
Wisconsin Judicial Needs Assessment Study | 2025

FINAL REPORT | APRIL 2026

Project Staff

Amy Kehner

Suzanne Tallarico

DeShield Greene

Shannon Nguyen

Anthony Kim

Emma Maier

Contents

About NCSC	ii
Acknowledgments	v
Workload Assessment Advisory Committee Members (WAAC)	v
Executive Summary	vi
Introduction	1
Judicial Needs Assessment Overview	1
Workload Assessment Advisory Committee (WAAC)	2
Work Time Study	3
Participants	3
Time Study Participation Rate	4
Preparation for the Work Time Study	4
Work Time Data Collection Process	4
Data Elements in the Judicial Work Time Study	4
Preliminary Weights	9
Time Spent on Non-Case-Related Activities	12
Qualitative Feedback	13
Adequacy of Time Survey (AOT)	13
Focus Groups	14
Complementary Findings	15
Qualitative Data: Main Themes and Results	15
WAAC Review of Weights & Qualitative Data	19
Case Weights Analysis	22
WAAC Approval of Case Weights	31
Calculating Resource Need for Circuit Court Judicial Officials	32
Annual Time Available for Case-Related Work	32
Chief Judge Adjustment	34
Determining the Need for Circuit Court Judicial Officials	35
Recommendations	41
Recommendation 1	41
Recommendation 2	41

Recommendation 3	41
Appendix A: Event-Based Methodology	42
Appendix B: Case Type Categories and Descriptions	44
Appendix C: Case-Related Activities and Descriptions	48
Appendix D: Non-Case-Related Activities and Descriptions	50
Appendix E: Adequacy of Time Survey Results	52
Appendix F: Application of the Weighted Caseload Formula to Each County Based on Average Filings from 2023, 2024, and 2025*	62
Adams - Calumet	63
Chippewa - Douglas	64
Dunn - Iowa	65
Iron - Lafayette	66
Langlade - Milwaukee	67
Monroe - Portage	68
Price - Sheboygan	69
St Croix - Washburn	70
Washington - Wood	71

About NCSC

TRUSTED LEADERSHIP. PROVEN SOLUTIONS. BETTER COURTS.

The National Center for State Courts is a community of dedicated researchers, consultants, and former practitioners who drive innovation and progress in courts and justice systems. NCSC's reputation for trusted leadership enables us to work alongside top judicial officials and staff to examine some of the most complex and significant issues facing society. Our team of experts and court leaders is deeply committed to advancing just, free, and safe communities.

Resources include webinars, on-site or remote technical assistance, education and training, and direct consulting. Our work is designed to make a difference. As the only organization that enjoys collaborative relationships with the Conference of Chief Justices, Conference of State Court Administrators, and other associations of judicial leaders, NCSC has unique insight into the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing state courts. Join us today in our work to advance just, free, and safe communities.

Copyright © 2026 National Center for State Courts.

This document may be reproduced with attribution to the National Center for State Courts.

Acknowledgments

The authors thank the Honorable Guy Dutcher, Chief Judge, District 4, for his leadership as chair of the Wisconsin Assessment Advisory Committee, and the Wisconsin judicial officials and committee members for their substantive input and collaboration. By supplying case-level data, reviewing the methodology, and participating in working sessions, they shaped the study's design, analysis, and recommendations. Special thanks to Tyler Brandt, Wisconsin Director of State Courts Office Manager of Court Data and Analytics, for his ongoing availability and behind-the-scenes support.

Workload Assessment Advisory Committee Members (WAAC)

The Honorable Guy Dutcher, Chief Judge, District 4, Chair

The Honorable Carl Ashley, Chief Judge, District 1

Rosa Barillas, Milwaukee County Circuit Court Commissioner

Jon Bellows, District Court Administrator, District 4

Tyler Brandt, Manager of Court Data and Analytics

The Honorable Paul Bugenhagen, Chief Judge, District 3

Anya Crossland, District Court Administrator, District 7

Stephanie Garbo, District Court Administrator, District 1

The Honorable Wynne Laufenberg, Chief Judge, District 2

Michael Neimon, District Court Administrator, District 3

The Honorable Scott Needham, Circuit Court Judge

Amber Peterson, Deputy Director of State Courts

The Honorable Elizabeth Rohl, Circuit Court Judge

Eric Sanford, La Crosse County Circuit Court Commissioner

The Honorable Carrie Schneider, Chief Judge, District 8

The Honorable Audrey Skwierawski, Director of State Courts

Holly Szablewski, Replaced by Amber Peterson, Deputy Director of State Courts

Staff: Sara Andrews, Program Specialist

Executive Summary

The Wisconsin Judicial Needs Assessment Study provides a comprehensive, data-driven evaluation of the time required for judicial officials, defined in this report as circuit court judges and court commissioners, to process cases statewide. Using a weighted caseload methodology, the study measures judicial workload based on the time required to process different case types and translates that work into staffing needs. This approach has been used in Wisconsin for more than 40 years and provides an objective foundation for assessing judicial resources.

In March 2025, the Director of State Courts Office (DSCO) engaged the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to update the judicial needs assessment model to reflect changes in laws, court practices, technology, and case complexity since the prior study in 2016. NCSC worked closely with the Workload Assessment Advisory Committee (WAAC), whose members provided guidance on study design, case types, methodology, and key policy considerations throughout the project.

The study draws on three primary data sources: (1) a four-week time study conducted from October 5 to November 1, 2025, with participation from 368 judicial officials, including ninety-nine percent (99%) of circuit court judges and court commissioners; (2) an adequacy of time (AOT) survey completed by 225 judicial officials; and (3) qualitative input from six focus group discussions. To support consistent and accurate reporting, NCSC provided training through webinars, written materials, and an online help desk. During the time study, judicial officials recorded all time spent on case-related and non-case-related activities using a secure online system.

The methodology establishes a standardized judicial workday and year value to estimate the time available for case handling, accounting for administrative duties, meetings, vacation, sick leave, other leave time, and additional non-case-related responsibilities. This ensures that the workload model accurately represents a realistic and sustainable allocation of judicial time, considering both the full range of work demands and the need for judicial officials to take leave and manage life outside of case handling.

Using this data, NCSC developed case weights representing the average time required to process each case type. The results were reviewed through focus groups and by the WAAC, which ultimately adopted the case weights without adjustment, concluding that they accurately reflect current case handling practices.

The findings show that judicial workload is shaped not only by filing volume but also by increasing case complexity and evolving court practices. Although filings have declined in some areas, the time required per case has increased across nearly all docket types, reflecting more complex and time-intensive case management. Contributing factors include expanded motion practice, increased use of digital evidence, and a rise in the number of self-represented litigants. These trends are

consistent with findings from recent NCSC workload studies conducted in jurisdictions across the country, which similarly document a shift toward fewer but more complex cases requiring greater judicial time and involvement. In many courts nationwide, judges are managing more intensive case oversight, increased procedural requirements, and greater demands on the record, even as overall filings remain stable or decline. Cases also more frequently involve overlapping legal issues, requiring additional coordination and judicial involvement.

Workload is also affected by structural and systemic conditions, including attorney shortages, staffing constraints, and limited treatment and placement resources. These factors can lead to delays, additional hearings, and greater judicial involvement, even when filing volumes remain stable or decline. Feedback from the adequacy of time survey and focus groups reinforces these findings. While most judicial officials reported that they usually have enough time to complete their work, many indicated that doing so often requires working beyond standard hours. Participants also noted increased administrative responsibilities and variability in workload due to county size, local practices, and resource availability.

Applying the updated model to recent filing data indicates that Wisconsin requires approximately 379.1 full-time equivalent judicial officials to manage the current workload effectively, compared with the current complement of 348.2 judicial officials statewide. This estimate provides a statewide baseline for evaluating judicial resource needs and supports informed decision-making regarding the allocation of judges and court commissioners.

The model does not capture all qualitative and local factors that influence workload, such as differences in case complexity, interpreter needs, staffing levels, operational practices, and the differing effects of county size and geography. These considerations should be evaluated alongside the model when making policy and resource decisions, particularly because factors such as travel demands, on-call responsibilities, vacancies, and limited staffing depth may have a greater operational impact in smaller counties.

To maintain accuracy over time, the study recommends updating the model annually using recent filing data and conducting a comprehensive review every five to seven years. Interim adjustments may also be appropriate when significant changes in law or procedure affect judicial workload.

Overall, this study provides Wisconsin with an updated, transparent, and empirically grounded framework for understanding judicial workload and planning for future resource needs.

Introduction

Funding agencies and the public increasingly expect courts and government bodies to operate efficiently and exercise fiscal prudence, ensuring taxpayers' money is used effectively while meeting communities' expanding and diverse needs. Accurately measuring court workload is essential to estimate how many judicial officials are required to manage caseloads and deliver justice. For this reason, court leaders often rely on data-driven weighted caseload assessments to guide resource decisions.

For more than 45 years, the Wisconsin Director of State Courts Office (DSCO) has used a workload formula to assess resource needs for circuit court judicial officials. Wisconsin first established its weighted caseload model in 1980 through an assessment by the Resource Planning Corporation (RPC); the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) updated the model in 1995, 2006, and 2016. NCSC, a national leader in judicial workload studies, develops weighted workload formulas to determine staffing needs for courts and other justice agencies. The current weighted caseload study, hereafter "judicial needs assessment", updates the weights through a four-week time study in which circuit court judges and court commissioners tracked their activities. Building on prior data, the assessment retains most core elements while making minor adjustments to case categories and activity types. Data were collected from judicial officials across 70 locations. The current judicial needs assessment:

- Used a methodology that developed case weights from all work recorded by circuit court judicial officials, covering every phase of case handling as well as routine non-case activities and travel.
- Achieved 99% participation from judicial officials statewide.
- Conducted a four-week data collection period to generate sufficient, valid data for developing case weights.
- Established a transparent, flexible model to determine statewide needs for circuit court judicial officials.

This report details the judicial needs assessment methodology, its results, and provides recommendations for the model's continued use.

Judicial Needs Assessment Overview

The judicial needs assessment methodology, which follows a weighted caseload model, recognizes that court cases differ in complexity and therefore generate varying amounts of judicial work. For example, a typical felony demands more judicial official time than a simple misdemeanor. Unlike allocation approaches based on population or raw (unweighted) case counts, the weighted caseload approach explicitly accounts for these differences across case types, yielding a more accurate and nuanced picture

of Wisconsin's need for circuit court judicial officials. The judicial needs assessment formula comprises three critical elements:

1. *Case filings* refer to the number of new cases of each case type filed annually, or the average over the most recent three years.
2. *Case weights* indicate the average amount of time, in minutes, required to process cases of each type annually.
3. *The year value* represents the amount of time each circuit court judicial official has available to work within a year.

The total annual workload is calculated by multiplying the annual case filings (or a three-year average of filings) for each case type by its respective case weight, then summing the workload across all case types. Each court's workload is then divided by the year value to find the total number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) judicial officials required to manage it.

This judicial needs assessment was conducted in two phases:

1. A time study in which all circuit court judicial officials were asked to record all case-related and non-case-related work over a four-week period. The time study provided an empirical description of the amount of time currently devoted to processing each case type, as well as the division of the workday between case-related and non-case-related activities.
2. A quality adjustment process to ensure that the final judicial needs assessment incorporates sufficient time for efficient and effective case handling. The quality adjustment process included:
 - a. An adequacy of time survey asking circuit court judges and court commissioners about the amount of time currently available to perform their work, including their perceived levels of work-related stress and whether the current pace of work is sustainable,
 - b. Six focus groups conducted by NCSC that included circuit court judicial officials from across the state, and
 - c. A review and acceptance of the weights by WAAC.

Workload Assessment Advisory Committee (WAAC)

The WAAC's role was to advise the NCSC on all aspects of the time study. This includes selecting case types and activities, designing the time study, and making policy *decisions regarding the development of case weights and the need model.*

The WAAC, appointed by DSCO, comprised five chief judges, two circuit court judges, two circuit court commissioners, the director and deputy director of state courts, four district court administrators, and the manager of court data and analytics.

The WAAC first convened on June 24, 2025, to define the study parameters, including which circuit court judicial officials would participate, the data collection timeframe and recording duration, and the case type and activity type categories that would form the study. These case types, together with case-related and non-case-related activities, cover the full scope of judicial officials' work. At its second meeting, held remotely on January 12, 2026, the WAAC reviewed NCSC's preliminary findings from the work time study and the adequacy of time survey. The committee's feedback added context to the analysis and helped shape the focus group questions for the following month. On March 4, 2026, the WAAC met in person to review focus group input and a refined analysis of the work time data and case weights. The committee agreed that no further revisions to the case weights were necessary and approved the final model.

Work Time Study

Participants

The judicial workload assessment included two types of participants: circuit court judges and court commissioners¹. Circuit court judges and court commissioners serve complementary roles within the circuit court system. While circuit court judges are elected officials with full judicial authority to hear all case types, conduct jury and bench trials, and issue final rulings and judgments, court commissioners are appointed by circuit court judges and exercise more limited, statutorily defined authority.

Court commissioners oversee a wide range of proceedings, including initial appearances in criminal cases, uncontested divorces, uncontested traffic matters, small claims cases, and preliminary and post-judgment matters in family law. In counties with populations of 500,000 or more, statute provides for three commissioner positions to assist with family law, small claims, and probate matters, and counties may establish additional positions as needed to support the efficient administration of judicial business. The extent of work handled by commissioners varies by case type, but their role is particularly significant in family law matters and contested small claims cases. Commissioners also perform a substantial portion of the work in uncontested traffic forfeitures, non-traffic forfeitures, juvenile ordinance cases, and small claims. Although their decisions may be subject to judicial review,

¹Supplemental court commissioners were not included unless they had circuit court authority and had a regularly scheduled calendar. The work of the registers in probate was also not included in the study. However, when a register in probate serves as a court commissioner, that time was included.

commissioners play a critical role in supporting efficient court operations by allowing judges to focus on more complex cases and trials. In counties with fewer commissioner resources, these responsibilities are more often handled by circuit court judges, further increasing judicial workload.

Time Study Participation Rate

Ninety-nine percent (99%) of all circuit court judicial officials participated in the four-week time study. This high level of participation ensured sufficient data to develop an accurate and reliable profile of current practice.

Preparation for the Work Time Study

To maximize data quality, all time-study participants were asked to attend a webinar training that explained how to categorize and record their time. NCSC offered six live Zoom sessions on September 3, 9, 16, 23, 24, and 30, 2025; participants also received a pre-recorded training and reference materials. A help desk link in the online data collection tool allowed participants to submit questions to NCSC, as needed. The web-based system allows participants to verify their entries and enables real-time monitoring of participation rates, thereby improving the completeness and accuracy of the time study data.

Work Time Data Collection Process

From October 5 to November 1, 2025, judicial officials tracked all work time by case type and category and by case-specific or non-case-specific activities, including work outside regular hours (e.g., weekends, vacation, sick leave). The work time study used an event-based methodology to collect data over four weeks and extrapolate it to an annual representation of judicial officials' work (see Appendix A). Time was recorded in five-minute increments using a manual form provided by the NCSC, and judicial officials were advised to record their time throughout the day. At the end of each day, they were to enter their data into the NCSC's secure database for analysis. Statewide participation rates provided sufficient observations to calculate accurate average case handling times for each case type in the study.

Data Elements in the Judicial Work Time Study

At its initial meeting on June 24, 2025, the WAAC defined the case-type categories and the case-related and non-case-related activities that would guide the time study, encompassing the full range of work expected of judicial officials in Wisconsin's circuit courts.

Case Type Categories

Measuring average time per case type helps the NCSC and the WAAC assess judicial staffing needs by accounting for both caseload volume and case complexity. Accurate

case type categories are essential because they reflect how cases are processed and counted in Wisconsin.

These case type categories must satisfy the following requirements:

- The case type categories are both mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, meaning that each case belongs to exactly one case type category.
- Categories are logically distinct.
- There are meaningful differences among categories in the amount of judicial official work required to process the average case.
- There are sufficient case filings in each category to establish a valid case weight.
- DSCO consistently and reliably tracks filings for each case type category or its component case types.

The WAAC defined the twenty-six categories shown in Figure 1.² A more detailed description of the case types is available in Appendix B.

Figure 1: Case Type Categories & Annual Filings³

Case Type	Annual Filings	% of Total Filings
Felony-Severity A or B	761	0.1%
Felony-Severity C or D	3,220	0.5%
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	8,808	1.3%
Felony-Severity H	19,892	2.8%
Felony-Severity I or U	11,754	1.7%
Misdemeanors	52,188	7.4%
Misdemeanor OWI	4,873	0.7%
Forfeitures	371,184	52.8%
Small Claims (Contested)	7,645	1.1%
Small Claims (Uncontested)	104,721	14.9%
Personal Injury/Property Damage	4,572	0.7%
Contracts/Real Estate	17,008	2.4%
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	766	0.1%
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	15,375	2.2%

² The WAAC also included a category for probable cause review, but since an accurate count of filings is unavailable, the minutes recorded during the data collection period were allocated proportionally to felony and misdemeanor cases.

³ Average annual filing data for calendar years 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Case Type	Annual Filings	% of Total Filings
Other Civil	5,587	0.8%
Formal Estates & Trusts	1,032	0.1%
Guardianships	6,830	1.0%
Commitments	9,510	1.4%
Other Probate	12,635	1.8%
Divorce	16,214	2.3%
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	13,103	1.9%
Other Family	3,920	0.6%
Termination of Parental Rights	1,227	0.2%
Delinquency & JIPS	4,924	0.7%
CHIPS	3,688	0.5%
Treatment Courts	924	0.1%
Total	702,359	100.0%

* 3 Year Average CY 2022-24

Judicial Work Activity Types

Circuit court judicial officials perform a range of responsibilities both inside and outside the courtroom. These duties include activities directly related to case handling, as well as administrative and other non-case-specific work. To ensure these responsibilities were fully represented, NCSC worked with the WAAC to develop a comprehensive list and description of these activities. This framework guided data collection for the time study. A list of case-related activities for circuit court judicial officials is provided in Figure 2, along with a more detailed description in Appendix C.

Figure 2: Case-Related Activities

Case-Related Activities
Pre-Trial
Non-Trial/Uncontested Disposition
Court Trial/Contested Disposition
Jury Trial
Post-Judgment/Post-Disposition
Treatment Courts
Probable Cause Review

Work that is not related to a specific pending case is also an essential part of judicial officials' workdays. To develop a detailed profile of circuit court judicial officials' non-

case-related activities and provide an empirical basis for constructing the day and year values, the WAAC defined these activities for circuit court judicial officials (see Figure 3 and Appendix D). Vacation, sick and holiday leave, judicial education and training, and time spent recording time study data were also included in the non-case-related activity category.

Figure 3: Non-Case-Related Activities

Non-Case-Related Activities
Non-Case-Related Administration
Chief Judge Administration
Judicial Education & Training
General Legal Research
Committee Meetings, Other Meetings, & Related Work
Community Activities & Public Outreach
Court to Court Work-Related Travel
Vacation, Sick, & Holiday Leave
NCSC Time Study Data Reporting & Entry

Work Time By Case and Activity Types

Figure 4 presents a detailed picture of the percentage of case-related time circuit court judicial officials spend on various cases statewide. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of time during data collection was devoted to felonies (49.1%), followed by misdemeanors (21.2%) and divorce (5.7%). In terms of case-related activities, the greatest proportion of time for all case types was spent on pre-trial work (48.1%), followed by non-trial/uncontested dispositions (14.8%), and post-judgment/post-disposition work (11.6%).

Figure 4: Percentage of Time Reported by Case Type & Event During the Data Collection Period

Case Types	Pre-Trial	Non-Trial/Uncontested Disposition	Court Trial/Contested Disposition	Jury Trial	Post-Judgment/Disposition	Treatment Courts	% Total Time
Felony-Severity A or B	13.1%	1.3%	1.5%	8.3%	3.9%	0.0%	7.9%
Felony-Severity C or D	16.6%	2.9%	1.7%	4.1%	2.8%	0.0%	7.0%
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	15.5%	4.4%	1.3%	4.8%	2.2%	0.0%	13.0%
Felony-Severity H	17.4%	4.9%	1.2%	2.7%	1.9%	0.0%	13.0%
Felony-Severity I or U	17.6%	4.8%	0.8%	2.1%	2.9%	0.0%	8.2%

Case Types	Pre-Trial	Non-Trial/ Uncon- tested Dispo- sition	Court Trial/ Con- tested Dispo- sition	Jury Trial	Post- Judg- ment/ Dispo- sition	Treat- ment Courts	% Total Time
Misdemeanors	18.3%	6.1%	0.9%	1.5%	1.4%	0.0%	16.8%
Misdemeanor OWI	18.3%	6.0%	0.9%	1.7%	1.3%	0.0%	4.3%
Forfeitures	52.8%	25.6%	11.9%	4.7%	5.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Small Claims (Contested)	38.3%	4.2%	46.0%	0.0%	11.5%	0.0%	1.8%
Small Claims (Uncontested)	48.8%	40.9%	1.7%	0.0%	8.6%	0.0%	1.0%
Personal Injury/Property Damage	78.6%	8.3%	2.6%	9.6%	0.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Contracts/Real Estate	62.6%	10.8%	12.0%	8.9%	5.8%	0.0%	2.3%
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	72.5%	4.6%	14.1%	2.5%	6.3%	0.0%	0.7%
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	30.5%	20.1%	44.1%	0.1%	5.3%	0.0%	1.7%
Other Civil	58.9%	16.8%	8.3%	7.9%	8.0%	0.0%	1.4%
Formal Estates & Trusts	70.4%	13.1%	13.1%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	0.5%
Guardianships	35.7%	23.1%	18.6%	0.1%	22.5%	0.0%	1.3%
Commitments	42.8%	12.0%	36.8%	1.9%	6.5%	0.0%	0.6%
Other Probate	50.4%	26.5%	11.2%	0.0%	11.9%	0.0%	0.4%
Divorce	38.7%	15.7%	19.6%	0.0%	26.0%	0.0%	5.7%
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	22.4%	15.9%	21.0%	0.1%	40.6%	0.0%	3.0%
Other Family	27.5%	9.2%	13.0%	0.0%	50.3%	0.0%	2.0%
Termination of Parental Rights	56.5%	7.8%	5.3%	18.2 %	12.2%	0.0%	0.5%
Delinquency & JIPS	56.2%	15.9%	6.8%	0.0%	21.1%	0.0%	1.3%
CHIPS	45.4%	15.1%	7.9%	0.7%	30.9%	0.0%	1.6%
Treatment Courts	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	1.6%

Distinguishing Caseload and Workload

Comparing the number of filings for each case type with the percentage of time spent on those cases highlights the importance of weighting cases. As shown in Figure 1, forfeitures account for the highest percentage of filings (52.8%). However, Figure 4

shows that circuit court judicial officials collectively spend only 1% of their case-related time on forfeitures. This demonstrates that the volume of case filings does not necessarily reflect the overall workload. Furthermore, the total caseload filings decreased by 20% since the last study, from 875,860 to 702,359, but this does not necessarily mean that the work time associated with those filings is less.

The judicial needs assessment model assumes that circuit court judicial officials have a uniform amount of time available each year to perform all responsibilities, including both case-related and non-case-related tasks. To estimate staffing needs, the average time spent on non-case-related activities is treated as constant, and the remaining time is calculated to determine the time available for case-related work. Because this calculation forms a critical component of the judicial needs assessment model, accurately measuring time spent on both case-related and non-case-related activities is essential.

Caseload Data

To translate the time study data into the average time spent on each case type (preliminary case weights), it is first necessary to determine the average number of cases filed in each category over the most recent three-year period. The DSCO provided filing data by county for calendar years 2022 through 2025, for each case type category. Calendar years 2022, 2023, and 2024 were used to create the case weights for each case type (see Figure 1). Subsequently, after the case weights were created, reviewed, and finalized, calendar years 2023, 2024, and 2025 were averaged and applied to those case weights to calculate the annual workload. Using a three-year average rather than data from a single year helps minimize the impact of temporary fluctuations in caseloads on creating the case weights.⁴

Preliminary Weights

Following the data collection period, the time study and caseload data were used to calculate preliminary case weights. A preliminary case weight represents the average amount of time a judicial official currently spends processing a case of a particular type. Separate weights were developed for each case category to reflect differences in case complexity and the varying amounts of judicial time required to process them. Simply relying on the number of filings to measure workload fails to account for these differences, as illustrated by comparing the distribution of case filings and judicial time expenditures in Figures 1 and 4.

Three sets of preliminary case weights were developed for the WAAC's consideration. The first set incorporated work time data entered by all participants, including judges and court commissioners. The second set included time entered only by circuit court

⁴ The case weights are based on the three-year average of case filings from 2022-2024 and the final workload model uses the most recent three-year average of case filings from 2023-2025.

judges, and the third set included time entered only by court commissioners. After careful review, the WAAC approved the case weights based on data from all participants because they most accurately reflect the overall workload of judicial officials statewide without overstating it.

The preliminary weights were calculated by: (1) summing all time spent by circuit court judicial officials on each case type during the 20-day data collection period, including all recorded work performed during regular business hours, after hours, and on weekends; (2) dividing that total by 20, the number of working days in the study, to determine the average daily time spent on each case type; (3) multiplying the daily average by the number of days judicial officials are expected to work in a year (the year value⁵) to estimate the annual time dedicated to each case type; and (4) dividing the annual time by the number of cases filed for that case type based on the most recent and representative three-year average of filings (calendar years 2022–2024). The resulting values represent the average amount of case-related time that circuit court judicial officials currently spend on each identified case type. Figure 5 illustrates the calculations used to determine the preliminary case weight for a divorce case.

Figure 5: Example: Calculating Annualized Minutes & Preliminary Weight for a Divorce Case

Divorce - Total Minutes Recorded During Data Collection Period	299,337
<i>Divide by</i>	÷
Work Days in the Data Collection Period	20
<i>Multiply by</i>	×
Average Minutes per Day Working on Divorce Cases	14,967
Total Working Days/Year	208.6
<i>Equals</i>	=
Annualized Minutes for Divorce Cases	3,122,084

⁵ The calculation for the year value, 208.6 days, is shown in Figure 13.

Figure 5a: Developing the Preliminary Case Weight

Annualized Minutes for Divorce Cases	3,122,084
<i>Divide by</i>	\div
3-Year Average Filings	16,214
<i>Equals</i>	=
Preliminary Case Weight (minutes)	192.55

Circuit court judicial officials spend a combined total of 3,122,084 minutes of case-related time on divorce cases annually. Dividing that time by the 3-year average number of divorce cases filed (16,214) yields a preliminary case weight of 192.55 minutes, rounded to 193 minutes. Figure 6 shows the complete set of preliminary case weights for circuit court judicial officials, broken down by judges and court commissioners.

Figure 6: Preliminary Weights

Case Types	Judge Time (minutes)	+	Court Commissioner Time (minutes)	=	Case Weight Combined (minutes)
Felony-Severity A or B	1,528		83		1,612
Felony-Severity C or D	307		33		340
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	208		21		229
Felony-Severity H	89		12		101
Felony-Severity I or U	96		13		109
Misdemeanors	44		6		50
Misdemeanor OWI	127		12		138
Forfeitures	1		0		2
Small Claims (Contested)	65		62		128
Small Claims (Uncontested)	1		4		5
Personal Injury/Property Damage	167		1		168
Contracts/Real Estate	75		1		76
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	479		13		491
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	26		36		62
Other Civil	128		10		139
Formal Estates & Trusts	215		37		251
Guardianships	82		26		108
Commitments	24		10		34
Other Probate	9		6		15
Divorce	110		81		191

Case Types	Judge Time (minutes)	+	Court Commissioner Time (minutes)	=	Case Weight Combined (minutes)
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	31		96		127
Other Family	86		197		283
Termination of Parental Rights	223		1		225
Delinquency & JIPS	115		33		148
CHIPS	181		54		236
Treatment Courts	876		52		927

Time Spent on Non-Case-Related Activities

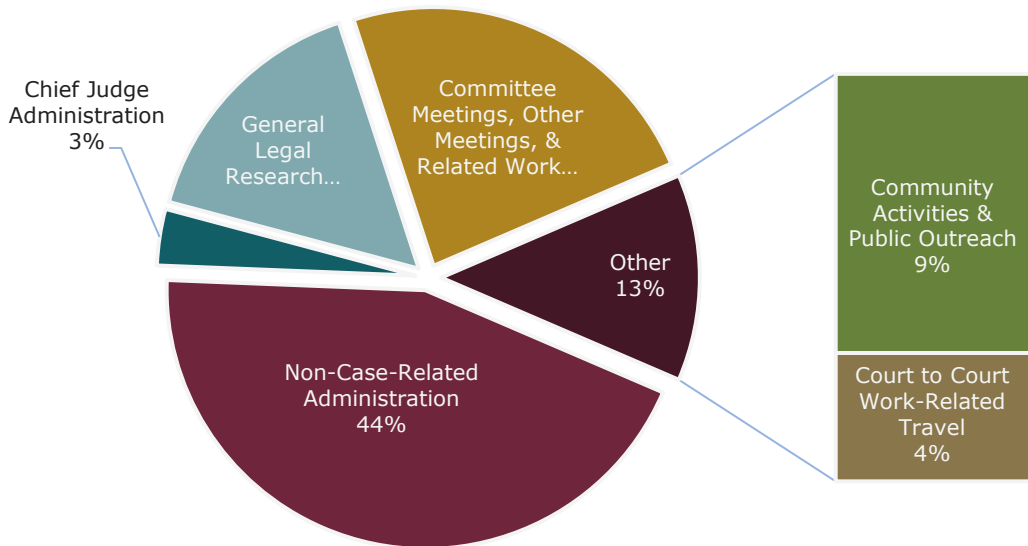
Judicial officials' responsibilities extend beyond presiding over hearings and deciding cases in the courtroom. A large portion of their work involves activities that support the court's overall functioning but are not tied to a specific case. Some of these responsibilities include preparing for court sessions, managing schedules, participating in judicial education and professional training, collaborating with court staff and justice system partners, and contributing to administrative and policy initiatives that improve court operations. It also covers any work-related travel that judicial officials must undertake, excluding regular commute time. Accounting for this work is important because it reflects the full scope of judicial responsibilities and ensures that workload assessments and staffing decisions accurately represent the time required to support an effective court system. Although these activities were measured across all participating judicial officials and averaged for purposes of the model, their practical impact may be greater in smaller counties, where fewer judicial officials are available to absorb administrative duties, travel, and other non-case-related responsibilities.

Based on data collected during the work time study, NCSC determined that circuit court judicial officials spend an average of 72 minutes per day on non-case-related activities.⁶ Figure 7 shows how that time was distributed across the various non-case-related activity categories reported during the study. For purposes of the workload model, however, the study continues to use Wisconsin's existing standard of 90 minutes per FTE day for non-case-related activities. That standard aligns with those used in other states, including California, Colorado, Iowa, Maryland, Kansas, and Texas. Since 2001, NCSC has conducted more than 60 workload assessments of judicial officials nationwide, and those studies have found non-case-related time

⁶ Judges = 90 minutes and Commissioners = 53 minutes.

ranging from 30 to 150 minutes per FTE day. Wisconsin’s 90-minute standard, therefore, falls well within the range observed in other jurisdictions.

Figure 7: Non-Case-Related Time



Qualitative Feedback

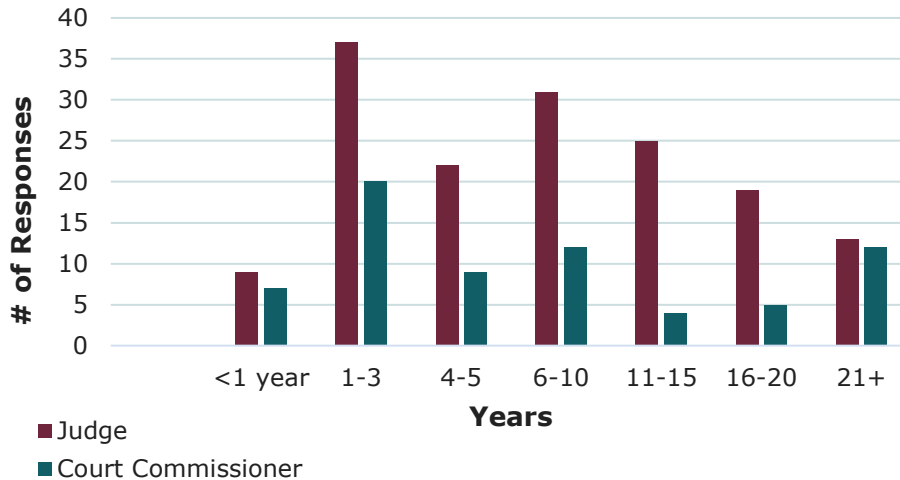
The initial case weights generated during the time study represent the time circuit court judicial officials currently spend on different case types, but they do not necessarily reflect the ideal amount of time required to perform this work effectively. To provide additional context for interpreting the time study results, the assessment included two qualitative components: the Adequacy of Time (AOT) survey and participant focus groups. These tools were designed to capture judicial officials’ perspectives on workload, case complexity, and the practical realities of court operations that cannot be fully reflected through time tracking alone. They also provide insight into the impact of certain factors, such as self-represented litigants, interpreters, and differences between rural and urban courts, which may influence workload but are not specifically measured in the judicial needs assessment.

Adequacy of Time Survey (AOT)

All circuit court judicial officials were invited to complete a web-based survey immediately following the data collection period. A total of 156 judges and 69 court commissioners, representing 65% of all time study participants, completed the survey. Among respondents, 7% reported less than one year of experience, 25% reported 1–5 years, 46% reported 6–15 years, and 22% reported 16 or more years

of experience. Figure 8 presents the distribution of respondents by tenure, and Appendix E provides detailed survey results.

Figure 8: AOT Survey Respondents by Tenure



The AOT survey gathered structured feedback from judges and court commissioners statewide regarding whether they have enough time, resources, and support to perform their duties effectively. Respondents were asked to assess if they have sufficient time during the day to complete their work, whether they possess adequate tools and resources for their jobs, and if they can meet deadlines without feeling rushed. The survey also inquired about whether participants feel overwhelmed or frustrated at work and what obstacles affect their ability to perform their duties successfully.

Respondents identified various factors impacting their workload, such as heavy caseloads, assisting self-represented litigants, attorney shortages, staffing limitations, insufficient resources, and interruptions during the workday. The survey also asked whether respondents believed their work during the time study period reflected a typical four-week period and if any judicial work performed during that time was not recorded in the time study.

Focus Groups

Following the AOT survey, NCSC conducted six focus groups with judicial officials from across the state to explore these issues in greater depth.⁷ Each group included six to ten participants and lasted between sixty and ninety minutes. To promote open discussion and gather a wider range of feedback, the advisory committee members and DSCO staff were not present.

⁷ Focus groups occurred on February 6, 9, 10, 18, and 20, 2026.

The focus groups were organized by case type to ensure representation across different areas of court work, including juvenile and probate, family and civil, misdemeanors, and felonies. Additional groups were conducted specifically for court commissioners and for judicial officials in Milwaukee to capture perspectives unique to those roles and jurisdictions.

During the focus groups, participants were given an overview of the weighted caseload methodology and asked to share their reactions to the time study design. In particular, they discussed whether the data collection period accurately reflected a typical work period and whether certain tasks or responsibilities were difficult to capture during the study.

Participants also discussed qualitative factors that affect workload and case handling time, including case complexity, self-represented litigants, interpreters, staffing, and attorney availability. The discussions further explored obstacles to efficient case handling, the causes of workplace stress and burnout, and whether cases in their assigned areas have become more complex over time.

Complementary Findings

Together, the AOT survey and focus groups provide complementary insights. The survey offered broad, statewide feedback on workload pressures and resource challenges. At the same time, the focus groups provided deeper context on why those pressures exist and how they affect day-to-day judicial work. Because participants were able to share detailed experiences and specific examples, the focus groups helped clarify survey responses and highlight factors influencing case handling times that may not be captured in time study data alone.

Collectively, the two tools provided the WAAC with additional information to assess the preliminary case weights and identify areas where adjustments might be appropriate before finalizing the weights. The results from both instruments were generally consistent and provide important context for understanding the time study findings.

Qualitative Data: Main Themes and Results

Representativeness of the Time Study Period

Most respondents reported that the time study period was generally representative of their typical workload. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of court commissioners and 62% of judges indicated that their work during the four-week study period reflected normal operations, while 32% of commissioners and 38% of judges reported that the period differed from their typical workload.

Respondents identified several reasons for atypical workloads during the study period, including vacations or personal leave, scheduled trials that were later adjourned, lighter calendars due to settlements or continuances, and attendance at conferences

or meetings. Some respondents also experienced disruptions, such as courtroom construction, office relocations, or other scheduling adjustments that affected their calendars.

Focus group discussions generally confirmed that the study period provided a reasonable snapshot of judicial work, but also highlighted concerns that it could not fully capture fluctuations in workload caused by calendar rotations, trial scheduling patterns, and seasonal filing trends. They also explained that block scheduling, adjournments, and unexpected case resolutions can significantly affect how judicial time is used during any given period.

Differences in Workload Between Smaller and Larger Counties

Focus group participants emphasized that workload is shaped not only by case volume and case complexity, but also by county size, geography, and local court structure. Judges in single-judge or smaller counties reported that workload pressures can be especially acute because responsibilities are concentrated on a single judicial official or a very small number of judicial officials. When vacancies occur, their impact may be felt especially sharply in smaller counties, where there are fewer judicial officials available to absorb additional work or maintain calendar coverage. These courts may also receive out-of-county case assignments, which require additional travel and coordination. Participants further noted that smaller counties rely heavily on remote hearings for many proceedings, reserving in-person hearings primarily for evidentiary matters, pleas, motions, preliminary hearings, and jury trials. These structural differences can make workload feel more compressed in smaller jurisdictions with fewer personnel and support resources.

Work Not Captured in Time Study

Although judicial officials were asked to record all work performed during the time study, some respondents reported that certain activities were difficult to capture. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of both judges and court commissioners reported engaging in work that they did not report as part of the study.

Among judges who reported missing time entries, the most common omissions included multitasking or overlapping tasks (81%) and administrative work such as email or routine communications (79%). Other commonly omitted activities included after-hours or weekend work (44%), legal research (35%), waiting for warrant requests while on call (33%), and work performed while on vacation or leave (25%). Court commissioners reported similar challenges, particularly with multitasking, administrative work, and after-hours activities.

Focus group participants reinforced these findings, explaining that judicial work often consists of many brief or overlapping tasks that are difficult to record in real time. For example, preliminary hearings or status hearings in criminal matters may last only a few minutes but occur in large numbers and require preparation and follow-up work.

Participants also noted that routine but frequent tasks, such as reviewing and signing orders, were difficult to track during the study but represent a meaningful portion of judicial workload.

Participants further explained that much judicial work occurs outside normal court hours, including reviewing files, preparing rulings, and completing paperwork in the evenings and on weekends. Although this work is necessary to maintain case progress, it is difficult to capture consistently in structured time-tracking systems.

Adequacy of Time to Perform Judicial Duties

Survey results suggest that judicial officials generally believe they have the tools necessary to perform their duties, but report mixed views regarding whether they have sufficient time to complete their work. On a five-point Likert scale⁸, judges reported an overall average score of 3.5 regarding whether they have adequate time, tools, and resources to complete their work efficiently, while court commissioners reported a higher average score of 4.05.

Judges reported lower scores on several measures related to time pressures, including having enough time to finish tasks once started (3.15), having sufficient time for professional learning opportunities (3.21), and having time for lunch or breaks during the day (3.30). Court commissioners reported similar concerns, with average scores of 3.71, 3.72, and 2.66, respectively, for those same measures.

Focus group discussions highlighted additional factors affecting time adequacy. Participants emphasized that calendar instability, attorney shortages, and limited system resources often reduce the amount of productive time available for case work. Judges noted that many administrative responsibilities, including committee work, staffing meetings, and supervisory duties, compete with core judicial responsibilities for limited time during the workday.

Workplace Stress and Judicial Burnout

Survey responses and focus group discussions indicate that many judicial officials experience workplace stress. Twelve percent (12%) of judges and 9% of court commissioners reported feeling overwhelmed all the time, while 49% of judges and 33% of court commissioners reported feeling overwhelmed some of the time.

Participants attributed these feelings primarily to heavy caseloads, continuous court calendars, and limited time for preparation and decision writing. Many judicial officials reported completing legal research and drafting decisions in the evenings, on

⁸ A Likert scale is a survey tool used to measure attitudes or opinions by asking respondents to rate their level of agreement or frequency on a fixed scale, typically ranging from options like "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

weekends, or during personal time because hearings and other court proceedings dominate their daily schedules.

Focus group participants also described the emotional demands of judicial work, including exposure to traumatic cases, difficult cases involving family disputes, and high-stakes criminal matters. Judges noted that they often feel pressure to move cases quickly to meet statutory timelines and scheduling demands, even when additional time might improve decision-making or case resolution.

Participants further explained that burnout is influenced not only by workload volume but also by resource constraints and systemic pressures, including shortages of attorneys, court staff, and interpreters. These limitations frequently require judicial officials to spend additional time managing delays and coordinating case logistics.

Obstacles to Judicial Effectiveness

Survey responses and focus group discussions identified several recurring barriers to efficient case handling. The most frequently cited obstacle was the shortage of attorneys, particularly public defenders, and court-appointed counsel. This issue was identified as an obstacle by 42% of court commissioners and 76% of judges, and it often leads to delays in case progression, repeated adjournments, and extended pretrial detention.

Participants also identified heavy caseloads and limited staffing resources as significant challenges. Thirty-two (32%) of court commissioners and 31% of judges reported that high case volume affects their ability to manage cases efficiently. Shortages of clerks, court reporters, interpreters, and other support staff were also noted as barriers that increase the amount of administrative work performed by judicial officials.

Focus group participants further emphasized that cases involving self-represented parties often require additional procedural explanations, longer hearings, and more follow-up work. Interpreter needs, particularly when rare languages or remote interpretation are required, can also lengthen hearings and cause scheduling delays.

Participants also identified several broader systemic factors that affect judicial workload, many of which are outside the courts' direct control yet still influence the pace of case handling. These include delays in crime lab testing, shortages of treatment services, and limited availability of placement options for juvenile and mental health cases. In addition, safety and security concerns, outdated facilities, and administrative responsibilities were identified as factors that can further complicate court operations and contribute to workload pressures.

WAAC Review of Weights & Qualitative Data

After completing the time study, the adequacy of time survey, and the focus group discussions, NCSC held a final meeting with the WAAC in person on March 4, 2026. The WAAC members reviewed the materials prepared by NCSC, which included findings from the time study and qualitative input from the adequacy of time survey and focus group feedback.

Compared to the 2016 study, two new case types were added, 17 case weights increased, and 3 decreased. Figure 9 illustrates these comparisons. The preliminary weights are compared with the previous study to assess changes in workload, but any differences should be interpreted with caution, as updates to case categories and other modifications may affect direct comparisons, even though the overall methodology remains the same. For example, definitions of some case types may have changed since the last study, or their filing counts might be tallied differently.

The following section summarizes the WAAC's discussions of each case weight and whether any preliminary case weights should be adjusted based on information gathered from the survey and focus groups.

Figure 9: Comparison Between 2025 & 2016 Time Study Minutes, Filings & Case Weights

Case Types	2025 (Preliminary)			2016			% Change from 2016		
	Annual Time Study Minutes	Average Annual Filings	Final Weight	Annual Time Study Minutes	Average Annual Filings	Final Weight	Annual Time Study Minutes	Average Annual Filings	Final Weight
Felony-Severity A or B	1,226,568	761	1,612	6,776,476	34,682	195	13%	28%	-12%
Felony-Severity C or D	1,093,460	3,220	340						
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	2,015,120	8,808	229						
Felony-Severity H	2,012,363	19,892	101						
Felony-Severity I or U	1,280,592	11,754	109						
Misdemeanors	2,617,253	52,188	50	2,635,822	69,590	38	-1%	-25%	32%
Misdemeanor OWI	673,905	4,873	138	730,220	8,672	84	-8%	-44%	64%
Forfeitures	568,694	371,184	2				*	*	*
Small Claims (Contested)	976,806	7,645	128	1,050,519	13,264	79	*	*	*
Small Claims (Uncontested)	552,653	104,721	5	431,437	590,143	1	*	*	*
Personal Injury/Property Damage	767,975	4,572	168	980,932	6,449	152	-22%	-29%	10%
Contracts/Real Estate	1,284,445	17,008	76	1,181,681	30,298	39	9%	-44%	94%
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	376,273	766	491	225,792	1,201	188	*	*	*
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	950,225	15,375	62	305,868	1,602	191	*	*	*
Other Civil	774,286	5,587	139	1,516,993	18,656	81	*	*	*

Case Types	2025 (Preliminary)			2016			% Change from 2016		
	Annual Time Study Minutes	Average Annual Filings	Final Weight	Annual Time Study Minutes	Average Annual Filings	Final Weight	Annual Time Study Minutes	Average Annual Filings	Final Weight
Formal Estates & Trusts	259,393	1,032	251	169,939	1,159	147	53%	-11%	71%
Guardianships	739,691	6,830	108	533,060	6,104	87	39%	12%	24%
Commitments	320,659	9,510	34	292,684	14,423	20	10%	-34%	66%
Other Probate	194,091	12,635	15	165,249	12,499	13	17%	1%	16%
Divorce	3,122,084	16,214	193	3,716,302	25,945	143	-16%	-38%	34%
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	1,668,667	13,103	127	1,739,772	13,106	133	-4%	-0.03%	-4%
Other Family	1,119,600	3,920	286	720,878	13,591	53	*	*	*
Termination of Parental Rights	275,478	1,227	225	817,813	8,051	102	-66%	-85%	121%
Delinquency & JIPS	728,254	4,924	148	994,663	4,823	206	-27%	2%	-28%
CHIPS	870,065	3,688	236	305,868	1,602	191	184%	130%	24%
Treatment Courts	857,212	924	927						

Green = increase, Red = decrease, Blue = new category

An asterisk (*) indicates that case type categories changed between studies and that meaningful comparisons cannot be made.

Case Weights Analysis

Criminal Case Weights

In general, criminal cases require more judicial time to manage and process due to the rapid growth of digital evidence, increased motion practice, and systemic resource constraints. Judges and court commissioners reported that body-worn camera footage, cellphone data, surveillance video, and social media records now routinely appear in criminal cases, requiring significant time for review, authentication, and evidentiary rulings. Motion practice has also increased, particularly motions to suppress evidence and other pretrial challenges, which require extensive briefing and hearings. In addition, many cases now involve defendants with significant mental health or substance use issues, which complicates case management and resolution. While not directly affecting case weights, attorney shortages, crime lab delays, and the need for expert testimony further slow case progression and extend timelines.

Felony

Compared to 2016, when all felonies were grouped into a single category with a case weight of 195 minutes, the current study separates felonies into five severity levels, allowing for more precise measurement of case complexity. Changes in felony filings are driven in part by charging practices, which vary across counties and influence overall workload. For example, lower-level felonies account for a large share of filings, with Class H Felonies representing the largest proportion. In contrast, some jurisdictions, such as Milwaukee County, file fewer lower-level felonies, reflecting differences in prosecutorial practices.

Recent statutory changes and enforcement trends have also increased both the volume and complexity of felony cases. Prosecutors are more frequently charging overdose deaths as first-degree reckless homicide under Wisconsin's Len Bias law, which was reclassified from a Class C to a Class B felony in August 2023. Drug trafficking offenses were also reclassified from Class B to Class C felonies, and filings have increased accordingly. These cases often require more extensive investigation and evidence review, contributing to increased work time.

At the same time, a rise in bail-jumping filings has influenced overall case weights. Bail jumping, defined under Wis. Stat. § 946.49, occurs when individuals violate bond conditions and are charged with a separate offense, often resulting in multiple charges within a single case. Since the previous study, felony filings have increased by 28%, with much of this growth driven by bail jumping and other lower-level offenses, while higher-level felony volume has declined. Although these cases are less complex individually, they require additional administrative work.

Overall, while higher-severity felonies require more time and resources, the increasing volume of lower-level offenses has shifted the composition of felony cases,

thereby increasing total filings while reducing the average case weight. When the most serious felonies (A through D) are excluded from the calculation, the average case weight drops to approximately 146 minutes. However, when C and D felonies are included, the average returns to about 195 minutes, aligning with the previous assessment. The WAAC agreed that the case weights for felony cases were appropriate.

Misdemeanor & Misdemeanor OWI

Misdemeanor and misdemeanor OWI cases are taking longer to resolve than in previous years due to increased litigation and logistical demands, which are extending case handling times. Additionally, OWI cases are being contested more often because the penalties involved, such as license revocation, fines, and potential jail time, create stronger incentives for defendants to challenge charges rather than settle quickly.

Another significant factor is the rise in motions practice, particularly in OWI cases. Defendants and attorneys are more likely to file motions to suppress evidence, which require extra hearings and legal review. These pretrial motions lengthen the litigation process and can delay case resolution. As a result, misdemeanor OWI cases often involve more extensive litigation compared to some lower-level felony cases, which may proceed more quickly through the system with fewer motions.

Compared to 2016, the misdemeanor OWI category now includes additional impaired driving cases, such as prohibited BAC (blood alcohol content). Most case type definitions within each category remain similar. Filings have decreased since the previous study, with misdemeanor cases down 25% and misdemeanor OWI cases down 44%. Nonetheless, case weights increased by 32% for misdemeanors and 64% for misdemeanor OWI. The committee found these increases reasonable given revisions to the case definitions and the increased workload per case.

Probable Cause

In the current time study, the WAAC decided to track probable cause reviews to understand better the amount of time this work requires. This category includes judicial work related to search warrants, detention reports, subpoenas, and probable cause determinations. Judicial time related to probable cause determinations often occurs outside normal court hours, as judicial officials must respond to search warrant requests and other urgent law enforcement needs in the evenings, at night, and on weekends. During the time study, time spent on probable-cause reviews was concentrated in a few counties. The top five counties are Milwaukee (17.3%), Dane (8.9%), Waukesha (4.8%), Kenosha (4.5%), and La Crosse (4.3%), accounting for 39.8% of the time spent statewide. This concentration matters because county size affects how that workload is divided: Milwaukee, Dane, and Waukesha are among Wisconsin's most populous counties and typically have more judicial officials to share on-call duties; Kenosha is mid-sized, and La Crosse is considerably smaller. As a

result, smaller counties often rely on a single official serving continuous or minimally rotated on-call shifts and handling most after-hours requests, whereas larger counties can rotate duties so individual officials have longer intervals between assignments. However, the work time associated with on-call duties varies substantially by county size. In smaller counties, judicial officials often serve on call continuously or with very limited rotation, meaning a single judicial official may handle all after-hours requests. In contrast, larger counties have more judicial officials available to share on-call responsibilities, resulting in longer intervals between on-call assignments for individual judicial officials.

Probable cause reviews are not always tied to a specific criminal case type, and because there were no filings directly associated with this category, the WAAC allocated the recorded time proportionally across felony and misdemeanor case types based on how judicial officials reported their time during the study period. Figure 10 below shows the percentage of time judicial officials reported spending on felony and misdemeanor cases during the time study.

Figure 10: Judicial Time Spent on Felonies and Misdemeanors

Case Types	Total Data Collection Time	Annualized Time
Felony-Severity A or B	117,600	11%
Felony-Severity C or D	104,838	10%
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	193,204	18%
Felony-Severity H	192,940	18%
Felony-Severity I or U	122,780	12%
Misdemeanors	250,935	24%
Misdemeanor OWI	64,612	6%

This approach ensures that probable cause review time is distributed across the full range of criminal case types that generate these requests. Overall, the study estimates that 569,569 minutes are spent annually on probable cause reviews statewide, equivalent to more than 7.5 full-time judicial officials.⁹ This allocation resulted in an increase to the criminal case weights by an additional 84 minutes for felony A or B, 18 minutes for felony C or D, 12 minutes for felony E, F, or G, 5 minutes for felony H, 6 minutes for felony I or U, and 3 and 7 minutes for misdemeanors and misdemeanor OWI, respectively.

Civil

Civil cases require more time due to expanded electronic discovery, increased motion practice, and a growing number of self-represented litigants. Judicial officials reported

⁹ 569,569 annual minutes ÷ 75,096 available judicial work minutes per judicial official per year.

that litigation now frequently involves extensive digital evidence, including emails, text messages, and social media content, all of which must be reviewed and ruled on for admissibility. At the same time, cases have become more procedurally complex, with more discovery disputes, dispositive motions, and evidentiary hearings. Injunction and restraining order proceedings have also increased and often function as full evidentiary hearings. The rise in self-represented litigants further extends proceedings, as courts must spend additional time explaining procedures and addressing incomplete or improper filings.

Small Claims: Contested and Uncontested, Forfeitures

In the 2016-time study, contested traffic and ordinance cases, contested small claims, and uncontested cases were separate categories. In the current assessment, forfeitures, which were previously divided between contested traffic and ordinance cases and uncontested cases, were consolidated into a new standalone forfeitures category. This change eliminated the contested traffic and ordinance category and separated the remaining small claims cases into distinct contested and uncontested categories. As a result, prior filings and case weights are not directly comparable.

Small claims cases, both contested and uncontested, are taking longer to process due to increased complexity, evolving filing practices, and greater administrative demands. One major factor is the rise in self-represented litigants, many of whom now use AI tools such as ChatGPT to generate filings. While this has made document submission more accessible, filings are often lengthy, unclear, or legally inconsistent, requiring additional time for judges and court commissioners to review and interpret. At the same time, many cases begin as contested matters but ultimately resolve by default, meaning courts must still complete scheduling, preparation, and review work before disposition.

Administrative changes have further increased the workload. With the shift to electronic filing, court commissioners are now responsible for reviewing all case documents themselves, a task previously shared with court clerks. Even uncontested cases now require several minutes of review, which adds up significantly in high-volume jurisdictions, such as Milwaukee County, where court commissioners may handle 60 to 100 cases per day. These changes highlight growing time demands and staffing constraints. In addition, existing monetary limits for small claims cases may influence filing patterns, and proposed increases to those limits could shift more cases into small claims court, further affecting workload.

The WAAC agreed that the case weights for forfeitures, small claims contested, and small claims uncontested were reasonable and made no adjustments.

Personal Injury/Property Damage

This case type remains largely unchanged from the previous study, except that complex forfeiture cases, such as actions involving environmental damage, consumer protection, or other significant public interest violations, are no longer included in this category and are now heard on the general civil (large claims) docket. The case weight increased by 10%, from 152 to 168, even though annual filings and time spent on these cases both decreased by 29% and 22%, respectively. The WAAC agreed that this case weight made sense because, even as filings decline, the remaining cases might require more work due to increased complexity, more motions, and greater procedural demands.

Contracts/Real Estate

Rising interest rates and a softer real estate market have increased both the number and complexity of contract and real estate disputes in Wisconsin's circuit courts. Higher rates have led to more loan defaults and enforcement actions, such as foreclosures and receiverships, while market instability has contributed to more contract disputes involving failed transactions, financing issues, and valuation disagreements, all of which require more court involvement and review of complex evidence.

Although filings decreased by 44% from the previous time study, annual work time increased by 9%, resulting in a higher case weight. The WAAC agreed that the case weight of 76 minutes reflects current trends for this case type and made no adjustments.

Civil/Administrative Reviews & John Doe

Changes in case type classification contributed to increases in civil/administrative reviews and John Doe case weight. John Doe cases, previously included in the other criminal category, are now classified with civil/administrative reviews. This category was also expanded to include additional proceedings, such as sexually violent person commitments, coroner's inquests, and criminal cases where prosecutors must obtain court approval before formally filing criminal charges.

Counties that house major prisons, such as Dodge County, experience a disproportionate number of these filings due to the presence of Dodge Correctional Institution and Waupun Correctional Institution. These facilities generate a high volume of inmate civil rights complaints, administrative reviews, and John Doe filings, often involving claims related to prison conditions, medical care, or property. In addition, sexually violent person commitments further contribute to increased case weights. Sexually violent person commitment hearings require more judicial time due to their complexity, multiple stages, and significant legal implications, and involve extensive expert testimony, large volumes of records, and frequent motions, all of

which require careful review. Judicial officials must also ensure strict due process protections and remain involved through ongoing reviews and proceedings, making these cases more time-intensive than typical civil matters.

Because the changes to this category were substantial, the case weights are not directly comparable. The WAAC determined that the current case weight is appropriate for this case type and made no adjustments.

Temporary Restraining Orders (TROs) and Injunctions

During the 2016 study, filings for Temporary Restraining Orders (TROs) and injunctions were erroneously included with the other civil case types. They should have been classified under the other family case category. During the study design, the WAAC agreed that moving TROs and injunctions into their own category would provide a better estimate of the time spent on this work, and that the new case weight of 62 minutes is appropriate, so no changes were made.

Other Civil

In 2016, the other civil category encompassed a wide range of case types, including restraining orders, injunctions, name changes, petitions for writ, and other unclassified matters. In 2025, this broad category was broken apart and redistributed into more specific classifications. Temporary restraining orders and injunctions were moved into their own standalone category, and the remaining other civil category was narrowed to include name changes, petitions for writs, and amortization of debt/wage earner filings. The WAAC agreed that no adjustments were needed to the case weight and that the new weight of 139 minutes was reasonable.

Other Probate

Probate cases have grown more complex as contested guardianship, commitment, and estate disputes have become more common. Participants reported that family conflicts over trusts, estates, and guardianships increasingly lead to litigation rather than resolution through agreement. At the same time, an aging population has contributed to growth in guardianship, protective placement, and mental health commitment proceedings, which require detailed factual findings and coordination with medical professionals and social service agencies. Attorney shortages in probate and guardian ad litem work also slow case resolution and require additional judicial involvement to address procedural issues and ensure cases move forward. When an estate includes real property, a stagnant housing market can delay sales, spark disagreements among heirs about timing, and produce unexpected appraisals, any of which can lengthen probate administration and increase court involvement.

In the 2025 study, this case type category was expanded to include informal estate proceedings, adoptions, and special administration to reflect the scope of probate work better. Between time studies, average filings increased by 1%, while time study

minutes rose by 17%, showing that cases are requiring more judicial time. The WAAC agreed that the increase in case weight, from 13 to 15 minutes, was reasonable and did not recommend any changes.

Formal Estates & Trusts

Judicial officials responding through the AOT survey and focus groups reported that formal estates and trust matters are becoming more complex, often involving multiple assets, disputes among beneficiaries, or complicated financial arrangements. At the same time, there are fewer attorneys with specialized expertise, which can lead to more procedural questions, additional hearings, and longer case timelines when attorneys or self-represented parties require more guidance from the court. They also noted that higher interest rates and slower housing conditions have made it more difficult to close probate cases, particularly when estates include real property. Delays in property sales, refinancing, or transfers can keep estates open longer, requiring courts to continue monitoring administration, approving transactions, and addressing related disputes. Similar trends have been observed nationally as the housing market shifted from a period of low interest rates and rapid price growth to a higher interest rate environment with limited inventory, slowing real estate transactions, and delayed estate administration.

Although filings decreased by 11% since the last time study, the time judicial officials reported during the time study increased by 53%, with 70% of that time spent on pretrial activities. This is consistent with feedback from participants. The case weight of 251 minutes, although 71% higher than in the previous study, was approved by the WAAC, given the increased complexity of the work.

Guardianships & Commitments

Guardianship and commitment cases are taking more judicial time due to increased procedural requirements and greater oversight. Many of these cases require more detailed findings and ongoing reviews of competency and case status. Hearings are also needed when modifying guardianships. Some participants reported that the difficulty in finding volunteers to serve as guardians ad litem is also an issue. Although this does not directly affect case weights or the time required to process individual cases, it does extend the time to disposition, which can ultimately impact overall case handling timelines.

Since the last time study in 2016, guardianship filings increased slightly, by 12%, from 6,104 to 6,830 cases; and the time spent during the current time study increased by 39%, resulting in a 24% increase in the case weight from 87 minutes to 108 minutes. During the same period, there was a 34% decrease in commitment filings and a 10% increase in judicial time spent on these cases, supporting the increase in case weight from 20 to 34 minutes. No recommended revisions to either case weight were made.

Divorce

Divorce filings are down by 38% from the previous study, and the time judicial officials spend on divorce cases decreased by 16%. However, the case weight increased by 35% from 143 to 193 minutes. The WAAC agreed that the increased case weight was appropriate because cases are becoming more complex and there are more self-represented litigants.

Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Administrative Paternity

There were no substantive changes to this category from the previous study, and the WAAC agreed that the slight decrease in case weight (4%) was reasonable, as filings remained stable and there was a 4% decrease in time spent during the time study.

Other Family

Family law cases increasingly require more time due to the rise in self-represented litigants, heightened conflict between parties, and growing evidentiary complexity. Since many family cases now involve parties without attorneys, judges and court commissioners must spend additional time explaining procedures, correcting filings, and managing hearings. Judicial officials also reported an increase in contested issues involving custody, placement, and support, as well as repeated post-judgment motions that return families to court multiple times. Mental health issues, substance use, and complex family structures also contribute to longer hearings and additional court involvement. Digital evidence, including text messages and social media content, has become common and requires additional review and evidentiary rulings.

A direct comparison to the prior other family case weight (53 minutes) is not appropriate because TROs and injunctions were previously counted as part of the Other Family case type. However, with TROs and injunctions now moved to a separate category (Other Civil), the case weights are not directly comparable.

Juvenile

Juvenile cases have become more complex because of increasing mental health and substance use issues among youth and families, more serious juvenile offenses, and shortages of treatment and placement resources. Judicial officials reported that many juvenile matters now involve youth and families experiencing trauma, addiction, or behavioral health challenges, which require additional services and evaluations. Courts also face shortages of placements, treatment providers, and attorneys, particularly in cases involving children in need of protection or services and termination of parental rights. These resource limitations often delay case progression and require additional hearings and judicial oversight. The WAAC did not make changes to CHIPS, delinquency, and JIPS case weights.

Treatment Courts

Treatment courts are specialized courts designed to address the underlying causes of repeated court involvement, such as substance use disorders, mental health needs, trauma, and impairment. They operate across criminal, juvenile, and family case types and include veterans' court, which serves veterans involved in the criminal justice system, often in connection with service-related conditions or other underlying needs. These courts rely on structured treatment programs, ongoing judicial monitoring, and collaboration with multidisciplinary teams to support recovery and accountability. These cases require more judicial time than traditional matters, as judges participate in regular review hearings, team staffing meetings, and continuous monitoring of participant progress. Judicial officials noted that treatment court populations increasingly include individuals with more complex needs, including co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. In addition, expanded program standards, compliance requirements, and coordination with treatment providers and community partners increase administrative responsibilities. Although treatment courts require greater upfront judicial involvement, study participants emphasized that they improve long-term outcomes by addressing the underlying causes of court involvement and reducing recidivism.

In the judicial needs assessment, treatment court workload is measured by participants rather than filings because participants appear before the court repeatedly over the course of the program for status hearings, progress reviews, and judicial supervision. National treatment court standards emphasize frequent judicial interaction with participants and recommend direct engagement during review hearings. Workload studies, therefore, commonly estimate treatment court judicial effort on a per-participant basis to account for repeated hearings and staffing activities throughout the year.

National research shows that treatment courts reduce recidivism and are cost-effective, with studies estimating that these programs return approximately \$2 to \$3 in savings for every \$1 invested.¹⁰ In Wisconsin, for every \$1 spent in TAD (Treatment Alternatives and Diversion Program) funding on treatment courts, between \$5.15 and \$5.92 is saved. For diversion programs, between \$8.18-\$9.12 is saved for every \$1 spent¹¹. This category did not exist in the 2016 assessment, so no direct comparison is possible. Based on the work time entered during the time study, it is estimated that

¹⁰ U.S. Government Accountability Office. Adult Drug Courts: Studies Show Courts Reduce Recidivism, but DOJ Could Enhance Future Performance Measure Revision Efforts. GAO-12-53, 2011, 19–21. <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-12-53>; Avinash Singh Bhati, John K. Roman, and Aaron Chalfin. To Treat or Not To Treat: Evidence on the Prospects of Expanding Treatment to Drug-Involved Offenders. Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2008, xvi, 64. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/222908.pdf>

¹¹ Wisconsin Department of Health Services. *Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) Program 2019–2023: Participant Summary, Post-Program Recidivism, and Cost-Benefit Report*. Wisconsin Digital Archives, 2025. <https://www.wistatedocuments.org/digital/collection/p267601coll4/id/35511/rec/1>

a judicial official spends 927 minutes (or 15 hours) for each participant over the course of one year, which is reasonable considering the number of hearings and work required.

WAAC Approval of Case Weights

After thoroughly reviewing all materials, the WAAC decided to adopt the preliminary case weights for all case and transaction types, except for felony and misdemeanor cases, which, as discussed earlier, were revised to include time spent on probable-cause reviews. They did not change any other weights. The final case weights are shown in Figure 11 on the next page. The weights, along with the number of filings and transactions, are important factors in determining the need for circuit court judicial officials.

Figure 11: Final Case Weights (Minutes)¹²

Case Types	Judge Time (minutes)	+	Court Commissioner Time (minutes)	=	Final Case Weight Combined (minutes)
Felony-Severity A or B*	1,598		92		1,696
Felony-Severity C or D*	321		37		357
Felony-Severity E, F, or G*	217		23		241
Felony-Severity H*	93		13		106
Felony-Severity I or U*	100		15		115
Misdemeanors*	46		7		53
Misdemeanor OWI*	132		13		146
Forfeitures	1		0		2
Small Claims (Contested)	65		62		128
Small Claims (Uncontested)	1		4		5
Personal Injury/Property Damage	167		1		168
Contracts/Real Estate	75		1		76
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	479		13		491
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	26		36		62
Other Civil	128		10		139
Formal Estates & Trusts	215		37		251
Guardianships	82		26		108
Commitments	24		10		34
Other Probate	9		6		15
Divorce	110		81		193

¹² An * indicates the weight changed from the preliminary weight.

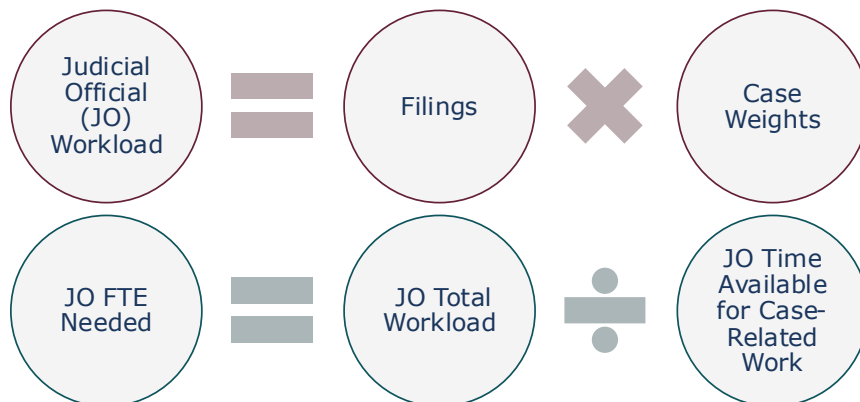
Case Types	Judge Time (minutes)	+	Court Commissioner Time (minutes)	=	Final Case Weight Combined (minutes)
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	31		96		127
Other Family	86		197		286
Termination of Parental Rights	223		1		225
Delinquency & JIPS	115		33		148
CHIPS	181		54		236
Treatment Courts	876		52		927

Calculating Resource Need for Circuit Court Judicial Officials

Annual Time Available for Case-Related Work

In every judicial need assessment, three factors contribute to calculating resource needs: case filings, case and transaction weights, and the minutes circuit court judicial officials have available for case-related work annually. The relationship of these elements is expressed as follows in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Needs Model Computation



The annual available minutes for case-related work indicate the amount of time that circuit court judicial officials have each year to perform case-related work. Arriving at this value is a three-stage process:

1. Determine the work year by identifying how many days per year circuit court judicial officials are available to perform work.

2. Determine the work day by calculating how many hours per day are available for case-related work, as opposed to non-case-related duties.
3. Calculate the total available time by multiplying the results from steps 1 and 2 and then converting the total to minutes.

The final product represents an estimate of the amount of time, in minutes, that the average judicial official has available to spend on case-related work each year.

Step 1: The Judicial Official Work Year

Calculating the average judicial official work year involves determining the number of days per year that judicial officials are available to handle case-related matters. This value was constructed by beginning with 365 days per year, then subtracting weekends, state holidays, vacation and sick leave, and continuing judicial education. The 208.6 work year established in the 2006 study, and used again in 2016, continues to reflect current policy regarding holidays, vacation, sick leave, and judicial education and was therefore retained. (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: Judicial Official Year (days)¹³

Total days per year	365.0
Weekends	-104.0
Holidays	-14.5
Vacation	-25.0
Sick	-5.4
Education & Training	-7.5
Case-related days per year	208.6

Step 2: The Judicial Official Work Day Value

The court’s standard hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The total working day for judicial officials is 8.5 hours, including lunch, breaks, and non-case-related work. Subtracting time for lunch, breaks, and non-case-related work from the total working day yields the amount of time available for case-related work, or the judicial official work day value. For purposes of the judicial needs assessment calculations, it is assumed that circuit court judicial officials spend 6 hours per day on case-related work, have 1 hour available for lunch and breaks, and 90 minutes for non-case-related duties, such as administrative responsibilities and professional obligations. This value was used in the previous two workload assessment studies and was adopted again for the current study, with the WAAC's agreement.

Although many judicial officials report working more than a standard workday, including completing work after hours and forgoing lunch or breaks, the judicial needs

¹³ Holidays are estimated at 14.5 days per year, which includes 10 state holidays and an additional 4.5 days for personal or floating holidays. The estimate of 5.4 sick leave days per year is based on data collected in 2006 and was used in 2016.

assessment model is based on this allocation because it reflects a realistic schedule in which judicial officials can perform their duties within a normal workday. It also addresses concerns raised during both the adequacy of time survey and focus group discussions that judicial officials did not always report their non-case-related work, especially if they were multitasking or doing this work after hours or on the weekend. Figure 14 shows the calculation for the work day.

Figure 14: Judicial Official Work Day Value

	Hours
Total Working Hours	8.5
<i>Subtract:</i>	
Lunch & Breaks	-1.0
Non-case-related-work	-1.5
Case-related hours per day	6.0

Step 3: Calculate the Judicial Officials’ Annual Available Time for Case Work

A judicial official’s work time covers both case-related and non-case-related activities. To find out how much time judicial officials have available for cases, subtract the average time spent on non-case-related activities from the total available work time. Figure 15 shows the calculations converted to minutes. A judicial official has 75,096 minutes per year to process cases after deducting for non-case-related time.

Figure 15: Judicial Official Annual Available Time for Case Work

Total Year	Days	Minutes
Total Days per Year (6 hours/day × 60 minutes = 360 minutes)	365.0	131,400
- Weekends (360 minutes × 104 days)	-104.0	-37,440
- Holidays (360 minutes × 14.5 days)	-14.5	-5,220
- Vacation (360 minutes × 25 days)	-25.0	-9,000
- Sick (360 minutes × 5.4 days)	-5.4	-1,944
- Education & Training (360 minutes × 7.5 days)	-7.5	-2,700
Total Available Work Time/Year	208.6	75,096

Chief Judge Adjustment

In each of Wisconsin’s nine judicial administrative districts, the Supreme Court of Wisconsin appoints a chief judge. The chief judge is responsible for administrative matters such as personnel management, fiscal management, and assignment of

judges. To accommodate the additional administrative responsibilities of a chief judge, each district was credited with an additional judicial need expressed as a full-time equivalent (FTE) judge. The WAAC agreed to use the chief judge adjustments established in the previous time study, 1.0 FTE in District 1 (Milwaukee) and 0.5 FTE in all other districts.

Determining the Need for Circuit Court Judicial Officials

Wisconsin has 72 counties organized into 69 circuit court circuits. While most counties have their own circuits, six counties are grouped into three joint circuits to share judicial resources: Buffalo and Pepin, Florence and Forest, and Shawano and Menominee. The 69 circuits are further organized into nine judicial administrative districts, each overseen by a chief judge. Given this structure, it is most appropriate to apply the weighted workload formula at the circuit level to determine judicial resource needs for each location.

To calculate the number of judicial officials needed in each of Wisconsin's circuit courts, the annual average filings for each case type were multiplied by the corresponding case weight to obtain the annual judicial workload for that case type, in minutes. Judicial workload was summed across all case types and then divided by the year value, which represents the amount of time each full-time judicial official has available for case-related work in one year. This yielded the total number of judicial officials required to handle the court's case-related workload and its routine non-case-related work.

Finally, the appropriate chief judge adjustment was applied to each chief judge's home court. Figure 16 presents the analysis for each location, uses the final case weights (see Figure 11), as approved by the WAAC, and compares total judicial need with the number of judges currently serving in each county, measured in FTE judicial positions. The number of additional judicial officials required to handle each court's workload is designated as "supplemental need."

In many courts, circuit court commissioners partially or fully meet supplemental needs. When prioritizing additional resources, the DSCO uses a method that evaluates workload per judicial official. This approach levels the playing field among jurisdictions, provides a more equal footing, and better highlights the relative pressure on available judicial resources, especially in smaller jurisdictions where there are fewer judges and court commissioners to handle excess judicial workload. See Appendix F for the workload per judicial official (Workload/JO) by county.

Negative values for supplemental need indicate courts where the complement of full-time circuit court judges is adequate or more than adequate to handle the judicial workload without assistance.

Applying the 2025 weighted workload formula to each circuit, using the average annual filings from 2023, 2024, and 2025, indicates that Wisconsin should have at

least 379.1 FTE circuit court judicial officials to manage its workload effectively.¹⁴ However, there are currently 261.0 FTE circuit court judges and 87.2 FTE court commissioners statewide. Under the new formula, this results in a need for an additional 30.9 FTE judicial officials statewide. Appendix F provides a county-by-county breakdown.

Supplemental need, however, does not necessarily equate to the need for additional judicial officials. Fractional needs cannot be filled perfectly, and our current system relies on a balance of court commissioners and judges. As such, the DSCO applies a nuanced approach to resource recommendations using the Workload per Judicial Official calculation (Appendix F). This calculation normalizes counties' workload in a way to make large and small counties comparable. The DSCO goal is to keep that Workload per Judicial Official near 1.0 FTE, which helps ensure both an efficient distribution of resources and prevents judicial burnout. The need for judicial resources should be evaluated with an understanding of local practices, other factors outside the judiciary that impact judicial workload, and fiscal and operational considerations at the state and local levels.

¹⁴ The case weights were built on case filings from 2022, 2023, and 2024. Since the time the model was developed, DSCO provided updated average annual filings, removing 2022 and adding 2025.

Figure 16: Summary of Calculations for Assessing the Need for Circuit Court Judicial Officials by District

District	County	Workload Based Need	+	Chief Judge Adjust.	=	Total Need	-	(Judges	+	Court Commissioners)	=	Supplemental Need
1	Milwaukee	69.48				69.48		47.00		23.00		-0.52
	Total	69.48		1.00		70.48		47.00		23.00		0.48
2	Kenosha	14.04				14.04		8.00		3.00		3.04
2	Racine	14.21				14.21		10.00		4.24		-0.03
2	Walworth	6.22				6.22		4.00		1.90		0.32
	Total	34.47		0.50		34.97		22.00		9.14		3.83
3	Dodge	5.13				5.13		4.00		1.00		0.13
3	Jefferson	4.82				4.82		4.00		2.00		-1.18
3	Ozaukee	3.75				3.75		3.00		1.00		-0.25
3	Washington	6.30				6.30		4.00		1.00		1.30
3	Waukesha	17.76				17.76		12.00		4.00		1.76
	Total	37.75		0.50		38.25		27.00		9.00		2.25
4	Calumet	2.05				2.05		2.00		0.10		-0.05
4	Fond du Lac	7.66				7.66		5.00		1.05		1.61
4	Green Lake	1.15				1.15		1.00		0.08		0.07
4	Manitowoc	5.82				5.82		4.00		1.25		0.57
4	Marquette	1.15				1.15		1.00		0.02		0.13
4	Sheboygan	7.01				7.01		5.00		1.90		0.11
4	Waushara	1.72				1.72		2.00		0.25		-0.53
4	Winnebago	10.10				10.10		6.00		3.00		1.10
	Total	36.66		0.50		37.16		26.00		7.64		3.52
5	Columbia	4.34				4.34		3.00		0.58		0.76
5	Dane	27.71				27.71		17.00		10.50		0.21
5	Green	2.02				2.02		2.00		0.52		-0.51
5	Lafayette	0.99				0.99		1.00		0.08		-0.09

District	County	Workload Based Need	+	Chief Judge Adjust.	=	Total Need	-	(Judges	+	Court Commissioners)	=	Supplemental Need
5	Rock	11.46				11.46		7.00		2.90		1.56
5	Sauk	5.21				5.21		3.00		1.00		1.21
	Total	51.73		0.50		52.23		33.00		15.58		3.64
7	Adams	1.53				1.53		2.00		0.26		-0.73
7	Buffalo/ Pepin	1.27				1.27		1.00		0.05		0.22
7	Clark	1.63				1.63		2.00		0.04		-0.41
7	Crawford	1.01				1.01		1.00		0.05		-0.04
7	Grant	2.61				2.61		2.00		0.33		0.28
7	Iowa	1.30				1.30		1.00		0.13		0.17
7	Jackson	1.91				1.91		2.00		0.18		-0.27
7	Juneau	2.42				2.42		2.00		0.50		-0.08
7	La Crosse	7.70				7.70		5.00		1.07		1.63
7	Monroe	4.28				4.28		3.00		0.25		1.02
7	Pierce	2.25				2.25		1.00		1.00		0.25
7	Richland	1.23				1.23		1.00		0.17		0.07
7	Trempealeau	1.83				1.83		1.00		0.18		0.65
7	Vernon	1.32				1.32		1.00		0.23		0.09
	Total	32.30		0.50		32.80		25.00		4.43		3.36
8	Brown	17.62				17.62		8.00		4.00		5.62
8	Door	1.59				1.59		2.00		0.40		-0.81
8	Kewaunee	0.88				0.88		1.00		0.41		-0.53
8	Marinette	2.83				2.83		2.00		1.00		-0.17
8	Oconto	1.84				1.84		2.00		0.50		-0.66
8	Outagamie	11.32				11.32		7.00		3.50		0.82
8	Waupaca	3.48				3.48		3.00		0.05		0.42
	Total	39.57		0.50		40.07		25.00		9.86		5.20

District	County	Workload Based Need	+	Chief Judge Adjust.	=	Total Need	-	(Judges	+	Court Commissioners)	=	Supplemental Need
9	Forest/ Florence	1.28				1.28		1.00		0.22		0.05
9	Langlade	1.58				1.58		1.00		0.56		0.03
9	Lincoln	2.21				2.21		2.00		0.14		0.07
9	Marathon	8.74				8.74		6.00		1.20		1.54
9	Menominee/ Shawano	3.45				3.45		2.00		0.34		1.11
9	Oneida	2.67				2.67		2.00		0.30		0.37
9	Portage	4.24				4.24		3.00		0.76		0.49
9	Price	0.94				0.94		1.00		0.01		-0.07
9	Taylor	1.09				1.09		1.00		0.27		-0.19
9	Vilas	1.35				1.35		2.00		0.09		-0.73
9	Wood	5.52				5.52		4.00		0.21		1.31
	Total	33.07		0.50		33.57		25.00		4.10		4.46
10	Ashland	1.36				1.36		1.00		0.21		0.15
10	Barron	3.37				3.37		3.00		0.12		0.25
10	Bayfield	0.98				0.98		1.00		0.00		-0.02
10	Burnett	1.54				1.54		1.00		0.18		0.36
10	Chippewa	3.92				3.92		3.00		0.14		0.79
10	Douglas	3.22				3.22		2.00		1.00		0.22
10	Dunn	3.45				3.45		3.00		0.16		0.30
10	Eau Claire	8.49				8.49		6.00		1.06		1.43
10	Iron	0.55				0.55		1.00		0.01		-0.46
10	Polk	3.14				3.14		2.00		0.72		0.41
10	Rusk	1.12				1.12		1.00		0.00		0.12
10	Sawyer	1.43				1.43		2.00		0.00		-0.57
10	St Croix	5.36				5.36		4.00		0.80		0.56

District	County	Workload Based Need	+	Chief Judge Adjust.	=	Total Need	-	(Judges	+	Court Commissioners)	=	Supplemental Need
10	Washburn	1.14				1.14		1.00		0.03		0.11
	Total	39.08		0.50		39.58		31.00		4.43		4.15
	State Total	374.10		5.00		379.10		261.00		87.20		30.90

Recommendations

The NCSC encourages the DSCO to consider the following recommendations regarding the ongoing use of the weighted workload model.

Recommendation 1

The NCSC recommends updating the judicial needs assessment model annually by inserting new case filings from the most recent year of reliable filings or using the average of the most recent three years of reliable filings.

Recommendation 2

The judicial needs assessment model presented in this report should serve as the starting point for determining the need for circuit court judicial officials in Wisconsin. However, certain qualitative factors are not fully captured by an objective model. These include variations in the proportion of cases involving self-represented litigants, differences across locations in the number of individuals requiring interpreter services, and the availability of support staff. Because these factors can affect case handling time, DSCO should consider them when evaluating judicial officials' needs. DSCO should also consider differences related to county size and geography, including concentrated responsibilities in smaller jurisdictions, travel demands, on-call coverage, staffing depth, and the availability of local support resources, when evaluating judicial official needs.

Recommendation 3

Over time, external factors such as changes in legislation, case law, legal practices, court technology, and administrative policies can impact the integrity of any weighted workload model. NCSC recommends that DSCO conduct a thorough review of the weighted workload model every five to seven years. This review should include a time study involving all or most circuit court judicial officials. Between updates, if a major legal or procedural change appears to significantly affect workload, a panel of experts can be convened to make interim adjustments to the relevant case weights.

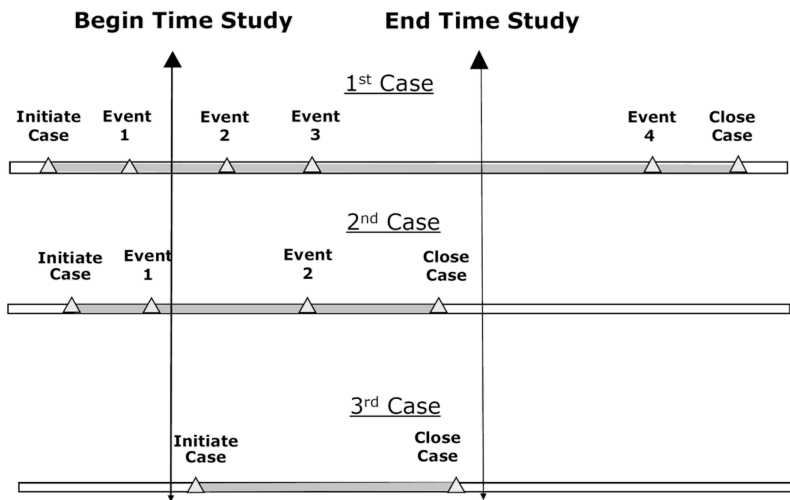
Appendix A: Event-Based Methodology

Event-Based Methodology is designed to capture judicial officials' activity by comparing the time they spend on key case events with the number of cases entering the courts. This study assesses the average total time judicial officials spend during the data collection period processing each type of case for which weights are being developed. Because this approach provides a snapshot of activity, relatively few cases progress from filing to final resolution within the study period. However, courts handle many cases at different stages of their lifecycle. For example, during the study period, judicial officials may preside over newly filed cases, manage cases on the trial docket that were filed months or years earlier, and address post-judgment matters.

If the study period is representative, the mix of case-related activities and the time spent on each will reflect the overall workload handled by judicial officials throughout the year. Accordingly, the data collected during this period provides a direct measure of the amount of judicial officials' time devoted to key case-processing events.

Time data are then combined with filing volumes to estimate average case handling time. For example, if judicial officials spent 2,000,000 minutes processing criminal misdemeanor cases and there were 50,000 such filings, this would produce an average of 40 minutes per case (2,000,000 minutes divided by 50,000 filings). This figure represents the estimated average time required to process a criminal misdemeanor case from start to finish, even though no individual case is tracked throughout its entire lifecycle during the study period. Instead, the workload standard is derived from a composite of cases observed at different stages of the case lifecycle. Figure A1 illustrates the Event-Based Methodology concept.

Figure A1: Event-Based Time Study



The figure above illustrates the progress of three separate misdemeanor criminal cases during the four-week study period. The study does not require tracking cases from beginning to end. Instead, it records the time spent on key processing events at various points in the case lifecycle.

For example, Case 1 reflects time spent in the middle stage of a case; Case 2 captures time associated with the final stage; and Case 3 represents the time required to complete a relatively simple case from start to finish. By combining the time spent on each event across these cases, the study estimates the total time required to process a case, even though individual cases are not followed throughout their entire lifecycle. Because these estimates are based on observations from thousands of individual events, the methodology yields reliable, representative results.

Appendix B: Case Type Categories and Descriptions

Case Types

A. Felony - Severity A or B

- FA and FB Felonies
 - At any point, the most severe charge on the case had a severity code of FA or FB
 - Not including JV Cases
-

B. Felony - Severity C or D

- FC and FD Felonies
 - At any point, the most severe charge on the case was a severity code FC or FD
 - Not including JV Cases
-

C. Felony- Severity E, F, or G

- FE, FF, or FG Felonies
 - At any point, the most severe charge on the case had a severity code FE, FF, or FG
 - Not including JV Cases
-

D. Felony- Severity H

- FH Felonies
 - At any point, the most severe charge on the case had a severity code of FH
 - Not including JV Cases
-

E. Felony- Severity I or U

- FI or FU/FZ Felonies
 - At any point, the most severe charge on the case had a severity code of FI or FU
 - Not including JV Cases
-

F. Misdemeanors

- General Misdemeanors
 - Non-OWI Traffic Misdemeanors
 - Class Codes 15000-19999 and 28000-28999, excluding 28100 and 28150
 - Not including JV Cases
-

G. Misdemeanors OWI

- Misdemeanor OWI
 - Prohibited BAC
 - Class Codes 28100 and 28150
 - Not including JV Cases
-

H. Forfeitures

- Case Types TR, FO, and JO
-

I. Small Claims (Contested)

- Case Type SC, where the respondent contested the complaint.
-

Case Types

- Small claims cases where the respondent provided an answer contesting the petitioner's claim. Once a case becomes contested or is contested, it remains that way.
-

J. Small Claims (Uncontested)

- Case Type SC, where the respondent did not contest the complaint.
 - Small claims cases where the respondent did not provide an answer contesting the petitioner's claim or did not dispute the claim.
-

K. Personal Injury/Property Damage

- Class Codes 30100-30201, excluding 30109
 - Product Liability
 - Personal Injury-Auto
 - Medical Malpractice-Other
 - Medical Malpractice-Ch. 655
 - Wrongful Death
 - Intentional Tort
 - Other Personal Injury
 - Asbestos
 - Sec.1983 & Other Federal Actions
-

L. Contracts/Real Estate

- Class Codes 30203-30405 or 35001-35010
 - Minor Settlements
 - Money Judgments
 - Garnishments-Large Claims
 - Other Contracts
 - Other Debtor Action
 - Condemnation Review
 - Agricultural Foreclosure
 - Other Real Estate
-

M. Civil/Administrative Reviews & John Doe

- Class Codes 30601-30701, 30705, and Case Types JD, IP, and CI
 - Appeal From Municipal Court Judgment
 - Administrative Agency Review
 - Declaratory Judgment
 - Sexually Violent Person Commitment
 - Incarcerated Person Litigation
 - John Doe
 - Coroner's Inquest
 - Criminal Complaints - Permission to File
-

N. Temporary Restraining Orders & Injunctions

- Class Codes 30703-30713, excluding 30705, and Case Type JI
 - Adult and Juvenile Restraining Orders and Injunctions
-

O. Other Civil

- Class Codes 30950-30999, 31007
-

Case Types

- Petitions for Writ
 - Amortization of Debt/Wage Earner
 - Name Changes
-

P. Formal Estates & Trusts

- Class Codes 50101, 50201, 50202
 - Formal Estate Proceedings
 - Trusts
 - Corporate Trusts
-

Q. Guardianships

- Class Codes 50301-50403, and All Case Type JG
 - Adult Guardianship of Person or Estate
 - Minor Guardianship of Person or Estate
 - Protective Placement with Guardianship
 - Protective Services
-

R. Commitments

- Case Types ME and JM
 - Mental Commitments
 - Juvenile Mental Commitments
 - Other Involuntary Commitments for Substance Abuse
-

S. Other Probate

- Class Codes 50100, 50102-50109, and 50601 & Case Type JA
 - Informal Estate Proceedings
 - Adoptions
 - Special Administration
-

T. Divorce

- Class Codes 40101, 40201
 - Divorce and Legal Separation
-

U. Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Administrative Paternity

- Class Codes 40501, 40503, 40504
 - Paternity
 - Paternity Acknowledgments
 - Administrative Paternity
-

V. Other Family

- Class Codes 40401-40999, excluding 40501, 40503, 40504
 - UIFSA
 - Support and Maintenance Actions
 - Unclassified Family
 - Actions to Modify-Enforce Judgment
-

W. Termination of Parental Rights

- Case Type TP
 - Voluntary TPR
 - Involuntary TPR
-

Case Types

X. Delinquency & JIPS

- Case Type JV
 - Delinquency JIPS
-

Y. CHIPS

- Case Type JC
 - CHIPS
-

Z. Treatment Court

- Any Case Type or Class Code
 - Treatment or Specialty Courts
-

ZA. Probable Cause Review

- Search Warrants, arrest detention reports
 - Subpoena duces tecum
 - Probable cause reviews, including after-hours review
 - Case-related work for unfiled cases
-

Appendix C: Case-Related Activities and Descriptions

Case-Related Activities

1. Pre-Trial

Includes all on-bench and off-bench activities related to proceedings occurring before trial or other dispositional proceedings. This includes all off-bench research and preparation associated with pre-trial matters. Examples of pre-trial activities include:

- Arraignment/initial appearance
 - Non-dispositive pre-trial motion (e.g., motion to suppress, motion in limine)
 - Scheduling a conference
 - Pre-trial conference
 - Preparation of findings and orders related to pre-trial matters
-

2. Non-Trial/Uncontested Disposition

Includes all on-bench and off-bench activities related to any non-trial proceeding that disposes of the entire case. Includes all off-bench research and preparation related to non-trial dispositions. Examples of non-trial dispositions include:

- Entry of guilty plea and sentencing
 - Motion to dismiss that disposes of all issues
 - Motion for summary judgment that disposes of all issues
 - Preparation of findings and orders related to non-trial dispositions
-

3. Court Trial/Contested Disposition

Includes all on-bench and off-bench activities related to a court trial in which the judge serves as the finder of fact. This encompasses all off-bench research and preparation related to court trials and sentencing following a court trial. Examples of court trial activities include:

- Court trial
 - Sentencing after conviction at a court trial
 - Preparation of findings and orders related to court trials
-

4. Jury Trial

Includes all on-bench and off-bench activities related to a trial where a jury serves as the finder of fact. Also includes all off-bench research and preparation related to jury trials, as well as sentencing that follows a jury trial. Examples of jury trial activities include:

- Jury selection
- Jury trial
- Sentencing after conviction at jury trial
- Preparation of orders related to jury trials

This activity does not include activity related to contested probate, contested divorce, family, or any filings under the PR case type.

Case-Related Activities

5. **Post-Judgment/Post-Disposition**

Includes all on-bench and off-bench activities that occur after the entry of judgment. Examples of post-judgment or post-disposition activities include:

- Post-trial motion (e.g., motion for rehearing, motion for new trial)
 - Show cause or capias on post-disposition matter
 - Preparation of findings and orders related to post-judgment/post-disposition matters
-

6. **Treatment Courts**

Includes all activities in a case assigned to a treatment court. Examples of activities in a treatment court include:

- Staffing treatment court cases and staffing meetings
 - Handling veterans' court matters
 - Handling drug court matters
 - Handling mental health court matters
-

7. **Probable Cause Review**

This activity will only be selected when recording time under case type "probable cause review". Examples of activities include:

- Search warrant
 - Arrest warrant
 - Waiting time (after hours)
-

Appendix D: Non-Case-Related Activities and Descriptions

Non-Case-Related Activities

a. Non-Case-Related Administration

Includes all non-case-related administrative work, such as:

- Personnel matters
 - Staff supervision and mentoring
 - Court management
 - County-related meetings
 - Weddings
-

b. Chief Judge Administration

Includes chief judge administrative activities, such as:

- Work performed in the capacity of a chief judge
 - Chief judge committee work and meetings
 - Personnel matters handled by the chief judge
-

c. Judicial Education & Training

Includes all educational and training activities such as:

- Judicial education
 - Conferences
-

d. General Legal Research

Includes all reading and research that is not related to a particular case before the court, such as:

- Reading journals
 - Reading professional newsletters
 - Reviewing appellate court decisions
-

e. Committee Meetings, Other Meetings, & Related Work

Includes all work related to and preparation for meetings of state and local committees, boards, and task forces, such as:

- Judge meetings
- Staff meetings
- Community criminal justice board meetings
- Supreme Court-appointed commissions, committees, or workgroups
- Travel to and from meetings

The activity excludes meetings specific to chief judges.

f. Community Activities & Public Outreach

Includes all public outreach and community service performed in an official judicial capacity. This category does not include work compensated for by an outside source, such as teaching law school courses, or personal community service activities not performed in an official judicial role. Examples of work-related community activities and public outreach include:

- Speaking at schools about legal careers
 - Judging moot court competitions
 - Travel to and from the meetings/activity
-

Non-Case-Related Activities

g. Court to Court Work-Related Travel

Includes all time spent traveling on court business, specific to hearing cases, to or from a location other than the primary court.

For the time study, the primary court is defined as the court where the judicial official sits most frequently. Travel time for commuting between home and the primary court should not be recorded. However, travel time between home and other court locations that exceeds the standard commute to the primary court should be recorded.

h. Vacation, Sick, and Holiday Leave

Includes all time away from work due to vacation, personal leave, illness or medical leave, and court holidays.

i. NCSC Time Study Data Reporting & Entry

Includes all time spent filling out time study forms and entering time study data using the web-based form.

Appendix E: Adequacy of Time Survey Results

Demographics

Figure E1. Respondents' Years With the Judiciary

	# of Responses Received
Court Commissioner (CC)	69
Judge	157
Total	226

Figure E2. Years of Experience Serving in a Judicial Capacity in Wisconsin Courts

Years of Experience	CC	Judge
Less than one year	7	9
1-3 years	20	37
4-5 years	9	22
6-10 years	12	31
11-15 years	4	25
16-20 years	5	19
21+ years	12	13
Total	69	156

Figure E3. Counties Where Court Commissioners Work

CC Location	Responses	%
Milwaukee	12	17%
Dane	6	9%
Rock	4	6%
Waukesha	4	6%
Ashland	3	4%
Outagamie	3	4%
Jefferson	2	3%
Kenosha	2	3%
Winnebago	2	3%

Figure E3.A. Counties Where Judges Work

Judge Location	Responses	%
Milwaukee	26	17%
Dane	7	4%
Waukesha	7	4%
Brown	6	4%
Eau Claire	5	3%
Fond du Lac	5	3%
Marathon	5	3%
Jefferson	4	3%
Racine	4	3%
Sheboygan	4	3%
Washington	4	3%
Winnebago	4	3%
Barron	3	2%
Chippewa	3	2%
Columbia	3	2%
Dodge	3	2%
Dunn	3	2%
Kenosha	3	2%
La Crosse	3	2%
Monroe	3	2%
Wood	3	2%
Adams	2	1%
Clark	2	1%
Douglas	2	1%
Grant	2	1%
Juneau	2	1%
Manitowoc	2	1%
Outagamie	2	1%
Ozaukee	2	1%
Polk	2	1%

Case Types Assigned

Figure E4. Types of Cases Assigned During the Time Study Period

Case Type	CC	Judge
CHIPS	20	104
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	7	90
Commitments	27	102
Contracts/Real Estate	8	113
Delinquency & JIPS	22	100
Divorce	53	114
Felony-Severity A or B	17	115
Felony-Severity C or D	23	130
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	25	129
Felony-Severity H	28	127
Felony-Severity I or U	29	127
Forfeitures	30	121
Formal Estates & Trusts	11	98
Guardianships	25	105
Misdemeanor OWI	31	121
Misdemeanors	33	128
Other Civil	16	121
Other Family	46	86
Other Probate	14	85
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	51	99
Personal Injury/Property Damage	4	112
Small Claims (Contested)	32	108
Small Claims (Uncontested)	32	88
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	54	119
Termination of Parental Rights	3	75
Treatment Courts	4	69

Time Study Period

Figure E5. Representativeness of Workload During the Four-Week Time Study Period

Response	CC	Judge
Yes	47	96
No	22	60
Total	69	156

Figure E5.A. Explanation of Differences from a Typical Workload

	CC
I did not report multitasking or overlapping tasks, such as work done in the courtroom, conversations regarding cases with a colleague, answering phones in the middle of a task, etc.	7
I did not report miscellaneous or administrative tasks, such as answering phones, checking email, checking the mail, etc.	6
Some of my time outside of normal court hours and/or weekend work did not get reported	6
Some of the time I spent on research did not get reported	2
I worked while I was on vacation/medical/personal leave, but it was not reported	1
I experienced technical difficulties	1
	Judge
I was on vacation	32
Several trials were scheduled but vacated	29
I had a lighter workload than usual	25
I was scheduled in court for less than usual due to continuances, motions, settlements, etc.	20
Other (Please explain):	16
I was at a conference, committee meeting, community meeting, etc.	10
I took sick/medical leave	8
I experienced technical difficulties	1
I had a heavier workload than usual	1
I just started a new position	1
My colleague(s) were on leave, so I handled their duties	1
The court was closed one or more days due to circumstances beyond normal operations	1

Figure E6. Unreported Court Work During the Time Study Period

Response	CC	Judge
Yes	13	57
No	56	99
Total	69	156

Figure E6.A. Description of Work Not Reported During the Time Study

Court Commissioner (CC)	#	%
I did not report multitasking or overlapping tasks, such as work done in the courtroom, conversations with a colleague about cases, or answering phones in the middle of a task.	7	54%
I did not report miscellaneous or administrative tasks, such as answering phones, checking email, or checking the mail.	6	46%
Some of my time outside of normal court hours and/or weekend work did not get reported	6	46%
Other (please explain):	3	23%
Some of the time I spent on research was not reported	2	15%
I worked while I was on vacation/medical/personal leave, but it was not reported	1	8%
I experienced technical difficulties	1	8%
Judge		
I did not report multitasking or overlapping tasks, such as work done in the courtroom, conversations with a colleague about cases, or answering phones in the middle of a task.	46	81%
I did not report miscellaneous or administrative tasks, such as answering phones, checking email, and checking the mail.	45	79%
Some of my time outside of normal court hours and/or weekend work did not get reported	25	44%
Some of the time I spent on research was not reported	20	35%
Time spent on warrant duty, waiting for a request to come in	19	33%
I worked while I was on vacation/medical/personal leave, but it was not reported	14	25%
I experienced technical difficulties	3	5%

Other (please explain):	3	5%
I was unable to participate and enter my time during the time study	2	4%
I attended some training sessions, conferences, meetings, etc., but I did not report the time	1	2%

Adequacy of Time

Figure E7. Adequacy of Time (1=least – 5 =most)

Question:	CC Avg Score	Judge Avg Score
I have sufficient time, on a regular basis, to get my work done.	4.16	3.63
I am able to accomplish what needs to be done during the workday.	4.12	3.55
When I start a task, I typically have the time to complete that task.	3.71	3.15
I have the tools and resources to do my job efficiently and effectively.	4.28	3.74
The reliability and speed of the internet connections are sufficient for me to complete my work.	4.59	4.34
I have enough time to assist court users adequately.	4.03	3.62
There is sufficient time for learning opportunities aligned with my job duties.	3.72	3.21
I am regularly able to meet deadlines without rushing at the last minute.	4.19	3.65
I have time available to take lunch and breaks throughout the day.	3.66	3.30

Overwhelm

Figure E8. Workplace Stress and Feelings of Overwhelm

Response	CC	Judge
Yes	6	19
No	40	60
Sometimes	23	77
Total	69	156

Obstacles

Figure E9. Barriers to Effectiveness in Judicial Work

Obstacles	CC	Judge
Assisting self-represented litigants	24	36
Constant interruptions and having to multitask	11	43
Continuous changes in laws, processes, public information, etc.	2	
Heavy volume of cases and workload	22	49
Inadequate case management system		4
Inadequate equipment (e.g., copiers, computers, etc.)	10	6
Inadequate training	4	9
Insufficient pay/benefits	15	33
Lack of funding	12	38
Lack of resources	9	35
Lack of security	10	35
Lack of time	9	43
Miscommunication/lack of communication	5	4
None	10	
Not enough attorneys	29	118
Not enough court staff	19	30
Not enough judges	8	39
Other		16
Outdated or poor facilities	6	24
Poor leadership/poor management/micro-management		10
Poor technology or internet connection	5	13
Uneven allocation of work and duties	3	17

Case Complexity

Criminal Case Types

Figure E10. Compared to several years ago, have criminal cases become more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Yes	14	96
No	20	38

Not Applicable	35	22
Total	69	100%

Figure E10.A. Which Criminal Case Types have grown more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Felony-Severity A or B	10	76
Felony-Severity C or D	11	82
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	10	79
Felony-Severity H	11	63
Felony-Severity I or U	9	53
Misdemeanors	10	43
Misdemeanor OWI	7	55

Civil Case Types

Figure E11. Compared to several years ago, have civil cases become more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Yes	13	45
No	25	73
Not Applicable	31	38
Total	69	156

Figure E11.A. Which civil case types have grown more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Forfeitures	0	5
Small Claims (Contested)	4	16
Small Claims (Uncontested)	2	5
Personal Injury/Property Damage	1	26
Contracts/Real Estate	1	34
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	0	15
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	8	24
Other Civil	3	17

Probate Case Types

Figure E12. Compared to several years ago, have probate cases become more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Yes	6	19
No	20	81
Not Applicable	43	56
Total	69	156

Figure E12.A. Which Probate Case Types have grown more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Formal Estates & Trusts	3	14
Guardianships	4	8
Commitments	3	8
Other Probate	1	8

Family Law Case Types

Figure E13. Compared to several years ago, have family law cases become more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Yes	28	44
No	22	68
Not Applicable	19	44
Total	69	156

Figure E13.A. Which Family Law Case Types have grown more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Divorce	23	41
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin	23	21
Paternity		
Other Family	14	23

Juvenile Case Types

Figure E14. Compared to several years ago, have juvenile cases become more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Yes	12	38
No	15	66
Not Applicable	42	52
Total	69	156

Figure E14.A. Which Juvenile Case Types have grown more complex or require more time to process?

	CC	Judge
Termination of Parental Rights	2	22
Delinquency & JIPS	11	31
CHIPS	8	23

Appendix F: Application of the Weighted Caseload Formula to Each County Based on Average Filings from 2023, 2024, and 2025*

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Adams - Calumet

Case Type	District	7	10	10	10	8	7	10	4
	County	Adams	Ashland	Barron	Bayfield	Brown	Buffalo/ Pepin	Burnett	Calumet
	Case Weight								
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	6	5	2	2	41	1	2	3
Felony-Severity C or D	357	13	12	23	9	188	10	10	15
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	37	26	48	31	388	21	40	41
Felony-Severity H	106	113	87	142	56	1,012	88	78	149
Felony-Severity I or U	115	51	43	158	28	539	84	92	72
Misdemeanors	53	234	191	360	86	2,690	231	320	332
Misdemeanor OWI	146	14	9	67	10	165	21	13	32
Forfeitures	2	2,759	1,297	2,971	1,997	9,766	2,926	1,478	2,783
Small Claims (Contested)	128	2	42	144	15	350	41	8	50
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	492	199	592	173	5,778	278	271	547
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	10	8	30	7	194	10	9	20
Contracts/Real Estate	76	96	50	158	43	762	58	73	101
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	2	3	5	4	42	1	5	4
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	60	47	140	68	478	61	57	41
Other Civil	139	19	15	31	15	289	14	13	33
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	3	2	12	3	28	2	5	5
Guardianships	108	34	30	74	16	293	26	37	29
Commitments	34	39	56	60	31	384	22	29	58
Other Probate	15	84	40	132	45	492	48	68	78
Divorce	193	60	40	128	39	749	51	68	124
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	20	16	42	6	647	35	14	38
Other Family	286	13	25	61	13	245	10	32	27
Termination of Parental Rights	225	2	5	8	3	29	7	3	5
Delinquency & JIPS	148	7	21	14	8	217	4	4	28
CHIPS	236	6	11	83	12	187	9	19	17
Treatment Courts*	927	8	9	26	6	53	0	5	0
Total Filings		4,186	2,289	5,511	2,727	26,003	4,061	2,754	4,633
Total Case Specific Workload		114,993	102,485	253,041	73,561	1,323,430	95,158	115,813	154,130
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		1.53	1.36	3.37	0.98	17.62	1.27	1.54	2.05
JUDGE FTE (2024)		2.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	8.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.26	0.21	0.12	0.00	4.00	0.05	0.18	0.10
TOTAL FTE (2024)		2.26	1.21	3.12	1.00	12.00	1.05	1.18	2.10
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		-0.73	0.15	0.25	-0.02	5.62	0.22	0.36	-0.05
Workload/JO		0.68	1.13	1.08	0.98	1.47	1.21	1.31	0.98

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Chippewa – Douglas

Case Type	District	10	7	5	7	5	3	8	10
	County	Chippewa	Clark	Columbia	Crawford	Dane	Dodge	Door	Douglas
	Case Weight								
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	9	5	8	1	55	7	2	6
Felony-Severity C or D	357	31	10	39	12	187	34	10	30
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	84	49	93	20	614	77	25	53
Felony-Severity H	106	333	93	338	73	1,472	221	102	143
Felony-Severity I or U	115	139	39	228	53	742	153	37	220
Misdemeanors	53	395	264	691	112	3,248	922	260	441
Misdemeanor OWI	146	50	34	92	21	428	99	21	36
Forfeitures	2	6,719	3,895	9,764	1,588	20,568	5,221	3,232	4,401
Small Claims (Contested)	128	72	15	85	6	708	116	2	13
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	935	313	867	246	7,654	1,437	402	1,214
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	29	8	30	6	457	42	18	34
Contracts/Real Estate	76	177	79	190	50	1,476	304	80	158
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	9	2	19	2	115	38	4	3
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	131	44	116	24	1,181	230	54	142
Other Civil	139	57	19	48	15	724	78	22	54
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	7	3	9	1	33	14	20	5
Guardianships	108	113	46	63	20	407	88	34	61
Commitments	34	100	39	82	22	666	120	58	70
Other Probate	15	192	81	149	49	978	215	78	149
Divorce	193	186	69	171	40	1,386	280	77	123
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	83	25	110	23	1,042	137	14	16
Other Family	286	26	25	21	12	255	16	33	68
Termination of Parental Rights	225	22	7	10	5	62	17	2	14
Delinquency & JIPS	148	60	15	36	7	369	32	10	45
CHIPS	236	32	18	22	11	109	26	13	55
Treatment Courts*	927	12	4	12	6	65	25	8	11
Total Filings		10,001	5,199	13,293	2,425	45,000	9,951	4,617	7,563
Total Case Specific Workload		294,590	122,669	325,597	76,035	2,080,900	385,149	119,555	241,993
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		3.92	1.63	4.34	1.01	27.71	5.13	1.59	3.22
JUDGE FTE (2024)		3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	17.00	4.00	2.00	2.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.14	0.04	0.58	0.05	10.50	1.00	0.40	1.00
TOTAL FTE (2024)		3.14	2.04	3.58	1.05	27.50	5.00	2.40	3.00
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		0.79	-0.41	0.76	-0.04	0.21	0.13	-0.81	0.22
Workload/JO		1.25	0.80	1.21	0.97	1.01	1.03	0.66	1.07

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Dunn – Iowa

Case Type	District	10	10	4	9	7	5	4	7
	County	Dunn	Eau Claire	Fond du Lac	Forest/ Florence	Grant	Green	Green Lake	Iowa
	Case Weight								
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	1	9	14	3	4	3	2	2
Felony-Severity C or D	357	22	66	93	11	16	11	7	14
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	67	167	185	37	42	45	23	23
Felony-Severity H	106	220	791	511	80	162	115	78	95
Felony-Severity I or U	115	116	308	315	65	91	44	41	39
Misdemeanors	53	762	1,442	1,460	206	403	174	313	265
Misdemeanor OWI	146	55	84	117	18	38	27	26	10
Forfeitures	2	8,501	12,760	7,284	1,846	4,902	3,566	1,563	2,610
Small Claims (Contested)	128	138	361	234	20	5	48	17	12
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	541	1,234	1,611	193	802	431	286	373
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	31	103	70	6	18	17	11	12
Contracts/Real Estate	76	112	283	309	46	127	111	67	73
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	3	11	10	3	12	3	1	3
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	109	198	121	35	100	80	33	40
Other Civil	139	47	109	93	12	43	31	15	21
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	5	11	9	12	7	4	4	3
Guardianships	108	65	133	120	21	54	27	21	25
Commitments	34	58	342	256	43	47	30	38	18
Other Probate	15	81	213	211	38	151	101	51	60
Divorce	193	118	308	297	41	114	99	48	59
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	30	156	84	21	78	33	8	21
Other Family	286	46	138	124	12	17	54	16	9
Termination of Parental Rights	225	10	21	28	1	12	6	3	4
Delinquency & JIPS	148	35	78	133	12	52	10	9	11
CHIPS	236	34	71	86	30	28	17	11	5
Treatment Courts*	927	21	25	3	3	12	14	0	7
Total Filings		11,229	19,425	13,777	2,815	7,335	5,102	2,691	3,812
Total Case Specific Workload		259,395	637,867	574,884	95,872	195,706	151,322	86,519	97,369
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		3.45	8.49	7.66	1.28	2.61	2.02	1.15	1.30
JUDGE FTE (2024)		3.00	6.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.16	1.06	1.05	0.22	0.33	0.52	0.08	0.13
TOTAL FTE (2024)		3.16	7.06	6.05	1.22	2.33	2.52	1.08	1.13
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		0.30	1.43	1.61	0.05	0.28	-0.51	0.07	0.17
Workload/JO		1.09	1.20	1.27	1.04	1.12	0.80	1.07	1.15

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Iron – Lafayette

Case Type	District	10	7	3	7	2	8	7	5
	County	Iron	Jackson	Jefferson	Juneau	Kenosha	Kewaunee	La Crosse	Lafayette
	Case Weight								
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	0	4	5	4	29	0	17	6
Felony-Severity C or D	357	5	9	31	17	117	5	89	10
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	14	32	94	53	417	12	170	25
Felony-Severity H	106	24	99	279	153	776	35	555	51
Felony-Severity I or U	115	21	47	131	71	543	21	287	21
Misdemeanors	53	111	176	1,059	433	2,541	182	1,403	133
Misdemeanor OWI	146	10	24	93	24	99	16	99	12
Forfeitures	2	1,549	4,198	7,617	3,587	10,023	2,583	3,698	1,728
Small Claims (Contested)	128	0	66	80	102	235	47	69	4
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	92	372	1,192	642	3,797	250	1,830	220
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	5	14	44	19	165	4	112	5
Contracts/Real Estate	76	24	47	260	104	648	47	277	55
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	2	6	9	7	24	0	11	1
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	10	79	159	90	435	20	131	28
Other Civil	139	4	23	85	30	160	12	124	8
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	1	5	6	5	17	5	23	2
Guardianships	108	14	38	80	48	210	24	136	21
Commitments	34	11	26	85	32	207	23	78	6
Other Probate	15	19	54	183	95	353	54	187	52
Divorce	193	16	59	258	86	480	54	284	39
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	4	21	129	14	563	14	191	16
Other Family	286	26	52	38	69	240	10	30	2
Termination of Parental Rights	225	3	11	18	15	62	2	16	3
Delinquency & JIPS	148	6	21	21	6	246	5	51	9
CHIPS	236	5	57	39	18	154	12	49	13
Treatment Courts*	927	0	9	16	4	9	0	72	6
Total Filings		1,976	5,552	12,012	5,728	22,548	3,439	9,987	2,479
Total Case Specific Workload		41,312	143,644	361,678	181,719	1,054,600	65,972	578,427	74,682
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		0.55	1.91	4.82	2.42	14.04	0.88	7.70	0.99
JUDGE FTE (2024)		1.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	8.00	1.00	5.00	1.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.01	0.18	2.00	0.50	3.00	0.41	1.07	0.08
TOTAL FTE (2024)		1.01	2.18	6.00	2.50	11.00	1.41	6.07	1.08
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		-0.46	-0.27	-1.18	-0.08	3.04	-0.53	1.63	-0.09
Workload/JO		0.54	0.88	0.80	0.97	1.28	0.62	1.27	0.92

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Langlade - Milwaukee

Case Type	District	9	9	4	9	8	4	9	1
	County	Langlade	Lincoln	Manitowoc	Marathon	Marinette	Marquette	Menominee/ Shawano	Milwaukee
	Case Weight								
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	3	9	9	20	6	3	10	238
Felony-Severity C or D	357	16	15	66	102	49	8	23	855
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	28	49	129	169	79	26	96	2,084
Felony-Severity H	106	115	198	442	692	149	63	418	1,594
Felony-Severity I or U	115	45	63	181	251	121	26	134	1,079
Misdemeanors	53	184	276	1,013	1,368	221	211	621	4,724
Misdemeanor OWI	146	7	23	73	115	46	27	33	576
Forfeitures	2	1,483	2,124	5,392	4,753	2,826	2,064	5,882	29,010
Small Claims (Contested)	128	33	75	98	311	39	26	26	110
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	335	378	1,300	1,934	736	230	773	35,021
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	11	19	38	95	28	7	21	1,232
Contracts/Real Estate	76	69	83	224	346	161	65	138	4,452
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	4	2	6	19	6	2	3	84
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	47	49	190	260	101	26	75	6,204
Other Civil	139	15	26	57	121	34	10	30	1,231
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	9	9	47	11	13	3	7	211
Guardianships	108	24	45	113	141	47	19	52	1,311
Commitments	34	44	61	96	292	65	28	111	1,749
Other Probate	15	59	88	192	272	107	54	106	1,875
Divorce	193	69	91	232	363	115	39	107	2,611
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	28	59	194	96	98	13	110	4,875
Other Family	286	52	25	45	144	28	18	20	391
Termination of Parental Rights	225	8	6	22	37	9	3	6	230
Delinquency & JIPS	148	24	15	97	123	6	6	65	1,042
CHIPS	236	25	41	87	82	27	8	33	765
Treatment Courts*	927	0	0	10	12	10	8	1	102
Total Filings		2,739	3,828	10,354	12,129	5,130	2,992	8,901	103,657
Total Case Specific Workload		118,960	166,006	436,889	655,972	212,851	86,022	259,277	5,217,316
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		1.58	2.21	5.82	8.74	2.83	1.15	3.45	69.48
JUDGE FTE (2024)		1.00	2.00	4.00	6.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	47.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.56	0.14	1.25	1.20	1.00	0.02	0.34	23.00
TOTAL FTE (2024)		1.56	2.14	5.25	7.20	3.00	1.02	2.34	70.00
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		0.03	0.07	0.57	1.54	-0.17	0.13	1.11	-0.52
Workload/JO		1.02	1.03	1.11	1.21	0.94	1.13	1.48	0.99

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Monroe - Portage

Case Type	District	7	8	9	8	3	7	10	9
	County	Monroe	Oconto	Oneida	Outagamie	Ozaukee	Pierce	Polk	Portage
	Case Weight								
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	16	2	2	15	4	0	4	9
Felony-Severity C or D	357	45	16	31	95	30	17	27	33
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	89	40	45	214	75	33	71	85
Felony-Severity H	106	379	103	236	618	179	121	183	280
Felony-Severity I or U	115	146	47	101	384	135	84	205	154
Misdemeanors	53	524	208	373	1,740	862	435	246	614
Misdemeanor OWI	146	35	20	65	175	52	31	32	59
Forfeitures	2	6,301	2,343	4,749	13,919	3,680	2,107	2,943	4,303
Small Claims (Contested)	128	99	75	86	332	106	44	123	117
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	764	569	465	3,300	691	460	550	836
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	26	15	21	165	45	20	33	39
Contracts/Real Estate	76	131	108	140	602	216	108	173	150
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	6	8	7	23	13	4	5	9
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	144	49	56	429	143	67	105	102
Other Civil	139	44	26	32	177	83	36	39	64
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	12	8	14	29	12	7	11	5
Guardianships	108	75	37	42	198	80	33	66	65
Commitments	34	47	47	81	286	119	40	41	119
Other Probate	15	102	96	99	303	148	85	120	119
Divorce	193	155	112	107	562	216	115	129	172
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	59	57	56	240	80	50	13	95
Other Family	286	77	10	17	115	14	29	109	57
Termination of Parental Rights	225	9	6	5	52	5	15	6	22
Delinquency & JIPS	148	65	21	39	115	26	23	18	60
CHIPS	236	32	27	44	93	25	57	30	80
Treatment Courts*	927	17	0	0	33	0	5	4	11
Total Filings		9,400	4,051	6,913	24,213	7,040	4,028	5,286	7,661
Total Case Specific Workload		321,292	138,422	200,137	850,156	281,839	168,593	235,438	318,430
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		4.28	1.84	2.67	11.32	3.75	2.25	3.14	4.24
JUDGE FTE (2024)		3.00	2.00	2.00	7.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.25	0.50	0.30	3.50	1.00	1.00	0.72	0.76
TOTAL FTE (2024)		3.25	2.50	2.30	10.50	4.00	2.00	2.72	3.76
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		1.02	-0.66	0.37	0.82	-0.25	0.25	0.41	0.49
Workload/JO		1.31	0.74	1.16	1.08	0.94	1.12	1.15	1.13

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Price – Sheboygan

Case Type	District	9	2	7	5	10	5	10	4
	County	Price	Racine	Richland	Rock	Rusk	Sauk	Sawyer	Sheboygan
	Case Weight								
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	2	31	1	17	4	8	4	17
Felony-Severity C or D	357	8	103	8	87	9	37	15	59
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	19	334	26	301	30	102	39	137
Felony-Severity H	106	86	615	82	620	89	469	88	308
Felony-Severity I or U	115	36	379	33	330	32	187	81	206
Misdemeanors	53	160	2,383	238	1,164	149	868	287	1,130
Misdemeanor OWI	146	15	150	18	207	8	81	13	97
Forfeitures	2	1,647	16,687	1,783	16,094	1,122	10,857	1,429	6,197
Small Claims (Contested)	128	2	341	45	123	16	237	10	143
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	204	4,460	240	3,891	216	1,220	222	2,217
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	5	228	6	133	5	45	13	61
Contracts/Real Estate	76	52	792	50	629	54	245	72	356
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	1	21	1	13	1	7	4	12
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	56	444	22	416	40	189	44	238
Other Civil	139	9	188	20	222	12	63	14	103
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	1	25	5	17	7	7	9	61
Guardianships	108	22	223	30	207	23	89	22	141
Commitments	34	21	266	41	252	20	101	23	143
Other Probate	15	50	389	50	376	43	147	55	200
Divorce	193	41	551	43	519	42	230	39	311
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	23	783	25	447	9	97	8	274
Other Family	286	7	212	16	134	22	33	19	47
Termination of Parental Rights	225	2	22	7	48	2	10	7	26
Delinquency & JIPS	148	8	183	12	245	8	22	32	162
CHIPS	236	16	84	12	48	20	35	10	59
Treatment Courts*	927	0	25	7	48	3	12	3	12
Total Filings		2,492	29,918	2,821	26,590	1,989	15,398	2,562	12,719
Total Case Specific Workload		70,915	1,067,186	92,631	860,331	84,091	391,562	107,596	526,720
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		0.94	14.21	1.23	11.46	1.12	5.21	1.43	7.01
JUDGE FTE (2024)		1.00	10.00	1.00	7.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	5.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.01	4.24	0.17	2.90	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.90
TOTAL FTE (2024)		1.01	14.24	1.17	9.90	1.00	4.00	2.00	6.90
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		-0.07	-0.03	0.07	1.56	0.12	1.21	-0.57	0.11
Workload/JO		0.93	1.00	1.06	1.16	1.12	1.30	0.72	1.02

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

St Croix – Washburn


Case Type	District	10	9	7	7	9	2	10
	County	St Croix	Taylor	Trempealeau	Vernon	Vilas	Walworth	Washburn
	Case Weight							
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	6	2	3	1	3	8	1
Felony-Severity C or D	357	39	7	15	7	10	38	8
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	125	20	40	24	34	139	22
Felony-Severity H	106	325	55	116	74	84	319	55
Felony-Severity I or U	115	274	21	70	34	67	143	39
Misdemeanors	53	980	151	269	150	214	1,379	110
Misdemeanor OWI	146	97	9	22	14	33	123	15
Forfeitures	2	6,008	1,618	2,905	1,242	1,711	6,936	2,075
Small Claims (Contested)	128	101	8	80	46	4	89	44
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	1,141	200	323	322	262	1,476	253
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	69	10	10	16	15	60	12
Contracts/Real Estate	76	304	48	84	69	73	394	67
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	14	0	2	2	7	12	3
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	123	37	52	33	45	361	53
Other Civil	139	96	11	25	22	16	99	12
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	8	13	6	9	17	24	5
Guardianships	108	109	29	26	44	29	102	25
Commitments	34	86	42	38	32	51	106	21
Other Probate	15	152	33	66	58	72	217	61
Divorce	193	268	48	64	68	50	289	47
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	104	23	59	26	25	148	38
Other Family	286	41	9	23	29	7	38	11
Termination of Parental Rights	225	15	7	3	5	5	14	2
Delinquency & JIPS	148	66	25	23	6	12	69	4
CHIPS	236	54	23	25	17	13	52	20
Treatment Courts*	927	5	6	6	5	0	21	5
Total Filings		10,610	2,454	4,355	2,354	2,861	12,653	3,007
Total Case Specific Workload		402,545	81,607	137,704	99,327	101,438	466,825	85,323
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		5.36	1.09	1.83	1.32	1.35	6.22	1.14
JUDGE FTE (2024)		4.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		0.80	0.27	0.18	0.23	0.09	1.90	0.03
TOTAL FTE (2024)		4.80	1.27	1.18	1.23	2.09	5.90	1.03
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		0.56	-0.19	0.65	0.09	-0.73	0.32	0.11
Workload/JO		1.12	0.85	1.55	1.08	0.65	1.05	1.11

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.

Washington – Wood

Case Type	District	3	3	8	4	4	9	State Total
	County	Washington	Waukesha	Waupaca	Waushara	Winnebago	Wood	
	Case Weight							
Felony-Severity A or B	1,696	8	16	9	3	15	14	779
Felony-Severity C or D	357	41	84	30	7	67	54	3,317
Felony-Severity E, F, or G	241	105	386	92	35	180	105	8,657
Felony-Severity H	106	259	879	218	104	371	284	19,794
Felony-Severity I or U	115	204	605	101	79	281	213	11,411
Misdemeanors	53	1,239	3,871	504	278	1,992	1,105	54,083
Misdemeanor OWI	146	96	267	60	20	146	77	4,802
Forfeitures	2	5,892	7,484	4,247	3,334	13,680	2,643	368,854
Small Claims (Contested)	128	228	625	107	43	364	78	7,543
Small Claims (Uncontested)	5	1,340	3,814	776	319	3,071	1,129	110,703
Personal Injury/Property Damage	168	80	266	28	10	124	36	4,593
Contracts/Real Estate	76	394	1,230	141	86	474	202	19,429
Civil/Admin Reviews & John Doe	491	13	47	5	3	36	4	777
Temp Restraining Orders & Injunctions	62	178	379	113	64	376	212	16,064
Other Civil	139	112	308	77	18	197	77	5,991
Formal Estates & Trusts	251	23	86	23	5	22	6	1,059
Guardianships	108	101	328	75	51	194	153	6,777
Commitments	34	231	544	100	50	349	228	9,108
Other Probate	15	228	710	113	81	369	192	12,266
Divorce	193	371	1,020	140	66	526	233	16,112
Paternity, Paternity Acknowledgments, or Admin Paternity	127	173	460	72	23	289	150	13,034
Other Family	286	33	74	18	22	84	49	3,848
Termination of Parental Rights	225	19	36	11	9	26	25	1,159
Delinquency & JIPS	148	94	108	32	21	140	55	4,653
CHIPS	236	45	36	23	16	65	72	3,457
Treatment Courts*	927	10	47	11	8	12	19	924
Total Filings		11,515	23,710	7,128	4,754	23,451	7,417	709,195
Total Case Specific Workload		473,054	1,333,486	260,982	129,370	758,504	414,487	28,093,351
Available Work Minutes per Year		75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096	75,096
Total Need		6.30	17.76	3.48	1.72	10.10	5.52	374.10
JUDGE FTE (2024)		4.00	12.00	3.00	2.00	6.00	4.00	261.00
COURT COMMISSIONER FTE (2024)		1.00	4.00	0.05	0.25	3.00	0.21	87.20
TOTAL FTE (2024)		5.00	16.00	3.05	2.25	9.00	4.21	348.20
Deficit(+)/Surplus (-)		1.30	1.76	0.42	-0.53	1.10	1.31	25.90
Workload/JO		1.26	1.11	1.14	0.77	1.12	1.31	1.07

*Treatment Courts are based on the average number of participants from 2022 to 2024, as more recent data were not available.



National Center for State Courts
300 Newport Ave. | Williamsburg, VA 23185
(800) 616-6164 | ncsc.org
