



# The Navajo Nation Judicial Branch

**FY 2025 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report**

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# A Message from Chief Justice

**Yá'át'ééh.** As we gather this spring, we are reminded of the season's symbolism—renewal, growth, and forward movement. It is a time to reflect on the seeds we've planted and nurture the progress ahead, guided by the strength of our traditions and the teachings of our ancestors. The Judicial Branch remains grounded in our mission to deliver meaningful and culturally rooted justice through our courts, Peacemaking Program, and Probation and Parole Services.

We thank the Navajo Nation Council, Law and Order Committee, and Budget and Finance Committee for approving the FY2025 Judicial Branch Budget. With full funding secured, we are meeting expenditure goals and have already begun FY2026 preparations through on-site district consultations. Major budget priorities for FY2026 include restoring hours for critical vacant positions, facility maintenance and repairs, technology upgrades, staff development, and operational assessments. We also stress the urgent need to fill nine vacant judgeships and appoint a permanent third Supreme Court Justice to alleviate strain on the courts and ensure timely justice.

Significant gains have been made in addressing case backlogs. Pending cases to 11,266, with 6,441 considered backlogged. The second quarter saw 3,446 new filings and 4,858 closures—resulting in a 141% clearance rate, surpassing our goal and reflecting strong judicial performance and accountability.

Progress continues, on the Window Rock modular building, expected to be operational by May 2025, despite delays. Construction on the Kayenta Judicial Complex will begin this summer. Additional projects under the Hashkééjí Nahat'á Béeso Bá Hooghan Expenditure Plan include a new Peacemaking Building, the Aneth Judicial Court Building, and design of the Ramah Judicial District facility—demonstrating our commitment to justice infrastructure across the Nation.

Staffing challenges persist with 76 vacancies, but progress is ongoing. Nine positions were filled, and six employees achieved permanent status in Q1. Recruitment remains difficult due to location and housing challenges. We continue to advocate for the Senior Judges Program, which would bring experienced judges back to the bench while mentoring newer ones—helping reduce caseloads and strengthening judicial quality.

As we continue to face resource constraints and increasing caseloads, the Judicial Branch is actively developing new policies for case management, court security, employee wellness, and teleworking. We urge support for critical facility needs like the Shiprock District Court and commit to staying innovative while honoring Diné values.

Through unity, resilience, and tradition, we will meet the challenges before us. With your support, we will uphold justice, protect sovereignty, and build a stronger, more equitable future for all Diné people.

*Ahéhee'*

**JoAnn B. Jayne**

*Chief Justice of the Navajo Nation*

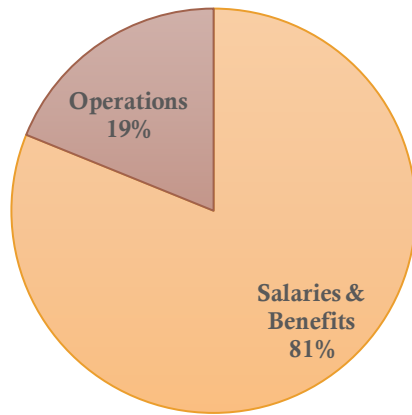
## Highlights of 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2025

- **Gratitude for Council Support:** Judicial Branch extends their sincere thanks to the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council for working diligently on passing the FY 2025 comprehensive budget and starting conversations on the FY 2026 comprehensive budgets. It is important for the Judicial to keep tribal courts operational, ensuring that justice continues to be served without any disruptions financially.
- **Judicial Independence:** The independence of the Judicial Branch remains vastly important not only to Chief Justice but to the entire branch. It is necessary to ensure that the rule of law continues to be respected. Furthermore, it is essential for fair, impartial decision making based on Diné Fundamental Law, safeguarding Navajo sovereignty.
- **Judge Applicant:** Judicial branch received a new applicant for Navajo Nation District Court probationary Judge, Mr. Tyson Yazzie. Yazzie completed his interview with the Judicial Conduct Commission staff and was recommended to President Dr. Buu Nygren to be appointed and is now awaiting legislation to be dropped.
- **Case Management Success:** Navajo courts filed 3,446 cases and closed 4,858 cases, achieving a clearance rate (closed cases/ filed cases) of 141%, significantly exceeding the target of 100%.
- **Reducing Backlogged Cases:** The Judicial Branch reduced its overall backlogged cases to 6,441, demonstrating the Judicial Branch's commitment to resolving backlogs and improving efficiency.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** The Window Rock Judicial District modular building will be completed by June 2025. Kayenta Judicial complex center has begun construction and is forecasted to be completed in June 2027. The Hashkééjí Nahat'á Béeso Bá Hooghan has passed legislation, allowing Aneth Court to move forward with its capital outlay budget expenditure plan as soon as the construction budget account is created by OMB.

- **Critical Staffing Milestones:** 9 new hires and 6 employees transitioned from probationary to permanent status; continued progress in filling judicial vacancies and staffing Probation and Parole Services in three districts.
- **Judicial Facility Challenges:** Despite only having one staff member, Ivan Cayedito, dedicated to facilities maintenance, AOC still manages to respond to service requests from all 13 district courts and program facilities throughout the Navajo Nation. To help ensure we don't overload our only facilities and maintenance technician, he is also accompanied by Construction manager Andy Thomas, and AOC custodian Michael Teller to assist in some work orders. Council support continues to be crucial for resolving facility challenges that are ongoing, such as the Dilkon district court rooftop, and HVAC units in older court buildings highlighting the importance of infrastructure maintenance.
- **Probation and Parole Staffing Successes:** PPS managed to fill two vacant positions, one probation officer for Tuba City office, and one Administrative Office Technician for the Kayenta office. Chief Probation Officer, Lucinda Yellowhair continues to recruit for vacant positions within all districts.
- **Staff Training Initiatives:** Human resources, fiscal unit, and the information technology units continue to provide essential staff training for all the Judicial Branch employees. These training courses are hosted in person and some take place virtually. Training topics include P-Card utilization, JustWare system/navigation, new hire orientation, Navajo reading & writing classes, finance and managing budgets within FMIS software. Together all business unit managers collaborate and always accommodate employees, providing learning tools and refreshers in certain areas.
- **Collaborative Court Efforts:** Tuba City Judicial District Court collaborated with Flagstaff Superior Court in the use of the District Court's facility. Coconino County Superior Court utilized Tuba City District Courtroom to provide Court services to Tuba City residents and surrounding communities.

## Budget and Operations

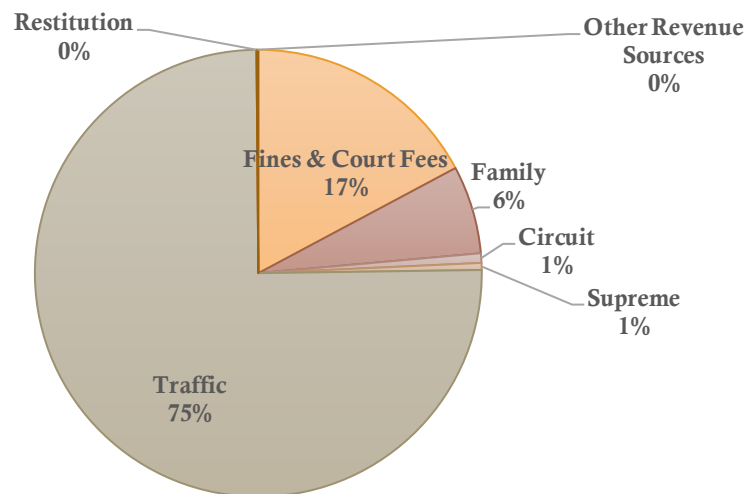
### FY2025 2ND QUARTER GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS NAVAJO JUDICIAL BRANCH



The FY 2025 General Fund Appropriation for the Navajo Judicial Branch consists of **81%** in Salaries and Benefits and **19%** in Operations.

**\$138,474.53** collected in Fines & Fees for FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter. All funds are deposited into the Navajo Nation General Fund.

### MONIES COLLECTED BY COURTS FY2025 2ND QUARTER



# Navajo Justice Systems

## *The Original Justice System*

Peacemaking is a traditional justice system within the Judicial Branch of the Navajo Nation that can be used instead of or alongside the Navajo Nation court system. Its goal is to provide a non-adversarial forum for resolving disputes, promoting healing, and reestablishing harmony.

### **Hózhóji Naat'aah (Diné Traditional Peacemaking)**

Traditional Diné Peacemaking starts from a place of chaos, hóochxq'/anáhóót'i', within an individual or between people. The Peacemaker guides individuals or groups to confront this chaos and move toward harmonious existence.

### **Áłchíní BáNdazhnit'á (Diné Family Group Conferencing)**

This extension of peacemaking addresses the requirements of the Áłchíní Bi Beehaz' áannii Act of 2011. It seeks culturally appropriate methods for family preservation and reunification, facilitating harmony consistent with Navajo Nation statutes and Diné principles.

### **Nábináhaazláago Áłch'j yáti' (Life Value Engagements)**

Life value engagements are traditional services where individuals or groups meet with a Peacemaker to learn how to address problems by opening to hózhq'. These engagements focus on personal accountability and the willingness to confront and overcome chaos for the benefit of oneself, family, and community.

# Navajo Justice Systems Have 3 Roles

## Roles of the Supreme Court of the Navajo Nation

- Appellate jurisdiction over trial court decisions.
- 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.
- Authority over the practice of law and bar membership on the Navajo Nation.
- Appellate jurisdiction over certain decisions of the Navajo Bar Association.
- Authority to approve all new and revised rules, pleadings, and forms of the Navajo Nation courts.

## Roles of the District Courts

- Original jurisdiction over crimes, civil causes and other matters under Navajo statutory law, Diné bi Beehaz'áanii, 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.

## Roles of the Family Courts

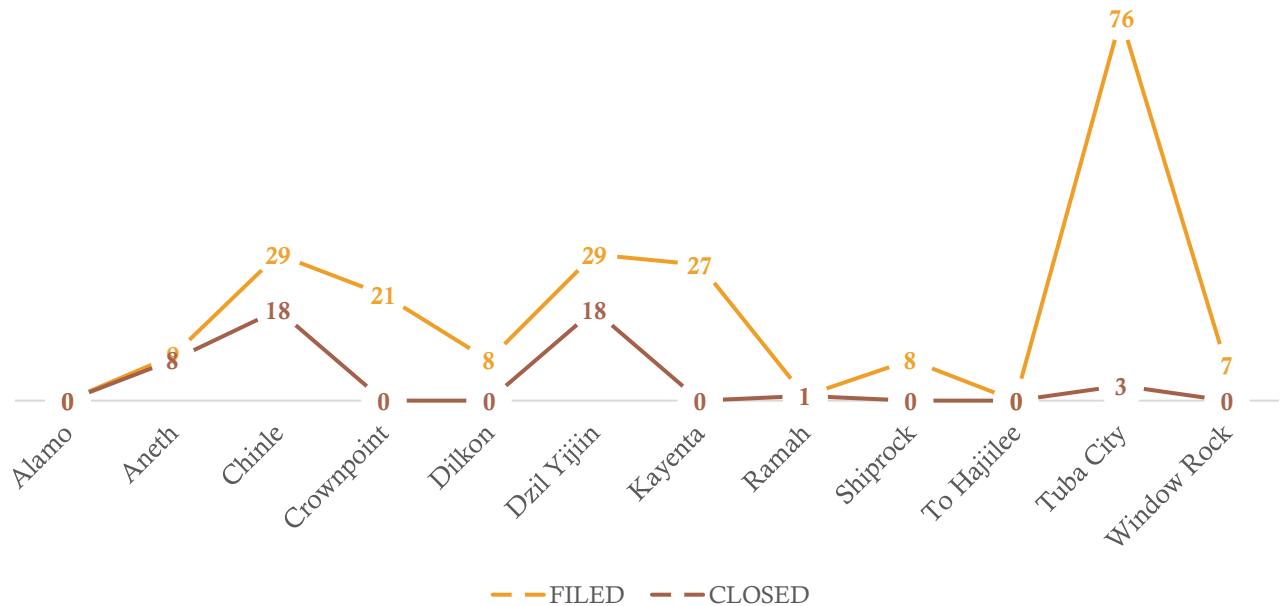
Original exclusive jurisdiction over:

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



# Navajo Nation Peacemaking

## NAVAJO NATION PEACEMAKING FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND QUARTER



Navajo Peacemaking remains the original justice system of the Navajo Nation by providing a non-adversarial forum for resolving disputes, promoting healing, and reestablishing harmony.

During FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, a total of **215** cases were filed with Navajo Peacemaking and **48** cases were closed which resulted in a **22% clearance rate**.

Traditional Program Specialist Andy Harrison and Melody Honyumtewa, along with program Office Technicians Loretta Yazzie, Candida Foster, Regina Watchman, and Valerie Brown were named “Subject Matter Experts” for JustWare.

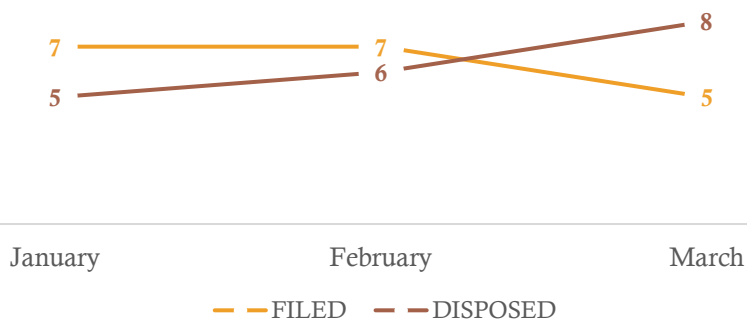
The first annual Kéeshjééh was planned and completed by Traditional Program Specialist Myron K. Begay. The event took place on January 17, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to the early morning of January 18, 2025, at the Chinle Peacemaking Hogan. Traditional stories and teachings related to Kéeshjééh, Diné Fundamental Law, and the importance of Diné bizaad, were topics shared with the participants during the event.

A virtual Winter Stories event was held on January 31, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. through TEAMS meeting for the Judicial District staff who were interested in participating in the event. This was the final event for the winter season.

Eight program staff attended the “A Conference on Mental, Emotional, Physical, Spiritual Wellness Conference,” on February 12, 13, 14, 2025 at the San Juan College, Farmington, New Mexico. The conference was provided by The Institute for Diné Culture, Philosophy, & Government LLC. and instructed by Dr. Wilson Aronilth Jr., Dr. Avery Denny and Mr. Justin Jones.

## Navajo Nation Supreme Courts

### SUPREME COURT APPELLATE JURISDICTION FILED & DISPOSED CASES: FY25 2ND QUARTER



**19 Appellate cases were filed with the Navajo Supreme Court during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, and**

**27 cases reached final disposition.**

As the sole appellate court for the Navajo Nation, the Supreme Court reviews lower court records, transcripts, and legal briefs as well as hold oral arguments.

The Navajo Supreme Court continues to serve as the Original Jurisdiction Court for bar members.

A total of 99 *Pro Bono* Appointments were made in FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter. The Chinle, Dilkon, and Shiprock Judicial Districts have the highest need for *Pro Bono* appointments.

The Office of Chief Justice in coordination with Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne, Associate Justice Eleanor Shirley, District Court Judge Malcolm Begay, District Court Judge William Platero, District Court Judge Cythia Thompson, and District Court Judge Leonard Livingston, completed the Oath of Office for 2025 Navajo Nation Elected Officials at all five agencies.

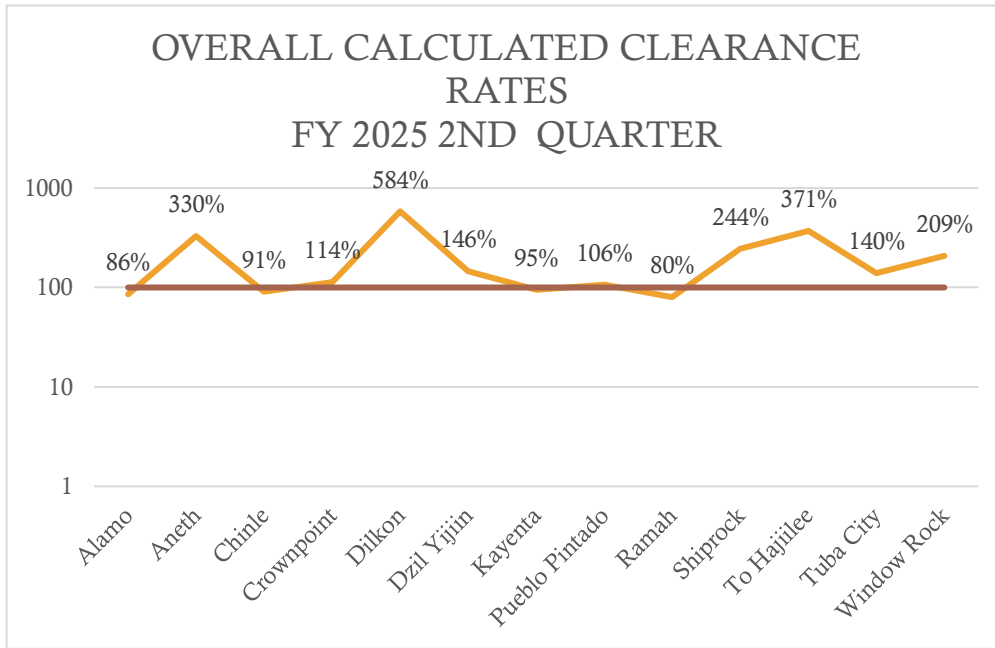
Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne presented at the Indian Law Symposium at Harvard Law School on “Indigenous Knowledge as Central to Criminal Justice,” and was a guest speaker to Harvard Law students on Peacemaking in their Restorative Justice Class. Additionally, Chief Justice met with Harvard Law Students for recruitment purposes.

Chief Justice re-appointed Joelynn Ashley as the Commissioner for the Navajo Nation Water Rights Commission, and appointed Nyera Yazzie to the Employee Housing Committee for the Judicial Branch.

The Associate Attorney with the Office of Chief Justice drafted and submitted a Case Management Policy and Procedure Manual to the Judicial Conference, requesting feedback on the documents.

# 13 Navajo Nation District Courts

## Judicial District (Trial Courts)



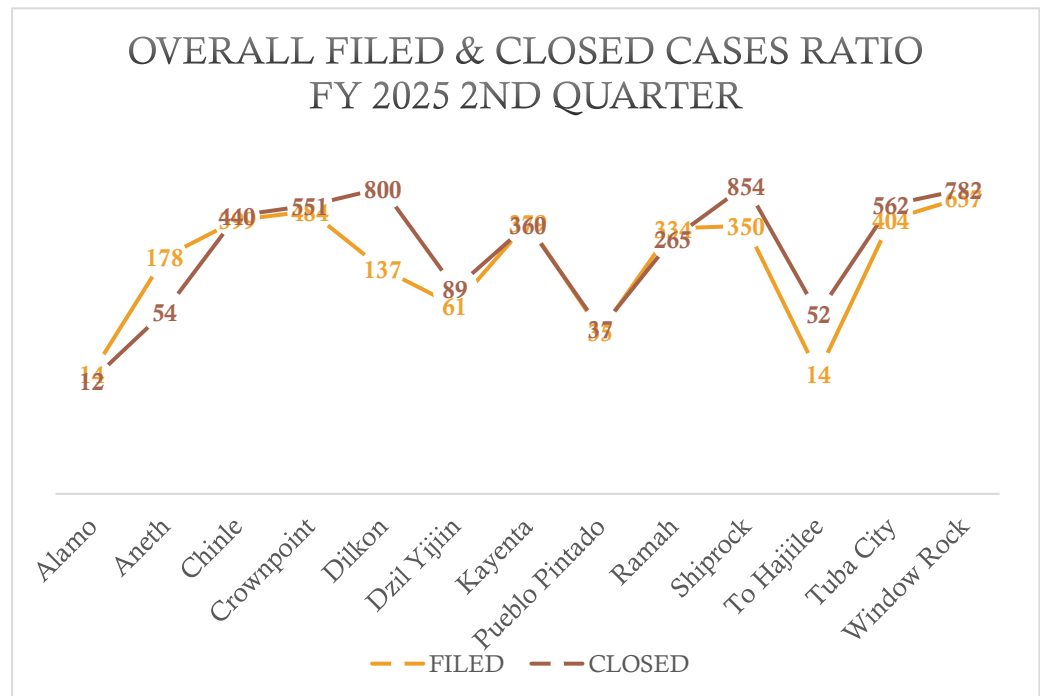
**Navajo Judicial District Courts (trial courts) are closing more cases than filed per quarter.**

Staying above 100% is crucial to address pending and backlog cases

**Judicial District Courts  
Overall, Clearance Rate is 141%.**

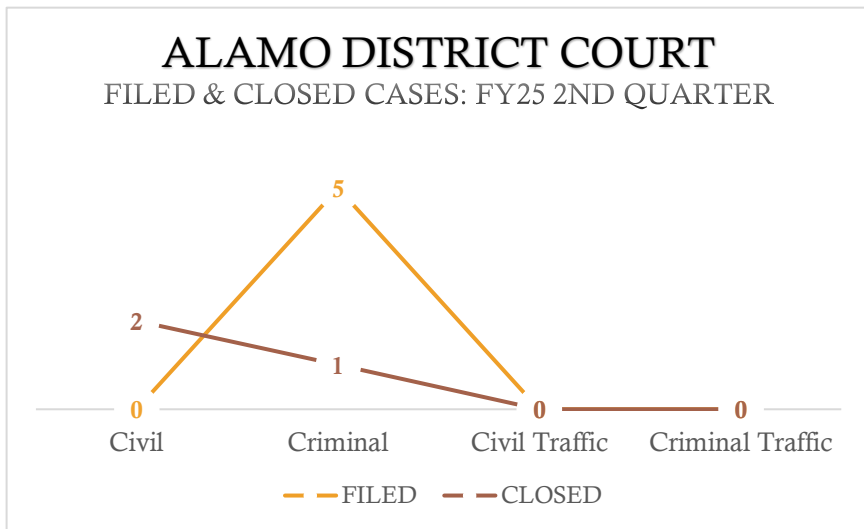
**The overall ratio of filed and closed cases for the trial courts identifies a positive trend.**

The closed cases protectory should at least mirror the filed cases to effectively manage caseloads.



# Alamo/Tó Hajiilee Judicial District

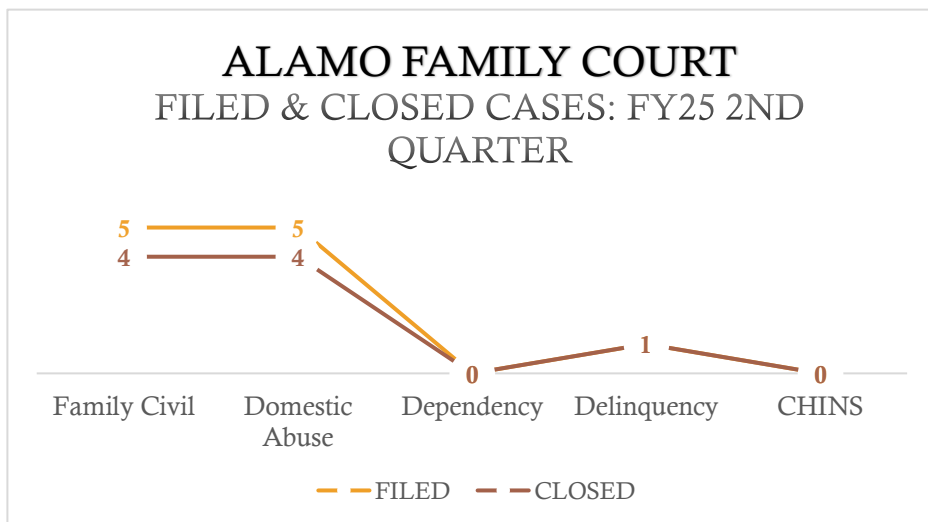
## Alamo District Court



**14 cases were filed in both the Alamo District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**12 cases were closed.**

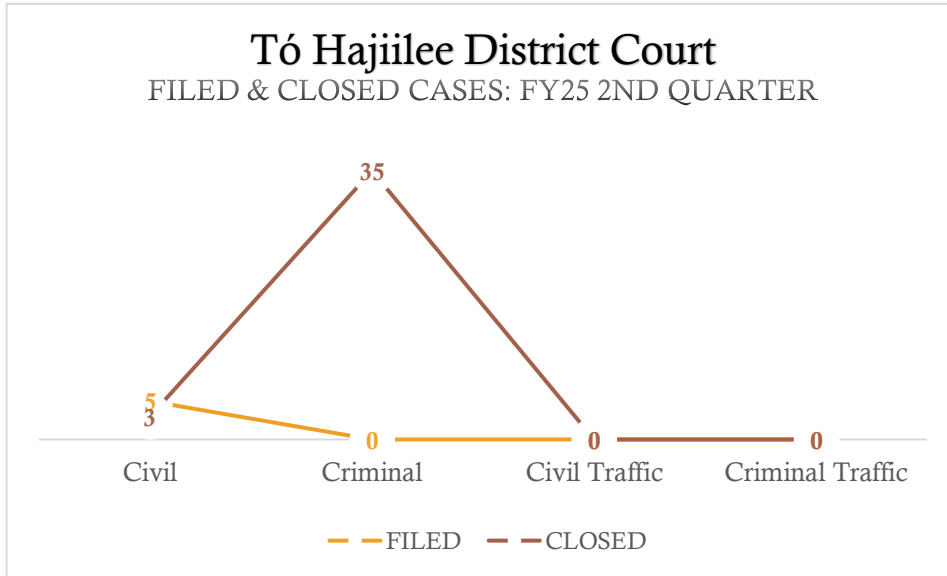
**Clearance Rate is 86%**



The Alamo Court Administrator actively participated in meetings with the Alamo Navajo Chapter and Alamo Navajo School Board to present details regarding the Alamo Justice Day. As a result of these efforts, the Alamo Navajo School Board committed to sponsoring the Justice Day luncheon and contributed \$9,000.00 to Rudy’s BBQ for catering services.

Staff Attorney provided training concerning Service of Process to the Alamo Staff on February 24, 2025. The training highlighted procedures regarding issuing summons and issuing summons for alternative service

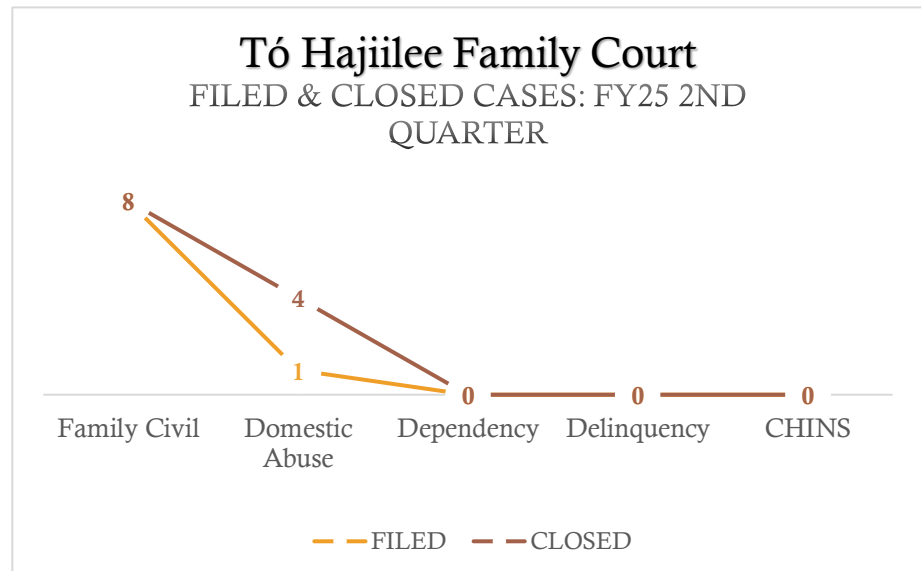
## Tó Hajiilee District Court



**14 cases were filed in both the Tó Hajiilee District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**52 cases were closed.**

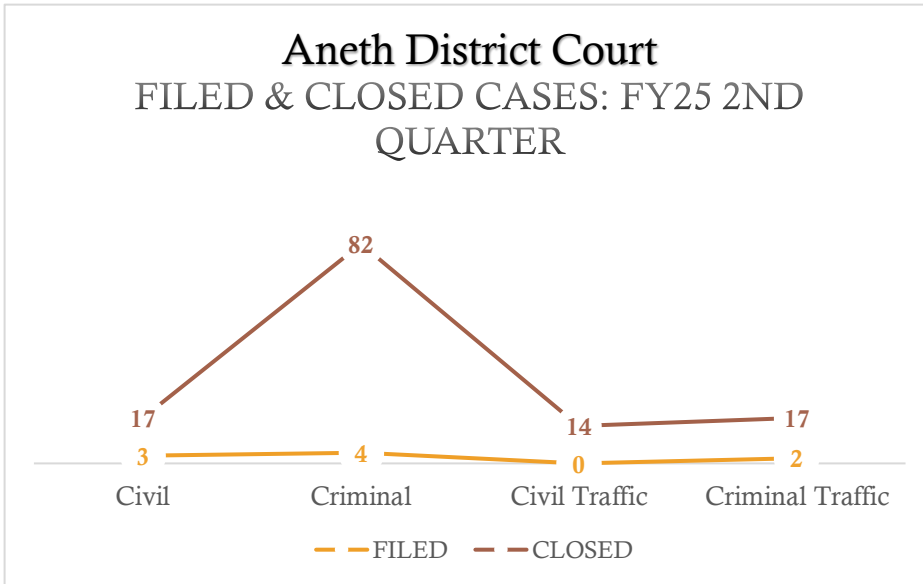
**Clearance  
Rate is 371%**



Judge Platero was appointed to administer the oath of office for Chapter Officials and School Board members in both Rough Rock, Arizona, and To'Hajiilee, New Mexico, demonstrating continued judicial support for community leadership transitions.

An interview for the To'Hajiilee District Court Clerk position was conducted during the quarter. A candidate was selected and is scheduled to be officially appointed in the next quarter.

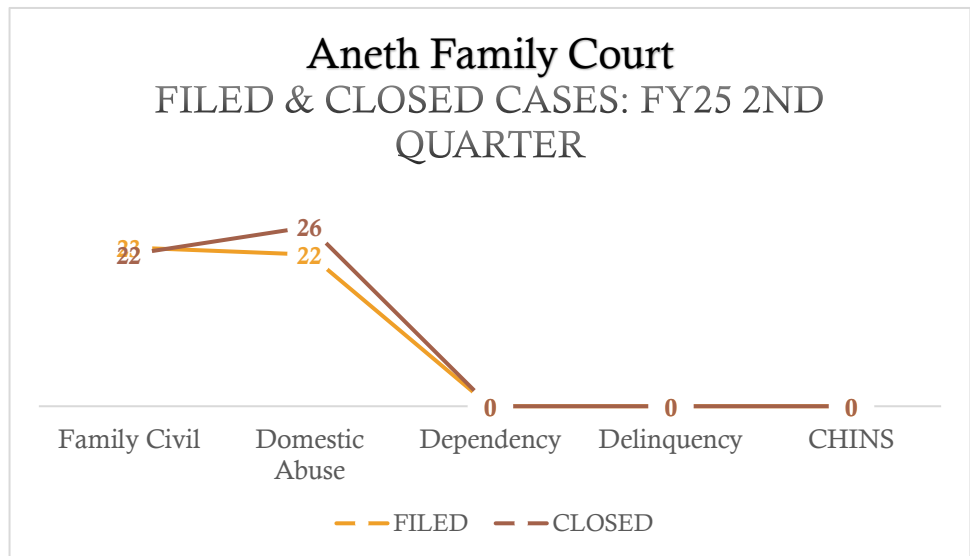
## Aneth Judicial District



**54 cases were filed in both the Aneth District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**178 cases were closed.**

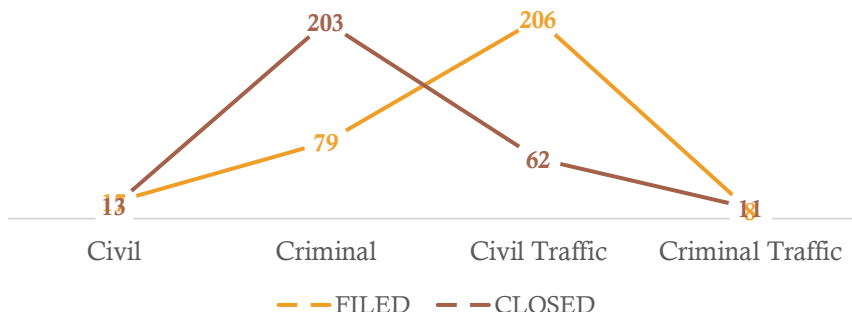
**Clearance Rate is 330%**



The Hashkééjí Nahat’á Béeso Bá Hooghan has passed legislation, allowing Aneth Court to move forward with its capital outlay budget expenditure plan as soon as the construction budget account is created. The initial planning phase for the new Aneth Judicial Court site has been completed with the Aneth Chapter’s involvement.

## Chinle Judicial District

Chinle District Court  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND QUARTER

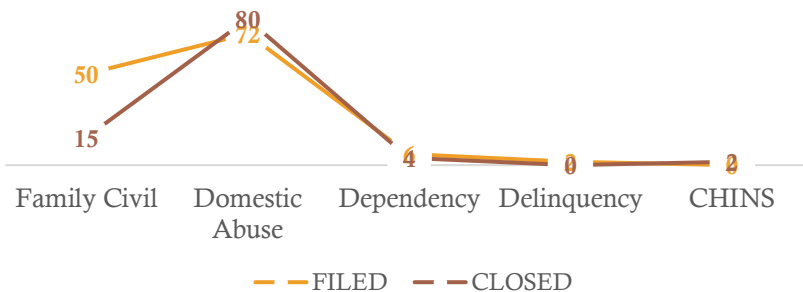


**440 cases were filed in both the Chinle District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**399 cases were closed.**

**Clearance Rate is 91%**

Chinle Family Court  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND QUARTER

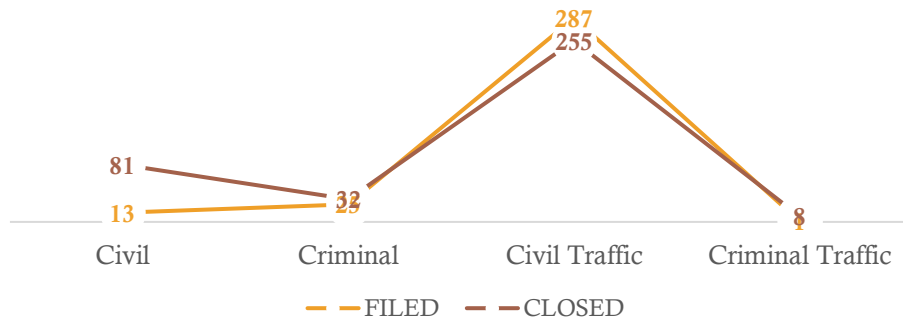


The S.O.S. group addressed issues related to school bullying and unsheltered community members. Discussions focused on fostering safer school environments and offering support to both victims and offenders. Concerns were also raised regarding unsheltered individuals residing under bridges and along washes, as these areas have become hubs for illegal activity, impacting community safety.

The Chinle Judicial District remains dedicated to advancing the mission and vision of the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch, with continued focus on service, accountability, and justice.

## Crownpoint Judicial District

CROWNPOINT DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

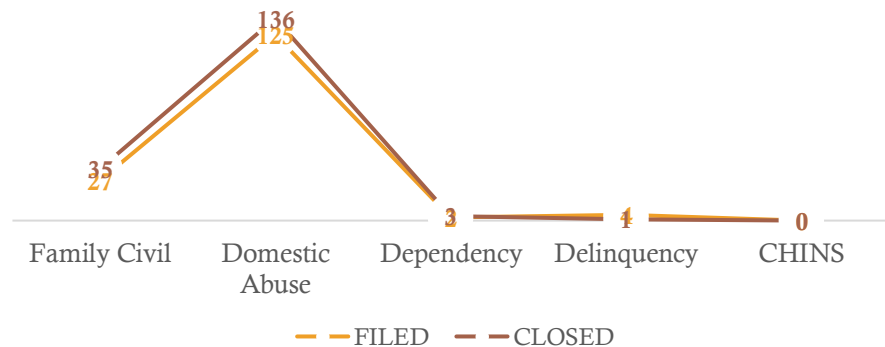


**484 cases were filed in both the Crownpoint District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**551 cases were closed.**

**Clearance  
Rate is  
114%**

CROWNPOINT FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER



Crownpoint Judicial District Court staff received staff meetings and training about the court's development, public education, operation, court efficiency, and strengthening access to justice.

The Judicial District court provided justice partners meeting to strengthen partnerships for the Justice system.

The District Court Judge provided an oath of office for 32 Law Enforcement personnel.



## Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court

Of the Crownpoint Judicial District

PUEBLO PINTADO DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

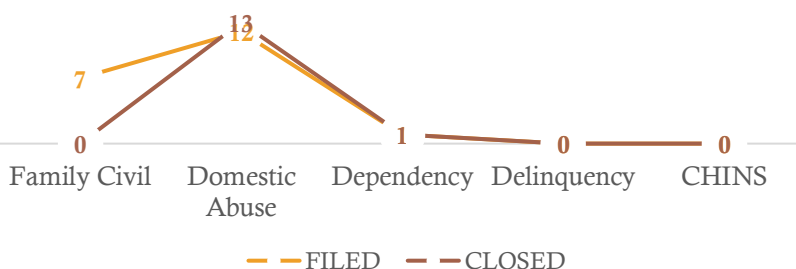


**35 cases were filed in both the Pueblo Pintado District Court and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**37 cases were closed.**

**Clearance  
Rate is 106%**

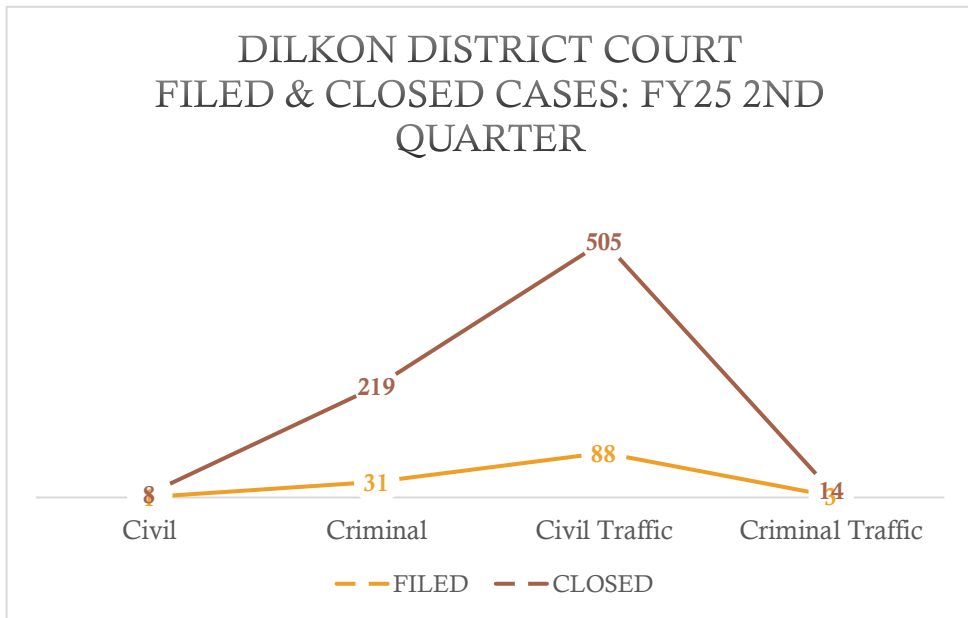
PUEBLO PINTADO CIRCUIT  
FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER



The Judicial Hearing Officer continues to conduct in-person hearings related to Domestic Violence and Shelter care, which significantly enhanced the court's overall performance and closed 13 cases.

The quarterly goal for Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court is to fulfill all NOSHA safety requirement to be able to re-open the court building for the next quarter, and to fill all of personnel positions.

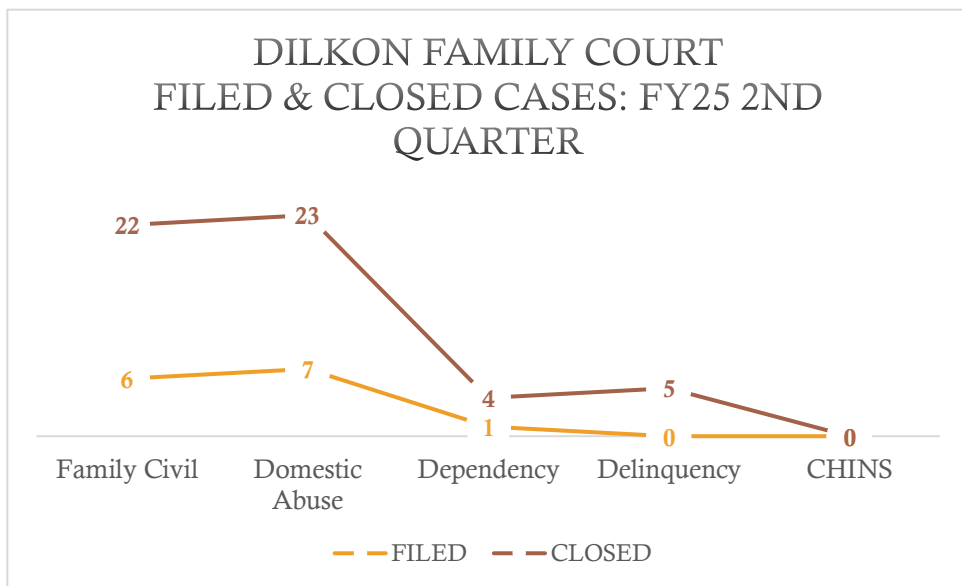
## Dilkon Judicial District



**137 cases were filed in both the Dilkon District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**800 cases were closed.**

**Clearance Rate is 584%**

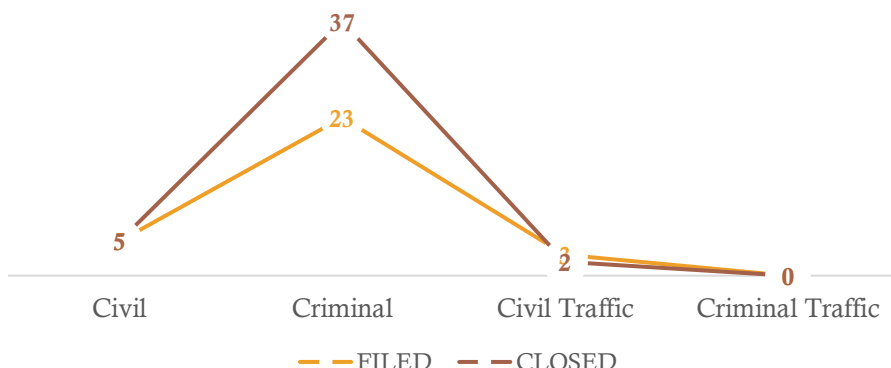


Effective October 07, 2024, Judge Victor J. Clyde was assigned to the Dilkon District Court by Chief Justice per Administrative Order #48-2024. This quarter an Oath of Office was also conducted by Judge Clyde.

The newly hired court clerk has completed their probationary period and is now permanent status. There have been interviews for the vacant court bailiff which will soon be filled.

## Dził Yijiin Judicial District

DZIŁ YIJIIN DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

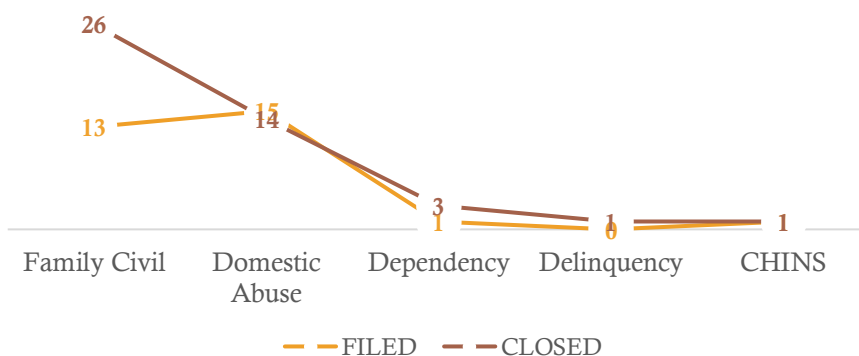


**61 cases were filed in both the Dził Yijiin District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**89 cases were closed.**

**Clearance Rate is 146%**

DZIŁ YIJIIN FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER



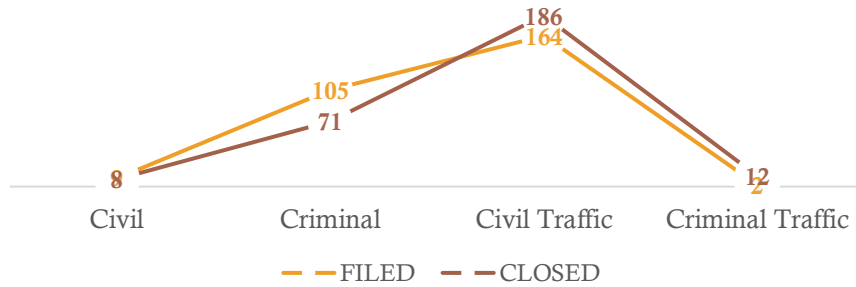
The Dził Yíjín district court staff completed over three relevant training sessions this quarter. They also participated in staff meetings and work sessions, led by the court administrator, covering topics on confidentiality, case processes, teamwork, customer service, and improving communication skills.

To enhance efficiency, the presiding judge conducts hearings in person, virtually, or by telephone, overseeing two district courts and handling cases in other districts as assigned by the Chief Justice.

Judicial Hearing Officer continues to be responsible for conducting hearings on petitions for Domestic Abuse Protection Orders.

## Kayenta Justice District

KAYENTA DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

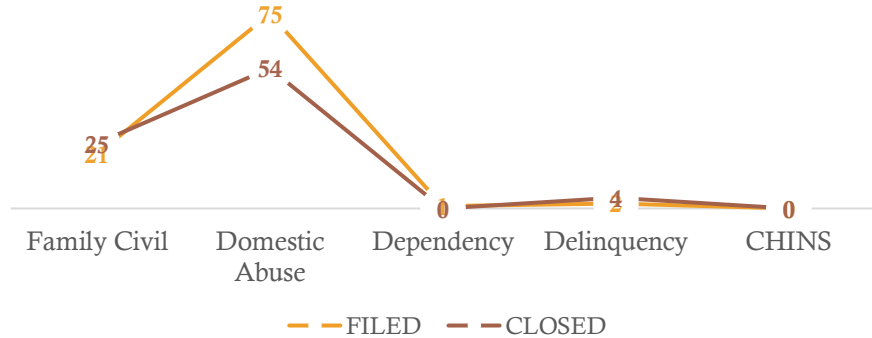


**379 cases were filed in both the Kayenta District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**360 cases were closed.**

**Clearance  
Rate is 95%**

KAYENTA FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER



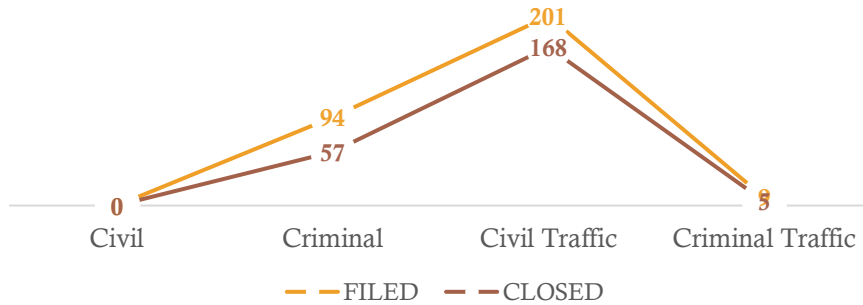
On March 14, 2025, the Kayenta community celebrated the groundbreaking of the long-awaited Kayenta Judicial Complex in Kayenta, Arizona. The facility was funded through the Navajo Nation's Sihasin Funds with additional funding from the State of Arizona and Kayenta Township Commission, marking a transformative moment for the Kayenta District. The 16,937 square foot facility construction completion timeline is set for July 2026.

Court administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie is assisting with implementation of a mandatory Judicial Branch Court Clerk Training funded by the Hashkééjí Nahat'á Béeso Bé Hooghan Fund expenditure plan.

New court clerks Elaine Benally and Kyle C. Grey, and custodian Wildred T. Yazzie successfully completed their 90-day employee probationary status. They are a great addition to our district team of professionals.

## Ramah Judicial District

RAMAH DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

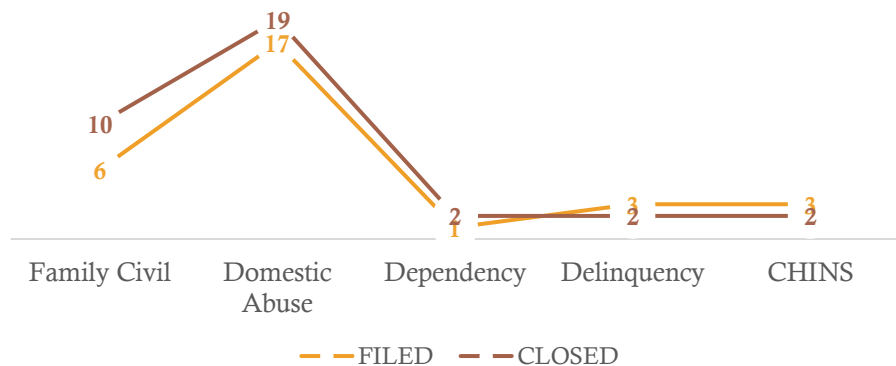


**334 cases were filed in both the Ramah District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**265 cases were closed.**

**Clearance Rate is 80%**

RAMAH FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

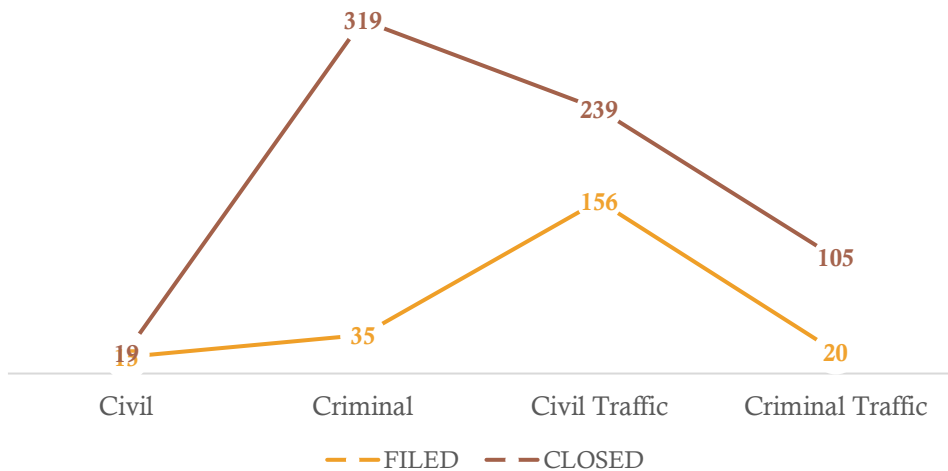


Ramah District Judge Malcom Laughing is supportive of the service, and primary focus is to enhance court efficiency and continue to have in person hearings, case reviewing, arraignments, and supervision of court administrator. The judge has been participating in a monthly staff meeting with the court staff to enhance Court efficiency and oversight.

This quarter four staff members have completed FMIS training to ensure the progress and movement of financial spending and budget for the court.

## Shiprock Judicial District

SHIPROCK DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

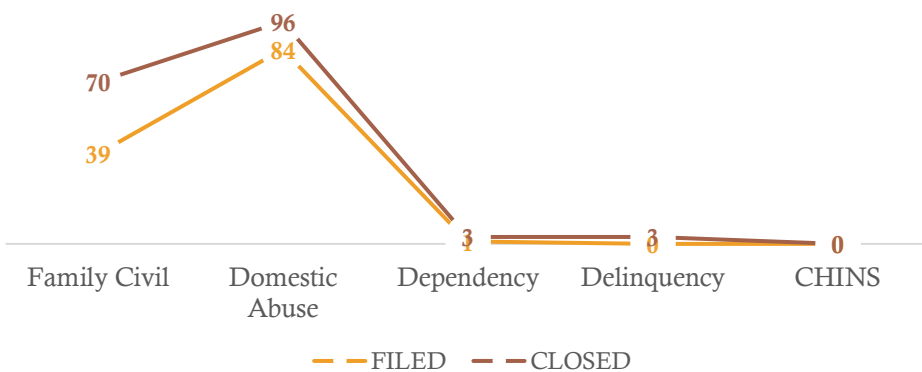


**350 cases**  
were filed in  
both the  
Shiprock  
District and  
Family  
courts during  
the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Quarter.

**854 cases**  
were closed.

**Clearance  
Rate is  
244%**

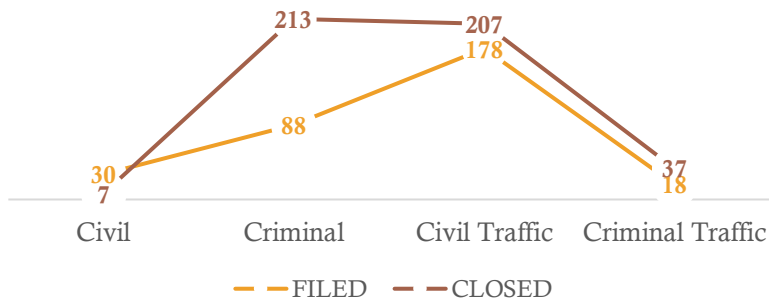
SHIPROCK FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER



The Shiprock District Court Judge conducted the Oath of Office Ceremony for the Shiprock Law Enforcement, Shiprock Criminal Investigation, and chapter officials, held on January 24, 2025, and another on February 4, 2025.

## Tuba City Judicial District

TUBA CITY DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25  
2ND QUARTER

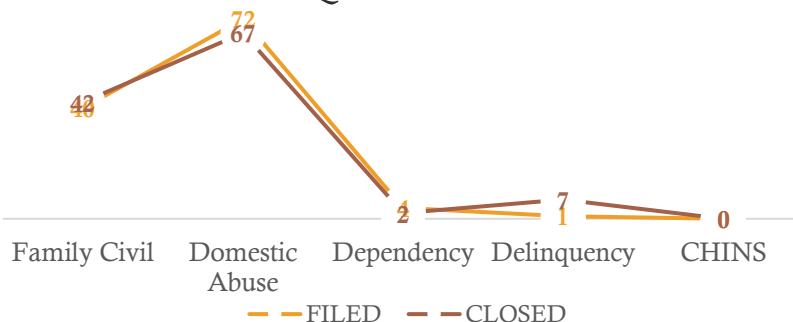


**404 cases were filed in both the Tuba City District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**562 cases were closed.**

**Clearance Rate is 140%**

TUBA CITY FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

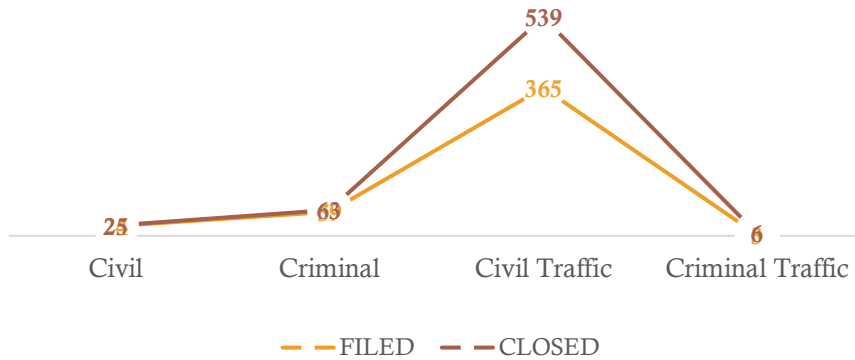


Tuba City Judicial District Court collaborated with Flagstaff Superior Court in the use of the District Court facility. Coconino County Superior Court utilized Tuba City District Courtroom to provide Court services to Tuba City residents and surrounding communities. The Superior Court offered services that included warrant quashing, marriage licenses, passport applications, accepting court filings, Superior Court Records/Document request, court payments for fines & fees, assistance from Adult Probation, assistance with Marijuana Conviction Expungement and intake with Victim Services. Victim Advocate Services and Coconino County Health and Human Services were on site providing information about rent and utility assistance to customers. The collaboration was a success, and it was very beneficial to our people and communities.

The Court Administrator, with the assistance of the Office Technician, and Maintenance Technician conducted successful interviews for the vacant Custodian Position. A total of three applicants were interviewed and a selection recommendation will be made soon.

# Window Rock Judicial District

WINDOW ROCK DISTRICT COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER

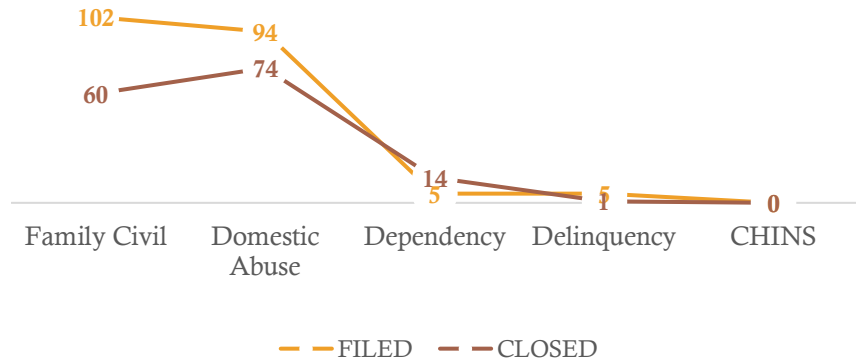


**657 cases were filed in both the Window Rock District and Family courts during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**782 cases were closed.**

**Clearance Rate is 119%**

WINDOW ROCK FAMILY COURT  
FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND  
QUARTER



The Window Rock Judicial Modular building team continues to meet bi-weekly regarding the progress of the modular building that will be set up west of the United States Postal Office in Fort Defiance, Arizona. The modular building has been delivered and is on site as of January 14, 2025. The contractors are in the process of setting up the building, getting it ready for NTUA to complete the 3 phase lines (water, electricity, wastewater). The IT Department are also involved in the security systems and internet services. The building should be complete and ready for moving in by June.

Judge Begay has completed the swearing in of Police Officers, Corrections Officers, and Western Agency elected officials on behalf of the Chief Justice. Judge Begay has also participated in the Title 17 revisions of the Navajo Nation Criminal Code with the Office of the Navajo Nation Chief Prosecutor and the Navajo Nation Public Defender’s Office attorneys.



# Navajo Nation Probation & Parole Services

Probation and Parole Services of the Navajo Nation is committed to enhancing community wellness and fostering *hozho* restoration. We achieve this through community-based supervision aimed at rehabilitating client-offenders. We prioritize the involvement of families, communities, and relevant agencies.

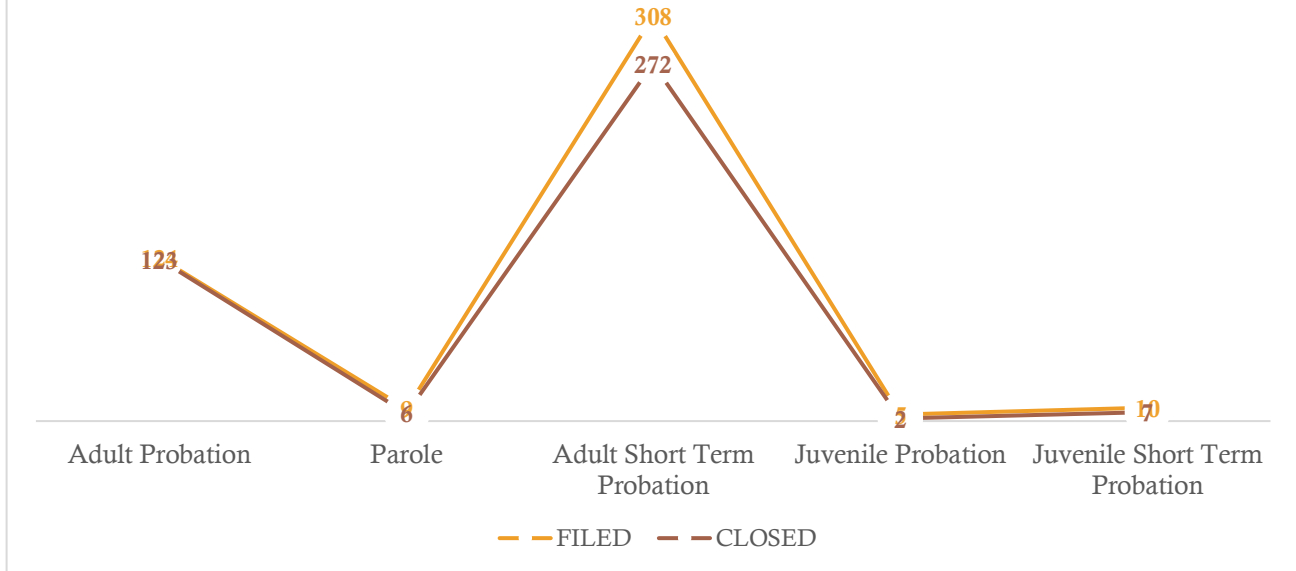
Restoration of *hozho*, accountability, personal responsibility, and community wellness are fundamental principles of traditional restorative justice. In Navajo justice, "restorative justice" literally means restoring justice in accordance with these principles. It involves engaging client-offenders, victims, and affected communities in seeking solutions that promote restoration and rebuilding.

Our justice system holds the responsibility of restoring *hozho* by providing necessary resources to rehabilitate offenders and reintegrate them into their communities, following traditional principles. This includes active communication with victims and advocates.

Probation and Parole Services offers programs designed to help client-offenders, their traditional support structures, and communities achieve crime-free and successful reintegration. Our approach emphasizes accountability, personal responsibility, and supports competence, self-worth, and self-improvement. Through rigorous risk assessment and supervision, we ensure public safety and facilitate client-offenders' compliance with court-imposed conditions and obligations.

Probation and Parole Management team has managed to begin the discussion and planning meeting towards reorganization of probation and parole services. The management team is currently identifying ways of merging two units; pre-trial Services and adjudicated probation/parole services with current limited staff.

## NAVAJO PROBATION & PAROLE FILED & CLOSED CASES: FY25 2ND QUARTER



**Probation and Parole Services are long-term services based on court ordered services and not all cases should be cleared within one quarter.**

**456 cases were filed with Probation and Parole Services during the FY25 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter.**

**410 cases were closed or completed.**

**Clearance  
Rate is 90%**

Probation Services (PPS) managed to fill two vacant positions: one probation officer for Tuba City PPS, and one Administrative Office Technician for the Kayenta PPS.

Chief Probation Officer, Lucinda Yellowhair continues to recruit for vacant positions within PPS.

The Probation management team continues to provide effective and efficient orientations for their new probation staff.

# Administrative Office of the Courts

**The primary purpose of the Judicial Branch Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)** is to be able to provide administrative support for all Navajo Nation Courts, Peacemaking system, and Probation and Parole Services. 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.

## **The Administrative Director, Bennie Francisco**

The AOC director continues to oversee six essential units: fiscal, human resources, information technology, facilities, construction management, and probation and parole services. In addition, the director is also staffed with his judicial executive assistant who provides administrative and clerical support, handling a wide range of tasks to ensure the smooth operation of AOC as well. Under his leadership:

1. There remains continued restructure within internal units to better meet the growing needs of the district courts, programs, and the public.
2. Emphasizing the importance in filling vacant positions to business unit managers.
3. Taking the initiative to meet in person with district courts to review and prepare FY26 budgets, and to also see what the staff need to help ensure excellent performance.
4. Ensuring that all necessary documents are reviewed, signed, and moved forward to help keep major projects moving forward.
5. Continues to meet bi-weekly with Chief Justice on day-to-day operations and updates, and also meets bi-weekly with business unit managers to attain updates on each section's progress.

## **Construction Project Manager, Andy Thomas**

Current projects under his leadership:

1. The Window Rock Judicial Modular building is still in the final building assembly process. Frontier Company completed infrastructure telephone and fiber line realignment scope. The civil site work is ongoing. Overall, project to be completed by Mid-May/June 2025
2. The Kayenta Judicial complex center will begin construction in April of 2025. The first monthly construction meeting is scheduled for April 1, 2025, at the Kayenta Township Hall meeting room.
3. The Window Rock Peacemaking building Judicial complex center will begin construction in March of 2026. The current floor design plans will be updated to current 2021 International Building Codes (IBC).
4. The Aneth Judicial complex center will be getting the design-build funding for their future design and construction of their court building. The design shall be completed by the end of the year and construction to begin in spring of 2026.
5. The Ramah Judicial complex center will be getting the design funding for their future design of their court building. The design shall be completed by the end of the year and will be awaiting construction to begin in summer of 2026.

6. The Administration Office of courts (AOC) central warehouse building will be getting the Design-Build funding for their future design and construction of their warehouse building. The design shall be completed by the end of fall and construction to begin in spring of 2026.

**Human Resources Director, Cheron Damon and staff**, work diligently to advertise vacant positions through many platforms. These platforms include law school websites, social media sites, local newspapers, radio stations, local/state organizations, and national tribal organizations. In doing this, the HR team was successful in filling 9 positions and transitioning 6 employees from 90 day introductory to regular status. Additionally, HR was able to provide multiple 3-day new training courses, and one P-card training session for all the Judicial Branch staff.

#### **Acting Information Technology Manager, Larry Hoskie**

The AOC IT staff plays a crucial role in the district courts and all Judicial Branch entities by ensuring all equipment is up to par and maintaining the technological support for court operations. These tasks include:

1. Addressing 401 IT requests throughout the entire Judicial branch across the Navajo Nation this quarter. These requests consist of providing technical support in network communications and infrastructure, court digital recorders, conferencing equipment, printers, hardware and software.
2. Providing in-person training, when necessary, at districts courts, who requests further assistance in learning how to operate certain equipment and software.
3. Getting the new Judicial Branch website active and providing maintenance when needed.
4. Justware case management configuration support to all Judicial Branch districts and programs.
5. Continued support for Microsoft 365 and DUO multi authentication to all end users.

#### **Acting Financial Service Manager, Sandra Dalgai**

The fiscal staff are highly essential in AOC and very active every day assisting in managing the court systems budget. This includes:

1. Overseeing financial operations, getting budget proposals prepared, tracking district courts expenses, and ensuring compliance with financial regulations.
2. Working very closely with district business unit managers by providing one-on-one interactions to assist Court Administrators, Office Technicians, and Judges with their budgets, and any other financial documents they are processing.
3. To help further accommodate the districts, staff members will make trips to the districts to host in-person training sessions.
4. Acting Financial service manager assisted Director Francisco in, FY26 on site budget meetings, to help provide clear consensus of director's goal in helping districts establish an accurate budget forecast.
5. Another crucial task is making sure major contracts make it through the entire 164 process for certain construction projects, and big purchases for district courts.