

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT
STATE COURT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

**JUDICIAL
RESOURCES
RECOMMENDATIONS**

December 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Michigan Constitution (Art VI § 11) requires changes in the number of judges and structure of circuits on recommendation of the Michigan Supreme Court to reflect changes in judicial activity. As such, the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) recommends a package of structural and judgeship changes to align Michigan's judicial resources with current needs. Specifically, the SCAO proposes the following:

- Add 25 circuit court judgeships,
- Add 8 district court judgeships,
- Convert 1 district court judgeship to a circuit court judgeship,
- Convert 4 municipal court judgeships to district court judgeships and reduce 3 by attrition,
- Reduce 2 additional district judgeships by attrition,
- Reduce 1 part-time probate judgeship by attrition, and
- Consolidate or realign several courts.

If implemented, these recommendations would result in a net increase of 31.5 state-funded trial court judgeships, approximately a 5.6% increase in the state's current trial court judicial resources.

The scale of the need identified in this report reflects a broader national pattern of increased judicial demand, determined by weighted caseload analyses in several other states. For example, the Florida Supreme Court recently recommended 48 additional judgeships (approximately 5.1% of its judicial resources), in Florida's FY 2025–26 budget.¹ California's 2022 Judicial Resource Assessment Study estimated a need for 98 additional judgeships (approximately 4.8% of its judicial resources); the California Legislature approved 23 new trial court judgeships in 2022 and 26 in 2023.² Montana recently published a report showing a need for 11.55 additional judges (26% increase in judicial resources) but ultimately requested only 3 judges (6.5% increase).³ These examples illustrate that recent, significant upward adjustments in judicial capacity are occurring beyond Michigan in the post-pandemic era.

Several factors drive the current recommendations. Weighted caseload data shows that the greatest increases in judicial time are concentrated in family, domestic relations, and juvenile cases, suggesting that these case types have become more complex. Michigan trial courts' extensive adoption of remote hearings, initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic, has likely improved access to justice and reduced default rates, while also adding some logistical burdens to the courts and, in many instances, lengthening proceedings that increase demands on judicial time.⁴ Improvements to Michigan's public defense system, through the MIDC, have also increased the availability and vigor of defense representation, which is reflected in higher criminal case weights, particularly at the district court level.⁵ Taken together, these operational and substantive changes suggest that the baseline for judicial resource needs has shifted both locally and nationally.

The SCAO's recommendations are based on its most recent statewide review, informed by a time study completed by all judicial officers, including quasi-judicial officers, in the fall of 2024. That review

¹ <https://law.justia.com/cases/florida/supreme-court/2024/sc2024-1721.html>

² <https://courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/courts/default/2024-12/lr-2022-judicial-needs-assessment-gov-code-section-69614%28c%29%281%29-and-%283%29.pdf>; https://calmatters.digitaldemocracy.org/bills/ca_202320240sb75

³ <https://friendsofthethirdbranch.org/national-center-for-state-courts>

⁴ <https://www.wacita.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/TX-Remote-Hearing-Assesment-Report-The-Impact-on-Judicial-Workload.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.sado.org/Articles/Article/1049>

highlights the need to consider more comprehensive realignment and merger strategies in several of Michigan's northern counties that have experienced population stagnation and decline.⁶ Additionally, Michigan's Center for Data and Analytics forecasts that many of these counties are likely to experience declines in the coming years.⁷ Further, this report identifies Wayne County, and other large counties with third-class district courts, as areas where realignment or mergers may more effectively distribute judicial resources and better serve the public. The SCAO therefore recommends further targeted analysis of those jurisdictions to explore realignment and consolidation options to improve flexibility in meeting future judicial demand.

Where reductions are recommended, the SCAO proposes maintenance of the historic practice of implementing them by attrition, for example, when a judge retires, becomes constitutionally ineligible to run for election, or a position otherwise becomes vacant. In some jurisdictions, reductions may not be necessary if courts are realigned, merged, or otherwise restructured; in those cases, the SCAO's recommendations present these alternative options. To further facilitate cross circuit assistance and more adaptive workload distribution in the future, the SCAO also recommends expanding MCL 600.401 et seq. to permit concurrent jurisdiction plans between judicial circuits. Any additions of judgeships require both legislative authorization and approval by the applicable local funding unit(s).⁸

The SCAO's analysis begins with a weighted caseload methodology performed by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), which assigns a case weight to reflect the relative judicial time required to handle each case type. Where the statistical analysis indicated a notable need or excess, the SCAO conducted secondary, jurisdiction specific reviews to account for local factors not fully captured by the weighted caseload model. In most instances, county funded circuit, probate, and district courts were combined for analysis; city and township funded district courts were generally analyzed separately except in cases of possible consolidation.

These recommendations reflect the SCAO's most recent, data informed effort to align Michigan's judicial resources with current caseloads, case complexity, operational changes, and demographic trends, while preserving options for local restructuring and statutory flexibility to respond to future changes. The SCAO has determined not to issue recommendations for courts that are not included in this report. This report will provide a brief historical and methodological summary of this process. Please refer to the National Center for State Court's (NCSC) methodological report for additional details.⁹

⁶ <https://thearp.org/blog/reference/population-estimate-shifts/>

⁷ <https://www.michigan.gov/mcda/insights/2025/03/06/mich-county-popproj-2050>

⁸ MCL 600.550, MCL 600.805, and MCL 600.8175 generally require that funding units/control units adopt a resolution approving the addition of a judgeship in circuit court, probate court, and district court, respectively.

⁹ <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/publications/statistics-and-reports/judicial-resources-recommendations-reports/>

2025 JUDICIAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

	Judicial Need	Current Judges	Judicial Excess/Need	Average Workload per Judge	Recommendation	Pg
Recommended Additions						
38th District Court – Eastpointe	1.87	1	0.87	187%	+1 district judgeship, or consolidate the 38th and 39th District Court	15
Macomb County – Circuit and Probate	30.31	18	12.31	168%	+3 circuit judgeships	16
Oakland County – Circuit and Probate	39.55	24	15.55	165%	+4 circuit judgeships	18
37th District Court – Warren and Center Line	6.59	4	2.59	165%	+1 district judgeship	20
Genesee County – Circuit and Probate	17.33	11	6.33	158%	+2 circuit judgeships	21
Kent County – Circuit and Probate	23.37	16	7.37	146%	+2 circuit judgeships	23
Washtenaw County – Circuit and Probate	10.07	7	3.07	144%	+1 circuit judgeship	25
Jackson County – Circuit and Probate	6.97	5	1.97	139%	+1 circuit judgeship	26
Wayne County – Circuit and Probate	88.57	65	23.57	136%	+6 circuit judgeships	27
Van Buren County – Circuit and Probate	4.05	3	1.05	135%	+1 circuit judgeship	29
Calhoun County	11.44	9	2.44	127%	+1 circuit judgeship	30
41A District Court – Sterling Heights and Shelby Township	5.07	4	1.07	127%	+1 district judgeship	31
Muskegon County	13.60	11	2.60	124%	+1 district judgeship	32
Ionia and Montcalm Counties	7.43	6	1.43	124%	+1 circuit judgeship	33
Ottawa County	12.21	10	2.21	122%	+1 circuit judgeship	35
Ingham County – Circuit and Probate	10.89	9	1.89	121%	+1 circuit judgeship	36
Kalamazoo County	17.81	15	2.81	119%	+1 circuit judgeship +1 district judgeship	37
St. Clair County	9.45	8	1.45	118%	+1 district judgeship	39
Recommended Reductions						
Baraga, Houghton, and Keweenaw Counties	1.99	4.5	-2.51	44%	Create probate court district of Houghton and Keweenaw with 1 probate judgeship or -1 district judgeship	41
54B District Court – East Lansing	1.00	2	-1.00	50%	-1 district judgeship	44

Judicial Need	Current Judges	Judicial Excess/Need	Average Workload per Judge	Recommendation	Pg
Dickinson, Iron, and Menominee Counties	4.05	7	-2.95	58% Create separate district courts in Dickinson and Iron Counties, give Dickinson probate judge district court authority, then -1 district judgeship from Dickinson	45
Conversions, Consolidations, and Realignments					
Bay County	5.38	6	-0.62	90% Convert 1 district judgeship to a circuit judgeship	49
62A District Court – Wyoming	2.04	2	0.04	102% Consolidate the 62A and 62B District Courts	51
62B District Court – Kentwood	1.46	1	0.46	146%	
14A District Court – Washtenaw County	2.95	3	-0.05	98% Consolidate the 14A and 14B District Courts	53
14B District Court – Ypsilanti Township	1.69	1	0.69	169%	
Grosse Pointe Municipal Courts	0.67	4	-3.33	17% Consolidate into one new district court with four district judgeships, then -3 district judgeships	56
30th District Court – Highland Park	0.70	1	-0.30	70% Consolidate the 30th and 36th District Courts and	58
36th District Court – Detroit	31.71	29	2.71	+2 district judgeships	
Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties	7.91	7	0.91	113% Create separate district courts in Leelanau and Antrim Counties, give probate judges in Antrim and Leelanau district court authority, then monitor judicial need	61
Delta County	1.92	3	-1.08	64% Expand the 47th Circuit Court to include Alger and Schoolcraft Counties with one circuit judgeship or -1 district judgeship from Delta	63
Chippewa County	2.44	2	0.44	122% Expand the 50th Circuit Court to include Luce and Mackinac Counties with two circuit judgeships or +1 district judgeship in Chippewa	65

METHODOLOGY

Any estimate of judicial workload and a community's need for judges is a complex and multidimensional process. Many states, including Michigan, consider both quantitative and qualitative factors. The process in Michigan involves two stages. The first stage utilizes a quantitative method – a weighted caseload formula – to estimate the number of judges needed in each court. During the second stage, known as the secondary analysis, the SCAO reviews additional factors, such as the impact of quasi-judicial officers or the need for judges to travel long distances between court locations in a single large circuit. Other factors include trends in filings or population, changes in prosecutorial practices, and any other issue that may affect the need for judges. This secondary analysis also helps identify any potential errors or biases in the initial model that can then be corrected.

The SCAO evaluates the county-funded courts within a judicial circuit together. This accounts for seventy-seven of Michigan's eighty-three counties. Typically, district courts that are funded by cities and townships are analyzed independently from county-funded courts in the same judicial circuit.

Aggregating within a circuit is important because concurrent jurisdiction plans pursuant to MCL 600.401 *et seq.* permit more equitable assignment of cases among judges within a circuit, thereby allowing a judicial excess in one court to offset need in another court. For example, a district court that shows a judicial need for one judge can offset that need by sharing work with circuit and probate courts that show a judicial excess. All courts are eligible to participate in concurrent jurisdiction plans, and many courts currently do. The SCAO has strongly encouraged and assisted courts in implementing these plans and will continue to do so.

Weighted Caseload Formula: The weighted caseload formula is the preliminary quantitative method used to identify potential judicial need or excess in each court. In the formula, a weight for each case type accounts for varying amounts of judicial time required to handle an individual case.¹⁰ The case weight for a medical malpractice case, for example, is much greater than the case weight for a civil infraction. All case weights include post-judgment time, which are common in family and probate matters.

The case weights are applied to the average annual new case filings to generate an estimate of the total judicial time necessary to process the court's caseload. To ensure that short-term variations in new case filings do not unduly affect judicial resource need estimates, caseload data from the three years preceding the time study (2022, 2023, and 2024) were used in the weighted caseload formula. The product of the case weights and filings is divided by the judicial year, which is the average amount of time available to an individual judge each year for case-related activity.¹¹ The result is an estimate of the number of judges required to process the court's caseload, as reflected in this formula:

Number of Judges Needed =	Average Annual New Case Filings	X	Case Weight
		Judicial Year	

The weighted caseload formula distinguishes the varying degrees of effort involved in handling different case types at the trial court level and is far more accurate than an analysis based on unweighted gross case

¹⁰ See Appendix A for the case weights used for this report.

¹¹ The judicial year is the average amount of time a judge has available each year to handle cases, excluding work-related travel, administration, education, vacations, holidays, etc. The judicial year is 77,040 minutes in single-county courts and, to account for additional travel, 73,830 in multi-county courts.

filings counts. The proportions of different case types may vary significantly between different court types and between different courts.¹² As part of the weighted caseload process, the NCSC also determines additional administrative adjustments that capture additional components of judicial work that are not captured by the time study. These adjustments include such components as chief and presiding judge administration, election commission responsibilities, problem-solving court administration, and out-of-county assignments. Additional information about these adjustments and calculations is presented in the accompanying methodological report from the NCSC.¹³

The NCSC¹⁴ recommends a weighted caseload methodology above all other methods, such as a simple population analysis or an unweighted case filings analysis. In Michigan, the weighted caseload method has been used by the SCAO to determine judicial need since 1998.

The weighted caseload formula was first developed for use in the state of Michigan by the Trial Court Assessment Commission (TCAC), which the Legislature created in 1996. The TCAC included representatives from the Court of Appeals, circuit courts, probate courts, district courts, State Bar of Michigan, Michigan House of Representatives, Michigan Senate, and local governments. In 1997, the TCAC conducted a time study for two months to measure the actual time judges spent on each case. The NCSC helped develop the Michigan weighted caseload formula.

In 2000, because of the implementation of the family division and changes in circuit and district court jurisdiction, the Michigan Supreme Court directed the SCAO to update the weighted caseload formula through a study of the time required to process case types. The SCAO conducted a time study in September and October 2000 and used the resulting case weights for the 2001, 2003, and 2005 Judicial Resources Recommendations reports. The SCAO conducted another time study in September and October 2006 to update the case weights. The average of the case weights from the 2000- and 2006-time studies were used to generate recommendations in the 2007 and 2009 Judicial Resources Recommendations reports.

In 2010, the SCAO established a Judicial Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) comprised of judges, referees, magistrates, and court administrators; JNAC oversaw an extensive review of the weighted caseload methodology. The NCSC was retained to conduct Michigan's review and conducted a time study in October 2010 with all trial court judges and any quasi-judicial officer performing judicial functions. This was the first judicial time study in Michigan that involved every court in the state. Previous studies were based on data from a sample of trial courts. The NCSC also conducted on-site court visits, an online survey of judges, and a qualitative review process with experienced judges. The result was an extensive update of the weighted caseload methodology and the case weights.

The policies, practices, and structure of Michigan's trial courts evolve over time in response to public needs, legislative changes, and funding constraints. To ensure accurate assessments of judicial need, the SCAO regularly reviews and updates its methodology. While necessary, these updates can limit direct comparisons between Judicial Resources Recommendations (JRRs) from different years, especially for large courts.

In 2012, SCAO formed the Judicial Resources Advisory Committee (JRAC), comprised of judges, court administrators, referees, and magistrates, to review its approach and recommend improvements. Based on JRAC's input, SCAO updated its weighted caseload formula in 2013 and 2015.

¹² For example, a significant portion of district court caseload consists of traffic cases, making the total number of cases processed in district courts significantly higher than in either circuit or probate courts.

¹³ <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/publications/statistics-and-reports/judicial-resources-recommendations-reports/>

¹⁴ The National Center for State Courts, based in Williamsburg, Virginia, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the nation's state courts through research and technical assistance.

In 2016, JRAC was reconstituted and reconvened to consider new workload factors including expanded due process in child protective cases, the creation of business courts, pretrial requirements in felony cases, ability-to-pay assessments, and the growth of problem-solving courts. Adjusted case weights reflecting these changes were used in the 2017 recommendations, with larger weights applied only when assessing judicial excess to maintain system stability.

In 2018, SCAO again partnered with the National Center for State Courts to develop a consistent set of case weights for both judicial need and excess by conducting a full workload assessment. This included a four-week time study, surveys, site visits, and qualitative input from experienced judges. The resulting weights were approved by the JRAC and used to estimate judicial resource need in the 2019 Judicial Resources Report.

In 2024, to better estimate judicial need after significant changes in court operations over the previous six years, SCAO again retained NCSC to update the time study and workload assessment. This effort ensures that the JRR continues to reflect current judicial practices and demands. The workload assessment included a one-month time study, surveys, and qualitative input from judicial officers.

History of Judicial Time Studies in Michigan

Time Study	Oversight & Research	Method of Selecting Courts	JRR ¹⁵ Reports Issued
1997	TCAC, NCSC, and SCAO	Stratified Random Sample	2000
2000	SCAO	Stratified Random Sample	2001, 2003, 2005
2006	SCAO	Stratified Random Sample	2007, 2009
2010	JNAC, NCSC, and SCAO	All Trial Courts	2011, 2013, 2015, 2017
2018	JRAC, NCSC, and SCAO	All Trial Courts	2019
2024	JRAC, NCSC, and SCAO	All Trial Courts	2025

TCAC – Trial Court Assessment Commission
SCAO – State Court Administrative Office
JRAC – Judicial Resources Advisory Committee

NCSC – National Center for State Courts
JNAC – Judicial Needs Assessment Committee

Quasi-Judicial Officers: Most courts have at least one quasi-judicial officer, such as a referee or magistrate, who perform limited judicial functions. In many courts, these quasi-judicial officers perform a significant amount of judicial work for the courts. In previous years, judicial proportions were used to account for the impact of these officers on judicial resource need. These proportions were applied to the court's entire workload based on the average influence of quasi-judicial officers (1) within that court and (2) within comparable courts (stratum). Two challenges arose from this method. First, these estimates resulted in a range of judicial need, leading to less precision in the initial estimates for judicial need in each court. This range tended to grow increasingly wide for larger courts. Second, the previous method poorly reflected the differential impact of quasi-judicial officers on different types of cases. This was particularly problematic when attempting to determine need for different dockets, such as civil, criminal, family, and probate cases, where quasi-judicial support is known to vary. Precision in judicial need by case type is important when assisting courts with balancing their workload between judges and as part of concurrent jurisdiction or family plans.

To address these shortcomings, the NCSC and the SCAO designed a new methodology that more accurately reflected the impact of quasi-judicial officers for specific case types and resulted in more precise initial judicial estimates for each court. In previous time studies, quasi-judicial officers reported their time only when performing judicial functions that would otherwise be performed by a judge. However, in the most recent time study, quasi-judicial officers reported all their time, even for non-

¹⁵ JRR – Judicial Resources Recommendations.

judicial functions. This allowed the NCSC to develop independent case weights for quasi-judicial officers and judges, rather than applying proportions to total workload, and eliminated the need to report ranges of judicial need estimates.¹⁶ Just as in previous years, judicial case weights continue to have an average assumption of quasi-judicial officer support, but for the first time the average support was allowed to vary between different types of cases. In other words, each judicial case weight reflects the average amount of time a judge spends on a case, after removing the average amount of time a quasi-judicial officer spends on that case. Due to variations in local funding, some courts have more or less quasi-judicial officer support than the average court. Therefore, the impact of quasi-judicial officers was evaluated again during secondary analysis for each court to account for courts with more or less than the average level of quasi-judicial officer support. As a result, initial estimates for courts with substantially disproportionate levels of quasi-judicial officer support may differ significantly from the final recommendations provided in this report.

Secondary Analysis: Calculating judicial need is a complicated and multifaceted process. All prior judicial advisory committees have advised that the SCAO should conduct a secondary analysis of factors that affect a court's workload before recommending an increase or reduction in judgeships. Therefore, all of the courts where the initial need estimate suggested a change in judgeships were subject to a secondary analysis.

For each court under review during the secondary analysis, SCAO considered both qualitative and quantitative information. During the secondary analysis, the SCAO regional administrators communicated with each court. Discussion focused on case-related factors that affect judicial resources, court resources, and community factors in the court's jurisdiction.

During the secondary analysis, the SCAO took into account the constitutional requirements of having at least one circuit judgeship for each judicial circuit and at least one probate judgeship for each county or probate court district.

Other secondary analysis factors included, but were not limited to:

- Physical facilities and capacity
- Financial conditions and relationships with local funding units
- Current use of concurrent jurisdiction plans
- Temporary constraints on judicial resources
- Referee and magistrate support
- Travel time between courthouses
- Problem-solving court administration
- Specialized dockets
- Staffing
- Accuracy of caseload reporting
- Demographics
- Population trends
- Technology usage/capability
- Remote proceeding usage
- Effect of other agencies' practices/policies
- Dispute resolution
- Backlog of cases
- Experience of the bench
- Chief judge duties

The JRAC recommended that SCAO that parking tickets be included with non-traffic civil infractions for weighted caseload analysis. During the secondary analysis, however, it became clear that several courts with highly disproportionate numbers of parking tickets biased the model resulting in inaccurate estimates, particularly for those courts. As a result, the decision was made to remove parking tickets from the analysis and recalculate the non-traffic civil-infraction case weight. This adjustment produced only minimal changes to workload estimates for the vast majority of courts.

¹⁶ During secondary analysis, the quasi-judicial officer case weights were used to compare quasi-judicial officer need with the current number of actual quasi-judicial officers in each court. These weights will be published at a later time.

Selecting Courts for Secondary Analysis

SCAO selects courts for a secondary analysis using the results of the weighted caseload analysis and other factors described below. Courts were allowed to request a secondary analysis and were, thereby, also included in that process, even if the court did not meet the other criteria.

Possible Addition: Courts that met the following criteria were included in the secondary analysis in 2025 for a possible increase in judgeships.

- Using the initial judicial need estimates, a judicial need greater than one full judgeship, or
- An average workload per current judge exceeding 125% of the standard full-time equivalent (FTE) judicial workload.

Possible Reduction: Courts that met the following criteria were included in the secondary analysis in 2025 for a possible reduction in judgeships.

- Using the initial judicial need estimates, a judicial excess greater than one full judgeship, or
- An average workload per current judge below 75% of the standard full-time equivalent (FTE) judicial workload.

Historically, workload per judge was not used as a criterion for selecting courts for secondary analysis. However, in effect, reliance on need for a full FTE created a high threshold for smaller courts with fewer judgeships, regardless of whether the court was experiencing judicial need or judicial excess. For example, a small court facing a rapid increase or decrease in filings might not exceed the gross threshold of +/- 1 FTE to qualify for secondary analysis yet still experience significant workload strain or underutilization. A court with one judge would require that judge to work at 200% capacity before meeting the +1 FTE threshold and that court would likely never qualify for secondary analysis if the judge was heavily underutilized. Similarly, a two-judge court would need judges operating at nearly 150% or below 50% capacity to qualify for secondary analysis. Meanwhile, a court with 30 judges could qualify for secondary analysis when judges were operating at 103% or 97% capacity.

While a gross judicial need or excess of +/- 1 FTE is significant as it reflects a clear potential to adjust judicial resources, it is not sufficient on its own to identify courts where judicial resources may be misaligned. In cases where the gross need or excess does not meet the +/- 1 FTE threshold, but workload indicators suggest substantial misutilization of judicial resources, alternatives such as consolidation or concurrent jurisdiction arrangements may be more appropriate for redistributing judicial resources. These recommendations are made, where appropriate, beginning on page 48 of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The current method of funding trial courts in Michigan requires counties and local municipalities to bear a majority of the cost of trial court operations. The state pays the full cost of judges' compensation, except for municipal judges which are funded by the municipality.

State Costs: The state is responsible for the judge's salary, a retirement contribution up to 9 percent, and the employer portion of FICA taxes (OASI and Medicare). The annual total state cost for a circuit, probate, or district judgeship is \$217,160.¹⁷

The SCAO recommends that the Legislature add 25 circuit judgeships, 8 district judgeships, convert 1 district court judgeship to a circuit court judgeship, convert 4 municipal judgeships to state-funded district judgeships, reduce 3 of the newly converted district court judgeships by attrition, reduce 2 additional district court judgeships by attrition, and reduce one part-time probate judgeship by attrition.¹⁸ If the Legislature enacts these recommendations in totality, the annual cost to the state will be an additional \$6,919,666.

Estimated Annual State Savings & State Expenses

	Recommended Changes in Judgeships	State Cost Per Judge	Annual State Savings and State Expenses
Additions	+33 judgeships	\$ 217,160	\$ 7,166,280
Conversions of municipal court judgeships to district court judgeships	+4 judgeships	\$ 217, 160	\$ 868,640
Reductions of judgeships by attrition	-5 judgeships	-\$ 217,160	-\$ 1,085,800
Reduction of part-time judgeship by attrition	-1 judgeship	-\$ 29,454	-\$ 29,454
		Net	\$ 6,919,666

Local Costs: Significant local costs are associated with each judgeship. These include judges' healthcare and other fringe benefits; salaries and fringe benefits of court personnel (i.e., clerk, court reporter, bailiff, legal assistants); computer hardware, software, and other equipment for these personnel; and additional facilities (i.e., courtrooms, jury rooms, and judges' chambers). As it relates to savings from reductions, local funding, particularly staffing for the courts, varies greatly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, it is difficult to determine the amount that a funding unit would save through the reduction of a specific judgeship.

¹⁷ Judicial salaries and costs current as of 10/1/2025.

¹⁸ The Legislature currently funds one part-time probate judgeship in Keweenaw County at a cost of \$29,454 annually.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONS

38th District Court – Eastpointe

Initial estimates indicate that the 38th District Court – Eastpointe needs 1.87 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The court currently has 1 judge with an outstanding need of 0.87 judges. Initial estimates indicate that the current average workload per judge is 187%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one district judgeship to the 38th District Court – Eastpointe. As an alternative, the SCAO also recognizes that operational efficiency and flexibility could be achieved through consolidation of the 38th District Court – Eastpointe and the 39th District Court – Roseville and Fraser. In the case of consolidation, the additional district judgeship would not be needed.

Current Judgeships	1
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 District Judgeship
Total Judgeships	2

The resulting workload per judge would be 94% if a district judgeship were added to the 38th District Court, or 116% if the 38th and 39th District Courts were consolidated.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
38th District Court	Eastpointe	1

History of Recommendations:

In 2015, the SCAO reviewed the judicial need in the 38th District Court but did not recommend an additional judgeship due to the lack of space.

In 2017, the SCAO recommended that the 38th District Court and 39th District Courts be consolidated into a single district court or enter a concurrent jurisdiction plan.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature approved the consolidation of the 38th District and 39th District Courts pending local resolutions prior to January 1, 2020. The consolidation did not occur. *2018 PA 6, MCL 600.8122*

38th District Court Filings

Year	Traffic Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	7,966	7,948	15,914
2020	6,784	6,020	12,804
2021	7,108	6,303	13,411
2022	9,248	6,929	16,177
2023	7,541	6,976	14,517
2024	9,138	8,102	17,240

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Eastpointe
2010 Census	32,442
2020 Census	34,318
2024 Estimate	33,943

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Macomb County

Initial estimates indicate that the 16th Circuit and Macomb County Probate Courts need 30.31 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 18 judges with an outstanding need of 12.31 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 168%. The SCAO determined that no recommendations were necessary for the 42nd District Court in Macomb County; therefore, it has been excluded from this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of three circuit judgeships.

Current Judgeships	18
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+3 Circuit Judgeships
Total Judgeships	21

The resulting workload per judge would be 144% if three circuit judgeships were added to the 16th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
16th Circuit Court	Macomb County	15
Macomb County Probate Court	Macomb County	3

History of Recommendations:

In 2001, the SCAO recommended the addition of two circuit judgeships.

In 2003, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship.

In 2005, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship.

In 2009, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship and the conversion of one probate judgeship to a circuit judgeship.

In 2013, the SCAO recommended the addition of four circuit judgeships.

In 2015, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship.

In 2019, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature authorized the addition of two circuit judgeships. *2001 PA 251, 2001 PA 257, MCL 600.517.*

The Legislature authorized the addition of one circuit judgeship and reduced one probate judgeship. *2002 PA 715, MCL 600.517.*

The Legislature authorized the addition of one circuit judgeship. *2006 PA 101, MCL 600.517.*

The Legislature temporarily reduced one circuit judgeship between January 1, 2011, and January 1, 2017. *2009 PA 228, MCL 600.517.*

The Legislature authorized the addition of one circuit judgeship on January 1, 2017, and one circuit judgeship on January 1, 2019. *2014 PA 56, MCL 600.517.*

The Legislature authorized the addition of one probate judgeship on January 1, 2025. *2023 PA 310, MCL 600.803.*

Macomb County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	209	4,013	4,651	9,505	5,141	23,519
2020	170	2,447	4,196	6,501	4,191	17,505
2021	194	3,039	4,078	8,170	5,635	21,116
2022	234	3,105	4,165	9,711	5,970	23,185
2023	222	3,587	4,413	9,779	5,458	23,459
2024	237	3,558	5,014	9,171	5,519	23,499

Population

Year	Macomb County
2010 Census	840,978
2020 Census	881,217
<u>2024 Estimate</u>	<u>886,175</u>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Oakland County

Initial estimates indicate that the 6th Circuit and Oakland County Probate Courts need 39.55 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 24 judges with an outstanding need of 15.55 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 165%. The SCAO determined that no recommendations were necessary for the 52nd District Court in Oakland County; therefore, it has been excluded from this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of four circuit judgeships. Additionally, initial estimates in the 6th Circuit Court indicate that the court has significantly more referees relative to their caseload than other courts.

Current Judgeships	24
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+4 Circuit Judgeships
Total Judgeships	28

The resulting workload per judge would be 141% if four circuit judgeships were added to the 6th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
6th Circuit Court	Oakland County	20
Oakland County Probate Court	Oakland County	4

History of Recommendations:

In 2001, the SCAO recommended that the legislature add two circuit judgeships.

In 2005, the SCAO recommended that the legislature add one circuit judgeship.

In 2013, the SCAO recommended that the Legislature add two circuit judgeships.

In 2015, the SCAO recommended that the Legislature add one circuit judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature added two additional judgeships to the 6th Circuit Court. *2001 PA 252, MCL 600.507.*

The Legislature added one additional judgeship to the 6th Circuit Court. *2006 PA 103, MCL 600.507.*

The Legislature extended the timeline to add the additional judgeship in the 6th Circuit Court from 2007 to 2009. *2006 PA 607, MCL 600.507.*

The Legislature suspended one judgeship from the 6th Circuit Court between the years 2011-2015. *2009 PA 228, MCL 600.507.*

The Legislature added one additional judgeship to the 6th Circuit Court. *2014 PA 57, MCL 600.507.*

Oakland County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	351	3,780	7,682	10,533	7,250	29,596
2020	209	2,877	6,486	8,245	5,992	23,809
2021	270	3,259	6,140	8,567	7,326	25,562
2022	361	3,678	5,818	9,551	7,621	27,029
2023	374	4,271	6,340	10,358	7,427	28,770
2024	318	4,585	6,857	10,452	7,196	29,408

Population

Year	Oakland County
2010 Census	1,202,362
2020 Census	1,274,395
2024 Estimate	1,296,888

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

37th District Court – Warren and Center Line

Initial estimates indicate that the 37th District Court – Warren and Center Line need 6.59 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The court currently has 4 judges with an outstanding need of 2.59 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 165%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one district judgeship.

Current Judgeships	4
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 District Judgeship
Total Judgeships	5

The resulting workload per judge would be 132% if one district judgeship were added to the 37th District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
37th District Court	Warren and Center Line	4

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made for this court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on this court.

37th District Court Filings

Year	Traffic Civil Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	38,046	21,513	59,559
2020	20,740	14,805	35,545
2021	31,040	18,147	49,187
2022	28,808	26,029	54,837
2023	30,753	27,132	55,885
2024	46,289	28,863	75,152

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Warren	Center Line
2010 Census	134,056	8,257
2020 Census	139,387	8,552
2024 Estimate	137,686	8,533

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Genesee County

Initial estimates indicate that the 7th Circuit and Genesee County Probate Courts need 17.33 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 11 judges with an outstanding need of 6.33 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 158%. The SCAO determined that no recommendations were necessary for the 67th District Court in Genesee County; therefore, it has been excluded from this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of two circuit judgeships.

Current Judgeships	11
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+2 Circuit Judgeships
Total Judgeships	13

The resulting workload per judge would be 133% if two circuit judgeships were added to the 7th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
7th Circuit Court	Genesee County	9
Genesee County Probate Court	Genesee County	2

History of Recommendations:

In 2001, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship to the 7th Circuit Court.

In 2005, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship to the 7th Circuit Court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature added two circuit judgeships in the 7th Circuit Court and reduced one probate judgeship by attrition. *2001 PA 236, MCL 600.508*.

The Legislature added one circuit judgeship for the 7th Circuit Court to take effect in 2007, but this addition has not occurred. *2006 PA 100, MCL 600.508*.

Genesee County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	84	1,914	1,212	7,032	3,215	13,457
2020	59	1,120	1,031	6,101	2,673	10,984
2021	93	1,705	1,148	6,036	3,091	12,073
2022	101	1,929	1,117	6,442	3,493	13,082
2023	96	1,621	1,200	6,555	3,336	12,808
2024	75	1,947	1,289	6,593	3,471	13,375

Population

Year	Genesee County
2010 Census	425,790
2020 Census	406,211
2024 Estimate	402,279

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Kent County

Initial estimates indicate that the 17th Circuit and Kent County Probate Courts need 23.37 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 16 judges with an outstanding judicial need of 7.37 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 146%. The SCAO determined that no recommendations were necessary for the 63rd District Court in Kent County; therefore, it has been excluded from this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of two circuit judgeships.

Current Judgeships	16
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+2 Circuit Judgeships
Total Judgeships	18

The resulting workload per judge would be 130% if two circuit judgeships were added to the 17th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
17th Circuit Court	Kent County	11
Kent County Probate Court	Kent County	5

History of Recommendations:

In 2001, the SCAO recommended the addition of two circuit judgeships to the 17th Circuit Court.

In 2003, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship to the 17th Circuit Court.

In 2005, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship to the 17th Circuit Court.

In 2013, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship in the 17th Circuit Court and one district judgeship in the 63rd District Court.

In 2019, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship in the 17th Circuit Court, one district judgeship in the 63rd District Court, and one probate judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature added two circuit judgeships. *2001 PA 256, MCL 600.518.*

The Legislature added one circuit judgeship. *2006 PA 99, MCL 600.518.*

The Legislature added one circuit judgeship and one district judgeship. *2014 PA 58 and PA 60, MCL 600.518, and MCL 600.8130(4).* Kent County approved the addition of one circuit judgeship.

The Legislature added one probate judgeship. *2022 PA 8, MCL 600.803*

The Legislature amended the statute to add the district judgeship to the 63rd District Court in 2025. 2023 PA 311, MCL 600.8130(4).

Kent County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	185	3,081	1,285	10,183	4,544	19,278
2020	137	2,719	1,043	8,343	3,748	15,990
2021	151	3,358	1,145	9,766	4,374	18,794
2022	121	2,956	1,266	10,902	4,033	19,278
2023	142	3,293	1,374	10,966	3,977	19,752
2024	198	3,283	1,593	10,822	3,643	19,539

Population

Year	Kent County
2010 Census	602,622
2020 Census	657,974
2024 Estimate	673,002

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Washtenaw County

Initial estimates indicate that the 22nd Circuit and Washtenaw County Probate Courts need 10.07 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 7 judges with an outstanding need of 3.07 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 144%. Due to imbalanced workloads among multiple district courts in Washtenaw County, a specific recommendation for consolidation is addressed in a later section of this report, see page 53.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Current Judgeships	7
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship
Total Judgeships	8

The resulting workload per judge would be 126% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 22nd Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
22nd Circuit Court	Washtenaw County	5
Washtenaw County Probate Court	Washtenaw County	2

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made for these courts.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on these courts.

Washtenaw County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	77	1,001	1,332	3,406	1,935	7,751
2020	81	658	1,277	2,526	1,674	6,216
2021	75	643	1,366	2,723	1,931	6,738
2022	89	747	1,683	3,072	1,986	7,577
2023	83	935	1,551	3,111	2,153	7,833
2024	104	1,045	1,625	3,060	2,150	7,984

Population

Year	Washtenaw County
2010 Census	344,791
2020 Census	372,258
2024 Estimate	373,875

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Jackson County

Initial estimates indicate that the 4th Circuit and Jackson County Probate Courts need 6.97 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 5 judges with an outstanding need of 1.97 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 139%. The SCAO determined that no recommendations were necessary for the 12th District Court in Jackson County; therefore, it has been excluded from this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Current Judgeships	5
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship
Total Judgeships	6

The resulting workload per judge would be 116% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 4th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
4th Circuit Court	Jackson County	4
Jackson County Probate Court	Jackson County	1

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made for this court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on this court.

Jackson County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	92	1,189	312	3,269	1,295	6,157
2020	96	974	293	2,487	1,160	5,010
2021	92	928	314	2,764	1,366	5,464
2022	81	819	337	2,856	1,281	5,374
2023	108	901	425	3,007	1,172	5,613
2024	88	1,102	472	2,840	1,131	5,633

Population

Year	Jackson County
2010 Census	160,248
2020 Census	160,366
2024 Estimate	160,233

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Wayne County

Initial estimates indicate that the 3rd Circuit and Wayne County Probate Courts need 88.57 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 65 judges with an outstanding judicial need of 23.57 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 136%. Wayne County does not fund a district court and, therefore, none is included in this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of six circuit judgeships. Additionally, initial estimates in the 3rd Circuit Court indicate that the court has significantly fewer referees relative to their caseload than other courts.

Current Judgeships	65
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+6 Circuit Judgeships
Total Judgeships	71

The resulting workload per judge would be 125% if six circuit judgeships were added to the 3rd Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
3rd Circuit Court	Wayne County	59
Wayne County Probate Court	Wayne County	6

History of Recommendations:

In 2001, the SCAO recommended reduction through attrition of two circuit judgeships in the 3rd Circuit Court.

In 2003, the SCAO recommended that one of the pending circuit reductions in the 3rd Circuit Court be suspended.

In 2005, the SCAO recommended reduction through attrition of one probate judgeship.

In 2007, the SCAO recommended reduction of two circuit judgeships through attrition. In 2007, the Michigan Supreme Court also recommended reduction of two circuit judgeships and one probate judgeship through attrition.

In 2009, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of two circuit judgeships.

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one circuit judgeship.

In 2013, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of four circuit judgeships.

In 2019, the SCAO recommended the addition of three circuit judgeships.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature reduced three circuit judgeships. *2001 PA 254, 2002 PA 715, MCL 600.504.*

The Legislature reduced one probate judgeship. *2001 PA 253 MCL 600.803*

The Legislature reduced one circuit and one probate judgeship. *2011 PA 300, MCL 600.504.*

The Legislature reduced four circuit judgeships. *2014 PA 59, MCL 600.504.*

The Legislature added one circuit judgeship. *2022 PA 8, MCL 600.504.*

Wayne County Case Filings

Year	Appeals	Circuit Court			Probate Court	Total Caseload
		Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	615	9,962	16,91	33,493	13,274	74,254
2020	398	5,207	16,51	24,125	9,688	55,931
2021	420	9,473	17,35	24,934	11,682	63,859
2022	467	7,627	15,01	30,576	11,513	65,197
2023	517	6,381	16,33	29,734	12,468	65,438
2024	570	7,127	18,33	33,238	11,957	71,230

Population

Year	Wayne County
2010 Census	1,820,584
2020 Census	1,793,561
2024 Estimate	1,771,063

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Van Buren County

Initial estimates indicate that the 36th Circuit and Van Buren County Probate Courts need 4.05 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 3 judgeships with an outstanding need of 1.05 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 135%. The SCAO determined that no recommendations were necessary for the 7th District Court in Van Buren County; therefore, it has been excluded from this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Current Judgeships	3
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship
Total Judgeships	4

The resulting workload per judge would be 101% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 36th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
36th Circuit Court	Van Buren County	2
Van Buren County Probate Court	Van Buren County	1

History of Recommendations:

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one judgeship from Van Buren County.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on these courts.

Van Buren County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court					Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family			
2019	23	550	132	1,053	457	2,215	
2020	22	447	121	943	394	1,927	
2021	14	645	131	1,001	480	2,271	
2022	37	777	139	1,093	471	2,517	
2023	25	696	132	1,079	501	2,433	
2024	21	478	130	1,060	436	2,125	

Population

Year	Van Buren County
2010 Census	75,258
2020 Census	75,587
2024 Estimate	76,129

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Calhoun County

Initial estimates indicate that the 37th Circuit, Calhoun County Probate, and 10th District Courts need 11.44 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 9 judges with an outstanding judicial need of 2.44 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 127%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Current Judgeships	9
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship
Total Judgeships	10

The resulting workload per judge would be 114% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 37th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
37th Circuit Court	Calhoun County	4
Calhoun County Probate Court	Calhoun County	1
10th District Court	Calhoun County	4

History of Recommendations:

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one circuit judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature reduced through attrition one probate judgeship. *2011 PA 300, MCL 600.803.*

Calhoun County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil Others		
2019	31	904	241	2,680	1,072	8,262	18,609	31,799	
2020	20	533	200	2,007	995	5,613	13,030	22,398	
2021	27	1,052	234	2,249	1,127	5,435	13,265	23,389	
2022	47	811	256	2,470	1,115	6,714	13,082	24,495	
2023	29	840	294	2,565	1,090	9,458	15,598	29,874	
2024	42	89	334	2,652	1,216	7,656	16,889	28,878	

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Calhoun County
2010 Census	136,146
2020 Census	134,310
<u>2024 Estimate</u>	<u>133,785</u>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

41A District Court – Sterling Heights and Shelby Township

Initial estimates indicate that the 41A District Court – Sterling Heights and Shelby Township needs 5.07 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The court currently has 4 judges and needs an additional 1.07 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 127%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one district judgeship. The SCAO makes this recommendation due, in part, to structural inefficiencies that limit the court's ability to effectively manage its caseload between two locations with different workload demands.

Current Judgeships	4
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 District Judgeship
Total Judgeships	5

The resulting workload per judge would be 101% if one district judgeship were added to the 41A District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
41A District Court	Sterling Heights and Shelby Township	4

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made for this court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on this court.

41A District Court Filings

Year	Traffic Infractions	Civil Cases	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	36,369	20,728	57,097	
2020	18,092	12,342	30,434	
2021	19,814	15,292	35,106	
2022	29,985	16,927	46,912	
2023	30,672	19,283	49,955	
2024	28,167	21,761	49,928	

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Sterling Heights	Shelby Township
2010 Census	129,699	73,804
2020 Census	134,346	79,408
2024 Estimate	133,460	78,590

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Muskegon County

Initial estimates indicate that the 14th Circuit, Muskegon County Probate, and 60th District Courts need 13.60 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 11 judges with an outstanding need of 2.60 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 124%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one district judgeship.

Current Judgeships	11
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 District Judgeship
Total Judgeships	12

The resulting workload per judge would be 113% if one district judgeship were added to the 60th District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
14th Circuit Court	Muskegon County	5
Muskegon County Probate Court	Muskegon County	2
60th District Court	Muskegon County	4

History of Recommendations:

In 2019, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature added one circuit judgeship. *2022 PA 8, MCL 600.515.*

Muskegon County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court					Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family	Traffic		Civil Infractions	All Others		
2019	61	1,530	347	3,757	1,381	12,340	22,421		41,837	
2020	31	1,126	312	2,651	1,178	7,376	15,198		27,872	
2021	38	1,060	377	2,817	1,332	8,110	16,004		29,738	
2022	35	1,203	369	3,316	1,426	9,109	16,335		31,793	
2023	40	1,150	388	3,608	1,583	9,927	18,065		34,761	
2024	43	1,064	483	3,134	1,603	9,124	18,903		34,354	

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Muskegon County
2010 Census	172,188
2020 Census	175,824
2024 Estimate	177,428

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Ionia and Montcalm Counties

Initial estimates indicate that the 8th Circuit Court, Ionia County Probate, Montcalm County Probate, 64A District, and 64B District Courts need 7.43 judges. These courts currently have 6 judges with an outstanding need of 1.43 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge of 124%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Current Judgeships	6
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship
Total Judgeships	7

The resulting workload per judge would be 106% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 8th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
8th Circuit Court	Ionia and Montcalm	2
Ionia County Probate Court	Ionia County	1
Montcalm County Probate Court	Montcalm County	1
64A District Court	Ionia County	1
64B District Court	Montcalm County	1

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made for these courts.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on these courts.

Ionia County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil Others	
2019	19	295	92	978	460	4,281	4,743	10,868
2020	17	243	93	707	408	3,069	3,631	8,168
2021	16	242	69	860	421	3,352	3,638	8,598
2022	15	265	81	824	405	2,750	3,308	7,648
2023	24	284	90	941	416	3,038	3,570	8,363
2024	24	268	124	878	383	2,877	3,959	8,513

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Montcalm County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil	All Others	
2019	26	293	99	1,211	502	2,916	4,569	4,569	9,616
2020	25	270	94	940	461	2,022	3,378	3,378	7,190
2021	12	358	95	1,178	526	2,304	3,312	3,312	7,785
2022	18	305	93	1,085	457	2,751	3,020	3,020	4,709
2023	16	255	109	1,152	507	2,653	3,481	3,481	8,173
2024	21	221	112	1,016	458	2,641	3,646	3,646	8,115

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Ionia County	Montcalm County
2010 Census	63,905	63,342
2020 Census	66,804	66,614
2024 Estimate	66,250	69,314

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Ottawa County

Initial estimates indicate that the 20th Circuit, Ottawa County Probate, and 58th District Courts need 12.21 judges to appropriately manage the workload. These courts currently have 10 judges with an outstanding need of 2.21 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 122%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Current Judgeships	10
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship
Total Judgeships	11

The resulting workload per judge would be 111% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 20th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
20th Circuit Court	Ottawa County	5
Ottawa County Probate Court	Ottawa County	1
58th District Court	Ottawa County	4

History of Recommendations:

In 2019, the SCAO recommended the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature added one circuit judgeship. *2001 PA 256, MCL 600.521.*

The Legislature added one circuit judgeship. *2022 PA 8, MCL 600.521.*

Ottawa County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil Others	All Others	
2019	42	857	361	3,321	1,066	23,290	18,751	47,688	
2020	49	679	283	2,942	977	20,146	14,770	39,846	
2021	54	754	293	3,122	1,143	22,909	14,862	43,137	
2022	53	698	367	3,263	1,120	26,511	14,770	46,782	
2023	55	739	407	3,353	1,185	22,224	15,187	43,150	
2024	56	730	435	3,353	1,153	19,864	16,376	41,967	

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Ottawa County
2010 Census	263,801
2020 Census	296,200
2024 Estimate	306,235

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Ingham County Circuit and Probate Courts

Initial estimates indicate that the 30th Circuit and Ingham County Probate Courts need 10.89 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 9 judges with an outstanding need of 1.89 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 121%. The SCAO determined that no recommendations were necessary for the 55th District Court in Ingham County; therefore, it has been excluded from this analysis.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit judgeship.

Current Judgeships	9
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship
Total Judgeships	10

The resulting workload per judge would be 109% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 30th Circuit Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
30th Circuit Court	Ingham County	7
Ingham County Probate Court	Ingham County	2

History of Recommendations:

In 2015, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one probate judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on this court.

Ingham County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		
2019	195	1,000	761	5,772	2,120	9,848
2020	139	937	598	3,934	1,843	7,451
2021	116	986	698	4,430	2,156	8,386
2022	175	963	687	4,753	2,179	8,757
2023	164	995	731	4,684	2,297	8,871
2024	165	1,032	879	4,771	2,181	9,028

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Ingham County
2010 Census	280,895
2020 Census	284,900
2024 Estimate	290,427

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Kalamazoo County

Initial estimates indicate that the 9th Circuit, Kalamazoo County Probate, and 8th District Courts need 17.81 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 15 judges with an outstanding need of 2.81 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 119%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one circuit and one district judgeship.

Current Judgeships	15
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 Circuit Judgeship, +1 District Judgeship
Total Judgeships	17

The resulting workload per judge would be 105% if one circuit judgeship were added to the 9th Circuit Court and if one district judgeship were added to the 8th District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
9th Circuit Court	Kalamazoo County	6
Kalamazoo County Probate Court	Kalamazoo County	3
8th District Court	Kalamazoo County	6

History of Recommendations:

In 2003, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship in the 8th District Court.

In 2009, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship in the 8th District Court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature approved a reduction by attrition of one district judgeship. *2012 PA 19, MCL 600.8117.*

The Legislature added a new circuit judgeship effective 2025. *2022 PA 277, MCL 600.510.*

Kalamazoo County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil	All Others	
2019	57	1,816	518	4,523	1,338	20,141	25,366		53,759
2020	40	1,252	493	3,401	1,201	15,479	19,249		41,115
2021	51	1,569	511	3,624	1,377	14,538	19,159		40,829
2022	75	1,658	612	3,482	1,297	16,097	19,983		43,204
2023	48	1,733	661	3,967	1,294	15,294	20,524		43,521
2024	57	1,879	733	3,718	1,430	17,520	24,478		49,815

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Kalamazoo County
2010 Census	250,331
2020 Census	261,670
<u>2024 Estimate</u>	<u>264,780</u>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

St. Clair County

Initial estimates indicate that the 31st Circuit, St. Clair County Probate, and 72nd District Courts need 9.45 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 8 judges with an outstanding need of 1.45 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 118%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the addition of one district judgeship.

Current Judgeships	8
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+1 District Judgeship
Total Judgeships	9

The resulting workload per judge would be 105% if one district judgeship were added to the 72nd District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
31st Circuit Court	St. Clair County	3
St. Clair County Probate Court	St. Clair County	2
72nd District Court	St. Clair County	3

History of Recommendations:

In 2015, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one probate judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on this court.

St. Clair County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil	All Others	
2019	30	947	353	2,293	1,079	10,997	12,827		28,526
2020	19	661	327	1,663	1,084	6,611	9,469		19,834
2021	26	795	358	1,800	1,208	9,768	10,702		24,657
2022	40	750	402	2,060	1,250	9,330	10,270		24,102
2023	50	709	386	2,027	1,176	8,737	10,458		23,543
2024	39	761	467	2,058	1,092	7,787	12,146		24,350

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	St. Clair
2010 Census	163,040
2020 Census	160,383
2024 Estimate	160,308

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

RECOMMENDED REDUCTIONS

Baraga, Houghton, and Keweenaw Counties

Initial estimates indicate that the 12th Circuit, Baraga County Probate, Houghton County Probate, Keweenaw County Probate, and the 97th District Courts need 1.99 judges to appropriately handle their workload. These counties currently have 4 full-time judges and 1 part-time judge and have an excess of 2.51 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge in Baraga, Houghton, and Keweenaw counties is 44%

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the creation of a probate court district of Houghton and Keweenaw Counties with one full-time probate judgeship and one part-time probate judgeship, then the reduction through attrition of the part-time probate judgeship. If a probate court district is not created, the SCAO recommends the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship.

Current Judgeships	4 full-time judgeships, 1 part-time judgeship
2025 SCAO Recommendation	Create probate court district of Houghton and Keweenaw with 1 probate judge or -1 district judgeship ¹⁹
Remaining Judgeships	4 full-time or 3 full-time and 1 part-time

The resulting workload per judge would be 50% if the part-time probate judgeship were reduced or 57% if the district judgeship were reduced from the 97th District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
12th Circuit Court	Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw Counties	1
Baraga County Probate Court	Baraga County	1
Houghton County Probate Court	Houghton County	1
Keweenaw County Probate Court	Keweenaw County	0.5 ²⁰
97th District Court	Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw Counties	1

History of Recommendations:

In 2003, the SCAO recommended that the part-time probate judgeships in Baraga and Keweenaw counties be converted to full-time with district court jurisdiction upon reduction of the district judgeship through attrition, if Houghton and Keweenaw counties did not form a probate court district. The counties did not form a probate court district, and the Legislature converted the Baraga County probate judgeship to full-time, however, the Legislature did not eliminate the district judgeship.

In 2007, the SCAO and the Michigan Supreme Court recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship.

¹⁹ MCL 600.807 (a) permits the counties of Houghton and Keweenaw to form a probate court district when a majority of electors voting on the question in each affected county approves. See, PA 492 of 2004. As an alternative to a probate court district with one judge, SCAO recommends the reduction of one district judgeship.

²⁰ The Keweenaw County Probate Court judgeship is the only judgeship in Michigan where state law permits the judge to also engage in the practice of law. It is shown as a part-time judgeship and calculated as 0.5 current judicial resources.

In 2009, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship. The SCAO also recommended that two district courts be created, one for Baraga County and one for Houghton and Keweenaw counties. As an alternative to eliminating the district judgeship and creating separate district courts, the SCAO stated that the counties could create a probate court district of Houghton and Keweenaw counties, which would result in the reduction through attrition of one part-time probate judgeship.

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one judgeship.

In 2013, SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship. As an alternative to eliminating the district judgeship, the SCAO also stated that the counties could create a probate court district of Houghton and Keweenaw counties, which would result in the reduction through attrition of one part-time probate judgeship.

In 2015, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship. The SCAO also recommended giving the probate judges district court authority.

In 2017, the SCAO recommended the creation of a probate district court in Houghton and Keweenaw Counties with one probate judge or the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship.

In 2019, the SCAO recommended the creation of a probate court district of Houghton and Keweenaw Counties and the reduction through attrition of a probate court judgeship. Alternatively, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature converted the Baraga County probate judgeship from part-time to full-time effective January 2, 2007. *2004 PA 492, MCL 600.810a.*

Baraga County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil Others	All Others	
2019	5	24	12	90	74	839	497	497	1,541
2020	3	29	6	71	60	710	432	432	1,311
2021	1	48	11	73	65	415	430	430	1,043
2022	1	31	11	62	59	421	415	415	1,000
2023	5	45	8	68	75	383	434	434	1,018
2024	3	35	10	94	67	537	410	410	1,156

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Houghton County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil Others	All Others	
2019	8	63	32	220	231	1,328	1,403	1,403	3,285
2020	4	49	23	218	183	1,012	1,215	1,215	2,705
2021	15	34	34	232	228	1,116	1,162	1,162	2,821
2022	11	72	27	233	226	1,119	1,246	1,246	2,934
2023	13	57	41	238	218	1,001	1,012	1,012	2,580
2024	13	77	41	265	233	851	943	943	2,423

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Keweenaw County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil Others	
2019	1	5	4	5	20	39	87	161
2020	1	2	3	13	14	33	83	149
2021	0	2	5	13	21	23	60	124
2022	1	6	6	16	22	26	50	127
2023	1	4	6	14	18	35	43	121
2024	3	5	4	13	15	21	65	126

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Baraga County	Houghton County	Keweenaw County
2010 Census	8,860	36,628	2,156
2020 Census	8,158	37,361	2,046
2024 Estimate	8,169	38,041	2,161

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

54B District Court – East Lansing

Initial estimates indicate that the 54B District Court – East Lansing needs 1.00 judge to appropriately handle the workload. This court currently has 2 judges and has an excess of 1.00 judge. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 50%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends the reduction through attrition of one district court judgeship. As an alternative, the SCAO also recognizes that operational efficiency, flexibility, and enhanced service to court users that would be achieved through consolidation of the 54A District Court – Lansing, the 54B District Court – East Lansing, and the 55th District Court.

Current Judgeships	2
2025 SCAO Recommendation	-1 District Judgeship
Remaining Judgeships	1

The resulting workload per judge would be 100% if one district judgeship were reduced from the 54B District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
54B District Court	East Lansing	2

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature approved the consolidation of the 54A District Court – Lansing, 54B – East Lansing, and 55th District courts to be completed before November 2019. This consolidation did not occur. *2018 PA 666, MCL 600.8125.*

54B District Court – East Lansing Filings

Year	Traffic Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	5,839	4,556	10,395
2020	1,607	2,199	3,806
2021	1,408	2,121	3,529
2022	810	2,145	2,955
2023	1,244	2,666	3,910
2024	1,722	2,902	4,624

Total Caseload excludes parking tickets (OK, SK).

Population

Year	East Lansing
2010 Census	48,579
2020 Census	47,741
2024 Estimate	48,964

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Dickinson, Iron, and Menominee Counties

Initial estimates indicate that the 41st Circuit, Dickinson County Probate, Iron County Probate, Menominee County Probate, 95A District, and 95B District Courts need 4.05 judges. The counties currently have 7 judges and have an excess of 2.95 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge in Dickinson, Iron, and Menominee counties is 58%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends that the 95B District Court be separated into two district courts, one in Dickinson County and one in Iron County. The Dickinson County probate judge should be given district court jurisdiction. The current district judge in 95B District Court would become the district court judge of Dickinson County alone. The SCAO recommends the reduction through attrition of the district judgeship from Dickinson County. The Iron County probate judge would maintain district and circuit court jurisdiction.

Current Judgeships	7
2025 SCAO Recommendation	-1 District Judgeship
Remaining Judgeships	6

The resulting workload per judge would be 68% if one district judgeship were reduced from the 95B District Court.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
41st Circuit Court	Dickinson, Iron, Menominee Counties	2
Dickinson County Probate Court	Dickinson County	1
Iron County Probate Court	Iron County	1
Menominee County Probate Court	Menominee County	1
95A District Court	Menominee County	1
95B District Court	Dickinson, Iron Counties	1

History of Recommendations:

In 2003, the SCAO recommended that the part-time probate judgeship in Iron County be converted to full-time with district court jurisdiction, and a circuit judgeship be reduced through attrition. Although the Legislature converted the probate judgeship to full-time with district court jurisdiction, the Legislature did not eliminate a circuit court judgeship.

In 2005, the SCAO recommended the reduction of one circuit judgeship through attrition.

In 2007, the SCAO and the Michigan Supreme Court recommended the reduction of two district judgeships through attrition and that the probate judges in Dickinson and Menominee counties be given district court jurisdiction.

In 2009, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one circuit judgeship and one district judgeship. The SCAO also recommended that the 95A District Court be reconstituted to include Dickinson and Menominee counties and that the 95B District Court be reconstructed to include only Iron

County. Because the Iron County probate judge already has district court jurisdiction, the SCAO recommended that the reconstituted 95B District Court not have an elected district judge. As an alternative to eliminating a circuit judgeship, the SCAO stated that the counties could create a probate court district of Dickinson and Menominee counties, which would result in the reduction through attrition of one probate judgeship.

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of two judgeships.

In 2019, the SCAO recommended reduction through attrition of one district judgeship. The SCAO also recommended an alternative to eliminating the district judgeship by expanding MCL 600.401 et seq. to allow assignment of judges between circuits.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature reduced through attrition the judgeship in 95A District Court and gave the Menominee County Probate Court judge district court jurisdiction. *2012 PA 21, MCL 600.8160.*

The Legislature restored the judgeship in 95A District Court. *2019 PA 1, MCL 600.8160.*

Dickinson County Case Filings

Circuit Court					District Court			Total Caseload
Year	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family	Probate Court	Traffic Infractions	All Others	
2019	4	155	27	359	195	1,551	1,673	3,691
2020	13	110	25	309	183	1,335	1,371	3,107
2021	6	148	33	343	177	1,230	1,504	3,134
2022	11	134	52	349	204	1,166	1,410	3,130
2023	8	101	40	334	240	976	1,304	2,865
2024	7	139	47	333	178	996	1,530	3,081

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Iron County Case Filings

Circuit Court					District Court			Total Caseload
Year	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family	Probate Court	Traffic Infractions	All Others	
2019	0	91	24	200	114	764	817	2,010
2020	3	85	19	152	96	606	657	1,618
2021	3	60	19	199	104	464	677	1,526
2022	6	68	23	232	110	652	769	1,859
2023	7	65	33	192	110	641	742	1,790
2024	2	75	27	186	128	425	744	1,587

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Menominee County Case Filings

Circuit Court					District Court			Total Caseload
Year	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family	Probate Court	Traffic Infractions	All Others	
2019	7	118	15	278	166	723	1,733	3,040
2020	4	96	17	215	150	679	1,372	2,533
2021	4	144	34	284	185	845	1,294	2,790
2022	5	139	26	252	192	694	1,246	2,554
2023	4	96	28	214	188	639	1,199	2,368
2024	6	131	76	375	190	586	1,393	2,757

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Dickinson County	Iron County	Menominee County
2010 Census	26,168	11,817	24,029
2020 Census	25,947	11,631	23,502
2024 Estimate	25,995	11,709	23,050

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

RECOMMENDED CONVERSIONS, CONSOLIDATIONS, AND REALIGNMENTS

Bay County

Initial estimates indicate that the 18th Circuit and Bay County Probate Courts need 3.49 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The 74th District Court needs 1.89 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The county currently has three district judges, two circuit judges, and one probate judge. For the circuit and probate courts, there is a judicial need of 0.49 with a workload per judge of approximately 116%. For the district court, there is a judicial excess of 1.11 with a workload per judge of approximately 63%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends that one district judgeship be converted to a circuit judgeship to more evenly distribute the workload in the county.

Current Judgeships	6
2025 SCAO Recommendation	Convert one district judgeship to a circuit judgeship
Remaining Judgeships	6

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
18th Circuit Court	Bay County	3
Bay County Probate Court	Bay County	1
74th District Court	Bay County	3

History of Recommendations:

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of two circuit judgeships.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature reduced one circuit judgeship. *2012 PA 38, MCL 600.519.*

Bay County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil	All Others	
2019	67	486	222	1,343	754	9,607	8,430		20,909
2020	42	356	161	1,054	756	4,484	6,189		13,042
2021	39	570	163	1,168	829	4,368	6,696		13,833
2022	33	531	196	1,245	763	4,672	6,072		13,512
2023	47	326	227	1,443	757	6,016	6,428		15,244
2024	42	437	257	1,358	707	6,087	7,174		16,062

Population

Year	Bay County
2010 Census	107,771
2020 Census	103,856
2024 Estimate	102,651

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Third-Class District Court Consolidations

Third-class district courts, established under MCL 600.8103(3), exercise district court jurisdiction within a portion of a county. They exist in six of Michigan's larger counties (Ingham, Kent, Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne). An equal number of counties (Berrien, Calhoun, Genesee, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, and Saginaw) have abandoned this structure through consolidation over past 54 years. Where third-class courts operate with relatively few judgeships, particularly in larger, more urban communities, this structure can limit the equitable and efficient distribution of judicial resources. A court with more judges, for example, has greater flexibility to absorb temporary caseload spikes, reallocate calendars, and provide coverage during absences without urgently requiring an additional judgeship; courts with fewer judges must absorb increased burdens within a smaller bench. This results in judges with both incredibly demanding and very light workloads.

Where workload estimates show an inequitable distribution of judicial need between district courts in the same county, the SCAO recommends consolidation of these district courts to increase flexibility in allocating judges and workload across a larger bench. Consolidation can improve capacity to respond to changing caseloads, reduce inequities in access to justice, and create administrative efficiencies. In this report, the SCAO makes four specific consolidation recommendations for third-class district courts in Ingham and Macomb Counties (both above), Kent and Washtenaw Counties (which follow). The SCAO recognizes that limited-bench configurations are also prevalent among many Wayne County third-class district courts and addresses that county separately in a dedicated section below.

62A District Court – Wyoming and 62B District Court – Kentwood

Initial estimates indicate that the 62A District Court – Wyoming needs 2.04 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The court currently has 2 judges with an outstanding need of 0.04 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 102%.

Initial estimates indicate that the 62B District Court – Kentwood needs 1.46 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The court currently has 1 judge with an outstanding need of 0.46 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 146%.

Collectively, these courts have a judicial need of 3.5 judges to appropriately handle the workload. If these courts were to be consolidated, they would have 3 judgeships with an outstanding need of 0.5. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge would be 117%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends that the most efficient means of addressing the judicial need in the 62B District Court – Kentwood is through consolidation. Therefore, the SCAO recommends that the 62A District Court – Wyoming and the 62B District Court – Kentwood be consolidated into a single district court. As an alternative, the SCAO also recognizes that operational efficiency and flexibility could be achieved through consolidation with the 63rd District Court of Kent County.

Current Judgeships	3
2025 SCAO Recommendation	No Change in Judgeships
Total Judgeships	3

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
62A District Court	Wyoming	2
62B District Court	Kentwood	1

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made for this court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on this court.

62A District Court Case Filings

Year	Traffic Civil Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	2,711	9,260	11,971
2020	1,927	5,991	7,918
2021	2,361	6,195	8,556
2022	3,430	6,222	9,652
2023	3,131	6,947	10,078
2024	3,067	7,533	10,600

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

62B District Court Case Filings

Year	Traffic Civil Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	4,468	6,079	10,547
2020	2,328	3,656	5,984
2021	3,354	4,494	7,848
2022	2,693	4,682	7,375
2023	2,570	4,874	7,444
2024	3,206	5,809	9,015

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Wyoming	Kentwood
2010 Census	72,125	48,707
2020 Census	76,501	54,304
<u>2024 Estimate</u>	<u>78,559</u>	<u>54,768</u>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

14A District Court – Washtenaw County and 14B District Court – Ypsilanti Township

Initial estimates indicate that the 14A District Court – Washtenaw needs 2.95 judges to appropriately handle their workload. The district court currently has 3 judges and has an excess of 0.05 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 98%.

Initial estimates indicate that the 14B District Court – Ypsilanti needs 1.69 judges to appropriately handle their workload. The district court currently has 1 judge and has an outstanding need of 0.69 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 169%.

Collectively, these courts have a judicial need of 4.64 judges to appropriately handle the workload. If these courts were to be consolidated, they would have 4 judgeships with an outstanding need of 0.64. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge would be 116%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends that the most efficient means of addressing the judicial need in the 14B District Court – Ypsilanti is through consolidation. Therefore, the SCAO recommends that the 14A District Court – Washtenaw and the 14B – Ypsilanti be consolidated into a single district court.

Current Judgeships	4
2025 SCAO Recommendation	No Change in Judgeships
Total Judgeships	4

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
14A District Court	Washtenaw County, Excluding Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Township	3
14B District Court	Ypsilanti Township	1

History of Recommendations:

No previous recommendations have been made for this court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken recent action on this court.

14A District Court Filings

Year	Traffic Civil Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	15,151	13,711	28,862
2020	8,813	9,087	17,900
2021	8,023	9,628	17,651
2022	10,237	9,546	19,783
2023	11,134	9,905	21,039
2024	10,681	10,324	21,005

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

14B District Court Filings

Year	Traffic Civil Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	5,522	8,185	13,707
2020	2,983	4,901	7,884
2021	2,739	5,364	8,103
2022	3,209	5,882	9,091
2023	2,316	6,199	8,515
2024	1,612	6,498	8,110

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Washtenaw County	Ypsilanti
2010 Census	344,791	53,362
2020 Census	372,258	55,670
2024 Estimate	378,875	54,760

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Wayne County

Since the 2019 Judicial Resources Recommendations Report, the nature of judicial work and filing patterns have shifted substantially, particularly for small courts within in large, urban communities, and these trends mirror changes occurring nationwide. In response, the SCAO recommends a comprehensive, data-driven analysis of Wayne County's district courts (including both third-class district and municipal courts) to develop a more effective jurisdictional realignment plan. A 2012 National Center for State Courts (NCSC) study of Wayne County district court boundaries examined jurisdictional configurations and offers analysis and methodology that can inform this comprehensive realignment.²¹ Several Wayne County courts currently seat only one judge, and recent caseload distributions indicate that this configuration may no longer represent efficient or equitable use of judicial resources. Because a meaningful realignment will require analysis and stakeholder engagement beyond the customary scope of the Judicial Resources Report, this section presents the shorter-term solutions to judicial resource allocation that can be implemented while a comprehensive realignment is studied and finalized.

²¹ <https://ncsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/ctadmin/id/2430/>

Grosse Pointe Municipal Courts

There are four municipal courts in Michigan with a combined judicial need of 0.67. These municipal courts are the only remaining municipal courts in Michigan. They serve the cities of Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms/Grosse Pointe Shores, Grosse Pointe Park, and Grosse Pointe Woods. All other municipal courts in Michigan were replaced with a district court.²² These municipalities, not the state, pay these judges. Each court has one part-time judge and less than a full-time judicial need.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends that the four municipal courts be consolidated into one new district court with four district judges. Additionally, the SCAO recommends that three of these judges be reduced through attrition.

Current Judgeships	4
2025 SCAO Recommendation	Convert 4 municipal judgeships to 4 district judgeships, then -3 district judgeships
Total Judgeships	1

The resulting workload per judge would be 67% if these courts were consolidated into a court with one district judgeship.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
MGPW	City of Grosse Pointe Woods	1
MGPF	Cities of Grosse Pointe Farms and Grosse Pointe Shores	1
MGP	City of Grosse Pointe	1
MGPP	City of Grosse Pointe Park	1

History of Recommendation:

In 2013, the SCAO recommended that the municipal courts be consolidated into a new district court, or into the 32A District Court – Harper Woods.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

MCL 600.8121(17) established the thirty-second-b district consisting of the cities of Grosse Pointe Woods, Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe, and Grosse Pointe Farms. However, these local jurisdictions did not pass resolutions to convert to a district court.

²² The most recent conversion of a municipal court to a district court occurred when [Public Act 681 of 2002](#) established the 38th District Court in the City of Eastpointe.

Municipal Court Filings

Year	Grosse Pointe Woods	Grosse Pointe Farms	Grosse Pointe City	Grosse Pointe Park
2019	1,740	3,083	970	3,072
2020	1,318	2,045	409	1,954
2021	1,295	3,025	398	2,267
2022	1,327	4,495	381	1,849
2023	1,625	3,356	381	1,610
2024	1,262	3,393	633	2,312

Municipal Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Grosse Pointe Woods	Grosse Pointe Farms	Grosse Pointe City	Grosse Pointe Park
2010 Census	16,135	9,987	5,421	11,555
2020 Census	16,487	10,148	5,678	11,595
2024 Estimate	15,897	9,794	5,526	11,513

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

30th District Court – Highland Park and 36th District Court – Detroit

Initial estimates indicate that the 30th District Court – Highland Park needs 0.70 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The court currently has 1 judge and has an excess of 0.30 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 70%.

Initial estimates indicate that the 36th District Court – Detroit needs 31.71 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The court currently has 29 sitting judges and has an additional need of 2.71 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 109%.

Collectively, these courts have a judicial need of 32.41 judges to appropriately handle the workload. If these courts were to be consolidated, they would have 30 judgeships with an outstanding judicial need of 2.41. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge would be 108%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends consolidating the 30th District Court – Highland Park into the 36th District Court – Detroit and the addition of two district judgeships.

Current Judgeships	30
2025 SCAO Recommendation	+2 District Judgeships
Total Judgeships	32

The resulting workload per judge would be 101% if the 30th and 36th district courts were consolidated and two district judgeships were added.

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
30th District Court	Highland Park	1
36th District Court	Detroit	29

History of Recommendations:

In 2001, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship from the 30th District Court.

In 2007, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship from the 36th District Court, The Michigan Supreme Court recommended the reduction through attrition of two district judgeships from the 36th District Court.

In 2013, the SCAO recommended no changes in judgeships in the 36th District Court due to the appointment of a special judicial administrator for this court.

In 2015, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one district judgeship in the 36th District Court.

In 2017, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of two district judgeships in the 36th District Court.

In 2019, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of two district judgeships in the 36th District Court.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature reduced through attrition one district judgeship from the 30th District Court. *2001 PA 255, MCL 600.8121(17).*

The Legislature reduced through attrition one district judgeship from the 36th District Court. *2014 PA 58, MCL 600.8121a.*

The Legislature reduced through attrition one district judgeship from the 36th District Court. *2018 PA 6, MCL 600.8121a.*

30th District Court Filings

Year	Traffic Civil Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	4,319	4,027	8,346
2020	1,864	3,751	5,615
2021	2,252	4,356	6,608
2022	1,900	2,850	4,750
2023	2,800	3,405	6,205
2024	2,303	3,445	5,748

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

36th District Court Filings

Year	Traffic Civil Infractions	All Other Cases	Total Caseload
2019	105,250	185,432	290,682
2020	76,703	132,714	209,417
2021	98,596	173,134	271,730
2022	157,610	197,291	354,901
2023	99,142	144,227	243,369
2024	103,692	156,384	260,076

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Highland Park	Detroit
2010 Census	11,776	713,777
2020 Census	8,977	639,111
2024 Estimate	8,390	645,705

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Upper Peninsula and Northern Michigan

Michigan's Northern counties have experienced a sustained decline in judicial resource demand driven by population stagnation and decline, together with recent shifts in filing patterns. Because many of these counties are geographically large, further reductions in judicial seats could increase the average travel distance for court users and complicate access to services, making resource allocation particularly challenging. Significant improvements in remote service availability have been made; however, broadband and internet connectivity remain limited in many areas, constraining the effectiveness of virtual solutions. For these reasons, the SCAO recommends a comprehensive, data-driven review of judicial resource needs in several Northern counties, similar to the review proposed for Wayne County. While this report offers several shorter-term adjustments and realignments that could be implemented more quickly, a deeper analysis of these counties is warranted. More immediate recommendations that could be implemented in the shorter term are presented in this section.

Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties

Initial estimates indicate that the 13th Circuit, Antrim County Probate, Grand Traverse County Probate, Leelanau County Probate, and 86th District Courts need 7.91 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 7 judges with an outstanding need of 0.91 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge in these courts is 113%.²³

Recommendation:

The SCAO recommends that the 86th District Court be separated into three district courts, one in each county. The probate judges in Antrim and Leelanau counties should be given district court jurisdiction in their respective counties. After these structural changes are implemented, the SCAO will review the judicial need throughout these three counties and prepare subsequent recommendations, if necessary.

Current Judgeships	7
2025 SCAO Recommendation	No Change in Judgeships
Total Judgeships	7

Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
13th Circuit Court	Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties	2
Antrim Probate Court	Antrim County	1
Grand Traverse Probate Court	Grand Traverse County	1
Leelanau Probate Court	Leelanau County	1
86th District Court	Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties	2

History of Recommendations:

In 2011, the SCAO recommended that one judgeship be reduced from Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau County courts.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature reduced one district judgeship by attrition. *2012 PA 33, MCL 600.8151*.

Antrim County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil Others	All Others	
2019	6	81	47	236	176	1,342	1,640	3,528	
2020	3	40	46	210	126	914	1,394	2,733	
2021	2	55	45	221	138	968	1,351	2,780	
2022	4	72	36	250	130	1,218	1,175	2,885	
2023	9	70	47	292	158	1,113	1,401	3,090	
2024	5	59	70	260	167	1,048	1,593	3,202	

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

²³ These courts are included in this report for a structural recommendation alone, even though the initial judicial needs estimates did not reach the threshold for inclusion in the secondary analysis.

Grand Traverse County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil	All Others	
2019	39	283	218	1,136	539	5,703	7,116		15,034
2020	25	277	231	830	441	4,215	5,417		11,436
2021	20	281	196	975	574	5,156	5,757		12,959
2022	34	372	217	1,097	560	3,940	5,342		11,562
2023	26	438	248	1,097	595	5,161	5,969		13,534
2024	23	396	250	1,088	502	4,580	6,554		13,393

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Leelanau County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court			Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil	All Others	
2019	6	20	46	128	162	751	737		1,850
2020	9	20	39	118	112	679	698		1,675
2021	3	22	35	152	130	934	655		1,931
2022	9	38	37	150	122	827	671		1,854
2023	8	41	43	127	144	719	672		1,754
2024	10	57	48	157	115	503	721		1,611

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Antrim County	Grand Traverse County	Leelanau County
2010 Census	23,580	86,986	21,708
2020 Census	23,431	95,238	22,301
2024 Estimate	24,536	96,625	22,871

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Delta, Alger, and Schoolcraft Counties

Initial estimates indicate that the 47th Circuit, Delta County Probate, and 94th District Courts need 1.92 judges to appropriately handle the workload. The Delta County courts currently have 3 judges and have a judicial excess of 1.08 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge in Delta County is 64%.

Initial estimates indicate that the 11th Circuit, the Alger County Probate, Luce County Probate, Mackinac County Probate, Schoolcraft County Probate, the 92nd District, and the 93rd District Courts need 2.90 judges to appropriately handle the workload.²⁴ The judicial need in Alger and Schoolcraft Counties alone is 1.46 and 1.44 in Luce and Mackinac Counties. These courts currently have 4 judges and have a judicial excess of 1.10 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge in these courts is 73%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO reaffirms its previous recommendation from 2013 to expand the 47th Circuit Court to include the jurisdictions of Alger and Schoolcraft Counties. The 47th Circuit judge would become the circuit judge of Delta, Alger, and Schoolcraft Counties. The probate and district courts in Delta, Alger, and Schoolcraft counties would maintain their current jurisdictions with their current number of judgeships. Alternatively, if the circuit courts are not re-aligned, the SCAO would recommend that one district judgeship be reduced by attrition from Delta County.

This realignment would result in a total judicial need of 3.38 judges across the three counties and four assigned judgeships with an estimated workload per judge of 85%.

Current Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
47th Circuit Court	Delta County	1
Delta County Probate Court	Delta County	1
94th District Court	Delta County	1
11th Circuit Court	Alger, Luce, Mackinac, and Schoolcraft Counties	1
Probate District 5	Alger and Schoolcraft Counties	1
93rd District Court	Alger and Schoolcraft Counties	0

Proposed Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Proposed Judgeships
47th Circuit Court	Delta, Alger, and Schoolcraft Counties	1
Delta County Probate Court	Delta County	1
94th District Court	Delta County	1
Probate District 5	Alger and Schoolcraft Counties	1
93rd District Court	Alger and Schoolcraft Counties	0

History of Recommendations:

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one judgeship from Delta County, and one judgeship from Alger, Luce, Mackinac, and Schoolcraft Counties.

²⁴ See the next section for recommendations related to Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties.

In 2013, the SCAO recommended the reduction of one district court judgeship. Alternatively, the SCAO recommended that three circuit courts be realigned to create two three-county circuit courts: Delta, Alger, and Schoolcraft; and Luce, Mackinac, and Chippewa.

In 2015, the SCAO recommended the reduction of one district judgeship.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

The Legislature has not taken any action on Delta County courts since 2001.

The Legislature combined Mackinac County with Alger, Luce, and Schoolcraft counties into a new judicial circuit. *2002 PA 92, MCL 600.512*.

Delta County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil All Others	
2019	14	291	67	559	230	2,816	2,615	6,592
2020	9	278	60	433	218	2,224	2,260	5,482
2021	7	275	56	516	257	2,568	2,260	5,939
2022	10	221	31	528	235	1,860	1,959	4,844
2023	16	210	48	489	277	1,904	1,910	4,854
2024	13	203	70	524	212	2,324	2,267	5,613

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Alger County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil All Others	
2019	6	60	23	123	72	1,454	680	2,418
2020	5	57	13	88	44	719	513	1,439
2021	2	59	20	99	73	815	427	1,495
2022	8	50	18	104	79	832	449	1,540
2023	6	80	11	107	74	1,014	612	1,904
2024	3	58	15	71	83	888	583	1,701

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Schoolcraft County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil All Others	
2019	1	30	12	121	56	490	486	1,196
2020	2	41	13	101	53	507	439	1,156
2021	2	22	16	133	44	426	430	1,073
2022	4	18	13	123	54	278	321	811
2023	2	26	16	100	53	684	466	1,347
2024	1	25	30	106	52	584	458	1,256

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Delta County	Alger County	Schoolcraft County
2010 Census	37,069	9,601	8,485
2020 Census	36,839	8,842	8,047
2024 Estimate	36,687	8,695	8,178

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties

Initial estimates indicate that the 50th Circuit, Chippewa County Probate, and 91st District Courts need 2.44 judges to appropriately handle the workload. These courts currently have 2 judges with an outstanding need of 0.44 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge is 122%.

Initial estimates indicate that the 11th Circuit, the Alger County Probate, Luce County Probate, Mackinac County Probate, Schoolcraft County Probate, the 92nd District, and the 93rd District Courts need 2.90 judges to appropriately handle the workload.²⁵ The judicial need in Alger and Schoolcraft Counties alone is 1.46 and 1.44 in Luce and Mackinac Counties. These courts currently have 4 judges and have a judicial excess of 1.10 judges. The SCAO estimates that the average workload per judge in these courts is 73%.

Recommendation:

The SCAO reaffirms its previous recommendation from 2013 to expand the 50th Circuit Court to include the jurisdictions of Luce and Mackinac Counties. The circuit judges of the 11th and 50th Circuit Courts would become the circuit judges of Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties. The probate and district courts would maintain their current jurisdictions and number of judgeships.

This realignment would result in a total judicial need of 3.88 judges across the three counties and five assigned judgeships with an estimated workload per judge of 78%.

Current Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Current Judgeships
50th Circuit Court	Chippewa County	1
Chippewa County Probate Court	Chippewa County	1
91st District Court	Chippewa County	0
11th Circuit Court	Alger, Luce, Mackinac, and Schoolcraft Counties	1
Probate District 6	Luce and Mackinac Counties	1
92nd District Court	Luce and Mackinac Counties	1

Proposed Courts, Jurisdictions, and Judgeships

Court	Jurisdiction	Proposed Judgeships
50th Circuit Court	Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties	2
Chippewa County Probate Court	Chippewa County	1
91st District Court	Chippewa County	0
Probate District 6	Luce and Mackinac Counties	1
92nd District Court	Luce and Mackinac Counties	1

History of Recommendations:

In 2011, the SCAO recommended the reduction through attrition of one judgeship from Chippewa County, and one judgeship from Alger, Luce, Mackinac, and Schoolcraft Counties.

Legislative Action Since 2001:

²⁵ See the previous section for recommendations related to Delta, Alger, and Schoolcraft Counties.

The Legislature separated Chippewa Circuit from Mackinac Circuit and added the Mackinac Circuit with Alger, Luce, and Schoolcraft Counties. *2002 PA 92, MCL 600.549b and MCL 600.512.*

The Legislature reduced one district judgeship from the 91st District Court and assigned district court jurisdiction to the Chippewa County probate judge. *2012 PA 36, MCL 600.803*

Chippewa County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil All Others	
2019	14	306	65	568	236	1,992	2,453	5,634
2020	29	325	45	477	227	2,361	2,063	5,527
2021	36	263	55	672	265	1,943	1,698	4,932
2022	42	290	60	609	319	1,684	1,726	4,730
2023	13	265	64	574	291	2,109	1,811	5,127
2024	28	265	68	568	307	1,474	1,974	4,684

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Luce County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil All Others	
2019	3	57	7	120	32	661	589	1,469
2020	6	57	9	80	37	1,025	529	1,743
2021	4	66	5	102	35	584	434	1,230
2022	1	34	13	111	46	572	523	1,300
2023	4	71	11	123	29	744	493	1,475
2024	3	41	13	122	36	943	455	1,613

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Mackinac County Case Filings

Year	Circuit Court				Probate Court	District Court		Total Caseload
	Appeals	Criminal	Civil	Family		Traffic Infractions	Civil All Others	
2019	6	83	31	128	38	1,823	976	3,085
2020	0	60	22	103	76	1,948	805	3,014
2021	3	74	27	115	141	1,628	994	2,982
2022	6	79	34	150	109	1,467	794	2,639
2023	4	88	27	110	80	2,025	759	3,093
2024	7	74	40	119	97	1,296	637	2,270

District Court case counts exclude parking tickets (OK, SK)

Population

Year	Chippewa County	Luce County	Mackinac County
2010 Census	38,543	6,631	11,113
2020 Census	36,785	5,339	10,834
2024 Estimate	36,253	6,328	11,144

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

APPENDIX A – CASE WEIGHTS

Case weights reflect the average number of minutes needed to perform the judicial work associated with a case. The following case weights were established during the most recent Michigan Judicial Workload Assessment, which included quality adjustments by the Judicial Resources Advisory Committee.

Circuit Court	Case Weight
Capital Felony and Felony Juvenile (FC, FJ)	930
Noncapital Felony (FH, AX)	122
Auto Negligence (ND, NF, NI)	119
Medical Malpractice (NH)	511
Other Civil (CC, CD, CE, CF, CH, CK, CL, CP, CR, CZ, NM, NO, NP, NS, NZ, PC, PD, PR, PS, PZ)	156
Business Court Cases (CB)	266
Divorce without Minor Children (DO)	54
Divorce with Minor Children (DM)	188
Non-Divorce Domestic (DC, DP, DS, DZ, UD, UE, UF, UI, UM, UN, UT, UW)	48
PPO/ERPO (EP, ER, EV, EE, EJ, EZ, PP, PH, PJ, VP)	32
Adoption (AB, AC, AD, AF, AG, AM, AN, AO, AU, AY)	64
Other Family (EM, ID, JG, NB, NC, PW, VF)	43
Juvenile Delinquency and Designated (DL, DJ, TL)	71
Child Protective Proceedings (NA)	258
Appeals and Other (AR, AV, AA, AE, AL, AP, AS, AH, AW)	122
Circuit Adult Drug Court	460
Circuit Sobriety Court	460
Circuit Hybrid Drug/Sobriety Court	460
Juvenile Drug Court	497
Family Dependency Drug Court	1,020
Veterans Treatment Court	460
Adult Mental Health Court	460
Juvenile Mental Health Court	497
Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program	100
Probate Court	Case Weight
Supervised and Unsupervised Estates (DA, DE)	21
Small Estates (PE)	5
Trusts (TT, TV)	239
Conservatorships and Protective Orders (CA, CY, PO)	86
Adult Guardianships (DD, GA, GL)	78
Minor Guardianships (GM, LG)	104
General Civil (CZ)	259
Judicial Admissions and Mental Commitments (JA, MI)	31
Other Probate (ML, BR, DH)	49

District Court	Case Weight
Felony (FY, FT, EX)	52
Misdemeanor (OM, SM)	42
Non-Traffic Civil Infraction (ON, SN)	7*
Traffic Misdemeanor (OT, ST)	8
Traffic Civil Infraction (OI, SI)	1
OWI Misdemeanor (OD, SD)	57
OWI Felony (FD)	41
General Civil (GC, GZ)	10
Small Claims (SC)	8
Landlord-Tenant/Summary Proceedings (LT, SP)	14
District Adult Drug Court	460
District Sobriety Court	460
District Hybrid Drug/Sobriety Court	460
Veterans Treatment Court	460
Adult Mental Health Court	460

* The case weight for non-traffic civil infractions was adjusted from 1.6 after parking cases were removed.