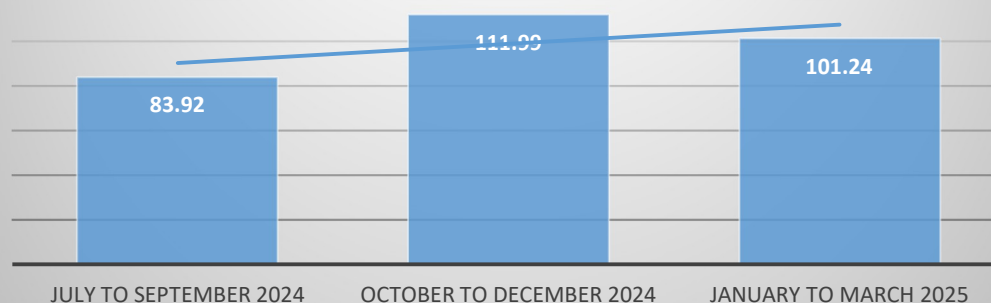


THE SPECIALISED FAMILY COURTS OF JAMAICA

(January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025)

SPECIALIZED FAMILY COURTS OF JAMAICA QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS CASE CLEARANCE RATE (%)



The case clearance rate measures a court's ability to manage its incoming cases effectively and is essential for preventing backlog.

The international benchmark for this rate is an annual average of 90% to 110%.

Prepared by: The Court Statistics Division with the support of the ICT Unit, Supreme Court of Jamaica, Kings Street, Kingston

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CHIEF JUSTICE'S MESSAGE FIRST QUARTER, FAMILY COURT 2025

The Family Courts are the primary deliverers of therapeutic justice. Its role is not so much the declaration of rights as it is to minimize family breakdowns and where that happens, to make the best provisions for the family members with a special focus on the child or children. These courts have carried out and continue to carry out that mission quite well.

Family Court cases, like all courts of the Judiciary, are managed under the shared mission to deliver justice fairly, efficiently, and in a timely manner, while differing in remit and subject matter from the Parish Courts. Although these courts are unique and are not based on the model of the normal Parish Court method to resolving issues, they are nonetheless held to complete cases within the established time standards set for the Parish Courts. The proposed case management tracks and time standards for Family Court matters are being developed in accordance with the laws governing the resolution of such cases. Where appropriate, unique standards may be applied within these tracks and are justified by the governing laws and supported by data. In this context, the data guides the identification of factors inherent in Family Court cases that, despite the best efforts, may contribute to delays. In line with the Judiciary's operational framework, cases extending beyond the 24-month period are thereafter recognised as part of the Judiciary's backlog.

Perhaps the time has come for the data to discriminate between the different case types to indicate the different times at which the case types are brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

It is now well known that increased efficiency and time standards in and of themselves do not necessarily and automatically lead to a diminution of quality. There is no evidence to suggest that reducing wait times for service delivery inevitably compromises procedural justice. While it is accepted that persons need adequate time to prepare to present their cases, this, without more, should not mean that there is unlimited time available to the litigants to get through the cases. It has to be kept in mind that a disproportionate amount of time on any one case means less appropriate time for other cases. Judicial services are not infinite and therefore must be allocated as appropriate to the needs of the particular case.

As we move forward into 2025 it my wish that these courts continue their excellent contribution and dispense therapeutic justice fairly, quickly, efficiently and effectively.

I thank the judges, staff, and stakeholders for the work done during this quarter. May they continue to strive for greater effectiveness.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Bryan Sykes, OJ, CD
Chief Justice of Jamaica

Executive Summary

The Specialised Family Courts in Jamaica play a critical role in advancing key performance goals established by the Honourable Chief Justice, aimed at positioning the Jamaican judiciary among the world's most efficient and effective legal systems. A pivotal target in achieving the strategic vision of backlog-free courts is ensuring that the net case backlog rate remains under 5%. Meeting this benchmark is not only crucial for enhancing court excellence but also instrumental in fostering a more conducive environment for business growth, investment, and broader socio-economic development.

A judiciary that minimizes delays in case resolutions is central to maintaining public confidence in the legal system, improving access to justice, and ensuring timely legal outcomes. The emphasis on efficiency is in line with global judicial best practices, which highlight the importance of reducing case backlogs to promote fairness and economic stability. Courts that operate without significant delays are better equipped to manage the increasing complexities of family law, protect vulnerable populations, and ensure swift justice in matters related to children, domestic issues, and support cases.

Moreover, a judicial system that effectively manages its caseload attracts both local and international investment, as businesses often seek jurisdictions with transparent and predictable legal processes. Delays in court proceedings can lead to increased legal costs, business uncertainties, and hinder the enforcement of contracts, all of which can negatively affect the business climate. Thus, the Jamaican family courts' efforts to meet and exceed these targets align not only with improving judicial efficiency but also with the country's broader economic ambitions.

Achieving a net case backlog rate of less than 5% reflects the judiciary's commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to the needs of citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders. As a service-based institution, the courts are key players in Jamaica's socio-economic development strategy, where efficient legal systems support stable governance and economic growth. In short, the success of specialised family courts in meeting these ambitious goals serves as a vital foundation for fostering court excellence, enhancing the rule of law, and creating a robust environment for investment and socio-economic progress.

In the first quarter, January 1, through March 31, 2025, the Specialised Family Courts of Jamaica, recorded a total of 2555 new cases filed. Case activity that was either disposed or inactive amounted to 2595 producing an overall case clearance rate of 101.57% (4.81 percentage points difference from the overall minimum established to eliminate case backlog within the Specialised Family Courts of Jamaica). The Corporate Area Family Court accounted for the largest share of new cases filed for the period (January 1, 2025-March 31, 2025) with 737 or 28.84%. St. James Family followed accounting for 733 or 28.68% of new cases filed and Westmoreland with 338 or 13.23%. The lowest share of new cases filed for the first quarter of 2025 were with the family courts of Trelawny 132 (5.17%), Manchester 160 (6.26%) and Hanover 166 (6.50%).

Classified among the most critical measures of court productivity and efficiency is the case clearance rate. Clearance rate measures the courts ability to manage its incoming case load effectively. This measurement is important in preventing case backlog; through, monitoring clearance rates, courts can identify and address potential backlogs before they escalate. If a court is disposing fewer cases than filed a severe backlog of cases is certain; that is, a persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually

lead to a backlog of cases in the court system. In the first quarter of 2025, the highest ratio of new cases filed to cases disposed among the specialised family courts in Jamaica was recorded in the Trelawny Family Court producing a weighted average case clearance rate of 151.52%. The Manchester Family Court ranked second with 117.50%, followed by Westmoreland with 116.27%, Corporate Area with 97.01%, Hanover with 96.99%, St. James with 95.23% and Chapelton with 83.04%.

The current rate of case clearance is influenced by both the efforts of the courts in case management and factors outside of the direct control of the courts. The overall weighted mean clearance rate of for the first quarter (Jan.1-Mar.31) satisfies the international minimum standard for this metric (90% - 100%).

Positioned towards reducing backlog, the family courts remain determined to maintain at minimum disposing as many, as the number of new cases being filed. To this effect, the specialised Family Courts in Jamaica continue to engage external parties and stakeholders in an effort to reduce the general incidence of delays brought about by factors such as the absenteeism of applicants and or respondents for hearings, outstanding scientific reports, among other reasons.

Table i. Aggregate Case Flow Performance Estimates for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Family Court	Number of new cases	Gross number of disposed cases	Gross number of inactive cases	Weighted average case clearance rate (%)
Corporate Area Family Court	737	697	18	97.01
St. James Family Court	733	683	15	95.23
Westmoreland Family Court	338	387	10	117.46
Chapelton Family Court	289	214	26	83.04
Hanover Family Court	166	159	2	96.99
Manchester Family Court	178	192	2	108.99
Trelawny Family Court	132	197	3	151.52
Total/Weighted Average	2573	2529	76	101.24

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured specialised Family Courts in the first quarter of 2025. It shows that a total of 2573 new cases were filed in these courts, while 72 became inactive and 2529 were disposed, leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 101.24%. The Trelawny Family Court recorded the highest overall weighted case clearance rate among the featured courts with 151.52%, followed by the Westmoreland Family Court with 117.46%, Manchester Family Court with 108.99%, while the Corporate Area Family Court recorded a clearance rate of 97.01% and the Hanover Family Court following behind with 96.99%, round off the top five courts in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table ii. Comparative Analysis of Actual and Forecasted Case Clearance Rates

Family Court	Forecasted QTR 1. Average Case Clearance Rate (%)	Actual QTR 1 Case Clearance Rate (%)	RESIDUAL	SQUARED ERROR	Absolute percentage Error
Corporate Area Family Court	109.26	97.01	-12.25	150.06	-12.63
St. James Family Court	97.52	95.23	-2.29	5.24	-2.40
Hanover Family Court	104.74	96.99	-7.75	60.06	-7.99
Westmoreland Family Court	104.09	117.46	13.37	178.76	11.38
Trelawny Family Court	98.58	151.52	52.94	2802.64	34.94
Manchester Family Court	95.62	108.99	13.37	178.76	12.27
Chapelton Family Court	0	83.04	83.04	6895.64	100.00
Total/Weighted Average	91.23	101.24			

The above table summarizes the actual and forecasted clearance rates, along with residuals, squared errors and absolute percentage errors for each of the Specialised Family Courts of Jamaica for the first quarter (January 1- March 31) 2025.

The Residual values present the difference between actual and forecasted rates and are important in determining the quality of the model. The residual values also serve as an indicator of how well the forecast aligns with the actual performance. Negative residuals indicate that the actual clearance rate was below the forecast while positive residuals indicate the clearance rate was above the forecast. The Trelawny, Westmoreland and Manchester Family Courts were the only courts that exceeded their forecast for the quarter and by extension were also above the international standard for this metric.

The Corporate Area Family Court had the largest negative residual. Other specialised family courts with actual case clearance rate considerably below the forecasted rate is the Hanover Family court.

The square mean error provide insight as to the magnitude of the errors without considering the direction. Higher squared values indicate larger deviations from the

forecast. The Trelawny Family Court had the highest squared error followed by the Manchester Family Court; here despite having surpassed the forecasted rate, the positive residual was large, and the differences amplified reflecting the large deviation from the forecasted rate for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Smaller squared errors were observed in the St. James Family Court and Hanover Family Court, indicating closer alignment of the actual rates with the forecasted rates.

The absolute percentage error expresses the accuracy of the forecast as a percentage of the actual value. Consistent with its large negative residual and high squared error the Trelawny Family Court had the highest percentage deviation from the forecast of 57.68 per cent, along with the St. James Family Court (34.94%) and Manchester Family Court (18.62%). The St. James Family Court had the lowest absolute percentage deviation; this suggests that the actual clearance rate for this court was closest to the forecast. This is also true for the Hanover Family Court (7.99%) and the Corporate Area Family Court (12.63%).

The overall forecast model is acceptably accurate and produced a good forecast of the case clearance rate for the Specialised Family Courts of Jamaica. The St. James Family Court had the closest actual and forecasted rates, which produced an absolute percentage error of 2.40%, the result of a highly accurate forecasted case clearance rate for the St. James Family Court.

The Trelawny Family Court, on the other hand, had the largest residual and squared error which produced an absolute percentage error of 34.94%. Though the model significantly over predicted the case clearance rate for the Trelawny Family Court, the absolute percentage error suggest that the model produced a reasonable forecasted case clearance rate for the Trelawny Family Court. The deviations between actual and predicted rates across the specialised family courts is indicative that, the courts'

performance is different from what was expected. Likely due to factors, including unique circumstances or challenges specific to individual courts, not captured in the forecasting model.

Table iii. Forecasted Case Activity Statistics for Second Quarter Ended June 30, 2025.

Parish Court	Forecasted number of new cases	Forecasted number of disposed cases	Forecasted number of inactive cases	Forecasted case clearance rate (%)
Hanover Family Court	171	161	4	96.44
Manchester Family Court	179	179	3	101.46
St. James Family Court	686	629	17	94.10
Corporate Area Family Court	677	678	21	103.17
Westmoreland Family Court	354	369	16	109.08
Trelawney Family Court	140	162	3	117.85
Total/Weighted Average	2208	2179	64	101.57

The above table forecasts core activity for the specialised family courts across the island. The forecasts are generated using the method of exponential smoothing which uses weighted averages from past observations with weights declining exponentially as the observations get older. See further explanation of the mathematical science behind the method of exponential smoothing in the glossary of terms.

The data indicates that the overall forecasted case clearance rate for specialized family courts in the second quarter of 2025 (April-June) is projected to reach 101.57%. This represents an increase of 0.33 percentage points compared to the actual case clearance rate of 101.24% recorded in the first quarter (January-March 2025). Additionally, all six family courts are expected to meet or exceed the minimum international standard case clearance rate of 90% during the second quarter. This suggests that these courts are making noteworthy progress in effectively managing their caseloads and moving toward equilibrium.

Methodology

The report covers the performance of the Corporate Area Family Court, Hanover Family Court, St. James Family Court, Westmoreland Family Court, Trelawny Family Court, Manchester Family Court, and Chapelton Family Court. Case data were categorized by type—criminal, family matters, domestic violence, child welfare, civil, and enforcement activities. The performance metrics are calculated using a weighted average approach, a measure of court performance based on caseload variations. In addition, the comparative analysis of forecasts with actual measures using squared error and absolute percentage error provides valuable insights into the accuracy and reliability of forecasting methods, facilitating a more comprehensive assessment of the forecasting model's performance.

Disclaimer

The numbers that are reflected in the case activity summary in the annual report may vary slightly from those quoted in the individual quarterly reports throughout the year due to occasional constraints with timely access to all records and other mitigating factors. Methodological adjustments may also result in slight variations in comparative figures across periods.

Introduction

The specialised Family courts, within the Jamaican judicial system, operate as comprehensive service hubs, offering on-site counselling, off-site referrals, extensive open court hearings, adjudication, and logistical support for payments and pay-outs, particularly in maintenance matters. Catering to diverse case types, including criminal, civil, domestic violence, and family and child welfare, these courts play a pivotal role in safeguarding the welfare of families, especially children.

The Judicature Family Court Act (1975) indicates the primary duty of the Family Court is to prevent family breakdowns and ensure the welfare of its members, particularly children, a mandate reflected in the multifaceted functions it performs. As outlined in the Act, the Family Court handles a wide range of family matters, including adoption, custody, maintenance, affiliation, juvenile care and protection, and divorce. This underscores the importance of the Family Courts in maintaining societal cohesion and promoting justice within families. Statistical reporting of the activities of the specialised family courts not only enhances this courts' productivity but also fosters public understanding and appreciation of its vital role and provisions.

The critical importance of the rule of law and the judiciary as principal components of a high quality of life is represented in Vision 2030 Jamaica National Goal 2 "The Jamaican Society is Secure, Cohesive and Just". This statistics report underscores the invaluable use of empirical-based knowledge in creating the Jamaica we want: "Jamaica, the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business". The report, provides insights into various case-related activities during the first quarter of 2025 and offers detailed insights into seven specialised family courts in Jamaica namely:

- The Corporate Area Family Court
- The Western Regional Family Courts
 - St. James Family Court
 - Hanover Family Court
 - Westmoreland Family Court
- The Trelawny Family Court
- The Manchester Family Court

Chapter 1.0: The Corporate Area Family Court

This chapter will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Corporate Area Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. It includes analyses of caseload, case type distribution and case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children's Court)

Table 1.1: Summary of Criminal Case Activity for Cases for the first Quarter Ended March 31,2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	10	4	1	50.00
Indictments	35	16	5	60.00
Summary	11	3	2	45.45
Petty Session	4	3	1	100.00
Total/Weighted Average	60	26	9	58.33

The above table shows the sample of 60 criminal cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Of these, 35 or 58.33% were indictment matters, 11 or 18.35% were summary, 10 or 16.67% were summary matters. There was a total of 26 criminal cases disposed while 9 became inactive during the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Of these, 16 indictment matters were disposed while 5 became inactive. There were 4 summary matters disposed and 1 became inactive, there were 3 summary and 3 petty session matters disposed. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 58.33% for these types of cases which does not satisfy the international standards on this vital metric.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children's Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Corporate Area Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	39	19	0	48.72
Uncontrollable Child	22	14	0	63.64
Total Weighted Average	61	33	0	54.10

There were 61 child welfare cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 39 or 63.93%, while the remaining proportion were uncontrollable child cases with 22 or 36.07%. A total of 33 child welfare cases were disposed of during the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 48.72% for child care and protection cases and 63.64% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 54.10%, which is below international standard of 90 and above on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for The Corporate Area Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Corporate Area Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under this broad case category included in this report are maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 1.3: Summary of Family Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	136	133	1	98.53
Declaration of Paternity	82	86	0	104.88
Maintenance	214	226	8	109.35
Total Weighted Average	432	445	9	105.09

The 432 new cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, revealed that Maintenance matters accounts for the largest proportion of cases filed (with 214 cases or 49.54%). This was followed by cases of custody with 136 or 31.48%. There were 82 maintenance cases or 18.98%. A total of 454 cases falling under the broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 445 disposed and 9 inactive cases. Maintenance cases accounted for 226 of the disposed cases and 8 became inactive while custody accounted for 133 disposed cases and 1 inactive case. There were 86 disposed access of declaration of paternity. This led to an overall estimated weighted average 105.09%, maintenance cases with 109.35%, while declaration of paternity cases accounted for 104.88% and custody cases recorded a clearance rate of 98.53%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, at the Corporate Area Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Corporate Area for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 1.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	171	178	0	104.09
Occupation Order	13	15	0	115.38
Total/Weighted Average	184	193	0	104.89

The data shows that there was a total of 184 new domestic violence cases filed in the first quarter of 2025 at the Corporate Area Family Court. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases which accounted for 171 or 92.93%, while cases of occupation order with 13 or 7.07% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 193 Domestic Violence cases were disposed of in the quarter. There were 178 protection order cases disposed of during the quarter, and 15 occupation order cases were also disposed of in the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 104.09% for protection order cases and 115.38% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 104.89%, which satisfies international standards on this vital metric.

Table 1.5: Sampling Distribution/Post Disposal Activity for the Corporate Area Court for the Quarter March 31, 2025

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Vary Orders	108	2	111	104.63
Disobedience of Maintenance	73	0	79	108.22
Total/ Weighted Average	181	2	190	106.08

Apart from substantive case activity, it is important to note that Vary Orders accounted for 108 or 59.67% of post disposal activity in the Corporate Area Family Court and the remaining 73 or 40.33% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) during the quarter. A total of 111 vary orders were disposed of while 2 became inactive in the period and 79 enforcements were either disposed of or became inactive producing a gross case clearance rate of 106.08% for these matters.

Chapter 2.0: The St. James Family Court

This chapter will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the St. James Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution and case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children's Court)

Table 2.1: Summary of Criminal Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	8	2	0	25.00
Indictments	13	15	1	123.08
Summary	11	16	0	145.45
Petty Session	6	2	0	33.33
Total/Weighted Average	38	35	1	94.74

The above table shows the sample of 38 criminal cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Of these, 13 or 34.21% were indictment matters. Summary matters accounted for 11 or 28.95%, while committal matters accounted for 4 or 10.53%. The remaining 6 or 15.79% was accounted for by petty session cases. There were a total of 36 criminal cases disposed of during the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Of these, summary and committal had 11 and 8 disposed cases respectively, while petty session matters and committal cases accounted for 2 cases each. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 94.74% for these types of cases.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children's Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the St. James Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 2.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	48	46	4	104.17
Uncontrollable Child	25	24	1	100.00
Total Weighted Average	73	70	5	102.74

There were 56 child welfare cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, the larger proportion of which were childcare and protection cases which accounted for 48 or 65.75%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 25 or 34.25% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 70 child welfare cases were disposed while 5 became inactive during the quarter. There were 46 child care and protection cases and 24 uncontrollable child cases disposed of during the quarter in the St. James Family Court. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 104.17% for child care and protection cases and 100% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 102.74%, which satisfies international standards on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the St. James Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the St. James Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under this broad case category included in this report are maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 2.3: Summary of Family Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	101	141	1	140.59
Declaration of Paternity	71	44	1	63.38
Legal Guardianship	11	13	0	118.18
Maintenance	161	185	4	117.39
Adoption	7	7	0	100.00
Total	351	390	6	112.82

The 319 new cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, revealed that maintenance matters with 161 cases or 45.87% accounts for the largest proportion of cases filed. This was followed by Custody with 101 or 28.77%. There were 71 Declaration of Paternity cases or 20.23%, there were 11 legal guardianship cases, and 7 adoption cases. A total of 390 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of while 6 became inactive in the quarter. Maintenance cases accounted for 185 of the disposed cases and 4 inactive cases while custody cases accounted for 141 disposed cases. There were 44 disposed cases concerning declaration of paternity and 13 legal guardianship cases. The remaining 7 disposed cases were cases of adoption. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 112.82 for the broad family case type. The highest case clearance rate of family case activities in the St. James Family court was for

custody cases with 140.59%; followed by legal guardianship cases with 118.18%, cases of maintenance accounted for 117.39%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, at the St. James Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in St. James for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 2.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	157	120	1	77.07
Occupation Order	30	34	2	120.00
Total/Weighted Average	187	154	3	83.96

The data above shows that there were a total of 187 new domestic violence cases filed in the first quarter of 2025 at the St. James Family Court. Protection order cases accounted for the larger proportion with 157 or 83.96%, while occupation order cases accounted for the remaining proportion with 30 or 16.04%. A total of 157 domestic cases were disposed of in the quarter. There were 120 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 34 occupation order cases were disposed and 2 became inactive. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 77.07% for protection order cases and 120% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 81.96%, which does not satisfy international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of Case Activity for Civil Matters at the St. James Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the St. James Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 2.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Number of New Cases Filed	Number of Cases Disposed	Number of Inactive Cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
84	34	0	40.48

The data above shows that there were a total of 84 new civil cases filed in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. There were also a total of 34 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter at the St. James Family Court. This produced an estimated case clearance rate of 40.48%, which is below the international standard on this metric.

Table 2.6: Sampling Distribution Enforcement/Post Disposal Activity for the St. James Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Disposed matters	Inactive matters	Estimated clearance rate (%)
Vary Orders	48	38	1	81.25
Disobedience of Maintenance	29	24	4	96.55
Warrants of Distress	11	0	0	0.00
Warrants of Arrest	21	0	0	0.00
Judgement summons	0	5	0	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	109	67	5	66.06

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 48 or 44.04% of post disposal activity in the St. James family court while 61 or 55.96% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress, and arrest warrants) during the quarter. There were 38 vary orders disposed of in the period while 1 became inactive, and 33 enforcements were disposed or made inactive, producing an estimated case clearance rate of 66.06% on these matters.

Chapter 3.0: The Hanover Family Court

This chapter will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Hanover Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution and case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children's Court)

Table 3.1: Summary of Criminal Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Indictments	2	10	1	550.00
Summary	4	7	0	175.00
Petty Session	0	2	0	0.00
Total	6	19	1	333.33

The above table shows the sample of 6 criminal cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Summary matters accounted for the largest share with 4 or 66.67% of the total followed by indictment matters with 2 cases or 33.33%. There were 20 criminal cases disposed of in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, resulting in a clearance rate of 333.33% which is above the international standard on this metric.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children's Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Hanover Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 3.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	7	13	0	185.71
Uncontrollable Child	6	4	1	83.33
Total Weighted Average	13	17	1	138.46

There were 13 child welfare cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 7 or 53.85%, while the remaining proportion were cases of uncontrollable child with 6 or 46.15%. For the period January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025. There were 18 child welfare case disposed of producing an estimated case clearance rate of 138.46%: an amount above the international standards on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Hanover Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the St. James Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under this broad case category included in this report are maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 3.3: Summary of Family Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	35	21	0	60.00
Declaration of Paternity	11	9	0	81.82
Maintenance	38	46	0	121.05
Legal Guardianship	1	3	0	300.00
Access	8	6	0	75.00
Total	93	85	0	91.40

The 93 new Family cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, disaggregated by case subtype showed maintenance matters accounted for the largest proportion with 38 cases or 40.86%. This was followed by custody cases with 35 or 37.63% and declaration of paternity with 11 or 11.83%. There were also 8 new case filed in the quarter concerning cases of access. A total of 85 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. For matters that were disposed of during the period, 46 were disposed maintenance cases, 21 disposed custody cases, 9 disposed cases declaration of paternity and 6 disposed cases of access. This produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 91.40% for the broad family case type; The highest rate recorded was for legal guardianship cases with 300%, followed by maintenance with 121.05% and declaration of paternity cases with 82.82%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, at the Hanover Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Hanover for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 3.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	42	24	0	57.14
Total/Weighted Average	42	24	0	57.14

The data above shows that there were a total of 42 new domestic violence cases filed in the first quarter of 2025 at the Hanover Family Court. All cases were protection order cases. During the first quarter of 2025, the Hanover Family court disposed a total of 24 Domestic Violence cases. This outcome produced case clearance rates of 57.14% for protection order cases which does not satisfy international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of Case Activity for Civil Matters at the Hanover Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Hanover Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 3.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
12	14	0	116.67

The data above shows that there were a total of 12 new civil cases filed in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. There were also a total of 14 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter at the Hanover Family Court. This produced an estimated case clearance rate of 116.67%, which satisfies international standards for this metric.

Table 3.6: Sampling Distribution Enforcement/Post Disposal Activity for the Hanover Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Disposed matters	inactive matters	Estimated Clearance Rate (%)
Vary Orders	27	29	1	111.11
Disobedience of Maintenance	7	7	2	128.57
Warrants of Distress	34	12	22	100.00
Warrants of Arrest	31	0	0	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	99	48	25	73.74

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 27 or 27.27% of post disposal activity in the St. James family court while 72 or 72.72% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) during the quarter. There were 29 vary orders disposed of in the period while 1 became inactive, and 19 enforcements were disposed while 24 made inactive, producing an estimated case clearance rate of 73.74% on these matters.

Chapter 4.0: The Westmoreland Family Court

This chapter will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Westmoreland Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution and case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children's Court)

Table 4.1: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the first ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	13	12	0	92.31
Indictments	18	12	0	66.67
Summary	14	22	4	185.71
Petty Session	23	44	0	191.30
Total/Weighted Average	68	90	4	138.24

The above table shows the sample of 68 criminal cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Of these, 23 or 33.82% were petty session matters, 18 or 26.47% were indictment matters, while summary matters accounted for 14 cases or 20.59%. Committal proceedings accounted for the remaining 13 matters or 19.12%. There were a total of 90 criminal cases disposed of during the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Of the total cases disposed petty session and summary matters accounted for 44 and 22 cases respectively, while committal and indictments matters accounted for 12 cases each. There were four inactive summary matters. This produced an estimated weighted clearance rate of 138.24% for the cases in the Westmoreland family court classified as criminal.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children's Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Westmoreland Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 4.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	16	32	0	200.00
Uncontrollable Child	24	19	2	87.50
Total Weighted Average	40	51	2	132.50

There were 40 child welfare cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, Child care protection cases accounted for the greater share with 24 or 55% and the remainder were uncontrollable child cases 18 or 45%. A total of 53 child welfare cases were disposed or became inactive during the quarter. Cases concerning childcare and protection accounted for 32 disposed cases; the remaining 19 disposed cases were matters related to uncontrollable child care. The 2 inactive cases recorded in the period were classified as uncontrollable child. This result produced a weighted average case clearance rate of 132.50%, which satisfies international standards of this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Westmoreland Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Westmoreland Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under this broad case category included in this report are maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 4.3: Summary of Family Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	48	64	1	135.42
Declaration of Paternity	19	25	1	136.84
Legal Guardianship	3	4	0	133.33
Maintenance	73	87	2	121.92
Access	10	4	0	40.00
Total/Weighted Average	153	184	4	122.88

The 153 new cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the first quarter ended March 30, 2025, revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 73 cases or 47.71%. This was followed by custody cases, accounting for 48 or 31.37% and cases concerning declaration of paternity, 19 or 12.42%. There were also 10 or 6.54% access cases. A total of 188 cases falling under the broad family category were disposed or became inactive in the quarter. That is, 87 disposed and 2 inactive maintenance cases, 64 disposed custody cases and 1 became inactive, 25 disposed declarations of paternity cases and 1 inactive, this produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 122.88% for the broad family case type. Cases classified as declaration of paternity, recorded the highest case clearance rate of 136.84%, custody cases followed with 135.42%, legal guardianship cases with 133.33% and cases concerning maintenance recorded a clearance rate of 121.92%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, at the Westmoreland Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Westmoreland for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 4.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	62	39	0	62.90
Occupation and protection Order	6	7	0	116.67
Total/Weighted Average	68	46	0	67.65

The data above shows that there were a total of 68 new domestic violence cases filed in the first quarter of 2025 at the Westmoreland Family Court. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases, accounting for 62 or 91.18%, while the remaining proportion were cases regarding occupation orders with 6 or 8.82%. A total of 46 domestic violence cases were disposed of during the quarter. There were 39 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while the remaining 7 disposed cases were occupation orders. These outcomes produced estimated case clearance rates of 62.90% for protection order cases and 116.67% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 67.65%, which is below international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of Case Activity for Civil Matters at the Westmoreland Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Westmoreland Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 4.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Number of New Cases Filed	Number of Cases Disposed	Number of Inactive Cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
9	16	0	177.78

The data above shows that there were a total of 9 new civil cases filed in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. There were also a total of 16 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter at the Westmoreland Family Court. This produced an estimated case clearance rate of 177.78%, which is above international standards on this metrics.

Table 4.6: Sampling Distribution Enforcement/Post Disposal Activity for the Westmoreland Family Court for the Quarter Ended March 31, 2025

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Disposed matters	Inactive matters	Clearance rate (%)
Vary Orders	47	28	1	61.70
Disobedience of Maintenance	26	20	10	115.38
Warrants of Distress	23	5	0	21.74
Warrants of Arrest	33	9	0	27.27
Judgement Summons	1	0	0	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	130	62	11	56.15

Apart from substantive case activity, it is important to note that vary orders accounted for 47 or 36.15% while 83 or 63.85% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress, and arrest warrants) during the quarter. In the reporting period 28 vary orders were disposed of while 44 enforcements were disposed or became inactive, this resulted in a case clearance rate of 56.15% on these matters.

Chapter 5.0: The Trelawny Family Court

This chapter will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Trelawny Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution and case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children's Court)

Table 5.1: Summary of Criminal Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	7	0	0	0.00
Indictments	7	1	0	14.29
Summary	13	8	0	61.54
Petty Session	0	7	0	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	27	16	0	59.26

The above table shows the sample of 27 criminal cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Summary matters accounted for the largest portion with 13 or 48.14%. Of these, summary, indictment and committal matters each accounted for 7 cases. There were a total of 16 disposed and inactive cases during the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, this produced an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 59.26% for criminal case activities in the Trelawny Family Court.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children's Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Trelawny Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 5.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	16	22	1	143.75
Uncontrollable Child	2	2	0	100.00
Total/ Weighted Average	18	24	1	138.89

There were 18 new child welfare cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 16 or 88.89%, while the remaining 2 were uncontrollable child matter. A total of 25 child welfare cases were disposed of during the quarter; 22 cases disposed were child care protection and 2 was uncontrollable child case. These results produced estimated case clearance rates of 143.75% for child care protection cases and 100% for uncontrollable child, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 138.89%, which satisfies international standards on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Trelawny Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Trelawny Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under this broad case category included in this report are maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 5.3: Summary of Family Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	20	42	0	210.00
Declaration of Paternity	4	7	0	175.00
Access	2	4	0	200.00
Legal Guardianship	1	1	0	100.00
Maintenance	35	47	2	140.00
Total	62	101	2	166.13

The 62 new cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 35 cases or 56.45% and custody matters with 20 cases or 32.26%. Declaration of paternity matters followed accounting for 4 or 6.45% of new family cases filed. A total of 103 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive during the quarter. Of the total disposed cases, 47 were concerning maintenance, 42 custody cases, 7 declaration of paternity cases, 4 cases of access and 1 case of legal guardianship. This produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 166.13% for the broad family case type. custody cases had the highest case clearance rate of 210%, followed by matters classified as access with 200%, declaration of paternity with 175%. Maintenance and Legal guardianship recorded a clearance rate of 140% and 100% respectively.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, at the Trelawny Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Trelawny for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 5.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	23	47	0	204.35
Total/Weighted Average	23	47	0	204.35

The data above shows that there were a total of 23 new domestic violence cases filed in the first quarter of 2025 at the Trelawny Family Court. A total 47 Domestic Violence cases were disposed of during the quarter. All new cases filed were protection orders, which accounted for 100% of the new cases filed. These results produced estimated case clearance rates of 204.35% for the quarter; this result satisfies the international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of Case Activity for Civil Matters at the Trelawny Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Trelawny Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 5.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	weighted case clearance rate (%)
2	9	0	450.00

The data above shows that there was no new civil case filed in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. There were 2 new cases filed during the quarter. However, there were a total of 9 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter regardless of when the cases were filed. This resulted in a clearance rate of 450%.

Table 5.6: Sampling Distribution Enforcement/Post Disposal Activity for the Trelawny Court for the Quarter Ended March 31, 2025

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Vary Orders	24	0	33	137.50
Disobedience of Maintenance	11	1	15	145.45
Warrants of Distress	24	0	3	12.50
Warrants of Arrest	10	11	40	510.00
Total/Weighted Average	69	12	91	149.28

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 24 or 34.78% of post disposal activities in the Trelawny Family Court and the remaining 45 or 65.22% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) during the quarter. There were 33 vary orders disposed, while 70 enforcements were disposed or became inactive in the period, producing a gross case clearance rate of 149.28% on these matters.

Chapter 6.0: The Manchester Family Court

This chapter will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Manchester Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution and case clearance rates for the different business lines of the family court.

Case Activity Summary in the Criminal Section (A Division of the Children's Court)

Table 6.1: Summary of Criminal Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed in the period	Overall Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases which became inactive in the period	Case clearance rate (%)
Summary	12	4	1	41.67
Committal	4	0	0	0.00
Total	16	4	1	31.25

The above table shows the sample of 16 criminal cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Summary matters accounted for 12 cases files or 75%, while committal accounted for the remaining 4 new case filed or 25%. There were a total of 5 criminal cases disposed of or became inactive during first quarter ended March 31, 2025, summary matters accounted for 4 disposed matters while 1 became inactive. This produced an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 31.25% for matters classified as criminal in the Manchester Family Court.

Case Activity on Child Welfare Matters (A Division of the Children's Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as child welfare in the Manchester Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 6.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	11	1	0	9.09
Uncontrollable Child	14	6	1	50.00
Total Weighted Average	25	7	1	32.00

There were 25 new child welfare cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, the larger proportion of which were uncontrollable child cases, accounted for 14 or 56%, while cases classified as child care protection accounted for the remaining proportion, 11 or 44%. A total of 8 child welfare cases were disposed of or became inactive during the quarter. There were 6 child uncontrollable child cases disposed of during the quarter, while 1 case of child care protection were disposed of. These results produced estimated case clearance rates of 9.09% for child care protection cases, and 50% for uncontrollable child cases. Further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 32%, which is below the international standards on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Manchester Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Manchester Family Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025. Matters falling under this broad case category included in this report are maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 6.3: Summary of Family Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Overall Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases within the period	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	34	28	0	82.35
Declaration of Paternity	5	5	0	100.00
Access	11	12	0	109.09
Maintenance	64	117	0	182.81
Adoption	1	2	0	200.00
Total	115	164	0	142.61

The 115 new cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, showed that maintenance matters accounted for the largest proportion of cases filed with 64 cases or 55.65%; custody matters followed with 34 or 29.57% of new cases filed. There were also 11 matters of access, 5 declaration of paternity and 1 matter of adoption filed in the reporting period. A total of 164 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of in the quarter. Maintenance cases accounted for 117 of the disposed cases while custody cases accounted for 28 disposed cases. There were 12 disposed cases related to access and 5 disposed declaration of paternity cases. This produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 142.61% for the broad family case type. Adoption recorded the highest clearance rate of 200%. Maintenance cases followed with 182.81%. cases of access and declaration of paternity followed with 109.09% and 100% respectively.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the first quarter ended March 31, 2025, at the Manchester Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Manchester for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025.

Table 6.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	4	11	0	275.00
Protection and Occupation Order	18	6	0	33.33
Total/Weighted Average	22	17	0	77.27

The data above shows that there were a total of 22 new domestic violence cases filed in the first quarter of 2025 at the Manchester Family Court. Protection order accounted for 18 or 81.82% while the remaining 4 or 18.18% was accounted for by occupation order. A total 17 Domestic Violence cases were disposed of during the quarter of which protection order cases accounted for 11 cases and the remaining 6 were cases of protection and occupation order. These outputs produced an overall clearance rate of 77.27%, which is below the international standards on this vital metric.

Table 6.5: Sampling Distribution Enforcement/Post Disposal Activity for the Manchester Court for the Quarter Ended March 31, 2025

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case clearance weight (%)
Vary Orders	32	29	0	90.63
Disobedience of Maintenance	14	19	2	150.00
Warrants of Distress	35	2	0	5.71
Warrants of Arrest	0	5	1	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	81	55	3	71.60

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 32 or 39.51% of post disposal activities in the Manchester family court and the remaining 49 or 60.49% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) during the quarter in the Manchester Family Court. In the report period 29 vary orders were disposed and 29 enforcement matters were disposed or became inactive; this produced a case clearance rate of 71.60%the for these matters.

Conclusion

The specialised family courts had an overall case clearance rate of 101.24% in the 1st quarter ended March 31, 2025. This suggests that for every 100 new cases that were filed approximately 101 cases were disposed of in the period. The rates ranged from a high of 151.52% in the Trelawny Family court to a low of 83.04% in the Chapelton Family Court. The target for the next 4-5 years established by The Chief Justice for the specialised family courts of Jamaica is a case clearance rate ≥ 106.39 towards achieving a sustainable net backlog rate of under 5%. The forecasted number of new cases in the second quarter of 2025 for the specialised family court is 2208, while the forecasted number of cases disposed or inactive is 2243, producing a predicted weighted case clearance rate of 101.57% for the specialised family courts of Jamaica. These results suggest that the specialised family courts will continue to make strides in improvements in productivity and efficiency; thereby making appreciable contributions to achieving the strategic objectives of the courts and advancing the Vision 2030 Jamaica National Goal 2 "The Jamaican Society is Secure, Cohesive and Just" and by extension the 2030 Global Agenda Goal 16 "Peace Justice and Strong Institutions".

Glossary of Terms

Sampling Distribution: A sampling distribution of a given population is the distribution of frequencies of a range of outcomes that could possibly occur for a statistic of a population. A population is the entire pool from which a statistical sample is drawn.

Range: This is a measure of the spread of values in a data set, calculated as the highest minus the lowest value. A larger range score may indicate a higher spread of values in a data set.

Standard deviation: This is a measure of how widely spread the scores in a data set are around the average value of that data set. The higher the standard deviation, the higher the variation of the raw scores in the data set, from the average score. A low standard deviation is an indication that the scores in a data set are clustered around the average.

Outlier: An outlier is a value that is too small or too large, relative to the majority of scores/trend in a data set.

Skewness: This is measure of the distribution of scores in a data set. It gives an idea of where the larger proportion of the scores in a data set can be found. Generally, if skewness is positive as revealed by a positive value for this measure, this suggests that a greater proportion of the scores in the data set are at the lower end. If the skewness is negative as revealed by a negative value for this measure, it generally suggests that a greater proportion of the scores are at the higher end. If the skewness measure is approximately 0, then there is roughly equal distribution of scores on both the higher and lower ends of the average figure.

Clearance rate: The ratio on incoming to outgoing cases or of new cases filed to cases disposed, regardless of when the disposed cases originated. For example, in a given Term 100 new cases were filed and 110 were disposed (including cases originating before that Term) the clearance rate is $110/100$ or 110%.

Note: The clearance rate could therefore exceed 100% but the disposal rate has a maximum value of 100%. A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system. The inferred international benchmark for case clearance rates is an average of 90% - 110 annualized. This is a critical foundation to backlog prevention in the court system.ⁱ

Disposal rate: As distinct from clearance rate, the disposal rate is the proportion of new cases filed which have been disposed in a particular period. For example, if 100 new cases are filed in a particular Term and 80 of those cases were disposed in said Term, then the disposal rate is 80%.

Note: A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system.ⁱⁱ

Case congestion rate: The ratio of pending cases to cases disposed in a given period. It is an indication of how fatigued a court is, given the existing state of resources and degree of efficiency. A case congestion rate of 150% for example is an indication that given the resources currently at a court's disposal and its degree of efficiency, it is carrying 1.5 times its capacity.

Trial/hearing date certainty: This is the proportion of dates set for trial or hearing which proceed without adjournment. For example, if 100 trial dates are set in a particular Term and 40 are adjourned, then the trial certainty rate would be 60%. The international standard for this measure is between 92% and 100%.

Case File Integrity Rate: Measures the proportion of time that a case file is fully ready and available in a timely manner for a matter to proceed. Hence, any adjournment, which is due to the lack of readiness of a case file or related proceedings for court at the scheduled time,

impairs the case file integrity rate. The international benchmark for the case file integrity is 100%.

Courtroom utilization rate: The proportion of courtrooms in full use on a daily basis or the proportion of hours utilized in a courtroom on a daily basis. The international standard for this rate is 100%.

Case backlog: A case that is in the court system for more than two years without disposition.

The **gross backlog rate** measures the proportion of all cases filed within a given period which remain unresolved for a period of over two years.

The **net backlog rate** on the other hand measures the proportion of active cases filed in a given period which are unresolved for over two years.

Continuance and Adjournment: In a general sense, any delay in the progression of a hearing in which a future date/time is set or anticipated for continuation is a form of adjournment. However, in order to make a strict distinction between matters which are adjourned for procedural factors and those which are generally avoidable, court statistics utilizes the terms 'continuance' and 'adjournment'. Here, 'continuance' is used strictly to describe situations in which future dates are set due to procedural reasons and 'adjournments' is used to describe the circumstances in which future dates of appearance are set due to generally avoidable reasons. For example, adjournments for another stage of hearing, say from a plea and case management hearing to a trial hearing or from the last date of trial to a sentencing date are classified as 'continuance' but delays for say, missing or incomplete files, due to outstanding medical reports or attorney absenteeism are classified as 'adjournments'. Adjournments as defined in this document have an adverse effect on hearing date certainty rates, but continuances do not.

Percentile Rank: This refers to the percentage of scores that are equal to or less than a given score. Percentile ranks, like percentages, fall on a continuum from 0 to 100. For example, a percentile rank of 45 indicates that 45% of the scores in a distribution of scores fall at or below the score at the 45th percentile. Percentile ranks are useful when you want to quickly understand how a particular score compares to the other scores in a distribution of scores. For instance, knowing a court disposed 300 cases in a given period doesn't tell you much. You don't know how many case disposals were possible, and even if you did, you wouldn't know how that court's score compared to the rest of the courts. If, however, you were told that the court scored at the 80th percentile, then you would know that this court did as well or better than 80% of the courts in case disposals.

Difference between percentage and percentile changes: The difference between percentage and percentage points, the latter is strictly used to compare two percentages, for example, if the clearance rate in 2018 was 89% and the clearance rate in 2019 is 100%, then the appropriate expression to compare these would be "an 11 percentage points increase". However, if we are comparing two absolute numbers, say, 1000 cases were disposed in 2018, and 1500 in 2019, then there would be a 50% increase in cases disposed.

Weighted Average: Weighted average is a calculation that takes into account the varying degrees of significance of the groups or numbers in a data set. In calculating a weighted average for a particular variable, the individual scores or averages for each group are multiplied by the weight or number of observations in each of those groups and summed. The outcome is then divided by the summation of the number of observations in all groups combined. For example, if we wish to calculate the weighted average clearance rate for the parish courts, the product of the clearance rate and number of cases for each court are computed, added, and then divided by the total number of cases across all the parish courts. This means that a court with a larger caseload has a greater impact on the case clearance

rate than a smaller court. A weighted average can be more accurate than a simple average in which all numbers in a data set are assigned an identical weight.

Exponential Smoothing: Exponential smoothing of time series data assigns exponentially decreasing weights for newest to oldest observations. In other words, the older data, the less priority ("weight") the data is given; newer data is seen as more relevant and is assigned more weight. Smoothing parameters (smoothing constants) – usually denoted by α – determine the weights of the observations.

Exponential smoothing is usually used to make short term forecasts, as longer term forecasts using this technique can be quite unreliable.

- **Simple (single) exponential smoothing** uses a weighted moving average with exponentially decreasing weights.
- **Holt's trend-corrected double exponential smoothing** is usually more reliable for handling data that shows trends, compared to the single procedure.
- **Triple exponential smoothing** (also called the Multiplicative Holt-Winters) is usually more reliable for parabolic trends or data that shows trends and seasonality.

ⁱ Source :

<http://courts.mi.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/bestpractice/BestPracticeCaseAgeClearanceRates.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Source :

<http://courts.mi.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/bestpractice/BestPracticeCaseAgeClearanceRates.pdf>

Appendix

Table A1.1:
Forecast of Case Clearance Rates 2023/24 – 2032/33 – Specialized Family Courts (%)

Family Court	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Corporate Area	110.91	109.90	109.98	107.71	107.89
St. James	108.09	107.81	106.67	105.67	106.78
Hanover	103.40	103.56	103.98	104.01	102.89
Westmoreland	107.82	105.45	106.01	104.67	105.34
Trelawney	104.56	104.48	105.59	104.67	105.67
Manchester	101.01	102.03	103.54	102.81	101.67
Chapelton	102.34	102.56	104.45	105.56	105.67

Family Court	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Corporate Area	106.61	106.78	105.51	105.67	106.03
St. James	107.56	106.76	106.78	105.88	104.67
Hanover	103.89	105.91	103.71	103.51	101.01
Westmoreland	103.71	104.04	105.05	103.04	103.76
Trelawney	106.67	107.71	105.71	105.87	105.98
Manchester	103.91	103.56	102.54	102.34	101.56
Chapelton	105.67	104.78	103.31	104.56	100.99

Table A2.1:
Mean Case Clearance Rate required to maintain a net backlog rate of under 5%
2023/24 – 2032/33 – Specialized Family Courts

Family Court	Required Average Rate (%) (2023/24 - 2032/33)	Expected Average Rate (%) (2023/24 - 2032/33)	Variance
Corporate Area	110.04	107.699	2.341
St. James	109.43	106.667	2.763
Hanover	103.05	103.587	-0.537
Westmoreland	106.54	104.889	1.651
Trelawney	107.23	105.691	1.539
Manchester	103.01	102.497	0.513
Chapelton	105.42	103.989	1.431

Note: A positive variance implies that the required average case clearance rate exceeds the expected case clearance rate over the next 10 fiscal years. On the contrary, a negative variance implies that the expected average case clearance rate exceeds the required average case clearance rate.