



BEST PRACTICES FOR CASELOAD REPORTING

— A Bench Card for Judges —

Caseload reporting is an important part of the administration of justice in Georgia. The Judicial Council asks all classes of courts to annually report their caseload to the Administrative Office of the Courts (see OCGA §15-5-24). These data are used to analyze the workload of Georgia's courts as well as to ensure compliance with numerous state and federal laws. The data are provided back to Georgia's courts for their use in policy and administrative decisions with the General Assembly, county commissions, and city councils.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR DATA

Judges, clerks, and court administrators should all be involved in the caseload reporting process. Outreach to the district attorney and probation offices may also be necessary. Courts should work collaboratively to identify all caseload reporting stakeholders and discuss concerns as they arise.

TALK TO YOUR CASE MANAGEMENT VENDOR

All case management systems (CMS) should be able to quickly and easily create the reports requested by the Judicial Council. If you do not believe yours can, talk to your clerk and vendor about working with the AOC. Maintain regular communication with your CMS vendor to ensure reports are updated to accurately reflect Judicial Council policy.

CONDUCT TRAINING

Both judge and clerk staff should be kept up to date on the case management system. Training manuals and updates should be available through the case management system vendor. AOC staff are available to assist with training.

REPORT YOUR CASELOAD DATA EARLY

The annual caseload collection period begins on the first business day in January and concludes on March 15. Certain superior and juvenile court data are legally required to be reported (see OCGA § 15-6-61, 15-7-50, 15-11-64(b), and 16-12-141.1(g)). Talk to your clerk about reporting data as early as possible. Early reporting allows the AOC to review the data to ensure accuracy. Submit your caseload data through the caseload reporting site caseload.georgiacourts.gov.

REVIEW DATA FOR ACCURACY

Ask your clerk to review caseload data with you. Even after submission, data can be corrected. Take advantage of the opportunity to ensure your court accurately reports its data according to Judicial Council standards. As your court reviews data for accuracy, keep the following in mind.

1. Review previous years' submissions and data from counties of similar size. If your data varies greatly from the previous year or a similarly sized county/circuit, there could be a problem.
2. The *Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting* is the Judicial Council-approved standard for caseload reporting. It can always be found at caseload.georgiacourts.gov.
3. In superior and state court criminal caseload reporting, each defendant is counted as a case by the level of the most serious charge. **DO NOT REPORT CHARGES OR WARRANTS.**
4. Serious felonies are defined as the Seven Deadly Sins. Look at counties of similar size to help determine if your figures are accurate.
5. If your county has a state court, then the superior court should have relatively few misdemeanor cases.
6. Probation revocations are often overlooked. Every county should have some probation revocations. Every filed petition to revoke probation, every petition to adjudicate first offender, and every petition to adjudicate conditional discharge sentences count as a probation revocation filing.
7. Adoption and Support IV-D cases are often overlooked. Every county will have at least a small number of these cases every year.
8. If more than five percent of civil cases are listed as unknown, your court should consider reviewing these cases to determine their appropriate category. Unknown cases get very little workload credit.
9. Be careful to appropriately categorize tort cases. The type of tort will greatly impact the workload analysis.

Note: In 2021, the Judicial Council will begin to capture DUI and remanded habeas cases as a separate category in superior court, each with separate case weights. Also, in 2021, RICO cases will begin to be counted as serious felonies.

CONTACT AOC RESEARCH STAFF

AOC Research can be reached at research.georgiacourts.gov/meet-our-team/ or via email at casecount@georgiacourts.gov. Contact your court assigned research analyst for concerns regarding your court's data. AOC staff are here to help. Please let us know what we can do for you.