

The Chief Justice's Statistics Progress Report

Traffic Courts of Jamaica

Performance Analysis and Forecasts

Period: January – April 2026

Prepared for the Office of the Chief Justice

May 2026

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Executive Summary

The first 113 days of the 2026 judicial calendar reveal a Jamaican Traffic Court system operating under profound volumetric strain. Between January and April 23, 2026, the courts received an overwhelming influx of 106,460 new cases, yet managed to dispose of only 10,675 of these new filings, resulting in a new case disposal rate of just 10.03%. While the courts successfully cleared 42,184 legacy cases brought forward from previous periods, the sheer volume of incoming infractions has suppressed the overall case clearance rate to a severely bottlenecked 39.62%. Current projections suggest this trajectory will compound, with year-end forecasts anticipating 343,875 new cases filed against only 170,739 total disposals across the island, representing a projected overall clearance rate of 50%. Every single traffic court is currently operating with a standard clearance rate below 100%, indicating that the national backlog is actively expanding across all jurisdictions, heavily driven by an extreme accumulation of newly filed, unresolved matters.

Disclaimer:

The statistical data utilized to produce this report is based on information available within the Traffic Information Management System (TiMS) as of April 23, 2026. Please be advised that there may be variances across individual courts regarding how promptly and comprehensively their local systems are updated. Nevertheless, this aggregated data provides critical and reliable insights into the broader operational trends, congestion rates, and overall performance of the traffic courts.

Introduction

This report presents a statistical evaluation of the Jamaican Traffic Courts, capturing the operational dynamics and throughput metrics for the first 113 days of the 2026 judicial calendar. Utilizing aggregated data from the Traffic Information Management System (TiMS) as of April 23, 2026, this analysis provides critical insights into the broader congestion rates and administrative realities facing the judiciary.

The findings establish that the traffic court network is currently operating under profound volumetric strain. Between January and April, the system received an overwhelming influx of 106,460 new case filings, yet successfully disposed of only 10,675 of these specific matters, resulting in a severely bottlenecked new case disposal rate of 10.03%. Although the courts supplemented their output by clearing 42,184 legacy cases, the sheer velocity of incoming infractions has suppressed the overall national case clearance rate to just 39.62%.

These metrics indicate that the courts are operating in a state of systemic insolvency, where the operational debt of new traffic infractions vastly outpaces the revenue of case resolutions. Every individual traffic court is currently functioning below the critical 100% standard clearance rate, confirming that the national backlog is actively expanding across all jurisdictions. This structural deficit not only threatens the integrity of contemporary traffic enforcement but also acts as a compounding frictional drag on national economic productivity.

The following sections will disaggregate this national congestion by parish to diagnose specific geographic failure points, outline the forecasted year-end trajectories, and provide data-driven recommendations. The ultimate objective is to decouple legacy backlog processing from daily intake operations and establish the modern administrative frameworks necessary to restore operational equilibrium across the island.

Statistical Evaluation of the Jamaican Traffic Courts

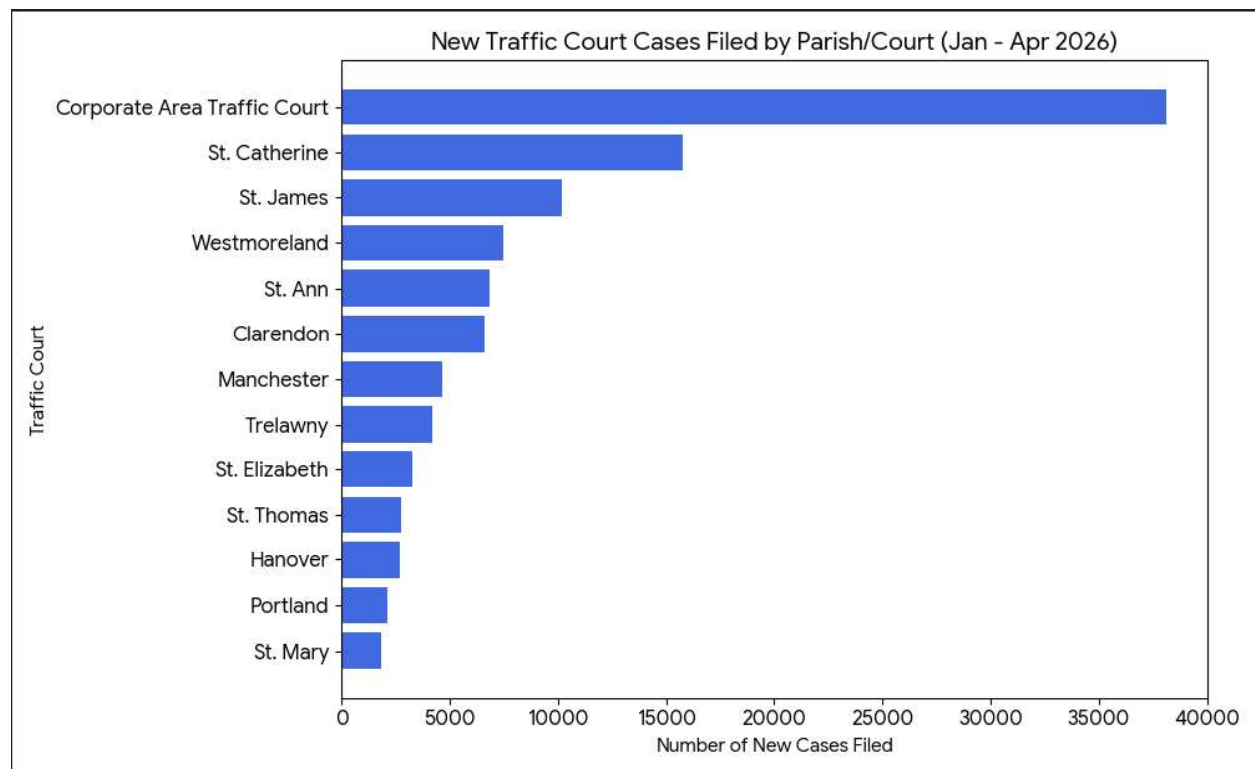
Table 1.0: Performance Summary for the First 113 days of 2026

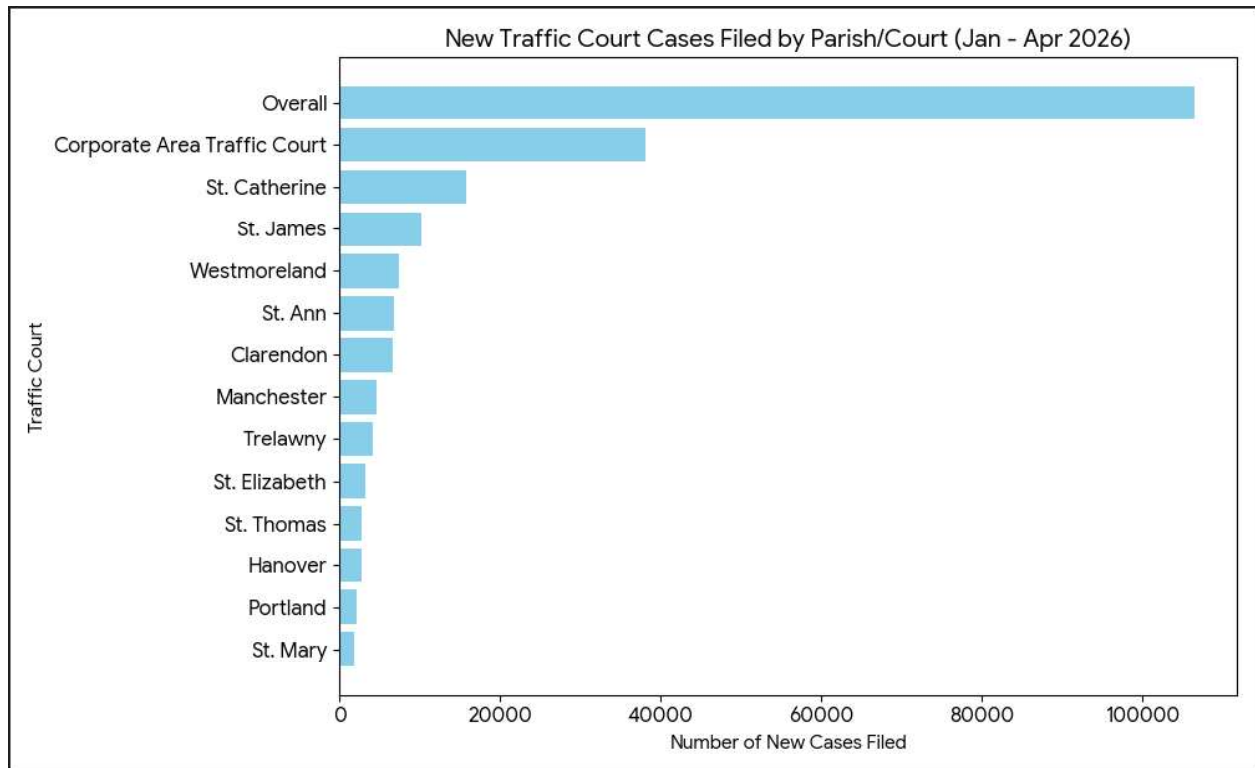
Traffic Court Case Activity Report for the period January - April 23, 2026					
Traffic Court	Number of New Cases Filed	Number of New Cases Filed which were disposed	Number of Cases Brought forward which were disposed	Case Disposal Rate	Case Clearance Rate
Clarendon	6630	777	908	11.72%	13.70%
Corporate Area Traffic Court	38127	4969	17482	13.03%	45.85%
Hanover	2708	252	678	9.31%	25.04%
Manchester	4647	29	365	0.62%	7.85%
Portland	2101	360	1323	17.13%	62.97%
St. Ann	6857	40	847	0.58%	12.35%
St. Catherine	15752	1316	13110	8.35%	83.23%
St. Elizabeth	3244	637	2069	19.64%	63.78%
St. James	10178	200	1380	1.97%	13.56%
St. Mary	1842	376	1320	20.41%	71.66%
St. Thomas	2724	563	852	20.67%	31.28%
Trelawny	4195	474	955	11.30%	22.77%
Westmoreland	7455	682	895	9.15%	12.01%
Overall	106460	10675	42184	10.03%	39.62%

This table provides a foundational snapshot of the operational load and throughput across all parishes during the first 113 days of the year. It highlights a severe imbalance where the system absorbed 106,460 new cases but only disposed of 10,675 of those specific new filings,

yielding a new case disposal rate of just 10.03%. The courts were largely sustained by their efforts to clear 42,184 brought-forward legacy cases, though this still left the overall national case clearance rate bottlenecked at 39.62%.

The Corporate Area Traffic Court recorded the highest influx with 38,127 new cases filed, creating a massive gap when compared to the lowest volume seen in St. Mary at just 1,842 cases. This establishes an extreme volume range of 36,285 new cases between the most and least burdened jurisdictions. Regarding case processing, St. Thomas achieved the highest new case disposal rate at 20.67%, while St. Ann struggled at the absolute bottom with a negligible 0.58%, resulting in a performance range of 20.09% across the parishes. When factoring in legacy cases, St. Catherine achieved the highest overall case clearance rate at 83.23%, standing in stark contrast to Manchester's island-low of 7.85%, which highlights a sprawling 75.38% gap in total clearance capabilities.





The above bar charts visually underscore the extreme geographic concentration of the incoming judicial workload. It clearly illustrates that the Corporate Area Traffic Court is the undisputed epicenter of traffic infractions, dwarfing all other jurisdictions. The visual cliff-drop from the Corporate Area down to the secondary hubs of St. Catherine and St. James emphasizes that national judicial resources must account for this heavily skewed distribution rather than treating all parishes as equal operational environments.

These visual representations emphatically underscore the volume crisis by graphically plotting the 36,285-case gap between the highest and lowest intake jurisdictions. The bar charts provide a stark visual of the cliff-drop between the undisputed epicenter, the Corporate Area Traffic Court, and all subsequent parishes. This extreme skewed distribution

vividly confirms that while the lowest-intake court (St. Mary) manages fewer than 2,000 cases, the system's apex failure point is absorbing nearly twenty times that amount.

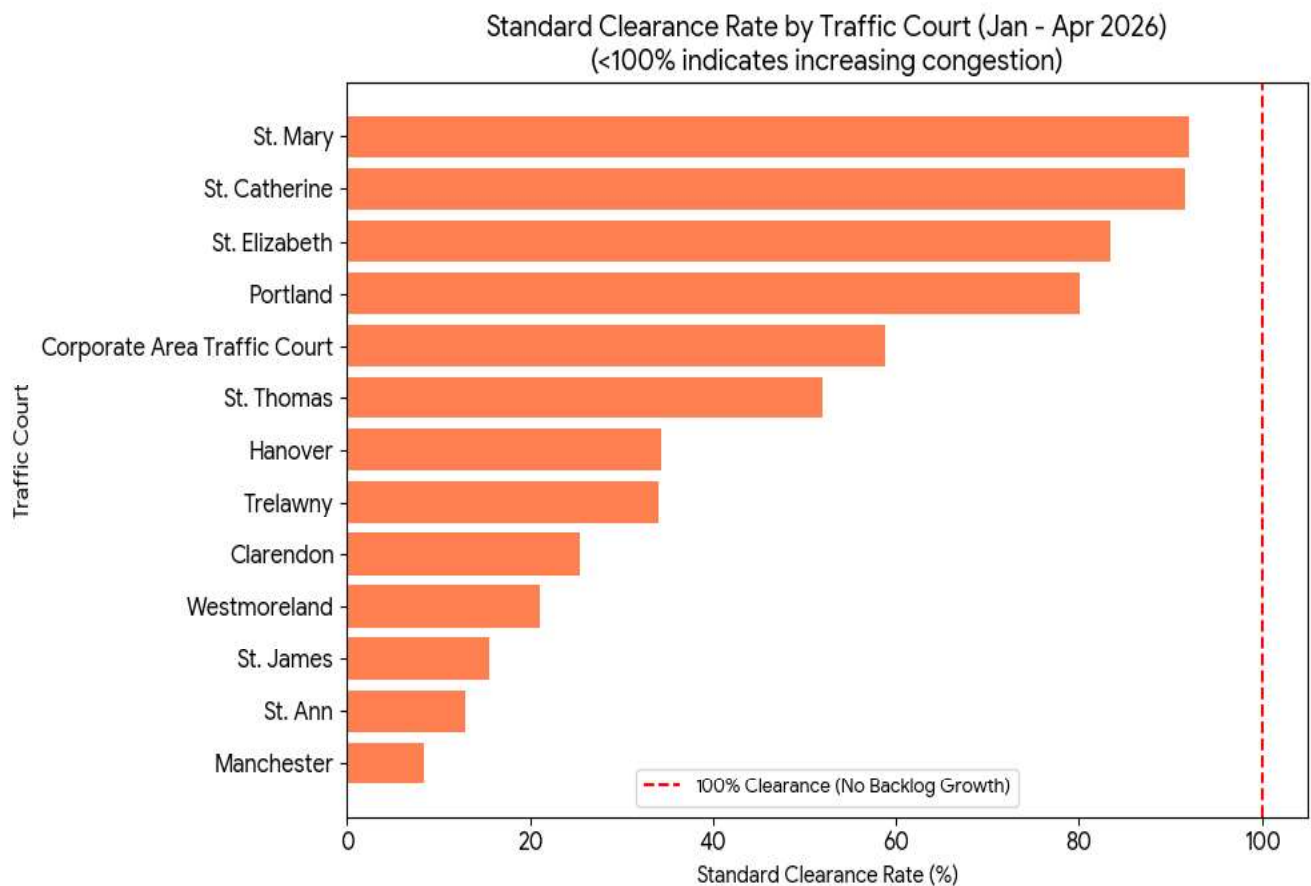
Table 2.0: Rest of Year Forecast for 2026 [Generated using the method of exponential smoothing]

Traffic Court	Forecasted Total New Cases 2026	Forecasted Total Disposed 2026	Case Clearance Rate (%)
Corporate Area Traffic Court	123153	72518	59%
St. Catherine	50880	46597	92%
St. James	32875	5103	16%
Westmoreland	24080	5093	21%
St. Ann	22148	2865	13%
Clarendon	21415	5442	25%
Manchester	15010	1272	8%
Trelawny	13550	4615	34%
St. Elizabeth	10478	8740	83%
St. Thomas	8798	4570	52%
Hanover	8747	3003	34%
Portland	6786	5436	80%
St. Mary	5949	5478	92%
Overall	343875	170739	50%

The above forecasting table projects the year-end reality if current filing and disposal trajectories remain unchanged throughout the rest of 2026. It anticipates a crushing national volume of 343,875 new cases against only 170,739 total disposals, cementing an unsustainable 50% projected annual clearance rate. The data warns that without intervention, major jurisdictions like the Corporate Area will conclude the year with tens of thousands of unresolved new matters, while smaller courts like Manchester and St. Ann face catastrophic year-end clearance rates of 8% and 13%, respectively.

The exponential smoothing forecast amplifies the current operational imbalances into alarming year-end projections. The forecasted total new cases hit a staggering ceiling in the

Corporate Area Traffic Court at 123,153 matters, compared to a baseline of 5,949 forecasted for St. Mary, expanding the projected volume range to a massive 117,204 cases. On the clearance front, St. Catherine and St. Mary are tied for the most optimistic year-end clearance rate forecast at 92%. Conversely, Manchester is projected to post the lowest clearance rate at just 8%, establishing an 84% performance spread that indicates deeply unequal systemic breakdown across the island by the close of 2026.



The above chart graphically diagnoses the active congestion spreading across the entire judicial network. The critical takeaway is visually represented by the red dashed line marking the 100% clearance threshold, which no single court has managed to cross. The cascading horizontal bars reveal a stark disparity in performance, with St. Mary and St. Catherine

approaching the threshold while Manchester and St. Ann languish at the absolute bottom, vividly demonstrating that every court is currently adding to the national backlog to varying degrees.

This graphical diagnosis of active congestion maps the distance of each court from the critical 100% standard clearance threshold. St. Mary represents the highest performer, visually approaching the red line with a 92.07% rate, whereas Manchester sits at the extreme low end of the chart at 8.48%. The length of the horizontal bars translates the raw data into a visual spread of 83.59%, demonstrating that even the most efficient courts remain separated from the least efficient courts by an immense operational gulf, while all remain universally trapped below the break-even threshold.

Table 3.0: Backlog accumulation and resolution focus

Traffic Court	Backlog Accumulation Rate	Standard Clearance Rate (Total)	Backlog Resolution Focus
Manchester	99.38%	8.48%	92.64%
St. Ann	99.42%	12.94%	95.49%
St. James	98.03%	15.52%	87.34%
Westmoreland	90.85%	21.15%	56.75%
Clarendon	88.28%	25.41%	53.89%
Trelawny	88.70%	34.06%	66.83%
Hanover	90.69%	34.34%	72.90%
St. Thomas	79.33%	51.95%	60.21%
Corporate Area Traffic Court	86.97%	58.88%	77.87%
Portland	82.87%	80.10%	78.61%
St. Elizabeth	80.36%	83.42%	76.46%
St. Catherine	91.65%	91.58%	90.88%
St. Mary	79.59%	92.07%	77.83%

This table breaks down the internal mechanics of why the courts are failing to keep pace with modern enforcement. It reveals that an overwhelming percentage of judicial effort—such as 95.49% in St. Ann and 92.64% in Manchester—is strictly dedicated to resolving legacy cases rather than addressing the contemporary influx. Consequently, the table exposes severe backlog accumulation rates, showing that the vast majority of new 2026 filings are instantly rolling over into the active backlog because the courts simply lack the throughput capacity to simultaneously handle past debts and current demands.

This table exposes the most critical friction points preventing operational fluidity. St. Ann suffers the highest backlog accumulation rate at a near-total 99.42%, while St. Thomas reports the lowest rate at 79.33%, indicating a relatively tight 20.09% range where the vast majority of all courts see roughly eight to ten of every new case instantly rolling into arrears. Looking at how judicial effort is spent; St. Ann again marks the extreme high by dedicating 95.49% of its resolution focus exclusively to legacy cases. Clarendon utilizes the lowest focus on legacy matters at 53.89%, creating a 41.60% variance in how different jurisdictions divide their attention between paying off past debts versus managing contemporary case filings.

Detailed Discussion of Statistical Output

The operational landscape of the traffic courts is defined by highly disproportionate case concentrations and a systemic inability to keep pace with new filings. As illustrated in the chart titled "New Traffic Court Cases Filed by Parish/Court (Jan - Apr 2026)," the Corporate Area Traffic Court stands as the undeniable epicenter of this congestion, single-handedly absorbing 38,127 new cases in the first four months of the year, which translates to a meager 13.03% disposal rate for new matters. St. Catherine and St. James follow as the next most

burdened jurisdictions, registering 15,752 and 10,178 new cases respectively. While St. Catherine has managed a relatively high overall case clearance rate of 83.23% by aggressively targeting its brought-forward inventory, its disposal rate for strictly new cases sits at an alarming 8.35%.

Forecasting these trends through the remainder of 2026 paints a concerning picture of resource allocation and throughput constraints. The Corporate Area is projected to end the year with 123,153 new case filings but only 72,518 total disposals, yielding an anticipated final clearance rate of 59%. Across the entire network, the forecasted national case clearance rate is expected to stabilize at merely 50%. This indicates that the judiciary will carry forward a massive deficit into 2027. Jurisdictions like Manchester and St. Ann are particularly vulnerable; Manchester is forecasted to receive 15,010 cases while disposing of only 1,272, resulting in a projected year-end clearance rate of just 8%. St. Ann mirrors this operational paralysis, tracking toward a 13% clearance rate by the close of the year.

The underlying dynamics of this congestion are best understood through the metrics of backlog accumulation and resolution focus. The data reveals a system forced to cannibalize its present capacity to pay off past debts. In Manchester and St. Ann, the backlog accumulation rates have reached critical mass at 99.38% and 99.42% respectively, meaning almost every single new case filed in 2026 is instantly becoming a backlogged legacy case. Concurrently, their backlog resolution focus metrics, 92.64% for Manchester and 95.49% for St. Ann, demonstrate that nearly all of their meager judicial throughput is dedicated strictly

to clearing old cases rather than addressing the incoming flow. As demonstrated in the chart titled "Standard Clearance Rate by Traffic Court (Jan - Apr 2026)," even the highest-performing courts are not immune to this structural deficit. St. Mary currently leads the island with a standard clearance rate of 92.07%, yet it still suffers from a 79.59% backlog accumulation rate, relying heavily on a 77.83% focus on legacy resolutions to maintain its overall metrics.

An Analysis of the State of Warrants in the Traffic Courts

The stark disparity between the 106,460 new cases filed and the mere 10,675 disposed points to a massive influx of unresolved contemporary matters across the network. In a traffic court setting, this approximately ninety percent non-compliance rate virtually guarantees the rapid issuance of thousands of bench warrants for disobedience of summons. However, the overarching national case clearance rate of just 39.62% mathematically confirms that these warrants are falling into either an issuance or execution void or more likely both. If the courts were rapidly issuing warrants and if the police were actively apprehending offenders, the disposal rate for new filings would necessarily spike. Instead, the data reveals a warrant issuance and enforcement loop that remains fundamentally unclosed.

This failure creates a compounding administrative paralysis within the court registries. For instance, the Corporate Area Traffic Court alone generated an excess of thirty-three thousand unresolved new cases within a mere 113-day window. The clerical burden of processing, printing, and disseminating warrants that will ultimately go unserved severely cannibalizes

the operational bandwidth needed to clear the active docket. Furthermore, with jurisdictions like Manchester and St. Ann dedicating upwards of ninety-two percent of their adjudicative focus strictly to legacy cases, the system lacks the structural capacity to process a sudden influx of executed warrants even if police sweeps were suddenly successful. This dynamic inadvertently projects a relatively weak enforcement environment, signaling to the motoring public that non-compliance carries minimal immediate risk and thereby fueling the cycle of new infractions.

Ultimately, this extreme volume of unexecuted warrants transcends procedural inefficiency to represent a severe financial deficit for the state. Every unresolved traffic infraction is an unrealized unit of revenue that should be actively funding public infrastructure. The compounding congestion—where today's unresolved filings guarantee tomorrow's unmanageable backlog —acts as a frictional drag on national productivity by forcing cyclical, unproductive court attendances.

Conclusion

The Jamaican Traffic Courts are operating in a state of systemic insolvency, where the revenue of case resolutions is vastly outpaced by the debt of new traffic infractions. Because the courts are structurally forced to prioritize legacy backlogs, they are functionally unequipped to process contemporary caseloads. This creates a compounding mathematical certainty where today's unresolved new filings guarantee tomorrow's unmanageable backlog. With no individual court achieving the critical 100% standard clearance rate

necessary to halt backlog growth, the data confirms that current procedural frameworks are insufficient to handle the modern realities of traffic enforcement and judicial administration.

Recommendations

To address these critical bottlenecks and modernize court management, it is highly recommended to implement aggressive diversionary and administrative resolution pathways for low-level traffic infractions, thereby removing them from the formal judicial docket entirely. This would immediately stem the tide of the extreme backlog accumulation rates observed in failing parishes. Furthermore, judicial resources must be dynamically reallocated using predictive analytics, shifting administrative and adjudicative support away from stabilized zones and directly into high-volume failure points like Manchester and the Corporate Area. Finally, the courts should prioritize the decoupling of legacy backlog processing from daily intake operations, perhaps by establishing specialized, temporary tribunals dedicated solely to clearing brought-forward cases, allowing the primary courts to focus exclusively on achieving a complete clearance rate for new filings.

Glossary of Technical Terms

Backlog Accumulation Rate: The percentage of newly filed cases that failed to be resolved within the reporting period, meaning they have automatically rolled over into the court's active backlog. It is calculated by dividing the number of unresolved new cases by the total number of new cases filed.

Backlog Resolution Focus: A metric that reveals where a court is spending its adjudicative resources. It represents the percentage of a court's total disposed cases that were legacy matters (brought forward) rather than recent filings.

Cases Brought Forward (Legacy Cases): Unresolved, pending traffic matters that were filed in previous years or reporting periods and carried over into the active inventory for 2026.

Cases Brought Forward Disposed: The specific volume of older, legacy cases that the court successfully resolved or closed during the current reporting period.

Case Clearance Rate (Standard Clearance Rate): The universal metric for measuring court congestion. It is the ratio of all disposed cases (both new and legacy) to the total number of new cases filed during the period. A rate of 100% means the court is breaking even; a rate under 100% indicates an actively growing backlog.

Case Disposal Rate (New Case Disposal Rate): The percentage of strictly new cases filed during the current period that were also successfully resolved within that exact same period.

New Cases Disposed: The number of newly filed traffic infractions (originating between Jan 1 and Apr 23, 2026) that have been successfully adjudicated, closed, or otherwise cleared from the docket.

New Cases Filed: The total absolute volume of new traffic infractions formally registered and added to the court's docket during the specified reporting period.

Total Disposed (Total Disposals): The combined sum of all case resolutions achieved by the court, including both the clearance of new cases and the clearance of legacy cases brought forward.