

## **Weighted Caseload Study**

### **Judicial Resources Allocation Commission**

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has relied on the use of a weighted caseload model to establish the baseline needs for trial court judicial resources since 1986, when the first weighted caseload study was conducted. Recognizing the need to update trial court case weights established in the 2007 study, the AOC, using grant money obtained from the State Justice Institute (SJI), contracted with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to update the case weights. The following changes were identified for the 2016 weighted caseload study:

- 1) Implementing paperless processes for civil cases and criminal cases;
- 2) Changes in the case management system; and
- 3) Changes in e-filing.

The 2016 weighted caseload study used the Delphi method of expert opinion to update the case weights, and, in some cases, to develop case weights for new case types. The Delphi methodology uses a consensus among a group of experts to attain an agreed-upon response to questions posed – in this case, case weight values. Developing case weights using the Delphi technique required the thoughtful participation of many judges across the state of Alabama. To facilitate the accuracy and speed of the study, the NCSC worked closely with the AOC staff and a new steering committee comprised of circuit and district judges, to outline the scope of the project and develop the data collection instruments. The steering committee was used to determine the judge year value, identify case types, case related and non-case-related activities, and review the preliminary case weights. Subcommittees were formed for each case type. Participating judges were required to review and complete a questionnaire prior to participating in the structured Delphi group sessions. The steering committee met a final time to review and validate the results of the study.

Case weights for criminal case types were converted from case weights to count weights in the following manner.

- 1) First, the workload (minutes) for each case type was computed based on case filing numbers.
- 2) Second, the workload, in minutes, was divided by the number of counts per case, resulting in the count weight as shown in the following chart.

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### Constructing the Case Weight

#### Felony Property Cases

Activity	Average Time (Minutes)	Event Frequency	Event Weight (Minutes)
Pretrial	18.05	100%	18
Non-trial disposition	25.00	88.00%	22
Bench trial	108.09	2.75%	3
Jury trial	720.00	2.50%	18
Post judgment	89.41	21.25%	19
<b>Total Case Weight</b>			<b>80</b>
<b>Count Weight</b>			<b>38</b>

The study found that judges in Alabama had 215 days available per year to process cases. This was determined by subtracting weekend days, holidays, sick leave, vacations, and time spent attending the judicial conferences, and seminars from the calendar year.

#### Calculation of Judge Year Value

Year Value	Days
Total days per year	365
<b>Subtract</b> non-working days	
Weekends	-104
Holidays	-13
Vacation leave	-12
Sick leave	-5
Conferences	-6
Continuing education	-10
Total working days per year	215
Total working hours per day	8

The steering committee adopted two separate day values. Non-case-related time is 1.5 hours per day in multi-county jurisdictions and 1 hour per day in the single county jurisdictions. Once the time spent on administrative activity is deducted from the time circuit judges have available to handle cases, the resulting case-related judge year for the current study is

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determined to be 83,850 minutes in multi-county circuits and 90,300 in the single county circuits. The district court judge year value is 90,300 minutes.

Calculation of Minutes per Judge Year Value:

- Total Working Hours per Day – Non-case-related Hours per Day = Case-related Hours per Day
  - Single County Circuit and District Judges →  $8 - 1 = 7$
  - Multi County Circuit Judges →  $8 - 1.5 = 6.5$
- Multiply Total Working Days per Year by Case Related Hours per Day by Minutes per Hour = Minutes per Judge Year Value
  - Single County Circuit and District Judge Year Value →  $215 \times 7 \times 60 = 90,300$
  - Multi County Circuit Judge Year Value →  $215 \times 6.5 \times 60 = 83,850$

#### **Calculation of Implied Need**

**Step 1** - Number of cases/counts:

- Start with all the cases filed in the fiscal year
- All Civil, Traffic, and Juvenile cases are counted
- Criminal cases are broken out by charge and count

In individual counties for each case type:

- Civil, Traffic, and Juvenile - # of Cases x case type weight = minutes
- Example: 795 (Contract cases) x 41 = 32,595 minutes

In individual counties for each charge type:

- Criminal - # of counts x charge type weight = minutes
- Example: 673 (Felony-Drug counts) x 58 = 39,064 minutes

Add totals in each case/charge type to get total minutes for the county.

**Step 2** - Calculate implied need for the circuit or district

- Divide Total Minutes by Judge Year Value – 90,300 (multi-county circuit – 83,850) to get “Overall Judicial Officer Need”
- For circuit, subtract District Judges hearing circuit cases.
- For district, add District Judges hearing circuit cases.
- Subtract referees hearing cases to calculate “Judge Implied Need” (how many judges needed)
- Subtract Judge Implied Need from actual number of judges to get the Difference showing the Deficit (-) or Surplus (+).

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### Circuit Example: For a Single County Circuit -

$420,840 \div 90,300 = 4.6$  Overall Judicial Officer Need

$4.6 - 0.0 - 0.0 = 4.6$  Circuit Court Judge Implied Need

$4 - 4.6 = -0.66$  Difference (Circuit Court Judge Deficit)

Single County Circuit Court Judge Need Model				
Case Type	Case/Count Weight	Single County Circuit	Workload by Case Type	Judge Need by Case Type
Capital Crimes	2,254	6	13,524	0.150
Felony - Person	104	231	24,024	0.27
Felony - Property	38	303	11,514	0.13
Felony - Drug	58	206	11,948	0.13
Felony - Other	36	309	11,124	0.12
Misdemeanor	7	274	1,918	0.02
Lower Court Appeals	45	120	5,400	0.06
Civil - Tort	203	218	44,254	0.49
Civil - Other	92	739	67,988	0.75
Civil - Contracts	41	453	18,573	0.21
Protection Orders	45	267	12,015	0.13
Workers Compensation	78	97	7,566	0.08
Domestic Relations - Contested	148	1,179	174,492	1.93
Domestic Relations - Uncontested	11	1,500	16,500	0.18
Juvenile Delinquency	35	0	0	0.00
Juvenile Dependency	130	0	0	0.00
Juvenile TPR	555	0	0	0.00
Paternity	27	0	0	0.00
Child Support	19	0	0	0.00
<b>Total Cases/Counts</b>		<b>5,902</b>		
<b>Total Workload (weight x filings/counts)</b>		<b>420,840</b>		
<b>Circuit Judge Year Value</b>		<b>90,300</b>		
<b>Circuit Judge Demand (workload/year value)</b>		<b>4.66</b>		<b>4.66</b>
<b>Current Circuit Judge Allocation</b>		<b>4.00</b>		
<b>Circuit Judge Surplus (+)/Deficit (-)</b>		<b>-0.66</b>		

## Circuit Court Judge Need Model


Case Type	Case/Count Weight	Single County Circuit	Workload by Case Type	Judge Need by Case Type
<b>Capital Crimes</b>	2,254	6	13,524	0.150
<b>Felony - Person</b>	104	231	24,024	0.27
<b>Felony - Property</b>	38	303	11,514	0.13
<b>Felony - Drug</b>	58	206	11,948	0.13
<b>Felony - Other</b>	36	309	11,124	0.12
<b>Misdemeanor</b>	7	274	1,918	0.02
<b>Lower Court Appeals</b>	45	120	5,400	0.06
<b>Civil - Tort</b>	203	218	44,254	0.49
<b>Civil - Other</b>	92	739	67,988	0.75
<b>Civil - Contracts</b>	41	453	18,573	0.21
<b>Protection Orders</b>	45	267	12,015	0.13
<b>Workers Compensation</b>	78	97	7,566	0.08
<b>Domestic Relations - Contested</b>	148	1,179	174,492	1.93
<b>Domestic Relations - Uncontested</b>	11	1,500	16,500	0.18
<b>Juvenile Delinquency/CHINS/Other</b>	35	0	0	0.00
<b>Juvenile Dependency</b>	130	0	0	0.00
<b>Juvenile TPR</b>	555	0	0	0.00
<b>Paternity</b>	27	0	0	0.00
<b>Child Support</b>	19	0	0	0.00
<b>Circuit Judge Demand (workload/year value)</b>				<b>4.66</b>

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## Weighted Caseload Study Judicial Resources Allocation Commission

### Circuit Example:

#### For a Multiple County Circuit -

$140,126 \div 83,850 = 1.67$  Overall Judicial Officer Need

$1.67 - 0.40 - 0.0 = 1.27$  Circuit Court Judge Implied Need

$1 - 1.27 = -0.27$  Difference (Circuit Court Judge Deficit)

Multi-County Circuit Court Judge Need Model				
Case Type	Case/Count Weight	Multi-County Circuit	Workload by Case Type	Judge Need by Case Type
Capital Crimes	2,254	0	0	0.00
Felony - Person	104	131	13,624	0.16
Felony - Property	38	293	11,134	0.13
Felony - Drug	58	236	13,688	0.16
Felony - Other	36	264	9,504	0.11
Misdemeanor	7	308	2,156	0.03
Lower Court Appeals	45	16	720	0.01
Civil - Tort	203	53	10,759	0.13
Civil - Other	92	109	10,028	0.12
Civil - Contracts	41	75	3,075	0.04
Protection Orders	45	99	4,455	0.05
Workers Compensation	78	21	1,638	0.02
Domestic Relations - Contested	148	363	53,724	0.64
Domestic Relations - Uncontested	11	511	5,621	0.07
Juvenile Delinquency	35	0	0	0.00
Juvenile Dependency	130	0	0	0
Juvenile TPR	555	0	0	0
Paternity	27	0	0	0
Child Support	19	0	0	0
<b>Total Cases/Counts</b>		<b>2,479</b>		
Total Workload (weight x filings/counts)		140,126		
Circuit Judge Year Value		83,850		
Circuit Judge Demand (workload/year value)		1.67		1.67
Current Circuit Judge Allocation		1.00		
District Court Judges Assigned to Circuit		0.40		
Circuit Judge Surplus (+)/Deficit (-)		-0.27		



## Weighted Caseload Study Judicial Resources Allocation Commission

### District Court Example:

$173,235 \div 90,300 = 1.92$  Overall Judicial Officer Need

$1.92 + 0.1 - 0.3 = 1.72$  District Court Judge Implied Need

$2 - 1.72 = 0.28$  Difference (District Court Judge Surplus)

District Court Judge Need Model				
Case Type	Case/Count Weight	District Court	Workload by Case Type	Judge Need by Case Type
Capital Crimes	99	0	0	0.000
A Felonies	35	115	4,025	0.04
Other Felonies	13	786	10,218	0.11
Misdemeanors	22	1,697	37,334	0.41
DUI	33	113	3,729	0.04
Traffic	4	5,742	22,968	0.25
Other Civil/Small Claims	15	1,428	21,420	0.24
Juvenile Delinquency	35	510	17,850	0.20
Juvenile Dependency	130	218	28,340	0.31
Juvenile TPR	555	15	8,325	0.09
Paternity	27	109	2,943	0.03
Child Support	19	621	11,799	0.13
Unlawful Detainer	17	252	4,284	0.05
<b>Total Cases/Counts</b>		<b>11,606</b>		
Total Workload (weight x filings/counts)		173,235		
District Judge Year Value		90,300		
District Judge Demand (workload/year value)		1.92		1.92
Current District Judge Allocation		2.00		
District Judges Assigned to Circuit		0.10		
Referees		0.30		
<b>District Judge Surplus (+)/Deficit (-)</b>		<b>0.28</b>		

**Alabama FY2017 Circuit Court Judicial Weighted Caseload Implied Need**

Cir	County	Region	Workload (minutes)	Judge Year Value (minutes)	Overall Judicial Officer Need (FTE)	District Court Judges (FTE)	Referees (FTE)	Circuit Judge Implied Need (FTE)	Actual Circuit Court Judges	Difference (+ = surplus; - = deficit)	Rank
	<b>Alabama</b>		15,354,490		173.3	10.0	7.3	156.0	146	-10.01	
23	Madison	Single	1,002,261	90,300	11.1	0.2	0.0	10.9	7	-3.90	1
13	Mobile	Single	1,638,168	90,300	18.1	1.0	3.0	14.1	11	-3.14	2
19	Autauga, Chilton,	Multiple	493,509	83,850	5.9	0.1	0.0	5.8	3	-2.79	3
6	Tuscaloosa	Single	852,823	90,300	9.4	0.0	1.0	8.4	6	-2.44	4
28	Baldwin	Single	741,965	90,300	8.2	0.8	0.1	7.3	5	-2.32	5
11	Lauderdale	Single	412,289	90,300	4.6	0.0	0.1	4.5	3	-1.47	6
20	Henry, Houston	Multiple	578,422	83,850	6.9	0.9	0.0	6.0	5	-1.00	7
37	Lee	Single	397,350	90,300	4.4	0.5	0.1	3.8	3	-0.80	8
5	Chambers, Macon, Randolph, Tallapoosa	Multiple	314,597	83,850	3.8	0.0	0.0	3.8	3	-0.75	9
24	Fayette, Lamar, Pickens	Multiple	161,497	83,850	1.9	0.4	0.0	1.5	1	-0.53	10
8	Morgan	Single	307,912	90,300	3.4	0.0	0.0	3.4	3	-0.41	11
33	Dale, Geneva	Multiple	198,860	83,850	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.4	2	-0.37	12
39	Limestone	Single	213,631	90,300	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.4	2	-0.37	13
1	Choctaw, Clarke, Washington	Multiple	198,067	83,850	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.4	2	-0.36	14
25	Marion, Winston	Multiple	236,220	83,850	2.8	0.5	0.0	2.3	2	-0.32	15
32	Cullman	Single	208,992	90,300	2.3	0.0	0.0	2.3	2	-0.31	16
41	Blount	Single	118,001	90,300	1.3	0.0	0.0	1.3	1	-0.31	17
4	Bibb, Dallas, Hale, Perry, Wilcox	Multiple	275,594	83,850	3.3	0.0	0.0	3.3	3	-0.29	18
34	Franklin	Single	110,947	90,300	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.2	1	-0.23	19
36	Lawrence	Single	106,685	90,300	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.2	1	-0.18	20
18	Shelby	Single	377,357	90,300	4.2	0.0	0.0	4.2	4	-0.18	21
35	Conecuh, Monroe	Multiple	94,716	83,850	1.1	0.0	0.0	1.1	1	-0.13	22
7	Calhoun, Cleburne	Multiple	516,160	83,850	6.2	1.0	0.1	5.1	5	-0.06	23
16	Etowah	Single	389,316	90,300	4.3	0.3	0.0	4.0	4	-0.01	24
17	Greene, Marengo, Sumter	Multiple	81,536	83,850	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	1	0.03	25
2	Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes	Multiple	113,438	83,850	1.4	0.4	0.0	1.0	1	0.05	26
3	Barbour, Bullock	Multiple	88,274	83,850	1.1	0.1	0.0	1.0	1	0.05	27
30	St. Clair	Single	209,422	90,300	2.3	0.4	0.0	1.9	2	0.08	28
38	Jackson	Single	156,247	90,300	1.7	0.0	0.0	1.7	2	0.27	29
31	Colbert	Single	156,087	90,300	1.7	0.0	0.0	1.7	2	0.27	30
21	Escambia	Single	155,561	90,300	1.7	0.0	0.0	1.7	2	0.28	31
15	Montgomery	Single	875,235	90,300	9.7	0.0	1.0	8.7	9	0.31	32
26	Russell	Single	161,713	90,300	1.8	0.1	0.0	1.7	2	0.31	33
27	Marshall	Single	240,135	90,300	2.7	0.0	0.0	2.7	3	0.34	34
9	Cherokee, DeKalb	Multiple	226,657	83,850	2.7	0.1	0.0	2.6	3	0.40	35
40	Clay, Coosa	Multiple	54,112	83,850	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.5	1	0.45	36
12	Coffee, Pike	Multiple	209,453	83,850	2.5	0.1	0.0	2.4	3	0.60	37
22	Covington	Single	122,083	90,300	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	2	0.65	38
29	Talladega	Single	166,548	90,300	1.8	0.6	0.0	1.2	2	0.76	39
14	Walker	Single	182,253	90,300	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	3	0.98	40
10	Jefferson	Single	2,210,397	90,300	24.5	2.4	1.9	20.2	27	6.82	41



**Alabama FY2017 District Court Judicial Weighted Caseload Time Study**

County	Workload (minutes)	Judge Year Value (minutes)	Overall Judicial Officer Need (FTE)	District Judges in Circuit (FTE)	Ref (FTE)	District Judge Implied Need (FTE)	Actual District Court Judges	Diff (+ = surplus; - = deficit)	Rank
Alabama	9,136,724		101.18	10.00	1.70	109.48	106.00	-3.48	
58 Shelby	356,231	90,300	3.94	0.00	0.10	3.84	2.00	-1.84	1
5 Baldwin	254,564	90,300	2.82	0.80	0.00	3.62	2.00	-1.62	2
2 Mobile	499,615	90,300	5.53	1.00	0.00	6.53	5.00	-1.53	3
31 Etowah	297,332	90,300	3.29	0.30	0.10	3.49	2.00	-1.49	4
28 DeKalb	183,229	90,300	2.03	0.10	0.00	2.13	1.00	-1.13	5
47 Madison	535,290	90,300	5.93	0.20	1.00	5.13	4.00	-1.13	6
63 Tuscaloosa	280,521	90,300	3.11	0.00	0.00	3.11	2.00	-1.11	7
38 Houston	195,714	90,300	2.17	0.80	0.00	2.97	2.00	-0.97	8
39 Jackson	155,885	90,300	1.73	0.00	0.00	1.73	1.00	-0.73	9
25 Cullman	242,752	90,300	2.69	0.00	0.00	2.69	2.00	-0.69	10
61 Talladega	182,992	90,300	2.03	0.60	0.00	2.63	2.00	-0.63	11
50 Marshall	236,756	90,300	2.62	0.00	0.00	2.62	2.00	-0.62	12
20 Colbert	140,349	90,300	1.55	0.00	0.00	1.55	1.00	-0.55	13
59 St. Clair	201,118	90,300	2.23	0.40	0.10	2.53	2.00	-0.53	14
Jefferson-Bessemer	135,326	90,300	1.50	1.00	0.00	2.50	2.00	-0.50	15
19 Coffee	125,304	90,300	1.39	0.10	0.00	1.49	1.00	-0.49	16
49 Marion	106,963	90,300	1.18	0.30	0.00	1.48	1.00	-0.48	17
12 Chambers	131,797	90,300	1.46	0.00	0.00	1.46	1.00	-0.46	18
30 Escambia	127,678	90,300	1.41	0.00	0.00	1.41	1.00	-0.41	19
8 Blount	126,499	90,300	1.40	0.00	0.00	1.40	1.00	-0.40	20
41 Lauderdale	125,694	90,300	1.39	0.00	0.00	1.39	1.00	-0.39	21
14 Chilton	127,539	90,300	1.41	0.00	0.10	1.31	1.00	-0.31	22
11 Calhoun	206,754	90,300	2.29	1.00	0.00	3.29	3.00	-0.29	23
43 Lee	160,522	90,300	1.78	0.50	0.00	2.28	2.00	-0.28	24
3 Montgomery	292,745	90,300	3.24	0.00	0.00	3.24	3.00	-0.24	25
4 Autauga	121,045	90,300	1.34	0.00	0.10	1.24	1.00	-0.24	26
23 Covington	106,782	90,300	1.18	0.00	0.00	1.18	1.00	-0.18	27
62 Tallapoosa	101,710	90,300	1.13	0.00	0.00	1.13	1.00	-0.13	28
13 Cherokee	95,225	90,300	1.05	0.00	0.00	1.05	1.00	-0.05	29
7 Bibb	93,058	90,300	1.03	0.00	0.00	1.03	1.00	-0.03	30
52 Morgan	272,201	90,300	3.01	0.00	0.00	3.01	3.00	-0.01	31
42 Lawrence	91,463	90,300	1.01	0.00	0.00	1.01	1.00	-0.01	32
27 Dallas	99,527	90,300	1.10	0.00	0.10	1.00	1.00	0.00	33
18 Cleburne	88,543	90,300	0.98	0.00	0.00	0.98	1.00	0.02	34
67 Winston	65,843	90,300	0.73	0.20	0.00	0.93	1.00	0.07	35
34 Geneva	83,052	90,300	0.92	0.00	0.00	0.92	1.00	0.08	36
33 Franklin	81,815	90,300	0.91	0.00	0.00	0.91	1.00	0.09	37
37 Henry	71,612	90,300	0.79	0.10	0.00	0.89	1.00	0.11	38
10 Butler	70,540	90,300	0.78	0.10	0.00	0.88	1.00	0.12	39
29 Elmore	168,216	90,300	1.86	0.10	0.10	1.86	2.00	0.14	40
55 Pike	74,915	90,300	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.83	1.00	0.17	41
44 Limestone	164,627	90,300	1.82	0.00	0.00	1.82	2.00	0.18	42
6 Barbour	59,821	90,300	0.66	0.10	0.00	0.76	1.00	0.24	43
65 Washington	63,627	90,300	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.70	1.00	0.30	44
64 Walker	150,628	90,300	1.67	0.00	0.00	1.67	2.00	0.33	45
24 Crenshaw	41,639	90,300	0.46	0.20	0.00	0.66	1.00	0.34	46
56 Randolph	56,689	90,300	0.63	0.00	0.00	0.63	1.00	0.37	47
32 Fayette	46,926	90,300	0.52	0.10	0.00	0.62	1.00	0.38	48
48 Marengo	54,972	90,300	0.61	0.00	0.00	0.61	1.00	0.39	49
40 Lamar	36,589	90,300	0.41	0.20	0.00	0.61	1.00	0.39	50
57 Russell	134,410	90,300	1.49	0.10	0.00	1.59	2.00	0.41	51
16 Clarke	50,619	90,300	0.56	0.00	0.00	0.56	1.00	0.44	52
54 Pickens	39,257	90,300	0.43	0.10	0.00	0.53	1.00	0.47	53
51 Monroe	47,365	90,300	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.52	1.00	0.48	54
46 Macon	46,668	90,300	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.52	1.00	0.48	55
45 Lowndes	33,976	90,300	0.38	0.10	0.00	0.48	1.00	0.52	56
36 Hale	40,289	90,300	0.45	0.00	0.00	0.45	1.00	0.55	57
21 Conecuh	39,975	90,300	0.44	0.00	0.00	0.44	1.00	0.56	58
22 Coosa	38,095	90,300	0.42	0.00	0.00	0.42	1.00	0.58	59
17 Clay	27,664	90,300	0.31	0.10	0.00	0.41	1.00	0.59	60
66 Wilcox	31,315	90,300	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.35	1.00	0.65	61
15 Choctaw	30,365	90,300	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.34	1.00	0.66	62
35 Greene	27,846	90,300	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.31	1.00	0.69	63
53 Perry	21,476	90,300	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.24	1.00	0.76	64
26 Dale	109,003	90,300	1.21	0.00	0.00	1.21	2.00	0.79	65
60 Sumter	17,986	90,300	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.20	1.00	0.80	66
9 Bullock	17,668	90,300	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.20	1.00	0.80	67
1 Jefferson-Birmingham	592,513	90,300	6.56	1.40	0.00	7.96	10.00	2.04	68