

# **APPENDIX 1 - COURT SUPPORT STAFFING**

This appendix outlines court support staffing for probation and pretrial services offices, courts of appeals, district courts, and bankruptcy courts. It also includes workload data used to determine staffing requirements in the courts, and a program statement explaining the purpose of these programs.

### Probation and Pretrial Services

Table A-1.1 Probation and Pretrial Services Workload Indicators by Statistical Year (SY)<sup>1</sup>

	SY 2024 Actual (% Change from Prior Year) <sup>2</sup>	SY 2025 Actual (% Change from Prior Year) <sup>2</sup>	SY 2026 Projected (% Change from Prior Year) <sup>3</sup>
Convicted Offenders Supervised in the Community	173,785 -0.6%	172,553 -0.7%	170,200 -1.4%
Charged Defendants Supervised in the Community	47,546 -7.0%	44,090 -7.3%	41,600 -5.6%
Investigative Reports Completed for Bail Determinations	65,684 1.6%	75,193 14.5%	77,900 3.6%
Investigative Reports Completed for Sentencing Determinations	57,952 0.5%	58,544 1.0%	60,200 2.8%

<sup>1</sup>The number of individuals under community supervision includes those newly placed, supervised throughout the year, and who began and ended supervision during this period. Individuals with cases spanning multiple categories are counted only once.

<sup>2</sup>Actual data is based on the 12-month period ending June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>3</sup>Estimates are based on projections for the 12-month period ending June 30 based on data from September 30, 2025.

### Probation and Pretrial Service Officers

**Probation officers** are federal law enforcement officers who protect the community. They work with individuals who have been convicted of federal crimes and are under “post-conviction” supervision, after their release from prison. Officers utilize practices rooted in social science research to guide their work with individuals under supervision. These practices, often referred to as evidence-based practices or research-to-results, are designed to assist these individuals in becoming contributing members of the community and leading law-abiding lives. To effectively implement these practices, officers assess each person’s risk of recidivism; identify dynamic risk factors that, when addressed, affect the individual’s likelihood to engage in future criminal activity; and apply supervision interventions tailored to reduce risk. These interventions may include a variety of strategies, such as assisting individuals under supervision with securing or maintaining appropriate housing, suitable employment, and positive relationships within their communities. Officers also provide cognitive skills counseling, which focuses on teaching individuals problem-solving, decision-making, and emotional regulation skills. To further enhance the effectiveness of these interventions, officers often leverage programs offered by other federal agencies and local social service organizations. A crucial aspect of a probation officer’s role is to ensure that persons under supervision comply with release conditions set by the court and address any issues that affect their ability to comply.

Officers monitor individuals under supervision through phone calls and personal contacts. They also direct them to essential services that help while under supervision, including substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, medical care, training, and employment assistance. Without probation officers, the court would not be able to effectively manage the risk that persons under supervision pose to individuals or the community. This includes verifying their locations and employment, monitoring their associates, restricting their travel, and taking necessary actions to make sure they obey the law.

**Pretrial services officers** work with defendants after they are charged with federal crimes and while they are awaiting trial. They help ensure that defendants released to the community commit no crimes while awaiting trial and return to court as required.

Both probation and pretrial services officers investigate defendants and persons under supervision for the court by gathering and verifying information about them. Their investigations involve interviews with defendants and persons under supervision to find out about their backgrounds, including family, education, employment, finances, physical and mental health, and alcohol or drug abuse. Officers perform criminal history record checks and interview other people who can provide helpful information, such as family members, employers, and law enforcement officials. They also review records, such as court, school, military, financial, and employment records.

This information is used to produce a pretrial services report and presentence report. The pretrial services report recommends whether to release or detain the defendant before trial and addresses whether the defendant is likely to stay out of trouble and return to court as required. The presentence report recommends sentencing options under the federal sentencing guidelines, addresses the offense's impact on the victim, and determines the person under supervision's ability to pay fines and restitution. It also recommends release conditions for the court to impose to help structure the person under supervision's movement and behavior in the community. Release conditions are tailored to the individual. For example, the court may require that the person under supervision get drug testing and seek treatment, secure stable employment, or be placed on location monitoring.

Table A-1.2 Persons Under Supervision by Type of Supervision<sup>1</sup>

	Calendar Year	Probation	Supervised Release	Parole	Bureau of Prisons Custody	Total
ACTUAL <sup>2</sup>	2015	19,191	112,750	1,245	242	133,428
	2016	18,275	118,318	1,140	149	137,882
	2017	17,139	117,662	1,003	143	135,947
	2018	15,740	114,278	920	98	131,036
	2019	15,179	111,943	893	105	128,120
	2020	14,063	111,710	837	265	126,875
	2021	12,415	110,700	736	398	124,249
	2022	12,443	110,811	652	261	124,167
	2023	12,149	110,965	535	203	123,852
	2024	11,897	109,988	510	207	122,602
	2025	11,328	108,607	420	202	120,557
ESTIMATED <sup>3</sup>	2026	10,900	107,600	400	200	119,100

<sup>1</sup> Includes only those cases that are open for supervision as of June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>2</sup> Actual data is based on the 12-month period ending June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>3</sup> Estimates are based on projections for the 12-month period ending June 30 based on data from September 30, 2025.

## District Courts

Table A-1.4 Major District Court Workload Indicators<sup>1</sup>

Filings	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Estimate <sup>2</sup>
Criminal Case Filings	54,961 1.5%	65,245 18.7%	68,500 5.0%
Criminal Defendants Filed	67,785 -2.6%	77,344 14.1%	80,600 4.2%
Civil Case Filings	340,683 0.5%	287,411 -15.6%	306,900 6.8%

<sup>1</sup>Actual data is based on the 12-month period ending June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates are based on projections for the 12-month period ending June 30 based on data from September 30, 2025.

### *District Clerks*

District court clerks' offices are the public business offices, providing specific centralized management in case-related and logistical areas. Clerks' office staff perform essential functions necessary for courts operations, such as:

- attorney admissions to practice in the district;
- case intake, docketing of pleadings and motions;
- service of process, events scheduling, receipting and accounting for fees and fines collected;
- case tracking, provision of court reporting, and court interpreting services;
- alternative dispute resolution programs;
- statistical reporting;

- training attorneys on the case management/electronic case files system (CM/ECF); and
- jury management.

These functions are essential elements in processing criminal cases and resolving civil cases. Public and private sector entities rely on effective case processing by the clerks' offices.

The proper functioning of the district court clerks' offices enhances the efficiency of the offices of the United States (U.S.) Attorney, U.S. Marshals Service, Federal Public Defender, and Probation and Pretrial Services. Other participants, including litigants, attorneys, witnesses, court reporters, court interpreters, expert witnesses, the media, and jurors are also impacted by the effective operations of the clerks' offices. To facilitate collaboration among these participants, the clerk's office manages courtroom space, information technology (IT) services, audio and video systems, budget decentralization, personnel administration, and other administrative functions, as well as the support required in the courtroom for the proper functioning of proceedings. The judicial system benefits from the professional management services provided by the clerks' offices.

As explained in the courts' Salaries and Expenses chapter, criminal case filings are, in part, influenced by the number of U.S. Attorneys and the emphasis placed on prosecution of offenses, such as illegal immigration, drug crimes, and violations of firearms laws. As shown on Table A-1.5 on page Appendix 1.7, comparing year-to-year criminal filings during the 12-months ending June 30, aggregate criminal filings

declined from 2020 through 2023 but are projected to increase 5.0 percent in 2026.

Despite these national trends, significant spikes in caseload may occur in specific districts due to localized factors. For example, on July 9, 2020, the Supreme Court held in *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, 591 U.S. 894 (2020), that land in northeastern Oklahoma reserved for the Creek Nation pursuant to the 1832 Treaty with the Creeks remains “Indian country” for purposes of the Major Crimes Act because Congress has never expressly disestablished the reservation. District courts in Oklahoma are continuing to experience significant increases in federal prosecutions stemming the Supreme Court’s *McGirt v. Oklahoma* decision and further decisions have continued to define the parameters of *McGirt*. As of September 2025, post-*McGirt* annual criminal case filings have increased by 72.1 percent in the Northern District of Oklahoma and by 54.5 percent in the Eastern District of Oklahoma compared to September 2020. The number of defendants increased by 60.7 percent in the Northern District of Oklahoma and by 115.7 percent in the Eastern District of Oklahoma over the same period.

Civil case filings are driven by prisoner petitions, social security cases, U.S. plaintiff recovery cases, large-volume multi-district litigation cases, and diversity of citizenship cases<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> A district court has subject matter jurisdiction based on diversity of citizenship when the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000, exclusive of interest and costs, and is between parties not from the same state or country.

### *Court Interpreters*

District courts utilize both staff and contract court interpreters. Staff court interpreters serve in district courts with a substantial daily need for interpreting services, particularly those located along the U.S.-Mexico border and in large metropolitan areas where the frequent demand makes it impractical to rely solely on contracted court interpreters.

Spanish is the most frequently needed language for interpreting events in the courts, comprising about 96.0 percent of all reported interpreted events in FY 2025. In FY 2025, there were 225,773 court events that required the services of an interpreter, with 216,396 of those in Spanish.

### *Pro Se Law Clerks*

Pro se law clerks are district-wide staff attorneys with efficient, specialized expertise in civil rights complaints and habeas petitions filed by prisoners. Pro se law clerks screen new prisoner civil rights complaints and habeas petitions for procedural adequacy and give judges research and drafting assistance through disposition of the cases. Without this specialized assistance, district judges and magistrate judges would need additional chambers staff resources. The number of pro se law clerks is determined by a formula driven by prisoner civil rights and habeas petition filings. For the 12-month period ending June 30, 2025, there were 51,594 such petitions filed.

This represents a 0.4 percent increase from the 49,610 filings in statistical year 2024.

### *Death Penalty Law Clerks*

Death penalty law clerks serve both as substantive legal resources to judges in post-conviction capital habeas corpus matters, and as case management monitors, since capital cases are generally lengthy and involve numerous issues. The staffing formula for these positions provides credit for capital habeas corpus cases pending in federal court that are not stayed at the end of the statistical year, June 30. Courts must have three pending capital habeas cases to be eligible for a half-time position, and seven cases for a full-time position. Courts with only one or two pending capital habeas cases are eligible for staffing credit in the pro se law clerk allocation. For the 12-month period ending June 30, 2025, 355 unstayed death penalty cases were pending in the district courts.

Table A-1.5 Civil and Criminal Filings

	Year	Civil Filings	Percent Increase/Decrease	Criminal Filings	Percent Increase/Decrease
ACTUAL <sup>1</sup>	2015	280,037	5.5%	60,866	-8.1%
	2016	290,430	3.7%	61,021	0.3%
	2017	271,721	-6.4%	58,121	-4.8%
	2018	281,202	3.5%	67,257	15.7%
	2019	293,520	4.4%	73,012	8.6%
	2020	421,082	43.5%	64,853	-11.2%
	2021	374,250	-11.1%	59,500	-8.3%
	2022	293,762	-21.5%	55,220	-7.2%
	2023	295,215	0.5%	54,366	-1.5%
	2024	340,698	15.4%	54,961	1.1%
	2025	287,441	-15.6%	65,245	18.7%
ESTIMATED <sup>2</sup>	2026	306,900	6.8%	68,500	5.0%

Table A-1.6 Components of Civil Caseload

	Year	Social Security	Diversity	Prisoner Filings	All Other	Total
ACTUAL <sup>1</sup>	2015	19,102	86,865	52,844	121,226	280,037
	2016	18,407	83,170	70,863	117,990	290,430
	2017	18,953	75,449	61,031	116,288	271,721
	2018	19,115	89,018	53,626	119,443	281,202
	2019	17,903	100,629	54,445	120,273	293,250
	2020	18,259	234,084	56,823	111,916	421,082
	2021	23,615	190,578	49,658	110,399	374,250
	2022	13,347	126,669	45,778	107,968	293,762
	2023	14,911	116,005	49,995	114,304	295,215
	2024	13,864	151,684	49,610	125,540	340,698
	2025	14,492	88,649	51,594	132,676	287,411
ESTIMATED <sup>2</sup>	2026	16,200	94,200	57,500	139,000	306,900

<sup>1</sup>Actual data for 2015 through 2025 is based on the 12-month periods ending June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates for 2026 are based on projections for the 12-month period ending June 30 based on data from September 30, 2025.

## Courts of Appeals and Circuit Units

Table A-1.7 Appellate Court Workload<sup>1</sup>

	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Estimate <sup>2</sup>
Appeals Filings	39,850 -3.3%	41,012 2.9%	42,500 3.6%

<sup>1</sup>Actual data for is based on the 12-month period ending June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates are based on the projections for the 12-month period ending September 30 of the corresponding year.

### *Circuit Executives*

The principal responsibility of the circuit executive’s office is to act as the secretariat for the circuit’s judicial council and its committees, and in some circuits, for the court of appeals and its committees. In this capacity, the circuit executives’ offices participate in policy oversight and assist in many areas of circuit-wide importance. These include planning for the effective and efficient use of space and facilities, IT, budget decentralization, and planning and organizing the circuit’s judicial conference. The circuit executives’ offices also provide vital administrative and logistical support to the courts of appeals, including IT, procurement, budget management, and personnel administration.

### *Appellate Clerks*

The clerks’ offices are the public business offices for the appellate courts and provide specific centralized management in case-related and logistical areas. Employees in clerks’ offices

perform essential functions necessary for the operation of the courts, such as:

- recording and maintaining all case filings, including public records and information needs;
- providing guidance to lawyers, litigants, and the public;
- distributing case materials to judges for decision-making; and
- providing vital logistical support.

The case-related workload of the clerks’ offices can fluctuate with changes in case filings.

Case decisions in appellate courts are made either by panels of three judges or, in some instances, by an en banc court, where all the judges on the court review the case. Appellate judges reside in locations throughout the geographic area of a circuit. Appellate clerks’ offices are situated at the headquarters of the circuit, providing a central public business office for the judges, lawyers, litigants, and the public.

Clerks’ offices receive case materials for filing, maintain the central files, and arrange for judges to convene in panels as necessary for case decisions. Inquiries about cases, procedures, and related matters are directed to the clerks’ offices. Materials are assembled, as appropriate, and dispatched to judges. Lawyers are advised of the schedule for decision-making. Decisions are made after oral argument hearings or submissions on briefs that are scheduled by the clerks’ offices. Decisions are filed in the clerks’ offices, which are then responsible for distribution of the decisions to the parties and the public, including posting on court websites.

### *Staff Attorneys*

Staff attorneys are central legal staff who assist the court in the disposition of appeals. Cases handled may include direct criminal appeals involving sentencing guidelines issues; all pro se appeals, including collateral attacks on criminal convictions by state and federal prisoners, and civil rights suits under 42 U.S.C. § 1983; employment discrimination cases; immigration cases; social security appeals; emergency matters; original proceedings; counseled motions; and death penalty cases. Staff attorney offices currently assist their courts by handling an estimated 45.0 – 60.0 percent of the case related work. The work has increased in complexity, largely due to major legislative changes affecting prisoner and habeas law. Staff attorneys may also assist with attorney discipline matters, support Criminal Justice Act matters, and produce orientation programs for judges and law clerks. Staff attorney legal review of pro se and counseled cases materially assists the judges and contributes to timely dispositions.

Pro se cases represented 49.9 percent of national appellate filings in FY 2025. Staffing resources are provided through a formula derived from work measurement studies. The current formula is driven primarily by case filings and is refreshed periodically.

### *Circuit Mediators*

Circuit mediators facilitate the disposition of cases on appeal through negotiated settlements, without appellate judicial involvement. Circuit mediators are skilled, seasoned lawyers who perform sensitive, confidential settlement work. The

attorneys often can streamline or dispose of issues in cases not easily settled. Distinct from staff attorneys, circuit mediators promote the voluntary settlement or withdrawal of appeals without court action. The program conserves judicial resources and improves appellate case management.

### *Librarians*

The national court library program is a network of 12 circuit headquarters libraries and 83 smaller satellite libraries, typically located in district courthouses. Although the library program falls administratively under the courts of appeals, court librarians serve and support the information and research needs of all federal courts and judges, including appellate, district, magistrate, and bankruptcy. In addition to federal judges, library services are provided to tens of thousands of judiciary researchers, including law clerks and chambers staff, staff attorneys, mediators, clerks of court, probation and pretrial services personnel, and public defenders. Many court libraries also serve the public, including pro se litigants and bar association members.

Librarians deliver comprehensive research, reference, and instruction services, and procure and facilitate access to the most reliable, authoritative, accurate, and up-to-date research resources. Library staff members also manage the acquisition and development of chambers' legal resource collections.

To support the information needs of on-site personnel as well as remote users within their broad and geographically dispersed areas, court libraries implement digital communication technologies, deliver web-based training services, and provide

comprehensive online access to research collections. Librarians design website and internet resources, develop online research guides, create current event awareness services that push content directly to their users, and support the design and publication of court materials. Subject specialization and deep legal and jurisdictional expertise are required of court librarians, as well as the ability to support multidisciplinary research in economics, science, medicine, social sciences, engineering, technology, and other business- and industry-specific fields.

### *Bankruptcy Appellate Panel Clerks*

The Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1994 requires that each circuit establish a Bankruptcy Appellate Panel (BAP) unless the judicial council of the circuit finds that either there are insufficient judicial resources in the circuit, or the establishment of a BAP would result in undue delay or increased cost to parties in bankruptcy cases. There are currently five BAPs nationally. A BAP is composed of bankruptcy judges within a circuit who are appointed by the circuit’s judicial council to decide, with the consent of all parties, appeals from bankruptcy court decisions. Even where a BAP exists, bankruptcy appeals may be heard by the district court, if a party so chooses.

A BAP requires a minimum of four bankruptcy judges, each from a different district, because the legislation prohibits a bankruptcy judge from hearing appeals that originated in the district for which he or she was appointed. The BAP clerks’ offices provide support services similar to the appellate clerks’ offices.

As explained in the courts’ Salaries and Expenses chapter, the judiciary currently projects that appellate case filings will increase in 2026 mainly due to projected increases in civil and other appeals, which include bankruptcy appeals and administrative agency appeals, despite decreases in criminal appeals. Administration initiatives, legislative initiatives, and court decisions can have significant effects on some annual totals.

## **Bankruptcy Courts**

Table A-1.8 Bankruptcy Court Workload<sup>1</sup>

	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Estimate <sup>2</sup>
Bankruptcy Filings	486,613 10.0%	542,529 11.5%	595,100 9.7%

<sup>1</sup>Actual data for is based on the 12-month period ending June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates are based on the projections for the 12-month period ending June 30 based on data from September 30, 2025.

### *Bankruptcy Clerks*

The clerk’s office is responsible for administrative activities pertaining to processing bankruptcy case filings. Employees in clerks’ offices perform essential functions necessary for the operation of the courts, such as:

- case tracking and scheduling, including the use of the CM/ECF;
- statistical reporting; and

- receipting and accounting for fees and fines collected.

All these functions are essential elements in processing bankruptcy cases. Public and private sector entities rely on effective bankruptcy case processing by the clerks' offices. The bankruptcy court clerks' offices facilitate processing cases, which helps individuals, attorneys, and businesses filing and participating in cases nationwide. To enable court participants to work together effectively, the clerks' offices manage courtroom space, IT services, audio and video systems, decentralized court budgets, personnel administration, and other administrative functions, as well as the support required in the courtroom for proceedings.

The judicial system, and community, benefit from the professional management services provided by the bankruptcy clerks' offices.

#### *Bankruptcy Administrators*

Nearly all bankruptcy cases are administered by an impartial case trustee. In most bankruptcy courts, case trustees are overseen by the U.S. Trustee Program, which is a component of the Department of Justice. The U.S. Trustee assigns trustees to cases, maintains and appoints the panel of trustees, monitors the conduct of parties in cases, oversees related administrative

functions, and acts to ensure compliance with applicable laws and procedures.

However, two states—Alabama and North Carolina—operate under a different structure. In each of the six judicial districts within those two states, a bankruptcy administrator oversees case administration and performs the bulk of the duties required of U.S. Trustees. Bankruptcy administrators are employed and overseen by the judiciary but have virtually the same authority as a U.S. Trustee.

#### *Bankruptcy Filings*

As explained in the courts' Salaries and Expenses chapter, bankruptcy filings decreased each year from 2010 to 2022, but have begun to rebound, increasing 10.0 percent in the 12 months ending June 2023, and 16.2 percent for 2024, as well as 11.5 percent in 2025. Further increases in filings are expected based on historical trends that suggest bankruptcies trail adverse economic conditions. Because filing levels drive staffing needs in bankruptcy courts, such increases will result in additional workload impacts on bankruptcy courts. A sudden spike in filings may result in courts facing challenges in processing these filings.

Table A-1.9 Bankruptcy Filings by Chapter

	Calendar Year	Chapter 7	Chapters 9, 11, 12, & 15	Chapter 13	Total
ACTUAL <sup>1</sup>	2015	568,679	7,112	303,945	879,736
	2016	509,769	8,532	300,858	819,159
	2017	489,011	7,628	299,398	796,037
	2018	479,151	7,686	288,741	775,578
	2019	475,069	7,876	290,416	773,361
	2020	436,919	8,345	237,099	682,363
	2021	335,886	7,559	118,864	462,309
	2022	239,750	4,715	136,169	380,634
	2023	239,215	6,147	173,362	418,724
	2024	285,104	9,088	192,421	486,613
	2025	333,321	8,918	200,290	542,529
ESTIMATED <sup>2</sup>	2026	368,800	9,200	217,100	595,100

<sup>1</sup>Actual data for 2015 through 2025 is based on the 12-month periods ending June 30 of the corresponding year.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates for 2026 are based on projections for the 12-month period ending June 30 based on data from September 30, 2025.