

Court Performance

The Registry continued to function as the Court’s ‘engine room’ during the period under review. The Registry managed all active cases and oversaw a favourable clearance rate. In addition, the team continued bearing responsibility for the receipt, transmission, and custody of documents filed in the Court’s Registry and those received from the sub-registries of the lower courts. The Registry emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic with a more robust technological infrastructure and improved processes, which led to enhanced accessibility, efficiency, and timeliness. It continued during the period to deliver excellent service to the people and states of the Caribbean Community.

The staffing complement of the Registry is as follows:

Registrar and Chief Marshal	Deputy Registrar and Marshal	Registry Supervisor	Administrative Co-ordinator (Judicial)	Case Management Officers (2)	Court Support Officer	Judicial Counsel (5)	Administrative Officers (Judicial) (4)
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Court Sitings

Type	Number
Case Management Conference	13
Hearing	15
Judgment Delivery	8
Total	36

The majority of sittings (86%), were held in complete virtual mode. Hybrid and in-person sittings accounted for 6% and 8% respectively. The Court resumed hybrid and in-person sittings post pandemic.

Over the period under review, the Court received the following filings:

Appellate Jurisdiction

New Matters			Cases Filed by Jurisdiction		
Type	2022/2023	2021/2022	Country	2022/2023	2021/2022
Application for Special Leave	13	14	Barbados	8	6
Notice of Appeal	12	14	Belize	8	6
Total	25	28	Dominica	0	0
			Guyana	8	16
			Saint Lucia	1	-
			Total	25	28

There was an 11% decrease in new matters filed for the reporting period of 1 August 2022 - 31 July 2023, compared to the previous year, with eight cases from Barbados, eight from Belize, eight from Guyana, and one from St. Lucia. Sixty percent were civil matters while 40% were criminal matters. The decrease in the volume of new matters being filed is likely to be accounted for by the effects of the pandemic on hearings in the courts below. There were no new cases from Dominica.

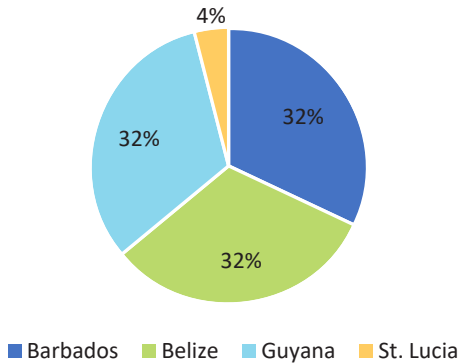


2022
2023

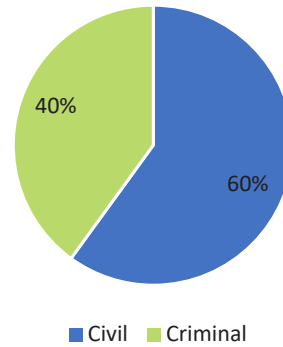
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Court Performance *(continued)*

Cases filed by Country



Case Type



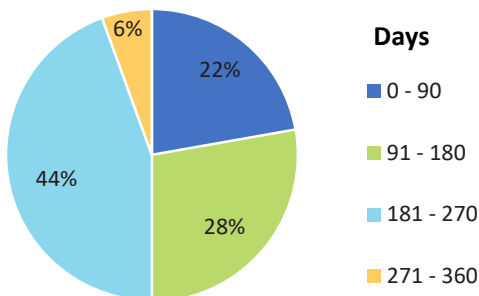
Time to Disposition

50% of the matters filed was disposed of within six months of filing. The table below gives a more detailed summary.

Time to Disposition		
Number of Days	Number of Cases Disposed	Cases Disposed (%)
0 - 90	4	22
91 - 180	5	28
181 - 270	8	44
271 - 360	1	6
Total	18	100

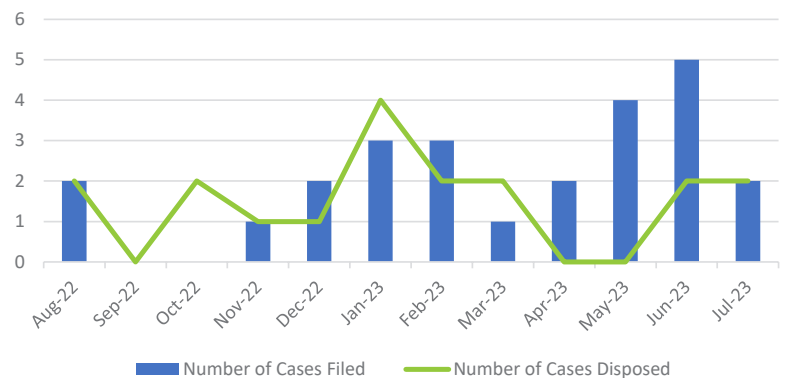
Summary of Disposition		
Number of Days	Cumulative Number of Cases Disposed	Cumulative (%)
0 - 180	9	50
0 - 360	18	100

Time to Disposition



Clearance Rate

The clearance rate for matters filed reflects a rate of 72% for disposed matters against new matters. The peak period of new filings was April to June 2023, while the peak of disposals was December 2022 to February 2023.



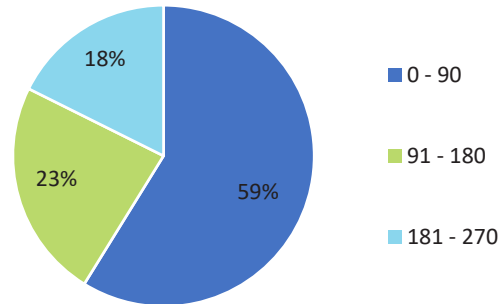


Court Performance *[continued]*

Age of Active Pending Caseload

Days	Number of Cases
0 - 90	10
91 - 180	4
181 - 270	3

Number of Cases



During the period under review, the Bench adjudicated several novel matters that allowed for the effective use of the new Part 12A - Addition of Respondents, Intervention, and Amicus Curiae [Caribbean Court of Justice (Appellate Jurisdiction) Rules, 2021]. One such matter is *OO v BK and The Attorney General of Barbados* [2023] CCJ 10 (AJ) BB. This was an appeal from the Court of Appeal of Barbados where the appellant appealed to the CCJ, challenging the majority judgment of the Court of Appeal. She sought a ruling that the phrase ‘former spouse’ as used in the amended Act, Act 2 of 2016, was not time limited. In a unanimous decision, the CCJ, using both the literal and purposive approaches to statutory interpretation, held that the appellant was indeed a ‘former spouse’ and therefore, was entitled to a protection order. In the lead judgment, the Hon. Mme Justice Rajnauth-Lee examined the statutory framework and held

that imposing a time limit on an applicant’s capacity to apply for a protection order would run counter to the purpose of the Act, which was to provide greater protection to victims of domestic violence. To assist in the appeal, the Court decided it would be prudent to add the Attorney General of Barbados as a respondent. The Court also invited interested bodies with significant information to file an application to assist the Court as *amicus curiae*. Two organisations responded to the Court’s invitation. They applied to assist the Court: Operation Safe Space Movement for Change Inc (OSS) in association with the International Center for Advocates Against Discrimination Inc (ICAAD) and the UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean. Permission was granted for both organisations to assist the Court. The judgment of the Court anonymised the parties to protect their privacy.

Original Jurisdiction

New Matters		
Country of Origin	2022/2023	2021/2022
Antigua and Barbuda	0	1
Dominica	2	0
Total	2	1

There were only two new cases filed within the current reporting period. These two cases relate to the same factual circumstances. However, they engaged the Court’s remit of permitting a national to file a claim and adjudicating upon a claim filed once permission is granted as two separate matters procedurally.

The Court’s Original Jurisdiction function remains underutilised compared to its Appellate Jurisdiction.