

Analysis of Case Processing Performance in the Supreme Court of Maryland

September Term, 2022



Administrative Office of the Courts

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Introduction

The case processing goals adopted by the Supreme Court of Maryland provide that all cases argued^a (or filed, depending on the appeal type) during a Term are to be decided before the Term's completion. This goal is similar to that of the Supreme Court of the United States and is an expansion of the Judiciary's commitment, which began in the trial courts, to ensure timely adjudication for all those with business before the courts. Case time standards are central to the Maryland Judiciary's mission to provide fair, efficient, and effective justice for all.

This report contains performance results compared against the Court's case time standards for September Term, 2022.

Methodology

Case processing performance in the Supreme Court of Maryland is based on all cases argued (or filed for certain types of appeals) during the Court's September Term, 2022.^b The Court's case time standards begin at the date of *argument* for appeals on its Regular Docket, Certified Questions of Law, and Attorney Grievance cases, and at *filing* for Miscellaneous Appeals and Bar Admissions Character Matters. See [Appendix](#) for the complete table of case time standards in the Supreme Court of Maryland.

Research staff pull data directly from the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) case management system and then enter the pertinent data fields from all cases filed or argued during the September 2022 Term, including case number, caption (case title), argument date, filing date, and disposition date (opinion, dismissal, or other order/disposition) into data analysis software. Data quality checks were performed comparing the case information entered into data analysis software to the docket sheets and to the electronic record in the MDEC system.

Research staff calculated the number and percentage of appeals disposed within standard as a proportion of the total number of cases argued or filed (depending on the appeal type) during the Court's September Term, 2022. Average and median case processing times for all disposed cases were also computed.

Performance Results

The Supreme Court of Maryland achieved the case time standard goal in each of the appeal types during the September Term, 2022. See [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#). Thirty-Six Regular Docket cases were disposed within the Term, averaging 134 days from argument to disposition. The next largest number of cases was Miscellaneous Appeals, with 54 filed in the September 2022 Term. All Miscellaneous Appeals reached disposition within the Term and averaged 30 days from filing to disposition.

All fourteen Attorney Grievance cases that contained arguments were decided within the Term, taking an average of 120 days from argument to disposition. There were nine Bar Admission Character Matters cases filed in the Court in the September Term, 2022; each was disposed within that Term, taking an average of 35 days from filing to disposition. For the September

^a The Court of Appeals typically hears cases from September through June.

^b The Court disposed of a number of cases during the period examined (September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023) that did not contain an argument. These cases were *not* subject to this analysis.

2022 Term, there were five Certified Question of Law argued, and they took an average of 146 days to dispose.

Table 1. Cases Disposed Within Time Standard Goals, Supreme Court of Maryland, September Term, 2022

| Case Type | Time Standard | Judiciary Goal | September Term, 2022 Cases ^{1,2} | Number of Cases Disposed Within Standard | % Within Standard |
|---|-------------------------|--|---|--|-------------------|
| Regular Docket | Argument to Disposition | Cases argued must be decided before the end of the term (100%) | 36 | 36 | 100% |
| Certified Questions of Law | | | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| Attorney Grievances | | | 14 | 14 | 100% |
| Miscellaneous Appeals | Filing to Disposition | Cases filed must be decided before the end of the term (100%) | 54 | 54 | 100% |
| Bar Admissions Character Matters | | | 9 | 9 | 100% |

¹ The number of September Term, 2022 cases represent either the number of cases (1) argued or (2) filed, depending on the appeal type.

² One bar admission/character matter in September Term 2022, the ceremonial disposition of the motion for posthumous bar admission for Edward Garrison Draper, is not included in the analysis because of the unique nature of that matter.

Table 2. Overall Average & Median Case Processing Times, Supreme Court of Maryland, September Term, 2022

| Case Type | Time Standard | September Term, 2021 Average & Median Case Times (in days) | |
|---|--|--|--------|
| | | Average | Median |
| Regular Docket | Argument to Disposition Cases argued must be decided before the end of the term | 134 | 140 |
| Certified Questions of Law | | 146 | 102 |
| Attorney Grievances | | 120 | 104 |
| Miscellaneous Appeals | Filing to Disposition | 30 | 20 |
| Bar Admissions Character Matters | Cases filed must be decided before the end of the term | 35 | 26 |

Appendix: Supreme Court of Maryland Case Time Standards

| Proceeding / Appeal Type | Standard | Case Time Start | Stay Begins (Suspends the standard) | Stay Ends | Case Time Stop | Comments |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------------|--|------------------|--|---|
| Regular Docket | Cases argued in term must be decided before end of term | Argument | None | None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposition • Opinion Filed • Dismissed • Order | New Policy beginning with the 2013 Term (September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014) |
| Miscellaneous Appeals | Cases must be decided before end of term | Filing | None | None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposition • Opinion Filed • Dismissed • Order | |
| Bar Admissions Character Matters | Cases must be decided before end of term | Filing | None | None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposition • Opinion Filed • Dismissed • Order | |
| Certified Questions of Law | Cases argued in term must be decided before end of term | Argument | None | None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposition • Opinion Filed • Dismissed • Order | |
| Attorney Grievances | Cases argued in term must be decided before end of term | Argument | None | None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposition • Opinion Filed • Dismissed • Order | |