



Date: July 1, 2024

To: District Clerks

RE: Biennial District Court Caseload Analysis Required by HB 3474 (Section 72.039, Government Code)

Required Information: All Judicial Council Monthly Court Activity Reports for State Fiscal Year 2024 and Census of Judicial Officers.

Due Date: September 20, 2024

Last session the Legislature passed HB 3474 requiring the Office of Court Administration to conduct a judicial officer needs analysis for the district courts in the 30 most populous counties at least every two years. The resulting report must be submitted **by October 1st of each even-numbered year** to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Legislature.

Your county has either been identified as one of the 30 most populous or has at least one court with overlapping jurisdiction with a county in the 30 most populous.

In order for OCA to complete the analysis for the district courts in your county:

- All [Judicial Council \(“OCA”\) monthly reports](#) from **September 2023 to August 2024** must be submitted by **September 20, 2024**, and
- The **Census of Judicial Officers** must be completed and returned to OCA by **August 30, 2024**.
 - OCA will send more information on how to report the Census of Judicial Officers.

Judicial Officer Needs Analysis

The need for judicial officers in a county is estimated using a weighted caseload methodology, considering the types of cases filed and their complexity. Since some case types require greater amounts of judicial time (e.g, capital murder), those cases are given a higher case weight when determining overall caseload. To calculate overall caseload, filings for each of the case types are multiplied by the corresponding case weights.

An explanation of the weighted caseload process and the current case weights are available in the [2023 Texas Judicial Workload Study Report](#) posted on the Texas Judicial Branch website.

We appreciate your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Data & Research Division, Texas Office of Court Administration

Statute for Reference:

Government Code Sec.72.039. DISTRICT COURT CASELOAD ANALYSIS.

(a) In this section:

(1)"Clearance rate" has the meaning assigned by Section 72.083.

(2)"Judicial officer" means a district judge or an associate judge, master, magistrate, or referee who conducts proceedings for district courts.

(b)The office at least once every two years shall conduct a district court caseload analysis. The analysis must concentrate on the weighted caseload of the district courts in the 30 most populous counties in this state, considering the nature and complexity of cases heard by each court, and include the following information, disaggregated by county:

(1) the number of cases filed in each district court with jurisdiction in the county in each of the preceding five state fiscal years;

(2) the clearance rate for each district court with jurisdiction in the county in each of the preceding five state fiscal years;

(3) the number of estimated full-time equivalent judicial officers serving district courts in the county in the preceding state fiscal year;

(4) the number of full-time equivalent judicial officers needed to serve the district courts in the county based on the most recent weighted caseload analysis;

(5) the calendar year for creation of the most recently created district court in the county;
and

(6) any other relevant information identified by the director.

(c) Not later than October 1 of each even-numbered year, the office shall report the results of the analysis conducted under Subsection (b) to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and each member of the legislature.