

Family Courts of Jamaica
The Chief Justice's Annual Statistics Report for 2022
(Corporate Area Family Court, the Trelawny Family Court,
the Manchester Family Court and the St. James Family
Court)

	JANUARY TO DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS	
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Gross Case Clearance Rate (%)	101.59	96.68
Net backlog rate (%)	6.01	9.12

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Executive Summary

The specialized family courts in Jamaica continued a trend of commendable output in 2022 and in so doing is poised to make a strong contribution towards the realization of several key quantitative targets set out by the Honourable Chief Justice as part of the objective for the Jamaican judiciary to become one of the best performing court systems in the world over the next few years. Accomplishing such a goal will pivot the court system more firmly towards inspiring public confidence and in contributing immensely to creating the environment for business, investment and broader economic buoyancy.

There were 6531 new cases filed at the four specialized family courts included in this report, namely the Corporate Area Family Court, the St. James Family Court and the family courts of Manchester and Trelawny. The Corporate Area Family Court accounted for the largest share of these new cases filed with 2668 or 40.85%, followed by the St. James Family Court with 2511 or 38.16% and the Manchester Family Court with 783 or 11.99%. The St. James Family Court accounted for the largest share of cases disposed with 2795 or 43.88%, followed by the Corporate Area Family Court with 38.05%.

On the matter of the case clearance rate which is one of the most critical measures of court performance, from which several metrics stem, the St. James Family Court was again the leader for the year, netting an impressive 114.81%, followed by the Manchester Family Court with 98.85% and the Corporate Area Family Court with 94.45%.

The estimated net case backlog rate across the specialized family courts is computed to be roughly 6.01%, which is an improvement of 3.11 percentage points when compared to the

previous year. A net case backlog rate of 5% or less is highly desirable and reflective of a court operating at near optimality in its clearance of cases. At the current rate of case clearance, it is anticipated that the family courts as a whole will be able to achieve a net case backlog rate of under 5% within the next 12 months.

The Family Courts as a whole continue to face challenges with delay factors such as the absenteeism of applicants and respondents for hearings as well as due to outstanding scientific reports, among other factors. Strengthening the case management apparatus of these courts as well as greater levels of cooperation and efficiency from external parties and stakeholders will be useful in reducing the general incidence of delays going forward. The Western Regional Family Courts and the Trelawny Family Court benefitted from the implementation of the new Judicial Case Management System (JCMS) towards the end of 2021 however there are several challenges to work through to reap optimum utility from the system at these locations.

Aggregate Case Activity Summary

Aggregate case flow performance estimates for the year ended December 31, 2022

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	2668	2424	96	94.45
St. James Family Court	2511	2795	88	114.81
Trelawny Family Court	569	398	60	80.49
Manchester Family Court	783	753	21	98.85
Total/Weighted Average	6531	6370	265	101.59

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured specialized Family Courts in the 2022 calendar year. It shows that a total of 6531 new cases were filed in these courts, while 265 became inactive and 6370 were disposed of, leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 101.59%. The St. James Family Court recorded the highest overall weighted case clearance rate among the featured courts with 114.81%, followed by the Manchester Family Court with 98.85%.

Introduction

In recent years, an electronic data capture system has been implemented in the specialized Family Courts of the Corporate Area, Trelawny and the Western Regional Family Courts (comprising St. James, Westmoreland and Hanover) to promote efficient data collection and statistical reporting as well as improved case management practices. The system, now nearly

perfected, is the foundation for the production of this statistics report on these specialized Family Courts, detailing a range of case related activities in 2022. The specialized family courts are quite unique within the Jamaican court system, carrying out an array of functions on daily basis – in many ways functioning as a ‘one-stop shop.’ Among the primary functions carried out are on site counselling, filtering matters to offsite counselling locations, extensive open court hearings and adjudication and facilitating wide-ranging operational logistics involving the collection of payments and pay-outs for matters such as maintenance. The specialized Family Courts also tends to a number of distinct case types/macro business units, namely criminal, civil, domestic violence, family which includes maintenance, custody, adoption, declaration of paternity, guardianship and child welfare which includes childcare and protection and uncontrollable child. The criminal division and child welfare together make up the primary activities in the Children’s Court. This report primarily focusses on open court activity for the named specialize courts. According to the Judicature Family Court Act, the primary purpose of the Family Court is to prevent the breakdown of families and where this may be unavoidable to ensure that the welfare of its members and in particular children is safeguarded. The plethora of functions, both judicial and administrative which are performed by the Family Courts are therefore not surprising. In explaining the structure of the handling of family matters in the Jamaican court system, the Judicature (Family Court) Act of 1975 outlines that:

Matters concerning the family of which our statute laws take cognizance are adoption, custody, maintenance, affiliation, juveniles in need of care and attention, juvenile offenders and divorce...the Resident Magistrate’s Court (now parish courts) have jurisdiction in adoption, maintenance and affiliation. These courts along with the Supreme Court hear and determine matters relating to custody and guardianship. The law relating to juveniles in need of care and protection and to offending juveniles is

principally administered by the Juvenile Courts, whilst the Supreme Court exercises exclusive jurisdiction in divorces.

The Family Courts are indeed an important part of the fabric of the justice sector and nation building and statistical reporting of this nature will contribute positively to the productivity of this court and improve the public's understanding and appreciation of its role and provisions. Together, these throughputs will redound to the benefit of the Jamaican society in both the long and short runs.

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.

Methodology – Generating Court Statistics in Jamaica

Guaranteeing the reliability and validity of the data used to produce the periodic statistical reports for the Jamaican Courts is of utmost importance as we seek to produce a data driven enterprise for policymaking and operational decisions. As a result, a robust and verifiable system of data production has been created in both the parish court and the Supreme Court jurisdictions. At the parish courts, a data capture system for criminal matters, called the CISS (Case Information Statistical System) has been operational in several courts for the past 4-6 years. This system captures a wide range of data on the progression of criminal cases from initiation to disposition and is manned by at least one dedicated Data Entry Officer Statistical Officer in each court. These officers update the system on a daily basis so that the data produced is as close as possible to

real time. The electronic data sheets for each parish court are then validated and backed-up to the network at the end of each month and the data submitted to a centralized, secure medium for processing by the Statistical Unit of the Supreme Court. A data validation mechanism is in place to periodically sample case files in all parish courts and the Divisions of the Supreme Court. A representative sample of case files are taken in each case and crosschecked against the electronic data to detect and eliminate errors of omission and commission.

The Court Statistics Unit at the Supreme Court produces various quarterly and annual court reports which are published on the websites of the Supreme Court and the Parish Courts; however, interim data required by stakeholders may be requested through the Office of the Chief Justice.

Chapter One: Case Activity in the Criminal Section (Corporate Area Family Court)

Case Activity in the Criminal Division (A Division of the Children’s Court)

Section 1.0: An analysis of Criminal Case Activity in the Family Courts in the 2022 calendar year

This Chapter of the document will examine a range of output and performance measurements for criminal matters in the Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, case clearance rates and disposal rates as well references to the case backlog rate and on-time case-processing rate among other metrics.

Table 1.0a: Sampling distribution of the status of charges handled at the Corporate Area Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of charges handled	Number of active charges	Number of disposed charges	Number of inactive charges
673	359	289	25

The above table shows a sampling distribution of 673 criminal charges that were handled at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year. An increase of 96 charges or 16.64% when compared to the 577 charges recorded in the 2021 calendar year. At the end of the year, 359 matters or 53.34% were still active. A matter is considered inactive when no future court date is set, as is typically the case with warrant matters. A total of 25 or 3.71% of these charges originating was inactive at the end of the year, while 289 or 42.94% were disposed.

Table 1.0b: Sampling distribution of the status of cases handled at the Corporate Area Family in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of individual cases filed	Number of active cases	Number of cases disposed	Number of cases inactive
331	175	143	13

The above table provides a sampling distribution of the case activity corresponding to the charges in the previous table. A sample of 331 criminal cases handled at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year is shown, 19 cases or 6.09% above the 312 cases recorded in the 2021 calendar year. Of the 331 new cases handled, 175 were still active at the end of the year, 143 were disposed of and 13 were inactive. There was a ratio of one (1) case to 2.03 charges handled in the 2022 calendar year. In other words, for every 100 cases handled, there were 203 charges. There was a ratio of 1 case to 1.85 charges recorded in the 2021 calendar year.

Table 1.0c: Distribution of cases statuses for criminal cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of new cases filed	Number of active cases	Number of inactive cases	Number of disposed cases	Estimated Case disposal rate (%)	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
226	145	7	74	35.84	69.03

The above table provides a summary of the distribution of case statuses for criminal cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year. Of the 226 new criminal cases filed at this court, 145 were still active at the end of the year, while 74 cases were disposed. This resulted in a case disposal rate of 35.84% for criminal cases filed, a 19.95 percentage points decline when compared to the 55.79% recorded in the 2021 calendar year. A more robust measurement of the productivity of cases handled in any court is the case clearance rate, which provides a ratio of all cases disposed to the new cases filed in a given period. The data presented in table 1.0b suggests that a total of 156 criminal cases were either disposed of or became

inactive in the year, resulting in a clearance rate of 69.03%, which is a 36.23 percentage point decline when compared to the 2021 calendar year. The Corporate Area Family Court has been employing the use of special days throughout the course of each month, which are dedicated to bringing inactive and aged matters before open court in order to expedite disposition. This initiative is a potential model to other courts as it has yielded moderate success so far.

Table 2.0: Sampling distribution of case types for criminal charges filed at the Corporate Area Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Committal Proceedings	153	40.69
Indictments	106	28.19
Summary	92	24.47
Petty Sessions	25	6.65
Total	376	100.00

The above table shows that the largest proportion of the sample of 376 criminal charges filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year. Of these, 153 or 40.69% were committal proceedings, 106 or 28.19% were indictments and 92 or 24.47% were summary matters. Petty sessions with 25 or 6.65% accounted for the lowest proportion of the sample of criminal charges in the year.

Table 3.0: Sampling distribution of the top five reasons for adjournment/continuance for the year ended December 31, 2022

Reason for adjournment/continuance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Social enquiry report requested	25	7.79
Sentencing	2	0.62
Medical report Outstanding	1	0.31
Other	293	91.28
Total	321	100.00

The above data highlights the sampling distribution of the five leading reasons for adjournment/continuance for criminal cases heard during the year ended December 31, 2022 at the Corporate Area Family Court. Aside from the category ‘other methods’, it is seen that social enquiry reported requested accounted for 25 or 7.79% of the sample. Sentencing with 2 or 0.62% rank next among the causes of delay in the progression of criminal of cases at this court, followed by medical report outstanding with 1 or 0.31%. The reason for adjournment provides critical insights into the range of both external and internal factors which explain delay in case progression. They therefore constitute an important part of computing the hearing trial date certainty rates, which are central measure of court.

Table 4.0: Sampling distribution of mention court frequency for the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive Statistics (months)

Number of observations	631
Mean	5.9334
Median	5.0000
Mode	4.00
Std. Deviation	3.24385
Skewness	.684
Std. Error of Skewness	.097
Range	17.00
Minimum	1.00
Maximum	18.00

The above table displays the descriptive statistics on mention court frequency for criminal matters at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year. It is seen that the average number of mentions per case is 5.93, an indication that for every 10 cases there were roughly 59 mentions. The median number of mentions was 5, the mode value was 4. The maximum number of mentions per matter in the year was 18 mentions, while the minimum was 1 mention. The moderate standard deviation is an indication that there was some amount of variations in the mention court frequency of individual cases around the average incidence. The positive skewness is an indication that a larger proportion of the scores in the data set fell below the average mention court frequency. The result is above the prescribed maximum rate 5 mentions per case, based on international best practices.

Table 5.0: Sampling distribution of methods of disposition for the year ended December 31, 2022

Method of Disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Transferred	95	33.10
Granted	47	16.38
Guilty	24	8.36
Not Guilty	6	2.09
Other	115	40.07
Total	287	100.00

The above table summarizes the methods of disposition for a sample of 287 criminal charges disposed within the 2022 calendar year. Aside from methods of disposition pooled under the category “other methods”, it is seen that matters transferred to another court with 95 or 33.10% accounts for the largest of disposition in the year. Applications granted with 47 or 16.38%, guilty verdicts with 24 or 8.36% and not guilty verdicts with 6 or 2.09% of the sample complete the list.

Table 7.0: Sampling distribution of the types of sentencing/orders made in the year ended December 31, 2022

Type of Order/Sentencing	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Probation Order	55	82.09
Correctional Order	4	5.97
Fit Person Order	4	5.97
Other	4	5.97
Total	67	100.00

It is seen in the above table that from the sample of 67 orders made in the 2022 calendar year, the majority were probation orders with 55 or 82.09% of the sample. Correctional orders, fit person orders and the category “other” with 4 or 5.97% each of the sample account for the remaining proportion of the sample.

Table 8.0: Sampling distribution of times to disposition for the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics (in days)

Number of observations	283
Mean	273.0424
Median	180.0000
Mode	90.00
Std. Deviation	240.77186
Skewness	1.965
Std. Error of Skewness	.145
Range	1331.00
Minimum	3.00
Maximum	1334.00

The above descriptive statistics provide a summary of the time taken to dispose of a sample of 283 matters resolved in the 2022 calendar year. It is seen that the average time taken to dispose of these cases was roughly 273 days or 9.1 months, while the median time was 180 days and the most frequently occurring time to disposition in the year (mode) was 90 days. The standard deviation suggests that there is some variation in the individual times, while the positive skewness suggests that a significant portion of the times to disposition in the data set fell below the overall average time to disposition. The maximum time taken to dispose of these cases was roughly 1334 days or 3.7 years and the minimum was 3 days.

Case Demographics

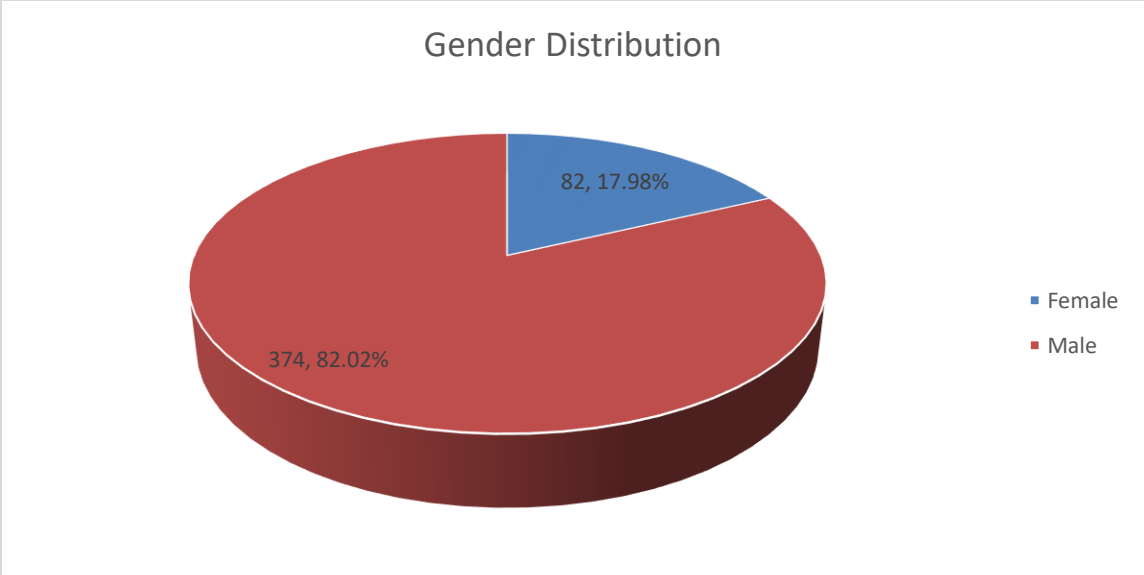
Table 1.0: Sampling distribution of the leading offences filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

Type of offence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Grievous sexual assault	44	9.76
Unlawful wounding	41	9.09
Assault occasioning bodily harm	41	9.09
Offensive Weapon	23	5.10
Indecent assault	22	4.88
Sub-total	171	37.92

Sample of offences filed in 2022 is 451

The above table provides a summary of the most frequently occurring charges filed in the 2022 calendar year at the Corporate Area Family Court. Of a sample of 451 offences filed in the year, it is seen that 44 or 9.76% were matters of grievous sexual assault. This was followed by assault occasioning bodily harm and unlawful wounding with 41 or 9.09% each of the sample. Offensive weapon accounted for 23 or 5.10% and indecent assault recorded 22 or 4.88% of the sample. Of the leading charges listed in the table above, offensive weapon and unlawful wounding had the highest proportion of male offenders with 86.36% and 78.05% respectively, while indecent assault had the highest proportion of female offenders with 36.36% of the sample.

Chart 1.0: Distribution of offences by gender for the year ended December 31, 2022



The above chart shows the distribution of offences filed by gender, using a sample of 456 matters. Males account for the overwhelming proportion of matters with 82.02%, while females accounted for the remaining 17.98% of matters filed. When compared to the 2021 calendar year, 76% of the sample was accounted for by males, while the remaining 24% was accounted for by females.

Table 2.0: Breakdown of leading charges by gender in the year ended December 31, 2022

Charge	Male		Female		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	
Grievous sexual assault	32	72.73	12	27.27	44
Unlawful wounding	32	78.05	9	21.95	41
Assault occasioning bodily harm	27	65.85	14	34.15	41
Offensive Weapon	19	86.36	3	13.64	22
Indecent assault	14	63.64	8	36.36	22
Malicious destruction of property	14	87.50	2	12.50	16
Illegal possession of firearm	14	93.33	1	6.67	15
Buggery	14	100.00	0	0.00	14
Robbery with aggravation	12	100.00	0	0.00	12
Sexual intercourse with a person under 16	13	92.86	1	7.14	14

The above tables summarize the distribution of the leading charges filed by gender in the 2022 calendar year. Males are especially dominant with the charges of buggery with 100%, robbery with aggravation (100%), illegal possession of firearm (93.33%) and sexual intercourse with a person under 16 (92.86%). As it relates to females charged, the charge with the highest frequency was indecent assault 8 or 36.36% of the total sample.

Table 3.0: Descriptive statistics on the age of offenders for the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics (in years)

Number of observations	335
Mean	15.7761
Median	16.0000
Mode	17.00
Std. Deviation	3.08182
Skewness	8.091
Std. Error of Skewness	.133
Range	44.00
Minimum	11.00
Maximum	55.00

The above descriptive statistics provide a statistical summary of the ages of persons charged in a sample of 335 criminal matters handled in the 2022 calendar year. It is seen that the overall average age is roughly 15.78 years. The oldest person charged was 55 years and the youngest 11. The median age was 16 years and modal age was 17 years old. The low standard deviation is an indication that the ages of persons charged did not vary widely from the overall mean age and the positive skewness is an indication that there most scores in the data set are below the series mean.

Table 4.0: Courtroom/outstation distribution for new matters heard in the year ended December 31, 2022

Courtroom/Outstation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Children's Court	460	100
Total	460	100

It is shown in the above table that all criminal cases heard at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year took place in the Children’s court.

Section 2.0: Case Activity in the 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 in the 2022 calendar year. Matters classified under the general case type category classified as child welfare includes uncontrollable child and childcare and protection.

Table 1.0: Distribution of Child Welfare matters handled at the Corporate Area Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of matters handled	Matters active	Matters disposed	Inactive matters
269	63	205	1

The above table details the outcome of 269 Child Welfare matters, which were handled by the Family Court in the Corporate Area in the 2022 calendar year, an increase of 17 charges or 6.75% when compared to the 252 charges recorded in the 2021 calendar year. At the end of the year, 63 matters were still active, 205 were disposed and 1 was inactive.

Table 2.0a: Distribution of new Child Welfare cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of new cases filed	Active cases	Disposed cases	Inactive cases	Estimated Case Disposal Rate (%)
183	44	138	1	75.96

The above data shows a sample of 183 child welfare cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year, which is 1 case above the 182 cases recorded in the 2021 calendar year. Of this, 138 cases were disposed of, 1 became inactive and 44 were still active at the end of the year. This produced a case disposal rate of 75.96% for these types of cases, which is 3.43 percentage points more than the disposal rate recorded in the corresponding 2021 calendar year.

2.0b: Clearance rate summary for the Corporate Area Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022

New Child Welfare cases filed	Gross number of inactive cases	Gross number of disposed cases	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
183	1	176	96.72

The above Table shows that there was an aggregate of 177 child welfare cases which were either disposed of or became inactive in the 2022 calendar year at the Corporate Area Family Court. This produced a case clearance rate of 96.72%, which meets the international standard and is 13.75 percentage points more than the clearance rate recorded in the corresponding 2021 calendar year.

Table 3.0: Sampling distribution of the types of Child Welfare matters filed in the year ended December 31, 2022

Types of cases	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Child Care and Protection	175	82.94
Uncontrollable Child	36	17.06
Total	211	100.00

A sample of 211 child welfare matters filed in the 2022 calendar year revealed that the majority of cases filed were childcare and protection matters with 175 or 82.94% of the sample, while matters of uncontrollable child with 36 or 17.06% accounted for the remaining proportion.

Table 4.0: Sampling distribution on the reasons for adjournment/continuance for Family matters heard in the year ended December 31, 2022

Reasons for adjournment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Other	23	92.00
Matter left off the list	2	8.00
Total	25	100.00

The above data highlights the sampling distribution of the five leading reasons for adjournment/continuance for child welfare cases heard during the year ended December 31, 2022 at the Corporate Area Family Court. The category 'other methods' accounted for 92% of the sample, followed by matters left off court list with 8%. The reason for adjournment provides critical insights into the range of both external and internal factors which explain delay in case progression. They therefore constitute an important part of computing the hearing trial date certainty rates, which are central measure of court.

Table 5.0: Sampling distribution of mention court frequency for Child Welfare matters heard in the in the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics (months)

Number of observations	210
Mean	2.4810
Median	2.0000
Mode	1.00
Std. Deviation	1.50664
Skewness	1.245
Std. Error of Skewness	.168
Range	8.00
Minimum	1.00
Maximum	9.00

The above table displays the descriptive statistics on mention court frequency for 210 child welfare matters at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year. It is seen that the average number of mentions per case is roughly 2.5, an indication that for every 10 cases there were 25 mentions. The median number of mentions was 2 and the modal number of mentions stood at 1. The maximum number of mentions per matter in the year was 9, while the minimum was 1. The standard deviation is moderate, an indication that there is some variation in the mention court frequency of individual cases. The positive skewness is an indication that the higher proportion of the scores in the data set fell below the series average. These outputs are within the prescribed maximum rate of 5 mentions per matter, based on international best practices.

Table 6.0: Sampling distribution of the methods of disposition for the year ended December 31, 2022

Method of Disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Granted	171	83.82
Transferred	20	9.80
Other	6	2.94
Struck out	3	1.47
Withdrawn	3	1.47
Dismissed	1	0.49
Total	204	100.00

The above table summarizes the methods of disposition for a sample of 204 child welfare matters in the 2022 calendar year. It is seen that applications granted accounted for the majority of the sample with 171 or 83.82%. Matters transferred to another court accounted for 20 or 9.80% and the category “other” accounted for 2.94% of the sample.

Table 7.0: Sampling distribution of the times to disposition for Child Welfare matters for the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics (in days)

Number of observations	182
Mean	95.4560
Median	70.0000
Mode	63.00
Std. Deviation	77.49964
Skewness	2.565
Std. Error of Skewness	.180
Range	468.00
Minimum	3.00
Maximum	471.00

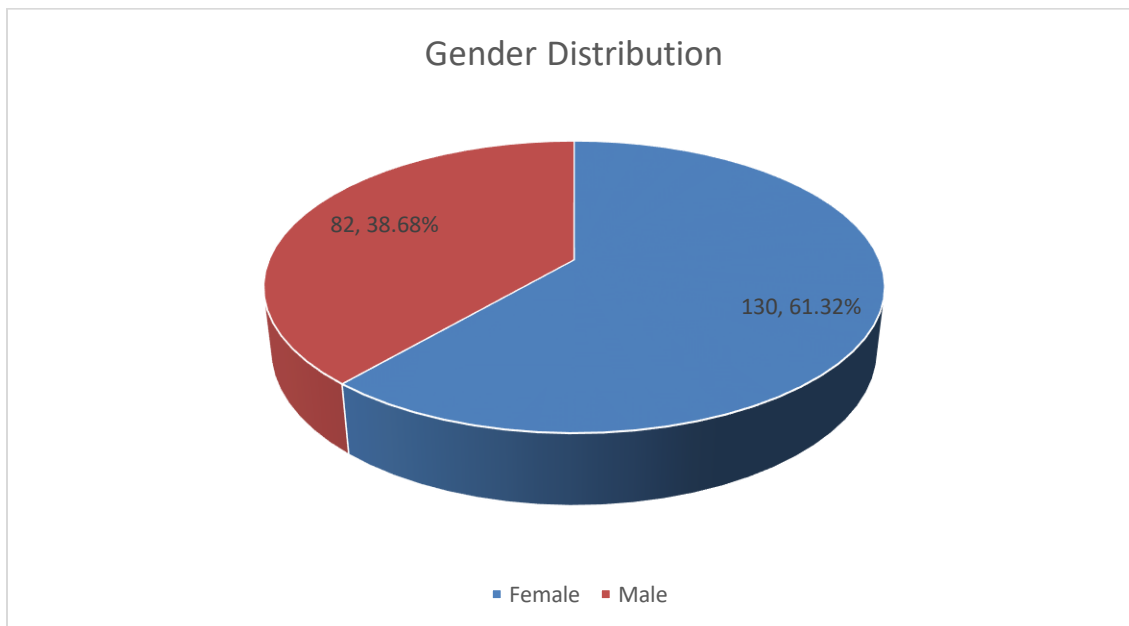
The above table provides a descriptive statistical summary of the times taken to dispose of child welfare cases in the 2022 calendar year. It is shown that from a sample of 182 matters disposed in the year, the average time to disposition was 95 days or roughly 3.2 months. The maximum

time taken to dispose of the cases used in this sample was 471 days, while the lowest time taken was 3 days. The overall standard deviation of approximately 77 days was moderate, indicating there was some amount of variation in the times to disposition. The positive skewness is an indication that a larger proportion of the data points were clustered around the overall mean.

Case initiation and case demographics –Child Welfare matters in the year ended December 31, 2022

In this subsection of the report, there is an examination of the case party demographics for the cases which had some activity in the 2022 calendar year.

Chart 1.0: Sampling distribution of the gender of children associated with new cases handled for the year ended December 31, 2022



The above chart shows that 61.32% of a sample of 212 children involved in child welfare cases filed were female, with males accounting for 38.68% of the sample.

Table 8.0: Descriptive statistics on age distribution of parties involved in cases filed in the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics (in years)

Number of observations	109
Mean	10.2110
Median	11.0000
Mode	15.00
Std. Deviation	5.64551
Skewness	.199
Std. Error of Skewness	.231
Range	34.00
Minimum	.00
Maximum	34.00

The table above shows the descriptive statistics on a sample of ages of children involved in child welfare cases during the year ended December 31, 2022. It is shown that from a sample of 109 matters, the average age was roughly 10 years old. The maximum age in this sample was 34 years, while the minimum age was less than a year. The overall standard deviation of approximately 6 years was moderate, indicating some variation among the ages in the distribution. The positive skewness indicates that most of the scores were clustered around the average age.

Table 9.0: Sampling distribution of matters by courtroom/outstation assignment for the year ended December 31, 2022

Courtroom/Outstation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Children's Court	214	98.62
Courtroom #2 (main courthouse)	2	0.92
Courtroom #1 (main courthouse)	1	0.46
Total	217	100.00

The above table shows the distribution of 217 child welfare matters filed by courtroom of assignment. It is shown that the Children's Court with 214 or 98.62% of the matters accounted

for the majority of cases, while courtroom 2 at the main courthouse accounted for 0.92%. Courtroom 3 at the main courthouse with 0.46% of the assignments complete the sample.

Section 3.0: Case Activity on Family Division (A Division of the Children’s Court)

This section examines case activity for matters classified as Family Matters in the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year. Matters classified under the general case type category classified as family matters includes maintenance, custody and declaration of paternity matters.

Table 1.0: Distribution of family matters handled at the Corporate Area Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of matters handled	Matters active	Matters disposed	Inactive matters
3379	973	2317	89

The above table details the outcome of the 3379 family matters, which were handled by the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year, a decrease of 57 charges or 1.66% when compared to the 3436 charges recorded in the 2021 calendar year. At the end of the year, 973 matters were still active and 2317 were disposed of. The remaining 89 matters were inactive at the end of the year.

Table 2.0a: Distribution of new family cases filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of new cases filed	Active cases	Disposed cases	Inactive cases	Estimated Case Disposal Rate (%)
1679	550	1087	42	67.24

The above data shows a sample of 1679 new child welfare cases handled at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year, 304 more cases or 22.11% above the 1375 cases recorded in the 2021 calendar year. Of this, 1087 cases were disposed of, 42 cases became inactive and 550 were still active at the end of the year. This produced an estimated case disposal rate of 67.24% for these types of cases and is 15.82 percentage points more than the case disposal rate recorded in the corresponding 2021 calendar year.

2.0b: Clearance rate summary for the Family Courts for the year ended December 31, 2022

New Family cases filed	Gross number of inactive cases	Gross number of disposed cases	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
1679	58	1547	95.59

The above table shows that in the 2022 calendar year in the family division, there were 1547 disposed cases and 58 cases which became inactive. This produced an estimated case clearance rate of 95.59% which meets the international standard and is 6.52 percentage points less than the case clearance rate recorded in the corresponding 2021 calendar year.

Table 3.0: Sampling distribution of the types of Family matters filed in the year ended December 31, 2022

Types of cases	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Maintenance	1144	46.96
Custody	746	30.62
Declaration of paternity	546	22.41
Total	2436	100.00

A sample of 2436 matters filed at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year revealed that the highest proportion of cases filed were maintenance matters with 1144 or

46.96% of the sample. This was followed by 746 or 30.62%, which were custody matters and 546 or 22.41% which were matters of declaration of paternity.

Table 4.0: Sampling distribution on the reasons for adjournment/continuance for Family matters heard in the year ended December 31, 2022

Reasons for adjournment/continuance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Results Outstanding	74	18.36
Re-Issue	54	13.40
Matter Left off the list	19	4.71
Social Enquiry Report Outstanding	13	3.23
Absenteeism of Respondent	5	1.24
Sub-total	165	40.94

Sample size= 403

The above table is derived from a sample of 403 adjournments heard in the 2022 calendar year.

The largest share of adjournments, 74 or 18.36% were due to Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) results outstanding, followed by adjournments for re-issue with 54 or 13.40% and adjournments due to matters left of court list with 19 or 4.71%. Adjournments due to Social Enquiry Report outstanding with 13 or 3.23% and the absenteeism of respondents with 5 or 1.24% rank next.

Table 4.0b: Sampling distribution of mention court frequency for family matters heard in the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics

Number of observations	2351
Mean	2.4054
Median	2.0000
Mode	1.00
Std. Deviation	2.11627
Skewness	2.665
Std. Error of Skewness	.050
Range	17.00
Minimum	1.00
Maximum	18.00

The above table displays the descriptive statistics on mention court frequency for 2351 family matters at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year. It is seen that the average number of mentions per case is roughly 2.4, an indication that for every 10 cases there were 24 mentions. The median number of mentions was 2 and modal number of mentions stood at 1. The maximum number of mentions per matter in the year was 18, while the minimum was 1 mention. The standard deviation is high, an indication that there is a wide variation in the mention court frequency of individual cases. The positive skewness shown is an indication that the vast proportion of the scores in the data set fell below the average. These outputs are within the prescribed maximum rate of 5 mentions per matter, based on international best practices.

Table 5.0: Sampling distribution of the methods of disposition for the year ended December 31, 2022

Method of Disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Struck out	1082	47.04
Granted	1034	44.96
Withdrawn	143	6.22
Denied	21	0.91
Other	15	0.65
Transferred	5	0.22
Total	2300	100.00

The above table summarizes the methods of disposition for a sample of 2300 family matters in the 2022 calendar year. It is shown in the sample that the highest proportion of matters were struck out, accounting for 1082 or 47.04% of the sample of disposed matters. This was followed by applications granted with 1034 or 44.96% of the sample. Applications withdrawn with 143 or 6.22% and applications denied with 21 or 0.91% of the sample follow.

Table 6.0: Sampling distribution of the times to disposition for family matters for the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics (in days)

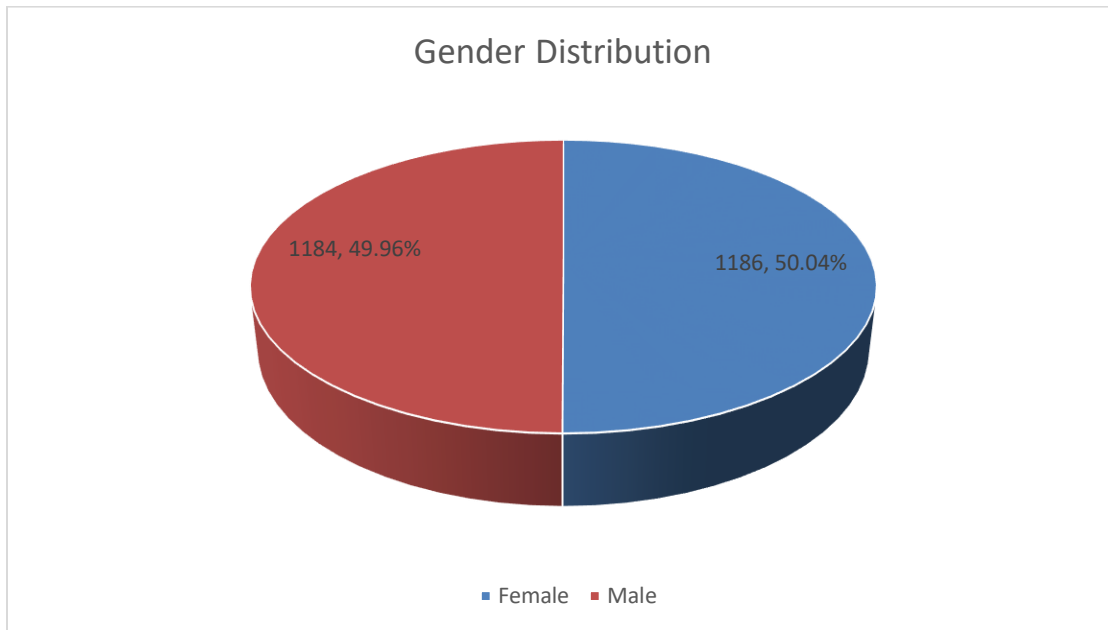
Number of observations	1198
Mean	155.4983
Median	99.0000
Mode	36.00
Std. Deviation	190.25978
Skewness	3.550
Std. Error of Skewness	.071
Range	1651.00
Minimum	1.00
Maximum	1652.00

The above table provides a descriptive statistical summary of the times taken to dispose of family cases at the Family Court in the Corporate Area in the 2022 calendar year. It is shown that from a sample of 1198 matters disposed in the year, the average time to disposition was 155 days or roughly 5.2 months. The maximum time taken to dispose of the cases used in this sample was 1652 days or 4.6 years, while the lowest time taken was 1 day. The overall standard deviation of approximately 190 days was relatively high, indicating a wide variation in the times to disposition. The positive skewness was high, an indication that a decidedly larger the proportion of the data points fell below the overall mean.

Case initiation and case demographics –Family matters in the year ended December 31, 2022

In this subsection of the report, there is an examination of the case party demographics for the cases which had some activity in the 2022 calendar year, as well as the utilization of the counselling option offered to case parties at the point of filing a case.

Chart 1.0: Sampling distribution of the gender of children associated with new cases for the year ended December 31, 2022



The above chart shows that 1186 or 50.04% of a sample of 2370 children involved in family matters filed were female, with males accounting for 1184 or 49.96% of the sample.

Table 7.0: Descriptive statistics on age distribution of parties involved in cases filed in the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive statistics (in years)

Number of observations	2370
Mean	7.7160
Median	6.0000
Mode	2.00
Std. Deviation	7.08978
Skewness	2.896
Std. Error of Skewness	.050
Range	68.00
Minimum	.00
Maximum	68.00

The table above shows the descriptive statistics on a sample of age of parties involved in cases for family case types for the year ended December 31, 2022. It is shown from a sample of 2370 matters that the average age was 7.7 years. The maximum age in this sample was 68 years, while the minimum age was less than a year. The overall standard deviation of approximately 7 years was relatively high, indicating a wide variation in the ages in the distribution. The positive skewness indicates a decisive leaning towards the lower ages in the distribution.

Table 8.0: Sampling distribution of cases by courtroom/outstation assignment for the year ended December 31, 2022

Courtroom/Outstation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Courtroom #2 (main courthouse)	1090	44.86
Courtroom #3 (main courthouse)	851	35.02
Courtroom #1 (main courthouse)	481	19.79
Gordon Town Outstation	8	0.33
Total	2430	100.00

The above table shows the distribution of 2430 family matters filed, by courtroom of assignment. It is shown that courtroom 2 at the main courthouse with 1090 or 44.86% of the matters

accounted for the highest proportion of cases sampled, with courtroom 3 at the main courthouse accounting for 851 or 35.02% ranking next. Courtroom 1 with 481 or 19.79% of the sample and the Gordon Town Outstation with 0.33% rounds off the accommodations in the sample.

Section 4.0: Summary of case activity for Domestic Violence matters filed in the year ended December 31, 2022

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in the Corporate Area in the year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 1.0: Summary of matters filed in the year ended December 31, 2022

New matters filed	Matters active	Matters inactive	Matters disposed
715	179	25	511

The above table shows that 715 domestic violence matters were filed in the 2022 calendar year, 179 of which were still active at the end of the period. There were 511 of the matters disposed of at the end of the year and 25 cases which became inactive. Table 2.0 provides further analysis of the equivalent number of domestic violence cases filed and the case disposal rates.

Table 2.0a: Summary of case activity for the year ended December 31, 2022

New cases filed	Active cases	Inactive cases	Disposed cases	Estimated Case Disposal Rate (%)
580	140	20	420	75.86

An equivalent number of 580 new domestic violence cases were filed in the 2022 calendar year, of which 140 were active and 420 were disposed and 20 became inactive at the end of the year.

This produces an estimated disposal rate of 75.86%, which is 2.56 percentage points above the disposal rate of 73.30% recorded for the 2021 calendar year.

Table 2.0b: Summary of gross case activity for the year ended December 31, 2022

New Domestic Violence cases filed	Gross number of Inactive cases	Gross number of Disposed cases	Estimated Case Clearance Rate (%)
580	24	558	100.34

The data above shows that a total of 582 domestic violence cases which were either disposed of or became inactive in the 2022 calendar year at the Corporate Area Family Court. This produces an estimated case clearance rate of 100.34%, which meets the international standard and is also 15.48 percentage points below the clearance rate of 115.82% recorded for the 2021 calendar year.

Table 3.0: Sampling distribution of cases by courtroom/outstation assignment for the year ended December 31, 2022

Courtroom/outstation	Frequency	Percentage
Courtroom #2 (main courthouse)	327	45.73%
Courtroom #3 (main courthouse)	222	31.05%
Courtroom #1 (main courthouse)	161	22.52%
Gordon Town outstation	5	0.70%
Total	715	100.00%

The above table shows the distribution of 715 domestic violence matters filed, by courtroom of assignment. It is shown that courtroom 2 at the main courthouse with 327 or 45.73% of the matters accounted for the highest proportion of cases sampled, with courtroom 3 at the main courthouse accounting for 222 or 31.05% ranking next. Courtroom 1 with 161 or 22.52% of the

sample and the Gordon Town outstation with 5 or 0.70% rounds off the accommodations in the sample.

Table 4.0: Sampling distribution on the reasons for adjournment/continuance for family matters heard in the year ended December 31, 2022

Adjournments/Continuances	Frequency	Percentage
Other	40	55.56
No Parties, No Returns-Re-Issue Application	11	15.28
Matter left off the list	10	13.89
No Returns-Re-Issue Application	7	9.72
Wrongly list	2	2.78
Absenteeism of Respondent	1	1.39
No Parties-Re-Issue Application	1	1.39
Total	72	100.00

The above table is derived from a sample of 72 adjournments heard in the 2022 calendar year. The majority of the sample, 40 or 55.56% were pooled under the category “other”, followed by No Parties, No Returns-Re-Issue Application with 11 or 15.28% and matter left off the court list with 10 or 13.89% of the sample.

Table 5.0: Sampling distribution of the times to disposition for domestic violence matters for the year ended December 31, 2022

Descriptive Statistics (days)

Number of observations	327
Mean	111.9266
Median	69.0000
Mode	29.00 ^a
Std. Deviation	127.72596
Skewness	3.489
Std. Error of Skewness	.135
Range	978.00
Minimum	1.00
Maximum	979.00

^aMultiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The above table shows that the average time taken to dispose of a sample of 327 matters in the 2022 calendar year was roughly 112 days or 3.7 months. The standard deviation of 128 days is high, indicating that there’s a large amount of dispersion of the individual times in the data set. The skewness of the data is positive, which is an indication that a decidedly larger number of the observations fell below the overall mean score. The maximum time taken to dispose of these matters was 979 days or 2.7 years, while 1 day was the lowest time.

Table 6.0: Sampling distribution of the methods of disposition for the year ended December 31, 2022

Method of Disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Struck out	341	50.15
Granted	221	32.50
Withdrawn	108	15.88

Other	7	1.03
Denied	3	0.44
Total	680	100.00

The above table summarizes the methods of disposition for a sample of 680 domestic violence matters disposed of in the 2022 calendar year at the Corporate Area Family Court. It is seen that matters struck out account for the majority of the sample with 341 or 50.15% of the sample. This was followed by applications granted with 221 or 32.50% and applications withdrawn with 108 or 15.88% of the sample.

Table 7.0: Distribution of applications for restraining orders in the year ended December 31, 2022

Type of restraining order	Number of orders made	Equivalent number of cases	Percentage of total orders
Protection Order	749	727	82.04
Occupation Order	164	161	17.96
Total	913	888	100.00

Using a sample of cases filed predominantly since 2018, the above table provides a sampling distribution of applications for restraining order filed. It is seen that of an estimated 913 such orders heard predominantly in the year ended December 31, 2022, the overwhelming majority were protection orders with 749 or 82.04%, while occupation orders accounted for 164 or 17.96% of the matters.

The ensuing tables summarize the relationships between the case parties involved in restraining order application heard in the year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 8.0a: Distribution of the relationship between parties for protection order applications made in the year ended December 31, 2022

Relationship	Frequency	Percentage
Former Partner	498	69.07
Estranged wife/husband	71	9.85
Other	70	9.71
Parent/Child	39	5.41
Spousal	30	4.16
Members of Household	13	1.80
Total	721	100.00

For the sample of applications for protection orders made over the stated primary period, the majority of the relationships between the case parties concerned was that of former partners, accounting for a notable 69.07%, followed in distant second by estranged partners with 9.85% and other relations with 9.71%, rounding off the top three.

Table 8.0b: Distribution of the relationship between parties for occupation order applications made in the year ended December 31, 2022

Relationship	Frequency	Percentage
Former Partner	68	43.31
Other	31	19.75
Estranged wife/husband	27	17.20
Parent/Child	20	12.74
Spousal	9	5.73
Members of Household	2	1.27
Total	157	100.00

The largest proportion of the relations in the sample of 157 applications for occupation order was also that of former partners, accounting for 43.31% of the sample. This is followed by other relations with 19.75% and estranged partners with 17.20% of the sample. The below tables summarize the leading methods of disposition for the earlier listed types of restraining orders over the stated period.

Table 9.0a: Distribution of methods of disposition for Protection Orders made in the year ended December 31, 2022

Method of Disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Struck out	287	51.34
Granted	188	33.63
Withdrawn	78	13.95
Other	5	0.89
Denied	1	0.18
Total	559	100.00

The dominant methods of disposition for 559 protection order applications are disposals by being struck out (51.34%), applications granted (33.63%) and applications withdrawn (13.95%).

Table 9.0b: Distribution of methods of disposition for Occupation Orders made in the year ended December 31, 2022

Method of Disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Struck out	55	45.83
Granted	32	26.67
Withdrawn	29	24.17
Denied	2	1.67
other	2	1.67
Total	120	100.00

The dominant methods of disposition for 120 occupation order applications are disposals by being struck out (45.83%), applications granted (26.67%) and applications withdrawn (24.17%).

Summary of case activity for matters filed in the 2022 calendar year at the Corporate Area Family Court

Table 1.0a: Summary of new case activity for cases in the year ended December 31, 2022

Aggregate Number of new cases filed	Number of Active cases	Number of inactive cases	Number of Disposed Cases	Weighted Case Disposal Rate (%)
2668	879	70	1719	67.05

The above table provides a summary of total case activity cross all business lines at the Corporate Area Family Court for the 2022 calendar year. It is shown that there was a total of 2668 new cases filed, of which 1719 were disposed of and 70 became inactive, thereby producing an estimated weighted case disposal rate of 67.05% for the year across all case types, 8.12 percentage points above the recorded weighted disposal rate for the corresponding 2021 calendar year. Domestic violence cases with a case disposal rate of 75.86%, family cases with a disposal rate of 67.24%, Child Welfare cases with a disposal rate of 75.96% and criminal cases with a rate of 35.84% completes the distribution of the case disposal rates across the macro case units.

Table 1.0b: Summary of case activity for cases in the year ended December 31, 2022

Aggregate Number of new cases filed	Number of inactive cases	Number of Disposed cases	Number of Disposed or inactive Cases (of those originating in the year)	Overall Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)	Overall Weighted Case Disposal Rate (%)
2668	96	2424	1789	94.45	67.05

The above table shows that a grand total of 2668 new cases were filed across the business lines at the Corporate Area Family Court in the 2022 calendar year, while 2424 cases were disposed of

and 96 became inactive. This produces an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 94.45% across all the case types in the 2022 calendar year, which is 9.88 percentage points below the overall weighted case clearance rate recorded in the 2021 calendar year. Domestic violence cases with 100.34% had the highest clearance rate, followed by child welfare cases with 96.72% and family division cases with 95.59%. Criminal cases had the lowest estimated clearance rate in the year with 69.03%. By any measure, these are quite impressive results. As indicated, the Corporate Area Family Court also recorded an overall weighted average case disposal rate of 67.05% in the year, ranging from a low of 35.84% in the criminal division to a high of 75.96% in the child welfare subdivision.

Table 2.0: Sampling distribution of courtroom utilization rate for the year ended December 31, 2022

Parish Court	Average overall Courtroom Utilization Rate (%)	Highest Recorded Courtroom Utilization Rate (%)	Lowest Recorded Courtroom Utilization Rate (%)	Standard Deviation of the Courtroom Utilization Rate (%)	Average Courtroom Utilization Rate for Night Court sittings (%)	Average Number of Courtroom Adjournments Per Day
Corporate Area Court-Family	78.44	212.50	5.28	30.16	-	-

The above table details the courtroom utilization rate for the Corporate Area Family Court for the 2022 calendar year. The courtroom utilization rate provides a measurement of the proportion of available hours for open court hearings in all courtrooms (including outstations) which are utilized. If the usage of any courtroom exceeds the available hours, then the utilization rate will exceed 100% and the rate will fall below 100% if less than the available hours are utilized. The

prescribed international standard for the courtroom utilization rate is 100%, which means that all hours allocating for court hearings in any court, on any given day should be utilized. The overall average courtroom utilization rate for the Corporate Area Family Court in the year was roughly 78.44%, which is an indication that on average roughly 78% of the available hours for court hearings in the 2022 calendar year. The standard deviation of the courtroom utilization rates is moderate, suggesting that on average the rates did not vary widely from the overall mean.

The sample size of days used to compute the rates for each court were sufficiently large and representative, though not the same for all courts. The margin of error of the courtroom utilization rates is a reliable $\pm 2.5\%$.

Table 3.0: Descriptive statistics on the time to disposition for cases disposed as at the year ended December 31, 2022

Family Courts	Time to disposition (days)							
	Average	Mode	Median	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Minimum	Maximum	Sample size (N)
Corporate Area Court-Child welfare	120.83	63	100	83.68	1.61	1	578	785
Corporate Area Court-Criminal	216.67	90	144	217.22	2.31	1	1493	1920
Corporate Area Court-Domestic Violence	132.42	28.00	77	161.89	4.08	1	2074	2052
Corporate Area Court-Family	182.81	42	121	205.76	3.99	1	3505	4451
Total/Weighted Average	173.36	55.75	110.50	167.14	3.00	1.00	1912.50	2302.00
Standard Deviation	44.67	26.99	28.66	60.53	1.23	0.00	1227.33	1541.42
Skewness	0.42	0.56	0.00	-1.20	-0.27	0.00	0.57	1.16

Number of matters sampled (N) = 9208

The table above shows the descriptive statistics on a sample of matters disposed at the Corporate Area Family Court as at December 31, 2022, covering at least a 145-week period. The output produces an estimated weighted average time taken to dispose of matters of approximately 173 days. The skewness of these times to disposition is 0.42, suggesting that most of these times were clustered around the overall mean. For the matters disposed in the period, the child welfare division (121 days) took the lowest time on average to dispose of cases over the period. The domestic violence division (132 days), the family division (183 days) and the criminal division (217 days) rank next. The average variation among the times to disposition across these divisions is however modest, as shown by the standard deviation (44.67). The maximum times to disposition in the sample ranged from a low of 578 days (19.3 months/1.6 years) in the child welfare division, to a high of 3505 days (116.8 months/9.7 years) in the family division, while the overall minimum time to disposition was one day. The sample size used to compute these descriptive data was a substantial and representative 9,208 matters.

Chapter 2.0: The St. James Family Court (A Division of the Western Regional Family Court)

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the St. James Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, 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 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal Proceedings	13	19	0	146.15
Indictments	19	11	0	57.89
Summary	50	68	2	140.00
Petty Session	8	13	0	162.50
Total/Weighted Average	90	111	2	125.56

The above table shows that the sample of 90 criminal cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022. Of these, 50 or 55.56% were summary cases, 19 or 21.11% were indictments, 13 or 14.44% were committal proceedings and 8.89% were petty session cases. There was a total of 113 criminal cases disposed of or which became inactive during the year ended December 31, 2022. Of these, 68 summary cases were disposed of and 2 became inactive, 11 indictment cases were disposed of, 13 petty session cases were disposed of and 19 committal cases were disposed of during the year. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 125.56% for these types of cases, which is 33.32 percentage points above the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted average case clearance rate of 92.24%.

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 year ended December 31, 2022. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the Table 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Childcare and protection	195	169	11	92.31
Uncontrollable Child	94	87	9	102.13
Total Weighted Average	289	256	20	95.50

There were 289 child welfare cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022, the majority of which were childcare and protection cases which accounted for 195 or 67.47%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 94 or 32.53% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 256 child welfare cases which were disposed of, while 20 became inactive during the year. There were 169 childcare and protection cases disposed of during the year and 11 became inactive, while 87 uncontrollable child cases were disposed of and 9 became inactive. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 92.31% for childcare and protection cases and 102.13% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 95.50% which satisfies the international standards on this vital metric and is 4.87 percentage points above the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted case clearance rate of 90.63%.

Family matters case activity summary for the St. James Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the St. James Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	423	489	19	120.09
Declaration of Paternity	208	215	3	104.81
Access	113	126	1	112.39
Legal Guardianship	35	23	0	65.71
Maintenance	603	580	28	100.83
Adoption	24	25	0	104.17
Total/Weighted Average	1406	1458	51	107.33

The 1406 new cases filed at the St. James Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022, revealed that the largest proportion of the sample were maintenance cases with 603 cases or 42.89%. This was followed by 423 or 30.09% which were custody cases and 208 or 14.79% which were cases of declaration of paternity. There were also 113 access cases, 35 legal guardianship cases and 24 adoption cases. A total of 1509 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed or became inactive in the year. This is broken down into 580 disposed and 28 inactive maintenance cases, 489 disposed and 19 inactive custody cases, 215 disposed and 3 inactive declaration of paternity cases and 126 disposed and 1 inactive access cases. There were 25 disposed adoption cases and 23 disposed legal guardianship cases. This led to an overall

estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 107.33% for the broad family case type, led by custody cases with 120.09%, access cases with 112.39% and declaration of paternity cases with 104.81%.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the year ended December 31, 2022

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in St. James for the year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	502	681	10	137.65
Occupation Order	104	145	5	144.23
Total/Weighted Average	606	826	15	138.78

The data above shows that there was a total of 606 new domestic violence cases filed in the 2022 calendar year at the St. James Family Court. Of this, 502 were protection order cases and 104 were occupation order cases. A total 841 Domestic Violence cases were either disposed of or became inactive during the year. There were 681 disposed protection order cases and 10 inactive cases, while 145 occupation order cases were disposed and 5 became inactive. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 137.65% for protection order cases and 144.23% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 138.78%, which exceeds the international standards on this vital metric and is 69.30 percentage points above the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted case clearance rate of 69.48%.

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 year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 1.0: Summary of civil case activity for cases in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
120	144	0	120.00

The data above shows that there was a total of 120 new civil cases filed in the year ended December 31, 2022. There was also a total of 144 civil cases which were disposed of in the year at the St. James Family Court. This produces an estimated case clearance rate of 120%, which meets the international standard and is 37.96 percentage points above the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted case clearance rate of 82.04%.

Summary of case activity across all business lines in the 2022 calendar year at the St. James Family Court

Table 1.0: Summary of case activity across all business lines in the year ended December 31, 2022

Aggregate Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
2511	2795	88	114.81

The above table shows that a total of 2511 new cases were filed at the St. James Family Court in the 2022 calendar year, while 2795 cases were disposed, and 88 cases became inactive. This produces an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 114.81% across all the case types in the period. Domestic violence cases with 138.78% had the highest clearance rate, followed by

criminal cases with 125.56%, civil cases with 120% and family division cases with 107.33%. Child welfare cases had the lowest estimated weighted average clearance rate in the year with a rate of 95.50%.

Table 2.0: Sampling distribution Enforcement/Post disposal activity for the St. James Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case Clearance Rate
Vary Orders	303	7	247	83.83
Disobedience of Maintenance	135	43	171	158.52
Warrants of Distress	260	145	57	77.69
Warrants of Arrest	146	49	110	108.90
Total/Weighted Average	844	244	585	98.22

Apart from substantive case activity, it is important to note that a combined total of 844 cases entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) and the vary orders during the year. Of these, 829 were either disposed of or became inactive in the period, producing a gross case clearance rate of 98.22% on these matters.

Chapter 3.0: The Trelawny Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Trelawny Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, 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 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal proceedings	12	5	0	41.67
Indictments	12	7	0	58.33
Summary	14	5	2	50.00
Petty Session	1	2	0	200.00
Total/Weighted Average	39	19	2	53.85

The above table shows that the sample of 39 criminal cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022. Of these, 14 or 35.90% were summary matters, 12 or 30.77% each were committal proceedings and indictments, while 1 was a petty case. There was a total of 21 criminal cases that were disposed of or became inactive during the year ended December 31, 2022. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 53.85% for these types of cases, which is 16.82 percentage points below the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted average case clearance rate of 70.67%.

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 year ended December 31, 2022. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Childcare and protection	66	55	0	83.33
Uncontrollable Child	18	10	3	72.22
Total/ Weighted Average	84	65	3	80.95

There were 84 child welfare cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022, the majority of which were childcare protection cases which accounted for 66 or 78.57%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 18 or 21.43% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 68 child welfare cases were disposed of or became inactive during the year. There were 55 childcare and protection cases which were disposed of during the year, while 10 uncontrollable child case were disposed of and 3 became inactive. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 83.33% for childcare and protection cases and 72.22% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 80.95%, which is below the international standards on this vital metric and is 15.48 percentage points below the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted case clearance rate of 96.43%.

Family matters case activity summary for the Trelawny Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Trelawny Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for the year ended December 31, 2022

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	74	52	5	77.03
Declaration of Paternity	46	33	4	80.43
Access	22	18	7	113.64
Legal Guardianship	5	4	0	80.00
Maintenance	142	90	20	77.46
Adoption	4	4	0	100.00
Total/Weighted Average	293	201	36	80.89

The 293 new cases filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022, revealed that the highest proportion of the sample were maintenance matters with 142 cases or 48.46% of the sample. This was followed by 74 or 25.26% which were custody cases and 46 or 15.70% which were cases of declaration of paternity and 22 cases or 7.51% were access cases. There were 5 legal guardianship cases and 4 adoption cases filed in the year. A total of 237 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the year. This is broken down into 90 disposed and 20 inactive maintenance cases, 52 disposed and 5 inactive custody cases, 33 disposed and 4 inactive declaration of paternity cases, 18 disposed and 7 inactive access cases, while adoption and legal guardianship had 4 disposed cases each. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 80.89% for the broad family case

type, led by access cases with 113.64%, adoption cases with 100% and declaration of paternity cases with 80.43%. Legal guardian cases had a clearance rate of 80%, followed by maintenance and custody cases with 77.46% and 77.03% respectively.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the year ended December 31, 2022 at the Trelawny Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Trelawny for the year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
138	105	18	89.13

The data above shows that there was a total of 138 new domestic violence cases filed in the 2022 calendar year at the Trelawny Family Court. A total of 123 of these cases were either disposed of or became inactive during the year which resulted in a weighted average case clearance rate of 89.13%, which is just below the international standards on this vital metric and is 5.04 percentage points above the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted case clearance rate of 84.09%.

Summary of case activity for civil matters at the Trelawny Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Trelawny Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 1.0: Summary of civil case activity for cases in the year ended December 31, 2022

Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	weighted case clearance rate (%)
15	8	1	60.00

The data above shows that there was a total of 15 new civil cases filed in the year ended December 31, 2022. There was also a total of 9 civil cases which were disposed of or became inactive in the year at the Trelawny Family Court. This produces an estimated case clearance rate of 60%, which is below the international standard and is 6.97 percentage points above the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted case clearance rate of 53.13%.

Summary of case activity across all business lines in the 2022 calendar year at the Trelawny Family Court

Table 1.0: Summary of case activity across all business lines in the year ended December 31, 2022

Aggregate Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
569	398	60	80.49

The above table shows that a total of 569 new cases were filed at the Trelawny Family Court in the 2022 calendar year, while 398 cases were disposed, and 60 cases became inactive. This produces an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 80.49% across all the case types in the 2022 calendar year, which is 9.68 percentage points above the corresponding 2021 calendar year weighted case clearance rate of 70.81%. Domestic violence cases with 89.13% had the highest

clearance rate, followed by child welfare cases with 80.95%, family division cases with 80.89% and civil cases with 60%. Criminal cases had the lowest estimated weighted average clearance rate in the year with a rate of 53.85%.

Table 2.0: Sampling distribution on Enforcement/Post disposal activity for the Trelawny Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case Clearance Rate
Vary Orders	85	8	56	75.29
Disobedience of Maintenance	28	5	24	103.57
Warrants of Distress	128	0	4	3.13
Warrants of Arrest	97	7	47	55.67
Total/Weighted Average	338	20	131	44.67

Apart from substantive case activity, it is important to note that a combined total of 338 cases entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) and the vary orders during the year. Of these, 151 cases were either disposed of or became inactive in the period, producing a gross case clearance rate of 44.67% on these matters.

Chapter 4.0: The Manchester Family Court

This chapter of the document will examine a summary of selected output and performance measurements for matters in the Manchester Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Such will involve analyses of caseload, case type distribution, 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 1.0: Summary of criminal case activity for cases for the Year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case clearance rate (%)
Committal proceedings	8	4	0	50.00
Summary	33	42	3	136.36
Petty Session	1	0	1	100.00
Total/Weighted Average	42	46	4	119.05

The above table shows that the sample of 42 criminal cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022. Of these, 33 or 78.57% were summary matters, 8 or 19.05% were committal cases and 1 was a petty sessions case. There was a total of 50 criminal cases that were disposed of or became inactive during the year ended December 31, 2022. This led to an estimated weighted clearance rate of 119.05% 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 Manchester Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Matters falling under the child welfare subdivision are uncontrollable child and childcare and protection cases.

Table 1.0: Summary of child welfare case activity for the Year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Childcare and protection	42	39	6	107.14
Uncontrollable Child	23	11	4	65.22
Total/ Weighted Average	65	50	10	92.31

There were 65 child welfare cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022, the majority of which were childcare protection cases which accounted for 42 or 64.62%, while cases of uncontrollable child with 23 or 35.38% accounted for the remaining proportion. A total of 60 child welfare cases were disposed of or became inactive during the year. There were 39 childcare and protection cases which were disposed of during the year and 6 became inactive, while 11 uncontrollable child case were disposed of and 4 became inactive. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 107.14% for childcare and protection cases and 65.22% for uncontrollable child cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 92.31%, which meets the international standards on this vital metric.

Family matters case activity summary for the Manchester Family Court in the Year ended December 31, 2022

This section examines case activity for matters classified under the broad category of family matters in the Manchester Family Court for the year ended December 31, 2022. Matters falling under this broad case category which are included in this report includes maintenance, custody, legal guardianship, access and declaration of paternity.

Table 1.0: Summary of Family case activity for cases for Year ended December 31, 2022

Case Subtype	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Custody	89	102	1	115.73
Declaration of Paternity	27	26	0	96.30
Access	61	35	0	57.38
Legal Guardianship	3	2	1	100.00
Maintenance	378	410	3	109.26
Adoption	4	2	1	75.00
Total/Weighted Average	562	577	6	103.74

The 562 new cases filed at the Manchester Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022, revealed that the majority were maintenance cases with 378 cases or 67.26% of the sample. This was followed by 89 or 15.84% which were custody cases and 61 or 10.85% which were access cases and 27 cases or 4.80% were declaration of paternity cases. There was 4 adoption cases and 3 legal guardianship cases filed in the year. A total of 583 cases falling under this broad family category were disposed of or became inactive in the year. This is broken down into 410 disposed and 3 inactive maintenance cases, 102 disposed and 1 inactive custody cases, 26 disposed declaration of paternity cases, 35 disposed access cases, 2 disposed and 1 inactive adoption cases and legal guardianship had 2 disposed cases and 1 inactive case. This led to an overall estimated weighted average case clearance rate of 103.74% for the broad family case type, led by custody

cases with 115.73%, maintenance cases with 109.26% and legal guardianship cases with 100%. Declaration of paternity cases had a clearance rate of 96.30%, followed by adoption and access cases with 75% and 57.38% respectively.

Summary of Case Activity for Domestic Violence Cases in the Year ended December 31, 2022 at the Manchester Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for Domestic Violence cases filed at the Family Court in Manchester for the year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 1.0: Summary of domestic violence case activity for cases for the Year ended December 31, 2022

Case Type	Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted case clearance rate (%)
Protection Order	98	69	1	71.43
Occupation Order	14	11	0	78.57
Total/Weighted Average	112	80	1	72.32

The data above shows that there was a total of 112 new domestic violence cases filed in the 2022 calendar year at the Manchester Family Court. Of this, 98 were protection order cases and 14 were occupation order cases. A total 81 Domestic Violence cases were either disposed of or became inactive during the year. There were 69 disposed protection order cases and 1 inactive case, while 11 occupation order cases were disposed of. These results led to estimated case clearance rates of 71.43% for protection order cases and 78.57% for occupation order cases, further yielding a weighted average case clearance rate of 72.32%, which falls below the international standards on this vital metric.

Summary of case activity for civil matters at the Manchester Family Court

The below subsection provides a basic summary of case activity for civil matters at the Manchester Family Court in the year ended December 31, 2022.

Table 1.0: Summary of civil case activity for cases in the Year ended December 31, 2022

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

The data above shows that there was a total of 2 new civil cases filed in the year ended December 31, 2022. There were no disposed cases in the year, hence, a clearance rate is not reportable.

Summary of case activity across all business lines in 2022 calendar year at the Manchester Family Court

Table 1.0: Summary of case activity across all business lines in the Year ended December 31, 2022

Aggregate Number of new cases filed	Number of cases disposed	Number of inactive cases	Weighted Case Clearance Rate (%)
783	753	21	98.85

The above table shows that a total of 783 new cases were filed at the Manchester Family Court in the 2022 calendar year, while 753 cases were disposed, and 21 cases became inactive. This produces an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 98.85% across all the case types in the 2022 calendar year. Criminal cases with 119.05% had the highest clearance rate, followed by family division cases with 103.74% and child welfare cases with 92.31%. Domestic violence cases had the lowest estimated weighted average clearance rate in the year with a rate of 72.32%.

Table 2.0: Sampling distribution on Enforcement/Post disposal activity for the Manchester Family Court for the Year ended December 31, 2022

Post disposal activity/Enforcement	New entries	Inactive matters	Disposed matters	Case Clearance Rate
Vary Orders	55	39	1	72.73
Disobedience of Maintenance	46	31	6	80.43
Warrants of Distress	63	6	0	9.52
Warrants of Arrest	55	18	7	45.45
Total/Weighted Average	219	94	14	49.32

Apart from substantive case activity, it is important to note that a combined total of 219 cases entered the enforcement stage (by way of disobedience of maintenance matters, distress and arrest warrants) and the vary orders during the year. Of these, 108 cases were either disposed of or became inactive in the period, producing a gross case clearance rate of 49.32% on these matters.

Aggregate Case Activity Summary

Aggregate case flow performance estimates for the year ended December 31, 2022

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	2668	2424	96	94.45
St. James Family Court	2511	2795	88	114.81
Trelawny Family Court	569	398	60	80.49
Manchester Family Court	783	753	21	98.85
Total/Weighted Average	6531	6370	265	101.59

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured specialized Family Courts in the 2022 calendar year. It shows that a total of 6531 new cases were filed in these courts, while 265 became inactive and 6370 were disposed of, leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 101.59%. The St. James Family Court recorded the highest overall weighted case clearance rate among the featured courts with 114.81%, followed by the Manchester Family Court with 98.85%.

Conclusion

This report featured the specialized Family Courts of Kingston and St. Andrew (Corporate Area), Trelawny, Manchester and St. James. Together, these specialized family courts registered a commendable overall case clearance rate of 101.59%, comparable with the overall productivity of the criminal and civil jurisdictions of the parish courts. The rates ranged from a high of 114.81% in St. James Family Court to a low of 80.49% in the Trelawny Family Court. The Chief Justice has set a target for the Jamaican courts to achieve a court-wide case clearance rate of 130% over the next 4-5 years. Achieving this rate will ensure that the net case backlog rate in the court system is reduced to under 5%. Specific targeted case clearance rates have been established for the individual courts and business lines throughout the Jamaican court system, including the Family Court. Based on the results observed over the past three years, there is a relatively high probability that the specialized Family Courts will attain their targets before 2025, creating a technically backlog free situation. One important metric that bears a direct correlation with the case clearance rate is the courtroom utilization rate. The specialized Family Courts enjoy comparatively strong courtroom utilization which partly explains their consistently strong case clearance rates. In 2022 for example, the Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Courts registered a courtroom utilization of roughly 78.44%.

The specialized family courts appear to be well poised to meet the key quantitative targets set out by the Chief Justice as part of the judiciary's strategic plan for the next few years, thus contributing to positioning the Jamaican court system among the best in the region and the world.

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.

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%. A distinction is sometimes made between the gross and net case clearance rates. The simple difference is that the net rate completely excludes inactive cases from its computation while the gross rate does not.

Note: The clearance rate could therefore exceed 100% but the disposal rate has a maximum value of 100%.

A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system. The inferred international benchmark for case clearance rates is an average of 90%-110 annualized. This is a critical foundation to backlog prevention in the court system. ¹

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%. A distinction is sometimes made between the gross and net case disposal rates. The simple difference is that the net rate completely excludes inactive cases from its computation while the gross rate does not.

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

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%.

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

Case 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.

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%

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 a 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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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

Source:

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

ⁱ *Source:*

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

