



# **THE JUDICIARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

## **2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

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**HIGH COURT**  
of the  
**Republic of the Marshall Islands**

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Iokwe, I am pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report for the Judiciary of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. As in recent years, this report reflects the dedication and hard work of the judges and staff who serve the Judiciary, the Government, and the people of the Marshall Islands. It is my pleasure and privilege to work with them.

On behalf of the Judiciary, I wish to express our sincere appreciation to the President, the Minister of Justice, and the other members of the Cabinet for their support in 2025. Also, I wish to express our profound thanks to the Nitijela and the House of Iroij for their continuing support of our budgetary and legislative requests. We are committed to working with the Cabinet, the Nitijela, and the House of Iroij in the years to come to maintain an independent judiciary that is fair and efficient, assuring justice and the rule of law for all. Our shared goals mandate that we work together in a spirit of respect and cooperation.

Submitted with the 2025 Annual Report are our Values, Mission Statement, and Vision Statement. For more information about the Judiciary, please contact me or the Chief Clerk of the Courts at the above address.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Ingram".

---

Carl B. Ingram  
Chief Justice, High Court  
Date: March 13, 2026



## Our Values:

### *Tomak, Jenok, im Aurok Ko Ad:*

The Marshall Islands Judiciary holds the following values, and desires to operate in a manner that is, and will be perceived as:

*Jikin Ekajet ko an Marshall Islands rej debij im jermal wot iumin tomak, aurok eo, im konan eo non air jermal ilo wawein ko renaj koman bwe armij ren kalimjeklok ra eo an Jikin Ekajet bwe ej juon eo ej einwot in:*

- accessible
- accountable
- competent
- consistent
- efficient
- fair and impartial
- independent
- respectful and
- service-oriented,
  
- valuing custom and tradition, as well as innovation.

*ebellok non aoleb armij  
 etiljek, ekkeke, im maron uwak non jermal ko an  
 ekakemooj im emmon an komane jermal eo an  
 ej jokkin wot juon an komane jermal eo an  
 ebolemen im tiljek ilo an kakke aikuij ko  
 ej jermal jimwe ilo ejelok kalijeklok ak jeb  
 ejenolok im jutaklok ian make  
 ewor an kautiej armij im  
 etiljek, jela nae, jela kunaan, im jela karejar  
 iben armij,  
 ej kaurok im kautiej manit im men ko bwinnid  
 im ad jolet, ekoba lomnak im wawein jermal ko  
 rekaal.*

These values form the basis for the Judiciary's Mission Statement and Vision.

*Tomak im aurok kein rej ejaake bedbed eo non kottobar im ettonak kein ilal.*

## **Mission Statement:**

### ***Kottobar Eo:***

The mission of the courts of the Marshall Islands, the Judiciary, is to fairly, efficiently, and effectively resolve disputes properly brought before them, discharging their judicial duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Constitution, laws, and customs of this unique island nation, for the benefit of those who use the courts' services.

*Kottobar eo an Jikin Ekajet ko an Marshall Islands ej non jermal jimwe ilo ejelok kalijeklok, bolemen im tiljek ilo an kakke aikuij ko ilo aoleb abnono ko rej itok imajer, im non komane jermal in ekajet im edro ko aer ekkar non Jemen-Ei eo, kakien ko, im manit ko an ailon kein ad im jej jenolok kaki jen lal ko jet ikijien manit im men ko bwinnid im ad jolet, non emmanlok eo an ro rej bok jiban jen jikin ekajet eo.*

## **Vision:**

### ***Ettonak Eo:***

The Marshall Islands Judiciary will be an excellent small-island judiciary, deserving of public trust and confidence.

- The Judiciary will be fair and impartial.
- The Judiciary will treat court users and colleagues with dignity, courtesy, and respect, and will require the same in return.
- The Judiciary will provide affordable and accessible services to court users.
- The Judiciary will seek to resolve matters efficiently, while maintaining quality, consistency, and certainty.
- The Judiciary will be independent yet accountable, deciding matters based upon the facts before the courts and a conscientious understanding of the law and custom.
- The Judiciary will administer the courts in accordance with internationally recognized standards for leadership, management, and accountability.
- The Judiciary will seek and employ innovative practices and procedures to better serve court users, to identify users' needs, and to develop court personnel.
- The Judiciary will maintain adequate and safe courthouses and a supportive work environment.

*Ra eo an jikin ekajet eo an Marshall Islands enaj juon eo ebolemen, im ebed liki im kojatdrikdrik an armij ro ie.*

- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj jermal jimwe ilo ejelok an kalijeklok.*

- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj kile, kautej, im karejar ippen ro rej kojerbal im bukot jiban jen jikin ekajet eo, ekoba dri-jerbal ro mottam, im enaj kotmene bwe armij renaj ukot tok ilo ejja wawein kein wot.*
- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj komman bwe en drik wonen, bidodo, im ejelok aban non ro rej kojerbal im bok jiban jen jikin ekajet eo.*
- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj bukot kojkan bwe en mokaj, emman, im jejjet wawein am bukot mejlan ailwaro im aikuj ko.*
- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj komman jemlok non abnono ko, ilo an ejelok kibel jen ijoko jabrewot, bedbed wot ion menin kamol ko rej walok, im jen am melele kin kien im manit.*
- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj kommani jerbal im eddro ko an court ekkar non jonak im wawein ko lal in ej kili im lori ikijen jerbal in tel, lolorjake, im bok eddro.*
- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj bukot im kojerbal wawein im rebeltan jerbal ko rekaal bwe en emman lok am kake aikuj ko an ro rej kojerbal jikin ekajet eo, im bareinwot non am kolablok kabeel ibben dri-jerbal ro ilo jikin ekajet eo.*
- *Ra eo an jikin ekajet eoenaj lolorjake bwe jikin ekajet ko ren ainemmon im bolemeir, im bwe jitbon jerbal in ippen dron eo en wonmanlok wot.*



Judiciary is attached as Appendix 1, and a listing of Judiciary personnel at the end of calendar year 2025 is attached as Appendix 2.

In the sections that follow, this report summarizes the Judiciary’s operations and accomplishments in calendar year 2025, as well as its challenges, including the need for financial support. These sections include the following:

- The Courts: Efficiency, Quality, and Accessibility;
- The Judicial Service Commission: Judicial Appointments;
- Accountability: Codes of Conduct and Complaints;
- Facilities, Technology, and Library; and
- Annual Budget and Audit Report.

## II. THE COURTS: EFFICIENCY, QUALITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY

The goals of the Judiciary include to be efficient, to produce quality decisions, and to be accessible.

- The Judiciary’s **efficiency** can be measured by annual clearance rates, five-year clearance rates, time standards, the age of cleared cases, pending to disposal ratios (“PDR”) and the age of pending cases.
- The **quality** of decisions can be measured by appeals and cases overturned on appeal.
- **Accessibility** can be measured by fee waivers, lower fees for vulnerable litigants, cases heard on circuit, free legal counsel, the availability of forms, the accessibility of courthouses, appearance by contemporaneous transmission, and access for women and those with disabilities.

To these ends, the 2025 Annual Report reviews all five levels of the Judiciary—the Supreme Court, the High Court, the Traditional Rights Court, the District Court, and the Community Courts. The review includes the courts’ jurisdictions, staffing, and case statistics, as well as continuing professional development for judges and staff. The case statistics come from the Judiciary’s Case Tracking System (“CTS”) developed and enhanced through funding by New Zealand. This includes statistics regarding gender, disability, representation, remote proceedings, and fee waiver.

## A. Supreme Court

The Supreme Court, the court of last resort, is a superior court of record having appellate jurisdiction with final authority to adjudicate all cases and controversies properly brought before it. An appeal lies to the Supreme Court:

- (i) as of right from a final decision of the High Court in the exercise of its original jurisdiction;
- (ii) as of right from a final decision of the High Court in the exercise of its appellate jurisdiction, but only if the case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation or effect of the Constitution; and
- (iii) at the discretion of the Supreme Court from any final decision of any court.

Also, the High Court may remove to the Supreme Court questions arising as to the interpretation or effect of the Constitution.

The Supreme Court consists of three justices: a chief justice and two associate justices. To date, all Supreme Court judges have been law-trained attorneys and most have been experienced judges. The current chief justice, Daniel N. Cadra, is a United States



citizen appointed to his second 10-year term effective September 2023. Generally, associate justices have been acting judges from other jurisdictions—the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the United States Federal District Courts within the Ninth Circuit, the Republic of Palau, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Canada. In 2025, the acting associate justices were two United States Federal Court judges from the Ninth Circuit: District Court Judge Michael Seabright from the District of Hawaii and Chief District Court Judge Richard Seeborg from the District of Northern California. The Chief Clerk of the Courts, Ingrid K. Kabua, serves as the clerk of the Supreme Court.

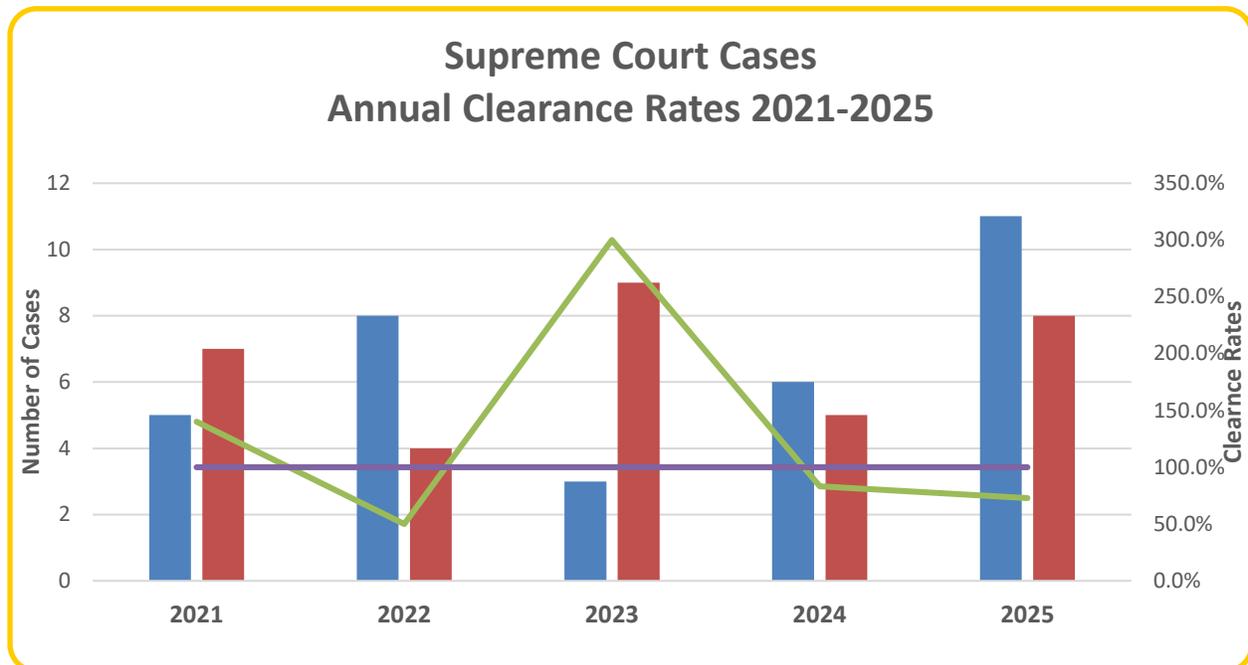


The Supreme Court's 2025 case and workload are summarized below, including the annual clearance rate, the five-year clearance rate, the annual average age of cleared cases, and the annual average age of pending cases. However, it should be noted that as the number of appeals each year is low. Accordingly, the annual performance indicators can fluctuate significantly.

At the beginning of 2025, there were six matters pending before the Supreme Court. In 2025, another 11 matters were filed (five land cases (two appeal and three writs), three non-resident corporation case, two constitutional interpretation cases, and 1 criminal case). The Supreme Court was able to hear and clear eight cases (four land cases (1 appeal and three writs), two non-resident corporate cases, and 1 removal case). At the end of 2025, 10 cases remained (five land cases, two non-resident corporation cases, two constitutional interpretation cases, and 1 criminal case).

With respect to deciding the cases brought before it, the Supreme Court’s goal is to achieve an annual clearance rate of 100% and a five-year clearance rate of 100%. In 2025, the Supreme Court met the five-year clearance goal but not the annual clearance goal. With 11 cases filed and seven cases cleared in 2025, the annual clearance rate was 63.6% (7/11). The five-year clearance rate was 97% (32/33). The Judiciary anticipates that the Supreme Court’s annual clearance rate and five-year clearance rate will continue to fluctuate around 100%.

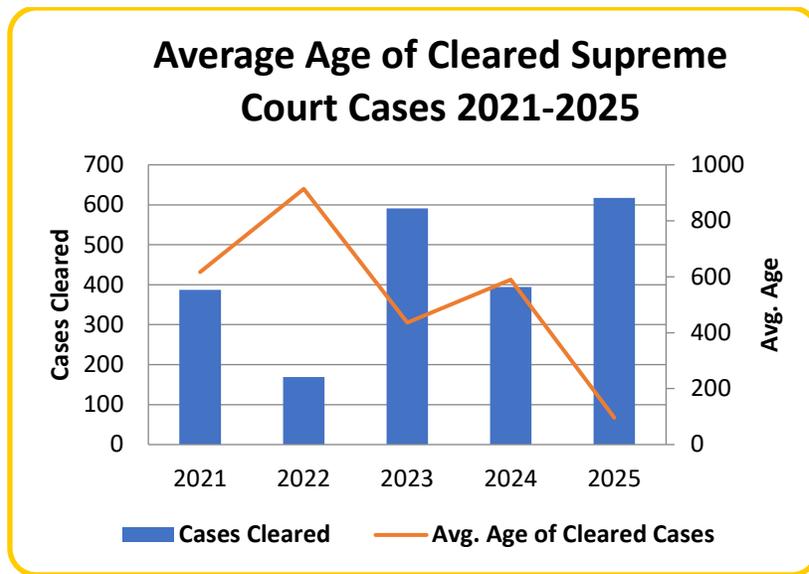
Annual and 5-Year Clearance Rates for Supreme Court Cases 2021-2025						
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	5-Year
<b>Cases Filed</b>	5	8	3	6	11	33
<b>Cases Cleared</b>	7	4	9	5	7	32
<b>Clearance Rate</b>	140.0%	50.0%	300.0%	83.3%	63.3%	97.0%
<b>Annual Goal</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



In addition to the clearance rate figures, the Judiciary tracks the average age of cleared Supreme Court cases. In 2025, the average age of the seven cases cleared was 107 days. The

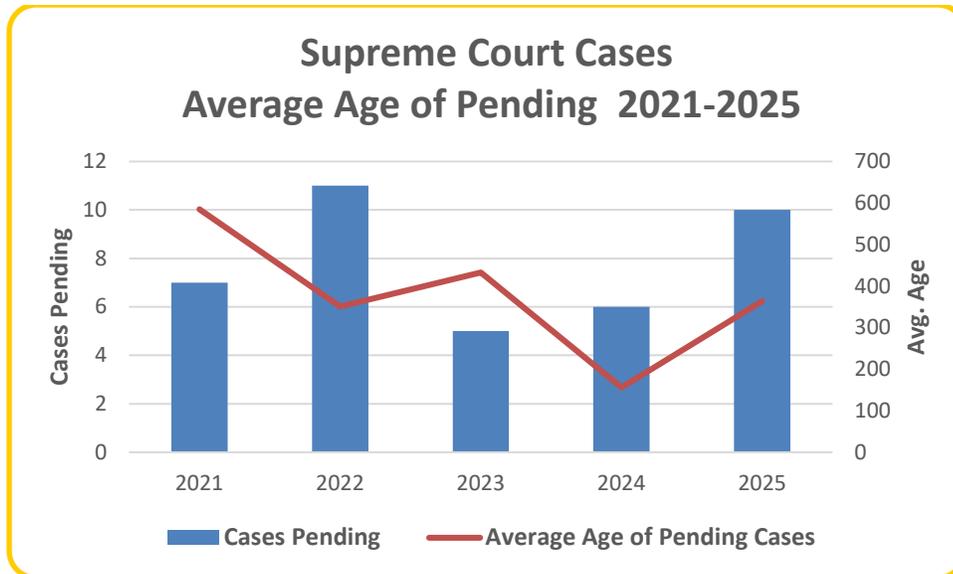
five-year trend for the average age of cleared Supreme Court cases is set forth below in the table and chart. The age of cleared cases in 2025 decreased by 482 days, 82%, less than 2024's figure.

<b>Average Age of Cleared Supreme Court Cases 2021-2025</b>					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Cases Cleared</b>	7	4	9	5	7
<b>Avg. Age of Cleared Cases</b>	617	914	436	589	107



Regarding the average age of pending cases, as the table below shows, at the end of 2025 the average age of the 10 pending Supreme Court cases was 364 days, up 208 days from 156 days the end of 2024. The five-year trend for the average age of pending Supreme Court cases is set forth below in the table and chart.

<b>Supreme Court Cases: Average Age of Pending Cases 2021-2025</b>					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Cases Pending</b>	7	11	5	6	10
<b>Average Age of Pending Cases</b>	585	351	433	156	364



In addition to the average of pending cases, the Judiciary tracks the pending to disposal ratio, or PDR. This is the number of cases pending at the end the year divided by the number of cases disposed or cleared in the past 12 months. The PDR is a lead indicator. That is, a PDR consistently over 1.0 is likely to lead to a backlog. For 2025, the Supreme Court’s PDR was 1.4 (10/7). In February 2026, the Supreme Court heard 7 of the 10 appeals pending from 2025. As of March 6, 2026, the Supreme Court had cleared 2 of the 10 appeals pending, and 2 new appeals had been filed.

In addition to the disposal rate, to track the Supreme Court’s efficiency the Judiciary also reviews the distribution and the average age of pending cases. At the end of 2025, there were 10 cases pending before the Supreme Court. All the cases were filed in 2025. The absence of a “tail” cases from previous years demonstrates that the Supreme Court is keeping current with its pending cases.

Beyond efficiency, the Supreme Court is affordable and accessible. Affordability and accessibility may be measured in terms of the availability of low filing fees for most litigants, fee waivers, the availability of free legal service for those who cannot afford an attorney, access for women, accommodations for those with disabilities, and publication of decisions.

- **Low Filing Fees.** The filing fee for most appeals is low, only \$100, and the availability of fee waivers was, and continues to be, publicized. The filing fee for non-resident matters is higher. That is, the filing fee is \$1,000 for appeals involving a non-resident entity, a foreign entity, or a foreign maritime entity, or cases involving the enforcement of a foreign judgment, arbitration award, or the like.
- **Fee Waivers.** Of the 11 matters filed in 2025, no fee waivers for the filing fee and the transcript fee were sought.

- **Legal Aid Services.** Of the 11 matters filed in 2025, no of the parties were represented by the Office of the Public Defender (“OPD”) or the Micronesian Legal Services Corporation (“MLSC”). All were represented by private counsel or appeared *pro se*.
- **Women’s Access to Justice.** In 2025, the Supreme Court tracked the gender of appellees and appellants on the Judiciary’s CTS. In the 11 appeals and writs filed in 2025, four appellants/petitioners and four appellees/respondents were women and the remaining parties were men or corporate entities.
- **Accommodation for Disabilities.** In 2025, the Supreme Court tracked via the CTS the disability status of litigants. In the 11 appeals and writs filed in 2025, four of the parties were seniors (over 60 years of age) and none suffered from disabilities, i.e., difficulty walking.
- **Proceedings Heard by Contemporaneous Transmission.** In 2025, none of the parties requested argument by contemporaneous transmission – that is, via Zoom. All motions were decided on written submissions.
- **Publication of Decisions.** All the Supreme Court’s decisions can be found on the Judiciary’s website, <http://rmicourts.org/>, under the heading Court Decisions and Digests.

Aside from the Supreme Court’s regular docket, Supreme Court Chief Justice Cadra, together with High Court Chief Justice Carl B. Ingram, admits new attorneys to the practice of law in the Republic. In most years, one or two Marshallese law graduates will seek admission to practice law and around six attorneys from overseas will seek admission to represent clients with respect to non-resident litigation. In 2025, one Marshallese, a women, was admitted, as was a Fijian couple. All three work for the Government. Also, in 2025, five overseas attorneys sat for the bar examination, and one was successful.

## B. High Court

The High Court is the highest court at the trial level. It is a superior court of record having general jurisdiction over controversies of law and fact in the Marshall Islands. The High Court has original jurisdiction over all cases properly filed with it, appellate jurisdiction over cases originally filed in subordinate courts, and, unless otherwise provided by law, jurisdiction to review the legality of any final decision of a government agency.





In 2023, the High Court included a chief justice and three associate justices: Chief Justice Carl B. Ingram and Associate Justice Witten T. Philippo for the entire year and in the last part of the year Associate Justice Murnane. All are law-trained attorneys, as have been all prior High Court judges, and attend at least one professional development seminar or workshop each year. Chief Justice Ingram was appointed to his third ten-year term in October 2023. Although Chief Justice Ingram is a United States citizen, he has lived and worked in the Marshall

Islands since 1979. In 2018, Associate Justice Philippo, as a citizen of the Republic was appointed until age 72 (January 31, 2030). In November 2022, the High Court added a third justice, Linda Murnane. Associate Justice Murnane was appointed to a two-year term commencing in November 2022, renewable for a second two-year term.



In addition to the three justices, the High Court is served by a chief clerk of the courts and four assistant clerks. The High Court's 2023 case statistics for civil cases, probate cases, criminal cases, juvenile cases, and caseloads are set forth below.

### **1. Civil Cases (other than Probate Cases)**

The High Court's 2024 statistics for civil cases (include family and personal status cases, general civil case, land cases, and other civil matters, excluding probate cases) cover the following:

- the number and nature of cases filed;
- the annual clearance rate and the five-year clearance rate;
- the average age of cleared cases at the end of the year;
- the time standards: clear 75% of cases cleared within 120 days and 90% within 360 days;
- the number and average age of pending cases at the end of the year and the five-year trend;
- the pending to disposal ratio;
- the distribution of pending cases, i.e., the "tail";

- the percentage of cleared cases appealed and the percentage of cases overturned on appeal; and
- affordability and accessibility in terms of fee waivers, low fees for vulnerable parties, cases heard on circuit, appearance by contemporaneous transmission, legal aid, forms, and access for women and those with disabilities.

**a. Number and Nature of Cases Filed**

In 2025, plaintiffs and petitioners filed 219 new civil cases in the High Court: 208 in Majuro and 11 in Ebeye. This is 28 less than the 247 cases filed in 2024.

The 208 civil cases filed in Majuro in 2025 breakdown as follows:

- 141 (67.8%), involved family and personal status matters (including 79 customary adoptions; 1 child custody and support case; 9 citizenship cases; 3 declarations of death; three divorce cases with child custody and/or support; 6 divorce cases without child custody and/or support; 6 domestic violence cases seeking a protection order; 25 guardianships; and 9 name-change petitions);
- 57 (27.4%) commercial cases (1 child rights case; 31 collection cases; 9 corporate cases; 7 declaratory relief cases; 2 enforcement of a foreign judgment case; 1 lease case; 2 maritime cases; 1 tort case; 1 wrongful death case; 1 EPA case; and 1 Public Lands Act case; and
- 10 (4.8%) land cases.

Of the 208 civil cases filed in Majuro in 2025, 173 were cleared in 2025, leaving 35 civil cases filed in 2025 pending at the end of the year: 2 customary adoption cases; 3 citizen cases; 3 guardianship cases; 2 divorce without children cases; 6 collection cases; 5 corporate cases; 3 declaratory cases; 1 enforcement of a foreign judgment case; 2 maritime cases; 1 Public Lands Act case; and 7 land cases).

As noted above, 11 civil cases were filed in Ebeye. Of the 11 cases, all were family and personal status matters (9 confirmations of customary adoption cases; 1 legal adoption; and 1 divorce case with child custody and/or support). In 2025, there were no collection cases filed. All but 3 of the 11 Ebeye civil cases were cleared in 2025. The pending cases included 2 customary adoption cases and 1 child support case.

Also, with respect to the civil cases, the High Court tracks via its CTS the gender of the parties and other persons. Almost all child custody and support cases, divorce cases with child custody and/or support, and domestic violence protection order cases are filed by women against men. Otherwise, the case numbers disaggregated by gender do not reveal any pattern or trend. Most Marshallese seeking divorces, child custody and support, and domestic violence protection

orders are represented at no cost by MLSC. The defendants in those cases are usually represented by the OPD. However, every year or two, there will be a non-Marshallese couple seeking a divorce (for example, Americans stationed at the United States missile range on Kwajalein Atoll). They are usually represented by private attorneys.

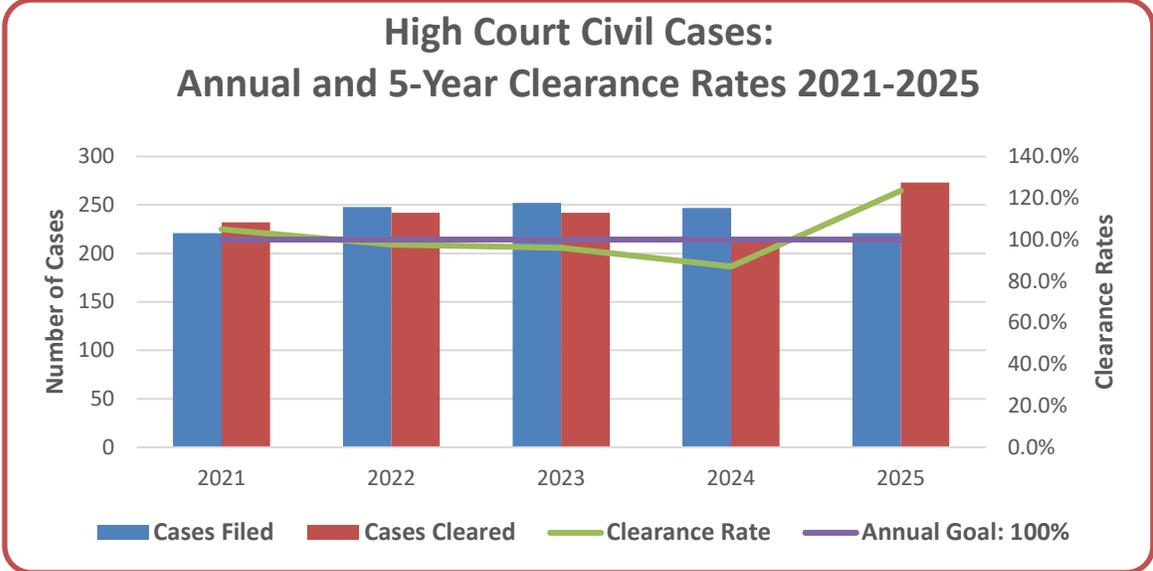
The High Court also tracks via the CTS the disability status of litigants. The most common disability is difficulty walking. When litigants, attorneys, or witnesses cannot easily climb stairs, their cases are heard in a ground-floor courtroom, and land rights cases, which involve older litigants and witnesses, are as a rule heard in a ground-floor courtroom. Also, witness depositions are used, particularly if the witness is home or hospital bound or lives overseas. Except as noted, disaggregation by disability status does not reveal any pattern.

Based upon the above civil caseload, the High Court measures its efficiency in terms of the annual clearance rates, the five-year clearance rate, time standards, the age of cleared cases, disposed to pending ratio, distribution of pending cases, and the age of pending cases.

**b. Annual Clearance Rate and the Five-Year Clearance Rate**

With respect to clearance rates, the High Court’s clearance goals are to achieve an annual clearance rate of 100% and a five-year clearance rate of 100%. In 2025, the High Court recorded an annual clearance rate of 124.7% for civil cases: 273 cases were cleared and 219 were filed. As a result, the five-year clearance rate also was down at 101.4% (1,204 cases cleared and 1,187 filed). The very high annual clearance rate in 2025 resulted from the High Court clearing many bank collection cases filed late in 2024. The High Court expects both the annual clearance rate and the five-year clearance rate to remain within 5% of the 100% goal.

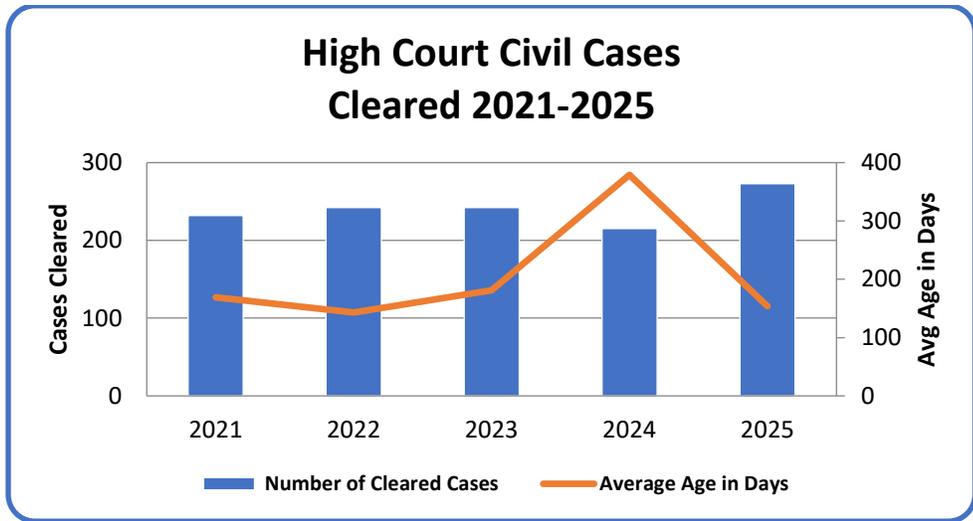
<b>High Court Civil Cases: Annual and 5-Year Clearances Rates 2021 to 2025</b>						
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>5-Year</b>
<b>Cases Filed</b>	221	248	252	247	219	1,187
<b>Cases Cleared</b>	232	242	242	215	273	1,204
<b>Clearance Rate</b>	105.0%	97.6%	96.0%	87.0%	124.7%	101.4%
<b>Annual Goal: 100%</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



**c. Average Age of Cleared Cases at the End of the Year and the Five-Year Trend**

In addition to the clearance rates, the High Court tracks the average age of cleared cases. As the table and chart below show, in 2025 the average age of the 273 cleared High Court cases was 154 days, 225 days less than in 2024. The 2024 figure was much higher than in 2025 because several old land cases were cleared in 2024.

Average Age of High Court Civil Cases Cleared 2021-2025					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of Cleared Cases	232	242	242	215	273
Average Age in Days	169	143	181	379	154



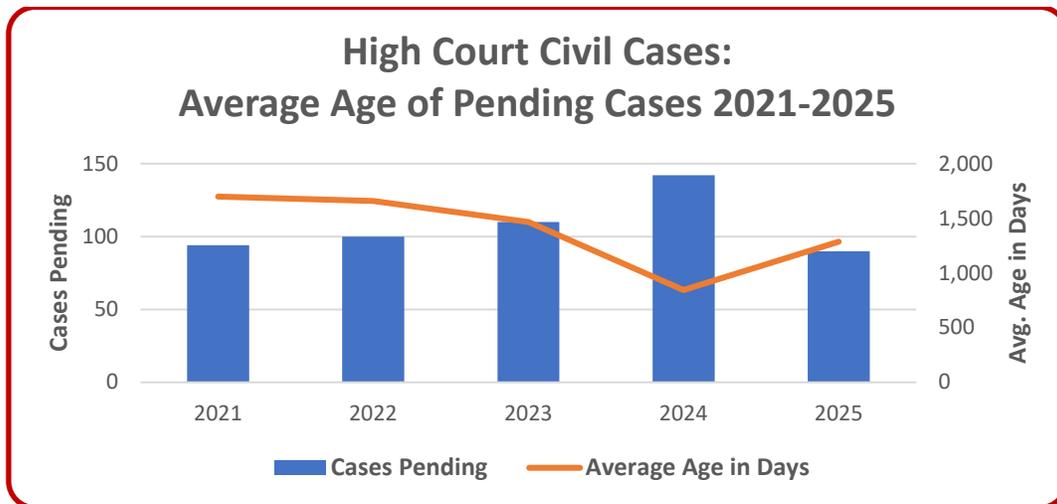
**d. Time Standard: To Clear 75% of Cleared Cases Within 120 Days and 90% Within 360 Days**

Each year the High Court seeks not only to meet its clearance goals, but also to meet its time standards. That is, the High Court seeks to clear 75% of its cleared civil cases within 120 days and 90% within 360 days. In 2025, the High Court met and surpassed its time standards for civil cases. The High Court cleared 75% of cases within only 109 days (11 days less than the 120-day standard) and 90% within only 246 days 114 days less than 360-day standard).

**e. Number and Average Age of Pending Cases at the End of the Year and the Five-Year Trend**

With respect to pending cases, the High Court tracks their number and average age. In 2025 the number of pending cases went down from 142 in 2024 to 90 in 2025. However, the average age of pending cases went up: from 844 days in 2024 to 1,285 days in 2025. The 2024 average age figure was unusually low due to the Bank of the Marshall Islands and the Marshall Islands Development Bank filing many collection cases in 2024. The 2025 average age figure is much closer to historically levels.

<b>High Court Civil Cases: Average Age of Pending Cases 2021-2025</b>					
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Cases Pending</b>	94	100	110	142	90
<b>Average Age in Days</b>	1,699	1,659	1,466	844	1,285



Of the 90 cases pending at the end of 2025, 36 cases or approximately 40% were land cases. This is an increase of two case, or 1%, since 2024. The High Court and the Traditional Rights Court continue to work hard to resolve the land cases without undue delay while affording the parties an opportunity to be heard.

### **f. Pending to Disposal Ratio**

In addition to the number and average age of pending cases, as an indicator of efficiency, the High Court tracks the pending to disposal ratio (PDR). As noted earlier in this report, the PDR is the number of cases pending at the end the year divided by the number of cases disposed or cleared in the past 12 months. The High Court’s goal is to maintain a PDR of 1.0 or less. For 2025, the High Court’s PDR for civil cases was very good at 0.33 (90/273).

### **g. Distribution of Pending Cases, the “Tail”**

In addition to the PDR, the High Court tracks the distribution of pending civil cases, the “tail.” At the end of 2025, there were 57 civil cases pending from 2011 through 2024. This relatively long “tail,” a reduction of 1 case since of the end of 2024. Most of these cases are customary land cases, which take longer than other cases to resolve. The High Court and the Traditional Rights Court continue to work hard to resolve the customary land cases without undue delay while affording the parties an opportunity to be heard.

### **h. Appeals**

In addition to measuring efficiency, it is important to review the quality of judgments. Courts can measure the quality of their judgments in two ways: the percentage of cleared cases appealed and the percentage of cases overturned on appeal.

In 2025, seven High Court civil decisions were appeal to the Supreme Court, three non-resident corporate cases (two of which were dismissed by the appellant), two land cases, and two declaratory judgment cases. That is, seven civil appeals in 273 cleared civil cases, 2.6%. Below is a table and chart showing the number of cleared cases appealed versus cases not appealed over the past five years.

<b>Cleared High Court Civil Cases Not Appealed v. Appealed 2021-2025</b>					
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Cases Cleared</b>	232	243	243	215	273
<b>Cases Appealed</b>	3	6	1	5	7
<b>% of Cases Appealed</b>	1.3%	2.5%	0.4%	2.3%	2.6%
<b>Cases Not Appealed</b>	229	237	242	210	266
<b>% of Cases Not Appealed</b>	98.7%	97.5%	99.6%	97.7%	97.4%

In 2025, no High Court civil cases from 2025, or from previous years, were overturned on appeal. The percentage of cases overturned on appeal was 0%.

In addition to the eight appeals, in 2025 there were three writs filed with the Supreme Court. All three writs, which involved land cases, were denied.

**i. Affordability and Accessibility: Fee Waivers; Cases Heard on Circuit; Appearances by Contemporaneous Transmission; Legal Aid; Forms; and Access for Women and Those with Disabilities**

It is not enough that courts be efficient and that the quality of judgments be high. The courts must be affordable and accessible. Affordability and accessibility to justice may be measured in terms of the availability of fee waivers, lower fees for vulnerable parties, the number of cases heard on circuit, the availability of free legal service, and the availability of forms.

- **Fee Waivers.** By rule and statute, fee waivers are available upon a showing of need. In 2025, as in recent years, the High Court continued to aggressively publish fee waiver rules. However, no one requested a fee waiver in a High Court civil case.
- **Low Filing Fees.** The filing fee for most types of High Court civil cases remained low: only \$25. In 2016, the filing fee for child custody and support cases (usually filed by single mothers) was reduced from \$25 to \$5. To off-set the low fees for most users, fees for admiralty cases, enforcement of foreign judgments, non-resident corporate cases, international adoptions, and citizenship cases are substantially higher.
- **Cases Heard on Circuit.** As noted above, in 2025, eight High Court civil cases were filed for the Ebeye circuit.
- **Proceeding Heard by Contemporaneous Transmission.** Also, in 2025 the CTS reveals that counsel, parties, or witnesses in civil cases appeared by contemporaneous transmission (i.e., via Zoom) in 27 out of 96 conferences, hearings, or trials. At the request of a party with a mobility disability, as hearing was held in a ground floor courtroom.
- **Legal Aid Services.** In 2025, the use of free legal services remained high. In the 219 civil cases filed in 2025, MLSC represented 196 parties in 133 cases, the OPD represented 10 parties in 10 cases, both of which provide legal assistance for free. Also, in 2025, approximately 9 plaintiffs (or prospective plaintiffs) were assigned a free court-appointed attorney for their claims. In FY 2025, the Judiciary collected approximately \$68,000 to pay court-appointed attorneys from private counsel who wished to opt-out of taking court-appointed cases.
- **Forms.** The Judiciary has long used forms in small claims cases, name-change petitions, and guardianship cases. Since 2013, the Judiciary has posted on its website and made available at courthouses forms for fee and cost waivers, confirmation of customary adoptions, guardianship petitions, divorce petitions, domestic-violence temporary protection orders, name-change petitions, and small claims cases.

## **2. Probate Cases**

Set forth below are the High Court's 2025 case statistics for probate cases, covering:

- the number of cases filed;
- the annual clearance rate and the five-year clearance rate;
- the average age of cleared cases at the end of the year and the five-year trend;
- the time standard: 75% of cases cleared to be cleared within 90 days;
- the number and average age of pending cases at the end of the year and the five-year trend;
- the pending to disposal ratio;
- the percentage of cleared cases appealed and the percentage of cases overturned on appeal; and
- affordability and accessibility in terms of fee waivers, low fees for smaller cases, cases heard on circuit, appearances by contemporaneous transmission, legal aid, and access for women and those with disabilities.

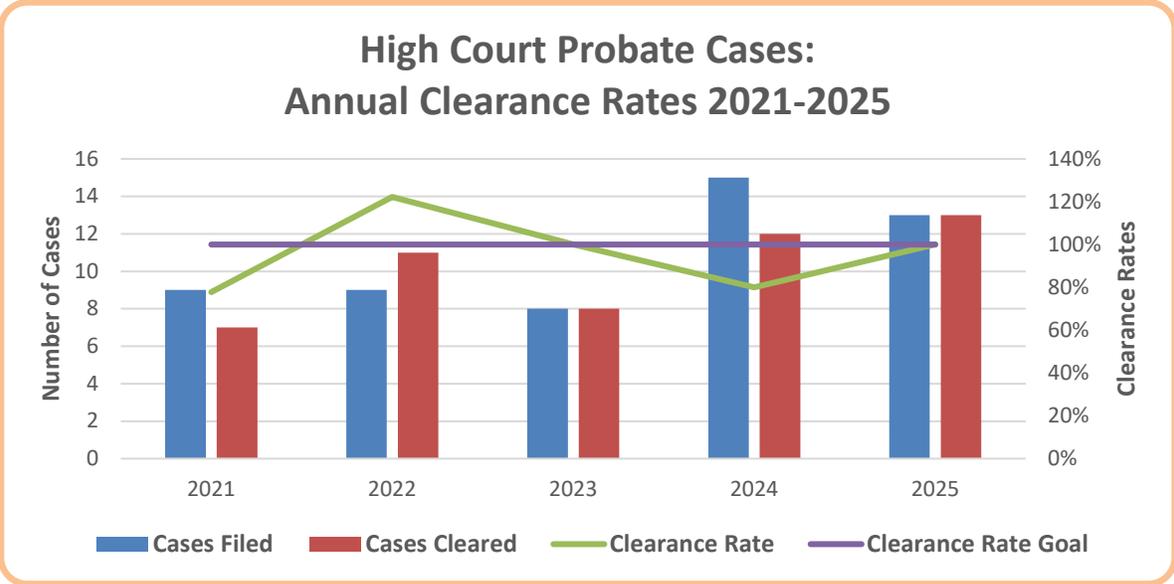
### **a. Number of Probate Cases**

In 2025, 13 probate cases were filed, two less than in 2024. Of the 13 cases, 12 were filed in Majuro and 1 was filed in Ebeye.

### **b. Annual Clearance Rate and The Five-Year Clearance Rate**

The High Court's clearance goals for probate cases are to achieve an annual clearance rate of 100% and a five-year clearance rate of 100%. In 2025, the High Court cleared 13 probate cases. All 13 cases were Majuro cases. The annual clearance rate was 100% (13/13). The five-year clearance rate for probate cases also was 94% (51/54). Given the relatively low number of probate cases filed each year, the annual clearance rate and five-year clearance rate should continue to fluctuate from around 80% to 120% as it has over the past five years.

High Court Probate Cases: Annual and 5-Year Clearance Rates 2021-2025						
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	5-Year
Cases Filed	9	9	8	15	13	54
Cases Cleared	7	11	8	12	13	51
Clearance Rate	78%	122%	100%	80%	100%	94%
Clearance Rate Goal	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



**c. Average Age of Cleared Cases at the End of the Year**

The average age of the 13 probate cases cleared in 2025 was 97 days, 8 days less than the 105 days in 2024.

**d. Time Standard: To Clear 75% of Cleared Cases Within 90 Days of the Day Filed**

In addition to the annual clearance rate goal of 100%, the High Court seeks annually to clear 75% of its cleared probate cases within 90 days. In 2025, the High Court met this goal. Of the 13 probate cases cleared in 2024, the High Court cleared 11 within 90 days, 85% (11/13). One case took 359 days to complete and another took 380 days to complete. The first case was a contested matter, and the second case was delayed pending consultations among survivors. With the very small number of probate cases filed each year, the goal of clearing 75% of the cases within 90 days can be stymied by one or two cases.

### **e. Number and Average Age of Pending Cases at the End of the Year**

At the end of 2025, four probate cases were pending. The average age of the pending cases was 180.3 days. Three were Majuro cases and one was an Ebeye case.

### **f. Pending to disposal ratio**

In addition to the above, as an indicator of efficiency, the High Court tracks the pending to disposal ratio for probate cases – that is, the number of cases pending at the end the year divided by the number of cases disposed or cleared in the past 12 months. At the end of 2025, there were four probate cases pending and 13 had been cleared for a PDR of 0.31. The High Court’s goal is to maintain a PDR of 1.0 or less. The 0.31 PDR for the probate cases was very good and evidences little risk of developing a backlog.

### **g. Appeals**

In 2025, no probate cases were appealed, nor were any cases from previous years overturned on appeal. Accordingly, the percentage of probate cases appealed was 0%, and the percentage of appealed probate cases overturned on appeal was 0%. This has been the case for more than 15 years.

### **h. Affordability and Accessibility: Fee Waivers; Low Fees, Cases Heard on Circuit; Appearances by Contemporaneous Transmission; and Legal Aid**

As noted above, affordability and accessibility to justice can be seen in the availability of fee waivers, low fees for smaller cases, the number of cases heard on circuit, appearances by contemporaneous transmission, the availability of free legal service, and access for women and persons with disabilities.

- **Fee Waivers.** As with other civil cases, fee waivers are available in probate cases. However, in 2025 (as in recent years) no one requested a fee waiver in a probate case. In 2025, the High Court widely published notice of the waivers, as it has in the past.
- **Low Filing Fees.** In 2025, the fees for probate cases remained low. The filing fee for probate cases is \$25, \$100 for estates over \$7,000.
- **Cases Heard on Circuit.** Of the 13 probate cases filed in 2025, only one was filed for the Ebeye circuit. Of the 13 probate cases cleared in 2025, none one was an Ebeye circuit case.
- **Legal Aid Services.** In eight of the 13 probate cases filed in 2025 (62%), the petitioner was represented by MLSC. In five probate cases the petitioner was represented by private counsel, and OPD represented an objector. In recent years, about two-thirds of probate petitioners are represented by MLSC.

- **Proceedings Hearing by Contemporaneous Transmission.** Upon request, the High Court conducts probate hearings by contemporaneous transmission to permit parties, counsel, and witnesses not able to appear in person to appear virtually. In 2025, at the request of a party, two of 22 probate hearings was/were conducted by via Zoom.
- **Access to Justice for Women.** The 2025 probate statistics disaggregated by gender reveals that in six cases, a little less than half, the petitioners were women, widows, or daughters of the decedent. Usually, the petitioner will be the surviving spouse, the eldest surviving child, or, failing either, the most senior surviving child present in Majuro.
- **Access to Justice to Persons with Disabilities.** In 2025, none of the parties or witnesses requested that accommodations be made due to disability. Families usually select a representative who is both physically and mentally is good health to serve as the petitioner or objector.

### 3. Criminal Cases

Set forth below are the High Court's 2025 case statistics for criminal cases. These statistics cover the following:

- the number and nature of criminal cases;
- the annual clearance rate and five-year clearance rate;
- the average age of cleared cases at the end of the year;
- the time standard: 90% percentage of cleared cases to be cleared within 550 days (18 months);
- the average age of pending cases at the end of the year;
- the pending to disposal ratio;
- the distribution of pending cases – that is, the tail;
- the percentage of cleared cases appealed and the percentage of cleared cases overturned on appeal; and
- affordability and accessibility (low or no fees, fee waivers, cases heard on circuit, appearances by contemporaneous transmission, free legal representation, and access for women and those with disabilities).

### **a. Number and Nature of Cases**

In 2025, the Office of the Attorney-General (“OAG”) filed 31 criminal cases in the High Court. Of the 31 cases, 26 were filed in Majuro and five were filed in Ebeye.

In Majuro, the 26 criminal cases filed in 2025 included the following (by most serious offense charged in the case): 3 aggravated assaults; 4 burglaries; 5 possessions of prohibited drugs; 1 assault with a deadly weapon; 2 reckless driving; two thefts; 1 forgery in the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree; 2 misconduct in public office; 1 forgery in the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree; 1 false statement to an immigration officer; 2 working without a valid work permit; 2 adding and abetting work permit fraud; 1 employment of a non-resident worker without a work permit; and 1 immigration (overstayer); and 1 disorderly connect.

In the 26 Majuro criminal cases, two of the defendants were a women. One was charged with burglary and related charges. All the charges were dismissed. The other women was charged with aggravated assault for assaulting another women.

In the 26 Majuro cases, females were the victims in at least 2 cases: a burglary and sexually assaulted in the 4<sup>th</sup> degree; and 1 aggravated assault. Counseling for victims of domestic violence and sexual violence is available through NGOs and government agencies, including Youth-to-Youth in Health, Women United Together Marshall Islands, the Mental Health Clinic, and the Ministry of Health and Human Services.

In Ebeye, the 5 criminal cases filed in 2025 included 2 sexual assaults in the first degree, 1 sexual assault of a minor, 1 burglary, 1 theft, and 1 selling marijuana. Of the 5 defendants, all were men. Two of the victims were females.

Other than as noted above, the High Court’s criminal case statistics, disaggregated by gender or disability, do not reveal any pattern or trend.

### **b. Annual Clearance Rate and Five-Year Clearance Rate**

The High Court’s clearance goals for criminal cases are an annual clearance rate of 100% and a five-year clearance rate of 100%. In 2025, met the annual clearance rate goal but not the five-year goal. In 2025, the High Court cleared 38 criminal cases from all years and added 31 new cases, resulting in a 2025 clearance rate of 122.6% (38/31). In three of the past five years the annual clearance rate was over than 100%. In 2025, the five-year clearance rate was 97.8% (137/134).

High Court Criminal Cases: Annual and 5-Year Clearance Rates 2021-2025						
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	5-Year
Cases Filed	29	29	24	24	31	137
Cases Cleared	22	32	27	15	38	134
Clearance Rate	75.9%	110.3%	112.5%	62.5%	122.6%	97.8%
Annual Goal	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



**c. Average Age of Cleared Cases at the End of the Year**

The average age of the 38 High Court criminal cases cleared in 2025 was 226 days. As the table below shows, this is a decrease of 50 days over the average age of the 15 cases cleared in 2024 (276).

Average Age of High Court Criminal Cases Cleared 2021-2025					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Cases Cleared	22	32	27	15	38
Avg. Age of Cases Cleared	249	302	274	276	226

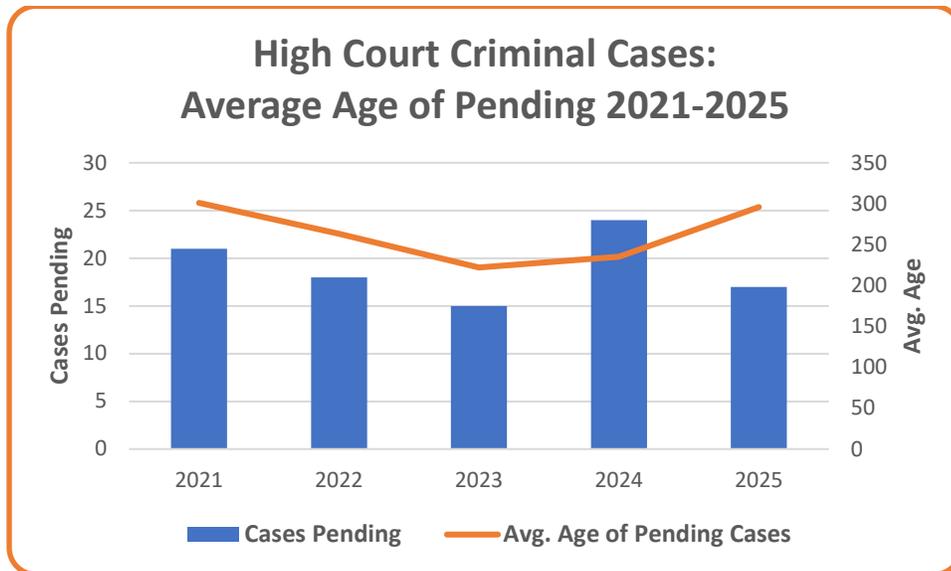
**d. Time Standard: 90% of Cleared Cases Cleared Within 550 Days (18 Months)**

In addition to the annual clearance rate, the High Court seeks to clear 90% of the cleared criminal cases within 550 days. In 2025, the High Court cleared 90% of the cleared cases in only 226 days, 324 days under the target of 550 days. Only two cases took more than 550 days to complete. One case took 629 to complete and another took 547.

**e. Average Age of Pending Cases**

As the table below shows, by the end of 2025, 17 criminal cases remained pending, seven less than the 24 cases pending at the end of 2024. Also, the average age of the pending cases was 296 days, an increase of 61 days from 235 days at the end of 2024. The High Court continues to encourage prosecutors and defense counsel to resolve criminal cases, particularly older cases. At the end of 2025, of the remaining 17 cases, only three were more than 550 days old and 12 were equal to or less than 365 days old.

High Court Criminal Cases: Average Age of Pending Cases 2021-2025					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Cases Pending	21	18	15	24	17
Avg. Age of Pending Cases	301	263	222	235	296



**f. Pending to disposal ratio**

In addition to the above, as an indicator of efficiency, the High Court tracks the pending to disposal ratio (PRD) for criminal cases – that is, the number of cases pending at the end the year divided by the number of cases disposed, or cleared, in the past 12 months. The High Court’s goal is to maintain a PDR of 1.0 or less. In 2025, the High Court’s PDR for criminal cases was 0.45 (17/38). This indicates little risk of developing a backup. The High Court will continue to encourage counsel to move their criminal cases forward without undue delay.

### **g. Distribution of Pending Cases, the “Tail”**

In addition to the clearance rates and the pending to disposal ratio, to track the High Court also tracks the distribution of pending criminal cases – that is, the “tail.” At the end of 2025, there were five criminal cases pending from earlier years: one from 2023, and four from 2024. This is very short “tail,” reflecting the reduction or elimination of a backlog. However, all 17 remaining cases from 2025 should be completed in 2026.

### **h. Appeals**

The number of cases appealed and overturned on appeal reflects the quality of the High Court’s criminal decisions. In 2025, only one of the 38 High Court criminal cases cleared were appealed. The percentage of cases appealed was 2.6% (1/38). Usually, one or two criminal cases are appealed each year.

### **i. Affordability and Accessibility: Absence of Fees or Fee Waivers; Cases Heard on Circuit; Appearances by Contemporaneous Transmission; and Legal Aid**

The Judiciary seeks to ensure its users affordability and accessible criminal justice through the absence of fees and the availability of fee waivers, circuit court sessions, appearances by contemporaneous transmission, and free legal representation.

**Fee Waivers.** That is, the Judiciary does not impose fees or court costs on criminal defendants at the trial level. On appeal, a defendant may apply for waiver of the filing fee and transcript costs.

**Cases Heard on Circuit.** Usually, the High Court travels to Ebeye on circuit once a quarter to hear felony cases. In 2026, the High Court held four in-court sessions in Ebeye. The first 2026 Ebeye circuit was held in February.

**Cases Heard by Contemporaneous Transmission.** In 2025, the CTS reveals that counsel, parties, or witnesses in criminal cases appeared by contemporaneous transmission (that is, via Zoom) in three of the conferences, hearings, or trials.

**Legal Aid Services.** Finally, criminal defendants have access to free legal counsel if they cannot afford to retain counsel. In 2025, as in other years, all or most criminal defendants who appeared in Court were represented by the OPD, the MLSC, or by private counsel paid by the Legal Aid Fund (“LAF”). In the 31 cases filed in 2025, 26 of 36 defendants were represented by the OPD in 23 cases, 1 defendant was represented by MLSC in 1 case, 3 defendants were represented by private counsel in 3 cases, and 6 defendants appeared *pro se* in 6 cases.

## **4. Juvenile Cases**

In 2025, the OAG filed six any juvenile cases in the High Court. This is the most juvenile cases the OAG as filed since 2006, when the Republic filed seven juvenile cases in Majuro. Usually, the Republic files no more than four High Court juvenile cases in a year. Most other juvenile cases (underage drinking) are heard by the District Court, a limited jurisdiction trial court. In recent years, all juvenile offenders were boys, and none of the juveniles has been identified as disabled.

At the beginning of 2025, one juvenile case was pending before the High Court from a previous year. That case should be cleared in 2025.

The High Court's annual and five-year clearance goals for juvenile cases are 100%. However, this is very difficult to achieve as the number of High Court juvenile cases is so low. In 2025, the five-year clearance rate was 89% (8/9). The High Court also seeks to clear 80% of juvenile cases within 180 days of filing. This too is a very difficult goal to reach with the very low number of juvenile cases.

In 2025, no juvenile cases were appealed.

To ensure juvenile offenders' access to justice, the Judiciary does not impose fees or court costs on juvenile offenders at the trial level, and on appeal a juvenile offender may apply for and receive a waiver for the cost of the trial transcript. Almost all juvenile offenders are represented by the OPD or private counsel appointed by the court. Additionally, High Court juvenile cases are heard on the Ebeye circuit. If necessary, juvenile proceedings can be conducted using Zoom. However, in 2025, no juvenile proceedings required the appearance of the parties or counsel via Zoom.

## **5. Caseloads for Judges and Clerks**

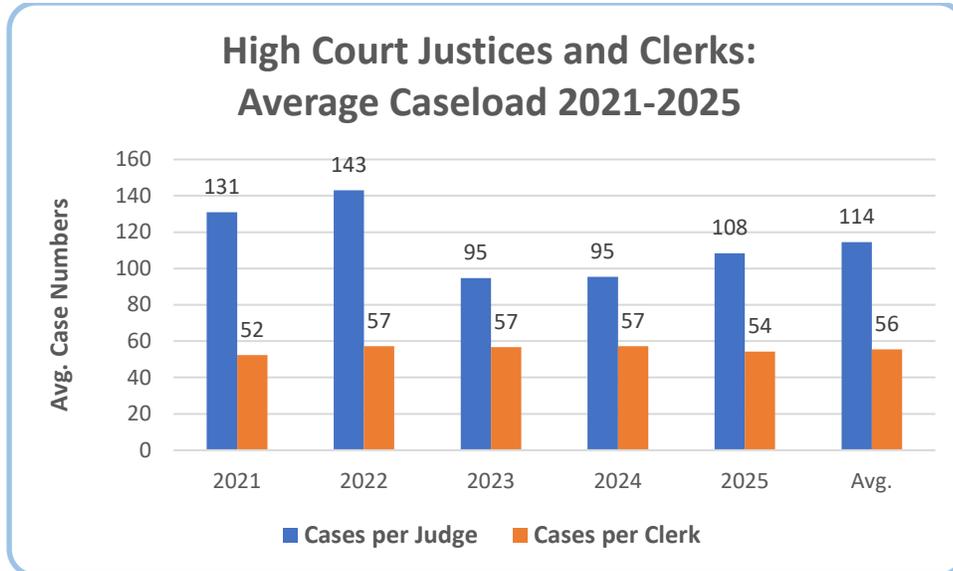
The total number of all High Court cases filed in 2025 was 271, 17 less than in 2024. Throughout the first half of 2025, the total number of High Court justices was two. In June the number increased to three. Based upon 2.5 justices, the caseload was increased on average by 108 cases per justice. In 2021 and 2022, the total number of High Court justices was only two, resulting in more new cases per judge in those years.

As to case assignments, generally cases are assigned between the justices on a rotating basis, subject to the need to balance the caseloads, conflicts, cases involving the same or related parties, and the absence of justice from country.

For the five clerks that regularly process High Court cases, their 2025 caseload included 54 new cases per clerk. As with the justices, the clerks' caseloads fluctuate from year-to-year within a limited range.

There is some specialization among the clerks, such as finance and interpretation; however, all clerks handle most functions, including customer service.

Below is a chart showing the five-year High Court caseload trend.



## 6. Selected Decisions

Selected High Court decisions can be found on the Judiciary’s website, <http://rmicourts.org/>, under the heading Court Decisions and Digests. The selected cases are the most noteworthy ones; ones that the Judiciary believes should be published for the benefit of the public and practitioners. The High Court will not publish a case unless it satisfies one or more of the following standards: (1) the opinion lays down a new rule of law, or alters, modifies an existing rule, or applies an established rule to a novel fact situation; (2) the opinion involves a legal issue of continuing public interest; (3) the opinion directs attention to the shortcomings of existing common law or inadequacies in statutes; (4) the opinion resolves an apparent conflict of authority. Most High Court decisions are routine in nature and generally are of interest only to the parties. The public can get copies of these decisions upon request to the Clerk of the Courts.

### C. Traditional Rights Court

Assisting the High Court at the trial level is the Traditional Rights Court (“TRC”). The TRC is a special-jurisdiction court of record consisting of three or more judges appointed for terms of four to 10 years, but not to exceed age 72, and selected to include a fair representation of all classes of land rights: Irojlaplap (high chief); where applicable, Irojdedrik (lesser chief); Alap (head of commoner/worker clan); and Dri Jermal (commoner/worker).

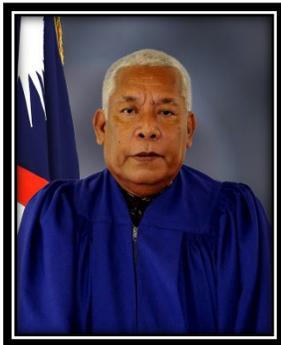
The jurisdiction of the TRC is limited to questions relating to titles to land rights or other legal interests depending wholly or partly on customary law and traditional practices. The jurisdiction

of the TRC may be invoked as of right upon application by a party to a pending High Court proceeding, provided the High Court judge certifies that a substantial question has arisen within the jurisdiction of the TRC.

Customary law questions certified by the High Court are decided by the TRC panel and reported back to the High Court. Upon request by the TRC’s presiding judge, a party, or the referring High Court judge, the Chief Justice of the High Court may appoint a High Court or District Court judge to sit with the TRC to make procedural and evidentiary rulings. In such joint-hearing cases, the High Court or District Court judge does not participate with the TRC in deliberations on its opinion, but the High Court or District Court judge may, in the presence of the parties or their counsel, answer questions of law or procedure posed by the TRC. The TRC’s jurisdiction also includes rendering an opinion on whether compensation for the taking of land rights in eminent domain proceedings is just.



The Constitution states that the High Court is to give decisions of the TRC substantial weight, but TRC decisions are not binding unless the High Court concludes that justice so requires. The Supreme Court has held the High Court is to review and adopt the TRC’s findings unless the findings are clearly erroneous or contrary to law.



In January 2021, the Cabinet and Nitijela elevated Judge Leban (Dri Jerbal member) from associate judge to the chief judge. Her appointment was for a 10-year term. She had been an associate judge for more than 10 years. Associate Judge Nixon David (Iroj member) was reappointed for a third four-year term in April 2021. In February 2021, the Cabinet appointed, and the Nitijela’s confirmed, another woman to the TRC bench, Claire T. Loeak. Judge Loeak (Alap member) is the first law-trained TRC judge. Her appointment was for 10 years. In 2022, all TRC judges attended judicial development training programs.

Although two of the three TRC judges are women, only four of the Judiciary’s approximately 30 judges were women: one High Court justice; two Traditional Rights Court judges; and one Community Court judge.



In 2025, the TRC issued 10 decisions, three more than in 2024. At the end of 2025 approximately 8 of 36 pending land cases were before the TRC and another two were pending the outcome of related cases.

The TRC’s decisions can be found on the Judiciary’s website, <http://rmicourts.org/>, under the heading Court Decisions and Digests.

## D. District Court



In addition to the TRC, the District Court is below the High Court at the trial level. The District Court is a limited-jurisdiction court of record. It consists of a presiding judge and two associate judges appointed for 10-year terms, not to exceed age 72. In 2025, the 3 incumbent judges were Presiding Judge Ablos Tarry Paul, Associate Judge Caios Lucky, and Associate Judge Alexander Capelle (Ebeye). Their 10-year terms expire in 2028, 2027, and 2026, respectively. Associate

Judge Caios Lucky resigned in August 2025. In October 2025, Associate Judge Ingrid K. Kabua was appointed to the position. Her 10-year term is set to expire in 2035. Prior to her appointment, she served for many years as Chief Clerk.



The current District Court judges are lay judges who receive specialized training. The District Court has original jurisdiction concurrent with the High Court:

- (i) in civil cases where the amount claimed or the value of the property involved does not exceed \$10,000 (excluding matters within the exclusive jurisdiction of the High Court by Constitution or statute, such as land title cases and admiralty and maritime matters) and small claim cases not exceeding \$2,500.
- (ii) in criminal cases involving offenses for which the maximum penalty does not exceed a fine of \$5,000 or imprisonment for a term of less than 3 years, or both.

The District Court also has appellate jurisdiction to review any decision of a Community Court.

The District Court's 2025 case statistics and case workload are set forth below.

### 1. Traffic Cases (Majuro)

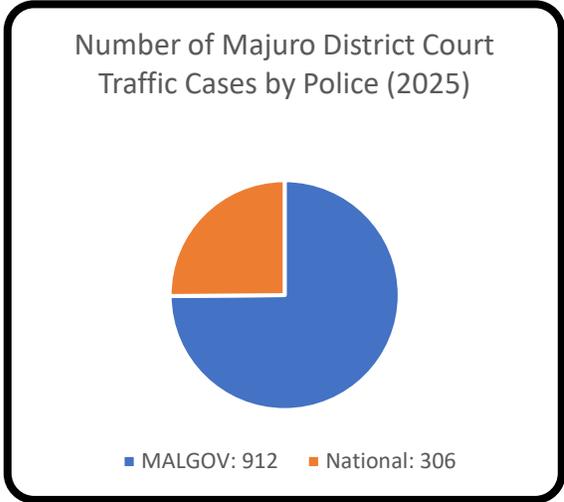
- the number and nature of traffic cases;
- annual clearance rates for the most recent five years;
- the average duration of cleared cases for the most recent five years;
- the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of appealed cases overturned on appeal; and

- affordability and accessibility in terms of fee waivers, cases heard outside of Majuro (the Capital), legal aid, and forms.

**a. Number and Nature of Cases Filed**

In 2025, the National Police and Majuro Atoll Local Government Police prosecutors filed in the District Court a total of 1218 traffic cases in Majuro.

Of the 1218 traffic cases filed in 2025, there were 1880 charges.<sup>1</sup>The 1880 charges are as follows (by most number of cases): 330 No Registration Card; 328 Driving without license in possession; 163 Driving with no license issued; 152 Failure to use seat belt; 142 Driving under the influence; 170 Driving without Chauffeur’s in Possession or License Issued/Revoked; 110 Failure to Signal Stopping or Turning; 71 Illegal Stopping, Standing, and Parking; 73 Disobeying traffic signs; 53 Negligent Driving; 46 Failure to Yield; 40 Faulty Head lights; 37 Overcrowding Pickup and Illegal Riding; 32 Faulty Brakes; 32 Unsafe Passing; 21 Reckless Driving; 19 Faulty Taillights; 18 Obligations of Insured; 13 Excessive Speeding; 11 Obstruction of Driver’s View or Driving Mechanism; 10 No License Plate; 3 Failure to Register Motor Vehicle; 2 Unattended Vehicle; 2 Failure of Bus Driver to use Red Flag Signal; and 1 Failure to use Safety Helmet. Of these 1218 Majuro traffic cases, 221 were women defendants.

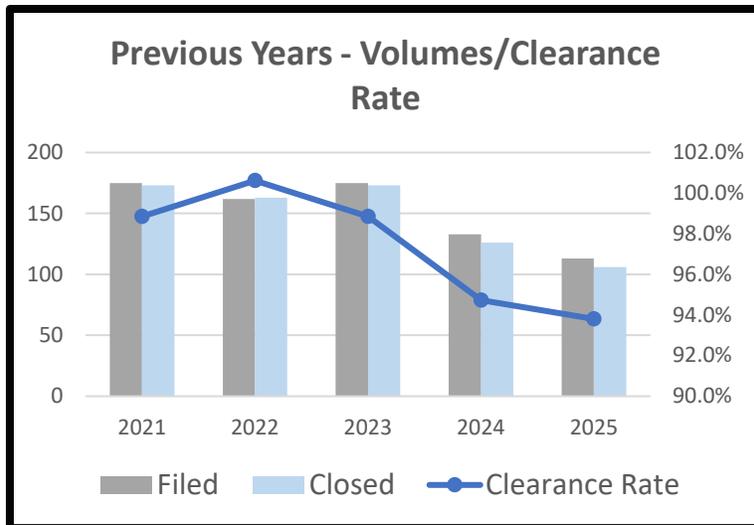


Of the 1218 traffic cases filed in Majuro in 2025, 1188 cases were finalized in 2025, adding 30 cases to the pending workload at the end of the year. Cases are delayed because the defendants give false addresses or have fled the Republic for the United States or have fled Majuro for the neighboring islands.

**b. Clearance Rates**

The District Court’s efficiency can be measured by case clearance rates. The District Court’s 2025 annual clearance rate for traffic cases was 99% (finalized/ filed). During 2025, the District Court, counsel, and parties finalized 1206 cases, 1188 2025 cases, and 18 2024 cases. And as noted above, the government filed 1218 new cases in 2025. The District Court’s goal is to maintain an annual clearance rate for traffic cases of 100% or better, for each year. Over the past five years, the District Court has achieved a total clearance rate of 101%.

<sup>1</sup> Traffic Defendants can be charged with multiple traffic violations.



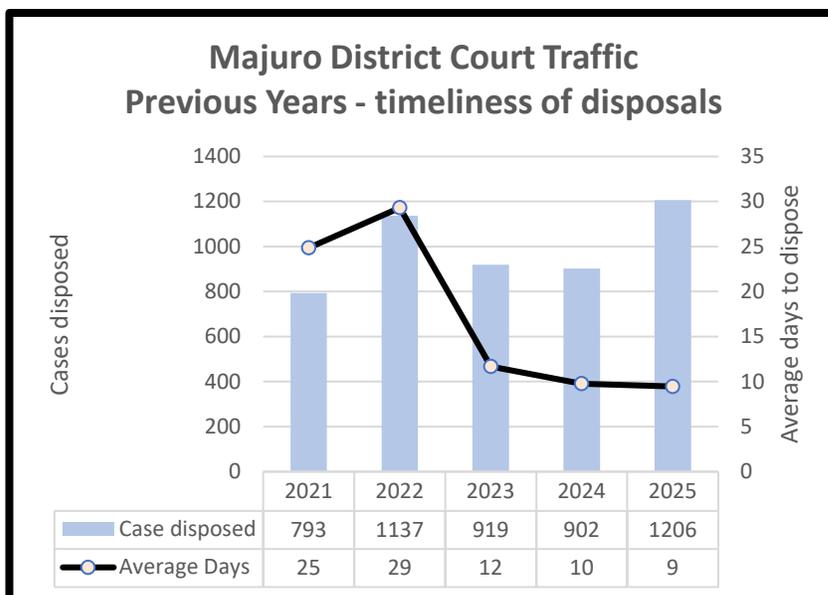
Majuro District Court Traffic Cases			
Previous Calendar Years	Filed	Closed	Clearance Rate
2021	767	793	103.4%
2022	1121	1137	101.4%
2023	897	919	102.5%
2024	903	902	99.9%
<b>2025</b>	<b>1218</b>	<b>1206</b>	<b>99.0%</b>
<b>Total/clearance rate</b>	<b>4906</b>	<b>4957</b>	<b>101.0%</b>

The District Court each month dismisses without prejudice abandoned cases that have been pending six months or more.

**c. Average Duration of Traffic Cases Cleared**

The average duration of District Court traffic cases cleared in 2025 was 9 days. A total of 1188 2025 cases, and 18 2024 cases were finalized in 2025.

For Majuro District Court traffic cases filed in the five years (2021-2025), the average durations of finalized cases in days are as follows:



**d. Appeals**

In addition to measuring efficiency, it is important to review the quality of judgments. The quality of judgments can be measured in two ways: the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of appealed cases overturned on appeal.

In 2025, none of the 1206 Majuro District Court traffic cases cleared in 2025 were appealed to the High Court and remanded back to the District Court. Furthermore, from 2020 to 2024, only two traffic case were appealed to the High Court.

**e. Affordability and Accessibility: Fee Waivers; Cases Heard Outside of Majuro; Legal Aid; and Forms**

As noted earlier, it is not enough that courts be efficient and that the quality of judgment be high. The courts must be affordable and accessible. Affordability and accessibility to justice may be measured in terms of the availability of fee waivers, the number of cases heard outside of the capital Majuro, the availability of free legal service, and the availability of forms.

**(i) Fee Waivers**

As there are no filing fees for traffic cases, fee waivers are not applicable.

**(ii) Cases Heard on Ebeye**

A third District Court judge is stationed in Ebeye to handle District Court matters including traffic cases filed there.

### (iii) Free Legal Services

At the District Court level, most traffic offenders are self-represented. Only in more serious cases, such as those involving DUI, do they seek legal assistance and representation by the MLSC or the OPD, which both provide free legal assistance. Of the 1218 traffic cases filed in Majuro in 2025, only 219 defendants (17.98%) were represented by the OPD, 998 represented themselves (81.94%), and 1 was represented by private counsel (0.08%).

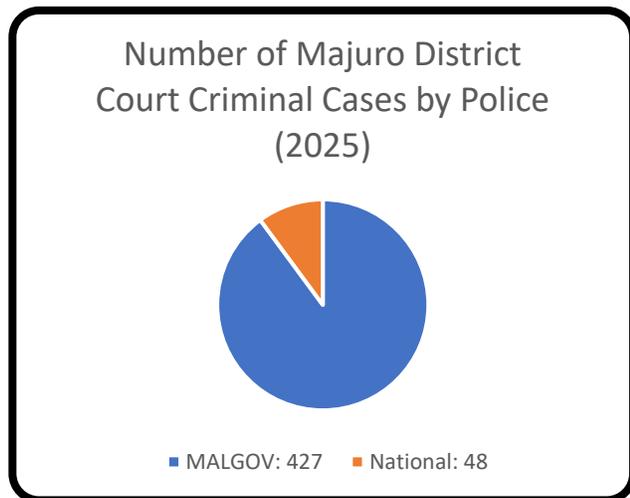
### (iv) Forms

Consent judgment forms are available at the Clerk’s Office for traffic offenders who wish to plead guilty and pay a fine. Those who use the form do not have to appear in court.

## 2. Criminal Cases (Majuro)

The District Court’s 2025 statistics for Majuro criminal cases cover the following:

- the number and nature of cases filed and finalized in 2025;
- the annual clearance rates for the most recent five years;
- the average duration of cleared cases in the most recent five years;
- the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of appealed cases overturned on appeal; and
- accessibility in terms of fee waivers, cases heard outside of Majuro, legal aid, and forms.



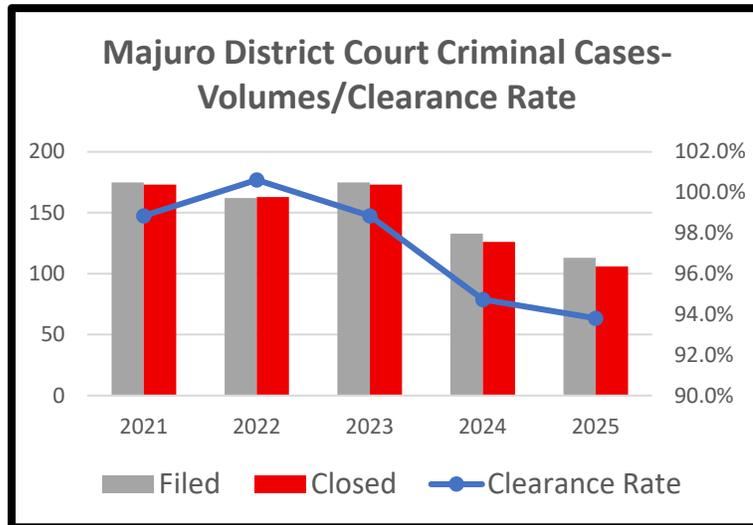
### a. Number and Nature of Cases Filed

In 2025, the National Police and Majuro Atoll Local Government Police prosecutors filed in the District Court a total of 475 criminal cases in Majuro.

Of the 475 criminal cases, 460 were cleared in 2025, leaving 15 pending at the end of the year. The 15 cases remained pending due to serious nature, police having difficulty locating defendants who either relocated to the United States, or to the neighboring islands of the Republic, or gave false addresses.

**b. Clearance Rates**

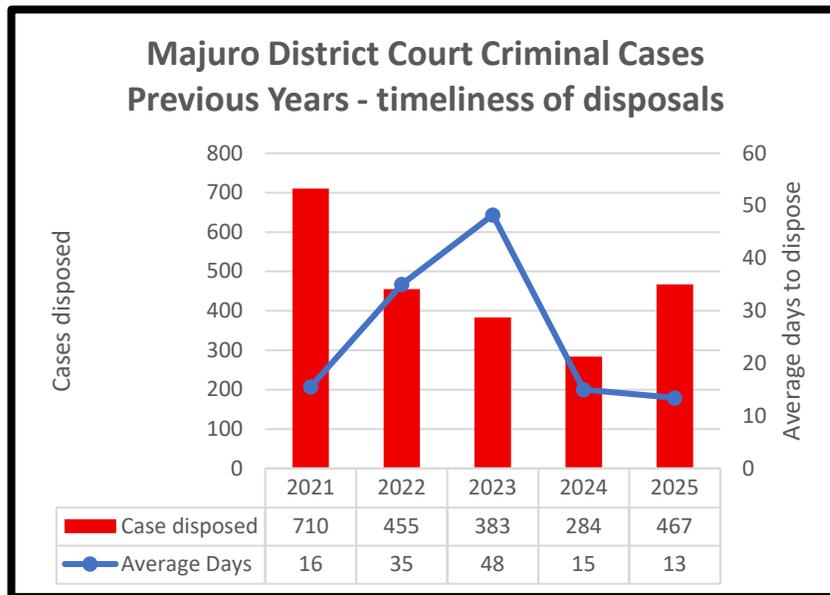
The District Court’s goal is to maintain an annual clearance rate for criminal cases of 100%, and a five-year clearance rate of 100%. As noted above, in 2025 the government filed 475 new cases. During 2025, the District Court, counsel, and parties closed a total of 467 cases, for an annual clearance rate of 98.3% (finalized/ filed). However, the clearance rate over five years was 100.5%, an excellent rate.



<b>Majuro District Court Criminal Cases</b>			
<b>Previous Calendar Years</b>	<b>Filed</b>	<b>Closed</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>2021</b>	715	710	99.3%
<b>2022</b>	501	455	90.8%
<b>2023</b>	312	383	122.8%
<b>2024</b>	284	284	100.0%
<b>2025</b>	475	467	98.3%
<b>Total/clearance rate</b>	<b>2287</b>	<b>2299</b>	<b>100.5%</b>

**c. Average Duration of Cleared Criminal Cases**

In addition to annual clearance rates, the efficiency of a case management system can be measured by the age of cleared cases. The average duration of District Court criminal cases cleared in 2025 was 13 days. A total of 460 2025 cases and 7 2024 cases were finalized in 2025.



**d. Appeals**

In addition to measuring efficiency, it is important to review the quality of judgments. The quality of judgments can be measured in two ways: the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of appealed cases overturned on appeal.

In 2025, none of the District Court criminal cases cleared in 2025 were appealed to the High Court. From 2020 to 2023 only 3 criminal cases were appealed, which 2 were dismissed and 1 case affirmed.

Furthermore, in 2025, there were no District Court criminal cases or decisions from any years overturned on appeal.

**e. Affordability and Accessibility: Fee Waivers; Cases Heard Outside of Majuro; Legal Aid; and Forms**

The courts must be affordable and accessible. Affordability and accessibility to justice may be measured in terms of the availability of fee waivers, the number of cases heard outside of the capital Majuro, the availability of free legal service, and the availability of forms.

**(i) Fee Waivers**

As there are no filing fees for criminal cases, fee waivers are not applicable.

**(ii) Cases Heard on Ebeye**

A third District Court judge is stationed in Ebeye to handle District Court matters including criminal cases filed there.

**(iii) Free Legal Services**

At the District Court level, most defendants are self-represented. Only in more serious cases, such as those involving selling alcohol to minors and assault and battery, do defendants seek legal assistance and representation by the MLSC or the OPD, which both provide free legal assistance. Of the 475 criminal cases filed in 2025, there were 477 defendants. Of the 477 defendants, 64 (13.4%) were represented by the OPD, 412 represented themselves (86.4%), and 1 was represented by private counsel (0.2%).

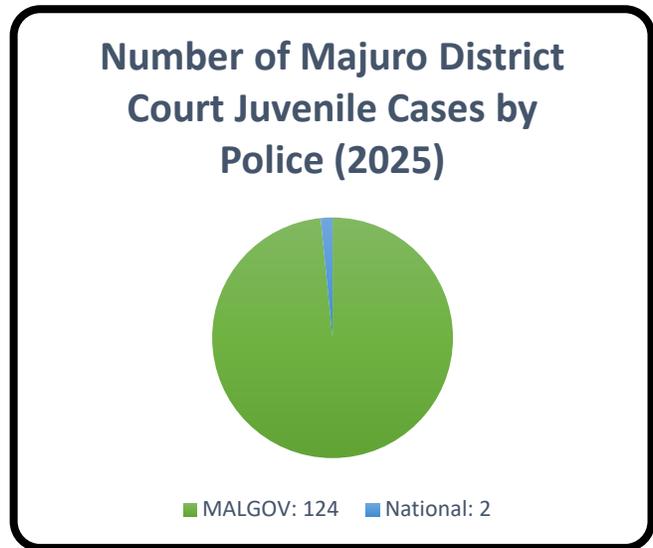
**(iv) Forms**

Consent judgment forms are available at the Clerk’s Office for defendants who wish to plead guilty and pay a fine. Those who use the form do not have to appear in court.

**3. Juvenile Cases (Majuro)**

The District Court’s 2025 statistics for juvenile cases cover the following:

- the number and nature of cases filed and finalized in 2025;
- the annual clearance rates for the most recent five years;
- the average duration of cleared cases;
- the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of cases overturned on appeal; and
- accessibility in terms of fee waivers, cases heard outside of Majuro, legal aid, and forms.



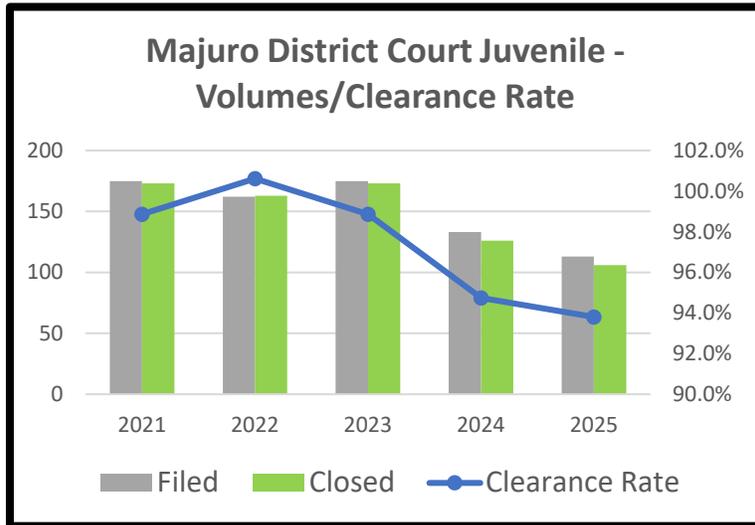
**a. Number and Nature of Cases Filed**

In 2025, the Majuro Atoll Local Government Police prosecutors filed in the District Court a total of 126 juvenile cases in Majuro. Of the 126 juvenile cases filed, 105 cases involved curfew violations, 10 cases involved underage drinking and alcohol related charges; 8 cases involved traffic related charges; and 3 ordinance related cases.<sup>2</sup>

The 126 juvenile cases filed in Majuro in 2025 were all cleared in 2025, leaving no pending cases at the end of the year.

**b. Clearance Rates**

The District Court’s efficiency in handling juvenile cases can be measured by case clearance rates. The District Court’s 2025 annual clearance rate for juvenile cases was 100%. During 2025, the District Court, counsel, and parties closed all 126 cases filed in 2025. The District Court’s goal is to maintain an annual clearance rate for juvenile cases of 100% or better, for each year.



Majuro District Court Juvenile Cases			
Previous Calendar Years	Filed	Closed	Clearance Rate
2021	38	37	97.4%
2022	45	47	104.4%
2023	66	66	100.0%

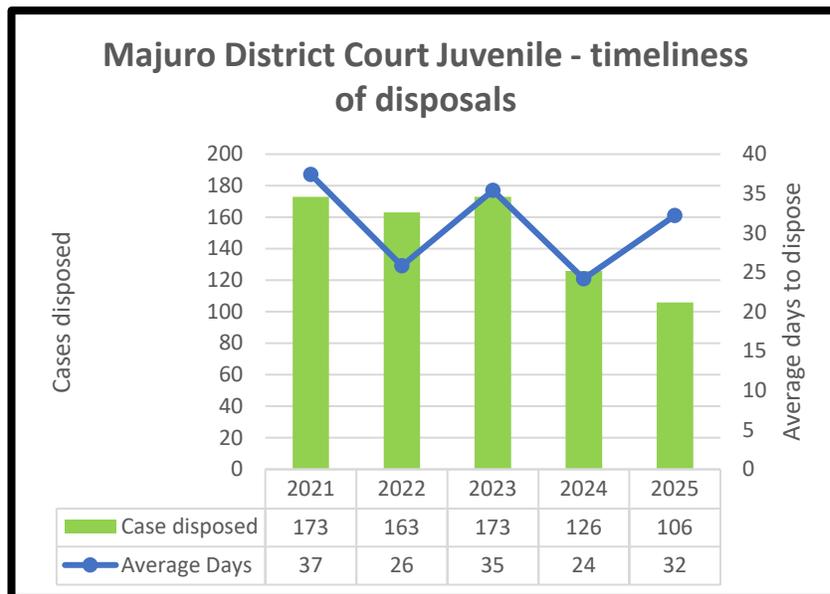
<sup>2</sup> Littering in Public Main Road, Selling Cigarettes by Piece, & Package Store Hour of Operation

<b>2024</b>	65	65	100.0%
<b>2025</b>	126	126	100.0%
<b>Total/clearance rate</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100.3%</b>

The District Court each month dismisses without prejudice abandoned cases that have been pending six months or more.

**c. Average Duration of Cleared Juvenile Cases**

In addition to annual clearance rates, the efficiency of a case management system can be measured by the age of cleared cases. The average duration of District Court juvenile cases cleared in 2025 was 10 days.



**d. Appeals**

The quality of judgments can be measured in two ways: the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of appealed cases overturned on appeal.

In 2025, none of the 126 District Court juvenile cases cleared in 2025 were appealed to the High Court. Similarly, from 2013 to 2023 no juvenile cases were appealed.

Furthermore, in 2025, there were no District Court juvenile cases or decisions from earlier years overturned on appeal.

#### **e. Affordability and Accessibility: Fee Waivers; Cases Heard Outside of Majuro; Legal Aid; and Forms**

The courts must be affordable and accessible. Affordability and accessibility to justice may be measured in terms of the availability of fee waivers, the number of cases heard outside of the capital Majuro, the availability of free legal service, and the availability of forms.

##### **(i) Fee Waivers**

As there are no filing fees for juvenile cases, fee waivers are not applicable.

##### **(ii) Cases Heard on Ebeye**

A third District Court judge is stationed in Ebeye to handle District Court matters including juvenile cases filed there.

##### **(iii) Free Legal Services**

At the District Court level, most juvenile offenders are self-represented. Only in more serious cases do they seek legal assistance and representation by the MLSC or the OPD, which both provide free legal assistance. Of the 126 juvenile cases filed in 2025, only 2 juvenile offenders were represented by the OPD (2%) and 124 represented themselves (98%). Similarly, in previous years, the number of juvenile offenders represented by the OPD or by private counsel has been very low.

##### **(iv) Forms**

Although consent judgment forms are available at the Clerk's Office for offenders who wish to plead guilty and pay a fine, these forms are not applicable for juvenile matters as juvenile cases are treated differently. It is a requirement that all juvenile offenders must attend Court with the presence of a parent and counsel.

#### **4. Small Claims Cases (Majuro)**

The District Court's 2025 statistics for Majuro small claims cases cover the following:

- the number and nature of cases filed and finalized in 2025;
- the annual clearance rates for the most recent five years;
- the average duration of cleared cases;
- the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of cases overturned on appeal; and

- affordability and accessibility in terms of fee waivers, cases heard outside of Majuro, legal aid, and forms.

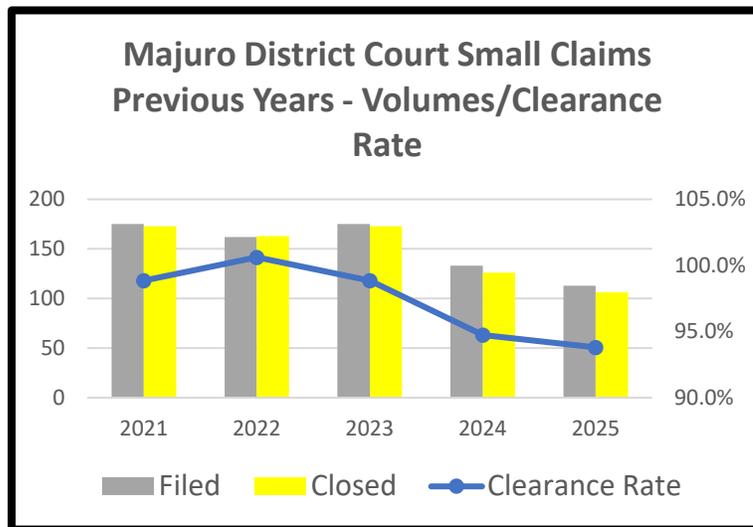
**a. Number of Cases Filed**

In 2025, a total of 113 small claims cases were filed in Majuro.

Of the 113 small claims cases filed in Majuro in 2025, 91 were cleared in 2025, leaving 22 pending cases at the end of the year.

**b. Clearance Rates**

The District Court’s 2025 annual clearance rate for small claims cases was 93.8%. However, the clearance rate over five years was 97.8%, an excellent rate. During 2025, the District Court, counsel, and parties closed 91 2025 cases and 16 2024 cases. And as noted in the chart below, 113 new cases were filed in 2025. The District Court’s goal is to maintain an annual clearance rate for small claims cases of 100% or better, for each year.



Majuro District Court Small Claims			
Previous Calendar Years	Filed	Closed	Clearance Rate
2021	175	173	98.9%
2022	162	163	100.6%
2023	175	173	98.9%

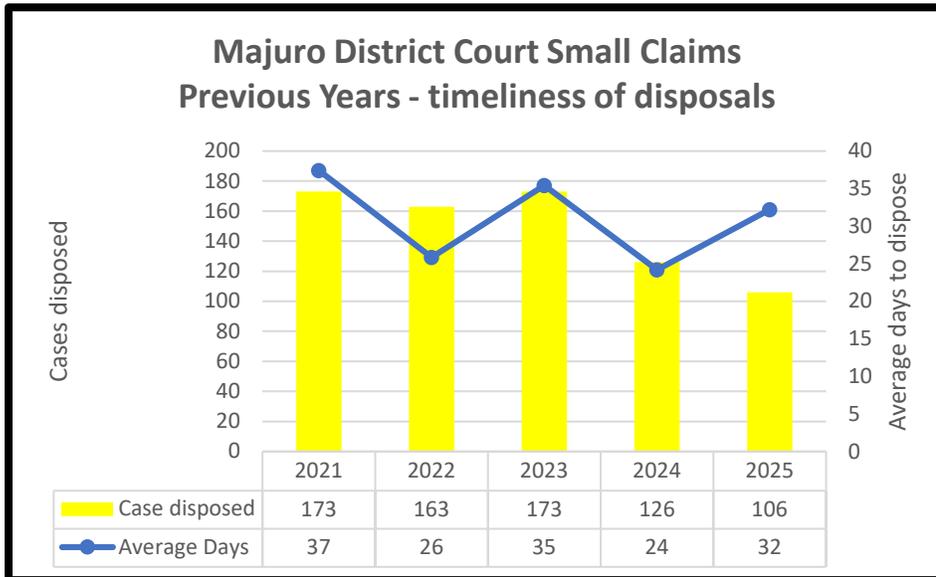
<b>2024</b>	133	126	94.7%
<b>2025</b>	113	106	93.8%
<b>Total/clearance rate</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>97.8%</b>

**c. Average Duration of Cleared Small Claims Cases**

In addition to annual clearance rates, the efficiency of a case management system can be measured by the age of cleared cases.

The average duration of District Court small claims cases cleared in 2025 was 32 days.

For Majuro District Court small claims cases cleared in the past five years (2021-2024), the average duration of cleared cases in days were as follows:



**d. Appeals**

In addition to measuring efficiency, it is important to review the quality of judgments. The quality of judgments can be measured in two ways: the percentage of cases appealed and the percentage of appealed cases overturned on appeal.

In 2025, none of the 106 District Court small claims cases cleared in 2025 were appealed to the High Court. Similarly, from 2020 to 2023 only one small claims case was appealed.

Furthermore, in 2025, there were no District Court small claims cases or decisions from any years overturned on appeal.

**e. Affordability and Accessibility: Fee Waivers; Cases Heard Outside of Majuro; Legal Aid; and Forms**

It is not enough that courts be efficient and that the quality of judgment be high. The courts must be affordable and accessible. Affordability and accessibility to justice maybe measured in terms of the availability of fee waivers, the number of cases heard outside of the capital Majuro, the availability of free legal service, and the availability of forms.

**(i) Fee Waivers**

Although, by rule and statute, fee waivers are available upon a showing of need, plaintiffs did not request a fee waiver in any of the 2025 District Court small claims cases. The filing fee for small claims cases remains low at only \$5 dollars.

**(ii) Cases Heard on Ebeye**

A third District Court judge is stationed in Ebeye to handle District Court matters including small claims cases filed there.

**(iii) Free Legal Services**

At the District Court level, most plaintiffs and defendants in small claims cases are self-represented. Only in a few cases do defendants seek legal assistance and representation by the MLSC or the OPD, which both provide free legal assistance. Of the 113 small claims cases filed in 2025, 0 plaintiffs were represented by MLSC. All appeared *pro se*. Of the 113 cases filed in 2025, there were a total of 116 defendants. Of the 116 defendants, 3 were represented by the OPD (2.6%), 1 by a private attorney (0.9%), and all others appeared *pro se* (96.5%).

**(iv) Forms**

Small claims forms are available on the court's website ([www.rmicourts.org](http://www.rmicourts.org)) or at the Clerk's Office.

In summary, a total of 1,944 cases were filed in the Majuro District Court: 1218 traffic cases; 475 criminal and local government ordinance cases; 126 juvenile cases; 113 small claims cases; and 12 other civil cases.

**5. Caseload for Judges and Clerks (Majuro)**

In 2025, the average number of new cases heard by the two District Court judges in Majuro was 972 cases, and the average number of new cases per court clerk was the same.

## **6. Ebeye**

In 2025 on Ebeye, cases were filed in the District Court:

- 75 traffic cases (60 cleared and 15 pending);
- 74 criminal & local government ordinance cases (72 cleared and 2 pending);
- 130 juvenile cases (119 cleared and 11 pending); and
- 0 small claim cases (0 cleared and 0 pending).

No 2025 Ebeye District Court cases were appealed or overturned on appeal.

In the 2025 Ebeye District Court small claims cases, traffic cases, criminal and local government ordinance cases, and juvenile cases most of the parties were self-represented. Only in 2 defendants in criminal cases and 4 in traffic cases were represented by the OPD.

## **E. Community Courts**

On the neighboring islands (excluding Kwajalein Atoll, which has a District Court), the Judiciary has Community Courts. A Community Court is a limited-jurisdiction court of record for a local government area, of which there are 22. Each Community Court consists of a presiding judge and such number of associate judges, if any, as the Judicial Service Commission may appoint. Appointments are made for terms of up to six years, but not to exceed age 72. Community Court judges are lay judges with limited training. A Community Court has original jurisdiction concurrent with the High Court and the District Court within its local government area:

(i) in all civil cases where the amount claimed or the value of the property involved does not exceed \$1,000 (excluding matters within the exclusive jurisdiction of the High Court by Constitution or statute, such as land title cases and admiralty and maritime matters) and

(ii) in all criminal cases involving offenses for which the maximum penalty does not exceed a fine of \$400 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, or both.

At the end of 2025, there were 20 serving Community Court judges and 10 vacancies. At the date of this report, there are 10 vacancies for which the Commission is waiting recommendations from local government councils: Ailinglaplap; Enewetak; Lib; Likiep; Mili; Namdrik; Namu; Rongelap; Ujae; and Wotho.

Community court judges receive training after being appointed, when they come to Majuro for biennial summer conferences, and on other occasions. The Judiciary encourages all Community Court judges who are in Majuro for other business to stop by the courthouse and arrange for training opportunities with the District Court judges. The Judiciary intends to continue providing such trainings for Community Court judges.

## F. Travel to the Neighboring Islands and Ebeye

The Judiciary also travels to the neighboring islands on an as-needed basis.

If the OAG, the OPD, and the MLSC were to station attorneys on Ebeye full time, the Ebeye caseload would increase as in the past providing greater access to justice.

If the Government cannot afford to station attorneys full-time on Ebeye, the Judiciary would request that at the very least the Office of the OAG and OPD receive funding to employ trial assistants on Ebeye. This was the practice until relatively recently. Defendants brought before the District Court on Ebeye on criminal charges have a constitutional right to legal counsel.

## G. Other Services: Births, Deaths, Marriages, Notarizations, etc.

In addition to deciding cases, the courts help the people through confirming delayed registrations of births and death, performing marriages, notarizing, and certifying documents, and issuing record checks. The courts offer these services on no or little notice. However, couples usually schedule marriages one to three days in advance. Marriages by non-citizens must first be approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



**1. Majuro.** In 2025 on Majuro, the High Court and the District Court processed 272 delayed registrations of birth, 5 delayed registrations of death, and performed 61 marriages. The clerks notarized 976 documents, of which 31 were notarized off site to accommodate disabled persons. Upon request, clerks will go to the hospital or homes to notarize documents for those who cannot travel to the courthouses. Also, the clerks issued 15 apostilles, certified 215 documents, 82 criminal record checks, no civil record checks, and 208 corporate litigation checks.

**2. Ebeye.** In 2025 on Ebeye, the District Court processed 75 delayed registrations of birth, no delayed registrations of death, and performed 8 marriages. The Ebeye clerk also notarized 170 documents.

**3. Neighboring Islands.** In 2025, a District Court judge and clerk traveled to 10 neighboring islands with the Early Childhood Development (“ECD”) Team and processed 392 delayed registrations of birth and performed 34 marriages. To date in 2026, a District Court judge and clerk traveled with the ECD Team for a trip to one neighboring island and traveled with the Social Security Administration’s ERNA Team to 10 neighboring islands. The District Court judge and clerk have processed 134 delayed registrations of birth and performed 18 marriages on the neighboring islands in 2026.

The five-year totals for birth, deaths, marriages, and notarizations are as shown below.

<b>Birth, Deaths, Etc. 2020-2025 (Majuro, Ebeye, and Neighboring Islands)</b>					
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Births</b>	248	269	265	380	739
<b>Deaths</b>	4	3	3	2	5
<b>Marriages</b>	29	36	39	51	103
<b>Notarizations</b>	1,552	912	876	911	1,146
<b>Certified Documents</b>	219	194	187	240	215
<b>Apostille Cert's</b>	5	6	12	19	15
<b>Criminal Checks</b>	29	40	189	254	82
<b>Corporate Checks</b>	304	188	291	219	208

## H. Court Staff



In 2025, the Judiciary's staff included the following: a chief clerk of the courts, seven assistant clerks (one in Ebeye), three bailiffs (seconded from the National Police), and two maintenance workers. The chief clerk and four of the seven assistant clerks were women. A listing of the judiciary personnel at the end of the year is attached as Appendix 2.

In addition to their administrative responsibilities, the clerks also serve as interpreters from Marshallese to English and English to Marshallese. The clerks also assist unrepresented court-users in completing forms.

The Office of the Clerk of the Courts is open 8:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. In case of emergencies, the courts will open on weekends and holidays. The contact information for the Majuro and the Ebeye Courthouses is as follows:

Majuro Courthouse  
P.O. Box B  
Majuro, MH 96960  
Tel.: (011-692) 625-3201/3297  
Email: [Marshall.Islands.Judiciary@gmail.com](mailto:Marshall.Islands.Judiciary@gmail.com)

The Majuro Courthouse is located in Uliga Village, Majuro Atoll, across from the Uliga Dock.

Ebeye Courthouse  
P.O. Box 5944  
Ebeye, Kwajalein Atoll, MH 96970

Tel.: (011-692) 329-4032  
Email: [ebeyecourthouse@gmail.com](mailto:ebeyecourthouse@gmail.com)

The Ebeye Courthouse is located behind the Police Station on the Oceanside.

## **I. Professional Development and Regional Conferences**

Managing the Judiciary’s personnel in accordance with sound leadership and management practices is the fourth goal of the Judiciary’s 2024-2028 Strategic Plan. In most years, all permanent justices and judges of the Supreme Court, the High Court, the Traditional Rights Court, the District Court, and court clerks attend at least one workshop and conference each year to further develop their knowledge and skills. Funding for such programs come from the Judiciary’s annual operating budget, the Compact of Free Association, New Zealand, and Australia. The Judiciary’s 2025 professional development activities are set forth below.

From January 27 to 29, 2025, Supreme Court Chief Justice Daniel N. Cadra and High Court Chief Justice Carl B. Ingram attended the Midwinter Workshop for Judges of the Ninth Circuit in San Diego, California. The Workshop activities include the following: Hot Topics in Criminal Law and Procedure; Changes in Judicial Culture; Basics of Sentencing Revisited or Facts Outside the Record; and Breathe & Flow: Yoga & Breathwork for Everyone; Election Law; Federal Indian Law; Luncheon with the Chief Circuit Judge; The State of the Administrative State or Tribal Courts; Book Review, “The Schoolhouse Gate: Public Education, the Supreme Court, and the Battle for the American Mind”; Mindfulness and Judging; Supreme Court Review; and discussions on recent Ninth Circuit Decisions.

From February 5 to 14, 2025, High Court Chief Justice Ingram attended in Auckland, New Zealand, both the 2025 Pacific Judicial Conference (“PJC”) and the 2025 Pacific Justice Sector Program (“PJSP”) Chief Justices’ Leadership Conference. The PJC included a customary greeting ceremony and presentations on judicial independence, the rule of law, the promise and perils of technology, strength in diversity, the place of custom, and climate change litigation. At the PJC, Chief Justice Ingram presented a paper on use of AI by the courts. The subsequent PJSP conference included presentations on judiciary wellbeing, access to judicial training funds for Pacific Islands judiciaries, the court and media including social media, PJSP’s Pacific Judicial Digital strategy, and PJSP’s Pacific Judicial Leadership Strategy. With respect to the PJSP, Chief Justice Ingram attended an Executive Commit meeting representing judiciaries from the Micronesia region.

From March 17 to 28, 2025, newly appointed Community Court judges Riaje Langrine (Maloelap), Gabriel Beasha (Wotje), Aelon Moses (Jaluit), Wilton Bruno (Mili), Edwin Emmius (Mejit), and Artor Hesa (Arno) attended an orientation training/workshop at the courthouse in



Majuro. The workshop topics included review of the Community Court judge’s handbook on Civil and Criminal procedures, Case Management, Domestic Violence, Judicial Code of Conduct, the Independence of the Judiciary, Administering Oaths and Notarizing documents, Reporting requirements, and forms.

From June 17 to 20, 2025, Traditional Rights Court Chief Judge Grace Leban, Associate Judge Claire Loeak, and Chief Clerk of the Courts Ingrid K. Kabua attended the National Judicial College Court Administration Academy in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The course was designed to assist judges with the administrative side of the job, including case management flow, ethics, security, crisis management, and technology. Efficient court administration is crucial in a court’s success.



From July 18 to 20, 2025, Supreme Court Justice Cadra and High Court Associate Justice Anne Bodley attended the 25/26 Forum Fisheries Agency Judiciary Symposium in Honiara, Solomon Islands. The keynote address was delivered by Judge Kathy-Ann Brown of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, who addressed developments including the International Court of Justice’s Climate Change Advisory Opinion, efforts to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and the implications of Article 73 of the Law of the Sea Convention for prosecuting fisheries offences.

From July 20 to 24, 2025, Supreme Court Chief Justice Daniel N. Cadra and High Court Chief Justice Carl B. Ingram attended the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Monterey, California. The Conference sessions and activities included the following: Supreme Court Review; A Fireside Chat with the Honorable Janet Napolitano; Ninth Circuit Civics Contest Reception; When Disaster Strikes: Insiders’ Views on the Law of Catastrophe; AI and Copyright: A Sea Change or More of the Same?; and Ninth Circuit Pacific Islands Committee Lunch Meeting; Ethics and Civility in Civil Litigation: Upholding Integrity in the Courtroom; Wellness Program for Chief Judges; The Digital Divide – Bridging New Technologies and Traditional Evidence Standards: Are Changes Needed?; Legal Airwaves: Navigating the Law of Podcasting; Keynote Speaker and Lunch with Bryan Stevenson; Health and Incarceration; Trawling For Meaning After Loper Bright; and Conversation with the Justice Elena Kagan, Associate Justice, US Supreme Court.

From September 24 to 26, 2025 Supreme Court Chief Justice Daniel C. Cadra and High Court Chief Justice Carl B. Ingram attended the 2025 Joint Annual Northern Mariana Islands District Court Conference and the Pacific Judicial Council Mid-Year Conference in Saipan. The conference sessions and activities included the following: Artificial Intelligence by Ninth Circuit SJ Margaret McKeown; Intro to Statutory and Constitutional Interpretation; Pre-Trial Detention and Release Best Practices; Theories of Statutory Interpretation – the Role of Precedence and the

Canons of Construction; Judicial Conduct and Disability; Virtual Supreme Court Review; Constitutional Interpretation - Jurisdictional Independence of Judges; Doing Constitutional Interpretation; Development in AI; Islands Constitutional Review; Corpus Linguistics and Interpretation; and Pacific Islands Reports.

From October 27 to 29, 2025, the Marshall Islands Judiciary hosted the Pacific Islands Legal Institute (PILI) Fundamentals of Evidence Session at the Marshall Islands Resort in Majuro. Judges from RMI and FSM reviewed the Federal Rules of Evidence and learned how they may be applied to their jurisdictions.



It was a highly interactive seminar in which the judges vigorously examined the rules of evidence in the everyday courtroom setting, examining the evidentiary issues that cause the most difficulty for judges including ethical issues, relevancy, lay and expert witnesses, impeachment, privileges, best evidence and demonstrative evidence, authentication, hearsay and its exceptions, electronic evidence, and judicial notice.

From November 4 to 7, 2025, High Court Associate Justice Anne Bodley, District Court Associate Judges Ingrid Kabua and Alexander Capelle, Assistant Attorney Generals Cutty Wase and Maniana Muller attended the 2025 Pacific Judicial Council and American College of Trial Lawyers Trial Practice Training in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The training offered legal professionals to acquire essential knowledge, share best practices, and establish valuable connections with peers across Micronesia.



Various topics covered included: Application of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Practice; Strategies for Complex Litigation; Proportionate Discovery; Criminal Justice Reform; Effective Jury Selection; Damage Presentation; Litigating under Media Scrutiny; and the Latest Updates on Evidentiary Rules.

## **J. Court Rules and Relevant Statutes**

To enhance access to justice, the Judiciary regularly reviews and amends or seeks amendments of its rules of procedure, Evidence Act, and other statutes.

Over the past 10 years, the Judiciary has proposed more than 37 amendments to Acts.

The Judiciary also regularly updates rules of Marshall Islands Rules of Civil Procedure, the Marshall Islands Rules of Criminal Procedure, and the Supreme Court Rules of Procedure. However, in 2025, no amendments of court rules were proposed.

### **III. THE JUDICIAL SERVICE COMMISSION: JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS**

Along with the courts, the Constitution provides for a Judicial Service Commission (“JSC”), which consists of the Chief Justice of the High Court, as chair, the Attorney-General, and a private citizen selected by the Cabinet. The private member is Jennifer Hawley. The JSC nominates to the Cabinet candidates for appointment to the Supreme Court, High Court and Traditional Rights Court, and the Commission appoints judges to the District Court and the Community Courts. In appointing Community Court judges, the Commission takes into consideration the wishes of the local communities as expressed through their local government councils. The Commission also may make recommendations to the Nitijela regarding the qualifications of judges. In the exercise of its functions and powers, the Commission does not receive any direction from the Cabinet or from any other authority or person but acts independently. The Commission may make rules for regulating its procedures and generally for the better performance of its functions. The Commission also reviews complaint against judges.

In 2025, the Commission appointed acting TRC judges for four cases where a member of the permanent TRC panel had a conflict, and the Commission appointed six Community Court judges for five atolls. Also, the Commission recommended to the Cabinet reappointment of acting associate justices of the Supreme Court for sessions in 2026 and 2027.

### **IV. ACCOUNTABILITY: CODES OF CONDUCT AND COMPLAINTS**

The third goal of the Judiciary’s Strategic Plan includes “*to be accountable.*” To enhance its transparency and accountability, the Judiciary has adopted internationally recognized standards for judicial conduct and attorney conduct. These standards are available to the public as are the procedures for lodging complaints against judges, attorneys, and court staff.

With respect to judicial conduct, the Judiciary has adopted the Marshall Islands Code of Judicial Conduct 2008 (revised May 13, 2025). The Code is based principally upon the Bangalore Principles and the American Bar Association Model Code of Judicial Conduct. A copy of the Judiciary’s code can be found on its website, [www.rmicourts.org/](http://www.rmicourts.org/) under the heading “The Marshall Islands and Its Judiciary.” The provisions for lodging and processing complaints against judges start on page 12 of the code. In 2025, no complaints were lodged or pending against a judge.

With respect to attorney conduct, the Judiciary has adopted the American Bar Association’s Rules of Professional Conduct. Provisions for lodging and processing complaints against attorneys can be found on the Judiciary’s website under the heading “Rules of Admission and Practice.” The Supreme Court and High Court have appointed an attorney-committee to hear complaints. In 2025, no complaints were lodged or pending against attorneys.

With respect to court staff, the Judiciary maintains a complaint box at the courthouses. In 2025, no complaints were lodged against court staff.

## V. FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, AND LIBRARY

Administering the Judiciary’s buildings and equipment in accordance with sound management practices is the fifth goal of the Judiciary’s Strategic Plan.

### A. Facilities



Over the past decade, the Judiciary, with funding from court fees and from the Cabinet, the Nitijela, and the Republic of China (Taiwan), has renovated the Majuro Courthouse and the Ebeye Courthouse to make them safe, secure, and accessible. The projects have included renovating the Ebeye Courthouse, adding a ground-floor courtroom at the Majuro Courthouse, renovating of the chambers of the Traditional Rights Court in Majuro, repainting the Majuro Courthouse and replacing the roof, installing

a 100KVA backup generator for the Majuro Courthouse, and constructing a police substation next to the Majuro Courthouse.



Also, since 2017, the Judiciary has sought funding for a new courthouse on Kwajalein Atoll. The Ebeye Courthouse building has deteriorated to the point where it needs to be replaced. It is in very bad condition and cannot be expanded to meet the Judiciary’s and Kwajalein community’s needs. Unfortunately, funds initially allocated for this project in 2023 were diverted to other projects. The Judiciary has continued to request funding for a new Kwajalein courthouse.

### B. Technology

The courthouses on Majuro and Ebeye are equipped with computers, printers, and photocopiers and have Internet access via Starlink at 652 Mbps for downloads and 13 Mbps for uploads depending on the connection. For hearing, the Judiciary offers single-use Internet access to parties and counsel. Also, the Judicial permits the filing and service of documents via email attachment. The computers in Majuro are linked together in a network, and the Majuro Courthouse has five scanners with OSC software permitting the courts to scan documents and send them almost anywhere in the world.

Currently, the High Court permits off-island counsel to attend status and scheduling conferences via telephone and Zoom. Occasionally, uncontested matters may be heard via Zoom. However, only rarely for time sensitive matters are contested matter heard via Zoom.

### **C. Library**

The Judiciary has a small, but functional, law library. However, the Judiciary relies upon WestLaw for up-to-date access to United States case law and secondary sources.

## **VI. ANNUAL BUDGET AND AUDIT REPORT**

Managing the Judiciary’s financial resources in accordance with sound financial practices is the sixth goal of the Judiciary’s Strategic Plan. This is evidenced not only by the work of the courts, but also by the Judiciary’s management of the funds made available to it.

For FY 2025, the Nitijela appropriated \$1,186,253.00 for the Judiciary: \$948,508.00 for salaries and wages and \$237,745.00 for all others. Less audit expenses of \$9,416.00 paid out by the Ministry of Finance, a total of \$228.329.00 was paid to the Judiciary for its operational funds.

Of the \$948,508.00 appropriated for personnel in FY 2025, the Judiciary only expended \$714,042.85 due to unexpended salaries (which High Court, District Court, and staff positions have since been filed). The unspent personnel funds from FY 2025, \$234, 465.15, remained in the General Fund with the Ministry of Finance.

Of the \$237,745.00 appropriated in FY 2025 for all other expenses, \$9,416.00 was retained by the Ministry of Finance for audit expenses and the Judiciary expended or obligated the remaining \$228,329.00.

The Judiciary has segregated moneys collected from annual attorney fees for the Legal Aid Fund (“LAF”). As of September 30, 2025, the Judiciary had \$333,220.94 in its LAF account, much of which had been obligated for payment to attorneys to represent those who cannot offer an attorney and cannot be represented by the Micronesian Legal Aid Services Corporation and the OPD. As of September 30, 2025, the Legal Aid Fund TCD Account had a balance of \$255,234.83.

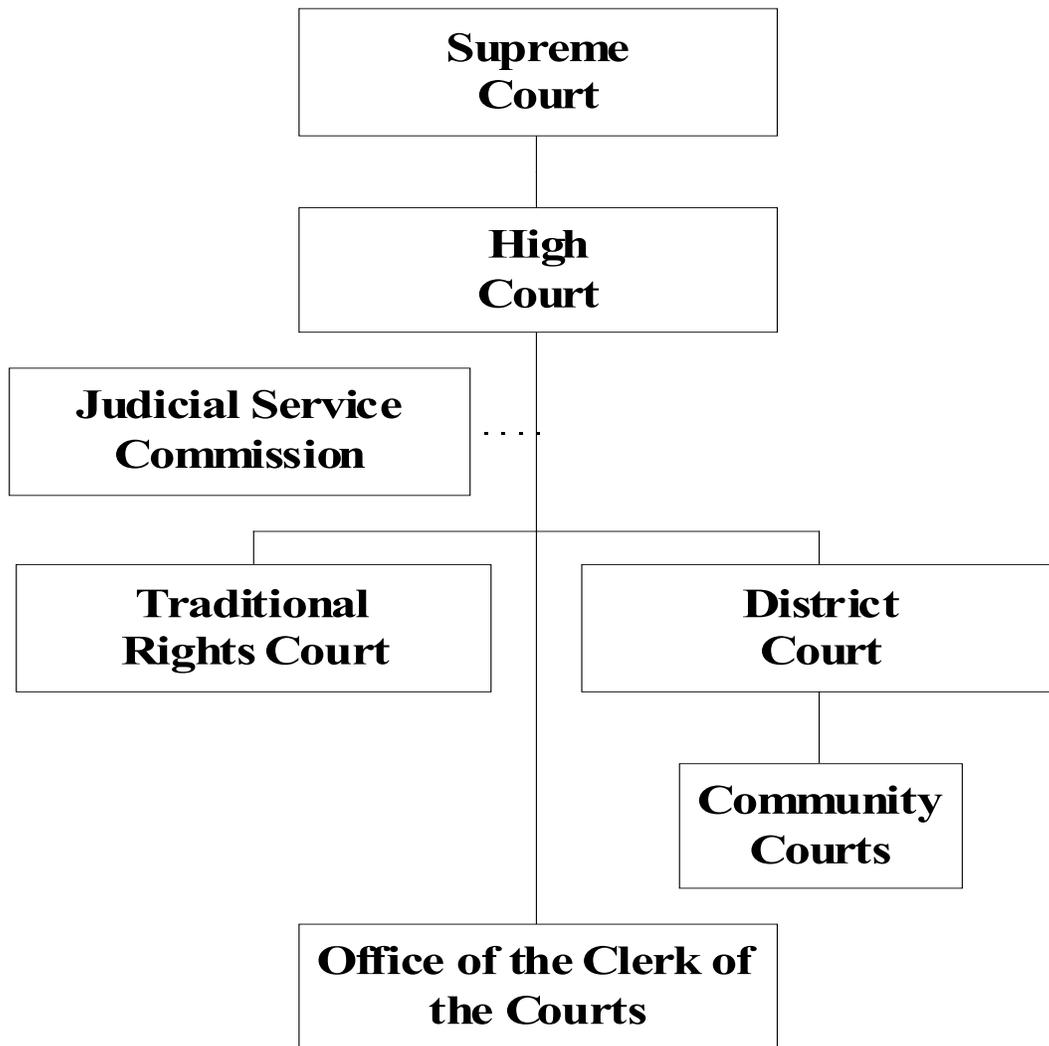
Apart from Nitijela appropriations, the Judiciary by Act has its own special revenue fund (“Judiciary Fund”). Court fines and fees (excluding national criminal fines and local government fines) collected by the Office of the Clerk of the Courts are deposited into this fund, as are funds from other sources. Collections by the Office of the Clerk of the Courts and deposited into the Judiciary Fund in FY 2025 totaled \$150,657.72. The fund balance at the



end of FY 2025, \$15,507.75 and monies collected in FY 2026 will be reserved for furnishing the new Ebeye courthouse and other emergency needs. The Ebeye Courthouse project is in the planning stage and most certainly will need much more additional funding.

For FY 2025, the Judiciary has contracted with Ernest and Young to audit the Marshall Islands Judiciary Fund, the Legal Aid Fund, the TCD accounts, and all Fiduciary accounts. As of the date of this report, the audit for FY2025 has not been completed but will commence as soon as the contract for EY is finalized. When the audit is completed, the Judiciary will amend the 2025 Annual Report to include the results of the audit.

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART  
FOR THE  
MARSHALL ISLANDS JUDICIARY**



### **JUDICIARY PERSONNEL**

#### **Justices and Judges**

Supreme Court Chief Justice Daniel N. Cadra (09/21/13-09/20/23)

High Court Chief Justice Carl B. Ingram (10/05/13-10/04/23)

High Court Associate Justice Witten T. Philippo (10/29/17-01/31/30)

High Court Associate Justice Ann Bodley (06/02/25-06/01/27)

Traditional Rights Court Chief Judge Grace L. Leban (02/30/20-12/30/30)

Traditional Rights Court Associate Justice Nixon David (04/07/25-04/23/30)

Traditional Rights Court Associate Justice Claire T. Loeak (05/17/21-05/16/31)

Presiding District Court Judge A. Tarry Paul (12/26/18-12/25/28)

Associate District Court Judge Alexander Capelle (Ebeye) (10/6/24-10/5/34)

Associate District Court Judge Ingrid K. Kabua (10/01/26-09/30/36)

Ailinglaplap Community Court Presiding Judge Mannu Rakin (03/01/25-03/01/31)

Ailinglaplap Community Court Associate Judge Lawday Kelen (12/12/22-12/11/28)

Ailinglaplap Community Court Associate Judge (vacant)

Ailuk Community Court Presiding Judge Tilly Menuna (11/14/24-11/13/30)

Arno Community Court Presiding Judge Batle Latdrik (08/05/24-08/04/30)

Arno Community Court Associate Judge Artor Hesa(8/5/24-8/4/30)

Arno Community Court Associate Judge Benjinej Kawe (08/05/24-08/04/30)

Aur Community Court Presiding Judge Benty Jikrok (03/03/23-03/02/29)

Bikini and Kili Community Court Presiding Judge Swinton Jakeo (03/09/20-03/08/26)

Ebon Community Court Presiding Judge Elson Naisher (05/13/24-05/12/30)

Enewetak and Ujelang Community Court Presiding Judge (vacant)

Jabat Community Court Presiding Judge Tari Jamodre (08/07/22-08/06/28)

Jaluit Community Court Presiding Judge Hertina Mejjena (12/03/18- resigned 03/22/24)

Jaluit Community Court Presiding Judge Marylee Jacob (11/03/24-11/02/30)

Lae Community Court Presiding Judge Island Langbata (08/17/25-08/16/31)

Lib Community Court Presiding Judge (vacant)

Likiep Community Court Presiding Judge (vacant)

Maloelap Community Court Presiding Judge Jobo Lauror (08/5/24-08/4/30)

Maloelap Community Court Associate Judge Riaje Langrine (08/5/24-8/4/30)

Mejit Community Court Presiding Judge Edwin Emmius (03/01/25-03/01/31)

Mili Community Court Presiding Judge (Vacant)

Mili Community Court Associate Judge Lowan Lalimo (03/01/25-03/01/31)

Namdrik Community Court Presiding Judge (vacant)  
Namu Community Court Presiding (vacant)  
Rongelap Community Court Presiding Judge (vacant)  
Ujae Community Court Presiding Judge (vacant)  
Utrik Community Court Presiding Judge Kobobo Kios (03/12/20-03/11/26)  
Wotho Community Court Presiding Judge (vacant)  
Wotje Community Court Presiding Judge Anjain Helbi, (05/27/18-05/26/24; 08/5/24-08/4/30)  
Wotje Community Court Associate Judge Gabriel Beasha(08/5/24-08/4/30)  
Unallocated (vacant)

### **Judicial Service Commission**

High Court Chief Justice Carl B. Ingram, Chair  
Attorney-General Bernard Adiniwin, Member  
Jennifer Hawley, Member Representing the Public

### **Staff**

Chief Clerk of the Courts Hainrick Moore  
Deputy Chief Clerk of the Courts Kristen Kaminaga  
Finance Office and Assistant Clerk of the Courts Tanya Lomae  
Assistant Clerk of the Courts Kaiboke Iseia  
Assistant Clerk of the Courts James Reimers  
Assistant Clerk of the Courts Junior Nathan  
Assistant Clerk of the Courts (vacant) (Ebeye)  
Assistant Clerk of the Courts (vacant)  
It Officer (vacant)  
Maintenance James Milne  
Part-time Custodian Jindrikdrik Joash  
Bailiff Moses Lautiej, Police Officer III  
Bailiff Clay Mielson, Officer III  
Bailiff Noland Tash, Policer Officer I  
Part-time Security Guard Henry Hiram

## **Appendix 3**

### **AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

(Awaiting audited Financial Statements from Ernst & Young)