

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF
THE NEBRASKA JUDICIAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
November 21, 2025**

Pursuant to the press release issued November 7, 2025, the Annual Meeting and public hearing of the Nebraska Judicial Resources Commission was held on the 21st day of November 2025, in the Nebraska Supreme Court Courtroom, State Capitol Building, in Lincoln, Nebraska.

AGENDA ITEM I: The Chair called the proceedings to order at approximately 10 a.m. The proceedings included a Zoom videoconferencing option for Commission members. Roll Call by Ashley Jenkins.

PRESENT (* denotes Zoom attendance)

Justice John R. Freudenberg
Judge Travis O’Gorman*
Judge Anne Paine
Judge Matthew Kahler
Jane Langan Mach
Kenneth Hartman
Ron Temple*
Meagan Spomer*
Jacqueline Tessendorf
Robert Parker
Darlene Starman
Nancy McCabe*
Roxanne Kracl
Cydnianna Hall*
Maria Whitmore
Brian Phares*
Taylor Gage

EXCUSED

Robert Parker
Roxanne Kracl

AGENDA ITEM II: The Chair confirmed that all Commission members had received and reviewed the minutes from the August 15, 2025, hearing. On an informal voice vote the commissioners unanimously accepted the minutes of August 15th.

AGENDA ITEM III: The following exhibits were received and considered by the Commission, and are attached to these minutes:

- Exhibit 1: Meeting Agenda
- Exhibit 2: Minutes of the August 15, 2025, hearing
- Exhibit 3: Retirement letter from Judge C. Jo Petersen dated August 1, 2025
- Exhibit 4: Resignation letter from Judge James G. Kube dated October 1, 2025
- Exhibit 5: District Courts Weighted Caseload Report Fiscal Year 2025
- Exhibit 6: County Courts Weighted Caseload Report Fiscal Year 2025
- Exhibit 7: Judicial Resources Commission Supportive Data for 2025 Annual Meeting
- Exhibit 8: Judicial Retirement Forecast
- Exhibit 9: Other Factors Affecting Judicial Resources
- Exhibit 10: Letter from Saunders County Bar Association dated November 13, 2025, re: request to declare judicial vacancy – 5th Judicial District, County Court.
- Exhibit 11: Letter from Catrina K. Harris dated November 13, 2025, re: request to declare judicial vacancy – 5th Judicial District, County Court.
- Exhibit 12: Letter from Hon. John M. Gerrard, NSBA President, dated November 13, 2025, re: NSBA Judicial Resources Committee recommendations.

Exhibit 13: Letter from Judge Stephen R.W. Twiss dated November 18, 2025, re: request to declare judicial vacancy – 5th Judicial District, County Court.

Exhibit 14: Letter from Christopher M. Johnson dated November 19, 2025, re: request to declare judicial vacancy – 5th Judicial District, County Court.

AGENDA ITEM IV: The public hearing was conducted, and the Commission received and considered public testimony from: Judge Stephen R. Twiss, 5th District, County Court; Amy Prenda, Deputy State Court Administrator; Bill Mueller, Nebraska State Bar Association; and Hazel Delgado, Director of Research and Data.

(a): It was moved by Jacqueline Tessorf and seconded by Judge Anne Paine to declare a judicial vacancy in the County Court, 5th Judicial District, due to the retirement of Judge C. Jo Petersen, with the primary office location being Seward, Seward County, Nebraska. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

(b): It was moved by Judge Matthew Kahler and seconded by Meagan Spomer to declare a judicial vacancy in the District Court, 7th Judicial District, due to the resignation of Judge James G. Kube, with the primary office location to be determined in consultation with the successful applicant. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM V: Annual Meeting topics under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-1205:

(a): The Commission took up whether it is appropriate to recommend adding a judgeship in any judicial district. No motions were made on this issue.

(b): The Commission took up whether it is appropriate to recommend reducing a judgeship in any judicial district. No motions were made on this issue.

(c): The Commission took up whether to recommend any judicial district boundaries, or number of judicial districts, should be changed

for the district or county courts. No motions were made on this issue.

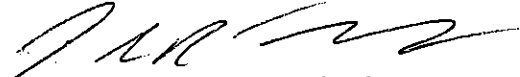
(d): The Commission took up whether to make any recommendations for the more balanced use of existing judicial resources. No motions were made on this issue.

AGENDA ITEM VI: 2026 quarterly meeting dates:

(a): The Chair advised the Commission of the dates for the 2026 meetings: February 13, May 1, August 14, and November 20.

AGENDA ITEM VII: There being no other matters, the Judicial Resources Commission hearing was adjourned by the Chair.

Respectfully submitted:



Justice John R. Freudenberg
Chair

HEARING AGENDA
JUDICIAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
ANNUAL MEETING
Friday, November 21, 2025 – 10 a.m. CST
Supreme Court Courtroom, State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska

- I. Call meeting to order; roll call of members.
- II. Approve minutes from JRC meeting held August 15, 2025.
- III. Identify/receive exhibits to be considered by commission during public hearing.
- IV. Conduct public hearing concerning the following:
 - a. Whether a judicial vacancy exists in the office of the County Court, 5th Judicial District, due to the retirement of Judge C. Jo Petersen, and if so, whether to recommend a primary office location.
 - b. Whether a judicial vacancy exists in the office of the District Court, 7th Judicial District, due to the resignation of Judge James G. Kube, and if so, whether to recommend a primary office location.
- V. Annual Meeting topics under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-1205:
 - a. Determine whether a new judgeship is appropriate in any judicial district;
 - b. Determine whether a reduction in judgeships is appropriate in any judicial district;
 - c. Determine whether the judicial district boundaries or the number of judicial districts should be changed for the district or county courts;
 - d. Determine whether, based on an examination of current caseload statistics, the Judicial Resources Commission should make any appropriate recommendations for the more balanced use of existing judicial resources.
- VI. 2026 quarterly meeting dates:
 - Friday, February 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. (CST)
 - Friday, May 1, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. (CST)
 - Friday, August 14, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. (CST)
 - Friday, November 20, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. (CST)
- VII. Adjourn

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF
THE NEBRASKA JUDICIAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
AUGUST 15, 2025**

Pursuant to the press release issued August 1, 2025, the public hearing of the Nebraska Judicial Resources Commission was held on the 15th day of August 2025, in the Nebraska Supreme Court Courtroom, State Capitol Building, in Lincoln, Nebraska.

AGENDA ITEM I: The Chair called the proceedings to order at approximately 10 a.m. The proceedings included a Zoom videoconferencing option for Commission members. Roll Call by Ashley Jenkins.

PRESENT (* denotes Zoom attendance)

Justice John R. Freudenberg

Judge Anne Paine*

Judge Matthew Kahler*

Jane Langan Mach

Kenneth Hartman

Ron Temple*

Meagan Spomer*

Jacqueline Tessendorf*

Robert Parker*

Darlene Starman

Nancy McCabe

Roxanne Kracl*

Cydnianne Hall*

Maria Whitmore*

Brian Phares*

Taylor Gage

EXCUSED

Judge Travis O’Gorman

AGENDA ITEM II: The Chair confirmed that all Commission members had received and reviewed the minutes from the April 11, 2025, hearing. On a voice vote the commissioners unanimously accepted the minutes of April 11th.

AGENDA ITEM III: The following exhibits were received and considered by the Commission, and are attached to these minutes:

- Exhibit 1: Meeting Agenda
- Exhibit 2: Minutes of the April 11, 2025, hearing
- Exhibit 3: Resignation letter from PaTricia A. Freeman dated May 9, 2025
- Exhibit 4: Retirement letter from Judge Laurie J. Yardley dated June 25, 2025
- Exhibit 5: Retirement letter from Judge Leigh Ann Retelsdorf dated April 18, 2025
- Exhibit 6: Resignation letter from Judge Michael L. Long (received May 23, 2025)
- Exhibit 7: District Courts Weighted Caseload Report Fiscal Year 2025
- Exhibit 8: County Courts Weighted Caseload Report Fiscal Year 2025
- Exhibit 9: Letter from Judge Leanne M. Srb dated July 22, 2025, re: request to declare judicial vacancy - 4th District, District Court.
- Exhibit 10: Letter from Hon. John M. Gerrard, NSBA President-Elect, dated August 7, 2025, re: NSBA Judicial Resources Committee recommendations.
- Exhibit 11: Letter from Judge Timothy C. Phillips dated August 12, 2025, re: request to declare judicial vacancy - 3rd District, County Court.
- Exhibit 12: Letter from Judge David J. Partsch dated August 12, 2025, re: request to declare judicial vacancy - 2nd District, County Court.

AGENDA ITEM IV: The public hearing was conducted, and the Commission received and considered public testimony from: Judge David J. Partsch, 2nd District, County Court; Judge Timothy C. Phillips, 3rd District, County Court; Judge Donna F. Taylor, 7th District, County Court; and Corey Steel, State Court Administrator.

(a): It was moved by Kenneth Hartman and seconded by Megan Spomer to declare a judicial vacancy in the County Court, 2nd Judicial District, due to the appointment of Judge PaTricia A. Freeman to the

Court of Appeals, with the primary location being Papillion, Sarpy County, Nebraska. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

(b): It was moved by Jane Langan Mach and seconded by Taylor Gage to declare a judicial vacancy in the County Court, 3rd Judicial District, due to the retirement of Judge Laurie J. Yardley, with the primary location being Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

(c) It was moved by Meagan Spomer and seconded by Taylor Gage to declare a judicial vacancy in the District Court, 4th Judicial District, due to the retirement of Judge Leigh Ann Retelsdorf, with the primary location being Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

(d) It was moved by Maria Whitmore and seconded by Ron Temple to declare a judicial vacancy in the County Court, 7th Judicial District, due to the appointment of Judge Michael L. Long to the District Court, with the primary location being Madison, Madison County, Nebraska. On a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM V: The Chair noted that the next public hearing of the Judicial Resources Commission will be held on Friday, November 21, 2025, at 10:00am.

AGENDA ITEM VI: There being no other matters, the Judicial Resources Commission hearing was adjourned by the Chair.

Respectfully submitted:



Justice John R. Freudenberg
Chair



SEWARD COUNTY COURT
PO BOX 37
SEWARD, NE 68434
402 643-3214

C. JO PETERSEN
COUNTY JUDGE
cjo.petersen@nejudicial.gov

August 1, 2025

The Honorable Jim Pillen
Nebraska State Governor
1445 K Street
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: Retirement Notice

Governor Pillen:

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the people of the State of Nebraska and Fifth Judicial District as a Nebraska County Judge. I am announcing my retirement effective September 30, 2025.

I appreciate having been given the opportunity to provide judicial services within a branch of government with judges, lawyers and staff dedicated to providing access to justice for all throughout the state. I have been blessed to work with and alongside hardworking, conscientious and reliable employees every day and thank each of them for their dedication and commitment to the judicial system. It has been a rewarding and fulfilling position that I am thankful I was given the chance to perform over the last twelve plus years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Jo Petersen', is written over a horizontal line.

C. Jo Petersen
County Judge

**District Court of the State of Nebraska
Seventh Judicial District**

JAMES G. KUBE, DISTRICT JUDGE

**KIMBERLEY BACHMAN
BAILIFF**

**TRACY KACZOR
COURT REPORTER**

October 1, 2025

Chief Justice Jeffrey J. Funke
PO Box 98910
Lincoln, NE 68509

Governor Jim Pillen
PO Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509

State Court Administrator Corey Steel
PO Box 98910
Lincoln, NE 68509

Gentlemen:

Please allow this letter to serve as my formal notice of resignation from the District Court Bench of the Seventh Judicial District. I intend to preside over my normal judicial duties until October 31, 2025, which will constitute the last day of my employment.

I cannot express to you enough my humble appreciation for my initial appointment along with the continuing opportunity to serve as a District Court Judge for the past 16 and a half years. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the Seventh Judicial District. I want to thank my court reporters, bailiffs and staffs from each of the seven districts, and the members of the Bar, for all of their hard work and patience with me during the time that I have been on the bench.

This has not been an easy decision for me to make because I have taken great pleasure in tending to my duties and responsibilities on the bench over the years. There was never a day when I got up in the morning and did not want to go to the courthouse. I have thoroughly enjoyed it. I can only hope that each of you has had that same sense of fulfillment sometime in your life. To experience it is to know that you have been truly blessed. I know that I have been.

Respectfully,


James G. Kube

P.O. BOX 249, MADISON, NE 68748
PHONE: (402)454-3311 EXT. 9245 FAX: (402)454-2680

District Courts

Weighted Caseload Report



Fiscal Year 2025

July 1, 2024, to
June 30, 2025



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Weighted Caseload Report

Nebraska District Courts Weighted Caseload Report

Nebraska has a district court in each of its 93 counties, organized into 12 Judicial Districts. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-301.02, the Legislature determines the number of district court judges who serve in each judicial district, and the geographic boundaries of each judicial district. An objective assessment of judicial workload allows informed decisions about district boundaries and the number of judges needed to timely resolve the cases in each judicial district.

To assist in evaluating judicial workloads, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-1007(1) requires the Nebraska Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation (AOCB) to compile judicial workload statistics based on caseloads weighted by category of case. These weighted caseload statistics are used by the Judicial Branch, the Judicial Resources Commission, and the Legislature to evaluate judicial need, and guide decisions and recommendations on how best to allocate judicial resources across the state.

To ensure the validity, uniformity and accuracy of the AOCB's judicial workload statistics, a statewide judicial time study was conducted in 2019-2020 under the direction and leadership of the National Center for State Courts. For a full description of the judicial time study and the recommended weighting methodology and standards, see *Nebraska Judicial Workload Assessment Final Report* (October 2020) (this is noted on tables in this report with an asterisk) on the Nebraska Supreme Court Website. Because this Weighted Caseload Report uses the methodology and standards from the 2020 workload assessment, direct comparison to archived reports is not recommended.

Weighted caseload statistics approximate the number of judges a district needs to handle the current caseload based upon the calculations of a three-year rolling average of case filing data. Therefore, when weighted caseload statistics are examined in conjunction with other compelling and critical metrics, they provide a vital part of an objective and standardized assessment of judicial needs and the fair allocation of judicial resources across juvenile courts in the State of Nebraska.

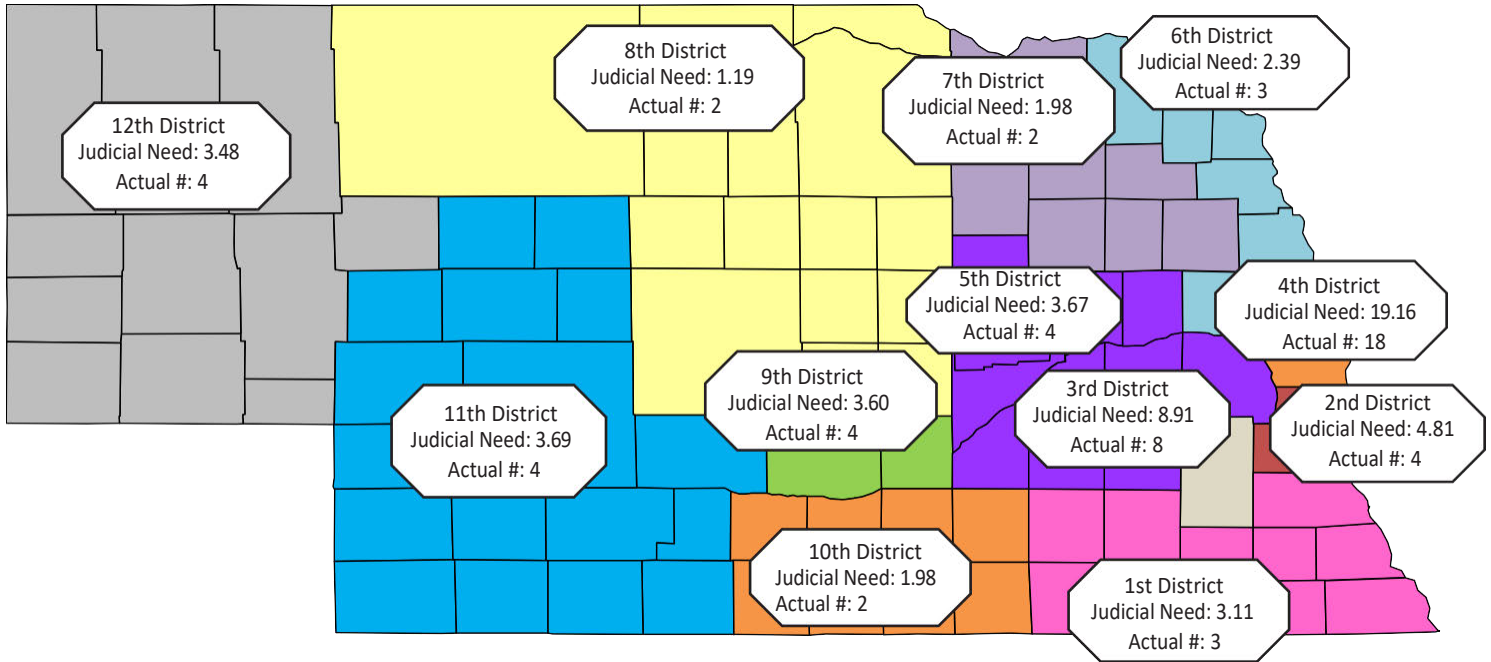


Corey R. Steel
Nebraska State Court Administrator
Nebraska Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts & Probation
Rm. 1211 State Capitol | P.O. Box 98910 | Lincoln, NE 68509
T 402.471.3730 | F 402.471.2197
www.supremecourt.nebraska.gov

Weighted Caseload Report

Nebraska District Court Judicial Needs

Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)



Note: Differences between the total District Court Need for Judges and the sum of individual counties is due to rounding to the nearest one-hundredth.

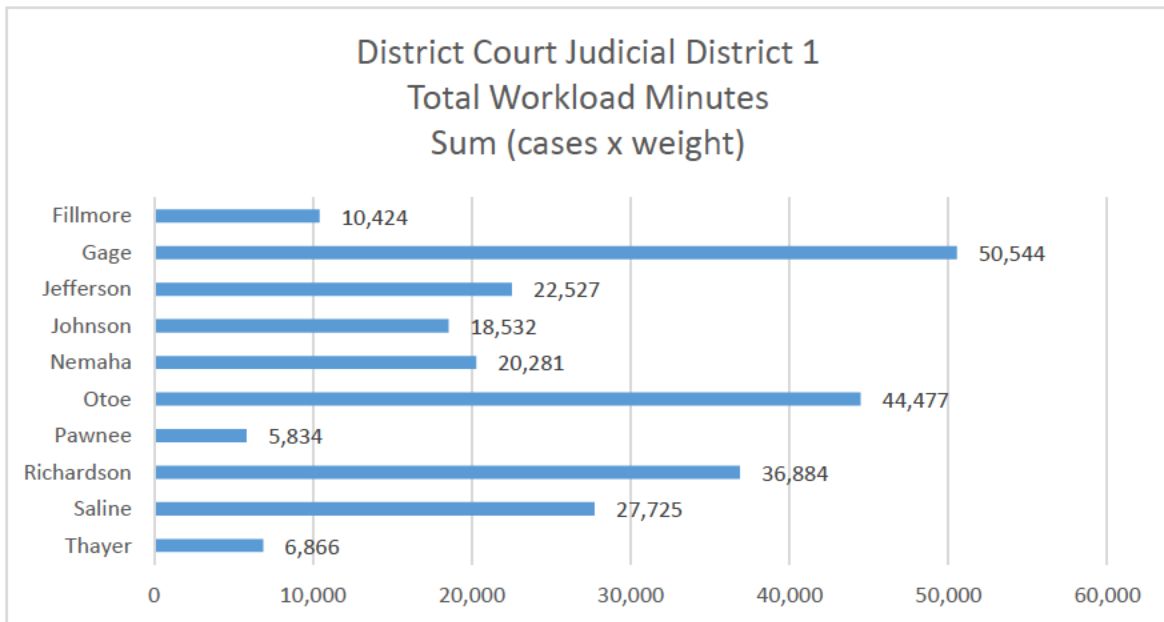
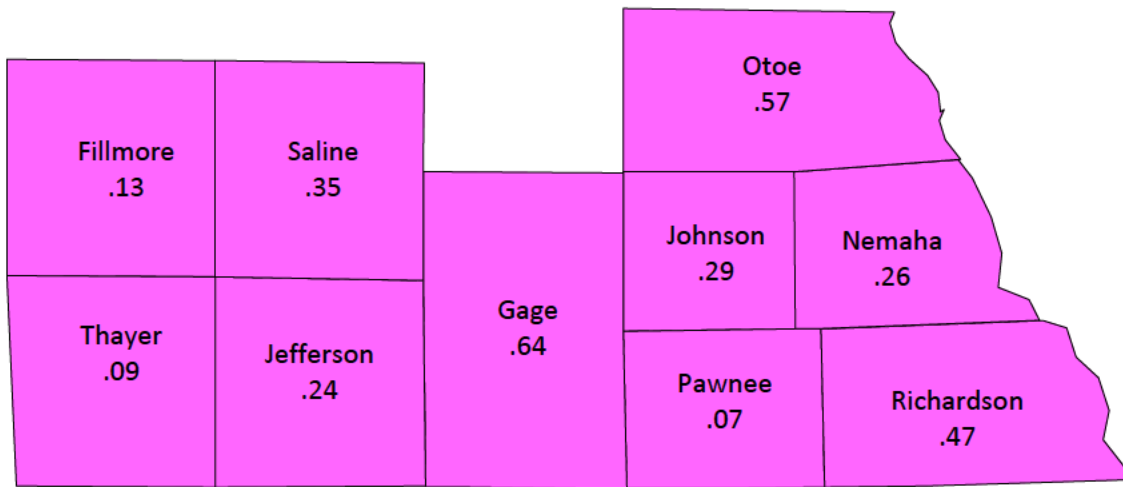
Weighted Caseload Report

1st Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 3.11
 Current number of judges: 3
 Workload per judge: 1.04
 Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 1st District

Bargen
Schreiner
J. Smith

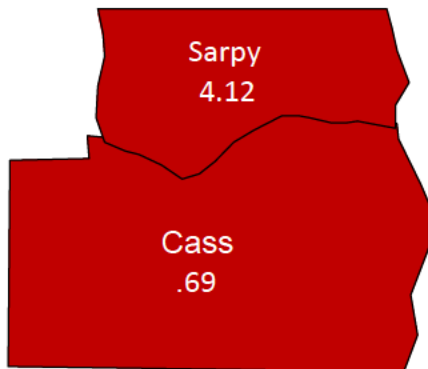


Weighted Caseload Report

2nd Judicial District – District Court

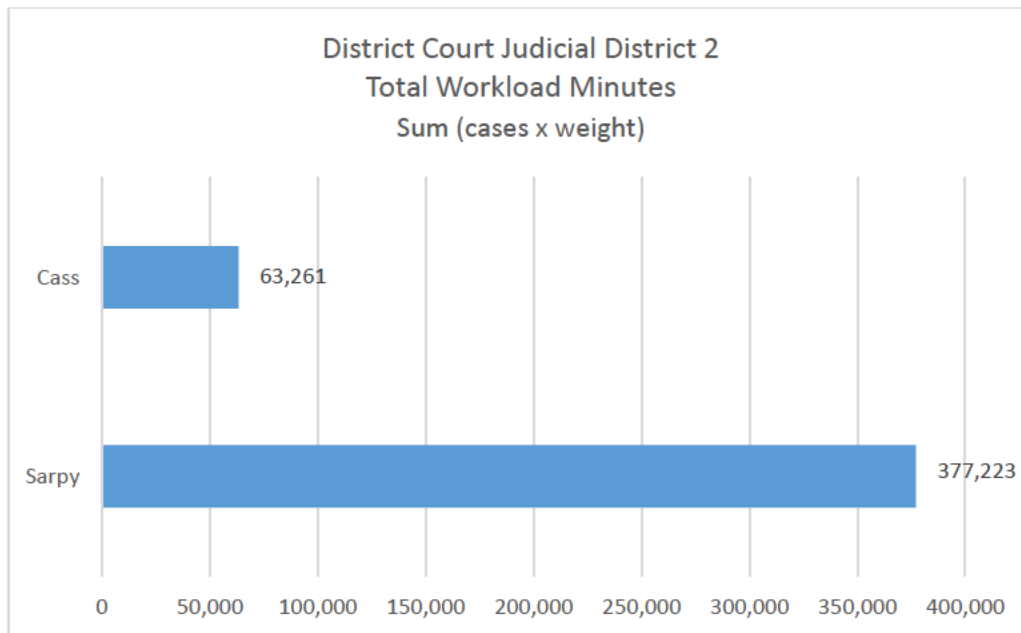
District court need for judges: 4.81
Current number of judges: 4
Workload per judge: 1.20

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 2nd District

Cox
Martinez
M. Smith
Thompson

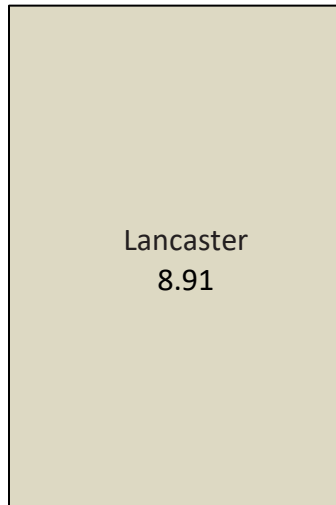


Weighted Caseload Report

3rd Judicial District – District Court

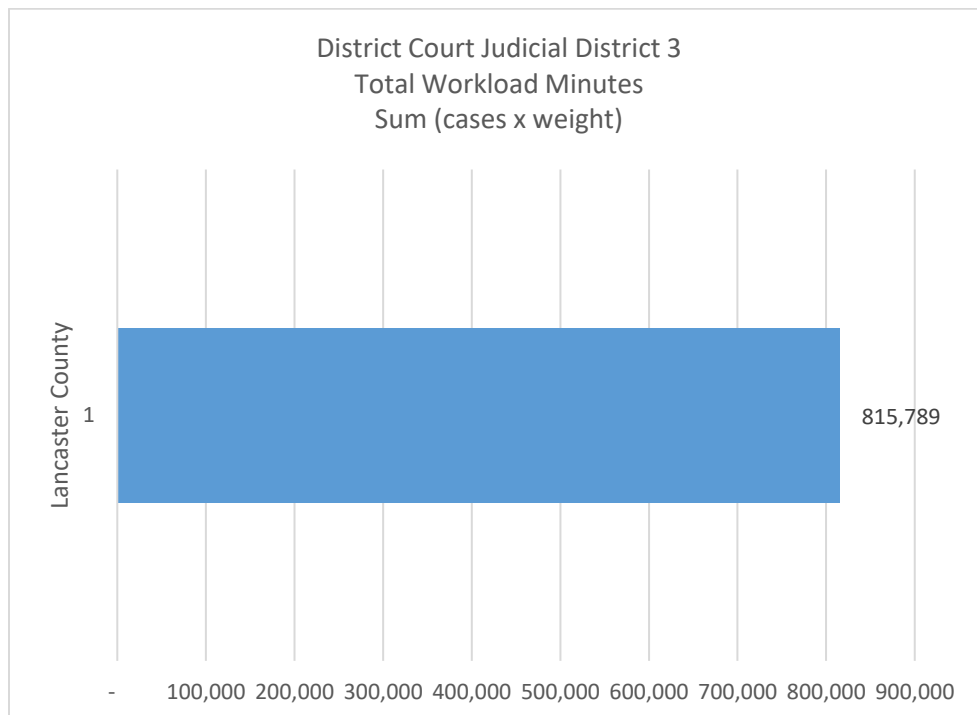
District court need for judges: 8.91
 Current number of judges: 8
 Workload per judge: 1.11

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 3rd District

- Ideus**
- Jacobsen**
- Maret**
- McManaman**
- Mellor**
- Nelson**
- Post**
- Strong**

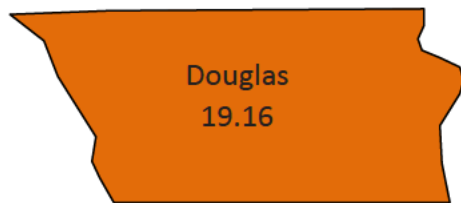


Weighted Caseload Report

4th Judicial District – District Court

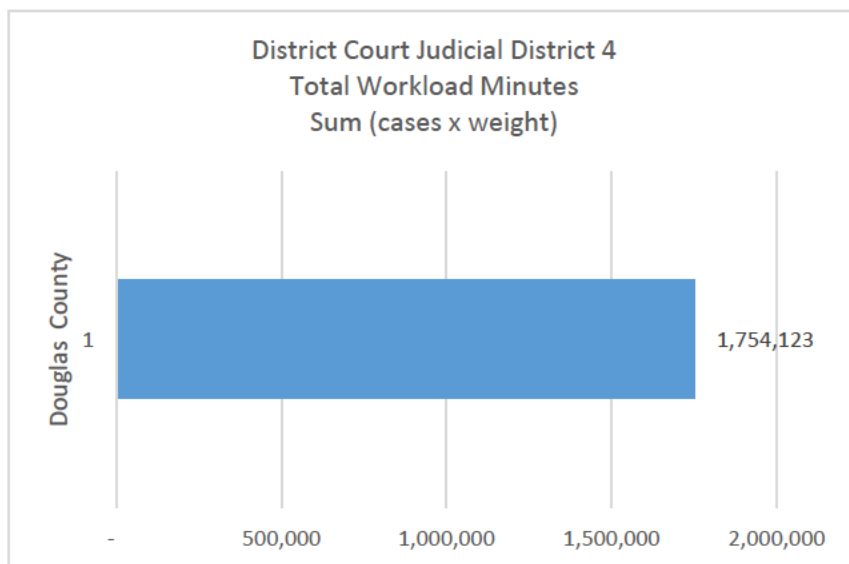
District court need for judges: 19.16
 Current number of judges: 18
 Workload per judge: 1.06

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 4th District

- Alioth**
- Bataillon**
- Benson**
- T. Burns**
- Derr**
- Dougherty**
- Engleman**
- Keane**
- Lindberg (Bowie)**
- Lux**
- Masteller**
- Miller Pankonin**
- Polk**
- Vacant (Retelsdorf)**
- Srb**
- Stratman**
- Vaughn**
- Wheelock**

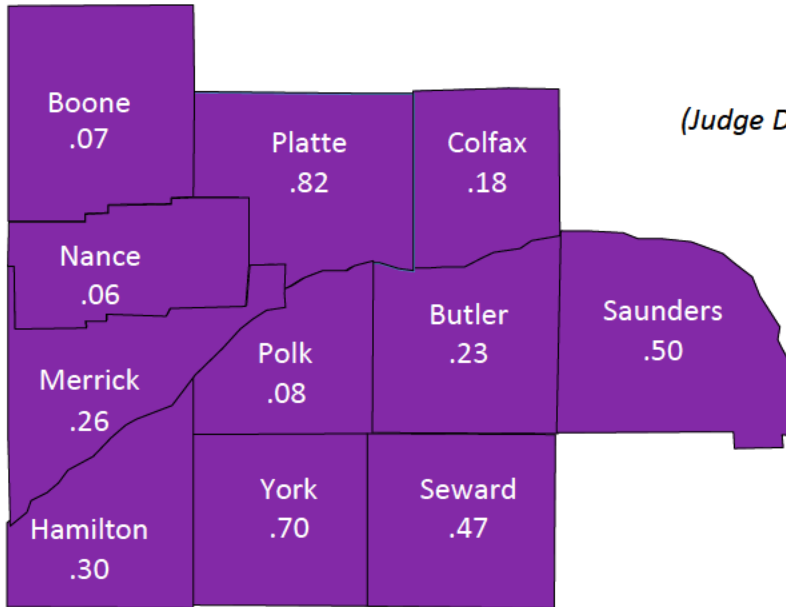


Weighted Caseload Report

5th Judicial District - District Court

District court need for judges: 3.67
 Current number of judges: 4
 Workload per judge: 0.92

Predicted judicial resources need by county

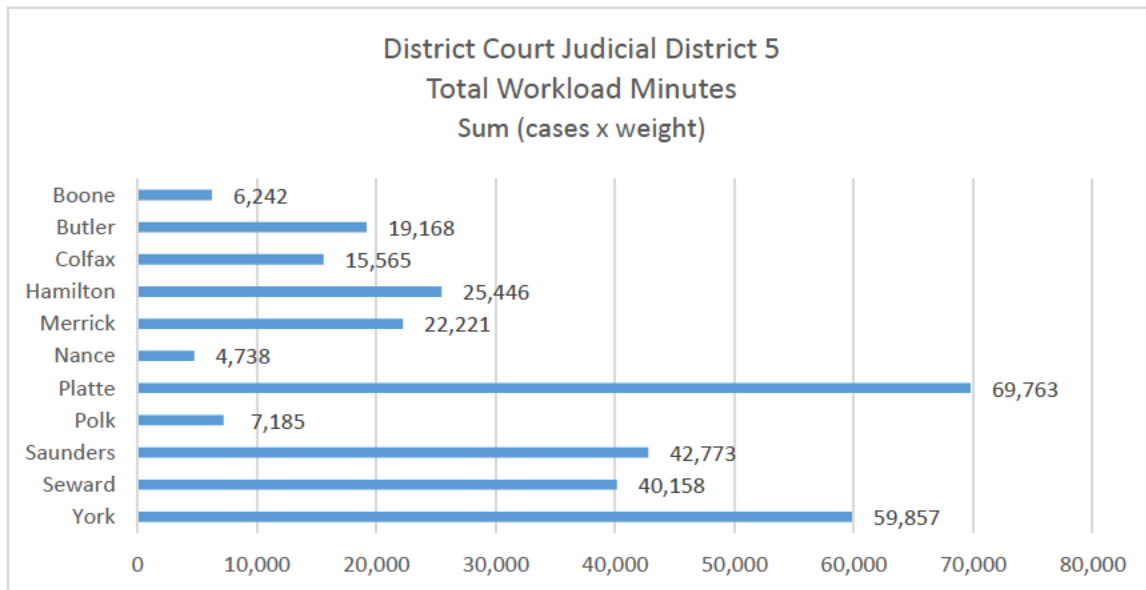


Judges Serving the 5th District

Vacant*

(Judge Doele was sworn in July 17th, 2025 – after caseloads were calculated)

Daugherty
Marroquin
Stecker



Weighted Caseload Report

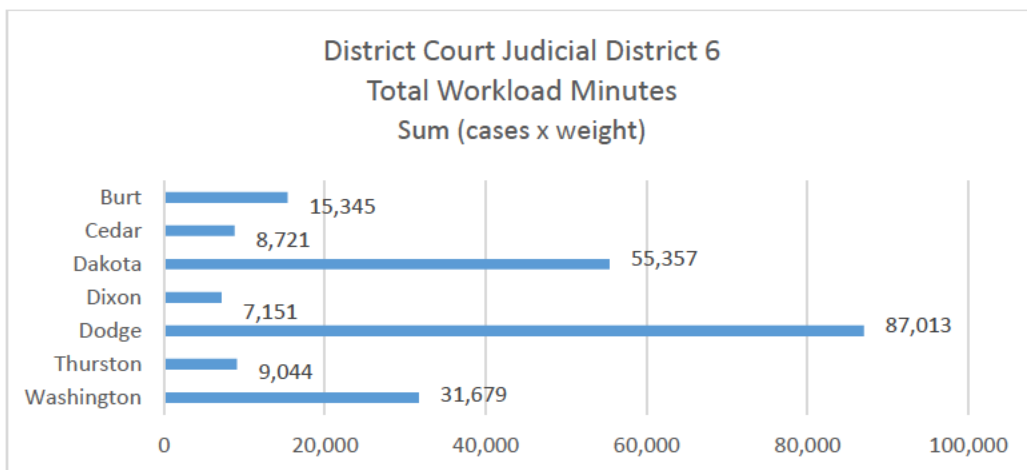
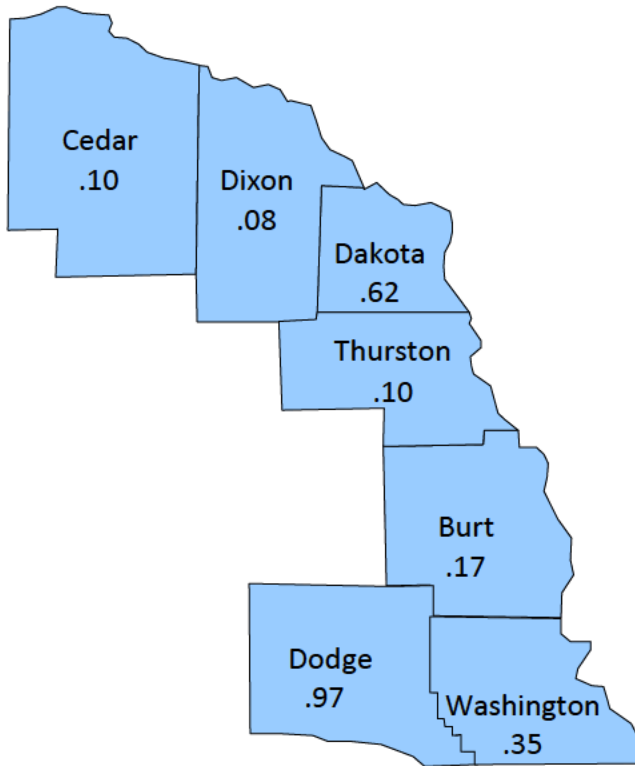
6th Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 2.39
 Current number of judges: 3
 Workload per judge: 0.80

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 6th District

Hall
Meisner
Blackman

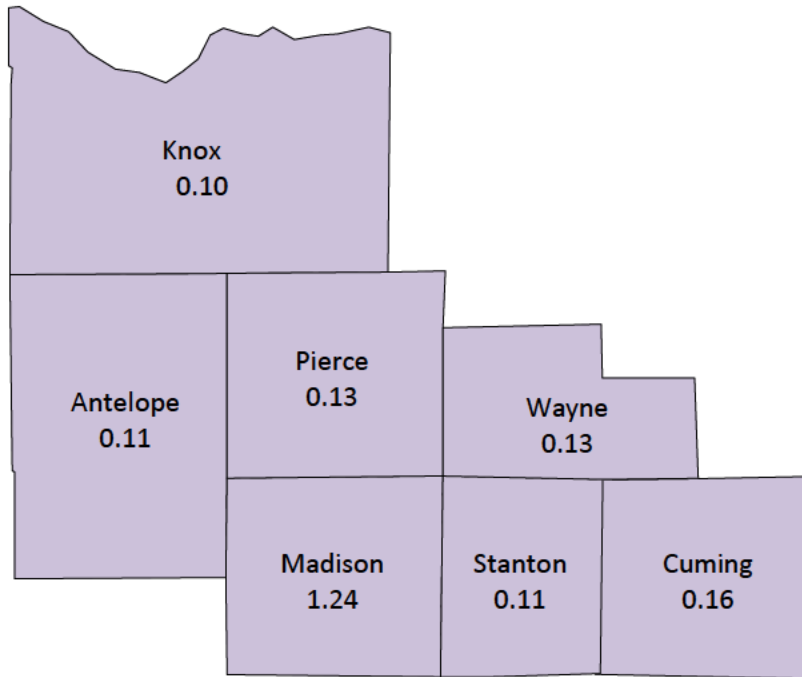


Weighted Caseload Report

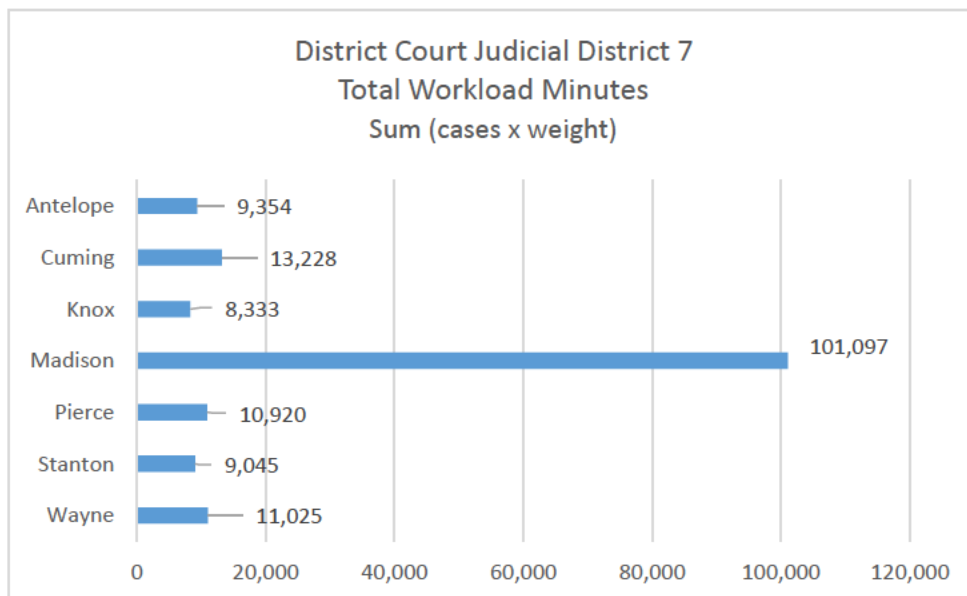
7th Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 1.98
Current number of judges: 2
Workload per judge: 0.99

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 7th District
Long (Johnson)
Kube



Weighted Caseload Report

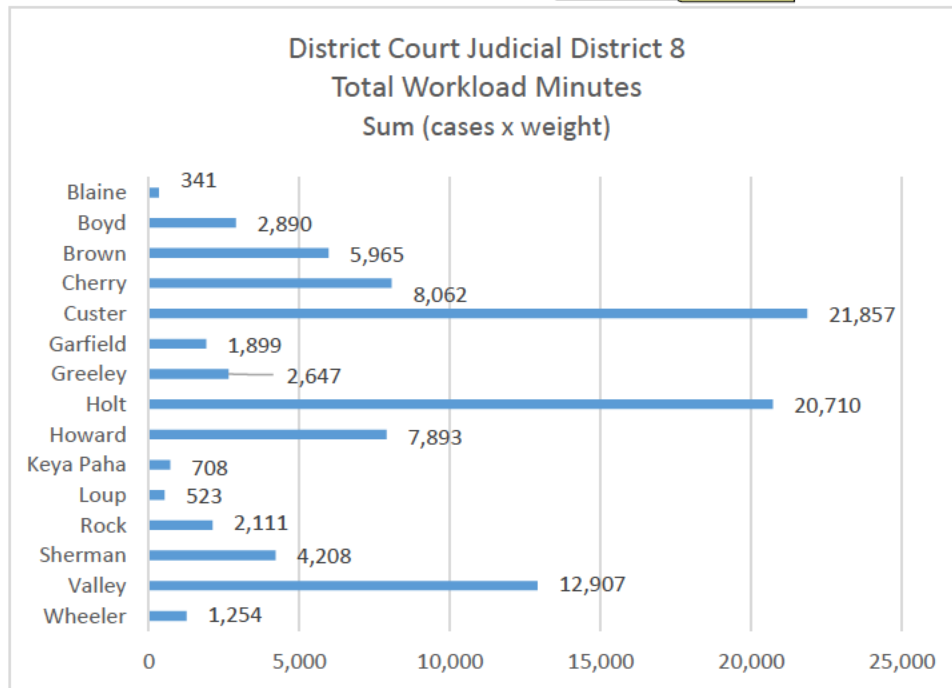
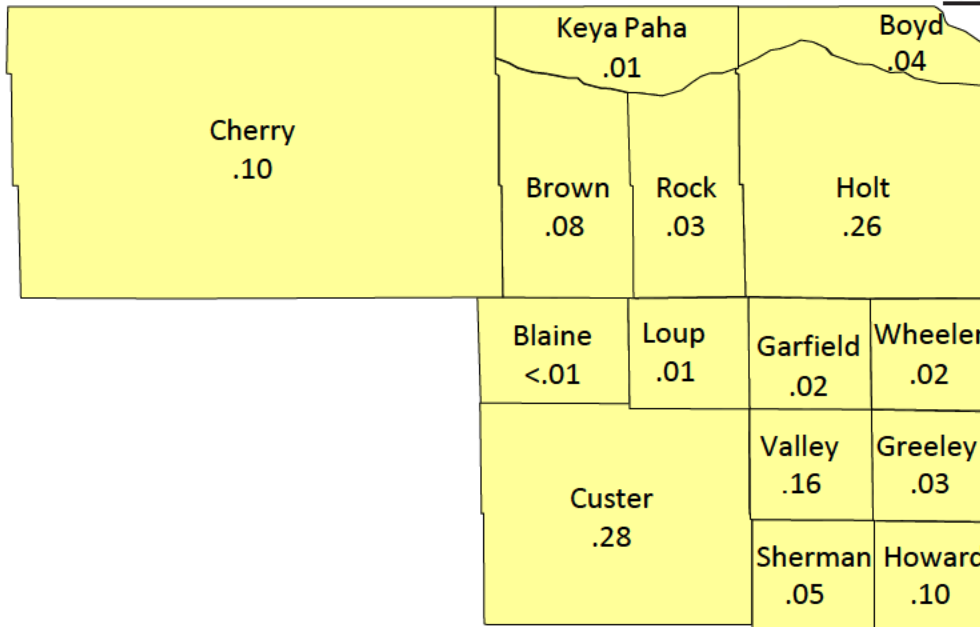
8th Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 1.19
 Current number of judges: 2
 Workload per judge: 0.60

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 8th District

Kozisek
Noakes



Weighted Caseload Report

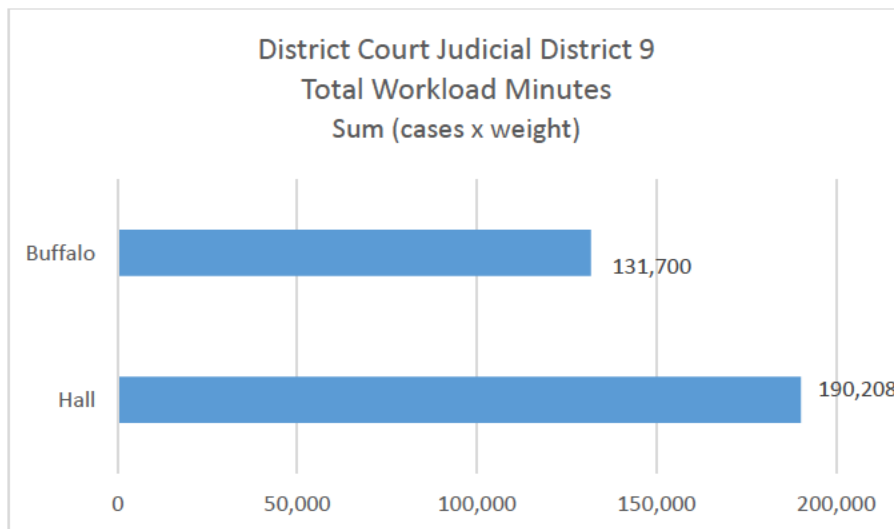
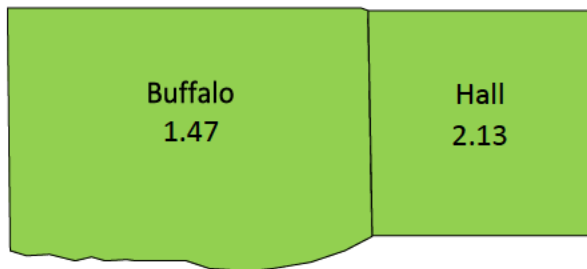
9th Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 3.60
Current number of judges: 4
Workload per judge: 0.90

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 9th District

Butler
Lee
Marsh
Ramsey (Carson)



Weighted Caseload Report

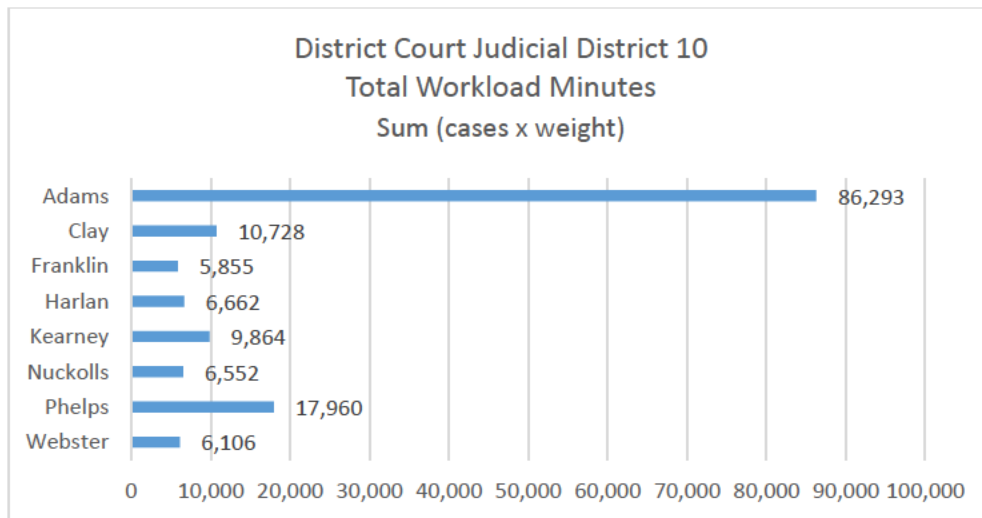
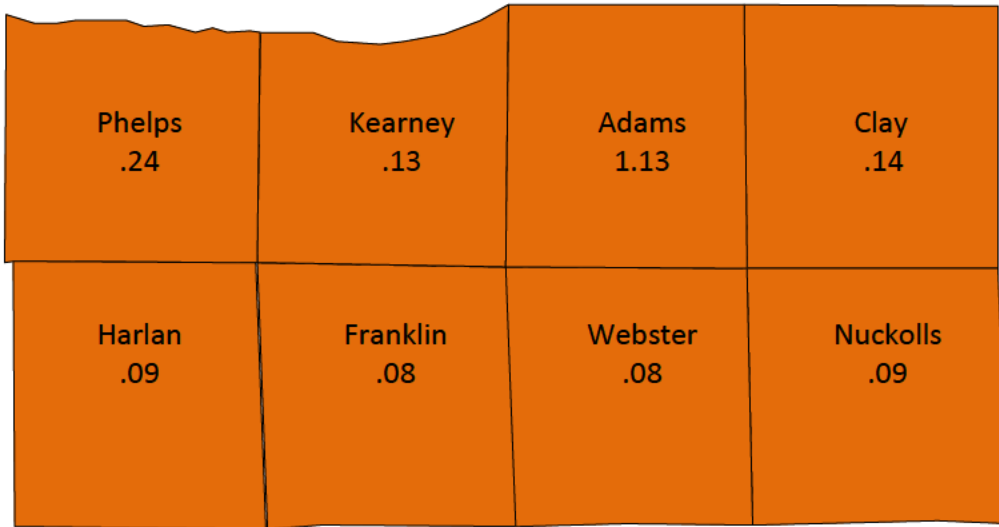
10th Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 1.98
 Current number of judges: 2
 Workload per judge: 0.99

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 10th District

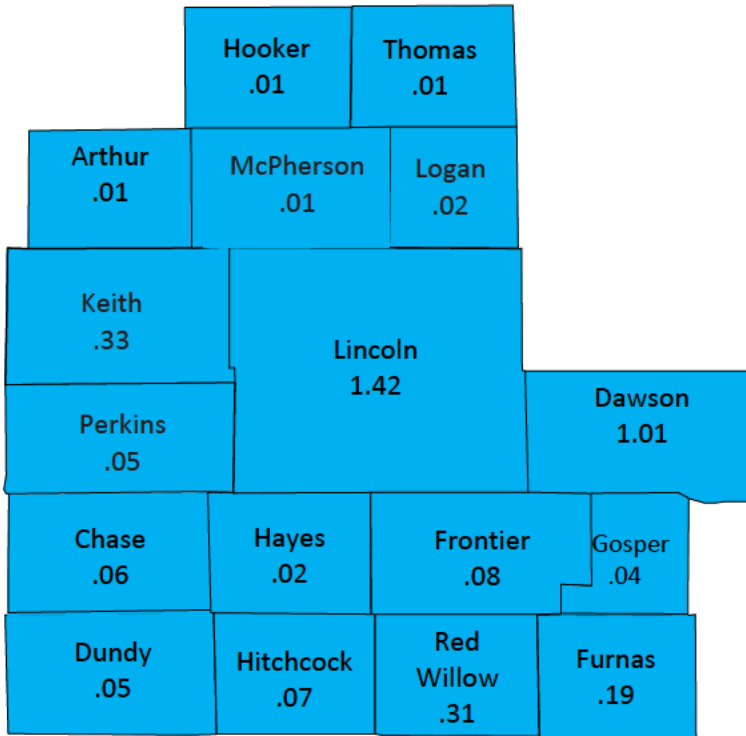
Farquhar
Hoeft



Weighted Caseload Report

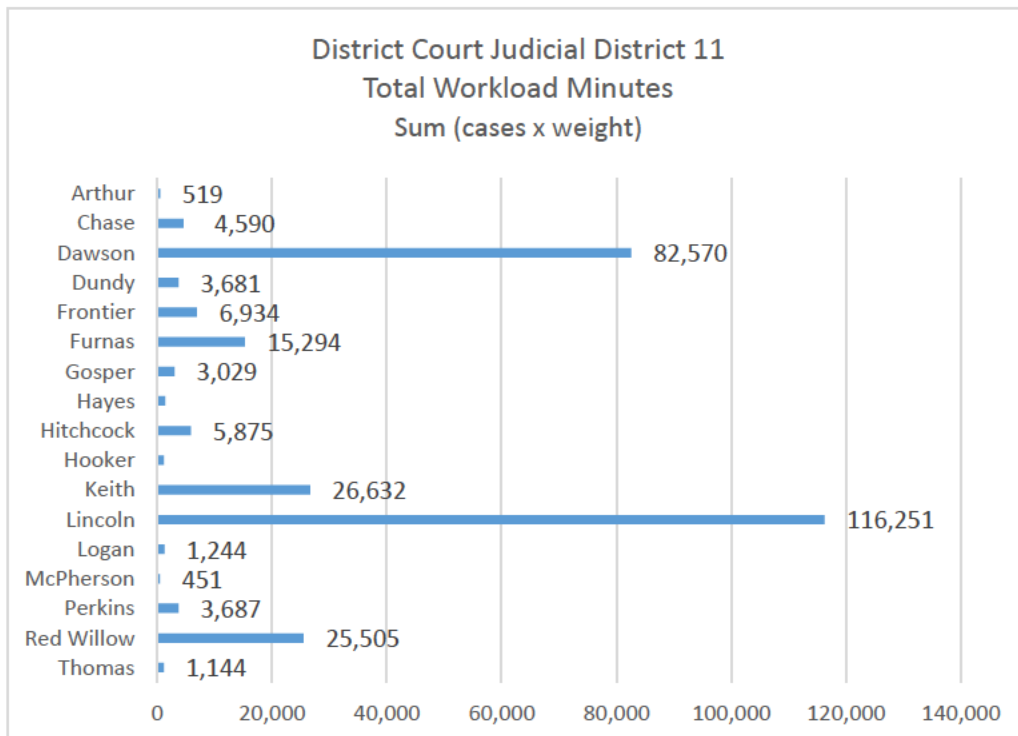
11th Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 3.69
 Current number of judges: 4
 Workload per judge: 0.92
 Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 11th District

Heng
Vacant (Neher)
Piccolo
Volkmer



Weighted Caseload Report

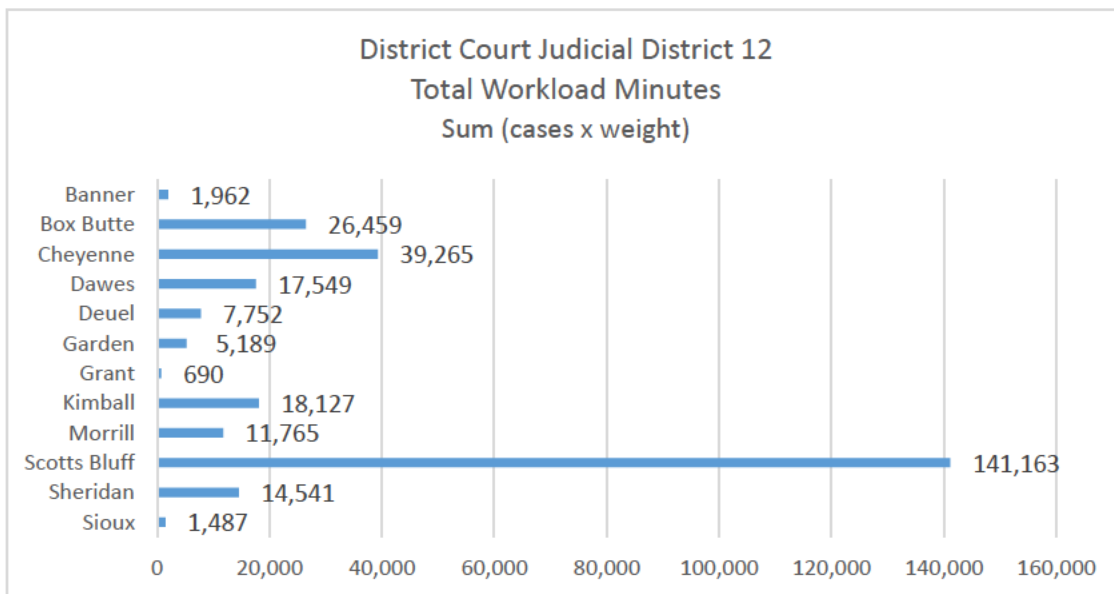
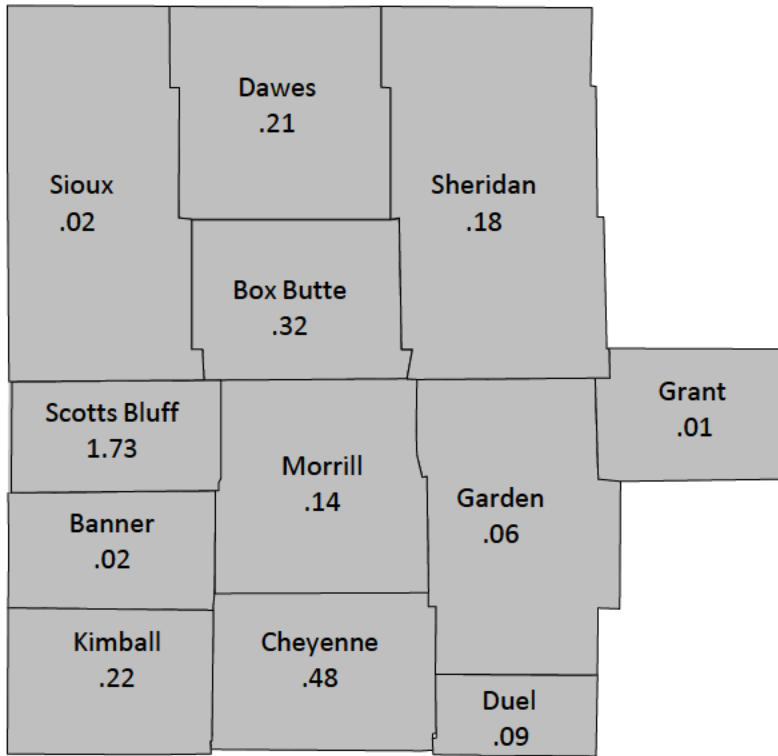
12th Judicial District – District Court

District court need for judges: 3.48
 Current number of judges: 4
 Workload per judge: 0.87

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 12th District

Dobrovlny
Miller
O’Gorman
Weimer



Weighted Caseload Report

Court Case Type Categories and Weights – Appendix

District Court Case Types	Case Weight* (minutes)
Problem Solving Court Cases	683
Protection Orders	32
Civil	219
Class I Felony	367
Other Criminal	149
Domestic Relations	97
Appeals	343
Administrative Appeals	540
County Court Case Types	Case Weight* (minutes)
Protection Orders	32
Felony	26
Misdemeanor	23
District Court: Adult Problem-Solving Court	683
Traffic	1
Civil	8
Probate	61
Guardianship/Conservatorship	133
Small Claims	30
Adoption	92
Domestic Relations	97
Juvenile: 3A Children	487
Juvenile: Delinquency	100
Juvenile: Status Offender 3B	37
Juvenile: Mentally Ill and Dangerous 3C	265
Juvenile: Bridge to Independence (B21)	58
Juvenile: Interstate Compact Hearings/Filings	2
Juvenile: Problem-Solving Court Cases	654
Separate Juvenile Court Case Types	Case Weight* (minutes)
Adoption	49
Domestic Relations	26
Juvenile: 3A Children	487
Delinquency	136
Status Offender 3B	54
Mentally Ill and Dangerous 3C	265
Bridge to Independence B21	36
Interstate Compact Hearing/Filings	2
Problem Solving Court Cases	654



Research and Data

Operations Division

Administrative Office of the Courts & Probation

Chief Standing Bear Justice Administration Building

521 S. 14th Street Suite 300 | Lincoln, NE 68508

T 531.739.8100 | F 402.471.2197

County Courts

Weighted Caseload Report



Fiscal Year 2025

July 1, 2024, to
June 30, 2025



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Court Case Type Categories and Weights - Appendix.....	15

Weighted Caseload Report

Nebraska County Courts Weighted Caseload Report

Nebraska has a district court in each of its 93 counties, organized into 12 Judicial Districts. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-301.02, the Legislature determines the number of district court judges who serve in each judicial district, and the geographic boundaries of each judicial district. An objective assessment of judicial workload allows informed decisions about district boundaries and the number of judges needed to timely resolve the cases in each judicial district.

To assist in evaluating judicial workloads, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-1007(1) requires the Nebraska Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation (AOC) to compile judicial workload statistics based on caseloads weighted by category of case. These weighted caseload statistics are used by the Judicial Branch, the Judicial Resources Commission, and the Legislature to evaluate judicial need, and guide decisions and recommendations on how best to allocate judicial resources across the state.

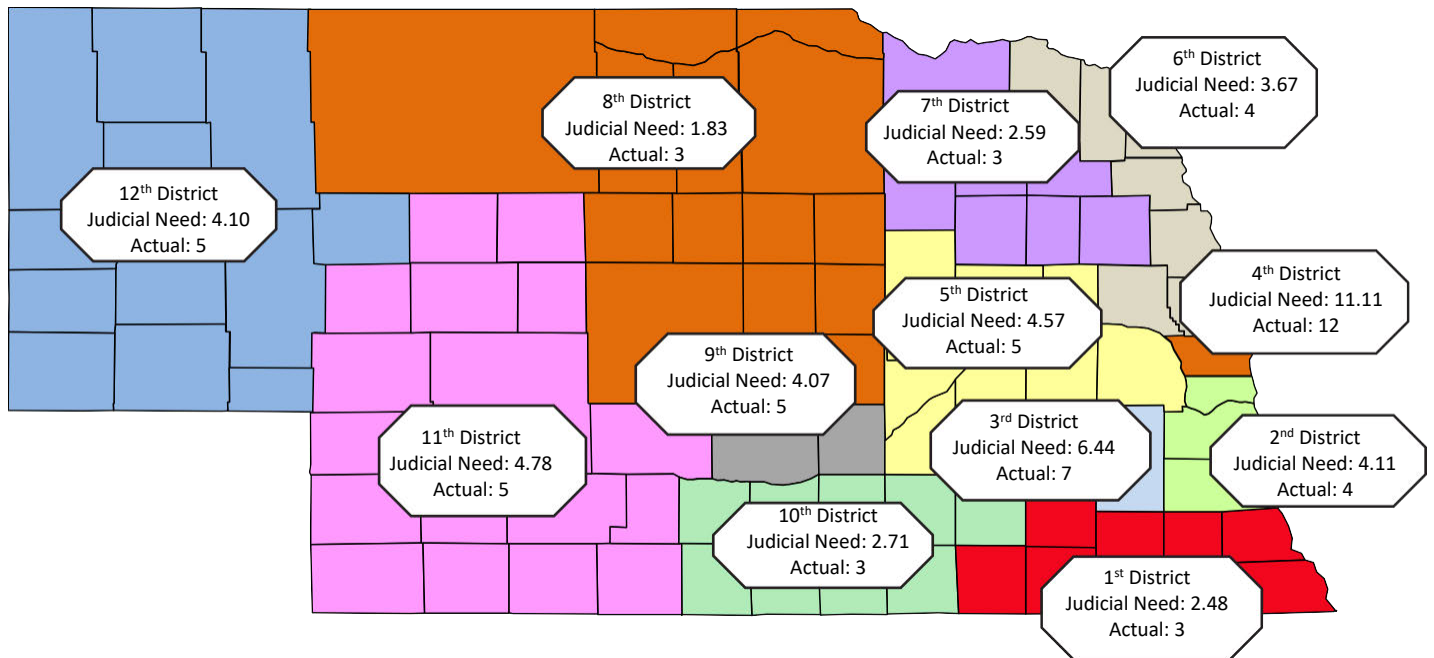
To ensure the validity, uniformity and accuracy of the AOC's judicial workload statistics, a statewide judicial time study was conducted in 2019-2020 under the direction and leadership of the National Center for State Courts. For a full description of the judicial time study and the recommended weighting methodology and standards, see *Nebraska Judicial Workload Assessment Final Report* (October 2020) (this is noted on tables in this report with an asterisk) on the Nebraska Supreme Court Website. Because this Weighted Caseload Report uses the methodology and standards from the 2020 workload assessment, direct comparison to archived reports is not recommended.

Weighted caseload statistics approximate the number of judges a district needs to handle the current caseload based upon the calculations of a three-year rolling average of case filing data. Therefore, when weighted caseload statistics are examined in conjunction with other compelling and critical metrics, they provide a vital part of an objective and standardized assessment of judicial needs and the fair allocation of judicial resources across juvenile courts in the State of Nebraska.



Weighted Caseload Report

Nebraska County Court Judicial Needs Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)



Note: Differences between the total District Court Need for Judges and the sum of individual counties is due to rounding to the nearest one-hundredth.

Weighted Caseload Report

1st Judicial District – County Court

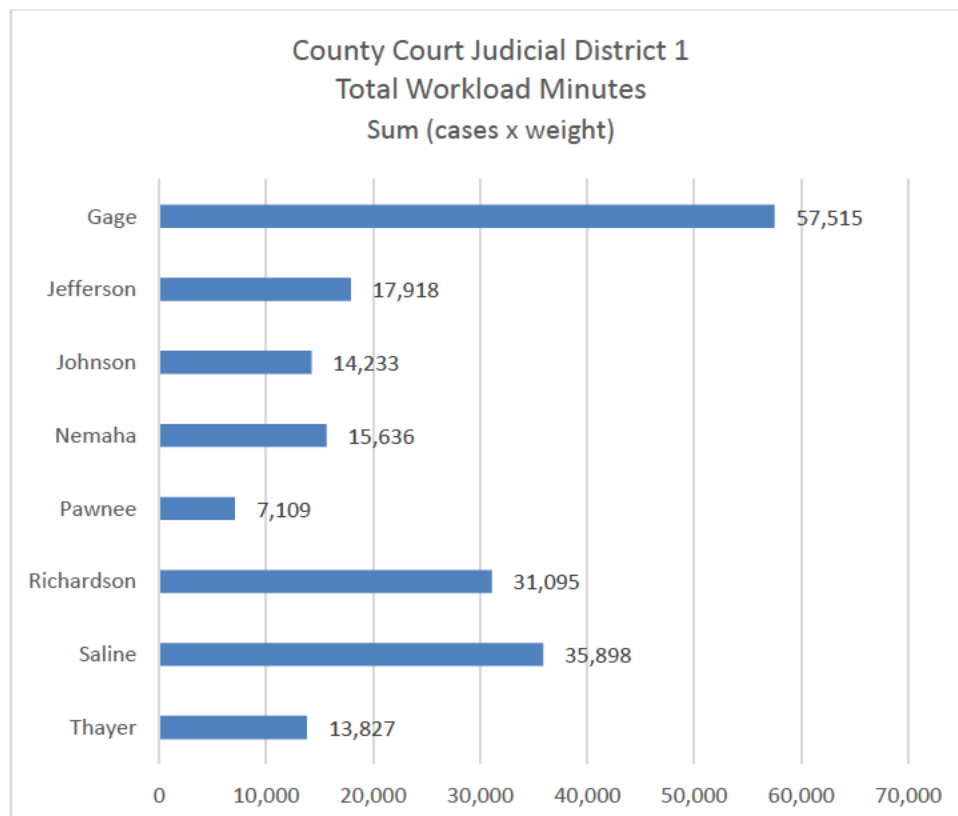
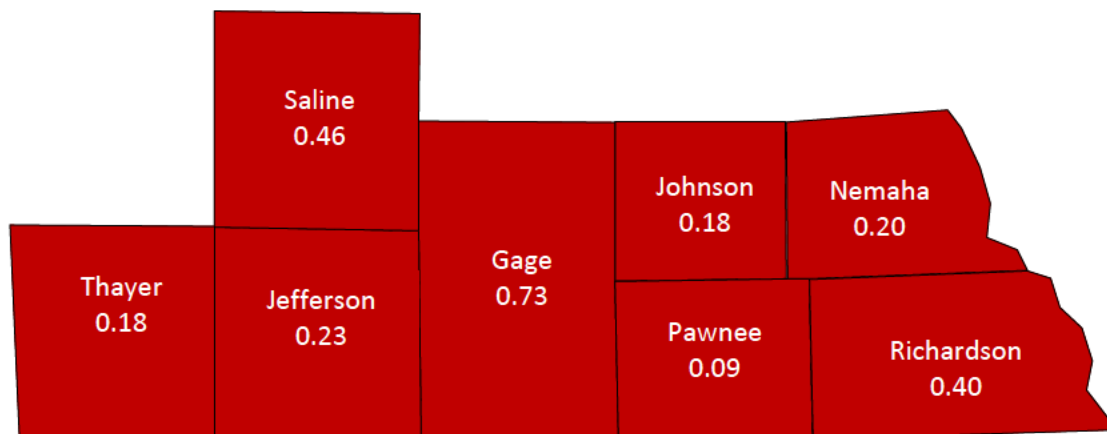
County court need for judges: 2.48
 Current number of judges: 3
 Workload per judge: 0.83

NOTE: An additional **0.01** is given due to Judge R. Smith being assigned to Problem-Solving Court cases in Fillmore County (District Court) and Otoe County (District Court).

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 1st District

L. Bauer
 Gaertig
 R. Smith

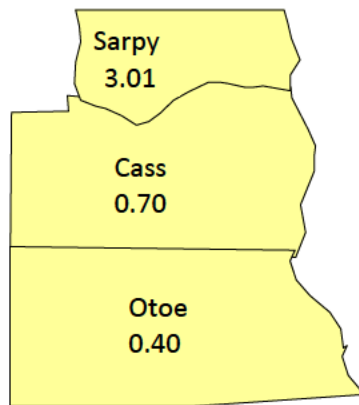


Weighted Caseload Report

2nd Judicial District – County Court

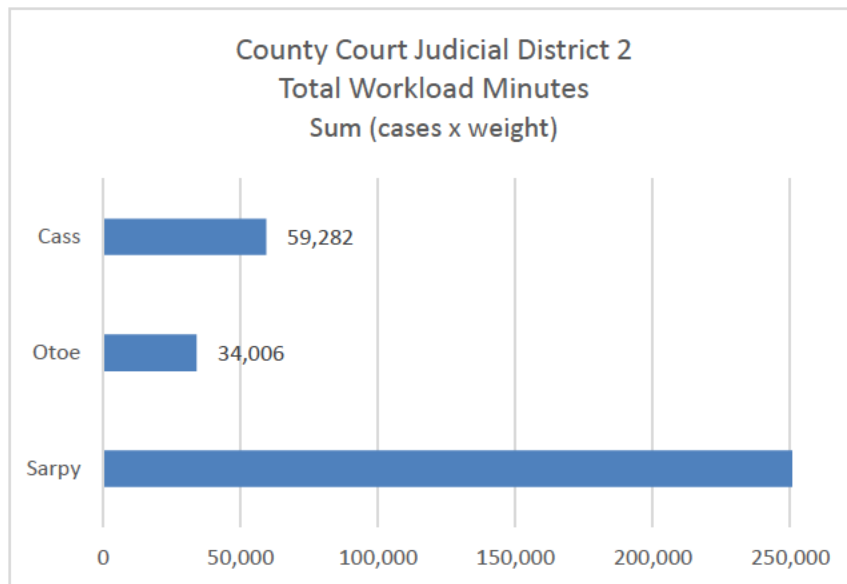
County court need for judges: 4.11
 Current number of judges: 4
 Workload per judge: 1.03

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 2nd District

Freeman
Hutton
Palm
Partsch



Weighted Caseload Report

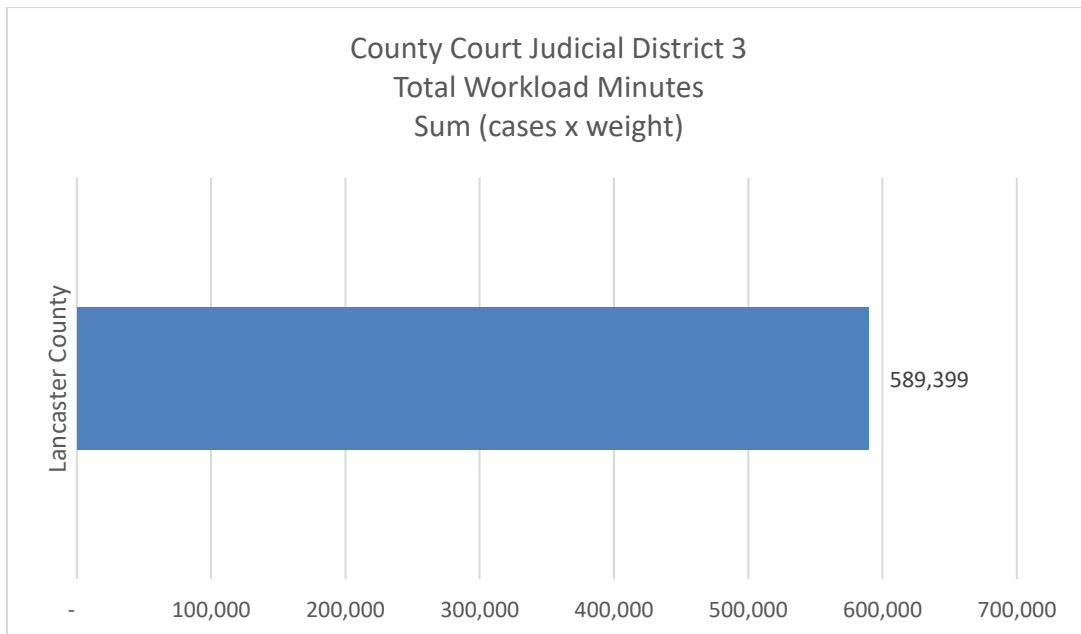
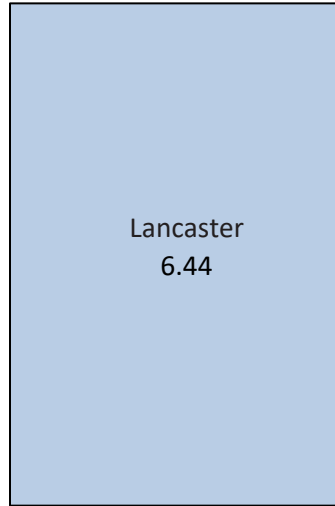
3rd Judicial District –County Court

County court need for judges: 6.44
 Current number of judges: 7
 Workload per judge: 0.92

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 3rd District

- Acton**
- Dalton**
- Parsley**
- Phillips**
- Reuter**
- Yardley**
- Zimmerman**



Weighted Caseload Report

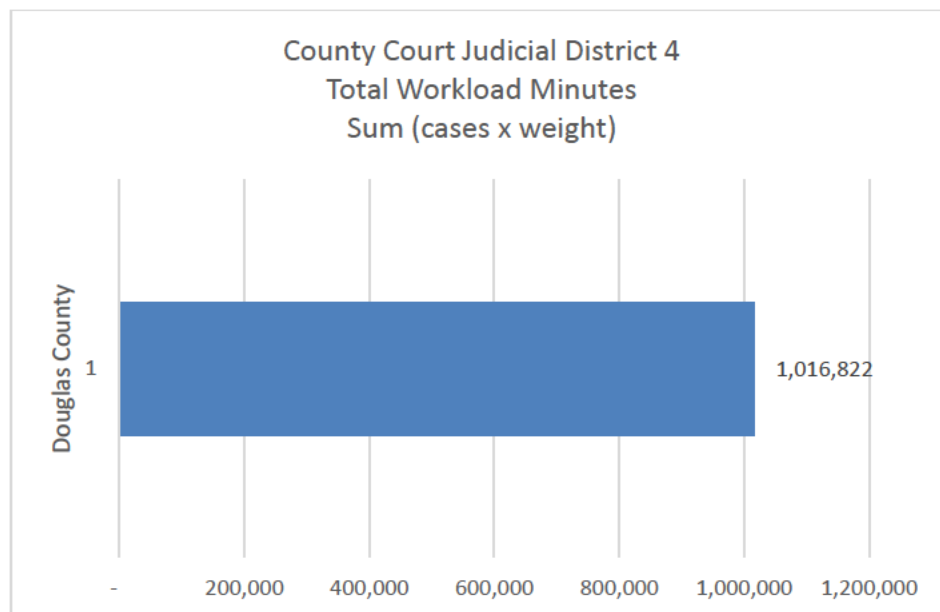
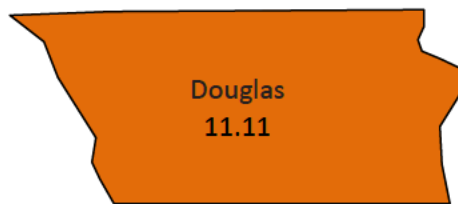
4th Judicial District –County Court

County court need for judges: 11.11
 Current number of judges: 12
 Workload per judge: 0.93

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Judges Serving the 4th District

- Finley
- Forsberg
- Hansen
- Harmon
- Hendrix
- Huber
- Keim
- Kleine (Marcuzzo)
- Lohaus
- McDermott
- Mosby (Lowe)
- Shearer

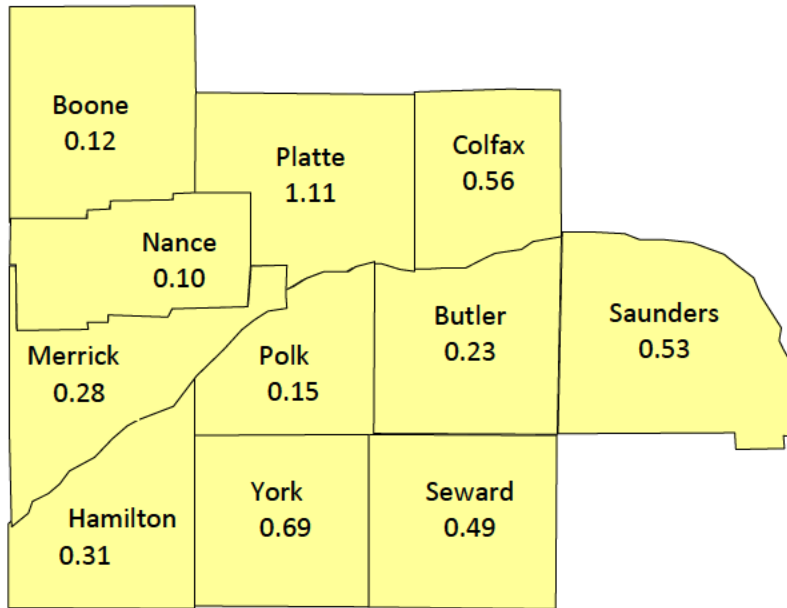


Weighted Caseload Report

5th Judicial District - County Court

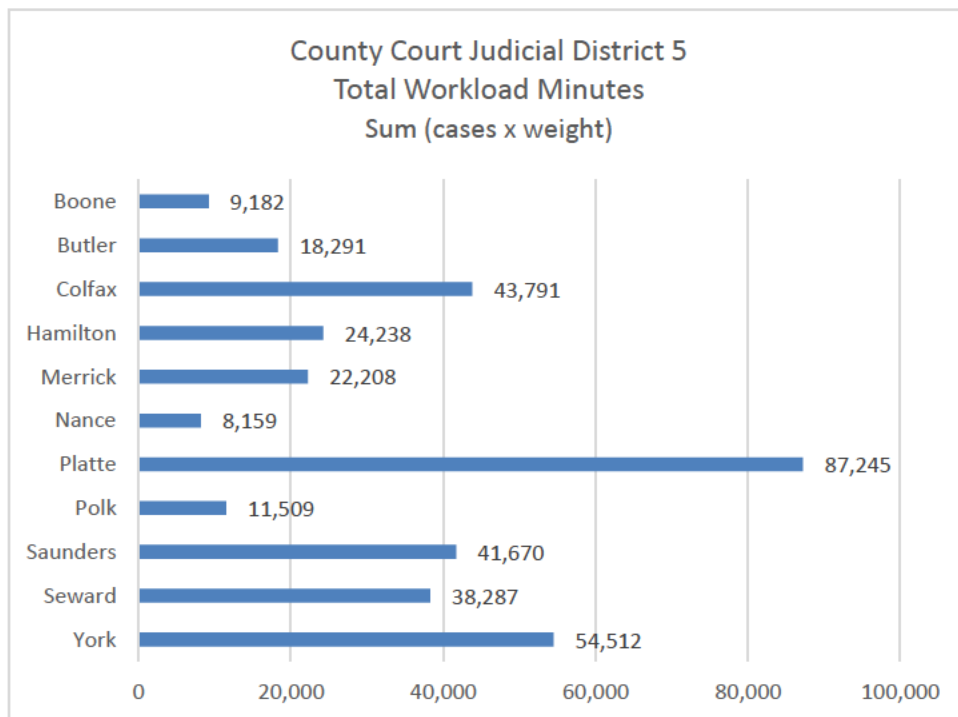
County court need for judges: 4.57
 Current number of judges: 5
 Workload per judge: 0.91

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 5th District

- Homolka
- Kracl
- Lange
- Petersen
- Twiss

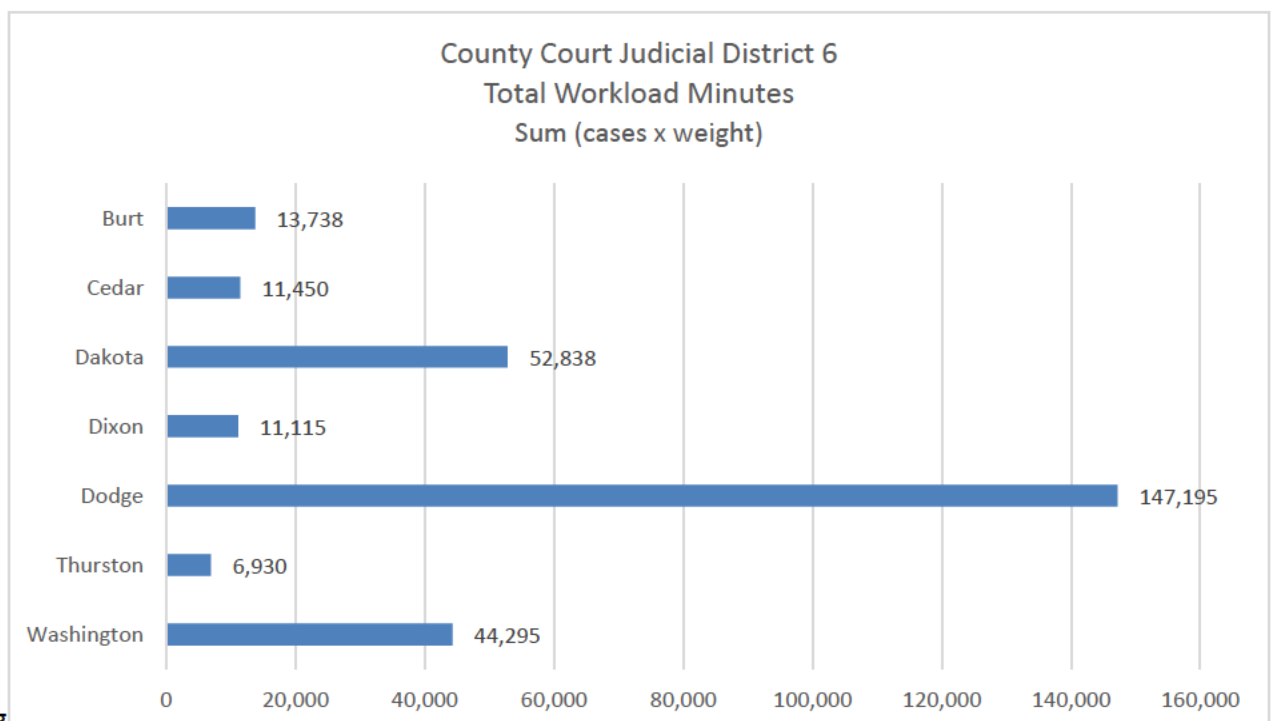
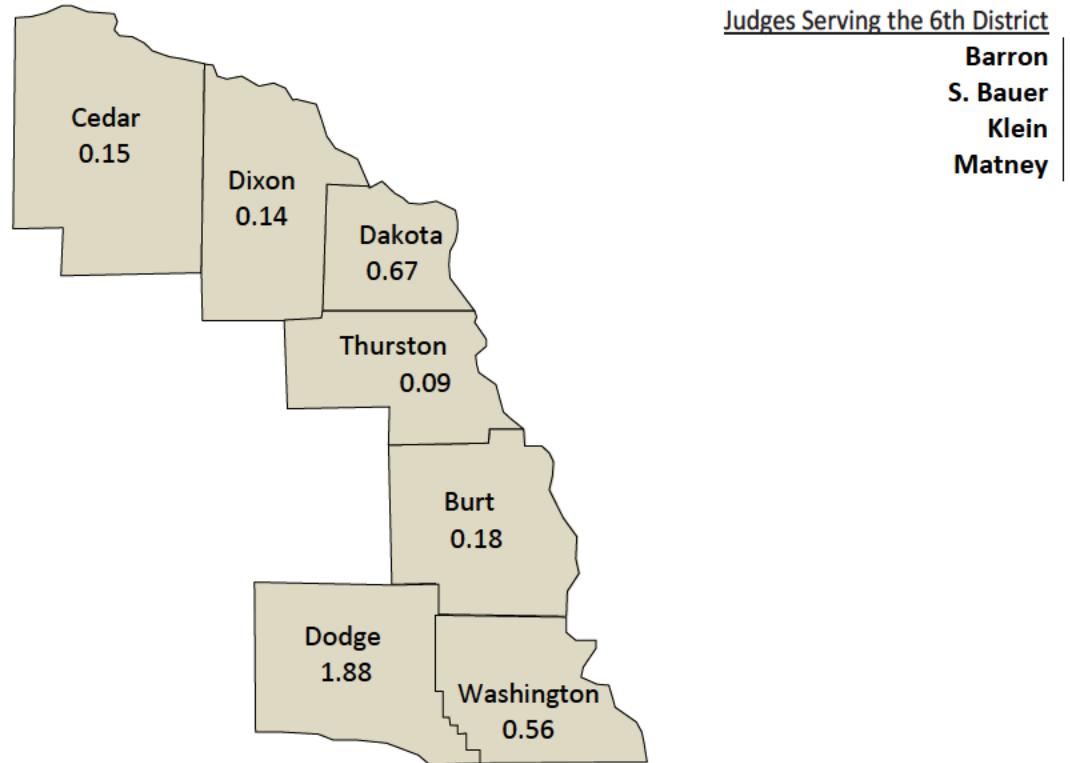


Weighted Caseload Report

6th Judicial District – County Court

County court need for judges: 3.67
 Current number of judges: 4
 Workload per judge: 0.92

Predicted judicial resources need by county

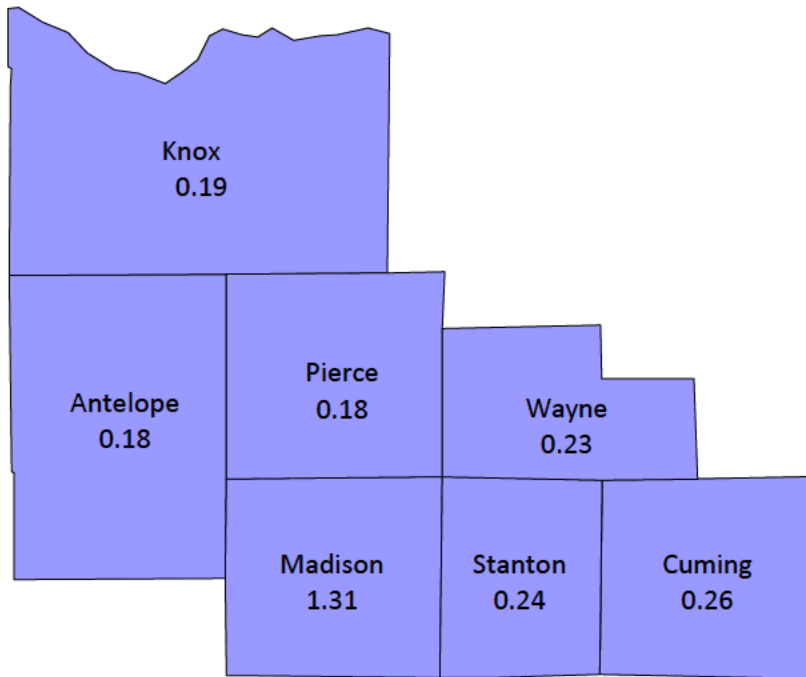


Weighted Caseload Report

7th Judicial District – County Court

County court need for judges: 2.59
 Current number of judges: 3
 Workload per judge: 0.86

Predicted judicial resources need by county

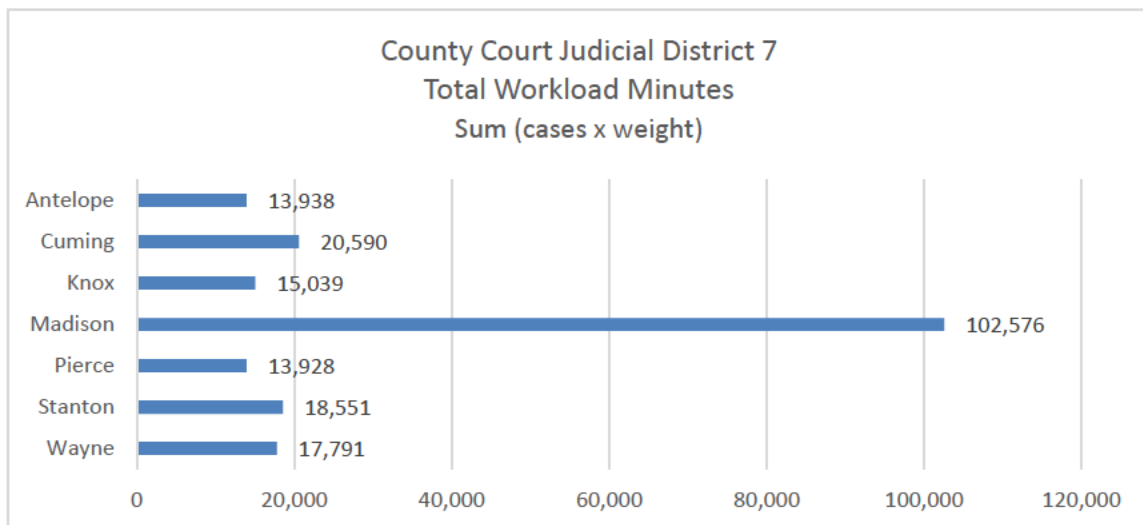


Judges Serving the 7th District

Vacant (Long)

Stoffer

Taylor

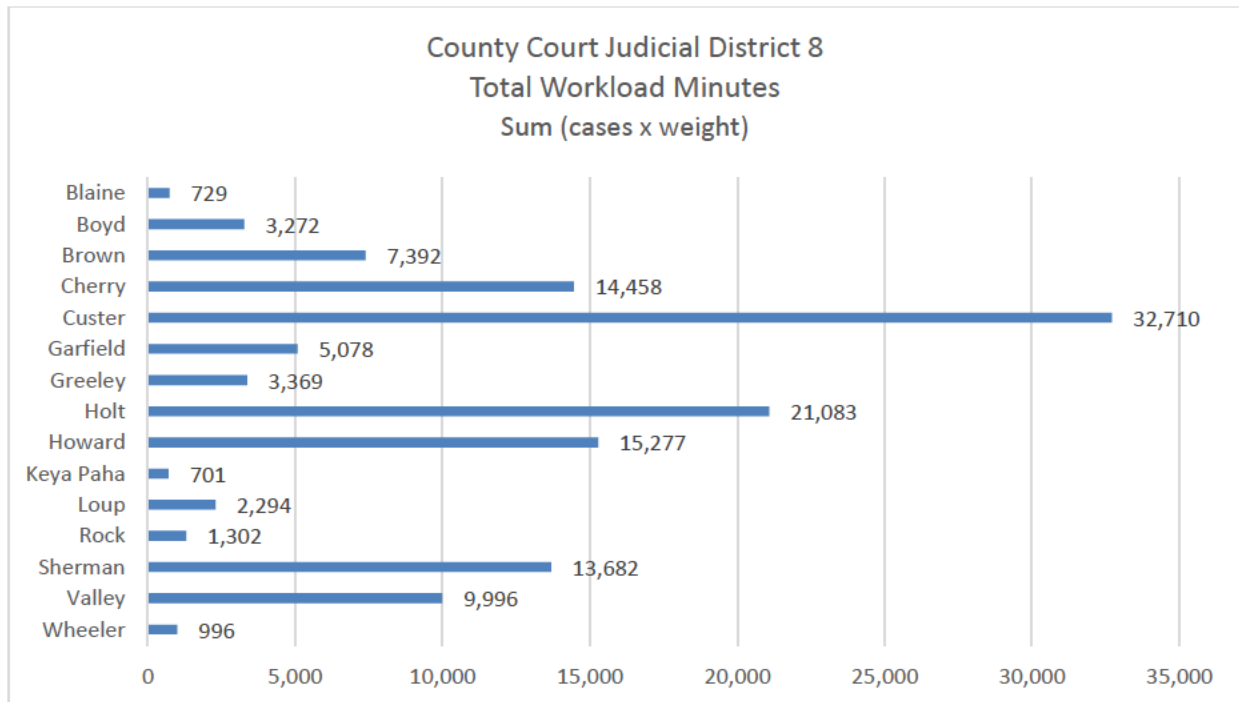
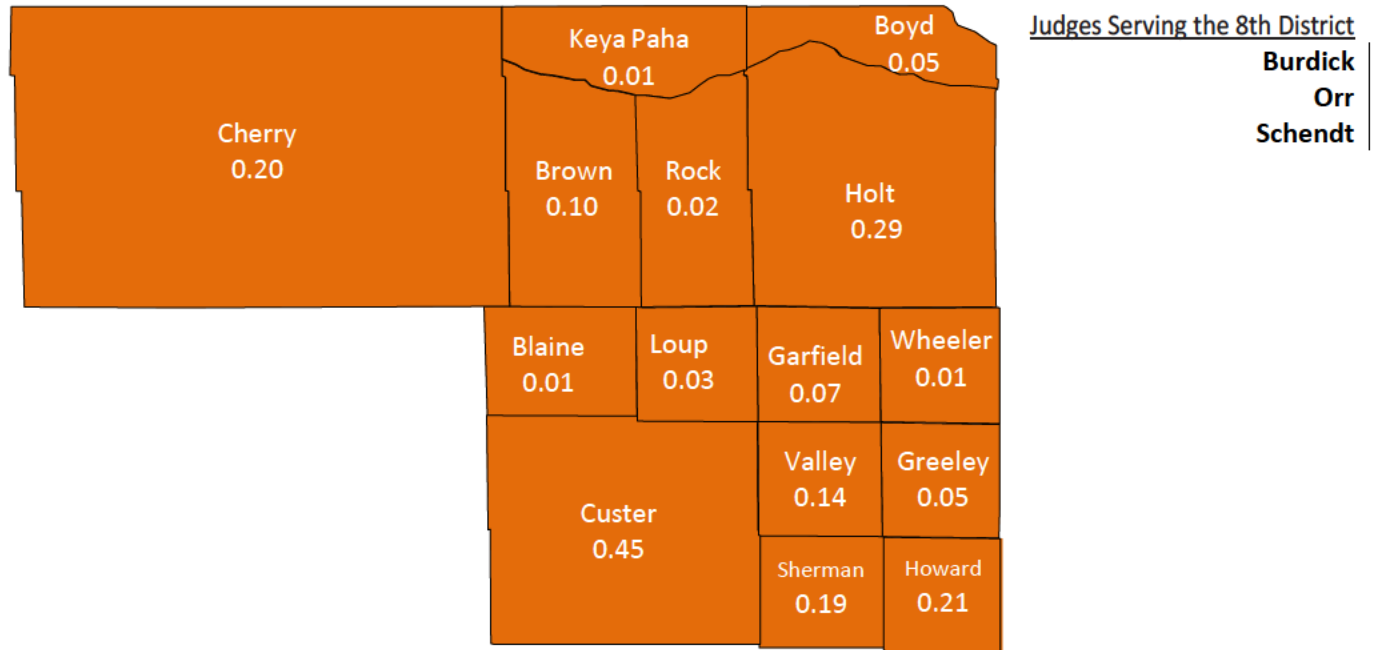


Weighted Caseload Report

8th Judicial District – County Court

County court need for judges: 1.83
 Current number of judges: 3
 Workload per judge: 0.61

Predicted judicial resources need by county

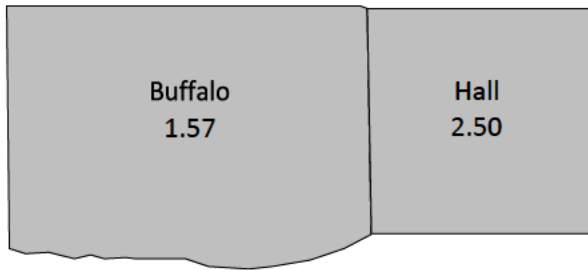


Weighted Caseload Report

9th Judicial District – County Court

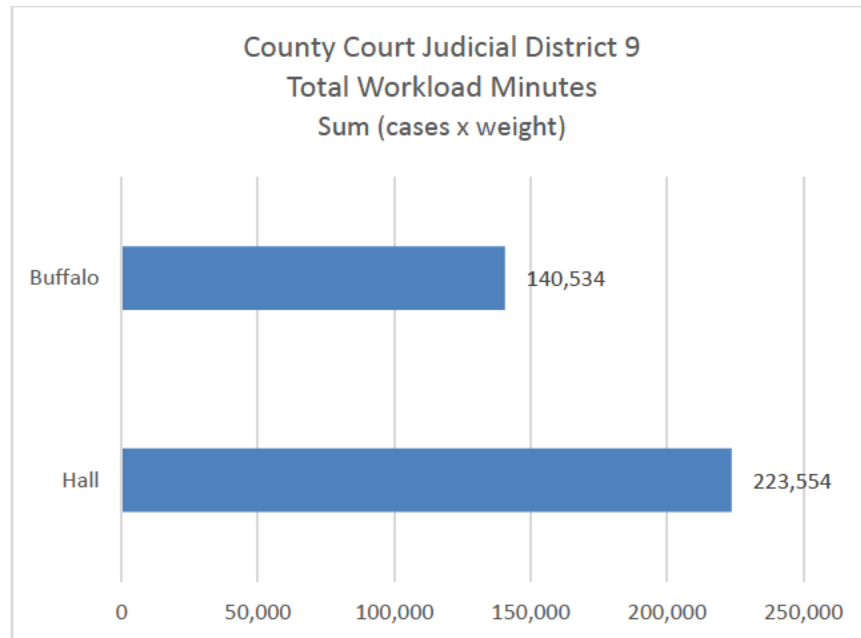
County court need for judges: 4.07
Current number of judges: 5
Workload per judge: 0.81

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 9th District

Corey
Jorgensen
McQuay
Rademacher
Wetzel



Weighted Caseload Report

10th Judicial District – County Court

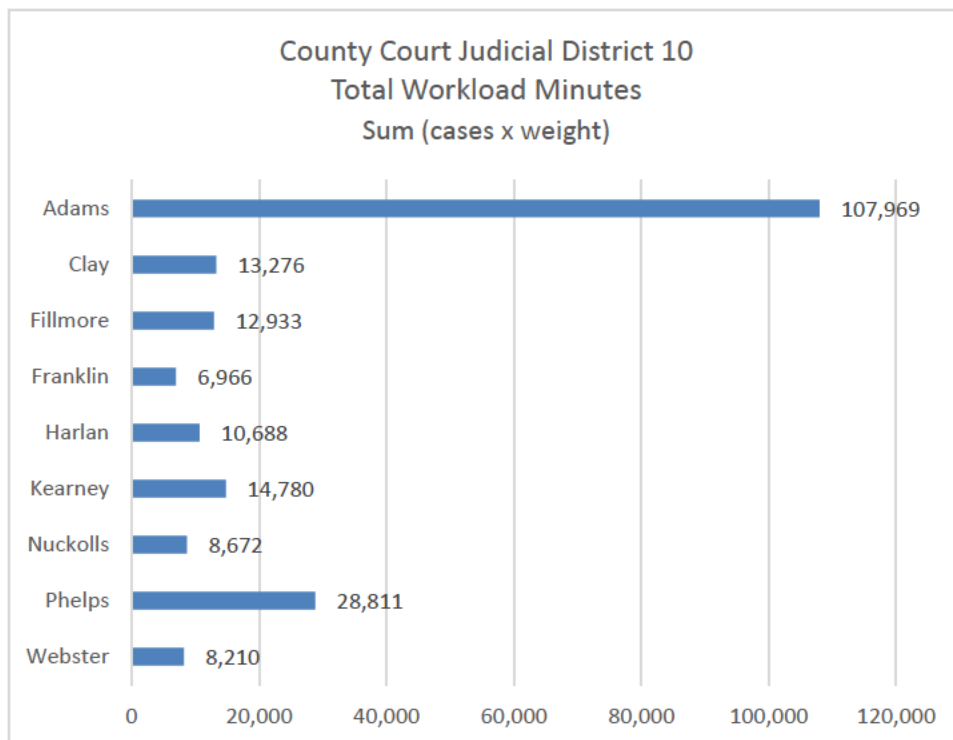
County court need for judges: 2.71
 Current number of judges: 3
 Workload per judge: 0.90

Predicted judicial resources need by county

Phelps 0.37	Kearney 0.19	Adams 1.38	Clay 0.17	Fillmore 0.16
Harlan 0.14	Franklin 0.09	Webster 0.10	Nuckolls 0.11	

Judges Serving the 10th District

Burns
 Mead
 Nelsen-Pacey (Hoeft)

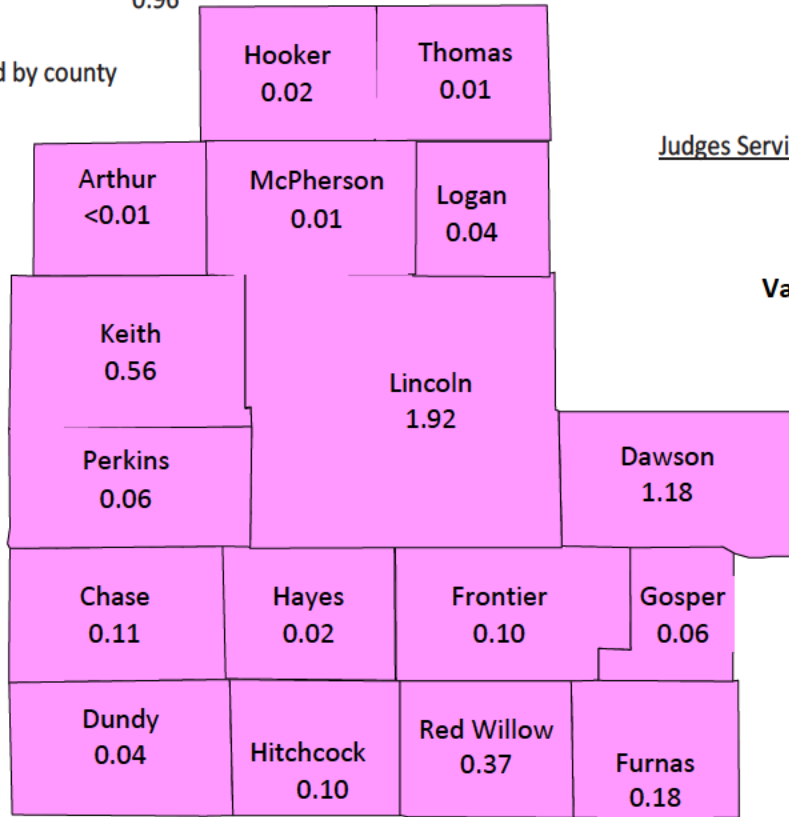


Weighted Caseload Report

11th Judicial District – County Court

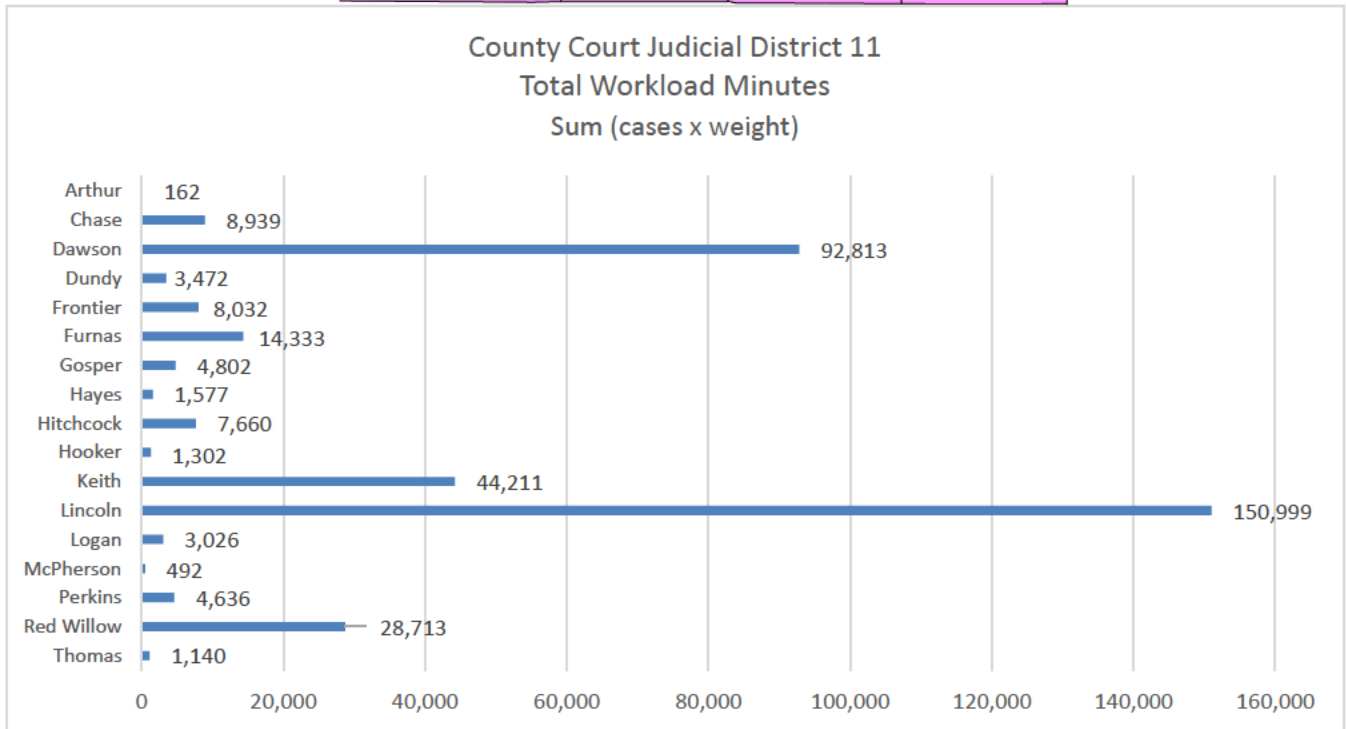
County court need for judges: 4.78
 Current number of judges: 5
 Workload per judge: 0.96

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 11th District

Jay
 Paine
 Roberts-Connick
 Vacant (Steenburg)
 Wightman

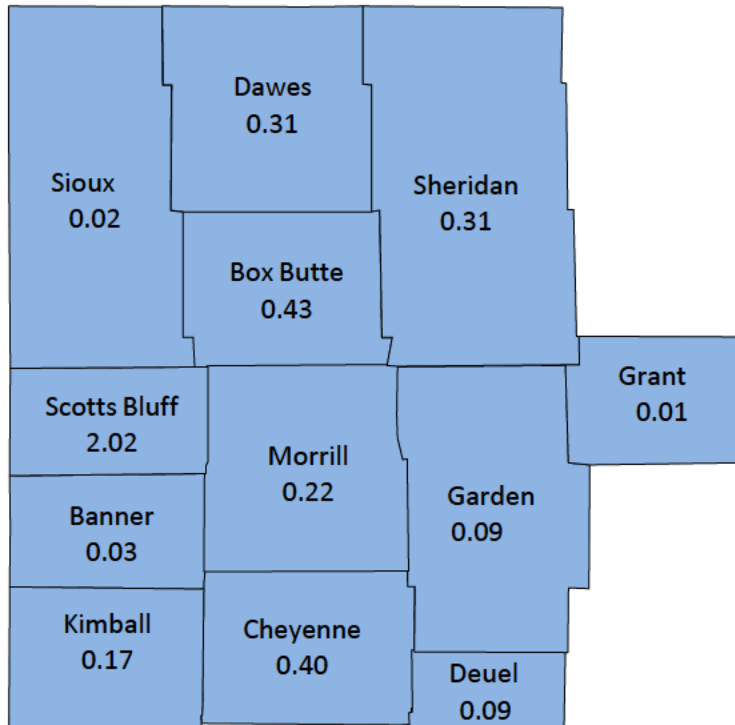


Weighted Caseload Report

12th Judicial District – County Court

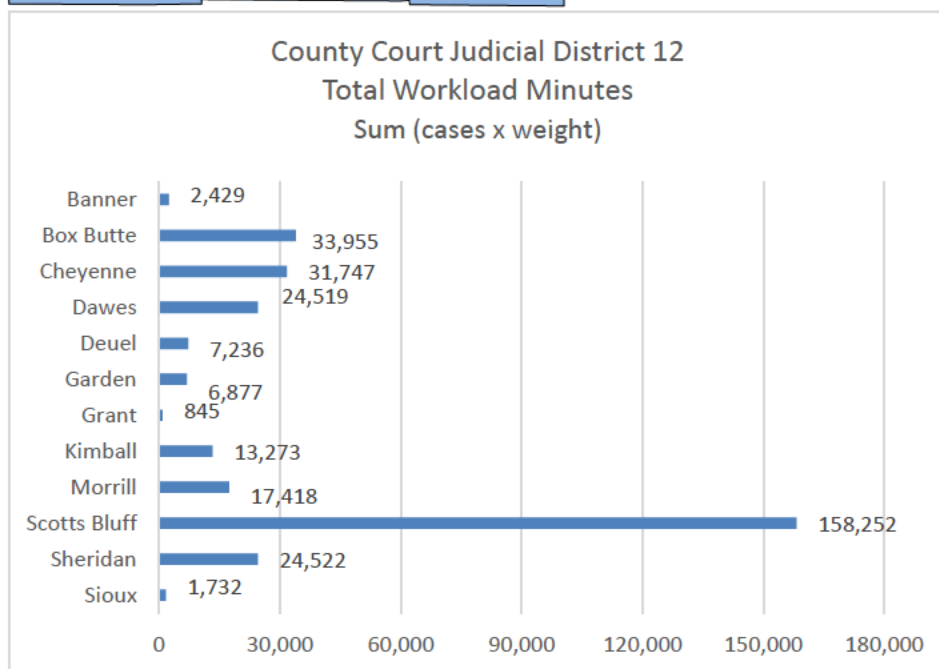
County court need for judges: 4.10
 Current number of judges: 5
 Workload per judge: 0.82

Predicted judicial resources need by county



Judges Serving the 12th District

Conn
 Mickey
 Roland
 Wess
 Worden



Weighted Caseload Report

Court Case Type Categories and Weights – Appendix

District Court Case Types	Case Weight* (minutes)
Problem Solving Court Cases	683
Protection Orders	32
Civil	219
Class I Felony	367
Other Criminal	149
Domestic Relations	97
Appeals	343
Administrative Appeals	540
County Court Case Types	Case Weight* (minutes)
Protection Orders	32
Felony	26
Misdemeanor	23
District Court: Adult Problem-Solving Court	683
Traffic	1
Civil	8
Probate	61
Guardianship/Conservatorship	133
Small Claims	30
Adoption	92
Domestic Relations	97
Juvenile: 3A Children	487
Juvenile: Delinquency	100
Juvenile: Status Offender 3B	37
Juvenile: Mentally Ill and Dangerous 3C	265
Juvenile: Bridge to Independence (B21)	58
Juvenile: Interstate Compact Hearings/Filings	2
Juvenile: Problem-Solving Court Cases	654
Separate Juvenile Court Case Types	Case Weight* (minutes)
Adoption	49
Domestic Relations	26
Juvenile: 3A Children	487
Delinquency	136
Status Offender 3B	54
Mentally Ill and Dangerous 3C	265
Bridge to Independence B21	36
Interstate Compact Hearing/Filings	2
Problem Solving Court Cases	654



Research and Data

Operations Division

Administrative Office of the Courts & Probation

Chief Standing Bear Justice Administration Building

521 S. 14th Street Suite 300 | Lincoln, NE 68508

T 531.739.8100 | F 402.471.2197



Judicial Resources Commission

Supportive Data for
2025 Annual Meeting

1. Caseload Data & Trends
2. Weighted Caseload Reports
3. Problem-Solving Courts
4. Judicial Retirement Forecast
5. Other Factors Affecting Judicial Resources

FY2025 caseloads

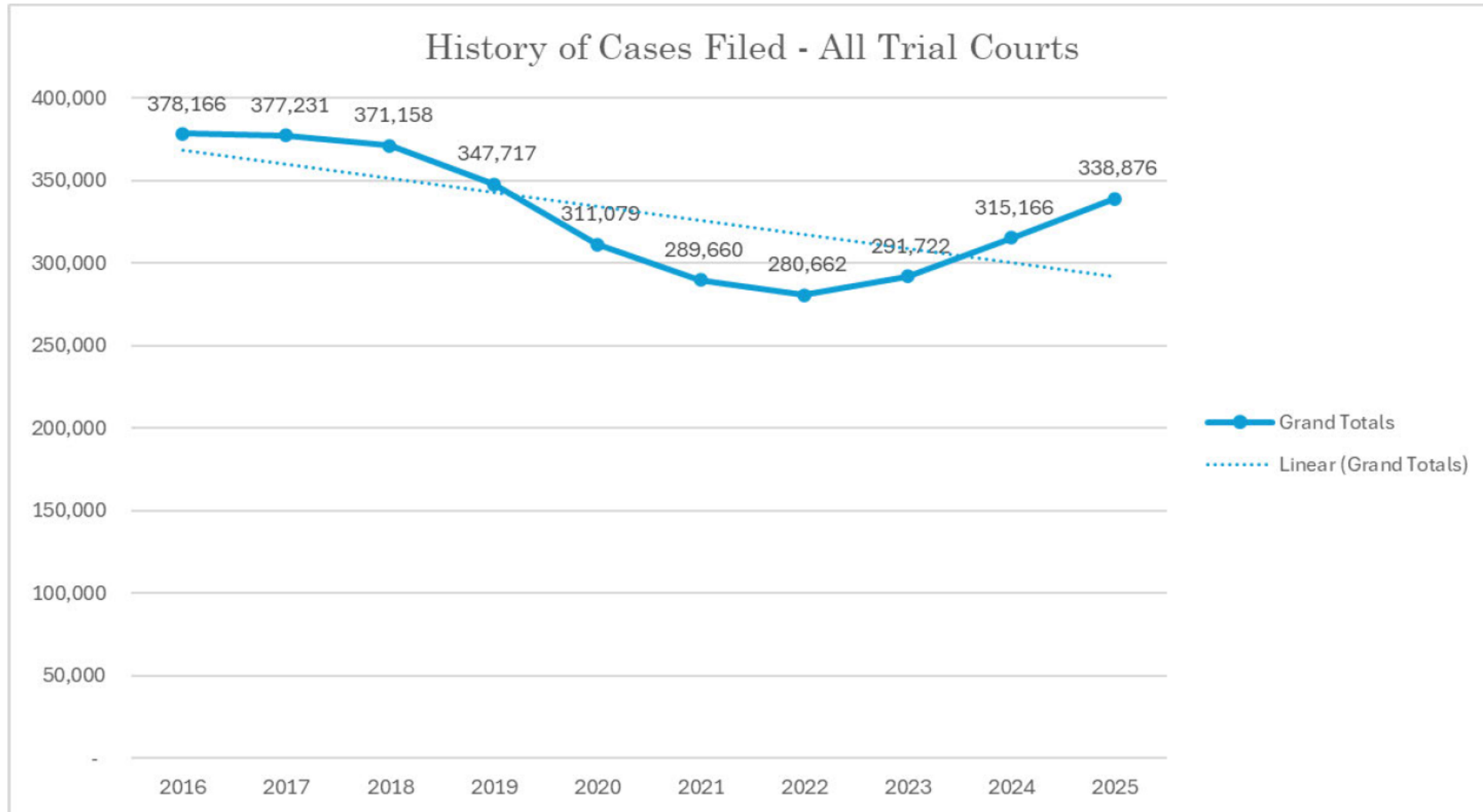
July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025

New Cases Filed in FY2025

In FY2025, there were a total of **338,876** cases filed* in the district, county, and separate juvenile courts.

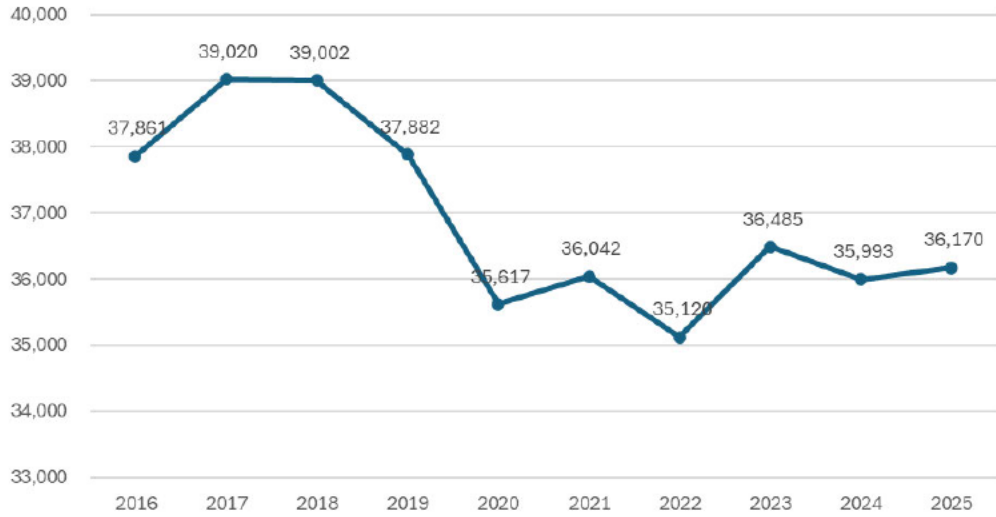
District Courts:	36,170 cases filed
County Courts:	298,536 cases filed
Separate Juvenile Courts:	4,170 cases filed*

History of Cases Filed: All Trial Courts

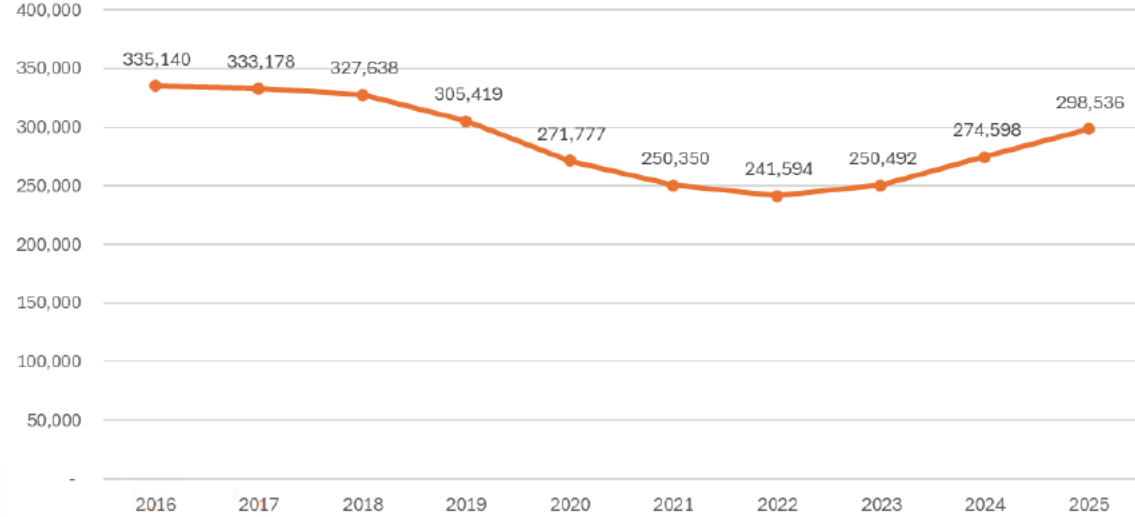


10-Year Trend Lines

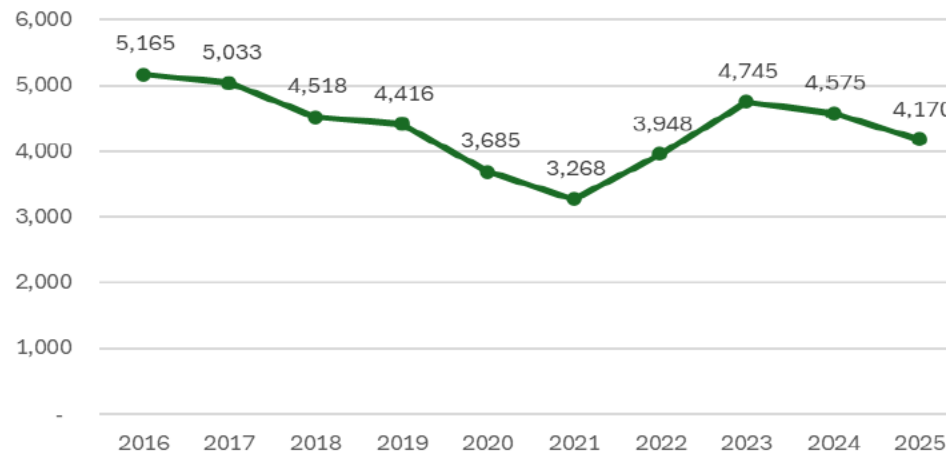
District Court Cases FY16 - FY25



County Court Cases FY16 - FY25



Juvenile Court Cases FY16 - FY25

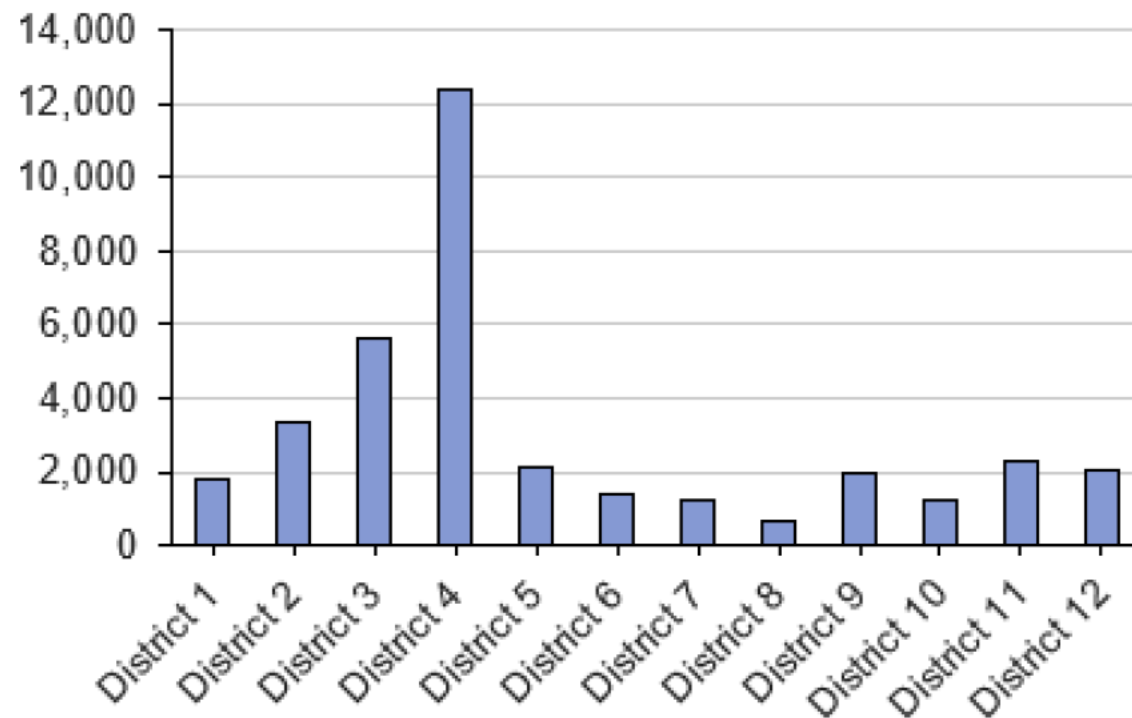


A Closer Look at Caseload Trends

DISTRICT COURTS

District Court Annual Caseloads

Fiscal Year 2025 District Court Cases Filed by District

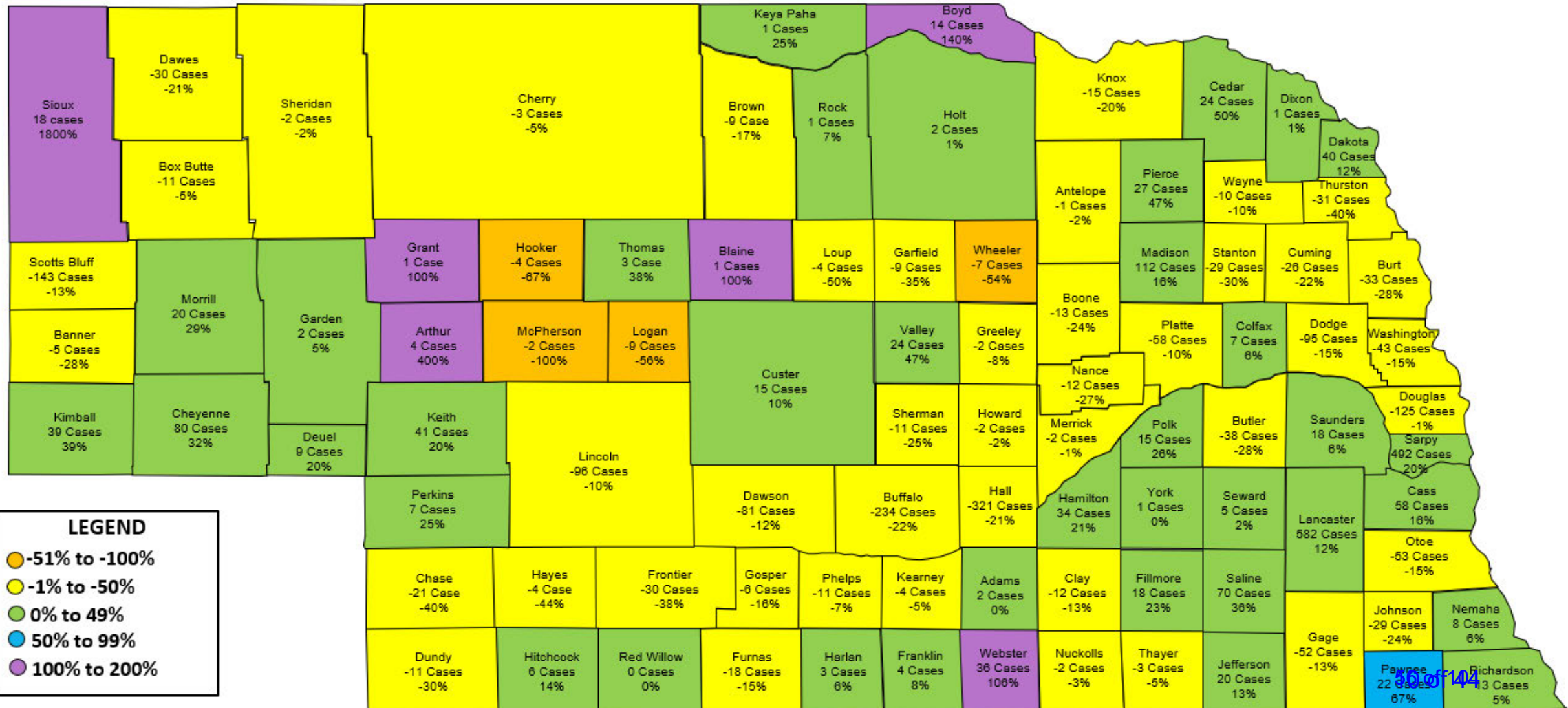


Historical Cases Filed

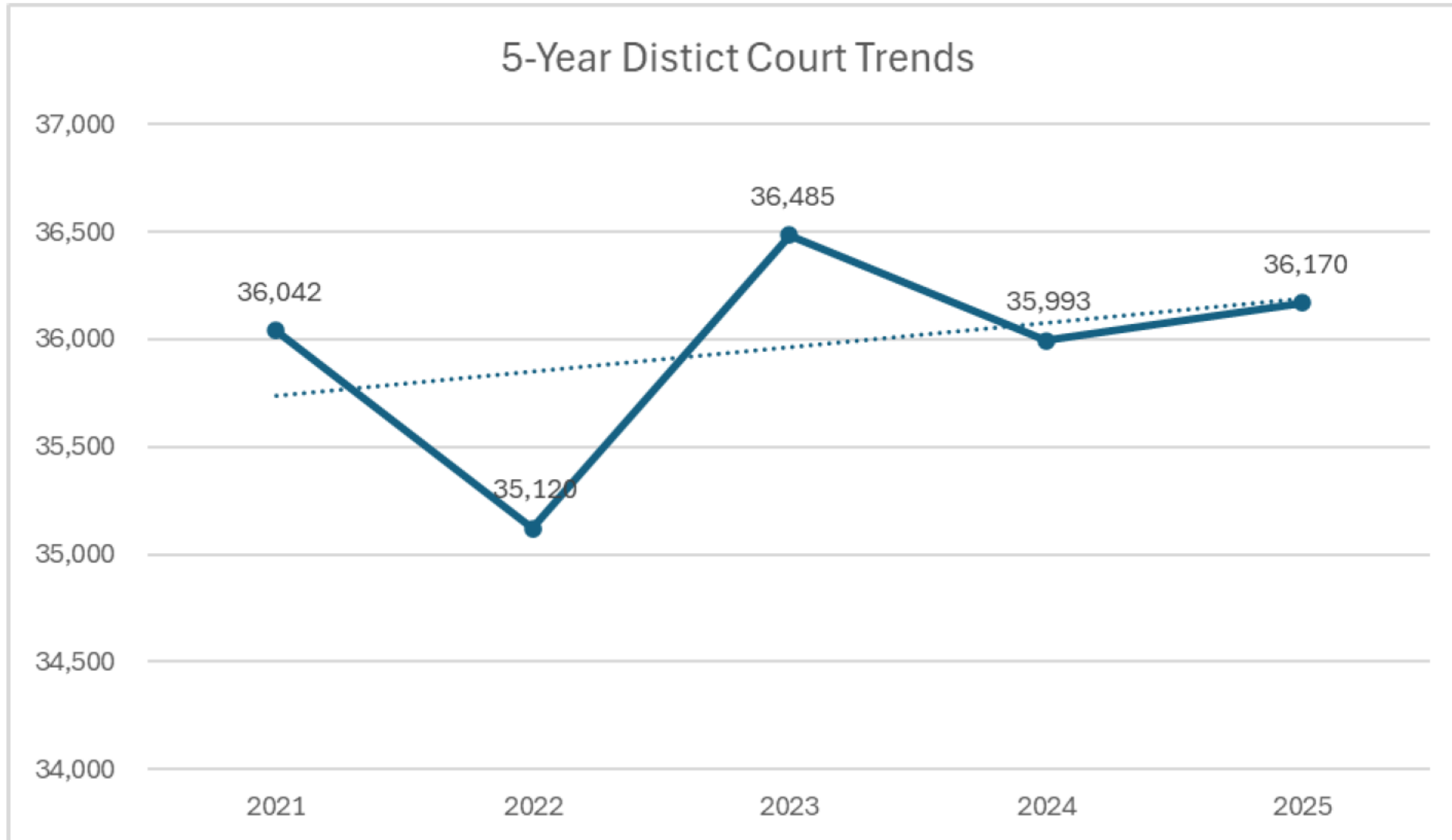
Fiscal Year	Count of Cases
2016	37,861
2017	39,020
2018	39,002
2019	37,882
2020	35,617
2021	36,042
2022	35,120
2023	36,485
2024	35,993
2025	36,170

County-by-County Change in Caseloads District Court 2021-2025

Statewide + 128 increase (+0.36% Change)

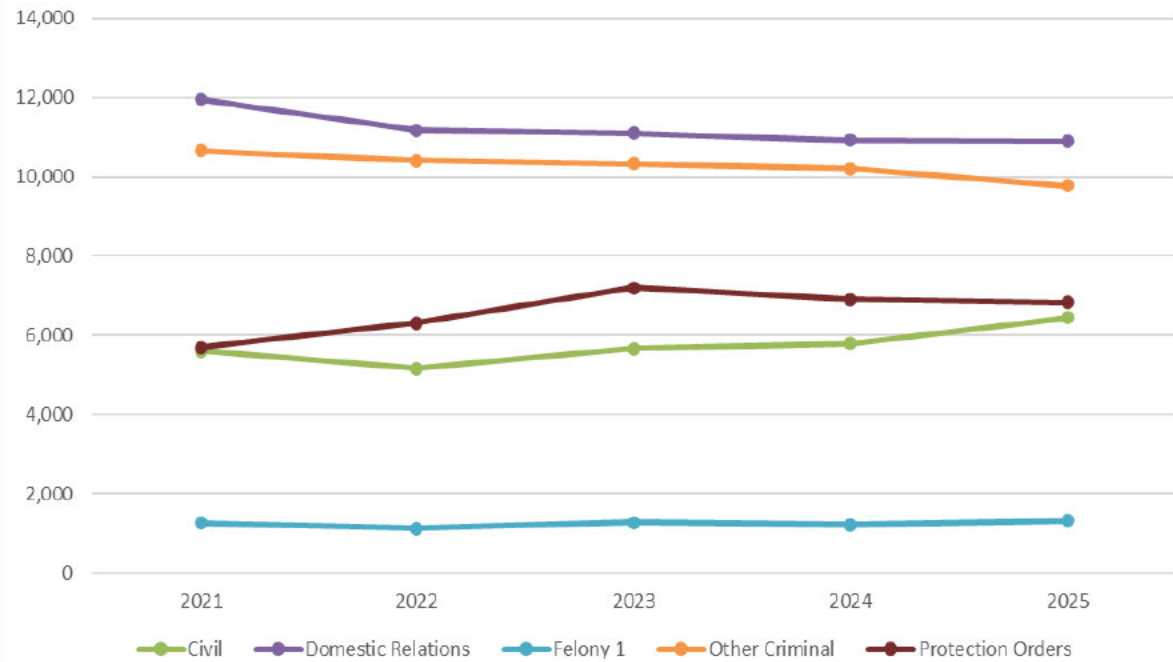


All District Courts

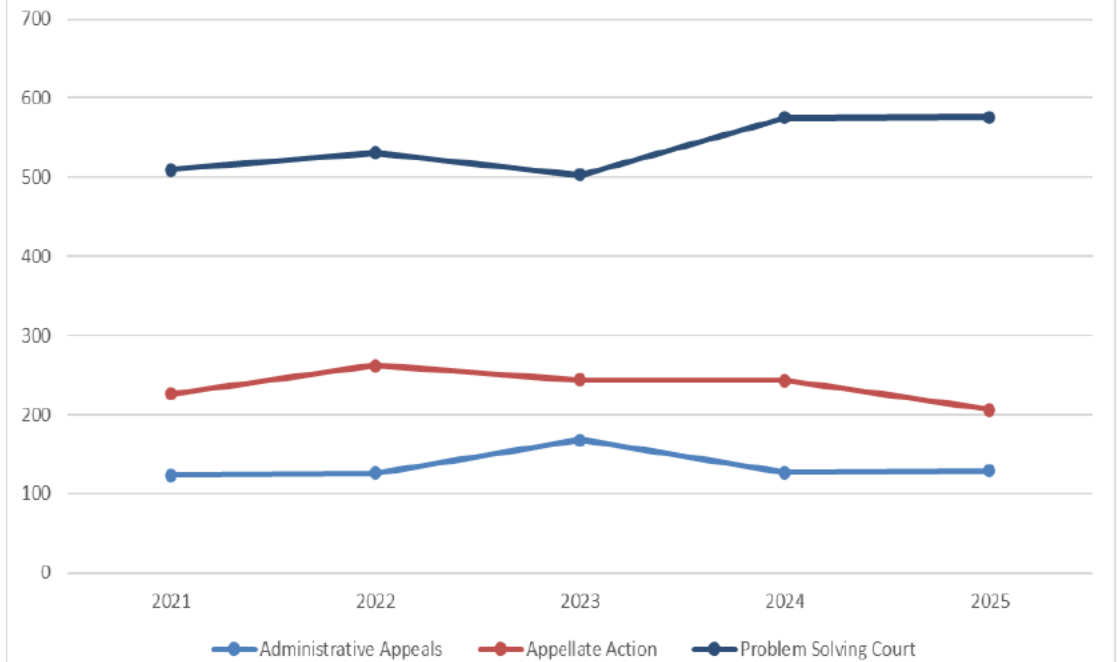


District Court: Case Type Trends

Domestic, Civil, Protection Orders, Felony 1, Other Criminal



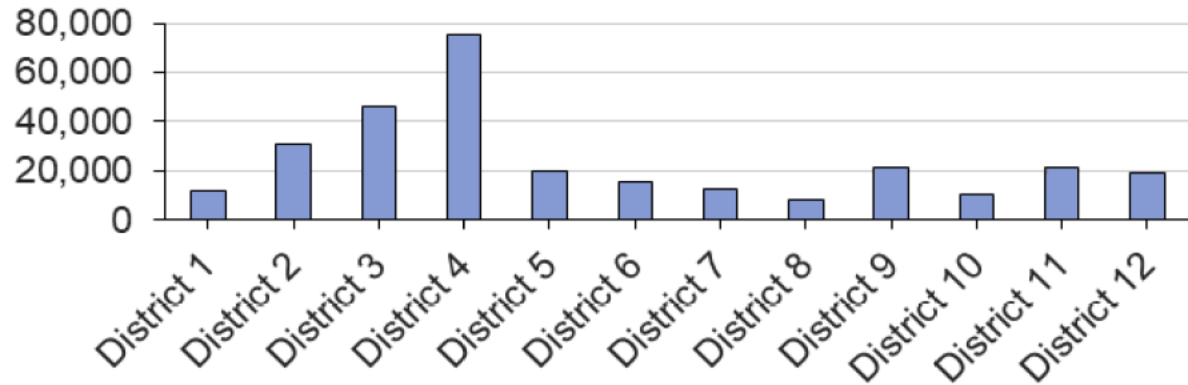
Admin Appeals, Appellate Action, Problem Solving Courts



COUNTY COURTS

County Court Caseloads

Fiscal Year 2025 County Court Adult Cases Filed by District

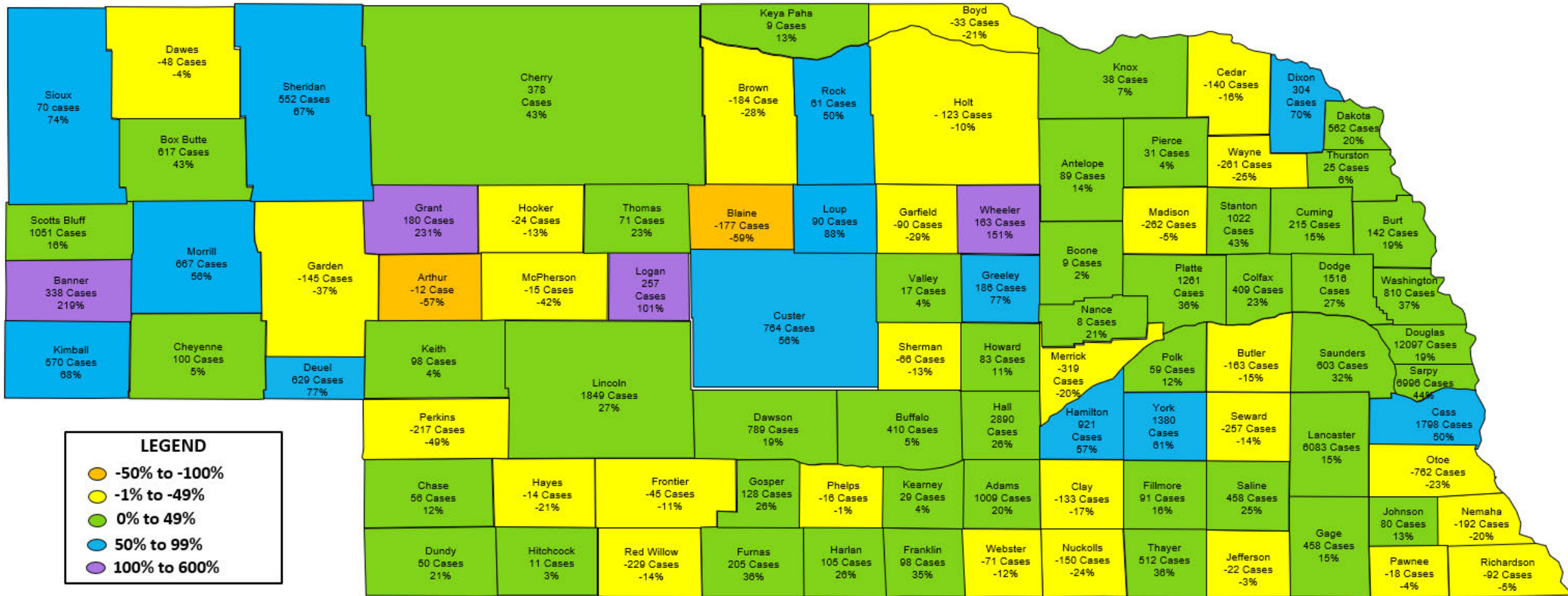


Fiscal Year	Historical Case Filed		
	Adult Count	Juvenile Count	Total Case Filings
2016	329,909	5,231	335,140
2017	328,001	5,177	333,178
2018	322,805	4,833	327,638
2019	300,972	4,447	305,419
2020	267,276	4,501	271,777
2021	246,058	4,292	250,350
2022	236,954	4,640	241,594
2023	245,726	4,766	250,492
2024	270,301	4,297	274,598
2025	294,275	4,261	298,536

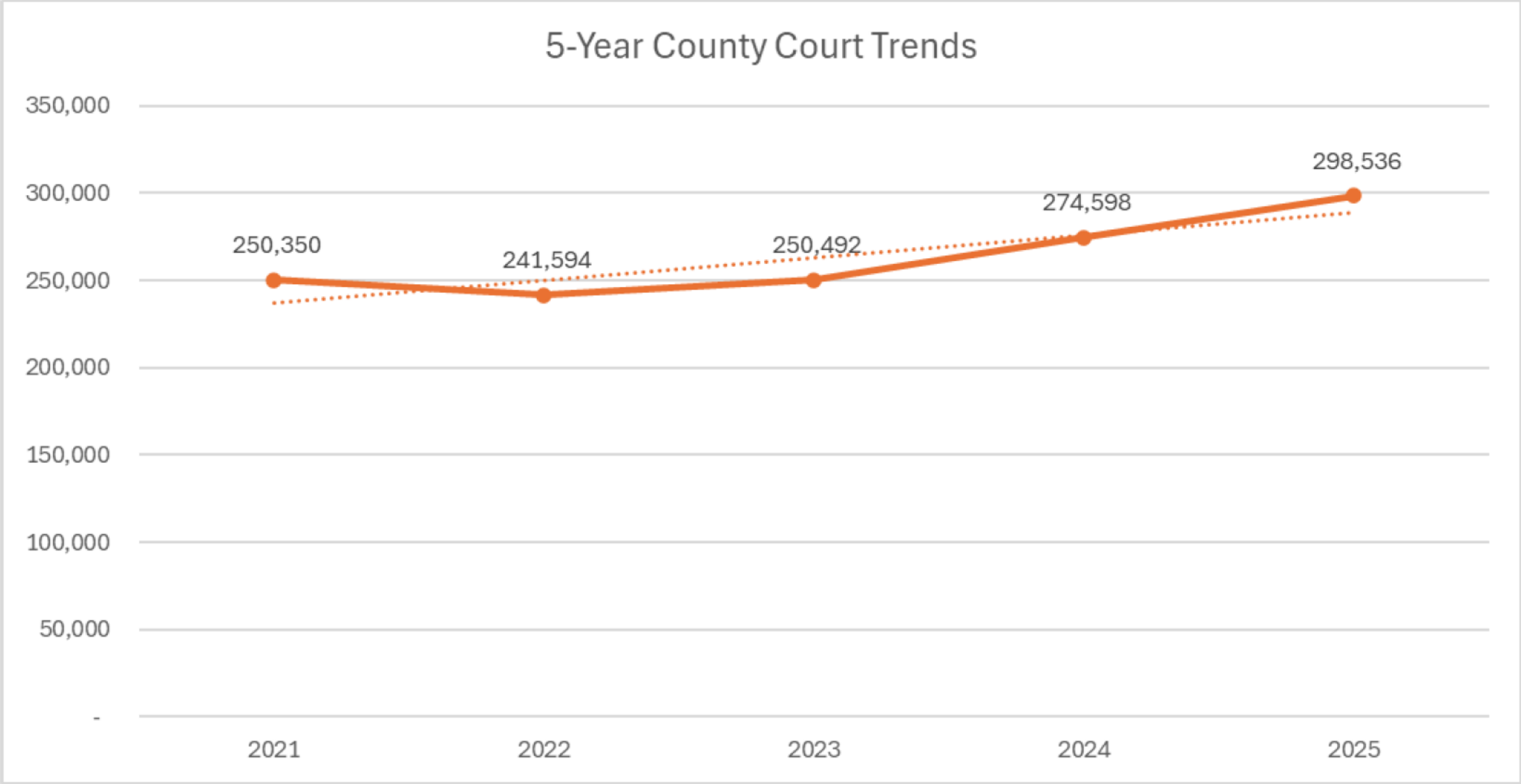
County-by-County Change in Caseloads County Court

2021-2025

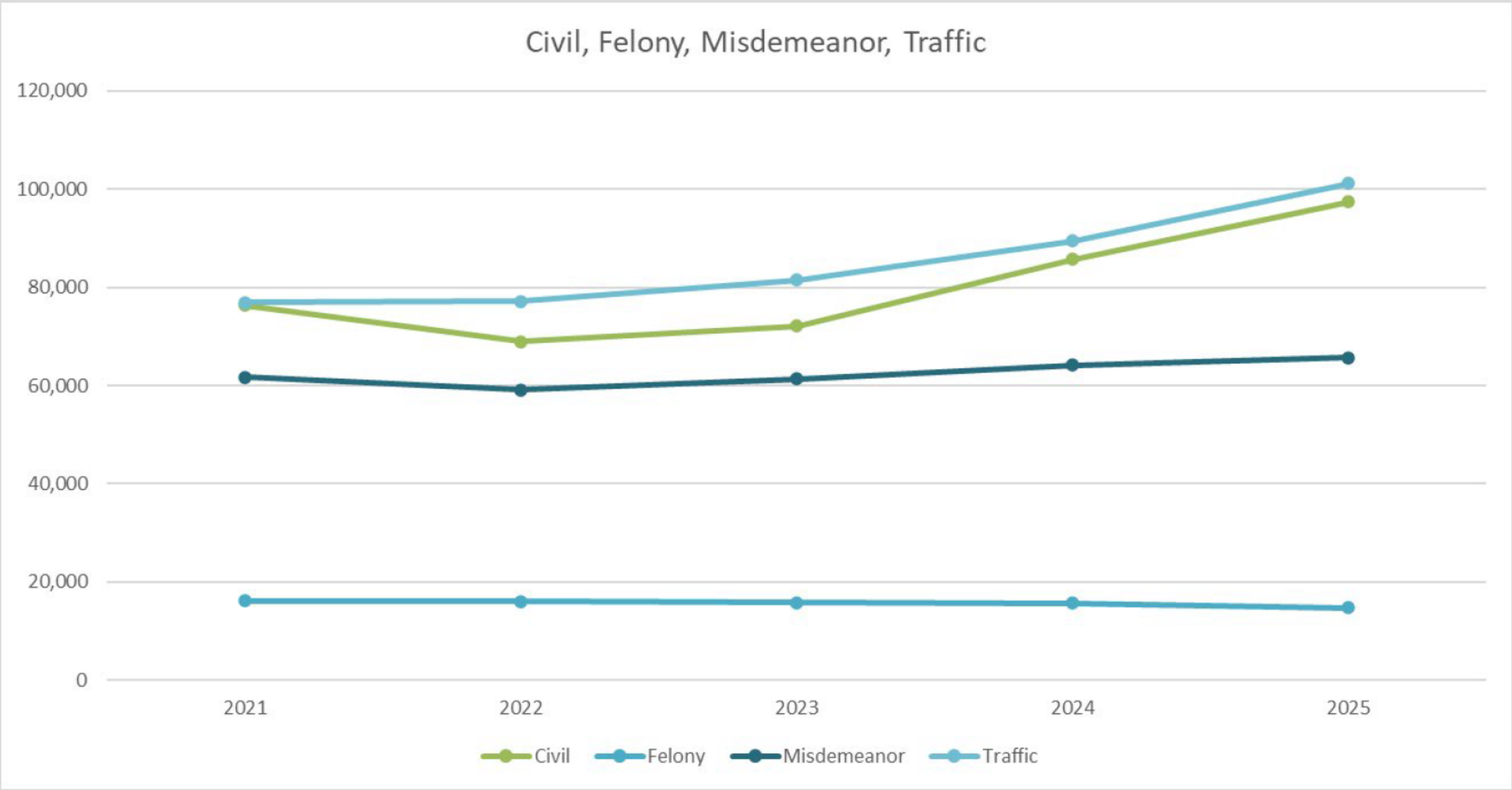
Statewide +48,186 increase (+19.25% Change)



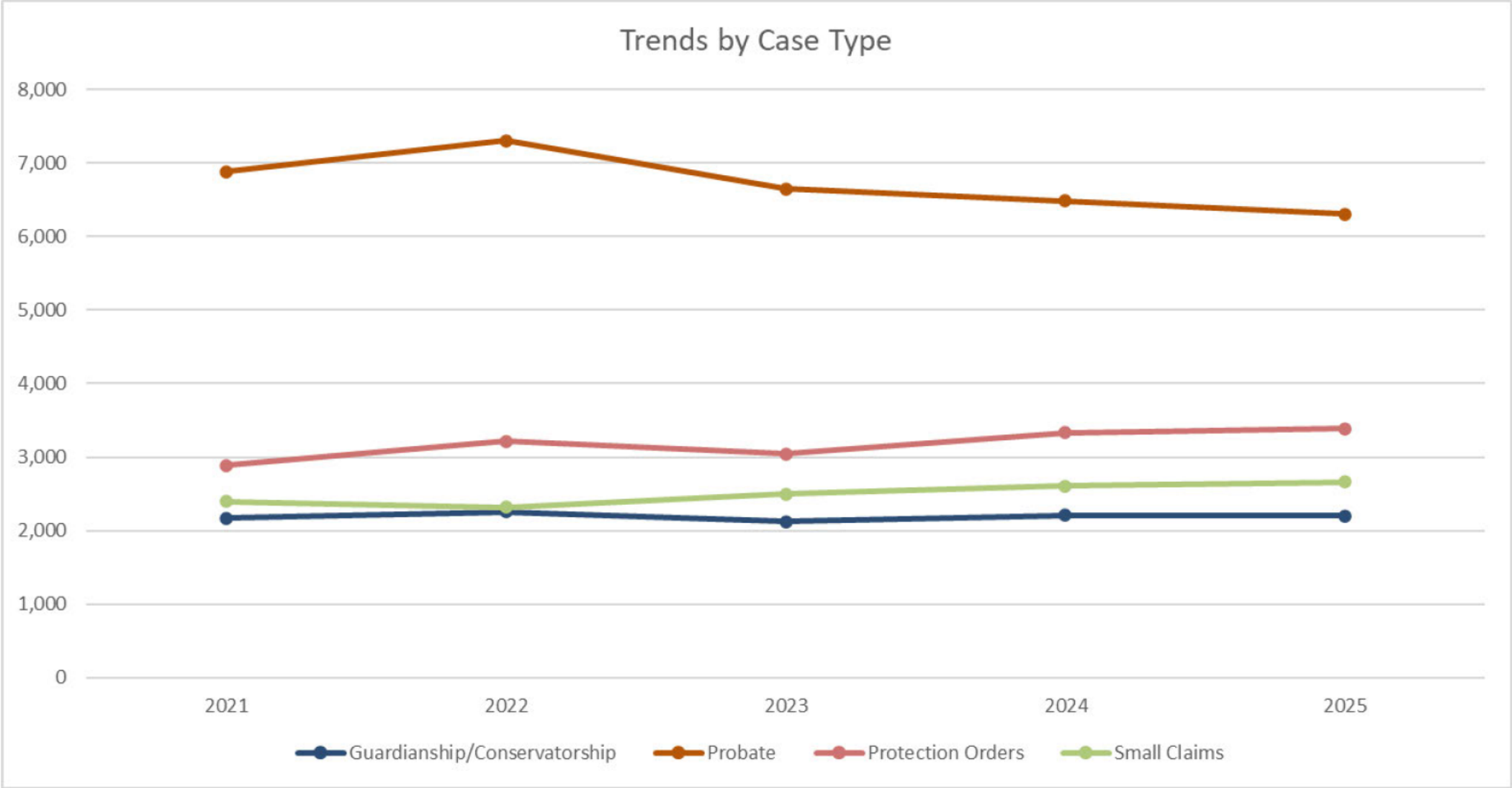
5-Year Trend for County Court



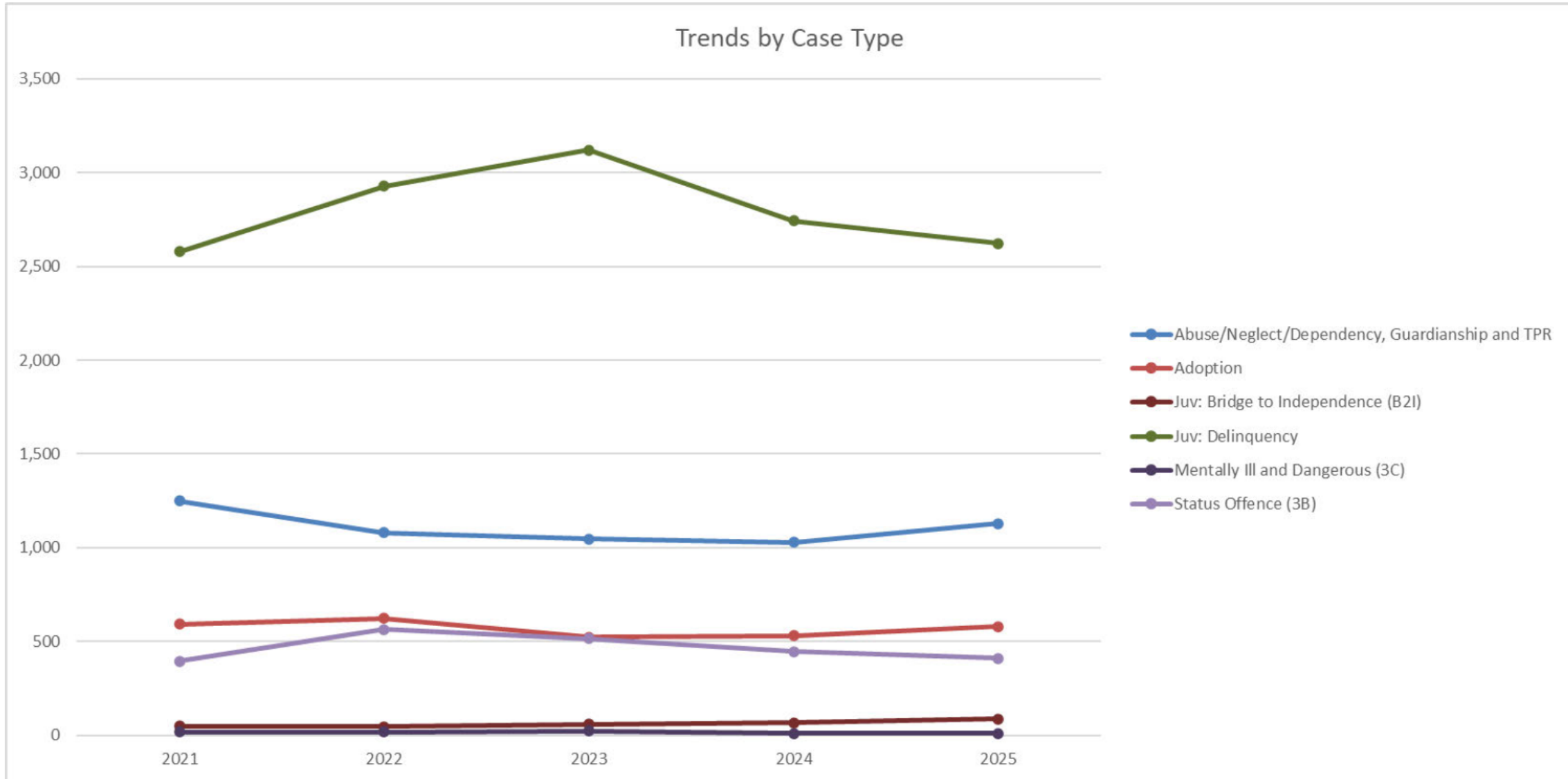
County Court: Case Type Trendlines



County Court: Case Type Trendlines



County Court: Juvenile Caseloads



County Court 5-Year Summary

Overall, from 2021 to 2025, county courts experienced a 19.25% increase in cases filed.

Juvenile: 3A Children	-9.53%
Adoption	-2.02%
Civil	+27.62%
Domestic Relations*	+150%
Felony	-8.51%
Guardianship/Conservatorship	+1.52%
Juvenile: Bridge to Independence (B2I)	+74%
Juvenile: Delinquency	1.63%
Juvenile: Mentally Ill and Dangerous 3C	-33.33%
Misdemeanor	6.53%
Probate	-8.38%
Protection Orders	+17.35%
Small Claims	10.8%
Juvenile: Status Offender 3B	+3.79%
Traffic	+31.53%
Problem Solving Court*	+23 Cases
Felony IV*	-4 Cases

SEPARATE JUVENILE COURTS

Separate Juvenile Court Caseloads

2025 County Separate Juvenile Court										
Separate Juvenile Courts Cases Filed - 10 Year History										
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Sarpy	789	871	853	825	734	527	655	786	783	584
Lancaster	1,464	1,304	941	980	827	942	1,465	1,478	1,431	1,534
Douglas	2,912	2,858	2,724	2,611	2,124	1,799	1,828	2,481	2,361	2,052
Total	5,165	5,033	4,518	4,416	3,685	3,268	3,948	4,745	4,575	4,170

5-Year Juvenile Court Change

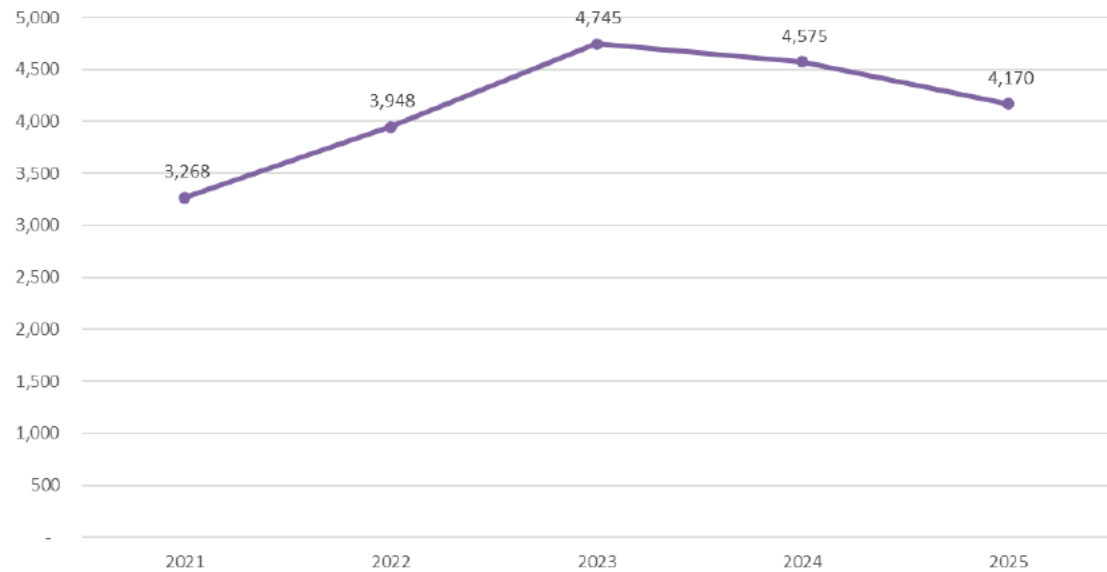
2021-2025

Statewide 902 increase (27.60% Change)

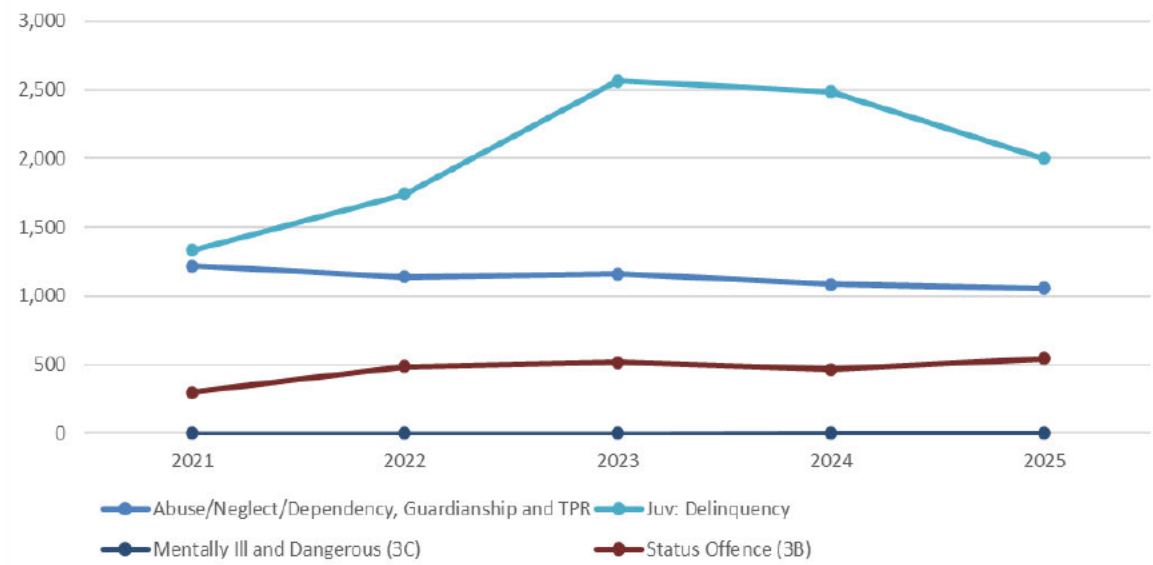


Separate Juvenile Court: Collective Trendlines

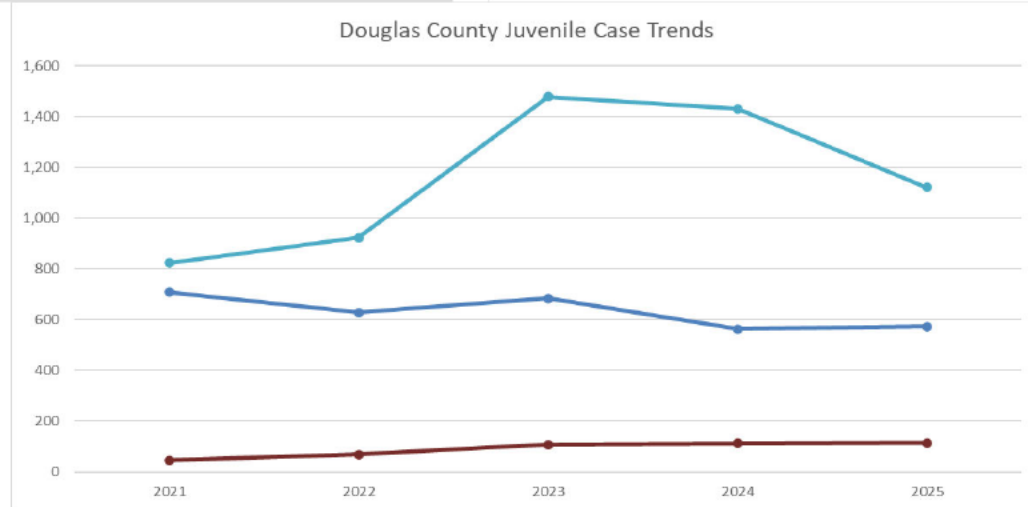
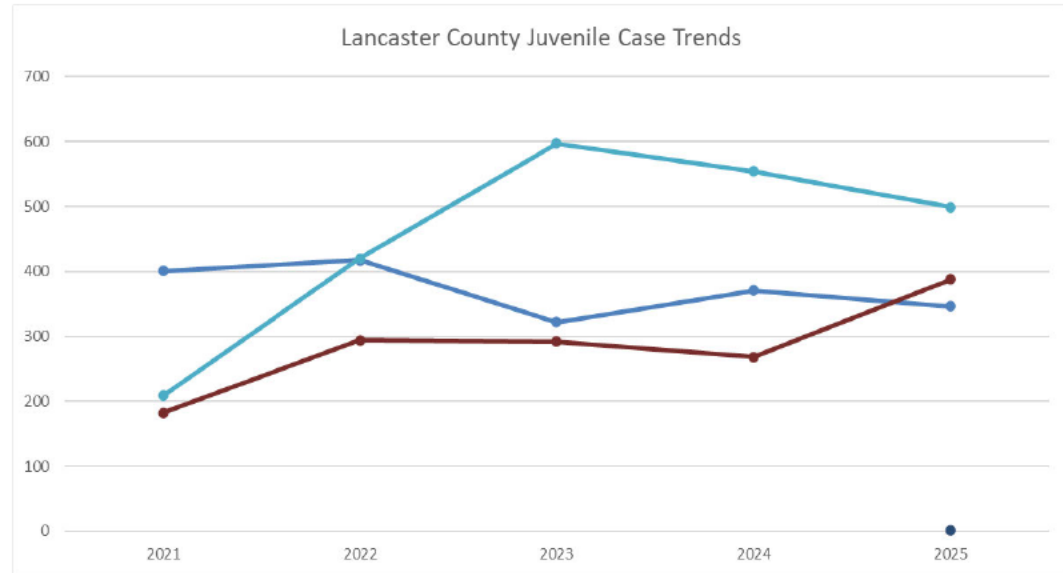
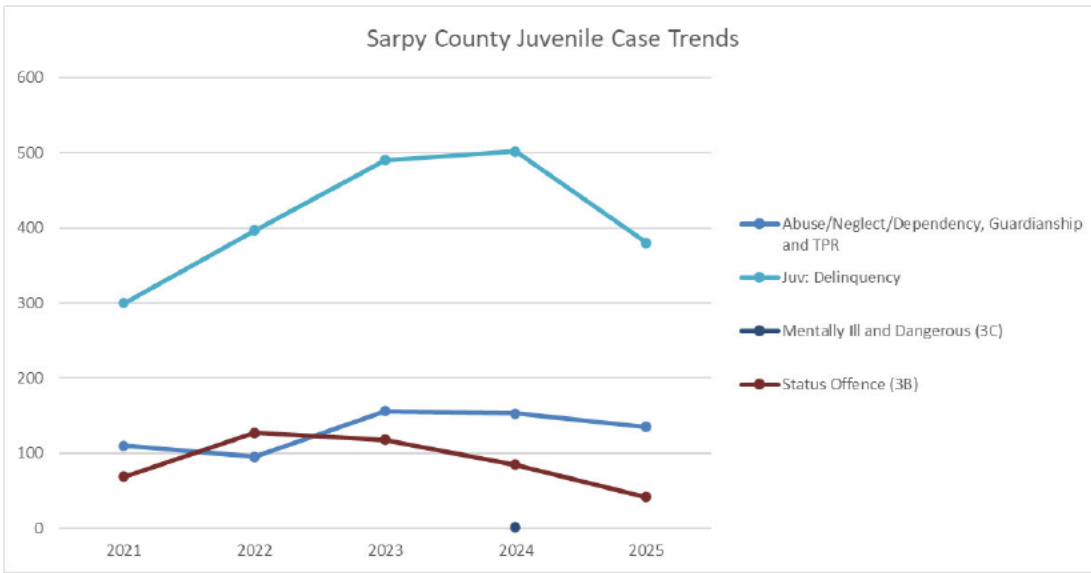
5-Year Collective Trend



Case Type Trends



Separate Juvenile: Case Type Trendlines



FY2025 Weighted Caseload Reports

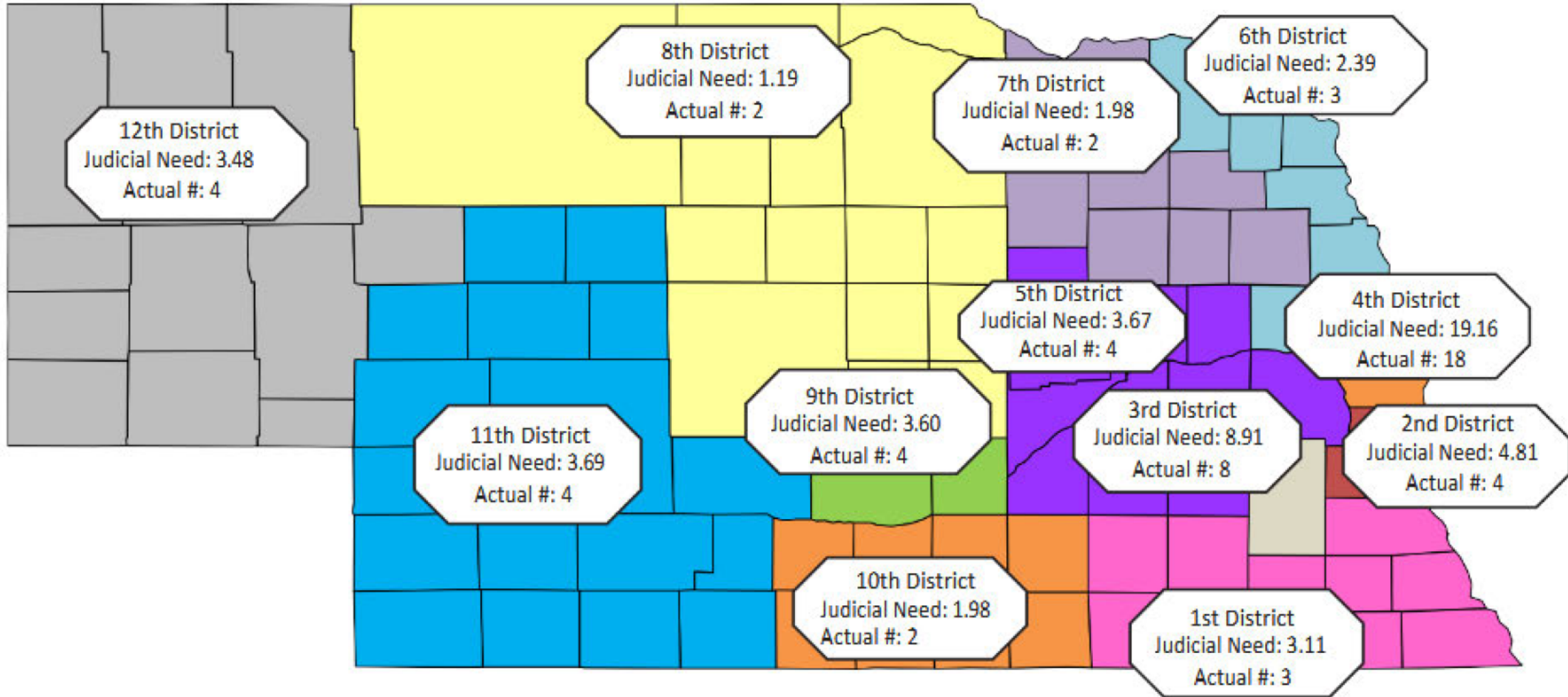
Weighted Caseload Terms

- ❖ **“Judicial Need”** is the number of cases by type, multiplied by corresponding case weights*, summed to calculate total time, and divided by judicial worktime (*based on the time study)
- ❖ **“Workload per judge” (WPJ)** is calculated by dividing the judicial need by the actual number of judges.
- ❖ Apply the **“Rounding Rule”**:
 - ❖ If $WPJ \geq 1.15$, consider adding a judge
 - ❖ If $WPJ < 0.6$, consider reducing a judge

District Courts Weighted Caseload Data

Nebraska District Court Judicial Needs

Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)



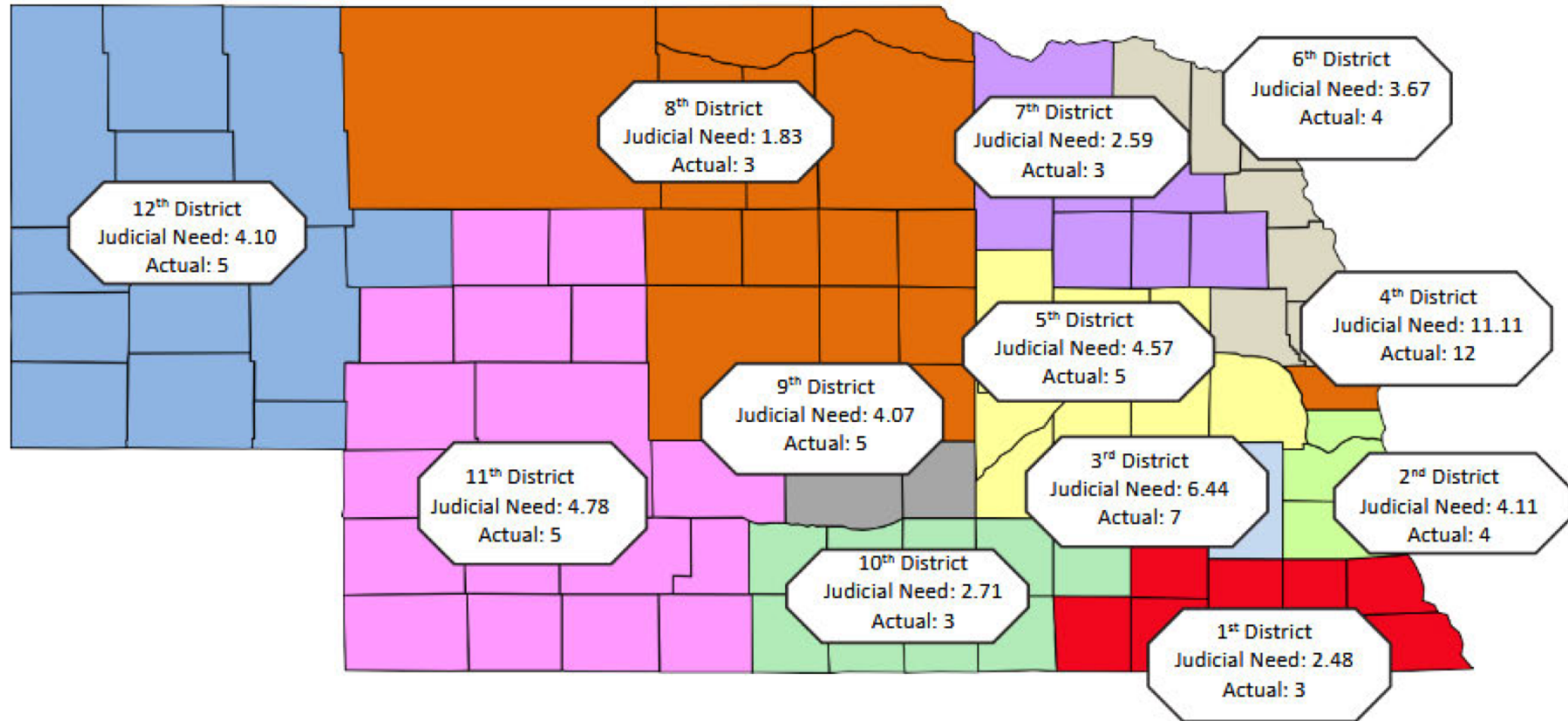
Average Workload Per Judge District Court

First Judicial District:	1.04
Second Judicial District	1.20
Third Judicial District:	1.11
Fourth Judicial District:	1.06
Fifth Judicial District:	0.92
Sixth Judicial District:	0.80
Seventh Judicial District:	0.99
Eighth Judicial District:	0.60
Ninth Judicial District:	0.90
Tenth Judicial District:	0.99
Eleventh Judicial District:	0.92
Twelfth Judicial District:	0.87

County Courts Weighted Caseload Data

Nebraska County Court Judicial Needs

Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

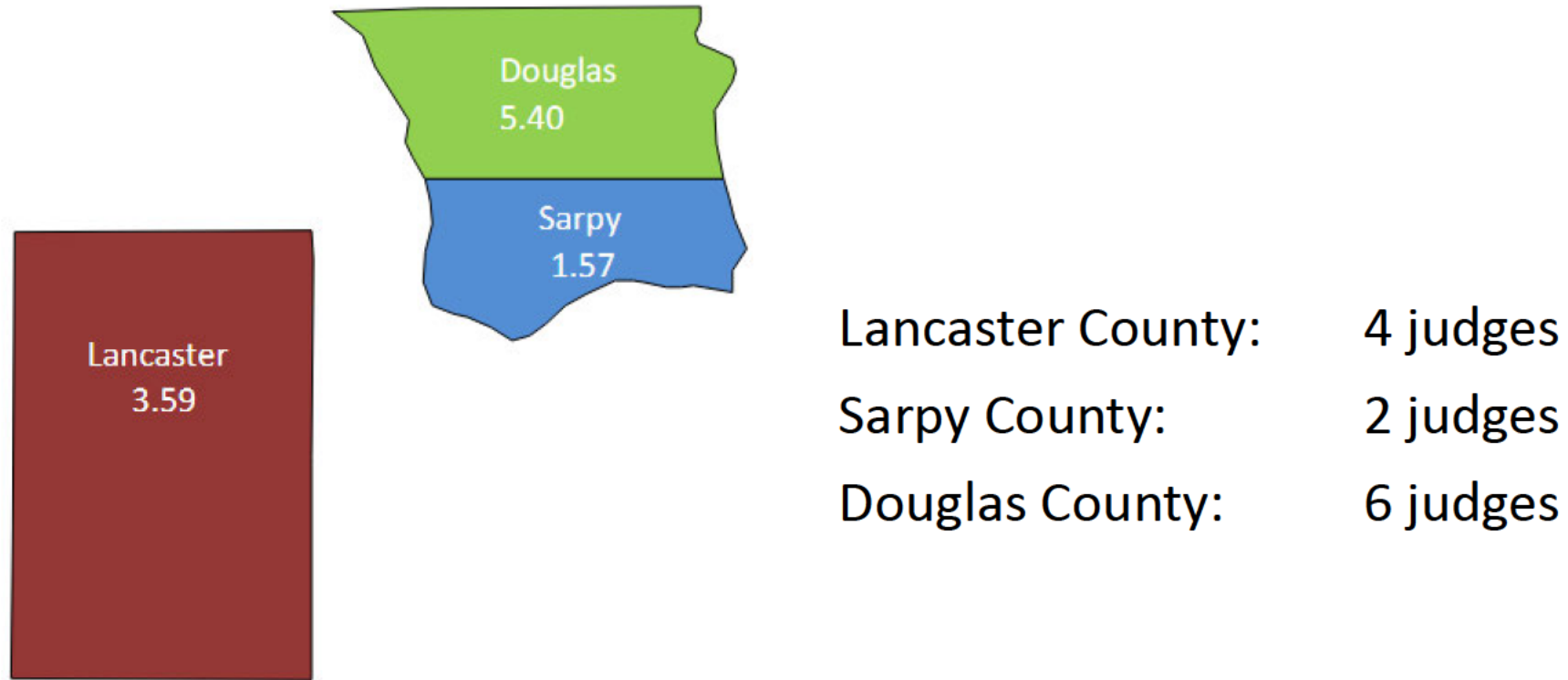


Average Workload Per Judge County Court

First Judicial District:	0.83
Second Judicial District:	1.03
Third Judicial District:	0.92
Fourth Judicial District:	0.93
Fifth Judicial District:	0.91
Sixth Judicial District:	0.92
Seventh Judicial District:	0.86
Eighth Judicial District:	0.61
Ninth Judicial District:	0.81
Tenth Judicial District:	0.90
Eleventh Judicial District:	0.96
Twelfth Judicial District:	0.82

Separate Juvenile Courts Weighted Caseload Data

FY2025 Weighted Caseload Separate Juvenile Courts

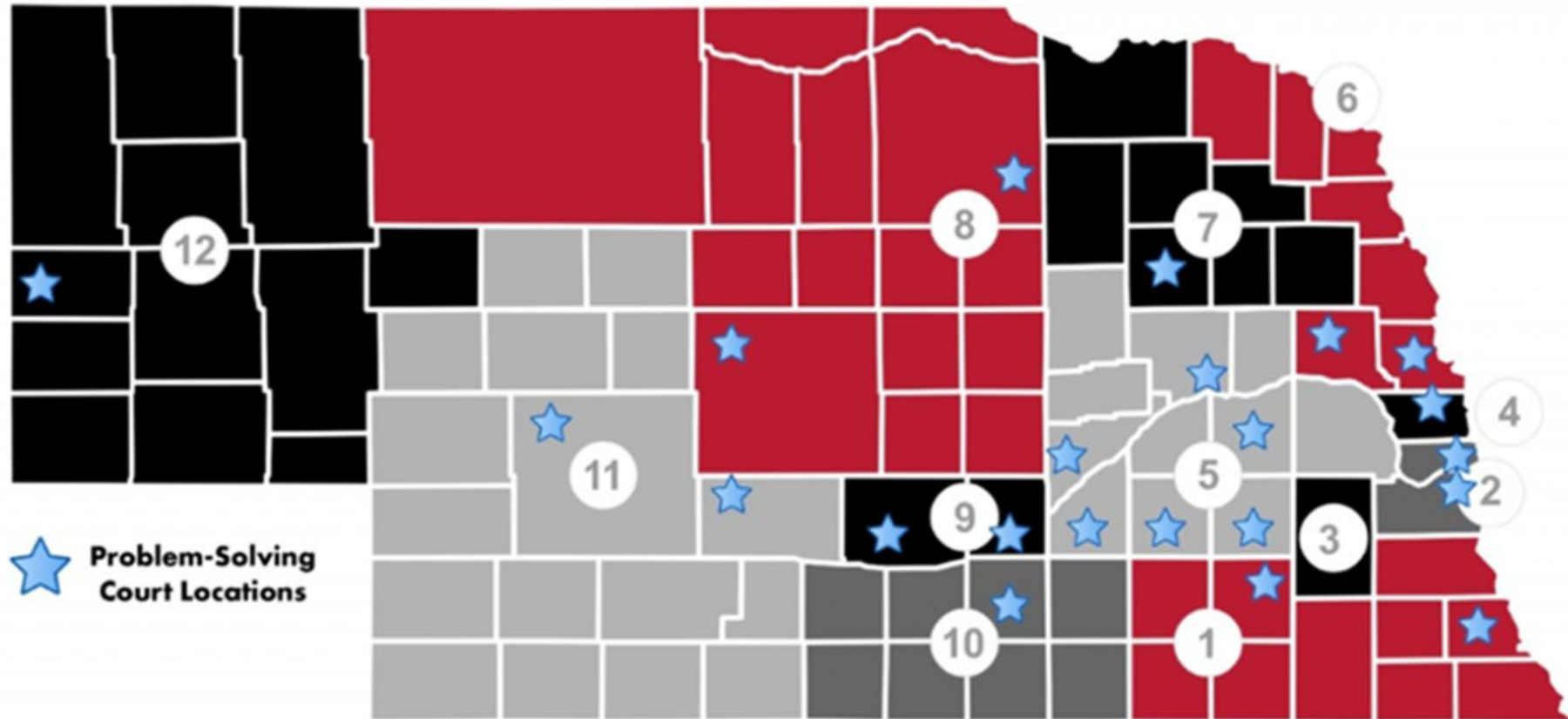


Average Workload Per Judge Separate Juvenile Court

Lancaster County	0.90
Sarpy County	0.79
Douglas County	0.90

Nebraska Problem-Solving Courts

Nebraska Problem-Solving Courts

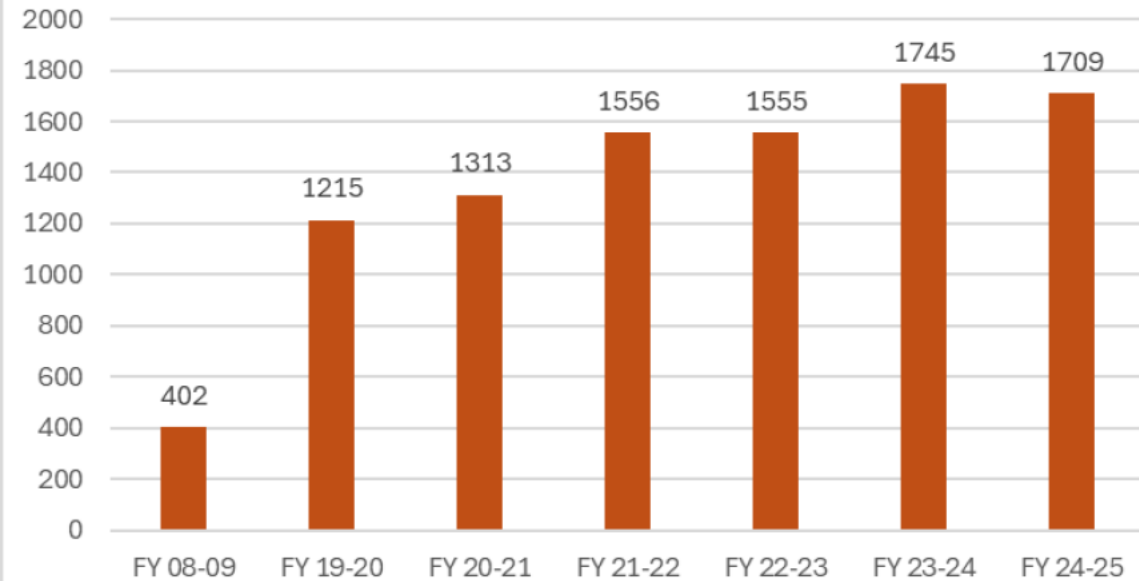


21 Adult Drug Courts
2 DUI Courts (Pilots)
4 Veterans Treatment Courts
3 Reentry Courts

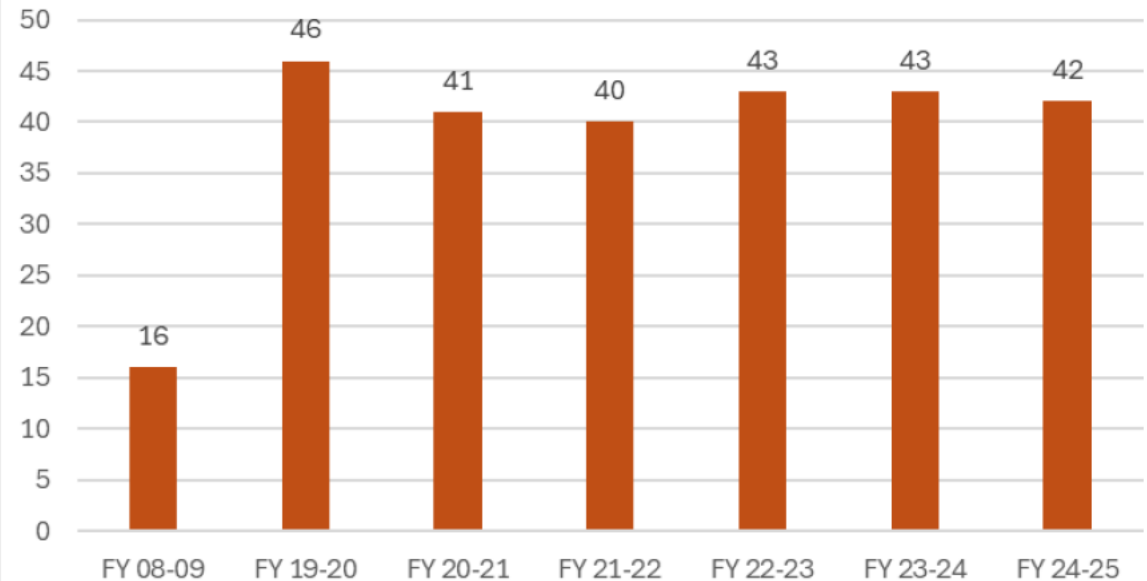
1 Young Adult Court
1 Mental Health Court (Pilot)
1 Juvenile Court
2 Family Treatment Courts

Problem-Solving Court Trends

Total # of Participants

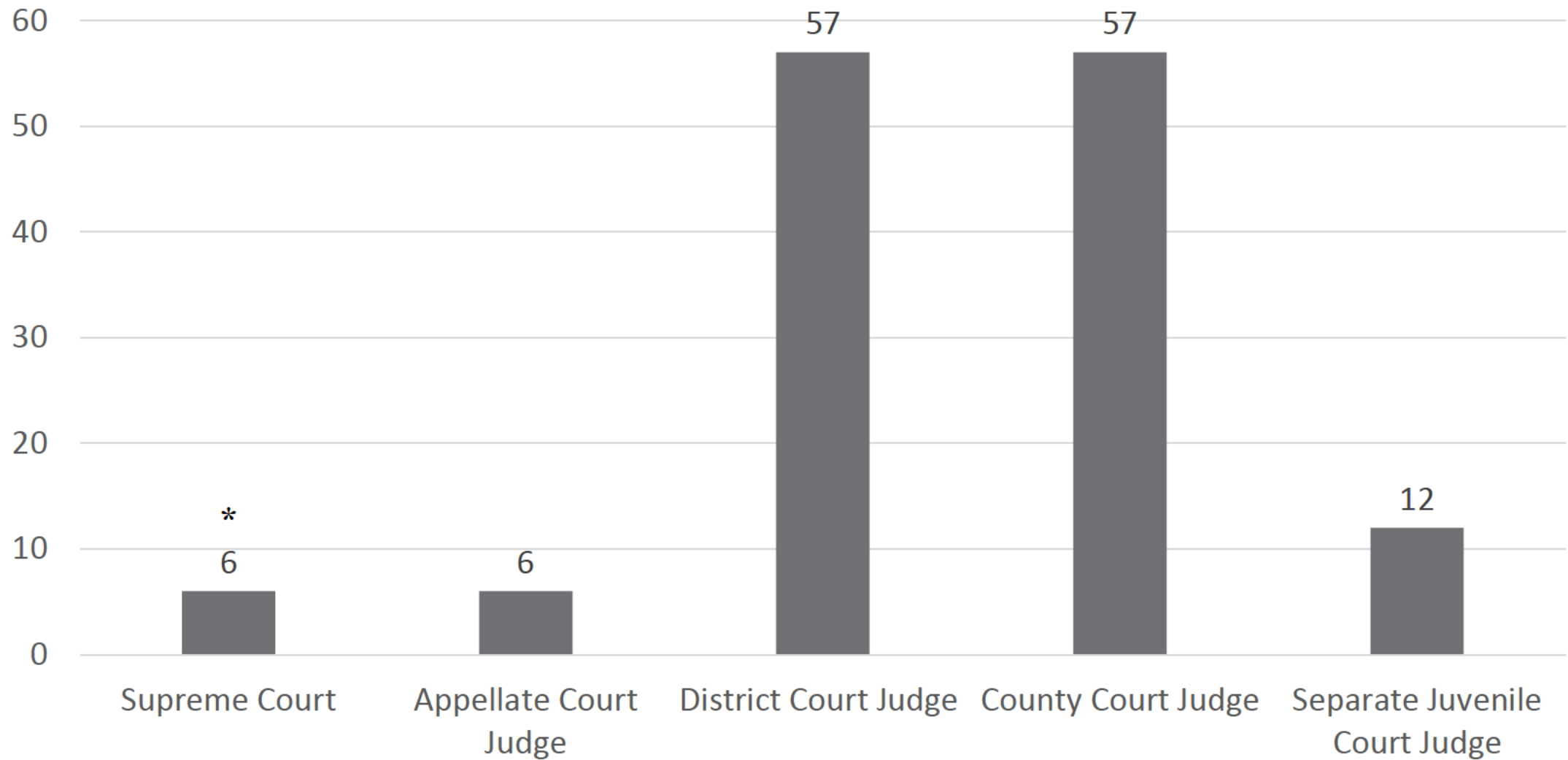


Total # of Judges



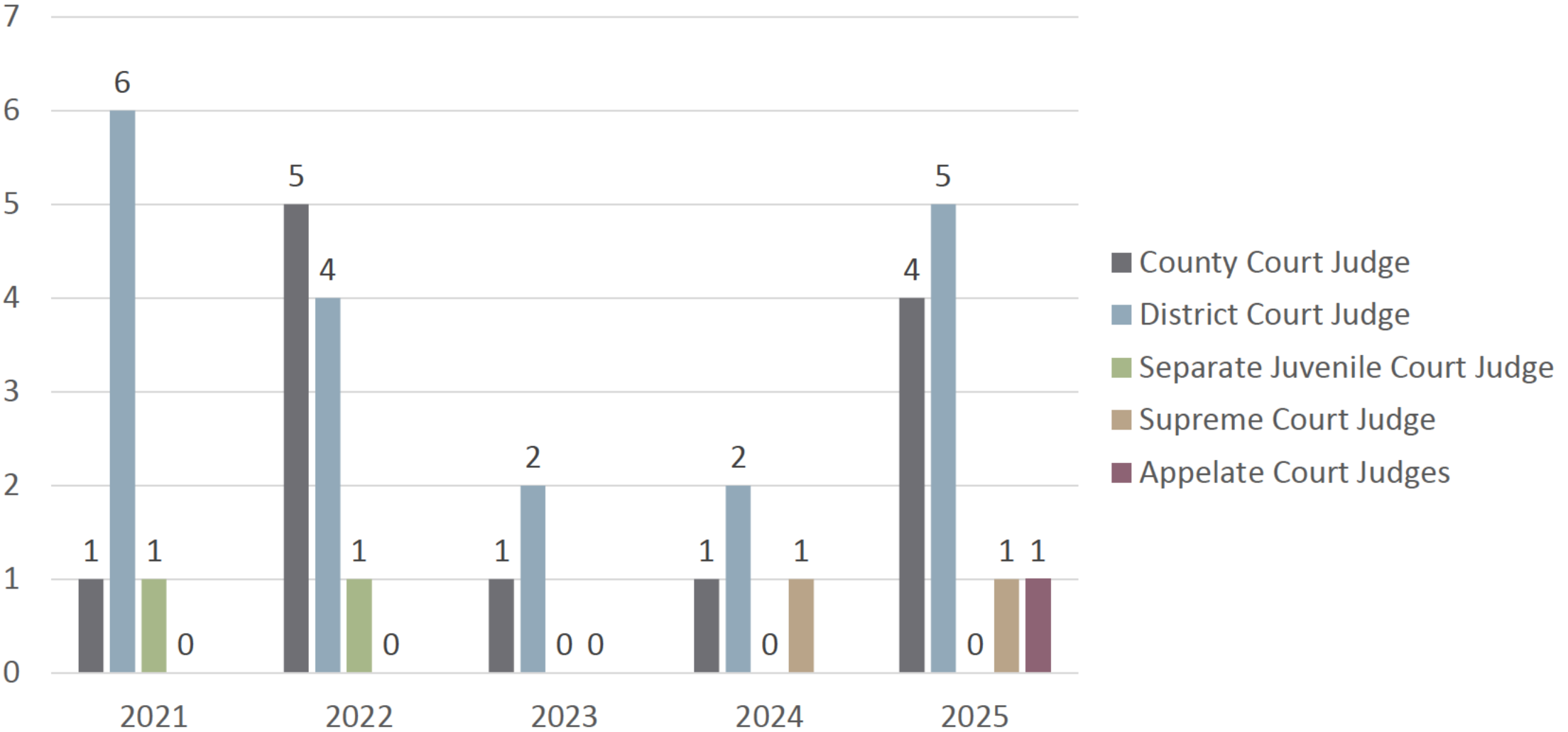
Judicial Retirement Forecast

Current Active Judges at Every Level of Court

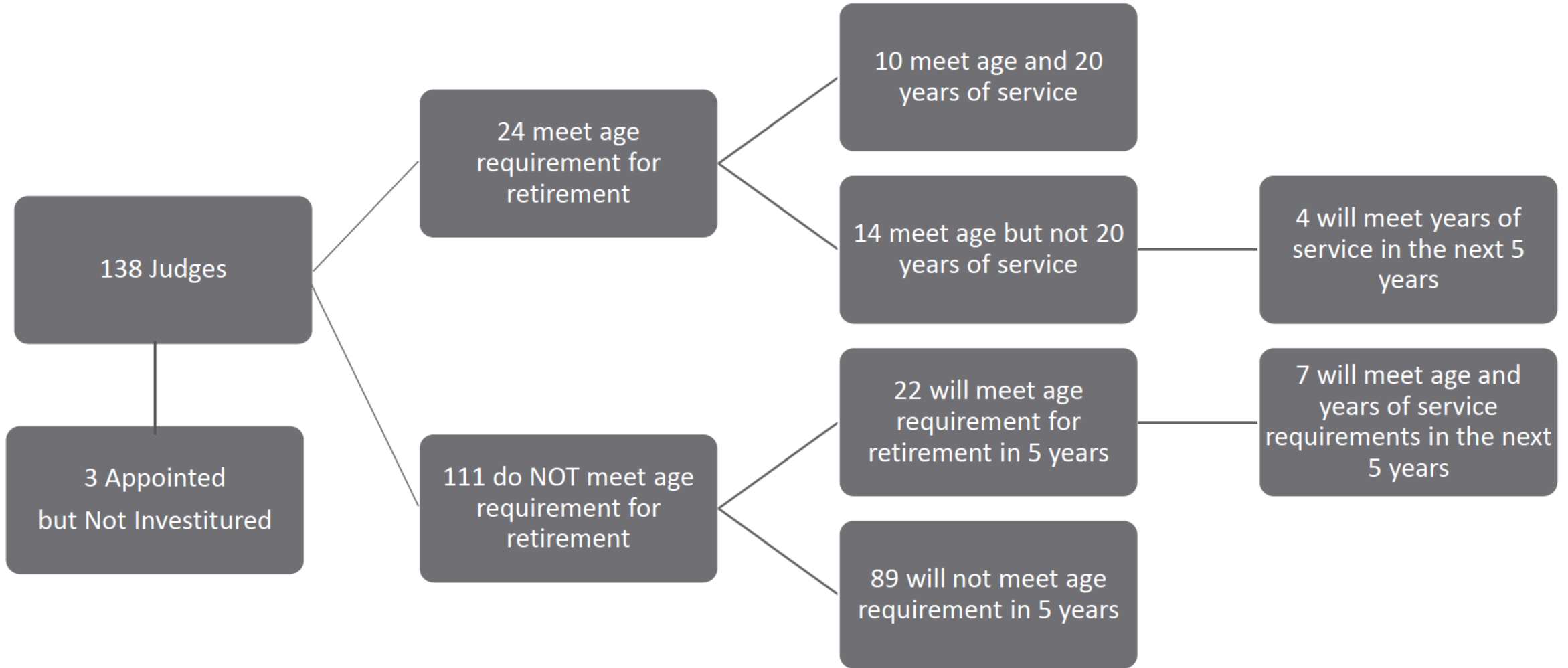


*Supreme Court Justice Miller-Lerman officially retires on 10/31/2025. Therefore, as of 10/31/2025, there are only 6 Supreme Court Justices.

2025 Calendar Year Retirement/Resignations by Judge Type



Judicial Retirement Forecast

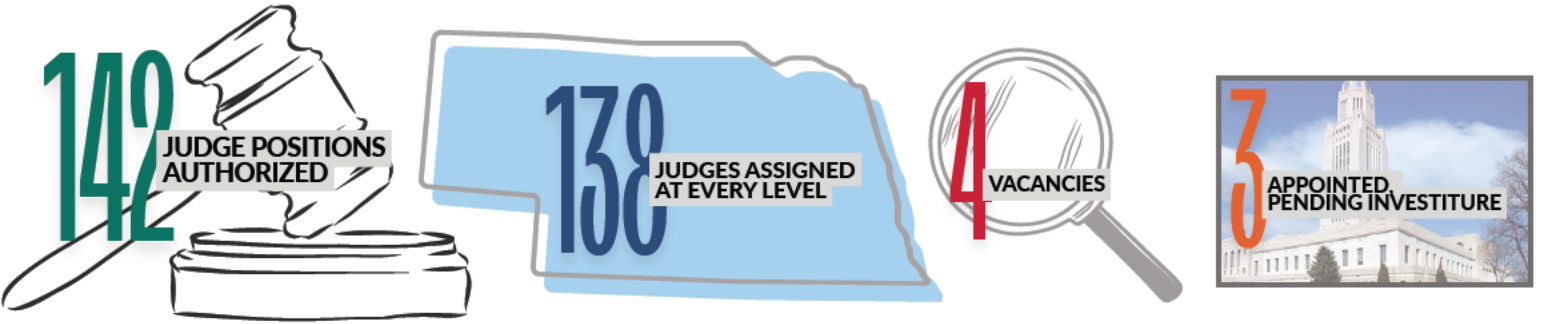


Other Factor Affecting Judicial Resources

- Nebraska Population Increases
- Changing Court Users
- Available Attorneys
- Changing Technology
- Access to Justice Issues



SNAPSHOT OF CURRENT JUDICIAL POSITIONS



JUDICIAL VACANCIES/APPOINTMENTS/INVESTITURES

In 2025 there were:



Districts with Judges Retired or Resigned in 2025 and Appointed Successors Awaiting Investiture

Court Type	District	Vacating Judge	Appointed, Pending Investiture
District Court	4	Judge Retelsdorf	Judge McGowan
County Court	2	Judge Freeman	Judge Buchanan
	3	Judge Yardley	Judge Decker

Judicial Vacancies 2025

Court Type	District	Vacating Judge	Vacancy Date
Supreme Court	-	Justice Miller-Lerman	10/31/2025
District Court	7	Judge Kube	10/31/2025
County Court	5	Judge Peterson	09/30/2025
	7	Judge Long	05/29/2025

JUDICIAL RETIREMENT FORECAST



PROJECTED JUDICIAL RETIREMENTS

JUDICIAL RETIREMENT FORECAST

Current number of judges who meet retirement to retire with full benefits.



Current number of judges who meet retirement age but will meet 20 years of service in the next 5 years.



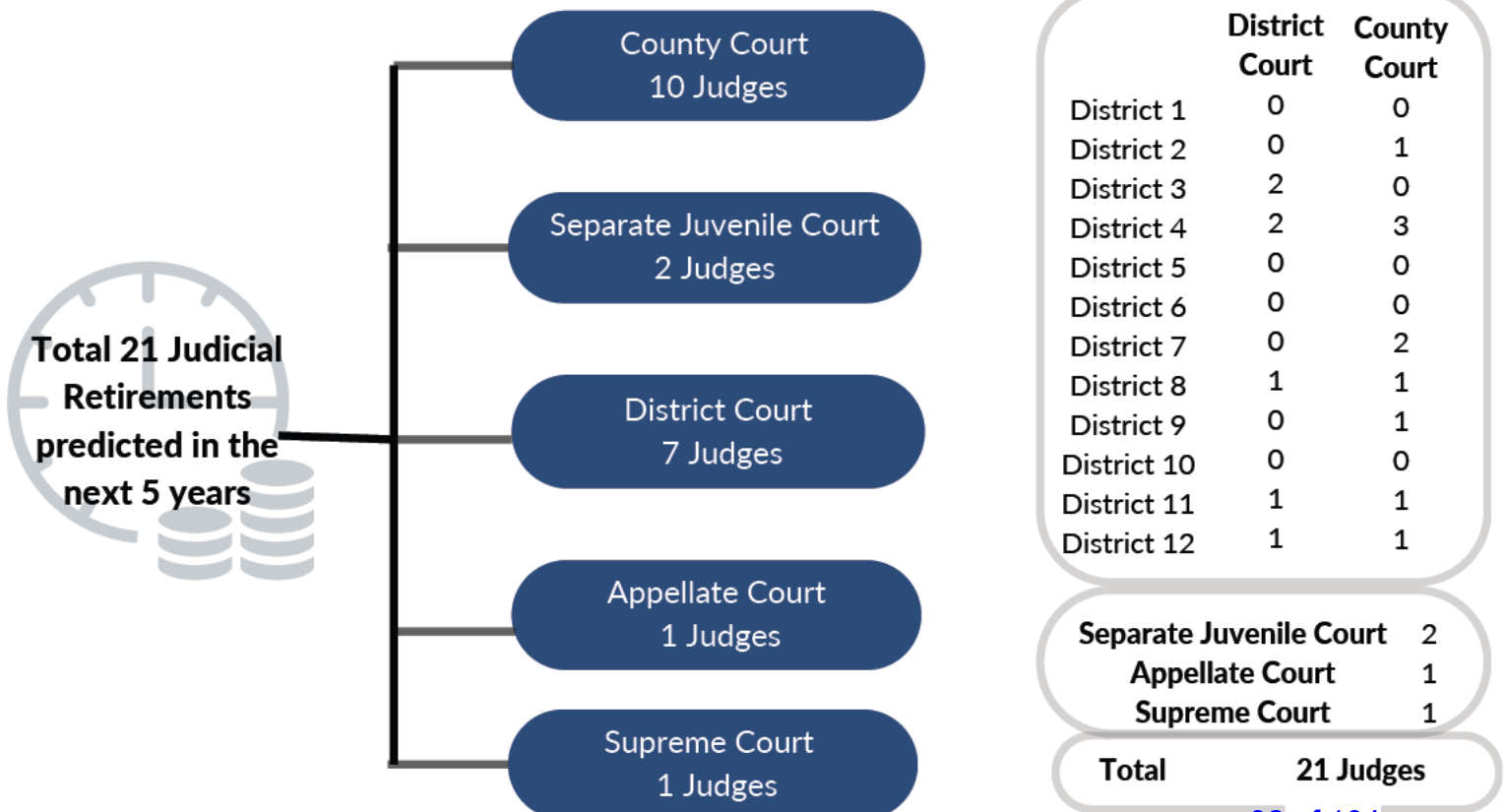
Current number of judges who do not currently meet the retirement criteria of age but WILL meet retirement criteria AND years of service in the next 5 years.



21 Judges forecasted to retire within the next 5 years.

Source: Research and Data of the Operations Division, Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation, Extracted: October 2025

PROJECTED JUDICIAL RETIREMENTS





SAUNDERS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

Saunders County, Nebraska
5th Judicial District

November 13, 2025

Nebraska Judicial Resources Commission
via E-Mail Only to: ashley.jenkins@nejudicial.gov

Re: 5th Judicial District, County Court

Dear Justice Freudenberg and Members of the Judicial Resources Commission:

On November 21, 2025, you are scheduled to consider whether the vacancy in the 5th Judicial District, County Court, created by the retirement of the Honorable C. Jo Petersen, should be filled. Please accept this letter as written testimony on behalf of the Saunders County Bar Association respectfully requesting that the Commission vote to declare a vacancy in said District.

As you are aware, the District covers 11 counties, to-wit: Boone, Butler, Colfax, Hamilton, Merrick, Nance, Platte, Polk, Saunders, Seward and York. The Saunders County Bar Association is concerned about potential delays and diminished access to the Courts with the absence of Judge Petersen—or a successor for her, to serve primarily in Butler County and Seward County. The caseload across the District continues to keep the docket busy and maintaining a fifth judge seated in Seward County is essential to adequately serve the public throughout the District and provide timely access to justice.

Although the 2025 Weighted Caseload Report indicates a calculated need of 4.57 judges for the 5th Judicial District, County Court, any reduction from five sitting judges to four would have a significant negative impact on the District's ability to manage its caseload effectively. The current workload per judge is already high at 0.91, and removing a judgeship would increase the workload ratio well beyond sustainable levels. Given the District's geographic size, the diversity of cases handled in its 11 counties, and the extensive travel already required of county court judges, maintaining five judges is vital to prevent hearing delays, ensure consistent judicial coverage and safeguard equitable access to justice in rural communities.

The 2025 Weighted Caseload Report further reflects that, without declaring a vacancy, the four remaining judges would be required to absorb Judge Petersen's caseload—totaling 56,578 weighted workload minutes (18,291 from Butler County and 38,287 from Seward County)—in addition to the associated travel demands. Seward County's workload alone ranks in the upper half of counties within the District, demonstrating the consistently high volume of cases requiring judicial attention. Failing to fill this vacancy would place an unsustainable burden on the remaining judges,

inevitably resulting in delays, increased travel inefficiencies, and diminished access to timely justice for the public served throughout the District.

For these reasons, and on behalf of the Saunders County Bar Association, we respectfully urge the Commission to determine that a vacancy exists in the 5th Judicial District, County Court, and that the seat remain in Seward County.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catrina". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catrina K. Harris, President
CHarris@luttonlaw.com

DAVID N. LUTTON
CATRINA K. HARRIS
LIZ N. FLYNN



1442 SILVER STREET
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LUTTON LAW OFFICE

CLAUDE D. LUTTON (1941-1999)

ESTABLISHED IN 1946

LUTTONLAW.COM

November 13, 2025

Nebraska Judicial Resources Commission
via E-Mail Only to: ashley.jenkins@nejudicial.gov

Re: 5th Judicial District, County Court

Dear Justice Freudenberg and Members of the Judicial Resources Commission:

My name is Catrina K. Harris and I am a practicing attorney in my tenth year of practice at Lutton Law Office, LLC in Ashland, NE and in Saunders County, Nebraska.

I am writing in my personal capacity to express my support for declaring a vacancy in the 5th Judicial District, County Court, following the retirement of Judge C. Jo Petersen. While I am submitting this letter as an individual, I respectfully refer the Commission to the more detailed information contained in my separate correspondence submitted on behalf of the Saunders County Bar Association.

The 5th Judicial District covers eleven counties, including Butler County and Seward County, where Judge Petersen primarily served. Without filling this seat, there will likely be increased delays and reduced access to the courts across the District. The caseload remains substantial, and maintaining a fifth judge based in Seward County is essential to ensure timely case processing and preserve access to justice for residents throughout the District.

As noted in the 2025 Weighted Caseload Report, the District's calculated need is 4.57 judges, but reducing from five to four would place an unsustainable workload on the remaining judges. Judge Petersen's caseload alone totaled 56,578 weighted workload minutes, with Seward County alone (38,287) ranking in the upper half of counties within the District for workload. Leaving this vacancy unfilled would strain judicial capacity and risk longer wait times for hearings and decisions.

Further, as an attorney practicing primarily in Saunders County within the District, I recognize the importance of maintaining consistent and accessible judicial coverage for my growing County. Judge Lange already carries a full docket serving Colfax County and Saunders County, two of the top five counties in terms of District workload. Preserving access to this judicial resource in Saunders County is essential to ensure that the needs of Saunders County—and the District as a whole—continue to be met efficiently, fairly and without undue delay.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Commission to declare a vacancy in the 5th Judicial District, County Court, and maintain the seat in Seward County.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,



Catrina K. Harris

CHarris@luttonlaw.com

Nebraska State Bar Association

"Helping lawyers help people"

November 13, 2025

Hon. John R. Freudenberg
Nebraska Supreme Court
State Capitol, #2210
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Justice Freudenberg:

On behalf of the NSBA Judicial Resources Committee ("the Committee"), I wish to convey to the members of the Judicial Resources Commission our recommendation regarding the vacancies in the County Court in the 5th District due to the retirement of Judge Peterson and the vacancy in the District Court in the 7th Judicial District due to the retirement of Judge Kube.

After reviewing the Judicial Weighted Caseload Reports ("Judicial Workload Assessment") for FY 2025, the Committee concluded that the State's justice system will not have adequate judicial resources available unless the current vacancies are filled expeditiously. Therefore, the Committee recommends filling:

- 1) The vacancy in the 5th Judicial District, County Court due to the retirement of Judge Peterson with the primary office location in either Seward or York counties.
- 2) The vacancy in the 7th Judicial District, District Court created by the retirement of Judge Kube with the primary office location to be determined in consultation with the successful applicant.

Thank you for your consideration of the recommendations set forth herein. Please include this letter with the materials provided to Judicial Resources Commission members before your November 21st meeting.

Sincerely,



Hon. John M. Gerrard
NSBA President

Cc: Corey Steel
Liz Neeley

STATE OF NEBRASKA
FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COUNTY COURTS

November 18, 2025

Justice John R. Freudenberg
Nebraska Supreme Court
P.O. Box 98910
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509
Emailed to: ashley.jenkins@nejudicial.gov

Dear Justice Freudenberg and Members of the Commission:

Please accept this letter as written testimony in support of the request of the County Judges of the Fifth Judicial District to declare that a vacancy exists in the office of the County Court, Fifth Judicial District, due to the retirement of Judge C. Jo Petersen.

The Fifth Judicial District includes eleven counties: Boone, Butler, Colfax, Hamilton, Merrick, Nance, Platte, Polk, Saunders, Seward, and York. Since at least 2013, when Judge Petersen was appointed, the Fifth District has had five County Court Judges covering those eleven counties. According to the National Center for State Courts Nebraska Judicial Workload Assessment completed in October 2020 and adopted by the Nebraska Supreme Court, the Fifth District County Courts had an implied judge need of 4.60 judges. At the time of the Assessment, the Fifth District had five actual judges resulting in the workload per judge being .92. The authors of the 2020 Assessment recommended that five judges was the appropriate number of judges in the County Courts of the Fifth District based on the judge need and the workload per judge.

The current numbers in the County Courts of the Fifth District are nearly identical to the numbers reported in the 2020 Assessment. According to the Fiscal Year 2025 County Courts Weighted Caseload Report, the County Court need for judges in the Fifth District is 4.57. With five judges, the workload per judge is .91. We submit that five judges is still the appropriate number of judges in the County Courts of the Fifth District.

Based upon the annual reports published by the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation, since 2020, the number of cases filed, the need for judges, and the workload per judge have all increased in the County Courts of the Fifth District. The reported statistics are summarized as follows:

County Court Annual Caseload Report
Fifth Judicial District

Cases Filed:	<u>Adult</u>	<u>Juvenile</u>
FY 2020	16,049	445
FY 2021	16,377	447
FY 2022	15,981	541
FY 2023	17,178	578
FY 2024	18,530	576
FY 2025	20,120	594

County Court Weighted Caseload Report
Fifth Judicial District

	<u>Judge Need</u>	<u>Workload Per Judge</u>
FY 2020	4.29	.86
FY 2021	4.12	.82
FY 2022	4.04	.81
FY 2023	4.25	.85
FY 2024	4.41	.88
FY 2025	4.57	.91

As County Court Judges in the Fifth District, our goal is to provide access to justice and forums in which all litigants, represented and self-represented, have an equal and timely opportunity to be heard. The issues that we face are not unique to the Fifth District. The use of interpreters, the increased number of self-represented litigants, the use of technology in and out of the courtroom, and staff hiring, supervision, and training, are all issues that have been identified in prior hearings before the Commission. These issues have resulted in an increase in the amount of time judges spend performing their duties in and out of the courtroom since the 2020 Assessment was completed and are not accurately captured in the current weighted caseload statistics.

The remaining four County Court Judges of the Fifth District have been busy working to maintain access to the County Courts of the District since the retirement of Judge Petersen. However, we have not been able to do it alone. We have received assistance from retired Judges and Judges from outside of the District with coverage of the criminal docket in Seward County during the vacancy. We would not have been able to continue to provide timely and efficient judicial resources throughout the District without that assistance. It is simply not possible to cover the caseloads in all eleven counties of the Fifth District with only four Judges.

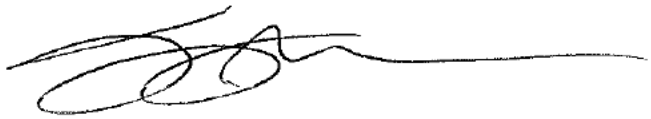
We respectfully request that the Judicial Resources Commission declare that a judicial vacancy exists in the office of the County Court, Fifth Judicial District, due to the retirement of Judge C. Jo Petersen, with the primary office to be located in Seward, Seward County, Nebraska.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Respectfully submitted,

The County Court Judges of the Fifth
Judicial District

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Twiss', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Stephen R.W. Twiss
Presiding Judge

EC: Hon. Lynelle D. Homolka
Hon. Denise J. Kracl
Hon. Andrew R. Lange



YORK COUNTY ATTORNEY

YORK COUNTY COURTHOUSE
SUITE 201
510 LINCOLN AVENUE
YORK, NEBRASKA 68467

GARY OLSON
COUNTY ATTORNEY

CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON
DEPUTY COUNTY ATTORNEY

NATHANIEL HEINZ
DEPUTY COUNTY ATTORNEY

(402) 362-5583
FAX (402) 362-5620

November 19, 2025

Judicial Resources Commission
Honorable Jonathan Papik
State Capitol Building
PO Box 98910
Lincoln, NE 68509

Re: Judicial Vacancy in 5th Judicial District – County Court

Dear Justice Papik and Members of the Commission:

I am writing in support of this Commission declaring a judicial vacancy in the Fifth Judicial District due to Judge C. Jo Peterson's retirement. Declaring a judicial vacancy on the County Court will help maintain the number of judges allocated by the Nebraska Legislature and ensure that the County Court continues to administer cases in a timely manner.

As for York County, all of our case counts have exploded in the past three years. This year, we are looking at roughly a doubling of juvenile court filings, and percentage increases across the board. Specifically, I track 4 case types. County court filings, which is all criminal filings, felony and misdemeanor; District Bindovers, which is felonies not resolved in County Court, Traffic filings, and Juvenile case filings. Year over year, we are looking at increases as follows:

- District Bindovers: **24.6% increase from 2024 to 2025**
- County Court Criminal Filings: **28.4% increase from 2024 to 2025**
- Traffic Filings: **22.7% increase from 2024 to 2025**
- Juvenile filings: **91.6% increase from 2024 to 2025**

These projections are accurate as of October 24, 2025, which is the last date in which I tracked these numbers. These numbers also do not account for adult diversion cases, nor for juvenile diversion cases. I am also the County Attorney in Polk County, also in the 5th Judicial District, which is experiencing similar percentage increases, albeit on a smaller total number of cases.

This is relevant because these cases are all handled by judges in the 5th Judicial District. In the event that the vacancy is not declared, or the vacancy is transferred to another judicial district, our already skinny resources will be stretched even further, as the Judges that handle cases in Polk and York would be required to also handle cases for two additional counties that previously Judge Peterson handled.

Ultimately, I am requesting that this Commission declare a vacancy at this time. I urge you to do so.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Johnson", written in a cursive style.

Christopher M. Johnson
Polk County Attorney, and
Chief Deputy York County Attorney