

VERMONT JUDICIAL OFFICER AND COURT STAFF WORKLOAD ASSESSMENT

Delphi Workload Assessment Report

Prepared for:
Vermont State Court Administrator

By:
National Center for State Courts
Court Consulting Services

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About the National Center for State Courts

Consulting services for this study were provided by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), Court Consulting Services. Founded by the Conference of Chief Justices in 1971, NCSC is an independent, private, nonprofit corporation dedicated to improving courts and upholding the rule of law nationwide and around the world. As the pre-eminent judicial reform organization in the United States, NCSC strives to help courts improve the administration of justice and delivery of services. The NCSC mission is to drive innovation and progress in courts and justice systems.

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Executive Summary

Adequate resources are essential for courts to effectively manage and process court matters in a timely manner while also ensuring the delivery of quality service to court patrons, litigants, and the public. Meeting these challenges includes ensuring a sufficient number of state-level judicial officers and court staff to manage the court's caseload and determining whether these resources are being allocated properly and in the correct locations. Since 2009, workload assessments have been used as a tool to evaluate the need for judicial officers and court staff in Vermont courts through the development of a weighted caseload model.

Weighted caseload models must be updated periodically to ensure their validity. Therefore, the Vermont Judiciary engaged the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to conduct a workload assessment, following a consensus-based Delphi process, to update the most recently developed 2015 case weights for civil, criminal, family, juvenile, probate, and the statewide Environmental Division and Judicial Bureau of the Vermont Superior Court.

Findings

The 2024 workload assessment produced case weights and models that the Vermont Judiciary can use to help determine optimal judicial and court staffing levels. The models can be updated annually by applying the most recent three-year average case filings for each case type to the models.

The updated workload standards developed for the Vermont Superior Court provide uniform and comparable workload measures and help determine the baseline number of judicial officers and court staff needed to provide effective case processing and case resolution in each court type (e.g., civil, criminal, family, probate). Applying the workload standards to the three-year Vermont Superior Court filing averages for fiscal years 2021 through 2023 resulted in a need for 71.47 judicial officers and 181.05 court staff to manage the workload of the Vermont Superior Court, which reflects a current deficit of 15.02 FTE for judicial officers, while the court staff figure is equal to the need.

Figure ES 1: Implied Vermont Judicial Officer and Court Staff Statewide Resource Need

Case Type	Current Demand FTE	Current Allocated Resources	Difference Between Allocation and Demand
Judicial Officers	71.47	56.45	-15.02
Court Staff	181.05	181.00	0.05

Recommendations

The NCSC proposes three recommendations to maintain the integrity and utility of the case weights and judicial officer and court staff need models.

1. The weighted caseload models presented in this report should be the starting point for determining need. Access to justice issues, process efficiencies, and court performance data should always be considered when addressing judicial officer and court staff needs. Similarly, there may be factors, such as varying rates of jury trials, variation in the need for interpreters, and self-represented litigants in certain areas that may impact the need for judicial officers and court staff.

2. The current judicial officer and court staff need models should be updated annually using the most recent three-year average of case filings for each case type represented in the study.

3. Over time, the integrity of the case weights is affected by multiple influences likely to impact case processing time, such as those that impacted the 2015 case weights referenced in this report. The Vermont Judiciary should update the case weights in five to seven years to ensure that they accurately represent the judicial officer and court staff workload.

Recommendations

- ✓ Use model as starting point.
- ✓ Use updated case filings to update model annually.
- ✓ Update case weights every 5-7 years.

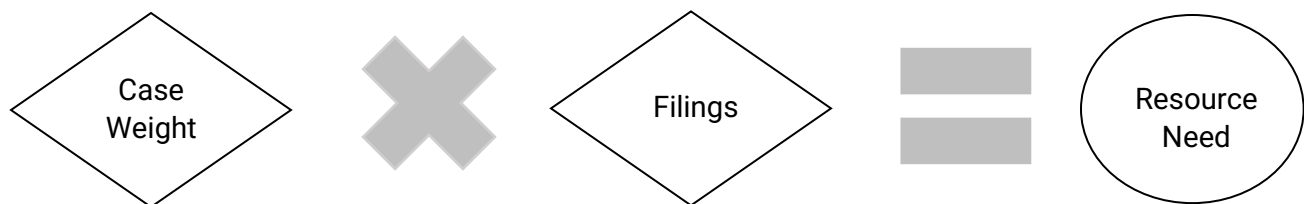
Table of Contents

<u>BACKGROUND</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>VERMONT WORKLOAD ASSESSMENT HISTORY</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>WORKLOAD ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>JUDICIAL OFFICER AND COURT STAFF DELPHI REVIEW PANELS</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>APPENDICES</u>	<u>42</u>

Background

The Vermont Judiciary requested consulting services from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to independently evaluate the judicial officer (also referred to as “judge” for this report) and court staff resources needed to effectively manage the superior court case workload, which includes jurisdiction in criminal, civil, juvenile, family, probate, treatment courts, Judicial Bureau, and Environmental Division cases. The analysis performed by NCSC staff updated the prior workload assessment project, conducted in 2015, using a consensus-based Delphi process and accounted for new laws and changes in case management practices, technologies, and policies.

Workload assessment studies, such as the Delphi process, provide courts with qualitative data and information about staffing needs based on the amount of time required to process various types of cases. This information is useful in determining the number of judicial officers and court staff needed to cover specific calendars based on the number and types of cases filed.



By weighting different types of cases to account for variations in complexity and the need for judicial officer and court staff attention, workload assessments translate the number of cases that come before the court into the total amount of judicial and staff work required to dispose of those cases. The result is a judicial officer and court staff workload model that provides an effective basis for determining judicial officers and staff needs and for equitably allocating resources. More than 40 states currently employ workload assessments, or weighted caseload models, to analyze resource needs in their trial courts, and the NCSC is the national leader in the weighted caseload method of court-related workload assessment.¹

Since the last workload assessment study was conducted in 2015, there has been a significant turnover in leadership, including the State Court Administrator, Chief Superior Court Judge, Chief of Trial Court Operations, and other key leaders, within the Court Administrator’s Office (CAO). There has also been significant turnover among judicial officers and court staff. Changes in court practices, including implementing a new case management system in 2020 and adapting court processes to accommodate safety measures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, primarily through the increased use of remote hearings in some courts, have occurred. These issues have impacted judicial officers and court staff case processing times.

¹ Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Wyoming, and Vermont are just a few of the states currently using judicial weighted caseload models developed by the NCSC.

Vermont Workload Assessment History

Workload assessments, or weighted caseload studies, have been used in Vermont for 15 years to evaluate the need for judicial officers and court staff. The 2024 workload assessment produced updated case weights and a workload model that the Judiciary can use to determine optimal judicial and court staffing levels statewide, by county, and by division, using the most recent three-year average case filings for each case type on an annual basis.²



After the first workload assessment was conducted in Vermont in 2009, a subsequent workload assessment occurred in 2014 with the final report issued in 2015. The purpose was to update the judicial officer and court staff case weights developed in 2009. Both the 2009 and 2015 workload assessments were time and motion studies.

A time and motion study measures case complexity in terms of the average amount of judicial officer or staff time actually spent managing and hearing different case types, from the initial filing to final resolution, including any post-judgment activity. A time and motion study includes judges and staff monitoring how their time is spent over a specific time frame. This level of detail involves tracking the amount of time spent on each case type and case-related activity or non-case-related activity. For example, a judge may report spending 5 minutes on a misdemeanor pre-trial case activity as part of their day. Court staff may report spending 20 minutes on a misdemeanor post-trial case activity. In 2009, the time and motion study spanned a four-week period. In 2015, the study spanned a twelve-week period. These time frames provided sufficient judicial officer and staff activity to determine accurate case weights.

In the previous workload assessment study conducted in 2015, researchers concluded that “[t]he case weights adopted....indicate the baseline need for 50.68 judicial officers and 212.00 court staff across all divisions to process the annual incoming caseload of the Vermont courts effectively.³ These case

² Generally, the case weights are accurate for five to seven years, at which time NCSC recommends that courts update them to ensure they accurately represent the workload of judicial officers and staff.

³ The 2015 case weights were calculated based on time submitted during the four-week period by court staff, which included court operations managers, security staff, and treatment court staff although these three specific positions were not included and factored into the 2024 study.

weights are grounded in current practices (as measured by the time study).”⁴ However, the case weights reflected “a system in which there is a backlog of cases, not enough time in the normal workday for judicial officers and court staff to keep up with their workloads, and a shortage of trial time available for those who would like to settle disputes in that manner.”⁵

At the time of the 2015 study, 32 superior court full-time equivalent (FTE) judicial officer positions were funded, with one FTE serving as the chief superior court judge. There were 212.87 court staff position FTEs allocated. In the 2015 study, while law clerks recorded their time, law clerk time was not factored into the judicial officer resource need. The study noted, “if law clerks did not provide judicial officer assistance, more judicial officers would be needed to accomplish the research and legal writing work that law clerks perform.”⁶

2024 Delphi Workload Assessment

The goal of the 2024 statewide workload assessment study was to update the 2015 judicial officer and court staff case weights and the corresponding workload models to show both the overall statewide resource need and the need by county. The models also show the need by division (e.g., criminal, civil, family, probate). To update the 2015 case weights and models, the CAO and NCSC focused on changes that have occurred since the previous workload assessment that would affect the case weights. The Delphi panels discussed possible technological, legislative, procedural, and staffing changes that impact case processing times. For court staff, the case weights and model do not reflect the time of court operations managers, security staff, or treatment court staff all of whom were included in the 2015 study.

Since the 2015 time study, several changes have occurred within the Judiciary, including modification of practices to include the use of remote hearings, the implementation of a new case management system and electronic filing, new positions created to assist with remote hearings and other technology-based issues, a greater degree of centralized work, and significant changes in court leadership. The 2024 assessment addressed how these issues and others impacted case processing times for judicial officers and court staff.

This study used a comprehensive strategy incorporating consensus-based Delphi panels to update the existing case weights. This methodology was in contrast to the time and motion study used in the two previous assessments in 2009 and 2015. The use of a Delphi methodology alleviated the time commitment for all judges and staff by eliminating the need for training and the daily tracking and entering of their worktime. During the Delphi sessions, judges and court staff were asked to adjust the 2015 case weights by focusing primarily on what has changed, that had either increased or decreased

⁴ Tallarico, S., Friess, E., and Douglas, J. Vermont Trial Court System Judicial Officer and Court Staff Weighted Caseload Study, 2015, p. i.

⁵ Ibid, p. 16.

⁶ Ibid, p. ii.

case processing times, since the prior assessment. There were also 16 new case types, shown in Figure 1, for which new case weights were established using the Delphi process in 2024.

Figure 1. 2024 New Case Weights Developed

Civil	Landlord Tenant Foreclosures Collections Appeals Prisoner Cases Torts
Family/Juvenile	Family Treatment Court Youthful Offender Other Miscellaneous Family CHINS ABC/TPR filings ⁷
Probate ⁸	Adoptions: Agency Adoptions: Private
Environmental Division	Civil Citation/Other
Judicial Bureau ⁹	Municipal Violations Traffic Violation Fish and Wildlife Violations

⁷ Separate case weights were created in the 2015 study for CHINS (Children in Need of Services) ABC cases (defined in 33 V.S.A §5102(3)) and Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) cases. However, the 2024 Delphi assessment created a new combined 2015 case weight for both CHINS ABC and TPR filings. This combined case weight was used to initiate discussions with the Delphi panel. The combined case weight was created by using the 2015 time study data and totaling the total amount of time recorded for CHINS ABC cases and the total amount of time recorded for TPRs. Since the TPRs are part of the larger CHINS ABC case file, the total combined time was divided by the number of CHINS ABC cases for the 2015 study. The single CHINS ABC and TPR case weight was created because (i) most TPR cases originate as a CHINS ABC case, and the TPR filing is a motion or petition in the underlying CHINS ABC file, and (ii) the current case management system does not capture TPR filings separate from CHINS ABC.

⁸ In 2015, a single case weight was created for all adoptions; there was no distinction between agency and private adoptions. However, due to the variation in the complexity of the two case types, separate case weights were created for agency and private adoptions for the 2024 Delphi assessment.

⁹ For judicial officers, two case weights were created in 2015 for Judicial Bureau cases to account for the difference in uncontested and contested Judicial Bureau matters. However, for court staff, a single case weight was created in 2015 to account for all Judicial Bureau cases with no distinction between uncontested and contested cases. In the 2024 Delphi assessment, three new case types were developed to account for the variation in each case type. Also, the current case management system lacked the capacity to discern between uncontested and contested Judicial Bureau cases to mirror the 2015 case types.

Prior to holding the Delphi panels, a statewide survey of judicial officers and court staff was conducted to identify obstacles in their work and perceptions from each group about perceived time constraints to complete their work-related duties. Following this survey, focus groups were conducted to obtain more detailed information based on the information contained in the surveys. The information gathered from both the surveys and focus groups was used to inform the Delphi panel discussions, where each panel discussed the impacts on case processing times since 2015.¹⁰

After each Delphi panel had updated the case weights, an additional review occurred. The Delphi methodology employed a final qualitative decision-making process conducted by two Advisory Committees and an Executive Committee to analyze all project results and recommend a final set of judicial officer and court staff workload standards.

The current workload assessment study built and improved upon the previous work in Vermont by maintaining some of the same data elements but increasing the number of case types for which case weights were developed. The 2024 statewide study accomplished the following:

- Utilized a methodology that based the development of case weights on changes in practice and case processing times gathered through qualitative data;
- Eliminated the need for all judicial officers and court staff to participate, thereby mitigating the burden of documenting all time spent over a four-week period and participating in training;
- Augmented the case types for which case weights were developed, and
- Allowed for a more qualitative review of judicial officer and court staff practices, which are generally more supplemental in the standard time and motion study.

The updated case weights established a transparent and flexible model that can be used to determine the need for superior court judicial officers and court staff in each county based on the three-year average number of filings for each county or statewide for Judicial Bureau and Environmental Division cases.

¹⁰ The report was finalized in 2015 but the time and motion study from which the 2015 case weights were derived occurred in 2014.

Workload Assessment Methodology

A consensus-based Delphi method was used to update the case weights and the resulting Vermont workload model for judicial officers and court staff. A Delphi process is a systematic, interactive method that relies on a panel of experts to make decisions and reach consensus through facilitated discussions. This methodology was developed by the RAND corporation in the 1940s and has since been used by both the government and the private sector to gather expert opinion on a specific subject or content area.

In the court milieu, the Delphi process provides a structured way for knowledgeable and experienced judges and court staff to evaluate the quality and time requirements of current case processing practices. The case weights, which were updated by Delphi panels, represent the average case-related time (in minutes) required to manage each case type. Applying these case weights to current or projected case filing numbers results in a measure of workload, which can be manually updated by inserting new filing figures. An estimate of the resource requirements can be made by dividing workloads by the amount of time available per judicial officer and court staff annually. This approach, which involves few complicated procedures, is sufficiently rigorous to measure resource needs and evaluate resource allocations.

The weighted caseload method of workload assessment is grounded in the understanding that different types of court cases vary in complexity and, consequently, in the amount of judicial officer and staff work they generate. For example, a typical felony creates a greater need for judicial resources than the average misdemeanor case, although the court staff misdemeanor case weight may be larger than the judicial officer case weight due to various administrative responsibilities involved. Therefore, case weights are developed to quantify the average amount of time required to hear, process, manage, and/or dispose of a case type. The case weight does not consider the volume or quantity of the case type but rather the amount of time required to manage an individual case of a particular case type.

Vermont Advisory Committees. For the Vermont Delphi Study, three oversight groups, the members of which were designated by the CAO, provided ongoing oversight and guidance at the onset and throughout the project: the Executive Advisory Committee, Judicial Officer Workload Study Advisory Committee, and Court Staff Workload Study Advisory Committee. The Executive Advisory Committee included CAO leadership and agreed on the overall project goals, timeframes, data requests, case type categories, and requirements while providing high-level guidance that informed the work of the two study advisory committees. Both study advisory committees provided oversight and guidance throughout the workload assessment project. The Executive Advisory Committee and study advisory committees also determined if adjustments were needed to the case weights updated by the Delphi panels.

Figure 2. Executive Advisory Committee

Name	Title	Office
Laurie Canty	Trial Court Operations	CAO
Therese Corsones	State Court Administrator	CAO
Scott Griffith	Planning and Court Services	CAO
Linda Richard	Project Liaison	CAO
Amanda Stites	Superior Court Clerk	SW Region/All Divisions
Judge Thomas Zonay	Chief Superior Judge	CAO

Figure 3. Judicial Officer Workload Study Advisory Committee

Name	Title	Division
Judge Jodi French	Probate Judge	Probate
Judge Joyce McKeeman	Assistant Judge	Civil/Family
Judge Mary Morrissey	Superior Judge	Criminal/Family
Magistrate Barry Peterson	Magistrate	Family
Judge Charles Romeo	Chief Hearing Officer	Traffic/Judicial Bureau
Judge Mary Teachout	Superior Judge (Retired)	Civil
Judge Thomas Walsh	Superior Judge	Environmental

Figure 4. Court Staff Workload Study Advisory Committee

Name	Title	County/Division
Pam Bassett	Judicial Assistant	Addison/Probate
Sadonna Delibac	Court Operations Manager	Orange/All Divisions
Angel Desilets	Register	Essex/Probate
Wendy Dickie	Court Operations Manager	Bennington/Criminal and Family
Lynn Lewis	Family Case Manager	Lamoille/Family
Sharon McNeil	Court Operations Manager	Rutland/Civil and Probate
Jennifer Morse	Court Operations Manager	Statewide/Judicial Bureau
Samantha Spinella	Court Operations Manager	Orange/All Divisions
Andy Stone	Manager	OSCA/TSC
Maggie Villeneuve	Superior Court Clerk	NE Region/All Divisions

Base Case Weights. The case weights, or average case processing times, developed in the 2015 time study were used as a starting point for discussions to determine the 2024 judicial officer and court staff resources needed as well as the resources needed in each county. In some instances, new case weights were developed if no case weight was created in the 2015 study. This was because the case type was new (e.g., Youthful Offender), because the number of case filings for that specific case type could not be provided by the CAO in 2015, or simply because the case type was not specifically tracked in the previous study and therefore no case weight could be created (e.g., landlord-tenant).

The weighted caseload method calculates resource needs based on each court's total workload. The weighted caseload formula consists of three critical elements:

- Case filings or the number of new cases of each type opened each year.¹¹
- Case weights, which represent the average amount of time required by judicial officers and court staff to process cases of each type during a one-year period.
- The year value, or the amount of time each judicial officer and court staff has available for case-related work in one year.

The total annual workload is calculated by multiplying the average number of filings by the corresponding case weight for judicial officers and then summing the workload across all case types. The same calculation is used to determine the annual workload for court staff. The three-year average filings used to calculate the workload can be found in [Appendix A](#). Each court's workload is then divided by the year value (defined above) to determine the total number of FTE judicial officers or court staff needed to process the workload.

The respective advisory committees considered the non-case-related time for each group—judicial officers or staff—using the similar time from the previous workload study as a baseline. Non-case-related time includes activities such as attending meetings, participating in committees, and traveling between court locations. The Executive Advisory Committee reviewed and agreed to apply the non-case-related time identified by each advisory committee (45 minutes per day for judicial officers, and 98 minutes per day for court staff). The non-case-related time is deducted from the 8-hour day, leaving the remainder of the day for case-related work. Thus, in an 8-hour working day, judicial officers have 7 hours and 15 minutes to process cases, and court staff have 6 hours and 22 minutes to process cases.

Therefore, the year value for judicial officers and court staff remained constant from the 2015 assessment: 208 days at eight hours per day. When applying the non-case-related time, each judicial officer has 90,480 minutes available for case-specific work in a year, and court staff has 80,496 minutes available for case-specific work.

¹¹ For this study, a three-year average of case filings in calendar years 2021, 2022, and 2023 was used for each case type.

Initial Meetings. An initial meeting was conducted with the Executive Advisory Committee in September 2023 to outline the workload assessment process, answer questions, and agree on project timelines. Separate meetings were subsequently held with the Judicial Officer Workload Study Advisory Committee and the Court Staff Workload Study Advisory Committee. Both meetings provided an opportunity to discuss the project timeline, focus group, and Delphi panel compositions, as well as identify the case types to be updated or created for this assessment. The 39 case types reviewed during this project are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. All Case Types Updated in 2024

Civil	Small Claims
	Stalking/Sexual assault
	Landlord Tenant
	Foreclosures
	Collections
	Appeals
	Prisoner Cases
	Torts
	Other Misc. Civil
Criminal	Misdemeanor
	Felony
	Adult Treatment Courts
	Civil Suspension
	Investigation Requests: Search Warrants, Inquests, NTO
	Other Misc. Criminal
Family	Domestic
	Child Support
	Protection Orders
	CHINS (A/B/C)
	Delinquency
	Truancy (including CHINS)
	Youthful Offender
	Family Treatment Court
	Mental Health
Probate	Other Misc. Family
	Estates
	Trusts
	Adult Guardianship
	Minor Guardianship
	Adoptions: Agency
	Adoptions: Private
	Other Probate
Environmental	De Novo Appeals
	On the Record Appeals
	Enforcement Actions
	Civil Violation/Other
Judicial Bureau	Municipal Violations
	Traffic Violations
	Fish and Wildlife

Adequacy of Time Surveys. In November 2023, adequacy of time surveys for judicial officers and court staff were developed by NCSC with contributions from the Executive Advisory Committee. These web-based surveys were disseminated statewide to all judicial officers and court staff. The goal of the surveys was to determine the perspective of respondents as to whether they have enough time to complete all their responsibilities within current resource levels reasonably, their perceived obstacles to getting work done, and to consider those case types and case activities where additional time is required to enhance the quality of the justice that is being delivered.

Judicial Officers' Survey Responses. Forty-four judicial officers responded to the adequacy of time survey. Of those who responded, 25% have sixteen years or more experience as judicial officers, while another 63% have ten years or less. More specifically, approximately 27% have worked as judicial officers for three years or less.

Approximately 40% of judicial officers responded that they almost always or often have sufficient time to complete their work. Unfortunately, nearly 60% of respondents indicated they sometimes, rarely, or never have adequate time for lunch and other breaks throughout the day. The majority of judicial officers (71%) indicated they are almost always or always able to meet deadlines in a timely and unrushed manner.

Judicial officers expressed a need for reliable remote hearing capacity, infrastructure, and support. The need for technological support was echoed in another response that indicated a desire for on-site information technology support staff to resolve technology issues. Survey comments reflected the need for more judicial officer training, particularly probate-specific seminars, and additional time to allow judges opportunities to attend training and meetings. Judicial officers also need more time to perform judicial duties, such as writing findings. There is also a perceived need for more staff, including judges, and courtroom space to address the backlog.

Survey results showed judicial officers view the electronic filing and case management systems as improving efficiencies in some ways while impeding them in others. Electronic filing has allowed for more efficiency and ease by enabling access to the entire file online from any location. This allows judges to locate cases that are filed anywhere in the state, cover courts with little notice, and create tasks and calendars that are easy to use. However, it has added to the administrative tasks judicial officers must undertake and made it more cumbersome to respond to very routine motions. E-filings are often difficult to read (especially in complicated filings like some environmental division cases and probate cases), incorrectly filed, or improperly scanned/labeled. This is true for both attorney and non-attorney filers. Further, these filings are completely inaccessible if the internet is slow, indicating a technological concern. Judicial officers also spend more time determining if a party was served with a particular filing.

The case management system makes routine processes more difficult and reduces efficiency for some judicial officers. It has shifted administrative tasks to judges and made deciding even stipulated motions a job that requires several mouse clicks. It has shifted "busy work" from staff

to judges. Form orders that used to be completed by staff in the courtroom while the judge announced their ruling are now completed by judges either during or after the hearing. Because all tasks appear in a single queue, workflows cannot be organized based on difficulty or the amount of time needed to complete the task. The result is that the task queue tends to be amorphous and difficult to prioritize. Responses varied among judicial officers about their stress in meeting deadlines and commitments, completing work, and the sustainability of their current work pace. These responses are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Judicial Officer Adequacy of Time

Question	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neutral	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree	Average
I rarely feel stressed about deadlines or commitments.	6	9	4	12	7	3.13
I rarely feel stressed or overwhelmed by the amount of work I have to complete.	5	9	4	15	5	3.16
The pace at which I work is sustainable.	7	10	8	9	4	2.82
E-filing has made my job easier.	7	11	8	3	6	2.71
The new case management system has made my work easier.	3	11	7	4	8	3.09

Survey respondents were asked about obstacles that hinder them from achieving success in their work as judicial officers. The lack of adequate personnel, including judges, paralegals, administrative assistants, and law clerks, and heavy workloads were the most commonly identified obstacles.

Extensive responsibilities and caseloads were also noted. Heavy judicial workload and judicial rotations require judges to travel as much as an hour or more round trip on top of working long days. Judges also lack the time needed to hear and decide cases and then write the resulting decisions. One respondent indicated that while the assistance of a law clerk would be beneficial in some rotations, the amount of work is simply more than one judge can complete in other rotations.

Judicial officers indicated the need for more time to conduct legal research, prepare findings and orders for trials, review and hear pretrial dispositive motions, attend training, address self-represented litigant issues, and address the questions and concerns raised by parties and their counsel in a hearing.

Judicial officers were asked if having more time to devote to certain case types would improve the quality of the judicial officer's work product. Juvenile, domestic, relief from abuse, and minor and adult guardianship matters were among the top responses.

Court Staff Survey Responses. A total of 108 court staff responded to the court staff adequacy of time survey. Of those who responded, 23% had 16 years or more experience, and half had five years or less experience, highlighting the recent turnover within this group.

Approximately one-third of respondents stated they rarely or almost never have sufficient time on a regular basis to complete their work. At the same time, 43% said they almost always or often have sufficient time to complete their work. Of the 108 respondents, 30 (27%) said they almost always or often feel stressed or overwhelmed by the amount of their work. Conversely, 44 (40%) reported that they rarely or almost never feel stressed or overwhelmed.

The most common case types identified for which having extra time would improve work product quality included domestic, criminal miscellaneous, felony, and juvenile CHINS (Abuse and Neglect) matters. However, 32 (29%) respondents indicated they do not need additional time for any case type. Figure 7 reflects the activities that court staff identified where additional time is needed to improve the quality of their work product. Having additional time for the following activities was among the top responses: training and education, case-related customer service, and courtroom support and monitoring. Twenty-four (22%) staff responded they did not need additional time for any activity.

Figure 7. Court Staff Activities Where Additional Time Needed

Activity	Percentage	Count
Education and Training	17.33%	39
Case-Related Customer Service	13.78%	31
Courtroom Support/Court Monitoring	12.00%	27
I do not need additional time for any activities	10.67%	24
Case Initiation, Calendaring, Financial Management & Jury Services	9.78%	22
Tend to Personnel-Related Work	8.44%	19
Non-Case-Related General Customer Service	7.56%	17
Other	6.22%	14
Non-Case-Related Financial Management, Jury Services, General Administrative	5.33%	12
Committees and Special Assignments	3.56%	8
Child Support Activities	3.11%	7
Treatment Court Activities	2.22%	5

The survey demonstrated a lack of awareness by some staff of training opportunities. However, staff remarked that if such opportunities were available, they would likely not have the time or office coverage to attend due to the need for staff to assist in the courtroom and assist self-represented litigants. Insufficient time to attend training, lack of training on technologies and continuing education, and lack of desk time were identified as obstacles to staff achieving success in their jobs.

Responses regarding the case management system were similar to the judicial officer responses—it has created efficiencies in some ways, and decreased efficiencies in others, but, importantly, improved connectivity is needed to support the technology.

Focus Groups. To capture the perspective of judicial officers and court staff about the constraints on work time and the day-to-day factors affecting case processing and management in the Vermont Superior Courts, three separate focus groups were conducted with representatives of each role in January 2024. The focus groups provided NCSC with insight into their case-related work and the factors impacting their work since the last workload assessment time study was completed.

NCSC staff started each focus group with an overview of the project, methodology, and summary of the relevant findings from the adequacy of time survey. Discussions in both the judicial officer and court staff focus groups concentrated on the following question: “Since 2015, what has changed that would increase or decrease the amount of time needed for judicial officers and court staff to process a case from filing to post-disposition?” The groups were asked about potential legislative, process, and

technological changes that would impact the case weights for each case type area (e.g., criminal, civil, family, probate). Follow-up questions were posed regarding the impact these changes have had on their work, the adequacy of time to complete their work, and what work is currently not getting done to their satisfaction.

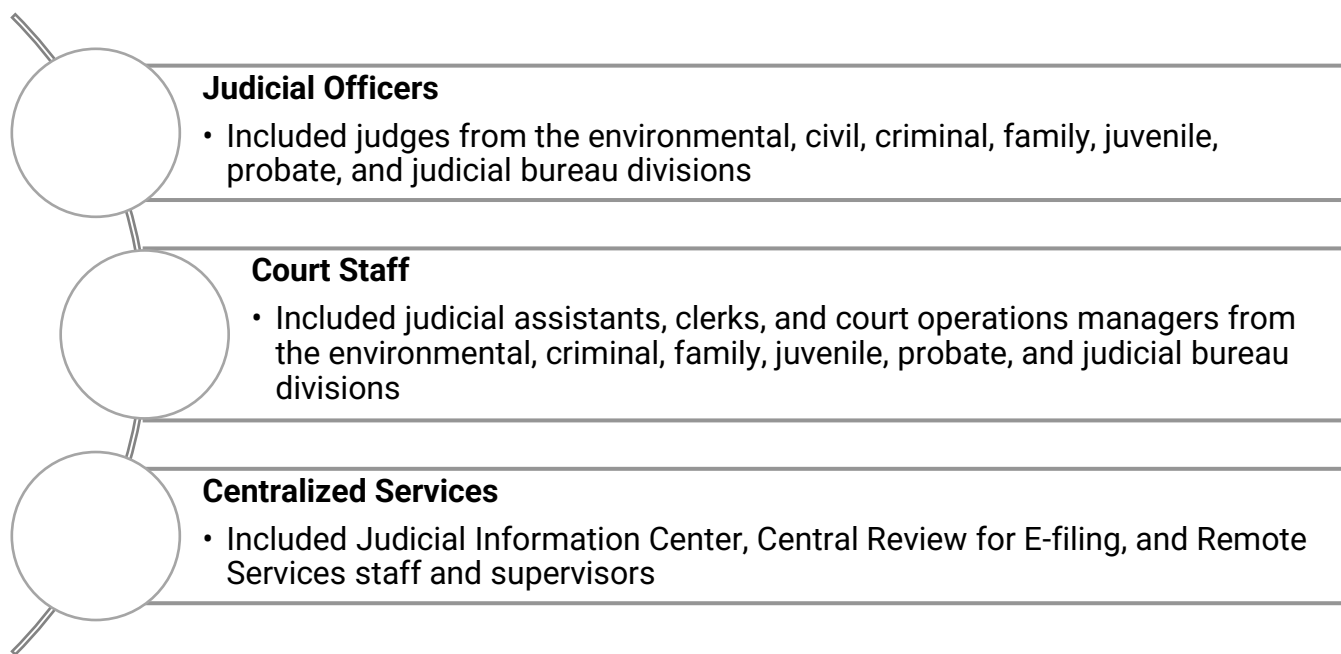
A special focus group was held with representatives from centralized staffing groups that were not included in the Delphi study. The participants included staff from the Judicial Information Center, Central Review for E-Filing, and Remote Services, all of whom support court users from across the state. The purpose of this special focus group was to better understand their functions and how their work supports judicial officers and court staff. As the centralized services group did not exist when the 2015 study was conducted, this focus group provided NCSC with information about the type of work centralized services perform and the type of services they offer the local courts, which may impact workload.

The Judicial Information Center (JIC) staff assists the local courts by answering phone calls that may otherwise go directly to the courts. However, this does not mean that local courts are not answering and responding to phone calls, as JIC staff may not always be able to address the inquiry. The JIC does not provide coverage for the Environmental Division. Central Review staff provide technical assistance and training on electronic filing, responding to attorney questions about e-filing, and reviewing e-filings. Remote services staff train local court staff on remote hearing technology, troubleshoot remote hearing issues, and identify improvements to the remote hearing process. However, they do not schedule remote hearings for the court.

General themes emerged from the two judicial officer and court staff focus groups that were consistent with the adequacy of time survey responses. Both groups noted that the implementation of the new case management (Odyssey), the increase in remote hearings in some case types, and technological challenges impacting both Odyssey and remote hearings have added to processing times for most case types. These impacts are discussed in the [Judicial Officer and Court Staff Delphi Review Panel](#) section and addressed in the case weight adjustment rationales found in [Appendices B and C](#).

Focus group feedback was used to initiate and inform discussions with each Delphi panel.

Figure 8. Focus Groups



Delphi Panel Review Sessions. Following the completion of the focus groups, NCSC project staff facilitated ten Delphi panels. The Delphi panels were organized by division and case type. There were separate judicial officer and court staff panels for the criminal, civil, family and juvenile, and probate case types. The Environmental Division and Judicial Bureau Delphi panels were conducted with both judicial officers and court staff combined. Each panel was scheduled for approximately 3 ½ hours, with the exception of the Environmental and Judicial Bureau panels, which were each scheduled for two hours.

The Delphi groups focused on reviewing the 2015 case weights and determining whether the case weights should be increased, decreased, or maintained. In some areas, new case weights were developed, as noted in this report. At the beginning of each session, NCSC project staff provided a brief overview of the project, a summary of the feedback from the focus groups, and a reminder of the 2015 case weights, where applicable. The Delphi participants, facilitated by NCSC staff, discussed the changes that have occurred since 2015 that impact case processing times and reached agreements as to how the case weight for each case type should be adjusted.

Final Advisory Committee Meetings. The updated case weights identified by the Delphi review panels were reviewed in April 2024 at each group's final Advisory Committee meeting. The Judicial Officer Workload Study Advisory Committee met on April 17, 2024, to review the judicial officer case weights, and the Court Staff Workload Study Advisory Committee met on April 11, 2024, to review the court staff case weights. The case weights were presented to the Advisory Committees along with the rationales for the adjustments if an adjustment was made. Where the Delphi panel created new case weights, the process for creating the case weight was explained. Both Advisory Committees were afforded the

opportunity to amend the case weights recommended by the Delphi panels that would be presented to the Executive Advisory Committee for final approval.

The Executive Advisory Committee met on April 29, 2024, to review and discuss the case weights for judicial officers and staff as approved by the Judicial Officer and Staff Workload Advisory Committees. The final case weights approved by the Executive Committee are discussed in the following section.

Judicial Officer and Court Staff Delphi Review Panels

Ten Delphi panels met between March and April 2024 to review, discuss, and update the 2015 case weights. Each Delphi session included a structured process to review the 2015 case weights.

In some areas, as previously noted, new case weights were developed for case types not included in the 2015 workload assessment but that are now integral to the responsibilities of judicial officers and court staff. The same case types were reviewed and updated or created by the respective judicial officer and court staff Delphi panels. For example, the Civil Judicial Officer Delphi panel created a new case weight for torts, as did the Civil Court Staff Delphi panel. Figure 9 shows the subject matter, or court type, for each of the ten Delphi panels.

Figure 9. Judicial Officer and Court Staff Delphi Review Sessions

Civil Court Judicial Officer	Civil Court Staff	Criminal and Treatment Court Judicial Officer	Criminal and Treatment Court Staff
Family and Juvenile Court Judicial Officer	Family and Juvenile Court Staff	Probate Judicial Officer	Probate Court Staff
Environmental Division Judicial Officer & Court Staff		Judicial Bureau Judicial Officer & Court Staff	

Few legislative changes have occurred since 2015 that impact case processing times. Overall, each judicial officer and court staff Delphi panel noted that the implementation of the new case management system, Odyssey, and remote hearings have had the greatest impact on the case weights.

The Odyssey case management system and electronic filing (e-filings) resulted in many efficiencies, such as allowing case files to be accessed from anywhere and a more seamless transfer of cases from one county or court to another. However, it has also lengthened case processing times for both judges and staff. Judicial officers reported it takes much longer to review an electronic case file than to review a paper file. One judge estimated it takes six times longer to review a case file for court in Odyssey compared to the previous case management system. The increase in time is due in part to delays

opening the electronic file and because judges found it easier to review a paper file, particularly one with multiple documents. In Odyssey, each document must be opened individually, which increases review time when complex files are involved. Odyssey has also shifted responsibilities that were once more administrative in nature to the judges. This may include monitoring Odyssey queues to review tasks that must be completed. Court staff also reported inefficiencies created by Odyssey.¹² Connectivity delays, slow computer response times, and multiple actions (“clicks”) for simple tasks have increased staff case processing time across all case types, some more so than others.

Remote hearings have also created some efficiencies while adding to some case processing times. The time impacting the case weights is related to creating the remote hearing links and setting up the remote hearing, providing technical assistance to litigants unfamiliar with the technology, restarting hearings, or possibly rescheduling hearings when there are audio issues and the extra time it may take to conduct a hearing remotely versus in person.

Judicial Officer Workload Advisory Committee Delphi Review. The Judicial Officer Workload Study Advisory Committee (JOWSAC) did not adjust the Judicial Delphi panels’ case weights. The non-case-related time was not reviewed by the Delphi panels but was considered by the JOWSAC. The group elected to retain the average non-case-related time of 45 minutes as measured in the 2015 time study but removed the 8 minutes of daily time allotted for travel in the 2015 study. The travel time was removed because judges are not traveling as frequently with the implementation of electronic filing and remote hearings. The final updated case weights for each case type are discussed below and in [Appendix B](#).

Court Staff Workload Study Advisory Committee Delphi Review. The Court Staff Workload Study Advisory Committee (CSWSAC) modified the case weights of the Staff Delphi panels for two case types, including *investigation requests* (e.g., search warrants, inquests, non-testimonial orders) and *adult guardianship* case types. Eight minutes was added by the Advisory Committee to the 2015 case weight for *investigation requests*, increasing the case weight from 24 to 32 minutes to account for the additional steps required to initiate a case, including manual entry and scanning. In the Delphi panel, no adjustment was made to this case weight. In addition to the increase recommended by the Delphi panel for the adult guardianship case weight, the Advisory Committee added 3 minutes to account for activities related to sending notices to file, including generating reports and setting hearings, increasing the adult guardianship case weight to 957 minutes (from 954 minutes).

A Delphi panel to update the staff case weights for family and criminal treatment court, domestic, relief from abuse/protection orders, child support, and miscellaneous family case types could not be convened. Therefore, the CSWSAC updated or, in some cases, created these case weights during its final meeting. The updated case weights and rationales, as modified by the CSWSAC and the Family/Juvenile Court Staff Delphi panel, can be found in [Appendix C](#).

¹² Staff Delphi panels noted that time is often devoted to determining “workarounds” in Odyssey if the functionality is inconsistent with a court practice, which is due to the lack of customization in some areas. This highlighted the need for more standardized processes and customized case management reports.

Non-case-related time was not reviewed by the Court Staff Delphi panels, but the CSWSAC considered this issue. The Committee elected to retain the average non-case-related time from the 2015 assessment time of 93 minutes, including 88 minutes of non-case-related time and 5 minutes allotted for travel associated with short trips to the post office or other errands frequently made by court staff.

Executive Advisory Committee Reviews. The Executive Advisory Committee reviewed the case weights proposed by the JOWSAC and the CSWSAC.

Non-Case-Related Time. The recommended 45 minutes of non-case-related time for judicial officers was approved, with the Executive Committee noting that most judges travel before the workday begins and arrive at their destination by 8:30 a.m.¹³

The recommended 93 minutes of non-case-related time for court staff was also approved. There was discussion as to how the case processing work performed by Court Operations Managers (COMs) should be considered in the workload model. While COMs should not be performing case processing duties as part of their job, they often must take on these responsibilities in addition to their management duties. This is due to courts lacking a sufficient number of judicial assistants to perform this work. To demonstrate the true need for judicial assistants for case processing without the work of COMs performing this role, the staff model will not include COMs FTE positions from the staff model. Additionally, security staff and treatment court staff were not included in the case weight updates and staff model.

2024 Final Case Weights. The Executive Advisory Committee adopted the 2024 court staff case weights approved by the CSWSAC. The 2024 judicial officer case weights approved by the JOWSAC were also adopted by the Executive Advisory Committee, except for the updated case weight for *trust* cases. The Delphi Panel proposed an increased case weight for trusts of 1,534 minutes from the 49-minute trust case weight in 2015. This increase was largely due to the time needed (estimated to be 960 minutes) to write opinions in trust cases. This case weight was reduced by the Executive Advisory Committee (and agreed to by the Delphi panel participants) to 1,168 minutes to account for the fact that not all trust cases will be contested and require this amount of time to write an opinion. The Probate Court Case Weight section discusses this reduction analysis in more detail.

The final 2024 adjusted case weights for judicial officers and court staff are presented in Figure 10 below by court case category and case type.

Figures 11 through 22 show the case weights in comparison to the 2015 case weights by court case category and case type, separated for each group—i.e., judicial officer and court staff. The

¹³ The Probate Judicial Officer Delphi panel noted that two to four of the probate judges are often asked to serve on various committees. This is in addition to their judicial workload. These judges may engage in more non-case-related time related to their participation in committees. However, despite these extra responsibilities, they did not express a desire to be excluded from these groups.

Appendix provides a detailed description of the changes made to the case weights by the Delphi review panels and approved by the Executive Advisory Committee.

Figure 10. 2024 Case Weights (in minutes)

Court Type	Case Type	Judicial Officer	Court Staff	Court Type	Case Type	Judicial Officer	Court Staff
Criminal	Felony	176	417	Probate	Estates	359	452
	Misdemeanor	38	212		Trusts	1,168	44
	Adult Treatment Courts	253	218		Adult Guardianship	438	957
	Civil Suspension	7	38		Minor Guardianship	660	460
	Investigation Requests	14	32		Adoptions: Agency	235	280
	Other Misc. Criminal	26	176		Adoptions: Private	253	348
Civil	Small Claims	36	169	Environmental Division	Other Probate	39	66
	Stalking/Sexual Assault	24	148		De Novo Appeals	1,308	997
	Landlord Tenant	42	226		On the Record Appeals	1,058	1,020
	Foreclosures	79	120		Enforcement Actions	246	155
	Collections	65	161		Civil Citation/Other	30	45
	Appeals	334	19	Judicial Bureau	Municipal Violations	5	28
	Prisoner Cases	225	53		Traffic Violations	5	28
	Torts	237	166		Fish and Wildlife	4	28
	Other Misc. Civil	90	172				
Family	Domestic	269	617				
	Child Support	76	213				
	Relief from Abuse/Protection Orders	84	195				
	CHINS/TPR	1,134	1,450				
	Delinquency	253	418				
	Truancy (CHINS D)	248	417				
	Youthful Offender	309	418				
	Family Treatment Court	253	218				
	Mental Health	84	239				
	Other Misc. Family	15	224				

Criminal and Treatment Court Case Weights

Judicial Officer. The case types reflected below were reviewed by the Judicial Officer Criminal and Treatment Court Delphi panel. The adjustments from the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the JOWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Figure 11. Judicial Officer Criminal Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Felony	130	176
Misdemeanor	28	38
Adult Treatment Courts	273	253
Civil Suspension	6	7
Investigation Requests	14	14
Other Misc. Criminal	24	26

Court Staff. The case types reflected in Figure 12, with the exception of the adult treatment court case weight, were reviewed by the Court Staff Criminal and Treatment Court Delphi panel. The CSWSAC reviewed and discussed the adult treatment court case weight.

In 2015, two treatment court case weights, adult and juvenile, were created. Both of these 2015 case weights included work performed by judicial assistants **and** treatment court coordinators. The inclusion of the time spent by treatment court coordinators in the treatment court case weights can greatly inflate the case weight and, therefore, skew the resulting workload model for court case processing staff that is based on those case weights.

For the 2024 Delphi assessment, the case weight was updated to reflect the work of non-treatment court coordinators only. In updating the case weight, the CSWSAC elected to compute a new case weight using the 2015 time study data, but excluding the time entered by the treatment court coordinators in 2015 since non-treatment court coordinator court staff spend less time performing work related to treatment court case types. Additionally, the CSWSAC added 25% more time to account for the additional entry into the case management system. This resulted in a total adult treatment court case weight of 218 minutes.

The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the CSWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Figure 12. Court Staff Criminal Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Felony	352	417
Misdemeanor	177	212
Adult Treatment Courts	2,576	218
Civil Suspension	30	38
Investigation Requests	24	32
Other Misc. Criminal	176	176

Civil Court Case Weights

Judicial Officer. The Judicial Officer Civil Court Delphi panel reviewed the case types reflected in Figure 13. The adjustments from the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the JOWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. The N/A shown in the chart below indicates that no case weight was developed for this case type in 2015, although that does not mean that the case type did not exist in 2015. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weights can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Figure 13. Judicial Officer Civil Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Small Claims	13	36
Stalking/Sexual Assault	24	24
Landlord Tenant	N/A	42
Foreclosures	N/A	79
Collections	N/A	65
Appeals	N/A	334
Prisoner Cases	N/A	225
Torts	N/A	237
Other Misc. Civil	84	90

Court Staff. The Court Staff Civil Court Delphi panel reviewed the case types reflected in Figure 14. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the CSWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. N/A, as shown in the chart below, indicates that no case weight was developed for this case type in 2015, although that does not mean that the case type did not exist in 2015. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Figure 14. Court Staff Civil Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Small Claims	136	169
Stalking/Sexual Assault	106	148
Landlord Tenant	N/A	226
Foreclosures	N/A	120
Collections	N/A	161
Appeals	N/A	19
Prisoner Cases	N/A	53
Torts	N/A	166
Other Misc. Civil	337	172

Family and Juvenile Case Weights

Judicial Officer. The Judicial Officer Family and Juvenile Court Delphi panel reviewed the case types reflected in Figure 15. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the JOWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. The N/A shown in the chart below indicates that no case weight was developed for this case type in 2015. Both the youthful offender and family treatment court case types are new case types for the 2024 study. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Figure 15. Judicial Officer Family and Juvenile Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Domestic	126	269
Child Support	46	76
Relief from Abuse/Protection Orders	31	84
CHINS/TPR	412	1,134
Delinquency	59	253
Truancy	103	248
Youthful Offender	N/A	309
Family Treatment Court	N/A	253
Mental Health	64	84
Other Misc. Family	N/A	15

Court Staff. The case types reflected in Figure 16 were reviewed, in part, by the Court Staff Family and Juvenile Court Delphi panel. The Delphi panel reviewed and updated the case weights for CHINS/TPR, delinquency, mental health, and truancy case types and created a youthful offender case weight, as this case type was enabled by legislation since the 2015 study.

The CSWSAC adjusted the staff case weights for family treatment court, domestic, relief from abuse/protection orders, child support, and miscellaneous family case types due to the unavailability of court staff to convene a Delphi panel.

Specifically, the family treatment court case weight was reviewed and discussed by the CSWSAC. As previously mentioned, in 2015, two treatment court case weights, an adult and a juvenile, were created in 2015. Both 2015 case weights included work performed by judicial assistants **and** treatment court coordinators. Inclusion of the time spent by treatment court coordinators in the treatment court case weights can inflate the case weight and, therefore skew the resulting workload model that is based on the case weights.

Since 2015, the juvenile treatment court has been abolished. However, a family treatment court was created between 2015 and 2024, and an appropriate case weight must be created. To create a new

case weight for family treatment courts, the CSWSAC followed the same methodology used to update the adult treatment court case weight. In creating the new family treatment court case weight, the CSWSAC used the 2015 time study data for adult treatment courts but excluded the time entered by the treatment court coordinators since non-treatment court coordinator court staff spend less time performing work related to treatment court case types. Additionally, the CSWSAC added 25% more time to account for the additional entry into the case management system. This resulted in a total family treatment court case weight of 218 minutes. This case weight is identical to the case weight for adult treatment courts, as seen in the [Criminal and Treatment Court Case Weight section](#).

The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in Figure 16 in comparison to the updated case weights as approved by the CSWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. The N/A shown in the chart below indicates that no case weight was developed for this case type in 2015. Both the youthful offender and family treatment court case types are new case types for the 2024 study. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Figure 16. Court Staff Family and Juvenile Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Domestic	566	617
Child Support	196	213
Relief from Abuse/Protection Orders	170	195
CHINS/TPR	1,123	1,450
Delinquency	288	418
Truancy	212	417
Youthful Offender	N/A	418
Family Treatment Court	N/A	218
Mental Health	179	239
Other Misc. Family	N/A	224

Probate Court Case Weights

Judicial Officer. The Judicial Officer Probate Court Delphi panel reviewed the case types reflected in Figure 17. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights, seen in Figure 17, are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and adopted by the Executive Advisory Committee, except for the trust case weight.

Figure 17. Judicial Officer Probate Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Estates	101	359
Trusts	49	1,168
Adult Guardianship	429	438
Minor Guardianship	203	660
Adoptions: Agency	130	235
Adoptions: Private	130	253
Other Probate	39	39

As previously noted, the trust case weight was increased by the Delphi panel and further adjusted by the Executive Advisory Committee. The Delphi panel and the JOWSAC proposed an increased case weight for trusts of 1,534 minutes from the 49-minute trust case weight in 2015. This increase was largely due to the time needed (estimated to be 960 minutes) to write opinions in trust cases. The Executive Committee questioned if all trust cases require this amount of time to write a trust opinion and if, in fact, some trust matters are uncontested or simple trust matters that are not as complex.

As the case management system did not track or identify a trust case as contested or uncontested, the CAO provided NCSC staff data showing the disposition types of trust cases filed during the calendar years 2021-2023.¹⁴ Using this data, NCSC inferred that a case is contested if it was disposed of by a bench or non-jury trial, and cases disposed by non-trial disposition were likely uncontested. Following this logic and based on the data, it was estimated that 61% of closed trust cases are uncontested, and 39% of trust cases are likely contested.

During its meeting, the Delphi panel indicated that 16 hours is required to write the opinion in a contested trust matter, but about 3 hours is required in a non-contested trust case. Therefore, based on the 39% contested vs. 61% uncontested estimate, the updated time for writing opinions in trust matters was reduced by about half, from 16 hours for 100% of trust cases to 8.02 hours for 100% of trust cases. When applied to the overall trust case weight, the updated case weight was reduced from 1,534 minutes (25.6 hours) to 1,168 minutes (19.5 hours). Based on the analysis shown in Figure 18, the Executive Advisory Committee approved this methodology, reducing the judicial officer trust case weight to 1,168 minutes to account for the fact that not all trust cases will be contested and will require this amount of time to write an opinion.

An explanation of all changes made to the 2015 case weights can be found in [Appendix B](#).

¹⁴ NCSC reviewed the 99 trust cases filed between 2021 and 2023, and of those, 57 of the cases had dispositions; 61% (n=35) were non-contested and 39% (n=22) were contested. We then applied the 960 minutes required to write an opinion to 39% of cases and adjusted the case weight to reflect this. The Delphi panel participants were allowed to review this change, and they concurred with the revision.

Figure 18. Trust Opinions: Contested vs. Uncontested Trusts

Filing Year	Bench/Non-Jury Trial	Non-Trial Disposition	Total Dispositions
2021	9	14	23
2022	10	9	19
2023	3	12	15
Total	22	35	57

	Percentage	Opinion Writing	Weighted Hours
Contested	39%	16 hours	6.18
Uncontested	61%	3 hours	1.84
Writing Opinions (in hours)			8.02

Court Staff. The case types reflected in Figure 19, below were reviewed by the Court Staff Probate Court Delphi panel. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the CSWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Figure 19. Court Staff Probate Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Estates	337	452
Trusts	59	44
Adult Guardianship	880	957
Minor Guardianship	386	460
Adoptions: Agency	187	280
Adoptions: Private	187	348
Other Probate	33	66

Environmental Division Case Weights

Judicial Officer. The case types reflected in Figure 20 were reviewed jointly by the Judicial Officer and Court Staff Environmental Division Delphi panel. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the

JOWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. The N/A shown in the chart below indicates that no case weight was developed for this case type in 2015, as this is a new case type. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Figure 20. Judicial Officer Environmental Division Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
De Novo Appeals	1,038	1,308
On the Record Appeals	278	1,058
Enforcement Actions	246	246
Civil Citation/Other	N/A	30

Court Staff. The case types reflected in Figure 21 were reviewed jointly by the Judicial Officer and Court Staff Environmental Division Delphi panel. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the CSWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee. The N/A shown in the chart below indicates that no case weight was developed for this case type in 2015, as this is a new case type. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Figure 21. Court Staff Environmental Division Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
De Novo Appeals	990	997
On the Record Appeals	990	1,020
Enforcement Actions	155	155
Civil Citation/Other	N/A	45

Judicial Bureau Case Weights

Judicial Officer. The case types reflected in Figure 22 were reviewed jointly by the Judicial Officer and Court Staff Judicial Bureau Delphi panel. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the JOWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee.

The N/A shown in the chart below indicates that no case weight was developed for this case type in 2015. In 2015, two separate case weights were developed for contested and uncontested matters heard by the Judicial Bureau, but a case weight was not created for each violation type (e.g., municipal). The current case management system does not capture contested and uncontested matters. For the 2024 assessment, three new case types were developed to account for each case type's variation in

case processing times. A single combined case weight of 1.25 was created as the starting case weight using the 2015 contested and uncontested case weights. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 municipal violation case weight and the newly created case weights can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Figure 22. Judicial Officer Judicial Bureau Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Municipal Violations	1.25	5
Traffic Violations	N/A	5
Fish and Wildlife	N/A	4

Court Staff. The case types reflected in Figure 23,¹⁵ below were reviewed jointly by the Judicial Officer and Court Staff Judicial Bureau Delphi panels. The adjustments to the 2015 case weights are shown in comparison to the updated case weights as determined by the Delphi panel and approved by the CSWSAC and Executive Advisory Committee.

The N/A shown in the chart below indicates that no court staff case weight was developed for this case type in 2015. The 2015 study did not capture the violation case weights separately, so the 2015 overall staff Judicial Bureau case weight was used to initiate discussions for the 2024 assessment. An explanation of the changes made to the 2015 case weight and the newly created case weights can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Figure 23. Court Staff Judicial Bureau Case Weight Comparison

Case Type	2015	2024
Municipal Violations	16	28
Traffic Violations	N/A	28
Fish and Wildlife	N/A	28

¹⁵ The Judicial Bureau court staff case weight in 2015 was 16 minutes for all Judicial Bureau case types, not specifically for municipal violations.

Calculating Implied Resource Need

The final case weights were applied to the annual three-year average number of cases filed for fiscal years 2021, 2022, and 2023 to determine the resources needed for judicial officers and court staff in the Vermont Superior Court. Implied “judicial officer need” or “court staff need” refers to the number of judicial officers or court staff needed as a result of multiplying the updated case weights by the average number of filings statewide or in a given county or division to determine the workload and then dividing the workload by the case-related year value. For judicial officers, the judicial officer case-related year value is 90,480 minutes. For court staff, the case-related year value is 80,496 minutes.

Judicial Officer Resource Need. The statewide resource need for judicial officers is determined by multiplying the judicial officer case weight for each case type by the total number of cases filed statewide for each case type. The resource need for judicial officers for each county can be determined by multiplying the case weight for each case type by the average number of filings for that case type in each individual county. To determine the resource need by court division, the case weight for each case type can be multiplied by the number of filings for the case types in that division. Figure 24 shows judicial officer need by case type.¹⁶

Court Staff Resource Need. The statewide resource need for court staff is determined by multiplying the court staff case weight for each case type by the average number of cases filed statewide for each case type. The resource need for court staff for each county can be determined by multiplying the case weight for each case type by the total number of filings for that case type in each individual county. See Figure 25 for court staff need by case type.¹⁷

¹⁶ As indicated previously, the need model is based on a three-year average of filing numbers. While filings are shown in whole numbers in Figure 24, in reality there are some decimal points. For this reason, multiplying the numbers shown will not result in the exact same numbers shown for total workload.

¹⁷ As indicated previously, the need model is based on a three-year average of filing numbers. While filings are shown in whole numbers in Figure 25, in reality there are some decimal points. For this reason, multiplying the numbers shown will not result in the exact same numbers shown for total workload.

Figure 24. Calculating Implied Statewide Judicial Officer Need

Court Type	Case Type	3-Year Filing Average	Case Weight	Total Workload (in minutes)
Criminal	Felony	4,233	176	745,008
	Misdemeanor	12,566	38	477,495
	Adult Treatment Courts	144	253	36,348
	Civil Suspension	994	7	6,958
	Investigation Requests	2,665	14	37,315
	Other Misc. Criminal	544	26	14,135
Civil	Small Claims	3,530	36	127,080
	Stalking/Sexual Assault	1301	24	31,232
	Landlord Tenant	1,225	42	51,436
	Foreclosures	381	79	30,073
	Collections	1,179	65	76,613
	Appeals	179	334	59,897
	Prisoner Cases	446	225	100,350
	Torts	403	237	95,511
	Other Misc. Civil	674	90	60,660
Family	Domestic	2,704	269	727,286
	Child Support	3,794	76	288,369
	Relief from Abuse/Protection Orders	3,505	84	294,420
	CHINS/TPR	773	1,134	876,204
	Delinquency	657	253	166,305
	Truancy	139	248	34,555
	Youthful Offender	321	309	99,189
	Family Treatment Court	10	253	2,446
	Mental Health	1,142	84	95,928
	Other Misc. Family	139	15	2,080
Probate	Estates	2,604	359	934,956
	Trusts	37	1,168	43,216
	Adult Guardianship	446	438	195,494
	Minor Guardianship	326	660	215,160
	Adoptions: Agency	235	235	55,225
	Adoptions: Private	84	253	21,168
	Other Probate	3,778	39	147,355
Environmental	De Novo Appeals	72	1,308	94,176
	On the Record Appeals	6	1,058	6,348
	Enforcement Actions	47	246	11,562
	Civil Citation/Other	5	30	150
Judicial Bureau	Municipal Violations	857	5	4,628
	Traffic Violations	39,808	5	199,040
	Fish and Wildlife	216	4	864
Total Workload =				6,466,235 min
Year Value ÷				90,480 min
FTE Implied Need =				71.47

Figure 25. Calculating Implied Statewide Court Staff Need

Court Type	Case Type	3-Year Filing Average	Case Weight	Total Workload (in minutes)
Criminal	Felony	4,233	417	1,765,161
	Misdemeanor	12,566	212	2,663,921
	Adult Treatment Courts	144	218	31,319
	Civil Suspension	994	38	37,772
	Investigation Requests	2,665	32	85,291
	Other Misc. Criminal	544	176	95,685
Civil	Small Claims	3,530	169	596,570
	Stalking/Sexual Assault	1,301	148	192,597
	Landlord Tenant	1,225	226	276,775
	Foreclosures	381	120	45,680
	Collections	1,179	161	189,765
	Appeals	179	19	3,407
	Prisoner Cases	446	53	23,638
	Torts	403	166	66,898
	Other Misc. Civil	674	172	115,928
Family	Domestic	2,704	617	1,668,162
	Child Support	3,794	213	808,193
	Relief from Abuse/Protection Orders	3,505	195	683,475
	CHINS/TPR	773	1,450	1,120,367
	Delinquency	657	418	274,765
	Truancy	139	417	58,102
	Youthful Offender	321	418	134,178
	Family Treatment Court	10	218	2,107
	Mental Health	1,142	239	272,938
	Other Misc. Family	139	224	31,061
Probate	Estates	2,604	452	1,177,159
	Trusts	37	44	1,628
	Adult Guardianship	446	957	427,141
	Minor Guardianship	326	460	149,960
	Adoptions: Agency	235	280	65,800
	Adoptions: Private	84	348	29,116
	Other Probate	3,778	66	249,370
Environmental	De Novo Appeals	72	997	71,784
	On the Record Appeals	6	1,020	6,120
	Enforcement Actions	47	155	7,285
	Civil Citation/Other	5	45	225
Judicial Bureau	Municipal Violations	857	28	23,996
	Traffic Violations	39,808	28	1,114,624
	Fish and Wildlife	216	28	6,048
Total Workload =				14,574,013 min
Year Value ÷				80,496 min
FTE Implied Need =				181.05

Having calculated the implied need for judicial officers and court staff, the next step is to compare these numbers with the actual number of judicial officers and court staff and determine which value is larger.

Figure 26 below shows the current FTE demand of judicial officers and court staff based on the 2024 study and the current number of allocated judicial officers and court staff.¹⁸ The last column shows the difference between the current allocation and the current FTE demand. For both judicial officers and court staff, there is a resource need. Approximately 22 additional judicial officers are needed statewide, whereas the court staffing figure is equal to the need. The model can calculate the need by division (for judicial officers) and by county (for court staff).

Figure 26. Implied Vermont Judicial Officer and Court Staff Statewide Resource Need

Case Type	Current Demand FTE	Current Allocated Resources	Difference Between Allocation and Demand
Judicial Officers	71.47	56.45	-15.02
Court Staff	181.05	181.00	0.05

¹⁸ The 2015 study reflected a court staff resource need of 212.00 FTE while the 2024 study reflects a court staff resource need of 181.05 FTE. As mentioned in this report, the 2024 study case weights and model do not reflect the time of court operations managers, security staff, or treatment court staff. Additionally, a substantial amount of work previously conducted by court staff has been centralized since the 2015 study was conducted.

Recommendations

The NCSC proposes three recommendations to maintain the integrity and utility of the Vermont judicial officer and court staff case weights and the resulting judicial officer and court staff resource need models.

First, the weighted caseload model presented in this report should be the starting point for determining need. Access to justice issues, process efficiencies, and court performance data should always be considered when addressing judicial officer and court staff needs. Similarly, there may be factors, such as varying rates of jury trials, variation in the need for interpreters, turnover in court staff and varying levels of experience, and self-represented litigants in certain areas that may impact the need for judicial officers and court staff.

Second, the current judicial and court staff need models should be updated annually using the most recent case filings for each case type represented in the study.

Finally, over time, the integrity of the case weights is affected by multiple influences likely to impact case processing time, such as those referenced in this report. The Vermont Judiciary should update the case weights in five to seven years through a time-and-motion study to ensure that the case weights accurately represent the judicial officer and court staff workload.

Appendices

[Appendix A](#) 2021-2023 Average Filings by Case Type

[Appendix B](#) Judicial Officer Case Weight Adjustments

[Appendix C](#) Court Staff Case Weight Adjustments

[Appendix D](#) Judicial Officer Need Model

[Appendix E](#) Court Staff Need Model

Appendix A

2021-2023 Average Filings by Case Type

Court Type	Case Type	3-Year Filing Average
Criminal	Felony	4,233
	Misdemeanor	12,566
	Adult Treatment Courts	144
	Civil Suspension	994
	Investigation Requests	2,665
	Other Misc. Criminal	544
Civil	Small Claims	3,530
	Stalking/Sexual Assault	1301
	Landlord Tenant	1,225
	Foreclosures	381
	Collections	1,179
	Appeals	179
	Prisoner Cases	446
	Torts	403
	Other Misc. Civil	674
Family	Domestic	2,704
	Child Support	3,794
	Relief from Abuse/Protection Orders	3,505
	CHINS/TPR	773
	Delinquency	657
	Truancy	139
	Youthful Offender	321
	Family Treatment Court	10
	Mental Health	1,142
	Other Misc. Family	139
Probate	Estates	2,604
	Trusts	37
	Adult Guardianship	446
	Minor Guardianship	326
	Adoptions: Agency	235
	Adoptions: Private	84
	Other Probate	3,778
Environmental	De Novo Appeals	72
	On the Record Appeals	6
	Enforcement Actions	47
	Civil Citation/Other	5
Judicial Bureau	Municipal Violations	857
	Traffic Violations	39,808
	Fish and Wildlife	216

Appendix B

Judicial Officer Case Weight Adjustments

Civil Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Small Claims	13	36	<i>Process: created case weight by path of the case, using the base case weight and building on that.</i>
				Added 5 minutes to 40% of cases that settle (net increase of 2 minutes), which attorneys previously heard.
				30 minutes were added to 50% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) that did not settle immediately .
				Added 60 minutes for the 10% of cases (net increase of 6 minutes) require with more complex issues requiring written findings.
	Stalking/Sexual Assault	24	24	N/A
	Landlord Tenant	N/A	42	New case type. <i>Process: created case weight by path of the case.</i>
				Added 10 minutes to the 10% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) resolved through default judgment.
				Thirty minutes to 60% of rent escrow cases (net increase of 18 minutes), including a hearing for 20 minutes and 10 minutes to review the filing and motion.
				Added 75 minutes to 30% of cases (net increase of 23 minutes), including the same steps as rent escrow cases, but adding 45 minutes for a second hearing on damages or other costs and possible written orders.
	Foreclosures	N/A	79	New case type. <i>Process: created case weight by path of the case.</i> All cases are touched frequently to keep them moving through the system.
				Path 1: Quick path to default/summary judgment. Accounts for 30 minutes in 20% of cases (net increase of 6 minutes).
				Path 2: Settlement. Accounts for 80 minutes in 34% of cases (net increase of 27 minutes). This takes into account cases that can be in the system for up to two years, but judges must touch them throughout the process to keep them moving.
				Path 3: Delayed default and summary judgment account for 90 minutes in 45% of cases (net increase of 41 minutes). It requires a 60-minute review of the case plus 30 minutes on motion/s.
				Path 4: Trials. Account for 480 minutes in 1% of cases (net increase of 5 minutes).
				<i>General note on foreclosures.</i> A high staff turnover rate requires judges to do a lot more administrative work on these cases. Foreclosures require scrutiny, unlike other types of cases, which take more judicial review time. While there may not be a lot of complicated legal arguments, there are a lot of affidavits. Attorneys also find ways to increase fees, so judges need to be vigilant to ensure that costs to litigants are not artificially escalated. There are also several technical requirements that require judicial vigilance to ensure they are met. Foreclosures are also unique in that a number of judicial interventions occur along the way.
	Collections	N/A	65	New case type. <i>Process: created case weight by type of collection case and path to resolve the case.</i>

Civil Case Type Category	2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
			Approximately 40% of cases are consumer credit cases resolved by default judgment in 45 minutes (net increase of 18 minutes); 35% are consumer credit cases that resolve through non-defaults, take 75 minutes, and require at least two hearings to resolve (net increase of 26 minutes). There may also be some complicated legal issues that require research.
			Tax cases account for 15% of collections cases (a net increase of 3 minutes) and are resolved in approximately 20 minutes.
			Other collections cases have significant variability in case type and complexity. These account for 10% of cases and require an average of 180 minutes to resolve (a net increase of 18 minutes). While filed as collections cases, these can often be contract cases, such as farm feed cases where farmers sue for insufficient quality. There is more litigation in these cases than in other collections cases.
Appeals	N/A	334	New case type. <i>Process: Determined time by category of appeal.</i>
			Probate appeals account for approximately 15% of appeals and are more like de novo cases, resulting in 2–3-day trials. On average, these cases take 12 hours, or 720 minutes (net increase of 108 minutes).
			Small claims appeals account for approximately 45% of cases and take 75 minutes (net increase of 34 minutes). These cases do not have hearings and have limited legal arguments. Judges may have to listen to the original hearing and must write their decision.
			Property tax appeals/municipal appeals/administrative appeals account for approximately 30% of cases. They can be complicated and take an average of 480 minutes (net increase of 144 minutes).
			Workman's comp cases account for approximately 10% of cases and take approximately the same amount of time as property tax appeals, or 480 minutes (net increase of 48 minutes).
Prisoner Cases	N/A	225	New case type. <i>Process: Determined time by nature of the case.</i>
			Furloughs account for 25% of cases and require a review of the record, a single hearing, and a decision, taking an average of 90 minutes per case (net increase of 23 minutes).
			Habeas cases account for 10% of cases, and require an average of 45 minutes per case, including 15 minutes to review the case, 15 minutes to conduct a status hearing, and 15 minutes for additional work (net increase of 5 minutes).
			Post-conviction relief (PCR) cases account for 25% of cases and require an average of 480 minutes to complete (a net increase of 120 minutes). This includes an initial review of the record and filings to classify and understand the case and determine the findings, which can take from a few hours up to four days, depending on the complexity.
			Rule 75 cases account for 30% of cases and require an average of 240 minutes to resolve, including review of the case, a brief hearing, and written findings (net increase of 72 minutes).
			Civil claims account for 10% of cases and generally get dismissed; however, the judge must review the case and determine what the inmate is requesting; this process takes an average of 60 minutes (net increase of 6 minutes).
Torts	N/A	237	New case type. <i>Process: determined by the path of the case.</i>
			Settled cases account for 75% of torts, and take an average of 60 minutes, including a review of the ADR order, discovery and two to three motions to continue (net increase of 45 minutes).
			Motions to dismiss/summary judgment motions account for 20% of cases and require an average of 480 minutes to complete (a net increase of 96 minutes).

Civil Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
				Trials account for 5% of tort cases and require an average of four days (1,920 minutes) to complete, including one day for jury selection and three days for motions, pretrial practice, and trial (net increase of 96 minutes).
	Other Misc. Civil	84	90	Added 6 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 6 minutes) to account for additional administrative work required in Odyssey and remote hearing issues.

Criminal Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Misdemeanor	28	38	Added 35% more time (net increase of 10 minutes) to 100% of cases to account for longer arraignment times, mid-case probation reviews, and additional Odyssey clicks not present in 2015.
	Felony	130	176	Added 35% more time (net increase of 46 minutes) to all cases to account for backlog issues, speedy trial motions, remote hearings, managing documents in Odyssey, receiving and reviewing evidence, mid-case probation reviews, and additional Odyssey clicks not present in 2015.
	Adult Treatment Courts	273	253	Created the average by comparing treatment court staffing time, in-court time, and miscellaneous hearings/activity with clients (emergency hearings, clients struggling), and hearing time for discharge hearings, plea changes, etc. These times were developed for Chittenden County (which averaged 312 hours per participant per year) and Washington County (which averaged 108 hours per participant per year). When combined with the average number of cases in each location, the case weight is 253 minutes.
	Civil Suspension	6	7	Added 10% more time (net increase of 1 minute) to account for additional administrative work and clicks in Odyssey.
	Investigation Requests: Search Warrants, Inquests, NTO	14	14	N/A
	Other Misc. Criminal	24	26	Added 10% more time (net increase of 2 minutes) to account for additional time to provide the required paperwork to incarcerated defendants, conduct the remote hearing, and administrative work and clicks in Odyssey.

Family and Juvenile Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Domestic	126	269	Added 60 minutes in 100% of cases for the creation of forms and administration in Odyssey (net increase of 60 minutes).
				Added 240 minutes in 7% of cases to account for longer and more detailed hearings in response to legislative changes (net increase of 17 minutes).
				Twenty minutes were added in 50% of cases to account for more status hearings because there is no block scheduling (net increase of 10 minutes).
				Sixty minutes were added in 25% of cases to account for the increase in hearing time for interpreters (net increase of 15 minutes).
				Added 15 minutes in 75% of cases for time spent tracking cases and orders (net increase of 11 minutes).
				Added 60 minutes in 50% of cases to account for scheduling duties that used to be handled by clerks (net increase of 30 minutes).
	Child support	46	76	Thirty minutes were added to 100% of cases for case processing and additional judicial administrative work in Odyssey and for all case processing. Accounts for establishments, modifications, enforcements, and contempt.
	Protection Orders	31	84	Thirty minutes to 25% of cases were added to account for the new stalking statute since 2015, which includes a more complicated pattern of behavior as the basis for finding abuse between family members (net increase of 8 minutes).
				Sixty minutes were added in 25% of cases to account for an increase in hearing time for cases involving interpreters (net increase of 15 minutes per case).
				Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases to account for extra administrative work and clicks in Odyssey (net increase of 30 minutes).
	CHINS/TPR (A/B/C)	412	1,134	Added 660 minutes in 80% of cases to account for the increased time involved for status hearings, motions, post-dispositional reviews, permanency hearings, writing decisions and judicial entry orders, administrative tasks, and extra clicks in Odyssey (net increase of 528 minutes).
				Added 300 minutes in 25% of cases to account for longer, more complex contested hearings and merit hearings (net increase of 75 minutes).
				Added 360 minutes in 12% of cases for contested TPR hearings (net increase of 43 minutes).
				Added 90 minutes in 20% of cases for TPR relinquishment hearings (net increase of 18 minutes).
				Added 480 minutes in 12% of cases for writing the opinion in TPR contested cases (net increase of 58 minutes).
	Delinquency	59	253	This weight was rebuilt. One hundred eighty minutes were added in 100% of cases to account for uncontested hearings, including the preliminary, pretrial, merits, and disposition hearings, probation review hearings, status hearings, and additional administrative work and clicks involved in using Odyssey (a net increase of 180 minutes).
				Added 240 minutes in 20% of cases to account for contested hearings, which includes writing decisions (net increase of 48 minutes).
				Fifteen minutes were added in 100% of cases for case review prior to the hearing (a net increase of 15 minutes).
				Added 10 minutes in 100% of cases for connectivity issues in remote hearings (net increase of 10 minutes).

Family and Juvenile Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Truancy (CHINS D)	103	248	Added 200 minutes to 100% of cases to account for the increase, length, and complexity in truancy cases since COVID and administrative work and clicks required in Odyssey (net increase of 200 minutes).
				Added 240 minutes in 20% of cases for additional time needed for contested merit or disposition and temporary care hearings (net increase of 248 minutes).
	Youthful Offender	N/A	309	New case type.
				Started with delinquency case weight (253 minutes) and added 30 minutes to 100% of cases for an initial motion hearing to determine whether to grant status (net increase of 30 minutes).
				Thirty minutes to 50% of cases were added to account for an additional hearing when the case was not prepared or the youth needed to make contact (net increase of 15 minutes).
				Sixty minutes were added in 18% of cases for contested hearings, which includes an evidentiary hearing (net increase of 11 minutes).
	Family Treatment Court	N/A	253	New case type.
				Used the Adult treatment court weight for this case type.
	Mental Health	64	84	Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases for multiple status conferences, stipulation or discharge, and Odyssey time to review and process the file (net increase of 30 minutes).
				Added 270 minutes to 20% of cases for contested hearings and time to draft decisions (net increase of 54 minutes).
	Other Misc. Family	N/A	15	New case type.
				Added 15 minutes in 100% of cases for the judge to review RFA and generate the order in Odyssey (net increase of 15 minutes).
Probate Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Estates	101	359	Added 54 minutes to 45% of cases for additional work required to open a case in Odyssey, compared to VTADS. Odyssey requires judges to toggle between documents to ensure all paperwork is in order (net increase of 24 minutes).
				Added 230 minutes to 100% of cases to account for additional administrative work required by judges that was previously done by court staff. Judges have to engage in research and check motions and other documents for completeness, which often involves returning documents to attorneys to refine and ensure that all aspects of the case are in order (net increase of 230 minutes).
				Added 15 minutes to 22% of cases (net increase of 3 minutes) to account for additional time associated with remote hearings.
	Trusts	49	1,168	Added 45 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 45 minutes) for the initial file review. Cases are more complex than in 2015, and many parties are not represented.
				Added 8 hours (480 minutes) to 100% of cases to account for multiple and lengthy hearings. Many trusts were set up years ago and may not be clear; many more are litigated today than in the past.
				Added 3 hours to 61% of uncontested cases (net increase of 220 minutes).
				Added 16 hours (960 minutes) to 39% of contested cases (net increase of 374 minutes) to account for writing opinions, most of which are very complex.
	Adult Guardianship	429	438	Added 30 minutes in 12% of cases to track "lost" cases (net increase of 4 minutes) found in Odyssey.
				5 minutes in 100% of cases were added to find counsel for each adult in the guardianship.

Probate Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Minor Guardianship	203	660	Compared to adult guardianships, there are many more issues to consider, which require more hearings, paperwork, and notices. Contested hearings are frequent and time-consuming. The panel agreed the cases require 150% longer than adult guardianships (657 minutes).
				Added 60 minutes to 5% of cases (net increase of 3 minutes) requiring GALs, who are not paid much but are required in CHINS cases. Finding willing GALs can be time-consuming.
	Adoptions: Agency	130	235	Added 75 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 75 minutes) required to cross-check and verify case documents after being scanned and labeled in Odyssey by staff. Judges are required to do much more administrative work on these cases in Odyssey than they did in VTADS.
				Added 120 minutes to 25% of cases for post-placement hearings required through legislative changes related to conditional custody vs. state custody (net increase of 30 minutes).
	Adoptions: Private	130	253	Added 150 minutes to 50% of cases that involve a TPR (net increase of 75 minutes) to work with parents and GAL to ensure all paperwork is in order and to ensure parents understand the process.
				Added 30 minutes to 90% of cases (net increase of 27 minutes) to verify the accuracy of all documents. Given the large degree of staff turnover, judges are very involved in this process.
				Thirty minutes were added to 70% of contested private adoption cases (a net increase of 21 minutes). The court must find an attorney for the child, which can take a large amount of time. Again, given staff turnover, judges are very involved in this process.
	Other Probate	39	39	PACA adds another 120 minutes, but very few of these exist in probate court, so the increased time does not impact the case weight.
				<i>General note regarding probate judges.</i> Some probate judges have been routinely requested to participate in state-level committee work based on the length of time they have served on the probate bench. Most probate judges are not even 100% FTE, and they do not have the ability to share their work. While judges appreciate the opportunity to have a voice in policies by participating in committees, this may create situations in which probate judges are overworked yet underpaid.

Environmental Division Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	De Novo Appeals	1,038	1,308	Added 120 minutes to 50% of motions that are "simple" (net increase of 60 minutes) and 180 minutes to 50% of motions that are complex (net increase of 90 minutes), for a total increase of 150 minutes for additional time needed to review motions in Odyssey.
				Also, 120 minutes were added to 100% of cases for law clerks to review matters in Odyssey.
	On the Record Appeals	278	1,058	Added 480 minutes to 100% of cases to listen to all hearings on audio because written transcripts are no longer provided by municipalities. Written findings are also required.
				Added 300 minutes for law clerks to listen, and potentially relisten to audio tapes.
	Enforcement Actions	246	246	N/A; law clerk time was included in the 2015 case weights.
	Civil Citation/Other	N/A	30	New case type.
				Applied 30 minutes to 100% of cases (net weight of 30 minutes) to all cases to review the matter, write an order and apply the fine.

Judicial Bureau Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Municipal Violations	1.25	5	Added 3.5 minutes in 100% of cases (net increase of 3.5 minutes) to prepare the electronic case file.
				Added 3 minutes to 23% of cases (net increase of .7 minutes) to account for the delay in remote hearings.
	Traffic Violations	N/A	5	New case type (as a separate case type).
				Applied 1 minute to 30% of cases (net increase of .3 minutes) to prepare e-tickets.
				Added 3.5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 3.5 minutes) for pre-hearing case preparation. This process takes much longer in Odyssey than with paper files.
				Added 3 minutes to 23% of cases (net increase of .7 minutes) for delays with remote hearings.
	Fish and Wildlife	N/A	4	New case type (as a separate case type).
				Added 3.5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 3.5 minutes) for pre-hearing case preparation.
				Added 3 minutes to 23% of cases (net increase of .7 minutes) for the delay in remote hearings.

Appendix C

Court Staff Case Weight Adjustments

Civil Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Small Claims	136	169	Added 6 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 4 minutes) for additional work when attorneys do not prepare paperwork properly.
				Added 5 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 2.5 minutes) to enter JEO, required in all cases that go to hearing.
				Added 5 minutes to 15% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) to process post-motion judgments.
				Added 30 minutes to 40% of cases (net increase of 12 minutes) to account for additional clicks in Odyssey and waiting time for system delays. Filings and exhibits also need to be organized in Odyssey.
				Added 14.5 minutes to all cases (net increase of 14.5 minutes) to accept the file (central staff does not accept small claims cases). Also requires a search for all parties in Odyssey Navigator and Odyssey File and Search to prevent duplicate filings.
	Stalking/Sexual Assault	106	148	Added 30 minutes to 85% of cases (net increase of 26 minutes) for scanning exhibits.
				Added 2 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) for exporting documents out of DPS or VSP.
				Added 10 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 10 minutes) to call law enforcement and serving agency to verify service was complete.
				Added 5 minutes to 6% of cases (no impact) for intent to pursue post-docket, allowing litigants to be heard, regardless of the judge's decision.
				Added 10 minutes to 25% of cases (net increase of 2.5 minutes) for additional file information if requested by the judge and requires scanning of exhibits.
				Added 5 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 2.5 minutes) to enter JEO, required in all cases that go to hearing.
	Landlord Tenant	N/A	226	New case type. Process: <i>Began with the base weight of small claims (169 minutes) and made modifications for different actions required in landlord/tenant cases.</i>
				15 minutes were added in 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) to account for all case initiation. While there are fewer steps in Odyssey compared to VTADS, there is a lot of clicking and waiting for the system to respond, which adds time.
				Added 8 minutes to 85% of cases (net increase of 7 minutes) to set status conferences, check for conflicts with Legal Aid attorneys, or find Legal Aid attorneys to represent parties.
				Added 30 minutes to 25% of cases (net increase of 7.5 minutes) to process and file a motion to stay writ in emergency cases. Paperwork is either downloaded or emailed to the Sheriff.

Civil Case Type Category	2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
			Added 50 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 25 minutes) to prepare for a bench trial, including finding a date, scheduling the hearing, and scanning exhibits for SRLs. The process takes longer in Odyssey than it did in VTADS.
Foreclosures	N/A	120	New case type. Process: <i>Began with the base weight of half the updated landlord/tenant case weight (97.5 minutes) and made modifications for different actions required in landlord/tenant cases.</i>
			Added 40 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 20 minutes) on default cases, requiring clerks to perform accounting to determine costs.
			Added 5 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 2.5 minutes) to prepare a motion to confirm sale post-judgment if property sells.
Collections	N/A	161	New case type. Process: <i>Began with the base weight of small claims (169 minutes) and made modifications for different actions required in landlord/tenant cases.</i>
			Subtracted 10 minutes in 90% of cases (net decrease of 9 minutes) to account for fewer SRL cases.
			Added 6 minutes to 20% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) to prepare a notice of dismissal that is needed in more cases.
Appeals	N/A	19	New case type. Process: <i>Determined time by category of appeal.</i>
			Added 11 minutes to 15% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) that appeal to the Vermont Supreme Court.
			Added 15 minutes to 15% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) that are probate appeals.
			Added 15 minutes to 15% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) that are small claims appeals.
			Added 15 minutes to 30% of cases (net increase of 4.5 minutes) that are tax appeals.
			Added 15 minutes to 10% of cases (net increase of 1.5 minutes), which are other appeal types.
			Added 30 minutes to 15% of cases (net increase of 4.5 minutes) that are Rule 74 cases (furlough revocation).
			Added 5 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 2.5 minutes) to enter JEO, required in all cases that go to hearing.
Prisoner Cases	N/A	53	New case type.
			Added 50 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 50 minutes) to review cases, set status conferences, send information to the Prisoner Rights Office at the DOC, and generate and send an inmate letter. PCR cases also involve the AG's office.
			Added 5 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 2.5 minutes) to enter JEO, required in all cases that go to hearing.
Torts	N/A	166	New case type. Process: <i>Began with the base weight of collections cases (161 minutes) and made modifications for different actions required in landlord/tenant cases.</i>
			Added 5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 5 minutes) to process the 16.4 form, which sets the initial case deadlines, and then schedule the case for mediation and discovery.

Civil Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Other Misc. Civil	337	172	Process: Reduced the 2015 case weight (337 minutes) by 50%.
				The reduction in case weight is due to less time spent on docketing and other activities.
				Added 5 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 2.5 minutes) to enter JEO, required in all cases that go to hearing.

Criminal Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Misdemeanor	177	212	Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) to update entry orders and follow-up with attorneys on missing/incorrect information.
				Added 5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 5 minutes) to manage script errors and other delays in Odyssey.
	Felony	352	417	Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) to update entry orders and follow-up with attorneys on missing/incorrect information.
				Added 5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 5 minutes) to manage script errors and other delays in Odyssey.
				Thirty minutes was added to 100% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) for additional weight of evidence hearing, which takes longer than in 2015.
				Added 15 minutes to 1% of cases (no impact) to address writ procedures for defendants who are incarcerated in federal prisons to appear via Webex. In 2015, defendants were transported to court for hearings.
	Adult Treatment Courts	175	218	Created the case weight using the 2015 time study data, excluding treatment court coordinators' time, and increased that weight by 25% to account for additional data entry in Odyssey. In 2015, the JA adult treatment court weight was 175 minutes (net increase of 43 minutes).
	Civil Suspension	30	38	Thirty minutes were added in 27% of cases (net increase of 8 minutes) that require an additional hearing when no resolution was reached.
	Investigation Requests: Search Warrants, Inquests, NTO	24	32	Added 8 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 8 minutes) to account for manual entry, scanning, and all steps to start the case.
	Other Misc. Criminal	176	176	N/A

Family and Juvenile Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Domestic	566	617	Added 45 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 22.5 minutes) to account for more post-judgment filings since 2015.
				Added 40 minutes to 20% of cases (net increase of 8 minutes) to contact and coordinate with GALs.

Family and Juvenile Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
				Added 15 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) to account for additional data entry time in Odyssey.
				Added 10 minutes to 5% of cases (net increase of .5 minutes) to address court users with disability support.
				Added 10 minutes to 20% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) to provide time to flag and coordinate with interpreters in remote hearings.
				Added 10 minutes to 13% of cases (net increase of 1.25 minutes) to account for the increased time required to set up WebEx hearings for remote users.
				Added 30 minutes to 5% of cases (net increase of 1.5 minutes) to provide time to find and coordinate with an attorney for a child.
	Child Support	196	213	Added 7 minutes to 1% of cases (no impact) to enter arrest warrants for child support contempt cases into VOWS (Vermont Orders and Warrant System).
				Added 20 minutes to 20% of cases (net increase of 4 minutes) to scan old paper files and recoup arrears.
				Added 13 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 13 minutes) to enter case information into Odyssey and to ensure child support orders are provided to the Office of Child Support registry.
	Relief from Abuse/Protection Orders	170	195	Added 15 minutes to 90% of cases (net increase of 14 minutes) to enter RFA/PO in VOWS and to enter data into Odyssey.
				Added 5 minutes to 35% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) to account for additional motions to surrender weapons, which did not exist in 2015.
				Added 10 minutes to 80% of cases (net increase of 8 minutes) to manage remote hearings.
				Added 2 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) for additional time to set up remote hearings, which is done in every case (remote or hybrid are always options).
	CHINS/TPR (A/B/C)	1,123	1,450	Added 120 minutes to 75% of cases (net increase of 90 minutes) for an average of 4 additional status conferences due to opioid addiction/treatment services and working with families with housing issues/homelessness.
				Added 30 minutes to 25% of cases (net increase of 8 minutes) to request PACA attorney for foster parents (post-adoption contract agreement protocol), which did not exist in 2015.
				Added 60 minutes in 50% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) to conduct remote hearings with incarcerated parents. This entails setting up a Webex hearing and creating a form. Each state and federal prison has different protocols for this, so the process can be time-consuming. Additionally, there are more incarcerated parents today than in 2015, and all parents have the right to attend all TPR-related hearings.
				Added 19 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 19 minutes) because hearings take longer.
				Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) for Odyssey data entry and processing.

Family and Juvenile Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
				Added 150 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 150 minutes) for all hybrid hearings. Generating Webex sessions is time-consuming and requires several steps. Each Webex session takes approximately 25 minutes to set up, and there is an average of 6 such hearings in every CHINS A/B/C case.
	Delinquency	288	418	Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) for Odyssey data entry and processing cases out of OFS and into Odyssey, including verifying and cross-checking parties.
				Added 100 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 100 minutes) for more required in-person hearings. Each hearing lasts approximately 25 minutes, and there is an average of 4 hearings per case.
	Truancy (CHINS D)	212	417	Added 175 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 175 minutes) to account for an average of 7 additional hearings, which can be held remotely. The number of status hearings in truancy cases has increased significantly since 2015.
				Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) for Odyssey data entry and processing cases out of OFS and into Odyssey, including verifying and cross-checking parties.
	Youthful Offender	N/A	418	While the procedures for having a case accepted as a youthful offender in family court are different than a delinquency case, the initial processing time is essentially equivalent to a delinquency case. Once accepted, the case follows the path of a delinquency case, so the time is estimated to be the same (418 minutes).
	Family Treatment Court	N/A	218	New case type.
				Used Adult Treatment Court case weight created from 2015 time study data.
	Mental Health	179	239	Added 15 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) for Odyssey data entry and processing cases out of OFS and into Odyssey. This takes less time in mental health cases as there is only one party to verify, and the cases do not have to be related to other matters.
				Added 45 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 45 minutes) for remote hearings, which is a completely different process from 2015.
	Other Misc. Family	N/A	224	Used Child Support as the base weight (213 minutes) and added 11 minutes to 100% of cases to send forms to judges and attorneys out-of-state (net increase of 11 minutes).
				Adjusted during the advisory committee meeting.

Probate Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Estates	337	452	Added 60 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) to account for case acceptance on e-filed cases. Most attorneys file estate cases differently and do not file them correctly, so staff has to correct all errors, including the entry of parties, which may require research.

Probate Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
				Added 50 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 50 minutes) to respond to the Odyssey task queue. Staff must enter information into all forms (which were previously auto-filled in VTADS). Work in this area often requires follow-up with judges and/or parties.
				Added 15 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 9 minutes) to generate ticklers for the judge to follow up on cases; VTADS was generally more efficient with this process.
				Added 15 minutes in 50% of cases (net increase of 7.5 minutes) for specialized phone calls that can only be answered by a register. These calls are related to legislative changes and population shifts in estates cases.
				Added 18 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 11 minutes) to account for technology issues in Webex for remote hearings and to perform the conflict checker. There is an average of 2 remote hearings in each case, and it takes 9 minutes to prepare for the Webex hearing.
				Added 15 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 7.5 minutes) to address technology and ADA issues for litigants.
				<i>There was a discussion that sending notifications and processing land records are faster in Odyssey; however, this time saving is offset by the new process for wills and death notices.</i>
	Trusts	59	44	Subtracted 15 minutes in 100% of cases (net decrease of 15 minutes) because the case processing has become simpler.
	Adult Guardianship	880	957	Added 15 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) for Odyssey data entry and processing.
				Added 60 minutes to 80% of cases (net increase of 48 minutes) to scan all material when opening a new file.
				Added 15 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 9 minutes) to respond to email communications with SRLs. Email communication with SRLs in adult guardianship cases did not exist in 2015.
				Added 3 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 1.5 minutes) to follow-up on annual accounting, which takes slightly longer than in 2015.
				Added 120 minutes to 15% of cases (net increase of 18 minutes) to respond to emergency guardianships, including information dissemination, connecting people with resources, working with agencies, etc.
				Added 3 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 3 minutes) to run reports and set hearings.
	Minor Guardianship	386	460	Added 15 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) to account for additional data entry time in Odyssey.
				Added 18 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 11 minutes) to account for technology issues in Webex for remote hearings. There is an average of 2 remote hearings in each case, and it takes 9 minutes to prepare for the Webex hearing.

Probate Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
				Added 360 minutes to 3% of cases (net increase of 11 minutes) to process cases involving vulnerable non-citizen youth. The panel requested this issue be raised with the Advisory Committee. Exact case processing steps have not yet been determined, and these cases are not likely to occur in all counties; they are most likely to occur in city areas with asylum seekers and refugees and in rural areas with migrant workers. Panel members indicated they expect the number of these cases to increase. The current statute is vague and requires legislative clarification.
				Added 15 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 7.5 minutes) to address technical assistance with Webex.
	Adoptions: Agency	187	280	Added 15 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) to account for additional data entry time in Odyssey.
				Added 18 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 11 minutes) to account for technology issues in Webex for remote hearings. There is an average of 2 remote hearings in each case, and it takes 9 minutes to prepare for the Webex hearing.
				Added 15 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 7.5 minutes) to address technical assistance with Webex.
				Added 60 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 60 minutes) to scan all documents into Odyssey, which takes a minimum of 60 minutes.
	Adoptions: Private	187	348	Added 15 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) to account for additional data entry time in Odyssey.
				Added 18 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 11 minutes) to account for technology issues in Webex for remote hearings. There is an average of 2 remote hearings in each case, and it takes 9 minutes to prepare for the Webex hearing.
				Added 15 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 7.5 minutes) to address technical assistance with Webex.
				Added 60 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 60 minutes) to scan all documents into Odyssey, which takes a minimum of 60 minutes.
				Added 90 minutes to 75% of cases (net increase of 68 minutes) to process TPR cases if there is no consent. This process is entirely different than in family court and involves a new petition, new hearing, and service.
	Other Probate	33	66	Added 15 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 15 minutes) to account for additional data entry time in Odyssey.
				Added 18 minutes to 60% of cases (net increase of 11 minutes) to account for technology issues in Webex for remote hearings. There is an average of 2 remote hearings in each case, and it takes 9 minutes to prepare for the Webex hearing.
				Added 15 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 7.5 minutes) to provide technical assistance with Webex.

Environmental Division Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	De Novo Appeals	990	997	Added 5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 5 to minutes) to assist SRLs with remote hearings.
				Added 15 minutes to 10% of cases (net increase of 1.5 minutes) to assist SRLs with e-filing issues.
	On the Record Appeals	990	1,020	Added 30 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 30 minutes) to manage audio recordings. Recordings typically are submitted on a thumb drive, which cannot be stored on any state computer.
	Enforcement Actions	155	155	NA
	Civil Citation/Other	N/A	45	New case type. Added 45 minutes (net increase of 45 minutes) to this case type to process cases submitted through email. Staff must save the document, create a case in Odyssey, and set time standard reminders. Once the timeframe has passed, staff check to see if a plea has been entered; if not, a default judgment is ordered, and the case is closed.

Judicial Bureau Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
	Municipal Violations	16	28	Added 5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 5 minutes) for payment processing.
				Added 3 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 3 minutes) to address pending or post-judgment motions.
				Added 3 minutes to 70% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) to process paper/hand-filed cases.
				Added 2 minutes to 35% of cases (net increase of .5 minutes) to process defaults in Odyssey.
				Added 4 minutes to 25% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) to print notices and some data entry.
				Added 1 minute to 30% of cases (net increase of .3 minutes) to process failure to pay cases.
				Added 2 minutes to 50% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) to process financial defaults.
	Traffic Violations	16	28	New case type.
				Added 5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 5 minutes) for payment processing.
				Added 3 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 3 minutes) to address pending or post-judgment motions.
				Added 3 minutes to 70% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) to process paper/hand filed cases.
				Added 2 minutes to 35% of cases (net increase of .5 minutes) to process defaults in Odyssey.
				Added 4 minutes to 25% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) to print notices and some data entry.
				Added 1 minute to 30% of cases (net increase of .3 minutes) to process failure to pay cases.
	Fish and Wildlife	16	28	New case type.
				Added 5 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 5 minutes) for payment processing.
				Added 3 minutes to 100% of cases (net increase of 3 minutes) to address pending or post-judgment motions.
				Added 3 minutes to 70% of cases (net increase of 2 minutes) to process paper/hand filed cases.

Judicial Bureau Case Type Category		2015 Case Weight	2024 Case Weight	Rationale for Case Weight Adjustment
				Added 2 minutes to 35% of cases (net increase of .5 minutes) to process defaults in Odyssey.
				Added 4 minutes to 25% of cases (net increase of 1 minute) to print notices and some data entry.
				Added 1 minute to 30% of cases (net increase of .3 minutes) to process failure to pay cases.

Division	Case Type Category	Case Weight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Environ. Division	Judicial Bureau	State	
		Unit (County)	Addison	Bennington	Caladonia	Childrens	Essex	Franklin	Grand Isle	Lamoille	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham	Windsor	State	Judicial State	Total	
DIVISION	Civil	Small Claims	36	160	233	170	777	34	305	46	161	132	193	389	323	298	309			3,530
		Stalking/Sexual assault	24	74	153	77	233	17	155	22	44	53	50	163	89	77	93			1,301
		Landlord Tenant	42	44	80	65	285	6	92	11	42	40	41	174	116	114	114			1,225
		Foreclosures	79	19	30	19	45	6	34	9	30	17	18	47	27	31	50			381
		Collections	65	52	77	56	237	10	106	14	51	56	44	126	157	88	105			1,179
		Appeals	334	4	5	9	35	1	10	1	3	4	14	19	50	8	18			179
		Prisoner Cases	225	4	14	43	54	2	35	1	3	1	85	19	101	15	70			446
		Torts	237	16	24	12	118	3	23	2	18	11	18	45	36	33	45			403
	Other Misc. Civil	90	32	46	27	140	7	33	11	32	22	45	58	105	54	62			674	
	Criminal	Misdemeanor	38	366	998	695	2,272	88	1,211	94	604	384	703	1,183	1,572	1,164	1,233			12,566
		Felony	176	117	445	246	893	49	331	16	145	108	285	397	440	346	414			4,233
		Adult Treatment Courts	253	0	0	0	63	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	35	0	25			144
		Civil Suspension	7	37	78	64	246	3	67	9	81	33	40	77	110	75	75			994
		Investigation Requests: Search Warrants, Inquests, NTO																		
			14	102	291	185	678	17	176	14	111	67	160	173	238	228	226			2,665
		Other Misc. Criminal	26	19	24	28	118	8	39	10	13	19	36	42	37	47	103			544
		Domestic	269	138	189	133	582	27	248	29	124	128	140	308	280	144	232			2,704
	Family	Child Support	76	159	305	215	713	35	389	25	183	182	223	381	374	279	332			3,794
		Protection Orders	84	154	339	219	660	38	310	45	153	151	199	448	319	216	254			3,505
		CHINS (A/B/C)	1,134	52	55	45	150	13	87	11	36	14	67	87	50	55	49			773
		Delinquency	253	37	72	21	83	2	88	3	31	27	44	47	84	46	72			657
		Truancy (CHINS D)	248	3	29	7	9	2	16	3	17	7	3	18	9	7	10			139
		Youthful Offender	309	14	18	17	79	2	51	8	5	6	17	16	54	6	28			321
		Family Treatment Court	253	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			10
		Mental Health	84	20	21	42	297	2	27	0	26	23	27	160	176	284	36			1,142
		Other Misc. Family	15	4	18	9	20	3	5	2	2	11	6	16	10	20	14			139
		Estates	359	144	188	139	471	37	169	32	105	126	144	299	240	225	286			2,604
		Trusts	1,168	4	2	2	7	0	2	1	1	3	2	4	2	2	5			37
		Adult Guardianship	438																	

Division	Case Type Category	Case Weight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Environ. Division	Judicial Bureau	State		
		Unit (County)	Addison	Bernington	Caladonia	Chiltdren	Essex	Franklie	Grand lse	Lamotte	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham	Windsor	State	Judicial State	Total		
DIVISION	Civil	Small Claims	36	160	233	170	777	34	305	46	161	132	193	389	323	298	309			3,530	
		Stalking/Sexual assault	24	74	153	77	233	17	155	22	44	53	50	163	89	77	93			1,301	
		Landlord Tenant	42	44	80	65	285	6	92	11	42	40	41	174	116	114	114			1,225	
		Foreclosures	79	19	30	19	45	6	34	9	30	17	18	47	27	31	50			381	
		Collections	65	52	77	56	237	10	106	14	51	56	44	126	157	88	105			1,179	
		Appeals	334	4	5	9	35	1	10	1	3	4	14	19	50	8	18			179	
		Prisoner Cases	225	4	14	43	54	2	35	1	3	1	85	19	101	15	70			446	
		Torts	237	16	24	12	118	3	23	2	18	11	18	45	36	33	45			403	
	Other Misc. Civil	90	32	46	27	140	7	33	11	32	22	45	58	105	54	62			674		
	Criminal	Misdemeanor	38	366	998	695	2,272	88	1,211	94	604	384	703	1,183	1,572	1,164	1,233			12,566	
		Felony	176	117	445	246	893	49	331	16	145	108	285	397	440	346	414			4,233	
		Adult Treatment Courts	253	0	0	0	63	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	35	0	25			144	
		Civil Suspension	7	37	78	64	246	3	67	9	81	33	40	77	110	75	75			994	
		Investigation Requests: Search Warrants, Inquests, NTO																			
		Other Misc. Criminal	14	102	291	185	678	17	176	14	111	67	160	173	238	228	226			2,665	
	Family	Domestic	26	19	24	28	118	8	39	10	13	19	36	42	37	47	103			544	
		Child Support	269	138	189	133	582	27	248	29	124	128	140	308	280	144	232			2,704	
		Protection Orders	76	159	305	215	713	35	389	25	183	182	223	381	374	279	332			3,794	
		CHINS (A/B/C)	84	154	339	219	660	38	310	45	153	151	199	448	319	216	254			3,505	
		CHINS (A/B/C)	1,134	52	55	45	150	13	87	11	36	14	67	87	50	55	49			773	
		Delinquency	253	37	72	21	83	2	88	3	31	27	44	47	84	46	72			657	
		Truancy (CHINS D)	248	3	29	7	9	2	16	3	17	7	3	18	9	7	10			139	
		Youthful Offender	309	14	18	17	79	2	51	8	5	6	17	16	54	6	28			321	
		Family Treatment Court	253	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			10	
		Mental Health	84	20	21	42	297	2	27	0	26	23	27	160	176	284	36			1,142	
		Other Misc. Family	15	4	18	9	20	3	5	2	2	11	6	16	10	20	14			139	
		Probate	Estates	359	144	188	139	471	37	169	32	105	126	144	299	240	225	286			2,604
			Trusts	1,168	4	2	2	7	0	2	1	1	3	2	4	2	2	5			

Vermont Court Staff Needs Model Based on 2024 Weights and on FY 2021-2023 Filings
3- Year Average Case Filings per Unit (County)

DIVISION	Case Type Category	Case Weight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Environ. Division	Jud. Bureau	State
		Unit (County)	Addison	Bennington	Caledonia	Chittenden	Essex	Franklin	Grand Isle	Lamoille	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham	Windsor	State	State	Total
Civil	Small Claims	169	160	233	170	777	34	305	46	161	132	193	389	323	298	309			3,530
	Assault	148	74	153	77	233	17	155	22	44	53	50	163	89	77	93			1,301
	Landlord Tenant	226	44	80	65	285	6	92	11	42	40	41	174	116	114	114			1,225
	Foreclosures	120	19	30	19	45	6	34	9	30	17	18	47	27	31	50			381
	Collections	161	52	77	56	237	10	106	14	51	56	44	126	157	88	105			1,179
	Appeals	19	4	5	9	35	1	10	1	3	4	14	19	50	8	18			179
	Prisoner Cases	53	4	14	43	54	2	35	1	3	1	85	19	101	15	70			446
	Torts	166	16	24	12	118	3	23	2	18	11	18	45	36	33	45			403
	Other Misc. Civil	172	32	46	27	140	7	33	11	32	22	45	58	105	54	62			674
Criminal	Misdemeanor	212	366	998	695	2,272	88	1,211	94	604	384	703	1,183	1,572	1,164	1,233			12,566
	Felony	417	117	445	246	893	49	331	16	145	108	285	397	440	346	414			4,233
	Courts	218	0	0	0	63	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	35	0	25			144
	Civil Suspension	38	37	78	64	246	3	67	9	81	33	40	77	110	75	75			994
	Requests: Search	32	102	291	185	678	17	176	14	111	67	160	173	238	228	226			2,665
	Criminal	176	19	24	28	118	8	39	10	13	19	36	42	37	47	103			544
Family	Domestic	617	138	189	133	582	27	248	29	124	128	140	308	280	144	232			2,704
	Child Support	213	159	305	215	713	35	389	25	183	182	223	381	374	279	332			3,794
	Protection Orders	195	154	339	219	660	38	310	45	153	151	199	448	319	216	254			3,505
	CHINS (A/B/C)	1,450	52	55	45	150	13	87	11	36	14	67	87	50	55	49			773
	Delinquency	418	37	72	21	83	2	88	3	31	27	44	47	84	46	72			657
	DJ	417	3	29	7	9	2	16	3	17	7	3	18	9	7	10			139
	Youthful Offender	418	14	18	17	79	2	51	8	5	6	17	16	54	6	28			321
	Court	218	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			10
	Mental Health	239	20	21	42	297	2	27	0	26	23	27	160	176	284	36			1,142
	Family	224	4	18	9	20	3	5	2	2	11	6	16	10	20	14			139
Probate	Estates	452	144	188	139	471	37	169	32	105	126	144	299	240	225	286			2,604
	Trusts	44	4	2	2	7	0	2	1	1	3	2	4	2	2	5			37
	Guardianship	957	26	24	33	85	5	35	3	15	22	33	52	38	31	43			446
	Guardianship	460	16	26	24	44	4	31	3	13	22	20	39	29	26	29			326
	Agency	280	13	18	7	71	1	27	2	1	6	10	15	15	40	8			235
	Private	348	3	4	7	30	0	5	0	6	3	3	9	5	4	4			84
	Other Probate	66	293	237	139	889	33	166	62	173	173	121	443	444	319	286			3,778
Environ.	De Novo Appeals	997															72		72
	Appeals	1,020															6		6
	Actions	155															47		47
	Citation/Other	45															5		5
JB	Violations	28																857	857
	Traffic Violations	28																39,808	39,808
	Fish and Wildlife	28																216	216
Staff Demand Computations	Total filings		1,772	3,462	2,357	8,782	380	3,572	388	1,901	1,950	2,430	4,353	4,805	3,667	3,941	130	40,881	84,374
	(weights x		575,534	1,049,962	723,756	2,651,223	134,796	1,177,311	127,094	570,400	483,554	777,596	1,410,081	1,383,121	1,075,445	1,204,059	85,414	1,144,668	14,574,013
	Staff year (208 days per year, 8 hours		99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840	99,840
	Travel (5 minutes		1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,040
	time (88 minutes		18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304	18,304
	case-specific		80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496	80,496
	currently		7.00	13.00	10.00	34.00	1.00	15.00	2.00	7.00	7.00	11.00	19.00	17.00	14.00	14.00	1.00	9.00	181.00
	unit		7.15	13.04	8.99	32.94	1.67	14.63	1.58	7.09	6.01	9.66	17.52	17.18	13.36	14.96	1.06	14.22	181.05
	1 or surplus (+)		-0.15	-0.04	1.01	1.06	-0.67	0.37	0.42	-0.09	0.99	1.34	1.48	-0.18	0.64	-0.96	-0.06	-5.22	-0.05
	division:																		
	Civil division		0.83	1.35	0.93	3.99	0.17	1.59	0.24	0.79	0.69	0.92	2.16	1.90	1.51	1.70	0.00	0.00	18.77
	Criminal division		1.67	5.14	3.27	11.42	0.51	5.09	0.36	2.46	1.66	3.49	5.43	6.74	5.09	5.81	0.00	0.00	58.13
	Family division		3.14	4.79	3.32	12.51	0.67	6.14	0.68	2.82	2.39	3.78	6.95	6.13	4.56	4.88	0.00	0.00	62.78
	Probate division		1.50	1.76	1.47	5.02	0.33	1.80	0.30	1.02	1.27	1.47	2.98	2.41	2.20	2.57	0.00	0.00	26.09
	Judicial bureau																1.06	0.00	1.06
	demand		7.15	13.04	8.99	32.94	1.67	14.63	1.58	7.09	6.01	9.66	17.52	17.18	13.36	14.96	1.06	14.22	181.05

