

Juvenile Caseloads

A comparison of incoming juvenile caseloads across states is made possible by calculating the number of incoming cases per 100,000 juveniles in the state

population. The table below presents the number of juvenile cases in 41 states, displayed in order of the highest to lowest number of per capita incoming cases.

Incoming Juvenile Caseloads and Rates in 41 States, 2005

State	Cases	Per 100,000 Juveniles	Population Rank
North Dakota*	11,234	7,058	49
Ohio	177,917	6,110	7
Georgia	136,361	5,672	9
Utah	45,095	5,671	32
Virginia	95,379	5,124	12
Arkansas	35,789	5,070	35
Alabama	54,937	4,764	24
South Dakota*	9,757	4,692	47
Nevada	27,998	4,529	36
Florida	182,376	4,496	4
Minnesota*	57,424	4,270	21
Kentucky	43,198	4,208	27
Rhode Island	10,610	4,177	44
Hawaii	12,663	4,070	43
New Jersey	86,296	3,991	10
Connecticut*	32,960	3,801	30
Idaho	14,382	3,531	39
District of Columbia*	3,751	3,390	52
Massachusetts	45,916	3,041	16
Washington	44,738	2,769	14
Kansas*	19,934	2,741	34
Michigan	66,683	2,524	8
Louisiana	30,793	2,493	22
Nebraska	11,456	2,477	38
Pennsylvania**	71,251	2,409	6
Maryland	34,280	2,391	19
New York	107,714	2,265	3
West Virginia	8,874	2,190	40
Oregon	19,662	2,186	29
North Carolina	44,308	2,091	11
Iowa*	14,756	1,982	33
Missouri*	28,126	1,902	17
Colorado	22,609	1,893	23
Wisconsin*	22,091	1,565	20
Vermont	2,347	1,557	50
New Mexico	8,289	1,535	37
Maine	4,759	1,526	42
Arizona	23,006	1,456	15
California*	134,726	1,366	1
Montana	3,059	1,282	45
Illinois*	36,290	1,089	5
Median		2,741	

States in **boldface** reported reopened and/or reactivated caseloads.

* These states have unified court systems.

** Data from Pennsylvania are preliminary figures provided by the PA AOC.

CSP Resource

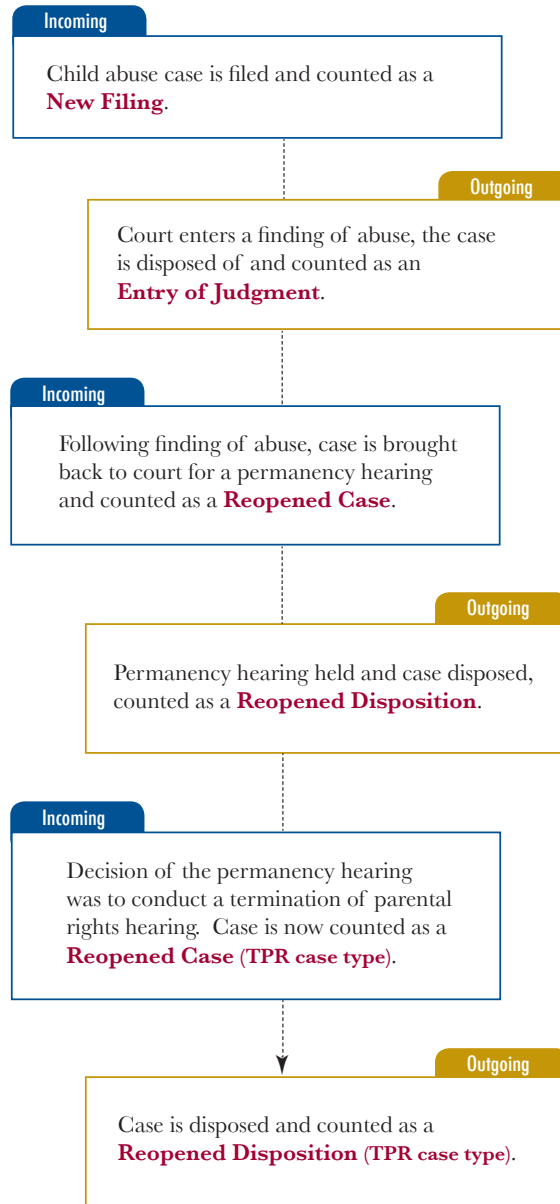
CSP
Court Statistics Project

National Center for State Courts
State Court Structure Charts



The number of newly filed juvenile cases alone does not provide an accurate picture of the workload sustained by courts with juvenile jurisdiction. As an example, dependency cases involving a single child may be opened and disposed several times before the matter that initiated the

court case is fully resolved. The hypothetical case scenario below illustrates the potential complexity of juvenile dependency cases. It would ultimately be reported as three incoming and three outgoing cases for the court in which it was processed.



Reopened and reactivated cases comprised an aggregate 33 percent of the incoming caseload in the 10 states able to distinguish and report a complete incoming caseload for 2005. Inclusion of reopened and reactivated cases provides for a more

accurate assessment of the true quantity of juvenile caseloads. Courts that cannot report these types of incoming cases may be understating their caseload and hence their workload.

Incoming Juvenile Caseloads in 10 States, 2005

State	New Filings	+	Reopened/Reactivated	=	Incoming	Percent Reopened/Reactivated
New York	49,995		57,719		107,714	54%
Florida	91,849		90,527		182,376	50
Arkansas	22,510		13,279		35,789	37
Ohio	125,908		52,009		177,917	29
California*	100,295		34,431		134,726	26
New Mexico	6,360		1,929		8,289	23
Illinois*	28,519		7,771		36,290	21
New Jersey	71,378		14,918		86,296	17
North Dakota*	9,375		1,859		11,234	17
Michigan	64,569		2,114		66,683	3
Total	570,758		276,556		847,314	33

* These states have unified court systems.

Tip

Some of the cases currently counted as "reopened" or "reactivated" may actually be cases that are set for periodic review subsequent to an entry of judgment. Cases that are *scheduled* to return to the court's docket subsequent to an entry of judgment are to be captured in a new status category called "set for review" in Version 2.0 (forthcoming 2007) of the *Guide*.



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Measure 2:
Clearance Rates

Clearance rates provide insight into the efficiency of a court's case processing and are calculated by dividing the number of outgoing cases by the number of incoming cases. A clearance rate above 100 percent indicates that the court resolved more cases than were incoming during a given reporting

period. States that regularly experience a clearance rate of less than 100 percent likely add to their pending caseload and risk creating a backlog. Of the 31 states that reported complete incoming and outgoing data for 2005, nine states had a clearance rate over 100 percent.

Juvenile Caseload Clearance Rates in 31 States, 2005

State	Clearance Rate
Idaho	111%
North Carolina	108
Hawaii	105
Vermont	103
New York	102
Utah	102
Virginia	102
New Jersey	102
Wisconsin*	101
District of Columbia*	99
New Mexico	99
South Dakota*	99
Michigan	99
Ohio	99
Oregon	98
Washington	98
Minnesota*	97
Pennsylvania**	97
Arkansas	96
Alabama	95
West Virginia	95
Kansas*	95
Arizona	90
Illinois*	90
Montana	90
Rhode Island	90
Missouri*	89
Georgia	88
New Hampshire	88
Maryland	87
California*	83

* These states have unified court systems.

** Data from Pennsylvania are preliminary figures provided by the PA AOC.

When clearance rates are examined by case subcategory, courts can identify targets of opportunity for improvement of caseload management. Only two states, Utah and Vermont, reported a clearance rate of 100 percent or more for all three juvenile subcategories.

Sixteen states provided data for juvenile cases pending at the beginning and at the end of the 2005 reporting period. The second table below illustrates that those states with less than a 100 percent clearance rate also had increases in their pending caseloads

Juvenile Clearance Rates in 12 States, by Case Subcategory, 2005

State	Total Juvenile	Delinquency	Dependency	Status Offense
Vermont	103%	102%	101%	112%
Utah	102	103	101	102
North Carolina	108	108	118	75
New York	102	96	103	111
New Mexico	99	101	79	100
Ohio	99	99	98	100
Washington	98	101	91	97
Minnesota*	97	99	94	98
Pennsylvania**	97	96	100	84
Arkansas	96	96	93	95
Missouri*	89	71	99	68
Georgia	88	93	81	86

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Pending Juvenile Caseloads in 16 States, 2005

State	Total Juvenile Caseload				Clearance Rate	Change in Pending Caseloads	
	Begin Pending	Incoming	Outgoing	End Pending		Cases	Percent
Decreased Pending Caseload							
Idaho	7,299	14,382	15,901	5,780	111%	-1,519	-21%
Hawaii	5,611	12,663	13,256	5,018	105	-593	-11
Vermont	1,071	2,347	2,413	997	103	-74	-7
New York	30,663	107,714	110,310	26,930	102	-3,733	-12
New Jersey	24,098	86,296	87,962	22,432	102	-1,666	-7
Increased Pending Caseload							
District of Columbia*	4,429	3,751	3,723	4,457	99	28	1
Michigan	16,034	66,683	65,950	16,767	99	733	5
New Mexico	5,398	8,289	8,219	5,449	99	51	1
Ohio	29,428	177,917	175,928	31,417	99	1,989	7
Oregon	11,245	19,662	19,341	11,566	98	321	3
Pennsylvania**	38,126	71,251	68,813	40,564	97	2,438	6
Arkansas	8,723	35,789	34,422	10,090	96	1,367	16
Arizona	21,983	23,006	20,809	23,719	90	1,736	8
Illinois*	38,046	36,290	32,662	41,674	90	3,628	10
Missouri*	15,267	28,126	24,924	18,469	89	3,202	21
New Hampshire	9,706	8,966	7,847	10,825	88	1,119	12

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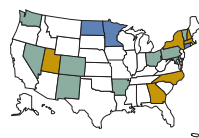
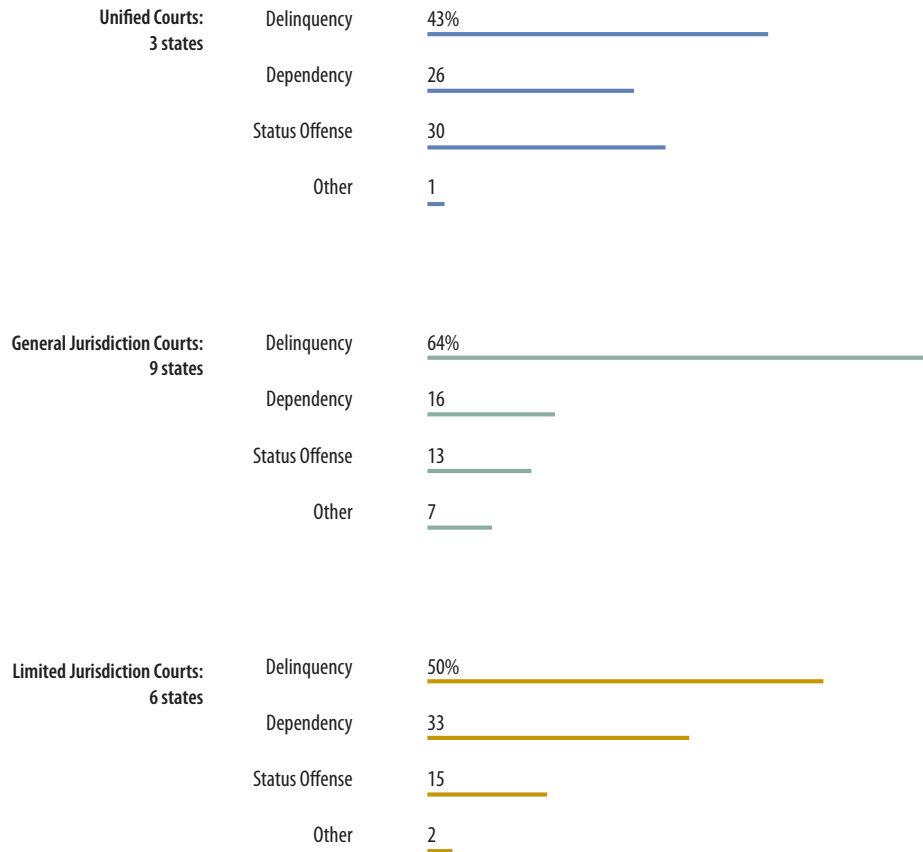


ranging from relatively insignificant (1 percent) to substantial (21 percent). Conversely, those states with a clearance rate greater than 100 percent showed decreases in their pending caseloads.

For court statistics purposes, the juvenile caseload is divided into three main subcategories (delinquency, dependency, and status offenses) as well as a residual "other" category. A delinquency case is filed when an individual under the age of majority in a given state is apprehended for committing

a criminal act. A status offense case is filed when a juvenile commits an act that is only considered a crime due to the age of the perpetrator (e.g., truancy). A dependency case results from a parent or guardian harming, or failing to properly supervise, a juvenile (e.g., abuse or neglect). Delinquency cases were the most prevalent in each of the 18 states that reported complete data for all three subcategories. The high percentage of status offense cases in unified courts is influenced by Minnesota's atypical inclusion of petty theft cases within that caseload.

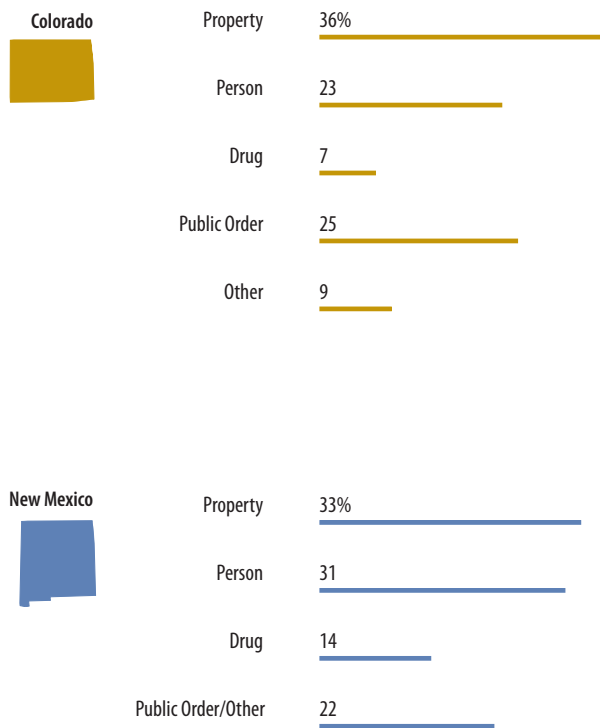
Incoming Juvenile Caseload Composition in 18 States, by Jurisdiction, 2005



Delinquency caseloads are further divided into five case types: property, person, drug, public order, and a residual "other" delinquency. Colorado reported the number of new filings for each of the case types within the delinquency subcategory. The neighboring state of New Mexico reported data for property, person, and drug cases but could not distinguish public order cases from other delinquency cases.

Property and drug offenses were the most and least common cases, respectively, in the delinquency caseloads of these two states. Despite these similarities, if Colorado's "other" delinquency cases are added to its public order caseload to make its composition more comparable to that of New Mexico, the combined caseload in Colorado (34 percent) becomes second only to property in that state and is greater than the proportion of property cases in New Mexico.

Juvenile Delinquency Caseload Composition in Colorado and New Mexico, 2005



Dependency cases are composed of four case types: abuse, neglect, dependent (no fault), and termination of parental rights (TPR). North Carolina was the only state to report the number of new filings for each of the four case types within the dependency subcategory. Nearly half of

North Carolina's juvenile caseload involved child neglect cases and over one-quarter were dependent (no fault) cases. However, until more states can report this level of detail, the extent to which these proportions are typical will remain unknown.

Juvenile Dependency Caseload Composition in North Carolina, 2005

