



Battling the Backlog

A Library of On-Demand Videos on Preventing Backlog and Addressing New Filings

Rapid Response Team: Children, Families and Elders Committee
www.ncsc.org/pandemic

The purpose of this library is to help courts manage cases involving Children, Families and Elders during the present emergency and beyond.

Current data indicates that cases involving children, families and elders are accumulating. While the gravity of the backlog may take several months to fully manifest, cases must move forward by all means necessary to avoid serious delays and putting vulnerable parties at risk.

Through a series of short videos that can be viewed on demand, this toolkit is designed to provide data, analysis and a forum for discussion for courts working to address new filings and prevent backlogged cases.

Are Cases Involving Children, Families and Elders Becoming Backlogged?

Diane Robinson, NCSC researcher, recently requested caseload data from courts across the country. The data from this small sample of courts appears to indicate the first signs of accumulating backlog. Diane explains the existing data and recommends essential signs that courts should look out for.

- An overview of cases accumulating all case types: <https://vimeo.com/492239142>
- Indications of backlog accumulating in juvenile matters (delinquency and child protection): <https://vimeo.com/492235766>
- Indications of backlog accumulating in domestic relations and domestic violence: <https://vimeo.com/492237427>

What Judges Should Know About Virtual Hearings (Prof. Beth Thornburg, SMU)

Professor Beth Thornburg of Southern Methodist University will soon publish “Observing Online Courts: Lessons Learned from the Pandemic” in the [ABA’s *Family Law Quarterly* \[vol. 54\]](#). Prof. Thornburg’s study presents real-time considerations for holding virtual hearings, both the opportunities and the pitfalls. She also considers these policy questions: What processes should continue to be done online? Even when courts are able to return to fully in-person hearings, should they? <https://vimeo.com/492156829>

Making Hard Decisions (pending)

Illinois Family Court Administrator Heather Dorsey and McHenry Administrator Dan Wallis discuss the commitment to staying open and moving cases forward despite barriers outside the walls of the courthouse.

Pathways for Child Protection in Massachusetts (pending)

Chief Justice Amy Nechem, Shana Cashman

