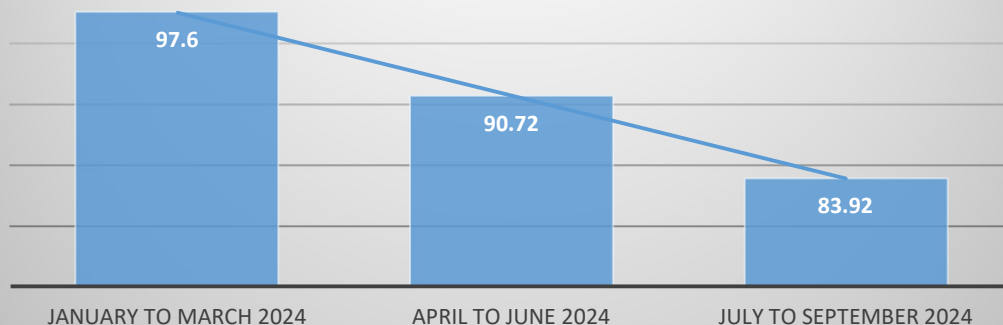


THE CHIEF JUSTICE'S THIRD QUARTER STATISTICS REPORT 2024

THE SPECIALISED FAMILY COURTS OF JAMAICA

(July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024)

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



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

The International benchmark for the rate is an annual average of 90% to 110%

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CHIEF JUSTICE'S MESSAGE THIRD QUARTER, FAMILY COURT 2024

The Family Courts provide important services to our people. They address matters from the perspective of diagnosis, analysis, programmes for improvement, and the restoration of family where possible. While the approach to cases is different from what is commonly expected in courts, it is vital that productivity is maintained so that the uncertainty produced by delay is reduced, if not eliminated.

We have established performance standards against which courts are measured. There will be circumstances outside the courts' control that may impede effective performance. However, where there is significant under-performance, an examination of the circumstances surrounding such performance is necessary. The St James Family Court's average clearance rate was 67.90%, while the forecast clearance rate was 84.35%. Similarly, the Manchester Family Court's clearance rate was 59.41%, compared with a forecast rate of 93.68%.

The accuracy and timeliness of statistical reporting are important considerations. These reports are valuable because they provide court managers with reliable information to support analysis and, where necessary, corrective action. They are most effective when produced close to the period under review, as this enables them to better inform operational decision-making. Finalised reports also provide the Judiciary and the wider public with a comprehensive and contextual record of performance, thereby strengthening accountability and institutional learning. In this way, the reports play a critical role in supporting policy development, strategic planning, and benchmarking across courts, ensuring that lessons learned continue to guide long-term improvements.

It is still early in the life of the Trelawny Family Court. However, note must be taken of the high performance standard achieved by a single judge. There is nothing to suggest that the quality of adjudication has suffered as a result of this high level of productivity.

The Family Courts continue to demonstrate resilience and effectiveness in fulfilling their mandate. All judges, staff, and stakeholders are appreciated for their contribution to the continued success of these courts in discharging their important responsibilities.

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 minimises 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 third quarter, July1, through September 30, 2024, the specialised family courts of Jamaica, recorded a total of 2015 new cases filed. Case activity that was either disposed or inactive amounted to 1691 producing an overall case clearance rate of 83.92% (6.08 percentage points below the overall minimum established to eliminate case backlog within the Specialised Family Courts of Jamaica¹). The St. James Family Court accounted for the largest share of new cases filed for the period (July 1, 2024-September 30, 2024) with 673 or 33.40%. Corporate Area Family followed accounting for 575 or 28.54% of new cases filed and Westmoreland with 316 or 15.68%. The lowest share of new cases filed for the third quarter of 2024 were with the family courts of Trelawny 119 (5.90%), Hanover 162 (8.04%) and Manchester 170 (8.44%).

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 third quarter of 2024, 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 114.29%. The Corporate

¹ Refer to appendix Table A2.1:

Area Family Court ranked second with 98.96%, followed by Hanover with 90.12%, Westmoreland with 89.24%, St. James with 67.90% and Manchester with 59.41%.

The current rate of case clearance is influenced by both the efforts of the courts in case management and factors outside of direct control of the courts. The overall weighted mean clearance rate for the third quarter (Jul.1-Sept.30) does not satisfy the international minimum standard for this metric (90% - 100%). The actual average case clearance rate is 10.32 percentage points lower than the forecasted case clearance rate for the specialised family courts.

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 third Quarter Ended September 30, 2024

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	575	552	17	98.96
Hanover Family Court	162	141	5	90.12
St. James Family Court	673	443	14	67.90
Westmoreland Family Court	316	258	24	89.24
Trelawny Family Court	119	131	5	114.29
Manchester Family Court	170	101	0	59.41
Total/Weighted Average	2015	1626	65	83.92

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured specialised family courts in the third quarter of 2024. It shows that a total of 2015 new cases were filed in these courts, while 65 became inactive and 1626 were disposed, leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 83.92%. The Trelawny Family Court recorded the highest overall weighted case clearance rate among the featured courts with 114.29%, followed by the Corporate Area Family Court with 98.96%, Hanover Family Court with 90.12%, while the Westmoreland Family Court recorded a clearance rate of 89.24% and the St. James Family Court following behind with 67.90% to round off the top five courts in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

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

Parish Court	Actual QTR 3. Average Case Clearance Rate (%)	Forecasted QTR 3 Case Clearance Rate (%)	Residual	Squared Error	Absolute Percentage Error
Corporate Area Family Court	98.96	107.83	-8.87	78.68	-8.96
St. James Family Court	67.90	84.35	-16.45	270.60	-24.23
Hanover Family Court	90.12	96.53	-6.41	41.09	-7.11
Westmoreland Family Court	89.24	92.21	-2.97	8.82	-3.33
Trelawny Family Court	114.29	92.05	22.24	494.62	19.46
Manchester Family Court	59.41	93.68	-34.27	1174.43	-57.68
Weighted Average	83.92	94.44			

The above table summarises 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 third quarter (July 1- September 30) 2024.

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 Family Court was the only court that exceed its forecast for the quarter and by extension was also above the international standard for this metric.

The Manchester Family Court had the largest negative residual. Other specialised family courts with actual case clearance rate considerably below the forecasted rate include Manchester and St. James.

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 Manchester Family Court had the highest squared error followed by the Trelawny 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 fiscal period 2023 /2024. Smaller squared errors were observed in the Westmoreland 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 Manchester Family Court had the highest percentage deviation from the forecast of 57.68 per cent, along with the St. James Family Court (24.23%) and Trelawny Family Court (19.46%). The Westmoreland 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 (7.11%) and the Corporate Area Family Court (8.96%).

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 Westmoreland Family Court had the closest actual and forecasted rates, which produced an absolute percentage error of 3.33%, the result of a highly accurate forecasted case clearance rate for the Westmoreland Family Court.

The Manchester Family Court, on the other hand, had the largest residual and squared error which produced an absolute percentage error of 57.68%. Though the model significantly over predicted the case clearance rate for the Manchester Family Court, the absolute percentage error suggest that the model produced a reasonable forecasted case clearance rate for the Manchester 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.

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 categorised 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 third quarter of 2024 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 third Quarter Ended September 30,2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	13	6	0	46.15
Indictments	19	17	7	126.32
Summary	11	11	0	100.00
Petty Session	8	4	0	50.00
Total/Weighted Average	51	38	7	88.24

The above table shows the sample of 51 criminal cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Of these, 19 or 37.25% were indictment matters, 13 or 25.49% were indictment, 11 or 21.57% were summary matters. There was a total of 38 criminal cases disposed while 7 became inactive during the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Of these, 17 indictment matters were disposed while 7 became inactive. There were 11 summary matters disposed, there were 6 committal matters disposed and 4 petty session matters. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 88.24% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the third Quarter Ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	26	29	0	111.54
Uncontrollable Child	10	16	0	160.00
Total Weighted Average	36	45	0	125.00

There were 36 child welfare cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 26 or 72.22%, while the remaining proportion were uncontrollable child cases with 10 or 27.78%. A total of 45 child welfare cases were disposed of during the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 111.54% for child care and protection cases and 160% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 125%, which satisfies international standard of 90 and above on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for The Corporate Area Family Court in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Corporate Area Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	126	125	3	101.59
Declaration of Paternity	69	60	1	88.41
Maintenance	75	95	2	129.33
Access	89	75	4	88.76
Total	359	355	10	101.67

The 359 new cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, revealed that custody matters accounts for the largest proportion of cases filed (with 126 cases or 35.10%). This was followed by cases of access with 89 or 24.79%. There were 75 maintenance cases or 20.89%. A total of 365 cases falling under the broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. This is broken down into 355 disposed and 10 inactive cases. Custody cases accounted for 125 of the disposed cases and 3 inactive cases while maintenance accounted for 95 disposed cases and 2 inactive cases. There were 75 disposed access cases while 4 became inactive and 60 declaration of paternity cases while 1 became inactive. This led to an overall estimated weighted average 129.33%, custody cases with 101.59%, while access cases accounted for 88.76% and declaration of paternity cases recorded a clearance rate of 88.41%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024, at the Corporate Area Family Court

The subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Corporate Area for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 1.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	111	100	0	90.09
Occupation Order	18	14	0	77.78
Total/Weighted Average	129	114	0	88.37

The data shows that there was a total of 129 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2024 at the Corporate Area Family Court. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases which accounted for 111 or 86.05%, while cases of occupation order with 18 or 13.95% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 114 Domestic Violence cases were disposed of in the quarter. There were 100 protection order cases disposed of during the quarter, and 14 occupation order cases were also disposed of in the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 90.09% for protection order cases and 77.78% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 88.37%, which is slightly below international standards on this vital metric.

Table 1.5: Sampling Distribution/Post Disposal Activity for the Corporate Area Court for the Quarter Ended September 30, 2024

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Vary Orders	117	59	44	88.03
Disobedience of Maintenance	44	64	53	265.91
Total/ Weighted Average	161	123	97	136.65

Apart from substantive case activity, it is important to note that Vary Orders accounted for 117 or 72.67% of post disposal activity in the Corporate Area Family Court and the remaining 44 or 27.33% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress, and arrest warrants) during the quarter. A total of 103 vary orders were disposed of or became inactive in the period and 117 enforcements were either disposed of or became inactive producing a gross case clearance rate of 136.65% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	4	12	0	300.00
Indictments	11	12	0	109.09
Summary	14	11	2	92.86
Petty Session	5	5	0	100.00
Total/Weighted Average	34	40	2	123.53

The above table shows the sample of 34 criminal cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Of these, 14 or 41.18% were summary matters. Indictment matters accounted for 11 or 32.35%, while petty session matters accounted for 5 or 14.71%. The remaining 4 or 11.76% was accounted for by committal cases. There were a total of 40 criminal cases disposed of during the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Of these, indictment and committal had 12 disposed cases each, while summary matters and petty session cases accounted for 11 and 5 disposed cases, respectively. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 123.53% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 2.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	41	53	3	136.59
Uncontrollable Child	15	10	3	86.67
Total Weighted Average	56	63	6	123.21

There were 56 child welfare cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, the larger proportion of which were childcare and protection cases which accounted for 41 or 73.21%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 15 or 26.79% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 63 child welfare cases were disposed while 6 became inactive during the quarter. There were 53 child care and protection cases and 10 uncontrollable child cases disposed of during the quarter in the St. James Family Court. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 136.59% for child care and protection cases and 86.67% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 123.21%, which satisfies international standards on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the St. James Family Court in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the St. James Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	98	0	0	0.00
Declaration of Paternity	53	38	0	71.70
Declaration of Maternity	0	1	0	undefined
Access	18	6	0	33.33
Legal Guardianship	3	1	0	33.33
Maintenance	145	104	3	73.79
Adoption	2	0	0	0.00
Total	319	150	3	47.96

The 319 new cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, revealed that maintenance matters with 145 cases or 45.45% accounts for the largest proportion of cases filed. This was followed by Custody with 98 or 30.72%. There were 53 Declaration of Paternity cases or 16.61%, there were 18 access cases, 3 declaration of legal guardianship cases and 2 cases of adoption. A total of 153 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of (150) or became inactive (3) in the quarter. Maintenance cases accounted for 104 of the disposed cases and 3 inactive cases while declaration of paternity cases accounted for 38 disposed cases. There were 6 disposed cases concerning access and 1 legal guardianship and declaration of maternity case. This led to an overall

estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 47.96% for the broad family case type. The highest case clearance rate of family case activities in the St. James Family court was for maintenance cases with 73.79%; followed by declaration of paternity cases with 71.70%, cases of access and legal guardianship each accounted for 33.33%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024, 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 2.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	182	140	0	76.92
Occupation Order	51	27	0	52.94
Total/Weighted Average	233	167	0	71.67

The data above shows that there were a total of 233 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2024 at the St. James Family Court. Protection order cases accounted for the larger proportion with 182 or 78.11%, while occupation order cases accounted for the remaining proportion with 51 or 21.89%. A total of 167 domestic cases were disposed of in the quarter. There were 140 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 27 occupation order cases were disposed. There were no inactive cases during the quarter. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 76.92% for protection order cases and 52.94% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 71.67%, 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 2.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Number of New Cases Filed	Number of Cases Disposed	Number of Inactive Cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
31	23	3	83.87

The data above shows that there were a total of 31 new civil cases filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. There were also a total of 23 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter at the St. James Family Court, while 3 became inactive. This produced an estimated case clearance rate of 83.87%, 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Disposed matters	Inactive matters	Estimated clearance rate (%)
Vary Orders	62	30	2	51.61
Disobedience of Maintenance	23	6	3	39.13
Warrants of Distress	215	2	17	8.84
Warrants of Arrest	42	0	0	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	342	38	22	17.54

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 62 or 18.13% of post disposal activity in the St. James family court while 280 or 81.87% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress, and arrest warrants) during the quarter. There were 30 orders disposed of in the period while 2 became inactive, and 28 enforcements were disposed or made inactive, producing an estimated case clearance rate of 17.54% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	5	0	0	0.00
Indictments	3	4	1	166.67
Summary	7	4	0	57.14
Petty session	0	2	0	UNDEFINED
Total	15	10	1	73.33

The above table shows the sample of 15 criminal cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Summary matters accounted for the largest share with 7 or 46.66% of the total followed by committal matters with 5 cases or 33.33%. There were 10 criminal cases disposed of in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, resulting in a clearance rate of 73.33% which is below 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 3.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	9	12	0	133.33
Uncontrollable Child	3	3	2	166.67
Total Weighted Average	12	15	2	141.67

There were 12 child welfare cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 9 or 75%, while the remaining proportion were cases of uncontrollable child with 3 or 25%. For the period July1, 2024 – September 30, 2024. There were 15 child welfare case disposed of producing an estimated case clearance rate of 141.67%: an amount above the international standards on this vital metric and a vast improvement from the 32.50% recording in the previous quarter (Jul.-Sep. 2024).

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Hanover Family Court in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the St. James Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	27	32	1	122.22
Declaration of Paternity	5	7	0	140.00
Access	10	5	1	60.00
Guardianship	3	0	0	0.00
Maintenance	28	23	0	82.14
Total	73	67	2	94.52

The 73 new Family cases filed at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, disaggregated by case subtype showed maintenance matters accounted for the largest proportion with 28 cases or 38.36%. This was followed by custody cases with 27 or 36.99% and access with 10 or 13.70%. There were also 5 new case filed in the quarter concerning cases of declaration of paternity. A total of 69 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter. For matters that were disposed during the period, 32 were disposed custody cases, 23 disposed maintenance cases, 7disposed cases declaration of paternity and 5 disposed cases of access. This produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 94.52% for the broad family case type; The highest rate recorded was for declaration of paternity cases with 140%, followed by custody with 122.22% and maintenance cases with 82.14%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024, at the Hanover Family Court

The subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Hanover for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 3.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	54	41	0	75.93
Total/Weighted Average	54	41	0	75.93

The data above shows that there were a total of 54 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2024 at the Hanover Family Court. All cases were protection order cases. During the third quarter of the 2024 calendar year the Hanover Family court disposed a total 41 Domestic Violence cases. This outcome produced case clearance rates of 75.93% 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 subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Hanover Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 3.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Number of New Cases Filed	Number of Cases Disposed	Number of Inactive Cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
8	8	0	100

The data above shows that there were a total of 8 new civil cases filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. There were also a total of 8 civil cases which were disposed of in the quarter at the Hanover Family Court. This produced an estimated case clearance rate of 100%, which satisfies international standards for this metric.

Table 3.6: Sampling Distribution Enforcement/Post Disposal Activity for the Hanover Family Court for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Disposed matters	inactive matters	Estimated Clearance Rate (%)
Vary Orders	36	24	1	69.44
Disobedience of Maintenance	16	13	0	81.25
Warrant of distress	181	83	98	100.00
Warrant of Arrest	54	4	50	100.00
Total/Weighted Average	287	124	149	95.12

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 36 or 12.54% of post disposal activity in the St. James family court while 251 or 87.46% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress, and arrest warrants) during the quarter. There were 24 vary orders disposed of in the period while 1 became inactive, and 100 enforcements were disposed while 148 made inactive, producing an estimated case clearance rate of 95.12% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	5	7	1	160.00
Indictments	10	12	1	130.00
Summary	8	8	4	150.00
Petty Session	20	27	9	180.00
Total/Weighted Average	43	54	15	160.47

The above table shows the sample of 43 criminal cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Of these, 20 or 46.51% were petty session matters, 10 or 23.26% were indictment matters, while summary matters accounted for 8 cases or 18.60%. Committal proceedings accounted for the remaining 5 matters or 11.63%. There were a total of 69 criminal cases disposed of or became inactive during the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Of the total cases disposed petty session and indictment matters accounted for 27 and 12 cases respectively, while summary matters accounted for 8 cases. There were seven inactive summary matters. This produced an estimated weighted clearance rate of 160.47% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 4.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	22	26	0	118.18
Uncontrollable Child	18	13	1	77.78
Total Weighted Average	40	39	1	100.00

There were 40 child welfare cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Child care protection cases accounted for the greater share with 22 or 55% and the remainder were uncontrollable child cases 18 or 45%. A total of 40 child welfare cases were disposed or became inactive during the quarter. Cases concerning childcare and protection accounted for 26 disposed cases and the remaining 13 disposed cases were matters related to uncontrollable child care. The 1 inactive cases recorded in the period were classified as uncontrollable child. This result produced a weighted average case clearance rate of 100%, which satisfies international standards of this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Westmoreland Family Court in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Westmoreland Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	52	39	0	75.00
Declaration of Paternity	25	12	2	56.00
Legal Guardianship	3	0	0	0.00
Maintenance	60	43	4	78.33
Access	10	4	0	40.00
Total/Weighted Average	150	98	6	69.33

The 150 new cases filed at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 60 cases or 40%. This was followed by custody cases, accounting for 52 or 34.67% and cases concerning declaration of paternity, 25 or 16.67%. There were also 10 or 6.67% access cases and 3 or 2% cases regarding legal guardianship. A total of 104 cases falling under the broad family category were disposed or became inactive in the quarter. That is, 43 disposed and 4 inactive maintenance cases, 39 disposed custody cases, 12 disposed declarations of paternity cases and 2 inactive, this produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 69.33% for the broad family case type. Cases classified as maintenance, recorded the highest case clearance rate of 78.33%, custody cases followed with 75%, declaration of paternity cases with 56% and cases concerning access recorded a clearance rate of 40%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024, at the Westmoreland Family Court

The subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Westmoreland for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 4.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	63	52	0	82.54
Occupation and protection Order	9	7	0	77.78
Total/Weighted Average	72	59	0	81.94

The data above shows that there were a total of 72 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2024 at the Westmoreland Family Court. The larger proportion of which were protection order cases, accounting for 63 or 87.50%, while the remaining proportion were cases regarding occupation orders with 9 or 12.50%. A total of 59 domestic violence cases were disposed of or were inactive during the quarter. There were 52 protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while the remaining 7 disposed cases were occupation orders. These outcomes produced estimated case clearance rates of 82.54% for protection order cases and 77.28% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 81.94%, which is below international standards on this vital metric.

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

The subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Westmoreland Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 4.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Number of New Cases Filed	Number of Cases Disposed	Number of Inactive Cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
11	8	2	90.91

The data above shows that there were a total of 11 new civil cases filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. There were also a total of 10 civil cases which were disposed of or became inactive in the quarter at the Westmoreland Family Court. This produced an estimated case clearance rate of 90.91%, 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 September 30, 2024

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Disposed matters	Inactive matters	Clearance rate (%)
Vary Orders	36	22	0	61.11
Disobedience of Maintenance	29	16	7	79.31
Warrants of Distress	41	21	0	51.22
Warrants of Arrest	31	8	0	25.81
Total/Weighted Average	137	67	7	54.01

Apart from substantive case activity, it is important to note that vary orders accounted for 36 or 26.28% while 101 or 73.72% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress, and arrest warrants) during the quarter. In the report period 22 vary orders were disposed of while 52 enforcements were disposed or became inactive, this resulted in a case clearance rate of 54.01% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal	5	8	0	160.00
Indictments	5	7	0	140.00
Summary	5	1	3	80.00
Petty Session	0	5	0	UNDEFINED
Total/Weighted Average	15	21	3	160.00

The above table shows the sample of 15 criminal cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Of these, summary, indictment, and committal matters each accounted for 5 cases. There were a total of 24 disposed and inactive cases during the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, this produced an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 160% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 5.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	14	21	0	150.00
Uncontrollable Child	1	1	0	100.00
Total/ Weighted Average	15	22	0	146.67

There were 15 new child welfare cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, the larger proportion of which were child care protection cases which accounted for 14 or 93.33%, while the remaining 1 was uncontrollable child matter. A total of 22 child welfare cases were disposed of during the quarter; 21 cases disposed were child care protection and 1 was uncontrollable child case. These results produced estimated case clearance rates of 150% for child care protection cases and 100% for uncontrollable child, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 146.67%, which satisfies international standards on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Trelawny Family Court in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Trelawny Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	14	16	0	114.29
Declaration of Paternity	8	7	0	87.50
Access	4	4	0	100.00
Legal Guardianship	1	2	0	200.00
Maintenance	30	19	2	70.00
Adoption	1	1	0	100.00
Total	58	49	2	87.93

The 58 new cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, revealed that the largest proportion were maintenance matters with 30 cases or 51.72% and custody matters with 14 cases or 24.14%. Declaration of paternity matters followed accounting for 18 or 31.03% of new family cases filed. A total of 51 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of during the quarter. Of the total disposed cases, 19 were concerning maintenance, 16 custody cases, 7 declaration of paternity cases, 4 cases of access and 1 case of legal guardianship and adoption. This produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 87.93% for the broad family case type. Legal guardianship cases had the highest case clearance rate of 200%, followed by matters classified as custody with 114.29%, access and adoption with 100% each, declaration of paternity with 87.50% and maintenance with 70%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024, at the Trelawny Family Court

The subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Trelawny for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 5.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	31	30	0	96.77
Total/Weighted Average	31	30	0	96.77

The data above shows that there were a total of 31 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2024 at the Trelawny Family Court. A total 30 Domestic Violence cases were disposed of during the quarter. All new cases filed were protection orders which accounted for 100%. These results produced estimated case clearance rates of 96.77% 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 subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Trelawny Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 5.5: Summary of Civil Case Activity for Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

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

The data above shows that there was no new civil case filed in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. However, there were a total of 9 civil cases which were disposed of in

the quarter. Due to the fact that there were no new cases filed in the quarter a clearance rate could not be calculated.

Table 5.6: Sampling Distribution Enforcement/Post Disposal Activity for the Trelawny Court for the Quarter Ended September 30, 2024

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Vary Orders	27	0	15	55.56
Disobedience of Maintenance	13	0	18	138.46
Warrants of Distress	25	0	0	0.00
Warrants of Arrest	17	18	16	200.00
Total/Weighted Average	82	18	49	81.71

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 27 or 32.93% of post disposal activities in the Trelawny Family Court and the remaining 55 or 67.07% entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) during the quarter. There were 15 vary orders disposed, while 52 enforcements were disposed or became inactive in the period, producing a gross case clearance rate of 81.71% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

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	3	1	0	33.33
Committal	1	3	0	300.00
Total	4	4	0	100.00

The above table shows the sample of 4 criminal cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Summary matters accounted for 3 cases files or 75%, while committal accounted for the remaining 1 new case filed or 25%. There were a total of 4 criminal cases disposed of or became inactive during third quarter ended September 30, 2024; committal matters accounted for 3 disposed matters while summary accounted for 1 case. This produced an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 100% 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 third quarter ended September 30, 2024. Matters falling under child welfare are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 6.2: Summary of Child Welfare Case Activity for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Child care protection	7	9	0	128.57
Uncontrollable Child	12	8	0	66.67
Total Weighted Average	19	17	0	89.47

There were 19 new child welfare cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, the larger proportion of which were uncontrollable child cases, accounted for 12 or 63.16%, while cases classified as child care protection accounted for the remaining proportion, 7 or 36.84%. A total of 17 child welfare cases were disposed of or became inactive during the quarter. There were 9 child care and protection cases disposed of during the quarter, while 8 cases of uncontrollable child were disposed of. These results produced estimated case clearance rates of 128.57% for child care protection cases, and 66.67% for uncontrollable child cases. Further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 89.47%, which is 0.53 percentage points below the international standards on this vital metric.

Family Matters Case Activity Summary for the Manchester Family Court in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Manchester Family Court for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024. 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 Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Overall Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases within the period	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	20	10	0	50.00
Declaration of Paternity	10	3	0	30.00
Access	10	3	0	30.00
Maintenance	84	54	0	64.29
Adoption	2	0	0	0.00
Total	126	70	0	55.56

The 126 new cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the third quarter ended September 30, 2024, showed that maintenance matters accounted for the largest proportion of cases filed with 84 cases or 66.67%; custody matters followed with 20 or 15.87% of new cases filed. There were also 10 matters of access and declaration of paternity and 2 matters of adoption filed in the reporting period. A total of 70 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of in the quarter. Maintenance cases accounted for 54 of the disposed cases while custody cases accounted for 10 disposed cases. There were 3 disposed cases related to access and 3 disposed declaration of paternity cases. This produced an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 55.56% for the broad family case type. Maintenance recorded the highest clearance rate of 64.29%. Custody cases followed with 50%. Declaration of paternity and access followed with 30% each.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024, at the Manchester Family Court

The subsection below provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Manchester for the third quarter ended September 30, 2024.

Table 6.4: Summary of Domestic Violence Case Activity for Cases for the Third quarter ended September 30, 2024

Order Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	18	10	0	55.56
Occupation Order	3	0	0	0.00
Total/Weighted Average	21	10	0	47.62

The data above shows that there were a total of 21 new domestic violence cases filed in the third quarter of 2024 at the Manchester Family Court. Protection order accounted for 18 or 85.71% while the remaining 3 or 14.29% was accounted for by occupation order. A total 10 Domestic Violence cases were disposed of during the quarter of which protection order cases accounted for all 10. These outputs produced an overall clearance rate of 47.62% which is way 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 September 30, 2024

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case clearance weight (%)
Vary Orders	22	0	14	63.64
Disobedience of Maintenance	16	3	14	106.25
Warrants of Distress	33	0	0	0.00
Warrants of Arrest	22	0	4	18.18
Total/Weighted Average	93	3	32	37.63

It is important to note that, apart from substantive case activity, vary orders accounted for 22 or 23.65% of post disposal activities in the Manchester family court and the remaining 71 or 76.34% 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 14 vary orders were disposed and 21 enforcement matters were disposed or became inactive; this produced a case clearance rate of 37.63%the for these matters.

Conclusion

The specialised family courts had an overall case clearance rate of 83.92% in the 3rd quarter ended September 30, 2024. This suggests that for every 100 new cases that were filed approximately 84 cases were disposed of in the period. Of note, the Chapelton Family court was not accounted for in this quarter as opposed to the previous two quarters (Jan.-Mar & Apr.-Jun.) The rates ranged from a high of 114.29% in the Trelawny Family court to a low of 59.41% in the Manchester 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 fourth quarter of 2024 for the specialised family court is 2071, while the forecasted number of cases disposed or inactive is 1925, producing a predicted weighted case clearance rate of 92.96% 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 annualised. 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 utilised 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 utilises 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 35th 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 :

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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 – Specialised 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.