



Resources and Practices Time Study

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Resources and Practices Time Study

oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative

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Executive Summary

In 2022, the Minnesota Judicial Branch made a historic decision to make remote hearings a permanent part of district court operations and formed the oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative (OHI) to oversee and guide the integration of remote and in-person hearings into a consistent statewide hearing framework. In 2024, OHI used a broad range of data, including the findings of the Resources and Practices Time Study, to inform recommendations about the future use of remote, hybrid, and in-person hearings in Minnesota courts.

The Resources and Practices Time Study was designed to examine differences in hearing duration between in-person, hybrid, and remote hearings, as well as the impact of different hearing and calendar practices on the average amount of time spent in hearings and calendar sessions. A time study involving 15 of Minnesota's 87 counties, including at least one county, courthouse, or line of business from each of the ten judicial districts was conducted over a four week period in June 2023. During the time study court staff recorded time for over one thousand calendar sessions and nearly 9,000 hearings.

Overall, for the case areas and hearings examined, the findings of this study do not indicate that remote hearings were substantially longer, on average, than in-person hearings. **For cases overall, the average hearing duration recorded in this study was very close to the average duration for hearings recorded during Minnesota's last Weighted Caseload study completed in 2019.**

- There was no difference in average hearing duration for Major Criminal cases (Gross Misdemeanor/Felony), while hearings in Civil and Probate/Mental Health cases were shorter, on average, in 2023. In the other three case areas (Minor Criminal, Family, and Juvenile Delinquency) average hearing duration was slightly higher in 2023.
- For specific hearing types in criminal cases with similar levels of offense, remote hearings in 2023 took slightly less time on average than in-person hearings, although average hearing times were very similar.
- Non-hearing session time – the time during a calendar session that is not spent in hearings or breaks – was not longer, on average, for remote calendar sessions than for in-person calendar sessions.

While there have been a handful of efforts nationwide, to date, that compared hearing length of remote and in-person hearings, the Resources and Practices Time Study is the first study known to explore the relationship between hearing and calendaring practices, hearing duration, and non-hearing calendar session time.

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Acknowledgments

The researchers wish to thank all of the Minnesota district court staff who diligently recorded time for calendar sessions and hearings during the time study and whose participation made this study possible. This study also would not have been possible without the support and guidance from Minnesota's oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative Steering Committee and input on the study design from the oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative Evaluation and Organizational Learning Team.

Study Background and Purpose

oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative

In 2022, the Minnesota Judicial Branch made a historic decision to make remote hearings a permanent part of court operations. It formed the oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative (OHI) to oversee implementation of the changes to remote and in-person hearings, help district courts resolve issues, and refine, evaluate, and improve the hearing process in alignment with the Minnesota Judicial Branch's oneCourtMN vision.

In June 2022, the oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative Policy (Judicial Council Policy 525) went into effect as an initial attempt at integrating remote and in-person hearings into a consistent statewide hearing framework. In 2024, OHI used a broad range of data to make permanent recommendations to the Judicial Council regarding the future use of remote, hybrid, and in-person hearings in Minnesota.

The OHI Steering Committee used the Resources and Practices Study to:

- Understand the calendar and hearing practices being used throughout the state.
- Examine how remote, hybrid, and in-person calendar sessions and hearings, and specific hearing practices, impact hearing length and calendar session time.
- Inform recommendations from the oneCourtMN Hearings Initiative to the Minnesota Judicial Council.

Methodology

County Practices Survey

Local hearing and calendaring practices that were relevant to the analysis in this study were identified from a survey of county practices. The County Practices Survey was conducted in late December 2022 thru January 2023. This survey was designed to collect information about hearing-related practices being used in different counties across the state. Surveys were distributed to judicial districts for targeted distribution to counties in their district, specifically to court staff with knowledge of hearing practices in their county and line of business.

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All counties submitted responses for each line of business: Civil, Adult Criminal, Juvenile Delinquency, Juvenile Protection, Family, and Probate/Mental Health. Counties could submit one response for more than one line of business if the business practices were the same. Large counties, where a line of business was further split into divisions, could submit a different response for each division. Overall, 534 responses were submitted.

Research staff conducted individual meetings with court administration in the counties selected to participate in the Resources and Practices time study to review their survey responses and confirm that the practices reported in the survey continued to be followed when the time study was conducted.

Time Study

A time study was conducted over a four week period in June 2023 (June 5th to June 30th). Two data collection methods were used to collect timing data.

- 1. Calendar Session Time Entry Form**

Used by staff in the courtroom to record information about the calendar session, including the actual end time and the amount of recess or break time when a recess or break was taken. Some of the information collected on the form was included to facilitate retrieval of additional data from the statewide case management system about the session and associated hearings. This reduced the data entry needed on the form.

- 2. Hearing duration entry**

Courtroom staff entered the hearing duration in minutes, or the hearing start and end time, in the court case management system for each hearing.

Fifteen counties were invited to participate in the time study, including at least one county, courthouse, or line of business from each judicial district.¹ The sample was intentionally selected to include a mix of counties, both large and small, dispersed geographically across the state. Sample selection also took into account the hearing and calendaring practices in each of the locations to ensure that the practices relevant to the analysis were represented in at least two counties, and that a variety of practices were represented. In most of the sample counties, all lines of business participated in the time study. In the larger counties, participation was limited to specific lines of business. See Appendix A for a list of Minnesota districts, counties, and lines of business participating.

¹ Minnesota has 87 counties divided into ten Judicial Districts. Certain counties have multiple courthouses, including one county, St. Louis, that participated in the time study.

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Table 3. Number of Calendar Session Forms and Hearings by Case Area

Case Area/Line of Business	Number of Calendar Session Forms	Number of Hearings	Percentage of Hearings
Civil	100	1,390	18%
Criminal	443	4,706	60%
Family	162	675	9%
Juvenile Delinquency	50	419	5%
Juvenile Protection	56	330	4%
Probate/Mental Health	21	344	4%
Unknown	180	0	0%
Total	1,012	7,864	100%

All hearing appearance types were studied, including those where all parties appeared only remotely or only in person, along with hybrid hearings where parties participated both remotely and in person (See Appendix C for definitions). The majority of hearings were held remotely (65%), one-quarter of the hearings were held in person, and less than 10% of hearings were held hybrid.

Table 4. Number of Hearings by Hearing Appearance Type

Hearing Appearance Type	Number of Hearings	Percentage of Hearings
Hearing Held Remote	5,137	65%
Hearing Held In-Person	2,046	26%
Hearing Held Hybrid	681	9%
Total	7,864	100%

Court staff participating in the time study received training prior to the time study and technical support during the time study. A recorded session was also available for staff that were unable to attend a live session prior to the time study. Informational sessions for managers and supervisors in participating counties were also conducted in late April 2023 before the training began.

Calendar Session Activities

Activities that court staff performed while facilitating hearings or between hearings on a calendar session are reflected in the time recorded for the hearing or the calendar session; however, the time for each specific activity was not recorded. These “in-court” activities may include managing other parties in

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Zoom breakout rooms, checking in parties for another hearing, waiting for parties to log into the hearing, updating records in the case management system, and troubleshooting technology issues.

Some hearing-related activities may have also been performed by court staff outside of a designated calendar session; however, time for these activities was not recorded or accounted for in this study. Some examples of these activities include, but are not limited to, data entry in the case management system following the calendar session, scheduling future hearings, and sending hearing notices. Only those activities that were performed during a calendar session were included.

Allocation of Calendar Session Time

Time was recorded for all calendar sessions where all parties were expected to appear only remotely or only in-person, as well as mixed/hybrid calendars with a combination of remote and in-person hearings (See Appendix C for definitions).

Calendar session time was divided into time spent in hearings, break/recess time, and time for other activities that may include customer/hearing support or waiting for parties before the hearing began. In order to understand how much time during the calendar session was spent performing these other activities, hearing and break/recess time was subtracted from the total recorded calendar session time.

The diagram in Figure 2 illustrates an example of how calendar session time was allocated into these three categories. Calendar session time used for activities other than hearings and breaks will be referred to as “non-hearing session time”. Non-hearing session time is denoted by the gold sections at the beginning, middle, and end of the bar in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Calendar Session Example



Using the example in Figure 2 above, Figure 3 demonstrates how non-hearing session time was calculated.

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Figure 3. Non-Hearing Session Time Calculation

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Total Calendar Session Time (75 min)} \\ & \quad - \text{Total Hearing Time (48 min)} \\ & \quad - \text{Break/Recess Time (15 min)} \\ & \quad = \text{Non-Hearing Session Time (12 min)} \end{aligned}$$

Due to variation in the length of calendar sessions, the number of hearings per session, and the length of breaks/recesses, it was necessary to calculate the average amount of non-hearing session time per hearing. A standardized measure was necessary to examine differences between remote and in-person calendar sessions and whether any hearing or calendar practices impacted calendar session time spent outside of hearings and breaks.

The average non-hearing session time was calculated by dividing the total calendar session time, not included in hearing or break time, by the number of hearings per session. An example of this calculation is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Average Non-Hearing Session Time Per Hearing Calculation

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Total Non-Hearing Session Time (12 min)} \\ & \quad + \\ & \quad \text{Number of Hearings in Calendar Session (N=4)} \\ & \quad = \text{Average Non-Hearing Session Time (3 min)} \end{aligned}$$

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Associating Hearing and Calendaring Practices with Timing Data

Timing data for hearings and calendar sessions was aggregated across counties and lines of business where the same practice was utilized and compared to timing data aggregated from jurisdictions that did not utilize that practice.

The following hearing and calendaring practices were examined:

- Using separate calendar sessions exclusively for remote or in-person hearings or combining both hearing types in the same calendar session.
- Instructing parties to log-in early for remote hearings.
- Offering Zoom practice sessions to parties before their hearing.
- Starting a certain number of hearings at different times on a calendar session
- Utilizing one or more roles (judicial officer, court staff, judicial staff) and none, one, or more staff to facilitate remote hearings (troubleshooting technology issues, managing Zoom breakout rooms, checking in parties for a hearing).⁴

Findings: Hearing Duration

To examine how hearing length has been impacted by widespread use of remote and hybrid hearings, the average hearing duration from the 2023 time study was compared to hearing data from the most recent 2019 Judicial Weighted Caseload (WCL) time study⁵. During the 2023 Resources and Practices time study, a combination of remote, hybrid, and in-person hearings were held (shown in Table 3 above), with most hearings held remotely, while during the 2019 study nearly all hearings were held in-person. If remote or hybrid hearings were consistently longer or shorter than the in-person equivalent, the average duration in 2023, overall and by case area, would also be expected to be longer or shorter than in 2019 (e.g., if a large proportion of hearings were being held remotely in 2023 and remote hearings were taking several minutes longer on average, it would be expected that the overall hearing duration in 2023 would be higher compared to 2019 when hearings were mostly held in-person).

Overall, the average hearing duration recorded in this study is very close to the average duration for hearings recorded in the most recent WCL time study (2019). Three case areas (Major Civil, Minor Civil, Probate/Mental Health) showed a decrease in average hearing duration in 2023. The average hearing duration for Major Civil cases was shorter by six minutes compared to when hearings were mostly in-person. In both Minor Civil and Probate/Mental Health cases, the average duration was lower than the Weighted Caseload time study by four minutes. In three case areas (Minor Criminal, Family, Juvenile

⁴ When more than one person helped to facilitate remote hearings, the practice of dividing or sharing the facilitation tasks (troubleshooting technology issues, managing Zoom breakout rooms, checking in parties for a hearing) was also examined.

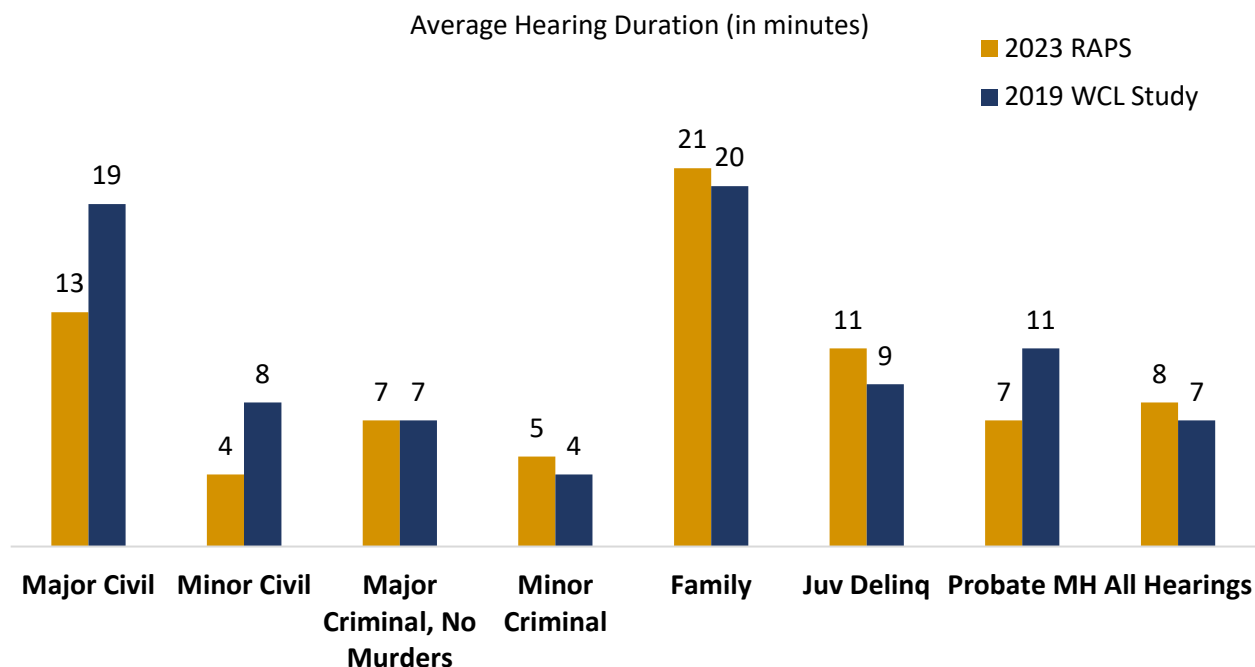
⁵ Minnesota Judicial Branch. (2019). *2019 Judicial Weighted Caseload Study*.

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Delinquency) average hearing duration was slightly higher in 2023. There was no change in average hearing duration for Major Criminal cases (Gross Misdemeanor/Felony).

Figure 5. Hearing Duration: 2023 Resources and Practices Study Compared to 2019 Judicial Weighted Caseload Study



Data table reference for Figure 5. Hearing Duration: 2023 Resources and Practices Study Compared to 2019 Judicial Weighted Caseload Study

Case Area/Line of Business	2023 Resources and Practices Time Study Ave Hearing Duration (minutes)	2019 Weighted Caseload Time Study Ave. Hearing Duration (minutes)
Major Civil	13	19
Minor Civil	4	8
Major Criminal, No Murders	7	7
Minor Criminal	5	4
Family	21	20
Juvenile Delinquency	11	9
Probate / Mental Health	7	11
All Hearings	8	7

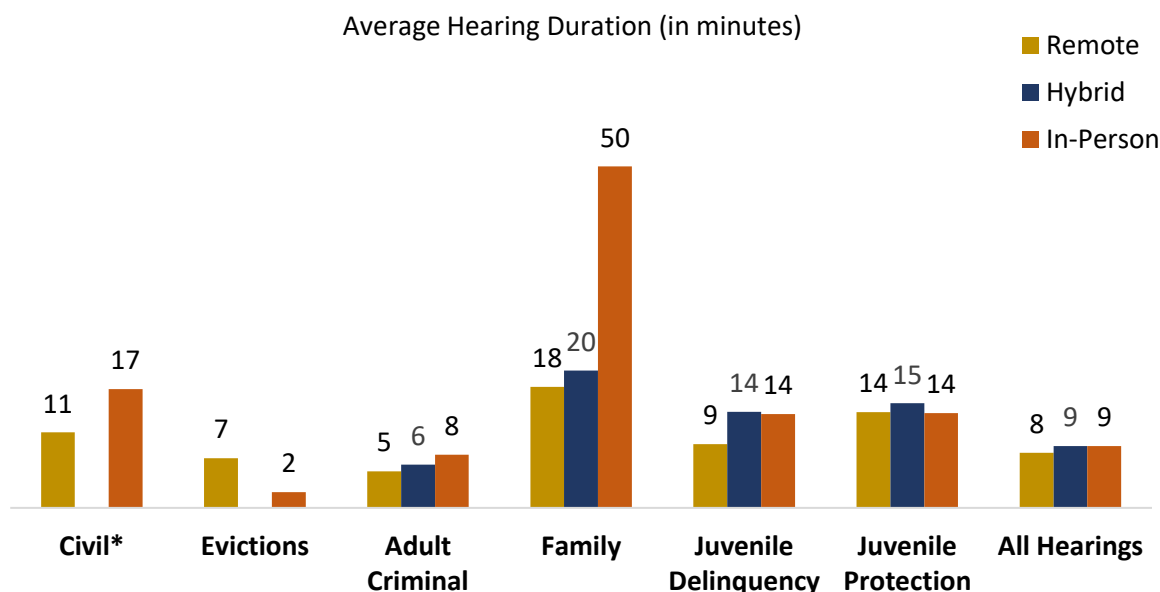
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While the 2023 Resources and Practices time study sample was designed to be representative of characteristics and practices across the state, it was not an exact match to the cases and hearings in the 2019 Weighted Caseload time study. However, the two samples were quite similar.⁶ Both studies collected data for the same amount of time (4 weeks), both studies included cases and hearings from across the state, and both samples were similar in characteristics that could impact how long a hearing takes, for example whether an interpreter was used.⁷

In Figure 6, average hearing duration for remote, in-person, and hybrid hearings recorded during the 2023 time study were compared. Across all case areas, with the exception of Eviction cases, the average length of remote hearings was less than or equal to the average duration of in-person hearings. Eviction hearings, shown separately from other Major Civil hearings, had a lower average duration for in-person hearings than remote hearings. This was likely due to the large number of Eviction hearings held in-person within the one county with an eviction specific court, the highest volume of eviction cases, and also highest population in the state.

Figure 6. Hearing Duration: 2023 Remote, Hybrid, and In-Person Hearings by Case Area



⁶ Hearings on conciliation cases, hearings in treatment court, and trials were excluded from the 2019 Weighted Caseload Study results for this analysis.

⁷ The percentage of hearings with an interpreter was slightly higher in the 2023 time study (4%) compared to the 2019 Weighted Caseload Study (2%) due to the inclusion of counties known to have a high-volume of interpreted hearings and an increase in these hearings since 2019.

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Data table reference for Figure 6. Hearing Duration: 2023 Remote, Hybrid, and In-Person Hearings by Case Area

Case Area/Line of Business	2023 Remote Ave. Hearing Duration (minutes)	2023 Hybrid Ave Hearing Duration (minutes)	2023 In-Person Ave Hearing Duration (minutes)
Civil	11	No data ⁸	17
Evictions	7	No data ⁸	2
Adult Criminal	5	6	8
Family	18	20	50
Juvenile Delinquency	9	14	14
Juvenile Protection	14	15	14
All Hearings	8	9	9

In the Family case area there were a handful of very long in-person hearings (300+ minutes) that contributed to a much higher average duration compared to hearings with parties appearing remotely and hybrid hearings. Even after removing the outliers, the average duration for in-person hearings was 39 minutes, which was still twice as long as the average duration for remote or hybrid hearings.

The finding that in some case areas remote hearings took less time, on average, than in-person hearings could be evidence of compliance with the statewide policy and local guidance to conduct more complex (and therefore often lengthier) hearings in-person.

A further examination of hearing duration by appearance type for certain high volume hearing types in adult criminal cases supported the overall trend of remote hearing length being similar to or shorter than in-person equivalents.⁹

Remote hearings took less time, on average, than in-person hearings for five high volume hearing types in Felony and Gross Misdemeanor cases (Major Criminal). The difference between the average duration of remote hearings compared to in-person hearings ranged from one minute less for bail hearings and probation violation hearings to six minutes less for pre-trial hearings.

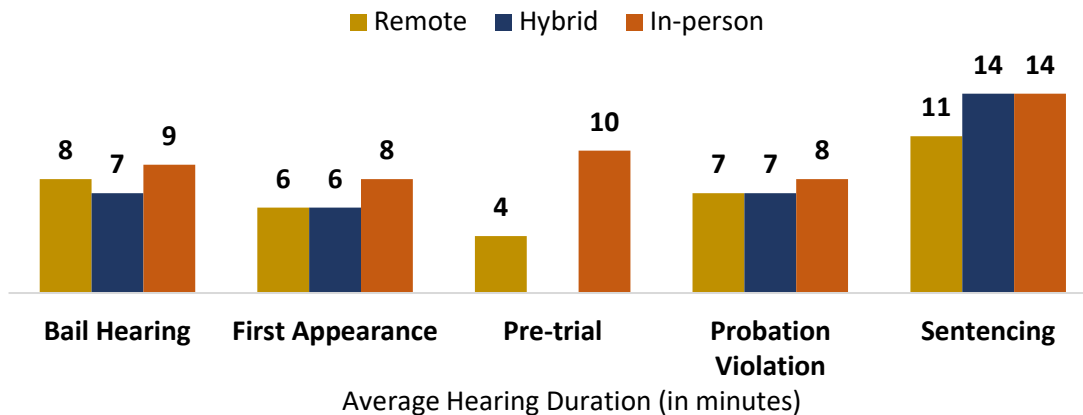
⁸ In Figure 6 and the associated data table, duration is not reported for appearance types with fewer than 10 hearings (hybrid hearings for Civil and Evictions). Data is also not reported for any Probate/Mental Health hearings since all of the appearance types for these cases had fewer than 10 hearings.

⁹ Only adult criminal hearings had sufficient data to report by hearing type.

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Figure 7. Average Hearing Duration: 2023 Remote, Hybrid, and In-Person Hearings by Hearing Type in Major Criminal Cases



Data table reference for Figure 7. Average Hearing Duration: 2023 Remote, Hybrid, and In-Person Hearings by Hearing Type in Major Criminal Cases

Hearing Type	2023 Remote Ave. Hearing Duration (minutes)	2023 Hybrid Ave Hearing Duration (minutes)	2023 In-Person Ave Hearing Duration (minutes)
Bail Hearing	8	7	9
First Appearance	6	6	8
Pre-Trial	4	No data ¹⁰	10
Probation Violation	7	7	8
Sentencing	11	14	14

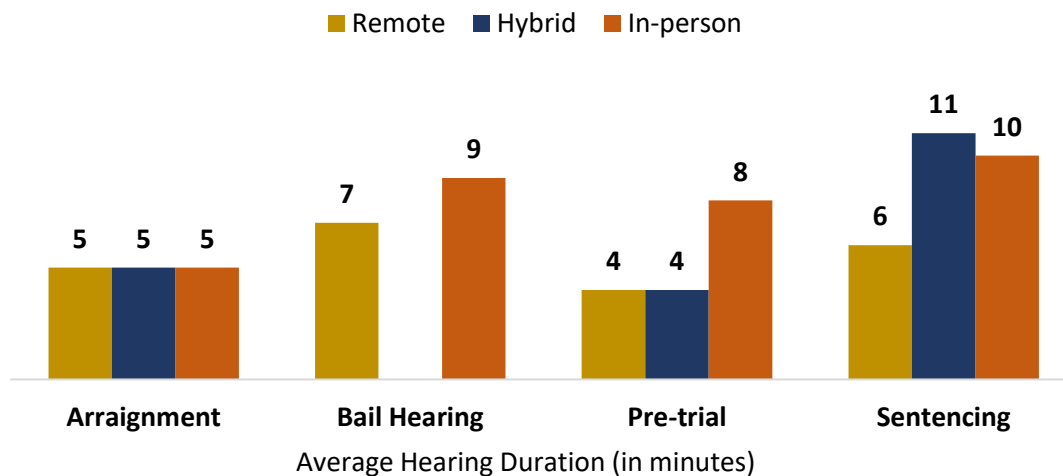
Remote hearings also took less time, on average, than in-person hearings for three of the four high volume hearing types in Misdemeanor and Petty Misdemeanor cases (Minor Criminal). The difference between the average duration of remote hearings compared to in-person hearings ranged from two minutes less for bail hearings to four minutes less for pre-trial hearings and sentencing proceedings. The average duration was the same for remote, hybrid, and in-person arraignment hearings.

¹⁰ The average duration is not reported in Figure 7 nor the associated data table where there were fewer than 10 hearings (pre-trial hybrid hearings).

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Figure 8. Average Hearing Duration: 2023 Remote, Hybrid, and In-Person Hearings by Hearing Type in Minor Criminal Cases



Data table reference for Figure 8. Average Hearing Duration: 2023 Remote, Hybrid, and In-Person Hearings by Hearing Type in Minor Criminal Cases

Hearing Type	2023 Remote Ave. Hearing Duration (minutes)	2023 Hybrid Ave Hearing Duration (minutes)	2023 In-Person Ave Hearing Duration (minutes)
Arraignment	5	5	5
Bail Hearing	7	No data ¹¹	9
Pre-Trial	4	4	8
Sentencing	6	11	10

Findings: Non-Hearing Calendar Session Time

Several hearing and calendaring related practices were examined by the research team as part of this study (see Methodology section). However, a smaller number of findings were supported by sufficient evidence to be reported here. Sufficient evidence was determined by the number of observations recorded and a clear relationship between the variables being examined.

¹¹ Data is not reported in Figure 8 nor the associated data table for appearance types with fewer than 10 hearings (hybrid bail hearings).

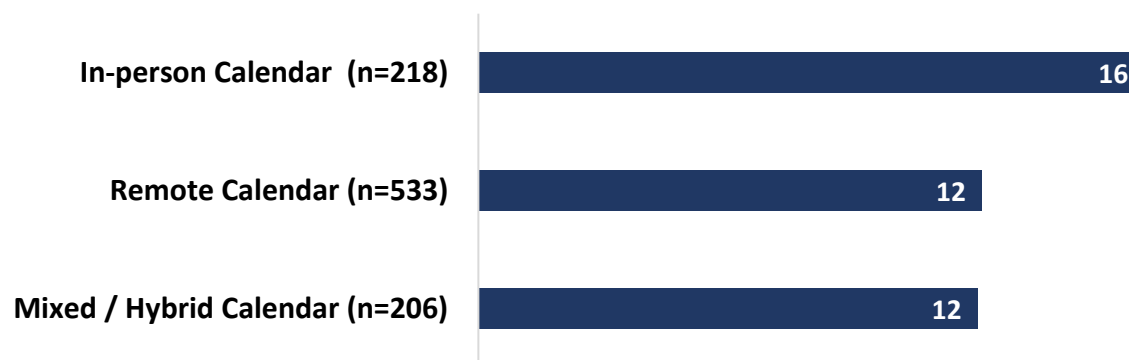
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The average non-hearing session time for calendar sessions intended exclusively for remote hearings was compared to calendars intended exclusively for in-person hearings and to mixed/hybrid calendars where both in-person and remote hearings were scheduled on the same session.¹²

In-person calendar sessions recorded more non-hearing session time per hearing than remote or mixed/hybrid calendar sessions. The average non-hearing session time for remote and mixed/hybrid calendar sessions was four minutes less than the average for in-person calendar sessions.

Figure 9. Average Non-Hearing Session Time (in minutes) by Calendar Session Type



Data table reference for Figure 9. Average Non-Hearing Session Time (in minutes) by Calendar Session Type

Calendar Session Type	Average Non-Hearing Session Time (minutes)	Number of Calendar Sessions
In-person Calendar	16	218
Remote Calendar	12	533
Mixed/Hybrid Calendar	12	206

Remote calendar sessions where parties were always or almost always instructed to log-in 15 minutes early for remote hearings had an average non-hearing session time that was up to ten minutes shorter than other remote calendar sessions. This finding would indicate that instructing parties to arrive early for their hearing was an effective time-saving practice.

¹² While remote and in-person calendar sessions were intended for all remote or all in-person hearings respectively, exceptions that were inconsistent with the scheduled calendar session type could have been made for certain hearings, e.g. the judicial officer granted an exception allowing a hearing scheduled on an in-person calendar to be held remotely based on the circumstances of the case.

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Table 5. Average Non-Hearing Session Time for Remote Calendars by Local Practice of Noticing Parties to Arrive Early

Parties are instructed on their notice to arrive 15 min early for their hearing	Average Non-Hearing Session Time (minutes)	Number of Calendar Sessions
Always or almost always	5	64
Sometimes	7	53
Never	15	336

In addition, offering hearing participants the opportunity to practice using remote hearing technology prior to their hearing in scheduled Zoom practice sessions did not demonstrate a clear relationship with non-hearing session time.

Conclusions and Limitations

To date, there have been a handful of efforts nationwide to determine if there are any differences in hearing length between remote and in-person hearings¹³; however, this study is the first one to also explore the relationship between hearing and calendaring practices, hearing duration, and non-hearing calendar session time.

Overall, for the case areas and hearings examined, the findings of this study do not indicate that remote hearings in 2023 were substantially longer, on average, than in-person hearings. For cases overall, the average hearing duration recorded in this study is remarkably close to the average duration for hearings recorded during a time study completed in 2019. There was no change in average hearing duration for Major Criminal cases (Gross Misdemeanor/Felony), while hearings in Civil and Probate/Mental Health cases were shorter, on average, in 2023. In the other three case areas (Minor Criminal, Family, and Juvenile Delinquency) average hearing duration was slightly higher in 2023. The average non-hearing session time – the time during a calendar session that is not spent in hearings or breaks – for remote and mixed/hybrid calendar sessions was less than the average for in-person calendar sessions.

This study was conducted in June 2023, over three years after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic which prompted the transition to conducting hearings remotely. By the time this study began, district courts

¹³ One such study is: National Center for State Courts. (2021). *The Use of Remote Hearings in Texas State Courts: The Impact on Judicial Workload*.

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across Minnesota had widely implemented remote hearings; judicial officers and staff had become experienced with conducting hearings in a virtual environment.

While the timing of this study was optimal in that court staff and judicial officers were experienced with conducting hearings remotely, there were practical considerations that limit the ability to generalize the findings of this study to all remote hearings and calendar sessions. Some of the limiting factors are listed below.

- **Sample size** – constraints on the number of counties that could participate in the time study and the purposeful exclusion of certain types of hearings, e.g. trials, hearings conducted by judicial officers who are not judges.
- **Time study length** – a four week time study may not be fully representative of all remote and in-person hearings
- **MN Judicial Branch and local policies in effect during the time study** – in particular, statewide policy and local agreements that governed which types of cases and hearings could be held remotely or in-person.¹⁴ Due to these policies, the legal issues heard in remote hearings were not always directly comparable to those heard during in-person hearings.
- **Factors related to operating within a complex court system** – technology issues, applicable laws, rules, business processes and practices – that could contribute to differences in the amount of time spent in hearings or in calendar sessions. It is expected that these other factors influenced the findings in this report to some extent.

Despite having a representative sample of counties and lines of business, and following the generally accepted standard for time study length that captures hearings from all phases in a case, there were not enough hearings across each stage of a case or enough cases in all case areas to be fully certain that remote hearings take more time, less time, or about the same amount of time, on average, than in-person hearings.

However, considering these limitations, this robust assessment of the differences in hearing length for in-person, remote, and hybrid hearing provides some insights into promising practices, including practices for reducing calendar session time outside of hearings.

¹⁴ Judicial Council Policy 525 and local criminal hearing plans.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Counties Participating in the Time Study

District	County/Line of Business
1	Goodhue County, McLeod County
2	Ramsey County Family Court
3	Rice County
4	Hennepin County Harassment and Housing Court
5	Nicollet County, Nobles County
6	St. Louis County - Virginia
7	Becker County, Mille Lacs County
8	Meeker County, Swift County
9	Cass County
10	Anoka County Juvenile Delinquency Court, Washington County

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Appendix B. Number of Calendar Session Forms and Hearings by County

County (Line of Business)	Number of Calendar Session Forms	Number of Hearings	Percentage of Hearings
Washington County	151	1,830	23%
Rice County	130	609	8%
Ramsey County (Family)	124	233	3%
Goodhue County	93	435	6%
Mille Lacs County	80	454	6%
McLeod County	63	451	6%
Hennepin County (Housing & Harassment)	62	874	11%
Nobles County	55	352	4%
Cass County	52	906	12%
St. Louis County (Virginia)	45	659	8%
Becker County	43	479	6%
Meeke County	41	151	2%
Anoka County	39	105	1%
Swift County	19	44	1%
Nicollet County	15	282	4%
Total	1,012	7,864	100%

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Appendix C. Definitions

Hearing Appearance Types

- **Hearing Held Remote:** All parties/attorneys are appearing using remote technology. No parties/attorneys are physically present in the courtroom.
- **Hearing Held In-Person:** No parties/attorneys are appearing using remote technology. All parties/attorneys are physically present in the courtroom.
- **Hearing Held Hybrid:** Some parties/attorneys appear in person and others appear using remote technology.

Calendar Session Types

- **Remote Calendar Session:** All hearings on the calendar session are scheduled to be held remotely. Occasionally in-person or hybrid hearings are held on these sessions if an exception is made after noticing.
- **In-person Calendar Session:** All hearings on the calendar session are scheduled to be held in-person. Occasionally remote or hybrid hearings are held on these sessions if an exception is made after noticing.
- **Mixed/Hybrid Calendar Session:** Both remote and in-person hearings are scheduled/noticed on the same calendar session; judicial officer and staff switch between remote and in-person hearings during the session.
- **Flexible Calendar Session:** Hearings on this calendar session allow all parties to choose how they appear (remote or in person), without notifying the court. This approach was piloted in two of the participating counties (Becker County, Meeker County, Ramsey County).