

SUPREME COURT OF ALABAMA

Annual Statistics

**for the Fiscal Year Ending
September 30, 2021**

Table I

FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021
Filings					
Certiorari petitions	462	471	388	410	363
Original decisions	706	745	682	687	539
Total	1168	1216	1070	1097	902 [†]
Dispositions					
Certiorari petitions	513	473	404	387	414
Original decisions	719	764	622	724	614
Total	1232	1237	1026	1111	1028
Pending (Year End)	425	417	478	464	332
Throughput	105.47%	101.72%	95.88%	101.27%	113.96%

Petitions to the Supreme Court of Alabama for writs for certiorari are proceedings seeking discretionary review of decisions of the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals and the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals.

Original decisions include the following types of cases:

- (1) direct appeals (i.e., proceedings seeking review in the Court of a judgment of a trial court in civil cases where the amount in controversy exceeds \$50,000 or the relief sought is equitable);
- (2) petitions for extraordinary writs (i.e., proceedings seeking review of orders that are not immediately appealable, such as certain orders entered during the pendency of a proceeding in a trial court or appellate court);
- (3) petitions for permission to appeal (i.e., proceedings seeking review of a question of law arising during the pendency of a proceeding in a trial court);
- (4) granted petitions for certiorari (i.e., proceedings after the Court has determined that further review is warranted); and
- (5) certified questions from federal courts (i.e., proceedings where a federal court has referred a question of Alabama law to the Court for resolution).

After certain cases are filed with the Court, the record on appeal is prepared and briefs are filed. Once this process is completed, cases are randomly assigned to the Justices for review and the preparation of the Court's decision.

The Alabama Appellate Mediation Program has been successful in both the Supreme Court of Alabama and the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals, having a substantial impact upon the number of cases assigned for decision.

[†]The number of cases *filed* does not include 5 appeals that were "filed" in the 2019-2020 fiscal year but not *docketed* until the 2020-2021 fiscal year, bringing the total number of cases docketed during the 2020-2021 fiscal year to 907. These additional 5 cases were not captured by last year's annual statistical report, nor are they included in this year's report.

Table II**CASES ASSIGNED TO JUSTICES
AND PENDING AT END OF FISCAL YEAR**

	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021
Parker, C.J.					
Certiorari petitions	7	6	2	5	3
Original decisions	2	5	12	7	4
Bolin, J.					
Certiorari petitions	6	5	7	5	5
Original decisions	10	19	12	12	6
Shaw, J.					
Certiorari petitions	17	11	7	16	7
Original decisions	22	16	8	18	11
Wise, J.					
Certiorari petitions	6	5	4	6	2
Original decisions	8	11	11	15	11
Bryan, J.					
Certiorari petitions	8	6	5	7	6
Original decisions	9	8	7	11	8
Sellers, J.					
Certiorari petitions	7	6	3	4	3
Original decisions	13	13	7	6	4
Mendheim, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	9	5	11	4
Original decisions	N/A	18	9	8	8
Stewart, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	N/A	11	19	6
Original decisions	N/A	N/A	32	18	15
Mitchell, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	N/A	18	10	5
Original decisions	N/A	N/A	39	36	9
Former Justices†					
Certiorari petitions	11	N/A	15	N/A	N/A
Original decisions	22	N/A	7	N/A	N/A
Total	166	154	222	214	117

†Cases assigned to former Justices who are no longer on the Court.

Table III

CASES ASSIGNED TO JUSTICES UPON ASSUMING OFFICE

	Pending Cases	Date Assumed Office
Stewart, J.		
Certiorari petitions	5	01/15/2019
Original decisions	26	
Mitchell, J.		
Certiorari petitions	5	01/15/2019
Original decisions	26	

This table includes only the Justices who most recently joined the Court. When a Justice assumes office, he or she assumes responsibility for cases previously assigned to other Justices. At that time, a new Justice's caseload consists primarily of these reassigned cases.

Table IV**AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS
BETWEEN ASSIGNMENT OF A CASE TO A JUSTICE
AND RELEASE OF A DECISION**

	FY 2016–2017	FY 2017–2018	FY 2018–2019	FY 2019–2020	FY 2020–2021
Parker, C.J.					
Certiorari petitions	41	41	42	59	58
Original decisions	149	102	108	155	171
Bolin, J.					
Certiorari petitions	38	39	41	36	34
Original decisions	102	128	132	138	94
Shaw, J.					
Certiorari petitions	115	91	67	98	152
Original decisions	227	163	124	143	173
Wise, J.					
Certiorari petitions	32	38	32	40	39
Original decisions	129	115	125	162	165
Bryan, J.					
Certiorari petitions	36	36	41	44	52
Original decisions	69	75	98	115	132
Sellers, J.					
Certiorari petitions	39	45	30	35	35
Original decisions	74	104	67	66	59
Mendheim, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	53	50	48	47
Original decisions	N/A	135	133	132	98
Stewart, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	N/A	61	99	109
Original decisions	N/A	N/A	75	233	214
Mitchell, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	N/A	88	110	105
Original decisions	N/A	N/A	156	308	265
Court Average[†]					
Certiorari petitions	48	47	50	63	73
Original decisions	137	109	115	169	156

[†]The “Court Average” values are calculated by dividing the total number of days for all cases by the total number of cases for all Justices. The value is then rounded to the next whole number.

Table V

DECISIONS RELEASED

	FY 2016–2017	FY 2017–2018	FY 2018–2019	FY 2019–2020	FY 2020–2021
Parker, C.J.					
Certiorari petitions	60	52	37	18	26
Original decisions	42	30	7	15	11
Bolin, J.					
Certiorari petitions	55	52	42	48	41
Original decisions	34	25	39	33	33
Shaw, J.					
Certiorari petitions	45	55	45	34	51
Original decisions	31	34	28	25	28
Wise, J.					
Certiorari petitions	52	49	41	41	44
Original decisions	31	24	22	30	33
Bryan, J.					
Certiorari petitions	56	49	46	46	39
Original decisions	33	37	23	26	29
Sellers, J.					
Certiorari petitions	26	51	46	44	42
Original decisions	18	40	32	32	28
Mendheim, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	40	45	43	47
Original decisions	N/A	36	32	35	28
Stewart, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	N/A	26	39	53
Original decisions	N/A	N/A	18	48	33
Mitchell, J.					
Certiorari petitions	N/A	N/A	22	53	44
Original decisions	N/A	N/A	12	37	40

These statistics do not reflect the following activities:

- (1) cases and matters in which the Court renders decisions that are disposed of by the Court without assignment to a Justice;
- (2) Justices' separate opinions in cases assigned to another Justice;
- (3) Alabama State Bar disciplinary matters;
- (4) administrative matters of the Court;
- (5) Justices' work with various standing rules committees, commissions, and task forces;
- (6) advisory opinions; and
- (7) other responsibilities beyond Justices' caseloads.

In many cases, for efficiency, the Court sits in two panels, each composed of the Chief Justice and four Associate Justices. Because the Chief Justice participates in both panels and also has significant additional administrative duties, the Chief Justice is assigned 1 of every 17 cases rather than 1 of every 9 cases.

For the year in which a Justice assumed office, that Justice's number of decisions reflects only part of that year.

Table VI

AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS BETWEEN FILING OF A CASE AND RELEASE OF AN INITIAL DECISION

	FY 2016–2017	FY 2017–2018	FY 2018–2019	FY 2019–2020	FY 2020–2021
Certiorari petitions	60	59	59	72	86
Original decisions	279	247	253	302	283

A certificate of judgment indicating the final disposition of certain types of cases is not issued until at least 18 days after the decision is released, unless the time is shortened by order of the Court or a timely application for rehearing is filed.

The number of days includes any time for preparation of an appellate record, for a trial court to take further action, for filing of briefs, and for other prerequisite actions. These events generally must occur before the assignment of a case to a Justice. The number of days also includes any time needed for the Court to vote on the disposition of a case and for circulation and review of the writings of the Justices.