



Minnesota Judicial Branch Policy

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I. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Minnesota Judicial Branch to use the methodology known as the Judicial Weighted Caseload (WCL) to determine the number of judges needed across the state and within a judicial district. The Judicial WCL will be reviewed annually by the Judicial Council and adjusted when necessary to take into account changes to law, rules, business practices, administrative policies, etc., that affect case weights, judge year value, or case types.

II. IMPLEMENTATION AUTHORITY

Implementation of this policy shall be the responsibility of the State Court Administrator, acting as the Judicial Council's agent.

III. EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

The State Court Administrator shall seek advice from a designated advisory group.

Changes to the case weights, judge year value or case types must be approved by the Judicial Council.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Judicial Weighted Caseload (WCL): The Judicial Weighted Caseload (WCL) calculates workload by multiplying the average amount of time judges spend on each type of case by the actual number of filings for each case type. This workload figure is divided by a "judge year value" which reflects the number of minutes judges have to work on case-related matters in a year. The judge year varies by judicial district to take into account variation in administrative and travel time. The WCL results are updated each quarter using the most current filings. A comparison is made between the WCL results and the actual number of judges, referees, and other judicial officers to reflect the actual need for more judges. A relative need analysis is done to indicate a rank order for the judge need to ensure that any new judgeship is assigned to the district with the greatest need. Since the early 1980s, Minnesota has used the WCL to determine the needs for judges.