

Caseload Exits at the Local Level:

The Third Year of FIP

**Catherine E. Born
Principal Investigator**

**Pamela J. Caudill
Welfare Research Director**

**Melinda L. Cordero
John Kunz
Project Analysts**

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**Welfare & Child Support Research and Training Group
University of Maryland School of Social Work
525 W. Redwood Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-706-5134**

This report was prepared by the Welfare and Child Support Research and Training Group, School of Social Work, University of Maryland, 525 West Redwood Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201 with support from its long time research partner, the Maryland Department of Human Resources.

For additional information about the report or the study, please contact Dr. Catherine Born at the School of Social Work (410.706.5134, cborn@ssw.umaryland.edu). For more information about welfare reform in Maryland, please contact Mr. Richard Larson at the Department of Human Resources (410.767.7150, rlarson@fia.dhr.state.md.us or welfarereformer@prodigy.net).

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Executive Summary

This is the third in a series of reports which examine the universe of cases which have left cash assistance in Maryland since the state's welfare reform program, the Family Investment Program (FIP), began in October, 1996. Today's report looks at the third full year of reform (October 1998 - September 1999), providing statewide and jurisdiction-specific information on all 37,997 cases which exited Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) during this 12 month period.¹ The report addresses two broad questions:

- " **What are the statewide and jurisdictional trends in cash assistance case closings during the third full year of welfare reform?**
- " **For the state as a whole and in each local subdivision, what is the profile of cases which closed and what are the administrative reasons for case closure?**

Monthly administrative data on all 37,997 cases which closed were examined to answer these questions. Specifically, information about closing cases, case and payee characteristics and case closing reasons were obtained from the Client Automated Resource and Eligibility System (CARES), Maryland's automated management information system for public welfare and social service programs. In addition to total numbers of exiting cases in the state and each of its 24 local subdivisions, information can be extracted from CARES on such case characteristics as size of the assistance unit, case composition, reasons for case closure, length of most recent welfare spell and age of youngest child in the assistance unit. Data are also available which profile

¹ Comparable reports on the universe of welfare leavers for the first two years were issued in April 1998 and June 1999. See: *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The First Year of FIP* and *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Second Year of FIP* University of Maryland School of Social Work.

exiting payees in terms of gender, racial/ethnic group, age, and age at birth of first child.

Key findings from our review of these data for the 37,997 cases which left welfare during year three of reform (October 1998 - September 1999) include the following:²

- " Statewide, the general trend in year three was that of a larger number of exits early in the year and smaller numbers of exits as the year progressed. The largest number of exits was recorded in the first quarter (n=11,457), the fewest (n=8,262) in the last quarter.
- " Fifteen of 24 jurisdictions also recorded their largest volume of exits during the first quarter; no single pattern describes year three exits in the remaining nine jurisdictions, all of which have very small caseloads and small monthly fluctuations in the numbers of exiting cases.
- " In 23 of 24 jurisdictions, the locality's share of year three closures equaled or exceeded its share of the year three cash assistance caseload. The exception was Baltimore City whose share of year three closures (53.9%) was less than its share of the year three caseload (57.7%).
- " Statewide, the typical exiting case in year three consisted of a two person assistance unit (39%) containing one adult (82%) and one child (46%). The majority of exiting cases (59%) had been on welfare for 12 or fewer consecutive months at the time of case closure.
- " The typical payee in an exiting case was female (96%), African-American (79%), in her early 30s (median 32 years) and had given birth to her first child before the age of 21 (59%).

²A closing case or case closure is defined as an assistance unit which, at least once during the 12 month study period, ceased receiving Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA, formerly Aid to Families with Dependent Children). That is, we count cases or families, rather than closures per se; for this reason, the number of closures we report may differ from the number reported by the Maryland Department of Human Resources for the same period.

A few intra-state variations in the profile of year three exiting cases and payees were observed. Among the notable of these are:

- " Two parent families, while a small proportion of closing cases statewide (2%), accounted for more than five percent of all exiting cases in six jurisdictions: Garrett (24%), Carroll (8%), Queen Anne's (8%), Somerset (8%), Calvert (7%), Cecil (7%) and Allegany (6%) counties.
- " Child-only cases accounted for only 16% of statewide closures during year three, but for much larger proportions of exits in two counties on the Eastern Shore: Kent (38%) and Caroline (30%).
- " In 23 of 24 jurisdictions, two person assistance units were most common among year three exiters. The exception was Carroll County where there were slightly more three person (37%) than two person (34%) assistance units.
- " The jurisdictional analysis showed considerable variation in payees estimated age at the time of first birth; average age at first birth ranged from 20 years in Wicomico County to 23 years in the counties of Howard and Montgomery.
- " The proportion of first births occurring before age 18 was 26% for the state as a whole but varied widely across counties, ranging from a low of about 15% in Carroll and Howard Counties to a high of 40% in Somerset County.
- " The proportion of exiting cases containing at least one child under the age of three years was 39% for the entire state. This ranged from about one case in three in Calvert (35%) and Queen Anne's (34%) counties to about half of all cases in the counties of Allegany (50%), Anne Arundel (49%), Frederick (51%), Kent (50%), and Washington (53%).
- " Statewide during the third year of reform, two administrative reasons for case closure predominated: failure to reapply/complete the redetermination process (n=12,959/37,997 or 34.2%) and income above limit/started work (n=8,864/37,997 or 23.4%).
- " The vast majority (n=10,725/12,959 or 82.8%) of cases closed for failure to reapply/redet were in Baltimore City and Prince George's County. Baltimore City accounted for three-fifths of all such closures in year three (n=8,055/12,959 or 62.2%) and Prince George's County accounted for about one-fifth (n=2,760/12,959 or 20.6%).

- " One case closing reason, income above limit/started work, is among the top five closure reasons in all 24 jurisdictions. Work-related sanctions are on the top five list in 21 of 24 jurisdictions (all but the counties of Harford, St. Mary's and Wicomico); the client's request for case closure makes the "top five" list in 20 of 24 subdivisions.
- " Full family sanctioning remains relatively uncommon, the vast majority of sanctions are work-related and intra-state differences are evident. Statewide, only 11.7% of all closures in year three were due to the imposition of a sanction. Consistent with trends observed in the first two years of reform, work sanctioning is much more common than sanctioning for non-cooperation with child support. Fully 86% of all sanctions statewide were related to work, 14% to child support.
- " In 23 of 24 jurisdictions, there were more work sanctions than child support sanctions during reform's third year. In Kent County, there were two of each type sanction imposed during the year.
- " Work sanctions as a proportion of all case closures ranged from more than 15% in four counties: Dorchester (19.6%); Somerset (18.0%); Baltimore (16.6%); and Calvert (15.1%) less than three percent in Wicomico (2.6%) and St. Mary's counties (1.5%). Child support sanctions range from 5.4% of all closures in Kent County to zero percent or no such closures in the counties of Anne Arundel, Cecil, Queen Anne's and Somerset.

Findings from our review of administrative data on all cash assistance cases which closed in Maryland during the third year of welfare reform (October 1998 - September 1999) are generally consistent with findings previously reported for the first two years of the new program. Consistent with prior years' reports also, today's review suggests that two areas continue to warrant special attention: the progress of reform in Baltimore City and full family sanctioning.

In our reports on the first and second year of welfare reform in Maryland, we called attention to two important findings about Baltimore City. First was the fact that, unique among local jurisdictions, Baltimore City's share of annual case closings was less, in both years, than its share of the total cash assistance caseload. Second was

the reality that, largely because of dramatic caseload declines in Maryland's 23 counties, Baltimore City accounted each year for an ever-larger share of the state's total active cash assistance caseload. Both findings held in year three as well. The gap between closures and caseload in the City was -3.8% and, for year three, the City accounted for 57.7% of the state caseload (up from 54.9% in year two and 50.7% in year one).

The good news is that the closures/caseload gap of -3.8% is markedly less than it was in either year one (-17.1%) or year two (-11.6%) of reform. However, this apparent good news is tempered by the realization that about two of every five year three closures in Baltimore City (n=8,055/20,484 or 39.5%) resulted from a single administrative closure reason, failure to reapply/complete the redetermination process. Many of these closures, perhaps even a majority, likely resulted from the City's now-discontinued practice of scheduling redeterminations at four month, rather than less frequent, intervals. In addition, there is reason to think that many of these closures may not be true exits from welfare, but rather that a significant portion of these families came back on welfare shortly after the closure.³ This is the phenomenon of churning which we have described in other of our research reports.⁴

³The October 1999 report in our *Life After Welfare* series found that cases leaving welfare for this reason had very high rates of early returns to welfare. About three in 10 came back on welfare within 90 days; of those, half returned in the first 30 days.

⁴ See: Welfare and Child Support Research and Training Group. (October 1999). *Life After Welfare: A Fourth Interim Report*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work.

The important points to take from the above discussion are two. First, the tremendous reduction in the Baltimore City closures/caseload gap reflected in these year three data may, for the reasons discussed, be more illusory than real. Second, even with the most optimistic or favorable interpretation of these year three data, Baltimore City now accounts for a greater and growing share of the state's overall cash assistance caseload (minimally 57.7% or nearly three-fifths). It thus remains true, in the authors' opinion, that Maryland's ability to make continued progress in caseload reduction, recidivism prevention, and the promotion of steady, post-exit employment among adults will depend ever more heavily on actions taken and results achieved in Baltimore City.

Close attention should also continue to be paid to the use of the full family sanction, in particular full family sanctions imposed for non-compliance with work requirements. In year three, as was true in the first two years of reform, Maryland continued to make relatively sparing use of this new, more severe penalty; only 11.7% of all year three closures statewide were due to full family sanctioning. This proportion is only a slight increase over year two (10.4%), but is considerably greater than the rate observed in the first year of reform (5.5%). Overall, sanctioning does appear to be used in moderation and is not a major reason for caseload declines. Nonetheless, because it is such a severe penalty, sanctioning remains an area to which state and local program managers should continue to pay close attention.⁵

⁵Sanctioning is also a key topic on our research agenda. See, for example, our recent report: Born, C. E., Caudill, P. J., and Cordero, M. L. (November 1999). *Life After Welfare: A Look At Sanctioned Families*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work.

Introduction

The University of Maryland's School of Social Work, through a long-standing partnership with the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR), is carrying out a multi-faceted, multi-year research program focused on the implementation, operation and outcomes of welfare reform in our state. The most well-known of these projects is the *Life After Welfare* study which longitudinally tracks the post-exit experiences of several thousand randomly-selected families who have left welfare since the beginning of reform (October 1996) and on which four statewide reports have been issued. The *Life After Welfare* study is intended to provide empirical case-level data that policy-makers and administrators can use to judge how the new welfare program is working, identify program modifications that might be needed, and assess what happens to Maryland families once they no longer receive cash assistance.

Today's report provides additional information about Maryland welfare leavers, specifically, macro-level data that are not covered in the *Life* study. By design, the *Life* reports present detailed follow-up employment, recidivism and other data about a statewide random sample of exiting cases. In contrast, today's report looks at the entire universe of 37,997 cases which exited cash assistance in Maryland during the third year of reform (October 1998 - September 1999). It describes case characteristics, exit patterns and the use of full family sanctioning for each of the state's 24 local subdivisions and the state as a whole.⁶

⁶ Similarly titled reports on the universe of exiting cases during reform's first and second years were issued in April, 1998 and June, 1999 respectively. See *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The First Year of FIP*, University of Maryland School of Social Work and *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Second Year of FIP*, University of Maryland School of Social Work

Methodology

Looking at all cases which closed during the third full year of welfare reform permits us to answer a number of questions germane to continued program monitoring and planning. The main questions of interest are:

- " What are the general trends in case closings in the third year of reform?
- " Do case closing patterns differ across subdivisions?
- " How does each jurisdiction's share of closings compare to its share of the overall average caseload for the same period of time?
- " What is the general statewide profile of all third year exiters and the profile in each subdivision in terms of assistance unit size, number of adults, number of children and length of the most recent welfare spell?
- " What are the demographic characteristics of exiting payees including: gender, racial/ethnic group, age, age at first birth, and age of youngest child in the assistance unit?
- " What are the most common administratively-recorded reasons for case closure?
- " What proportion of cases, statewide and in each subdivision, left welfare during the third year because of a full family sanction for non-compliance with work requirements or non-cooperation with child support?

To answer these questions, aggregate data on closing cases were obtained from monthly case closing extract files created from an administrative data system, the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES). This system contains official records of clients' utilization of various public assistance and social service programs, including cash assistance, which are under the purview of the Department of Human Resources and local Departments of Social Services (LDSSes). There are 24 LDSSes in the state - one in each of Maryland's 23 counties and in the separate, incorporated City of Baltimore.

In addition to providing raw data on the number of closing cases throughout the state, the extract files created from the administrative data system also contain the following data which are presented in this report:

- " Assistance unit size - number of individuals included on the grant;
- " Case composition - numbers of children and adults included on the grant;
- " Benefit begin and end dates - from which length of current welfare spell is calculated.
- " Closing code - administratively-recorded reason for welfare case closure.
- " Demographic characteristics of exiting payees – age, racial/ethnic group, age of youngest child in assistance unit, and age of female payees at the birth of their first child.

A closing case (or case closure), for purposes of this analysis, is defined as an assistance unit which, at least once during the 12 month study period, ceased receiving Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) benefits (formerly AFDC). That is, we count cases or families rather than closures per se. Because some cases could, conceivably, have exited or closed more than once during the 12 month period, the total number of closures reported here may differ from the total number of closures reported by DHR for that same period of time.

Findings

The following results are based on the universe of unique closing cases (n=37,997) in the third full year of welfare reform (October 1998 - September 1999) in Maryland. The universe includes all assistance units which exited cash assistance (TCA, formerly AFDC) at least once during the 12 month period. Findings for both the state and each of its 24 local jurisdictions are presented in the following sections:

- " Closing cases by month: statewide analysis
- " Closing cases by month: jurisdictional analysis
- " Closing cases relative to caseload size: jurisdictional analysis
- " Characteristics of exiting cases: statewide and jurisdictional analyses
- " Characteristics of exiting payees: statewide and jurisdictional analyses
- " Administrative reasons for case closure: statewide and jurisdictional analyses
- " Full family sanctions: statewide and jurisdictional analyses.

Closing Cases by Month: Statewide Analysis

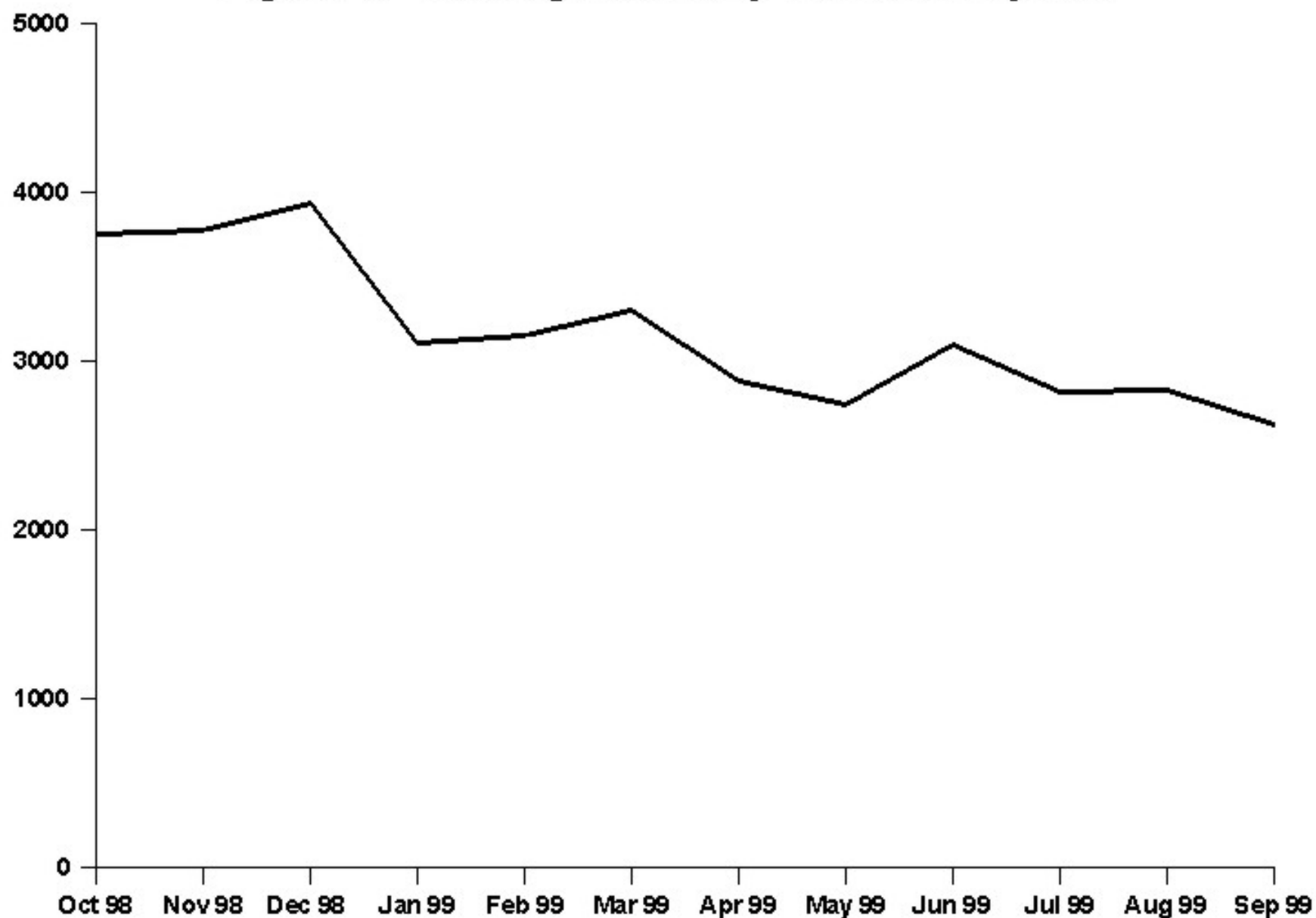
Aggregate statewide data on the number of cases closing during the entire year and in each of the 12 months are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1, following. As the table and figure show, the general trend in year three of reform was that of a larger number of exits in the early part of the year and a smaller number of exits as the year progressed. Specifically, the greatest number of closings (n=11,457) occurred in the first quarter of reform's third year (October - December 1998), with smaller although still sizeable numbers of closings taking place in each of the next three quarters. A total of 9,556 unique cases closed in the second quarter (January - March 1999), 8,722 closed in the third quarter and 8,262 exited during the last quarter of reform's third year (July -

September 1999). The spread between the month with the highest number and proportion of closings (December 1998, n=3,934 or 10.4%) and the month with the lowest (September 1999, n=2,619 or 6.9%) was just about 1,300 cases.

Table 1. Number of Monthly Closing Cases: Maryland

Month	Closing Cases	Percent	Cumulative Percent
October 1998	3,750	9.9%	9.9%
November 1998	3,773	9.9%	19.8%
December 1998	3,934	10.4%	30.2%
<i>1st Quarter Total</i>	<i>11,457</i>	<i>30.2%</i>	<i>30.2%</i>
January 1999	3,107	8.2%	38.3%
February 1999	3,150	8.3%	46.6%
March 1999	3,299	8.7%	55.3%
<i>2nd Quarter Total</i>	<i>9,556</i>	<i>25.1%</i>	<i>55.3%</i>
April 1999	2,885	7.6%	62.9%
May 1999	2,737	7.2%	70.1%
June 1999	3,100	8.2%	78.3%
<i>3rd Quarter Total</i>	<i>8,722</i>	<i>23.0%</i>	<i>78.3%</i>
July 1999	2,817	7.4%	85.7%
August 1999	2,826	7.4%	93.1%
September 1999	2,619	6.9%	100.0%
<i>4th Quarter Total</i>	<i>8,262</i>	<i>21.7%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
Annual Total	37,997	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 1. Closing Cases By Month: Maryland



Closing Cases by Month: Jurisdictional Analysis

Maryland is a small but very diverse state and, as a result, statewide data often mask important intra-state variations. Welfare reform's strong emphasis on local flexibility also makes it important to examine jurisdictional data on dimensions such as patterns in welfare exits. Monthly and quarterly closing numbers and proportions for each jurisdiction are presented in Table 2 on the following pages.

On a quarterly basis, Table 2 shows that the most jurisdictions (n=15 of 24) recorded their largest number and percent of closings during the first quarter of the year (October 1998 - December 1998). These 15 subdivisions are a diverse group, representing suburban and rural areas, sizable as well as moderate and small TCA caseloads: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot and Wicomico counties as well as Baltimore City.⁷ The remaining nine jurisdictions (Allegany, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Garrett, Queen Anne's, Washington, and Worcester counties), all have very small caseloads and small monthly fluctuations in the number of exits. Thus, no one pattern describes year three exits in these jurisdictions.

Although not conclusive, these findings may suggest that the anticipated slowdown in the number and rate of TCA exits may have begun, in at least some, if not most, jurisdictions. We will examine this issue in more detail in a forthcoming report which compares case closing patterns in the first, second and third years of reform.

⁷ Readers are referred to Appendix A, Figures A-1 to A-24 which graphically illustrate year three monthly case closing patterns separately for each local jurisdiction.

Table 2. Number of Closing Cases by Month and Jurisdiction

	Maryland	Allegany	Anne Arundel	Baltimore	Calvert	Caroline	Carroll
October 1998	3,750 (9.9%)	22 (7.6%)	137 (10.5%)	367 (9.9%)	20 (10.1%)	10 (6.8%)	29 (10.6%)
November 1998	3,773 (9.9%)	23 (7.9%)	153 (11.8%)	371 (10.0%)	15 (7.5%)	12 (8.2%)	18 (6.6%)
December 1998	3,934 (10.4%)	34 (11.7%)	116 (8.9%)	377 (10.2%)	14 (7.0%)	16 (10.9%)	31 (11.4%)
1st Quarter	11,457 (30.2%)	79 (27.2%)	406 (31.2%)	1,115 (30.2%)	49 (24.6%)	38 (25.9%)	78 (28.6%)
January 1999	3,107 (8.2%)	29 (10.0%)	99 (7.6%)	296 (8.0%)	21 (10.6%)	11 (7.5%)	30 (11.0%)
February 1999	3,150 (8.3%)	23 (7.9%)	119 (9.2%)	323 (8.7%)	22 (11.1%)	11 (7.5%)	25 (9.2%)
March 1999	3,299 (8.7%)	28 (9.7%)	128 (9.8%)	318 (8.6%)	14 (7.0%)	19 (12.9%)	17 (6.2%)
2ND Quarter	9,556 (25.1%)	80 (27.6%)	346 (26.6%)	937 (25.4%)	57 (28.7%)	41 (27.9%)	72 (26.4%)
April 1999	2,885 (7.6%)	25 (8.6%)	74 (5.7%)	293 (7.9%)	14 (7.0%)	17 (11.6%)	23 (8.4%)
May 1999	2,737 (7.2%)	23 (7.9%)	101 (7.8%)	275 (7.4%)	20 (10.1%)	14 (9.5%)	16 (5.9%)
June 1999	3,100 (8.2%)	26 (9.0%)	90 (6.9%)	290 (7.8%)	22 (11.1%)	8 (5.4%)	14 (5.1%)
3rd Quarter	8,722 (23.0%)	74 (25.5%)	265 (20.4%)	858 (23.2%)	56 (28.6%)	39 (26.5%)	53 (19.4%)
July 1999	2,817 (7.4%)	19 (6.6%)	110 (8.5%)	219 (5.9%)	15 (7.5%)	9 (6.1%)	21 (7.7%)
August 1999	2,826 (7.4%)	22 (7.6%)	86 (6.6%)	265 (7.2%)	9 (4.5%)	12 (8.2%)	25 (9.2%)
September 1999	2,619 (6.9%)	16 (5.5%)	87 (6.7%)	302 (8.2%)	13 (6.5%)	8 (5.4%)	24 (8.8%)
4th Quarter	8,262 (21.7%)	57 (19.7%)	283 (21.8%)	786 (21.3%)	37 (18.6%)	29 (19.7%)	70 (25.6%)
Total	37,997	290	1,300	3,696	199	147	273

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

	Cecil	Charles	Dorchester	Frederick	Garrett	Harford
October 1998	32 (10.3%)	47 (11.5%)	23 (8.5%)	31 (8.1%)	12 (7.4%)	54 (10.1%)
November 1998	27 (8.7%)	53 (13.0%)	24 (8.9%)	39 (10.1%)	16 (9.8%)	40 (7.4%)
December 1998	25 (8.0%)	38 (9.3%)	16 (5.9%)	40 (10.4%)	12 (7.4%)	64 (11.9%)
1st Quarter	84 (26.9%)	138 (33.9%)	63 (23.3%)	110 (28.6%)	40 (24.5%)	158 (29.4%)
January 1999	28 (9.0%)	26 (6.4%)	20 (7.4%)	22 (5.7%)	11 (6.7%)	36 (6.7%)
February 1999	37 (11.9%)	33 (8.1%)	16 (5.9%)	28 (7.3%)	7 (4.3%)	36 (6.7%)
March 1999	35 (11.2%)	32 (7.9%)	20 (7.4%)	32 (8.3%)	15 (9.2%)	33 (6.1%)
2nd Quarter	100 (32.1%)	91 (22.4%)	56 (20.7%)	82 (21.3%)	33 (20.2%)	105 (19.6%)
April 1999	14 (4.5%)	37 (9.1%)	31 (11.5%)	28 (7.3%)	13 (8.0%)	47 (8.8%)
May 1999	26 (8.3%)	35 (8.6%)	35 (13.0%)	20 (5.2%)	17 (10.4%)	46 (8.6%)
June 1999	25 (8.0%)	27 (6.6%)	20 (7.4%)	43 (11.2%)	13 (8.0%)	42 (7.8%)
3rd Quarter	65 (20.8%)	99 (24.3%)	86 (31.9%)	91 (23.6%)	43 (26.4%)	135 (25.1%)
July 1999	21 (6.7%)	30 (7.4%)	25 (9.3%)	31 (8.1%)	19 (11.7%)	51 (9.5%)
August 1999	16 (5.1%)	24 (5.9%)	30 (11.1%)	36 (9.4%)	15 (9.2%)	48 (8.9%)
September 1999	26 (8.3%)	25 (6.1%)	10 (3.7%)	35 (9.1%)	13 (8.0%)	40 (7.4%)
4th Quarter	63 (20.2%)	79 (19.4%)	65 (24.1%)	102 (26.5%)	47 (28.8%)	139 (25.9%)
Total	312	407	270	385	163	537

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

	Howard	Kent	Montgomery	Prince George s	Queen Anne s	St. Mary s
October 1998	44 (12.9%)	7 (18.9%)	136 (10.6%)	655 (11.2%)	4 (4.3%)	31 (11.1%)
November 1998	30 (8.8%)	3 (8.1%)	117 (9.1%)	694 (11.9%)	8 (8.6%)	28 (10.0%)
December 1998	41 (12.0%)	4 (10.8%)	151 (11.8%)	662 (11.3%)	10 (10.8%)	25 (9.0%)
1st Quarter	115 (33.6%)	14 (37.8%)	404 (31.4%)	2,011 (34.4%)	22 (23.7%)	84 (30.1%)
January 1999	24 (7.0%)	1 (2.7%)	108 (8.4%)	431 (7.4%)	4 (4.3%)	18 (6.5%)
February 1999	33 (9.6%)	1 (2.7%)	107 (8.3%)	420 (7.2%)	6 (6.5%)	14 (5.0%)
March 1999	31 (9.1%)	6 (16.2%)	107 (8.3%)	501 (8.6%)	10 (10.8%)	20 (7.2%)
2nd Quarter	88 (25.7%)	8 (21.6%)	322 (25.1%)	1,352 (23.1%)	20 (21.5%)	52 (18.6%)
April 1999	31 (9.1%)	2 (5.4%)	89 (6.9%)	366 (6.3%)	9 (9.7%)	23 (8.2%)
May 1999	15 (4.4%)	3 (8.1%)	89 (6.9%)	329 (5.6%)	4 (4.3%)	29 (10.4%)
June 1999	18 (5.3%)	5 (13.5%)	111 (8.6%)	523 (9.0%)	12 (12.9%)	23 (8.2%)
3rd Quarter	64 (18.7%)	10 (27.0%)	289 (22.5%)	1,218 (20.8%)	25 (26.9%)	75 (26.9%)
July 1999	24 (7.0%)	0 (0.0%)	77 (6.0%)	458 (7.8%)	7 (7.5%)	32 (11.5%)
August 1999	25 (7.3%)	2 (5.4%)	106 (8.2%)	449 (7.7%)	11 (11.8%)	18 (6.5%)
September 1999	26 (7.6%)	3 (8.1%)	87 (6.8%)	354 (6.1%)	8 (8.6%)	18 (6.5%)
4th Quarter	75 (21.9%)	5 (13.5%)	270 (21.0%)	1,261 (21.6%)	26 (28.0%)	68 (24.4%)
Total	342	37	1,285	5,842	93	279

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

	Somerset	Talbot	Washington	Wicomico	Worcester	Baltimore City
October 1998	14 (10.9%)	16 (13.9%)	54 (10.8%)	50 (7.0%)	16 (8.2%)	1,939 (9.5%)
November 1998	15 (11.7%)	11 (9.6%)	46 (9.2%)	61 (8.5%)	15 (7.7%)	1,954 (9.5%)
December 1998	9 (7.0%)	9 (7.8%)	51 (10.2%)	58 (8.1%)	20 (10.3%)	2,111 (10.3%)
1st Quarter	38 (29.7%)	36 (31.3%)	151 (30.2%)	169 (23.5%)	51 (26.2%)	6,004 (29.3%)
January 1999	11 (8.6%)	11 (9.6%)	52 (10.4%)	58 (8.1%)	14 (7.2%)	1,746 (8.5%)
February 1999	9 (7.0%)	12 (10.4%)	40 (8.0%)	58 (8.1%)	19 (9.7%)	1,751 (8.5%)
March 1999	11 (8.6%)	6 (5.2%)	45 (9.0%)	80 (11.1%)	25 (12.8%)	1,766 (8.6%)
2nd Quarter	31 (24.2%)	29 (25.2%)	137 (27.4%)	196 (27.3%)	58 (29.7%)	5,263 (25.7%)
April 1999	8 (6.3%)	12 (10.4%)	40 (8.0%)	67 (9.3%)	17 (8.7%)	1,605 (7.8%)
May 1999	15 (11.7%)	12 (10.4%)	32 (6.4%)	55 (7.7%)	20 (10.3%)	1,506 (7.4%)
June 1999	10 (7.8%)	2 (1.7%)	30 (6.0%)	62 (8.6%)	11 (5.6%)	1,673 (8.2%)
3rd Quarter	33 (25.8%)	26 (22.6%)	102 (20.4%)	184 (25.6%)	48 (24.6%)	4,784 (23.4%)
July 1999	12 (9.4%)	8 (7.0%)	24 (4.8%)	60 (8.4%)	9 (4.6%)	1,536 (7.5%)
August 1999	5 (3.9%)	8 (7.0%)	39 (7.8%)	47 (6.5%)	21 (10.8%)	1,507 (7.4%)
September 1999	9 (7.0%)	8 (7.0%)	47 (9.4%)	62 (8.6%)	8 (4.1%)	1,390 (6.8%)
4th Quarter	26 (20.3%)	24 (20.9%)	110 (22.0%)	169 (23.5%)	38 (19.5%)	4,433 (21.6%)
Total	128	115	500	718	195	20,484

Note: Quarterly percentages may not represent the exact sum of the percentages for the individual months, due to rounding.

Closing Cases Relative to Caseload Size: Jurisdictional Analysis

Table 2 shows that, relatively speaking, each jurisdiction continued to record sizable numbers of case closings during the third year of reform. The number of case closings occurring (or possible) in any subdivision, of course, is largely a function of the size of its overall TCA caseload. Because caseload sizes do vary dramatically, meaningful cross-county comparisons using literal numbers and proportions are difficult. However, in terms of caseload exits, one way to contrast localities which takes caseload size differences into account is to consider each subdivision's share of statewide case closings relative to its share of the statewide average annual caseload for the same period. This information appears in Table 3, following this discussion.⁸

Table 3 tells us several things. First, and as expected, it shows that subdivisions with the largest caseloads (Baltimore City and the counties of Prince George's, Baltimore, Montgomery and Anne Arundel) are also those with the largest numbers and proportions of total case closures. These five subdivisions account for more than four-fifths (87.1%) of the average annual caseload and for about four-fifths (82.4%) of total case closures statewide during the 12 month study period.

The figures which appear in the difference column of Table 3, however, illustrate a more important point. While the "difference" percentages are quite small in some cases, they show that 23 of 24 jurisdictions' shares of overall case closures in

⁸ Caseload data were calculated by the authors from the *Monthly Statistical Reports* issued by the Family Investment Administration, Department of Human Resources for the period October 1998 - September 1999.

year three closely approximated their shares of the average annual caseload in that same year.

As Table 3 shows, the remaining jurisdiction, Baltimore City, was unique; its share of year three closings (53.9%) was less than its share of the overall year three caseload (57.7%). However this gap between caseload and closures (-3.8%) is markedly lower than it was in the second (-11.6%) and initial (-17.1%) years of reform. It should be noted, too, that in year three, Baltimore City did account for more than half (53.9%) of all cases which left cash assistance at least once during the 12 month period. Of the 37,997 families which exited between October 1998 and September 1999, more than 20,000 (n=20,484) resided in Baltimore City.

It is also important to bear in mind that, as welfare reform has unfolded so far, Baltimore City has come to account for an ever-larger share of the state's overall TCA caseload. As shown in Table 3, Baltimore City accounted for 57.7% of the statewide caseload during the third year of reform. In the previous year, the City represented 54.9% of the state's active caseload, and during the first year of reform (October 1996 to September 1997) it accounted for just about half (50.7%) of the caseload.⁹ The obvious and very important implication of this trend is that the state's continued success in achieving the goals of reform will depend ever more heavily on results achieved in Baltimore City.

⁹ See: Welfare and Child Support Research and Training Group. (April, 1998). *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The First Year of FIP* and (June, 1999). *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Second Year of FIP*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work.

Table 3. Percent of Total Closings/Caseload by Jurisdiction:10/98 - 9/99

Jurisdiction	Percent of Total Closings	Percent of Total Caseload	Difference
Prince George s	15.4%	13.4%	2.0%
Baltimore	9.7%	9.2%	0.5%
Washington	1.3%	1.0%	0.3%
Cecil	0.8%	0.6%	0.2%
Howard	0.9%	0.7%	0.2%
Wicomico	1.9%	1.7%	0.2%
Allegany	0.8%	0.7%	0.1%
Carroll	0.7%	0.6%	0.1%
Frederick	1.0%	0.9%	0.1%
Garrett	0.4%	0.3%	0.1%
Montgomery	3.4%	3.3%	0.1%
Queen Anne s	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Somerset	0.4%	0.3%	0.1%
Calvert	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%
Caroline	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Charles	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%
Kent	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
St. Mary s	0.7%	0.7%	0.0%
Talbot	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%
Worcester	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%
Anne Arundel	3.4%	3.5%	-0.1%
Dorchester	0.7%	0.8%	-0.1%
Harford	1.4%	1.5%	-0.1%
Baltimore City	53.9%	57.7%	-3.8%
Total	100%	100%	0.0%

Characteristics of Exiting Cases: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses

Characteristics of the universe of year three exiting cases are presented for the state and each jurisdiction in Table 4, which follows this discussion. Five characteristics describing exiting cases are presented: length of the TCA spell which culminated in the exit;¹⁰ number of adults in the assistance unit; number of children in the assistance unit; proportion of child-only cases¹¹; and size of the assistance unit.

Length of Exiting Spell

Table 4 shows that, statewide, the vast majority of cases which left welfare during the third year of reform had been on assistance for a relatively short period of time. More than three of every four cases (77%) had been open for two years or less, more than half (59%) for 12 or fewer months, and almost one-fifth (18%) for 13 to 24 months. Fewer than one in ten cases (9%) had received assistance for more than five uninterrupted years.¹²

Jurisdictional results are similar, but variations are also evident. In all 24 jurisdictions the most common situation among exiting cases was a current welfare spell that had lasted for one year or less. However, there were large variations across

¹⁰ Length of exiting spell refers, in this paper, to the continuous period of TCA receipt immediately preceding the closing of the case. Readers are alerted that variations in local case closing and/or redetermination practices during the study period may influence the observed results.

¹¹ A child-only case is one in which no adult is included in the assistance unit (i.e., cash assistance is being provided only to the child or children).

¹² Because of the disproportionate size of Baltimore City in terms of actual numbers of exiting cases, the table presents statewide data in two forms: with the City included and with the City excluded. References to statewide figures in the text **include** Baltimore City.

counties in the relative size of this short-spells group of exiters. In Worcester County, to illustrate, fully 83% of exiting cases had been on welfare for one year or less. At the other extreme are Prince George's County and Baltimore City. In these two jurisdictions only 53% and 55% of cases, respectively, had spells that were this short.

In 18 of 24 subdivisions (Allegany, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico and Worcester counties), two-thirds or more of all year two exiters had been receiving aid for one year or less. At the other extreme, relatively few closing cases statewide or in any jurisdiction had been on welfare continuously for more than five years. In the majority of jurisdictions (n=16 of 24) five percent or fewer of closing cases had been receiving TCA continuously for this long. Carroll and Garrett Counties had the lowest proportions of cases that had been receiving TCA continuously for more than five years, 2% each. In the remaining eight jurisdictions, between 6% and 12% of closing cases had been receiving TCA for five years or more continuously. Subdivisions with the largest proportions of long-term recipients (61 months or more of continuous receipt) were Baltimore City (12%) and Kent County (11%).

Number of Adults in the Assistance Unit

The dominant situation among year three closing cases was that of a family where only one adult was receiving TCA benefits. Statewide, more than four-fifths (82%) of all cases contained only one recipient adult. Two-adult cases were quite infrequent (2%), while cases with no adult recipient (i.e. child-only cases) discussed below, accounted for 16% of all cases which left welfare during the third year of reform.

The same pattern prevailed at the local level. In all 24 jurisdictions, assistance units with one adult dominated among year three closing cases; proportions ranged from a low of 60% of cases in Kent County to a high of 85% in Baltimore City and 84% in Dorchester County. Although two adult assistance units were a very small proportion of all exiting cases statewide (2%), they were a much larger proportion of exiting cases in a few, predominantly rural, jurisdictions. In Garrett County, one of every four closing cases (24%) contained two adults. In five other counties, more than 5% of cases contained two adults: Allegany (6%), Calvert (7%), Carroll (8%), Cecil (7%), Queen Anne's (8%), and Somerset (8%). In the remainder of the state, the percent of cases containing two adults was 5% or less.

Number of Children in the Assistance Unit

Statewide, cases closing between October 1998 - September 1999 tended to have only one (46%) or two (29%) children in the assistance unit. Overall, a bit more than one in five cases (22%) contained three or more children.

In all 24 jurisdictions, also, one child in the assistance unit was the most common situation, though again there were noticeable variations across counties. The proportions of one-child families ranged from a low of 42% of cases in Worcester County to a high of 59% in Kent County. The proportions of exiting households with three or more children on the grant ranged from a low of 11% in Kent County to a high of 25% in Prince George's County.

Child-Only Cases

Child-only cases, those in which no adult is included in the assistance unit/benefit amount, have historically represented about 10-15% of the overall cash

assistance caseload in Maryland and nationally. However, since shortly before welfare reform and continuing to the present, as traditional mother-child families have left welfare in large numbers, child-only cases have come to represent a considerably larger proportion of active cash assistance caseloads.¹³ To illustrate, in September 1999, in Maryland, child-only cases represented fully one third (33.5%) of all active TCA cases statewide and, in some counties, more than two-fifths of the entire active caseload.¹⁴ Thus, in all welfare reform research projects, including this one, we pay special attention to this type of TCA household.

Statewide during the third year of reform, child-only cases exited welfare at a rate generally consistent with their historical representation in the AFDC/TCA caseload. Overall, 16% of closing cases in the October 1998 - September 1999 period were child-only cases.

There was a great deal of variation in this proportion across the 24 local subdivisions. The lowest proportion was in Carroll County (13%). The highest proportions of child only cases were in Caroline County (30%) and Kent County (38%).

Assistance Unit Size

Statewide, closing cases in year three ranged in size from one to 13 persons. The most common situation, accounting for a plurality of cases (39%), was that of a two person assistance unit. Next most common was a three person assistance unit; a little

¹³ Dr. Donald Oellerich, ASPE-US Department of Health and Human Services and Mr. Mark Millspaugh, FIA-Maryland Department of Human Resources, Personal Communication, August 1998 and October 1998, respectively.

¹⁴ Family Investment Administration, *Core Caseload Report*, September 1999, Baltimore: Department of Human Resources, October 28, 1999.

over one-fourth of cases (26%) leaving welfare had three persons on the grant. Large assistance units were relatively uncommon among those who exited; about one in five closing cases (21%) included four or more persons on the grant.

In 23 of the state's 24 jurisdictions, two person assistance units were also most common. In these subdivisions the proportions of two person exiting cases ranged from 34% of cases in Garrett County to 42% of cases in Dorchester and St. Mary's Counties and 47% in Worcester County. The exception to this pattern was Carroll County. There were slightly more three person (37%) than two person (34%) assistance units among those who left TCA in that county during the program's third year.

Table 4. Case Characteristics By Jurisdiction - Third Year of FIP (October 1998 - September 1999)

	Allegany	Anne Arundel	Baltimore County	Calvert	Caroline	Carroll
Number of Closing Cases (Unique)	290	1,300	3,696	199	147	273
Length of Exiting Spell¹⁵						
12 months or less	74%	64%	66%	71%	71%	74%
13-24 months	13%	18%	18%	16%	11%	17%
25-36 months	3%	7%	7%	2%	5%	6%
37-48 months	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	<1%
49-60 months	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%
more than 60 months	6%	5%	4%	7%	8%	2%
Mean spell length (months)	15.97	16.88	15.29	15.96	16.88	10.86
Median spell length (months)	5.98	8.94	8.03	7.76	6.24	6.61
Range (months)	1 - 184	1 - 167	1 - 284	1 - 170	1 - 167	1 - 120
Number of Adults						
0	19%	21%	18%	15%	30%	13%
1	75%	77%	79%	78%	69%	79%
2	6%	2%	3%	7%	1%	8%
Number of Children						
0	1%	4%	2%	4%	6%	3%
1	49%	47%	48%	47%	47%	47%
2	29%	27%	30%	29%	34%	36%
3 or more	21%	22%	20%	21%	13%	14%
Child-Only Cases	19%	21%	18%	15%	30%	13%
Size of Assistance Unit						
1	14%	18%	14%	13%	24%	13%
2	40%	38%	40%	39%	39%	34%
3	25%	24%	27%	28%	26%	37%
4 or more	21%	20%	19%	21%	12%	15%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.67	2.62	2.61	2.67	2.27	2.60
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
Range	1 - 8	1 - 10	1 - 11	1 - 6	1 - 5	1 - 7

¹⁵Readers are cautioned that some jurisdictional differences in length of exiting spell may be explained by differences in case closing practices.

	Cecil	Charles	Dorchester	Frederick	Garrett	Harford	Howard
Number of Closing Cases (Unique)	312	407	270	385	163	537	342
Length of Exiting Spell							
12 months or less	75%	63%	71%	77%	77%	61%	72%
13-24 months	16%	18%	18%	12%	14%	22%	12%
25-36 months	2%	5%	4%	2%	6%	6%	6%
37-48 months	2%	4%	1%	2%	1%	5%	5%
49-60 months	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
more than 60 months	3%	6%	4%	5%	2%	5%	4%
Mean spell length (months)	11.20	19.09	13.95	14.21	10.80	17.53	14.13
Median spell length (months)	5.88	10.48	6.85	6.47	5.32	9.86	6.88
Range (months)	1 - 114	1 - 170	1 - 149	1 - 299	1 - 157	1 - 172	1 - 129
Number of Adults							
0	20%	20%	14%	21%	14%	21%	21%
1	73%	77%	84%	75%	63%	75%	76%
2	7%	3%	2%	4%	24%	4%	3%
Number of Children							
0	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	4%
1	46%	46%	46%	49%	45%	48%	48%
2	29%	31%	29%	31%	31%	29%	29%
3 or more	22%	20%	21%	18%	20%	22%	19%
Child-Only Cases	20%	20%	14%	21%	14%	21%	21%
Size of Assistance Unit							
1	17%	16%	11%	17%	9%	16%	19%
2	37%	37%	42%	37%	34%	38%	37%
3	22%	28%	29%	28%	33%	25%	26%
4 or more	24%	19%	18%	18%	25%	21%	19%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.70	2.64	2.62	2.54	2.82	2.65	2.53
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00
Range	1 - 9	1 - 8	1 - 7	1 - 7	1 - 6	1 - 8	1 - 7

	Kent	Montgomery	Prince George's	Queen Anne's	St. Mary's	Somerset	Talbot
Number of Closing Cases (Unique)	37	1,285	5,842	93	279	128	115
Length of Exiting Spell							
12 months or less	62%	66%	53%	75%	67%	73%	75%
13-24 months	11%	15%	22%	15%	17%	16%	10%
25-36 months	8%	6%	8%	5%	4%	3%	6%
37-48 months	3%	5%	5%	1%	4%	2%	3%
49-60 months	5%	3%	3%	0%	3%	2%	4%
more than 60 months	11%	5%	8%	3%	6%	3%	4%
Mean spell length (months)	19.35	16.50	21.21	11.72	17.41	12.70	14.03
Median spell length (months)	8.05	7.42	11.34	6.11	9.33	6.31	5.62
Range (months)	1 - 81	1 - 166	1 - 171	1 - 158	1 - 176	1 - 175	1 - 152
Number of Adults							
0	38%	18%	20%	19%	24%	23%	25%
1	60%	79%	78%	73%	72%	70%	70%
2	3%	3%	2%	8%	4%	8%	5%
Number of Children							
0	0%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%
1	59%	46%	45%	56%	50%	49%	51%
2	30%	28%	27%	25%	25%	27%	30%
3 or more	11%	24%	25%	16%	22%	23%	15%
Child-Only Cases	38%	18%	20%	19%	24%	23%	25%
Size of Assistance Unit							
1	24%	13%	15%	18%	16%	17%	20%
2	41%	38%	37%	41%	42%	38%	38%
3	30%	26%	24%	25%	21%	22%	27%
4 or more	5%	23%	24%	16%	21%	24%	15%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.22	2.74	2.73	2.55	2.59	2.64	2.47
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Range	1 - 6	1 - 11	1 - 11	1 - 7	1 - 7	1 - 8	1 - 7

	Washington	Wicomico	Worcester	Baltimore City	Maryland with Balt City	Maryland without Balt City
Number of Closing Cases (Unique)	500	718	195	20,484	37,997	17,513
Length of Exiting Spell						
12 months or less	78%	71%	83%	55%	59%	63%
13-24 months	12%	16%	6%	17%	18%	18%
25-36 months	4%	4%	4%	7%	7%	7%
37-48 months	2%	2%	2%	4%	4%	4%
49-60 months	1%	3%	1%	3%	3%	2%
more than 60 months	3%	4%	5%	12%	9%	6%
Mean spell length (months)	12.21	13.85	11.87	26.42	22.18	17.22
Median spell length (months)	5.49	6.47	5.46	11.11	9.96	8.84
Range (months)	1 - 235	1 - 176	1 - 169	1 - 312	1 - 312	1 - 299
Number of Adults						
0	16%	16%	15%	14%	16%	19%
1	80%	81%	80%	85%	82%	78%
2	5%	3%	5%	1%	2%	3%
Number of Children						
0	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%
1	46%	42%	56%	46%	46%	46%
2	27%	32%	24%	28%	29%	29%
3 or more	22%	21%	17%	23%	22%	22%
Child-Only Cases	16%	16%	15%	14%	16%	19%
Size of Assistance Unit						
1	14%	14%	13%	12%	13%	15%
2	38%	37%	47%	40%	39%	38%
3	25%	28%	25%	27%	26%	26%
4 or more	23%	21%	15%	22%	21%	21%
Mean Assistance Unit Size	2.68	2.67	2.50	2.71	2.69	2.66
Median Assistance Unit Size	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Range	1 - 7	1 - 10	1 - 7	1 - 13	1 - 13	1 - 11

Characteristics of Exiting Payees: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses

For purposes of describing the universe of cases which left cash assistance in the third year of reform, we are also able to profile exiting payees on certain demographic characteristics. Specifically, these new data permit us to describe payees' gender, racial/ethnic group, age, age at first birth and age of the youngest child in the payee's assistance unit. These data for the state and each subdivision are presented in Table 5, following this discussion.¹⁶

Gender of Payee

The vast majority of cases leaving welfare in the third year were headed by women. The payee was female in more than nine out of ten exiting cases (95.7%). Statewide, male payees were a very small minority; fewer than one in twenty cases was headed by a man (4.3%).

In all 24 jurisdictions, cases headed by female payees also predominate, accounting for more than nine of ten exiting cases in year three. However some variation does exist. The proportion of cases headed by a female ranges from a low of 91.7% in Allegany County to a high of 97.3% in Kent County.

Racial/Ethnic Group of Payee

Statewide, almost four-fifths (79.0%) of exiting cases in year three were headed by an African-American payee. The payee was Caucasian in almost one-fifth of cases

¹⁶ Because of the disproportionate size of Baltimore City in terms of actual numbers of exiting cases, the table presents statewide data in two forms: with the City included and with the City excluded. References to statewide figures in the text **include** Baltimore City.

(19.3%). Statewide, fewer than 2% of exiting cases had a payee who was a member of another racial/ethnic group.

On this dimension, there was great variation at the jurisdictional level. To illustrate, the proportion of Caucasian payees ranged from a high of 100% in the remote Western Maryland County of Garrett, to a low of 5.5% in Prince George's County and 9.7% in Baltimore City.¹⁷ Caucasian payees were the majority in eight counties (Allegany, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Queen Anne's and Washington). In contrast, African American payees were the majority in 16 jurisdictions (Baltimore City and the counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Charles, Dorchester, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester).

Age of Payee

Statewide, the average exiting payee in year three was in her early thirties (mean 33 years, median 32 years). Payee s ages range from 18 to 90 years of age. In year three, about two in ten exiting payees were over age 40.

Very little jurisdictional variation was found in the mean age of exiting payees. Average ages range from 31 years (31.05) in Washington County to 35 years (34.83) in Howard County. However, the proportion of cases headed by payees over age 40 did vary widely across subdivisions. In Kent and Somerset Counties, almost three in ten (29.7% and 29.1% respectively) exiting cases were headed by someone over the age

¹⁷ For the most part, these sub-state differences appear to be consistent with general patterns in the ethnic composition of the counties' populations.

of 40. In contrast, in Dorchester and Garrett Counties, fewer than two in ten cases were headed by a payee over age 40 (18.9% and 18.2%, respectively).

Age at First Birth¹⁸

Statewide, the average payee was about 21 years old at the birth of her first child. Fifty percent of exiting payees are estimated to have had their first child before the age of 20 and about one in four (26.3%) before the age of 18.

The jurisdictional analysis shows considerable variation in the estimated age at first birth; the range is from 20 years in Wicomico County to 23 years in Howard and Montgomery Counties. The proportion of births before age 18 also varies greatly across counties, from a low of about 15% in Carroll and Howard Counties (14.7% and 14.5% respectively) to a high of about 40.2% in Somerset County. In all jurisdictions, more than four in ten first births were before age 21. The proportion of first births before age 21 was lowest in Howard County (45.9%) and highest in the Eastern Shore counties of Wicomico (67.4%), Somerset (66.7%), and Dorchester (66.4%).

Age of Youngest Child

The average age of the youngest child in year three exiting families was 5.69 years, statewide. Children in exiting cases ranged from those under one month of age, to those 18 years of age. The median or midpoint age was about 4½ years; almost four in ten (38.5%) were under age three.

¹⁸ Estimates of age at first birth for female payees were calculated using the payee's date of birth and the date of birth of her oldest child included in the assistance unit. Our calculations underestimate the prevalence of early child-bearing if payees have another older child who is not in the assistance unit.

Across jurisdictions, the average age of the youngest child ranged from 4.50 years (Washington County) to 6.28 years (Queen Anne's County). The proportion of cases including at least one child under age three varied from about one in three (34.4%) in Queen Anne's County to more than half (53.4%) in Washington County.

Table 5. Household Characteristics By Jurisdiction - Third Year of FIP (October 1998 - September 1999)¹⁹

	Allegany	Anne Arundel	Baltimore County	Calvert	Caroline	Carroll
Unique Case Closings	290	1,300	3,696	199	147	273
Head of Household						
%Female	91.7	95.5	95.3	95.5	94.5	93.8
%Male	8.3	4.5	4.7	4.5	5.5	6.2
% African-American	9.5	52.9	59.4	54.2	51.4	11.6
% Caucasian	90.5	44.6	38.8	44.7	47.9	84.9
Age of Payee						
Mean	31.93	33.94	33.16	34.25	34.74	32.41
Median	30.74	31.88	31.16	33.03	32.04	31.64
Std. Dev.	10.46	11.28	10.64	11.60	13.41	9.85
Range (years)	18 - 65	18 - 84	18 - 83	18 - 83	18 - 83	18 - 73
% over age 40	19.3	23.9	21.6	24.1	28.6	21.3
Estimated Age at First Birth						
Mean	21.35	22.43	21.98	22.13	20.84	22.41
Median	20.03	20.82	20.40	20.72	19.91	20.86
Std. Dev.	4.23	5.44	5.38	5.38	4.82	5.29
Range (years)	14 - 39	14 - 43	14 - 48	14 - 41	14 - 41	15 - 49
% who gave birth before 18	16.2	19.2	21.2	18.6	26.7	14.7
% who gave birth before 21	59.0	51.4	55.0	53.9	61.9	51.5
Age of youngest child						
Mean	4.96	5.25	5.42	6.02	6.02	5.43
Median	3.02	3.26	3.80	5.10	4.61	4.29
Std. Dev.	4.96	5.02	4.75	4.64	5.20	4.77
Range	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 17 yrs
% cases with a child under 3	49.8	48.5	43.1	34.8	41.3	43.6

¹⁹Valid percent is used. Due to missing data for some cases on some variables, n does not always equal the unique closing cases total reported under the heading for each jurisdiction.

	Cecil	Charles	Dorchester	Frederick	Garrett	Harford	Howard
Unique Case Closings	312	407	270	385	163	537	342
Head of Household							
%Female	92.3	95.8	96.3	96.6	94.4	95.9	94.7
%Male	7.7	4.2	3.7	3.4	5.6	4.1	5.3
% African-American	18.5	65.4	77.6	40.9	0.0	42.7	62.5
% Caucasian	79.9	32.8	20.9	55.1	100.0	54.1	30.8
Age of Payee							
Mean	32.97	33.05	32.12	33.35	31.60	33.37	34.83
Median	31.67	31.81	29.59	31.00	29.92	31.82	32.57
Std. Dev.	9.77	10.05	10.98	11.47	10.25	10.93	11.33
Range (years)	18 - 70	18 - 74	18 - 79	18 - 75	18 - 66	18 - 74	19 - 80
% over age 40	20.5	22.1	18.9	23.9	18.2	21.6	26.4
Estimated Age at First Birth							
Mean	21.47	22.27	20.56	22.97	21.70	21.73	23.13
Median	19.99	20.37	19.27	20.76	20.18	20.35	21.54
Std. Dev.	4.52	5.73	4.61	6.37	4.63	5.08	5.47
Range (years)	15 - 36	13 - 46	14 - 39	13 - 44	16 - 39	14 - 43	14 - 41
% who gave birth before 18	19.4	20.2	30.5	17.2	17.8	21.1	14.5
% who gave birth before 21	58.7	55.5	66.4	53.2	60.0	55.6	45.9
Age of youngest child							
Mean	5.27	5.35	5.57	4.60	5.37	5.23	5.89
Median	4.03	3.76	4.63	2.82	3.73	3.36	4.58
Std. Dev.	4.63	4.64	4.61	4.57	4.77	4.89	4.94
Range	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs
% cases with a child under 3	40.5	43.0	40.6	51.6	46.2	47.4	40.6

	Kent	Montgomery	Prince George's	Queen Anne's	St. Mary's	Somerset	Talbot
Unique Case Closings	37	1,285	5,842	93	279	128	115
Head of Household							
%Female	97.3	96.1	95.9	97.8	92.1	96.9	90.4
%Male	2.7	3.9	4.1	2.2	7.9	3.1	9.6
% African-American	72.2	66.6	92.8	47.8	55.7	72.0	69.6
% Caucasian	25.0	18.2	5.5	52.2	43.2	27.2	28.6
Age of Payee							
Mean	34.51	34.30	34.14	33.44	33.41	33.44	33.30
Median	33.57	32.92	32.34	30.75	30.50	31.18	31.40
Std. Dev.	11.51	10.32	10.98	11.50	12.17	11.59	11.14
Range (years)	20 - 57	18 - 78	18 - 83	19 - 70	18 - 78	18 - 63	19 - 66
% over age 40	29.7	25.9	23.5	21.5	23.0	29.1	26.1
Estimated Age at First Birth							
Mean	21.89	23.13	21.77	21.30	21.10	20.87	21.26
Median	20.06	21.56	20.24	20.33	19.71	18.74	19.99
Std. Dev.	5.13	5.93	5.36	5.63	4.81	5.70	4.80
Range (years)	15 - 34	13 - 47	13 - 49	15 - 45	14 - 40	14 - 36	15 - 37
% who gave birth before 18	26.7	16.9	23.1	25.0	26.6	40.2	25.6
% who gave birth before 21	56.7	46.1	57.2	60.5	64.0	66.7	60.5
Age of youngest child							
Mean	5.49	5.43	5.80	6.28	5.45	5.92	5.03
Median	2.65	3.94	4.75	4.81	3.90	4.48	3.94
Std. Dev.	5.90	4.71	4.49	5.19	4.76	5.32	4.74
Range	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs
% cases with a child under 3	50.0	42.2	35.5	34.4	42.6	41.5	44.1

	Washington	Wicomico	Worcester	Baltimore City	Maryland with Balt City	Maryland without Balt City
Unique Case Closings	500	718	195	20,484	37,997	17,513
Head of Household						
%Female	95.6	96.1	96.9	96.0	95.7	95.5
%Male	4.4	3.9	3.1	4.0	4.3	4.5
% African-American	24.4	72.9	56.5	89.6	79.0	66.7
% Caucasian	72.4	26.3	41.4	9.7	19.3	30.4
Age of Payee						
Mean	31.05	31.25	32.76	32.89	33.17	33.50
Median	29.50	28.61	31.86	31.33	31.52	31.72
Std. Dev.	10.01	10.62	11.85	10.66	10.77	10.89
Range (years)	18 - 68	18 - 77	18 - 84	18 - 90	18 - 90	18 - 84
% over age 40	16.3	17.0	23.2	20.7	21.6	22.6
Estimated Age at First Birth						
Mean	21.31	20.46	22.27	21.32	21.60	21.92
Median	20.03	19.34	20.39	19.62	19.98	20.35
Std. Dev.	4.54	4.66	5.76	5.49	5.45	5.37
Range (years)	14 - 41	13 - 48	15 - 44	13 - 50	13 - 50	13 - 49
% who gave birth before 18	20.7	31.9	22.2	30.2	26.3	21.7
% who gave birth before 21	61.5	67.4	56.9	61.4	58.9	55.9
Age of youngest child						
Mean	4.50	5.05	5.50	5.87	5.69	5.49
Median	2.52	3.31	4.11	4.66	4.41	4.09
Std. Dev.	4.53	4.69	4.97	4.60	4.65	4.70
Range	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs	<1 mo - 18 yrs
% cases with a child under 3	53.4	46.9	43.0	36.0	38.5	41.5

Administrative Reasons for Case Closure: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses

As noted in all of our welfare leavers research reports, the reasons why families leave welfare are many and varied. Administrative data systems must attempt to capture this complexity and diversity in pre-determined, standardized codes. Our reports have also documented that case closing codes sometimes do not paint a full picture of why cash assistance cases close. Most notably, we have found that far more clients leave welfare for work than are known to the welfare agency as doing so. This situation often results when the client fails to keep a redetermination appointment or to provide requested information, but does not inform the agency that (s)he has secured a job.^{20, 21} The caveats about administrative case closing reasons notwithstanding, it is still instructive to examine statewide and local case closure patterns for the third full year of reform. These data are particularly useful in illustrating the extent to which full-family sanctioning was used during reform's third year.

Top Five Case Closing Reasons: Statewide Data

Table 6, following this discussion, presents the top five administrative reasons for year three cash assistance case closings for the universe of exiting cases statewide and, separately, for each of the state's 24 local subdivisions. Statewide, two reasons for closure predominate: failure to reapply/complete the redetermination process (n=12,959 or 34.2%) and income above limit/started work (n=8,864 or 23.4%). In years

²⁰ See, for example, University of Maryland School of Social Work, *Life After Welfare: Third Interim Report*, March 1999 for a fuller discussion of this topic.

²¹ Because transitional benefits are available to those who leave welfare for work/higher earnings, efforts are underway to educate clients and reinforce to front-line staff the importance and benefits of focusing on employment at the time of case exit/closure.

one and two of reform these were also the top two reasons, but in reverse order. The seeming flip in year three is largely a Baltimore City phenomenon due mostly to the City's now discontinued practice of scheduling TCA redeterminations at four month, rather than less frequent, intervals. Of the 12,959 cases closed in year three for failure to reapply/ complete redetermination fully 62.2% (n=8,055) were Baltimore City cases.²²

The third most common reason for case closure during the third complete year of reform was failure to give eligibility information (n=5,297 or 14.0%). Together, these three reasons accounted for slightly more than seven of every ten closures during the 12 month period (n=27,120 or 71.6%). Statewide, the fourth most common reason for case closure in reform's third year was failure to comply with work requirements (n=3,819 or 10.1%) - that is, case closure because of the agency's imposition of a work-related full family sanction. Rounding out the top five statewide closing reasons in year three was case closure at the request of the client (n=1,624 or 4.3%). Altogether, these top five reasons accounted for more than four-fifths (n=32,563 or 86.0%) of all case closures during the 12 month period.

Top Five Case Closing Reasons: Jurisdictional Data

Jurisdiction-specific patterns in the use of various administrative case closing reasons were generally similar to the statewide pattern. In 20 of the state's 24 jurisdictions, the most common reason for case closure was income above limit. There was considerable variation across jurisdictions, however, in the proportions of

²²Prince George's County, which also experimented with a 4-month redetermination cycle, accounted for another 2,760 or 20.6% of year three cases closed for failure to reapply/no redet. Together, the county and Baltimore City represented 82.8% or 10,725 of the 12,959 cases closed in year three for this reason.

cases closed for this reason, ranging from a high of 51.6% and 45.9% of all closures in Queen Anne's and Kent Counties on the Eastern Shore to a low of 17.7% of closures in Prince George's County.²³

In three jurisdictions (Baltimore City, Prince George's and St. Mary's Counties) the most common reason for case closure in year three was failure to reapply/complete the redetermination process. In St. Mary's County, three in ten cases closed with this reason (n=85 or 30.5%). In Prince George's County more than two of every five closures (n=2,670 or 45.8%) were for this reason, as were almost two of every five (n=8,055 or 39.5%) in Baltimore City. These latter two jurisdictions are those with the largest welfare caseloads and the largest number of case closures in year three.

Anne Arundel County was unique among the state's subdivisions in year three in that the most often used case closing reason was the client's failure to provide eligibility information. About three of every 10 closures in this county during the October 1998 - September 1999 period (n=402 or 31.1%) were for this reason.

We also examined which case closing reasons appeared most often in the top five lists across jurisdictions. One reason, income above limit (the work/earnings-related closure code), shows up in the top five list in all 24 subdivisions. The assistance unit's request for case closure and the client's failure to reapply/complete the redetermination process appear in the top five lists for 20 and 18 of the 24 jurisdictions, respectively. Notably, case closures for non-compliance with work are among the five most common closure reasons in 21 of 24 subdivisions (all but the counties of Harford, St. Mary's and Wicomico).

²³ This last finding may not be unrelated to the fact that, according to 1990 census data, 44.9% of all workers in Prince George's County work out of state.

Table 6. Top Reasons for Case Closure²⁴

Jurisdiction	Top 5 Closing Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Maryland	Failure to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	12,959	34.2%
	Income Above Limit/Started Work	8,864	23.4%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	5,297	14.0%
	Work Sanction	3,819	10.1%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	1,624	4.3%
Allegany	Income Above Limit/Started Work	115	39.7%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	47	16.2%
	Work Sanction	43	14.8%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	18	6.2%
	No Eligible Child	14	4.8%
Anne Arundel	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	402	31.1%
	Income Above Limit/Started Work	270	20.9%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	231	17.9%
	Work Sanction	170	13.2%
	No Eligible Child	56	4.3%
Baltimore County	Income Above Limit/Started Work	1,048	28.4%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	969	26.3%
	Work Sanction	613	16.6%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	445	12.1%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	175	4.7%
Calvert	Income Above Limit/Started Work	77	38.7%
	Work Sanction	30	15.1%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	28	14.1%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	22	11.1%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	15	7.5%
Caroline	Income Above Limit/Started Work	58	39.5%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	24	16.3%
	Work Sanction	15	10.2%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	13	8.8%
	Residency	10	6.8%
Carroll	Income Above Limit/Started Work	108	39.6%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	61	22.3%
	Work Sanction	32	11.7%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	30	11.0%
	Child Support Sanction	7	2.6%
Cecil	Income Above Limit/Started Work	93	29.8%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	48	15.4%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	45	14.4%
	Work Sanction	41	13.1%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	29	9.3%

²⁴ Some jurisdictions have six closing reasons listed if the fifth most common closing reason had two reasons for closure with an equal number of associated cases.

Jurisdiction	Top 5 Closing Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Charles	Income Above Limit/Started Work	118	29.0%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	115	28.3%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	41	10.1%
	Work Sanction	38	9.3%
	No Eligible Child	36	8.8%
Dorchester	Income Above Limit/Started Work	88	32.6%
	Work Sanction	53	19.6%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	35	13.0%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	31	11.5%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	29	10.7%
Frederick	Income Above Limit/Started Work	163	42.3%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	54	14.0%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	41	10.6%
	Work Sanction	38	9.9%
	No Eligible Child	34	8.8%
Garrett	Income Above Limit/Started Work	72	44.2%
	Work Sanction	24	14.7%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	16	9.8%
	No Eligible Child	10	6.1%
	No Eligible Members	9	5.5%
Harford	Income Above Limit/Started Work	203	37.8%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	102	19.0%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	74	13.8%
	No Eligible Child	41	7.6%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	38	7.1%
Howard	Income Above Limit/Started Work	137	40.1%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	45	13.2%
	Work Sanction	44	12.9%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	37	10.8%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	27	7.9%
Kent	Income Above Limit/Started Work	17	45.9%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	5	13.5%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	3	8.1%
	Work Sanction	2	5.4%
	Child Support Sanction	2	5.4%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	2	5.4%
Montgomery	Income Above Limit/Started Work	467	36.4%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	270	21.1%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	162	12.6%
	Work Sanction	83	6.5%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	83	6.5%

Jurisdiction	Top 5 Closing Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Prince George s	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	2,670	45.8%
	Income Above Limit/Started Work	1,035	17.7%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	539	9.2%
	Work Sanction	475	8.1%
	Child Support Sanction	279	4.8%
Queen Anne s	Income Above Limit/Started Work	48	51.6%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	13	14.0%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	12	12.9%
	No Eligible Child	7	7.5%
	Work Sanction	6	6.5%
St. Mary s	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	85	30.5%
	Income Above Limit/Started Work	76	27.2%
	Non-Cooperation with Eligibility Process	27	9.7%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	19	6.8%
	No Eligible Child	14	5.0%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	14	5.0%
Somerset	Income Above Limit/Started Work	39	30.5%
	Work Sanction	23	18.0%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	17	13.3%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	17	13.3%
	No Eligible Child	9	7.0%
Talbot	Income Above Limit/Started Work	51	44.7%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	15	13.2%
	Work Sanction	9	7.9%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	8	7.0%
	No Eligible Child	6	5.3%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	6	5.3%
Washington	Income Above Limit/Started Work	184	36.9%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	89	17.9%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	57	11.4%
	Work Sanction	48	9.6%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	46	9.2%
Wicomico	Income Above Limit/Started Work	279	39.0%
	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	128	17.9%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	109	15.2%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	49	6.8%
	Whereabouts Unknown	34	4.7%
Worcester	Income Above Limit/Started Work	88	45.1%
	Non-Cooperation with Eligibility Process	23	11.8%
	Work Sanction	19	9.7%
	Assistance Unit Requested Closure	18	9.2%
	Residency	13	6.7%
Baltimore City	Failed to Reapply/Complete Redetermination	8,055	39.5%
	Income Above Limit/Started Work	4,030	19.8%
	Failed to Give Eligibility Information	3,132	15.4%
	Work Sanction	1,956	9.6%
	No Eligible Child	630	3.1%

Full Family Sanctions: Statewide and Jurisdictional Analyses

Maryland imposes a full family sanction - termination of the entire cash assistance benefit - when the adult recipient(s) does not comply with work participation requirements or cooperate with child support enforcement. There is a mandatory 30 day conciliation period before the first full family sanction can be imposed, but state law requires a full, rather than partial, sanction upon the first instance of non-compliance.²⁵

Full Family Sanctions: Statewide Data

Following this discussion, Table 7 illustrates the frequency with which work and child support full family sanctions were used statewide and in each of the 24 subdivisions during the third full year of reform. The table shows that Maryland continues to make generally sparing use of these new, stringent penalties. Statewide, just a little more than 10% of all year three closures (n=4,444 of 37,997 or 11.7%) were due to full-family sanctioning.²⁶

Consistent with the pattern observed in the first two years of reform, virtually all sanctions were for non-compliance with work. Specifically, among all case closures statewide, 10.1% (n=3,819) were work-related full family sanctions and 1.6% (n=625) were full family sanctions for non-cooperation with child support. Put another way, of all

²⁵Full family sanctioning is also used for non-compliance with certain substance abuse requirements; these are not discussed in today's report, primarily because there have been very few such sanctions imposed to date.

²⁶ For a more detailed description of sanctioned families see: Born, C. E., Caudill, P. J., & Cordero, M. L. (November 1999). *Life After Welfare: A Look at Sanctioned Families*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work.

full family sanctions imposed during the third year of reform, 86% were work sanctions and 14% were child support sanctions.

Full Family Sanctions: Jurisdictional Data

As was true in the first two years of reform, the use of work- and child support-related full family sanctions varied widely across the state during reform's third year. In all 24 jurisdictions, however, work sanctions were more common than child support sanctions.

The highest rates of work sanctions in year three were the counties of: Dorchester (n=53 or 19.6%), Somerset (n=23 or 18.0%), Baltimore (n=613 or 16.6%) and Calvert (n=30 or 15.1%); in each of these four counties 15% or more of year three closures occurred for this reason. Full family sanctioning for work was most infrequent in Wicomico (n=19 or 2.6%) and St. Mary's Counties (n=4 or 1.4%).

Sanctions for non-cooperation with child support were quite rare statewide during the third year of reform, but intra-state variations were evident. Jurisdictions with the highest proportions of child support sanctions were the counties of Howard (n=13 or 3.8%), Prince George's (n=279 or 4.8%) and Kent (n=2 or 5.4%). In four counties (Anne Arundel, Cecil, Queen Anne's and Somerset) there were no reported closures for non-cooperation with child support in the third year of reform.

Table 7. Full Family Sanctions: October 1998 - September 1999.

	Full Family Sanctions	Frequency	Percent
Maryland	Work Child Support	3,819 625	10.1% 1.6%
Allegany	Work Child Support	43 2	14.8% 0.7%
Anne Arundel	Work Child Support	170 0	13.1% 0.0%
Baltimore County	Work Child Support	613 28	16.6% 0.8%
Calvert	Work Child Support	30 1	15.1% 0.5%
Caroline	Work Child Support	15 2	10.2% 1.4%
Carroll	Work Child Support	32 7	11.7% 2.6%
Cecil	Work Child Support	41 0	13.1% 0.0%
Charles	Work Child Support	38 2	9.3% 0.5%
Dorchester	Work Child Support	53 4	19.6% 1.5%
Frederick	Work Child Support	38 1	9.9% 0.3%
Garrett	Work Child Support	24 2	14.7% 1.2%
Harford	Work Child Support	34 5	6.3% 0.9%
Howard	Work Child Support	44 13	12.9% 3.8%

	Full Family Sanctions	Frequency	Percent
Kent	Work Child Support	2 2	5.4% 5.4%
Montgomery	Work Child Support	83 24	6.5% 1.9%
Prince George s	Work Child Support	475 279	8.1% 4.8%
Queen Anne s	Work Child Support	6 0	6.5% 0.0%
St. Mary s	Work Child Support	4 1	1.4% 0.4%
Somerset	Work Child Support	23 0	18.0% 0.0%
Talbot	Work Child Support	9 3	7.8% 2.6%
Washington	Work Child Support	48 3	9.6% 0.6%
Wicomico	Work Child Support	19 15	2.6% 2.1%
Worcester	Work Child Support	19 1	9.7% 0.5%
Baltimore City	Work Child Support	1,956 230	9.5% 1.1%

Conclusions

This paper provides descriptive information on the entire universe of 37,997 cases which exited cash assistance during the period October 1998 - September 1999, the third full year of welfare reform in Maryland. The report provides statewide data, but also separate information for each of the state's 24 local jurisdictions. Separate reports have been issued previously presenting comparable information for the first and second years of reform.²⁷

The third year data do not reveal any drastically different trends from those observed during the first two years nor do they suggest any new areas in need of attention or concern. While the total number of exiting cases, as expected, is less in year three (n=37,997) than in years two (n=40,773) or one (n=41,212), general exiting patterns and case/payee characteristics are quite similar in all three years.

Today's report is similar to prior ones as well in its documentation that Baltimore City's welfare reform experiences, to date, have not paralleled those of the 23 counties. It is beyond the scope of this paper to ascertain the no doubt myriad reasons why the universe data continue to show Baltimore City as an outlier compared to the 23 counties. We do conclude, however, as we have in previous reports that attention to the progress and practice of welfare reform in Baltimore City simply must be a matter of widespread concern and attention. Given the City's disproportionate share of today's

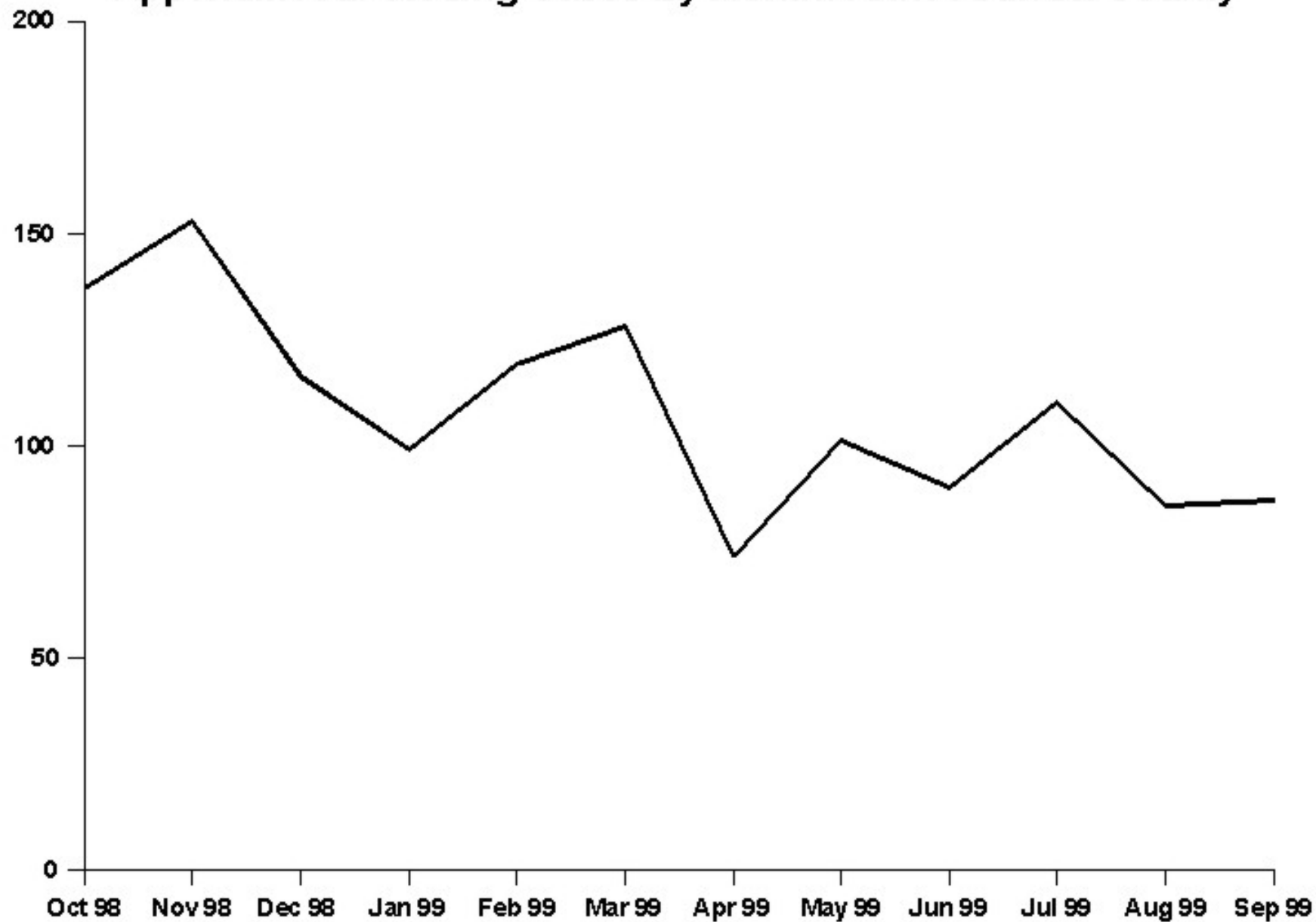
²⁷ See: Welfare and Child Support Research and Training Group. (April, 1998). *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The First Year of FIP* and (June, 1999). *Caseload Exits at the Local Level: The Second Year of FIP*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Social Work.

active cash assistance caseload (conservatively, about three-fifths of the statewide total), the slower pace of exits in the City compared to the counties, and the looming presence of the five year threshold, among other things, our continued success in welfare reform as a state will depend heavily on actions and accomplishments in Baltimore City.

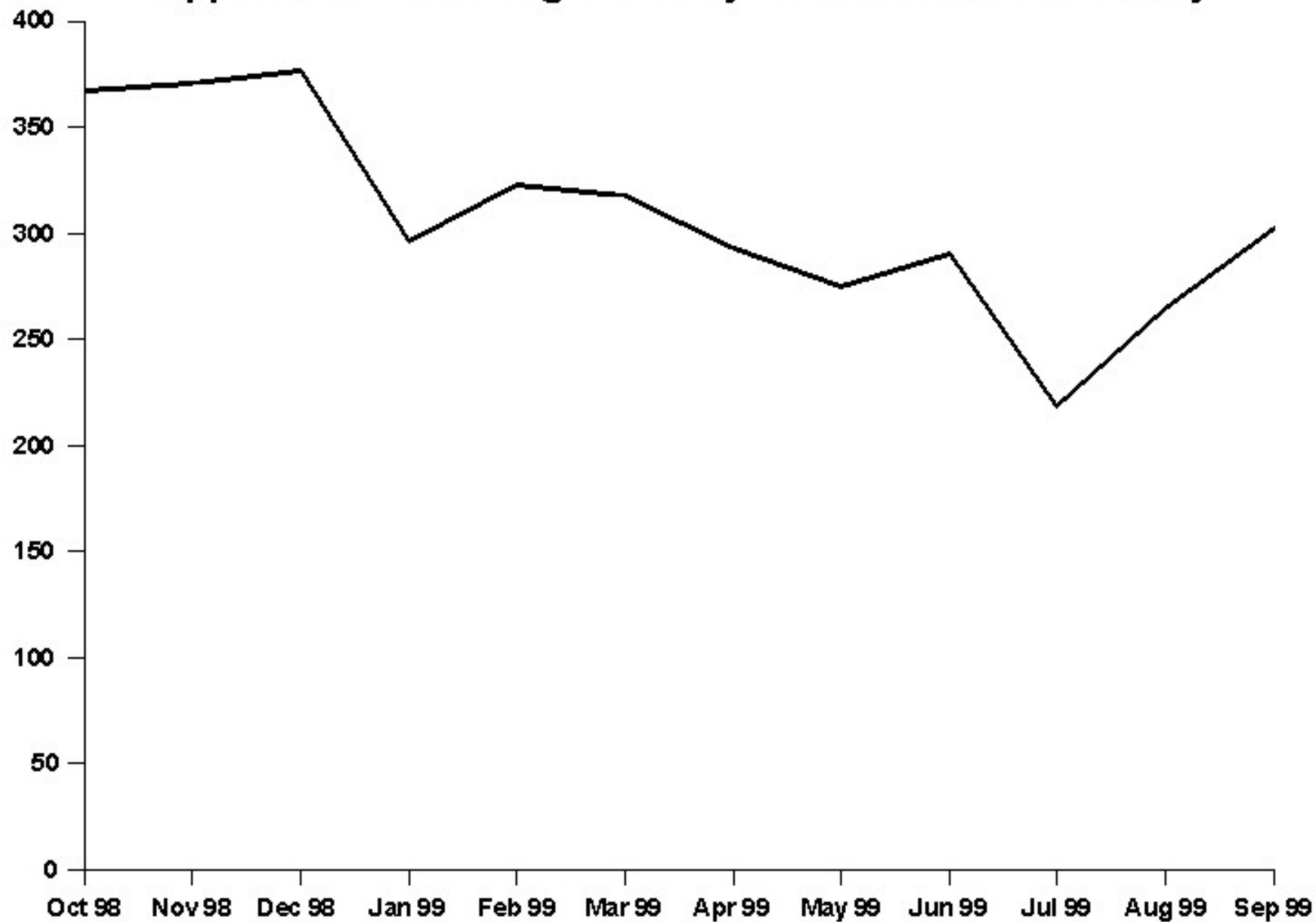
Appendix A-1. Closing Cases By Month: Allegany County



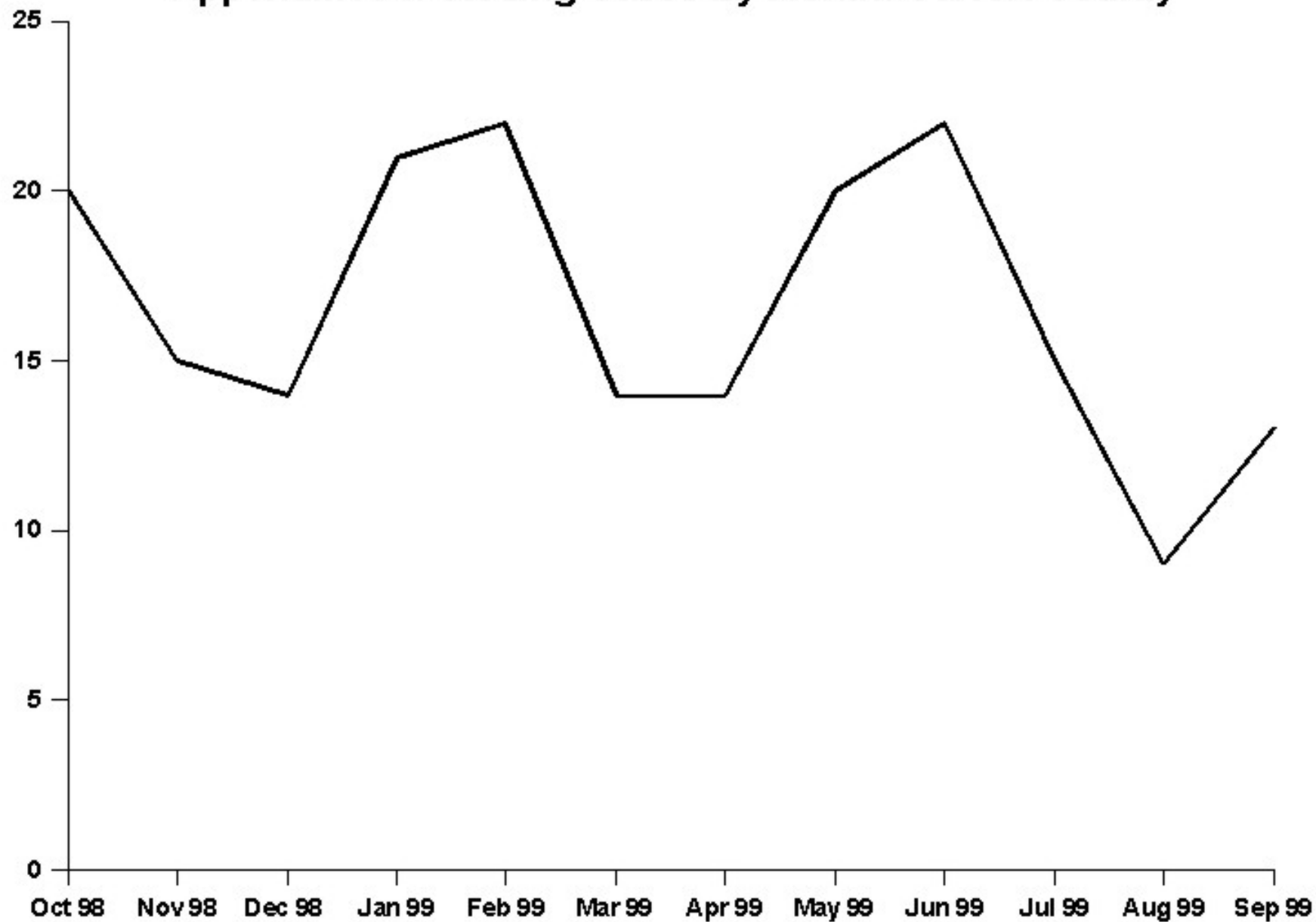
Appendix A-2. Closing Cases By Month: Anne Arundel County



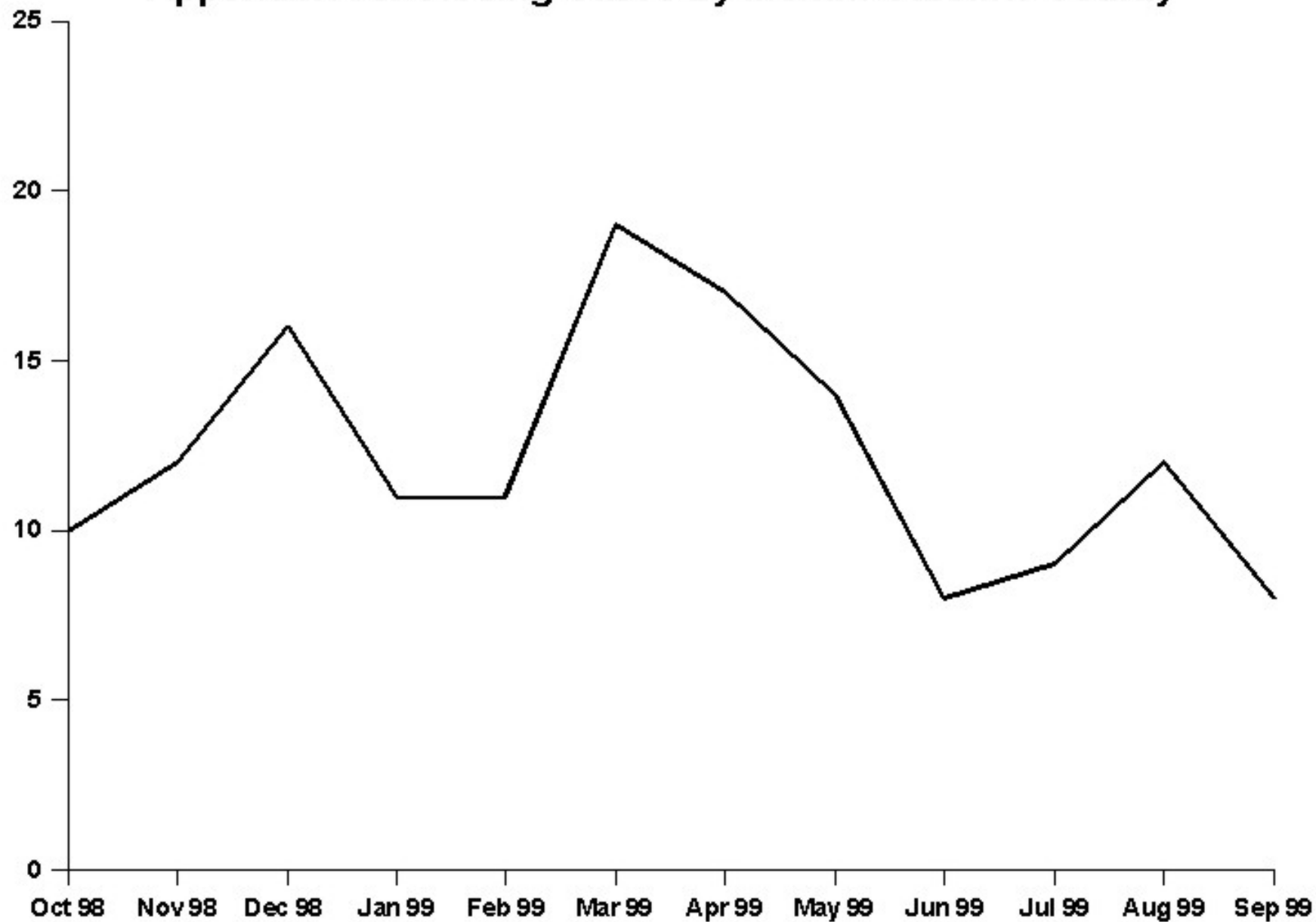
Appendix A-3. Closing Cases By Month: Baltimore County



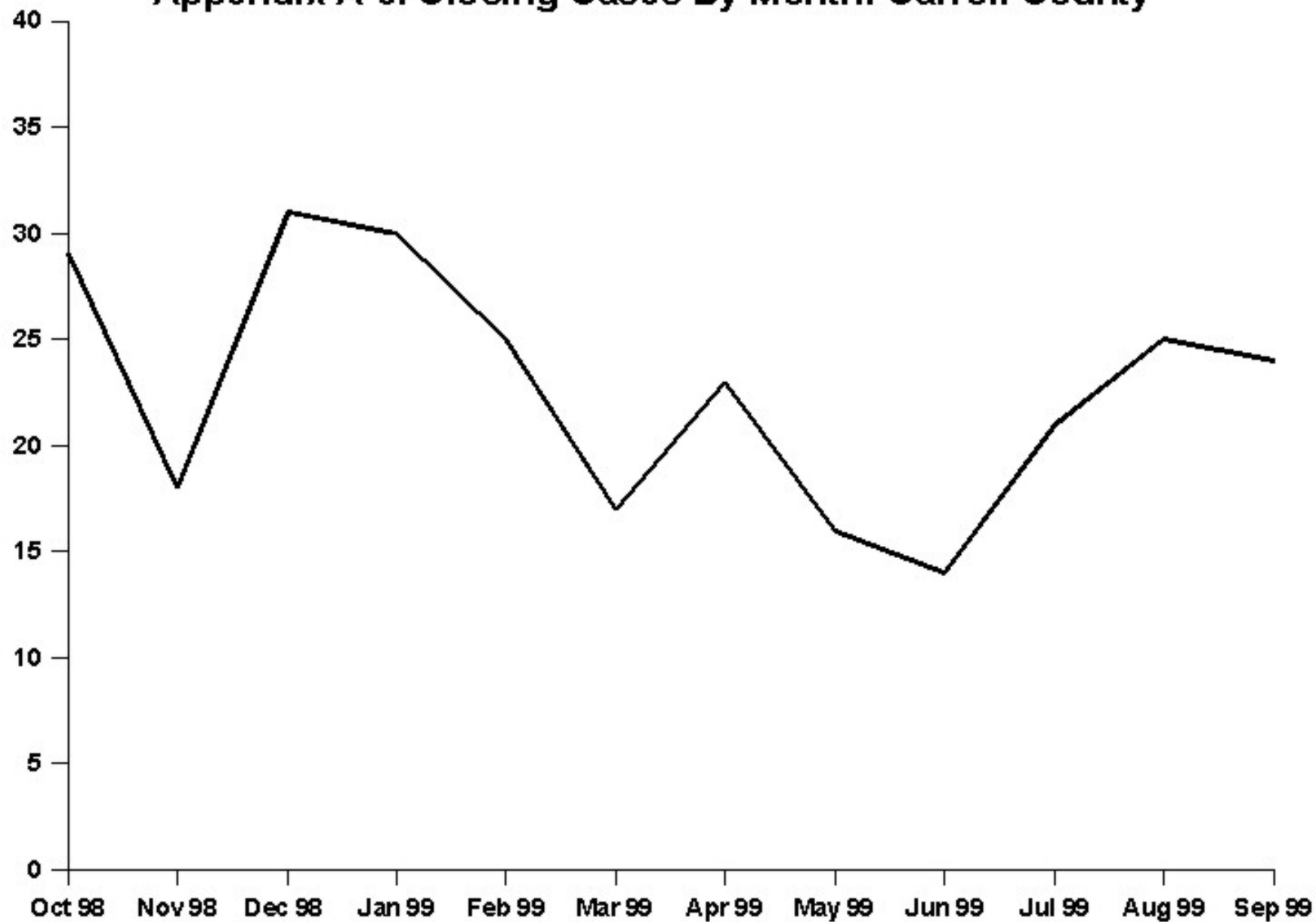
Appendix A-4. Closing Cases By Month: Calvert County



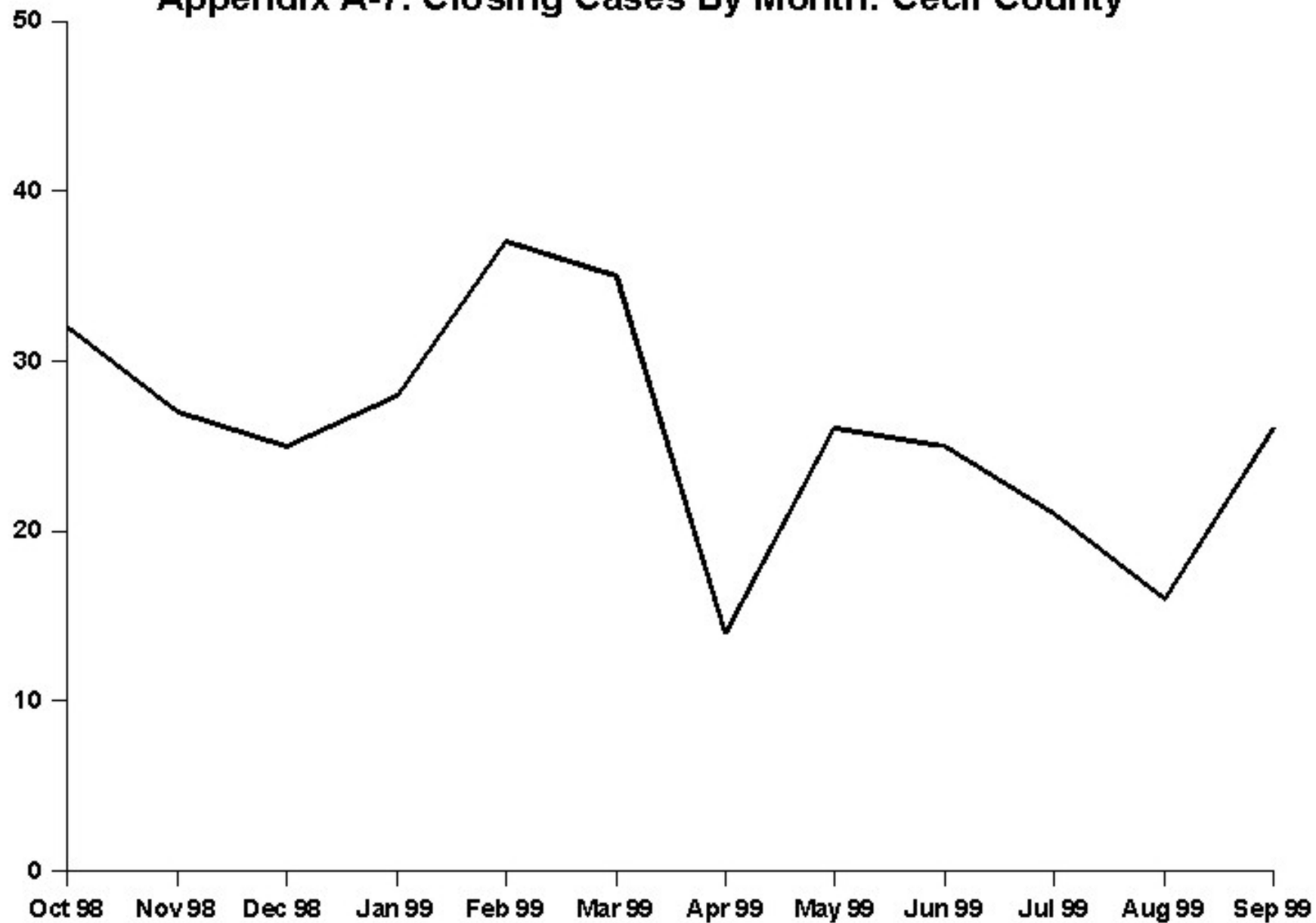
Appendix A-5. Closing Cases By Month: Caroline County



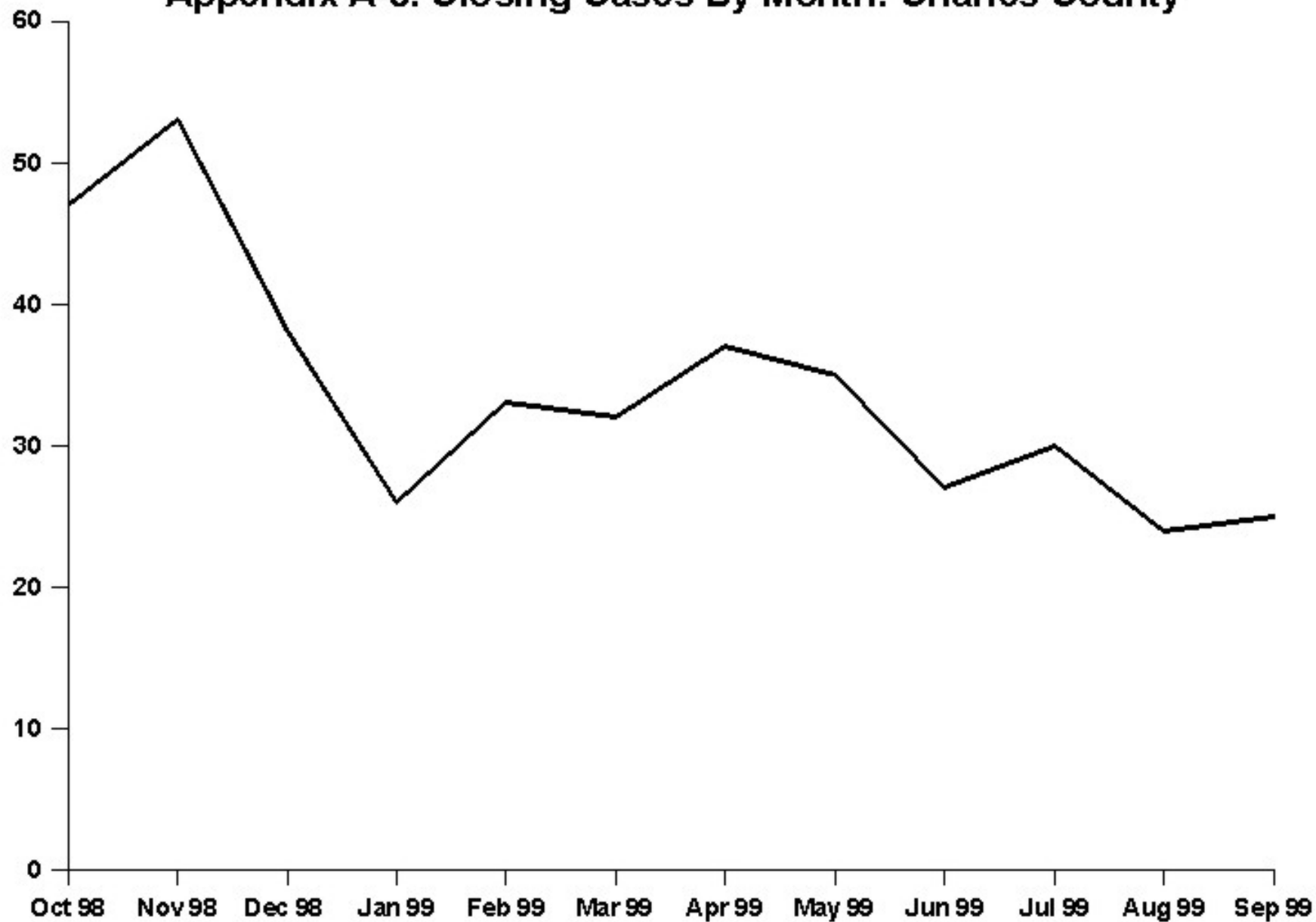
Appendix A-6. Closing Cases By Month: Carroll County



Appendix A-7. Closing Cases By Month: Cecil County



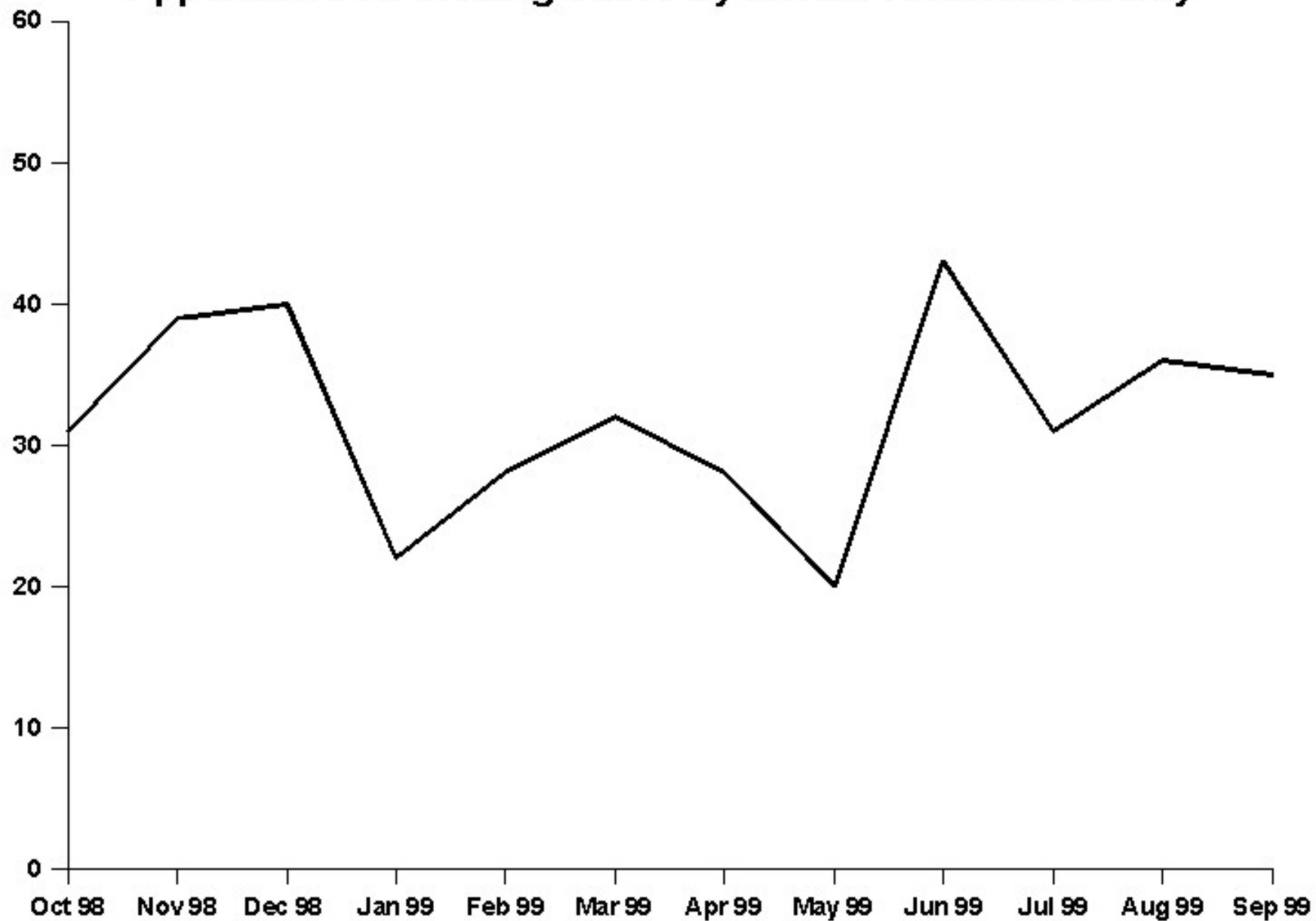
Appendix A-8. Closing Cases By Month: Charles County



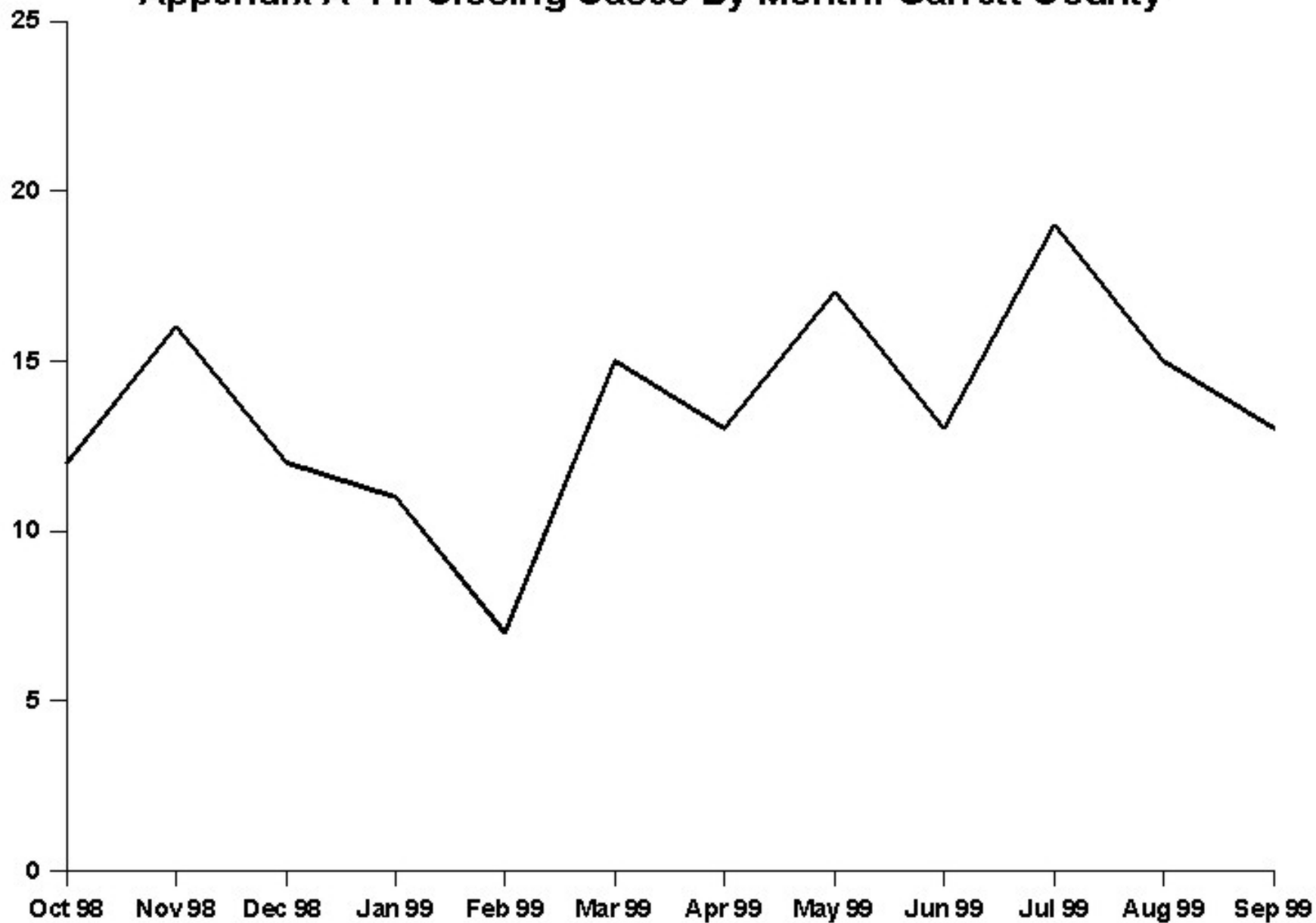
Appendix A-9. Closing Cases By Month: Dorchester County



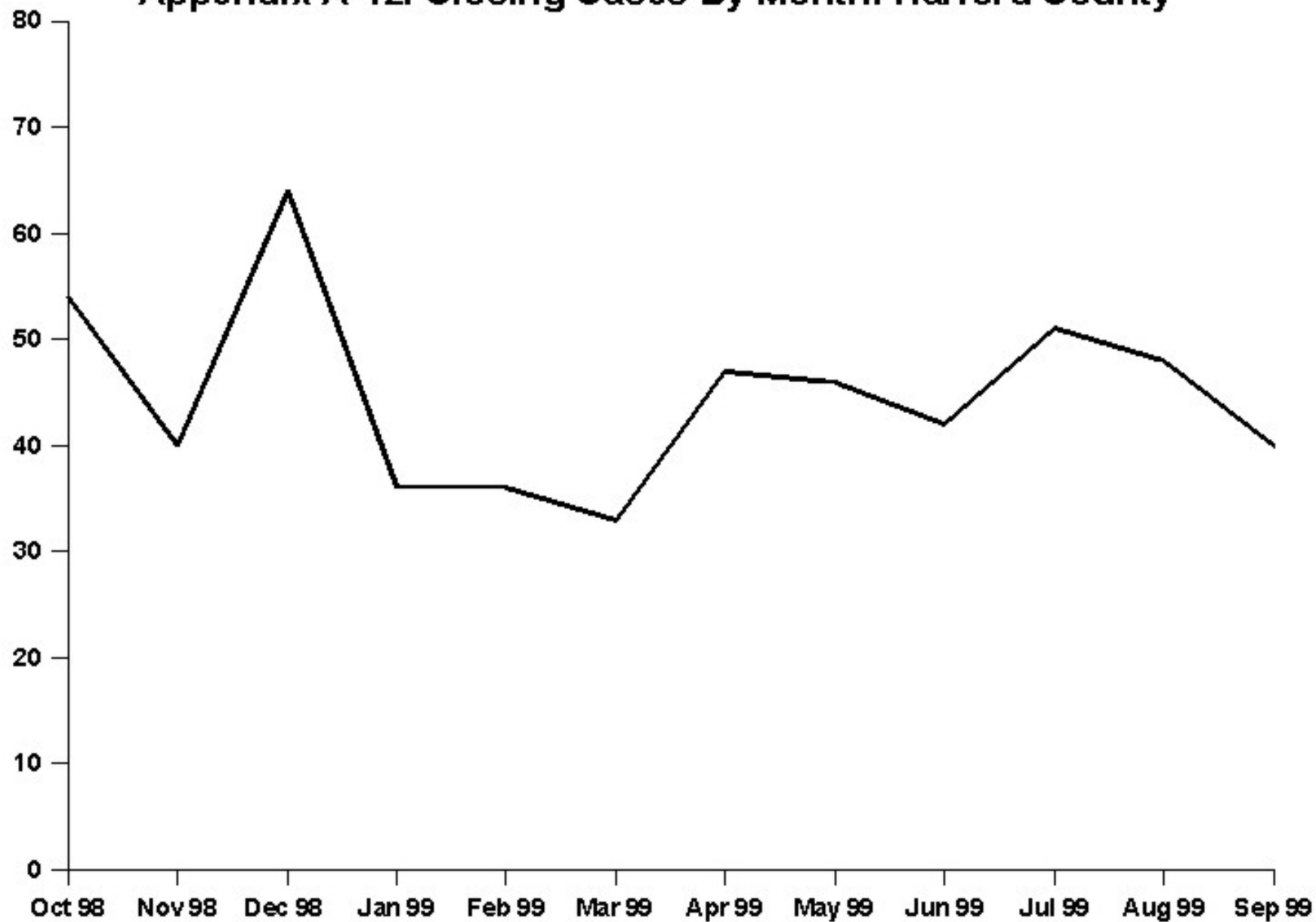
Appendix A-10. Closing Cases By Month: Frederick County



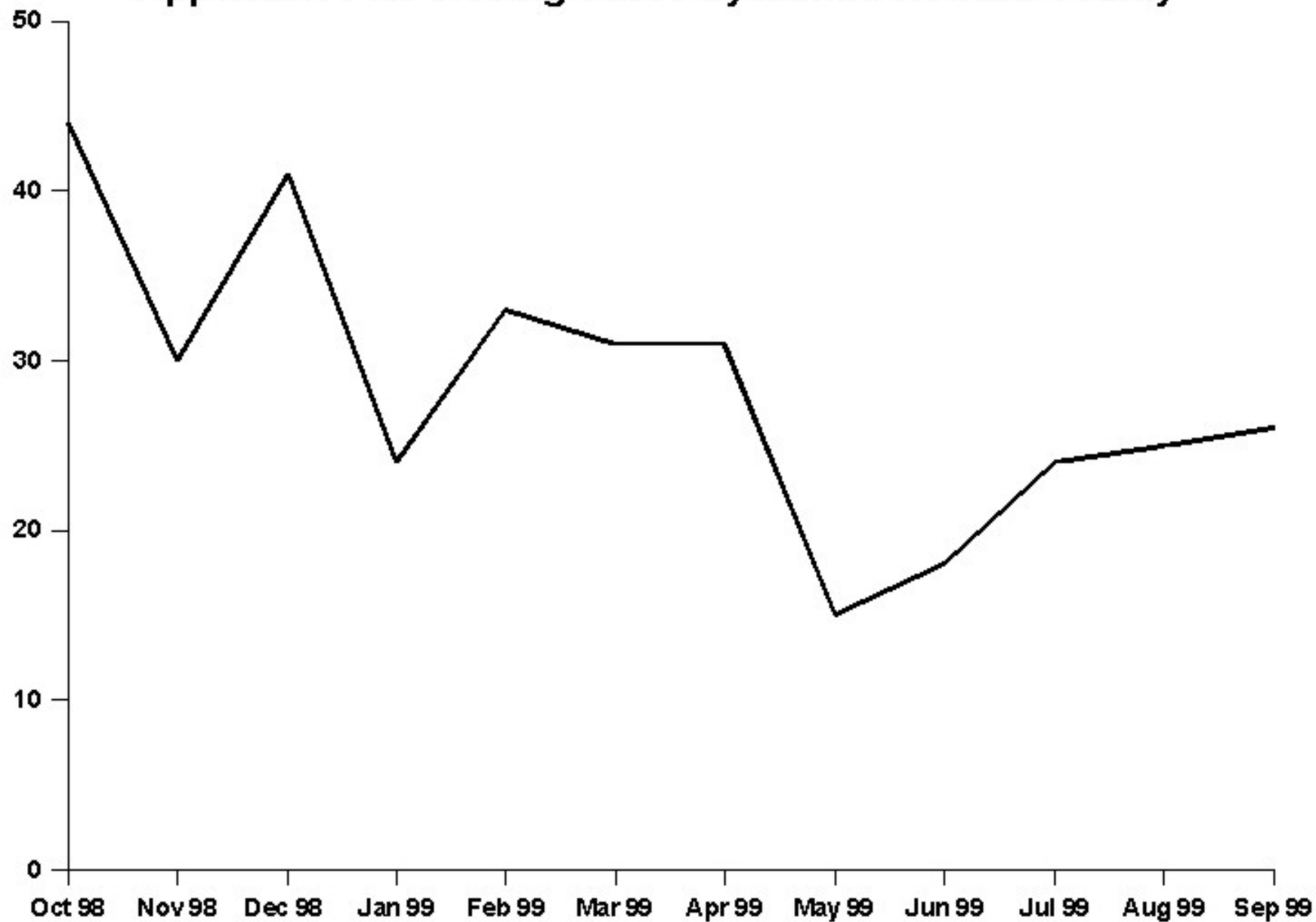
Appendix A-11. Closing Cases By Month: Garrett County



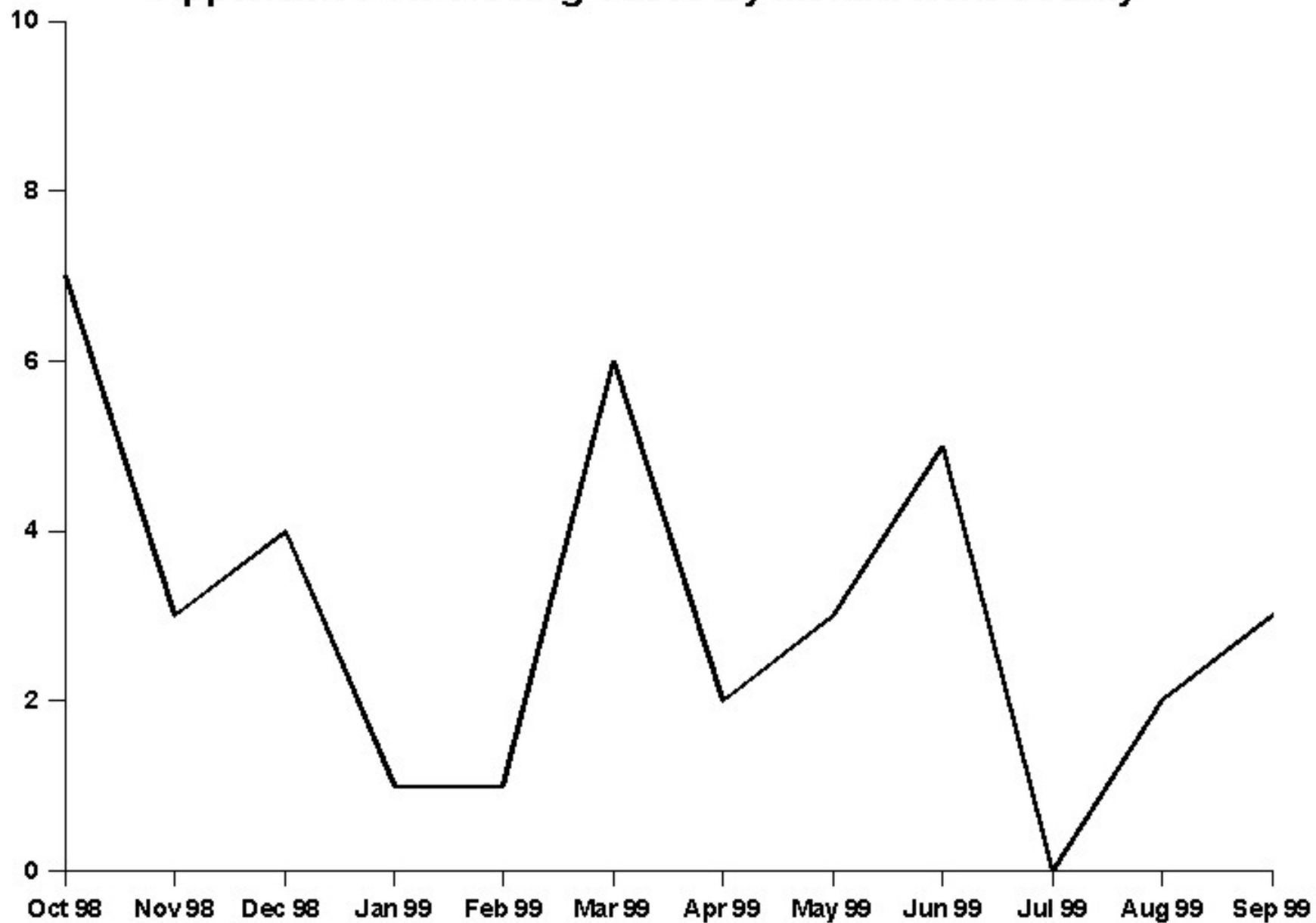
Appendix A-12. Closing Cases By Month: Harford County



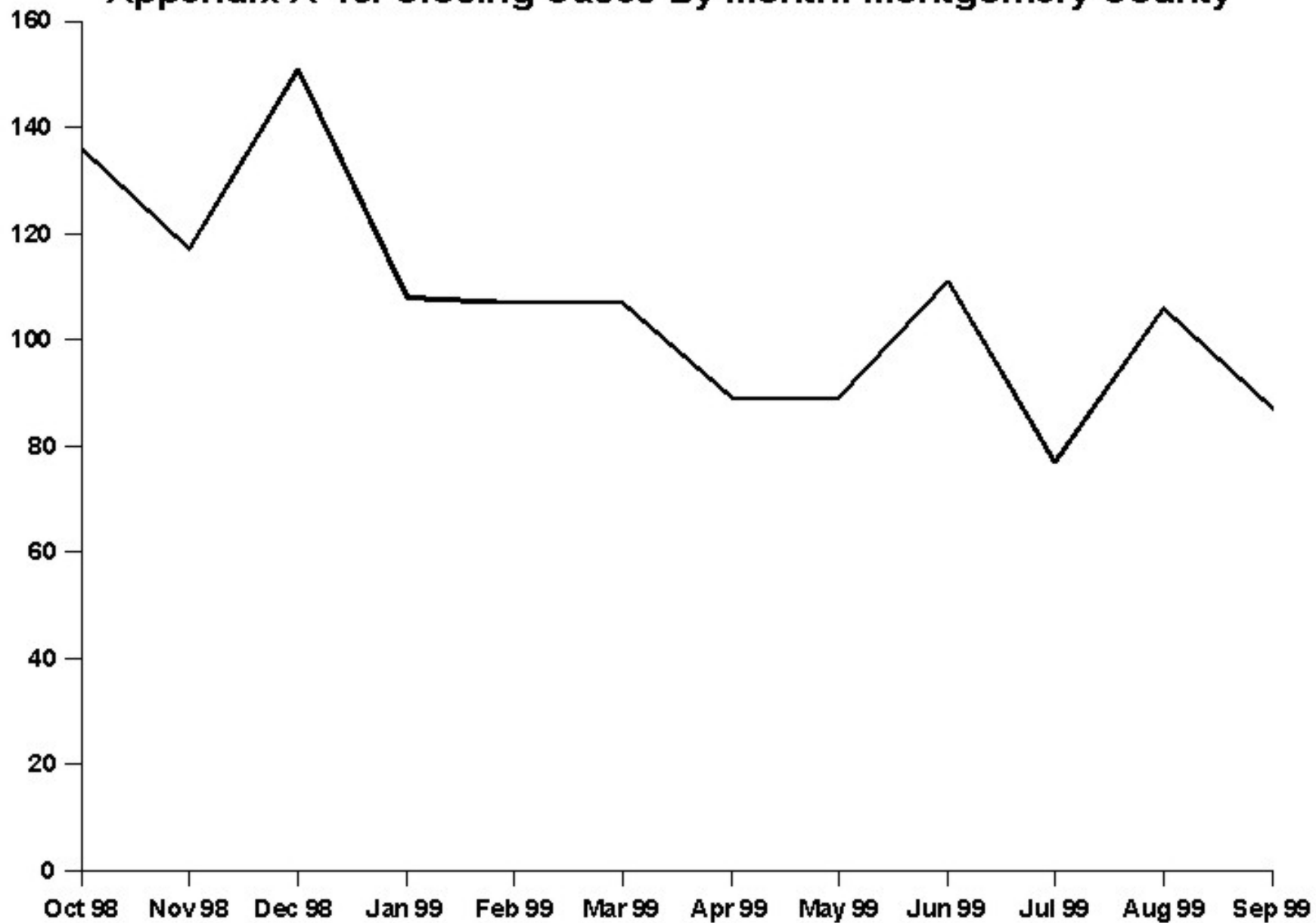
Appendix A-13. Closing Cases By Month: Howard County



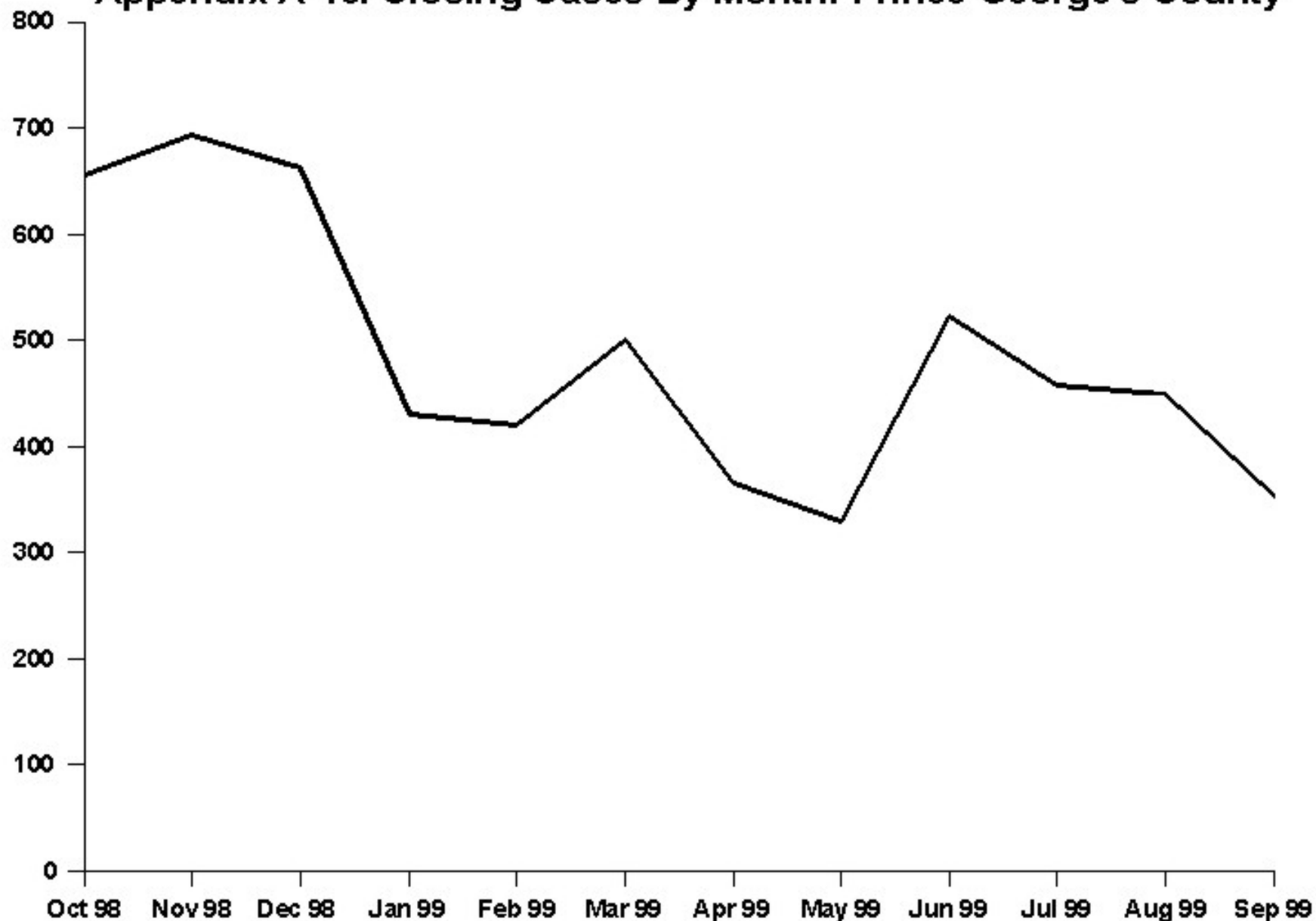
Appendix A-14. Closing Cases By Month: Kent County



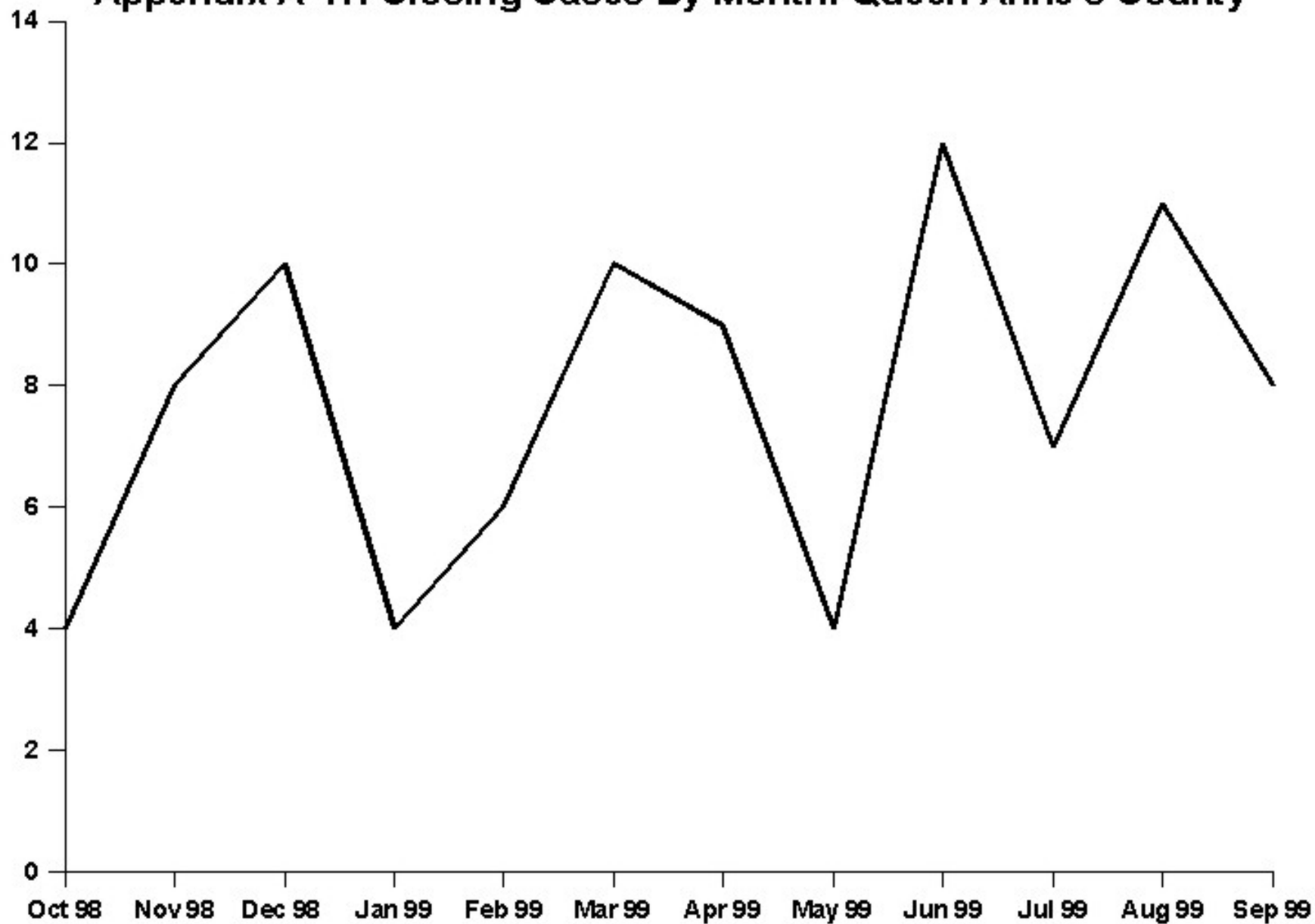
Appendix A-15. Closing Cases By Month: Montgomery County



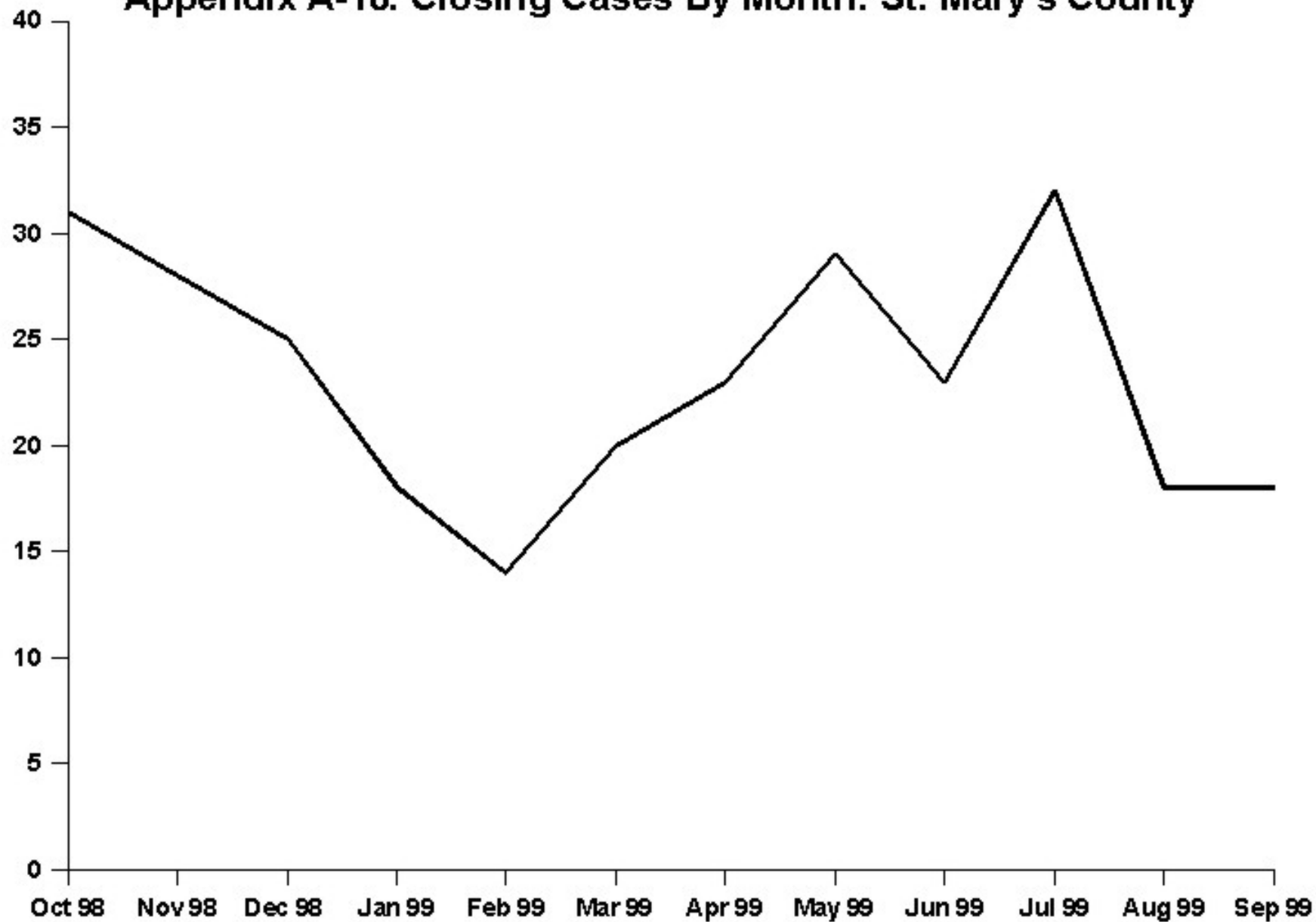
Appendix A-16. Closing Cases By Month: Prince George's County



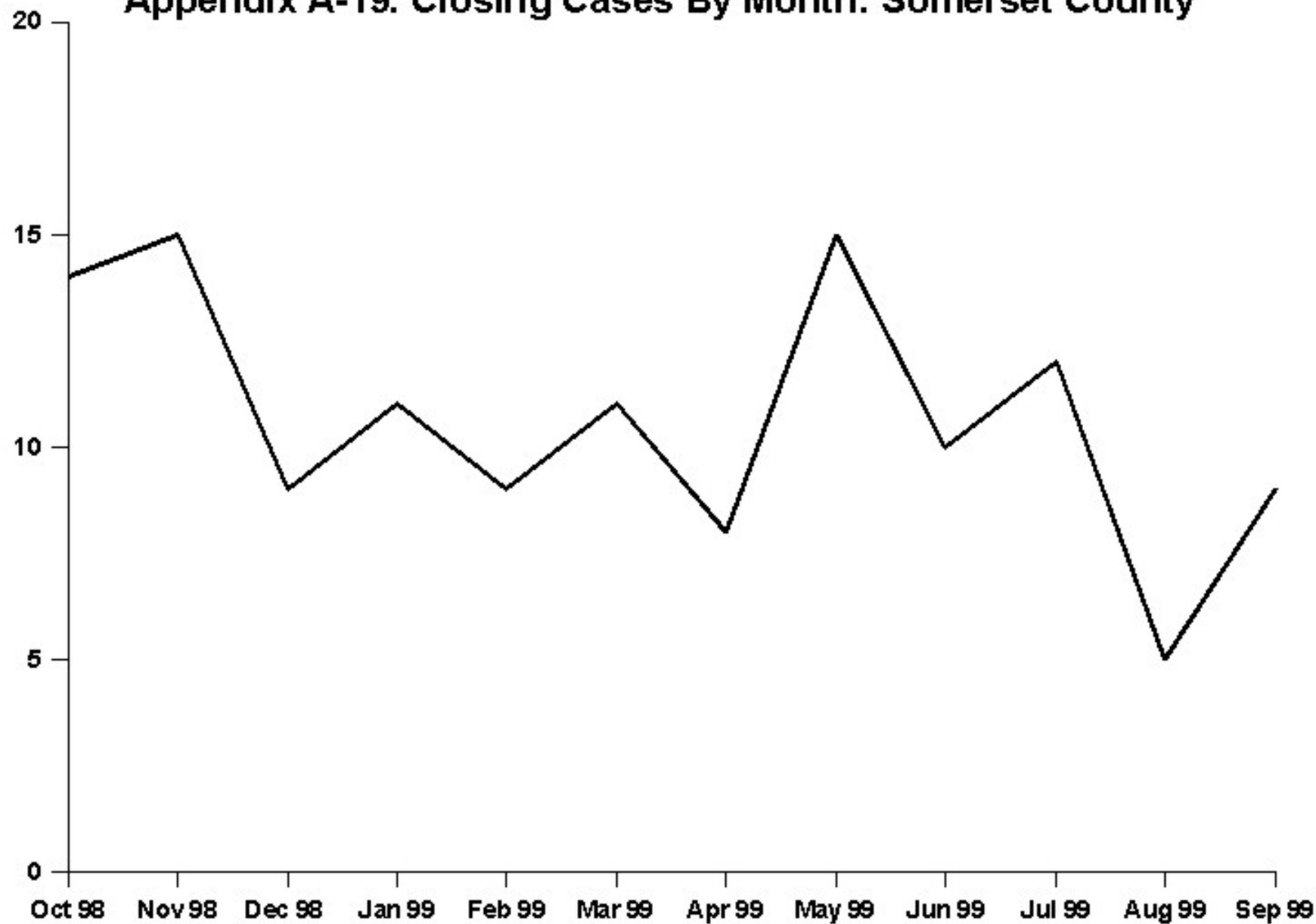
Appendix A-17. Closing Cases By Month: Queen Anne's County



Appendix A-18. Closing Cases By Month: St. Mary's County



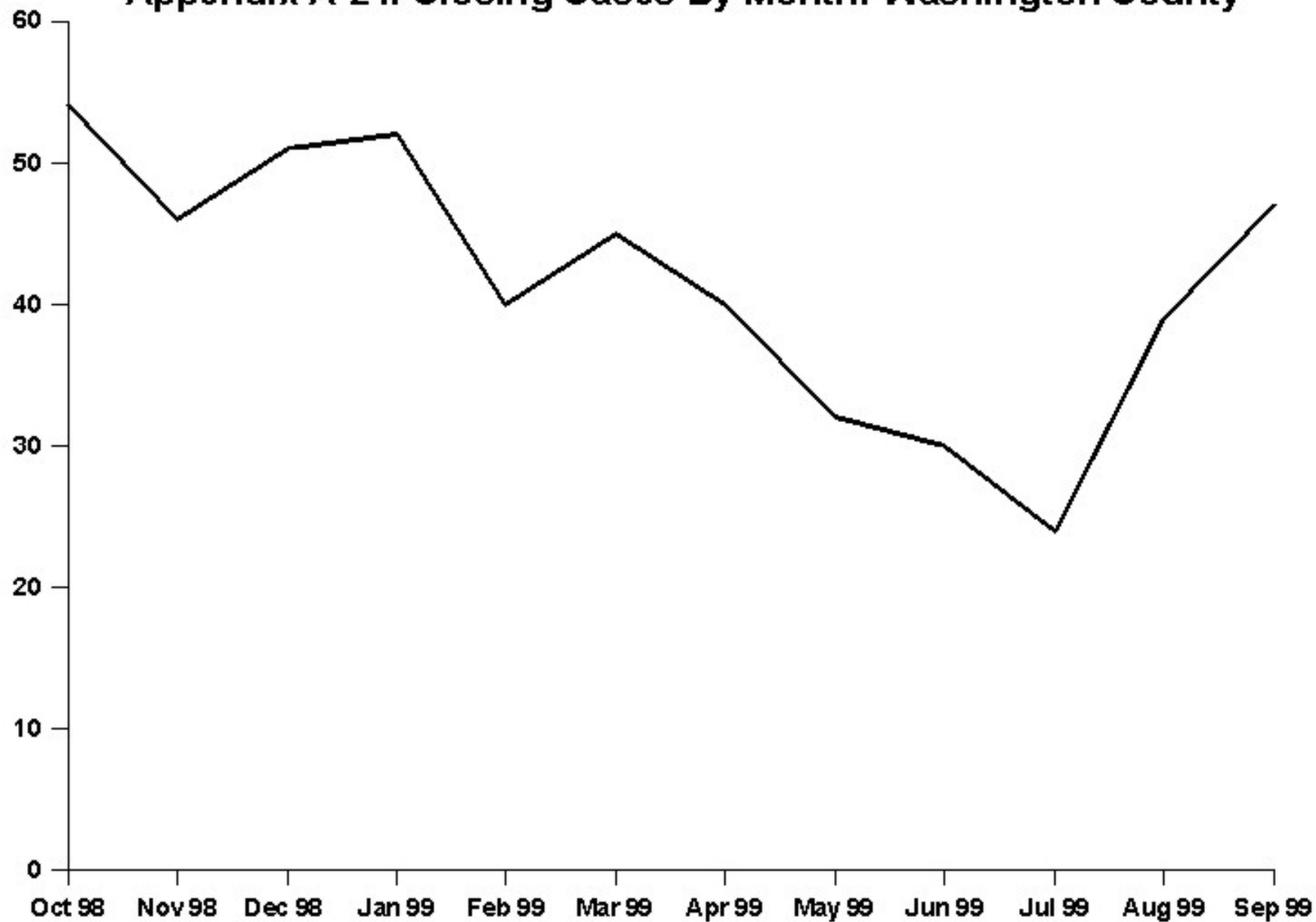
Appendix A-19. Closing Cases By Month: Somerset County



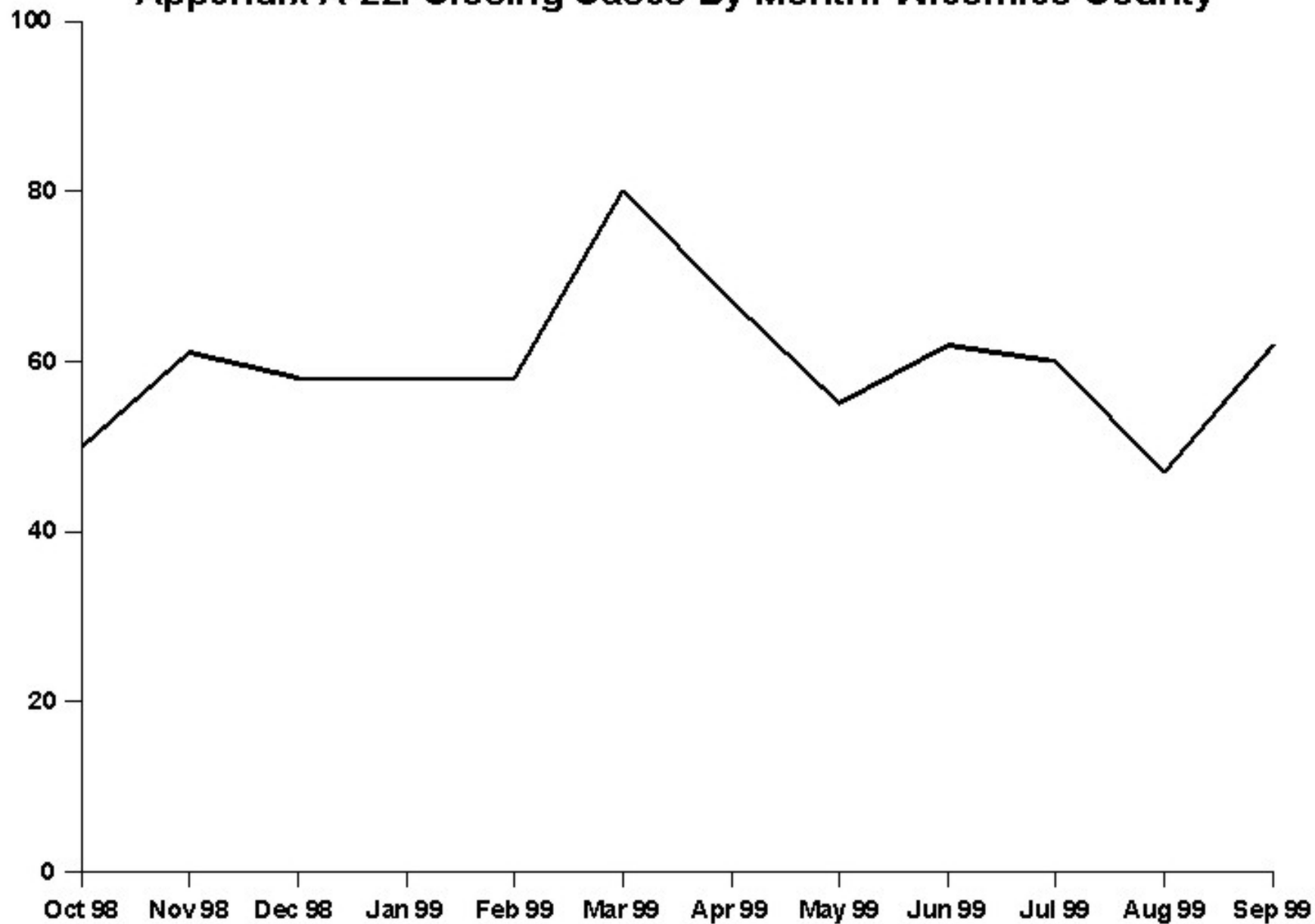
Appendix A-20. Closing Cases By Month: Talbot County



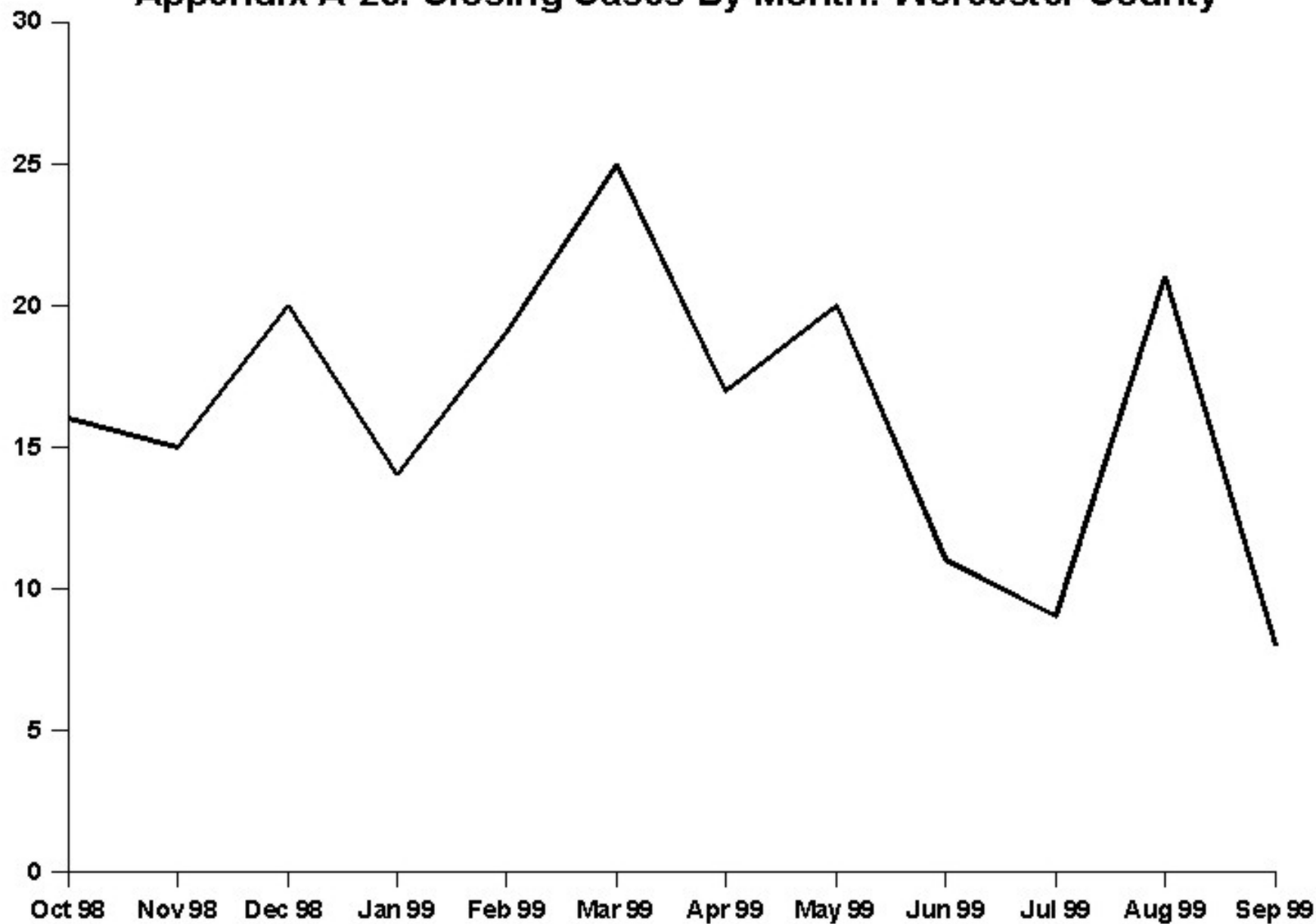
Appendix A-21. Closing Cases By Month: Washington County



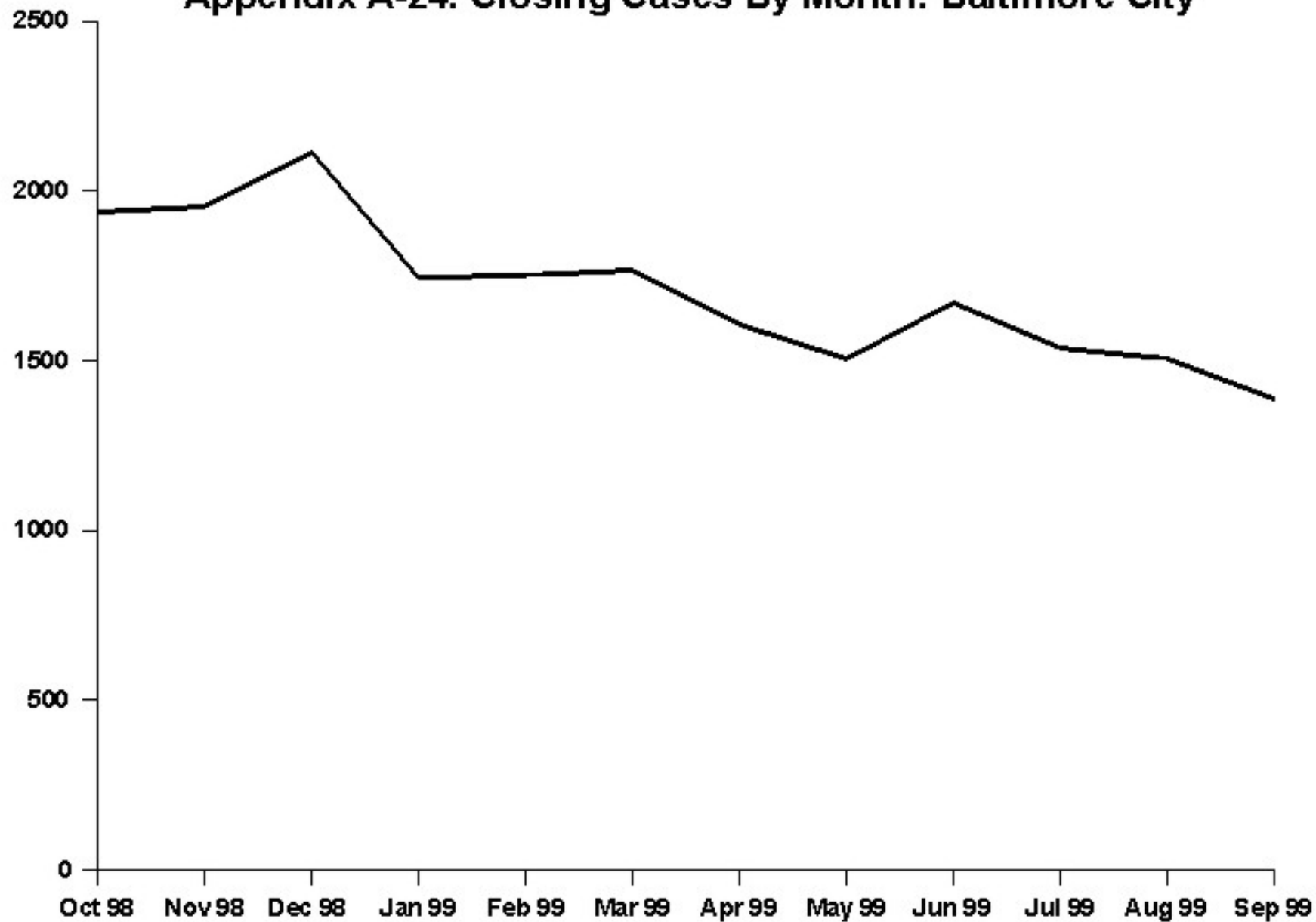
Appendix A-22. Closing Cases By Month: Wicomico County



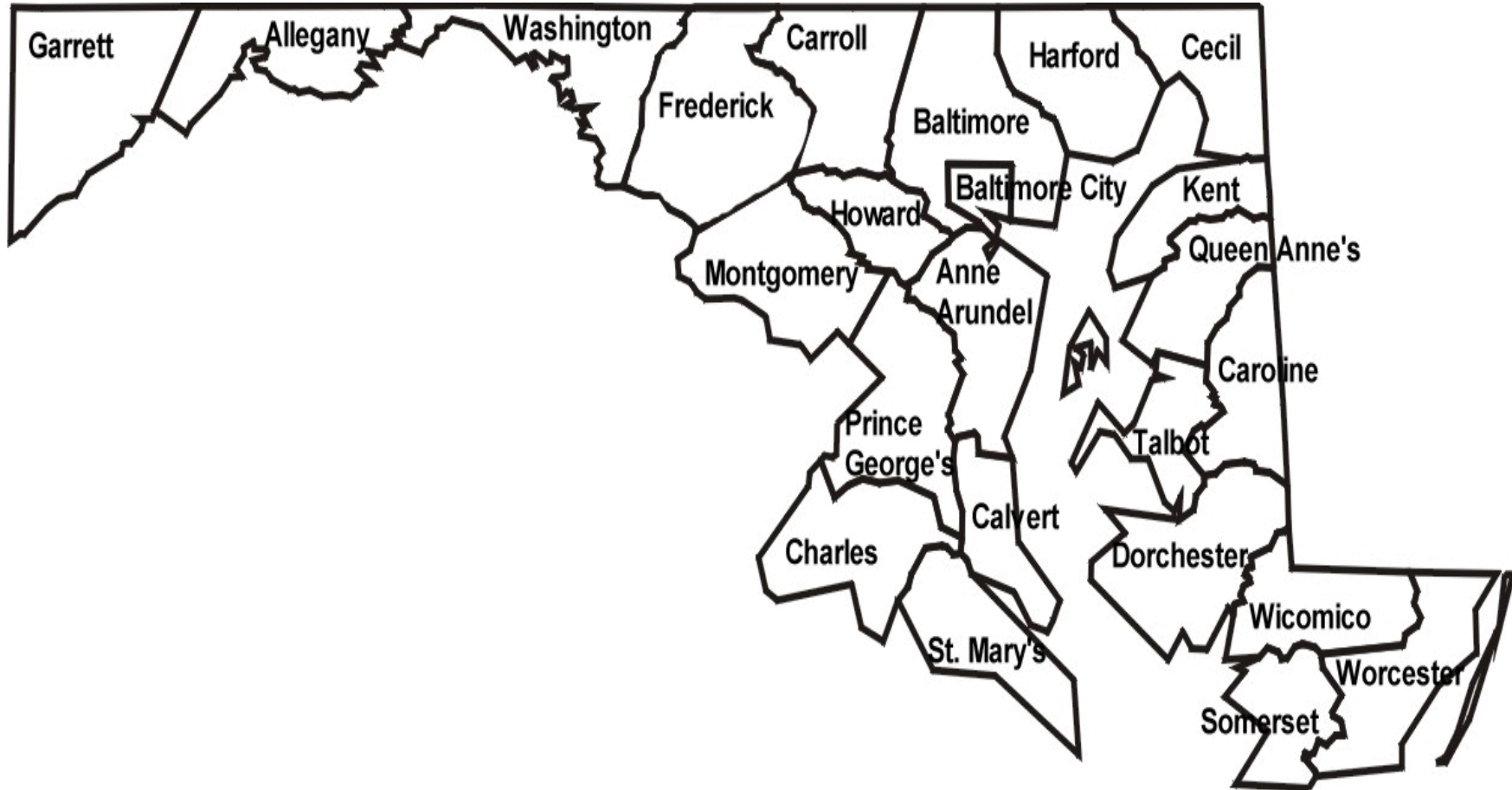
Appendix A-23. Closing Cases By Month: Worcester County



Appendix A-24. Closing Cases By Month: Baltimore City



Appendix B. Map of Maryland



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