



The Third Quarter Statistics Report on the Specialized
Family Courts of Jamaica - 2023

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Executive Summary

This report covers core case activity summary for the specialized family courts for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. The data suggests that a total of 2139 new cases were filed in the combined specialized family courts of Manchester, Trelawny, Westmoreland, Hanover, St. James, Manchester, Clarendon (Chapelton) and the Kingston and St. Andrew Family Court (Corporate Area). The Kingston and St. Andrew Family Court accounted for the largest share of new cases filed with 578 or 27.02%, followed by the St. James Family Court with 490 or 22.91% and the Westmoreland Family Court with 414 or 19.35%. A total of 1852 cases were disposed in the quarter with the Kingston and St. Andrew Family Court accounting for the largest share with 675 or 36.45% and the, followed by the Westmoreland Family Court with 320 or 17.28% and the St. James Family Court with or 309 or 16.68%, rounding off the top three.

The specialised family courts in this report recorded an impressive overall case clearance rate of 91.21% during the quarter, with the Kingston and St. Andrew Family Court leading the way with an outstanding 123.01%, followed by the Trelawny Family Court with 103.05% and the Hanover Family Court with 102.33%.

Upcoming reports will cover a more comprehensive range of metrics for the specialized family courts as most of these courts are currently undergoing significant data system transitions. Nevertheless, the results revealed in this report suggest that the specialized family courts have a good rate case turnover rate and are making notable strides in reducing case congestion to a sustainable level. In so doing these courts are making an appreciable contribution towards the

fulfilment of the strategic plan of the judiciary to achieve an overall net backlog rate of under 5% and a consistent overall weighted mean case clearance rate of 100% or over.

Below is a summary of case activity during the third quarter of 2023 for the seven family courts featured in the report.

Aggregate case flow performance estimates for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Family Court	Number of new cases	Gross number of disposed cases	Gross number of inactive cases	Weighted average case clearance rate
Corporate Area Family Court	578	675	36	123.01
Manchester Family Court	205	126	4	63.41
Clarendon Family Court	149	123	25	99.33
Hanover Family Court	172	169	7	102.33
St. James Family Court	490	309	10	65.10
Westmoreland Family Court	414	320	12	80.19
Trelawny Family Court	131	130	5	103.05
Total/Weighted Average	2139	1852	99	91.21

Introduction

The specialized family courts are quite unique within the Jamaican court system, carrying out an array of functions on daily basis – in many ways functioning as a ‘one-stop shop.’ Among the primary functions carried out are on site counselling, filtering matters to offsite counselling locations, extensive open court hearings and adjudication and facilitating extensive operational logistics involving the collection of payments and pay-outs for matters such as maintenance. The Family Courts also tends to a number of distinct case types, namely criminal, civil, domestic violence and family and child welfare that includes maintenance, custody, adoption, declaration of paternity, guardianship, childcare and protection and uncontrollable child. In appreciation of the peculiar operational dynamics of the Family Court, this report seeks to provide a robust representation of both open court and non-court services, which the court offers to the public. According to the Judicature Family Court Act, the primary purpose of the Family Court is to prevent the breakdown of families and where this may be unavoidable to ensure that the welfare of its members and in particular children is safeguarded. The plethora of functions, both judicial and administrative which are performed by the Family Courts are therefore not surprising. In explain the structure of the handling of family matters in the Jamaican court system, the Judicature (Family Court) Act of 1975 outlines that:

Matters concerning the family of which our statute laws take cognizance are adoption, custody, maintenance, affiliation, juveniles in need of care and attention, juvenile offenders and divorce...the Resident Magistrate’s Court (now parish courts) have jurisdiction in adoption, maintenance and affiliation. These courts along with the Supreme Court hear and determine matters relating to custody and guardianship. The

law relating to juveniles in need of care and protection and to offending juveniles is principally administered by the Juvenile Courts, whilst the Supreme Court exercises exclusive jurisdiction in divorces.

The Family Courts are indeed an important part of the fabric of the justice sector and nation building and statistical reporting of this nature will contribute positively to the productivity of this court and improve the public's understanding and appreciation of its role and provisions. Together, these throughputs will redound to the benefit of the Jamaican society in both the long and short runs.

This report includes case activity and performance measurements for seven of the eight specialized family courts in Jamaica, namely the three Western Regional Family Courts of Hanover, Westmoreland and St. James, Trelawny, Manchester and Chapelton. The newest specialized family court in St. Ann will be included in future reports.

Disclaimer

The numbers that are reflected in the case activity summary in the annual report may vary slightly from those quoted in the individual quarterly reports throughout the year due to occasional constraints with timely access to all records and other mitigating factors. Methodological adjustments may also result in slight variations in comparative figures across periods.

Chapter 2.0: Corporate Area Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Corporate Area Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Table 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	7	4	3	100.00
Indictments	17	4	1	29.41
Summary	6	5	2	116.67
Petty Session	4	1	7	200.00
Total/Weighted Average	34	14	13	79.41

The above table shows that the sample of 34 criminal cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 17 or 50% were indictment matters, 7 or 20.59% were Indictments, 6 or 17.65% were summary matters and 4 or 11.76% were petty session matters. There was a total of 14 criminal cases disposed of which 13 became inactive during the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 5 summary cases were disposed while 2 became inactive. There were 4 Committal matters disposed while 3 became inactive, there were 4 indictment matters disposed while 1 became inactive. Seven (7) petty session matters became inactive while 1 case was disposed of during the quarter. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 79.41% for these types of cases.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Corporate Area Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	27	38	0	140.74
Uncontrollable Child	11	12	0	109.09
Total Weighted Average	38	50	0	131.58

There were 38 child welfare cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023, the larger proportion of which were childcare and protection cases which accounted for 27 or 71.05%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 11 or 28.95% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 50 child welfare cases were disposed of during the quarter. There were 38 child care and protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 12 uncontrollable child cases were disposed. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 140.74% for child care and protection cases and 109.09% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 131.58%, which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the Corporate Area Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Corporate Area Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	106	152	5	148.11
Declaration of Paternity	57	68	5	128.07
Access	8	0	0	undefined
Maintenance	178	215	11	126.97
Adoption	3	3	0	100.00
Total	352	438	21	130.40

The 352 new cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 revealed that maintenance matters with 178 cases or 50.57% accounts for the largest proportion of cases filed. This was followed by Custody with 106 or 30.11%. There were 57 Declaration of Paternity cases or 16.19%. A total of 459 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 438 disposed and 21 inactive cases. Maintenance cases accounted for 215 of the disposed cases and 11 inactive cases while custody accounted for 152 disposed cases and 5 inactive cases. There were 68 disposed declaration of paternity cases while 5 became inactive. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 130.40% for the broad family case type, led

by Custody with 148.11%, and declaration of paternity cases with 128.07%. Maintenance cases accounted for 126.97%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 at the Corporate Area Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Corporate Area for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	135	147	1	109.63
Occupation Order	19	26	1	142.11
Total/Weighted Average	154	173	2	113.64

The data above shows that there was a total of 154 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2023 at the Corporate Area Family Court. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases which accounted for 135 or 87.66%, while cases of occupation order with 19 or 12.34% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total 175 Domestic Violence cases were either disposed or became inactive during the quarter. Of this amount 173 domestic cases were dispose while 2 became inactive during the quarter. There were 147 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 1 became inactive. There were 27 occupation order cases disposed of while 1 became inactive. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 109.63% for protection order cases and 142.11% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted

average case clearance rate of 113.64%, which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Chapter 2.0: St. James Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the St. James Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Table 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	7	1	0	14.29
Indictments	12	4	2	50.00
Summary	7	4	0	57.14
Petty Session	2	0	0	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	28	9	2	39.29

The above table shows that the sample of 28 criminal cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 12 or 42.9% were indictment matters committal and summary matters accounted for 7 or 25% each. Petty session matters accounted for the remaining 2 or 7.1%. There was a total of 9 criminal cases disposed of which 2 became inactive during the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 4 summary cases were disposed, 4 indictments matters were disposed while 2 became inactive and 1 committal proceeding was disposed of during the quarter. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 39.29% for these types of cases.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the St. James Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	34	7	1	23.53
Uncontrollable Child	15	8	1	60.00
Total Weighted Average	49	15	2	34.69

There were 49 child welfare cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023, the larger proportion of which were childcare and protection cases which accounted for 34 or 69.39%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 15 or 30.61% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 15 child welfare cases were disposed while 2 became inactive during the quarter. There were 7 child care and protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 8 uncontrollable child cases were disposed. There was 1 inactive uncontrollable child cases and also 1 child care protection which became inactive during the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 23.53% for child care and protection cases and 60.00% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 34.69%, which is below the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the St. James Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	61	43	1	72.13
Declaration of Paternity	50	36	1	74.00
Access	8	16	0	200.00
Adoption	5	5	0	100.00
Legal Guardianship	3	8	0	266.67
Maintenance	99	53	3	56.57
Total	226	161	5	73.45

The 226 new cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 revealed that maintenance matters with 99 cases or 43.81% accounts for the largest proportion of cases filed. This was followed by Custody with 61 or 26.99%. There were 50 Declaration of Paternity cases or 74%, there were 8 access cases, 3 legal Guardianship cases and 5 Adoption case. A total of 166 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 161 disposed and 5 inactive cases. maintenance cases accounted for 53 of the disposed cases and 3 inactive cases while custody cases accounted for 43 disposed cases and 1 inactive cases. There were 36 disposed and 1 inactive declaration of paternity cases, 16 disposed access cases. This led to an overall estimated

weighted average case clearance rate of 73.45% for the broad family case type, led by legal guardianship 266.67%, and access cases with 200%, adoption cases with 100%, declaration of paternity with 74%, custody with 72.13% and maintenance with 56.57%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 at the St. James Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in St. James for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	132	90	1	68.94
Occupation Order	28	19	0	67.86
Total/Weighted Average	160	109	1	68.75

The data above shows that there was a total of 160 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2023 at the St. James Family Court. A total 110 Domestic Violence of these cases were either disposed or became inactive during the quarter. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases which accounted for 132 or 82.50%, while cases of occupation order with 28 or 17.50% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 109 domestic cases were disposed while 1 became inactive during the quarter. There were 90 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 19 occupation order cases were disposed. There was 1 protection order cases which became inactive during the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 68.94% for protection order cases and 67.86% for occupation order cases, further yielding a

weighted average case clearance rate of 68.75%, which does not satisfy the international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of case activity for civil matters at the St. James Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Table 1.0: Summary of civil case activity for cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	weighted case clearance rate (%)
27	15	0	55.56

The data above shows that there was a total of 27 new civil cases filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. There were also a total of 15 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter at the St. James Family Court. This produces an estimated case clearance rate of 55.56%, which is below the international standard on this metrics.

Chapter 3.0: The Hanover Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Hanover Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Table 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	2	1	0	50.00
Indictments	3	14	1	500.00
Summary	3	3	0	100.00
Petty Session	0	2	0	undefined
Total	8	20	1	262.50

The above table shows that the sample of 8 criminal cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 3 or 37.50% were Indictments and summary matters, 2 or 25% were committal matters. There were a total of 20 criminal cases disposed during third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 14 Indictments cases were disposed, 3 summary matters, 1 committal matter were disposed, and 2 Petty session matters were disposed of during the quarter. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 262.50% for these types of cases. This satisfies the international standard on this vital metrics.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Hanover Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	7	18	1	271.43
Uncontrollable Child	6	12	2	233.33
Total Weighted Average	13	30	3	253.85

There were 13 child welfare cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 7 or 53.85%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 6 or 46.15% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 33 child welfare cases were disposed or became inactive. There were 18 child care protection disposed of during the quarter, while 6 uncontrollable child cases were disposed. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 271.43% for child care and protection cases and 233.33% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 253.85%, which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the St. James Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	37	16	0	43.24
Declaration of Paternity	5	7	0	140.00
Access	11	3	0	27.27
Legal Guardianship	3	0	0	0.00
Maintenance	47	32	2	72.34
Total	103	58	2	58.25

The 103 new cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 47 cases or 45.63%. This was followed by 37 or 35.92% which were custody cases and 11 or 10.68% which were access cases. There were also 5 cases of declaration of paternity and 3 of legal guardianship. A total of 60 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 32 disposed maintenance cases while 2 became inactive. There were 16 disposed custody cases, 7 disposed declarations of paternity cases and 3 disposed access cases. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 58.25% for the

broad family case type, led by Declaration of Paternity cases with 140%, Maintenance with 72.34%, custody cases with 43.24%, and cases of access with 27.27%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 at the Hanover Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Hanover for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2021

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	38	44	0	115.79
Occupation Order	7	9	1	142.86
Total/Weighted Average	45	53	1	120.00

The data above shows that there was a total of 45 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2023 at the Hanover Family Court. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases which accounted for 38 or 84.44%, while cases of occupation order with 7 or 15.56% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total 54 Domestic Violence of these cases were either disposed or became inactive during the quarter. This was broken down in 53 domestic cases being disposed while 1 became inactive during the quarter. There were 44 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 9 occupation order cases were disposed while 1 became inactive. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 115.79% for protection order

cases and 142.86% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 120%, which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of case activity for civil matters at the Hanover Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Table 1.0: Summary of civil case activity for cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
7	8	0	266.67

The data above shows that there was a total of 7 new civil cases filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. There were also a total of 8 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter at the Hanover Family Court. This produces an estimated case clearance rate of 266.67%, which is above the international standard.

Chapter 4.0: The Westmoreland Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Westmoreland Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Table1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	7	1	0	14.29
Indictments	21	5	1	28.57
Summary	7	3	0	42.86
Petty Session	10	4	0	40.00
Total/Weighted Average	45	13	1	31.11

The above table shows that the sample of 45 criminal cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 21 or 46.67% were indictment matters, 10 or 22.22% were petty session matters, while summary matters and committal proceedings accounted for 7 cases each or 15.56%. There was a total of 14 criminal cases disposed of or became inactive during the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 5 indictment matters were disposed while 1 became inactive, 4 petty session cases were disposed, and 3 petty summary cases were disposed of during the quarter. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 31.11% for these types of cases.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Westmoreland Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	28	39	0	139.29
Uncontrollable Child	18	16	3	105.56
Total Weighted Average	46	55	3	126.09

There were 46 child welfare cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023, this was accounted for by 28 or 60.87% child care protection cases and 18 or 39.13% Uncontrollable Child cases. A total of 58 child welfare cases were disposed of became inactive during the quarter. This was broken down into 39 childcare cases disposed and 16 uncontrollable child care cases disposed while 3 became inactive. This result led to a weighted average case clearance rate of 126.09%, which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Westmoreland Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	68	70	4	108.82
Declaration of Paternity	27	23	0	85.19
Access	17	0	0	undefined
Legal Guardianship	1	0	0	undefined
Maintenance	109	84	3	79.82
Total/Weighted Average	222	177	7	82.88

The 222 new cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 109 cases or 49.10%. This was followed by 68 or 30.63% which were custody cases and 27 or 12.16% which were cases of declaration of paternity. There were also 17 or 7.66% access cases. A total of 184 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 84 disposed and 3 inactive maintenance cases, 70 disposed and 4 inactive custody cases, 23 disposed declaration of paternity cases. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 82.88% for the broad family case type, led by Custody

cases with 108.82%, declaration of paternity cases with 85.19% and maintenance cases with 79.82%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 at the Westmoreland Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Westmoreland for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	73	43	0	58.90
Occupation Order	15	9	0	60.00
Total/Weighted Average	88	52	0	59.09

The data above shows that there was a total of 88 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2023 at the Westmoreland Family Court. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases which accounted for 73 or 82.95%, while cases of occupation order with 15 or 17.05% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 52 domestic cases were disposed of during the quarter. There were 43 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 9 occupation order cases were disposed. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 58.90% for protection order cases and 60% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 59.09%, which is below the international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of case activity for civil matters at the Westmoreland Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Table 1.0: Summary of civil case activity for cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
13	23	1	184.62

The data above shows that there was a total of 13 new civil cases filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. There were also a total of 23 civil cases which were disposed of and 1 became inactive in the quarter at the Westmoreland Family Court. This produces an estimated case clearance rate of 184.62%, which satisfies the international standard on this metrics.

Chapter 5.0: The Trelawny Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Trelawny Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Table 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	7	1	1	28.57
Indictments	4	7	0	175.00
Summary	6	6	0	100.00
Petty Session	4	0	0	undefined
Total/Weighted Average	21	14	1	71.43

The above table shows that the sample of 21 criminal cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 7 or 33.33% were committal matters, 6 or 28.57% were summary matters. Petty session and indictment matters each accounted for 4 cases or 19.05%. There was a total of 14 disposed cases and 1 inactive criminal case during the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 71.43% for these types of cases.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Trelawny Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	8	16	0	200.00
Uncontrollable Child	1	2	0	200.00
Total/ Weighted Average	9	18	0	200.00

There were 9 child welfare cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 8 or 88.89%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 1 or 11.11% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 18 child welfare cases were disposed of during the quarter. There were 16 child care protection cases, and 2 uncontrollable child cases disposed of during the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 200% for uncontrollable child and 200% for child protection cases. further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 200%, which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Trelawny Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	18	22	1	127.78
Declaration of Paternity	23	11	0	47.83
Access	4	2	0	50.00
Legal Guardianship	3	0	0	undefined
Maintenance	25	33	2	140.00
Total	73	68	3	97.26

The 73 new cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 25 cases or 34.25%, declaration of paternity matters with 23 cases or 31.51%. This was followed by custody matters 18 or 24.66%. A total of 71 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 33 disposed and 2 inactive maintenance cases, 22 disposed custody cases while 1 became inactive, 11 disposed declaration of paternity cases and 2 cases of access. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 97.26% for the broad family case type, led by maintenance cases with 140%, custody cases with 127.78%, access cases with 50% and declaration of paternity with 47.83%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 at the Trelawny Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Trelawny for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	23	25	1	113.04
Occupation Order	3	1	0	33.33
Total/Weighted Average	26	26	1	103.85

The data above shows that there was a total of 26 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2023 at the Trelawny Family Court. A total 27 Domestic Violence cases were either disposed or became inactive during the quarter. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases which accounted for 23 or 88.46%, while cases of occupation order with 3 or 11.53% accounted for the remaining proportion. There were 25 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 1 occupation order case was disposed. There was 1 protection order case that became inactive during the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 113.04% for protection order cases and 33.33%, and an overall clearance rate of 103.85 which is above the international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of case activity for civil matters at the Trelawny Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Table 1.0: Summary of civil case activity for cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	weighted case clearance rate (%)
5	5	0	100

The data above shows that there was a total of 5 new civil cases filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. There were also a total of 5 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter. This produces an estimated case clearance rate of 100%, which is above the international standard on this metrics.

Chapter 2.0: St. Manchester Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Manchester Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Table 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Summary	9	8	0	88.89
Total	9	8	0	88.89

The above table shows that the sample of 9 criminal cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. All 9 cases were accounted for by summary matters. There was a total of 8 criminal cases disposed of during third quarter ended September 30, 2023. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 88.89% for these types of cases.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Manchester Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	2	12	0	600.00
Uncontrollable Child	6	5	3	133.33
Total Weighted Average	8	17	3	250.00

There were 8 child welfare cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023, the larger proportion of which were uncontrollable child cases which accounted for 6 or 75%, while cases of child care protection with 2 or 25% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 20 child welfare cases were disposed of or became inactive during the quarter. There were 12 child care protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 5 uncontrollable child cases were disposed. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 600% for child care and protection cases and 133.33% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 250%, which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Manchester Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	33	13	0	39.39
Declaration of Paternity	5	4	0	80.00
Access	16	10	1	68.75
Maintenance	121	74	0	61.16
Total	175	101	1	58.29

The 175 new cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 revealed that maintenance matters with 121 cases or 69.14 accounts for the largest proportion of cases filed. This was followed by custody matters with 33 or 18.86%. There were also 16 matters of access and 5 declaration of paternity cases. A total of 102 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 101 disposed and 1 inactive cases. Maintenance cases accounted for 74 of the disposed cases while custody cases accounted for 13 disposed cases. There were, 10 disposed cases of access while 1 became inactive and 4 disposed declaration of paternity cases. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 58.29% for the broad family case type, led by

declaration of paternity cases with 80%. Access cases with 68.75%, and maintenance matters with 61.16% followed.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 at the Manchester Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Manchester for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	13	0	0	undefined
Total/Weighted Average	13	0	0	0.00

The data above shows that there was a total of 17 new cases of Domestic Violence.

Summary of case activity for civil matters at the Manchester Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Chapter 3.0: The Clarendon Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Clarendon Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Table 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	7	0	0	UNDEFINED
Indictments	12	9	0	75.00
Summary	2	1	0	50.00
Petty Session	5	4	0	80.00
Total	26	14	0	53.85

The above table shows that the sample of 26 criminal cases filed at the Clarendon Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 12 or 46.15% were indictment matters, 7 or 26.92% were indictment matters, and petty session matters accounted for 5 or 19.23%. There was a total of 14 criminal cases disposed during third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of these, 9 indictment matters were disposed, 4 petty session matters and 1 summary matter were disposed of during the quarter. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 53.85% for these types of cases.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Clarendon Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	8	8	0	100.00
Uncontrollable Child	6	0	1	16.67
Total Weighted Average	14	8	1	64.29

There were 14 child welfare cases filed at the Clarendon Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Of These 8 or 57.14% were cases of the child care protection and the remaining 6 or 42.86% were accounted for uncontrollable child cases. A total of 9 child welfare cases were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. This result, further yielded a weighted average case clearance rate of 64.29%, which is below the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the Clarendon Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Clarendon Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	11	13	3	145.45
Declaration of Paternity	13	15	2	130.77
Access	12	12	1	108.33
Maintenance	40	40	14	135.00
Adoption	1	1	0	100.00
Total	77	81	20	131.17

The 77 new cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 40 cases or 51.95%. This was followed by 13 or 16.88% which were declaration of paternity cases and 12 or 15.58% which were cases of access. There were also 11 custody cases and 1 of adoption. A total of 101 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 40 disposed maintenance cases, 15 declaration of paternity cases, 13 custody cases, 12 disposed access cases and 1 adoption case. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 131.17% for the broad family case type, led by custody

cases with 145.45%, maintenance with 135%, declaration of paternity cases with 130.77%, and access and adoption cases with 108.33% and 100% respectively.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023 at the Clarendon Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Clarendon for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the third quarter ended September 30,2023

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	31	19	4	74.19
Occupation Order	1	1	0	100.00
Total/Weighted Average	32	20	4	75.00

The data above shows that there was a total of 32 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2023 at the Clarendon Family Court. A total 24 Domestic Violence of these cases were either disposed or became inactive during the quarter. Protection order accounted for 31 or 96.88% of the cases while occupation order accounted for the remaining 1 or 3.13%. A total of 20 domestic cases were disposed while 4 became inactive during the quarter. There were 19 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 1 occupation order case was disposed. This result led to a weighted average case clearance rate of 75%, which is below the international standards on this vital metric.

Aggregate case flow performance estimates for the third quarter ended September 30, 2023

Family Court	Number of new cases	Gross number of disposed cases	Gross number of inactive cases	Weighted average case clearance rate
Corporate Area Family Court	578	675	36	123.01
Manchester Family Court	205	126	4	63.41
Clarendon Family Court	149	123	25	99.33
Hanover Family Court	172	169	7	102.33
St. James Family Court	490	309	10	65.10
Westmoreland Family Court	414	320	12	80.19
Trelawny Family Court	131	130	5	103.05
Total/Weighted Average	2139	1852	99	91.21

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured specialized Family Courts in the third quarter of 2023. It shows that a total of 2139 new cases were filed in these courts, while 99 became inactive and 1852 were disposed, leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 91.21%. The Corporate Area Family Court recorded the highest overall weighted case clearance rate among the featured courts with 123.01%, followed by the Trelawny Family Court with 103.05%, while the Hanover Family court recorded a clearance rate of 102.33% and the Clarendon Family court following closely behind with 99.33% to round off the top four courts in the third quarter ended September 30, 2023.

Conclusion

This third quarter statistics report on the specialized family courts of Jamaica reveal a continued trend of positive trend. While there was a noticeable decline in output for traditional strong performer, the St. James Family Court, the family courts of Hanover and the Kingston and St. Andrew Family Court sustained their typically impressive patterns, with case clearance rates of over 100% while the Trelawny Family Court which maintains modest returns, surged above the 100% case clearance rate mark, with an output of 103.05%, the second highest case clearance rate of the quarter. The Chapelton Family Court in Clarendon with a case clearance rate of 99.33% also performed quite impressively in the period. Overall the specialized family courts disposed 1852 cases and registered and overall weighted average case clearance rate of 91.21%. These results are largely an indication that the family courts remain on the path to make a positive contribution to the overall backlog reduction and strategic goals of the Jamaican judiciary. The relatively low case clearance rate registered by the St. James Family Court is an anomaly and it is anticipated that their overall results for the year will be quite strong.

Four of the specialized family courts are currently undergoing a transition to the use of a new web-based system called the Judicial Case Management System at present and it is anticipated that this will have a transformation effect on the efficiency of these courts in the provision of the critical range of services that they offer. The other three are also expected to be added to the system over the course of 2024. The Judicial Case Management System is expected to eventually be replaced by the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) however having the court's data in the JCMS will make for ease of migration. The upcoming 3-5 years are expected to be a major period of transformation in the courts.

Glossary of Terms

Sampling Distribution: A sampling distribution of a given population is the distribution of frequencies of a range of outcomes that could possibly occur for a statistic of a population. A population is the entire pool from which a statistical sample is drawn.

Clearance rate: The ratio on incoming to outgoing cases or of new cases filed to cases disposed, regardless of when the disposed cases originated. For example, in a given Term 100 new cases were filed and 110 were disposed (including cases originating before that Term) the clearance rate is 110/100 or 110%.

Note: The clearance rate could therefore exceed 100% but the disposal rate has a maximum value of 100%.

A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system. The inferred international benchmark for case clearance rates is an average of 90%-110 annualized. This is a critical foundation to backlog prevention in the court system. ⁱ

Disposal rate: As distinct from clearance rate, the disposal rate is the proportion of new cases filed which have been disposed in a particular period. For example, if 100 new cases are filed in a particular Term and 80 of those cases were disposed in said Term, then the disposal rate is 80%.

Note: A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system. ⁱⁱ

Trial/hearing date certainty: This is the proportion of dates set for trial or hearing which proceed without adjournment. For example, if 100 trial dates are set in a particular Term and 40 are

adjourned, then the trial certainty rate would be 60%. The international standard for this measure is between 92% and 100%.

Courtroom utilization rate: The proportion of courtrooms in full use on a daily basis or the proportion of hours utilized in a courtroom on a daily basis. The international standard for this rate is 100%.

Case congestion rate: The ratio of pending cases to cases disposed in a given period. It is an indication of how fatigued a court is, given the existing state of resources and degree of efficiency. A case congestion rate of 150% for example, is an indication that given the resources currently at a court's disposal and its degree of efficiency, it is carrying 1.5 times its capacity.

Case File Integrity Rate: Measures the proportion of time that a case file is fully ready and available in a timely manner for a matter to proceed. Hence, any adjournment, which is due to the lack of readiness of a case file or related proceedings for court at the scheduled time, impairs the case file integrity rate. The international benchmark for the case file integrity is 100%

Standard deviation: This is a measure of how widely spread the scores in a data set are **around** the average value of that data set. The higher the standard deviation, the higher the variation of the raw scores in the data set, from the average score. A low standard deviation is an indication that the scores in a data set are clustered around the average.

Outlier: An outlier is a value that is too small or too large, relative to the majority of scores/trend in a data set.

Skewness: This is a measure of the distribution of scores in a data set. It gives an idea of where the larger proportion of the scores in a data set can be found. Generally, if skewness is positive as revealed by a positive value for this measure, this suggests that a greater proportion of the scores in the data set are at the lower end. If the skewness is negative as revealed by a negative value for this measure, it generally suggests that a greater proportion of the scores are at the higher end. If the skewness measure is approximately 0, then there is roughly equal distribution of scores on both the higher and lower ends of the average figure.

Range: This is a measure of the spread of values in a data set, calculated as the highest minus the lowest value. A larger range score may indicate a higher spread of values in a data set.

Case backlog: A case that is in the court system for more than two years without disposition. The **gross backlog rate** measures the proportion of all cases filed within a given period which remain unresolved for a period of over two years. The **net backlog rate** on the other hand measures the proportion of active cases filed in a given period which are unresolved for over two years.

Percentile Rank: This refers to the percentage of scores that are equal to or less than a given score. Percentile ranks, like percentages, fall on a continuum from 0 to 100. For example, a percentile rank of 45 indicates that 45% of the scores in a distribution of scores fall at or below the score at the 45th percentile.

Percentile ranks are useful when you want to quickly understand how a particular score compares to the other scores in a distribution of scores. For instance, knowing a court disposed 300 cases in a given period doesn't tell you much. You don't know how many case disposals were possible, and even if you did, you wouldn't know how that court's score compared to the rest of

the courts. If, however, you were told that the court scored at the 80th percentile, then you would know that this court did as well or better than 80% of the courts in case disposals.

Difference between percentage and percentile changes: The difference between percentage and percentage points, the latter is strictly used to compare two percentages, for example, if the clearance rate in 2018 was 89% and the clearance rate in 2019 is 100%, then the appropriate expression to compare these would be "an 11 percentage points increase". However, if we are comparing two absolute numbers, say, 1000 cases were disposed in 2018, and 1500 in 2019, then there would be a 50% increase in cases disposed.

Weighted Average: Weighted average is a calculation that takes into account the varying degrees of significance of the groups or numbers in a data set. In calculating a weighted average for a particular variable, the individual scores or averages for each group are multiplied by the weight or number of observations in each of those groups, and summed. The outcome is then divided by the summation of the number of observations in all groups combined. For example, if we wish to calculate the weighted average clearance rate for the parish courts, the product of the clearance rate and number of cases for each court are computed, added, and then divided by the total number of cases across all the parish courts. This means that a court with a larger caseload has a greater impact on the case clearance rate than a smaller court.

A weighted average can be more accurate than a simple average in which all numbers in a data set are assigned an identical weight.

Continuance and Adjournment: In a general sense, any delay in the progression of a hearing in which a future date/time is set or anticipated for continuation is a form of adjournment. However, in order to make a strict distinction between matters which are adjourned for

procedural factors and those which are generally avoidable, court statistics utilizes the terms 'continuance' and 'adjournment'. Here, 'continuance' is used strictly to describe situations in which future dates are set due to procedural reasons and 'adjournments' is used to describe the circumstances in which future dates of appearance are set due to generally avoidable reasons. For example, adjournments for another stage of hearing, say from a plea and case management hearing to a trial hearing or from the last date of trial to a sentencing date are classified as 'continuance' but delays for say, missing or incomplete files, due to outstanding medical reports or attorney absenteeism are classified as 'adjournments'. Adjournments as defined in this document have an adverse effect on hearing date certainty rates but continuances do not.

Source:

<http://courts.mi.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/bestpractice/BestPracticeCaseAgeClearanceRates.pdf>

ⁱ *Source:*

<http://courts.mi.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/bestpractice/BestPracticeCaseAgeClearanceRates.pdf>

