



Oregon Judicial Department

Unrepresented Crisis – January 2025

Key Insights

[Unrepresented Trends](#)

The total number of unrepresented persons and unrepresented cases both increased to new highs of 4,178 unrepresented persons and 4,598 unrepresented cases. ([Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#)). Both numbers increased close to 11% between December 1, 2024, and January 1, 2025. The unrepresented population has increased in 11 of the last 12 months. Daily updates are available on the [Unrepresented Dashboard](#) on the OJD website.

[Unrepresented – Out-of-Custody](#)

The average number of days an out-of-custody felony case was unrepresented increased 39% in 2024 to an average of 110 days in December 2024. ([Figure 6](#)). That number remains higher than the average number of days an out-of-custody misdemeanor case is unrepresented. The average number of days an out-of-custody misdemeanor case is unrepresented decreased in November and December of 2024.

[Unrepresented – In-Custody](#)

The average number of days a person who is in custody and is unrepresented on any case has decreased since November 2024 to 23 days in December 2024, but remains 50% above the January 2024 level. ([Figure 7](#)).

[Public Defense-Related Case Filings & Dispositions](#)

Public defense-related case filings increased in 2024 for the fourth consecutive year ([Figure 8](#)). The case types with the highest filings in 2024 were misdemeanors, minor felonies, and civil commitments. Lane, Washington, Clatsop, Union and Wallowa, Jackson, Klamath, Clackamas, and Benton judicial districts saw a 10% or higher increase in public defense-related case filings in 2024, compared to 2023 ([Figure 9](#)).

[Unrepresented by County](#)

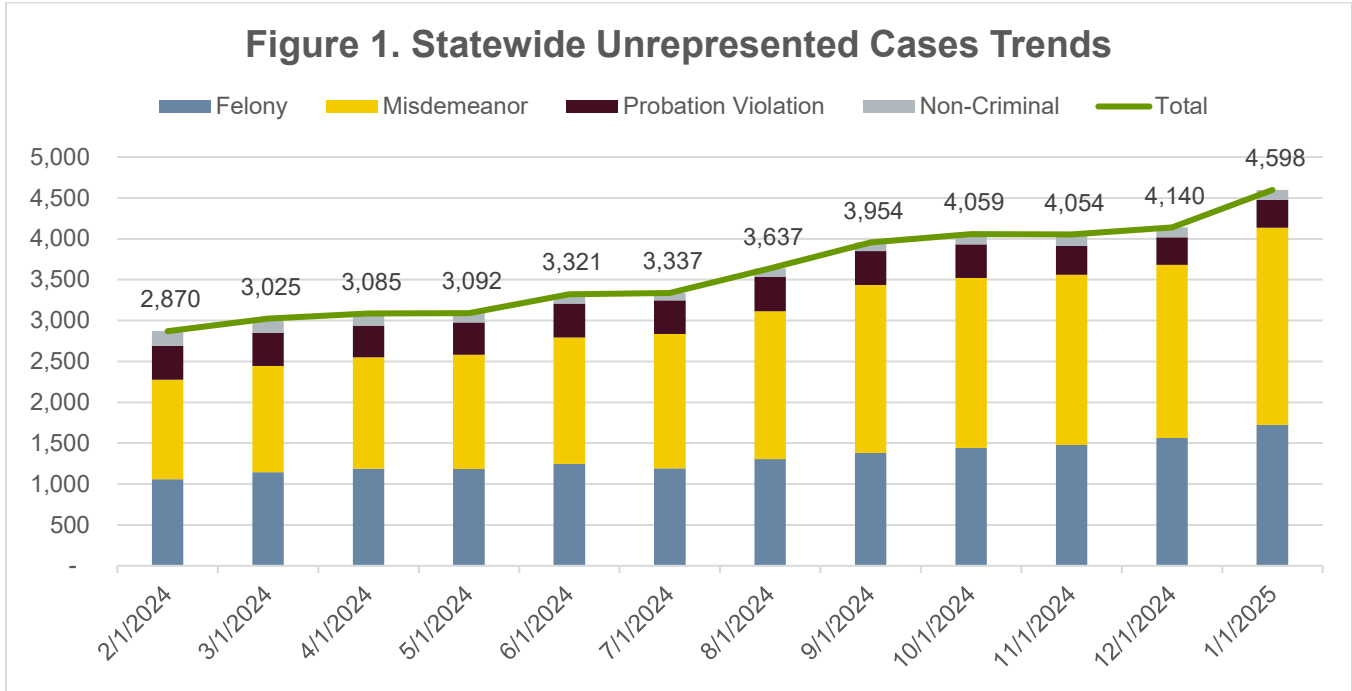
Multnomah, Jackson, Marion, Washington, Douglas, and Coos counties continue to have the highest number of unrepresented persons in Oregon ([Figure 11](#)). Multnomah County's unrepresented list has doubled since July 1, 2024, to a total of 1,109 unrepresented individuals on January 14, 2025.

On Monday, February 3, 2025 at 8:00am OJD, OPDC, and ODAA will be presenting on the current state of the crisis to the [Ways & Means Public Safety Subcommittee](#).

Note: The cases filed data in Figures 8 and 9 might change to some extent in the near future. Circuit courts audit their data at the end of the year, which might result in changes by the audit deadline in March. Also, data in this report is presented by calendar year. Some OJD presentations, especially in the Ways & Means Public Safety Subcommittee, present data by fiscal year, which better reflects the cycles for the state budget and OPDC contracts.

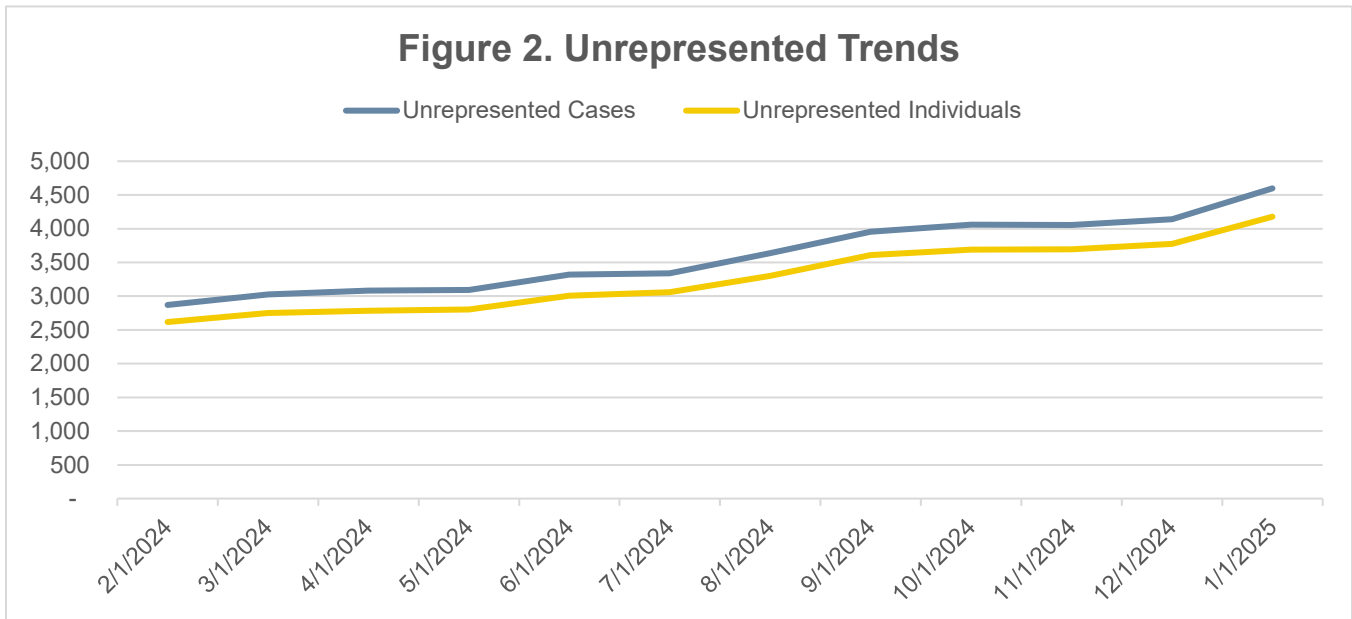
Unrepresented Trends

Figure 1 shows the number of unrepresented cases by case type. The number of unrepresented cases continues to increase each month, reaching another record high on January 1, 2025, of 4,598 cases. Between December 1, 2024, and January 1, 2025, the number of unrepresented cases increased in each case type, whereas in prior months there would be increases in some case types and decreases in other case types.



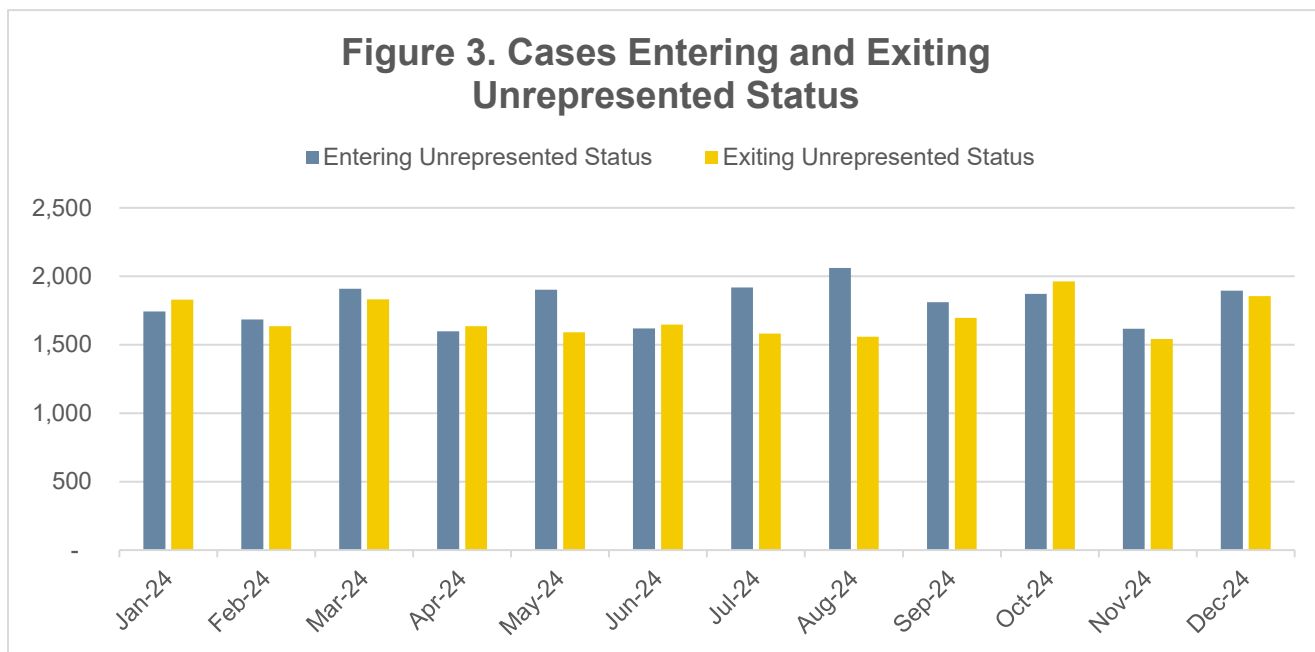
Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Figure 2 shows the number of unrepresented cases and number of unrepresented individuals. The number of unrepresented persons in Oregon also reached a new high of 4,178 persons on January 1, 2025.



Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Figure 3 shows the number of cases entering and exiting the unrepresented list each month. The number of cases entering and exiting the unrepresented list increased in December 2024. More cases entered the list than exited in 8 of the last 12 months.



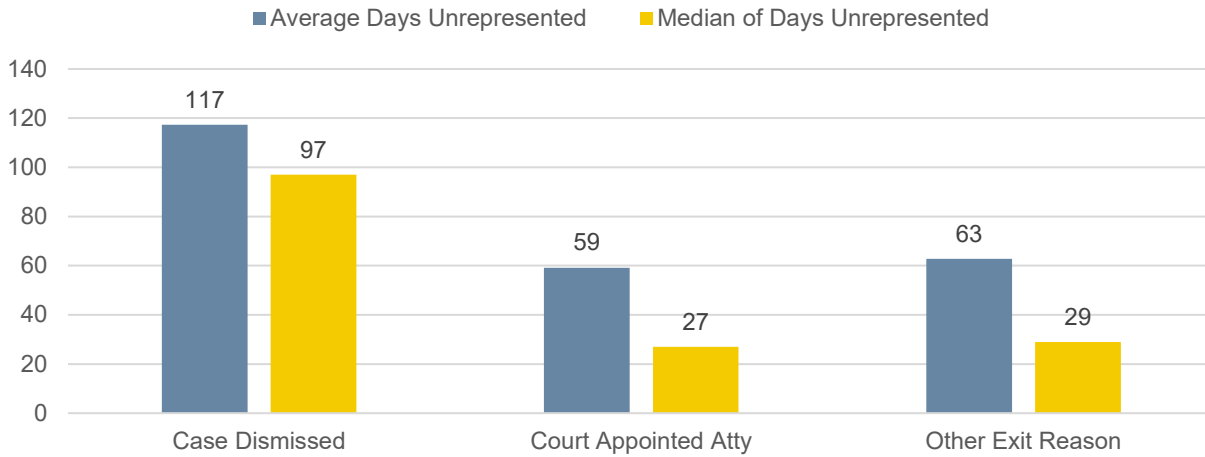
Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Figure 4 shows the *average number of days* until a case exits the unrepresented based on the exit reason. **Figure 5** shows the *average number of appearances* in an unrepresented case before exiting the unrepresented list by exit reason. These charts include both in-custody and out-of-custody cases.

Cases exit unrepresented status because the case was dismissed, an attorney was appointed, or “other exit reason.” As of January 2025, cases exiting unrepresented status because an attorney was appointed have the lowest average days (59 days) but have the highest average number of appearances (5 appearances) compared to other two exit reasons.

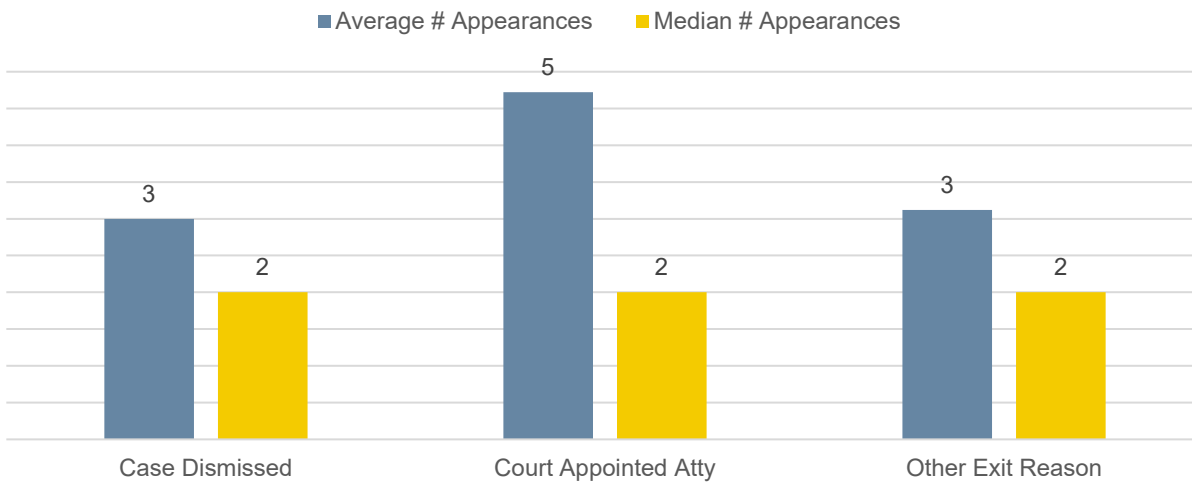
Some courts require unrepresented persons to appear in court, either physically or remotely. There are some courts that require unrepresented persons to check-in with the court’s release assistance office and are documenting those check-ins as “appearances” for tracking purposes.

Figure 4. Days Until Exit From Unrepresented Status by Exit Reason



Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

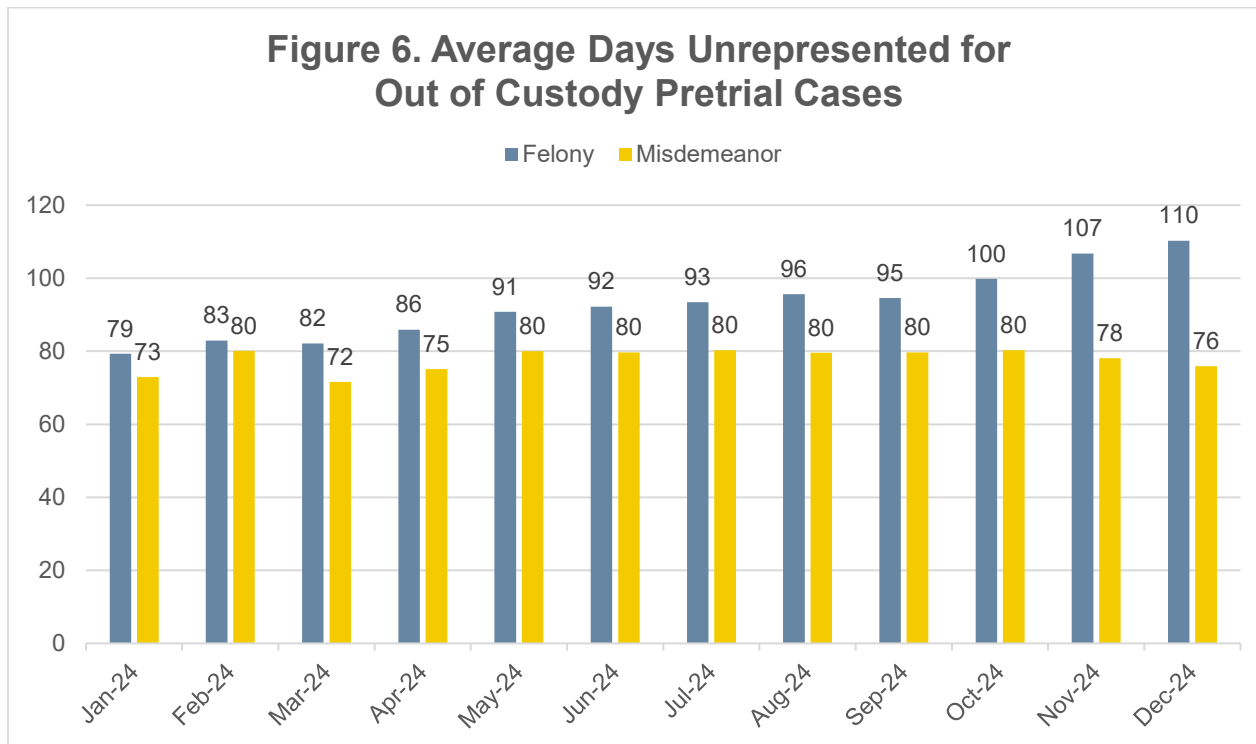
Figure 5. Avg Appearances Until Exit From Unrepresented Status



Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Unrepresented – Out-of-Custody

Figure 6 shows trends in the average days an out-of-custody felony or misdemeanor case is unrepresented by month. [Note: The numbers in this chart are lower than in prior reports because they do not include the time an unrepresented case was in warrant status. This methodology change does not change the overall trends.] The average number of days an out-of-custody felony case is unrepresented has increased throughout 2024 to an average of 110 days in December 2024. The number of days an out-of-custody unrepresented misdemeanor is unrepresented remained steady throughout most of 2024 and began to decrease in November.

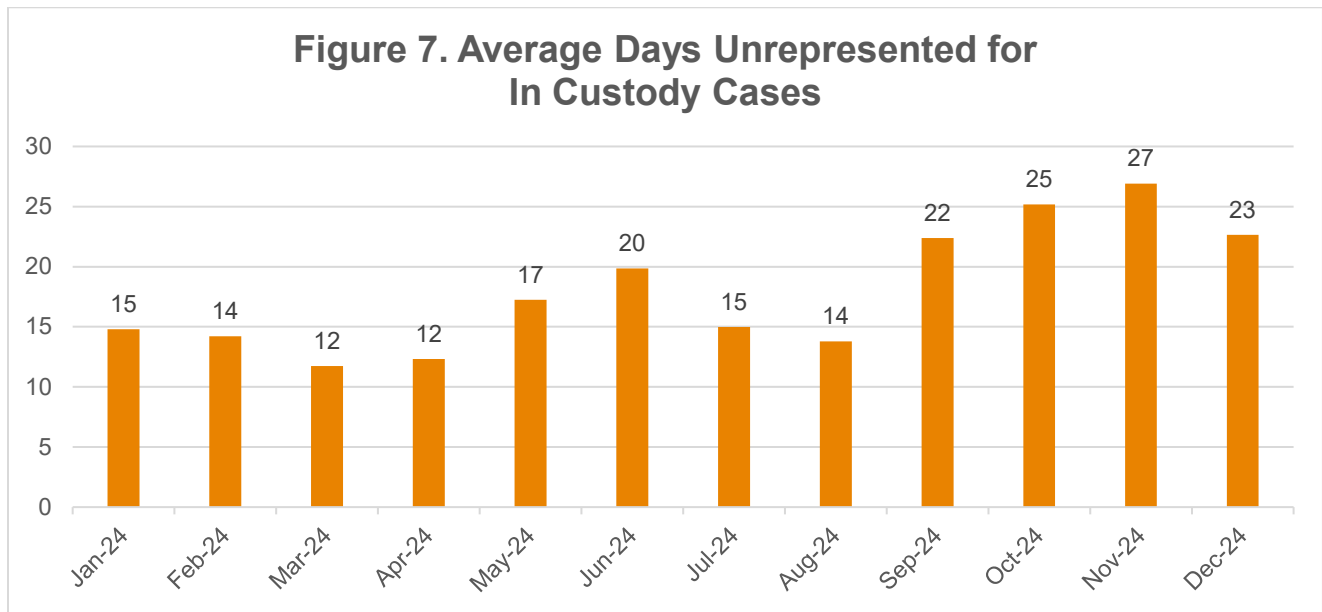


Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Unrepresented – In-Custody

Figure 7 shows trends in the average number of days a person is both in custody and is unrepresented in any case. The average number of days an in-custody case was unrepresented increased between September 2024 and November 2024, but decreased in December 2024 to an average of 23 days.

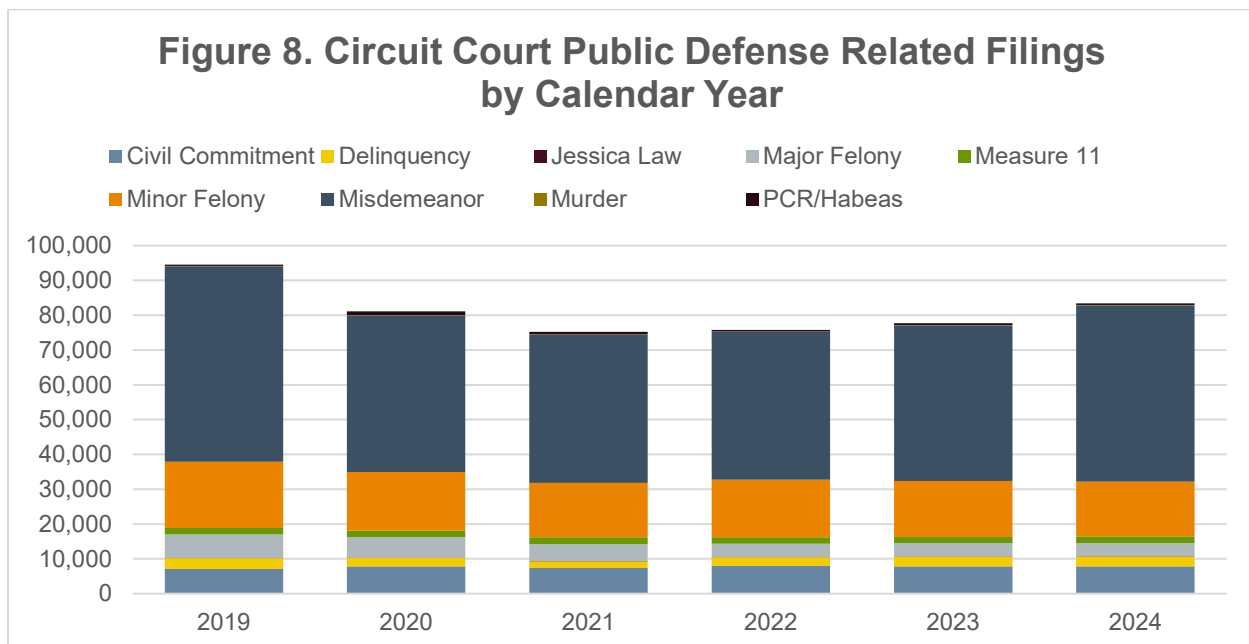
This chart primarily consists of people who are in-custody and are unrepresented either on that in-custody case, another in-custody case, or an out-of-custody case. Because of the variety of circumstances in which being represented and unrepresented in different cases can occur while a person is in custody, this creates complexity in ensuring a person has appointed counsel on all their pending cases. If a person is being held in custody for reasons other than the unrepresented case, they may not be prioritized for appointment of counsel by OPDC because they will remain in custody for other reasons.



Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Public Defense-Related Case Filings & Dispositions

Figure 8 shows the number of public defense-related case filings by calendar year since 2019. Public defense-related case filings have been increasing since pandemic-reduced filings in 2021 and are now at their highest level since 2019. The three case types with the highest number of filings in 2024 were misdemeanors, minor felonies, and civil commitments. The biggest changes in case filings between 2023 and 2024 were in murder case filings (-25.5%); misdemeanor case filings (+13.5%); post-conviction relief/habeas case filings (-11.7%); and Measure 11 case filings (+10.7%).

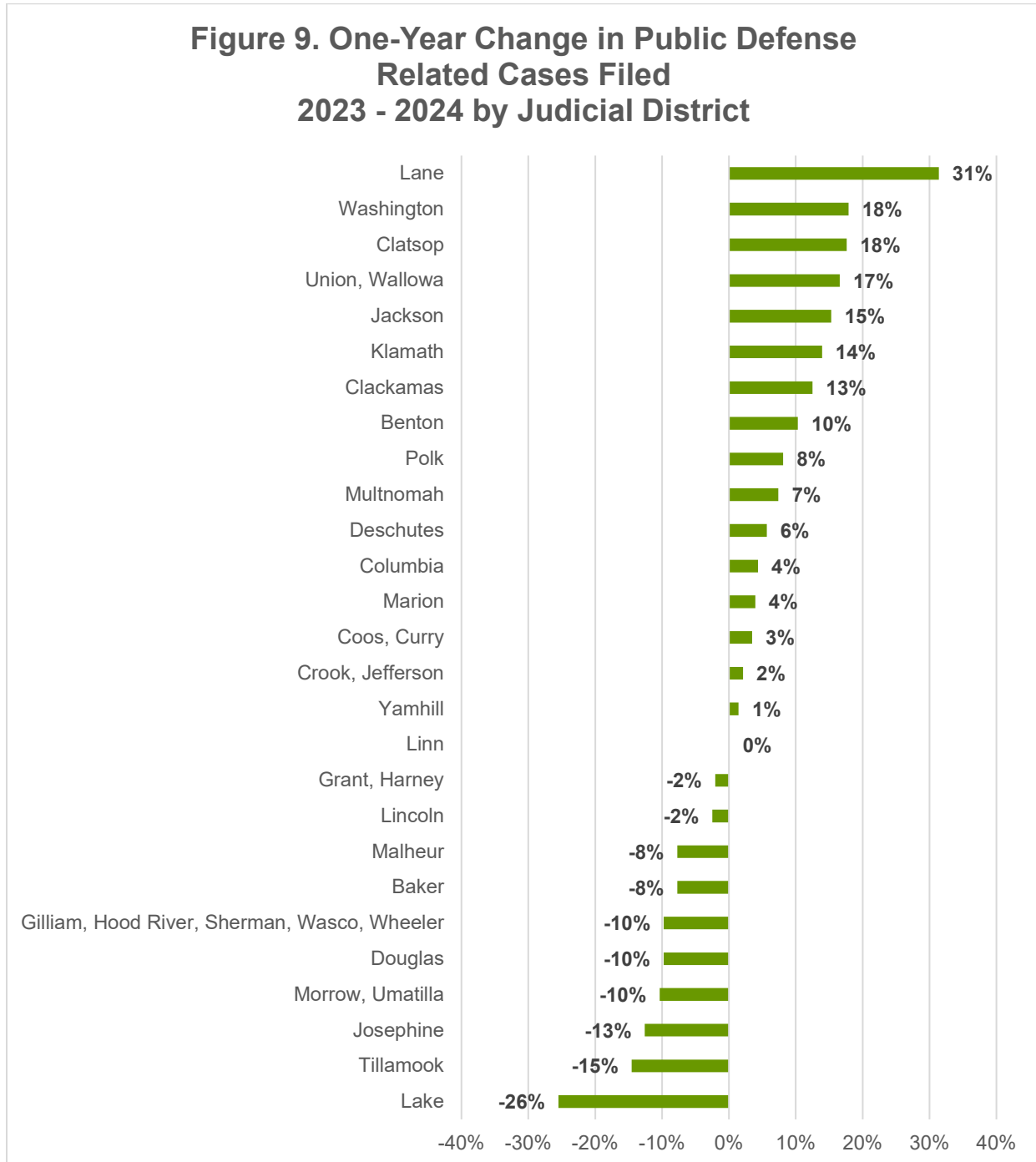


Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Figure 9 shows the percentage change in public defense-related case filings between calendar years 2023 and 2024. Judicial districts for Lane, Washington, Clatsop, Union and Wallowa, Jackson, Klamath, Clackamas, and Benton counties saw a 10% or higher increase in public defense-related case filings in 2024.

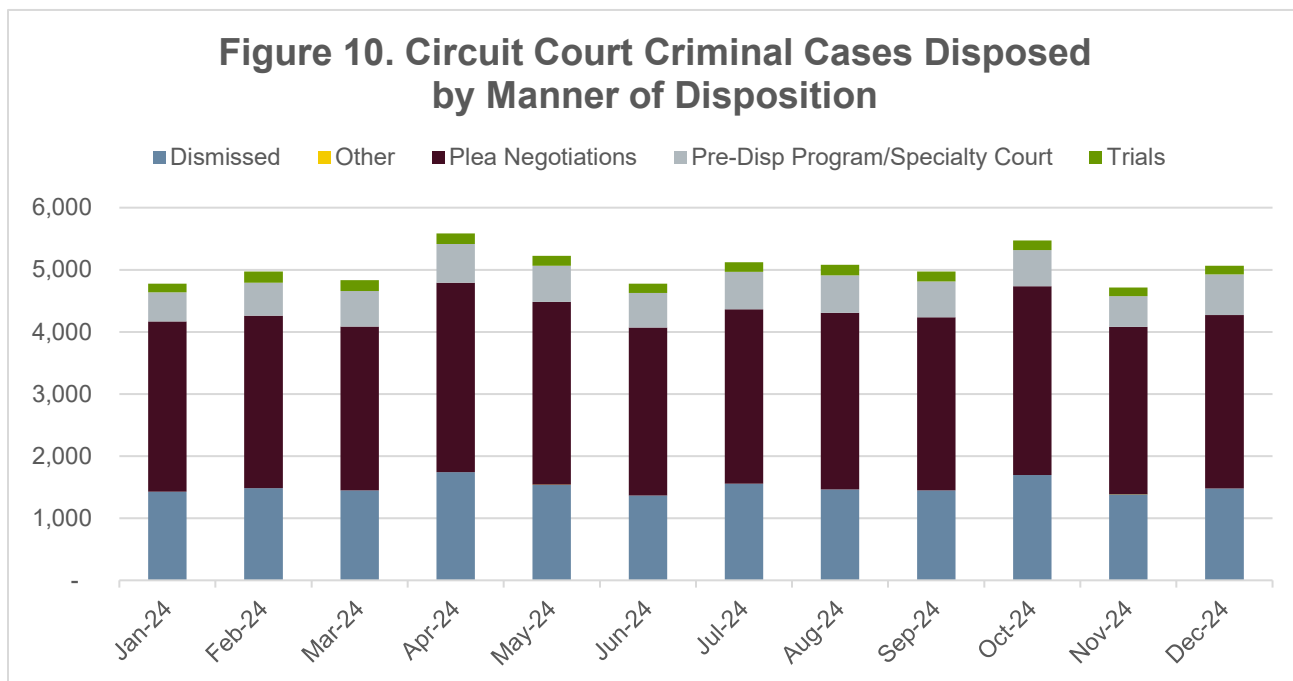
Filings in all large counties increased, including Marion by 4% and Multnomah by 7%.

Although case filings in judicial districts for Malheur, Douglas, Josephine, and Lake counties decreased, all continue to have cases on the unrepresented list ([See Figure 11](#)).



Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

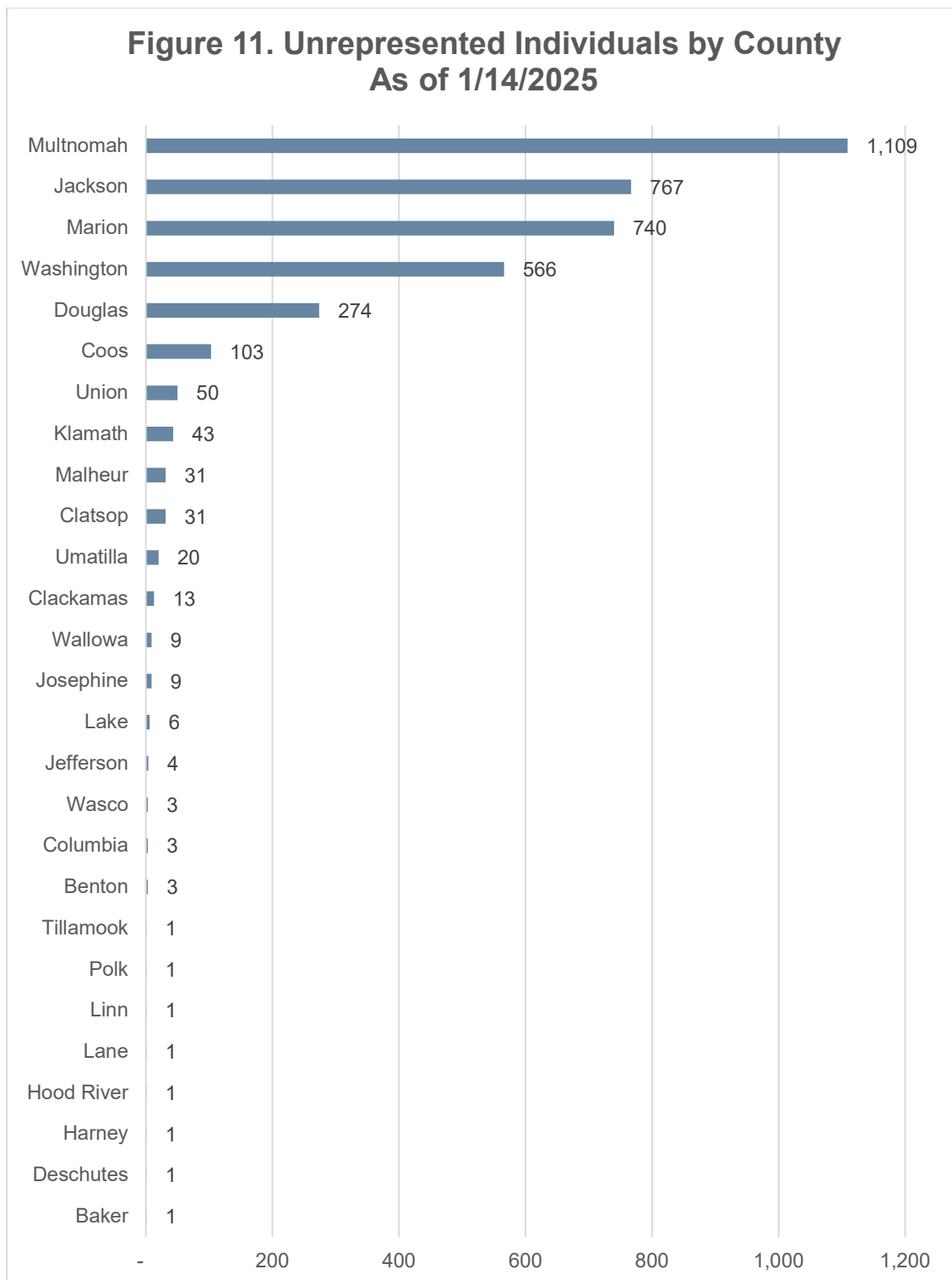
Figure 10 shows the number of criminal cases closed (finalized) each month by manner of disposition. Most cases are disposed through plea negotiations, which can occur any time during the life of a case, including the morning of trial. The second most common way a case is disposed is by dismissal, which can be the result of a variety of circumstances. Additionally, some cases are dismissed and then later re-filed or re-instated. Trials are the least common way a criminal case is disposed. In 2024 Oregon circuit courts held 1,901 criminal trials (both bench and jury), for an average of 158 trials each month.



Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).

Unrepresented by County

Figure 11 shows the number of unrepresented persons by county as of January 14, 2025. Multnomah, Jackson, Marion, Washington, Douglas, and Coos counties continue to have the highest number of unrepresented persons in Oregon. Multnomah County’s unrepresented list has doubled since July 1, 2024, to a total of 1,109 unrepresented individuals.



Source: OJD Odyssey Data (eCourt).