

The Corporate Area Coroner's and The Special Coroner's Court

(January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025)

OVERALL QUANTITATIVE HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY 1, 2025 – DECEMBER 31, 2025

Court	Case Disposal Rate (%)	Case Clearance Rate (%)	Average time to Disposition (months)
Corporate Area Coroner's Court	97.40	104.09	0.78
Corporate Area Special Coroner's Court	54.29	174.29	34.79
Weighted Average	92.43	112.17	6.74

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CHIEF JUSTICE'S MESSAGE FOR SPECIAL CORONER'S AND CORPORATE AREA CORONER'S COURT

This report indicates the continued drive towards efficiency, fairness and timeliness of cases involving death. Delays in treating with these matters can be a source of great distress and anxiety for family members, friends and those who knew the deceased. The Coroner's process matters because without the Form D from the coroner in cases of violent, unexpected or unexplained deaths, family members will have great difficulty gaining access to the estate of the deceased. Stated another way, an inefficient coronial system hinders economic activity, delays property transfer and obstructs wealth creation because the living cannot do anything with the assets of the deceased. Both courts have demonstrated their commitment to high quality coronial services.

An innovation in this year's report is the inclusion of coronial activity across the Parish Courts. I wish to thank our Chief Statistician, Ms. leesha Graham-McIntosh, for this important development. It will enable the leadership of the judiciary to keep track of the performance of these important courts.

Since the last annual report, the Coroner and Special Coroner were tasked with the responsibility of developing proposals for improving the coronial system to bring it in line with the best coronial systems in the world. That report was sent to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. Among the recommendations were (a) the removal of the jury from the process since it is not clear that it adds significant value to the determination of the matter; and (b) empowering the coroner to make recommendations concerning any circumstances that led to the death. The first recommendation seeks to improve the quality and efficiency of disposition. It would assist in bringing closure to the grieving family earlier. The second underscores what modern Coroners do. They do speak to the death, which is the immediate cause of the enquiry, but are also

permitted to address underlying issues that led to the death and, if those issues are addressed, this is likely to reduce or minimise the likelihood of such deaths in the future. A modern coronial system is not only concerned with the immediate death and its cause but also with minimising the likelihood of future occurrences, thereby improving the safety and wellbeing of citizens and visitors. I can only urge the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to examine the proposals and take such steps as it considers appropriate to modernise our present coronial structure to make it appropriate for current and future needs.

Let me thank the Coroners, the staff, and stakeholders for their commitment and determination to improve our justice system. Without those qualities this report would not be so excellent.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Bryan Sykes, OJ, CD
Chief Justice of Jamaica

Executive Summary

This report provides a detailed analysis of case activity within the Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court during the year ended December 31, 2025. Key performance indicators such as case disposal rate, case clearance rate, and average time to disposition were examined to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of these courts.

The Corporate Area Coroner's Court recorded a case disposal rate of 97.40%, indicating that approximately 97 cases were resolved out of every 100 filed during the 2025 calendar year. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court continues to maintain a case clearance rate above international standards. This reporting period saw 560 disposed cases (regardless of date of origin) and 538 new cases filed; this produced a case clearance rate of 104.09%. The average time to disposition was 0.78 months, indicative of efficient case processing within the Corporate Area's Coroner's Court.

For the year ended December 31, 2025, the Special Coroner's Court filed 70 new cases; of the new cases filed during the year there were 38 disposed cases, leading to a disposal rate of 54.29%. The Special Coroner's Court disposed 122 cases regardless of the date of origin, indicative of efforts to resolve older cases within year, leading to a clearance rate of 174.29% and an average time to disposition of 34.79 months. The court's jurisdiction across parishes, saw cases in the reporting period primarily originating from St. Catherine (26.25%), Kingston (17.50%), and St. James (15.00%).

Key performance Summary- 2025

Court	Disposal Rate (%)	Case Clearance Rate (%)	Average time to disposition (months)
Corporate Area Coroner's Court	97.40	104.09	0.78
Special Coroner's Court	54.29	174.29	34.79
Weighted Average	92.43	112.17	6.74

The report also analysed various aspects of case activity, including sources of cases, causes of death, gender distribution, and age demographics. Notably, in the Corporate Area Coroner's court the majority of cases were filed by the police (79.75%), highlighting their role in initiating legal proceedings. The majority of cases filed in the Corporate Area Coroner's Court for year ended December 31, 2025, were males (70.82%), and the prevalent cause of death as reported was death due to natural causes. As it concerns Form D applications, most (65.77%) of the outcomes were in accordance with Section 14¹, indicating the acceptance of matters for an inquest. Despite the fact that delays were encountered, primarily due to the generic category 'Other' (33.15%), the Corporate Area Coroner's Court overall performance for the year ended December 31, 2025, remained impressive.

An examination of the demographic disaggregation and causes of death for cases in the Special Coroner's Court, noted all cases were male victims. It is also of note for the period January through December 2025 that 86.25% of the matters filed in the Special Coroner's Court were deaths related to JCF incidents, 12.50% were death related to custodial incidents. Of the new cases filed in the period, 38 cases were disposed of. The Special Coroner's Court recorded

¹ Section 14 of the Coroners Act grants coroners the discretion to forgo an inquest if the cause of death is clearly established, there is no suspicion of foul play, or an inquest would not provide further insights. This provision aims to improve efficiency, avoid unnecessary burdens on families, and ensure judicial resources are used effectively.

a case clearance rate of 174.29% exceeding international standards.

Across both courts in the year ended December 31, 2025, a total of 608 new cases were filed, with 682 disposed of during the year and an overall average time to disposition of 6.74 months. The weighted average case disposal rate was 92.43%, and the weighted average case clearance rate was 112.17% for the reporting period.

Forecasted case flow performance estimates for the year ended December 31, 2026

Parish Court	Forecasted number of new cases	Forecasted number of disposed cases	Forecasted gross number of disposed cases (regardless of origin)	Forecasted case disposal rate (%)	Forecasted case clearance rate (%)
Corporate Area Coroner's Court	508	501	545	98.62	107.28
Special Coroner's Court	74	51	145	68.92	195.95
Total/Weighted Average	582	552	690	94.85	118.56

The above table forecasts core activity for the Corporate Area Coroner's and Special Coroner's court. The forecasts are generated using the method of exponential smoothing which uses weighted averages from past observations with weights decaying exponentially as the observations get older. See further explanation of the mathematical science behind the method of exponential smoothing in the glossary of terms. The above data shows that the overall forecasted case clearance rates for the Corporate Area Coroner's court in the period (Jan. - Dec. 2026.) is 107.28%, which would be 3.19 percentage points higher than that of the 104.09% recorded in the period (Jan. - Dec. 2025). The overall forecasted case clearance rates for the Special Coroner's court in the period (Jan. – Dec. 2026.) is 195.95%, which would be 21.66 percentage points higher than that of the 174.29% recorded in the period (Jan. - Dec. 2025).

Introduction

The coroner's court serves as the judicial body responsible for determining the cause of death in diverse circumstances. Although the Coroner's Court operates across all parishes in Jamaica, this report concentrates specifically on the Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court. It is important to note the distinction between the Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court, with the latter focusing on cases involving deaths caused by individual or institutional state actors or occurring under state care. Despite the fact that there's only one Special Coroner's Court on the island, located in Kingston and St. Andrew, it conducts special sittings in all parish courts, ensuring full coverage.

This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the key statistics regarding case activity within both the Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Courts during 2025. It includes various metrics related to productivity, time lag, resource utilization, and other relevant measurements. The objective is to offer insights into the case flow dynamics within these courts, including disposals, factors contributing to case delays, and other crucial aspects of case progression management and outcomes.

Net and Gross Backlog

Backlog indicators, specifically net and gross backlog rates, serve as critical measures of judicial performance, reflecting the effectiveness of case clearance and disposal processes. Persistent backlog continues to undermine the efficiency of the justice system. The gross backlog rate quantifies the proportion of total caseload (inclusive of active and inactive matters) exceeding an established time standard (e.g. 24 months), while the net backlog rate isolates only active cases within that threshold. As such, the gross rate captures the full extent of case accumulation, whereas the net rate provides a more accurate assessment of current case flow management. Consistent with international benchmarks and the strategic performance targets of the Jamaica Judiciary, acceptable thresholds are set at below 10% for gross backlog and below 5% for net backlog. Collectively, these indicators facilitate comparative analysis across courts, enabling the identification of systemic inefficiencies, the scale of aged case accumulation, and priority areas for targeted intervention in advancing a more efficient, timely, and accountable justice system in line with Vision 2030 Jamaica.

Table 1.0: Net and gross Coroner's case backlog as at the year ended December 31, 2025, for cases over 24 months

Coroner's Court	Net Backlog (%)	Gross Backlog (%)
Corporate Area Coroner's	0.11	0.19
Special Coroner's	0.10	2.17
Weighted Average	0.10	0.61
Standard Deviation	0.01	1.40

The Coroner's Courts show exceptionally strong performance, with backlog levels close to zero. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court reports "0.11%" net and "0.19%" gross, while the Special Coroner's Court records "0.10%" net and a slightly higher "2.17%" gross. These extremely low percentages indicate high disposal rates and efficient case progression, with very few matters remaining unresolved beyond 24 months. The weighted average of 0.10% net confirms that the coroner's system is managing its caseload effectively.

Chapter 1.0: The Corporate Area Coroner's Court

This subsection on the Corporate Area Coroner's Court details information on the case activity in this court for the year ended December 31, 2025, as well as the associated measurements of productivity in the disposal of cases, time lag measures outlining the average times between important events on the case flow continuum, as well as other supplementary measurements and information.

Table 1.1: Summary of time interval between date death reported and date case opened for the period ended December 31,2025

Descriptive Statistics (in days)	
Number of observations	560
Mean	817.09
Median	393.00
Mode	202
Std. Deviation	1179.390
Skewness	3.471
Std. Error of Skewness	.103
Range	9295
Minimum	1
Maximum	9296

The table above provides a descriptive summary of the time taken between the date deaths were reported and the date that the cases for investigation of causes of death were opened in court at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court in 2025. It is seen that from a sample of 560 observations, the average time taken between the date deaths were reported and the date that the associated cases were opened in Corporate Area Coroner's Court was roughly 817 days (or 2.2 years). The modal time taken was 202 days or 6.7 months and the median was approximately 393 days or approximately 13 months. The standard deviation stands at a high of 1179 days or 3.2 years, strongly suggesting that the alignment between the time of reporting death and the date cases open in the court varies widely around the mean. The acutely high positive skewness

further suggests that decisively more of the scores fall below the overall average, a result that is not surprising considering that the modal and median values are significantly below the overall mean. The maximum time shown between date deaths reported and date case opened is approximately 25.47 years, while the lowest is 1 day.

Table 1.2: Case Activity Summary for the year ended December 31, 2025

Approximate Number of new cases filed	Approximate Number of active cases	Number of disposed or inactive cases (from those filed in the quarter)	Estimated Case disposal rate (%)
538	14	524	97.40

The above table provides a summary of the cases filed at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court in 2025. It is shown that 538 new cases were filed during the year, 26 cases or 5.08% more than the 512 cases filed in the similar period of 2024. There were 524 disposed cases at the end of the 2025 calendar year. These results yield to a case disposal rate of 97.40% which satisfies the international standard on this measure and suggests that for every 100 cases filed over the period, roughly 97 cases were resolved. The case clearance rate will be examined later in this report.

Table 1.3: Sampling distribution of Source of matters filed for the year ended December 31, 2025

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Police	449	79.75
Family	114	20.25
Total	563	100

A sample of 563 matters filed at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court shows that 449 matters or 79.75% of matters filed were filed by the police, while 114 or 20.25% were filed by the family of deceased.

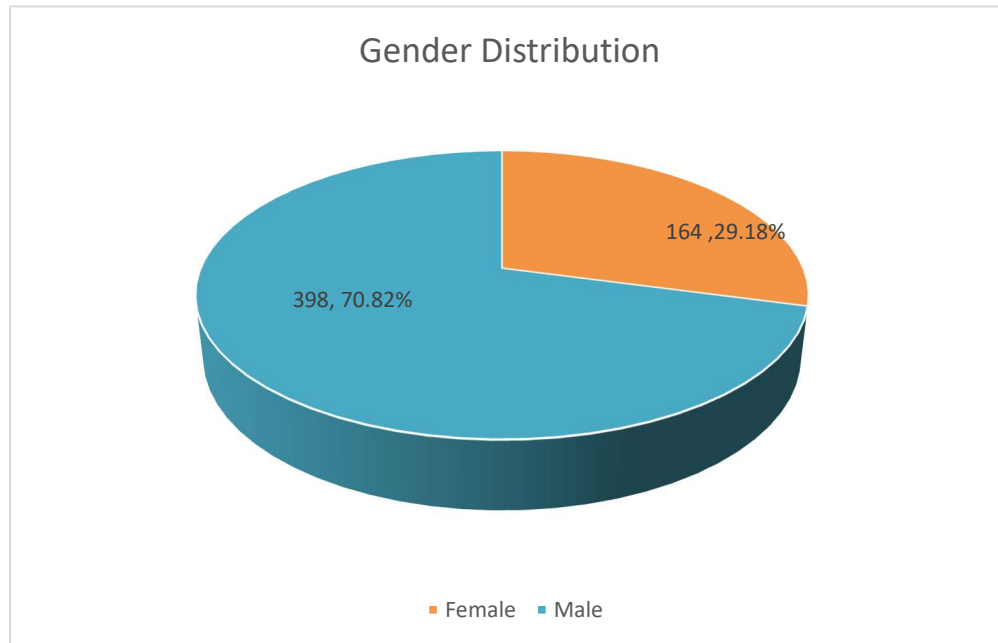
Table 1.4: Sampling distribution of deaths reported at various Police and brought before the court for the year ended December 31, 2025

Police Station	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Elletson Road Police Station	50	9.0
Half Way Tree Police Station	46	8.3
Denham Town Police Station	42	7.6
Hunts Bay Police Station	42	7.6
Major Investigations Division	37	6.7
Vineyard Town Police Station	29	5.2
Sub-Total	246	44.4

Sample of observations (N) = 555

The data showed a sample of 555 Coroner's Court matters reported at the different police stations in the Corporate Area which were subsequently brought to court. Of that number, Elletson Police Station accounted for the highest proportion of matters filed/investigated in 2025 with 50 or 9.0%, while the Half Way Tree Police Station followed with 46 or 8.3%. The Denham Town Police Station and the Hunts Bay Police Station, with 42 or 7.6% each ranked next. The Major Investigation Division and the Vineyard Town Police Station rounded off the top five Police Station with 37 matters (6.7%) and 29 (5.2%) respectively of the sample.

Chart 1.1: Distribution of gender of the deceased for new cases filed during the year ended December 31, 2025



The above chart summarizes gender distribution, using a sample of 562 deceased persons involved in the cases filed during the year ended December 31, 2025. It is shown that 398 or 70.82% of the deceased were male, while the remaining 164 or 29.18% were female. In the similar period of 2024, males also accounted for a smaller proportion, 371 or 70.53% of the total sample. For the reporting period the absolute number of cases of males decrease by was 12.73% when compared to 2025.

Table 1.5: Descriptive Statistics on the age of the deceased in cases filed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Descriptive statistics (age in years)	
Number of observations	555
Mean	55.73
Median	57.00
Mode	80
Std. Deviation	22.862
Skewness	.023
Std. Error of Skewness	.104
Range	93
Minimum	11
Maximum	104

A sample of 555 ages of the deceased involved in the cases filed revealed that the average age is roughly 56 years, while the median is approximately 57 years, and the modal age value is 80 years. The standard deviation stands at a moderate value of 23 years, indicating a modest variation of the scores around the mean. The skewness is low positive value, suggesting that the distribution of ages is scattered around the mean. The smallest age value in the data set is 11 years, while the largest age value was 104 years.

Table 1.6a: Sampling distribution of the causes of death reported for cases filed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Cause of death	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Multiple gunshot wounds	27	4.78
Shock and haemorrhage, haemothorax and haemoperitoneum, polytrauma, cranio cerebral, Stab wound to chest and abdomen associated with incised wounds to upper limb	13	2.30
Injuries to vital organs, Multiple gunshot wounds	12	2.12
Multiple blunt force trauma	11	1.95
Myocardial infarction, Hypertensive heart disease, hypertension, Atrial fibrillation chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	10	1.77
Sub-Total	73	12.92

Sample size (N) = 565

The above table is computed using a sample of 565 observations of the causes of death associated with cases. It is shown that among the most common causes of death reported are death caused by multiple gunshot wounds with 27 or 4.78% of the sample and Shock and haemorrhage, haemothorax and haemoperitoneum, Polytrauma, cranio cerebral, Stab wound to chest and abdomen associated with incised wounds to upper limb with 13 or 2.30%. Multiple impact trauma with 12 or 2.12% and blunt impact trauma with 11 or 1.95% followed. Myocardial infarction, Hypertensive heart disease, hypertension, Atrial fibrillation chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with 10 or 1.77% rounded off the top five causes of death.

Table 1.6b: Sampling distribution of the causes of death as officially determined by the coroner for matters disposed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Cause of death as determined by Coroner	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Death due to natural causes	201	36.55
Death due to gunshot wounds	122	22.18
Death due to motor vehicle accident	22	4.00
Death due to stab wounds	7	1.27
Haemorrhage and shock due to multiple gunshot wounds to the right posterior (back of the) trunk (chest and abdomen)	6	1.09
Sub-Total	358	65.09

Number of observations (N) = 550

The above table is computed using a sample of 550 observations of the causes of death as officially determined by the Coroner. It is shown that among the most common causes of death reported are deaths due to natural causes with 201 or 36.55% of the sample and deaths due to gunshot wounds with 122 or 22.18% of the sample. It is important to note that there may often be variances between the causes of death as reported and the causes of death as determined by the coroner.

Table 1.7: Sampling distribution of the Summary of outcomes of Form D applications made during the year ended December 31, 2025.

Outcomes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Section 14	365	65.77
Other	184	33.15
Trial and Judge	4	.72
Awaiting Further Information	1	.18
Coroner's Decision on Form D Application	1	.18
Total	555	100

During the processing of a case at the Coroner's Court, a Form D application is made which the judge reviews an order to determine the direction of the case thereafter. The above table provides a summary of the outcomes of these applications over the period under examination. It is seen that the dominant outcome from Form D applications were decisions in accordance with Section 14, which means that the matter was accepted for an Inquest to be carried out by the coroner. Section 14 accounts for 365 or 65.77% of the outcomes, while the generic category 'other outcomes' accounted for 184 or 33.15%. These results are typical of the trends observed in the Coroner's Courts Island wide. The data was computed using a sample of 555 cases.

Table 1.8: Sampling distribution of reasons for adjournment/continuance during the year ended December 31, 2025

Reasons for adjournment/continuance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Part-heard	11	47.83
File incomplete/awaiting medical certificate	5	21.74
Transfer to other court/return to sender	5	21.74
Mention/Awaiting Jury Panel	1	4.35
Other	1	4.35
Total	23	100.0

In the report period, 23 matters were adjourned/continued. Continuances (delays attributable to case progression stages) by way of adjournment due to part-heard, incomplete files/awaiting medical certificate, transfer to other court/return to sender and mention/awaiting jury panel. Part-heard accounted for the highest portion of the sample with 47.83% of the sample. File incomplete/awaiting medical certificate and transfer to other court/return to sender matters followed with 5 or 21.74% each.

Table 1.9: Sampling distribution of the type of hearings during the year ended December 31, 2025

Type of hearing	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chambers	562	98.60
Trial Judge Only	7	1.23
Trial Judge and Jury	1	0.18
Total	570	100

A sample of 570 hearings at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court in 2025 reveals that 562 or 98.60% were chamber hearings, while 7 or 1.23% were trial judges only. The remaining 1 or 0.18% was trial judge and jury.

Table 1.10: Sampling distribution of the methods of Disposition of matters completed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Methods of disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Section 14	383	66.26
Section 10	179	30.97
Inquest	12	2.08
Open Court Verdict	4	0.69
Total	578	100

The methods of disposition for a sample of 578 matters which were disposed during the 2025 calendar year, revealed that 383 or 66.26% of matters were disposed by way of an Inquest, under the provisions of Section 14 of the Coroner's Court Act. Matters disposed by way of inquest under the provision of Section 10 of the Coroner's Court Act followed this with 179 or 30.97% of the sample. Matters disposed by open court verdict or by inquest accounted for 16 or 2.77%.

Table 1.11: Descriptive Statistics on the time to disposition for matters completed during the year ended December 31, 2025**Descriptive Statistics (in days)**

Number of observations	577
Mean	22.91
Median	3.00
Mode	1
Std. Deviation	91.240
Skewness	6.820
Std. Error of Skewness	.102
Range	983
Minimum	1
Maximum	984

The above data shows that the average time taken to dispose of matters during the year is approximately 23 days. This was derived from a sample of 577 matters resolved during the year. The data also revealed that the median time taken to dispose of the matters was 3 days and the modal time was also 1 day. The standard deviation of 91.24 days, however, suggests that there is a wide variation in the individual scores, and the high positive skewness indicates that a larger proportion of the scores fell below the overall mean. The minimum time taken was 1 day, with the maximum time taken being 984 days. The average time taken between the date the file was received, and the date of first hearing was 4.01 days compared to the 6.98 days recorded in 2024.

Table 1.12: Case clearance rate summary for the year ended December 31, 2025

Approximate Number of new cases filed	Approximate Number of cases disposed or inactive	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
538	560	104.09

Courts that consistently maintain an average case clearance rate of between 90%-110% long enough will at a minimum have its disposals keeping up with the number of new cases filed but may also likely make considerable strides in reducing its case backlog rate to an acceptable level of under 10% of its active cases. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court with a case clearance rate of 104.09% for the year ended December 31, 2025, down from the 116.41% recorded in the similar period of 2024, falls within the above mentioned range which shows promising signs of a well-managed caseload. The court currently has a net case backlog rate of approximately 0.11%. There were 538 new cases filed in the year, and 560 cases were disposed (regardless of date of origin), leading to the stated clearance rate. It suggests that for every 100 new cases filed, roughly 104 cases were resolved during the year.

Chapter 2.0: The Special Coroner's Court

This section provides a detailed summary of case activity and events as well as case outcomes and related factors at the Special Coroner's Court during the year ended December 31, 2025.

Table 2.1a: Case activity summary for the year ended December 31, 2025, in the Special Coroner's Court

Approximate number of new cases filed	Approximate number of active cases	Approximate number of disposed or inactive cases (from those filed in quarter)	Estimated Case disposal rate (%)
70	2	38	54.29

Note 1: There were 30 new pending cases at the end of the period

The above table provides a summary of the cases filed at the Special Coroner's Court. It is shown that 70 new cases were filed in 2025, of which 38 cases were disposed in the quarter leading to an estimated disposal rate of 54.29%.

Table 2.2: Sampling distribution of the parish of origin of matters filed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Parish Origin	Frequency	Percentage (%)
St. Catherine	21	26.25
Kingston	15	18.75
St. James	12	15
Clarendon	7	8.75
St. Elizabeth	5	6.25
Westmoreland	5	6.25
St. Andrew	4	5
St. Ann	4	5
Manchester	3	3.75
Hanover	2	2.5
Trelawny	1	1.25
Total	80	100

As a parish court, the Special Coroner's Court has a single location in Kingston but is deployed island wide to hear cases originating in the various parishes. The above table

provides a summary of the 'parish of origin' of cases filed in the Special Coroner's Court. It is seen that St. Catherine with 26.25% of the cases filed, Kingston with approximately 18.75% and St. James with 15.00% accounted for 60% share of new cases filed in the Special Coroner's Court during the year ended December 31, 2025.

Table 2.3: Sampling distribution of the source of matters filed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
INDECOM	78	97.50
Other	2	2.50
Total	80	100

A sample of 80 matters filed at the Special Coroner's Court during the year ended December 31, 2025, shows that 78 or 97.50% were filed by INDECOM. The remaining 2.50% were accounted for by the generic category 'other'.

Table 2.4: Sampling distribution on the type of death by Institution during the year ended December 31, 2025

Type of death	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF)	69	86.25
Custodial Institution	10	12.50
Jamaica Defence Force (JDF)	1	1.25
Total	80	100

It is seen in the above table that 86.25% of all the matters filed during the year ended 2025 were matters related to JCF deaths, while 12.50% were related to custodial deaths. The remaining 1.25% were death related to JDF. The majority of the causes of death as reported in the cases filed during the year ended 2025 were stated as "death due to natural causes", accounting for 36.55% of the sample. The sex distribution of the deceased involved in the 80 cases filed in the year 2025, were 97.50% males.

Table 2.5: Descriptive Statistics on the age of the deceased in cases filed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Descriptive Statistics (age in years)

Number of observations	77
Mean	35.62
Median	32.00
Mode	23
Std. Deviation	14.519
Skewness	1.031
Std. Error of Skewness	.274
Range	57
Minimum	18
Maximum	75

The above descriptive summary on the age of the deceased 77 observations, the average age was roughly 36 years, while the most frequently occurring age was 23 years old. The highest age recorded was 75 years, while the lowest is 18 years old. The moderate standard deviation of roughly 15 years suggests that there was a modest variation of the individual ages from the overall mean, while the positive skewness shown is an indication that proportionately more of the scores fell below the overall mean.

Table 2.6: Sampling distribution of the methods of disposition for matters resolved during the year ended December 31, 2025

Methods of disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Section 14	83	69.75
Section 16(1)	36	30.25
Total	119	100

The methods of disposition for a sample of 119 matters, which were disposed of during the year ended December 31, 2025, revealed that 83 or 69.75% of matters were disposed by way of an inquest under the provisions of Section 14 of the Coroner's Court Act. The remainder were matters

disposed by way of Inquest under the provision of Section 16(1) of the Coroner's Court Act with 30.25% of the sample.

Table 2.7: Descriptive Statistics on the time to disposition for matters completed during the year ended December 31, 2025

Descriptive Statistics (Days)	
Number of observations	118
Mean	1043.65
Median	818.50
Mode	3065
Std. Deviation	1042.540
Skewness	.934
Std. Error of Skewness	.223
Range	4616
Minimum	20
Maximum	4636

The above table uses a sample of 118 cases disposed of in 2025 reveals an estimated average of roughly 35 months, with a maximum of approximately 13 years and a minimum of 20 days. The positive skewness is an indication that proportionately more of the scores in the distribution were below the series mean, while the standard deviation shows a large amount variation in the data points around the overall mean.

Table 2.8: Descriptive statistics on the age of active cases as at December 31, 2025

Descriptive Statistics (in days)	
Number of observations	8
Mean	294.88
Median	276.50
Mode	267 ^a
Std. Deviation	49.907
Skewness	1.282
Std. Error of Skewness	.752
Range	133
Minimum	247
Maximum	380

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The above data is based on sample of 8 active Special Coroner's matters as at December 31, 2025. The average age of these matters was roughly 295 days or approximately 10 months, while one of the most frequently occurring age in the distribution was 267 days. The standard deviation of roughly 50 days suggests that there is a small dispersion in the individual scores from the average, while the positive skewness seen is an indication that there were more scores in the data set which fell below the overall average age of the active cases. The oldest active matter was 380 days old, while the youngest case is 247 days.

Table 2.9: Case clearance rate summary for the year ended December 31, 2025

Approximate number of new cases filed	Approximate number of cases disposed	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
70	122	174.29

Courts that consistently maintain an average case clearance rate of between 90%-110% for long enough will at a minimum, have its disposals keeping up with the number of new cases filed, but may also likely make considerable strides in reducing its case backlog rate to an acceptable level of under 5% of active cases. The Special Coroner's Court with a case clearance rate of 174.29% in the 2025 calendar year exceeds the above-mentioned range, which shows promising signs of a well-managed caseload. There were 70 new cases filed and 122 cases were disposed (regardless of date of origin), leading to the stated clearance rate.

Aggregate Case Activity Summary

Table 2.10: Aggregate case flow performance estimates for the year ended December 31, 2025

Metric	Corporate Area Coroner's Court	Special Coroner's Court	Total/Weighted Average
Approximate number of new cases	538	70	608
Approximate number of disposed cases	524	38	562
Approximate gross number of disposed cases (regardless of date of origin)	560	122	682
Estimated Case Disposal Rate (%)	97.40	54.29	92.43
Estimated Case Clearance Rate (%)	104.09	174.29	112.17
Average Time to Disposition	0.78	34.79	6.74

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured Corporate Area Coroner's Court and Special Coroner's Court during the year ended December 31, 2025. It is shown that a total of 608 new cases were filed in these courts, while 562 of these cases were disposed of, leading to an estimated weighted case disposal rate of 92.43%. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court had an estimated case disposal rate of 97.40%, an impressive result. The table also shows that a gross number of 682 cases were disposed of in the year (regardless of date of origin), leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 112.17%. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court recorded a case clearance rate of 104.09%, and the Special Coroner's Court had an estimated case clearance rate of 174.29%, both notable results which exceed the international standard.

Parish Courts – Coroner’s Court Activity

An Overview of Coroner’s Court Case Activity in the Parish Courts

This section provides a statistical overview of Coroner’s Court case activity across the Parish Courts of Jamaica for the reporting period. The analysis presents aggregate counts of cases filed and cases disposed of, offering a concise indication of case throughput within this specialised jurisdiction.

It is important to note that Coroner’s Court proceedings are, by their nature, largely investigative and are frequently conducted in chambers. As such, a significant proportion of coroner-related activities, particularly preliminary inquiries, administrative reviews, and case management processes, are not fully captured within the standard courtroom-based statistical framework presented in this report.

Accordingly, the figures outlined herein should be interpreted as a structured but partial representation of Coroner’s Court output, reflecting only those matters formally recorded within the case management system as filed or disposed of during the period under review. The inclusion and progressive expansion of more comprehensive indicators to capture the full scope of coronial activity remain a work in progress and form part of the Judiciary’s ongoing efforts to strengthen the measurement and reporting of specialised court functions.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the data presented provide a useful baseline for understanding trends in recorded case activity and support the broader objective of enhancing transparency and accountability in the administration of justice.

Table 2.11a Aggregate case clearance rate estimates for the year ended December 31, 2025

Coroner's Court	Approximate number of cases filed	Approximate number of cases disposed	Estimated case clearance rate (%)
Hanover	0	1	-
St. Catherine	15	8	53.33
Corporate Area	538	560	104.09
Manchester	5	1	20.00
Clarendon	126	136	107.94
St. Mary	-	-	-
St. Thomas	-	-	-
Trelawny	-	-	-
Westmoreland	-	-	-
Portland	10	0	-
St. Ann	3	0	-
Total/Weighted average	697	706	101.29

For the year ending December 31, 2025, the aggregate case clearance rate across Jamaica's Coroner's Courts stood at 101.29%, meaning slightly more cases were disposed of than filed overall. Corporate Area and Clarendon courts performed strongly, with clearance rates above 100%, indicating they disposed of more cases than were filed during the year. St. Catherine and Manchester showed lower clearance rates 53.33% and 20.00% respectively, suggesting backlogs remain. Portland and St. Ann recorded no disposals despite having cases filed, resulting in a 0% clearance rate. Several courts Hanover, St. Mary, St. Thomas, Trelawny had either no filings or no disposals, leading to undefined or zero clearance rates. This mixed performance highlights areas of efficiency in some jurisdictions, while others may require administrative or resource interventions to improve case throughout.

Table 2.11b Case Clearance Rates across Coroner’s Courts from 2019-2025

Coroner’s Court	2019			2020			2021			2022			2023			2024			2025		
	Number of new cases filed in 2019	Number of cases disposed* in 2019 / Inactive	Average / Weighted Average Case Clearance Rate 2019	Number of new cases filed in 2020	Number of cases disposed* in 2020 / Inactive	Average / Weighted Average Case Clearance Rate 2020	Number of new cases filed in 2021	Number of cases disposed* in 2021/ Inactive	Average / Weighted Average Case Clearance Rate 2021	Number of new cases filed in 2022	Number of cases disposed* in 2022 / Inactive	Average / Weighted Average Case Clearance Rate 2022	Number of new cases filed in 2023	Number of cases disposed* in 2023 / Inactive	Average / Weighted Average Case Clearance Rate 2023	Number of new cases filed in 2024	Number of cases disposed* in 2024 / Inactive	Average / Weighted Average Case Clearance Rate 2024	Number of new cases filed in 2025	Number of cases disposed* in 2025 / Inactive	Average / Weighted Average Case Clearance Rate 2025
St. Thomas	2	0	-	-	-	-	1	3	300.00	0	2	-	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portland	26	2	7.69	39	5	12.82	21	5	23.81	12	3	25.00	23	4	17.39	23	13	56.52	10	0	-
St Mary	0	1	-	14	26	185.71	4	27	675.00	4	9	225.00	7	4	57.14	13	12	92.31	-	-	-
St. Ann	0	2	-	0	47	-	0	17	-	0	1	-	5	1	20.00	1	8	800.00	3	0	-
Trelawny	3	3	100.00	5	4	80.00	4	2	50.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	-	-	-	-
St. James	5	5	100.00	6	3	50.00	11	8	72.73	5	3	60.00	3	1	33.33	-	-	-	0	1	-
Hanover	1	1	100.00	1	2	200.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	-	0	1	-
Westmoreland	3	6	200.00	13	3	23.08	3	2	66.67	1	6	600.00	0	8	-	0	2	-	-	-	-
St. Elizabeth	5	0	-	1	3	300.00	0	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manchester	6	1	16.67	10	1	10.00	9	23	255.56	26	10	38.46	10	4	40.00	14	7	50.00	5	1	20.00
Clarendon*	21	200	952.38	40	79	197.50	35	43	122.86	29	62	213.79	22	28	127.27	24	27	112.50	138	146	105.80
St. Catherine	5	5	100.00	13	13	100.00	19	9	47.37	24	16	66.67	10	2	20.00	27	27	100.00	8	0	-
Total / Average Case Clearance Rate	77	226	293.51	142	186	130.99	107	142	132.71	101	112	110.89	80	53	66.25	103	97	94.17	164	149	90.85

*(irrespective of the date of case origin)

Note:

* In 2019 there was a clean-up exercise of Coroner’s matters in Clarendon (number of cases disposed in 2019)

Table 2.11c Aggregate Case Clearance Rate across Coroner's Courts from 2019-2025

2019 - 2025			
Total Number of new cases filed in 2019 - 2025	Total Number of cases disposed* in 2019 - 2025 / Inactive	Coroner's Court	Average Case Clearance Rate
3	6	St. Thomas	200.00
154	32	Portland	20.78
42	79	St Mary	188.10
9	76	St. Ann	844.44
12	10	Trelawny	83.33
30	21	St. James	70.00
3	4	Hanover	133.33
20	27	Westmoreland	135.00
6	6	St. Elizabeth	100.00
80	47	Manchester	58.75
309	585	Clarendon*	189.32
106	72	St. Catherine	67.92
774	965	-	124.68

The Coroner's Court data for the period 2019–2025 presents a landscape of highly uneven activity across Jamaica's parishes, with significant disparities in both the volume of new filings and the number of cases disposed. The dataset shows that some parishes consistently recorded minimal or no movement, while others particularly Clarendon, Manchester, Portland, and St. Catherine handled comparatively heavier caseloads and demonstrated more active disposal patterns. This imbalance is evident from the outset: for example, St. Thomas begins the period with 2 new cases filed in 2019 and 0 disposed, and this pattern of inactivity continues through most subsequent years.

Clarendon emerges as the most active parish by a wide margin, driven in part by the 2019 clean-up exercise, which resulted in 200 cases disposed against 21 new filings. This extraordinary disposal volume produced a clearance rate of 952%, and Clarendon continued to show strong throughput in the years that followed. In 2020, the parish recorded 40 new cases and 79 disposals, followed by 35 new cases and 43 disposals in 2021, which generated a clearance rate of 197.50% and 122.86% respectively. The trend continued into 2022 and 2023, with disposal numbers consistently exceeding new cases filed. These figures indicate a sustained effort to reduce backlogs and maintain active case progression.

Manchester also demonstrated notable activity, with a spike in 2021 when 9 new cases were filed and 23 were disposed, resulting in a clearance rate of 255.56%. The parish maintained moderate but steady performance in subsequent years, including 26 new cases filed and 10 disposals in 2022, and 10 new cases filed and 4 disposals in 2023. This pattern suggests a parish that, while not as high-volume as Clarendon, consistently engages in meaningful case disposal.

Portland's data reflects a mix of moderate filings and occasional high disposal efficiency. In 2019, the parish recorded 26 new cases and 2 disposals, but by 2020 and 2021, disposal activity increased, with 5 disposals in 2020 and 5 in 2021. The clearance rate in 2021 reached 23.81%, and by 2024, Portland disposed of 13 cases, the highest disposal figure for that parish within the period. These fluctuations suggest intermittent activity.

St. Catherine shows a similar pattern of steady engagement. In 2019, the parish recorded 5 new cases and 5 disposals, achieving a 100% clearance rate. Activity increased in 2020 and 2021, with 13 new cases filed and 13 disposed cases in 2020, and 19 new cases filed and 9 disposals

in 2021. The parish continued to dispose cases consistently through 2022 and 2023, including 24 filings and 16 disposals in 2022, and 10 filings and 2 disposals in 2023.

In contrast, several parishes exhibited periods of inactivity or extremely low activity. St. Thomas, St. Ann, Hanover, St. Elizabeth, and Trelawny all recorded multiple years with zero disposals, zero cases filed, or both. For example, St. Ann shows zero new cases filed and 2 disposals in 2019, followed by 0 new cases filed and 47 disposals in 2020, but then returns to years of minimal or no activity. St. Elizabeth shows 5 new cases filed and 0 disposals in 2019, and then several years with no new cases and no disposed cases, resulting in repeated undefined clearance rates. These patterns suggest either very low incident levels and / or administrative or operational gaps.

St. Mary and Westmoreland present patterns of extreme percentage movements. St. Mary recorded 14 new cases filed and 26 disposals in 2020 leading to a case clearance rate of 185.71%, followed by 4 new cases filed and 27 disposals in 2021 yielding to a case clearance rate of 675%, the highest rate throughout the period of 2019-2025. Westmoreland shows 3 new cases filed and 6 disposals in 2019, and a spike in 2022 with 1 new case filed and 6 disposals, producing a clearance rate of 600%. These extreme percentages reflect the disposal of older matters rather than sudden increases in new cases filed.

St. James stands out as one of the more stable parishes, with consistent new cases filed and disposals across the period. The parish recorded 5 new cases filed and 5 disposals in 2019, there were 6 new cases filed and 3 disposals in 2020, and 11 new cases filed and 8 disposals in 2021, maintaining clearance rates between 33% and 72%. This steadiness suggests predictable caseloads and regular case movement.

Across the seven-year period, the national average clearance rate is reported as 124.68%, indicating that, overall, the courts disposed of more matters than they received. This reflects ongoing efforts to reduce backlogs, but the wide disparities between parishes highlight persistent structural imbalances. Some courts are active and clearing significant numbers of cases, while others have less coroner activity. The presence of numerous “undefined” clearance rates, caused by years with no filings or no disposals presents the uneven distribution of coroner activity across the island's parish courts.

Table 2.12: Sampling distribution of the Summary of outcomes of Form D applications made during the year ended December 31, 2025, at the Portland Coroner's Court

Outcomes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Other	6	85.71
Trial and Judge	1	14.29
Total	7	100

Table 2.13: Sampling distribution of the Summary of outcomes of Form D applications made during the year ended December 31, 2025, at the Westmoreland Coroner's Court

Outcomes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Other	14	100.00
Total	14	100

Form D in the Coroner's Court is an official certificate issued by a coroner that authorizes the registration of a death, particularly in cases involving sudden, violent, or unnatural circumstances. During the processing of a case at the Coroner's Court, a Form D application is made which the judge reviews an order to determine the direction of the case thereafter. The above tables provide a summary of the outcomes of these applications over the period under examination. It is seen that the dominant outcome from Form D applications in the Portland Coroner's court is by way of the generic category 'other' with 6 or 85.71% while the remaining

1 was accounted for by trial and judge. In the Westmoreland Coroner's Court, the generic category other accounted for all 14 of the outcomes of form D application in 2025.

Concluding Note

The Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court both continue to contribute to reducing the overall net case backlog rate and enhancing judicial efficiency. In 2025, the combined weighted average time to disposition was 6.74 months. Across both courts the estimated case disposal rate was 92.43%, and the estimated case clearance rate was 112.17% in the reporting period.

The Corporate Area Coroner's Court has consistently sustained high rates of case disposal and clearance, and in this regard has achieved and maintained the judiciary's goal of reducing the backlog to under 5%. These sustained high case disposal and clearance rates are pivotal in positioning the Jamaican judiciary as one of the most efficient globally. The data shows that, for the reporting period, the Special Coroner's Court filed 70 new cases and irrespective of the date of origin, 122 cases were either disposed or inactive. The Special Coroner's Court recorded a case clearance rate of 174.29%, with an average time to disposition of 34.79 months in 2025. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court filed 538 new cases in the reporting period and disposed of 560 matters irrespective of the date of origin, producing a case clearance rate of 104.09%. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court, in particular, continues to be an exceptional performing court and one of the fastest in disposing of new cases, having disposed of 524 of the 538 new cases filed (97.40%) in 2025 and recorded an average time to disposition of less than one month (0.78 months).

The inclusion of aggregate Coroner's Court activity across the Parish Courts further reflects the Judiciary's ongoing efforts to expand the scope and completeness of statistical reporting within specialised jurisdictions.

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.

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.

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 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.

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%.

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.ⁱ

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

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%.

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.

Inactive Case: a death investigation or file that is temporarily or permanently not undergoing active court proceedings, hearings, or an ongoing inquest.

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%.

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%.

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 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 remains 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.

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 utilize 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.

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 45th 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.

Exponential Smoothing: Exponential smoothing of time series data assigns exponentially decreasing weights for newest to oldest observations. In other words, the older data, the less priority (“weight”) the data is given; newer data is seen as more relevant and is assigned more weight.

Smoothing parameters (smoothing constants) – usually denoted by α – determine the weights of the observations.

Exponential smoothing is usually used to make short term forecasts, as longer term forecasts using this technique can be quite unreliable.

- **Simple (single) exponential smoothing** uses a weighted moving average with exponentially decreasing weights.
- **Holt's trend-corrected double exponential smoothing** is usually more reliable for handling data that shows trends, compared to the single procedure.
- **Triple exponential smoothing** (also called the Multiplicative Holt-Winters) is usually more reliable for parabolic trends or data that shows trends and seasonality.

ⁱ Source:

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

ⁱⁱ Source:

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