

# Court Structure and Caseload Activity

The Unified Court System is comprised of 11 separate trial courts, an Appellate Division with four regional departments, an Appellate Term that hears appeals from certain trial courts in certain regions of the state, and the Court of Appeals — the highest court in the State.

## Appellate Courts

The Court of Appeals is the state’s court of last resort. It consists of the Chief Judge and six Associate Judges appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, to 14-year terms. The court’s caseload activity is reported in TABLE 1.

Table 1: Caseload Activity in Court of Appeals - 2023							
Applications Decided [CPL 460.20(3)(b)]							1,167
Records on Appeal Filed							129
Oral Arguments (Includes Submissions)							95
Appeals Decided							93
Motions Decided							861
Judicial Conduct Determinations Reviewed							1
Dispositions of Appeals Decided in the Court of Appeals by Basis of Jurisdiction							
BASIS OF JURISDICTION	AFFIRMED	REVERSED	MODIFIED	DISMISSED	OTHER*	TOTAL	
<b>All Cases:</b>							
Dissents in Appellate Division	7	5	0	0	0	12	
Permission of Court of Appeals or Judge thereof	24	23	2	1	0	50	
Permission of Appellate Division or Justice thereof	3	11	1	0	0	15	
Constitutional Question	2	0	1	0	0	3	
Stipulation for Judgment Absolute	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	1	1	1	10	13	
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>93</b>	
<b>Civil Cases:</b>							
Dissents in Appellate Division	7	5	0	0	0	12	
Permission of Court of Appeals	11	9	1	0	0	21	
Permission of Appellate Division	2	5	1	0	0	8	
Constitutional Question	2	0	1	0	0	3	
Stipulation for Judgment Absolute	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	1	1	1	10	13	
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>57</b>	
<b>Criminal Cases:</b>							
Permission of Court of Appeals Judge	13	14	1	1	0	29	
Permission of Appellate Division Justice	1	6	0	0	0	7	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	

\*Includes anomalies which did not result in an affirmation, reversal, modification or dismissal (e.g., judicial suspensions, acceptance of a case for review pursuant to Court Rule 500.27)

Below the Court of Appeals is the Appellate Division of State Supreme Court, a mid-level appellate court. The Presiding Justice and Associate Justices of the Appellate Division in each Judicial Department are designated by the Governor from among Justices elected to the Supreme Court. The Presiding Justices serve for the duration of the term for which they were elected to Supreme Court; the Associate Justices may serve terms of five years or of indeterminate length, depending on the seats they are appointed to fill. The Appellate Division's caseload activity is listed in TABLE 2.

	FIRST DEPT		SECOND DEPT		THIRD DEPT		FOURTH DEPT		TOTAL
	Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal	
<b>Records on Appeal Filed</b>	<b>1,555</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>2,468</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>7,344</b>
Disposed of before argument or submission (e.g., dismissed, withdrawn, settled):	2,295	375	3,751	257	1,181	148	0	0	8,007
Disposed of after argument or submission:									
Affirmed	844	348	1,343	296	450	214	334	309	4,138
Reversed	218	24	557	30	71	20	72	30	1,022
Modified	240	87	246	43	86	30	84	33	849
Dismissed	180	11	329	3	81	6	140	10	760
Other	16	7	61	38	8	1	11	17	159
<b>Total Dispositions</b>	<b>3,793</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>6,287</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>1,877</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>14,935</b>
Oral Arguments*		1,186		1,692		392		621	<b>3,891</b>
Motions Decided*		4,717		6,085		4,405		6,429	<b>21,636</b>
Admissions to the Bar		2,775		2,666		3,260		284	<b>8,985</b>
Attorney Disciplinary Proceedings Decided		51		109		313		40	<b>513</b>

\*Not broken down by civil or criminal.

Appellate Terms of the Supreme Court in the First and Second Judicial Departments hear appeals from civil and criminal cases originating in New York City's Civil and Criminal Courts. In the Second Department, the Appellate Terms also hear appeals from civil and criminal cases originating in District, City, and town and village Justice Courts. Justices are selected by the Chief Administrative Judge upon approval of the Presiding Justice of the appropriate Appellate Division. The Appellate Terms' caseload activity is listed in TABLE 3.

	FIRST DEPT			SECOND DEPT			TOTAL
	Civil	Criminal	Total	Civil	Criminal	Total	
<b>Records on Appeal Filed</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>1,349</b>	<b>1,519</b>
Disposed of before argument or submission (e.g., dismissed, withdrawn, settled)	-	12	12	529	200	729	741
Disposed of after argument or submission:							
Affirmed	39	80	119	74	49	123	242
Reversed	12	7	19	48	32	80	99
Modified	5	10	15	20	7	27	42
Dismissed	19	2	21	14	1	15	36
Other	-	-	-	11	-	11	11
<b>Total Dispositions</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>1,171</b>
Oral Arguments*			129			175	304
Motions Decided*			1,793			3,629	5,422

\*Not broken down by civil or criminal.

# Trial Courts

In 2023, 2,472,802 cases were filed statewide in the trial courts. Criminal cases accounted for 32.5%. Civil cases accounted for 41.5%. Twenty percent of the cases were in Family Court and 6% were in Surrogate’s Court. TABLE 4 shows total filings in the trial courts over a five-year period. FIGURE A shows the percentage of filings by case type.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Criminal</b>					
Supreme and County Courts Criminal <sup>a</sup>	39,324	19,059	29,670	29,681	35,057
Criminal Court of the City of NY <sup>b</sup>	325,680	173,368	203,511	224,915	290,227
City & District Courts Outside NYC <sup>b</sup>	613,414	399,168	431,444	435,175	475,882
<b>Criminal Total</b>	<b>978,418</b>	<b>591,595</b>	<b>664,625</b>	<b>689,771</b>	<b>801,166</b>
<b>Civil</b>					
Supreme Court Civil <sup>c</sup>	452,910	307,203	349,635	320,644	326,461
Civil Court of the City of NY <sup>d</sup>	541,067	325,912	333,003	380,555	406,756
City & District Courts Outside NYC <sup>d</sup>	191,198	117,685	124,037	140,648	148,439
County Courts Civil <sup>c</sup>	85,726	86,938	96,837	98,242	82,398
Court of Claims	1,801	1,590	1,577	1,258	3,057
Small Claims Assessment Review Program	42,029	102,571	91,426	47,960	63,670
<b>Civil Total</b>	<b>1,314,731</b>	<b>941,899</b>	<b>996,515</b>	<b>989,307</b>	<b>1,030,781</b>
<i>Family</i> <sup>e</sup>	586,630	344,196	385,085	469,523	490,432
<i>Surrogate’s</i>	141,237	118,284	139,429	146,396	150,423
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,021,016</b>	<b>1,995,974</b>	<b>2,185,654</b>	<b>2,294,997</b>	<b>2,472,802</b>

\*This reflects data entry as of 2/13/24.

<sup>a</sup>In October 2023, supreme & county criminal data categorization changed from felonies to superior accusatory instruments (all Indictments & SCI’s) and misdemeanors to local accusatory instruments (felony youth complaints, integrated domestic violence, & other unindicted cases in supreme & county criminal). Prior to the change, felony youth complaints were not included in reporting.

<sup>b</sup>Includes arrests, uniform traffic & parking tickets that require the court’s involvement, and NYC summons cases.

<sup>c</sup>Includes new cases, ex parte applications and uncontested matrimonial cases.

<sup>d</sup>Includes civil, housing, small claims, and commercial claims.

<sup>e</sup>Includes Permanency Planning Hearings held.

