

**Program Name: Civil Caseflow Processing
Judicial Branch, Court Operations Division**

Quality of Life Result to which the Program Contributes:

Any person with an unresolved legal dispute may have their matters resolved in a civil court, in a fair, timely, efficient and open manner.

Program's Contribution to Result:

“Civil Caseflow Processing” is an extremely broad term chosen to describe one of the major functions of the court which encompasses a large number of activities and case types with distinctly different sets of possible results and performance measures.

Caseflow processing provides the court with the ability to effectively manage its civil caseload, including matters such as: small claims, housing, family matters, tax litigation, complex litigation, foreclosure resolution, and alternative dispute resolution.

Civil caseflow processing divides civil case types into eight major categories that contain over 77 different individual case types. These eight categories include administrative appeals; contracts; eminent domain; property; torts; vehicular torts; wills, estates and trusts; and miscellaneous.

Partners:

- Members of the public
- Litigants
- Attorneys
- Bar Associations
- Advocacy groups
- Business groups

Performance Measures:

Performance Measure #1:

Disposition Time:

Disposition time is a broad measure that shows the overall effect that caseflow processing procedures may have on one quality of life factor for litigants, the timely disposition of civil cases. It provides a numerical value that can be compared against national standards.

Disposition times (in months) for civil court trials:

Fiscal year 2006-2007: 21.4

Fiscal year 2007-2008: 24.4

Fiscal year 2008-2009: 22.4

Disposition times (in months) for civil jury trials:

Fiscal year 2006-2007: 21.4

Fiscal year 2007-2008: 21.8

Fiscal year 2008-2009: 21.5

Story Behind the Baseline:

The number of civil filings has steadily increased over the past three years, rising from 57,349 in fiscal year 2006-07, to 69,112 in fiscal year 2007-08, to 76,317 in fiscal year 2008-09, while disposition times over this same period have remained relatively unchanged. As case volume increases, methods to better manage cases from filing to disposition are needed to maintain and improve timeliness by which civil cases are disposed, and to improve additional quality of life results for individuals involved in civil cases.

Proposed Actions to “Turn the Curve”:

The court has begun to implement a number of caseflow procedures meant to improve quality of life results for litigants in civil proceedings, both as a result of recommendations made by its Civil Commission, and in connection with the implementation of the Branch’s strategic plan. These include the use of special sessions and alternatives to court appearances, which concentrate on better outcomes for the parties involved in a particular type of dispute (foreclosure for example); development of uniform court procedures, which ensure fair and consistent resolution of matters across the Branch; simplified procedures for self-represented parties; adoption of rules; and adaptation of technology throughout the Branch to help better utilize case information to provide improved outcomes for the individuals involved in a dispute.

Each of these efforts, while contributing to the overall result sought through “Civil Caseflow Processing” concentrates upon a more targeted set of quality of life results for the individuals involved in that particular type of civil proceeding, an example of which is the Foreclosure Mediation Program, which not only helps to dispose of the increasing number of foreclosure cases before the court in a fair and timely manner, but helps homeowners remain in their homes.

Future Results Based Accountability reporting will be presented regarding the effectiveness of efforts such as the Foreclosure Mediation Program, and will concentrate more on intended quality of life results, rather than on their effect upon a single, very broad measure of overall program performance such as timeliness, as shown by time to disposition for a case.