



S N A P S H O T

FY 2017-18 Tennessee Judicial Weighted Caseload Study Update

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State law requires the Comptroller of the Treasury to annually update the judicial weighted caseload study for state trial court judges. Weighted caseload studies compare the state’s existing judicial resources with an estimate of the judicial resources needed. This update provides estimates based on cases filed in FY 2018.

The state has an estimated net deficit of 6.51 judges based on FY 2018 data. Overall, FY 2018 filings increased from FY 2017 by 2,118 cases (1.05 percent).

Yearly Trend in Judicial Resources (Full-Time Equivalent Judges)

| | 2007 Model | | 2013 Model | | | | |
|--|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Fiscal Years | FY 12 | FY 13 | FY 14 | FY 15 | FY 16 | FY 17 ^(a) | FY 18 ^(b) |
| Total Judicial Resources | 152 | 152 | 152 | 152 | 153 | 153 | 156 |
| Estimated Judicial Resources Needed | 145.35 | 157.13 | 154.73 | 151.22 | 157.22 | 159.31 | 162.51 |
| Net Excess or Deficit in Judicial Resources | 6.65 | -5.13 | -2.73 | 0.78 | -4.22 | -6.31 | -6.51 |

Notes: (a) The weighted caseload update for FY 2017 was revised with data received after the report was published. (b) Judicial Districts 16, 19, and 21 were each assigned one more judge in September 2018. They were included in the model for FY 2018 when determining the net demand in judicial resources. Source: Calculations by the Office of Research and Education Accountability based on data provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

At the district level, judicial districts 19, 22, and 23 showed the highest demand for judicial resources in FY 2018, with respective estimated net deficits of 1.23, 1.23, and 1.52 FTE judges.

In terms of categories of cases, criminal cases increased about 5.5 percent (46 percent of cases), civil cases decreased by less than 1 percent (30 percent of cases), and domestic relations cases decreased by over 3.5 percent (25 percent of cases). With an increase of 3,082 case filings compared to last year, probation violations saw the largest change in the number of case filings by a wide margin. The other case types that exhibited a change greater than 1,000 case filings when compared to FY 2017 are: Felony A and B cases (+1,237); Felony C, D, and E cases (-1,151); and Contempt cases (-1,737). The FY 2018 update includes revised figures for Shelby County for FY 2017, as criminal case data for FY 2017 was unavailable last year and a three-year growth average was used in lieu of actual data. The Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) received Shelby County’s criminal case data for FY 2017 in late 2018 and then recalculated judicial need for the county for FY 2017. Based on actual criminal case data, Shelby County shows a surplus of 1.54 FTE judges for FY 2017 as opposed to a deficit of 1.97.

The FY 2018 update also includes an analysis of how the passage of Public Chapter 1021 of 2018, which allows most appeals under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act to be filed and heard outside of Davidson County, may affect case weights for Administrative Hearing case types.

The FY 2018 judicial weighted caseload update and a map showing estimated demand for judicial resources by judicial district are available at www.comptroller.tn.gov/OREA/.

