



# King County

Department of Judicial Administration

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*Director and Superior Court Clerk*

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## King County Superior Court

# 2023 Annual Statistical Report

Department of Judicial Administration

January 31, 2024

Report #: YR-2023

**Seattle:**  
516 Third Avenue Room E609  
Seattle, WA 98104-2386

**Regional Justice Center:**  
401 Fourth Avenue North Room 2C  
Kent, WA 98032-4429

**Juvenile Division:**  
1211 East Alder Room 3015  
Seattle, WA 98122-5598

## 2023 Highlights

### **The coronavirus pandemic still has residue impact on the 2023 statistics.**

- **Filings** (Table 1). The total number of cases filed in 2023 was 10% higher than that in 2022 (+10.2%). In 2023, the filing volume (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) was 54,636 cases. Total judicial filings (after excluding “Matters Filed with Clerk”) increased by 10.7% from 2022 (+10.7%), totaling 49,172 cases. Filings were the highest since the COVID pandemic, but still lower than the pre-COVID level. When compared with 2022, notable increases in 2023 filings occurred in civil (up 25.2%), and juvenile offense cases (up 44.6%). The increase in civil cases was primarily due to the resumed filing in unlawful detainer and the rise in civil protection petitions. Filing in juvenile offense cases has shown a significant uptick in the last two years. The court received twice as many of juvenile offense cases in 2023 than in 2021 (723 cases in 2023 vs. 356 cases in 2021).
- **Resolutions** (Table 2). The overall resolution volume was the highest since 2019, but still lower than the pre-COVID level. The total resolutions (including “Matters Filed with Clerk”) in 2023 were 52,016 cases, almost 9% higher than 2022 (+8.7%). In 2023, the court resolved more cases than 2022 in the following major case categories: criminal (+14.5%), civil (+19.3%), and juvenile offense (+79.9%). However, the disposition volume in 2023 was 2,620 cases lower than the filings received in the same year in 2023. The court resolved fewer cases than the number of cases received in 2023 in both civil and domestic. Conversely, criminal dispositions exceeded the criminal filings in 2023.
- **Pending Caseload** (Table 3). The overall pending caseload at the end of 2023 was 21,865 cases, showing an increase of 1,770 cases from the end of 2022 (+8.8%). When compared to 2022 notable increases in pending caseload include: civil up 18.2%, domestic up 2.9%, probate up 13.3%, guardianship up 10.6%. paternity up 11.9%, and ITA up 18.1%. On the other hand, the pending caseloads decreased in the following case categories: criminal down 8.8%, adoption down 8.5%, dependency down 22.2%, and termination down 48.3%. Criminal pending continued to decrease due to a combination of higher disposition volume and a lower filing volume in 2023. It is the first time that the criminal pending caseload was under 4,000 cases since the COVID pandemic. Even with the decrease in 2023, the criminal pending caseload is still significantly higher than the pre-COVID level. Most importantly, a significant portion of the pending criminal cases are charged with serious crimes in homicides, sex crimes, burglary 1<sup>st</sup> degree, and assaults (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree).
- **Trials**. The court had more trials in 2023 than 2022, totaling 913 trials (241 jury trials and 672 non-jury trials) in 2023. The court had 17 more jury trials and 78 more non-jury trials when compared to 2022.
- **MRJC vs. SEA** (Table 4). Of the total 54,636 cases (including Matters filed with the Clerk) filed in 2023, 34% were MRJC cases. The MRJC also shared 34% of total resolutions in KCSC in 2023. In 2023, the MRJC accounted for 36%, 42%, and 39% of total criminal, civil and domestic case filings, respectively. At the end of 2023, the MRJC had 37% of the entire court’s pending caseload, 37% of the total active criminal cases, 35% of the total pending civil cases, and 39% of the total pending domestic cases.

Table 1. Annual Filings

Category	Annual Filings										2023-2022
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change
Criminal	6,213	6,237	6,632	6,441	5,989	6,607	5,877	4,658	4,956	4,896	-1.2%
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	21,418	21,217	21,222	21,517	22,217	21,202	15,352	13,624	15,794	19,776	+25.2%
Domestic	7,921	7,559	7,512	7,597	7,640	7,280	6,163	6,184	5,999	6,369	+6.2%
Probate	5,920	6,022	6,073	6,418	6,382	6,804	6,766	7,478	7,747	7,565	-2.3%
Guardianship	928	969	1,008	949	977	706	725	1,057	958	1,021	+6.6%
Adoption	470	460	458	546	445	483	431	347	363	318	-12.4%
Parentage	702	650	528	539	512	526	340	401	347	333	-4.0%
Involuntary Treatment Act	3,852	4,004	4,152	4,694	4,910	4,985	5,131	5,159	5,665	5,541	-2.2%
Juvenile Dependency	940	848	727	793	788	811	435	361	377	302	-19.9%
Juvenile Termination	321	214	219	304	344	225	291	205	188	168	-10.6%
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	285	217	247	245	292	206	187	251	301	479	+59.1%
Juvenile Truancy	1,233	1,369	1,222	1,547	1,925	1,706	501	61	1,121	1,560	+39.2%
Juvenile Offender	1,802	1,649	1,295	1,324	1,229	1,121	788	356	500	723	+44.6%
Criminal RALJ	172	180	111	136	117	146	63	49	53	58	+9.4%
Civil RALJ	47	57	66	65	68	81	53	58	55	63	+14.5%
<b>Total Judicial Filings</b>	<b>52,224</b>	<b>51,652</b>	<b>51,472</b>	<b>53,115</b>	<b>53,835</b>	<b>52,889</b>	<b>43,103</b>	<b>40,249</b>	<b>44,424</b>	<b>49,172</b>	<b>+10.7%</b>
Civil Matters Filed with the Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	12,240	9,581	8,742	10,903	9,036	10,030	2,784	2,882	5,169	5,464	+5.7%
<b>Total Annual Filings</b>	<b>64,464</b>	<b>61,233</b>	<b>60,214</b>	<b>64,018</b>	<b>62,871</b>	<b>62,919</b>	<b>45,887</b>	<b>43,131</b>	<b>49,593</b>	<b>54,636</b>	<b>+10.2%</b>
Post-disposition Modifications (domestic/parentage) <sup>(2)</sup>	1,943	1,844	1,890	1,916	1,766	752	575	622	565	519	

- (1) “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk” consists of those civil cases that require no or little judicial resources. This category includes the following cause codes of civil actions: Abstract of Judgment, Foreign Judgment, Tax Warrant, and Transcript of Judgment.
- (2) Prior to 2019, the numbers included both “parenting” and “support only” modifications. Since 2019, only the “parenting” modifications are included.

Table 2. Annual Resolutions

Category	Annual Resolutions										2023-2022
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change
Criminal	6,002	6,413	5,915	6,162	5,780	5,788	4,085	5,639	4,727	5,413	+14.5%
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	22,551	22,066	21,230	21,544	21,399	21,389	14,765	14,509	15,167	18,096	+19.3%
Domestic	7,861	7,885	7,479	7,564	7,696	7,295	5,998	6,224	6,145	6,060	-1.4%
Probate	5,842	5,874	5,948	6,182	6,134	6,764	6,417	7,078	7,394	7,310	-1.1%
Guardianship	948	910	988	906	915	656	668	803	907	937	+3.3%
Adoption	486	466	472	525	419	472	354	337	358	326	-8.9%
Parentage	861	642	573	542	539	511	333	376	375	302	-19.5%
Involuntary Treatment Act	3,836	4,015	4,178	4,632	4,672	4,980	4,986	4,817	5,924	5,406	-8.7%
Juvenile Dependency	976	716	888	753	708	688	498	398	322	316	-1.9%
Juvenile Termination	227	243	265	234	299	187	170	284	172	231	+34.3%
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	272	222	286	239	230	183	192	261	260	465	+78.8%
Juvenile Truancy	813	948	1,385	1,535	1,300	1,632	1,769	588	429	881	+105.4%
Juvenile Offender	1,616	1,533	1,401	1,179	1,252	1,034	831	624	399	718	+79.9%
Criminal RALJ	161	173	159	128	127	134	136	76	51	46	-9.8%
Civil RALJ	57	51	67	58	71	67	60	68	57	45	-21.1%
<b>Total Judicial Resolutions</b>	<b>52,509</b>	<b>52,157</b>	<b>51,234</b>	<b>52,183</b>	<b>51,541</b>	<b>51,780</b>	<b>41,262</b>	<b>42,082</b>	<b>42,687</b>	<b>46,552</b>	<b>+9.1%</b>
Civil Matters Filed with the Clerk <sup>(1)</sup>	12,240	9,581	8,737	10,905	9,027	10,032	2,780	2,883	5,171	5,464	+5.7%
<b>Total Annual Resolutions</b>	<b>64,749</b>	<b>61,738</b>	<b>59,971</b>	<b>63,088</b>	<b>60,568</b>	<b>61,812</b>	<b>44,042</b>	<b>44,965</b>	<b>47,858</b>	<b>52,016</b>	<b>+8.7%</b>

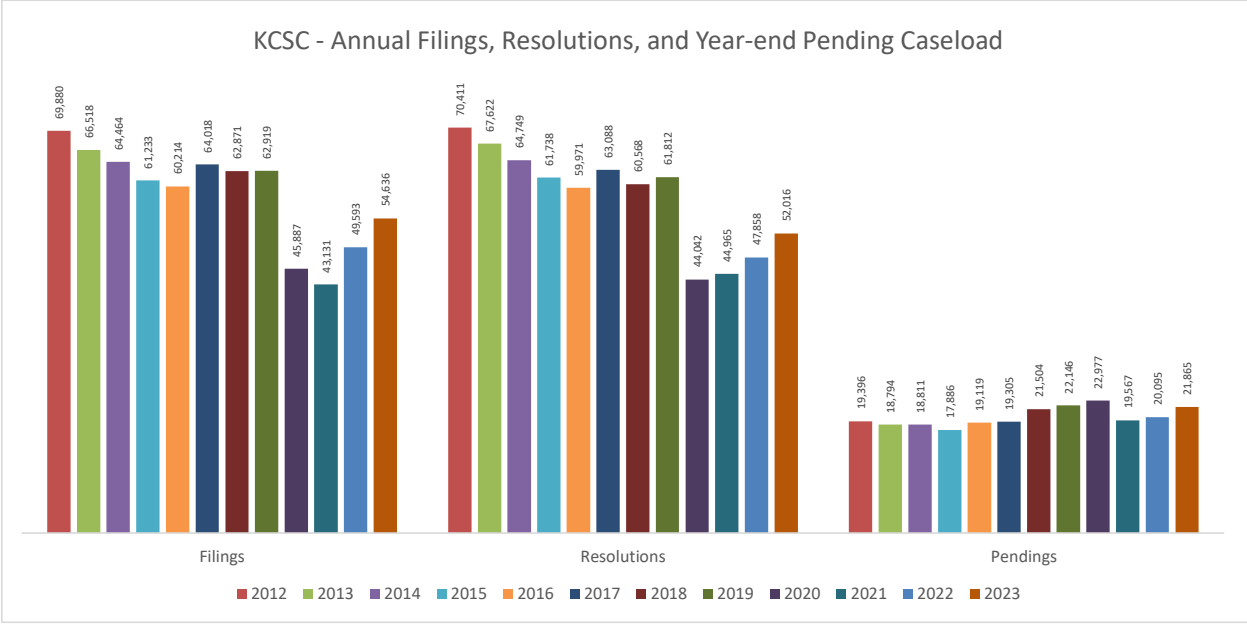
- (1) “Civil Matters Filed with Clerk” consists of those civil cases that require no or little judicial resources. This category includes the following cause codes of civil actions: Abstract of Judgment, Foreign Judgment, Tax Warrant, and Transcript of Judgment.

Table 3. Year-end Pending Caseload

Category	Year-end Pending Caseload										2023-2022
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change
Criminal	2,866	2,619	3,193	3,172	3,150	3,564	6,083	4,849	4,298	3,919	-8.8%
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	7,148	6,747	7,798	7,203	8,243	8,576	7,778	6,234	6,799	8,034	+18.2%
Domestic	4,579	4,234	4,337	4,366	4,381	4,384	4,445	4,317	4,281	4,404	+2.9%
Probate	908	580	684	909	1,146	690	1,023	1,339	1,388	1,572	+13.3%
Guardianship	301	311	329	376	409	235	290	505	489	541	+10.6%
Adoption	149	147	135	155	174	184	258	260	259	237	-8.5%
Parentage	300	310	253	245	225	251	248	255	226	253	+11.9%
Involuntary Treatment Act	121	90	60	126	283	288	321	535	282	333	+18.1%
Juvenile Dependency	414	474	300	357	434	647	467	241	279	217	-22.2%
Juvenile Termination	225	164	128	196	244	277	382	248	265	137	-48.3%
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	119	111	86	102	146	100	169	120	158	143	-9.5%
Juvenile Truancy	821	1,329	1,237	1,421	2,041	2,112	832	307	999	1,677	+67.9%
Juvenile Offender	677	581	441	504	464	647	572	286	301	302	+0.3%
Criminal RALJ	155	156	107	132	126	140	66	40	42	55	+31.0%
Civil RALJ	28	33	31	41	38	51	43	31	29	41	+41.4%
<b>Year-end Total Pending Caseload</b>	<b>18,811</b>	<b>17,886</b>	<b>19,119</b>	<b>19,305</b>	<b>21,504</b>	<b>22,146</b>	<b>22,977</b>	<b>19,567</b>	<b>20,095</b>	<b>21,865</b>	<b>+8.8%</b>

Table 4. Statistics by Location (SEA vs. MRJC)

Category	2023 Filings			2023 Resolutions			2023 Year-end Pending Caseload		
	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)	MRJC (%)	SEA (%)	Total (n)
Criminal	36%	64%	4,896	38%	62%	5,413	37%	63%	3,919
Civil (excluding RALJ and Matters Filed with Clerk)	42%	58%	19,776	42%	58%	18,096	35%	65%	8,034
Domestic	39%	61%	6,369	39%	61%	6,060	39%	61%	4,404
Probate	29%	71%	7,565	29%	71%	7,310	29%	71%	1,572
Guardianship	46%	54%	1,021	46%	54%	937	42%	58%	541
Adoption	24%	76%	318	23%	77%	326	33%	67%	237
Parentage	55%	45%	333	54%	46%	302	63%	37%	253
Involuntary Treatment Act	---	100%	5,541	--	100%	5,406	--	100%	333
Juvenile Dependency	33%	67%	302	37%	63%	316	32%	68%	217
Juvenile Termination	23%	77%	168	34%	66%	231	19%	81%	137
Juvenile At-Risk Youth/Child in-need of Service /Others	44%	56%	479	47%	53%	465	36%	64%	143
Juvenile Truancy	67%	33%	1,560	70%	30%	881	63%	37%	1,677
Juvenile Offender	---	100%	723	--	100%	718	--	100%	302
Criminal RALJ	24%	76%	58	33%	67%	46	27%	73%	55
Civil RALJ	16%	84%	63	22%	78%	45	12%	88%	41
<b>Total Judicial Cases</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>49,172</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>46,552</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>21,865</b>
Civil Matters Filed with the Clerk	34%	66%	5,464	34%	66%	5,464			
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>54,636</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>52,016</b>			



# Appendix Definition

## **Active Status**

A case is active if it is not on suspense status (see Suspense Status).

## **Adoption and Parentage Cases (case type 5)**

ADP - Adoption  
CFI - Confidential Intermediary  
CHN - Confidential Change of Name  
DIP - Disestablishment of Parentage  
MDS - Modification/Support Only  
MOD - Modification  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
OAA - Open Adoption Agreement  
PAD - De Facto Parentage  
PAG - Pre Birth Establish Parentage Genetic  
PAS - Establish Parentage Gestational Surrogacy  
PAT - Parentage  
PPR - Initial Pre Placement Report  
PRC - Parentage Rescission/Challenge  
PUR - Parentage (URES/UIFA)  
REL - Relinquishment  
ROB - Relocation Objection  
TER - Termination of Parental Rights

## **Case**

A case is defined as a filing with an assigned case number.

## **Civil Cases (case type 2, no RALJ)**

ALR - Administrative Law Review  
ALRLI - L&I Administrative Law Review  
AOD - Assurance of Discontinuance  
ASB - Asbestos  
ASP - Asbestos Personal Injury  
ASW - Asbestos Wrongful Death  
BAT - Petition to Appeal/Amend Ballot Title  
CAA - Motion to Confirm/Compel Arbitration Award  
CFJ - Petition for Order Granting Judgment on Confession of Judgment  
CHN - Non Confidential Change of Name  
COL - Collection  
COM - Commercial  
CON - Condemnation  
CRP - Certificate of Restoration of Opportunity  
CRR - Petition for Certificate of Rehabilitation  
DOL - Appeal Licensing Revocation  
DSF - Notice of Deposit of Surplus Funds from Trustee's Sale of Real Property  
DVP - Domestic Violence  
ECP - Enforcement of Canadian Protection Order  
EOM - Emancipation of Minor  
FOR - Foreclosure  
FPO - Foreign Protection Order  
FVL - Motion to Show Cause /Fruivolous Lien  
HAR - Unlawful Harassment  
HSI - Application for Health & Safety Inspection  
INJ - Injunction  
IPL - Complaint for Interpleader  
LUP - Land Use Petition  
MAL - Other Malpractice  
MED - Medical Malpractice  
MER - Meretricious Relationships  
MHA - Malicious Harassment  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
MST - Minor Settlement  
MWP - Minor Work Permit  
NJF - Non Judicial Filing  
OSS - Petition to Issue Out of State Subpoena  
PBC - Petition for Birth Certificate Change  
PBJ - Petition for Justification /Bail Bond Company  
PCC - Petition for Civil Commitment

PFA - Property Fairness Act  
PIN - Personal Injury  
PPT - Petition for Perpetuation of Testimony  
PRA - Public Records Act  
PRG - Property Damage /Gangs  
PRP - Property Damage  
PVO - Petition for Vehicle Ownership  
QTI - Quiet Title  
RCV - Petition to Appoint Receiver  
RDR - Relief from Duty to Register  
RFR - Restoration of Firearms Rights  
RRC - Remove Restricted Covenant  
SCA - Small Claims Appeal  
SDR - School District /Required Action Plan  
SER - Subdivision Election Process Law Review  
SPC - Seizure of Property From Commission of a Crime  
SPR - Seizure of Property Resulting From a Crime  
STK - Stalking Protection  
SXP - Sexual Assault Protection  
TMV - Tort /Motor Vehicle  
TSS - Petition for Approval of Transfer of Structured Settlement  
TTO - Tort /Other  
UND - Unlawful Detainer  
VAP - Vulnerable Adult Protection Order  
VEP - Voter Election Process Law Review  
VVT - Victims of Motor Vehicle Theft /Civil Action  
WDE - Wrongful Death  
WHC - Writ of Habeas Corpus  
WMW - Miscellaneous Writs  
WRM - Writ of Mandamus  
WRR - Writ of Restitution  
WRV - Writ of Review  
XRP - Extreme Risk Protection Order

## **Civil Matters Filed with Clerk (case type 2)**

ABJ - Abstract of Judgment  
FJU - Foreign Judgment  
TAX - Tax Warrants  
TRJ - Transcript of Judgment

## **Civil RALJ Cases (case type 2)**

LCA - Lower Court Appeal /Civil  
LCI - Lower Court Appeal /Infractions

## **Completion**

A case is completed if dispositive document is filed with the court following resolution.

## **Criminal Cases (case type 1, no RALJ)**

Adult criminal cases, excluding appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction. This reporting category includes the following crime categories within SCOMIS case type 1:

Homicide  
Sex Crime  
Robbery  
Assault  
Theft/Burglary  
Motor Vehicle Theft  
Controlled Substance  
Others

## **Criminal RALJ Cases (case type 1)**

CRJ - Criminal RALJ

### ***Domestic Cases (case type 3)***

CIR - Committed Intimate Relationship  
CUS - Child Custody  
DIC - Dissolution w/ Children  
DIN - Dissolution no Children  
DIS - Dissolution  
DPC - Dissolution of Domestic Partnership w/ Children  
DPN - Dissolution of Domestic Partnership /No Children  
FJU - Out of State Support Registration /Foreign Judgment  
INC - Annulment /Inv of Marriage w/ Children  
IND - Annulment /Inv of Domestic Partnership w/ Children  
INP - Invalidity, Domestic Partnership  
INV - Annulment /Invalidity  
MDS - Modification/Support Only  
MOD - Modification  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
MWA - Mandatory Wage Assignment  
OSC - Out of State Custody  
PPS - Parenting Plan / Child Support  
PSO - Petition for Entry of KC Support Order  
RCV - Relative Child Visitation  
RIC - Reciprocal, Resp in County  
ROB - Relocation /Objection  
ROC - Reciprocal, Resp out of County  
RVC - Relative Child Visits  
SDC - Legal Separation, Domestic Partnership w/ Children  
SEC - Legal Separation w/ Children  
SEP - Legal Separation  
SPD - Legal Separation, Domestic Partnership /No Children  
TSS - Structured Settlement

### ***Jury Trial***

A hearing is reported as a jury trial if the jury is impaneled.

### ***Juvenile BECCA Cases (case type 7)***

ARY - At Risk Youth  
CNS - Child In Need Of Services  
DDP - Developmental Disability  
DGN - Dependency Guardianship  
EFC - Extended Foster Care, Dependency  
GFC - Guardianship Foster Children  
RPR - Reinstatement of Parental Rights  
RVS - Relative Visitation  
TRU - Truancy  
VYG - Vulnerable Youth Guardianship

### ***Juvenile Dependency Cases (case type 7)***

DEP – Dependency  
TER - Termination of Parental Rights

### ***Juvenile Offender Cases (case type 8)***

Homicide  
Sex Crime  
Robbery  
Assault  
Theft/Burglary  
Motor Vehicle Theft  
Controlled Substance  
Others

### ***Involuntary Treatment Act Cases (case type 6)***

Alcoholic Treatment (ALT)  
ITA - Adult (MI)  
ITA - Family (MIF)  
ITA - Juvenile (MIJ)

### ***Non-Jury Trial***

A hearing is reported as a non-jury trial if an opening statement is made, waived, or reserved.

### ***Pending Case***

A case is defined as pending if it is unresolved and active (not in suspense).

### ***Post-disposition Modifications***

Petition to modify parenting plan after the resolution of the original case, based on the modification schedule.

### ***Probate and Guardianship Cases (case type 5)***

ABS - Absentee  
AOS - Affidavit of Successor  
ASE - Affidavit of Small Estate  
DSC - Disclaimer  
EST - Estate  
FNW - Foreign Will  
G/E - Guardianship/Estate  
GDE - Guardianship of the Estate  
GDN - Guardianship  
GDP - Guardianship of the Person  
LGD - Limited Guardianship  
LGE - Limited Guardianship of the Estate  
LGP - Limited Guardianship of the Person  
MGD - Minor Guardianship  
MSC - Miscellaneous  
MST - Minor Settlement  
NJB - Non Judicial Binding/TEDRA Agreement  
NNC - Non Probate Notice to Creditor  
POA - Petition for Relief (RCW 11.94) /Power of Attorney  
RGR - Registration of Guardianship  
RTR - Registration of Trust /Trust Situs  
SNT - Special Needs Trust  
TDR - Trust/Estate Dispute Resolution  
TRS - Trust  
WLL - Will Only

### ***Resolution***

A case is resolved if all issues in the complaint are fully adjudicated.

### ***Suspended Case***

A case is placed in suspense status from active status during the reporting period.

### ***Suspense Status***

A case is on suspense status if it is on warrant, appeal, stay, mediation, arbitration (“Deferred Prosecution” is not a suspense status, but is treated as a resolution).

### ***Trial***

A hearing set before a judge or jury in which all the issues in the case are meant to be resolved. A trial normally includes opening statements to the court or jury stating what evidence will show, introduction of witnesses and exhibits for direct and cross examination, final arguments to the court or jury in which counsel argue both the evidence and the law, and judgment by the court or jury stating what the facts of the case are and what law applies to the facts. In a jury case, it also includes the selection of the jury. A trial can be held for one or more cases. A single trial may be held to adjudicate more than one case (as defined above).