

THE CORPORATE AREA CORONER'S AND THE SPECIAL CORONER'S COURT

(JANUARY 1, 2026 – MARCH 31, 2026)

OVERALL QUANTITATIVE HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY 1, 2026 – MARCH 31, 2026

Court	Case Disposal Rate (%)	Case Clearance Rate (%)	Average time to Disposition (months)
Corporate Area Coroners Court	99.30	102.80	0.34
Corporate Area Special Coroners Court	71.79	161.54	42.09
Weighted Average	93.41	115.39	13.56

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

The first quarter report confirms the high clearance rates of both courts and confirm that the backlog – net and gross – are under 3%. For the quarter the Corporate Area Coroner's Court resolved 99.30% of cases that came in. That is to say the case disposal rate for the quarter was 99.30%. There was clearance rate of 102.80%. That is to say, for the quarter the court kept up with high productivity of clearing more cases than cases entering whether or not the cases came in during the quarter or before. Overall, this means that the court is disposing of older and new cases way above the expected level of performance. The average time to disposition is under thirty (30) days. That is to say, once the case enters the Corporate Area Coroner's Court then the case is likely to be disposed of within thirty (30) days. The net backlog of cases is 0.03%, and the gross case backlog is 0.13% using a time standard of twenty four (24) months.

In respect of the Corporate Area Coroner's Court, the report refers to the sample of 145 cases for the period in question. In that period the mean time between the date of death and the file opening in the court was approximately 852 days, equivalent to about 2.37 years, or 2 years and 4 months. The median was approximately 364 days, or about 12 months. This means that half of the cases were opened within approximately one year of the death being reported, while the other half took longer. The mode was 32 days, meaning that 32 days was the most frequently observed interval in the dataset. The concern here is that the delay in getting the matter to court needs investigation to determine whether that time can be reduced significantly. Why is it taking 2.33 years on average for a death to be reported to the court? This needs to be examined to see what improvements can be made to improve coronial services.

The same can be said for the Special Coroner's Court. It had a case disposal rate of 71.79% (disposing of 28 of the 39 new cases that came in during the quarter) and a case clearance rate of 161.54%. The Special Coroner's Court has a net backlog of 0.09% and a gross backlog of 2.36% using a twenty (24) month time standard.

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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026. 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 99.30%, indicating that approximately 99 cases were resolved out of every 100 filed during the first quarter of 2026. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court continues to maintain a case clearance rate above international standards. This reporting period saw 147 disposed cases (regardless of date of origin) and 143 new cases filed, this produced a case clearance rate of 102.80%. The average time to disposition was 0.34 months, indicative of efficient case processing within the Corporate Area's Coroner's Court.

For the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 the Special Coroner's Court filed 39 new cases; of the new cases filed during the quarter there were 28 disposed cases, leading to a disposal rate of 71.79%. The Special Coroner's Court disposed 63 cases regardless of the date of origin, indicative of efforts to resolve older cases within the quarter leading to a clearance rate of 161.54% and an average time to disposition of 42.09 months. The court's jurisdiction across parishes, saw cases in the reporting period primarily originating from St. Catherine (34.09%), Kingston (25%), and Westmoreland (11.36%).

Table i: Key performance Summary- Quarter 1 2026 (Jan.-Mar.)

Court	Disposal Rate (%)	Case Clearance Rate (%)	Average time to disposition (months)
Corporate Area Coroner's Court	99.30	102.80	0.34
Special Coroner's Court	71.79	161.54	42.09
Weighted Average	93.41	115.39	13.56

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 (88.36%), highlighting their role in initiating legal proceedings. The majority of cases filed in the Corporate Area Coroner's for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 were males (63.27%), and the prevalent cause of death as reported was death due to natural causes. As it concerns Form D applications, most (83.56%) 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' (16.44%), the Corporate Area Coroner's Court overall performance for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026, 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 first quarter January through March 2026 that 61.36% of the matters filed in the Special Coroner's Court were deaths related to JCF incidents, 34.09% were death related to custodial incidents. Of the new cases filed in the quarter 28 cases were disposed of. The Special Coroner's Court recorded a

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.

case clearance rate of 161.54% exceeding international standards.

Across both courts for the quarter ended March 31, 2026, a total of 182 new cases were filed, with 210 disposed of during the quarter and an overall average time to disposition of 13.56 months. The weighted average case disposal rate was 93.41%, and the weighted average case clearance rate was 115.39% for the reporting period.

Table ii: Forecasted case flow performance estimates for the second quarter ended June 30, 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	138	136	147	98.91	106.63
Corporate Area Special Coroner's Court	23	14	41	60.62	180.28
Total/Weighted Average	140	150	170	93.44	117.15

The above table forecasts core activity for the Corporate Area Coroner's and Special Coroner's Courts. 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 (Apr. –Jun. 2026.) is 106.63%, which would be 3.83 percentage points higher than that of the 102.80% recorded in the first quarter (Jan-Mar. 2026). The overall forecasted case clearance rates for the Corporate Area and Special Coroner's Courts in the period (Apr.-Jun. 2026.) 180.28%, which would be 18.74 percentage points higher than that of the 161.54% recorded in the first quarter (Jan.-Mar. 2026).

Introduction

The Coroners' Courts 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 first quarter of 2026. 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 iii: Net and gross Coroner's case backlog as at March 31, 2026 for cases over 24 months

Coroner's Court	Net Backlog (%)	Gross Backlog (%)
Corporate Area Coroner's	0.03	0.13
Special Coroner's	0.09	2.36
Weighted Average	0.04	0.61
Standard Deviation	0.05	1.57

The Coroner's Courts show exceptionally strong performance, with backlog levels close to zero. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court reports "0.03%" net and "0.13%" gross, while the Special Coroner's Court records "0.09%" net and a slightly higher "2.36%" 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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026, 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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Descriptive Statistics (in days)	
Number of Observations	145
Mean	851.80
Median	364.00
Mode	32 ^a
Std. Deviation	1627.618
Skewness	5.229
Std. Error of Skewness	.201
Range	13877
Minimum	29
Maximum	13906

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

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 Coroners Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2026. It is seen that from a sample of 145 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 852 days (or 2.37 years). The modal time taken was 32 days and the median was approximately 364 days or approximately 12 months. The standard deviation stands at a high of 1628 days or roughly 4.5 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 38 years, while the lowest is 29 days.

Table 1.2: Case Activity Summary for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

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 (%)
143	0	142	99.30

The above table provides a summary of the cases filed at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2026. It is shown that 143 new cases were filed during the quarter, 24 cases or 20.17% more than the 119 cases filed in the similar period of 2025. There were 142 disposed cases at the end of the first quarter of 2026. These results yield to a case disposal rate of 99.30%. This disposal rate satisfies the international standard on this measure and suggests that for every 100 cases filed over the period, roughly 99 cases were resolved. The case clearance rate will be examined later in this report.

Table 1.3: Sampling distribution of Source of cases filed for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026.

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Police	129	88.36
Family	17	11.64
Total	146	100

A sample of 146 cases filed at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court shows that 129 cases or 88.36% of cases filed were filed by the police, while 17 or 11.64% were filed by the family of deceased.

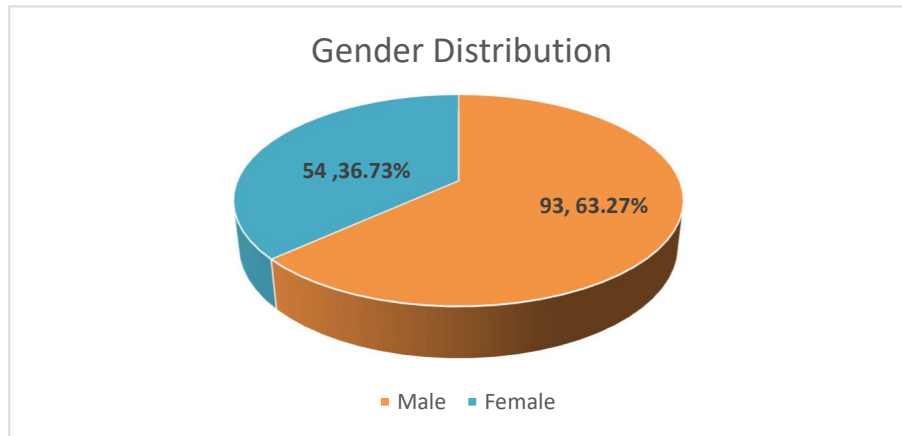
Table 1.4: Sampling distribution of deaths reported at various Police and brought before the court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Police Station	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Olympic Gardens Police Station	25	17.01
Duhaney Park Police Station	18	12.24
Hunts Bay Police Station	17	11.56
Half Way Tree police Station	8	5.44
Major Investigations Div.	8	5.44
Sub-Total	76	51.69

Sample of observations (N) = 134

The data showed a sample of 134 Coroner's Court cases reported at the different police stations in the Corporate Area which were subsequently brought to the court. Of that number, Olympic Gardens Police Station accounted for the highest proportion of cases filed/investigated in the first quarter of 2026 with 25 or 17.01%, while the Duhaney Park Police Station followed 18 or 12.24%. The Hunts Bay Police Station with 17 or 11.56% ranked next while The Half Way Tree and Major Investigation Division rounded off the top five Police Station with 8 cases (5.44 %) each of the sample.

Chart 1.1: Distribution of gender of the deceased for new cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026



The above chart summarizes gender distribution, using a sample of 147 deceased persons involved in the cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026. It is shown that 93 or 63.27% of the deceased were male, while the remaining 54 or 36.73% were female. In the similar period of 2025, males also accounted for a larger proportion, (84 or 68.85%) of the total sample. For the reporting period the absolute number of cases of males increased by was 10.71% when compared to 2025.

Table 1.5: Descriptive Statistics on the age of the deceased in cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Descriptive statistics (age in years)	
Number of Observations	144
Mean	64.55
Median	71.50
Mode	29 ^a
Std. Deviation	22.878
Skewness	-.620
Std. Error of Skewness	.202
Range	101
Minimum	3
Maximum	104

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

A sample of 144 ages of the deceased involved in the cases filed revealed that the average age is roughly 65 years while the median is approximately 72 years, and one of the most common age value is 29 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 negative value, suggesting that the distribution of ages is clustered around the mean. The smallest age value in the data set is 3 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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Cause of death	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Multiple gunshot wounds to chest and abdomen	5	3.40
Acute respiratory failure, Pneumonia, Cardiomyopathy	4	2.72
Myocardial infarction, Hypertensive heart disease, Hypertension, Complete heart block	4	2.72
Haemorrhage and shock, Multiple blunt trauma	3	2.04
Myocardial infarction, Coronary artery disease, Hypertension, History of left Brachial artery thrombosis	3	2.04
Sub-Total	19	13

Sample size (N) = 147

The above table is computed using a sample of 147 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 Gunshot wound with 5 or 3.40% of the sample while Acute respiratory failure, Pneumonia, Cardiomyopathy and Myocardial infarction, Hypertensive heart disease, Hypertension, Complete heart block with 4 or 2.72%. Myocardial infarction, Coronary artery disease, Hypertension, History of left Brachial artery thrombosis and Haemorrhage and shock, Multiple blunt trauma with 3 or 2.04% 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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Cause of death as determined by Coroner	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Death due to natural causes	108	73.97
Death due to gunshot wounds	14	9.59
Death due to motor vehicle accident	5	3.42
Multiple gunshot wounds to head ,chest and neck	3	2.05
Death due to stab wounds	2	1.37
Sub-Total	132	90.41

Number of observations N= (146)

The above table is computed using a sample of 146 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 108 or 73.97% of the sample and deaths due to gunshot wounds with 14 or 9.59% 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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026.

Outcomes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Section 14	122	83.56
Other	24	16.44
Total	146	100.0

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 122 or 83.56% of the outcomes. While the generic category 'other

outcomes' accounted for 24 or 16.44%. These results are typical to the trends observed in the Coroner's Courts Island wide. The data was computed using a sample of 146 cases.

Table 1.8: Sampling distribution of reasons for adjournment/continuance during the quarter ended March 31, 2026

Reasons for adjournment/continuance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
File incomplete/awaiting medical certificate	3	50.00
Part-heard	3	50.00
Total	6	100

In the report period, 6 matters were adjourned/continued. Continuances (delays attributable to case progression stages) by way of Adjournments due to Part-heard, and incomplete files/awaiting medical certificate. Part-heard and file incomplete/awaiting medical certificate accounted for 3 or 50% each.

Table 1.9: Sampling distribution of the type of hearings during the quarter ended March 31, 2026

Type of hearing	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chambers	147	100.00
Total	147	100

A sample of 147 hearings at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court in the first quarter of 2026 reveals that all 147 matters were chamber hearings.

Table 1.10: Sampling distribution of the methods of Disposition of matters completed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Methods of disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Section 14	121	80.13
Section 10	25	16.56
Inquest	3	1.99
Open Court Verdict	2	1.32
Total	151	100

The methods of disposition for a sample of 151 matters which were disposed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026, revealed that 121 or 80.13% 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 25 or 16.56% of the sample. Matters disposed by way of inquest or by open court verdict accounted for 1.99% and 1.32% respectively.

Table 1.11: Descriptive Statistics on the time to disposition for matters completed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026**Descriptive Statistics (in days)**

Number of observations	151
Mean	10.25
Median	2.00
Mode	1
Std. Deviation	43.003
Skewness	6.000
Std. Error of Skewness	.197
Range	365
Minimum	1
Maximum	366

Table 1.11 shows that the average time taken to dispose of matters during the year is approximately 10 days. This was derived from a sample of 151 matters resolved during the first quarter of 2026. The data also revealed that the median time taken to dispose of the matters was 2 days and the modal time was also 1 day. The standard deviation of 43 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 366 days. The average time taken between the date the file was received and the date of first hearing was 7.31 days compared to the 5.43 days recorded in the similar first quarter of 2025.

Table 1.12: Case clearance rate summary for the quarter ended March 31, 2026

Approximate Number of new cases filed	Approximate Number of cases disposed or inactive	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
143	147	102.80

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 102.80% for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026, up from the 101.68% recorded in the similar first quarter of 2025, falls within the above –mentioned range which shows promising signs of a well-managed caseload. Currently, it has a net case backlog rate of approximately 0.03%. There were 143 new cases filed in the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 and 147 cases were disposed (regardless of date of origin), leading to the stated clearance rate. It suggests

that for every 100 new cases filed, 102 cases were resolved during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026.

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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026.

Table 2.1a: Case activity summary for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026, 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 (%)
39	0	28	71.79

Note 1: There were 11 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 in the first quarter ended March 31, 2026. It is shown that 39 new cases were filed while 28 cases were disposed of those originating in the quarter leading to a disposal rate of 71.79%.

Table 2.2: Sampling distribution of the parish of origin of matters filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Parish Origin	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Clarendon	4	9.09
Kingston	11	25.00
Manchester	1	2.27
St Ann	1	2.27
St Catherine	15	34.09
St Elizabeth	2	4.55
St James	4	9.09
St Mary	1	2.27
Westmoreland	5	11.36
Total	44	100.0

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 34.09% of the cases filed, Kingston with approximately

25% and Westmoreland with 11.36% accounted for 70.45% share of new cases filed in the Special Coroner's Court during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026.

Table 2.3: Sampling distribution of the source of matters filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
INDECOM	43	97.73
Other	1	2.27
Total	44	100

A sample of 44 matters filed at the Special Coroner's Court during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 shows that 43 or 97.73% were filed by INDECOM. The remaining 2.27% were accounted for by the generic category 'other'.

Table 2.4: Sampling distribution on the type of death by Institution during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Type of death	Frequency	Percentage(%)
JCF	27	61.36
Custodial Institution	15	34.09
JDF	2	4.55
Total	44	100

It is seen in the above table that 61.36% of all the matters filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 were matters related to JCF deaths, while 34.09% were related to custodial deaths. The remaining 4.55% were death related to JDF.

Table 2.5: Descriptive Statistics on the age of the deceased in cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026.

Descriptive Statistics (age in years)	
Number of observations	43
Mean	35.51
Median	31.00
Mode	27
Std. Deviation	15.116
Skewness	.772
Std. Error of Skewness	.361
Range	54
Minimum	17
Maximum	71

The above descriptive summary on the age of the deceased is 43 observations, the average age was roughly 36 years, while the most frequently occurring age was 27 years old. The highest age recorded was 71 years, while the lowest is 17 years old. The moderate standard deviation of roughly 15 years suggests that there was a wide 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 first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Methods of disposition	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Section 14	69	97.18
Section 16(1)	2	2.82
Total	71	100

The methods of disposition for a sample of 71 matters, which were disposed of during the first quarter of 2026, revealed that 69 or 97.18% 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 2.82% of the sample.

Table 2.7: Descriptive Statistics on the time to disposition for matters completed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Descriptive Statistics (Days)	
Number of observations	71
Mean	1262.73
Median	1198.00
Mode	37
Std. Deviation	1134.759
Skewness	.489
Std. Error of Skewness	.285
Range	3730
Minimum	30
Maximum	3760

The above table uses a sample of 71 cases disposed of in the first quarter of 2026 reveals an estimated average of roughly 42 months, with a maximum of approximately 10 years and a minimum of 30 days. The low positive skewness indicates that there are some cases with comparatively longer times to disposition, while the standard deviation of approximately 1,135 days indicates considerable variation in the time to disposition of cases around the overall mean.

Despite the wide variation in individual case durations, the median of 1,198 days (about 39.9 months) is fairly close to the mean of 1,262.73 days, reinforcing the interpretation that the distribution is only mildly positively skewed.

Table 2.8: Case clearance rate summary for the quarter ended March 31, 2026

Approximate number of new cases filed	Approximate number of cases disposed	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
39	63	161.54

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 Corporate Area Special Coroner's Court with a case clearance rate of 161.54% in the first quarter of 2026, exceeds the above-mentioned range, which shows promising signs of a well-managed caseload, there were 39 new cases filed and 63 cases were disposed (regardless of date of origin), leading to the stated clearance rate.

Aggregate Case Activity Summary

Table 2.9: Aggregate case flow performance estimates for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026

Metric	Corporate Area Coroner's Court	Corporate Area Special Coroner's Court	Total/Weighted Average
Approximate number of new cases	143	39	182
Approximate number of disposed cases	142	28	170
Approximate gross number of disposed cases (regardless of date of origin)	147	63	210
Estimated Case Disposal Rate (%)	99.30	71.79	93.41
Estimated Case Clearance Rate (%)	102.80	161.54	115.39
Average Time to Disposition	0.34	42.09	13.56

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured specialized Coroner's Court and Special Coroner's Court during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026. It is shown that a total of 182 new cases were filed in these courts, while 170 of these cases were disposed of, leading to an estimated weighted case disposal rate of 93.41%. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court had an estimated case disposal rate of 99.30%, an impressive result. The table also shows that a gross number of 210 cases were disposed of in the quarter (regardless of date of origin), leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 115.39%. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court recorded a case clearance rate of 102.80%, and the Special Coroner's Court had an estimated case clearance rate of 161.54%, both notable results which exceed the international standard.

An Overview of other Coroner's Court Performance

Table 2.10a presents the aggregate case clearance rate estimates for the Coroners' Courts for the quarter ended March 31, 2026, encompassing the Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the other Coroners' Courts across the island. The table provides a comparative overview of the approximate numbers of cases filed, disposed of, and inactive, together with the corresponding estimated case clearance rates, thereby facilitating an assessment of caseload management and court performance during the reporting period. Table 2.11 outlines the outcomes of Form D applications at the St. Catherine Coroner's Court, while Table 2.11a details the distribution of Forms D collected by the Registrar General's Department (RGD) from the participating Coroners' Courts.

Table 2.10: Aggregate case clearance rate estimates for the quarter ended March 31, 2026

Coroner's Court	Approximate number of cases filed	Approximate number of cases disposed (regardless of date of origin)	Approximate number of cases inactive (regardless of date of origin)	Estimated case clearance rate (%)
St. James	0	1	0	-
Hanover	-	-	-	-
St. Catherine	11	10	0	90.91
Corporate Area	143	147	0	102.80
Manchester	0	0	0	0.00
Clarendon	19	15	0	78.95
St. Mary	8	0	0	-
St. Thomas	-	-	-	-
Trelawny	-	-	-	-
Westmoreland	-	-	-	-
Portland	-	-	-	-
St. Ann	1	-	-	-
Total/Weighted average	182	173	0	95.05

For the quarter ended March 31, 2026, the aggregate case clearance rate across Jamaica's Coroners' Courts stood at 95.05%, meaning for every 100 new cases filed approximately 95 were disposed of. The Corporate Area performed strongly, with clearance rates above 100%, followed by St. Catherine Court with 90.91%, while Clarendon had a 78.95% clearance rate for the quarter. St. James recorded 1 disposed case, resulting in a 0% clearance rate. Several courts Hanover, St. Mary had 8 cases filed. Courts such as Trelawny, St. Thomas, Portland among others had either no filings or no disposals, leading to - 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 2.11: Sampling distribution of the Summary of outcomes of Form D applications made during the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 at the St. Catherine Coroner's Court

Outcomes	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Section 14	9	81.82
Other	2	18.18
Total	11	100

Table 2.11a Sampling distribution of Form D collected by RGD from Coroner's Court in the first quarter ended March 31, 2026.

Coroner's Court	Frequency	Percentage(%)
St. Catherine	56	90.32
Westmoreland	6	9.68
Total	62	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.

Tables 2.11 and 2.11a 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 St. Catherine Coroner's court is by way of section 14 with 9 or 81.82% while the remaining 2 was accounted for by the generic category 'other'. In the Westmoreland Coroner's Court, there were 6 form D collected for the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 and 56 collected at the St. Catherine Coroner's court.

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 the first quarter ended March 31, 2026 the combined weighted average time to disposition was 13.56 months. Across both courts the estimated case disposal rate was 93.41%, and the estimated case clearance rate was 115.39% in the reporting period.

The Corporate Area Coroner's Court has consistently sustained high rates of case disposal and clearance, and to 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 39 new cases and irrespective of the date of origin, sixty three (63) cases were either disposed or inactive. The Special Coroner's Court recorded a case clearance rate of 161.54%, with an average time to disposition of 42.09 months in the first quarter. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court disposed an overall total of 147 cases in the reporting period, and had 143 new cases, producing a case clearance rate of 102.80%. 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 142 of the 143 new cases filed (99.30%) in the first quarter of 2026 and recorded an average time to disposition of less than one month (0.34 months).

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 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.

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 system².

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%.

Note: A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system³.

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.

² Source:

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

³ ³Source:

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

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 daily. 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 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.

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.

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 of 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.

Appendix

Tables A1 and A2 present the case clearance rates across the Coroners' Courts in Jamaica for the period 2019 to 2025. The table compares the number of new cases filed with the number of cases disposed of or rendered inactive during each year and calculates the corresponding case clearance rate for each parish court. Case clearance rates provide an important measure of court performance, indicating the extent to which courts are able to resolve cases relative to the volume of incoming matters. A clearance rate above 100 per cent suggests that a court disposed of more cases than it received during the year, thereby contributing to a reduction in case backlog, while rates below 100 per cent may indicate an accumulation of pending matters. The tables also present annual aggregate figures, facilitating an assessment of overall trends in the efficiency and workload management of the Coroners' Court system over the review period.

Table A1: 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 A2: 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

Coroners' Court activity varied considerably across parishes during 2019–2025, with some courts recording sustained case movement while others experienced prolonged periods of little or no activity. Overall, the national average clearance rate was 124.68%, indicating that disposals exceeded new filings across the period, partly reflecting the clearance of older matters and backlog-reduction efforts.