

ARKANSAS JUDICIARY



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

MOVING FORWARD

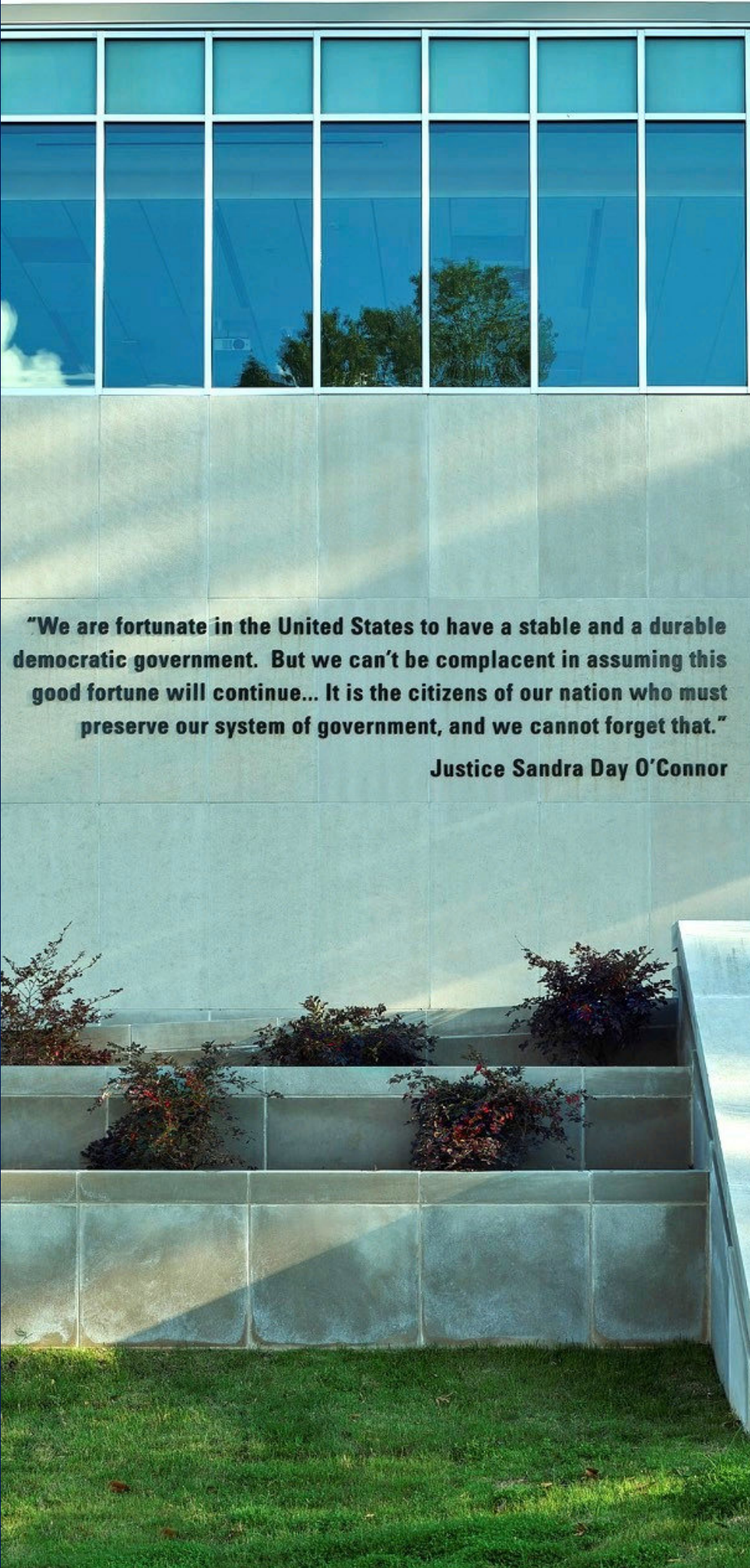
ARKANSAS JUDICIARY

OUR MISSION

As an equal and independent branch of government, the Arkansas Judiciary, acting with integrity, shall provide a safe, accessible, transparent, efficient, and impartial system of justice by fairly resolving disputes, protecting the public interest, and preserving individual rights while maintaining respect for the rule of law.

OUR VISION

The Arkansas Judiciary will embody integrity, transparency, and accountability to the public, which it serves.



"We are fortunate in the United States to have a stable and a durable democratic government. But we can't be complacent in assuming this good fortune will continue... It is the citizens of our nation who must preserve our system of government, and we cannot forget that."

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor

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From Marty Sullivan, Director



My Fellow Arkansans,

It is my privilege to present the 2025 Annual Report of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). I have often said that the AOC is the greatest public service organization in the state, and I truly believe that. The dedicated professionals at the AOC work tirelessly to improve the administration of justice in Arkansas. As I begin my twenty-third year with the agency, I remain deeply honored to serve alongside them, learning from their expertise as we pursue new and innovative ways to increase efficiency and enhance our court system for all Arkansans.

Over the past eight years as Director, I've had the opportunity to travel across the state, meeting with judges, legislators, circuit clerks, county judges, court staff, and law enforcement in every judicial circuit. These conversations have taught me that one of the most valuable things a leader can do is listen.

Each year, Arkansas state courts handle over 1.2 million cases, which is more than the total caseload of all federal courts nationwide. The judges and staff who work in our courthouses each day are the ones who best understand what improvements are needed. We've listened to their needs and feedback, and this report reflects our commitment to continuously improving the judiciary.

I can't help but to look forward. I'm proud to announce that in the coming months, we will launch a new case management system – built by Arkansans, for Arkansans. No out-of-state vendor knows our court community like we do, and we've used that understanding to design a system tailored to our state's unique needs. By embracing technology and innovation, we've achieved what once seemed out of reach.

Last fall, we completed the expansion of the Justice Building and opened our new Civics Education Center. The Center is designed to be both informative and engaging, and a place where all Arkansans can learn about state government and the importance of civility.

This innovative facility features interactive exhibits, including the Scipio A. Jones Courtroom, which is available to high schools, colleges, and law schools for debate and mock trial competitions. If you haven't visited yet, we look forward to welcoming you for a tour soon.

I am humbled every day by the opportunity to serve as your State Court Administrator. I am also deeply grateful for the support and partnerships we've built across the state, particularly with members of the General Assembly. Together, we are fulfilling our mission: to support all courts and ensure that justice is accessible, fair, and efficient for every Arkansan.

I look forward to continuing this important work with all of you in the years ahead.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Marty Sullivan".

Marty Sullivan

Director, Administrative Office of the Courts

ARKANSAS COURT STRUCTURE

ARKANSAS SUPREME COURT

1 CHIEF JUSTICE, 7 JUSTICES TOTAL
ELECTED STATEWIDE
8-YEAR TERMS



ARKANSAS COURT OF APPEALS

1 CHIEF JUDGE, 12 JUDGES TOTAL
ELECTED DISTRICT-WIDE
8-YEAR TERMS



CIRCUIT COURTS

126 CIRCUIT JUDGES
ELECTED CIRCUIT-WIDE
28 CIRCUITS
6-YEAR TERMS

CRIMINAL

DOMESTIC
RELATIONS

CIVIL

PROBATE

JUVENILE



STATE DISTRICT COURTS

70 STATE DISTRICT JUDGES
41 DISTRICTS
4-YEAR TERMS

TRAFFIC
AND
MINOR CRIMINAL

CIVIL
AND
SMALL CLAIMS

SUPREME COURT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 18

- CIVIL JURISDICTION UP TO \$25,000
- SMALL CLAIMS JURISDICTION UP TO \$5,000
- MAY HEAR LIMITED CIRCUIT COURT MATTERS

INTRODUCTION TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is the Judicial Branch agency that supports all state courts. The agency provides administrative and legal support to Arkansas's judges and court employees as well as assists attorneys and members of the public to ensure our state courts are accessible, efficient, and impartial. Additionally, the agency serves as a resource to the Arkansas General Assembly and Executive Branch agencies.

THE AOC IS COMPOSED OF FOUR DIVISIONS

COURT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The Court Information Systems Division is responsible for building a state-of-the-art court management system, for providing technological support for Arkansas courts, and for managing and maintaining the applications that support the judiciary and court participants.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Finance and Administration Division is responsible for maintaining the day-to-day operations of the AOC, and supporting administrative, security, financial, human resources, and statistical needs throughout the judiciary.

JUVENILE SERVICES

The Juvenile Services Division is responsible for providing juvenile judges and juvenile stakeholders with the resources, education, and support they need to better serve the children and families in Arkansas who become court-involved.

LEGAL SERVICES

The Legal Services Division plays a vital role in supporting the judiciary and ensuring the smooth operation of the courts through its comprehensive legal services and resources.



LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

Kristin Clark, Legal Services Division Director

The Legal Services Division plays a vital role in supporting the judiciary and ensuring the smooth operation of the courts through its comprehensive legal services and departments.

The staff attorneys and the trial court administrator in the Legal Services Division provide a wide range of essential services to support the Judicial Branch and court operations. Key programs and responsibilities include:

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Staff attorneys and the trial court administrator provide support to all divisions within the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Arkansas Supreme Court, and retired judges who accept cases on assignment. This support is crucial for the efficient operation of the Judicial Branch.

LEGAL RESEARCH AND SUPPORT

The staff attorneys provide legal support to circuit and district courts, other divisions within the AOC, and the Arkansas Supreme Court. Additionally, staff attorneys collaborate with legislators, other local officials, and state agencies on court-related issues and ensure that specialty courts operate effectively and in accordance with legal standards.

COMMITTEE WORK

The staff attorneys work with various Arkansas Supreme Court Committees, Judicial Council Committees, Legislative Task Forces, and Legislative Committees. This involves working on court rule revisions, administrative plans, and special projects.

LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

DOMESTIC RELATIONS AND PROBATE ATTORNEYS AD LITEM PROGRAM

Act 708 of 1999 authorized the AOC to establish an attorneys ad litem program in domestic relations and probate cases involving custody. This program is administered within the Legal Services Division and provides qualification training to attorneys who would like to serve as attorneys ad litem. This program ensures that children's rights are protected by having qualified attorneys to represent them.

PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

The staff attorneys prepare and contribute to various publications for court use, including the Appellate Update, Judicial Election Guide, new subject matter bench cards, and legislative summaries. These resources are essential for informing court personnel and the public about changes in the law and procedures.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The staff attorneys frequently serve as faculty for judicial education trainings for judges, clerks, trial court administrators (TCAs), and court reporters. Additionally, they provide training for ADR mediator certification, court interpreter orientation, attorney ad litem qualification, and other educational programs.

COURT INTERPRETER SERVICES

The AOC provides court interpreting services for individuals with limited English proficiency. Additionally, the AOC must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing qualified interpreters for those who are deaf, hard of hearing, or are unable to speak.

Interpreter services are available during court proceedings to parties, witnesses, and victims with cases in a state court. Removing barriers to communication helps ensure that everyone receives fair and equal access to justice.

The AOC is also charged with the responsibility for the testing and certification of those interested in becoming a foreign language interpreter for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (L.E.P.). The AOC maintains a Registry of Certified Court Interpreters who may be contracted directly by attorneys, law enforcement officers, jail officials, other state agency employees, social workers, or mental health workers for interpreting services.

LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

SPECIALTY COURTS PROGRAM

PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT IN SPECIALTY COURTS

In October 2024, the AOC began administering the Peer Recovery Specialists program for the Arkansas Department of Human Services. This federally-funded project places up to 28 peer recovery specialists in many of the state's treatment courts. These peer specialists, who are themselves in recovery, receive specialized training to provide mentoring and to arrange access to support services. Peer specialists serve as a positive role model of hope and recovery, reinforcing to treatment court participants that recovery is possible. National research has shown that peer recovery support services are linked to reductions in substance use relapses, higher retention rates in specialty courts, reduction in hospitalizations and the utilization of few emergency services.



ANNUAL SPECIALTY COURT CONFERENCE

The annual specialty court conference—the state's largest in-person training event for treatment court practitioners—was held in Little Rock in April, with over 425 practitioners in attendance. The AOC was able to utilize federal funds to host the event and keep the costs to attendees to a minimum. For the first time, attendees were not charged a registration fee, and the AOC paid the full cost of lodging for attendees from out of town. During the two-day conference, over 11 hours of continuing education (CLE and CEU) programming was available. Topics included working effectively with participants who have experienced trauma, national best-practice standards, the psychopharmacology of drug addiction, and legal issues in treatment courts. The AOC also worked with its federal partners to create in-depth training for juvenile drug court practitioners, treatment court coordinators, and those practitioners new to specialty courts.

ROLE-SPECIFIC TRAINING VIDEOS

The AOC has received federal grant funding to develop and deploy online video training modules to provide on-demand training for new treatment court team members. These videos will educate new team members on evidence-based national standards, the differences between specialty courts and regular criminal courts, the various duties and responsibilities of the various team member roles, and specialized training concerning their own role.

LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) DEPARTMENT

The Commission on Alternative Dispute Resolution regulates and certifies mediators, offers training and education, provides technical assistance, and administers the Access and Visitation Family Mediation Program. Additionally, the Commission annually awards grants to help fund programs that promote alternative dispute resolution in Arkansas.

Staff support, facilities, and operating assistance for the Commission is provided by the AOC.

MEDIATOR CERTIFICATION

The Commission is the regulatory entity for the certification and professional discipline of certified mediators. Mediators eligible to mediate cases must be certified by the Commission. The Commission has established standards for mediator certification, professional conduct, and discipline with which applicants must comply in order to be included on the Roster of Certified Mediators. Certified mediators must complete six hours of continuing mediation education each year in order to renew their certification.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The Commission offers basic mediation training as well as advanced and specialized training, and continuing mediation education courses for certified mediators. Additionally, Commission members or staff make educational presentations to organizations on what ADR is and how to effectively utilize it.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Commission provides technical assistance in designing ADR programs. The Commission has helped design, fund, or provide training for projects and programs for district, circuit, and appellate courts in Arkansas, as well as government agencies, school-based programs, and non-profit organizations.

ACCESS AND VISITATION FAMILY MEDIATION PROGRAM

The Commission is the advisory body for this statewide mediation program. The Access and Visitation Program provides mediation to divorced, divorcing or never married Arkansas parents who are encountering difficulty in the following areas: child custody, visitation, and child support.

ADR GRANTS

The Commission annually awards up to \$25,000 in grants to help fund programs that promote alternative dispute resolution in Arkansas.





COURT INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIVISION

Tim Holthoff, Court Information Systems Division Director

LEADERSHIP IN COURT TECHNOLOGY

In December 2024, the Arkansas Supreme Court recognized Chief Justice John Dan Kemp for his exceptional leadership in advancing court technology. Chief Justice Kemp's efforts have been instrumental in establishing e-filing across all 75 counties in Arkansas, transitioning to cloud-based computing, and developing a new, more effective case-management system. His vision and support have positioned the AOC as a national and international leader in court technology.

CIS KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

➤ ACAP SYSTEMS CONFERENCE

The CIS Division held its annual ACAP Systems Conference where court and court-adjacent participants learn about the tools and technologies available to manage Arkansas courts. Approximately 300 participants from all over the state learned about the AOC's latest developments in court technology. Courts also receive Data Quality Awards from the AOC Office of Research and Justice Statistics for their hard work in providing timely, accurate, and complete court information.

➤ INNOVATIVE COURT TECHNOLOGY

The AOC has continued to prioritize innovative court technology to enhance transparency, accountability, and accessibility. This year, the Court Information Systems Division staff participated in the annual meeting for the Court Information Technology Officers Consortium and presented at the National Center for State Courts' eCourts 2024 conference.

➤ CODE FOR JUSTICE SUMMIT

The AOC hosted the second Code for Justice Summit, bringing together nearly one hundred participants from twenty states to share insights on software development in the judiciary.

➤ INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

AOC staff provided technology assistance and training webinars for the Ukraine Judiciary, consulted with the Brazilian National Council of Justice and the Botswana Judiciary, and collaborated with the National Center for State Courts on a cybersecurity curriculum delivered to courts across the nation.

➤ AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

The AOC received the AWS State and Local Government Champions Award for the second time, recognizing our efforts in court technology modernization.



COURT INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIVISION

GRANTS AND FUNDING

➤ Through 2024, the CIS Division continued development of its cloud-native court management system and released a replacement for Public CourtConnect, called Search ARCourts. The expectation is that CIS will reach its first release by the end of calendar year 2025. In October, the AOC secured significant funding to further our technological advancements including the following:

- **National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP):** A two-year, \$4,000,000 grant to enhance our court management system.
- **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration:** A \$2,600,000 grant to expand our court management system.

A screenshot of the 'Welcome to the Arkansas Judiciary Case Search' web application. The interface features a search bar with a dropdown menu set to 'Cases' and a text input field for 'Case ID or Citation Number'. Below this are several filter sections: 'Start Range' and 'End Range' with date pickers (MM/DD/YYYY), 'Case Type' and 'Docket Code' with dropdown menus, and 'County' and 'Court Location' with dropdown menus. At the bottom right are 'Clear' and 'Search' buttons. The background of the interface shows a faint map of Arkansas.

The CIS Division is also responsible for supporting thousands of court users, attorneys, and the public in the use of our legacy systems. The Division is responsible for supporting case management, online access, online payments, jury management, and electronic filing systems deployed in every county of the State of Arkansas. Receiving more than 100 daily support requests on average, the team of experts resolves problems and assists the public in finding answers to their court-related questions, such as assisting with payment of traffic tickets or reporting for jury service. The Division is also responsible for supporting the technology needs of the AOC, the appellate courts and their ancillary agencies.

The CIS Division is on a quest of continuous improvement and continuous delivery using the latest agile methodologies and endeavors to fulfill our mission of providing technology to ensure justice and our vision of innovative technology supporting access to justice anytime, anywhere, on any device.



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Sam Kauffman, Finance and Administration Division Director

The Finance and Administration Division is responsible for maintaining the day-to-day operations of the AOC and supporting administrative, security, financial, human resources, and statistical needs throughout the Arkansas Judiciary.

From providing security, to resolving personnel disputes, to keeping the lights on, the staff of the Finance and Administration Division play a crucial role in supporting the courts.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

The Administrative Support Department provides clerical and logistical services to ensure the smooth operation of the AOC, Arkansas Judicial Council, and District Judges Judicial Council. This includes managing correspondence, scheduling meetings, organizing records, processing mail, and offering direct support to leadership and staff. The department serves as a central hub for administrative coordination, helping maintain efficiency across all functional areas.

COURT SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DEPARTMENT

The Court Security and Emergency Preparedness Department is responsible for creating an emergency preparedness plan for the Judicial Branch and for helping local agencies and governments develop security plans for their circuit and district courts. The director also develops security training programs for court personnel and administers state-funded grants for court security improvements.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance Department oversees fiscal operations for the AOC, including budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, grant management, and procurement. It ensures compliance with state and federal regulations and provides financial guidance to court personnel. The department plays a critical role in safeguarding public funds while supporting the AOC's ability to operate efficiently and transparently.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Human Resources Department manages personnel administration for the AOC and offers significant assistance throughout the Judiciary, including recruitment, onboarding, employee relations, benefits administration, performance management, and compliance with employment laws. The department works to attract and retain a qualified and competent workforce while fostering a professional and supportive work environment.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND JUSTICE STATISTICS

The mission of the Office of Research and Justice Statistics (ORJS) is to support the judiciary, employees of the Judicial Branch, attorneys, and members of the public with relevant and accessible data to improve the court system's efficiency, accessibility, and fairness to all. The ORJS works to improve data quality, produces the Arkansas State Court Guide to Statistical Reporting, provides data reports to local courts, responds to data requests, works with researchers using court data, and serves as the liaison with the National Center for State Courts' Court Statistics Project.

TRIAL COURT EMPLOYEE PAY PLAN

Division staff worked with the Trial Court Employee Committee of Judicial Council to develop and implement the Trial Court Employee Pay Plan. The plan provides a minimum salary corresponding to established qualifications. The pay plan is an attempt to institute uniformity and incentivize employees to obtain relevant experience and educational achievements to better serve Arkansas courts. Employees are rewarded for their service by earning "steps" for their job performance, educational achievements, and relevant work experience. In the nearly four years since its implementation, trial court employee pay has increased significantly, allowing the courts to remain competitive employers in a competitive labor market.

» GRANTS AND SUBGRANTS OVERVIEW

The AOC manages 15 federal and state-funded grants and subgrants totaling nearly \$40 million. These funds support a wide range of judicial initiatives, including statewide technology improvements, specialty court services, access to justice programs, and court personnel training.

Grants directly administered by the AOC to support statewide judicial infrastructure and programming:

Juvenile Justice System Improvement Grant

Federal Award Amount: \$1,000,000

Supports reforms to improve outcomes for children and families in the Arkansas justice system. Emphasis is placed on data-driven practices, diversion programs, and interagency collaboration.

Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Grants

Federal Award Amount: \$600,000

Provides funding specifically for juvenile drug treatment courts across Arkansas. These grants support evidence-based treatment programs, case management, and recovery services designed to reduce substance use and improve long-term outcomes for justice-involved youth.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Adult Specialty Court Enhancement Grants

Federal Award Amount: \$3,250,000

Two grants dedicated to expanding and strengthening Arkansas's adult specialty courts. These grants support operational improvements, treatment services, and evidence-based practices.

Veterans Treatment Court Support Grant

Federal Award Amount: \$2,000,000

Supports specialized courts that serve justice-involved veterans by funding peer mentorship, behavioral health services, and community reintegration support.

Court Improvement Program Grant

Federal Award Amount: \$810,190

The Court Improvement Program (CIP) provides funding, technical assistance, and training opportunities to courts to help them better respond to the needs of children and families involved in child welfare cases. Through the CIP, courts have been able to implement best practices, improve data collection and analysis, and promote collaboration with other agencies involved in the child welfare system.

State Access and Visitation Program Grant

Federal Award Amount: \$110,782

Supports mediation services for separated or divorced parents to help resolve visitation and custody issues, encouraging cooperative parenting and reducing court conflict for families.

NCHIP (National Criminal History Improvement Program) Grant

Federal Award Amount: \$4,027,500

Improves the quality, completeness, and accessibility of criminal history records through technology upgrades and data integration projects within the Arkansas court system.

CDLPI Grant (Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation) from FMCSA

Federal Award Amount: \$2,589,891

Supports the Arkansas court system's implementation and compliance with federal Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program requirements, improving coordination with licensing agencies and enforcement efforts.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

SUBGRANTS

Funds administered by the AOC or passed through to local courts or partner organizations:

ARPA Subgrant – Statewide Case Management System

Federal Award Amount: \$20,000,000

Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, this \$20 million subgrant supports the design and implementation of a modern, unified case management system accessible to all Arkansas courts, streamlining operations and improving data sharing.

Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Funding

State Award Amount: \$1,750,000

State-allocated funding administered by the AOC provides support to local CASA programs to ensure children in dependency cases have trained volunteers advocating for their best interests in court.

Supplemental Juvenile Funding Subgrants

State Award Amount: \$306,667

Delivers flexible funding to local juvenile courts to support and pilot programs, expand community-based alternatives, and supplement core juvenile justice services aligned with best practices.

Peer Support Specialists Subgrant from Arkansas DHS

Federal Award Amount: \$1,500,000

A pass-through subgrant from the Arkansas Department of Human Services to support the placement of certified peer support specialists in drug courts. These professionals assist participants in recovery, offering lived-experience mentorship and helping reduce relapse and recidivism.

JAG Behavioral Health and Juvenile Education Subgrants from Arkansas DFA

Federal Award Amount: \$275,984

Two separate subgrants of Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funds from the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration that support: (1) behavioral health education for specialty court participants, and (2) prevention and education initiatives in juvenile courts.

Highway Safety Adjudication Training Project from Arkansas State Police

Federal Award Amount: \$203,000

A subgrant from the Arkansas State Police provides training to judges and court personnel on adjudicating cases related to highway safety, impaired driving, and traffic offenses. The project promotes consistency in case handling and supports broader statewide traffic safety goals.

Court Security Subgrants

State Award Amount: \$500,000

Supports local courts in enhancing physical security measures—such as entry screening equipment, surveillance systems, and facility improvements—to ensure the safety of court staff and visitors.



JUVENILE SERVICES DIVISION

Brooke Steen, Juvenile Services Division Director

The Juvenile Services Division is responsible for providing juvenile judges and juvenile stakeholders with the resources, education, and support needed to better serve children and families of Arkansas. The Division includes attorneys and other professionals who provide legal support and resources on best practices to child welfare and juvenile justice stakeholders across the state. The Division consists of the Attorneys Ad Litem Program, which employs more than 60 attorneys who focus on providing quality representation for children involved in the child welfare system. The Division also maintains the Juvenile Justice Program, which trains and supports 250 juvenile officers statewide. In addition, the Division houses the State Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program, the Court Improvement Program, and the newly created role of the Behavioral Health Administrator, which was established in recognition of the increasing need for a dedicated liaison to strengthen coordination between behavioral health stakeholders and the Judicial Branch.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Juvenile Division has continued to coordinate and host a wide range of trainings and educational initiatives aimed at strengthening the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. From organizing statewide conferences to tailoring smaller stakeholder trainings across the state, the Division has worked to ensure that judges, attorneys, juvenile officers, other agencies, CASA, and community partners have access to timely, relevant, and impactful learning opportunities. In May 2025, the Juvenile Division hosted the largest conference to date, Children in the Courts, where more than 500 stakeholders had the opportunity to hear from national and state leaders on ways to improve legal representation, to address secondary traumatic stress, and to strengthen multidisciplinary collaboration.

INNOVATIONS AND RESOURCE CREATION

The Juvenile Services Division has continued developing resources for children and families who become court-involved. In collaboration with the Commission on Children, Youth, and Families and other stakeholders, the Juvenile Division created a Guidebook for parents as well as several videos to help families better understand and navigate court processes, which ultimately produces better outcomes for youth and families.

The Division Director and other stakeholders were also recently recognized for their work with the Child Advocacy Centers in developing the state's first Model Protocols for Multidisciplinary Teams who work with child victims. This groundbreaking effort strengthens the coordinated response to child abuse and improves outcomes for vulnerable children across the state.



JUVENILE SERVICES DIVISION

The Juvenile Services Division, along with the Legal Services Division, is excited to share the creation of the position: the Statewide Behavioral Health Administrator for the Judiciary. This role will ensure the judiciary is regularly collaborating with behavioral health stakeholders and reflects the AOC's commitment to improving outcomes for individuals with behavioral health needs who are involved with the judiciary.



Reunification Celebration Day
2024

FUNDING

Over the past year, the Juvenile Division has delivered an unprecedented level of financial, educational, and other support to juvenile courts and juvenile stakeholders through subgrants, trainings, collaboration opportunities, and resource development.

More than \$100,000 in Court Improvement Program Funding

Awarded to all juvenile courts to support improvements in dependency-neglect proceedings, aimed at improving timelines, legal representation, and resources

More than \$100,000 to Improve Juvenile Officer Functions

Awarded to delinquency courts to strengthen juvenile officer's productivity, education, and court-based programming

More than \$100,000 in Juvenile Drug Court Subgrants

In partnership with the Specialty Court Program, funding for all juvenile drug courts to improve services, treatment, and support for participating youth

More than \$100,000 in Subgrants for Behavioral Health and Treatment Initiatives

In collaboration with the Specialty Court Program, funding for all juvenile courts and their behavioral health providers to expand behavioral health treatment and other supportive services for court-involved youth

Support to Counties for Juvenile Officer Salaries and Trainings

Providing statewide training and reimbursements to counties for the salaries of approximately 250 juvenile officers, ensuring sustained local capacity to support youth and families



JUDICIAL BRANCH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Jennifer Taylor, Judicial Education Director

The judicial education department provides continuing legal education to all appellate, circuit, and district judges, court staff, trial court administrators, court reporters, district court clerks, and court security officers. The department provides educational conferences for each of these groups throughout the state. This ensures continued professional development of our judiciary and court staff.

The department also administers funding for judges to receive out-of-state training at centers of excellence, such as the National Judicial College and the National Center for State Courts.



COURT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (CMP)

The department also administers the Arkansas Certified Court Manager Program. This program is part of the National Center for State Courts Institute for Court Management and provides training specific to trial court management and administration. Participants who complete the program receive a nationally recognized certification as a Certified Court Manager.

The program consists of six courses taught by certified Arkansas and national faculty:

- » Accountability & Court Performance
- » Project Management for Courts
- » Budget & Fiscal Management
- » Purposes & Responsibilities of Courts
- » Caseflow & Workflow Management
- » Workforce Management



Judicial Branch Education Department



PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Arkansas Judicial Branch has partnered with teachers, community groups, and others to foster public understanding of the court system's role in our government. Our Public Education Program aims to create an informed and engaged citizenry by providing various educational resources and opportunities, including guided tours, virtual tours, and observing oral arguments.

» Visiting the Court

The AOC enjoys hosting school and community group tours of the Justice Building and Civics Education Center in Little Rock providing students the opportunity to speak with a justice, judge, or court staff.



» Observing Oral Arguments



A guided group tour can be paired with watching oral argument in the courtroom, wherein attorneys from each side argue their appellate case directly to the judges or justices. It is a very interactive process, as the judges ask the attorneys many questions about their cases. Seeing an oral argument first-hand can give additional insight into how the justice system works.

» Virtual Tour


Virtual tours are also an available option, and oral arguments can also be viewed virtually. The Arkansas Supreme Court schedules its oral arguments on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. and the Arkansas Court of Appeals schedules its oral arguments on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. Oral arguments occur when the courts are in session, which is typically from the first week of September until the first week of July. An oral argument lasts about 45 minutes.




COURT SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Pete Hollingsworth, Director of Security and Emergency Preparedness

Every person who uses the state's courthouses is entitled to a safe environment. This includes people who appear in court, judges and their staff, and for all other employees and members of the public who conduct business in courthouses throughout Arkansas.



The Director of Security Emergency Preparedness is responsible for creating an emergency preparedness plan for the Judicial Branch and for helping local agencies and governments develop security plans for their circuit and district courts. The director also develops security training programs for court personnel and administers state-funded grants for court security improvements.



The Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Security and Emergency Preparedness administers court security grants to support cities and counties in implementing local security and emergency preparedness plans for circuit and district courts. The Committee also establishes standards for individuals serving as court security officers. Its primary role is to recommend and assess uniform statewide policies on court security and emergency preparedness, while providing guidance and assistance to local courts in the development and execution of their individual plans.



COURT SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Security Grants Awarded in 2025 Grant Cycle

This year, the Committee on Security and Emergency Preparedness awarded \$500,000 in court security grants, thanks to the Arkansas State Legislature's decision to increase available funding. A total of 32 counties across the state received grant awards to support enhanced court security and emergency preparedness efforts.

Projects funded through this grant cycle included a wide range of security enhancements, such as upgrades to surveillance camera systems, construction of a holding cell, procurement of hand-held metal detectors, and improvements to panic alarm systems. Additional initiatives included the installation of a secure clerk's transaction window, the provision of Stop the Bleed first aid kits, the construction of a security cabinet near courthouse entry screening areas, and the purchase of portable radios and electronic restraints.

COUNTY NAME	GRANT AWARD
BAXTER	\$18,317.00
BENTON	\$19,288.00
BRADLEY	\$19,918.99
CLAY	\$19,813.28
COLUMBIA	\$20,000.00
CRAIGHEAD	\$18,000.00
CRAWFORD	\$19,516.73
DALLAS	\$18,686.29
FAULKNER	\$7,500.00
FRANKLIN	\$18,754.75
FULTON	\$20,000.00
HEMPSTEAD	\$16,000.00
HOWARD	\$19,494.95
JOHNSON	\$19,172.07
LITTLE RIVER	\$4,626.00
LOGAN	\$16,222.22
MILLER	\$13,779.55
MISSISSIPPI	\$10,039.90
MONROE	\$19,998.07
NEVADA	\$5,101.50
PERRY	\$19,654.39
POPE	\$4,741.53
PULASKI	\$12,726.66
RANDOLPH	\$17,027.71
SALINE	\$18,888.89
SEARCY	\$20,000.00
SEBASTIAN	\$12,726.67
SEVIER	\$20,000.00
STONE	\$13,937.79
VAN BUREN	\$576.28
WASHINGTON	\$15,490.78
WHITE	\$20,000.00



COMMISSION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Ashley Figueroa, Commission on Children, Youth, and Families Administrator

THE COMMISSION WORKS CLOSELY WITH THE JUVENILE SERVICES DIVISION OF THE AOC TO PRIORIZE AND CREATE RESOURCES FOR THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THAT BECOME COURT-INVOLVED. THE COMMISSION'S 2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

1 IMPLEMENTATION OF ARKANSAS'S FIRST POINT OF CONTACT DECISION-MAKING TOOL

The Commission is nearing completion on a multi-year grant. The grant provided funding to study and make informed decisions at a juvenile's first point of contact with the justice system. Several years of observation and visits with pilot sites in conjunction with national experts resulted in the decision to build a first of its kind tool. Arkansas is now developing the first application Structured Decision-Making Tool for the first point of contact. In collaboration with TEKsystems, national implementation experts, legal advisors, and site teams, the Commission is moving this project from research to a web-based prototype. The build-out should be completed in the first or second quarter of the next fiscal year and followed by the selection of a pilot site for testing. This effort has been guided by a focus on usability, fidelity, and validation with the long-term goal of establishing a scalable best practice for Arkansas and beyond.

2 DEVELOPMENT OF STATEWIDE INFORMATIONAL COURT VIDEOS

The Commission produced two high-quality informational videos to explain court processes for children, youth, and families involved in the judicial system. Both were replacing outdated information. These videos were made possible through the obtainment of grants and support of the Court Improvement Project funds. The project was designed from the ground up and featured an authentic Arkansas courtroom. These videos are available on our website and distributed through the Commission's stakeholders to reflect our strategic plan's goal of commitment to accessibility and transparency.

3 STATEWIDE SITE TOUR AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder visits have provided crucial insight into local challenges to help the Commission make informed decisions about current and future initiatives. This intentional outreach effort reflects the Commission's belief that meaningful system change requires hearing directly from those on the ground.

4 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND NATIONAL COLLABORATION FOR FUTURE GROWTH

The Commission partnered with the National Center for State Courts to prepare for its first formal strategic planning retreat in August 2025.

5

CREATION OF THE STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE – EDUCATION-FOCUSED PREVENTION

Recognizing the connection between school practices and juvenile court involvement, this year the Commission launched the Student Success Committee in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). This interdisciplinary group is creating a statewide resource toolkit for schools on truancy prevention, discipline alternatives, and coordinated responses, aimed at reducing reliance on law enforcement and courts for school-based behavior. The ADE has begun piloting some initiatives.

7

CENTERING LIVED EXPERIENCE IN NEW PARENT VIDEO

Most courts require parents in dependency-neglect cases to watch a tape of *The Clock is Ticking*. This video informs parents of their responsibilities to avoid termination of parental rights. To better support parents and provide a true opportunity for reunification, the Commission voted to create a replacement video. In collaboration with our stakeholders, and guided by family voices, the video will provide a much-needed update, honest perspective, and useful guide to reunification in our courts. The goal is to have this complete in the first half of 2026.

9

ENHANCED COMMUNICATION AND COMMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE

The Commission strengthened both its internal structure and external communication strategy. Improvements include a refreshed website, onboarding tools for new commissioners, consistent committee briefings, and organized document access. These upgrades support transparency, continuity, and more efficient collaboration across all Commission efforts.

6

JUVENILE CODE REVISIONS AND LEGISLATIVE IMPACT

Two years ago, the Commission and the AOC established an Advisory Council to expand the membership and stakeholder input into the Commission. This has allowed us to tackle larger projects. For example, the Advisory Council was a key partner with the AOC and the Commission in spearheading a comprehensive restructuring of the Arkansas Juvenile Code. Rather than changing substantive content, the effort focused on improving organization, ensuring statutes are in the appropriate sections and grouped logically for easier navigation. The result is a more user-friendly code that enhances accessibility for legal practitioners, service providers, and families.

8

DATA-DRIVEN POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH COLLABORATION

The Commission's Data Committee completed a year's study with pilot sites on the coordination of data collection. It examined the challenges posed by inconsistent juvenile justice data processes and collection, particularly regarding probation intake and school-based arrests.

10

JUVENILE PROBATION REFORM ADVOCACY AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Juvenile probation and intake emerged as a top reform priority through discussions within the Commission's committees. Together with the Juvenile Services Division, the Commission helped shape strategic messaging to improve and align intake practices. Commission leadership also participated in judicial training and professional conferences across the state to promote evidence-based practices and elevate the role of developmentally appropriate probation services.

2024 CASELOADS

Supreme Court

CASE TYPE	FILINGS	DISPOSITIONS
APPEAL BY STATE	2	2
APPELLATE FELONY	28	20
APPELLATE MISDEMEANOR	0	2
CAPITAL DEATH	0	1
CAPITAL LIFE W/O PAROLE	13	13
CIVIL APPEAL ADMINISTRATIVE	0	1
CIVIL APPEAL CIRCUIT	35	24
CIVIL PETITION FOR REVIEW	0	0
DEPT WORKFORCE SERVICE	0	1
DHS JUVENILE APPEAL	1	0
INCARCERATED CIVIL APPEAL	41	29
INTERLOCUTORY APPEAL	4	4
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY APPEAL	1	0
ORIGINAL ACTION	8	12
POST CONVICTION APPEAL	46	33
POST CONVICTION DEATH	1	0
PROBATE APPEAL	0	0
WORKER'S COMPENSATION	2	0
WRIT OF CERTIORARI - CR	6	5
WRIT OF CERTIORARI - CV	6	3
WRIT OF MANDAMUS - CR	7	10
WRIT OF MANDAMUS - CV	12	17
WRIT OF PROHIBITION - CR	1	2
WRIT OF PROHIBITION - CV	2	2
TOTAL	216	181

2024 CASELOADS

Court of Appeals

CASE TYPE	FILINGS	DISPOSITIONS	CLEARANCE RATE
APPELLATE FELONY	260	221	85%
APPELLATE MISDEMEANOR	12	7	58%
CIVIL APPEAL ADMINISTRATIVE	2	1	50%
CIVIL APPEAL CIRCUIT	194	222	114%
DEPT WORKFORCE SERVICE	238	649	273%
DHS JUVENILE APPEAL	63	68	108%
INCARCERATED CIVIL APPEAL	7	7	100%
INTERLOCUTORY APPEAL	15	17	113%
JUVENILE CIVIL APPEAL	0	1	n/a
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY APPEAL	6	3	50%
ORIGINAL ACTION	0	1	n/a
POST CONVICTION APPEAL	27	27	100%
PROBATE APPEAL	12	19	158%
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION	0	1	n/a
WORKER'S COMPENSATION	22	15	68%
WRIT OF CERTIORARI - CR	0	0	n/a
TOTAL	858	1,259	147%

2024 CASELOADS

Circuit Court

CASE TYPE	FILINGS	DISPOSITIONS	CLEARANCE RATE	% OF FILINGS
CIVIL	54,807	49,439	90%	30%
CRIMINAL	46,810	49,132	105%	25%
DOMESTIC RELATIONS	44,779	43,475	97%	24%
JUVENILE	17,094	16,738	98%	9%
PROBATE	21,121	21,830	103%	11%
GRAND TOTAL	184,611	180,614	98%	

2024 CASELOADS

Circuit Court

CHARGES FILED

CHARGE LEVEL																
FELONY							MISDEMEANOR				REVOCATION				VIOLATION	STATEWIDE TOTAL
CIRCUIT	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	CLASS D	CLASS Y	UNCLASSIFIED	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	UNCLASSIFIED						
1ST	31	362	351	824	98	7	450	77	160	168		88	234	2,850		
2ND	161	1,077	3,078	4,370	575	80	1,570	230	345	429		1,332	256	13,503		
3RD	57	377	433	1,088	141	15	454	57	73	141		361	28	3,225		
4TH	95	374	1,403	2,403	230	55	1,215	82	108	196		936	36	7,133		
5TH	50	130	635	993	75	18	321	67	58	102		433	33	2,915		
6TH	302	1,490	2,873	5,849	858	191	2,382	119	399	172		2,297	59	16,991		
7TH	13	405	153	488	47	1	116	6	13	7		89	6	1,344		
8TH NORTH	14	68	135	260	25	3	46	9	4	11		146	5	726		
8TH SOUTH	24	241	705	768	100	4	25	2	3	10		590	1	2,473		
9TH EAST	5	21	147	173	12	1	62	4	4	8		71	1	509		
9TH WEST	17	219	188	369	70	6	112	6	7	11		120	4	1,129		
10TH	37	228	176	534	87	10	199	4	8	27		170	5	1,485		
11TH EAST	20	169	201	513	39	1	149	4	17	8		0	1	1,122		
11TH WEST	111	481	532	1,061	139	8	188	9	15	2		221	2	2,769		
12TH	51	214	298	904	130	53	382	17	42	74		1,612	23	3,800		
13TH	47	317	590	1,258	156	24	360	20	34	65		273	15	3,159		
14TH	52	207	606	964	91	6	916	54	171	241		299	90	3,697		
15TH	25	111	368	742	57	12	266	28	64	62		167	23	1,925		
16TH	29	253	619	749	125	3	393	58	84	81		194	45	2,633		
17TH	30	165	364	716	72	10	246	18	35	38		277	25	1,996		
18TH EAST	41	227	698	834	132	17	441	26	85	178		149	128	2,956		
18TH WEST	8	58	153	236	47	2	118	9	11	24		36	11	713		
19TH EAST	1	58	128	225	14	1	100	13	15	17		80	6	658		
19TH WEST	68	329	924	1,815	155	24	696	52	87	127		1,344	40	5,661		
20TH	61	399	1,043	1,462	139	11	833	80	210	468		439	115	5,260		
21ST	33	217	255	573	92	9	320	38	57	137		209	26	1,966		
22ND	22	142	692	991	41	2	355	10	20	54		372	5	2,706		
23RD	18	118	337	646	56	2	269	12	14	45		118	3	1,638		
STATEWIDE TOTAL	1,423	8,457	18,085	31,808	3,803	576	12,984	1,111	2,143	2,903		12,423	1,226	96,942		

2024 CASELOAD DATA

Circuit Court

CHARGES DISPOSED

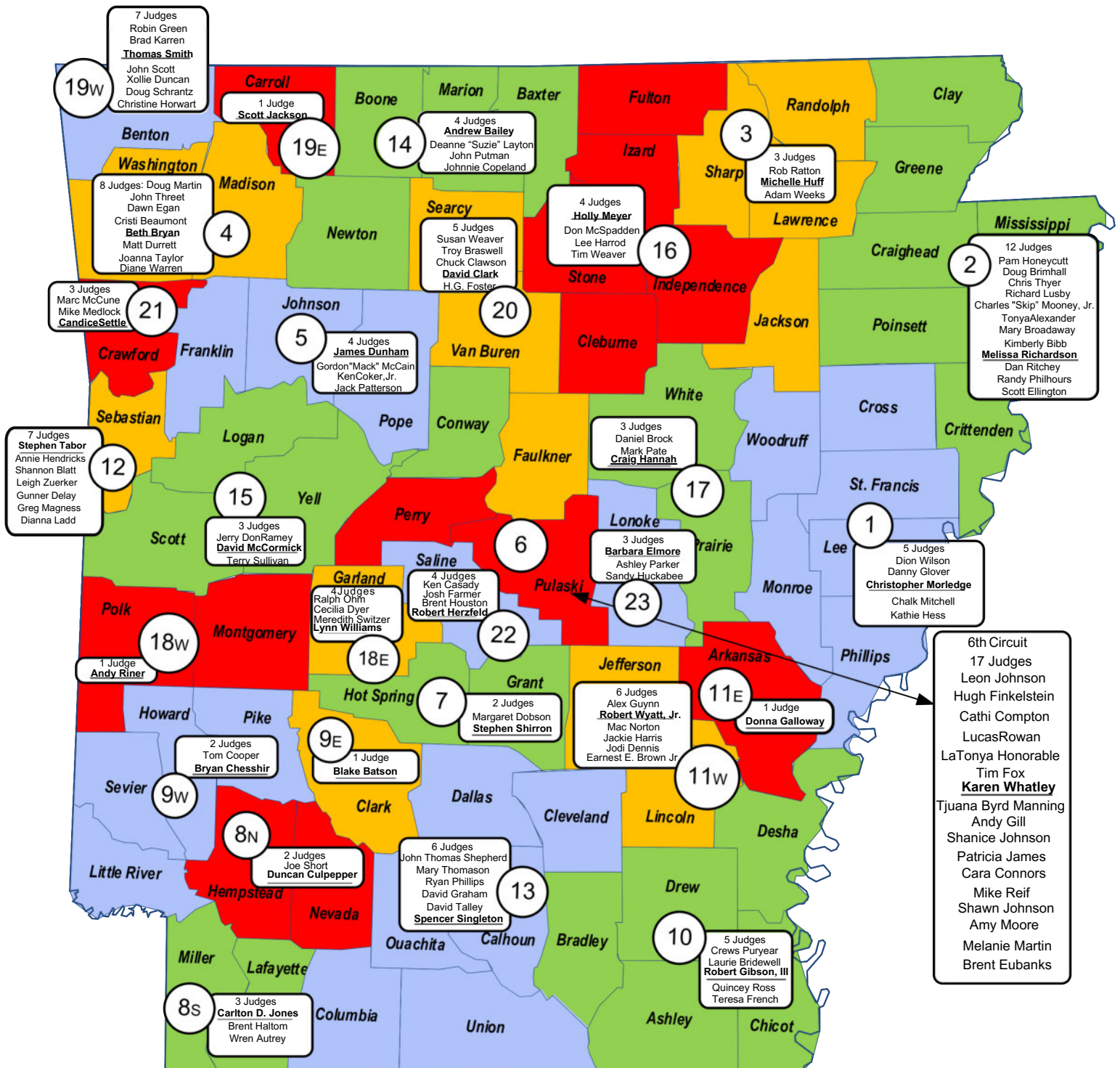
CIRCUIT	CHARGE LEVEL												
	FELONY						MISDEMEANOR				STATEWIDE		
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	CLASS D	CLASS Y	UNCLASSIFIED	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	UNCLASSIFIED	REVOCATION	VIOLATION	TOTAL
1ST	32	276	402	993	140	9	489	75	159	177	112	243	3,107
2ND	218	1,505	2,068	4,458	567	33	1,852	253	328	441	1,866	271	13,860
3RD	54	319	356	1,082	127	10	488	39	64	126	346	22	3,033
4TH	80	445	1,885	2,970	200	24	1,349	64	126	147	1,198	31	8,519
5TH	65	267	677	1,035	117	6	367	63	64	104	524	25	3,314
6TH	283	1,599	2,587	5,368	736	49	2,421	132	371	166	1,729	79	15,520
7TH	10	418	139	413	42		63	6	3	2	76	2	1,174
8TH NORTH	12	68	249	306	19		80	9	7	19	159	6	934
8TH SOUTH	33	293	315	741	101	4	46	2	5	9	554	1	2,104
9TH EAST	5	35	89	147	14	1	55	8	4	10	70	1	439
9TH WEST	19	105	148	394	56	6	100	6	5	17	139	2	997
10TH	22	237	181	615	90	6	182	7	3	20	193	2	1,558
11TH EAST	14	186	133	460	46	1	136	4	23	13	6	7	1,029
11TH WEST	31	618	418	678	147	4	152	10	8	4	168	3	2,241
12TH	53	226	352	996	107	43	437	19	37	55	1,439	17	3,781
13TH	35	289	384	1,151	118	12	300	15	28	54	294	15	2,695
14TH	30	186	321	1,013	100	10	707	63	172	237	233	104	3,176
15TH	54	179	619	1,016	86	8	398	29	67	82	221	18	2,777
16TH	32	225	695	764	93	3	417	34	80	81	185	35	2,644
17TH	35	155	335	737	68	5	269	15	42	35	296	27	2,019
18TH EAST	33	246	418	708	98		368	15	71	121	124	62	2,264
18TH WEST	10	75	233	276	48	2	136	7	11	28	128	6	960
19TH EAST	1	86	179	365	15	3	148	14	16	26	100	11	964
19TH WEST	84	370	1,078	2,214	123	16	736	51	97	129	1,555	33	6,486
20TH	69	354	982	1,588	109	6	860	91	189	427	449	115	5,239
21ST	42	146	322	700	68	7	346	37	59	110	249	32	2,118
22ND	19	157	695	1,032	30	3	354	8	18	47	395	6	2,764
23RD	21	130	494	665	52	6	287	8	20	52	244	1	1,980
STATEWIDE TOTAL	1,396	9,195	16,754	32,885	3,517	277	13,543	1,084	2,077	2,739	13,052	1,177	97,696

2024 CASELOADS

District Court

CASE TYPE	FILINGS	DISPOSITIONS	CLEARANCE RATE
APPEALS	788	716	90.9%
CIVIL - OTHER	7,978	4,300	53.9%
CONTRACTS	7,103	5,195	73.1%
DWI	15,847	13,857	87.4%
DAMAGE TO PERSONAL PROPERTY	114	77	67.5%
DEBT COLLECTION	24,215	15,946	65.9%
LOCAL ORDINANCE	28,044	26,394	94.1%
MISDEMEANOR - PERSON	7,443	4,294	57.7%
MISDEMEANOR - DV	8,932	7,410	83.0%
MISDEMEANOR - PROPERTY	14,489	13,937	96.2%
MISDEMEANOR - DRUG	14,296	12,230	85.5%
MISDEMEANOR - WEAPON	2,199	2,172	98.8%
MISDEMEANOR - PUBLIC ORDER	18,644	13,842	74.2%
MISDEMEANOR - OTHER	284,127	210,437	74.1%
PARKING	491	427	87.0%
RECOVERY OF PERSONAL PROPERTY	14	8	57.1%
SMALL CLAIMS	4,936	2,293	46.5%
TRAFFIC MISDEMEANOR	148,768	135,636	91.2%
TRAFFIC VIOLATION	283,636	246,341	86.9%
VIOLATION - OTHER	70,317	67,617	96.2%
GRAND TOTAL	942,381	783,129	83.1%

ARKANSAS JUDICIAL CIRCUITS

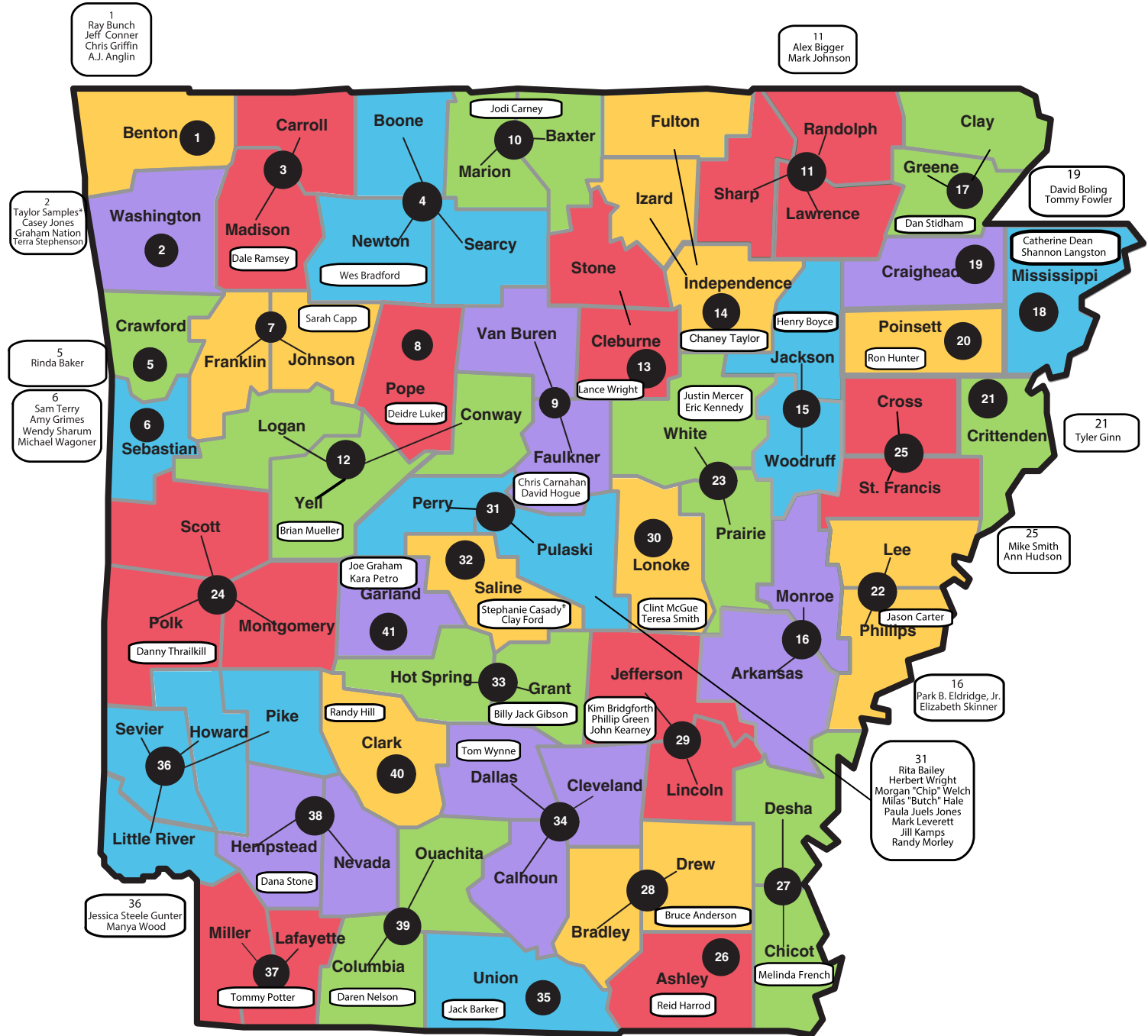


28 JUDICIAL CIRCUITS
75 COUNTIES
126 CIRCUIT JUDGES

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE

Last updated: 6/1/2025

ARKANSAS JUDICIAL DISTRICTS





IN MEMORIAM

Honorable Gary Ray Cottrell
September 28, 1950 – July 8, 2025

Honorable Gayle Ford
July 14, 1936 – March 26, 2024

Honorable John Gray Holland
October 20, 1925 – April 6, 2024

Honorable Collins Kilgore
December 3, 1941 – June 11, 2025

Honorable Jerry Edward Mazzanti
July 13, 1940 – January 18, 2025

Administrative Office of the Courts

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arcourts.gov
