

Analysis of Case Processing Performance in the Court of Appeals

September Term, 2015



Administrative Office of the Courts

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Introduction

The Court of Appeals adopted case time standards effective for its September Term, 2013 (the period spanning September 1, 2013 through August 31, 2014). The case processing goals adopted by the Court provide that all cases argued¹ (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 followed by the U.S. Supreme Court, 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.

This report contains performance results against the Court's case time standards for September Term, 2015.

Methodology

Case processing performance in the Court of Appeals is based on all cases argued (or filed for certain types of appeals) during the Court's September Term, 2015.² 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 Extraordinary Writs and Bar Admissions. See Appendix for the complete table of case time standards in the Court of Appeals.

Data on the number of cases argued or filed were obtained from the Clerk of the Court of Appeals upon conclusion of the September Term, 2015, from the Court's docket sheets. Pertinent data fields were individually extracted and transferred to customized data collection forms. Data included: case number, caption (case title), argument date, filing date, and disposition date (opinion, dismissal, or other order/disposition). Upon completion of entry into the data collection forms, dates were cross-checked with the original paper files to verify accuracy.

We 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, 2015. Average and median case processing times for all disposed cases were also computed.

¹ The Court of Appeals typically hears cases from September through June.

² The Court disposed of a number of cases during the period examined (September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2016) that did not contain an argument. These cases were not subject to this analysis.

Overall Performance Results

The Court of Appeals achieved the case time standard goal in each of the appeal types during the September Term, 2015. See Tables 1 and 2. All 96 Regular Docket cases were disposed within the Term and took an average of 85 days from argument to disposition. The next largest number of cases were Extraordinary Writs, in which all 46 filed within September Term, 2015 reached disposition, and took an average of 5 days from filing to disposition.

All five Attorney Grievance appeals that contained an argument were decided within the Term and took an average of 65 days from argument to disposition. There were three Bar Admission appeals filed in the Court in September Term, 2015, and each was disposed within that Term, taking an average 146 days from filing to disposition. The last type of appeal was Certified Questions of Law, of which there were two. Each of these appeals was disposed within the Term and took an average of 64 days from argument to disposition.

Table 1. Cases Disposed within Time Standard Goals, Court of Appeals, September Term, 2015

Case Type	Time Standard	Judiciary Goal	September Term, 2015 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%)	96	96	100%
Certified Questions of Law			2	2	100%
Attorney Grievances			5	5	100%
Extraordinary Writs	Filing to Disposition	Cases filed must be decided before the end of the term (100%)	46	46	100%
Bar Admissions			3	3	100%

¹ The number of September Term, 2015 cases represents either the number of cases, (1) argued, or (2) filed, depending on the appeal type.

² There was an Extraordinary Writs appeal in the September Term, 2015 that was not perfected, and therefore not included in this analysis.

Table 2. Overall Average & Median Case Processing Times, Court of Appeals, September Term, 2015

Case Type	Time Standard	September Term, 2015 Overall Average & Median Case Times (in days)	
		Overall Average	Overall Median
Regular Docket	Argument to Disposition	85	80
Certified Questions of Law	Cases argued must be decided before the end of the term.	64	64
Attorney Grievances		65	73
Extraordinary Writs	Filing to Disposition	5	2
Bar Admissions	Cases filed must be decided before the end of the term.	146	140

APPENDIX: Court of Appeals Case Time Standards

Court of Appeals Case Timestandards

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