

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)



MAINE JUDICIAL BRANCH



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION: To administer justice by providing a safe, accessible, efficient, and impartial system of dispute resolution that serves the public interest, protects individual rights, and instills respect for the law.

MAINE STATE COURTS: AT A GLANCE



POPULATION OF MAINE.....	1,405,012
GEOGRAPHIC AREA.....	30,843 sq. mi.
COURT LOCATIONS.....	31

Judicial Branch Operations..... \$99,994,699

Personal Services.....	\$65,483,190
All Other Operational Expenses.....	\$34,511,509
Debt Service.....	\$16,022,859
Guardians ad Litem and Psychological Exams	\$12,116,558
Maine Civil Legal Services Fund.....	\$1,300,000

FY25 EXPENDITURES TOTAL: \$117,317,577**% of State General Fund:..... 2.1%****FY25 REVENUE TOTAL: \$23,513,407**

Deposited to Maine's General Fund.....	\$13,901,184
Deposited to Revenue Accounts.....	\$9,612,223

JUDICIAL OFFICERS & STAFF TOTAL: 622

Staff totals are as of June 30, 2025.

JUDGES (Total).....	69
District Court Judges.....	44
Superior Court Justices.....	18
Supreme Judicial Court Justices.....	7

***FAMILY LAW MAGISTRATES..... 8**

STAFF.....	545
Administration.....	26
Clerks.....	254
Court Operations.....	17
Court Reporters/Tech Asst.....	14
Executive Assistants.....	2
Finance, HR, Facilities.....	23
Information Technology.....	29
Judicial Admins.....	12
Law Clerks.....	26
Security.....	119
Service Center.....	23

*Magistrates: one-third General Fund, two-thirds federally funded.

FY25 CASES FILED TOTAL: 142,868

Violations Bureau.....	64,334
Unified Criminal Docket.....	40,539
District Court.....	34,689
Superior Court.....	2,624
Supreme Judicial Court.....	682

2025 In Review

From the beginning of her term, Chief Justice Valerie Stanfill emphasized the importance of ensuring that the Maine Judicial Branch (MJB), as the third co-equal branch of government, have adequate resources to fulfill the court's mission of providing fair and timely access to justice to all. The ability to meet the mission depends on three key components: (1) sufficient staffing, (2) reliable and secure technology infrastructure, and (3) safe and accessible courthouses. While the MJB continues to advocate for appropriate resources, Chief Justice Stanfill has encouraged out-of-the box thinking to address the challenges faced by our court system and those who seek justice. The MJB has made great strides in 2025 towards meeting our goals.

Increased Resources to Support Operations

Judicial Branch employees are the backbone of the court system and made up 56% of the court's general fund expenditures in FY2025. It should be no surprise that "right-sizing" the Branch remains our number one priority. Additional judicial positions, clerks, marshals, and support staff received in prior years have helped, but more are needed. The chronic understaffing of the court system was affirmed in an independent study by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) which makes plain that the Judicial Branch does not have enough personnel to efficiently handle the workload.

Progress on Reducing Case Backlogs

Despite understaffing, the Judicial Branch continues to address pending case backlogs that accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most non-criminal case types returned to pre-pandemic levels, but two areas are still affected by backlogs: criminal cases and original action family matters cases.

Innovative Approaches to Streamline Operations

Additional resources are only part of the equation, however. The Judicial Branch is seeking innovative and data-driven approaches to streamline operations. For example, the addition of more centralized services has diverted some of the workload, allowing frontline personnel to focus on the needs of people at the courthouse. In spring 2025, the MJB hosted a summit on criminal process with justice partners from Maine and New England with the assistance of the NCSC and a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. In January 2026, a project began to pilot ways to streamline criminal court processes at the Penobscot Judicial Center.

Addressing the Justice Gap

The MJB continues to work to address the shortage of counsel

Continued on next page

THE COURTS OF MAINE

SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT



From Left to Right: Justice Wayne R. Douglas, Justice Catherine R. Connors, Justice Andrew M. Mead, Chief Justice Valerie Stanfill, Justice Andrew M. Horton, Justice Rick E. Lawrence, and Justice Julia M. Lipez

CHIEF JUSTICE & TRIAL CHIEFS



From Left to Right: Deputy Chief Judge of the District Court Eric Walker, Chief Judge of the District Court Brent Davis, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court Valerie Stanfill, and Chief Justice of the Superior Court Robert Mullen

STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR



Amy A. Quinlan, Esq.

Year in Review — Continued

and the unmet legal need (the “Justice Gap”). This gap leaves many without the ability to navigate the justice system and undermines confidence in the judicial process. Recent changes by the Supreme Judicial Court to Bar Admission Rules have made it easier for attorneys to be admitted to practice. Chief Justice Stanfill’s key work with the Committee on Legal Education and Admissions Reforms (CLEAR), comprised of chief justices and state court administrators nationwide, looked at ways to address the challenges of a changing legal landscape. In July 2025, the Committee released a series of recommendations to improve the practice readiness of new lawyers, reform bar admissions processes to better meet public needs, support public service attorneys, and encourage practice in rural areas experiencing a critical shortage of attorneys.

Civics Outreach — Improving Public Trust and Confidence

Building and maintaining public trust and confidence is integral to the court’s core responsibility of resolving disputes. Civics education remains an important component of the overall strategy. The Judicial Branch has continued its outreach efforts with Maine schools to help students learn how justice is administered and to bring awareness of the various career opportunities that exist within the Branch. The Maine Supreme Judicial Court heard oral arguments at three Maine high schools in October 2025 in Falmouth, Wales, and Bingham, giving students a chance to witness the appellate process firsthand. High school students from around the state visited courts to watch trial court proceedings, tour a courthouse, and visit with jurists about how a court docket is administered. The Judicial Branch hosted students in Portland, Augusta, and Bangor for programs about various career opportunities within the state court system. The MJB continues to welcome school and community groups into our courthouses.

Continued on page 5

TOTAL FY25 COURT CASE FILINGS: 142,868

CRIMINAL FILINGS: 37,456

Unified Criminal Docket (UCD)	34,394
Probation Revocations (UCD).....	3,032
Superior Court Probation Revocations	30

DISTRICT COURT FAMILY DIVISION: 17,322

Protection from Abuse	5,403
Divorce	4,274
Family Matters Post-Judgment	3,341
Parental Rights & Responsibilities	1,410
Juvenile	1,033
Child Protection.....	862
Adoptions	512
Guardianships	129
Emancipations.....	107
Foreign Judgments	101
Other Family Matters	91
Grandparents’ Rights	47
Name Changes	12

CIVIL FILINGS: 15,828

	<u>SUPERIOR</u>	<u>DISTRICT</u>
FEDs (Evictions)		4,392
Small Claims		2,075
Money Judgments		647
Other Civil	1,146	503
Tort	714	95
Foreclosure	398	636
Contract	336	4,886
TOTAL(S):	2,594	13,234

OTHER COURT ACTIONS: 7,246

Civil Violations (UCD)	3,113
Protection from Harassment (District Court).....	2,777
Mental Health (District Court)	1,356

SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT

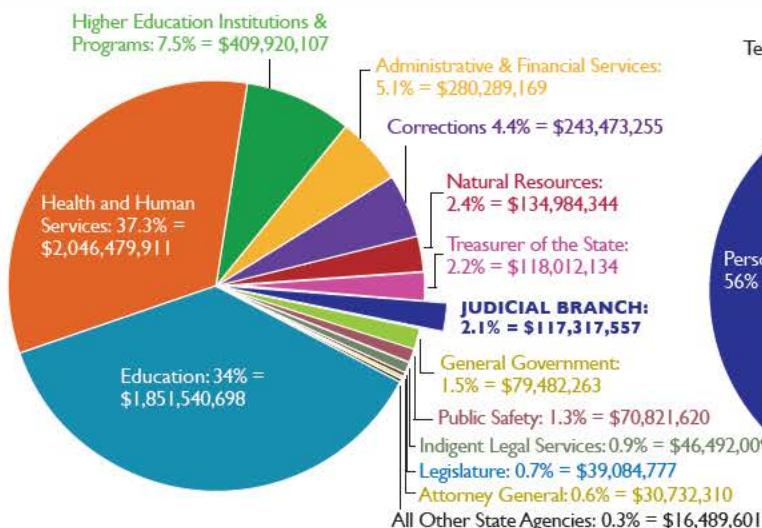
Supreme Judicial Court	682
------------------------------	-----

VIOLATIONS BUREAU

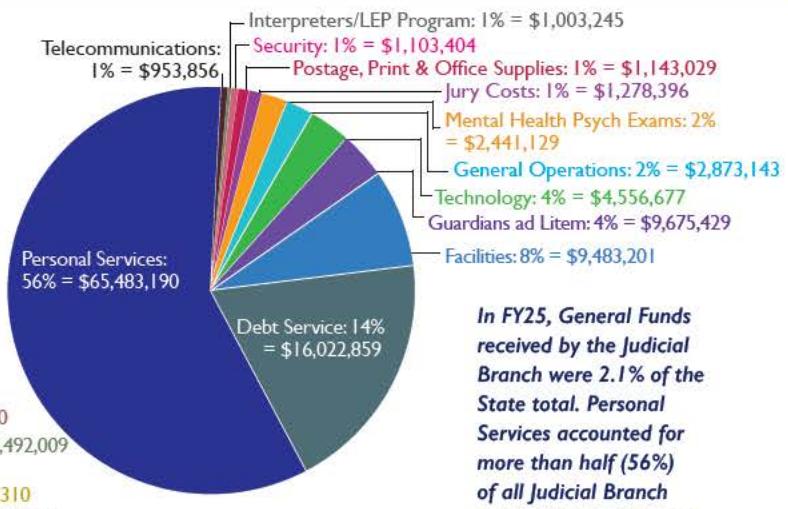
Traffic Infractions	64,334
---------------------------	--------

FISCAL INFORMATION – FY25

GENERAL FUND AND JUDICIAL BRANCH EXPENDITURES



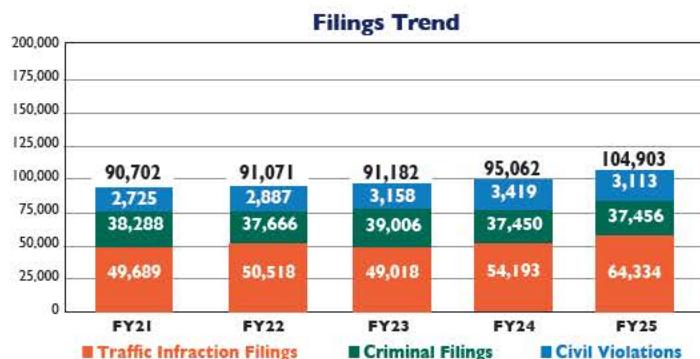
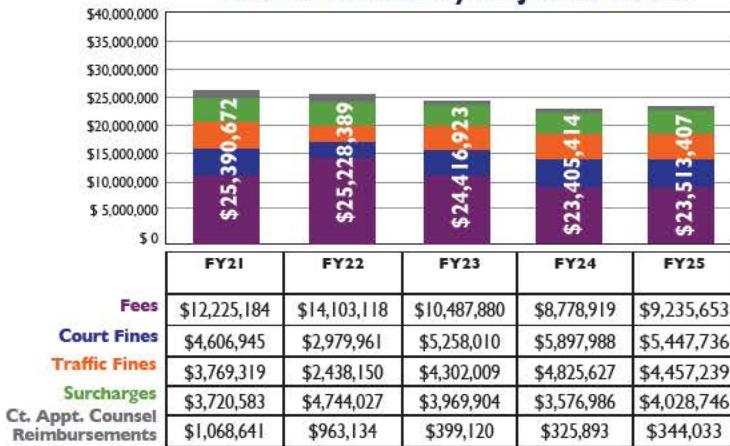
**STATEWIDE GENERAL FUND
FY25 EXPENDITURES**
Total: \$5,485,119,752



In FY25, General Funds received by the Judicial Branch were 2.1% of the State total. Personal Services accounted for more than half (56%) of all Judicial Branch expenditures. The total includes 1.3M that is passed through to Civil Legal Services. This pass through is not reflected in the expenditures pie chart.

FY25 REVENUE

Revenue Collected by the Judicial Branch

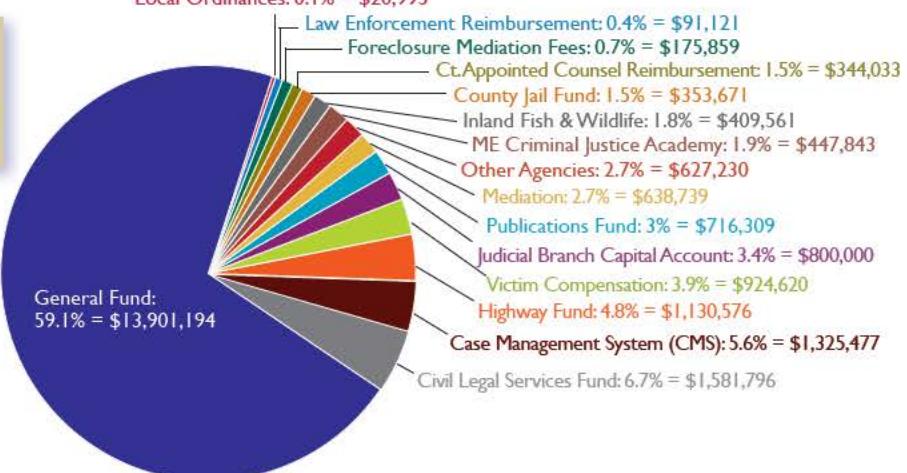


REVENUE DISTRIBUTED BY THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

FY25 Revenue Distribution
Total: \$ 23,513,407

Deposited to Maine's General Fund.....\$13,901,194
Deposited to Dedicated Revenue Accounts.....\$9,612,213

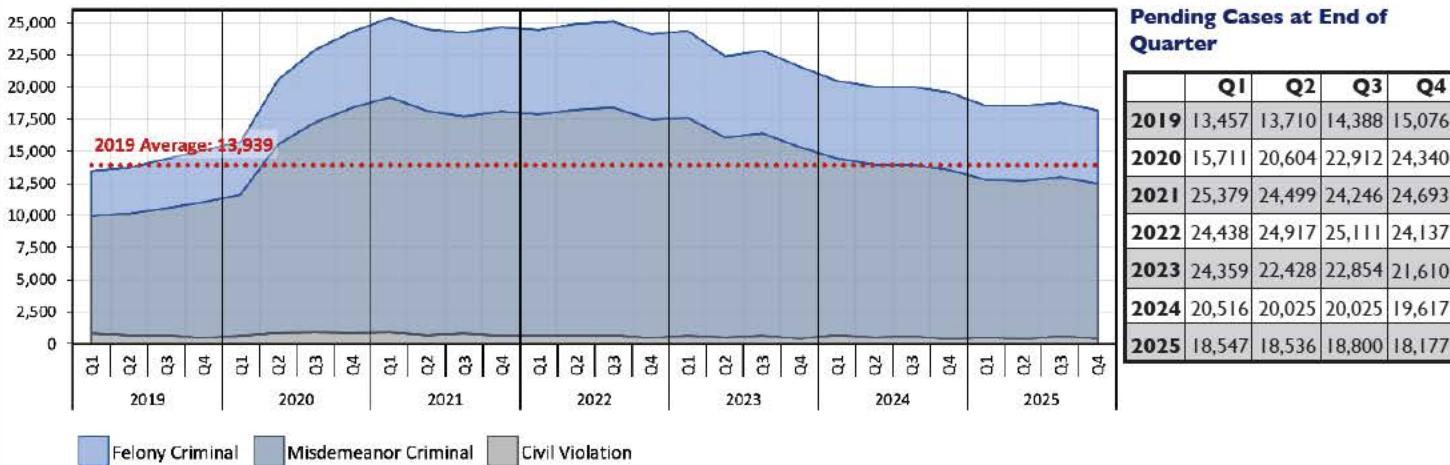
Revenue collected by the Judicial Branch is deposited into the State's General Fund and to other State-dedicated accounts as required by Maine Statutes.



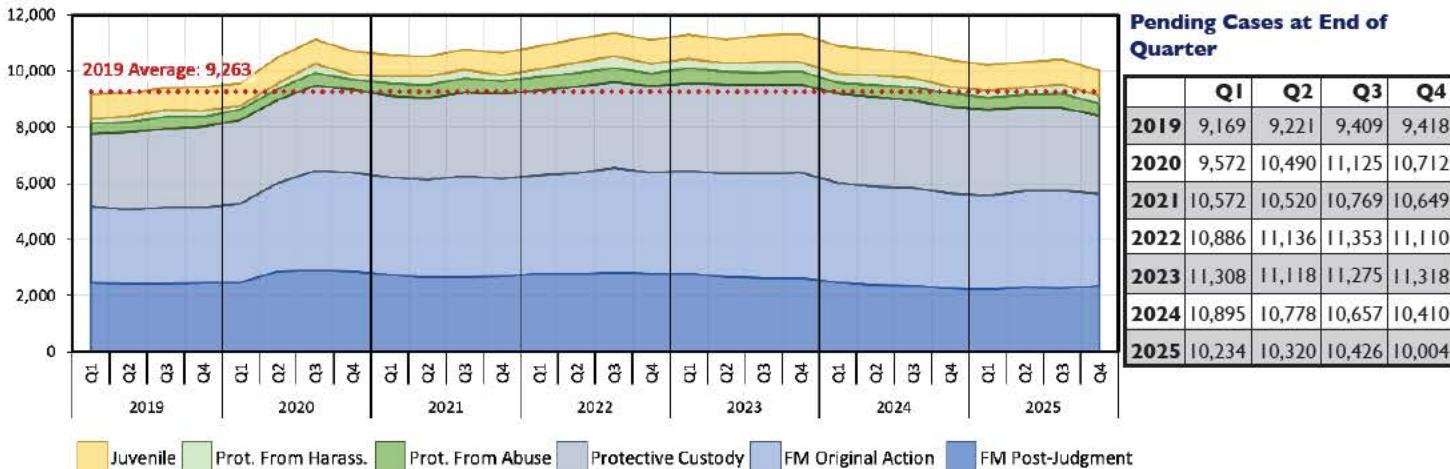
PENDING CASE BACKLOG

Criminal and some types of family matters cases continued to be affected by pandemic-related backlogs. There was some improvement to family matters caseloads in 2025, but pending family cases remained around 8% higher than the 2019 average. The criminal caseload represents the largest caseload (not including traffic tickets) and suffered some of the most severe backlogs. At the peak of delays in early 2021, the number of pending criminal cases was 82% higher than the average number of pending cases in 2019. The courts have made significant progress since then. Still, the statewide number of pending criminal cases remains around 30% higher than the 2019 average. This backlog varies from region to region, and some areas of the state have been able to return their criminal caseloads to pre-pandemic levels. Much of the remaining increase involves complex felony cases and cases awaiting trial.

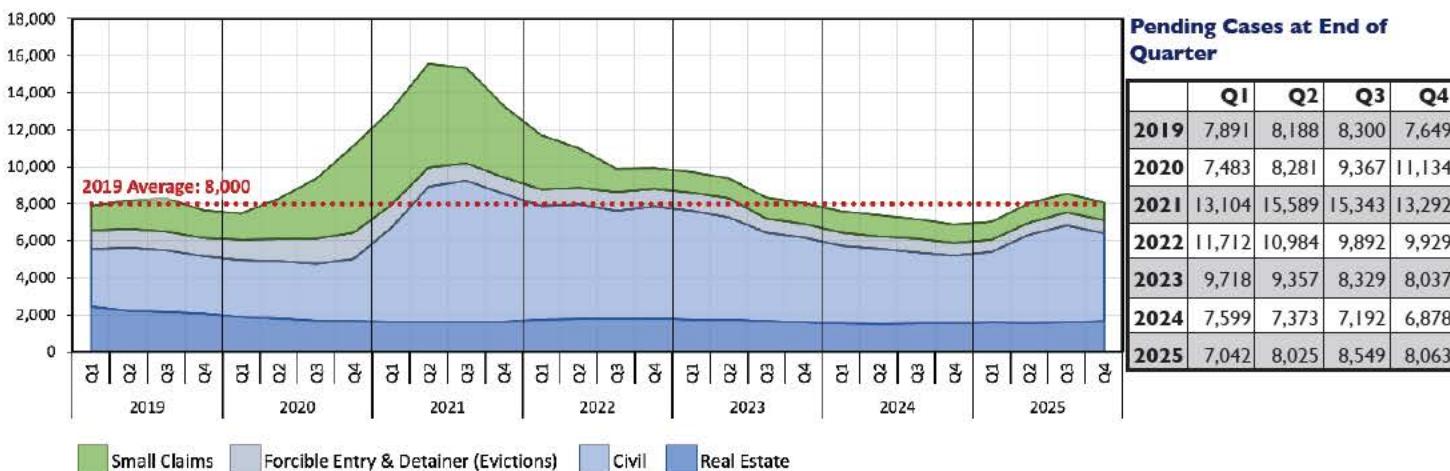
PENDING UNIFIED CRIMINAL DOCKET CASES 2019 - 2025



PENDING FAMILY MATTERS CASES 2019 - 2025



PENDING CIVIL CASES 2019 - 2025



Year in Review — Continued

Maine eCourts and eFiling Live for All Case Types

The court's technology infrastructure is an important tool in bridging the justice gap, transforming court operations from a traditional, in-person, paper-based system to a more accessible digital platform. The Judicial Branch's new electronic eFiling and case management system (Maine eCourts) is on track to roll out all case types to all trial courts by the end of 2026. In early 2025, the Judicial Branch eCourts project team completed the configuration of Maine eCourts for criminal and juvenile cases in Lewiston and Auburn courts and developed robust training for court personnel and attorneys using the system. Criminal and juvenile cases require close coordination and collaboration with the Maine Attorney General, district attorneys, public defenders, and private attorneys to enable a smooth transition from conventional filing to eFiling. The team also worked closely with the Department of Public Safety to synchronize the posting of warrants, bail conditions, and protection orders.

Maine eCourts launched in June for criminal and juvenile cases in the Androscoggin Superior and Lewiston District Courts, followed by Rumford, Farmington, and South Paris courts in September. These five courts now use Maine eCourts for all active cases. In addition, courts can now text reminders about court dates to criminal defendants who have a cellphone number on file with the court, with the goal of reducing failure-to-appear rates.

Replacement of Outdated Technology

The Judicial Branch received much-needed funding from the Legislature to update critical courtroom technology and replace outdated systems. Zoom carts cobbled together during the global pandemic are being replaced with modern Neat Bar technology to bring better audio and video communication to remote hearings. Thanks to the increased investment in technology, work is underway to update the court's aging recording system (For The Record or FTR). FTR is the system that creates the official court record and transcript.

Update on New Courthouse Facilities

The Judicial Branch continues the decades-long effort to address the lack of suitable facilities statewide. Intensive planning has begun for three new courthouses in Hancock, Somerset, and Androscoggin Counties. Once completed, these new facilities will provide the public and court staff with safe and dignified spaces to address the important matters that come before the court and greatly increase the efficiency of operations.

The Hancock Judicial Center is a new courthouse construction project. It will house both the Superior Court and District Court for Hancock County and the consolidated court clerk's office for both courts. With the assistance of the City of Ellsworth, the Judicial Branch selected a site off High Street behind the LL Bean Outlet and Merrill Furniture. North Peak Architecture, of Lyman, Maine, has been selected as the architect. The Judicial Branch is on track to break ground on the site in late spring or early summer 2026.

The Judicial Branch will add on to the current building housing the Skowhegan District Court at 47 Court Street. The expansion will consolidate operations and courtrooms for both the district and superior courts into one building. WBRC Architects of Bangor/Portland has been selected as the architect firm. The architects are working on schematics for the project, with full schematics review by Judicial Branch representatives planned for February 2026. Project construction is expected to begin in fall 2026.

The Judicial Branch has hired Harriman of Auburn as the architect for the new Androscoggin Judicial Center. The AJC will house both the Lewiston District Court and Androscoggin Superior Court and will be an addition to the District Court building on Lisbon Street in Lewiston. The architects expect a 15- to 18-month design time to create construction documents to combine the current District Court building and the building adjacent to it (the former Depositors Trust/KeyBank building). The Judicial Branch expects to begin construction on this facility in 2027.



Architect rendering of the new Hancock Judicial Center.



Architect rendering of the new Somerset Judicial Center, consolidating Skowhegan District Court and Somerset County Superior Court into one building.

COURT REGIONS AND CASES FILED

REGION 5

CASE TOTAL 11,799
REGIONAL POPULATION 174,272
COURT LOCATIONS 5

PENOBCOT 3,397 sq. miles/pop. 156,840
 Bangor Superior 218
 Penobscot UCD 5,695
 Bangor District 3,389
 Newport District 873
 Lincoln/Millinocket District 555

PISCATAQUIS 3,961 sq. miles/pop. 17,432
 Dover-Foxcroft Superior 23
 Piscataquis UCD 612
 Dover-Foxcroft District 434

REGION 4

CASE TOTAL 11,507
REGIONAL POPULATION 179,799
COURT LOCATIONS 3

SOMERSET 3,924 sq. miles/pop. 51,338
 Skowhegan Superior 66
 Somerset UCD 1,898
 Skowhegan District 1,541

KENNEBEC 868 sq. miles/pop. 128,461
 Augusta Superior 296
 Kennebec UCD 3,677
 Augusta District 2,279
 Waterville District 1,750

REGION 3
CASE TOTAL 12,480
REGIONAL POPULATION 206,213
COURT LOCATIONS 5

FRANKLIN 1,697 sq. miles/pop. 30,902
 Farmington Superior 29
 Franklin UCD 875
 Farmington District 760

OXFORD 2,077 sq. miles/pop. 60,039
 South Paris Superior 102
 Oxford UCD 1,798
 South Paris District 672
 Rumford District 571

ANDROSCOGGIN 468 sq. miles/pop. 115,272
 Auburn Superior 241
 Androscoggin UCD 3,694
 Lewiston District 3,738

REGION 2
CASE TOTAL 13,496
REGIONAL POPULATION 313,809
COURT LOCATIONS 2

CUMBERLAND 835 sq. miles/pop. 313,809
 Portland Superior 670
 Cumberland UCD 7,460
 Portland District 4,494
 Bridgton District 872

REGION 1
CASE TOTAL 10,680
REGIONAL POPULATION 220,143
COURT LOCATIONS 1

YORK 991 sq. miles/pop. 220,143
 Biddeford Superior 374
 York UCD 5,409
 Biddeford District 4,897

REGION 8

CASE TOTAL 4,506
REGIONAL POPULATION 66,776
COURT LOCATIONS 5

AROOSTOOK 6,671 sq. miles/pop. 66,776
 Caribou/Houlton Superior 184
 Aroostook UCD 2,519
 Caribou District 402
 Presque Isle District 609
 Houlton District 467
 Fort Kent/Madawaska District 325

REGION 7
CASE TOTAL 4,721
REGIONAL POPULATION 88,329
COURT LOCATIONS 3

HANCOCK 1,587 sq. miles/pop. 56,946
 Ellsworth Superior 81
 Hancock UCD 1,441
 Ellsworth District 1,231

WASHINGTON 2,563 sq. miles/pop. 31,383
 Machias Superior 53
 Washington UCD 1,146
 Machias District 475
 Calais District 294

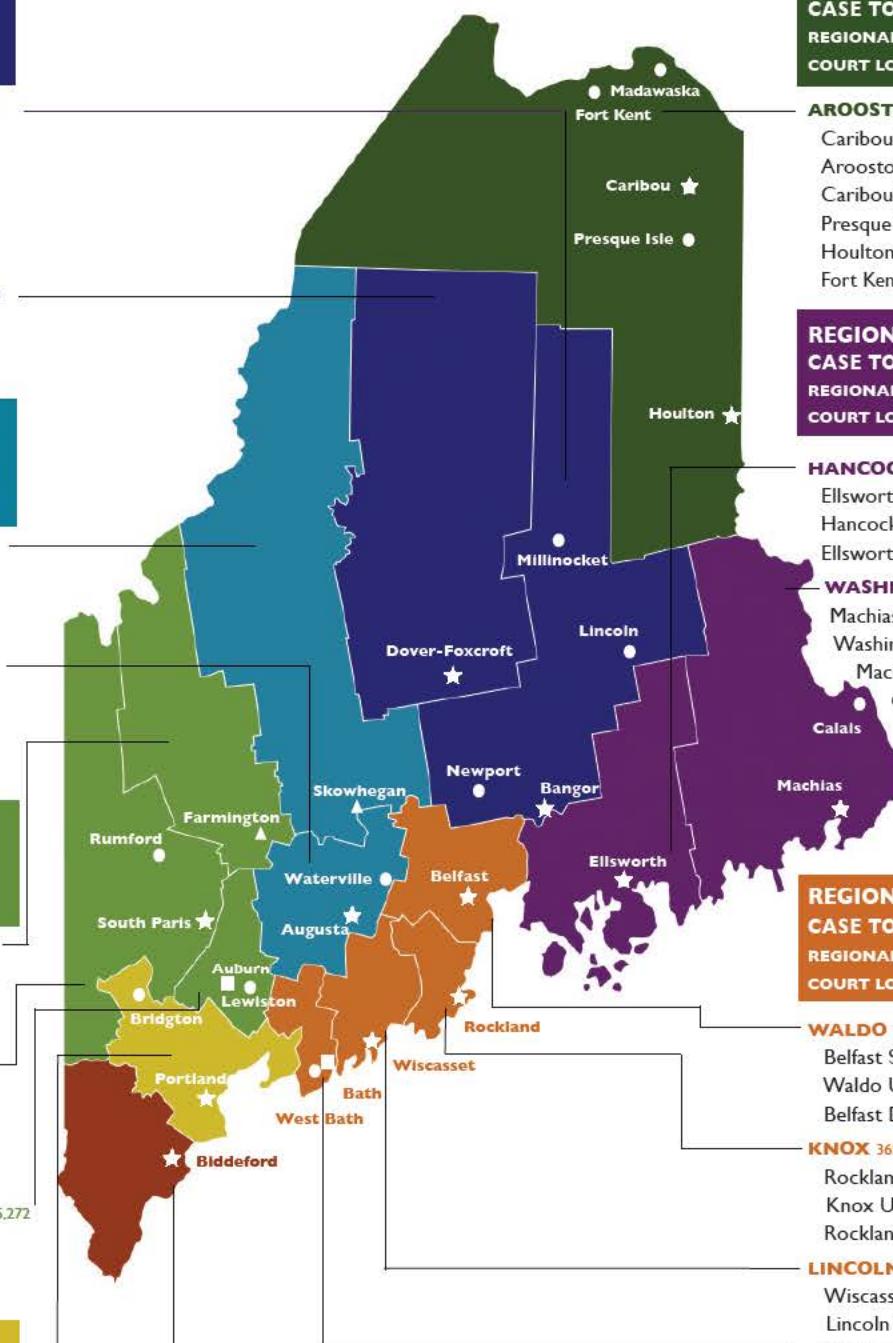
REGION 6
CASE TOTAL 8,663
REGIONAL POPULATION 155,671
COURT LOCATIONS 5

WALDO 730 sq. miles/pop. 40,617
 Belfast Superior 100
 Waldo UCD 1,144
 Belfast District 1,017

KNOX 365 sq. miles/pop. 40,981
 Rockland Superior 82
 Knox UCD 1,218
 Rockland District 995

LINCOLN 456 sq. miles/pop. 36,491
 Wiscasset Superior 57
 Lincoln UCD 1,034
 Wiscasset District 707

SAGADAHOC 254 sq. miles/pop. 37,582
 Bath Superior 48
 Sagadahoc UCD 919
 West Bath District 1,342



KEY

- District Court
- Superior Court
- ▲ District and Superior in the same city/town
- ★ District and Superior Court occupy the same building

Counties grouped together by color are part of a single court **REGION**, where resources and scheduling are coordinated.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For more information about the Courts

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS**
 PO Box 4820
 Portland, ME 04112-4820
 (207) 822-0792 711 (Maine Relay)

Visit the website: courts.maine.gov
 or scan the QR code



TRAFFIC INFRACTIONS
 Total: 64,334

