dispute resolution effectiveness. One segment of such a program would be designed to establish uniform data systems, particularly among new centers. Other topics of interest to be addressed within this program would include research on: (a) accurate identification of the complex interpersonal cases, reliable means for screening and referring out those which are most troubled, and developing supplemental strategies and resources for handling such cases; (b) an assessment of the different potential referral points in the processing sequence of the criminal justice system, determining particular consequences (costs saved, eventual resolution effectiveness, etc.) of referring cases at specific points in the sequence; and (c) research on ways to increase referrals from police, through different methods of training and management.

Brief Guidelines for the Establishment of NJCs

1. NJCs should seek to attract a variety of case types, including interpersonal disputes involving families, friends, and neighbors, as well as civil/consumer disputes between landlords and tenants, consumers and merchants, and employers and employees.

A wide variety of disputes may be resolved under one roof; there is no compelling reason for excluding any of the above broad types of disputes. NJCs offer a needed resolution service between the courts and long-term therapy or counseling. A central problem in screening concerns those cases which more properly belong in the courts, because of the magnitude of the dispute or because of particular legal problems; or in therapy or counseling, because of a

serious and continuing underlying problem (e.g., alcoholism, complex marital problems, etc.). However, at present, it is probably only through careful examination of screening that such problems can hope to be identified. General case classifications of minor disputes should not be excluded.

2. NJC staffs must devote a great deal of time and effort to the cultivation and nurturing of referral sources, particularly segments of the justice system.

Referral sources, particularly the courts and police, require early and continued attention if the NJC expects to eventually receive cases from them. For example, the NJC may have to place an intake worker in court for four to six weeks before the first referral is made. Staff cannot expect that one or two meetings with the court administrator or judge will be sufficient.

3. The managing Board of an NJC should be composed of active members who can help develop referral sources; the Board should closely monitor and support the NJC staff.

Board members should be able to materially assist the NJC in establishing fruitful relationships with referral sources, such as the courts, police, or a community organization. Ethnic and geographic diversity is also desirable, but probably less important than influence and willingness to assist with referral sources. The Board should meet often (monthly) with the NJC senior staff. They should actively guide the staff, monitoring performance as well as providing close support.

4. The location of an NJC within a city government will raise its probability of survival, but may lower its flexibility and autonomy.

If an NJC is positioned within the city government, its chances of plugging into referrals and future funding will probably be increased. However, its flexibility may be significantly hindered by necessary adherence to city regulations on hiring policies, administrative procedures, etc.

5. The most important criterion in the selection of the NJC Director should be that he or she display past success in a management position.

The most important skills for an NJC Director are management skills. He or she should display not simply some management experience, but specific and impressive experience in a management position. Contrary to general public perceptions, the director of a new, innovative community program such as an NJC must be an extraordinary manager, tolerant of ambiguity, possessing leadership qualities, able to set and meet goals and deadlines, etc. The skills of dispute resolution and knowledge of the workings of segments of the criminal justice are helpful, but less important and more easily acquired than management skills.

6. NJCs should develop and utilize a large cadre of motivated volunteers, not only to perform mediation, but to assist in outreach, case processing, etc.

Probably no single element in the approach of the Atlanta NJC was more

significant than their creation of a highly motivated cadre of volunteers. The volunteers performed invaluable outreach functions, spending days and weeks in the courts soliciting and screening referrals, assisting with mock mediation presentations to civic organizations, etc. Senior NJC staff nurtured, directed, praised, and provided feedback to this valued resource on a daily basis. Moreover, all the mediators were used on a periodic basis; and a good deal of staff time was spent scheduling mediators, calling to remind them of hearings, etc. Volunteers are critical resource people who can make a significant impact on an NJC.

7. Although mediation hearings are at the heart of NJC functions, increased attention should be given to conciliation and out-referral.

The results of this research showed that a large number of disputes are resolved -- and remain resolved -- without going to a hearing. In many cases, important disputes were resolved in a matter of minutes through a few brief telephone calls -- a very efficient means of resolution. Of course these conciliations are not applicable to all types of disputes. An analysis of complainants who were referred to another agency showed that a significant proportion (although a minority) of them followed the referral and were assisted in some fashion. NJCs should look closely at the increased use of such out-referrals.

8. Mediator training can be accomplished, at least partially, through the use of local resources.

In most major cities, effective mediator training can be accomplished with local training resources, using outside experts (who are typically more expensive) only for spot counseling. NJCs should take care not to train more mediators than they can initially use, or the mediators may lose interest or become frustrated. Initial training probably does not have to exceed 60 total hours; beyond this period, participants may begin to become bored and restless. It is important for staff to attend the mediator training as well, since it familiarizes them with the process, and they will be prepared if called upon (as can happen) to perform a mediation.

9. Well before an NJC becomes operational, the senior staff and Board should carefully articulate their goals and objectives.

The NJC senior staff and Board should devote as much as eight to ten hours across several sessions in articulating their goals, objectives, and their underlying philosophy. These goals should also be prioritized according to importance. This exercise can help to ensure that all the senior staff and Board members attain some degree of consensus on the nature and direction of the program.

10. After center operations are under way, NJCs should continue to monitor caseload data, continue outreach, provide feedback to referral agencies, and conduct follow-up on cases resolved.

At the outset of center operations, NJCs must establish a routine for

monitoring, feedback, follow-up, and outreach. Caseloads (size, type, referral source, etc.) should be monitored regularly. The NJC should provide formal and informal feedback to referral sources. Mechanisms for routine follow-up of resolved cases must be established, and outreach functions -- presentations to groups, media campaigns, etc. -- must be continued on a regular basis.

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APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed while conducting the national evaluation of the Neighborhood Justice Centers Field Test incorporated a number of options so that alternatives were available to accommodate the developing nature of the three Field Test sites. Initially, the evaluation project's goals and objectives were identified by representatives of relevant policy-making and implementation organizations, and these goals and objectives were assigned importance weights to determine priorities in conducting each of the major evaluation activities. Next, data collection instruments and procedures were then developed to measure each of the projects' major goals, and local studies were designed to assess different approaches among the three NJCs. Each of these evaluation processes are described in greater detail in the following sections.

The Evaluation Goals and Objectives

As one of the initial evaluation activities of the NJCs Field Test, program goals and objectives were identified by key program administrators in LEAA's National Institute (NILECJ, now the National Institute of Justice), and the Office for Improvements in the Administration of Justice (OIAJ) in the Department of Justice. In addition, each of the three NJC project directors as well as key staff assisted in identifying their local program goals and objectives. The purpose in identifying the NJC goals and objectives was to develop a common set of evaluation priorities based on input from the federal decision-makers as well as the individual projects. The end result was a list of six major goals and 24 specific objectives (see Table A-1).

Participants who reviewed the goals and objectives were asked to assign them weights according to how they perceived their importance. They were to allot 100 points among the six goals, and then assign 100 points to the set of objectives under each goal. The participants were told that this was a very important source of information, designed to ensure that the evaluation process incorporated the intentions and perspectives of the administrators and planners who had a key role in the Field Test program. The weighted goals and objectives did, in large part, guide the data collection activities and the interpretation of results. As seen in Table A-1, the weighted goals and objectives reflect a high degree of consistency among those providing the importance weights. With only a couple of exceptions, the six major goals were weighted and ranked in the same order by the NJC project directors, OIAJ, and NILECJ representatives.

All participants rated the first goal, to establish an effective community mechanism for the resolution of citizen disputes, the highest. The second goal, attracting a variety of cases from diverse sources, was rated second. Rated of less importance were the NJCs' contribution to the reduction of conflict in the community and a favorable response to the NJCs from the community. There were differences among the three Centers in weighting the importance of the goals. The Venice/Mar Vista NJC placed a higher value on community impact, putting more emphasis on generating community referrals and developing an effective public relations program and at the same time de-emphasizing the development of a large caseload. On the other hand, the

TABLE A-1
WEIGHTED PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and Objectives	Weights			
	NJCS	NILECJ	OIAJ	Average
A. To establish an effective community mechanism (NJC) for the relatively inexpensive, expeditious and fair resolution of citizen disputes through the processes of conciliation, mediation, and/or arbitration. The Centers are expected to enhance the quality of justice delivered to the community without diminishing the effectiveness of the existing criminal justice system.	33	34	40	36
1. The Centers should be accessible to, and utilized by, a cross-section of the community.	23	22	30	25
2. The costs of case dispositions through the Center should compare favorably with the costs of selected existing adjudication procedures.	10	13	20	14
3. The speed of dispute resolution through the Centers should compare favorably with that of selected existing adjudication procedures.	20	17	20	19
4. The Centers should help the disputing parties to agree upon resolutions which are fair, long-lasting, and satisfactory to the disputants.	37	29	20	29
5. The Centers should have a beneficial impact on the ability of the formal justice system (including courts, police and prosecutors) to handle its workload.	10	19	10	13
B. The Centers should attract a variety of civil and criminal dispute cases drawn from different sources in the community and the criminal justice system.	18	14	20	16
1. The Centers should deal with a variety of interpersonal disputes involving on-going relationships, including certain types of landlord/tenant disputes and appropriate consumer complaints.	32	20	25	26
2. Dispute cases should be referred from the major components of the justice system, such as the police, prosecutor, and courts.	21	19	15	18
3. Dispute cases should be referred from social service agencies.	13	16	15	15
4. Centers should receive self-referrals from the community.	13	16	15	15
5. The Centers should generate information which indicates the types of cases and forms of dispute resolution which work most effectively.	12	15	15	14
6. The Centers should generate information which helps to determine the social and demographic characteristics of disputants who benefit most from the utilization of the Centers.	8	13	15	12
C. To contribute to the reduction of tension and conflict in the community.	10	11	5	9
1. The Centers should help community residents feel that the quality of justice in the community has been enhanced.	28	32	25	28
2. The Centers should help to prevent the occurrence of serious interpersonal conflicts and assaults in the community by resolving some disputes which may otherwise have led to more serious conflicts.	30	13	20	21
3. The Centers should facilitate communication and understanding among the different social, cultural, and economic segments of the community.	8	9	5	7
4. The Centers should help community residents to feel that community institutions are more responsive to their particular needs and problems.	15	23	15	18
5. The Centers should help residents gain better access to existing community and governmental services through referrals from the Centers.	17	28	35	27
D. To institutionalize the Neighborhood Justice Center concept and procedures.	13	12	10	12
1. The Centers should generate alternative sources of funding for their effort.	27	29	25	27
2. The Centers should expand their services beyond the target area.	25	10	0	12
3. The concepts and procedures of these Centers should be adopted by other communities.	13	18	10	14
4. To provide information on the problems and procedures of developing and implementing an NJC.	18	22	40	25
5. The Centers should provide information on the forces and events which contribute to or oppose institutionalization within their communities.	17	21	25	20
E. To provide information to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration and the Department of Justice on the progress and effectiveness of the Centers as this relates to future planning for the expansion of the NJCs and their concept.	13	17	25	20

TABLE A-1 Continued

Goals and Objectives	Weights			
	NJCs	NILECJ	OIAI	Average
F. The key elements of the community -- the residents, the criminal justice agencies the other major community organizations -- should be aware of and have a positive view of the Neighborhood Justice Center.	12	12	5	9
1. To develop an effective public relations component for the NJC which helps residents to be aware of and have a positive view of the NJC.	38	38	33	36
2. Community residents would be expected to distinguish between the NJC and the existing legal/judicial system.	15	26	34	25
3. The NJC should be viewed positively by the major community institutions, including the police department, the courts and other relevant agencies and organizations.	47	36	33	39

Atlanta and Kansas City NJCs placed greater emphasis on a criminal justice system orientation, weighting the generation of a large number of criminal justice system referrals and a favorable response from criminal justice system agencies higher.

The weighted goals and objectives reflected the combined input of the relevant decision-making groups described above, and provided a means for developing three major studies that were conducted during the course of the NJC Field Test. These three studies were:

- Implementation Study. This included the documentation and assessment of the events which took place during the early months of the program.
- Process Study. This effort was an assessment of the resolution procedures and initial outcomes, the nature of the target population, and the flow of clients to and through the Centers.
- Impact Study. This was an assessment of outcomes, related to impact on the disputants, courts, and other agencies, as well as the local communities themselves. A study of the costs associated with processing cases and holding mediation hearings was conducted.

As reflected in Table A-1, a large percentage of the resources available for the evaluation were allocated to the first two goals -- establishing an effective dispute resolution mechanism and attracting a variety of cases. These two goals received average weights of 36% and 18% respectively. The remaining goals were evaluated using resources in approximate proportion to the weights they received. Specific evaluation activities were developed to collect relevant data within the framework of each of the three evaluation studies noted above.

A majority of the on-site collection was conducted by three Evaluation Analysts hired, trained and supervised by the evaluation project. Each of the Analysts were recruited in the cities where the three field test sites were located: Atlanta, Kansas City and Los Angeles. They were employed to work with each NJC in order to (1) ensure that all relevant data were collected in a uniform manner; (2) collect and forward data relevant to case handling, outcomes, and follow-up; and (3) conduct special studies relevant to unique field test site operations.

Immediately after being hired they were brought together for a training session conducted by the central evaluation project staff. At this time, the goals, objectives and major studies of the evaluation were presented, as well as specific data collection procedures and quality controls that were to be used. Throughout the Field Test period, the three Analysts were contacted frequently -- many times daily -- to discuss any data collection issues and problems that might have surfaced. One member of the central evaluation staff was assigned the responsibility for coordinating and supervising the on-site Analysts, and for implementing most of the data collection activities at the three NJCs. Frequent on-site visits by members of the central evaluation staff also provided continuity during the data collection activities. Prior to any major study beginning at a field test site, a visit was made to review the data collection

procedures to be employed. Often members of the central evaluation staff would work with the Analysts for a period of time, conducting interviews or coding case forms, to ensure that the procedures were being implemented as originally designed. The three Analysts worked full-time in the NJCs from February 1978 through June 1979. They were crucial to the evaluation by providing the needed link between the central evaluation staff and the activities in the NJCs.

Each of the three major studies outlined above are described in greater detail in the following sections.

Implementation Study

The major data collection activities in the Implementation Study were (1) a description of the historical and developmental events which preceded the establishment of the Centers, including the grant development, staff selection, and mediator selection and training; (2) a documentation of the outreach activities with potential justice system referral agencies, social service agencies, and the community-at-large (including media coverage and public relations activities); and (3) a description of the development and evolution of NJC policies and procedures during the first months of operations. The results of the implementation study were reported in an earlier report (Sheppard, Roehl and Cook, 1978).

The basic approach used in the implementation study may perhaps be best described as a combination of conventional interview techniques with participant-observation methods. Most of the historical information about how the Center was developed and established was elicited through interviews with those individuals who participated in the development of the Centers. The on-site Evaluation Analysts were responsible for gathering a majority of the implementation activity data including interviews with NJC sponsors, project directors and staffs. They also completed observational logs and collected relevant documents and memos detailing project operations and referral procedures. The central evaluation staff conducted interviews with NJC program planners to reconstruct the early development events within the Department of Justice and LEAA.

The major data collection activities and topics included the following:

- Interviews with governing board members and sponsors: Initial grant development; process of grant and project formation, including selection of Project Director and Board Members; perspectives on the role and purpose of the NJC.
- Interviews with LEAA and DOJ officials: Initial site selection and grant development; pre-operational technical assistance, Board and staff training, and ongoing monitoring of grantees.
- Evaluation Analysts' observations and recordings: Description of processes and procedures in the Center and how they were developed -- intake, screening, and hearing scheduling, etc.; description of staff roles and responsibilities, how they develop or change over time; perspectives on policy formulations and changes over time; description of overall assessment

of mediator training through the use of training effectiveness questionnaires.

- Analysts' interviews with the Project Directors: Staff and mediator recruitment and selection; staff and mediator training -- design, purpose, effects; initial contacts with local agencies and organizations -- types of agencies, purpose of contacts, results, etc.; initial general orientation, guiding philosophy on role of NJC; development of case processing procedures -- intake, hearing, referral.
- Analysts' interviews with center staff: Reactions to staff training experiences, including technical assistance training, mediator training, other in-service training; perceptions of role and purpose of NJC, reactions to basic structure and processes; type of staff activities and responsibilities, reactions to assigned tasks.
- Collection and analysis of memos and documents on program development, policies, and procedures: Description of processes and procedures in the Center (intake, hearing, referrals, etc.) as contained in memos and documents; written statements of Center policies and goals; written agreements with community agencies and organizations; job descriptions delineating staff duties and responsibilities.

As interviews were completed by on-site Evaluation Analysts, they were forwarded to the central evaluation project staff for content analysis and interpretation; questionnaires for the mediators training assessment were administered by the Analysts and forwarded to the project staff as well.

Process Study

The data collection activities in the process study included (1) the identification of client characteristics; (2) identification of the specific types of cases referred to the local Centers; (3) sources of client referral, including both criminal justice agencies and community/walk-ins; and (4) assessment of the resolution process by types of cases and client characteristics.

Most of the process data were the result of establishing a common routinized data collection system. The system gathered relevant information on each case in a uniform manner across all three Centers. The data system was developed over a period of time beginning with the development of disputant forms at each of the Centers. The central evaluation staff constructed sample client intake, mediator reaction, and disputant follow-up forms that were designed to capture the relevant case handling data elements. As a result each NJC either adapted or adopted the forms for their own use, ensuring that all the key data items were retained. As the Centers began operations, copies of the intake and mediator reaction forms were forwarded to the central project staff so that a data coding system could be developed. The coding process enabled the on-site Analysts to condense a large amount of information on each case. However, a brief narrative summary of the case was recorded so that in addition

to the coding categories, a more complete description of the cases would be available for analysis. The case coding format is enclosed as Attachment 1. The development of the routinized data system permitted monthly analyses of all the cases handled at each NJC. This feedback process proved to be very useful for both NJC project staff as well as for LEAA program monitors.

The process study activities are detailed below:

- Evaluation Analysts' observations and recordings: Ongoing observation and description of changes in Center processes and procedures, especially staff roles and responsibilities, maintenance of current and establishment of new referral sources, case processing procedures, and program policies. Extensive documentation of the resolution process.
- Collection of memos and documents on program development, policies, and procedures: Also to document changes in Center processes and procedures.
- Routinized data collection system: Extraction of data from case files to document disputant characteristics (age, sex, race, marital status, income and employment status, language, occupation, target area residency), case characteristics (source, type, relationship between the parties), and case disposition data (how resolved, details of mediation hearing, etc.).
- Computerized analysis of data base: Data on all cases handled by the NJCs (resolved or not) were analyzed to summarize the monthly caseload, year-to-date totals and trends. The primary analyses were the dispositions of the cases broken down by the various sources and type of case. The process of mediation hearings (length, number of mediators, etc.) was also analyzed.
- Monthly Feedback Reports: Monthly summaries of the NJC case-loads were compiled and described in reports to the project directors and staff and project administrators in LEAA. These routinized feedback reports were designed to provide up-to-date information on the type of cases, sources of referral, disputant characteristics, and disposition of cases that were handled.

The role of the on-site Evaluation Analysts was extremely important during the collection of the process study data. From the period March 1978 through May 1979 they collected and coded about 4,000 separate cases. Their data coding procedures were monitored by the central evaluation project staff. When questions arose concerning how specific items were to be coded, or when special cases were handled, the Analysts contacted the data coordinator in the central staff so that if any new codes were required they could be done on a uniform basis. As a result of this activity, and especially during the early phases of the program, the data codes were updated several times before the final version was developed. The resulting data capturing system was based on the experience of several thousand cases, and was designed to categorize almost all types of dispute situations.

Impact Study

The impact study was designed to (1) assess the program's impact on the disputants in terms of the satisfaction with the resolution process and the extent to which the resolution was long-lasting, (2) assess the impact of the program on the courts by examining the potential for caseload reduction and improved efficiency in operations, (3) determine the impact on the local communities in which the NJCs operate by assessing the ability of the Centers to attract community referrals and generate community awareness and support, and (4) analyze the costs involved in processing and resolving disputes at the NJCs, and compare these estimates with those from other dispute resolution programs where such data was available.

These objectives were met by implementing five primary data collection activities:

- Disputant follow-up
- Court comparison studies
- A community residents survey
- Impact interviews with community and referral agencies
- An analysis of NJC program costs

Each of these procedures, along with various subprocedures, is described below:

1. Disputant follow-up. Both short- and long-term follow-ups of the disputants were conducted. Short-term follows-ups were attempted for most mediated cases (in addition, the Venice/Mar Vista NJC followed up on the cases resolved prior to a hearing), to provide management feedback information so that case handling could be improved. One or more staff members from the Centers generally had the responsibility for following cases on a short-term basis. These follow-up interviews were conducted approximately two months after the hearing, and attempts were made to reach both parties. The Atlanta and Venice/Mar Vista NJCs made calls to the disputants and conducted interviews by telephone; the Kansas City Center mailed both disputants a short questionnaire and attempted to telephone some of those who did not respond by mail.

Long-term follow-up interviews with complainants and respondents were conducted by telephone by the Evaluation Analysts, approximately six months after the case was closed by the NJC. All three case disposition categories were followed up -- mediated settlements, those resolved prior to a hearing (conciliated cases), and those unresolved by the Centers. In Venice/Mar Vista and Kansas City, all mediated and conciliated cases were to be followed up; because of the high caseload in Atlanta, 50% of these cases were to be followed. In all three Centers, at least 25% of the unresolved cases (selected randomly) underwent long-term follow-up. Long-term follow-ups were conducted on cases closed between March 1978 and February 1979. The total number of cases handled by the NJCs during this time was 2,990; in 1,301 (43.5%) cases, one or both parties were interviewed.

Table A-2 illustrates the number of cases in which at least one party was contacted and long-term follow-up interviews conducted. As illustrated, 55% of the 586 mediated cases in Atlanta were followed up. A random sample of closed

**TABLE A-2
LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UPS BY
CASE DISPOSITION**

	Mediated cases	Resolved prior cases	Unresolved cases
Atlanta NJC	324 out of 586 (55%)	128 out of 288 (44%)	250 out of 889 (28%)
Kansas City NJC	209 out of 258 (81%)	71 out of 123 (58%)	72 out of 284 (25%)
Venice/Mar Vista NJC	114 out of 182 (63%)	36 out of 79 (46%)	97 out of 301 (32%)
Total	647 out of 1025 (63%)	235 out of 490 (48%)	419 out of 1474 (28%)

case was drawn until the target number was reached. In Kansas City and Venice/Mar Vista, 81% and 63%, respectively, of the mediated cases were followed up. Many cases were not followed because the parties moved, could not be contacted for a variety of reasons, or because the case file information was inadequate. In cases resolved prior to a hearing, 44%, 58%, and 46% were followed up in Atlanta, Kansas City, and Venice/Mar Vista, respectively; 28% of all unresolved cases were followed.

The on-site Evaluation Analysts had the responsibility for conducting the disputant follow-up interviews. They were trained by the central project staff, and a staff member was present as they conducted their first interviews. A copy of the disputant interview format is enclosed as Attachment 2. The Analysts were told to say that they were conducting an independent evaluation of the NJCs and make it clear that they did not work for any of the Centers. Before an attempt to reach a disputant was terminated and another case selected to replace it, the Analysts were to make at least five attempts at different times of the day to reach the party. As a result, most of the interviews were conducted in the evening when the parties were at home.

Face-to-face interviews. In order to assess the validity of the information gathered by telephone follow-up interviews, a small number (46) of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Kansas City and Venice/Mar Vista. These disputants were interviewed in greater detail than was possible on the phone regarding the disputes that brought them to the NJCs, their reaction to the mediation process, and the ultimate outcome of their cases after leaving the Centers. Twenty-one household interviews were conducted in the Venice/Mar Vista area of Los Angeles, and 23 were interviewed in Kansas City. Due to the heavier caseload and a lack of available resources, face-to-face interviews with former disputants were not conducted in Atlanta.

Survey of "out-referrals". Because of the emphasis the Venice/Mar Vista NJC placed on providing referrals to people they could not help, a small survey was conducted to assess the outcome of the referrals. A sample of 50 people (who received a referral and had a listed telephone number) was interviewed by phone by the Evaluation Analyst; to reach these 50 people, a full sample of 110 was needed.

2. Court comparison studies. Two major court studies were initiated in Kansas City and Atlanta. The Kansas City Municipal and Atlanta's Fulton County State courts were selected since they were primary sources of case referral for the two NJCs, and the City Prosecutor in Kansas City and court administrators and judges in both courts agreed to cooperate with the studies. A data collection plan was developed for the courts that had two major components, case processing and individual case tracking and follow-up. These two data gathering activities are described in greater detail below:

Case Processing

- A sample of 228 Prosecutor filing cases and 233 police initiated cases in Kansas City was obtained. Processing data for all the cases handled by the Kansas City Municipal Court during 1977 were located in the Police Department's computer facility. Over 6,000 cases were identified with violations

similar to those being referred to the NJC; these included disturbing the peace, simple assault, and destruction of private property. Both Prosecutor and police initiated case data were available providing an opportunity to examine any differences in the ways these cases are handled in the court. However, only a limited amount of data was available on each case: filing date, arrest date, court appearance dates, final dispositions, etc. Due to state rules governing access to court records, cases that were dismissed or where a not guilty verdict was reached were closed and their records unavailable for review. Thus, the computer data did not contain any personal identifying information for follow-up contact.

- In Atlanta, case processing data were collected manually on 2,040 cases filed in the Fulton County State Court during 1978. Since there is no automated data system in the County Court, all case filings at the Criminal Warrants Desk for offenses similar to those referred to the NJC were tracked through the Bindover Hearing. A sample of 456 of these cases was coded and transferred to an automated data format to facilitate case processing analysis. One hundred seven of the above cases were bound over to the Criminal Division of the court and their tenure there was also monitored and recorded. Thus, processing data were available for a set of cases, January through April 1978, that were either dropped, dismissed or adjudicated.

Case Tracking and Follow-up

- A group of 42 cases filed at the Prosecutor's Desk in Kansas City Municipal Court was flagged as a cohort sample of disputes similar to those referred to the NJC. These cases were tracked periodically by obtaining status reports from the Court Administrator's Office, and when a case was either dropped or adjudicated an attempt was made to interview the complainant. For nine of the cases observation was possible, thus providing useful comparative information. Twenty-four of the complainants from the cohort sample were located subsequent to their cases being dropped or adjudicated by the court. These individuals were interviewed a month or two later by telephone to assess their reactions to their recent experiences with the judicial system. Attempts to contact some of the defendants proved to be unsuccessful.
- In Atlanta an attempt was made to locate all of the 107 cases that had been bound over to the Criminal Division of the court in early 1978. Since many of the cases take 90 days or longer to be adjudicated, it was thought that by April or May of 1979 all court actions would have been completed. Forty-three of the complainant parties were located and telephone interviews were conducted. As with the Kansas City cases, the complainants were asked to review their experiences in court and to state their attitudes about what happened to their case. Not all of these cases were adjudicated; rather they were processed

in the same manner as any group of cases filed in the court. As a result, many of them were dropped prior to any formal hearing or trial.

As was the situation during the disputant follow-up interviews, the on-site Analysts had primary responsibility for conducting the court complainant interviews. Unlike the NJC case interviews, however, the court complainants had to be encouraged to respond to the interview questions since they were unaware that their case might be followed after leaving court. A copy of the court complainant interview format is included as Attachment 3.

3. Survey of community residents. The impact of the NJCs on community residents was assessed through a random sample telephone survey of residents in Venice and Mar Vista, the two communities which compose the NJC's original target area in Los Angeles. Limited evaluation resources did not allow for community surveys at all the NJC sites. Since the Venice/Mar Vista NJC had engaged in more community outreach activities than the other Centers, it was decided that a survey of Venice/Mar Vista would provide an opportunity to test community awareness and attitudes. A random systematic sample of 209 phone numbers was drawn from a cross-directory of Venice and Mar Vista. Both residences and businesses were included; 85 numbers were randomly selected in Venice and 124 numbers were selected in Mar Vista. Of the 209 telephone numbers selected, 25 resulted in dead-ends due to disconnected phones and no answer after six attempts. Ten numbers elicited respondent refusals to answer the questions, resulting in 174 completed interviews (69 in Venice, 105 in Mar Vista).

The telephone calls were made in daytime and evening hours. The interviews were conducted by the Evaluation Analyst, who told the interviewee that she represented an independent research organization. When reaching a private residence, the person answering the phone, if over 16 years of age, was interviewed; in a business establishment, the owner or manager was interviewed.

4. Impact interviews. A series of impact interviews were conducted with NJC staff members, Board members, mediators, and referral sources from the courts and community agencies. These interviews were conducted by members of the central evaluation staff during August and September 1979, approximately 18 months after the NJCs had opened. Those persons who had been involved in referring to the Centers (i.e., prosecutors, judges, police, community agency representatives, etc.) were asked for their perceptions of the NJC case handling procedures, reasons for referring or not referring cases, and suggestions for improvements in program operations. The interviewees were also asked if they had noticed any changes in their case handling processes as a result of the NJC referrals.

5. Cost analysis. There are problems in applying cost analysis to human service programs, and one of the most important is that social science measures of program effectiveness are extremely difficult to relate to dollar values. Moreover, reliable and comprehensive data are not yet available on the costs of processing cases through the courts. As a result, a meaningful cost effectiveness/benefit study was not possible. However, available data were analyzed which identified costs per referral and per resolved case for each of the three NJCs. Some limited comparative cost per case data were available from other dispute resolution projects such as the Dorchester Urban Court and Brooklyn

Dispute Resolution Center evaluations.

Attachments to Appendix A

DATA EXTRACTION FORM
Intake and Hearing Information for Case No. _____

	Complainant	Respondent
1. Age	_____	_____
2. Sex	_____	_____
3. Race	_____	_____
4. Years in community	_____	_____
5. Employed?	Yes/No	Yes/No
6. Occupation	_____	_____
7. Language	_____	_____
8. Marital status	_____	_____
9. In target area?	Yes/No	Yes/No
10. Income	_____	_____

- 11. Type of dispute: _____
- 12. Referral source: _____
- 13. Arrest made? Yes/No. Offense charged: _____
- 14. Case status in criminal justice system: _____
- 15. Relationship between parties: _____
- 16. Close/casual.
- 17. Ongoing/intermittent.
- 18. Date of intake: _____
- 19. Case closed with no hearing. Reason: _____
At what point? _____
- 20. Date of hearing: _____
- 21. Agreement reached? Yes/No.
- 22. Length of hearing: _____ hours, _____ minutes.
- 23. Name of mediator(s): _____
- 24. Referral made? Yes/No. For whom? complainant/respondent.
- 25. Agency: _____
- 26. Service: _____

27. Summary description of the dispute:

28. Disputants' motivation for coming to the NJC:

29. Summary of mediator's comments on the process of the hearing:

30. Comments:

LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW FOR CASES WITH HEARINGS

Interview with Complainant/Respondent

Date of interview _____

Date and times of attempted contact:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Case No. _____

Mediator: _____

Outcome:

_____ mediated, written agreement

_____ mediated, verbal agreement

_____ mediated, no agreement

_____ arbitrated

READ CASE FILE CAREFULLY, PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE AGREEMENT AND SHORT-TERM FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION, IF ANY, AND ADJUST WORDING OF QUESTIONS WHERE APPROPRIATE.

(If there was no mediated agreement, start with Question #4.)

1. Are you satisfied with the terms of the agreement? (or award?)

1 = yes

2 = no

Explain:

2. Have you lived up to all the terms of the agreement? (or award?)

1 = yes, one-time resolution

2 = yes, ongoing resolution

3 = no: How long did agreement last? _____

4 = partially (probe for details)

Explain:

3. Has the other party lived up to all the terms of the agreement? (or award?)

1 = yes, one-time resolution

2 = yes, ongoing resolution

3 = no: How long did the agreement last? _____

4 = partially (probe for details)

Explain:

4. Since you left the NJC, have you had any more problems with the other party?

1 = yes
2 = no
3 = no contact

5. Were you satisfied with the mediation process?

1 = yes
2 = no

Explain:

6. (If case was arbitrated): (a) Did you fully understand that if mediation failed you would submit your case for arbitration?

1 = yes
2 = no

Explain:

- (b) Were you satisfied with the arbitration process?

1 = yes
2 = no

Explain:

7. What are your opinions of the mediator/arbitrator:

(a) Was s/he fair and impartial? 1 = yes. 2 = no.
(b) Was s/he skillful in conducting the hearing? 1 = yes. 2 = no.
(c) Was s/he helpful in resolving your dispute? 1 = yes. 2 = no.

Comments:

8. (If case ended without an agreement): (a) Do you feel the mediator did everything s/he could to bring about an agreement? 1 = yes. 2 = no.

Explain:

- (b) What has happened to your dispute since the hearing?

- 1 = resolved by a one-time incident
- 2 = resolved on an ongoing basis
- 3 = remained unresolved (situation the same or worse?)
- 4 = partially resolved (situation improved)

Explain:

- (c) After the hearing, what resources did you use to attempt to resolve your dispute?

- 1 = criminal justice system: _____
- 2 = social service agency: _____
- 3 = dealt with problem alone
- 4 = none

9. (a) Are you satisfied with your overall experience at the NJC?

- 1 = yes
- 2 = no

Explain:

- (b) Has your view of the NJC experience changed over the past few months?

- 1 = yes
- 2 = no

Explain:

10. If you had a similar problem in the future, where would you go for help?

1 = NJC

2 = criminal justice system: _____

3 = social service agency: _____

4 = other: _____

11. (If case involved charges filed in court): What happened to your case in the courts?

12. (If referral to another agency was made by the NJC): (a) Where were you referred?

(b) Did you follow-up on the referral?

1 = yes

2 = no: Explain why not:

(c) (If yes): Were you satisfied with the service you received?

1 = yes

2 = no

Explain:

Follow-Up Interview

Court Cohort Study

Interview with Prosecuting Witness/Defendant

Docket No. _____

Date of Interview _____

Interviewer _____

Date and Times of Attempted Contacts:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

1. What was your case about? (Draw out description of the dispute. Attempt to categorize case according to ISA primary categories.)

Case Type

- _____ Domestic (assault or harassment)
- _____ Domestic (settlement, other)
- _____ Family Dispute (all types)
- _____ Neighbors (assault or harassment)
- _____ Neighbors (nuisance)
- _____ Friends (all types)
- _____ Landlord/tenant
- _____ Consumer/merchant
- _____ Employee/employer
- _____ Other _____

Describe briefly

2. What had you tried to do (about this problem) before coming to court?

- Called police
- Filed in Court
- Other: _____

3. Why did you come to file your case at the court?

Was the file clerk helpful? yes no How? _____

4. What did the judge do at the first (Bindover) hearing?

- Bound over to Criminal Division
- Other: _____

5. What happened after that?

- Case was dropped (go to question 6)
- Case went to trial (go to question 7)
- Other: _____

6. If Case Was Dropped:

a. When was case dropped?

- Before arraignment
- At arraignment
- After arraignment, before trial
- At the trial
- Other: _____

b. Who dropped the case?

- Yourself (prosecuting witness): Why? _____
- Prosecutor: Why? _____
- Judge: Why? _____
- Other: _____

c. After the case was dropped, what happened to your dispute with the other party?

- Resolved. How? _____
- Not resolved. How? _____

d. Did you take any further action about this dispute?

- No
- Went back to court
- Called police
- Other action: _____

e. If further action was taken, did it help resolve the problem?

- Yes: How? _____
- No: How? _____
- Other: _____

f. Do you think that dropping the case was the best thing?

- Yes: Why? _____
- No: Why? _____

7. If Case Went to Trial:

a. Was it a jury trial or judge-only trial? (Circle one)

b. What was the verdict?

- Guilty
- Nolo Contendere
- Not Guilty
- Bound over to Superior Court
- Dismissed (go back to question 6)
- Other: _____

c. If found guilty, what was the sentence?

- Jail and/or fine -- but suspended
- Fine (\$ _____), and probation (Length: _____)
- First offender act
- Fine (\$ _____), and suspended jail sentence
- Jail (Length: _____), and probation (Length: _____)
- Probation only (Length: _____)
- Other: _____

d. Did you think the sentence was fair?

- Yes: Why? _____
- No: Why? _____

e. Did the judge's decision resolve the dispute with the other party?

- Yes: How? _____
- No: How? _____
- Other: _____

f. Were you satisfied with the prosecutor who handled your case?

_____ Yes: Why? _____

_____ No: Why? _____

g. Were you satisfied with the judge?

_____ Yes: Why? _____

_____ No: Why? _____

8. What were the costs to you in order to take your case to court?

_____ Court fees (filing fees) \$ _____

_____ Legal fees \$ _____

_____ Transportation costs \$ _____ Parking \$ _____

_____ Lost time from work _____ Lost wages \$ _____

_____ Other: \$ _____

9. What was your reactions to the following in court?

● The overall handling of your case?

_____ good, excellent

_____ okay, average

_____ poor, bad

● Keeping you informed about what was happening to your case?

_____ good, excellent

_____ okay, average

_____ poor, bad

● The way they treated you in the courtroom(s)?

_____ good, excellent

_____ okay, average

_____ poor, bad

10. Would you take a similar case to court again?

_____ No: Why? _____

_____ Yes: Why? _____

_____ Other: _____

11. Have you ever heard of the Atlanta Neighborhood Justice Center?

_____ No

_____ Yes: How? _____

If yes, what does it do? _____

APPENDIX B

**Case Disposition, Referral Source, and Type
for the
Atlanta, Kansas City, and Venice/Mar Vista
Neighborhood Justice Centers**

TABLE B-1: ATLANTA NJC
CASE DISPOSITION BY REFERRAL SOURCE

	Judges (Bench Referrals)	Civil or Criminal Warrants Desks	Police	Community Agencies	Self	Legal Aid Organizations	Government Agencies	Others	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	359 (68)	169 (16)	10 (29)	13 (15)	40 (20)	21 (16)	16 (9)	27 (19)	655 (28.0)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	56 (11)	57 (6)	1 (3)	4 (5)	9 (5)	12 (9)	3 (2)	14 (10)	156 (6.7)
Cases resolved without a hearing	11 (2)	202 (19)	4 (11)	10 (12)	45 (23)	30 (23)	55 (31)	24 (17)	381 (16.3)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	82 (16)	190 (18)	11 (31)	22 (25)	37 (19)	32 (24)	35 (20)	21 (15)	430 (18.4)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	22 (4)	421 (41)	9 (26)	38 (44)	69 (35)	38 (29)	66 (38)	53 (38)	716 (30.6)
Total	530 (22.7)	1039 (44.4)	35 (1.5)	87 (3.7)	200 (8.6)	133 (5.7)	175 (7.5)	139 (5.9)	2338 (100%)*

*Missing Data on 13 cases.

TABLE B-2: ATLANTA NJC
CASE DISPOSITION BY TYPE OF CASE

	Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	135 (63)	65 (45)	53 (45)	61 (52)	32 (36)	116 (42)	40 (11)	87 (16)	29 (9)	36 (28)	654 (28.0)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	19 (9)	17 (12)	11 (9)	4 (3)	10 (11)	16 (6)	14 (4)	37 (7)	18 (6)	8 (6)	154 (6.6)
Cases resolved without a hearing	11 (5)	10 (7)	8 (7)	10 (9)	10 (11)	24 (9)	105 (28)	114 (21)	79 (26)	12 (9)	383 (16.4)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	36 (17)	36 (25)	27 (23)	21 (18)	17 (19)	73 (26)	70 (18)	81 (15)	49 (16)	19 (15)	429 (18.4)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	12 (6)	18 (12)	20 (17)	22 (19)	21 (23)	49 (18)	151 (40)	234 (42)	134 (43)	54 (42)	715 (30.6)
Total	213 (9.1)	146 (6.3)	119 (5.1)	118 (5.1)	90 (3.9)	278 (11.9)	380 (16.3)	553 (23.7)	309 (13.2)	129 (5.5)	2335 (100%)*

*Missing data on 16 cases.

TABLE B-3: ATLANTA NJC
REFERRAL SOURCE BY TYPE OF CASE

	Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Judges (Bench Referrals)	155 (73)	57 (39)	51 (43)	68 (59)	21 (23)	130 (47)	7 (2)	12 (2)	6 (2)	15 (12)	522 (22.2)
Civil or Criminal Warrants Desks	35 (16)	33 (23)	33 (28)	26 (22)	32 (36)	99 (36)	126 (33)	334 (61)	233 (75)	84 (66)	1035 (44.6)
Police	6 (3)	6 (4)	2 (2)	8 (7)	6 (7)	1 (1)	4 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)	35 (1.5)
Community Agencies	11 (5)	6 (4)	2 (2)	3 (3)	2 (2)	2 (1)	18 (5)	34 (6)	7 (2)	2 (2)	87 (3.7)
Self	3 (1)	13 (9)	5 (4)	2 (2)	6 (7)	13 (5)	71 (19)	57 (10)	16 (5)	13 (10)	199 (8.6)
Legal Aid Organizations	0 (0)	18 (12)	19 (16)	1 (1)	11 (12)	15 (5)	15 (4)	31 (6)	14 (5)	6 (5)	130 (5.6)
Government Agencies	1 (1)	5 (3)	1 (1)	3 (3)	2 (2)	5 (2)	102 (27)	41 (8)	14 (5)	1 (1)	175 (7.5)
Others	2 (1)	7 (5)	5 (4)	5 (4)	10 (11)	11 (4)	34 (9)	41 (8)	18 (6)	6 (5)	139 (6.0)
Total	213 (9.2)	145 (6.2)	118 (5.1)	116 (5.0)	90 (3.9)	276 (11.9)	377 (16.2)	550 (23.7)	309 (13.3)	128 (5.5)	2322 (100%)*

*Missing data on 29 cases.

**TABLE B-4: KANSAS CITY NJC
CASE DISPOSITION BY REFERRAL SOURCE**

	Judges (Bench Referrals)	Prosecutor's Office	Police	Community Agencies	Self	Legal Aid Organizations	Government Agencies	Other	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	83 (80)	95 (35)	81 (42)	11 (23)	14 (14)	8 (23)	9 (19)	14 (39)	315 (37.8)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	2 (2)	4 (2)	5 (3)	2 (4)	1 (1)	1 (3)	0 (0)	1 (3)	16 (1.9)
Cases resolved without a hearing	3 (3)	51 (19)	20 (11)	17 (35)	27 (27)	5 (14)	19 (39)	11 (31)	153 (18.3)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	7 (7)	26 (10)	24 (13)	4 (8)	14 (14)	0 (0)	1 (2)	3 (9)	79 (9.5)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	9 (9)	94 (35)	61 (32)	14 (29)	45 (45)	21 (60)	20 (41)	7 (19)	271 (32.5)
Total	104 (12.5)	270 (324)	191 (22.9)	48 (5.8)	101 (12.1)	35 (4.2)	49 (5.9)	36 (4.3)	834 (100%)*

*Missing data on 11 cases.

TABLE B-5: KANSAS CITY NJC
CASE DISPOSITION BY TYPE OF CASE

	Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	46 (44)	26 (42)	29 (47)	86 (48)	41 (34)	45 (52)	14 (14)	10 (16)	0 (0)	19 (42)	316 (37.6)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	1 (1)	1 (2)	0 (0)	3 (2)	3 (3)	1 (1)	4 (4)	2 (3)	1 (6)	0 (0)	16 (1.9)
Cases resolved without a hearing	12 (11)	6 (10)	7 (11)	22 (12)	26 (22)	14 (16)	38 (38)	21 (34)	4 (22)	6 (13)	156 (18.5)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	18 (17)	6 (10)	7 (11)	15 (8)	12 (10)	4 (5)	5 (5)	6 (10)	2 (11)	5 (11)	80 (9.5)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	28 (27)	23 (37)	19 (31)	55 (30)	39 (32)	22 (26)	39 (39)	22 (36)	11 (61)	15 (33)	273 (325)
Total	105 (12.5)	62 (7.4)	62 (7.4)	181 (21.5)	121 (14.4)	86 (10.2)	100 (11.9)	61 (7.3)	18 (2.1)	45 (5.4)	841 (100%)*

*Missing data on 4 cases.

TABLE B-6: KANSAS CITY NJC
REFERRAL SOURCE BY TYPE OF CASE

	Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Judges (Bench Referrals)	12 (11)	7 (12)	17 (27)	32 (18)	12 (10)	8 (9)	6 (6)	1 (2)	1 (6)	8 (18)	104 (12.5)
Prosecutor's Office	51 (49)	25 (41)	24 (39)	48 (27)	30 (25)	46 (54)	15 (16)	9 (16)	5 (28)	16 (36)	269 (32.4)
Police	33 (31)	16 (26)	12 (19)	66 (37)	33 (27)	13 (15)	11 (12)	2 (3)	0 (0)	3 (7)	189 (22.8)
Community Agencies	5 (5)	2 (3)	2 (3)	6 (3)	4 (3)	2 (2)	25 (27)	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (2)	48 (5.8)
Self	2 (2)	8 (13)	2 (3)	9 (5)	14 (12)	5 (6)	21 (22)	22 (38)	9 (50)	9 (20)	101 (12.2)
Legal Aid Organizations	1 (1)	1 (2)	3 (5)	6 (3)	7 (6)	2 (2)	3 (3)	8 (14)	1 (6)	3 (7)	35 (4.2)
Government Agencies	0 (0)	2 (3)	0 (0)	10 (6)	14 (12)	2 (2)	5 (5)	13 (22)	1 (6)	2 (4)	49 (5.9)
Others	1 (1)	0 (0)	2 (3)	4 (2)	7 (6)	7 (8)	8 (9)	2 (3)	1 (6)	3 (7)	35 (4.2)
Total	105 (12.7)	61 (7.3)	62 (7.5)	181 (21.8)	121 (14.6)	85 (10.2)	94 (11.3)	58 (7.0)	18 (2.2)	45 (5.4)	830 (100%)*

*Missing data on 15 cases.

**TABLE B-7: VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
CASE DISPOSITION BY REFERRAL SOURCE**

	Judges (Bench Referrals)	Small Claims Desk	Police	Community Agencies	Self	Legal Aid Organizations	Government Agencies	Others	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	73 (66)	15 (18)	3 (5)	9 (19)	45 (12)	0 (0)	4 (24)	5 (24)	154 (20.8)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	37 (33)	7 (8)	2 (4)	1 (2)	22 (6)	5 (19)	1 (6)	2 (10)	77 (10.4)
Cases resolved without a hearing	1 (1)	7 (8)	9 (16)	7 (15)	75 (20)	4 (15)	2 (12)	1 (5)	106 (14.3)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	0 (0)	10 (12)	13 (23)	11 (23)	55 (15)	3 (12)	6 (35)	5 (24)	103 (13.9)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	0 (0)	44 (53)	29 (52)	19 (40)	181 (48)	14 (54)	4 (24)	8 (38)	299 (40.5)
Total	111 (15.0)	83 (11.2)	56 (7.6)	47 (6.4)	378 (51.2)	26 (3.5)	17 (2.3)	21 (2.8)	739 (100%)*

*Missing Data on 12 cases.

TABLE B-8: VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
CASE DISPOSITION BY TYPE OF CASE

	Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Cases with hearings, resolved	0 (0)	20 (29)	6 (38)	0 (0)	13 (19)	8 (24)	23 (12)	55 (24)	2 (5)	25 (29)	152 (20.3)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	0 (0)	8 (11)	1 (6)	1 (13)	5 (7)	3 (9)	7 (4)	38 (17)	0 (0)	14 (16)	77 (10.3)
Cases resolved without a hearing	0 (0)	2 (3)	1 (6)	0 (0)	11 (16)	2 (6)	33 (17)	50 (22)	4 (11)	5 (6)	108 (14.4)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	3 (43)	15 (21)	2 (13)	2 (25)	9 (13)	3 (9)	40 (21)	16 (7)	5 (13)	11 (13)	106 (14.2)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	4 (57)	25 (36)	6 (38)	5 (63)	32 (46)	18 (53)	89 (46)	67 (30)	27 (71)	32 (37)	305 (40.8)
Total	7 (0.9)	70 (9.4)	16 (2.1)	8 (1.1)	70 (9.4)	34 (4.5)	192 (25.7)	226 (30.2)	38 (5.1)	87 (11.6)	748 (100%)*

*Missing data on 3 cases.

TABLE B-9: VENICE MAR/VISTA NJC
REFERRAL SOURCE BY TYPE OF CASE

	Domestic Assault and Harassment	Domestic Settlement and Other	Family Dispute	Neighbors: Assault and Harassment	Neighborhood Nuisances and Other	Friends: Assault, Harassment and Other	Landlord/Tenant Disputes	Consumer/Merchant Disputes	Employee/Employer Disputes	Other	Tot.
Judges (Bench Referrals)	0 (0)	2 (3)	2 (13)	0 (0)	3 (4)	2 (6)	13 (7)	62 (29)	1 (3)	23 (26)	108 (14.7)
Small Claims Desk	0 (0)	8 (12)	2 (13)	1 (13)	12 (17)	3 (9)	18 (10)	29 (13)	2 (5)	8 (9)	83 (11.3)
Police	3 (43)	6 (9)	4 (25)	3 (38)	12 (17)	3 (9)	14 (7)	5 (2)	2 (5)	4 (5)	56 (7.6)
Community Agencies	2 (29)	7 (10)	0 (0)	2 (25)	5 (7)	3 (9)	16 (8)	6 (3)	0 (0)	6 (7)	47 (6.4)
Self	1 (14)	36 (52)	3 (18)	2 (25)	32 (46)	18 (53)	109 (57)	104 (48)	32 (84)	41 (47)	378 (51.4)
Legal Aid Organizations	0 (0)	5 (7)	4 (25)	0 (0)	3 (4)	0 (0)	4 (2)	6 (3)	1 (3)	3 (3)	26 (3.5)
Government Agencies	0 (0)	2 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	3 (9)	10 (5)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	17 (2.3)
Others	1 (14)	3 (4)	1 (6)	0 (0)	2 (3)	2 (6)	6 (3)	4 (2)	0 (0)	2 (2)	21 (2.9)
Total	7 (1.0)	69 (9.4)	16 (2.2)	8 (1.1)	70 (9.5)	34 (4.6)	190 (25.8)	217 (29.5)	38 (5.2)	87 (11.8)	736 (100%)*

*Missing data on 15 cases.

**TABLE B-10: CASE DISPOSITION IN THE NJCs
JUNE THROUGH OCTOBER 1979**

	Atlanta	Kansas City	Venice/ Mar Vista
Cases with hearings, resolved	296 (26.9)	101 (33.8)	109 ^A (31.9)
Cases with hearings, unresolved	64 (5.8)	9 (3.0)	
Cases resolved without a hearing	259 (23.6)	32 (10.7)	50 (14.6)
Cases unresolved, no hearing (no-shows, withdrawals)	144 (13.1)	41 (13.7)	183 ^B (53.5)
Cases unresolved, no hear- ing (respondent refusals and no contacts)	336 (30.6)	116 (38.8)	
Total	1099 (63.2)	299 (17.2)	342 (19.7)

A Includes all cases with hearings; the number of cases ending with an agreement is not available.

B Includes all unresolved cases; additional breakdowns are not available.

Appendix C

**Disputant and Target Area Characteristics
for the Atlanta, Kansas City, and
Venice/Mar Vista NJCs**

TABLE C-1
ATLANTA NJC
DISPUTANT CHARACTERISTICS
RACE, INCOME, SEX, AGE, AND TARGET AREA RESIDENCY

		All Complainants* n=2351	Respondents		
			Corporate Reps. n=1114	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=1237	All Respondents n=2351
RACE	White	680 (30.6%)	419 (64.9)	271 (23.7)	689 (38.6)
	Black	1534 (69.1)	222 (34.4)	869 (76.1)	1091 (61.1)
	Hispanic	1 (<1)		1 (<1)	1 (<1)
	Other	6 (<1)	5 (0.8)	1 (<1)	6 (<1)
	Missing data	130 cases	468 cases	95 cases	564 cases
INCOME	\$ 0- 6,000	1020 (50.6)	4	269 (52.0)	273 (50.4)
	\$ 6-12,000	642 (31.9)	4	177 (34.2)	181 (33.4)
	\$12-20,000	268 (13.3)	10	56 (10.8)	66 (12.2)
	\$20,000	84 (4.2)	10	12 (2.3)	22 (4.1)
	Missing data	337 cases	1086 cases	723 cases	1809 cases
SEX	Male	1005 (42.8)	706 (78.9)	842 (69.0)	1548 (73.2)
	Female	1343 (57.2)	189 (21.1)	378 (31.0)	567 (26.8)
	Missing data	3 cases	219 cases	17 cases	236 cases
AGE	Average	33	41	33	35
	Range	12-88	19-80	10-81	10-81
	Missing data	44 cases	686 cases	176 cases	862 cases
IN ORIGINAL TARGET AREA?	Yes	396 (17.2)	77 (8.1)	169 (14.6)	246 (11.7)
	No	1912 (82.8)	869 (91.9)	990 (85.4)	1859 (88.3)
	Missing data	43 cases	168 cases	78 cases	246 cases

*Forty-seven (2%) complainants
were corporate representatives

TABLE C-2
ATLANTA NJC
DISPUTANT CHARACTERISTICS
MARITAL STATUS, EMPLOYMENT STATUS, AND OCCUPATION

		All Complainants n=2351	Respondents		
			Corporate Reps. n=1114	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=1237	All Respondents n=2351
MARITAL STATUS	Married	776 (34.7%)	124 (67.0)	310 (32.0)	434 (37.6)
	Divorced, separated	495 (22.1)	16 (8.6)	236 (24.4)	252 (21.8)
	Single	967 (43.1)	45 (24.3)	423 (43.7)	468 (40.5)
	Missing data	113 cases	929 cases	268 cases	1197 cases
CURRENTLY EMPLOYED?	Yes	1502 (65.9)	1037 (99.0)	682 (71.6)	1719 (86.0)
	No	752 (33.0)	9 (<1)	253 (26.6)	262 (13.1)
	Retired, disabled	26 (1.1)	1 (<1)	17 (1.8)	18 (<1)
	Missing data	71 cases	67 cases	285 cases	352 cases
OCCUPATION	Professional	299 (19.4)	32 (3.4)	62 (10.1)	94 (6.1)
	Managerial	89 (5.8)	126 (13.5)	18 (2.9)	144 (9.3)
	Business owner	40 (2.6)	705 (75.8)	39 (6.3)	744 (48.1)
	Sales worker	82 (5.3)	24 (2.5)	27 (4.4)	51 (3.3)
	Clerical worker	243 (15.8)	1 (<1)	35 (5.7)	36 (2.3)
	Craft worker	162 (10.5)	28 (3.0)	116 (18.8)	144 (9.3)
	Industrial worker	155 (10.1)	7 (<1)	99 (16.1)	106 (6.8)
	Laborer	53 (3.4)	3 (<1)	42 (6.8)	45 (2.9)
	Service worker	319 (20.7)	4 (<1)	143 (23.2)	147 (9.5)
	Student	82 (5.3)		29 (4.7)	29 (1.8)
	Homemaker	15 (<1)		4 (<1)	4 (<1)
	Other	1 (<1)	930	2 (<1)	2 (<1)
	Missing data	811 cases	184 cases	621 cases	805 cases

**TABLE C-3
ATLANTA NJC
CITY AND TARGET AREA CHARACTERISTICS**

		Atlanta	Target Area
POPULATION			67,081
RACE	Black White	59% 41%	54% 46%
MEDIAN INCOME (1970)		\$6,222	\$5,096
EMPLOYMENT (% of total population employed, 1970)		38%	44%

**TABLE C-4
KANSAS CITY NJC
DISPUTANT CHARACTERISTICS
RACE, INCOME, SEX, AGE, AND TARGET AREA RESIDENCY**

		All Complainants* n=845	Respondents		
			Corporate Reps. n=144	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=701	All Respondents n=845
RACE	White	331 (46.2%)	28	222 (44.6)	250 (46.5)
	Black	371 (48.8)	11	253 (50.8)	264 (49.1)
	Hispanic	25 (4.2)	1	19 (3.8)	20 (3.7)
	Other	6 (0.8)		4 (<1)	4 (<1)
	Missing data	112 cases	104 cases	203 cases	307 cases
INCOME	\$ 0- 6,000	316 (55.9)	2	158 (53.6)	160 (51.9)
	\$ 6-12,000	163 (29.4)	4	79 (26.8)	83 (26.9)
	\$12-20,000	66 (10.7)	3	38 (12.9)	41 (13.3)
	\$20,000	33 (4.0)	4	20 (6.8)	24 (7.8)
	Missing data	267 cases	131 cases	406 cases	537 cases
SEX	Male	323 (38.3)	76 (78.4)	421 (60.8)	497 (63.0)
	Female	520 (61.7)	21 (21.6)	271 (39.2)	292 (37.0)
	Missing data	2 cases	47 cases	9 cases	56 cases
AGE	Average	36		33	
	Range	13-95	?	11-80	?
	Missing data	156 cases		259 cases	
IN ORIGINAL TARGET AREA?	Yes	178 (21.2)	31 (22.8)	143 (21.0)	174 (21.3)
	No	662 (78.8)	105 (77.2)	537 (79.0)	642 (78.7)
	Missing data	5 cases	8 cases	21 cases	29 cases

*Twenty-seven (3%) complainants were corporate representatives

TABLE C-5
KANSAS CITY NJC
DISPUTANT CHARACTERISTICS
MARITAL STATUS, EMPLOYMENT STATUS, AND OCCUPATION

		All Complainants n=845	Respondents		
			Corporate Reps. n=144	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=701	All Respondents n=845
MARITAL STATUS	Married	217 (41.3%)	13	167 (43.4)	180 (44.7)
	Divorced, separated	105 (20.0)	1	86 (22.3)	87 (21.6)
	Single	162 (30.8)	4	132 (34.3)	136 (33.7)
	Missing data	319 cases	126 cases	316 cases	442 cases
CURRENTLY EMPLOYED?	Yes	459 (64.5)	66 (97.1)	293 (65.4)	359 (69.6)
	No	214 (30.1)	1 (1.5)	139 (31.0)	140 (27.1)
	Retired, disabled	39 (5.5)	1 (1.5)	16 (3.6)	17 (3.3)
	Missing data	133 cases	76 cases	253 cases	329 cases
OCCUPATION	Professional	48 (8.9)	5 (11.9)	19 (5.9)	24 (6.6)
	Managerial	29 (5.4)	12 (28.6)	25 (7.8)	37 (10.2)
	Business owner	18 (3.3)	12 (28.6)	10 (3.1)	22 (6.0)
	Sales worker	15 (2.8)	6 (14.3)	10 (3.1)	16 (4.4)
	Clerical worker	82 (15.1)		29 (9.0)	29 (8.0)
	Craft worker	45 (8.3)	3 (7.1)	28 (8.7)	31 (8.5)
	Industrial worker	85 (15.7)	2 (4.8)	69 (21.4)	71 (19.5)
	Laborer	17 (3.1)	1 (2.4)	22 (6.5)	23 (6.3)
	Service worker	131 (24.2)	1 (2.4)	65 (20.1)	66 (18.1)
	Student	38 (7.0)		29 (9.0)	29 (8.0)
	Homemaker	34 (6.3)		16 (5.0)	16 (4.4)
	Other				
Missing data	303 cases	102 cases	379 cases	481 cases	

**TABLE C-6
KANSAS CITY NJC
CITY AND TARGET AREA CHARACTERISTICS**

		Kansas City	Target Area
POPULATION (1970)		450,925	70,202
AREA			6.87 sq. miles
RACE	Black White Hispanic	73% 24% 3%	45% 50% 5%
SEX	Male Female	47% 53%	45% 55%
INCOME	<\$5,000 \$ 5 - 10,000 \$10 - 15,000 \$15 - 25,000 \$25 - 50,000 \$50,000 +		34% 40% 18% 6% 1% <1%

TABLE C-7
VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
DISPUTANT CHARACTERISTICS
RACE, INCOME, SEX, AGE, AND TARGET AREA RESIDENCY

		Complainants			Respondents		
		Corporate Reps. n=92	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=659	All Complainants n=751	Corporate Reps. n=368	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=383	All Respondents n=751
RACE	White	65 (76.5)	414 (65.0)	479 (66.3)	277 (84.7)	245 (68.1)	522 (76.0)
	Black	10 (11.8)	127 (19.9)	137 (18.9)	22 (6.7)	59 (16.4)	81 (11.8)
	Hispanic	6 (7.1)	71 (11.1)	77 (10.6)	13 (4.0)	37 (10.3)	50 (7.3)
	Other	4 (4.7)	25 (3.9)	29 (4.0)	15 (4.6)	19 (5.3)	34 (4.9)
	Missing data	7 cases	22 cases	29 cases	41 cases	23 cases	64 cases
INCOME	\$ 0- 6,000	10 (14.5)	247 (45.6)	357 (42.1)	7 (3.3)	66 (29.7)	73 (16.9)
	\$ 6-12,000	12 (17.4)	158 (29.2)	170 (27.8)	31 (14.8)	66 (29.7)	97 (22.4)
	\$12-20,000	25 (36.2)	102 (18.8)	127 (20.8)	95 (45.2)	50 (22.5)	145 (33.6)
	\$20,000	22 (31.9)	35 (6.5)	57 (9.3)	77 (36.7)	40 (18.0)	117 (27.1)
	Missing data	23 cases	117 cases	140 cases	158 cases	161 cases	319 cases
SEX	Male	60 (65.9)	329 (50.2)	389 (52.1)	287 (79.3)	232 (62.0)	519 (70.5)
	Female	31 (34.1)	327 (49.8)	358 (47.9)	75 (20.7)	142 (38.0)	217 (29.5)
	Missing data	1 case	3 cases	4 cases	6 cases	9 cases	15 cases
AGE	Average	46	38	39	43	36	39
	Range	23-92	15-91	15-92	20-78	15-81	15-81
	Missing data	17 cases	54 cases	71 cases	108 cases	63 cases	171 cases
IN ORIGINAL TARGET AREA?	Yes	20 (23.5)	233 (36.4)	253 (34.9)	51 (15.5)	109 (30.5)	160 (23.4)
	No	65 (76.5)	407 (63.6)	472 (65.1)	277 (84.5)	248 (69.5)	525 (76.6)
	Missing data	7 cases	19 cases	26 cases	40 cases	26 cases	66 cases

TABLE C-8
VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
DISPUTANT CHARACTERISTICS
MARITAL STATUS, EMPLOYMENT STATUS, AND OCCUPATION

		Complainants			Respondents		
		Corporate Reps. n=92	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=659	All Complainants n=751	Corporate Reps. n=368	Excluding Corp. Reps. n=383	All Respondents n=751
MARITAL STATUS	Married	36 (52.9)	224 (39.5)	260 (40.9)	142 (74.3)	118 (41.0)	260 (54.3)
	Divorced, separated	6 (8.8)	74 (13.1)	80 (12.6)	8 (4.2)	52 (18.1)	60 (12.5)
	Single	26 (38.3)	269 (47.4)	295 (46.5)	41 (21.4)	118 (41.0)	159 (33.2)
	Missing data	24 cases	92 cases	116 cases	177 cases	95 cases	272 cases
CUR- RENTLY EMPLOYED?	Yes	83 (93.2)	405 (68.9)	488 (72.1)	336 (97.4)	251 (79.4)	587 (88.8)
	No	3 (3.4)	137 (23.3)	140 (20.7)	3 (<1)	55 (17.4)	58 (8.8)
	Retired, disabled	3 (3.4)	46 (7.8)	49 (7.2)	6 (1.7)	10 (3.2)	16 (2.4)
	Missing data	3 cases	71 cases	74 cases	23 cases	67 cases	90 cases
OCCUPA- TION	Professional	23 (28.0)	82 (19.9)	105 (21.3)	44 (14.0)	36 (18.6)	80 (15.7)
	Managerial	41 (50.0)	42 (10.2)	83 (16.8)	205 (65.1)	30 (15.5)	235 (46.2)
	Business owner	2 (2.4)	3 (<1)	5 (1.0)	26 (8.3)	4 (2.1)	30 (5.9)
	Sales worker	2 (2.4)	17 (4.1)	19 (3.8)	12 (3.8)	6 (3.1)	18 (3.5)
	Clerical worker	2 (2.4)	53 (12.9)	55 (11.1)	2 (<1)	23 (11.9)	25 (4.9)
	Craft worker	5 (6.1)	53 (12.9)	58 (11.7)	21 (6.7)	26 (13.4)	47 (9.2)
	Industrial worker		26 (6.3)	26 (5.3)		18 (9.3)	18 (3.5)
	Laborer		13 (3.2)	13 (2.6)		10 (5.2)	10 (2.0)
	Service worker	4 (4.9)	79 (19.2)	83 (16.8)	4 (1.3)	32 (16.4)	36 (7.1)
	Student	2 (2.4)	15 (3.6)	17 (3.4)		3 (1.5)	3 (<1)
	Homemaker	1 (1.2)	28 (6.8)	29 (5.9)	1 (<1)	6 (3.1)	7 (1.3)
	Other		1 (<1)	1 (<1)			
	Missing data	10 cases	247 cases	257 cases	53 cases	189 cases	242 cases

**TABLE C-9
VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
COUNTY AND TARGET AREA CHARACTERISTICS**

		Los Angeles County	Venice/ Mar Vista
POPULATION (1970)		7,032,075	156,146
AREA			8.2 sq. miles
RACE	White Hispanic Black	71% 11% 18%	76% 19% 5%
SEX	Male Female	48% 52%	49% 51%
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME			\$11,022
INCOME	<\$5,000 \$ 5 - 8,000 \$ 8 - 12,000 \$12 - 25,000 \$25,000 +	16% 16% 25% 36% 7%	17% 16% 27% 35% 4%
MARITAL STATUS	Single Married Divorced, widowed	25% 61% 14%	24% 61% 15%
UNEMPLOYMENT		7%	9.7%
OCCUPATION	Professional Managerial Sales/Clerical Craftmen Laborers Service Workers	17% 9% 29% 29% 4% 12%	18% 8% 28% 31% 5% 11%

Appendix D

**Month-to-Month Trends in
Disposition, Referral Source, and Casetype
for the Atlanta, Kansas City, and
Venice/Mar Vista NJCs**

FIGURE D-1
 ATLANTA NJC
 MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN CASE DISPOSITION

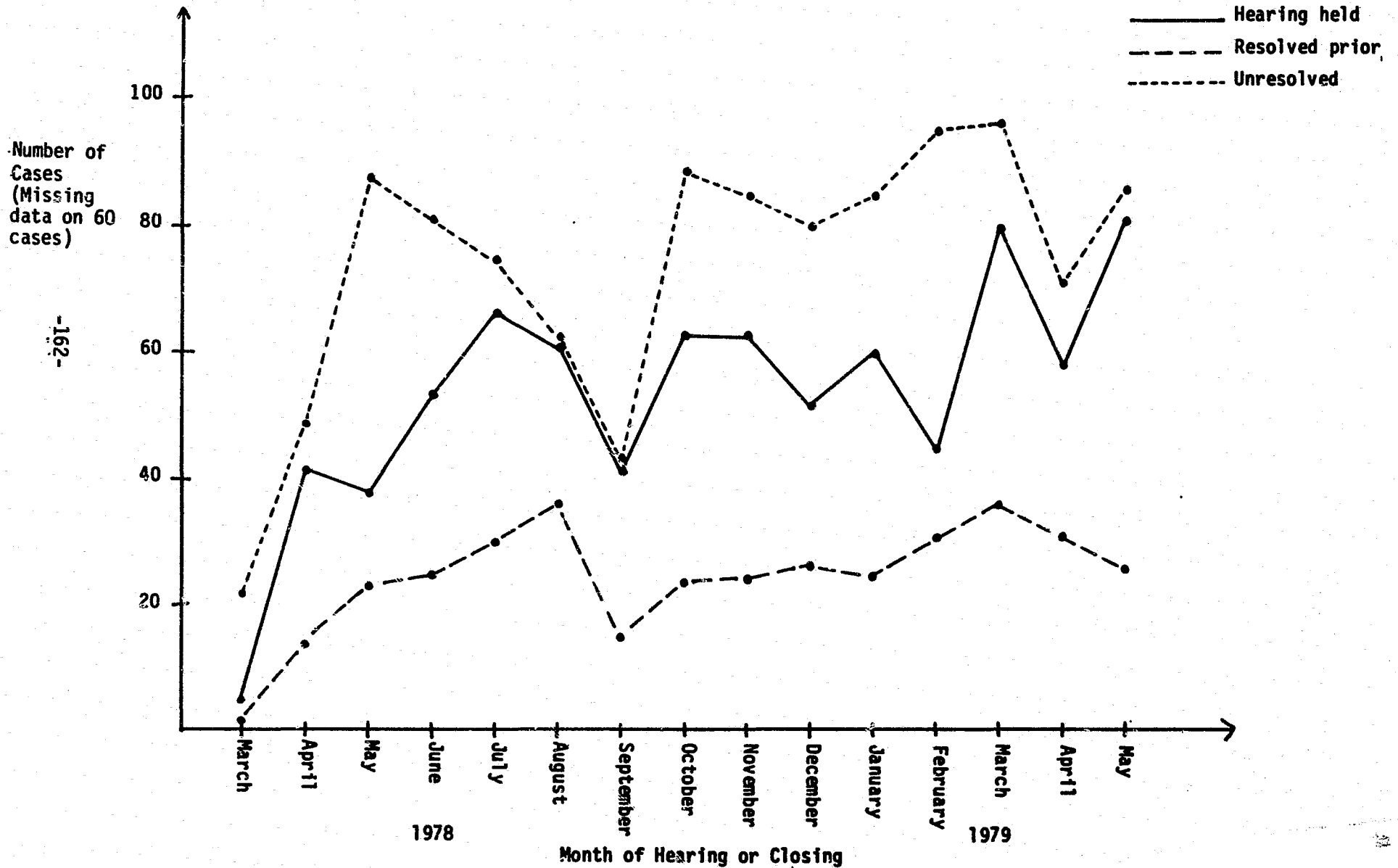


FIGURE D-2
 ATLANTA NJC
 MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN REFERRAL SOURCES

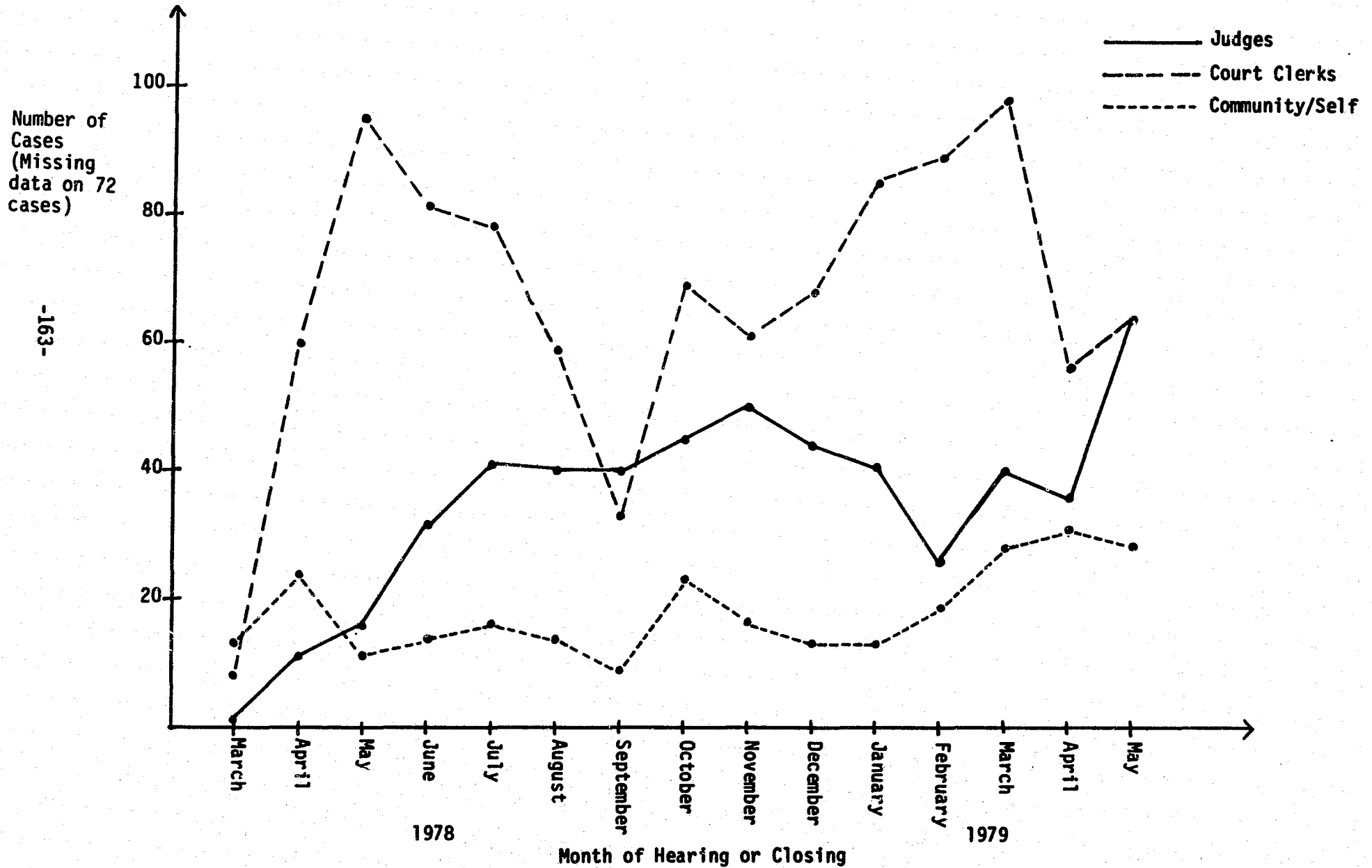


FIGURE D-3
ATLANTA NJC
MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN CASETYPES

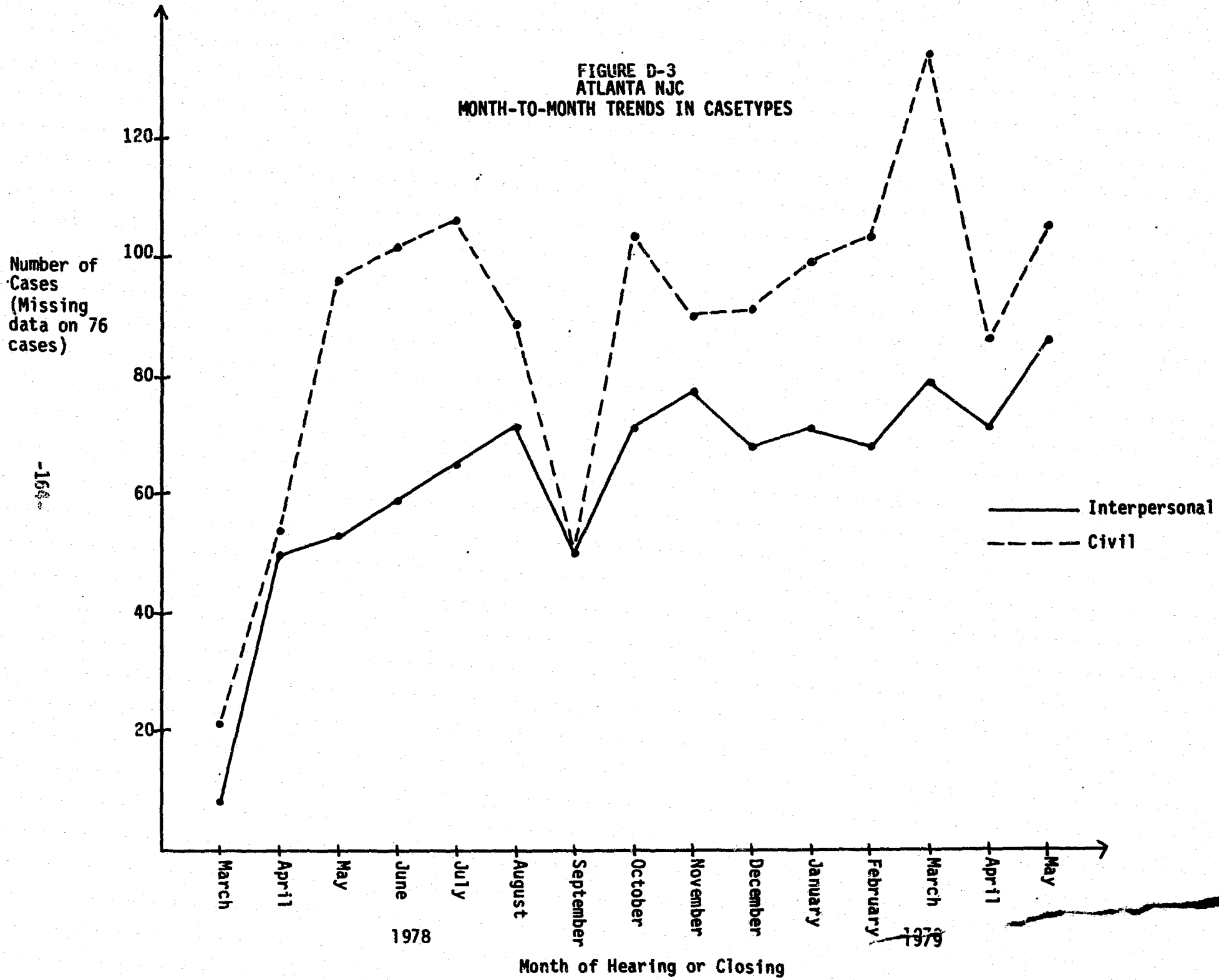


FIGURE D-4
 KANSAS CITY NJC
 MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN CASE DISPOSITION

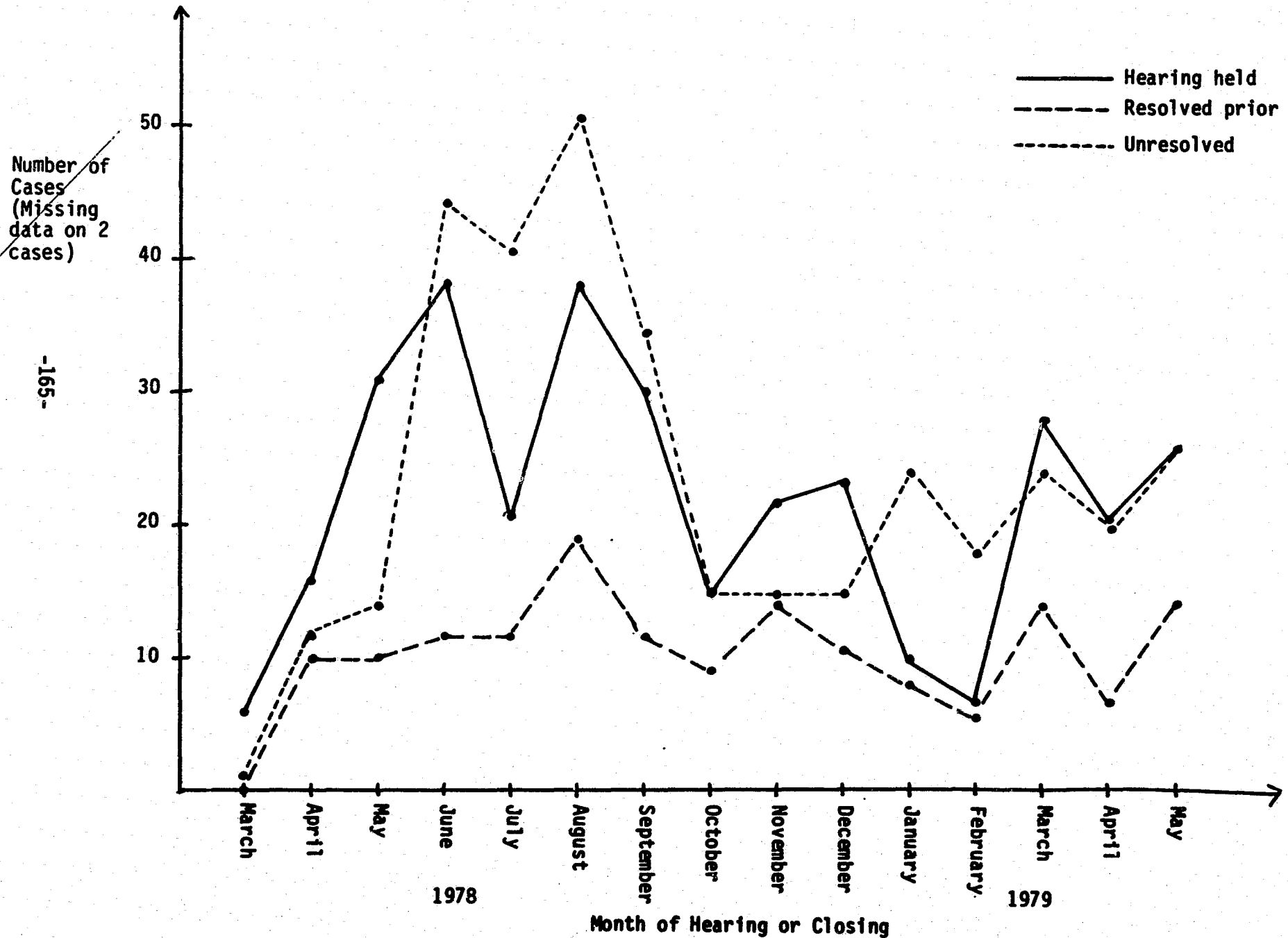


FIGURE D-5
 KANSAS CITY NJC
 MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN REFERRAL SOURCES

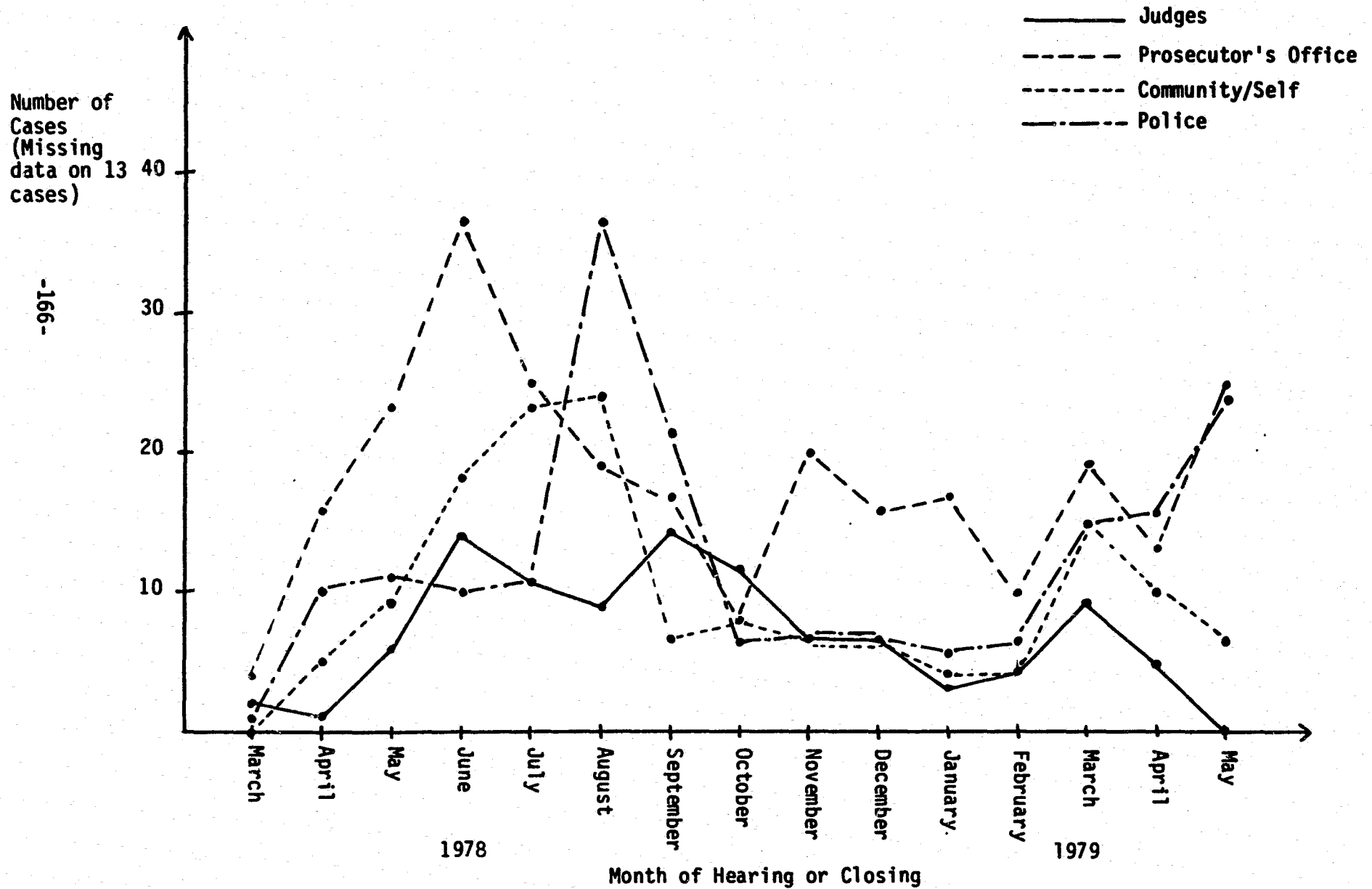


FIGURE D-6
 KANSAS CITY NJC
 MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN CASETYPES

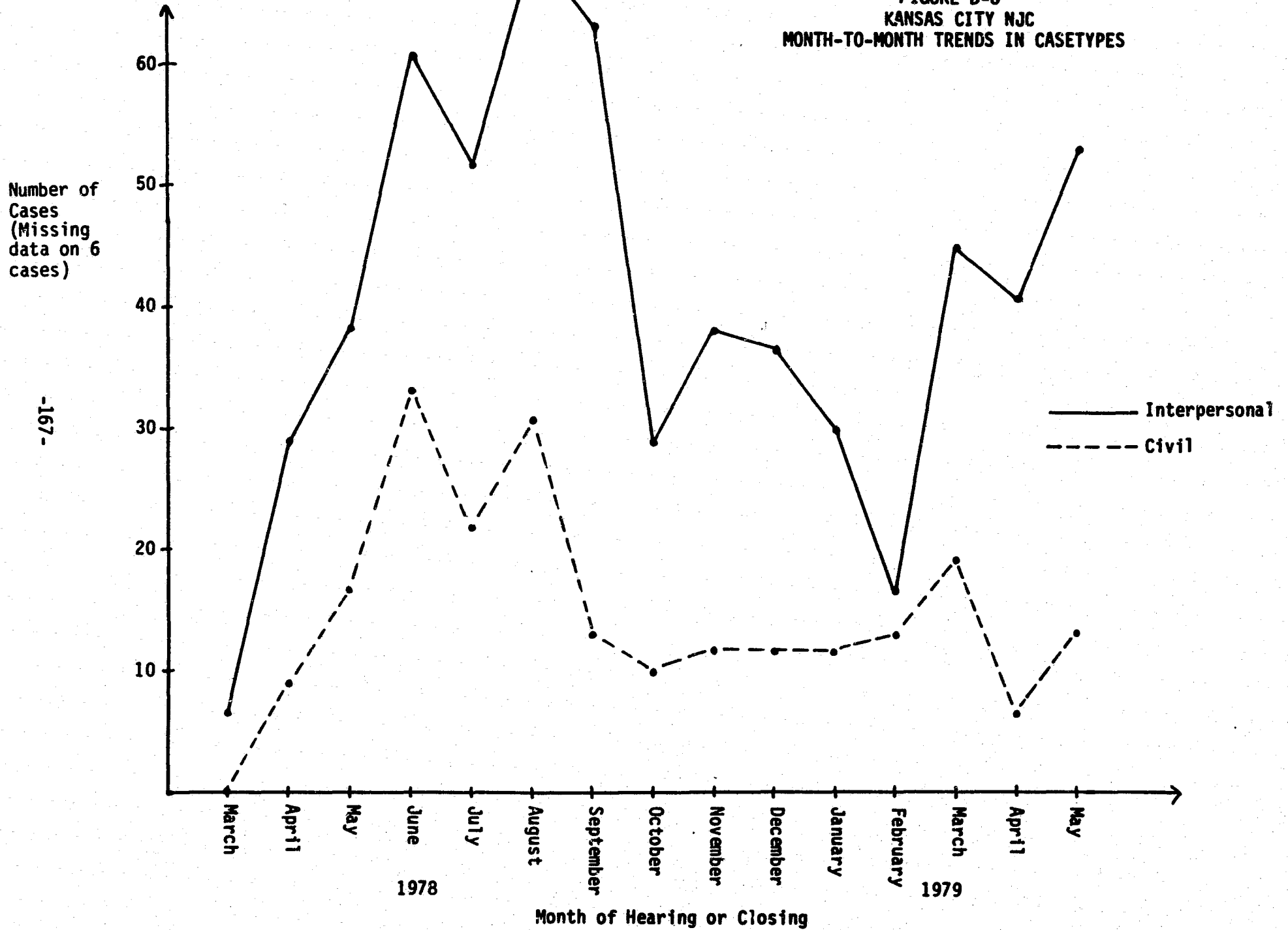


FIGURE D-7
 VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
 MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN CASE DISPOSITION

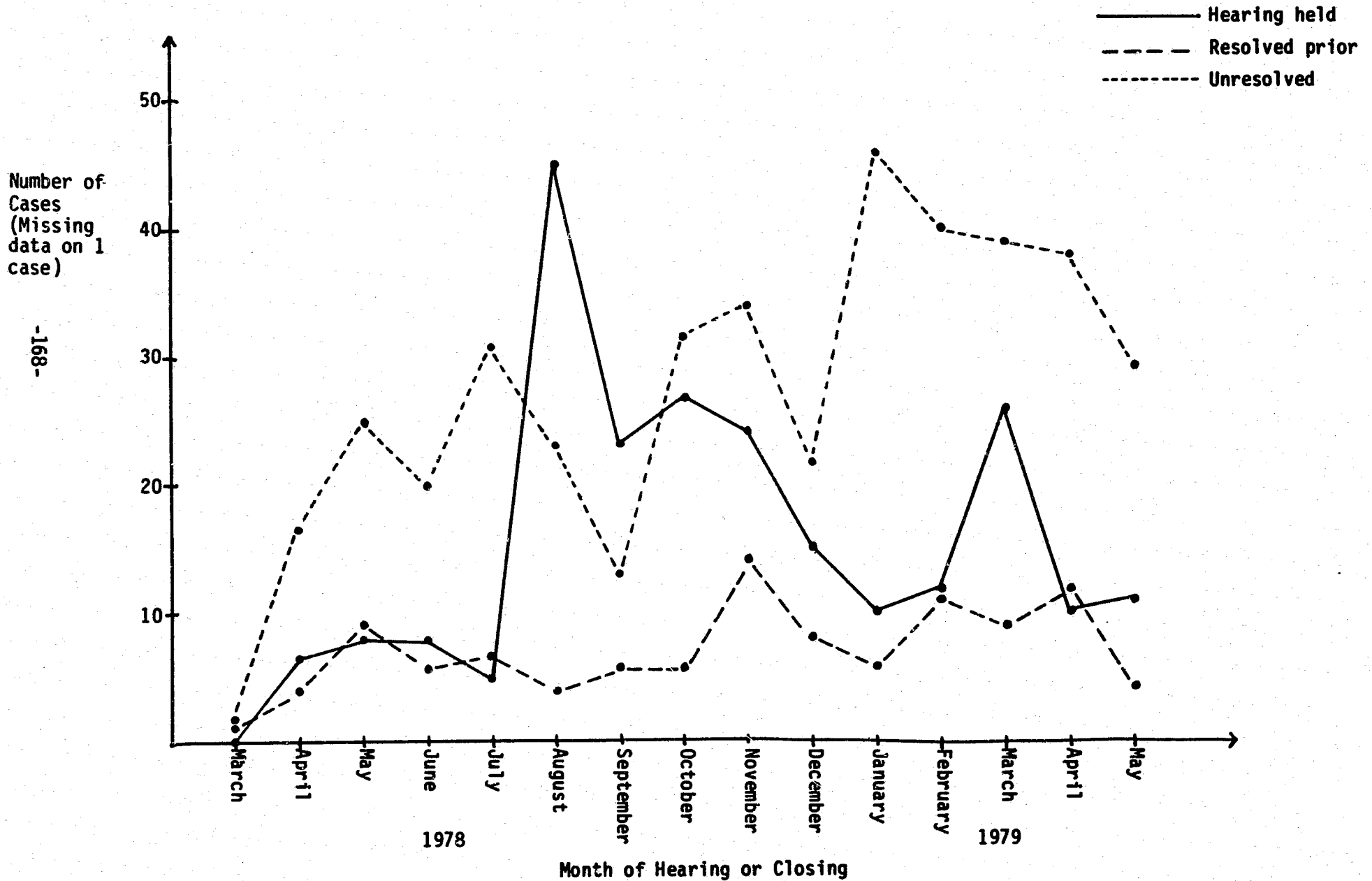
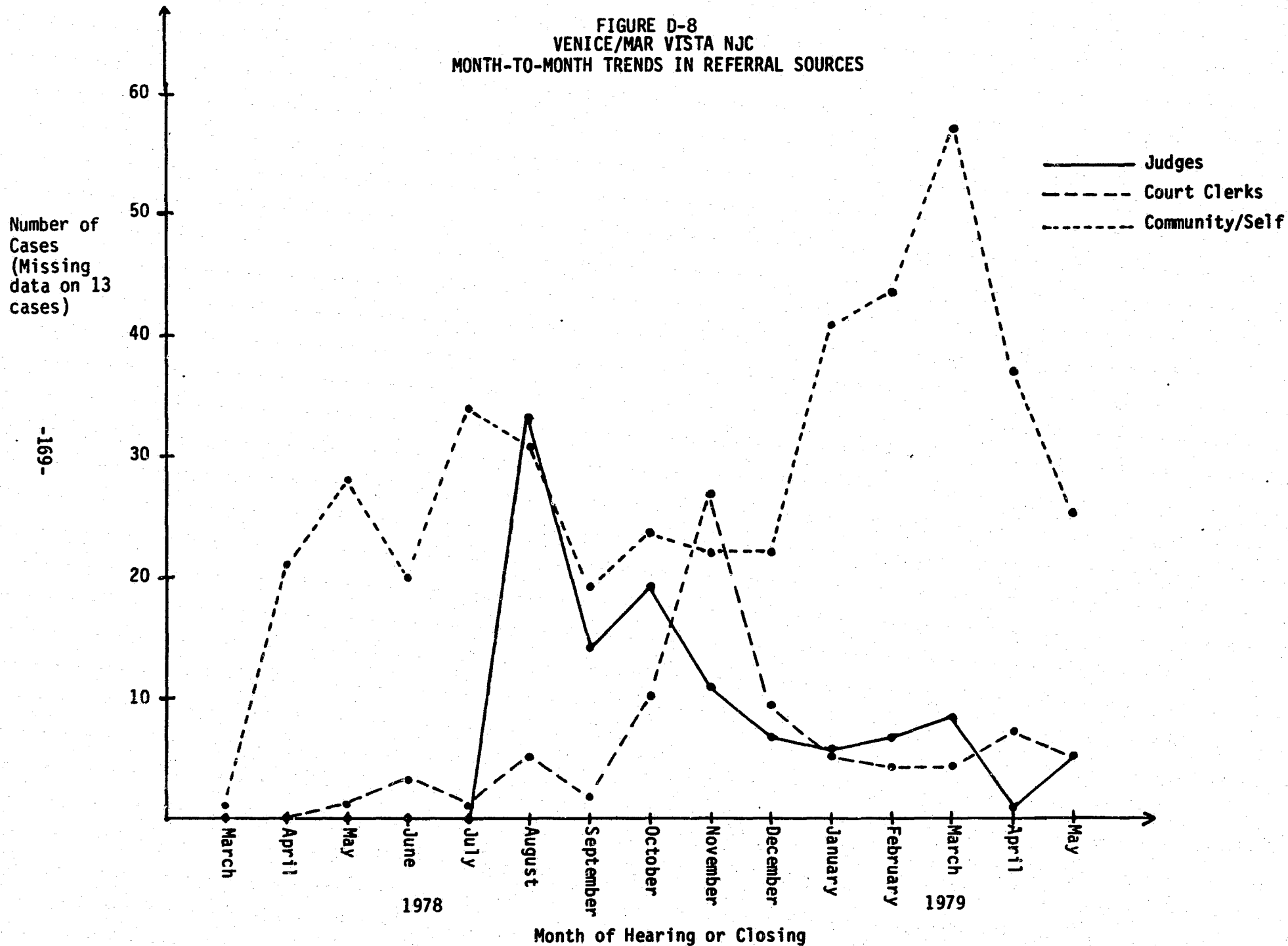


FIGURE D-8
 VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
 MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN REFERRAL SOURCES

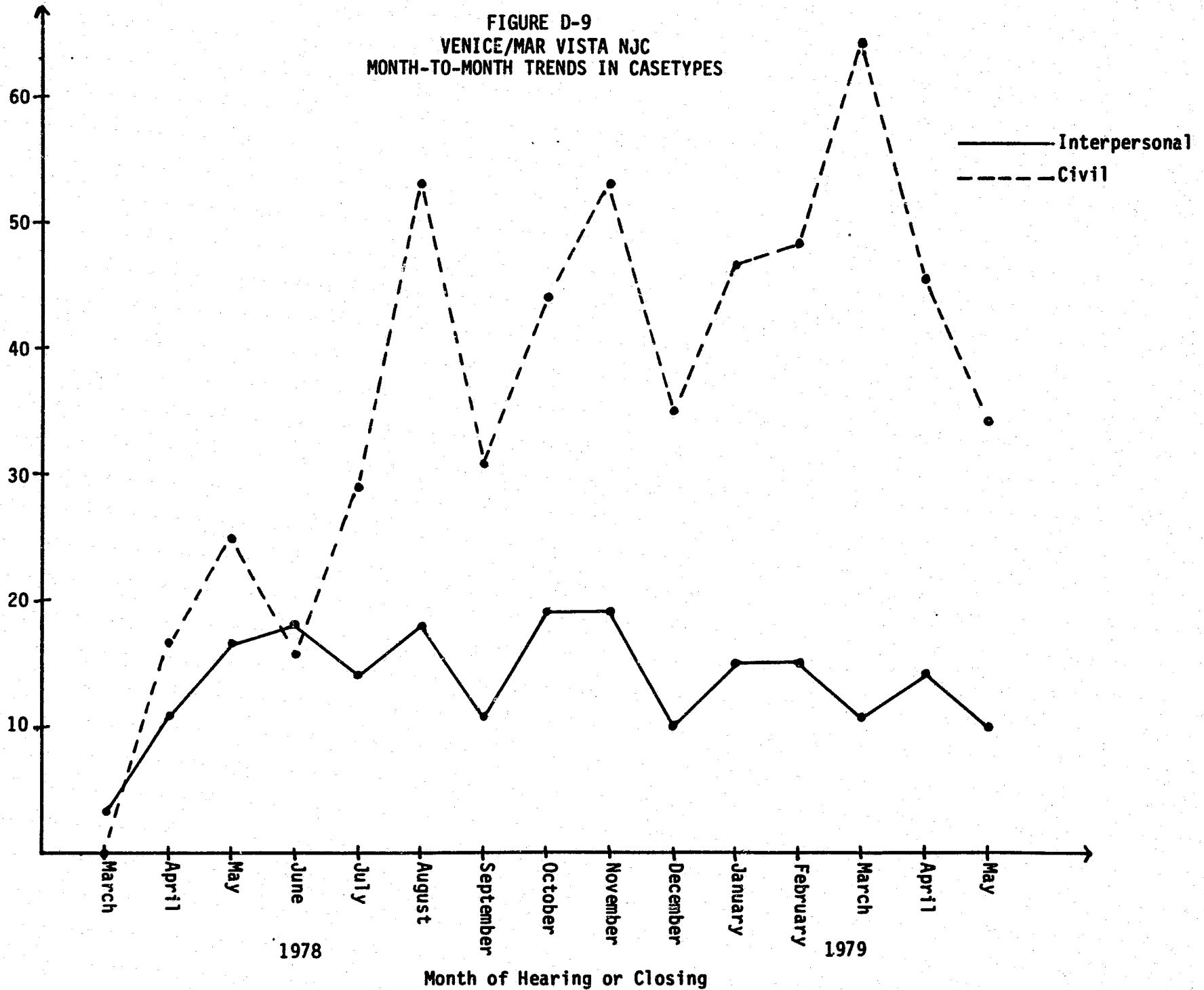


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FIGURE D-9
VENICE/MAR VISTA NJC
MONTH-TO-MONTH TRENDS IN CASETYPES

Number of Cases
(Missing data on 4 cases)

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