

## **Understanding How the Court Uses Weighted Caseload Statistics**

The North Dakota court system utilizes a weighted caseload method to determine when and where judges, court staff, and juvenile court staff are needed.

Understood in its simplest form, a weighted caseload is a time and frequency study. To determine the base weights, all judges, clerk staff, and juvenile court officers in the state record their daily activities for a designated period of time. This data is then used to assign “weights” to various case types based on the average amount of time that is needed to process each type of case. The weight is then multiplied by the frequency of cases filed. To determine judge or staff need, we take the number that is reached by multiplying the weighted caseloads and number of cases filed in a year, and divide it the amount of judge or staff time currently available.

The Court uses a rolling 2-year average of the weighted caseload as a factor in determining where judges or staff are needed. Other factors we look at in making this decision include the existence of drug court or domestic violence court in the district, the size of the district, the amount of travel required between courthouses, the number of other judges or staff within the district, and the anticipated growth or stagnation of communities within a geographic region.