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



FISCAL YEAR 2026  
FIRST QUARTER REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2025-DECEMBER 31, 2025

REPORT DATE: JANUARY 26, 2026

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# Table of Contents

<b>Message from the Chief Justice</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Strategic Plan Vision and Mission</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Judicial Branch Highlights</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Understanding Court Terms &amp; Statistics</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Peacemaking Program</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Probation &amp; Parole Services</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Supreme Court &amp; District Courts</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Administrative Office of the Courts</b>	<b>43</b>

# nábináhaazláago

## Comprehensive Approach

The Hashkééjį Nahat'á (Judicial Branch) of the Navajo Nation is continuing to address specific strategies from its current Strategic Plan. Initiating strategies to best address the needs of the public is critical as we transform how we serve the public. Navajo teachings and values ground the judicial and program activities in developing systems, updating rules, and moving on a path that addresses significant needs of the public and our employees.

### *Working with Legislative and Executive Branches to Elevate the Legal Profession*

The Navajo Nation is considered a legal desert - law students are not returning to work on the Navajo Nation, bar passage rate is low for legal advocates, and the legal profession is under constant negative criticism with no solutions. These factors only exacerbate the lack of judge applicants. This distinguished profession must be invested in, encouraged, and developed with the only the highest standards. Navajo culture (teachings, language, customs) are the cornerstone of Navajo sovereignty; the cornerstone of a strong Navajo jurisprudence.

Even facing insurmountable odds with less than half the number of judges required, our judges work diligently with great sacrifice to continue to address cases. The lack of judges at the trial court level has reached a critical point with few applicants and many current judges on the cusp of retirement. Prioritizing trial court judgeships must occur this year. Active recruitment is only one avenue. We must change the discussion about our legal profession on the Navajo Nation, particularly about judges. I challenge all three of our Branches to bring together solid pools of judge and justice applicants that are thoroughly vetted for their legal analytical skills, grounded in Navajo teachings and strong writing skills.

### *Niná'ázhdilkaah*

The winter time brings teachings that reminds us to reflect - the Judicial Branch begins this time with reflection upon the last quarter and all of last year. The First Quarter was spent re-evaluating how we conduct judicial processes with limited resources and improving the use of these resources. Federal Funding spend down plans were developed to address crucial areas - judicial support by hearing officers, initiating plans for on demand interpreters for ASL, Spanish and Navajo in all courts and programs, and assistive equipment for hearing impairments. Further development of safe and health facilities that give a place for the people to resolve their disputes is key to the successful justice system development the Judicial Branch continues. This reflection and reassessment of our work, our path forward, will continue to be strengthened as we improve services and access to justice for all Navajo people.

Eleanor Shirley, Interim Chief Justice  
Office of the Chief Justice



## STRATEGIC PLAN

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## 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

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## 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.

### **Kayenta Judicial District Court Facility — Major Infrastructure Milestone**

The Kayenta Judicial District Court facility has reached a significant milestone, with construction approximately more than half complete and an anticipated opening this year. This flagship infrastructure project represents one of the Judicial Branch's largest ongoing investments and will substantially expand access to court and program services in the northwestern region of the Navajo Nation. Once completed, the facility will strengthen service delivery, enhance staff capacity, and improve public access to justice, reflecting the Judicial Branch's continued commitment to modern, accessible, and community-focused court facilities.



### **Judicial Facilities Progress**

The Judicial Branch continues to advance key court facility projects, with the Aneth Judicial District Court transitioning into active development and a project kick-off and groundbreaking scheduled for February 2026, and the Ramah Judicial District Court project moving forward with completion of its RFP and plans to enter the design phase by late February 2026. Together, these efforts reflect steady progress in the Branch's infrastructure strategy and an ongoing commitment to modern, functional court facilities that strengthen access to justice across the Navajo Nation.

### **Case Certification and Backlog Reduction**

The Judicial Branch continues to demonstrate its commitment to serving the people of the Navajo Nation by documenting the true scope of its workload through the annual case certification process. While case certification is a routine and established requirement, it reveals the extraordinary volume of cases being managed by judges and court staff operating with less than half of the judges needed. Even under these conditions, the certification shows that every judicial district is actively addressing case backlogs, reflecting sustained effort and progress across the Branch. Judges continue to preside over heavy dockets with professionalism and integrity, while court staff shoulder expanded responsibilities—maintaining accurate records, supporting court operations, and assisting litigants—often without additional resources. Collectively, this data reflects not just caseload numbers, but the resilience, dedication, and strength of a Judicial Branch workforce that continues to uphold judicial independence, maintain high ethical standards, and deliver access to justice for the people it serves.

### **Advancing E-Filing and Technology**

Under the Chief Justice's direction, the Judicial Branch is advancing the development of an electronic filing (e-filing) system to improve how cases are submitted, tracked, and managed across the Navajo Nation courts and programs. The Branch completed listening sessions with Judicial Branch employees and justice partners throughout the Navajo Nation, including Navajo Nation Bar members who regularly practice in the courts, reflecting strong engagement and shared enthusiasm for improving court access. This effort highlights the courts' collective commitment to reducing barriers, increasing transparency, and ensuring the justice system better serves the people of the Navajo Nation through modern, responsive court processes, Peacemaking and Probation services.

### **Spend Down Plan for Federal Funds - Fiscal Accountability**

The Judicial Branch is actively implementing a spend-down plan to address previously unspent federal funds, ensuring compliance and full utilization of resources. In coordination with the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of the Controller, the Branch developed a streamlined financial plan to spend down funds from prior fiscal years that had been held in abeyance, supporting critical staffing needs for Judicial Hearing Officers and Document Technicians. This plan is currently underway, with funds being expended as intended, and the Branch is simultaneously developing additional spend-down plans to further strengthen fiscal accountability, eliminate underutilized funds, and direct resources where they have the greatest operational impact, specifically for repairs and maintenance of our facilities.

### **T'áá Shí Ádá'asht'í Bá Hooghan - Access to Justice Initiative**

The Judicial Branch continues work on T'áá Shí Ádá'asht'í Bá Hooghan, an access to justice initiative centered on serving the people by helping individuals better understand and prepare their cases through self-help tools, legal forms, and legal informational guidance. The initiative educates community members on both court and Peacemaking options, empowering them to make informed decisions and navigate the justice system with greater confidence. The pilot program remains underway in Window Rock, with an initial focus on probate and quiet title matters, and Judicial Navigator positions have been created and will be advertised to expand remote and in-person assistance. This effort prioritizes the needs of the people by reducing barriers, easing the burden on court staff, and building trust through culturally responsive, wrap-around services.

### **Investing in Our Staff and Strengthening the Judicial Branch**

Significant investments continue to strengthen staff expertise and organizational capacity across the Judicial Branch, reflecting a sustained commitment to serving the people of the Navajo Nation. The Judicial Branch is developing individualized training plans to support professional growth and operational continuity.

From October through December the Judicial Branch filled several hard-to-recruit legal positions, including a Staff Attorney, Court Solicitor, and Supreme Court Law Clerk, strengthening judicial and administrative support. In response to limited judicial resources, a circuit judge has stepped in to assist larger courts, and judges across the Branch have voluntarily covered multiple districts, demonstrating flexibility and dedication. Districts have also worked creatively by sharing court clerks during high-volume days, and Judicial Hearing Officers continue to provide exceptional support by covering multiple districts to keep courts accessible and responsive. Together, these efforts reflect the resilience, collaboration, and commitment of judges and staff who continue to deliver timely, ethical, and accessible justice for the Navajo people—making the most of the resources available.



# KEY TERMS IN THE JUDICIARY

## CASE MANAGEMENT & ANALYSIS

### **Case Management System (CMS)**

The court's internal system used to store, manage, and track case information and documents.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

## Case Certification Process

The case certification process requires each court to manually review and count its cases, identify matters filed more than one calendar year prior, and outline strategies to address existing backlog caseloads.

Case certification is completed annually in February of the subsequent year. For example, Calendar Year 2024 case certification was completed in February 2025, and Calendar Year 2025 case certification will be completed in February 2026. The Judicial Branch resumed this process in 2023 to strengthen accountability, improve data accuracy, and support courts and programs in addressing longstanding case backlogs.



# 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 Dine 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

## Staff Training and Professional Development

Training plans were developed for Peacemaking Program staff that incorporate both traditional and western perspectives, with a focus on personal and professional development. The plans were created with the current budget in mind, emphasizing the use of local resources. On November 6, 2025, Ms. Lahoma Bahe provided training via Microsoft Teams on Judicial Branch Employee Policies and Procedures, Sexual Harassment, and Ethics.

## Operational Cross-Training and Efficiency

Ms. Cassandra Little provided training to Peacemaking staff on completing Travel Authorization forms and supplied a reference guide for continued use. The cross-training was successful, allowing staff to confidently complete travel documents without reliance on an Office Technician, improving operational efficiency.

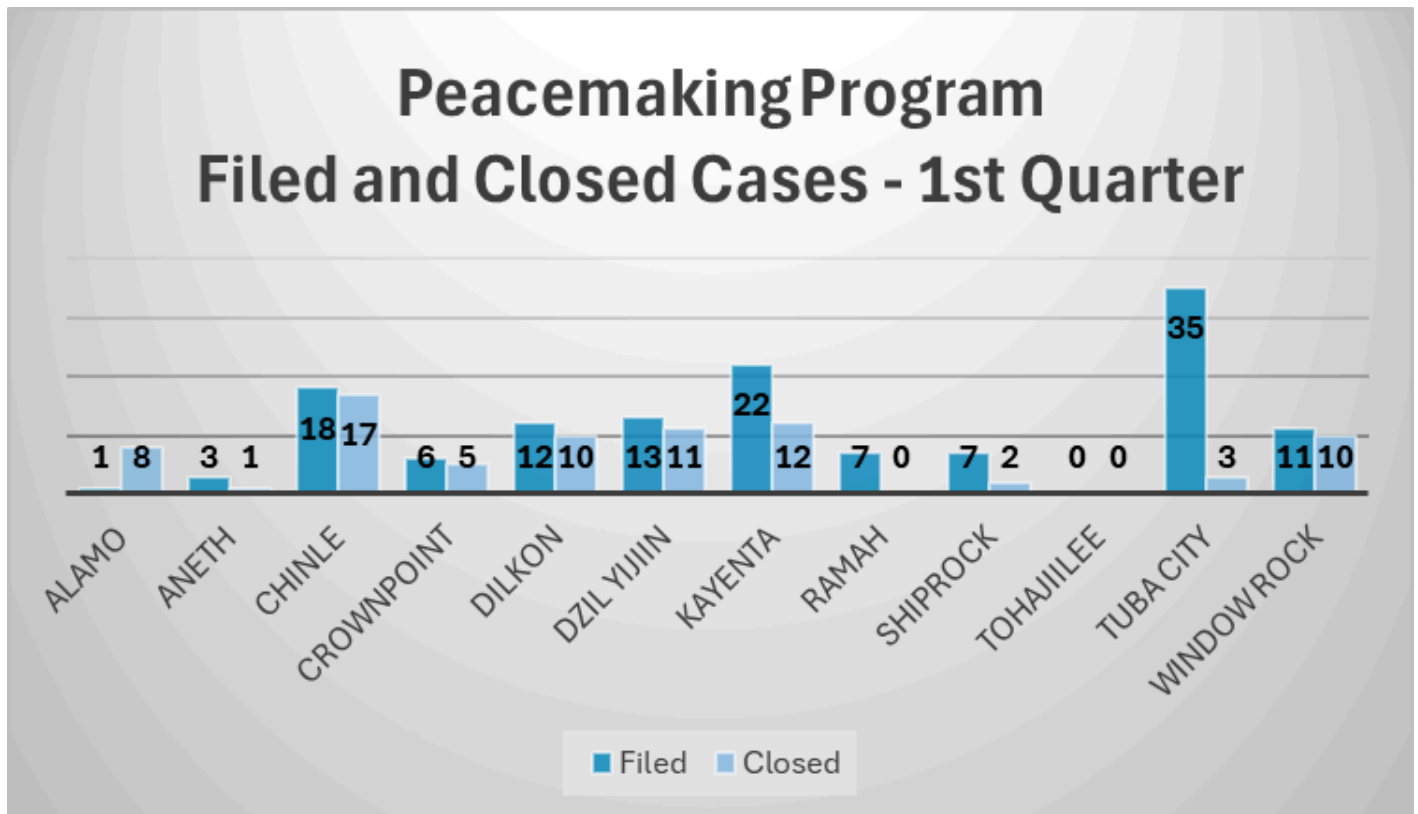
## Outreach and Legal Education

On October 24, 2025, a virtual presentation on Diné Fundamental Law was delivered to the ASU–CLE Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law. The presentation was well received, and feedback from participants highlighted the importance of increased use of Peacemaking services for Diné clients.

## Cultural Engagement and Staff Recognition

The Peacemaking Program's Thanksgiving and Christmas Luncheon was held on December 12, 2025, at the Tuba City office for program staff and peacemakers. The event included presentations on local chapters, areas of significance, and cultural stories. Mr. Alfonso Nez shared traditional teachings on the meaning of Thanksgiving and Christmas, incorporating the principles of K'é. Words of encouragement and appreciation were also shared by Mr. Harvey, which were warmly received by staff.

# PEACEMAKING PROGRAM



# 109

## PENDING CASES

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

# 55%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Peacemaking Program received a total of 122 new filed cases. The Peacemaking Program closed 68 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 55%.

# Probation and Parole Services

Navajo Nation Probation and Parole Services 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 Next Quarter

- Complete 2025 employee evaluations for PPS staff
- Begin preparation of the FY2027 PPS budget
- Finalize SOP revisions incorporating fundamental concepts
- Prepare and schedule next quarter's PPS staff training

## Strategic Training Planning

The Probation Services Program (PPS) Management Team identified and developed a FY2026 training proposal aligned with staff job descriptions and responsibilities. Training priorities focus on strengthening professional skills, addressing evolving social trends, and supporting effective probation practices. Management staff also participated in two online leadership trainings this quarter, including Understanding Trauma and Self-Care and Resolving Workplace Conflict.

## Quality Assurance and Performance Oversight

The PPS Management Team completed and reviewed the next six months of probation case reviews to ensure compliance with case management standards, quality assurance, and accountability. In addition, management provided training for both new and seasoned staff on the updated quarterly narrative reporting process.

## Departmental Growth and Staffing

Probation Services welcomed three new team members this quarter, including Probation Officers for Crownpoint and Dził Yijiin/Pinon, and an Office Technician for Window Rock. New staff orientations were conducted to support effective onboarding and integration into the department.

## Policy Development and Cultural Integration

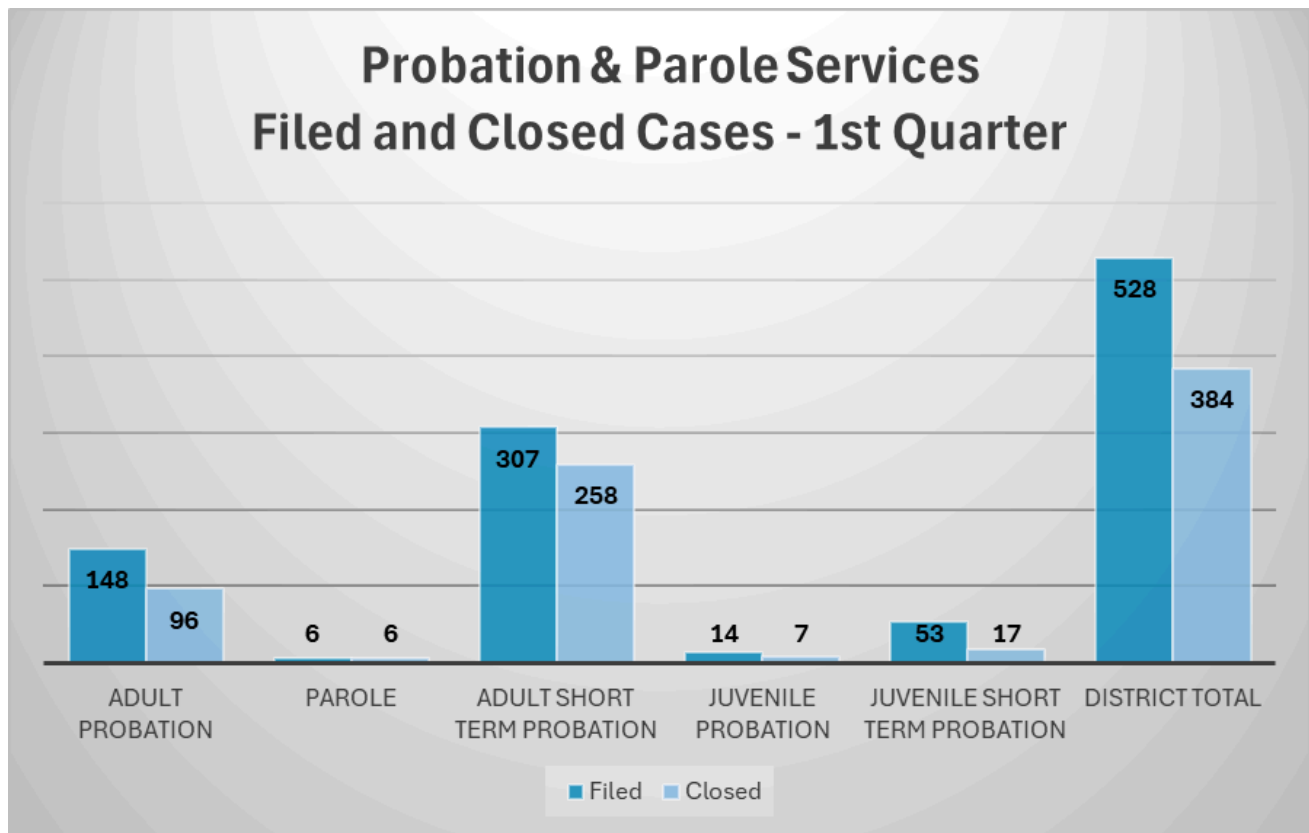
The Management Team is in the final stages of revising the Standard Operating Procedures Manual, incorporating Diné fundamental concepts and traditional teachings that emphasize life skills and values. Department-wide goals and objectives were also established, including the development of an internal training curriculum and the formation of probation committees focused on training, strategic enhancements, and policy revisions.

## Leadership Engagement and Branch Collaboration

Chief Probation Officer Lucinda A. Yellowhair actively participated in executive meetings convened by the Office of the Chief Justice, supporting transparency, communication, and alignment with Judicial Branch priorities. Probation staff also completed first-quarter training led by Kayenta Court Administrator Lavonne Yazzie, who provided an overview of the history, growth, and evolution of the Navajo Nation Courts.



# PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICES



# 1,047

## PENDING CASES

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

# 73%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, Probation and Parole Services received a total of 528 new filed cases. Probation and Parole Services closed 384 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 73%.



## Role of the Supreme Court

- 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
- Regulatory authority over the practice of law and Navajo Nation bar membership
- 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

## Role of the Judicial District Courts

Within a Judicial District, there are two courts: a District Court and a Family Court. Each court having separate and unique authorities and roles for resolving disputes.

### 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:

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

# Supreme Court

**Honorable Eleanor Shirley**

**Honorable William Platero** (temporarily assigned)

**Honorable Robert Yazzie** (recalled)

## 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.



## Bar Admissions and Professional Oaths

The Navajo Nation Supreme Court swore in and admitted six individuals to practice law on the Navajo Nation and formally admitted them to the Navajo Nation Bar Association, Inc., strengthening the legal profession serving the Nation.

## Judicial Appointments and Case Coverage

Chief Justice Eleanor Shirley appointed the Honorable Judge Malcolm Laughing as a Circuit Judge for the Tuba City District Court, Window Rock Family Court, and Chinle Family Court through Administrative Orders No. 62-2025, supporting judicial coverage and case management across multiple courts.

## Intergovernmental Engagement and Legal Education

The Navajo Nation Supreme Court conducted an oral argument in collaboration with the University of California Berkeley School of Law and participated in a roundtable discussion on Tribal Sovereignty and Jurisdiction with California State Judges, Tribal Judges, and Federal Judges, advancing dialogue and understanding across jurisdictions.

## Judicial Branch Leadership and Staffing

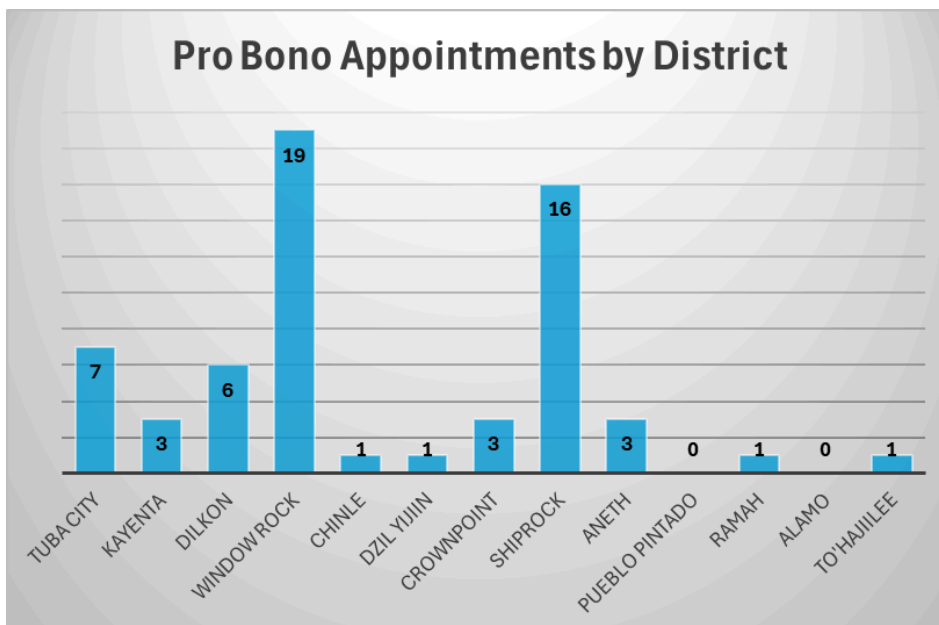
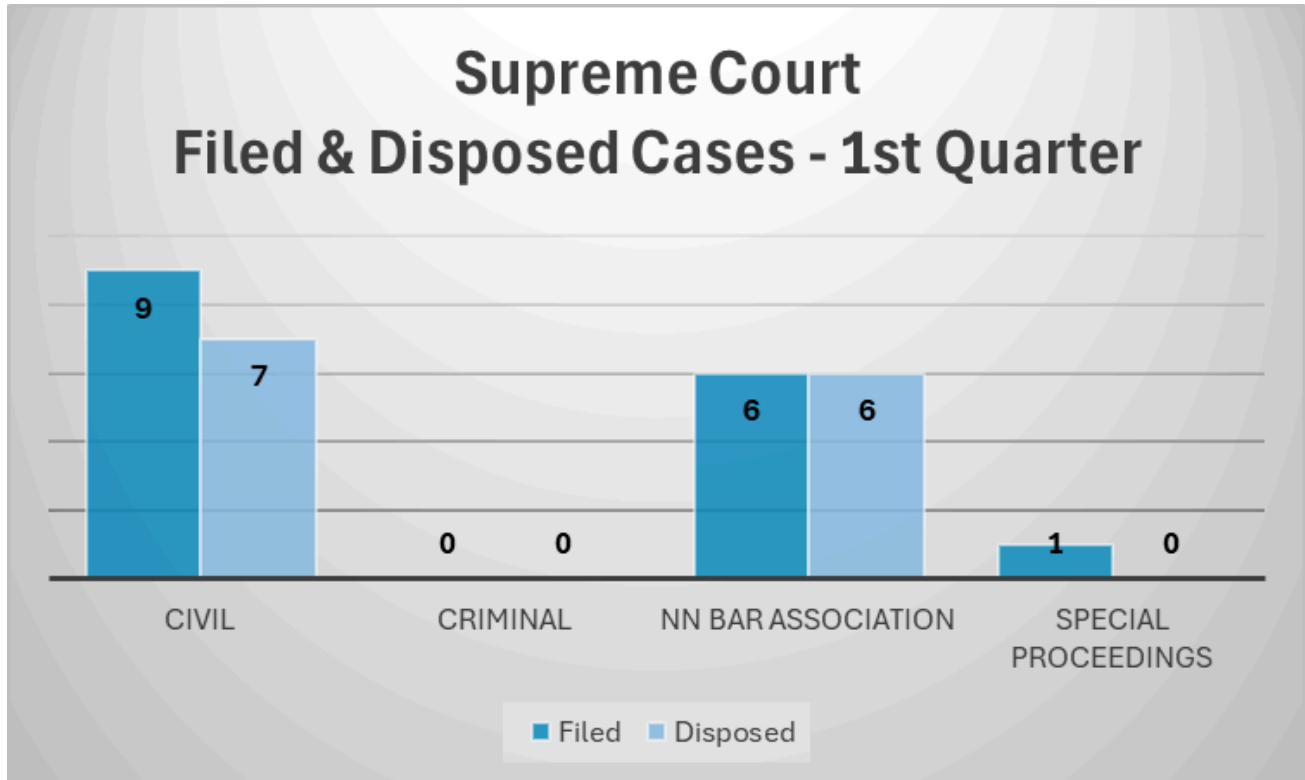
The Office of the Chief Justice welcomed Jordan Hale as Court Solicitor, and the Navajo Nation Supreme Court welcomed Bryan Curley-Chambers as Supreme Court Law Clerk, strengthening legal and administrative support for the Court.

## Oaths of Office

Chief Justice Eleanor Shirley administered the Oaths of Office to eight Navajo Nation elected officials representing all five agencies, reaffirming the Court's role in upholding constitutional governance.



# SUPREME COURT



# 61

## PRO BONO APPOINTMENTS

This quarter, the Supreme Court facilitated 61 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)

## 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 this 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 Assignment and Continuity

In October 2025, Judge Leonard R. Livingston of the Crownpoint District Court was assigned to also serve the Alamo District Court following the appointment of Judge William J. J. Platero as Acting Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. Judge Livingston's assignment supports continued judicial coverage and stability for the Alamo District Court and is scheduled through December 31, 2026.

## Staffing and Operational Support

The Alamo District Court custodian position became vacant following an employee resignation. The position has been advertised, with interviews anticipated during the second quarter and plans in place to fill the position thereafter to support court operations and facility needs.

## Cultural Engagement and Community Education

In collaboration with Traditional Program Specialist Annabell Pino, the Alamo District Court hosted a Winter Storytelling presentation that highlighted traditional hunting practices, the history of Alamo, New Mexico, Native food preparation, and the importance of K'é kinship. The presentation contributed to cultural awareness and community engagement within the court.

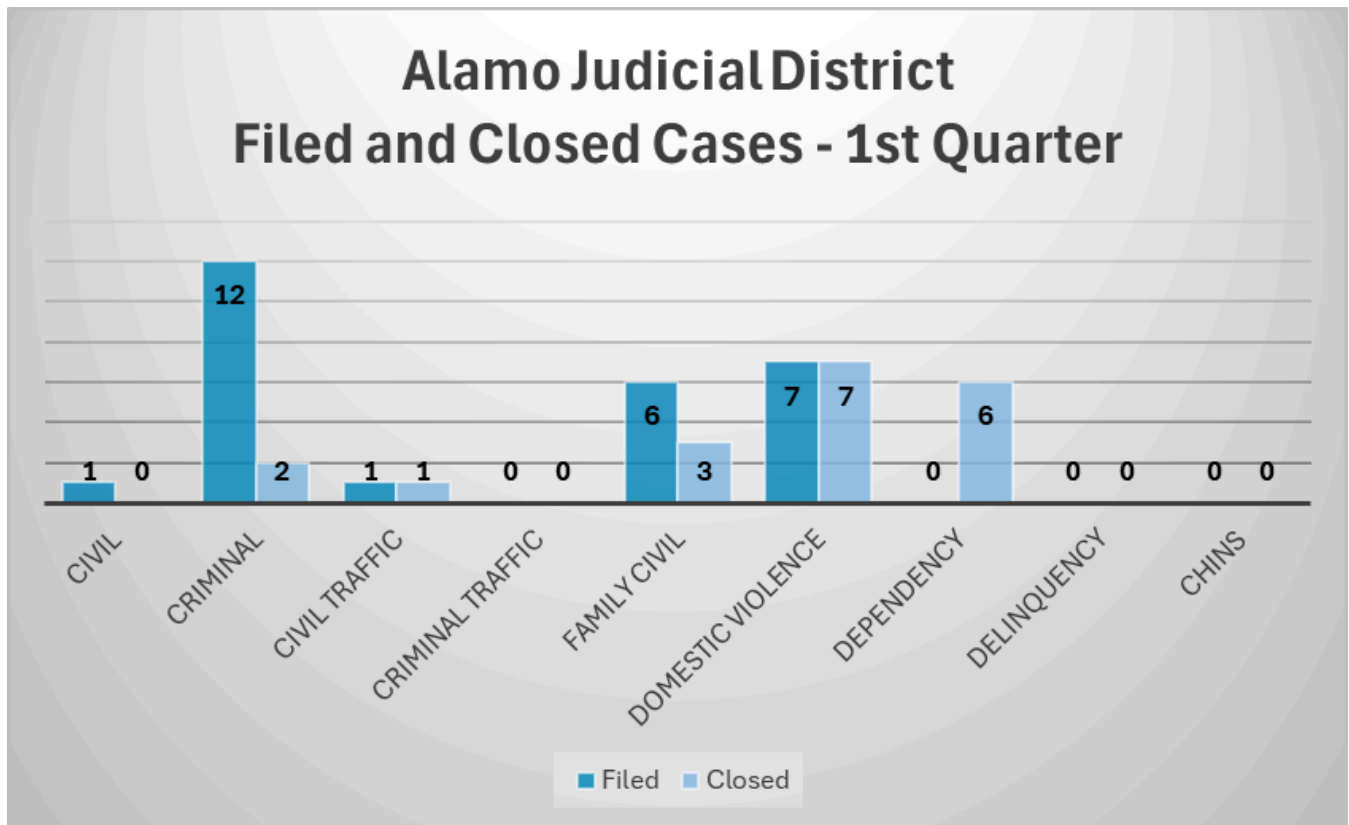
## Staff Development and Training

Staff development activities for the Alamo and Tohajiilee District Courts were successfully conducted during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season. In November, staff received training from Annabell Pino on applying K'é principles in the workplace. In December, Staff Attorney Alisha Thompson provided training on Emergency Protection Orders (EPO) and Temporary Protection Orders (TPO), enhancing staff understanding and professional knowledge.

## Facility Maintenance and Planning

The Alamo District Court continues to manage challenges related to an aging HVAC system. While ongoing maintenance services remain in place, long-term planning and budget considerations are being evaluated to support safe, reliable, and functional working conditions.

# ALAMO DISTRICT AND FAMILY COURTS



# 34

## 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.

# 70%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Alamo Judicial District Court received a total of 27 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 19 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 70%.

## Tó'hajiilee District and Family Courts

**Honorable Leonard Livingston**  
(temporarily assigned)

### 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 this 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 Assignment and Court Coverage

In October 2025, Judge Leonard R. Livingston of the Crownpoint District Court was assigned to also serve the Tó'hajiilee District Court following the appointment of Judge William J. J. Platero as Acting Associate Justice of the Supreme Court in Window Rock, Arizona. Judge Livingston's assignment to the Tó'hajiilee District Court is for one year, ending December 31, 2026.

### Staff Development and Cultural Training

Staff development activities for the Alamo and Tó'hajiilee District Courts conducted in observance of Thanksgiving were successful. In November, staff received training from Annabell Pino, Traditional Program Specialist, which focused on the application of K'é principles within the workplace. The session contributed to enhanced staff knowledge and professional development.

### Legal Training and Procedural Clarity

In December, during the Christmas staff development session, Alisha Thompson, Staff Attorney, conducted training on Emergency Protection Orders (EPOs) and Temporary Protection Orders (TPOs). The training clarified distinctions between petition types filed with the court and strengthened staff understanding of procedural requirements, contributing to professional development.

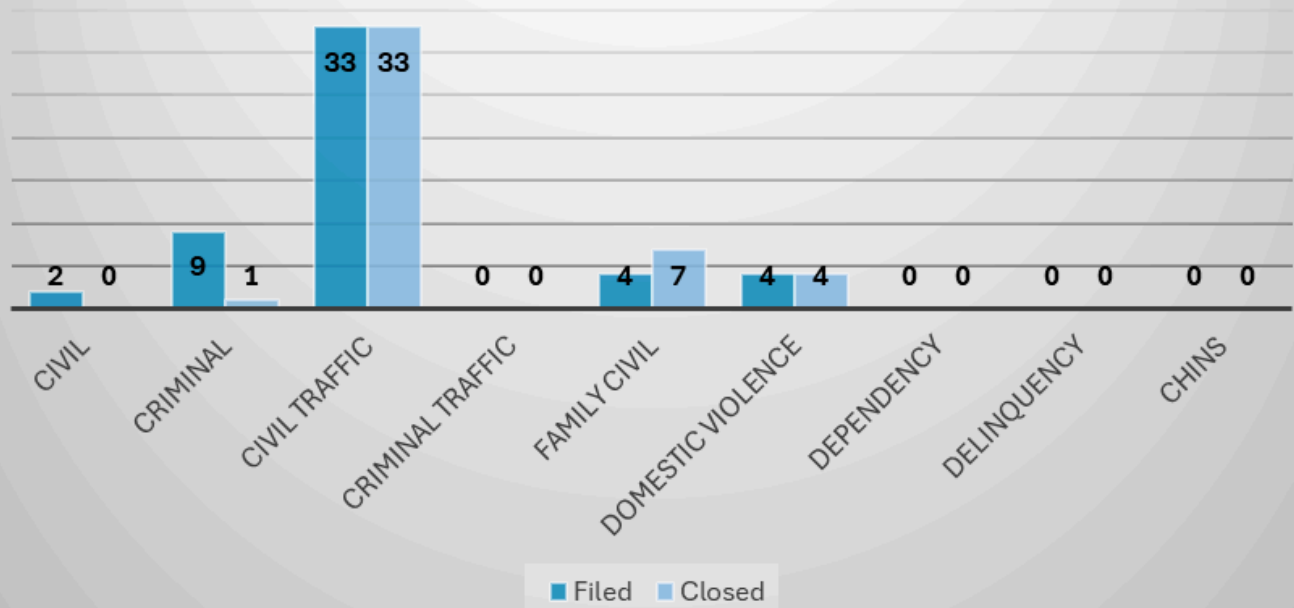
### Facility Systems and Planning Considerations

The Tó'hajiilee District Court continues to experience challenges related to an aging HVAC system. Despite ongoing maintenance services from Etsitty's HVAC Company, the 20-plus-year-old system remains unreliable and has resulted in heating outages in several offices. While funding is limited, long-term planning and budget considerations are being evaluated to support safe and functional working conditions.



# TÓ'HAIILEE JUDICIAL DISTRICT

## Tó'hajiilee District and Family Courts Filed and Closed Cases - 1st Quarter



# 65

### 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.

# 87%

### CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Tó'hajiilee District and Family Court received a total of 52 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 45 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 87%.

# Aneth Judicial District

## Honorable Irene Black

### 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 this 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.

### Aneth Court Building Project

The Aneth Court Building Project is officially underway following the selection of a contractor. Contracts were finalized with Keyah Construction, LLC, marking an important milestone toward the development of a new court facility in Aneth, Utah.

### Case Backlog Reduction Efforts

The court continues to actively work toward reducing its existing case backlog. While progress is impacted by the presiding judge's dual assignment to the Shiprock District Court, limiting availability in Aneth to Tuesdays and Wednesdays, case resolutions remain a priority during scheduled court days in Aneth.

### Staffing Enhancement

The Aneth District Court welcomed Mahlon Wigton as Staff Attorney. Mr. Wigton brings extensive experience in civil litigation, and his addition strengthens the court's legal capacity and supports long-term service to the Aneth Judicial District.

### *Objectives for Next Quarter*

### Fiscal Management and Coordination

The court will continue collaborating with the Judicial Branch Finance Department to ensure the prudent and responsible expenditure of general funds allocated by the Navajo Nation.

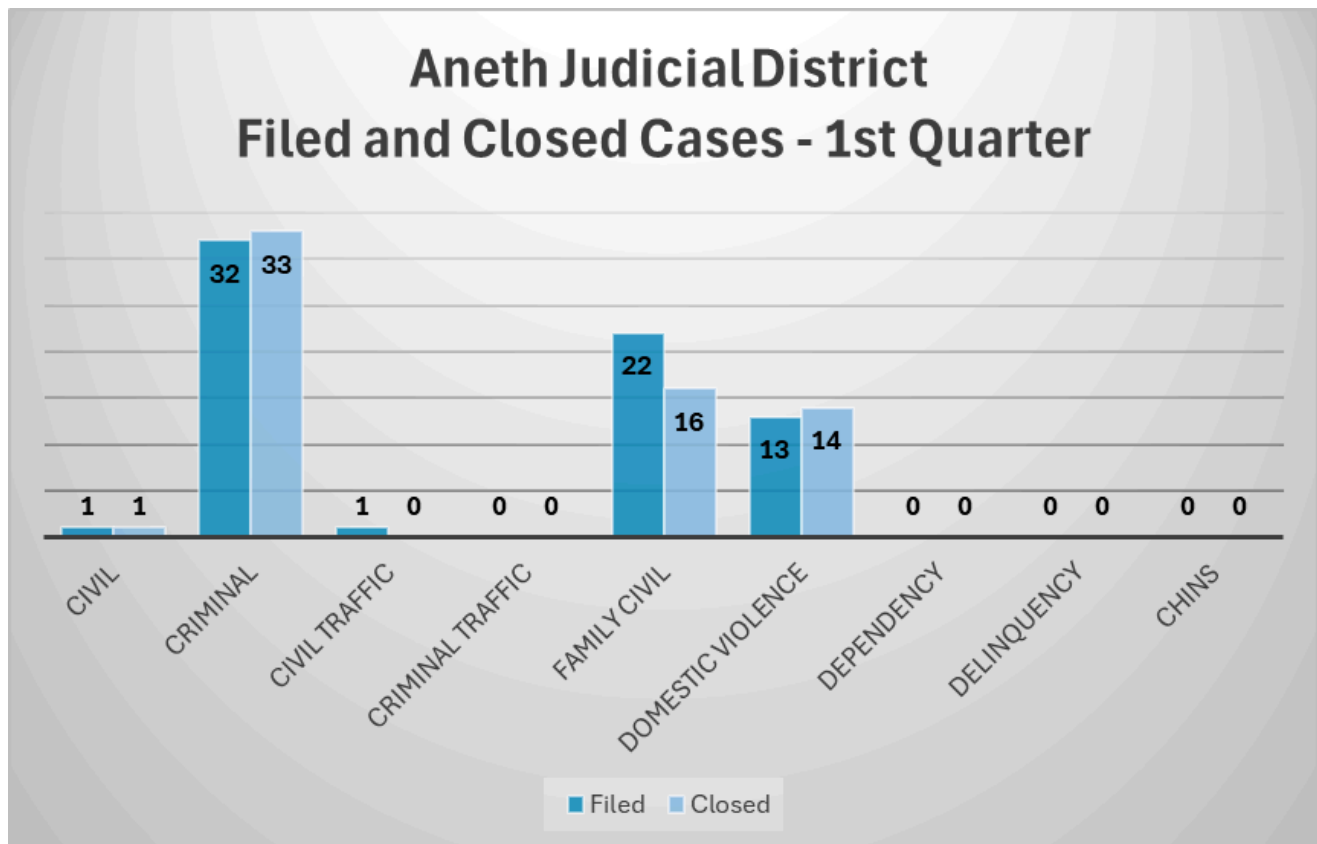
### Facility Development and Planning

Following contract finalization, the court and Keyah Construction will proceed into the programming phase and the development of construction documents for the new Aneth court facility.

### Data Integrity and Case Management Support

To improve data integrity, staff will conduct a comprehensive review of physical case files to ensure consistency within the JustWare system. Staff will also provide focused support to the presiding judge to streamline matters on the Aneth District Court docket.

# ANETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 334

## 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.

# 93%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Aneth Judicial District Court received a total of 69 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 64 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 93%.

# Chinle Judicial District

**Honorable Cynthia Thompson**

## **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 this 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 Leadership and Partnerships**

The Chinle Judicial District played an active role in two major community initiatives during the quarter. Through participation in the Save Our Student Initiative, the court supported collaborative planning for a spring conference focused on mental health awareness, student safety, and early intervention. This effort strengthens partnerships and expands access to support services for students and families.

The court also remained an engaged partner in the Reclaiming Our Community Initiative, working alongside the Chinle Police Department and Chinle Chapter to address community safety, health, and environmental concerns. The court's involvement supports coordinated problem-solving and a unified community response to local challenges.

## **Operational Adaptability and Workforce Support**

Despite challenges associated with the Dayforce payroll and timekeeping system, court staff demonstrated adaptability and commitment by continuing daily operations while identifying issues and seeking improved guidance and training. This ongoing effort supports accuracy, accountability, and long-term system improvement.

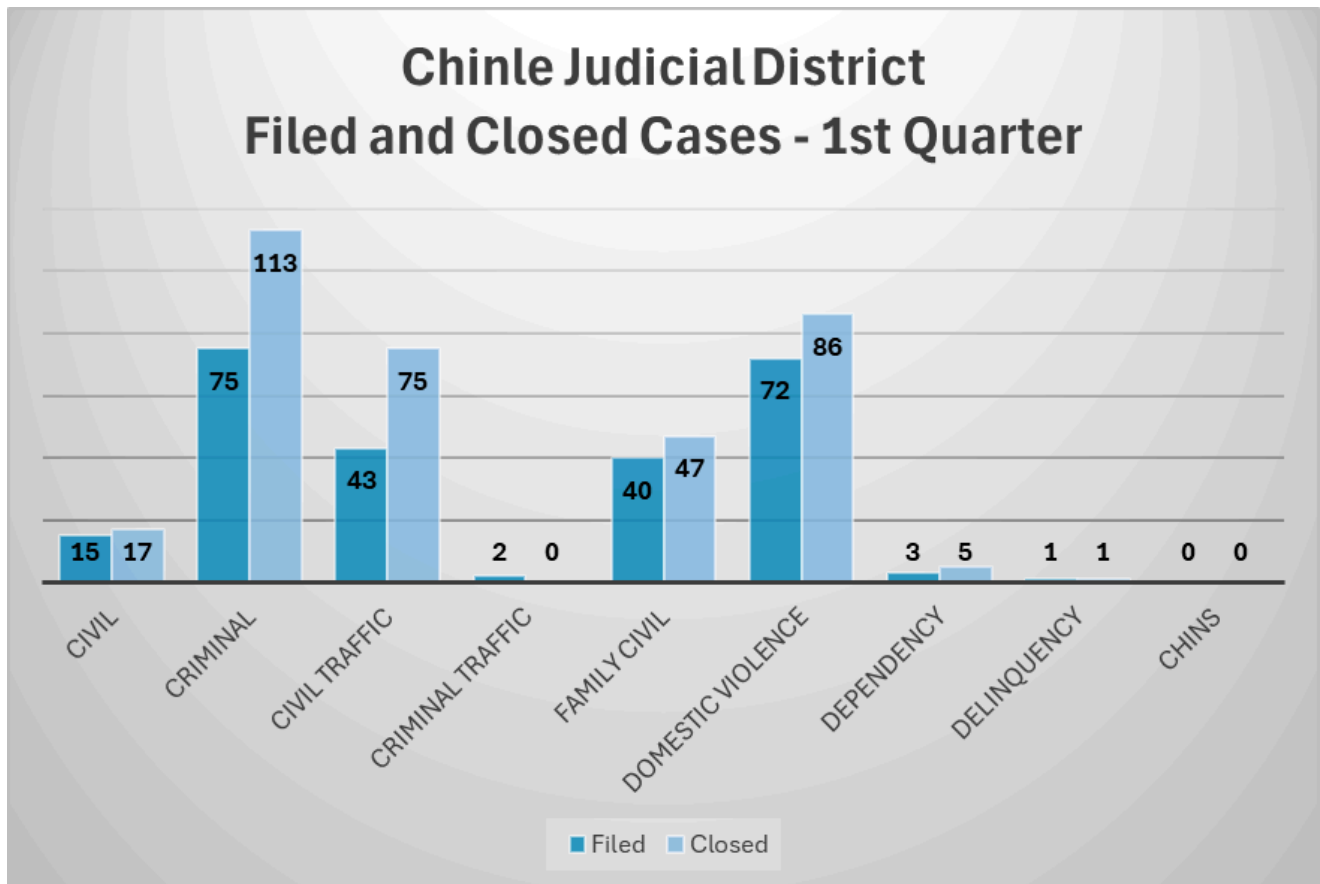
## **Facility Planning and Risk Assessment**

The court successfully completed a comprehensive building assessment with the construction manager, identifying critical infrastructure needs and prioritizing improvements related to HVAC systems, security access, cameras, and courtroom recording equipment. The assessment also established preventative maintenance practices to extend the life of building systems and reduce future costs.

## **Commitment to the Judicial Mission**

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 access to justice.

# CHINLE JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 698

## 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.

# 137%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Chinle Judicial District Court received a total of 251 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 344 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 137%.



# Crownpoint Judicial District

## Honorable Leonard Livingston

### 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 this 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

During the fourth quarter of FY2025, the Crownpoint Judicial District and Family Court closed 300 cases, demonstrating continued efficiency in case management. In addition, in-person hearings conducted by the Judicial Hearing Officer for Domestic Violence and Alchini Bibeehaz'aanii (ABBA) Dependency (Shelter Care) cases resulted in 89 additional case closures. Court operations were further strengthened with the hiring of a new Document Technician, currently completing a 90-day probationary period.

### Transparency

Court staff participated in meetings and training focused on court development, public education, self-help services, and access to justice. Trainings completed this quarter included Dayforce system implementation, new employee orientation, E-Filing System Assessment, Criminal Law and Procedure, and Courtroom Security Threat Awareness for Bailiffs.

### Facility

The court maintained regular coordination with BIA Facility Maintenance to address facility needs. Installation of safety bollards and upgrades to security camera systems are currently underway to enhance court security.

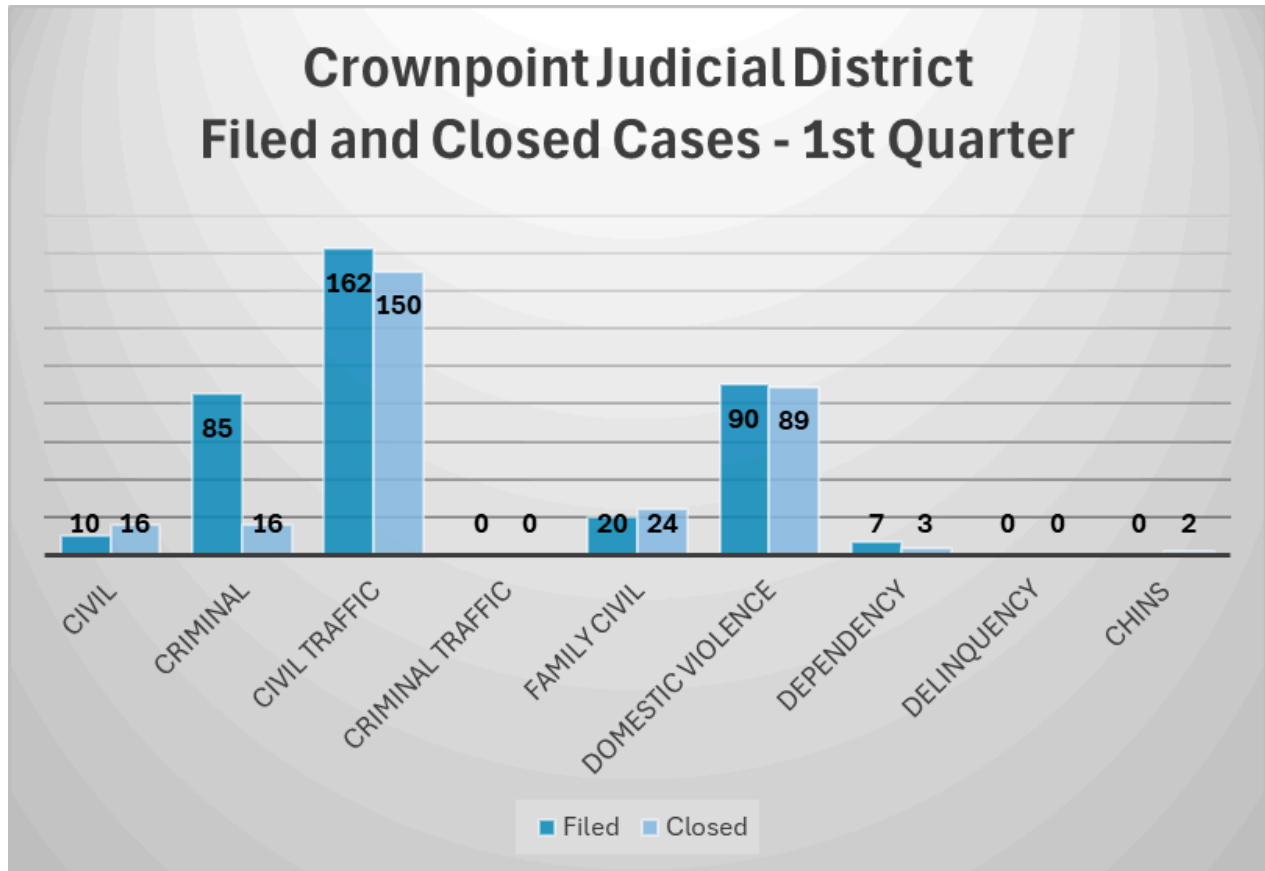
### Challenges

Ongoing internet connectivity issues continue to affect operations, requiring consideration of backup solutions. Additional needs include upgraded courtroom audio equipment to support effective communication and equitable access to justice. Demolition of the old Crownpoint Courthouse and Judicial Housing Complex remains a priority to reduce liability and support future development.

### Future Trends

Looking ahead, the court will continue close coordination with the Administrative Office of the Courts to support major facility projects, personnel hiring and retention, increased case closures, strengthened partnerships with justice system stakeholders, and mandatory staff trainings focused on safety and court operations.

# CROWNPOINT JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 1,017

## 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.

# 80%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Crownpoint Judicial District Court received a total of 374 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 300 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 80%.

# Dilkon Judicial District

**Honorable Victor Clyde**

## 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 this 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 Backlog Improvement

Dilkon District Court staff continue to make progress on improving case backlog numbers as directed by the Chief Justice through proactive case management. This progress is reflected in the numbers, with more cases closed than were filed during the quarter. This remains a continuous goal each quarter.

## Training and Judicial Engagement

Several staff in-services were conducted this quarter. Court staff attended JustWare training, Judicial Branch E-Filing Listening presentations, and Dayforce trainings. The Judge attended a conference on Financial Statements in the Courtroom in San Francisco, California, as well as the Judicial Branch Judicial Conference for Judges, conducted Oaths of Office for a Private Process Server and School Board, and supported administrative case assignments with other judicial districts. The Court Administrator and Judge also met with the Chief Justice to discuss district concerns, communication, case management, and backlog trends.

## Staffing and Branch Coordination

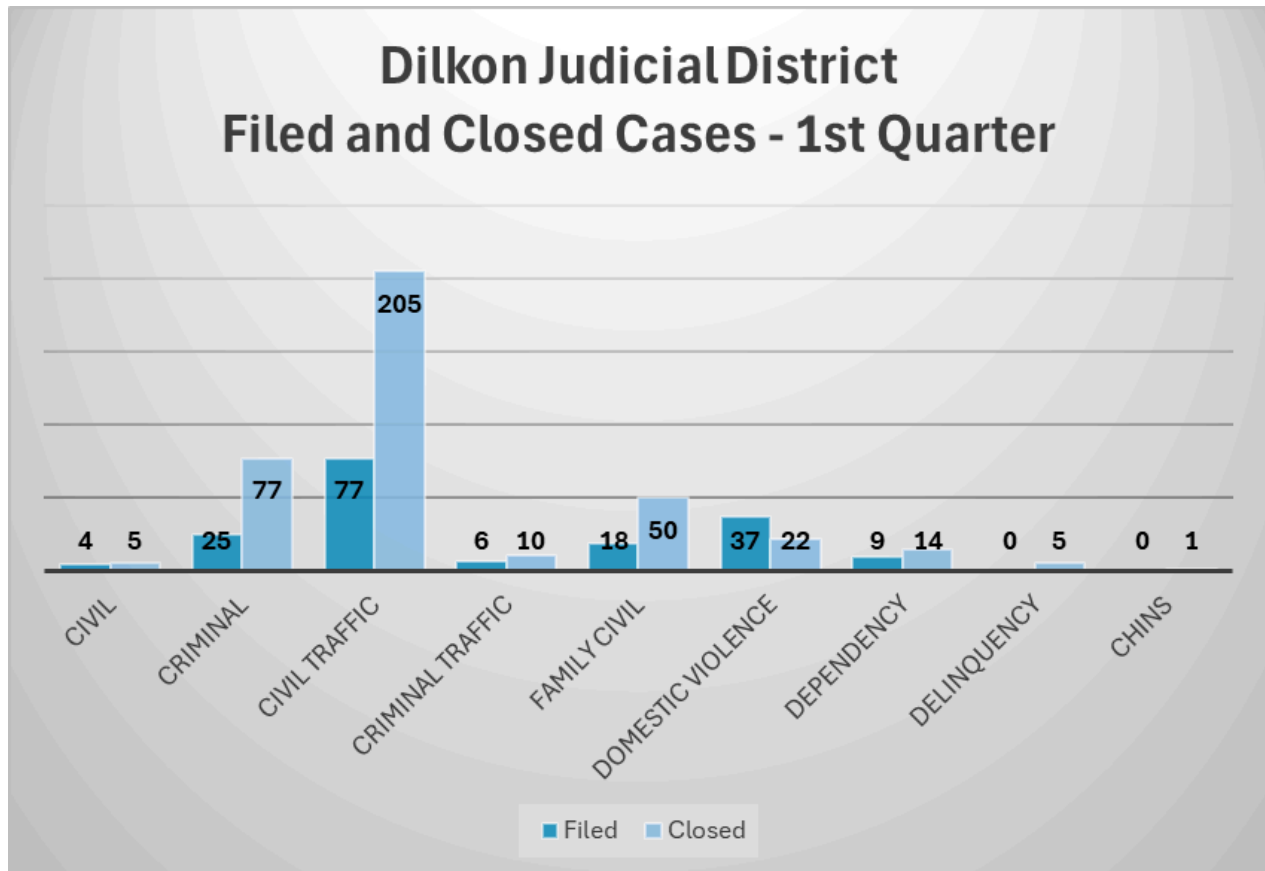
The Dilkon District Court successfully fulfilled vacant positions for custodian, court bailiff, and court clerk, strengthening court operations. Several internal Judicial Branch meetings were helpful and informative, including planning discussions related to the transition from Frontier to Sunstate telephone services, budget matters, and Dayforce implementation.

### *Challenges*

## Systems and Facility Considerations

The implementation of the Dayforce timekeeping system required an accelerated transition and continues to present challenges, highlighting the need for additional training. Fiscal and administrative processes remain time-consuming, particularly contract coordination; however, improvements are anticipated with new fiscal office assignments in FY2026. Facility challenges persist due to aging infrastructure, including roof leaks and HVAC issues affecting climate control. A roof repair project is currently underway.

# DILKON JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 3,384

## 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.

# 221%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Dilkon Judicial District Court received a total of 176 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 389 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 70%.

# Dził Yíjín 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 this 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.

## Expanded Judicial Access and Case Coverage

The Dził Yíjín Judicial District continues to provide comprehensive court services across a wide range of case types. To enhance access and efficiency, the Presiding Judge conducts hearings in person, virtually, and by telephone. In addition to presiding over the Dził Yíjín Judicial District, the Judge also supports other district courts and accepts additional assignments as directed by the Chief Justice. A Judicial Hearing Officer is designated to handle Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) hearings, supporting focused and timely case management.

## Staff Development, Training, and Recognition

In-service staff training continued throughout November and December, with emphasis on work ethics, customer service, and jury trial management. Staff were recognized with a small token of appreciation in acknowledgment of their hard work and dedication to serving the Court and the public. Staff also welcomed the implementation of the Dayforce system as a positive step toward improving workforce reporting accuracy and efficiency.

## Administrative Oversight and Strategic Planning

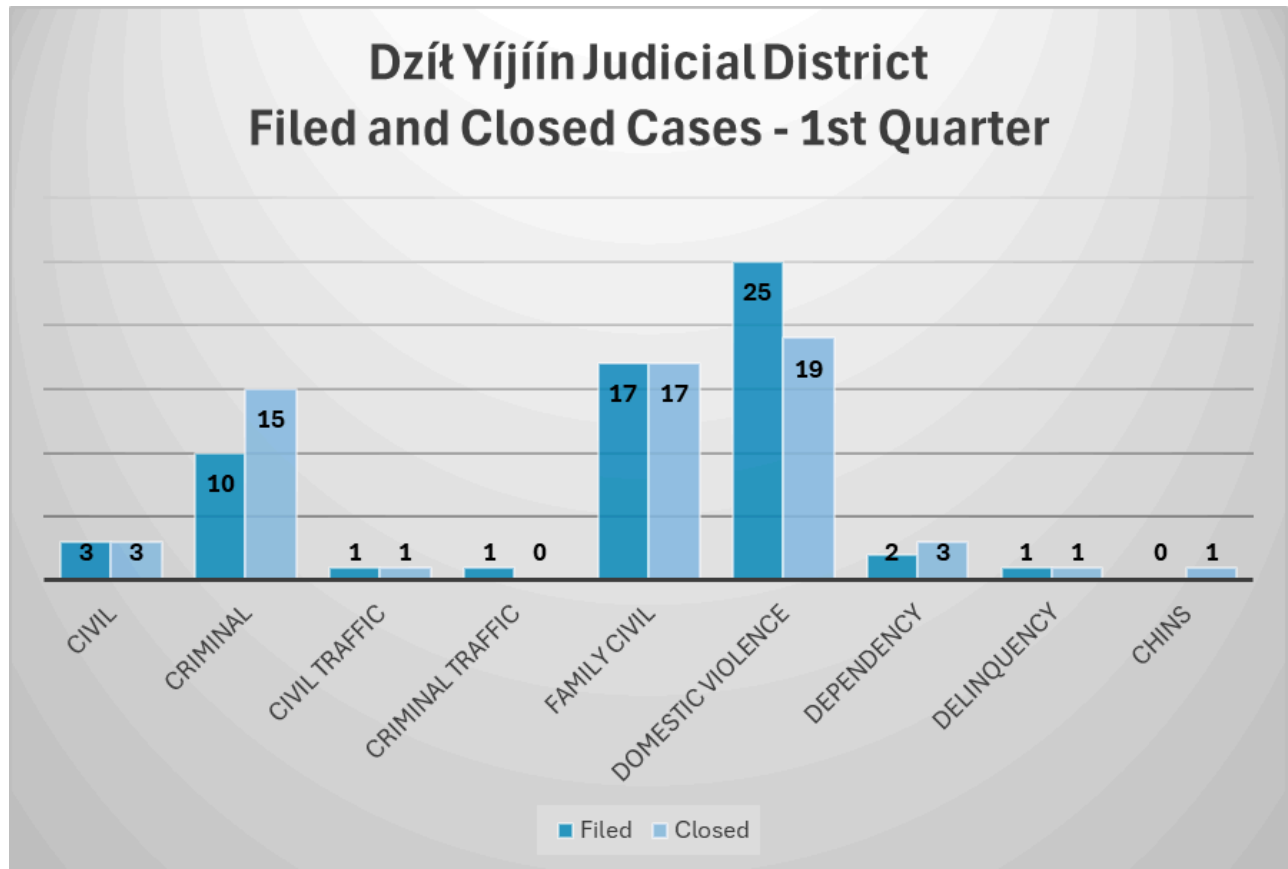
The Court Administrator continued to support efficient court operations through effective case management, weekly financial recaps, and coordinated staff oversight. She actively participated in managers' meetings, submitted the FY2026 budget aligned with strategic priorities, and met with the Chief Justice on December 8, 2025, to discuss key areas for improvement. The meeting also included planning for the use of the district's \$75,000 allocation to enhance public understanding and access to Probate and Quiet Title processes.

## Workforce and Facility Considerations

The district currently has a vacant bailiff position following the advancement of the former bailiff to a Probation Officer serving the Dził Yíjín District. In addition, the lack of perimeter fencing around the facility remains a security concern, highlighting the need for future planning to protect staff, visitors, and court property.



# DZÍŁ YÍJÍÍN JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 242

## 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

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Dzít Yíjín Judicial District Court received a total of 60 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 60 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 100%.

# 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 this 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 Complex Construction Progress**

Construction of the new Kayenta Judicial Complex in Kayenta, Arizona continues with regular monthly update meetings and onsite walkthroughs. The 16,937-square-foot facility is funded through Navajo Nation Sihasin Funds, the State of Arizona, and the Kayenta Township Commission. The project remains on track, with completion anticipated in summer 2026.

## **Staff Training and Professional Development**

All district court staff participated in Criminal Law and Procedures training on October 17, 2025. The online course, facilitated by Crownpoint District Staff Attorney Shawn R. Attakai, provided practical instruction directly applicable to staff daily duties and responsibilities.

## **Court Security Certification**

Bailiffs Brandyn Benallie and Chaston B. Yazzie successfully completed Court Security Officer Certification – Response to Critical Incidents and Emergency Planning training held December 1–5, 2025. Both bailiffs passed the required examination and earned certification, strengthening court security and emergency preparedness.

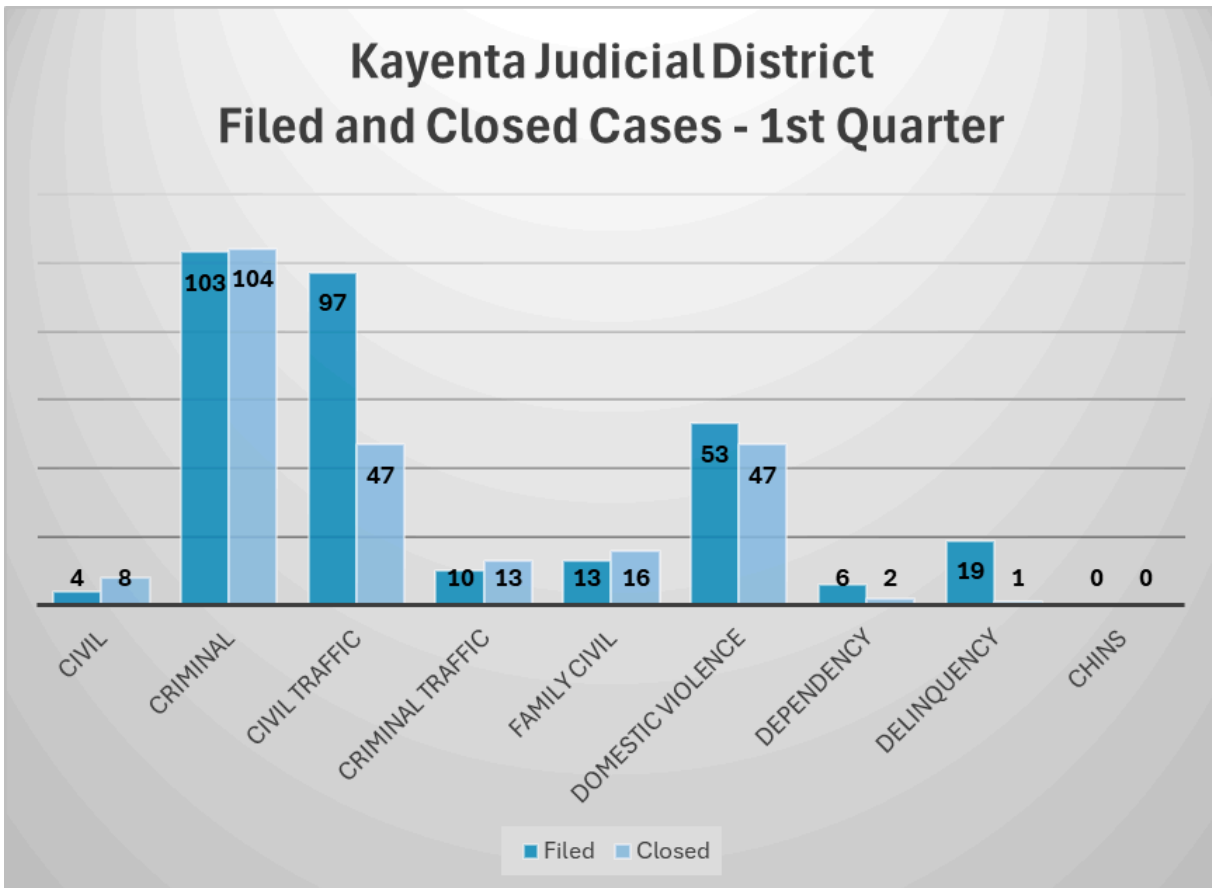
## **Judicial Outreach and Community Service**

Judge Letitia M. Stover administered the Oath of Office to six newly appointed School Board and Black Mesa Review Board members on December 12, 2025, in Kayenta, Arizona.

## **Inter-Branch Training and Knowledge Sharing**

Court Administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie provided training on History of the Navajo Nation Courts and Case Management for probation staff on December 19, 2025, in Tohajiilee, New Mexico, supporting cross-program learning and collaboration within the Judicial Branch.

# KAYENTA JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 1,378

## 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.

# 78%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Kayenta Judicial District Court received a total of 305 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 238 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 78%.

# Ramah Judicial District

## Honorable Malcolm Laughing

### 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 this 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 Leadership and Court Operations

During the quarter, Ramah District Court Judge Malcolm Laughing was appointed as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Laughing continues to preside over Ramah District Court hearings on Mondays and Tuesdays and remains actively engaged in maintaining access to justice for the community. The Judge conducted hearings on essential matters, including District and Family Court cases and petitions for Domestic Violence Protection Orders, utilizing alternative means when necessary to manage caseloads efficiently. The court's focus remains on enhancing efficiency while continuing in-person hearings, case reviews, and arraignments.

### Staff Training and Professional Development

The newly hired Ramah District Court Clerk completed Court Clerk Training Parts I and II provided by Judicial Branch Training Manager Lahomah Bahe. The training enhanced knowledge in case management, data entry, court case processing, and court procedures. Additional court staff also participated in branch-wide discussions and planning sessions, including presentations related to the Dayforce system.

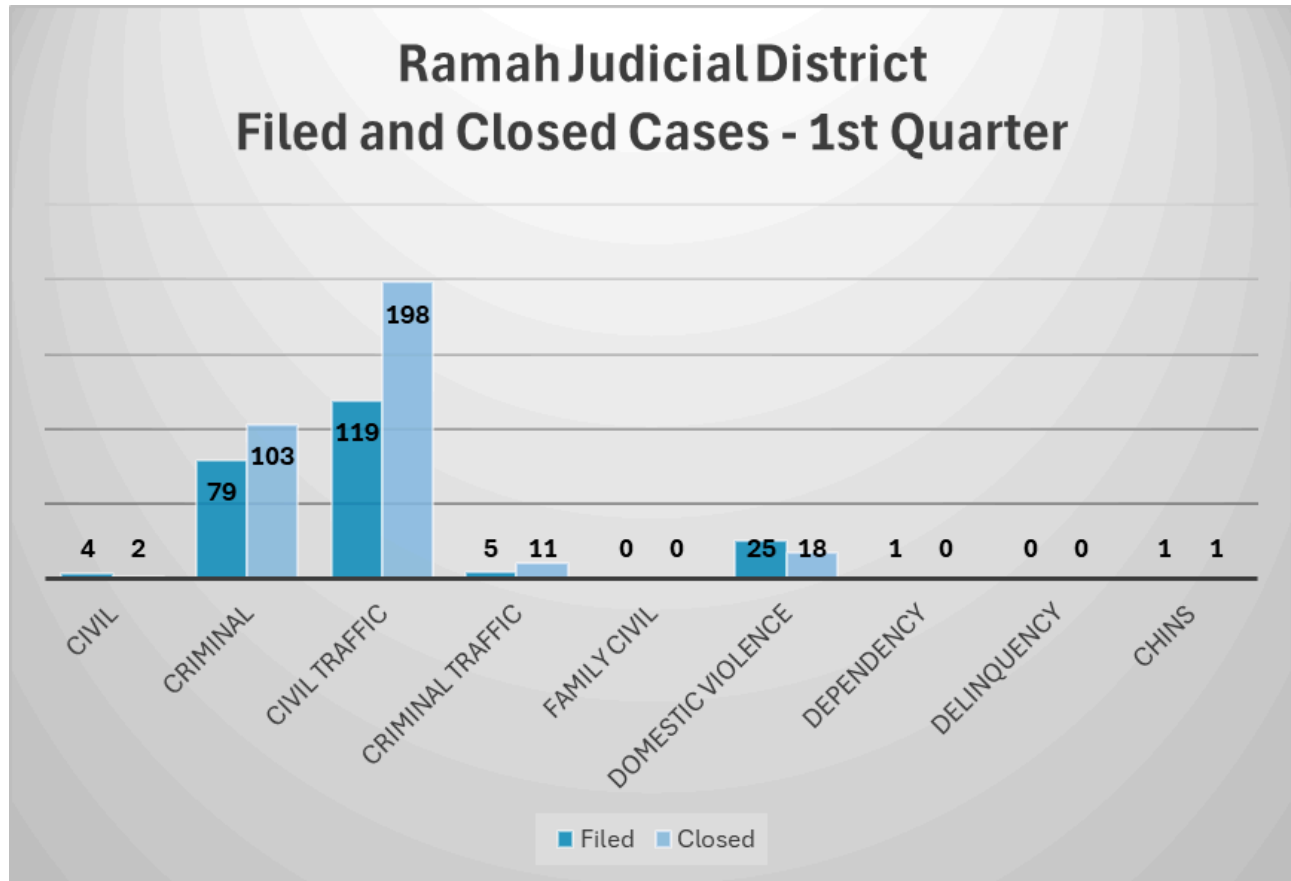
### Facility Assessment and Maintenance Planning

The Ramah District Court experienced challenges related to its HVAC system during the quarter. Facility concerns remain a priority for the Judicial Branch, and the Chief Justice directed Maintenance Manager Andy Thomas to conduct a site visit at the beginning of the quarter to complete a comprehensive assessment of Judicial Branch facility issues in coordination with court staff.

### Case Backlog Reduction

The Ramah District Court continues to make steady progress in reducing its case backlog through proactive case management, successfully closing more cases than were filed during this quarter and the previous quarter.

# RAMAH JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 407

## 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.

# 142%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Ramah Judicial District Court received a total of 234 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 333 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 142%.



# Shiprock Judicial District

## Honorable Genevieve Woody

### 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 this 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 Activity and Case Outcomes

During the quarter, the Shiprock Judicial District received 590 new case filings and adjudicated 440 cases, reflecting increased court activity and case resolution. District Judge Woody returned to full-time duties in November 2025, strengthening judicial coverage and supporting continued case processing.

### Public Access and Court Services

The Shiprock Judicial District continued to provide comprehensive services to Northern Agency communities through in-person assistance, telephone and fax services, postal mail and drop box access, online and call-in payments, family and district court filings, and visitor services. These efforts resulted in 8,523 total service transactions during the quarter, demonstrating the court's commitment to accessibility and public service.

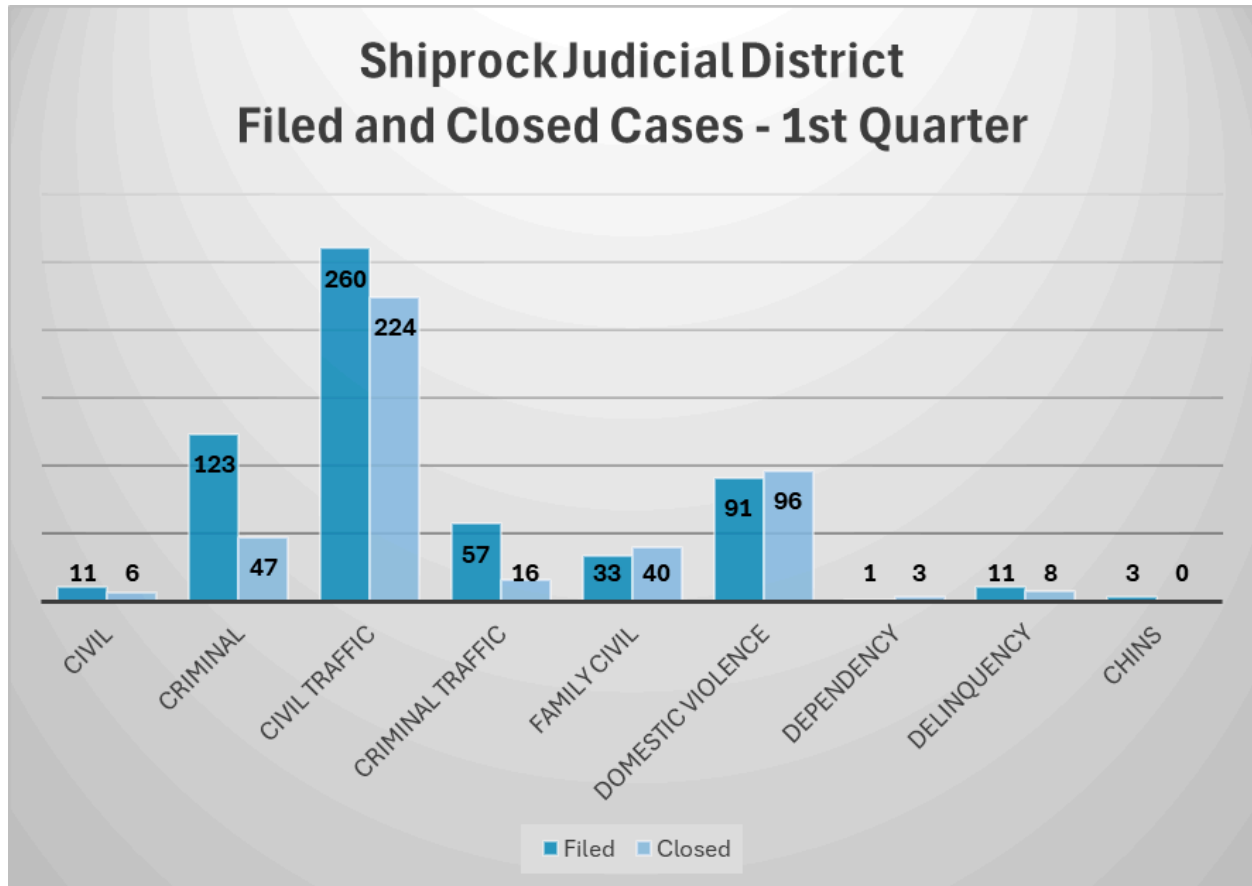
### Financial Performance

Court fines and fees collected during the quarter totaled \$7,952.00, with an additional \$100.00 in bonds posted. Community service work performed in lieu of fines was valued at \$4,457.00, and \$400.00 was collected in direct restitution payments, resulting in a total value of \$12,909.00.

### Operational Challenges and System Transition

The implementation of the Dayforce timekeeping system presented challenges related to limited training, incomplete employee profiles, visibility issues during virtual instruction, and payroll discrepancies following the system's launch. Staff continue to work through these issues while additional guidance and system refinements are pursued to improve accuracy and efficiency.

# SHIPROCK JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 983

## 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.

# 75%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Shiprock Judicial District Court received a total of 590 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 440 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 75%.

# Tuba City Judicial District

## Honorable Cecelia Tallman

### 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 this 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.

### Training and Professional Development

Court staff completed Domestic Violence training led by Staff Attorney Alisha Thompson, covering the Domestic Abuse Protection Act, Navajo Rules of Domestic Violence Proceedings, DAPO petitions, and Administrative Orders. Newly hired Document Technician Brannon Huskie completed new hire orientation and hands-on training with the Dził Yíjiiin Court, strengthening document and case processing skills.

### Judicial Education

Honorable Cecelia Tallman attended the National Judicial College Advanced Trial Skills for Judges: Managing a Jury Trial and completed additional virtual trainings on evidence, jury management, criminal law and procedure, remote hearings, Geoforce warrants, and digital evidence.

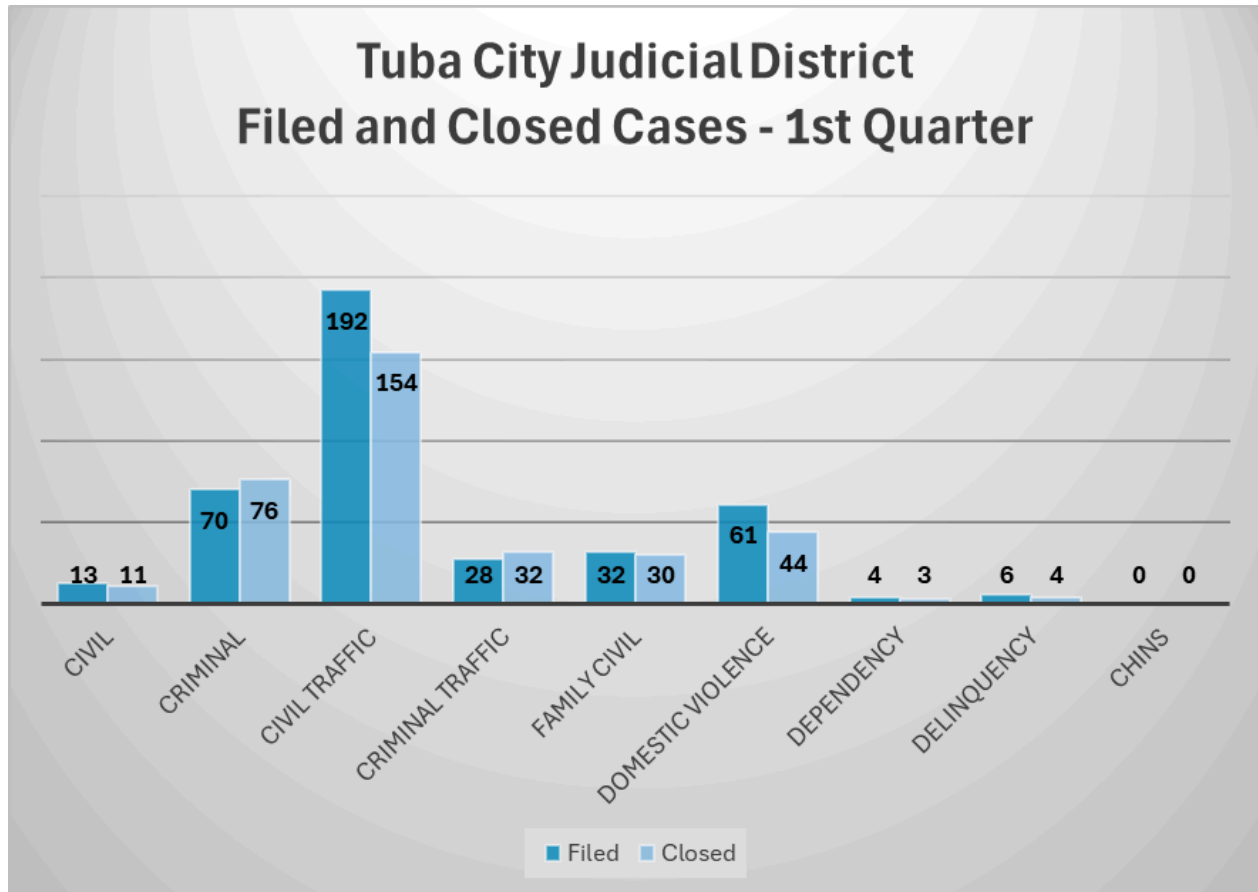
### Collaboration and Court Operations

The court hosted a community resource meeting with public safety agencies and community programs to strengthen coordination, with quarterly meetings planned for FY2026. Tuba City also hosted the Judicial Branch E-Filing Judicial Listening Session, featuring presentations by BerryDunn and participant discussion. Monthly staff meetings continued, including budget and travel training, and staff were recognized during Thanksgiving and Christmas luncheons.

### Access to Justice and Judicial Support

The court submitted a Probate and Quiet Title funding proposal focused on access to justice, transparency, and community engagement. Judge Malcolm Laughing was assigned as a Circuit Court Judge to assist with arraignments via Microsoft Teams, helping manage high caseloads. Inter-district collaboration efforts continue to address court clerk staffing needs while recruitment strategies are pursued.

# TUBA CITY JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 1,673

## 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.

# 70%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Tuba City Judicial District Court received a total of 406 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 354 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 70%.

# Window Rock Judicial District

## Honorable Malcolm P. Begay

### 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 this 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 Operations and Case Coverage

The Window Rock Judicial District continues to conduct in-person hearings, with the Honorable Judge Malcolm Begay presiding over all court matters except domestic violence cases. In addition to hearings, Judge Begay continues to manage workloads impacted by vacant positions, including responsibilities typically assigned to two additional judges, a Staff Attorney, and a Judicial Hearing Officer. The court's primary focus this quarter has been domestic violence, criminal, and dependency cases due to ongoing community needs, which has affected the scheduling of family civil matters. The court also welcomed Judge Malcolm Laughing, who presides over domestic violence hearings, providing critical judicial support.

### Court Security and Safety

The Window Rock Judicial District Bailiff successfully completed a week-long Court Security training and received certification on December 5, 2025, strengthening courtroom safety and emergency preparedness.

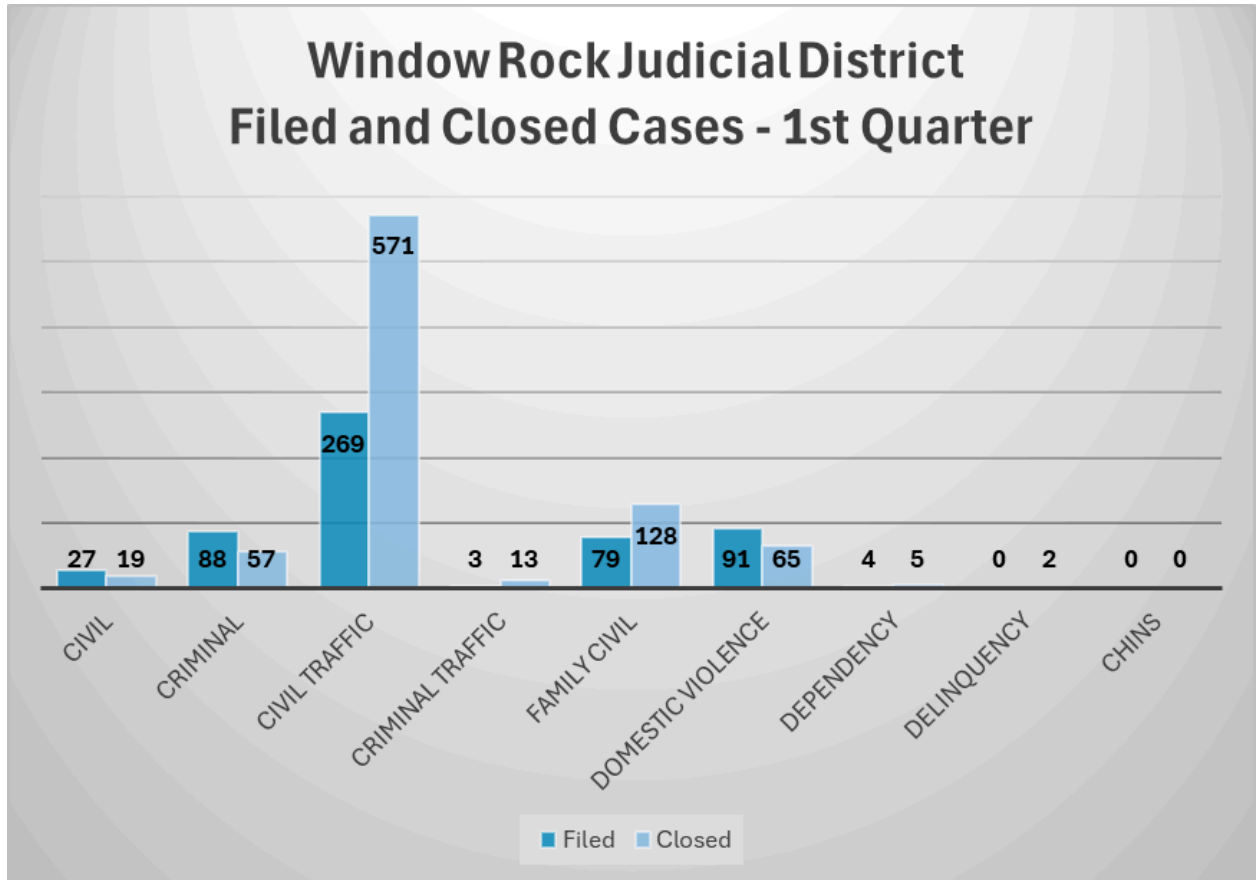
### System Modernization

The court transitioned to the Dayforce time management system, which includes workstation-based clock-in and clock-out procedures. While implementation challenges remain, ongoing online training continues to support staff adaptation and system improvements.

### Court Activity and Reporting

During the quarter, the court conducted 332 Family Court hearings and 181 District Court hearings. Court clerks are actively compiling case statistics for the quarterly case certification report covering October, November, and December.

# WINDOW ROCK JUDICIAL DISTRICT



# 2,391

## 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.

# 153%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Window Rock Judicial District Court received a total of 561 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 860 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 153%.



# Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court

**Honorable Leonard Livingston**

## 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 this 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

Despite the continued closure of the Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court during the fourth quarter of FY2025, the court closed 36 cases, demonstrating steady progress in caseload management. In addition, in-person hearings for Domestic Violence and Alchini Bibeehaz'aanii (ABBA) Dependency (Shelter Care) cases were conducted at the Crownpoint District Court, resulting in 22 additional case closures.

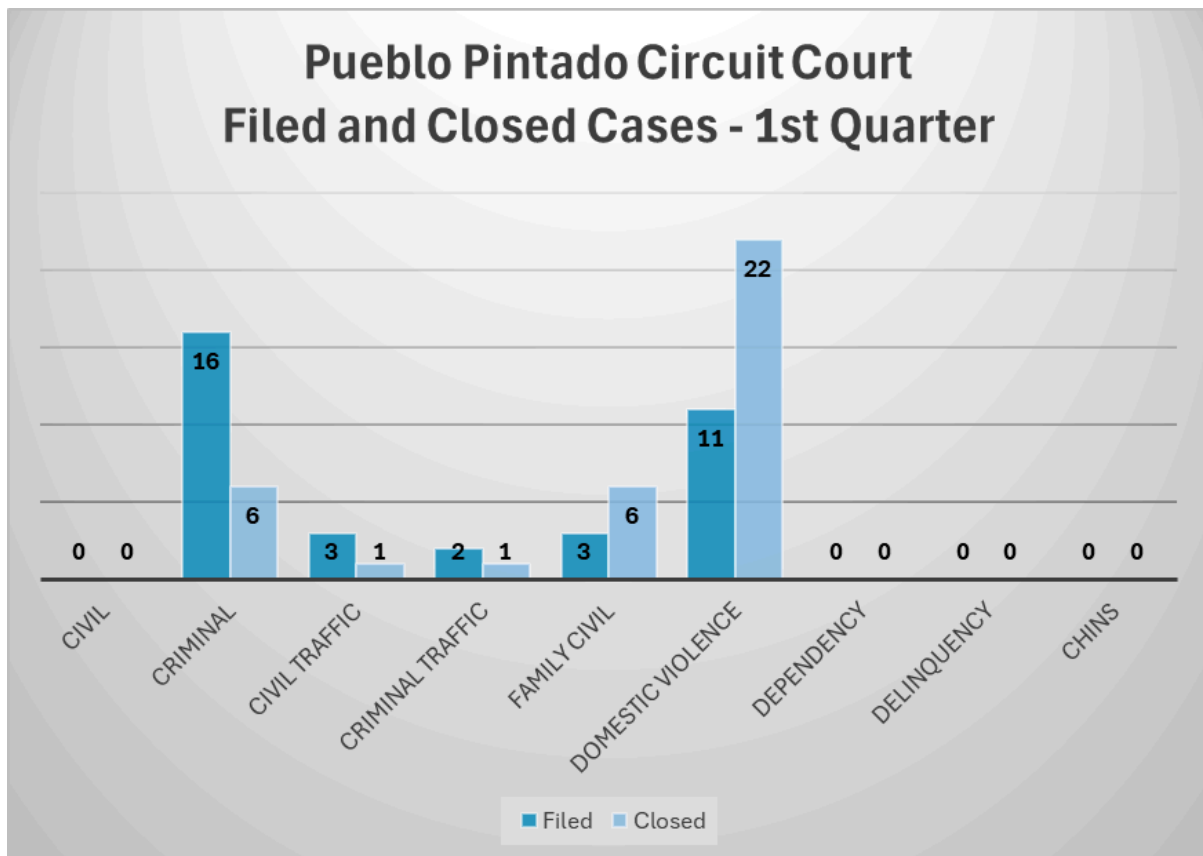
## Coordination and Operations

Crownpoint Judicial District Court administration continued coordination with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) on financial management, personnel recruitment, and vendor support for Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court operations. Preventive maintenance and building assessments are ongoing to support reopening efforts, though progress remains impacted by limited manpower. During this period, case processing and new filings continued to be handled by Crownpoint District Court clerks.

## Goals for the Upcoming Quarter

- Reopen the Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court facility
- Recruit and onboard staff to fill personnel vacancies
- Install security camera systems to enhance court safety
- Acquire updated equipment to improve courtroom operations
- Complete mandatory staff trainings for employee safety and court operations

# PUEBLO PINTADO CIRCUIT COURT



# 95

## 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.

# 103%

## CLEARANCE RATE

During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, the Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court received a total of 35 new case filings across civil, criminal, traffic, family civil, domestic violence, dependency, and CHINS matters. The Court closed 36 cases, resulting in a case clearance rate of 103%.

## Administrative Office of the Courts

### At a Glance

The Judicial Branch's Administrative Office of the Courts 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 primary role is to provide administrative support for all Navajo Nation Courts, Peacemaking system, 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

The Fiscal Services unit 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

The Information Technology unit 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

The Facilities and Maintenance unit 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, 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's Human Resources Unit provides the essential financial, budget, and procurement services to the entire Judicial Branch.

### Key services supported:

- Trainings
- Onboarding for New Employees
- Employee Relations
- Recruitment

Every day, the Human Resource team works to recruit and retain highly qualified staff. Providing onboarding for new employees and continuing professional development for current employees. The Human Resource team works with the entire Judicial Branch to effectively address human resources matters.

## Recruitment and Hiring

The Human Resources Team oversees recruitment, hiring, and onboarding for Judicial Branch employees. This includes coordinating selection processes, finalizing appointments, and supporting employee training, while also administering compensation and benefits in accordance with applicable policies and guidelines.

## Employee Relations

The Human Resources Team supports supervisors and employees by providing guidance on disciplinary actions, employee grievances, and personnel matters. In carrying out these responsibilities, the team applies Navajo teachings and values to promote fairness, respect, and accountability within the workplace.

## Operations and Administrative Support

The team manages daily human resources operations, including maintaining personnel files, processing new hire documentation, and coordinating new employee orientation and ongoing professional development opportunities.

## Policy Development and Modernization

At the direction of the Chief Justice, the Human Resources Team leads the development and revision of personnel policies and procedures to support the effective operation of courts and programs. As part of ongoing modernization efforts, the team is implementing and training staff on Dayforce to streamline and modernize human resources functions, including recruitment, onboarding, timesheets, and payroll processes, ensuring greater efficiency and consistency across the Judicial Branch.

# Fiscal

## Fiscal at a Glance

The Judicial Branch's Fiscal Unit provides the essential financial, budget, and procurement services to the entire Judicial Branch.

### Key services supported:

- Financial
- Budget
- Procurement
- Fund Management (including external funds)

Every day, the Finance team works with all of the courts and programs - with judges, court administrative, office technicians, probation and peacemaking staff to ensure all of the various courts and programs are provided highly professional financial support.

## Financial Oversight and Compliance

The Finance Team actively strengthens fiscal accountability across courts and programs by maintaining standardized financial practices, processing expenditures efficiently, and ensuring ongoing compliance with Judicial Branch and Navajo Nation financial policies.

## Streamlined Procurement Support

The Finance Team continues to facilitate and coordinate procurement and contracting actions, ensuring courts receive critical goods and services in a timely manner to support uninterrupted operations and public service delivery.

## Budget Development and Management

Working closely with the Chief Justice, the Finance Team actively supports Judicial Branch budget development, fund allocation, and ongoing financial management, improving transparency, district coordination, and alignment of resources with Branch priorities.

## District Allocation Planning: Probate and Quiet Title

The Finance Team is supporting judicial districts as they develop and implement district-specific probate and quiet title plans, with a focus on expanding public education and improving community access to court services.

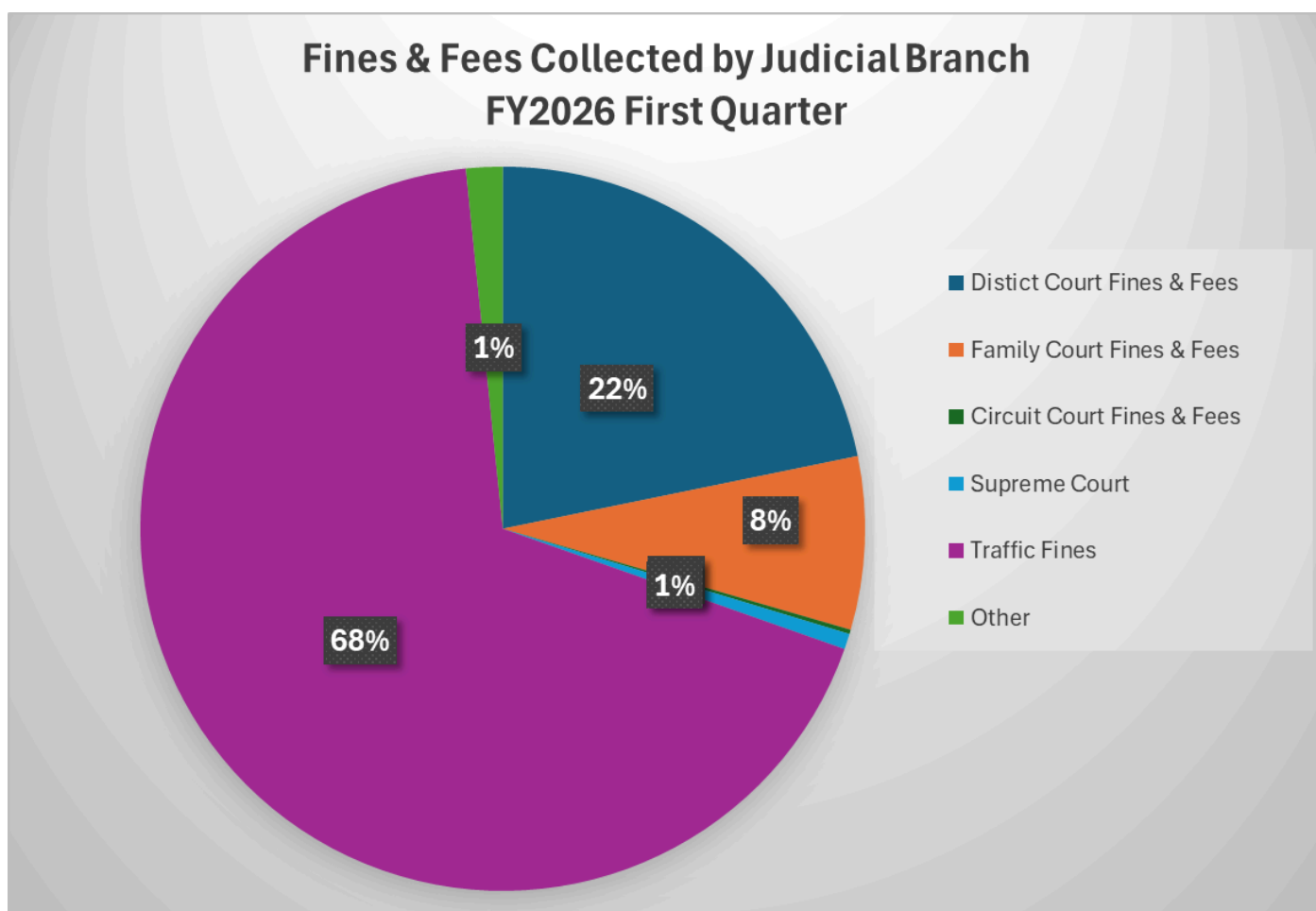
## External Funding Administration

The Finance Team is actively administering external funding for targeted initiatives and specialized court programs, coordinating spend-down planning, monitoring expenditures, and ensuring continued compliance with funding requirements.

## Fines and Fees

During the first quarter of FY 2026, the Judicial Branch collected a total of **\$86,683.34** 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's Information Technology program provides the essential systems and technical support that keep court operations running smoothly across the Navajo Nation.

### Key services supported:

- Case management systems
- Network and server security
- Computer and equipment support
- Training for court staff

Every day, IT staff work behind the scenes to ensure reliable access to digital tools and secure information. Their dedication strengthens efficiency, protects sensitive data, and empowers Judges, Court Clerks, and staff to deliver justice services effectively to the Navajo people.

## Website Development and Public Access

The IT Team collaborated with the Navajo Nation Department of Information Technology (NNDIT) to deploy a temporary Judicial Branch website, ensuring uninterrupted public access to essential court information. At the same time, the team is actively planning and developing an official, modern, and user-friendly website designed to better serve both the public and Judicial Branch staff.

## District Court Technical Support

The IT Team provided comprehensive technical support across all District Courts, including network infrastructure, digital recording systems, conferencing equipment, printers, hardware and software troubleshooting, Microsoft 365, DUO multi-factor authentication, and Justware system configurations.

## System Implementations and Training

Ongoing collaboration with BerryDunn e-Filing Assessment, implementing VoIP services for district courts, delivering Justware training, managing end-user accounts, and network planning meetings.

## Technology Asset Management

The IT Team established permanent networking and Wi-Fi infrastructure at the Window Rock Judicial District and initiated implementation of the WASP inventory management system. As part of this effort, staff are actively visiting judicial districts to conduct on-site equipment inventories using the WASP system.

## Objectives for the Next Quarter

Upcoming priorities include finalizing a contract for the new Judicial Branch website, completing pending IT service requests and Justware updates, continuing technical support for all District Courts and programs, and preparing computer equipment for new employees to support onboarding and staffing needs.

# Judicial Branch Facilities Projects

## Facilities & Infrastructure at a Glance

The Judicial Branch's Facilities and Maintenance program oversees the construction, care, and improvement of court buildings and infrastructure across the Navajo Nation.

### Scope of Work:

- Planning and managing new construction projects
- Overseeing renovations and facility upgrades
- Coordinating infrastructure development such as utilities and site improvements
- Ensuring compliance with building codes and safety standards
- Supporting long-term sustainability of Judicial Branch facilities

Through this 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.

## Kayenta Judicial Complex

Work at the Kayenta Judicial Complex continues to progress, with structural (shell) construction and the installation of underground utilities, including sewer and water systems, well underway. Construction activities are approximately 50 percent complete, and the project remains on schedule.

## Window Rock Peacemaking Administration Building

The Window Rock Peacemaking Administration Building project is advancing into the next phase. Procurement activities are progressing, including required 164(B) reviews to update contracts. Construction documents and the project manual will be updated to comply with the 2012 IBC. Construction is anticipated to begin in March 2026, pending final contract approval.

## Aneth Judicial Complex

The Aneth Judicial Complex project is under contract with a design-builder and is currently in the design programming phase. Design completion is anticipated by the end of the summer, with construction expected to begin in Summer/Fall 2026. A project kick-off meeting and groundbreaking are scheduled for February 12, 2026.

## Ramah Judicial Complex

The Ramah Judicial Complex is currently in the 164(B) contract review phase. The design phase is anticipated to begin in Spring 2026 with the architectural and engineering (A/E) firm. Construction will be contingent upon available funding, with an anticipated start timeframe of Summer/Fall 2027.

## Judicial Branch Central Warehouse

The AOC Central Warehouse project has secured design-build funding. Procurement is expected to begin, and design completion is anticipated by the end of the summer, with construction planned for Spring/Summer 2026.

## Judicial Branch Facility Assessment

In addition to ongoing capital projects, a comprehensive Judicial Branch facility assessment was conducted across all court buildings. The assessment evaluated existing conditions, infrastructure needs, and operational deficiencies to inform future capital planning, maintenance priorities, and long-term facility improvement strategies.

# Key Terms

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

# FISCAL YEAR 2026 FIRST QUARTER REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2025-DECEMBER 31, 2025

JANUARY 26, 2026

