

Judicial Branch Workload Formulas and On-Bench Time Reporting

September 23, 2014 Presented by: Brad Fowler, Planning and Organizational Development Officer



Workload Formulas



Appropriations Act of 2011

S.L. 2011-145

WORKLOAD FORMULA FOR SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES/MINUTES MAINTAINED BY THE CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT TO RECORD CONVENING AND ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF COURT

SECTION 15.6.(a) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall use funds available to contract with the National Center for State Courts to develop a workload formula for superior court judges. The results of this formula shall be submitted to the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety by December 1, 2011.



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Judicial Branch Workload Formulas

Background

- Use of workload indicators as early as 1990s
- First collaborated with the National Center for State Courts in 2006 to convert workload indicators to workload formulas for clerks of superior court, magistrates, and district court judges
- Prior to workload formulas, staffing needs were addressed based upon subjective decision-making
- General Statutes set forth the numbers of judges, assistant district attorneys, and minimum number of magistrates
- Workload formulas provide an objective means for projecting staffing needs



Judicial Branch Workload Formulas

Overview

Staffing Resources Needs

- Based on empirical data
- Focuses on most common work performed
- Provides credibility (National Center for State Courts methodology)
- Requested by the General Assembly
- Provides tools for equitable analysis of local needs

Management of Resources

- Dynamic calculations are revised often and vacancies are taken into consideration
- Tools are extremely effective for relative resourcing comparisons



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Judicial Branch Workload Formula Approach

Committee directed, approved by the constituent group

Case weight approach based on time studies used for:

- Clerks of superior court
- Magistrates
- District court judges
- Superior court judges
- Family court case coordinators
- Assistant district attorneys and victim witness/legal assistants
- Custody mediators



Effective Workload Formula Process

- Strong participation by all judicial official groups in time studies
- Determined preliminary case weights (i.e., what is)
- Modest quality adjustments to preliminary case weights to determine final case weights (i.e., what should be)
- Computed annually using most recent three years of filings (i.e., workload formulas being updated now based on July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2014 filings)
- Components updated as necessary to reflect changes in law, procedures, responsibilities, or other factors





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Final Case Weights

Superior Court Judges

946 minutes

homicide

131 minutes

sex offender list offense (felony or misdemeanor)

91 minutes

habitual offender

117 minutes

felony assault/robbery with dangerous weapon

40 minutes

felony controlled substance

40 minutes

other felony

32 minutes

misdemeanor/other

86 minutes

contracts

27 minutes

collect on accounts

104 minutes

negligence

183 minutes

real property

31 minutes

administrative appeal/other



Staffing Needs Calculations

Number of filings (defendants) x case weight

Case-related staff year value

Workload formulas acknowledge that not every hour of every work day is spent on case related activities. There is time included for non-case related activities (e.g., administrative responsibilities, travel, and training).

Not all case-related work occurs in a courtroom. There is a variety of case preparation activities and post-hearing case-related work that occurs outside of the courtroom.



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On-Bench Time Reporting



Appropriations Act of 2011

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SECTION 15.6.(b) G.S. 7A-109 is amended by adding a new section to read:

"(a1) The minutes maintained by the clerk pursuant to this subsection shall record the date and time of each convening of court, as well as the date and time of each recess or adjournment of court with no further business before the court."

SECTION 15.6.(c) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall provide on a monthly basis the records of the dates and times of convening, recess, and adjournment of court collected by each clerk of superior court pursuant to G.S. 7A-109, as enacted by subsection (b) of this section, to the National Center for State Courts, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Study Committee on Consolidation of Judicial and Prosecutorial Districts created in Section 15.11 of this act.



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Implementation of On-Bench Time Reporting

Effective July 1, 2011 in Superior Court

- July 2011 June 2013
 - Used simple survey tool to collect data
 - Two-week development and implementation window
 - Data exported to Excel
 - Labor-intensive manual sorting of data (1,100 rows of data per month)
 - Staff time of approximately 10-12 hours per month
 - No system edits to minimize errors or conflicting data





Expansion to District Court Appropriations Act of 2013 (S. L. 2013-360)

MINUTES MAINTAINED BY THE CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT TO RECORD CONVENING AND ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF BOTH DISTRICT AND SUPERIOR COURT

SECTION 18B.8.(a) G.S. 7A-109(a1) reads as rewritten:

"(a1) The minutes maintained by the clerk pursuant to this subsection shall record the date and time of each convening of district and superior court, as well as the date and time of each recess or adjournment of <u>district and superior</u> court with no further business before the court."

SECTION 18B.8.(b) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall provide on a monthly basis the records of the dates and times of convening, recess, and adjournment of district and superior court collected by each clerk of superior court pursuant to G.S. 7A-109, as amended by subsection (a) of this section, to the National Center for State Courts, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety.

SECTION 18B.8.(c) This section becomes effective January 1, 2014.



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Implementing Expansion to District Court

Effective January 1, 2014

- Reporting process used for superior court (112 judges) was inadequate for district court (270 judges)
- Technology Services Division developed Court Time, a webbased application for data entry
 - Effective date of special provision allowed six months to design data collection system in 2013 – compared to two weeks in 2011
- Court Time uses drop-down options instead of free text which simplifies data aggregation
- Court Time provides system edit checks (e.g., each judge can only be in one session of court at a time) and system validation checks (e.g. reminders to counties who report no sessions in a month) which improves quality of data



Court Time Application

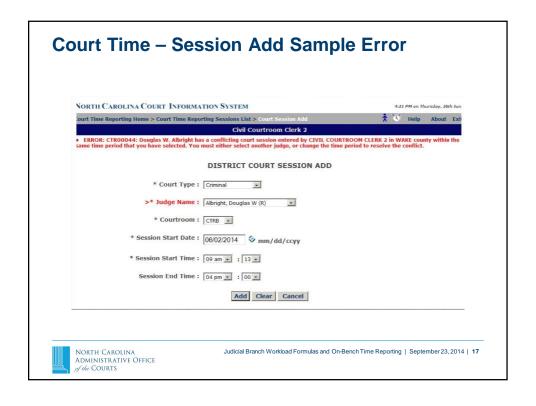
Overview

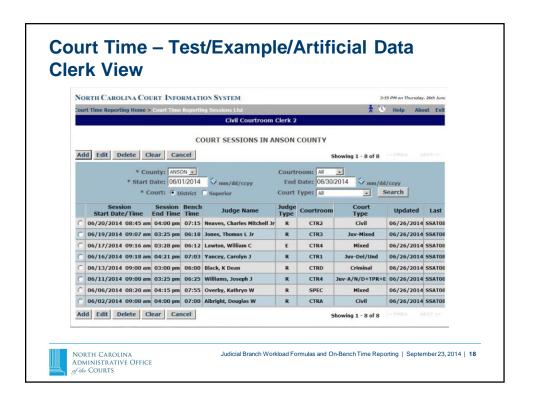
- Training manuals for various users
 - · Courtroom clerks
 - Elected clerks
 - Judges
- Implemented for courtroom clerks on January 1, 2014
- · Roles added for elected clerks and designees
 - · Clerks can view all data for that county
- Roles added for judges
 - · Judges can only view his/her own sessions

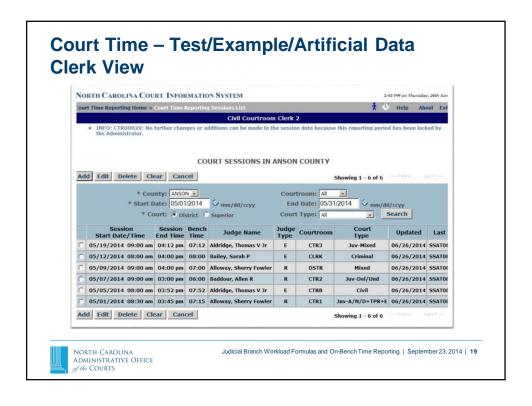


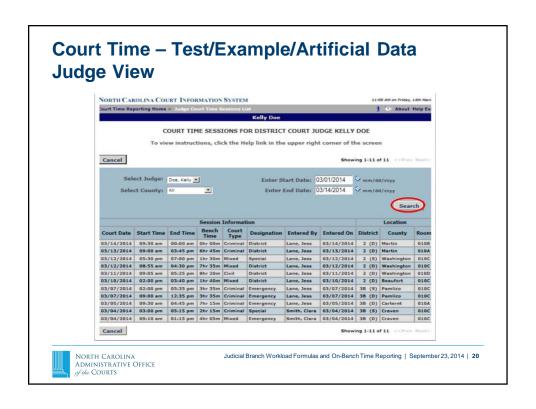
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Court Time — Adding a Session NORTH CAROLINA COURT INFORMATION SYSTEM Jourt Time Reporting Home > Court Time Reporting Sessions List > Court Session Add Civil Courtroom Clerk 2 DISTRICT COURT SESSION ADD * Court Type : Cremnal * Judge Name : Allen, Claude W Ir (E) * Courtroom : CIRI = * Session Start Date : 06/26/2014 mm/dd/ccyy * Session Start Time : 00 am = : 100 = Session End Time : 00 am = : 100 = Add Clear Cancel NORTH CAROLINA Judicial Branch Workload Formulas and On-Bench Time Reporting | September 23, 2014 | 16 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of ACCOUNTS









Summary of Key Points

- Case weight workload formulas follow methodology utilized by the National Center for State Courts.
- Workload formulas acknowledge that not every hour of every work day is spent on case-related activities.
- On-bench time alone is not representative of the full range of activities in a judicial work day.
- Presenting on-bench time as a full measure of judicial work is misleading and incomplete.
- Workload formulas are valuable tools for comparing staffing needs among counties/districts/divisions.



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