HASHKÉÉJÍ NAHAT'Á (JUDICIAL BRANCH) OF THE NAVAJO NATION



FISCAL YEAR 2026
FOURTH QUARTER REPORT

JULY 1, 2026 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

REPORT DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2026

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nábináhaazláago

Comprehensive Approach

A strong and independent judiciary is built not only through the decisions made in our courtrooms, but through the investments, policies, and commitments that sustain justice for generations to come. As the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch concludes this fiscal year and prepares for the year ahead, we remain focused on strengthening the foundation of our justice system, expanding our institutional capacity, and ensuring that the resources entrusted to us translate into meaningful service for the Navajo people. These priorities reinforce our responsibility to maintain a justice system that is accessible, accountable, and equipped to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

As we prepare for the upcoming fiscal year, the Judicial Branch will prioritize the review and development of court rules, uniform pleadings, and policies that strengthen operations, promote accountability, and provide clear guidance to employees and programs. These efforts reflect our commitment to employee well-being, appropriate public access and transparency, consistent administrative practices, and organizational accountability. By continually evaluating and strengthening our policies, we are building a more consistent, effective, and responsive judiciary.

A significant opportunity to strengthen the Judicial Branch is the Hashkééjí Nahat'á Béeso Bá Hooghan Fund, established by statute through the Navajo Nation Council. The Fund provides an opportunity for our courts and programs to address critical operational needs, plan for future demands, and strengthen service delivery. The Office of the Chief Justice has encouraged each judicial district and program to assess its current and long-term needs and develop proposals consistent with the Fund's criteria for expenditure. To support a fair and accountable process, the Judicial Branch has established a Hashkééjí Nahat'á Béeso Bá Hooghan Fund Ranking Committee to conduct an internal review of submitted proposals. Through thoughtful evaluation and strategic planning, we seek to ensure that these resources support meaningful improvements and lasting benefits for the Navajo people, including Information Technology infrastructure and necessary building infrastructure.

Our commitment to strengthening the judiciary also extends to the facilities and infrastructure that serve our communities. The Judicial Branch continues to advance major construction and development initiatives, in the Kayenta, Window Rock, Aneth, Ramah, and Shiprock Judicial Districts. These projects represent important investments in providing safe, functional, and welcoming spaces where justice can be administered with dignity and respect. Their continued advancement reflects our commitment to addressing the needs of our judicial districts and preparing for the future of court operations throughout the Navajo Nation.

In addition to judicial complex development, the Judicial Branch continues to invest in administrative facilities and improvements that support the delivery of services across the Branch. These efforts include planning for the Administrative Office of the Courts central warehouse, completing renovations to the Judicial Branch Self-Help Center, the Peacemaking building, and with the dedication and support of the Law and Order Committee, the Shiprock Judicial Complex. Together, these initiatives demonstrate that infrastructure encompasses more than court buildings; it includes the facilities and operational resources necessary to support our courts and programs. We will continue to identify infrastructure needs across all judicial districts and programs and pursue sustainable solutions that strengthen our ability to serve the public.

None of this work would be possible without the dedication of our justices, judges, Judicial Branch staff, justice partners, and community stakeholders. I extend my sincere appreciation to all who continue to contribute their time, knowledge, and commitment to strengthening our judiciary. Through these collective efforts, we can address challenges, pursue opportunities, and ensure that our priorities remain responsive to the needs of the Navajo people.

As we conclude this fiscal year and look toward the next, we remain committed to building a judiciary that is responsive to our communities, accountable for the resources entrusted to us, and prepared to serve future generations. Our success will not be measured solely by funds allocated, policies adopted, or facilities constructed, but by how these efforts improve public service, strengthen confidence in our courts, and expand meaningful access to justice. It is an honor to serve the Navajo people, and together, we will continue building a Judicial Branch that honors our values, strengthens our institutions, and upholds our responsibility to provide justice throughout every judicial district and across every program of the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch.

Eleanor Shirley, *Interim* Chief Justice
Office of the Chief Justice

STRATEGIC PLAN
VISION

It is our vision that the present judicial system, consisting of an adversarial-style tribal court system modeled on Anglo courts, a peacemaking system modeled on Diné original dispute resolution methods, and Probation and Parole Services, will fully embody the values and processes of the Navajo People, including family and clan-centered Navajo values. Our justice system as a whole will truly reflect the heart and soul of the Diné. It will be one that the People can recognize as their own and fully participate in the spirit of nábináhaazláago.

STRATEGIC PLAN
MISSION

The Judicial Branch will provide stability in the Navajo Nation government by providing court, peacemaking, and probation and parole services, to adjudicate cases, resolve disputes, rehabilitate individuals and families, restore harmony, educate the public, agencies, services and other governments in Diné bi beenahaz' áanii, and protect persons and property pursuant to Navajo Nation laws, customs, traditions, and applicable federal laws. Pursuant to Diné bi beenahaz' áanii, the Judicial Branch will carefully develop a justice system that fully embodies the traditional values and processes of the Navajo People.

T'áá Shí Ádáásht'į Bá Hooghan (Self-Help Center) Judicial Navigators

Since the Navajo Nation Council invested in the Judicial Branch's efforts to expand access to justice, Judicial Navigators hired through this initiative have helped community members navigate court processes, with an initial focus on Probate and Quiet Title matters. Through pro se clinics, one-on-one guidance, and referrals to local resources, the Judicial Navigators continue to provide assistance to individuals and families throughout the Navajo Nation. A significant milestone was reached during the week of September 14–18, 2026, when T'áá Shí Ádáásht'į Bá Hooghan (Self-Help Center) celebrated its grand opening. During the grand opening, 78 families received free legal advice from pro bono attorneys and legal information from Judicial Navigators, strengthening access to our justice systems.

Following the grand opening, the Judicial Navigators continue providing services at various chapter houses throughout the Navajo Nation while operating the Self-Help Center in Window Rock open during the workweek to assist those traveling to the area for services. They help community members understand court procedures, complete Probate and Quiet Title forms, and connect with available legal resources. Assistance is also available year-round by calling the toll-free number at (855) 462-8256 or emailing selfhelp@navajo-nsn.gov. This fiscal year, the Judicial Branch will expand services with additional Judicial Navigators in various locations throughout the Navajo Nation. Through continued community outreach and collaboration with pro bono attorneys and justice partners, the Judicial Branch remains committed to bringing court services closer to the people and strengthening access to justice across the Navajo Nation.

Strengthening our Workforce

The Judicial Branch continues to enhance workforce capacity and organizational effectiveness through strategic recruitment, professional development, and operational improvements. During this quarter, the Judicial Branch successfully filled 10 positions across its courts and programs, strengthening staffing capacity and supporting the delivery of judicial services throughout the Navajo Nation. The Branch also received a high volume of employment applications, demonstrating continued interest in career opportunities and contributing to efforts to recruit qualified individuals dedicated to public service. In addition to recruitment, the Judicial Branch continues to prioritize employee training and professional development to strengthen staff competencies, promote career growth, and support evolving organizational needs. These initiatives foster accountability, encourage continuous improvement, and help maintain continuity in court operations. Through ongoing recruitment and workforce development efforts, the Judicial Branch remains committed to building a strong, capable, and responsive workforce that supports the effective administration of justice throughout the Navajo Nation.

Organizational Policy Development and Effectiveness

The Judicial Branch of the Navajo Nation continues to strengthen organizational effectiveness through the development and review of policies that promote employee well-being, operational consistency, accountability, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. These efforts are intended to establish clear guidelines, support staff and leadership, and ensure that internal practices align with the Judicial Branch's mission and responsibilities. Several policies are currently under review to address key organizational needs and improve the overall delivery of judicial services.

The policies under development include the Wellness Policy, which focuses on supporting employees' mental, physical, and emotional well-being; the Media Relations and Courtroom Access Policy, which will provide guidance on media interactions, access to courtroom proceedings, and access to court information; the Compliance Policy, which aims to help ensure adherence to applicable federal and Navajo Nation laws, regulations, and established Judicial Branch policies; and the Sick Leave Donation Policy, which will establish guidelines for employees to donate sick leave to eligible colleagues in need. Collectively, these policy initiatives reflect the Judicial Branch's commitment to fostering a supportive workplace, promoting transparency, strengthening compliance, and establishing consistent administrative practices that enhance organizational effectiveness.

Annual Judicial Branch Conference

The Judicial Branch continues to prioritize professional development and skill enhancement to foster a knowledgeable, capable, and effective workforce. As part of these efforts, the Branch will host its Annual Judicial Branch Conference in October, beginning with a staff appreciation dinner to recognize and celebrate employees who have dedicated years of service to the Judicial Branch. This recognition highlights the commitment, experience, and contributions of staff members who play an essential role in supporting the administration of justice throughout the Navajo Nation. The following day will be dedicated to professional development and training for staff, justices, and judges in their respective fields. The conference has been planned in accordance with the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch Training Policy to ensure alignment with established training requirements and professional development objectives. Presenters from various organizations will share their knowledge, expertise, and resources to strengthen professional skills, encourage collaboration, and support continued learning. Through these initiatives, the Judicial Branch remains committed to investing in its workforce, recognizing employee contributions, and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of judicial services provided to the Navajo people.

KEY TERMS IN THE JUDICIARY CASE MANAGEMENT & ANALYSIS

Oath of Office
An official, legally binding promise made by an elected or appointed individual to faithfully perform the duties of their position and uphold the law governing that office.

Policy
A formal set of guidelines, principles, or rules established by an organization to direct decision-making, guide employee conduct, and ensure consistent practices in carrying out its responsibilities.

Probate
The legal process of settling a deceased person's estate, which includes identifying their property, determining heirs or beneficiaries, addressing debts or obligations, and distributing assets to the rightful recipients.

Quiet Title
A legal process used to establish, clarify, or resolve ownership of property when there are questions, disputes, or competing claims regarding who has legal rights to the property. The Navajo Nation lacks a quiet title statute thus requiring Navajo Nation judges to apply state law to these complex issues.

Steward
A person who is entrusted with the responsibility of managing, protecting, and using resources responsibly on behalf of others.

Peacemaking

The goal of Peacemaking is returning to Hózhó. When there is disharmony or Anáhóót'i' with our children and families, among adults, or in our community, it is our personal responsibility to restore harmony and balance. We must learn to resolve our own problems and teach our children Traditional Diné values that will be a positive influence in their lives.

Peacemaking emphasizes that our Diné people solve their own problems by talking it out and finding justice, rather than depending on the courts. This concept is based on the Traditional teaching: "T'áá hó ájít'éego". Teaching traditional Diné values to our younger generation is vital to the well-being of the Diné. Youth engagement in Peacemaking is a high priority.

Priorities:

- Restorative Justice
- Traditional Teachings – Language & Culture
- Inclusiveness of all Faiths / Faith-Based
- Children & Family Hózhó
- Status Accorded to Elders
- Vulnerable Adults
- Extreme Family Discord

Staffing and Vacancies

This quarter, Gwendolyn Sam filled the vacant Traditional Program Specialist position at the Chinle Office, while Daisha Holyan filled the vacant Office Technician position at the Window Rock Office. Traditional Program Specialist positions at the Crownpoint, Dilkon, Dzil Yijiin, and Tuba City offices, as well as the Office Technician position at the Dilkon Office, continue to be advertised.

Staff Development and Cultural Training

Program staff convened for the Fourth Quarterly Meeting in Kayenta, where they participated in Diné cultural teachings presented by the Honorable Judge Victor Clyde and received program updates. The Program also provided Diné Fundamental Law and Traditional Work Ethics training during the July, August, and September New Hire Orientations, while staff received additional training in Diné Fundamental Law, Kinaldaa, and Domestic Violence from a Diné perspective from Victim Witness Services for Northern Arizona.

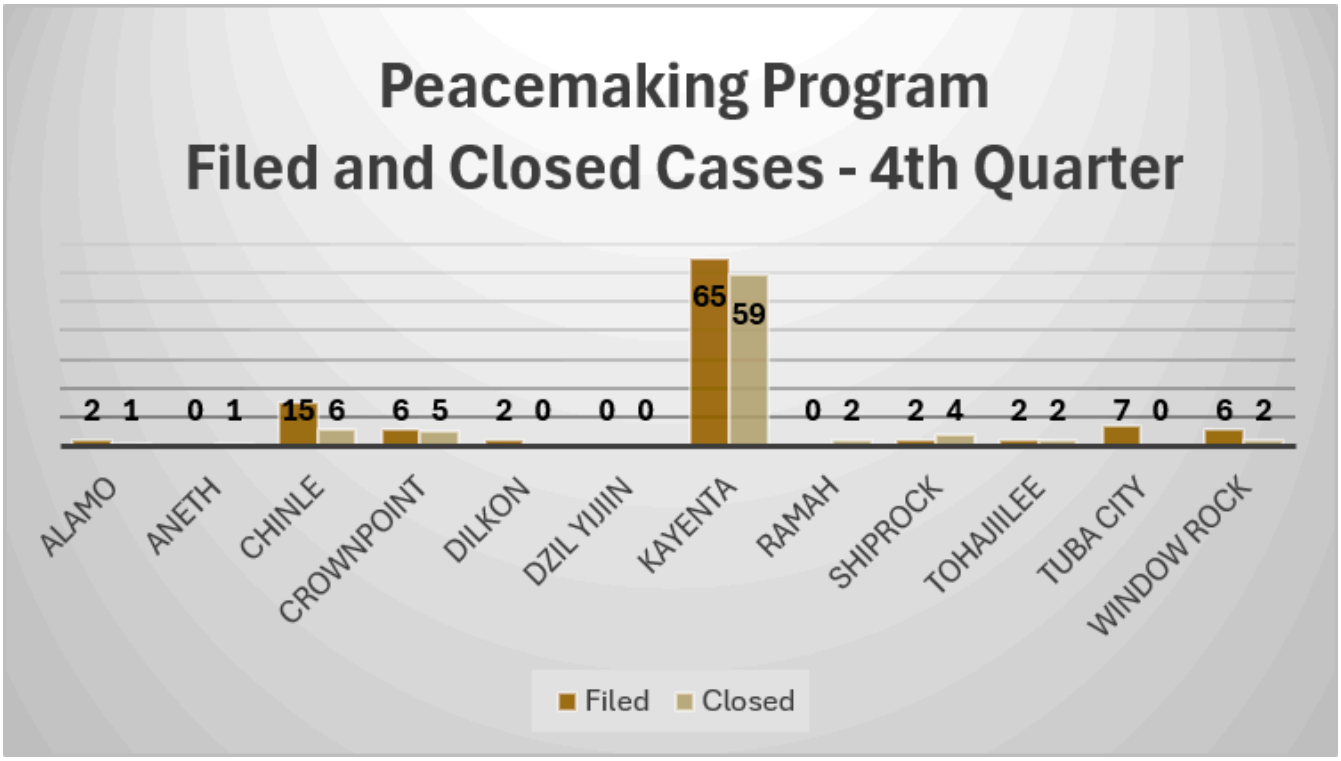
Community Outreach and Program Activities

Program staff provided clan and being a responsible male and female presentations during Kids Day events at the Central Navajo Fair, Navajo Nation Fair, and Northern Navajo Fair, reaching many students from various schools. Staff also provided Diné Fundamental Law presentations at the Self-Help Center Grand Opening, and the Diné Library policy development reached its final phase following extensive research and collaboration with resources and professionals experienced in library management.

Case Activity and Program Performance

This quarter, the Peacemaking Program received 10 peacemaking cases, 106 Life Value Engagement cases, 4 Diné Family Group Conferencing cases, and 0 probate/quiet title cases. Of the 107 cases filed during the quarter, 101 were referred cases and 6 were walk-ins.

PEACEMAKING PROGRAM



145

PENDING CASES

The Peacemaking Program is unique as cases are opened based upon court, agency, and school referrals as well as walk-ins.

77%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Peacemaking Program received a total of 107 new filed cases. The Peacemaking Program closed 82 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 77%.

Probation and Parole Services

Navajo Nation Probation and Parole Services (PPS) play a vital role in enhancing community safety and supporting rehabilitation across the Judicial Branch. Their work focuses on accountability, treatment, and reintegration to reduce future criminal behavior and strengthen families.

Purpose:

- Enhance public safety by reducing criminal acts among convicted offenders
- Conduct needs assessments for adults, juveniles, diversion participants, and their families
- Provide case management, supervision, and referrals for treatment and counseling
- Promote reintegration of clients as law-abiding, productive members of society
- Perform indigency determinations for court proceedings

Objectives for the Next Quarter

- To prepare the second half of administrative tasks and training for the office technicians.
- To ensure the Senior Probation Officers complete the bi-annual case reviews.
- To continue the recruitment of vacant PPS positions.
- To prepare and plan the yearly training goals

Strengthening Fiscal Accountability and Workforce Recruitment

Under the leadership of Chief Probation Officer Yellowhair, Probation and Parole Services (PPS) expended FY 2026 General Funds in accordance with departmental needs. PPS strengthened recruitment efforts through social media outreach and community announcements to fill vacant positions.

Enhancing Case Management and Accountability

PPS leadership and Senior Probation Officers utilized case audit outcomes to restructure, realign, and improve case management tracking across judicial districts, promoting consistency and a uniform departmental case management system.

Advancing Officer Safety and Professional Development

PPS leadership successfully completed the annual Train-the-Trainer seminar. The PPS Safety Committee facilitated the required biannual Officer Response Tactics (ORT) training, conducted by the U.S. Probation Services ORT Team, District of Arizona, strengthening officer safety and preparedness.

Strengthening Administrative Operations and Efficiency

PPS initiated a four-week training program for newly hired Office Technicians. Under Chief Yellowhair's direction, administrative responsibilities were assigned to promote cross-training, operational efficiency, and consistent departmental practices.

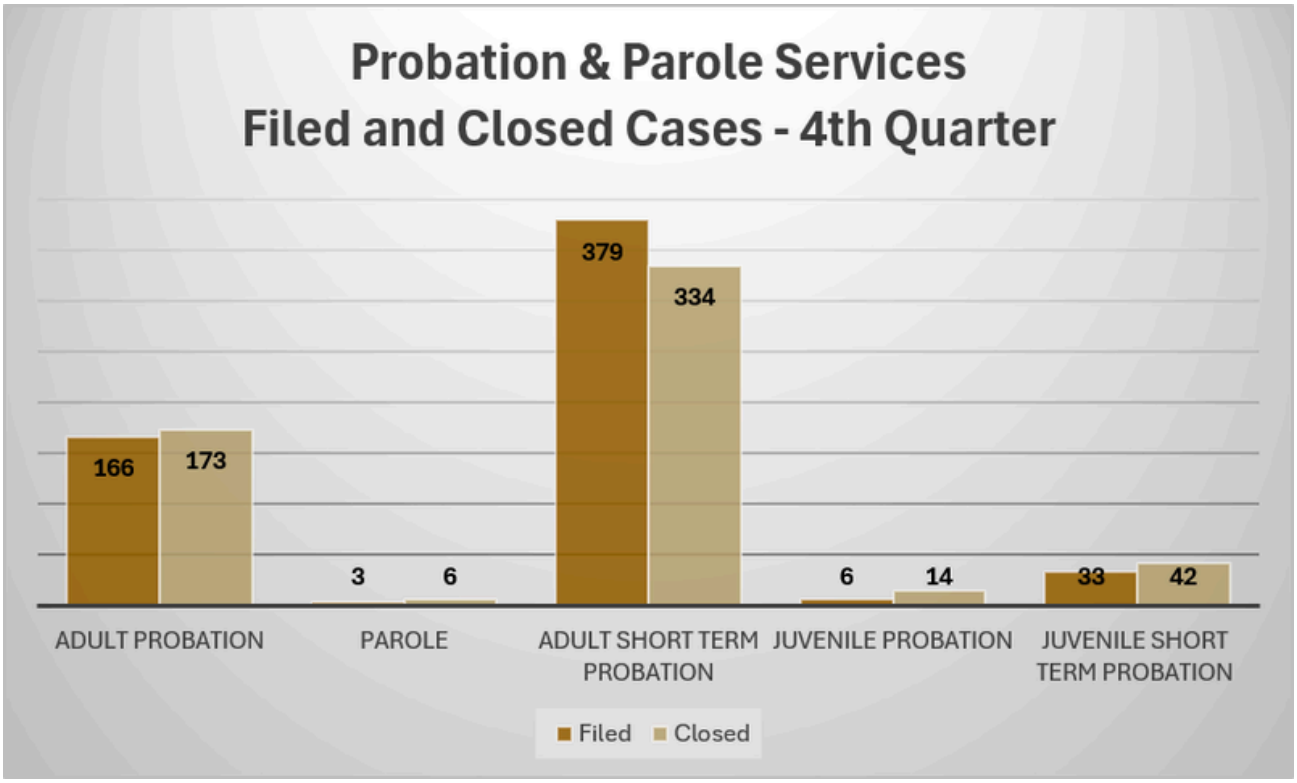
Advancing Policy Development

PPS Probation Officers and leadership continued reviewing and revising the Navajo Policy on Appointment of Counsel and Indigency to strengthen departmental policies and procedures.

Promoting Employee Wellness and Collaboration

PPS continued strengthening daily operations while encouraging innovation, professional growth, and collaboration. Personnel participated in staff development, stress-management activities, and team-building opportunities to promote employee morale, wellness, and positive working relationships.

PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICES



932

PENDING CASES

Probation and Parole Services provides short and long term probation and parole services.

97%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, Probation and Parole Services received a total of 587 new filed cases. Probation and Parole Services closed 569 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 97%.

Role of the Supreme Court

- Appellate jurisdiction over trial court decision
- Original jurisdiction over petitions for extraordinary writs (mandamus, prohibition and habeas corpus and other writs)
- Final adjudication of decisions by administrative bodies such as the Tax Commission, Office of Hearings and Appeals, and Labor Commission
- Discretionary review of certified questions by trial courts and administrative agencies, and state/federal courts
- Regulatory authority over the practice of law and Navajo Nation Bar membership
- Appellate jurisdiction over certain decisions of the Navajo Nation Bar Association
- Authority to approve all new and revised rules, pleadings, and forms of the Navajo Nation courts

Role of the Judicial District Courts

Each Judicial District includes two courts: a District Court and a Family Court. Although both courts operate within the same Judicial District, each has distinct jurisdiction, authority, and responsibilities for resolving different types of legal matters.

District Court

- Original jurisdiction over crimes, civil causes and other matters under Navajo statutory law, Diné bi Beehaz'áannii, and Navajo Nation Treaties.
- Courts of general jurisdiction.
- Small claims division within each District Court.
- Special Division of the Window Rock District Court.
- Exclusive jurisdiction to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate and prosecute ethics and corruption cases involving officials of the Navajo Nation government.

Family Court

Original exclusive jurisdiction over:

- Cases arising under the Álchíní Bi Beehaz'áannii Act
- Domestic relations
- Probate
- Adoption
- Paternity
- Custody
- Child support
- Guardianship
- Mental health commitments
- Mental and/physical competency
- Name changes
- Elders


GREAT SEAL OF THE NAVAJO NATION
JUDICIAL BRANCH

Supreme Court

Honorable Eleanor Shirley, Interim Chief Justice
Honorable William J.J. Platero, Acting Associate Justice *(Temporarily assigned)*
Honorable Robert Yazzie
Recalled Justice

Jurisdiction and Authority
The Navajo Nation Supreme Court is the highest judicial authority in the Nation, serving as the final appellate body for decisions from District Courts and other lower forums. Its jurisdiction covers civil, criminal, and administrative matters under Navajo law.

The Court also regulates Navajo Nation Bar members, overseeing admissions, professional conduct, and discipline to uphold ethical standards. Through its rulings and oversight, the Supreme Court ensures justice aligns with both traditional Navajo values and due process.

Strengthening Legal Services
This quarter, the Supreme Court swore in and admitted 11 individuals to the Navajo Nation Bar Association, strengthening the legal profession and enhancing the delivery of legal services throughout the Navajo Nation. The Supreme Court also opened 95 cases, closed 27 cases, and maintained an active caseload of 288 matters.

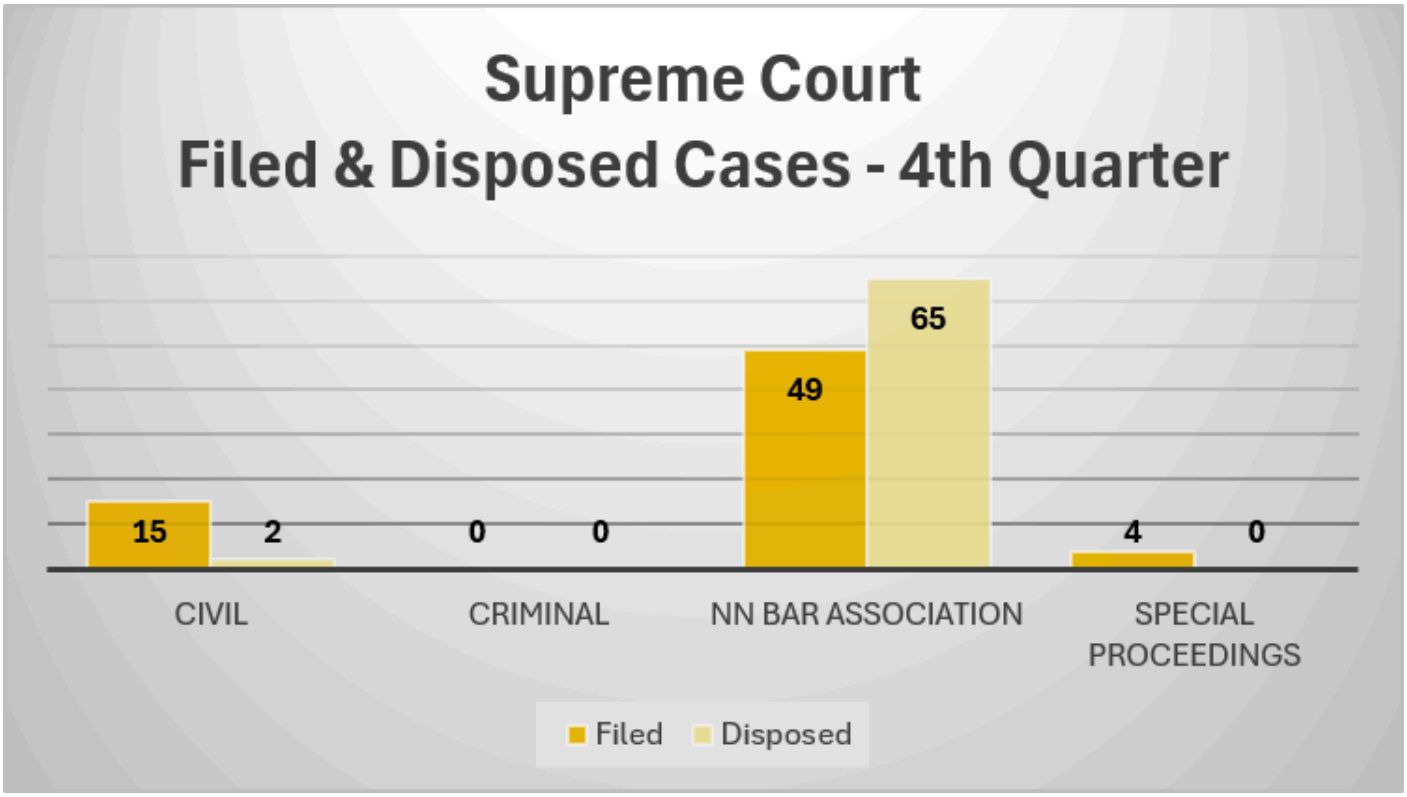
Strengthening Government Leadership and Intergovernmental Collaboration
This quarter, Chief Justice Shirley administered the oath of office to seven elected officials representing all five agencies, reaffirming the Court's role in supporting the orderly transition of leadership and the rule of law. Chief Justice Shirley also appointed Helen Brown, Compliance Officer as the Judicial Branch Representative to the Navajo Nation Insurance Commission, strengthening intergovernmental collaboration.

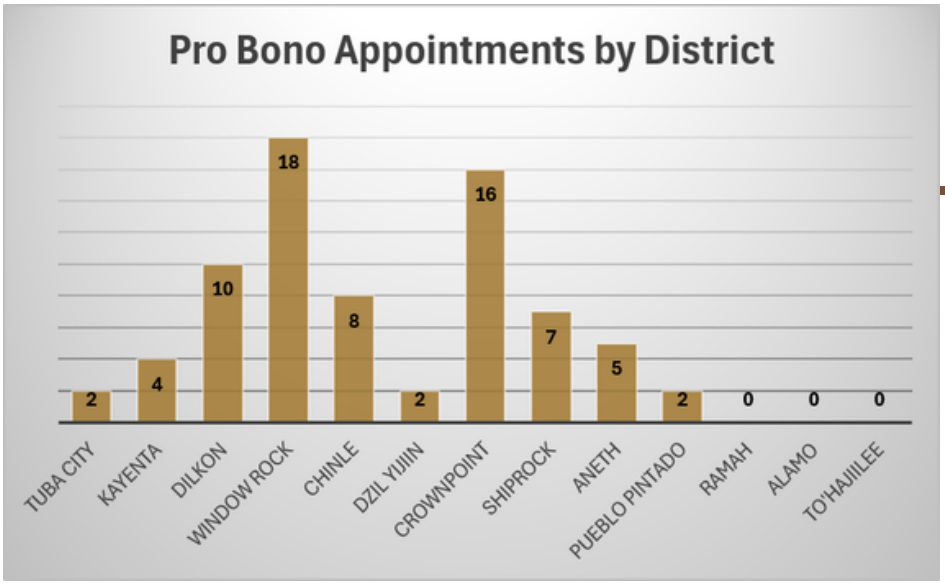
Enhancing Judicial Administration
The Judicial Branch welcomed Shaniya Logg as the Government Affairs Director, expanding the branch's capacity to support governmental affairs. Chief Justice Shirley also issued Administrative Order No. 22-2026, amending the Judicial Branch's performance management step increase procedures to provide supervisors with clear guidance for employees serving in acting-status positions for more than six months.

Expanding Public Access to Justice
The Office of the Chief Justice and Judicial Navigators continue to expand access to justice by providing Pro Se Probate and Quiet Title Clinics in multiple chapters including, Piñon, Aneth, and Ramah. The Supreme Court also completed the digitization and archival of 7,866 opinions, memorandum decisions, and orders issued between March 1984 and June 2026, preserving decades of Judicial Branch records and improving public access to legal resources.

Strengthening Access to Justice
The Office of Pro Bono Services reviewed and assigned 92 pro bono appointments during the quarter, connecting eligible individuals with legal representation and reinforcing the Judicial Branch's commitment to accessible and equitable justice services.

SUPREME COURT





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PRO BONO APPOINTMENTS

This quarter, the Supreme Court facilitated 74 Pro Bono Appointments across the Navajo Nation. These appointments help ensure community members have access to legal assistance, supporting fairness and equal opportunity in the justice system.

Alamo District and Family Courts

Honorable Leonard Livingston
Temporarily assigned
Lauren A. Billy, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Alamo/Tó'hajiilee Judicial District serves both Alamo and Tó'hajiilee communities. Each facility has a District and Family court.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

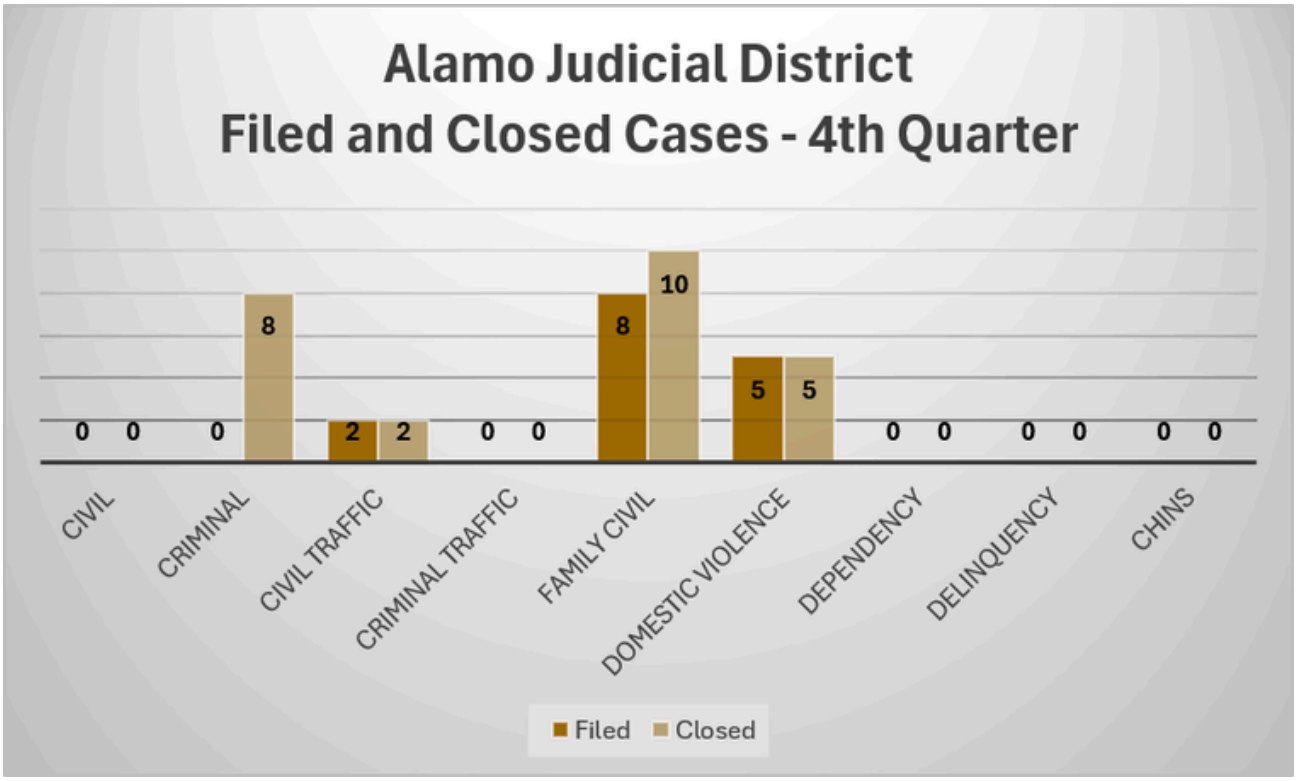
Judicial and Community Services
The Honorable Judge Livingston virtually administered the Oath of Office to 14 Socorro County Sheriff's Officers and New Mexico State Police Officers. Alamo District Court also hosted a Pro Se Probate and Quiet Title presentation led by four Judicial Branch Navigators; although the presentation was informative, only four community members attended despite radio announcements and flyers throughout the community.

Community Collaboration and Resources
The Alamo District Court and Peacemaking Program hosted a community resource meeting in collaboration with local stakeholders and community organizations. Representatives from Alamo and Magdalena Schools, Behavioral Health Services, Navajo Nation Law Enforcement, the Prosecutor's Office, Alamo Chapter, Alamo School Board, and the Alamo/Tohajiilee/Ramah Council Delegate attended to discuss community concerns, identify available resources, strengthen communication, and build partnerships.

Safety and Emergency Preparedness
The Bailiff and Custodian attended Active Shooter Survival Training at Alamo Navajo School. The training covered threat awareness, de-escalation, survival tactics, combat first aid, Stop the Bleed, and emergency response procedures.

Court Operations and Support
The Alamo District Court Clerks and Office Technician provided clerking and operational support to the Tohajiilee District Court during its vacancy period. Their flexibility and teamwork helped maintain continuity of court operations and ensured uninterrupted access to judicial services until the Tohajiilee Court Clerk position was filled.

ALAMO DISTRICT AND FAMILY COURTS



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PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

167%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Alamo Judicial District Court received a total of 15 new case filings across civil traffic, family civil, and domestic violence matters. The Court closed 25 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 167%.

Tó'hajiilee District and Family Courts

Honorable Leonard Livingston
Temporarily assigned
Lauren A. Billy, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

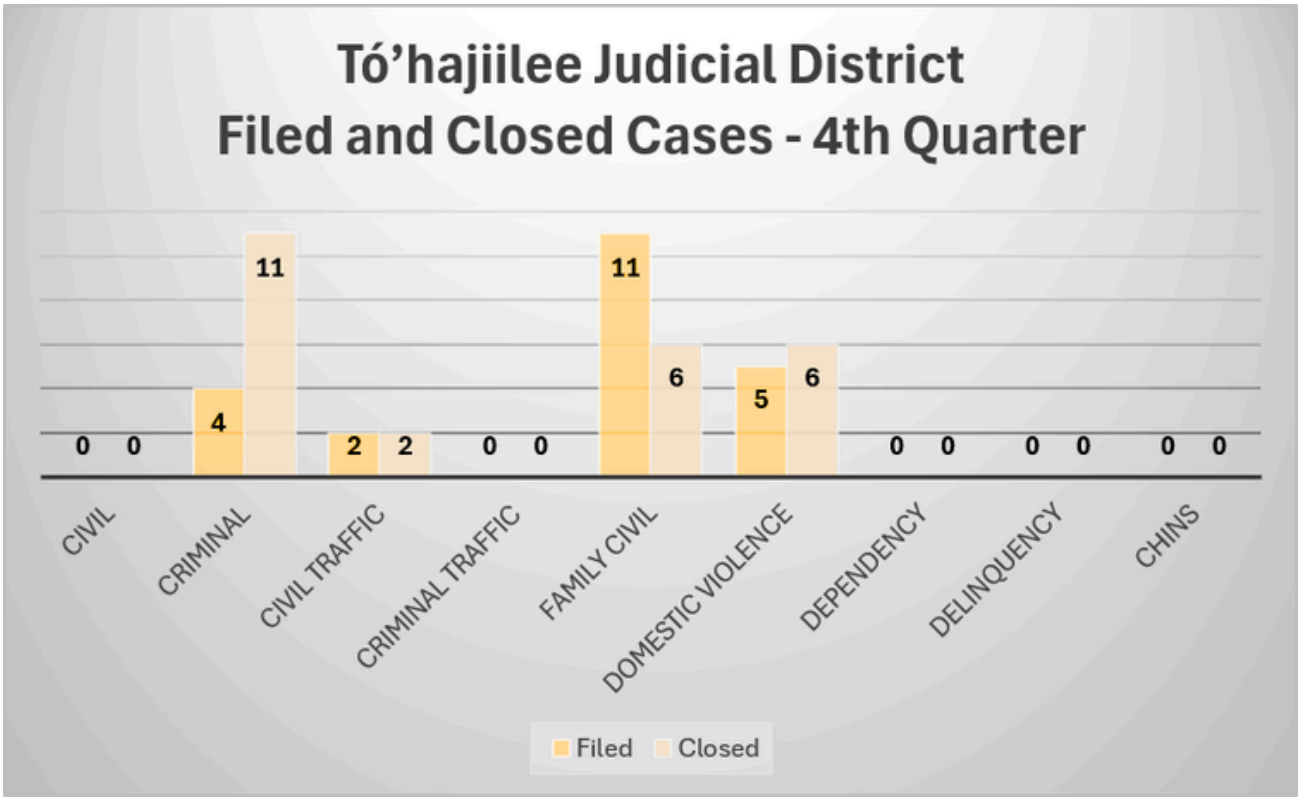
Community Outreach and Legal Resources
A Pro Se Probate and Quiet Title presentation was held at the District Court and provided by four Judicial Branch Navigators. Although the presentation was informative, only two community members attended despite court staff making radio announcements through Alamo KABR Radio and posting flyers throughout the community.

Court Resources and Staffing
The Court received a new 2025 Ford Explorer to replace its previous court vehicle, which had accumulated more than 170,000 miles. The court also welcomed Ms. Faleria R. Apachito as the new Court Clerk in August; she is currently completing her 90-day introductory period and receiving training in pro se forms, document processing, Justware, and other court clerk duties.

Facility and Maintenance Concerns
The Court continues to experience ongoing ceiling leaks and water intrusion that have resulted in damage to the court building. Although work orders have been submitted to the Construction/Facilities Maintenance Department, permanent repairs remain pending, and recent water intrusion into the mechanical room caused saturated ceiling and drywall, moisture damage, and mold growth; addressing the underlying source of the leaks is necessary to prevent further deterioration.

Training and Professional Development
The Staff Attorney conducted a case management refresher training for the Alamo and Tohajiilee Court Clerks. The training reinforced case processing procedures, filing requirements, and time-sensitive case management practices, strengthening staff knowledge and promoting consistency and efficiency in court operations.

TÓ'HAJIILEE JUDICIAL DISTRICT



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PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

114%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Tó'hajiilee District and Family Court received a total of 22 new case filings across criminal, civil traffic, family civil, and domestic violence matters. The Court closed 25 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 114%.

Aneth Judicial District

Honorable Irene Black
Bryan Parrish, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

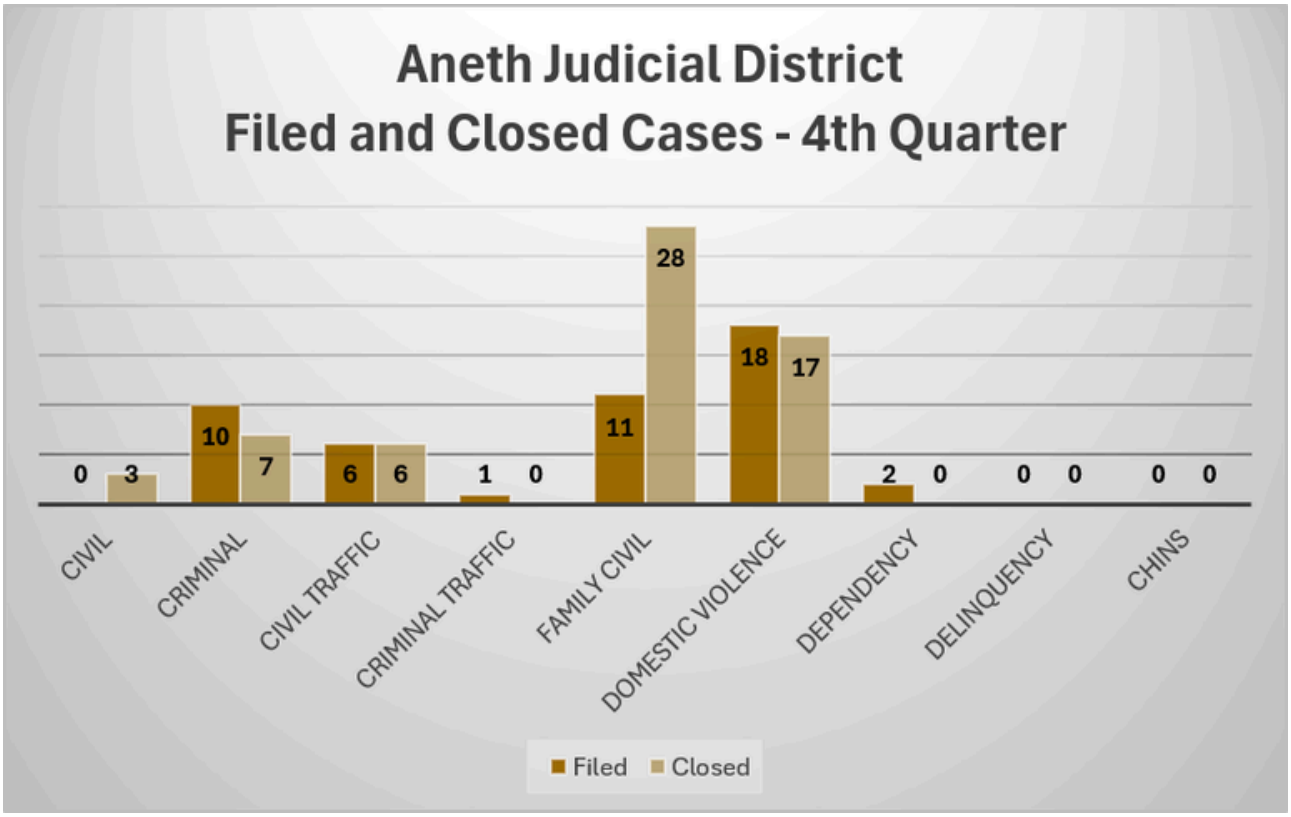
Court Facility Development
The Aneth Court building programming and construction design phases are approximately 90% complete. Keyah, LLC and the Judicial Branch Project Manager are working closely with the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) to finalize necessary approvals and cost estimates, with the goal of beginning construction in the near future.

Case Backlog Reduction
The Aneth Court has reduced its Probate and Quiet Title case backlog by 20%, meeting the proposed target closure rate. Although the presiding Judge's commitments to other assignments may affect case closures, the Aneth Court team remains focused on prioritizing case resolutions when the Judge is present at the Aneth Judicial Court.

Legal and Judicial Support
Staff Attorney Mahlon Wigton successfully completed Pro Se Clinics addressing Probate and Quiet Title matters. Moving forward, he will focus on providing additional legal support to the presiding Judge in facilitating case closures across all case types.

Objectives for Next Quarter
1. The Aneth Court has completed reconciliation of all district expenditures under the FY2026 budget, and the Aneth Administrator and Judge will begin utilizing the 365 Dynamic financial system for the FY2027 budget.
2. The Court will also collaborate with the Aneth Chapter to explore cost-sharing opportunities for infrastructure serving the 24-acre property and proposed judicial facility.
3. Staff will continue reviewing physical files against Justware records and providing docketing support to the presiding Judge during her time in Aneth, Utah.

ANETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT



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PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

127%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Aneth District and Family Court received a total of 48 new case filings across criminal, civil traffic, criminal traffic, family civil, domestic violence, and dependency matters. The Court closed 61 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 127%.

Chinle Judicial District

Honorable Cynthia Thompson
Vanessa Mescal, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

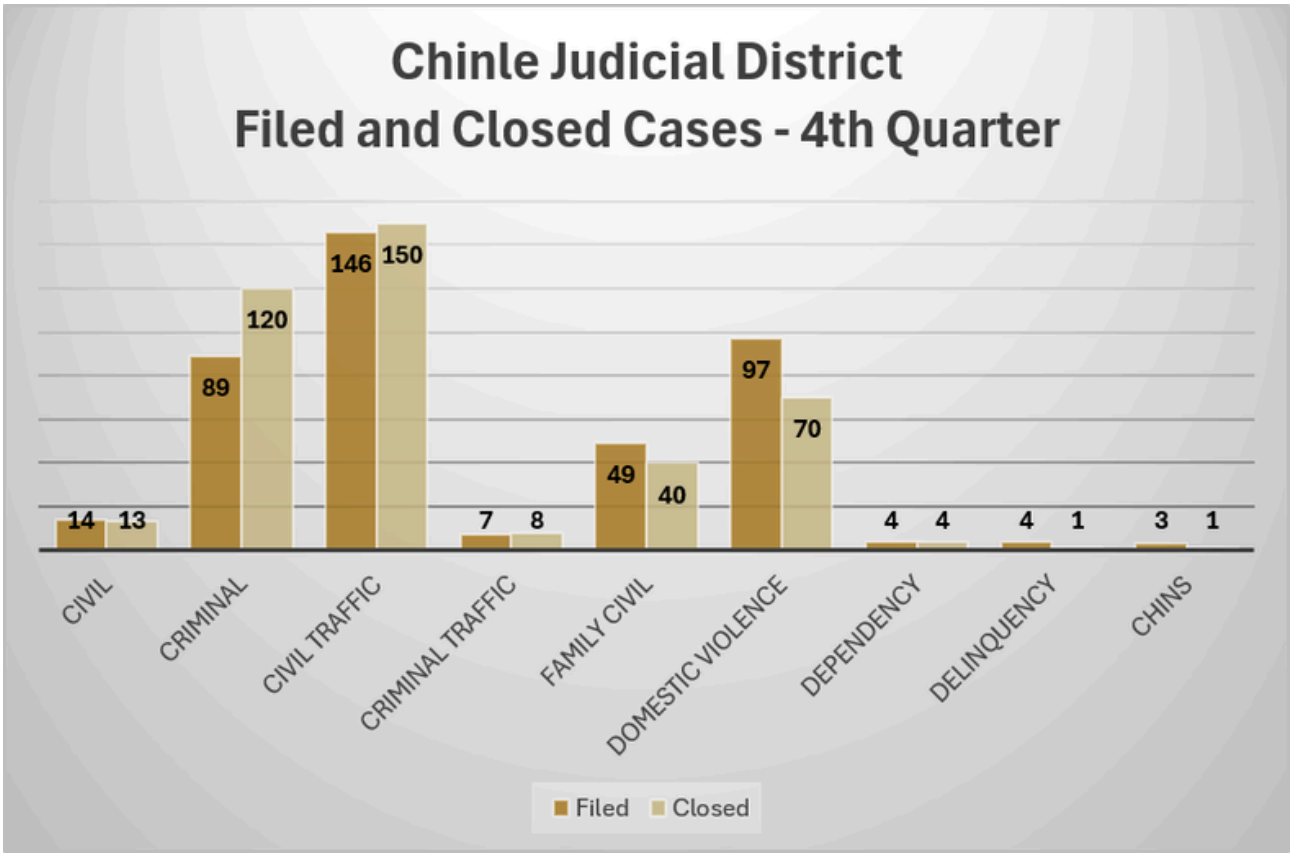
Judicial Services and Court Operations
This quarter, the District continued to provide essential judicial services, with court clerks processing cases from docketing and filing pleadings through case closure, maintaining the case management system, collecting applicable fines and fees, and providing courtroom support. Bailiffs maintained courtroom security and decorum, the Staff Attorney provided legal research and case law support, and the Court Administrator (CA) coordinated daily court operations with law enforcement, corrections, prosecutors, public defenders, attorneys, local government officials, and schools.

Community Coordination and Collaborative Services
The CA and Judge Thompson facilitated a district resource meeting with local service providers, including schools, Family Services, Probation and Parole, Peacemaking, Corrections, Behavioral Health, prosecutors, and law enforcement. The meeting focused on coordinating services for children and families, with truancy and substance abuse identified as significant concerns and participating agencies expressing a commitment to developing collaborative responses.

Re-Entry Program and Judicial Coverage
The District continued to support the Northern Arizona Re-Entry Pilot Project in partnership with the U.S. Probation Office by providing courtroom space for local re-entry hearings every other month. A critical concern remains the vacant Chinle judicial position, as Judge Thompson currently provides judicial coverage for both the Chinle and Dzil Yijiin Judicial Districts, creating a significant workload and concerns regarding sustainability and judicial burnout.

Priorities and Commitment to Justice
Filling the vacant Chinle judicial position remains a priority to ensure adequate judicial coverage, timely access to justice, effective case management, and continued quality court services. The District remains dedicated to advancing the mission and vision of the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch, with continued focus on service, accountability, collaboration, and justice.

CHINLE JUDICIAL DISTRICT



851

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

99%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Chinle District and Family Court received a total of 413 new case filings across all matters. The Court closed 407 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 99%.

Crownpoint Judicial District

Honorable Leonard Livingston
Jamie S. Mike, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

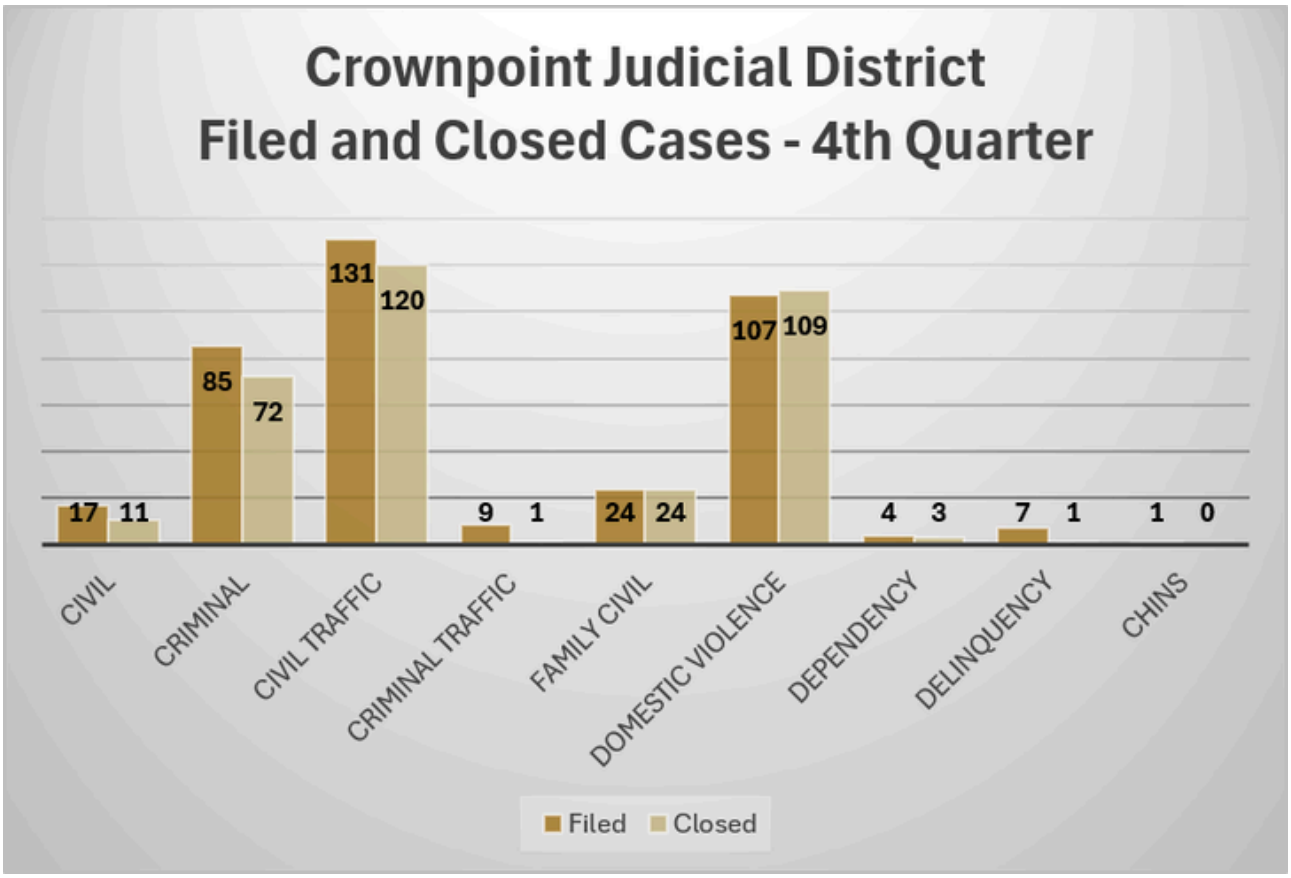
Achievements & Service Delivery
This quarter, the Crownpoint Judicial District and Family Court successfully closed 148 court cases, demonstrating continued efficiency in case management. The Judicial Hearing Officer conducted in-person Domestic Violence hearings, resulting in the closure of 109 cases, while the Court provided Probate and Quiet Title education to 15 Eastern Navajo communities, reaching a total of 484 participants.

Staffing, Transparency & Court Operations
One Document Technician position and one Clerk position remained vacant during the quarter, with applications continuing to be accepted for both positions. Court staff actively participated in meetings and court-development training sessions focused on improving court operations and access to justice, while the Court continued regular communication with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) regarding funding and expenditures; the Court also collected $8,244.45 in fines and fees during the quarter.

Facilities & Operational Challenges
The Crownpoint Judicial District continues to maintain regular communication with BIA Facility Maintenance to address facility-related work orders and ongoing infrastructure needs. Key operational challenges include internet connectivity, the need to upgrade courtroom audio equipment, and establishing reliable backup solutions to maintain operational continuity.

Looking Ahead & Future Trends
Moving forward, the Court will continue strengthening coordination with the AOC to support major facility and infrastructure projects, personnel hiring and retention, increased case closures, and stronger partnerships with the Prosecutor's Office and other justice system stakeholders. Mandatory staff training on employee safety and court operations will remain a priority, while the demolition of the Judicial Housing Complex continues to be a critical infrastructure goal to reduce liability and support future development.

CROWNPOINT JUDICIAL DISTRICT



1,156

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

89%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Crownpoint Judicial District Court received a total of 385 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, dependency, delinquency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 341 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 89%.

Dilkon Judicial District

Honorable Victor Clyde
Darlene LaFrance, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

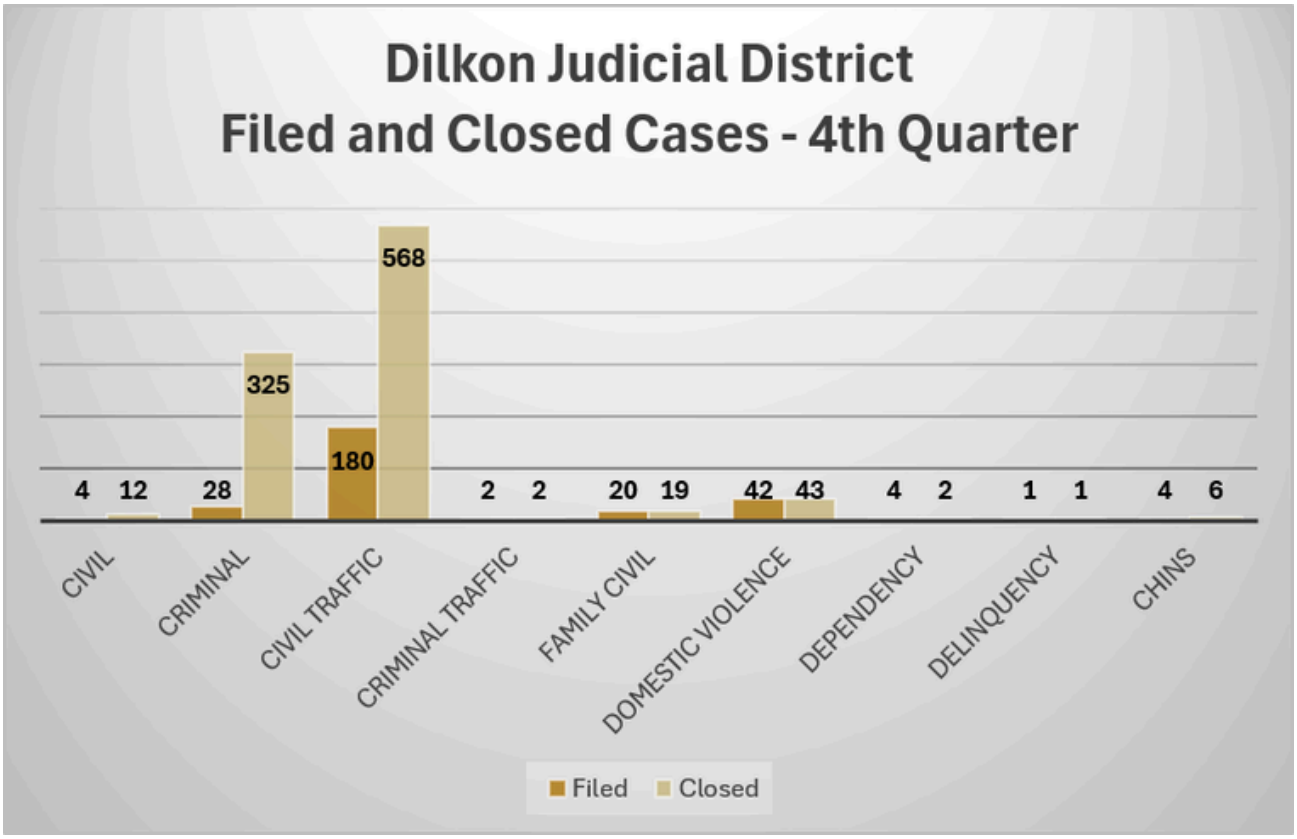
Case Management and Staff Achievements
The District Court staff continued making progress in reducing case backlogs, including probate and quiet title cases, through proactive case management as directed by the Chief Justice. This progress is reflected in the number of cases closed exceeding the number of cases filed, which remains an ongoing quarterly goal.

Staff Development and Training
The District conducted its quarterly staff in-service, focusing on Hózhó in the Workplace, stress management, mental health, traditional teachings, and wellness. Staff also collaborated with NN Land Management on updates to Pro Se forms for probate and quiet title cases, while participating in Dayforce, PSAP, new employee orientation, and Justware refresher training; Judge Clyde also attended a judicial conference, conducted an Oath of Office, and presented on the Peacemaking Program.

Judicial Coverage
Pursuant to Administrative Order, Judge Clyde continues to preside over and provide judicial coverage for both the Dilkon and Ramah Judicial Districts, effective April 2026. The dual-district assignment continues to require ongoing coordination to ensure both courts maintain effective judicial services.

Challenges and Facility Improvements
The implementation of Dayforce and its integration with Judicial Branch administrative processes has presented time-consuming challenges, particularly for local judicial district staff, with delays and system issues requiring continued attention. The courthouse roof project remains partially complete and will require an additional funding source for full completion, while only four of the 13 HVAC units have been installed, creating a significant facility concern.

DILKON JUDICIAL DISTRICT



1,360
PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

343%
CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Dilkon Judicial District Court received a total of 285 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, dependency, delinquency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 978 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 343%.

Dził Yíjíín Judicial District

Honorable Cynthia Thompson
Arlene Lee, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:

- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:

- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

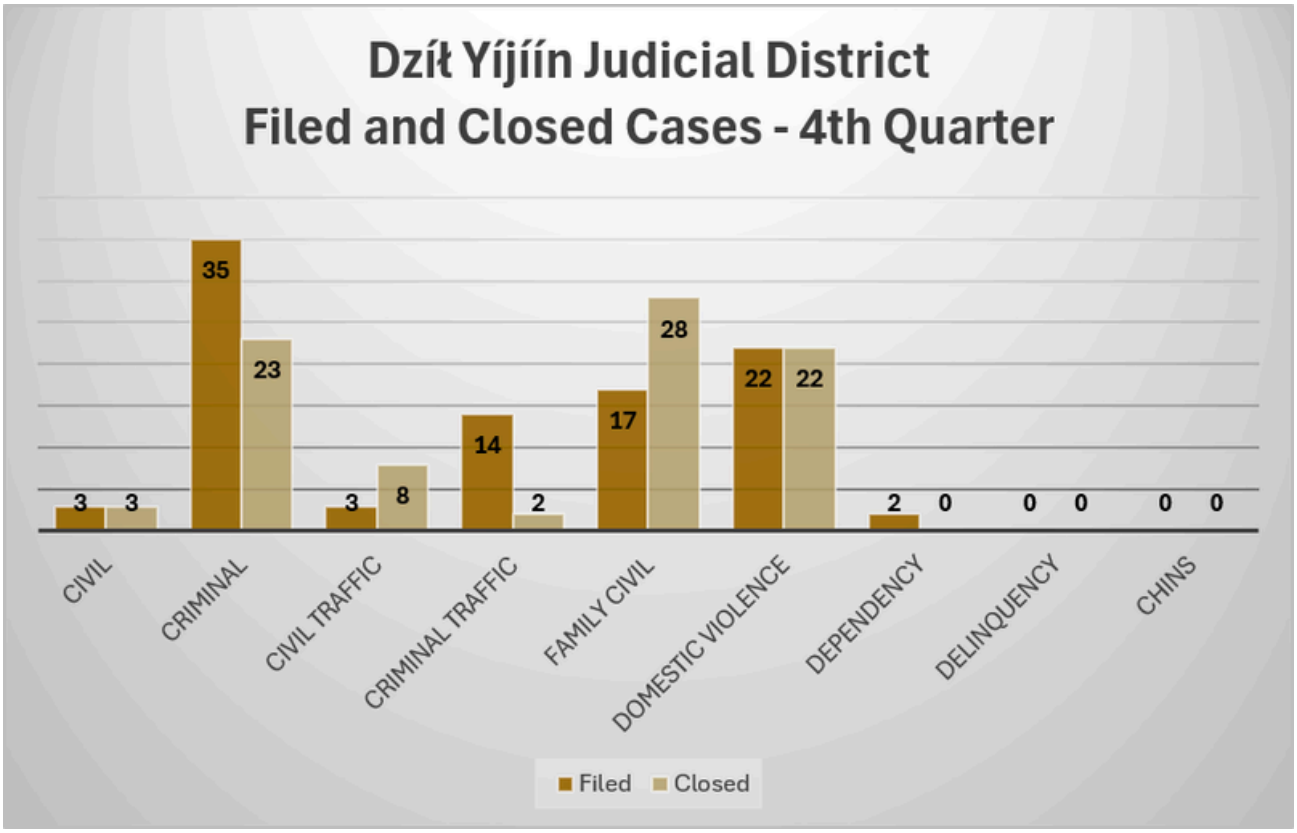
Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

Judicial Services and Case Management
The Dził Yíjíín Judicial District continues to provide comprehensive judicial services across a broad spectrum of case types. To ensure timely access to judicial proceedings and the efficient administration of cases, the Presiding Judge conducts hearings in person, by videoconference, and telephonically, as appropriate to the circumstances of each matter. In addition to presiding over cases within the district, the Presiding Judge provides judicial services to other district courts and accepts assignments from the Chief Justice as necessary to address court-wide operational needs and maintain the effective administration of justice. A Judicial Hearing Officer presides over Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) hearings, thereby facilitating the prompt resolution of these matters.

Staff Training and Professional Development
This quarter, the staff participated in various in-service training and professional development. In August, staff attended training presented by Judge Thompson on Diné Philosophy and its relevance to the workplace. The training also addressed Dayforce procedures, completion of travel/training documents, workplace safety, and stress management. Additionally, the Bailiff and Document Technician participated in a two-day virtual Justware training to strengthen their knowledge and proficiency in utilizing the system. Staff attended the Grand Opening of the Self-Help Center while the Bailiff assisted with traffic control and parking.

Court Administration and Community Legal Services
The Court Administrator maintained efficient and effective court operations through proactive case management, daily docket oversight, weekly financial reporting, and strategic coordination of staff responsibilities. She strengthened access to legal information and court services by coordinating with DNA People's Legal Services to provide a Pro Se Clinic addressing Probate and Quiet Title matters, giving community members greater access to practical legal resources, demonstrating leadership, collaboration, and continued coordination and effective administration of court operation.

DZIŁ YÍJÍÍN JUDICIAL DISTRICT



238

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

90%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Dzíł Yíjíín Judicial District Court received a total of 96 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, and dependency matters. The Court closed 86 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 90%.

Kayenta Judicial District

Honorable Letitia Stover
Lavonne K. Yazzie, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

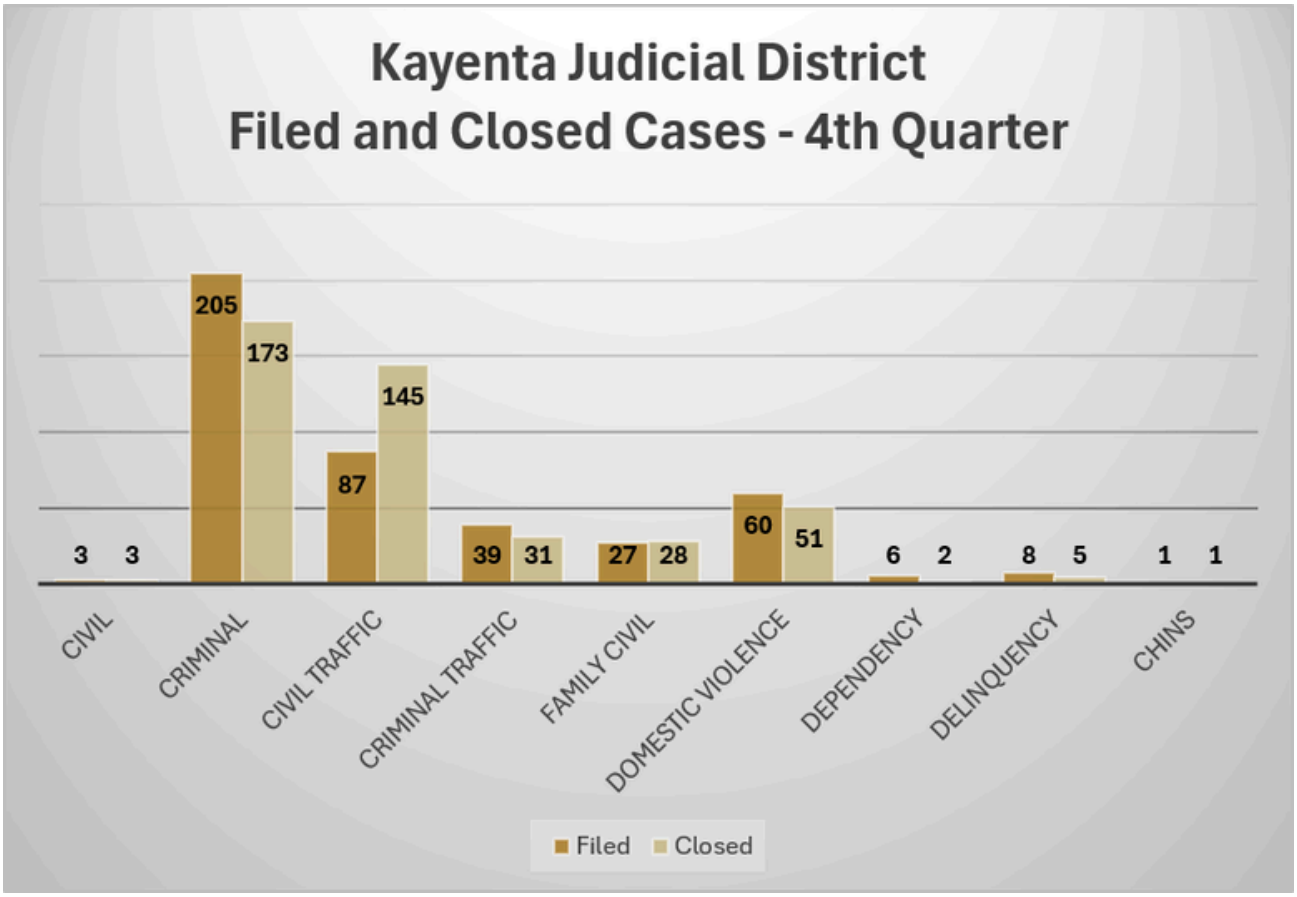
New Judicial Complex Construction
Construction of the new Kayenta Judicial Complex is approximately 85% complete, with monthly progress meetings and onsite walkthroughs continuing. The 16,937-square-foot facility is funded through Navajo Nation Sihasin Funds, the State of Arizona, and the Kayenta Township Commission, with completion anticipated by the end of 2026.

Mobile Court Services
The Kayenta Judicial District provided mobile court services to several chapters in August and September. Services included new case filings, pending case inquiries, and fine and fee payments, while Tuba City DNA Legal Services provided free Pro Se Legal Clinics during the visits, supporting the district's continued "Justice on Wheels" efforts.

Court Security and Professional Development
Bailiff Brandyn Benallie completed the National Criminal Justice Training Center's "*Creating a Safer Courthouse: The People, Places and Things*" training in Sandy, Utah. The four-day training addressed court security, critical incident response, and emergency planning to strengthen courthouse safety and preparedness.

Community Partnerships and Judicial Development
The Kayenta Judicial District participated in a meeting with local service providers and criminal justice partners to strengthen collaboration, streamline processes, and improve services to the community. Judge Letitia M. Stover also participated in the quarterly judicial conference on September 25, 2026, in Gallup, New Mexico, receiving Judicial Branch updates and information on current developments.

KAYENTA JUDICIAL DISTRICT



1,753

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

101%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Kayenta Judicial District Court received a total of 436 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, dependency, delinquency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 439 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 101%.

Ramah Judicial District

Honorable Victor J. Clyde
Jennifer Jim-Cly, *Acting* Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:

- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:

- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

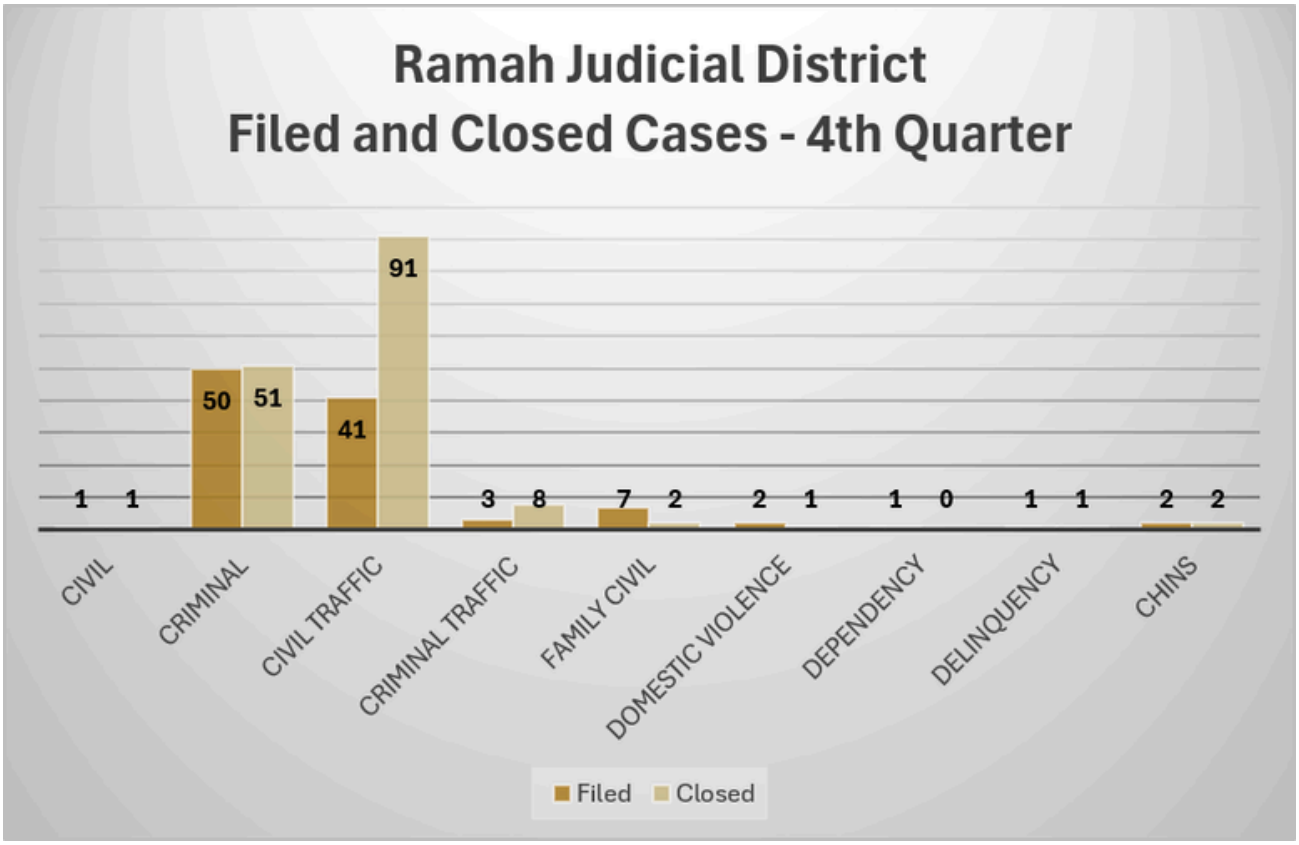
Judicial Support and Community Coordination
Judge Victor J. Clyde of the Dilkon Judicial District continues to provide valuable judicial support to the Ramah District Court by presiding over hearings both in person and virtually, working closely with court staff, and participating in staff meetings to support effective judicial services and accurate case management. Judge Clyde also administered the Oath of Office to assisting law enforcement personnel from the Zuni and Navajo Police Departments and Cibola County who provided support during the Ramah Fair.

Staff Development and Court Operations
The Ramah Judicial District remains committed to advancing the mission and vision of the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch through service, accountability, and justice. Newly hired Office Technician, Brendolyn Natan, successfully completed her probationary period and transitioned to permanent status, while Court Clerks and the Office Technician completed Justware refresher training and the Court Custodian successfully received training on cleaning agents, proper dilution, and custodial duties.

Case Management and New Court Facility
The Acting Court Administrator continues to oversee daily court operations, coordinate staff, participate in meetings, and assist with court clerking responsibilities to support accurate and reliable case management records. Monthly meetings with LAM Corporation continue for the new court building project, with design development currently at 35%; all business units, including PPS, Peacemaking, Court Staff, and IT, have provided input on their facility needs.

Facility Improvements and Case Backlog Reduction
The Ramah District Court continues to address the needs of its current facility through ongoing maintenance, repairs, and facility improvement projects to maintain a safe, functional, and effective environment for court operations. The Court will also continue efforts to reduce case backlogs by processing and addressing cases in a timely and orderly manner to ensure judicial services remain accessible, efficient, and responsive to the community.

RAMAH JUDICIAL DISTRICT



1,002
PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

145%
CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Ramah Judicial District Court received a total of 108 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, dependency, delinquency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 157 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 145%.

Shiprock Judicial District

Honorable Genevieve Woody
Ethel Laughing, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:
- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:
- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

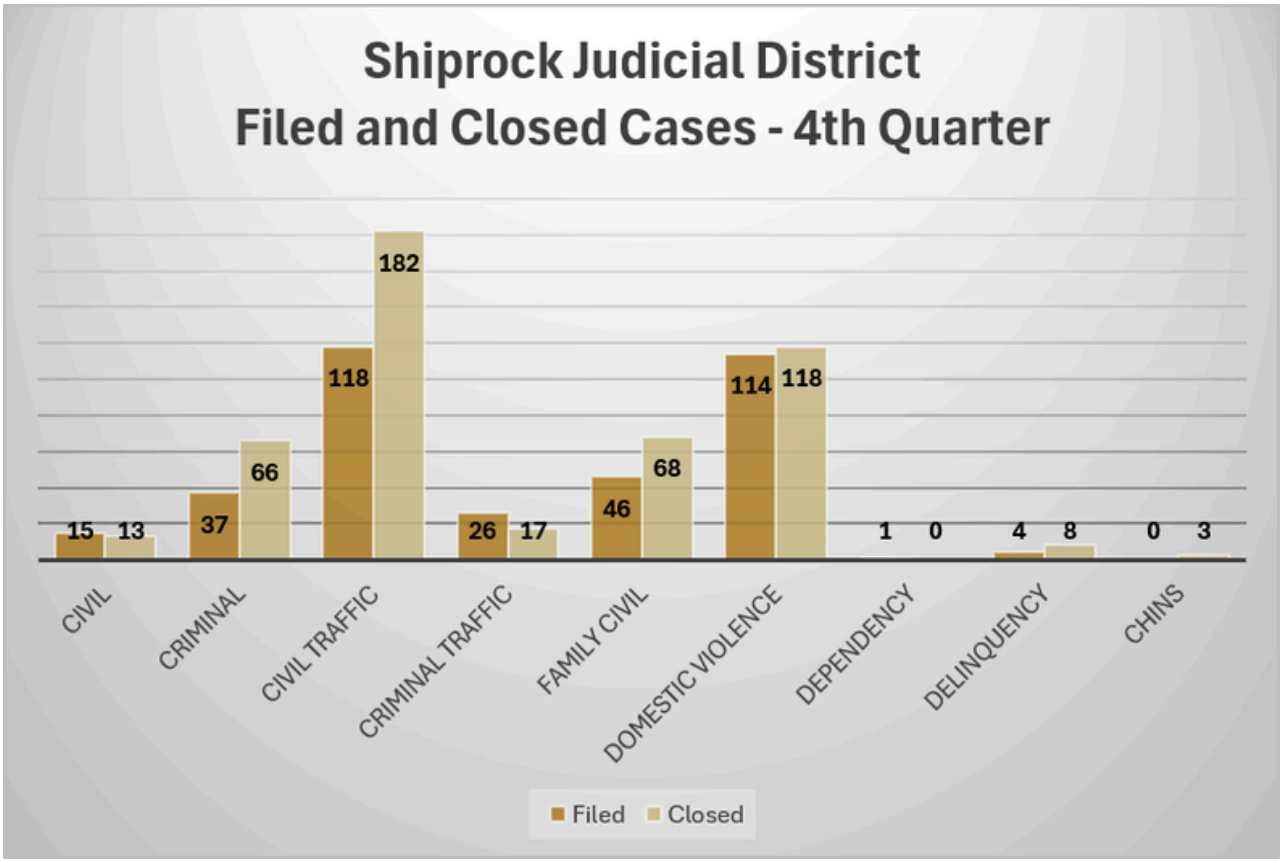
Case Activity and Adjudications
This quarter, the Shiprock Judicial District received 361 new filings and adjudicated 475 cases. The Judicial District continued to increase case adjudications, with the district team working diligently to achieve successful results and timely case resolutions.

Probate and Quiet Title Outreach
The Shiprock Judicial District received $75,000 in FY2026 Probate and Quiet Title funding to support meaningful communication, public outreach, and public education. Under the leadership of Judicial Navigator Kenderick Goldtooth, the initiative demonstrated creativity, innovation, and community engagement through collaboration with resource providers, community chapters, and local court and administrative staff; Pro Se Clinics were held in Cove, Newcomb, Nenahnezad, Hogback, and Beclabito, with the initial clinic held at the Shiprock Judicial District.

Community and Public Services
The Shiprock Judicial District continued providing services to Northern Agency communities through in-person assistance, telephone and fax services, post office and drop-box services, online payments, family and district court filings, and visitor log services. These services helped maintain access to court resources and supported community members with their filing and case-related needs. Total communications received and sent out were 11,201.

Fines, Fees, and Community Service
This quarter, the District Court collected $14,157.15 in fines and fees, with security bonds totaling $100.00. Community service performed in lieu of fines amounted to $6,038.00, resulting in a combined total of $20,295.15 for the quarter.

SHIPROCK JUDICIAL DISTRICT



430

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

132%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Shiprock Judicial District Court received a total of 361 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, dependency, and delinquency matters. The Court closed 475 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 132%.

Tuba City Judicial District

Honorable Cecelia Tallman
Sheila Begishie, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:

- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:

- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

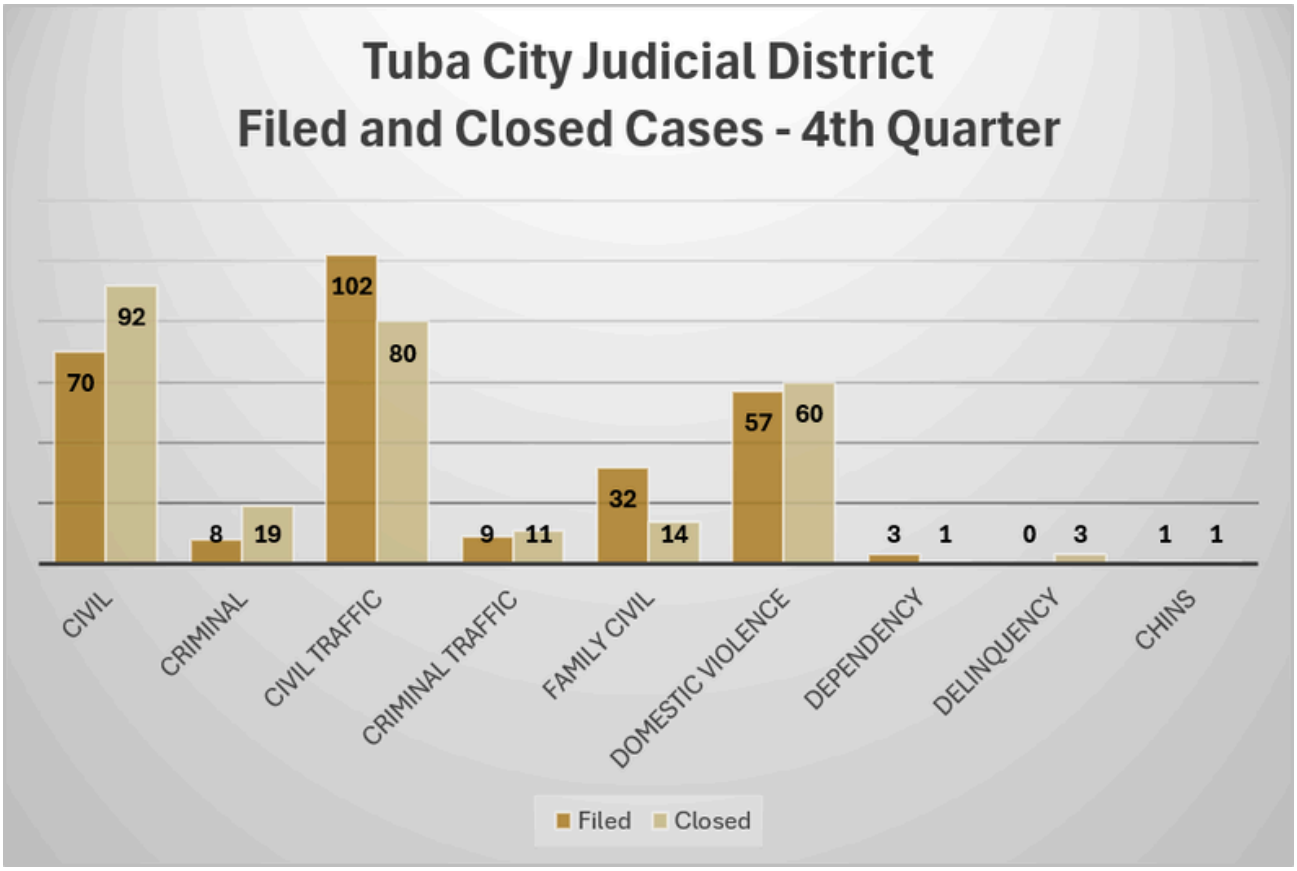
Staff Training and Professional Development
Court staff participated in several training and professional development activities this quarter, including Fire Safety training, Justware refresher training, and OMB trainings on the Beeso Naadzooigii Doo Nahat'a (BNDN) System, and the D365 Travel Authorization process. Honorable Tallman participated in seven web-based training sessions on effectively handling small claims cases and attended the Quarterly Judicial Conference.

Interagency Coordination and Staffing
The Court Administrator participated in two Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) meetings with Navajo Law Enforcement to address the consolidation of dispatch services and establish a process for transmitting court documents, including warrants, criminal summons, and protection orders, to the planned 9-1-1 center in Kayenta. The Court also welcomed two new Court Clerks, Francine Montoya and ReAnna Honyumptewa, who completed orientation and Justware training and are receiving hands-on training in case management, court processes, courtroom responsibilities, customer service, and reporting.

Probate and Quiet Title Outreach
The Court contracted with MJ Bennett Law, LLC to provide Probate and Quiet Title Pro Se presentations and successfully conducted five pro se clinics and mobile court services at various surrounding chapters. The clinics reached a combined 125 participants during the quarter, and the service contract was extended through December 31, allowing the District to schedule additional clinics in Coppermine, Flagstaff, Kayenta, and Tonalea.

Administrative Activities and Facility Needs
The Court Administrator attended the Business Unit Managers' meeting with the Chief Justice, receiving updates regarding Probate and Quiet Title funding, the FY2027 budget, Hashkeeji Nahat'a Beeso Ba Hooghan funding opportunities, and the upcoming Judicial Annual Conference. The District continues to experience ongoing HVAC issues with the court building, and after bids for replacement of the HVAC control system exceeded the District's budget, the Court Administrator plans to submit a proposal to utilize Hashkeeji Nahat'a Beeso funding to address the facility needs in FY2027.

TUBA CITY JUDICIAL DISTRICT



1,427

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

100%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Tuba City Judicial District Court received a total of 282 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 281 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 100%.

Window Rock Judicial District

Honorable Malcolm P. Begay
Kendra Watchman, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Judicial District Courts continued to uphold their vital responsibility of delivering justice services across the Navajo Nation.

District Court Cases:

- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:

- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

Case Closures and Judicial Support
The Window Rock Judicial District had more family cases close out due to the assistance of the Judicial Hearing Officer and Family Court Clerks. The District Court also had an increase in case closure despite staff shortage. WRJD is forever grateful for the assistance of our hardworking staff and other Judges that assist our caseload.

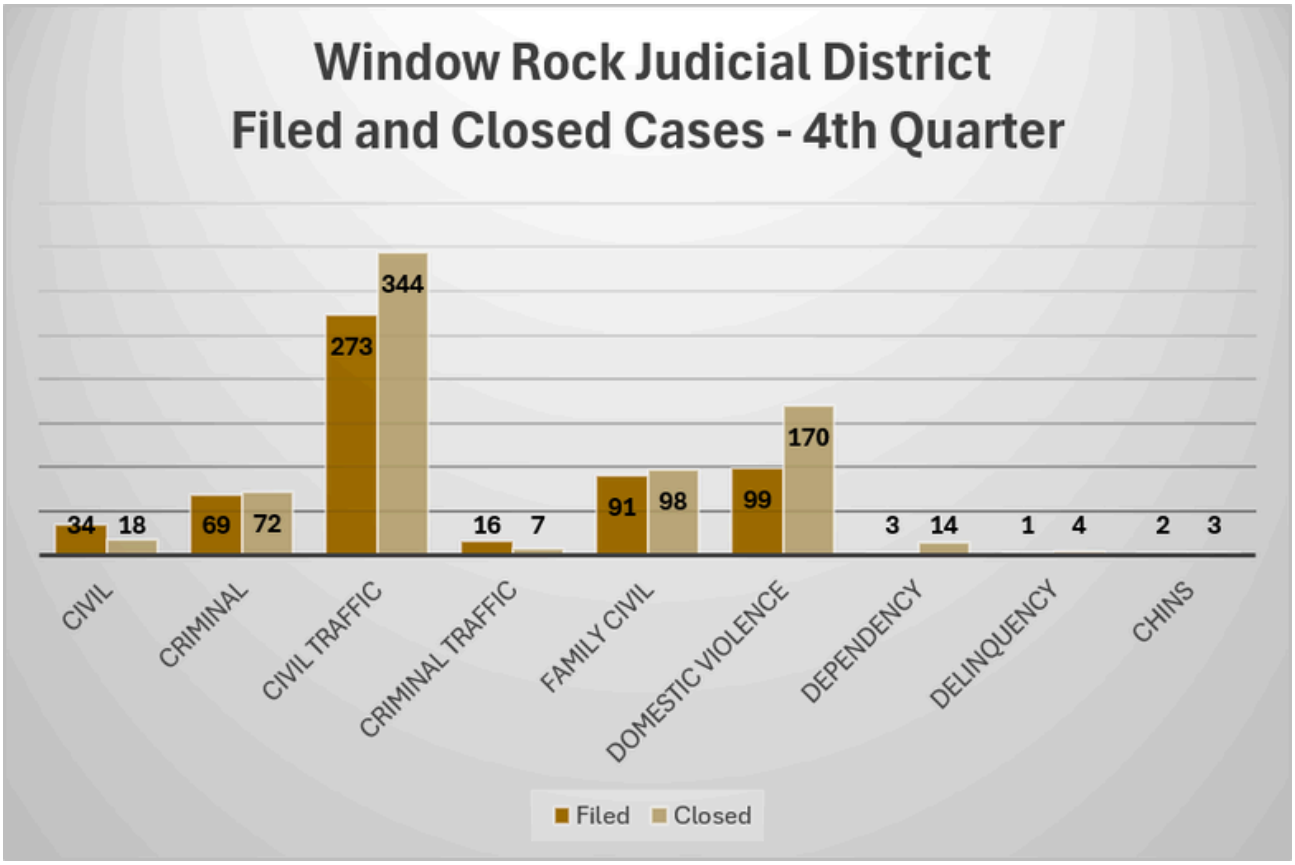
Staffing
The Window Rock Judicial District filled 1 position temporarily. The District Court Clerk position is temporarily filled until a selection is made for the permanent position.

Fines and Fees
The Window Rock Judicial District collected $7,462.30 for the month of July and $ 3,736.70 for the month of August and $4,347.90 for the month of September totaling $15,546.90 for fines and fees for the fourth quarter.

Court Hearings
The Window Rock Judicial District heard 299 Family Court hearings, and 313 District Court hearings were heard for the fourth quarter.

Facility Inspection and Repairs
The Window Rock Judicial District building went through a final inspection regarding the warranty ending in August. The President and Project Manager of Modular Solutions assessed the facility malfunctions in September. The plan is to fix the malfunctions as soon as possible. One of the main projects is renovating the entire roof of the building.

WINDOW ROCK JUDICIAL DISTRICT



2,487

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

124%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Window Rock Judicial District Court received a total of 588 new case filings across all case matters. The Court closed 730 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 124%.

Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court

Honorable Leonard Livingston
Jamie S. Mike, Court Administrator

Judicial District Courts at a Glance
The Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court is a part of the Crownpoint Judicial District.

District Court Cases:

- Civil
- Criminal
- Civil Traffic
- Criminal Traffic

Family Court Cases:

- Domestic Violence
- Dependency
- Delinquency
- Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

Each day, Judges and Court Clerks work diligently to manage the wide range of cases, ensuring fairness, protection, and timely resolutions. Their dedication reflects the strength of the judicial system and its essential role in supporting Navajo families and communities.

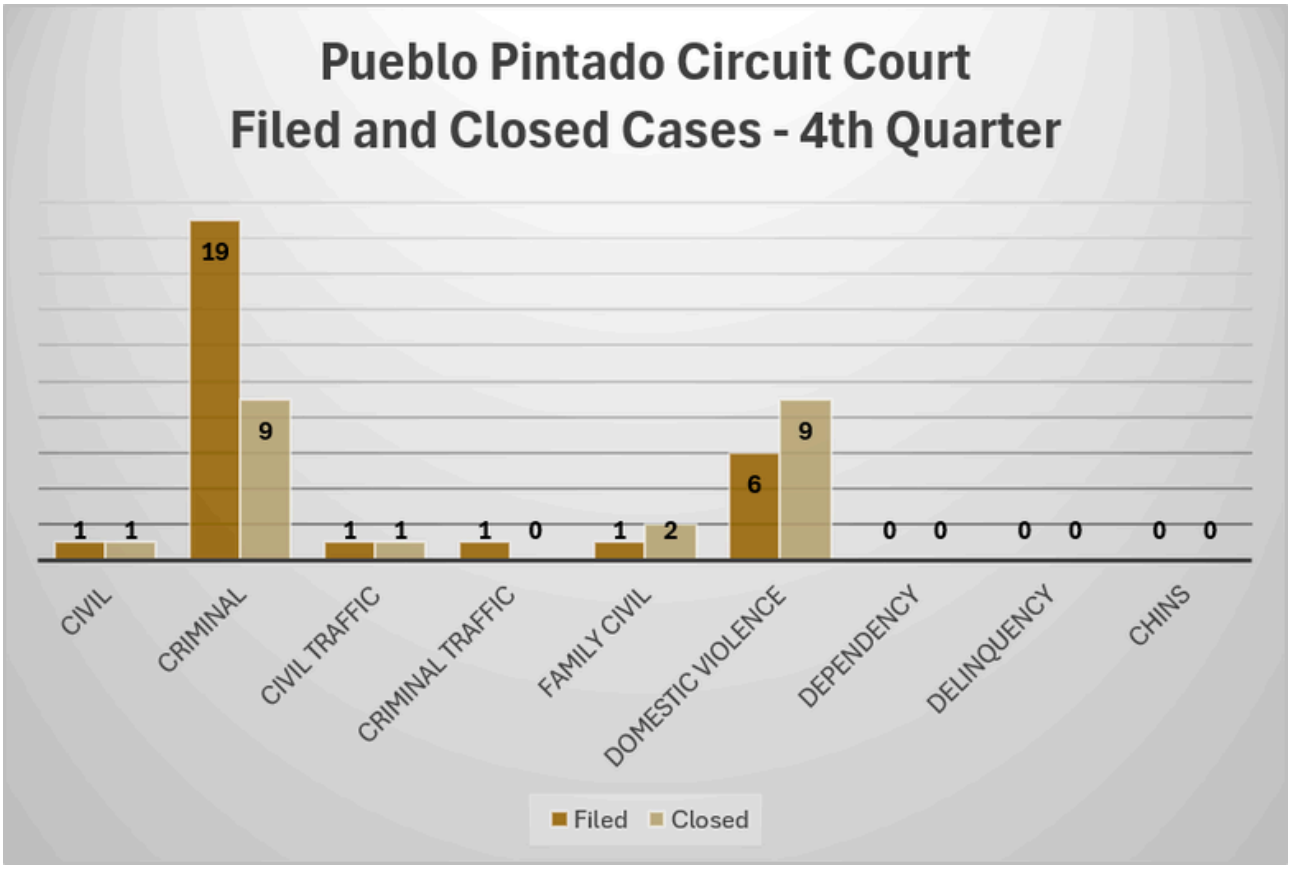
Case Management and Court Operations
Despite the continued closure of the Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court building this quarter, **12** court cases were successfully closed, reflecting steady progress in caseload management. The Judicial Hearing Officer also conducted in-person Domestic Violence hearings at the Crownpoint District Court building, resulting in the closure of **9** cases.

Facility and Staffing Challenges
Reopening the Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court building remains a challenge due to limited manpower, which continues to delay necessary repairs and the overall reopening of the facility. The building's phone landlines were also disconnected due to the closure, while recruitment efforts for circuit court clerks and district court judge positions remain ongoing, with applications accepted daily through Human Resources.

Case Processing and Financial Activity
During this quarter, the Circuit Court continued to process cases and new filings through the Crownpoint Judicial District Court, with support from Crownpoint District Court Clerks, the District Judge, and the Judicial Hearing Officer. The Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court collected no fines or fees this quarter.

Goals for the Upcoming Quarter
The primary objectives for the upcoming quarter are to reopen the Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court facility and fill vacant personnel positions. Continued focus will be placed on meeting Navajo Nation case-closure performance measures, staff recruitment and onboarding, installation of security camera systems, acquisition of updated courtroom equipment, and completion of mandatory staff training related to employee safety and court operations.

PUEBLO PINTADO CIRCUIT COURT



103

PENDING CASES

Pending cases highlight the active caseload managed by the courts and reflect the ongoing judicial process as hearings, filings, and orders move forward. Monitoring pending cases is important for understanding workload trends and ensuring timely resolution to better serve the people.

76%

CLEARANCE RATE

This quarter, the Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court received a total of 29 new case filings across civil, criminal, family, and domestic violence matters. The Court closed 22 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 76%.

Administrative Office of the Courts

At a Glance

The Judicial Branch's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) acts as the administrative arm of the Chief Justice, as the Chief Justice is the administrative head of the Judicial Branch but also serves as a Supreme Court jurist. The AOC's primary role is to provide administrative support for all Navajo Nation Judicial Districts, Peacemaking Program, and Probation and Parole Services.

Under the direction of the Chief Justice, AOC is the centralized support to ensure that the entire Judicial Branch operates smoothly by providing support in managing budgets, human resources, personnel, information technology, facilities maintenance, and construction/project management.

Human Resources

Human Resources supports Judicial Branch operations through recruitment, hiring, and workforce development. The unit actively advertises vacant positions through multiple platforms, including academic institutions, media outlets, professional organizations, and tribal networks, to attract qualified candidates and strengthen staffing across the Branch.

Fiscal Services

Fiscal Services provides comprehensive financial support to the Judicial Branch, including budget development, procurement coordination, contract processing, expenditure monitoring, and financial reporting. This unit ensures responsible stewardship of funds and supports operational continuity across all judicial districts and programs.

Information Technology

Information Technology (IT) supports daily court operations by maintaining case management systems, e-filing platforms, courtroom technology, network infrastructure, and secure user access. IT also supports remote and hybrid court operations, system upgrades, cybersecurity safeguards, and technical troubleshooting, ensuring reliable, secure, and efficient delivery of judicial services.

Facilities and Maintenance

Facilities and Maintenance oversees the construction, maintenance, and improvement of Judicial Branch facilities. Despite limited staffing, the unit completed maintenance and repair assessments for court buildings this quarter and will conduct assessments for Peacemaking and Probation and Parole Services facilities in the upcoming quarter, supporting safe, functional, and compliant work environments.

Human Resources

Human Resources at a Glance

The Judicial Branch Human Resources Unit supports the organization by recruiting, developing, and retaining a highly qualified workforce. The team partners with employees and leadership to provide responsive employee resource services that promote a respectful, professional, and productive workplace.

Key services supported:

- Training & Professional Development
- New Employee Onboarding
- Employee Relations
- Recruitment and Hiring
- Policy Advancement

From recruiting talented candidates to supporting employees throughout their careers, the Human Resources Unit is committed to delivering effective, employee-focused services that help the Judicial Branch achieve its mission.

Recruitment and Personnel Actions

Following the Acting Chief Justice's appointment in July, recruitment responsibilities were transferred to attorneys in the Office of the Chief Justice and Supreme Court, focusing on attorneys, judges, and justices. Current applications include two Chief Justice applications, three Associate Justice applications, and two District Court Judge applications, with varying levels of completion; during the quarter, HR processed 10 new hires, 5 introductory-to-regular status changes, 2 retirements, 4 resignations, and 1 termination.

Judicial Recruitment and Training

The Office of the Chief Justice is completing an internal administrative review of one probationary judge before submitting a written report to the Law and Order Committee for consideration of a public hearing. The Judicial Branch also conducted new-hire and employee training during the quarter covering Navajo Courts history, Navajo Fundamental Law, employee policies and conduct, customer service, fiscal procedures, Dayforce, leave and timesheet procedures, and employee benefits.

Policy Development and Dayforce Implementation

The HR Office continued developing policies, including Sick Leave Donation procedures and a Wellness Policy presented to the Judicial Conference in September. Dayforce was scheduled to go live October 1, 2026, with HR working closely with AXL, DPM, and other Navajo Nation programs to ensure the system accurately reflects Judicial Branch policies for payroll, benefits, timekeeping, leave, and deductions.

Human Resources Operations and Administrative Support

HR continued providing recruitment assistance, employee and supervisor support, employee relations guidance, timesheet processing, and administrative assistance to Judicial Branch leadership. The HR team also supported ERP implementation, developed a spend-down plan for older BIA grants, and assisted with the FY 2027 budget, including Form 3s, step increases, the vacancy pool, and bonus budget planning.

Fiscal Services

Fiscal at a Glance

The Judicial Branch Fiscal Unit provides comprehensive financial, budget, procurement, and fund management services that support the operations of the entire Judicial Branch. The team is committed to ensuring responsible stewardship of resources while delivering efficient, accurate, and accountable financial services.

Key services supported:

- Financial Management
- Budget Development & Administration
- Procurement Services
- Fund Management (including External Funds)

The Fiscal Unit works closely with judges, court administrators, office technicians, probation staff, peacemaking personnel, and Judicial Branch programs to provide timely financial guidance and support. Through collaboration, established fiscal practices, and efficient customer service, the team helps ensure that courts and programs have the resources they need to effectively serve the public.

FY 2027 Budget Development

This quarter, the Finance Team assisted in the development of the FY2027 Budget by conducting site visits and budget assessments at all 11 Judicial Districts, Peacemaking Program, and Probation and Parole Services. Court Administrators and Program Managers presented their proposed budgets to Chief Justice Shirley on June 2–3, 2026, allowing time for review, discussion, and budget adjustments.

Budget Presentation and Legislative Review

Chief Justice Shirley presented the Judicial Branch FY 2027 Budget to the Law & Order Committee on July 1–6, 2026, including an amendment to correct minor errors and update vacancy information. The approved allocation under Resolution BFAP-09-26 totals $16,365,207, including the General Fund, Probate Quiet Title, Indirect Cost, and Fixed Cost budgets, with additional presentations scheduled before the Budget & Finance Committee in July.

Financial Systems and Grant Administration

Finance has begun preparing the Judicial Branch's five-year Model 108 Agreement under the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) 93-638 Contract for FY 2027–2031, with the Scope of Work submitted for legal review. The transition from FMIS to the new Dynamics 365 Financial System remains on schedule, with FMIS continuing through October 1, 2026, and Dynamics 365 training to begin soon.

Operational Updates and Revenue

The Administrative Office of the Courts has successfully implemented its new Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phone system. During the third quarter of FY 2026, the Judicial Branch collected $122,348.98 in fines and fees, all of which were deposited into the Navajo Nation General Fund.

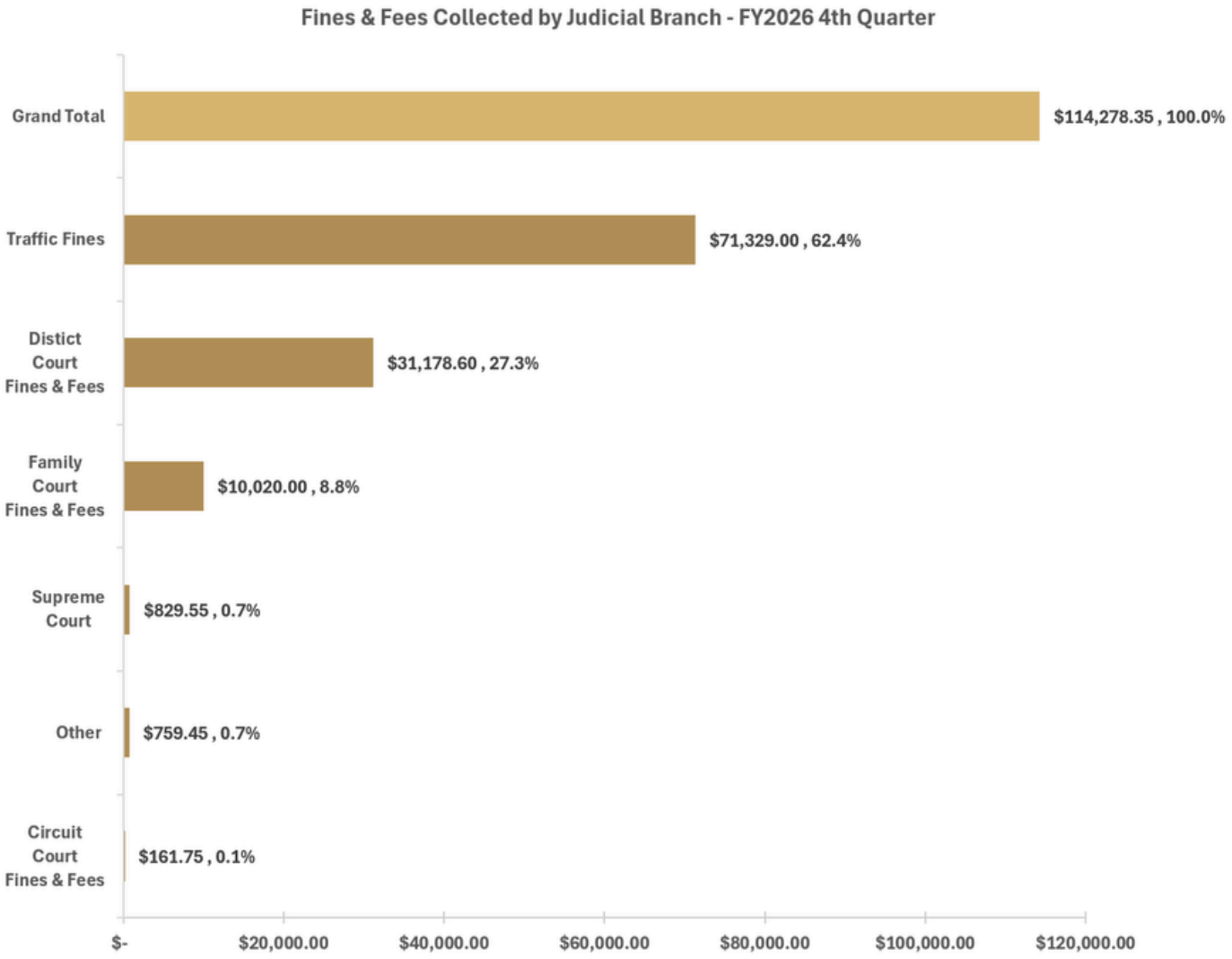
Fiscal Year-End

The Office of the Controller will soon begin the FY 2026 Year-End Closeout process. The Finance Unit will begin compiling and finalizing all budget transactions.

Fines and Fees

During the fourth quarter of FY 2026, the Judicial Branch collected a total of **$114,278.35** in fines and fees. All funds were deposited into the Navajo Nation General Fund.

These collections reflect the continued diligence and effective efforts of all judicial districts in carrying out their financial responsibilities.



Information Technology

Information Technology at a Glance

The Judicial Branch Information Technology (IT) Unit provides reliable technology solutions and technical support that enable courts and programs across the Judicial Branch to operate efficiently, securely, and effectively. The IT team is dedicated to maintaining the technology infrastructure that supports the administration of justice throughout the Navajo Nation.

Key services supported:

- Case Management Systems
- Network and Server Administration
- Computer Hardware & Software Support
- Cybersecurity and Data Protection
- Technology Training and User Support

The IT staff work closely with Judicial Branch staff to ensure secure access to critical systems, dependable technical support, and reliable technology services. Through collaboration and responsive service, the team helps strengthen court operations and supports the Judicial Branch's mission of delivering accessible and effective justice.

Previous Quarter Accomplishments

IT successfully fulfilled its primary objectives by providing comprehensive technical support to Judicial Branch District Courts and programs. Key accomplishments included network infrastructure installation at the new Self-Help Center, ongoing support for court communications and technology systems, Justware configuration and training, Hashkeeji funding proposal development, and participation in district court construction planning.

Continued Objectives and Activities

IT continues to provide responsive technical support while participating in key AOC operational, procurement, contracting, construction, and financial planning activities. The unit also contributed to the Berry Dunn Comprehensive e-File Assessment, completed new employee technology onboarding, fulfilled service requests, and provided IT updates for the Judicial Branch newsletter.

Objectives for Next Quarter

The unit will focus on preparing network infrastructure and fiber-optic connectivity for the new Kayenta District Court, maintaining accurate WASP inventory and funding information, and supporting the transition to updated laptops and docking stations for Judicial Branch employees. Additional priorities include completing IT service requests, RFP-related tasks, and Justware training and configuration support.

Conclusion

Judicial IT remains committed to providing reliable, secure, and efficient technology services that support the operational needs of the Judicial Branch. Moving forward, the unit will continue strengthening service delivery, infrastructure, cybersecurity, system accountability, and technology initiatives that improve the reliability and effectiveness of court operations.

Facilities and Maintenance

Facilities & Maintenance at a Glance
The Judicial Branch Facilities Unit is responsible for planning, developing, maintaining, and improving court facilities across the Districts. The team works to provide safe, functional, and sustainable environments that support the effective administration of justice.

Scope of Work:

- Planning and managing new construction projects
- Overseeing facility renovations and building improvements
- Infrastructure development and site improvements
- Building code, safety, and regulatory compliance
- Supporting long-term sustainability of Judicial Branch facilities

Through their diligent work, Facilities and Maintenance strengthens the foundation of the Judicial Branch, creating safe, modern, and accessible spaces that ensure justice services can continue to grow and serve future generations.

Judicial Complex Construction Projects
The Kayenta Judicial Complex is ongoing with exterior and interior construction, including the installation of underground sewer, water, and other utilities, with overall construction progress at 85%. The Window Rock Peacemaking Building Judicial Complex will begin construction in Spring 2027 with design progress at 90%.

Judicial Complex Design and Development Projects
The Aneth Judicial Complex is proceeding as a design-build project, with design expected to be completed by the end of the year and construction began in September; overall design progress is at 90% and groundwork is at 5%. The Ramah Judicial Complex is currently in the design phase at 35%, with design expected to be completed by next summer and construction pending funding. Window Rock Judicial Court Master site planning and design is currently at 75% complete. It is pending additional funds for design and construction.

Administrative and Facility Improvement Projects
The AOC Central Warehouse has received design-build funding for future design and construction, with procurement to begin, design expected to be completed end of winter, and construction anticipated thereafter. The Shiprock District Judicial Court Master Site Plan construction documents are 100% complete with funds identified, pending project kick-off, while the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch Self-Help Building tenant improvement project is ongoing with renovation progress at 98%.

Maintenance and Annual Winterization Project
The Construction and Facility Maintenance Department will begin scheduling the Annual Winterization Project on Monday, October 12, 2026, transitioning district and program facilities from cooling to heating. Maintenance will set thermostats to heating, replace batteries and return-air filters, and thoroughly clean heating sources.

Key Terms from prior quarterly reports

Case Backlog
A case that has been pending in the court for more than one calendar year. During the annual case certification process, each court does a manual count of all cases to identify which cases have been filed and not disposed of within a calendar year time period. This count does not include cases filed during the current calendar year.

Case Management System (CMS)
The court's internal system used to store, manage, and track case information and documents.

Clearance Rate
The ratio of outgoing cases (disposed) to incoming cases (filed) over a period of time, expressed as a percentage. A rate of 100% or higher indicates the court is keeping up with its caseload.

Continuance
A postponement of a scheduled court hearing or proceeding to a later date, often contributing to case delays or backlog.

Court Caseload
The total number of cases that the court is handling within a specific time period. It includes both newly filed cases and backlog cases, and can be used to measure workload, staff needs, and the efficiency of the judicial system.

Disposition
The final resolution of a case, including outcomes such as dismissal, judgment, settlement, plea, or other court action that closes the case.

Docket
The official schedule or list of cases set for hearing before the court, including all pending matters assigned to a judge on a given day or time period.

E-File System / E-Filing Platform
The online application used to upload, submit, track, and manage court filings, including notifications and electronic payment of filing fees.

E-Filing (Electronic Filing)
The secure, court-approved process of submitting legal documents to a court through an online portal rather than in person, by mail, fax, or email.

Key Terms from prior quarterly reports continued

Electronic Confirmation / Receipt
An automated notice showing that a filing has been successfully submitted or accepted by the court.

Filer
A person or party who submits documents to the court through the e-filing system.

Infographics
Visual tools that present information or data in a clear and easy-to-understand format using graphics, charts, icons, and concise text. They are used to educate the public about court services, legal processes, and judicial programs.

Legal Information
General facts, resources, and educational materials about laws, court procedures, and available services. It is intended to help individuals understand the legal system but does not recommend specific actions or interpret how the law applies to a person's situation.

Legal Advice
Guidance provided by licensed legal counsel that applies the law to an individual's specific facts or circumstances and recommends a particular course of action. Legal advice establishes an attorney-client relationship only under appropriate legal and ethical standards and cannot be provided by court personnel or Judicial Navigators.

Pending Cases
A court case is one that has been filed but is not yet disposed of, meaning it is still open and active until a final judgment is reached. This includes cases filed in the calendar year and backlog cases.

Pro Bono Clinic
An event where Navajo Nation Bar members volunteer their time to provide free legal services to individuals who qualify based on established eligibility criteria. Services may include legal advice and document preparation.

Pro Se Clinic
An event designed to assist individuals who choose to represent themselves in court without an attorney. The clinic provides guidance on court procedures, forms, and filing requirements but does not provide legal advice or representation.

Key Terms from prior quarterly reports continued

Pro Se Litigant
An individual who represents themselves in court without the assistance of an attorney. Pro se litigants are responsible for preparing and submitting their own legal documents and navigating court procedures.

Stat Dashboard
An interactive display of judicial data and performance metrics that provides users with access to statistical information, trends, and reports. It supports transparency, informed decision-making, and monitoring of court operations.

System Integration
The automated connection between the e-filing platform and the case management system that allows accepted filings to be recorded without manual data entry.

FISCAL YEAR 2026
FOURTH QUARTER REPORT



JULY 1, 2026 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

OCTOBER 19, 2026