

How Long Does it Take to Process a Criminal Case?

An Analysis of Disposition & Pending Case Times in North Carolina

Jessica Smith, W.R. Kenan Jr. Distinguished Professor & Director, Criminal Justice Innovation Lab

Ross Hatton, Graduate Research Assistant

UNC School of Government Criminal Justice Innovation Lab

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Introduction

The mission statement of the North Carolina Court System includes providing timely resolution of legal matters.¹ And the legal maxim “justice delayed is justice denied” is embedded in the North Carolina Constitution.² That document provides, in relevant part, that “justice shall be administered without favor, denial, or delay.”³ Noting “[i]ndications of potential problems” with case processing delay in the state’s criminal justice system, the report of the North Carolina Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice (NCCALJ) explained that such delays can create problems, including for:

- Pre-trial detainees who sit in the county jail while waiting for the prosecution to prove to a judge or jury that they violated the law, and in the meantime cannot earn income or support their famil[ies].
- Pre-trial detainees who choose to plead guilty to a charge in order to obtain the short-term gain of getting out of jail but then must face the long term consequences of a conviction, including difficulty finding employment and, in the case of a felony, loss of voting rights.
- Victims of crimes who need resolution of their case in order to receive restitution and/or to put the emotional damage of the crime behind them.
- Witnesses who over time may become unavailable and less likely to provide credible testimony.
- Institutions and individuals who will expend additional time and cost to resolve cases.⁴

At the same time, that report discussed potential benefits from improved caseflow management, including cost savings and enhanced public trust and confidence.⁵ Among the report’s recommendations is that North Carolina examine its current case processing time guidelines, using model standards developed by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) as a guide.⁶ Based on that recommendation, in this report we examine disposition and pending case times for North Carolina criminal cases, compare disposition times to the NCSC model standards, and provide data allowing jurisdictions to compare their performance to peer counties.

¹ That mission statement provides:

To protect and preserve the rights and liberties of all the people, as guaranteed by the Constitutions and laws of the United States and North Carolina, by providing a fair, independent, and accessible forum for the just, timely, and economical resolution of their legal affairs.

NORTH CAROLINA ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS, ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NORTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL BRANCH. JULY 1, 2018 – JUNE 30, 2019, <https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/documents/publications/2018-19-North-Carolina-Judicial-Branch-Annual-Report.pdf?8Xkl8oI6angZpJHnxhSeenXp3sI2QJSB>.

² NIAL RAAEN & LEE SUSKIN, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS, IMPLEMENTATION OF A CRIMINAL CASE FLOW MANAGEMENT PLAN: A REPORT TO THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF LAW AND JUSTICE 2-3 (August 17, 2016), https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/documents/publications/nccalj_criminal_investigation_and_adjudication_committee_report.pdf?FzwNepbOildnLygNhgfi7PqYjj8GD09e.

³ N.C. CONST. art. 1, § 18.

⁴ RAAEN & SUSKIN, *supra* note 2, at 2-3.

⁵ *Id.* at 4-5.

⁶ *Id.* at 6.

Data Sources, Methodology & Additional Information

Data Source & Years

Our report is based on public data posted online by the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NC AOC).⁷ In this report we present pending case time data through fiscal year (FY) 2019. With respect to disposition times, we modified our focus. Our discussion of felony disposition time data tracks that for pending case time data and includes data through FY 2019. However, our analysis of misdemeanor disposition times focuses on 2017 and 2018 data. We opted for this approach because a number of counties engaged in data integrity and dismissal projects in FY 2019, artificially inflating misdemeanor disposition times. Specifically, for counties that engaged in these projects, many older cases that previously had been dismissed with leave were classified as disposed in FY 2019. This resulted in a dramatic increase in 2019 disposition times for these counties, far beyond rates seen in prior years. To account for this, we focused our analysis of misdemeanor disposition times on FY 2017 and FY 2018, before these projects began. Only one jurisdiction — Mecklenburg — conducted such a project prior to FY 2019; Mecklenburg’s project took place in FY 2018 and inflated disposition times for misdemeanors in that year. Because of this, we excluded Mecklenburg’s disposition times when discussing the range of statewide median disposition times in FY 2018. FY 2019 misdemeanor disposition times for all counties and Mecklenburg’s 2018 misdemeanor disposition times are, however, presented in our accompanying spreadsheets, noted below. As discussed below, our report compares processing times based on counties’ urbanicity. Only two North Carolina counties qualify as large metro areas: Mecklenburg and Wake County. Because Mecklenburg’s 2018 project impacted its misdemeanor disposition numbers and Wake’s similar project in 2019 did the same, we compare these two large metro areas by presenting 2017 data.

Median Disposition & Pending Times

NC AOC reports only median disposition and pending times, and our report focuses on those measures. The median is the middle value (or 50th percentile) in a range of numbers. Because of this, it is less susceptible to extreme outliers, which can inflate averages, and it is more representative of the true middle of a dataset.

Cases that are not resolved are classified as pending; as used here, the term median pending time refers to the median time that cases in a jurisdiction’s open docket of work have been pending. Once a case is resolved, it is classified as disposed. Median disposition time refers to median time to disposition for cases that were resolved in the relevant reporting period.

The statewide median rates reported here are calculated and provided by the NC AOC. As noted above, because of its 2018 data integrity/dismissal project, we excluded Mecklenburg from our discussion of the range of medians in FY 2018. That county’s case 2018 case processing data is, however, included in the NC AOC’s statewide median rates.

The use of median pending and disposition times in this report is subject to two important caveats. First, jurisdictions vary in their rules of recordkeeping with respect to “pauses” in cases, such as when a defendant flees, requiring the trial to be delayed until the defendant is found and taken into custody. Some jurisdictions “stop the clock” during these events; others include these periods of delay in case

⁷ See North Carolina Judicial Branch, *Criminal/Infraction Case Activity Report by County*, NCCOURTS.GOV (July 9, 2020), <https://www.nccourts.gov/documents/publications/criminalinfraction-case-activity-report-by-county>.

times. These variations in rules of recordkeeping can impact median pending and disposition times. Second, while a median time is less susceptible to outliers, it does not reveal why the median shifted from one year to the next and may hide activity among outliers. For example, a median pending time could increase because a number of “young cases” were disposed or it could increase because a large number of lingering cases aged over the course of the year. Similarly, a jurisdiction could dispose of many older cases, but if the same number of young cases are disposed, the median may not shift significantly. For smaller jurisdictions, the disposal of just a few cases can substantially shift the median, which can cause considerable swings and variance in the median among rural counties. Without additional information regarding these issues, it is not possible to assess whether a county has a growing or shrinking backlog of cases based solely on median case times.

Case Types

NC AOC data reports case processing data for district and superior court in three criminal case categories: non-traffic misdemeanors, traffic misdemeanors, and felonies. Thus, we use these case types in our analysis.

NCSC Time Standards

Although we benchmark the NC AOC data against the NCSC model time standards, we do not implicitly or expressly endorse those standards for North Carolina. Rather, we use those standards because the NCCALJ report recommended them as a guide for updating North Carolina’s time standards. The NCSC’s standards are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – NCSC Model Time Standards⁸

Case Type	NCSC Model Standard
Felony	75% within 90 days 90% within 180 days 98% within 365 days
Misdemeanor	75% within 60 days 90% within 90 days 98% within 180 days
Traffic and Local Ordinance	75% within 30 days 90% within 60 days 98% within 90 days

⁸ See NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS, MODEL TIME STANDARDS FOR STATE TRIAL COURTS 3 (2011), https://www.ncsc.org/data/assets/pdf_file/0032/18977/model-time-standards-for-state-trial-courts.pdf#:~:text=For%20all%20the%20courts%20in,standard%20was%20difficult%20to%20achieve.&text=In%2098%25%20of%20cases%2C%20the,plea%20accepted%20within%20330%20days.

The NCSC also provides intermediate model time standards. For felonies, these include benchmarks for initial appearances, arraignment, initiation of trial, and plea acceptance. For misdemeanor cases, these include benchmarks for initial appearances, initiation of trial, and plea acceptance. Because the NC AOC does not provide intermediate processing data, we cannot compare performance to these benchmarks.

Accounting for Local Resourcing — NCHS County Classifications

Local court system resourcing varies across North Carolina's counties. To allow jurisdictions to make more meaningful comparisons of performance, we categorized North Carolina's 100 counties based on urbanicity using the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)'s Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties.⁹ This scheme assigns counties to one of six classifications according to their population and the location/size of their largest principal cities. The six classifications are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – NCHS Classification Definitions¹⁰

Classification	Definition
Large Central Metro	Counties in metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) with a population of 1 million or more that contain the entire population of the MSA's largest city, have their entire population contained in the largest principal city of the MSA, or contain at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA.
Large Fringe Metro	Counties in MSAs of 1 million or more that do not qualify as large central metros.
Medium Metro	Counties in MSAs of populations of 250,000 to 999,999.
Small Metro	Counties in MSAs of populations less than 250,000.
Micropolitan	Counties in micropolitan statistical areas.
Noncore	Nonmetropolitan areas that do not qualify as micropolitan.

Appendix A lists all North Carolina counties by their NCHS classification.

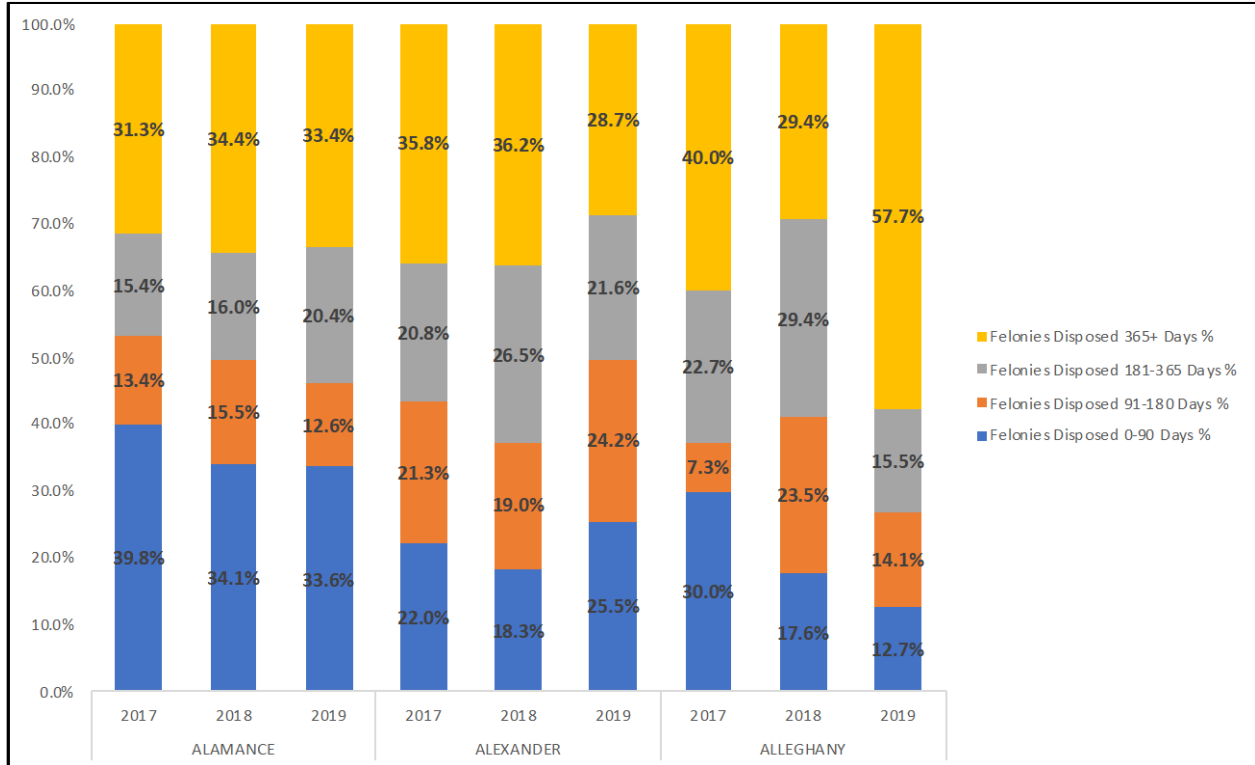
⁹ See U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, 2013 NCHS URBAN-RURAL CLASSIFICATION SCHEME FOR COUNTIES (2014), https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_02/sr02_166.pdf.

¹⁰ Metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) have an urbanized area with a population of at least 50,000. The MSA includes the central county or counties containing the core area. It also includes adjacent counties with significant economic and social integration with these core counties. Micropolitan statistical areas are similarly defined except that their urban cluster must have a population between 10,000 and 50,000. See Office of Management and Budget; 2010 Standards for Delineating Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas, 75 Fed. Reg. 37252 (Jun. 28, 2010), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2010-06-28/pdf/2010-15605.pdf>.

Additional Information

For those who wish to take a closer look at the data, we offer detailed spreadsheets for both district court ([here](#)) and superior court ([here](#)). Those spreadsheets contain additional perspectives and tools for analysis. For example, they include stacked bar charts allowing users to compare percentages of cases pending and disposed vis-à-vis the NCSC benchmarks. Figure 1 below shows, for example, this presentation for Alamance, Alexander, and Alleghany Counties with respect to 2019 Superior Court felony disposition times.

Figure 1 – County Comparison of Superior Court Felony Disposition Times—Sample Bar Charts



District Court

In this section, we discuss disposition and pending times for district court traffic and non-traffic misdemeanors. Most felony cases have some proceedings in district court (e.g., first appearance). Although some Class H and I felonies are disposed of in district court by plea,¹¹ other felony pleas and all felony trials are handled in superior court. Thus, this narrative portion of our report does not discuss pending or disposition time data for felonies in district court. However, that data is available in the district court spreadsheet noted above. Additionally, individual county-level data is included in that same spreadsheet.

IN 2018, THE MEDIAN
DISPOSITION TIME FOR
NON-TRAFFIC
MISDEMEANORS IN
DISTRICT COURT WAS 172
DAYS

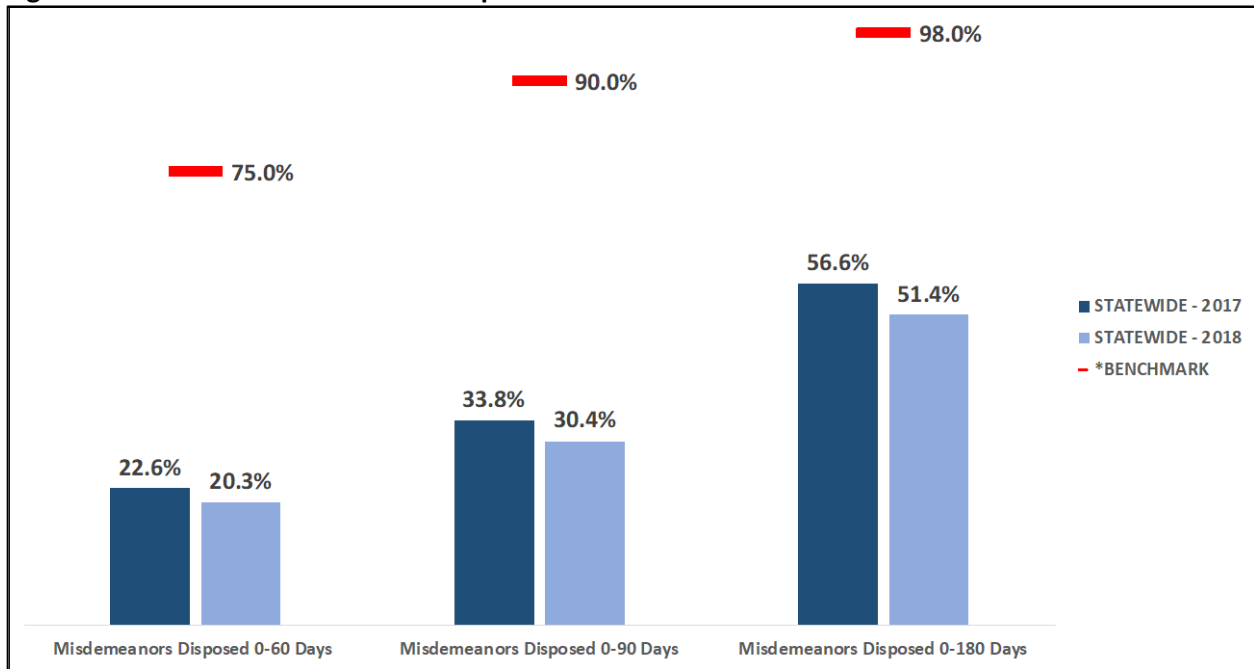
Non-Traffic Misdemeanors

The statewide median disposition time for non-traffic misdemeanors in FY 2018 was 172 days—an increase of 24 days from FY 2017. The range of 2018 median disposition times across North Carolina counties includes a minimum of 74 days in Richmond County and a maximum of 345 days Forsyth County.

Figure 2 shows the percentage of cases that met NCSC benchmarks. As shown below, 20.3% (2.3 percentage point decrease from FY 2017) of 2018 non-traffic misdemeanor cases were disposed of within 60 days, compared to a benchmark of 75%. 30.4% were disposed of within 90 days (3.4 percentage point decrease from FY 2017) relative to the benchmark of 90%, and 51.4% (5.2 percentage point decrease from FY 2017) were disposed within 180 days compared to the benchmark of 98%.

¹¹ G.S. 7A-272(c) (jurisdiction of the district court to accept a plea of guilty or no contest in Class H or I felony cases, subject to certain requirements).

Figure 2 – District Court Non-Traffic Disposition Times and NCSC Benchmarks



*NCSC benchmarks for non-traffic misdemeanors are 75% disposed within 60 days, 90% disposed within 90 days, and 98% disposed within 180 days.

The statewide median pending time for non-traffic misdemeanor cases in district court was 123 days in FY 2019. This was an increase of 11 days over FY 2017 (112) and 9 days over FY 2018 (114). The range of 2019 median pending times includes a minimum of 44 days in Currituck County and a maximum of 254 days in Greene County.

Disposition Times

Figure 3 below shows the distribution of median disposition times for district court non-traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county’s median disposition time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar disposition times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in disposition times. As a reminder, the data presented for large central metros reflects FY 2017 data due to the presence of data integrity and dismissal programs in FY 2018 and 2019.

As shown in Figure 3, the highest median disposition time in FY 2018 was Forsyth County at 345 days. This is followed by Wilson County (240 days) and Edgecombe County (224 days). Generally, the highest median disposition times in each classification decline as counties become increasingly urban or suburban. However, the lowest median disposition times were also found in noncore (Anson County – 78 days) and micropolitan (Richmond County – 74 days) counties, though there is a relatively small range in the lowest disposition times for each category (74 days to 118 days). The largest ranges in disposition times (246 days) was among medium metro counties due to Forsyth being a significant outlier. If Forsyth is removed, micropolitan counties had the widest range in disposition times (166 days).

Figure 3 – FY 2018 Median District Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Time Ranges by NCHS Classification¹²



¹² The large central metro category reflects FY 2017 data. See Data Source and Years for further explanation.

The five counties with the lowest median non-traffic misdemeanor disposition times in FY 2018 are presented by NCHS classification in Table 3 below.¹³

Table 3 – Lowest FY 2018 Median District Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Times¹⁴

County	FY18 Median Days Disposed
Noncore Counties	
ANSON	78
ALLEGHANY	83
BERTIE	103
ASHE	107
SAMPSON	112
Micropolitan Counties	
RICHMOND	74
STANLY	78
CAMDEN	89
CLEVELAND	97
TRANSYLVANIA	101
Small Metro Counties	
JONES	118
PAMLICO	157
CRAVEN	174
ALAMANCE	179
ONslow	198
Medium Metro Counties	
ROCKINGHAM	99
PENDER	113
BRUNSWICK	125
HAYWOOD	132
CATAWBA	133
STOKES	133
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
CURRITUCK	100
LINCOLN	109
GATES	122
JOHNSTON	127
ROWAN	132

¹³ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

¹⁴ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having their entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here have the following MSAs: Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Currituck and Gates), Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Lincoln and Rowan), and Raleigh (Johnston).

Pending Times

Figure 4 below shows the distribution of median pending times for district court non-traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county's median pending time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar pending times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in pending times.

As seen in Figure 4, Greene County had the highest median pending time for district court non-traffic misdemeanors in FY 2019 at 254 days. Currituck had the lowest median pending time among all counties at 44 days. Noncore counties had the largest range in median pending times (189 days). The range in pending times for large fringe metro counties was notably larger than the range in disposition times among these large fringe metro counties (150 days vs. 70 days). In addition, large central metro counties had the smallest range in pending times by a significant margin.

Figure 4 – FY 2019 Median District Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Time Ranges by NCHS Classification



The five counties with the lowest median pending case times for non-traffic misdemeanors in FY 2019 are presented by NCHS classification in Table 4 below.¹⁵

Table 4 – Lowest FY 2019 District Court Median Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Times¹⁶

County	FY19 Median Days Pending
Noncore Counties	
CLAY	65
CHOWAN	79
ANSON	82
POLK	88
YANCEY	88
MITCHELL	88
Micropolitan Counties	
RICHMOND	63
DARE	68
PERQUIMANS	74
STANLY	83
CLEVELAND	94
TRANSYLVANIA	94
PASQUOTANK	94
Small Metro Counties	
EDGECOMBE	111
NASH	131
CRAVEN	142
ALAMANCE	146
JONES	161
Medium Metro Counties	
DURHAM	77
STOKES	87
CHATHAM	90
ALEXANDER	91
BRUNSWICK	94
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
CURRITUCK	44
ROWAN	84
GATES	85
CABARRUS	94
IREDELL	118

¹⁵ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

¹⁶ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Currituck and Gates) and Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Rowan, Cabarrus, and Iredell).

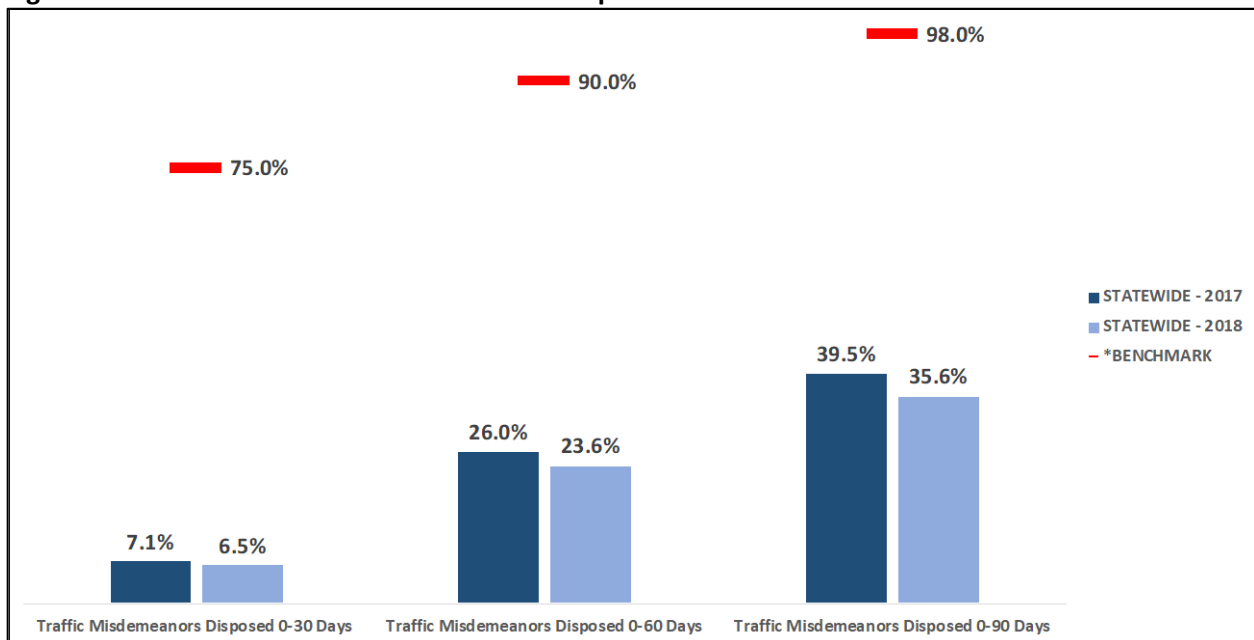
Traffic Misdemeanors

In FY 2018, the statewide median disposition time for district court traffic misdemeanors was 150 days. This was an increase of 23 days over the FY 2017 median (127). The range of FY 2018 median disposition times includes a low of 59 days in Avery County and a high of 261 in Vance County.

**IN 2018, THE MEDIAN
DISPOSITION TIME FOR
TRAFFIC MISDEMEANORS IN
DISTRICT COURT WAS 150
DAYS**

As seen in Figure 5 below, 6.5% (.6 percentage point decrease from FY 2017) of traffic misdemeanor cases were disposed in 0-30 days compared to the NCSC benchmark of 75%. 23.6% of cases were disposed within 60 days (2.4 percentage point decrease from 2017) relative to the 90% NCSC benchmark. 35.6% of cases were disposed within 90 days (3.9 percentage point decrease from 2017), as compared to the NCSC benchmark that calls for disposing 98% of these cases within that period.

Figure 5 – District Court Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Times and NCSC Benchmarks



*NCSC benchmarks for traffic misdemeanors are 75% within 30 days, 90% within 60 days, and 98% within 90 days.

The FY 2019 statewide median pending time for district court traffic misdemeanors was 107 days. This is an increase of nine days over the FY 2017 median (98) and four days over the FY 2018 median (103). In FY 2019, the lowest median pending time was 48 days in Hyde County, and the highest median was 387 days in Graham County.

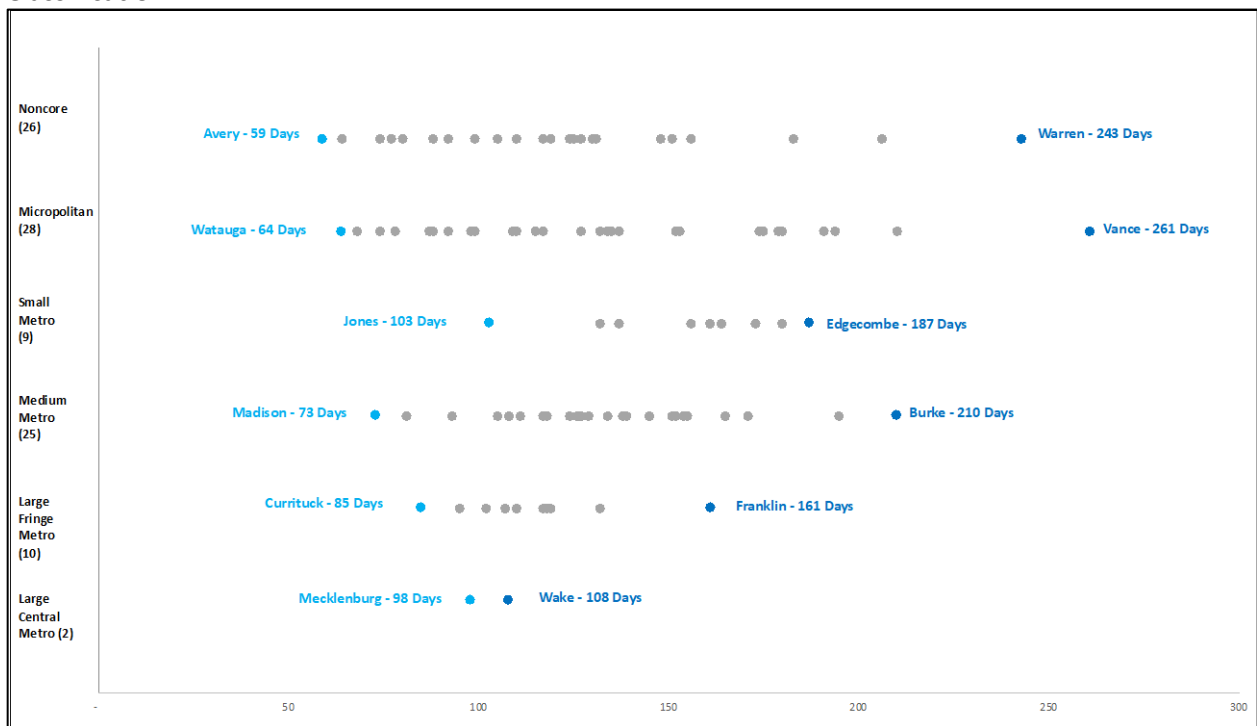
Disposition Times

Figure 6 below shows the distribution of median disposition times for district court traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county’s median disposition time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar disposition times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in disposition times. As a reminder, the

data presented for large central metros reflects FY 2017 data due to the presence of data integrity and dismissal programs in FY 2018 and 2019.

Vance County (261 days) had the highest median disposition time in FY 2018, followed closely by Warren at 243 days. Once again, noncore (184 days) and micropolitan counties (197 days) had the largest ranges in disposition times relative to other NCHS county classifications. Large central metro counties also had by far the smallest range in disposition times at 10 days. In general, the longest median disposition time in each classification declines as counties become more urban and populated, though there is a modest increase between both noncore and micropolitan counties and small metro and medium metro counties. Similarly, the lowest median disposition time in each classification tends to increase as the classification becomes more urban; however, there is a decline in the minimum for medium metro counties compared to small metro counties.

Figure 6 – FY 2018 Median District Court Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Time Ranges by NCHS Classification¹⁷



¹⁷ The large central metro category reflects FY 2017 data. See Data Source and Years for further explanation.

Table 5 below show the five counties with the lowest median disposition times by NCHS classification for traffic misdemeanors in FY 2018.¹⁸

Table 5 – Lowest FY 2018 Median District Court Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Times¹⁹

County	FY18 Median Days Disposed
Noncore Counties	
AVERY	59
YANCEY	64
MACON	74
WASHINGTON	77
ALLEGHANY	80
MITCHELL	80
Micropolitan Counties	
WATAUGA	64
DARE	68
TYRRELL	74
STANLY	78
CAMDEN	87
Small Metro Counties	
JONES	103
ALAMANCE	132
ONslow	137
CRAVEN	156
PAMLICO	161
Medium Metro Counties	
MADISON	73
DAVIE	81
CHATHAM	93
DAVIDSON	105
NEW HANOVER	108
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
CURRITUCK	85
ROWAN	95
UNION	102
IREDELL	107
JOHNSTON	110

¹⁸ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

¹⁹ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Currituck), Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Rowan, Union, and Iredell), and Raleigh (Johnston).

Pending Times

Figure 7 below shows the distribution of median pending times for district court traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county's median pending time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar pending times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in pending times.

Graham had the longest pending time for district court traffic misdemeanors in FY 2019 at 387 days. The next highest median pending time was Ashe (227 days)—another noncore county. Noncore had the widest range in pending times at 339 days. Large central metro counties also had by far the tightest range in pending times at 5 days.

Figure 7 – FY 2019 Median District Court Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Time Ranges by NCHS Classification



Table 6 below show the five counties with the lowest median pending times by NCHS classification for traffic misdemeanors in FY 2019.²⁰

Table 6 – Lowest FY 2019 Median District Court Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Times²¹

County	FY19 Median Days Pending
Noncore Counties	
HYDE	48
CHOWAN	58
ALLEGHANY	61
YANCEY	66
CLAY	70
POLK	70
Micropolitan Counties	
CAMDEN	52
TYRRELL	56
DARE	58
WATAUGA	65
PERQUIMANS	69
Small Metro Counties	
JONES	87
NASH	104
CRAVEN	108
ALAMANCE	110
EDGECOMBE	113
Medium Metro Counties	
MADISON	61
CHATHAM	74
RANDOLPH	75
DURHAM	75
ALEXANDER	80
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
CURRITUCK	49
GATES	71
ROWAN	75
IREDELL	80
CABARRUS	81

²⁰ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

²¹ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Currituck and Gates) and Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Rowan, Cabarrus, and Iredell).

Superior Court

In this section, we discuss disposition and pending case times for superior court felonies, non-traffic misdemeanors, and traffic misdemeanors.

NC AOC data for superior court disposition and pending times reflects only time spent in superior court. The data are not presented in a way that allows us to link superior and district court proceedings for the same case for purposes of calculating disposition and pending times. Thus, the data presented here reflect only the time spent in superior court.

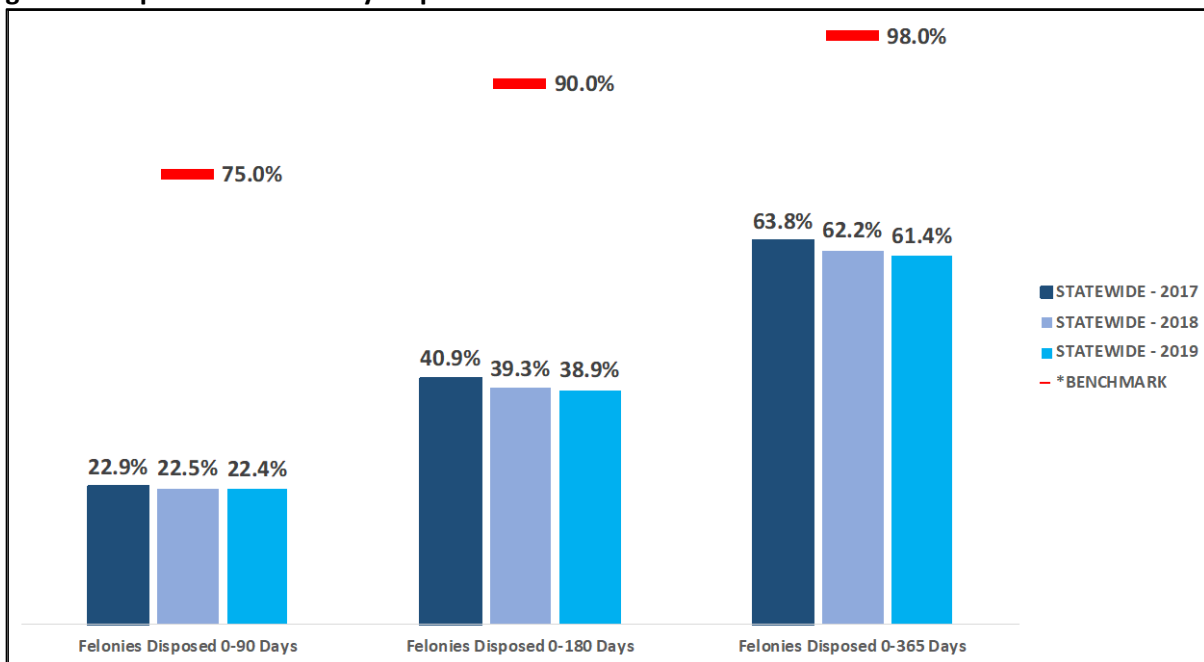
Detailed information for each of North Carolina’s counties is provided in the spreadsheet noted above.

Felonies

The statewide median disposition time for superior court felonies was 259 days in FY 2019. This was an increase of 20 days over the FY 2017 median (239) and 7 days over the FY 2018 median (252). The range of 2019 median felony disposition times ran from 104 days in Avery County to 673 days in Catawba County. Figure 8 below shows the percentage of cases in FYs 2017-2019 that met NCSC benchmarks. In FY 2019, 22.4% of superior court felonies were disposed of within 90 days, which is .5 percentage points lower than FY 2017 and below the NCSC benchmark of 75%. 38.9% were disposed within 180 days. This is a 2-point decrease from FY 2017 and below the 90% NCSC benchmark. 61.4% of cases were disposed within 365 days, a decrease of 2.4 percentage points from FY 2017 and below the 98% NCSC benchmark.

IN 2019, THE MEDIAN
DISPOSITION TIME FOR
SUPERIOR COURT FELONIES
WAS 259 DAYS

Figure 8 – Superior Court Felony Disposition Times and NCSC Benchmarks



*NCSC benchmarks for felonies are 75% within 90 days, 90% within 180 days, and 98% within 365 days.

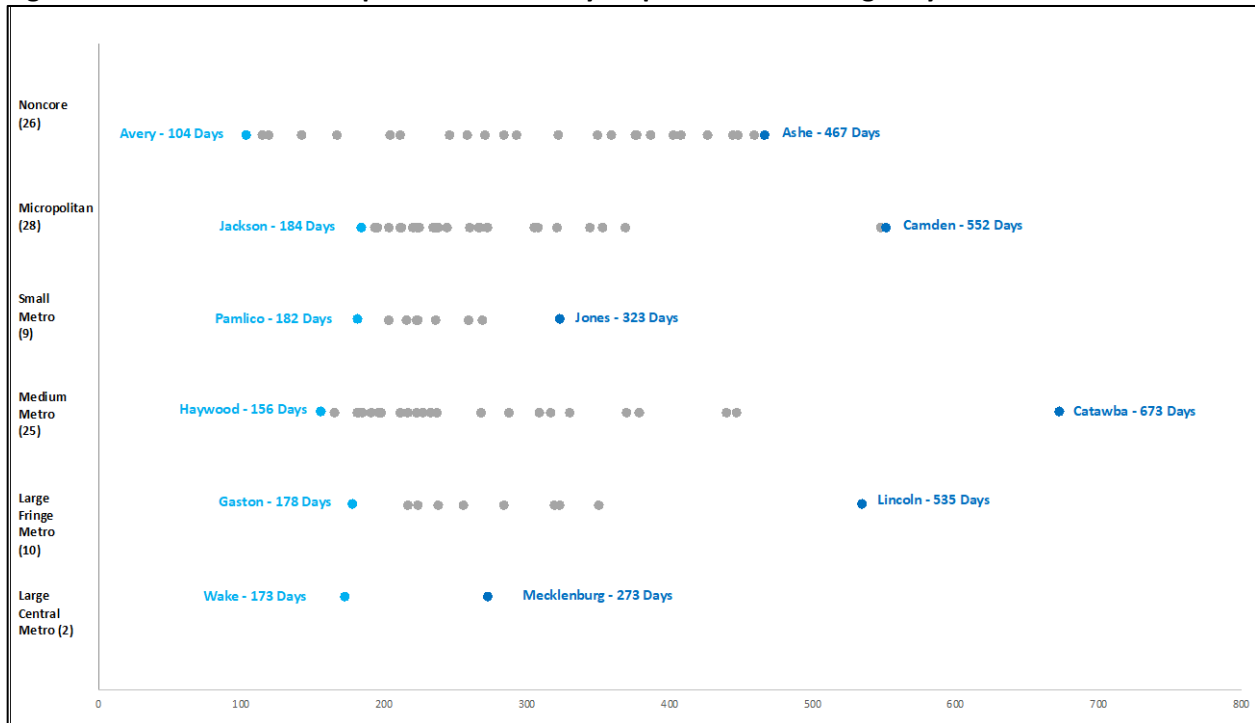
The FY 2019 statewide median pending time for superior court felonies was 263 days, which is an increase of 51 days from the FY 2017 median (212 days) and an increase of 36 days from the FY 2018 median (227 days). FY 2019 median pending times ranged from 39 days in Tyrrell County to 713 in Caswell County.

Disposition Times

Figure 9 below shows the distribution of median disposition times for superior court felonies. Each dot represents a county’s median disposition time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar disposition times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in disposition times.

Catawba County had the highest median disposition time in FY 2019 at 673 days. This was followed by a high of 552 days among micropolitan counties in Camden County and a high of 535 days among large fringe metro counties in Lincoln County. Medium metro counties has the widest range in medians (517 days), though this is largely due to Catawba County being a significant outlier among medium metro counties. Large central metro counties again had the tightest range in disposition times at 100 days, followed closely by small metro counties with a range of 141 days.

Figure 9 – FY 2019 Median Superior Court Felony Disposition Time Ranges by NCHS Classification



In Table 7 below, we present the five counties with the lowest median felony disposition times in FY 2019 by NCHS classification.²²

Table 7 – Lowest FY 2019 Median Superior Court Felony Disposition Times²³

County	FY19 Median Days Disposed
Noncore Counties	
AVERY	104
YANCEY	115
MITCHELL	119
GREENE	142
HYDE	168
Micropolitan Counties	
JACKSON	184
WILKES	194
TRANSYLVANIA	195
WATAUGA	203
HARNETT	211
Small Metro Counties	
PAMLICO	182
EDGECOMBE	203
NASH	216
ONSLow	223
ALAMANCE	224
Medium Metro Counties	
HAYWOOD	156
PENDER	165
ALEXANDER	181
STOKES	182
FORSYTH	185
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
GASTON	178
UNION	217
FRANKLIN	224
JOHNSTON	238
CABARRUS	256

²² Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

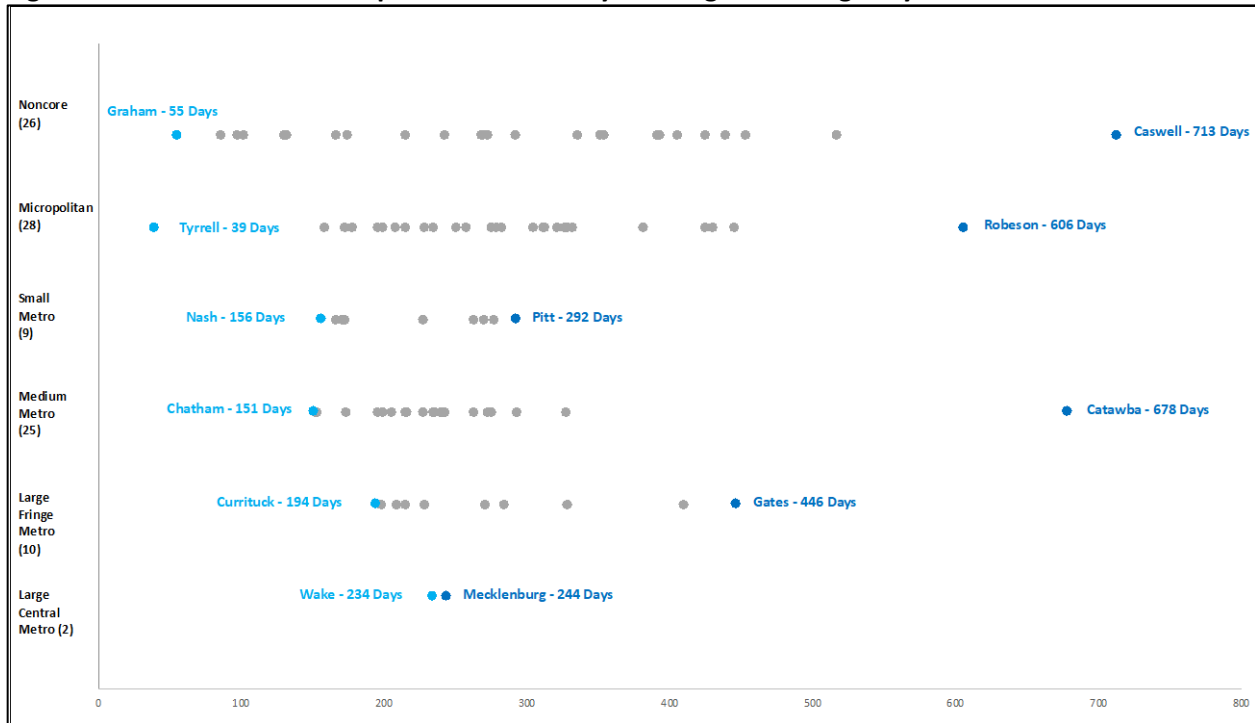
²³ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Gaston, Union, and Cabarrus) and Raleigh (Franklin and Johnston).

Pending Times

Figure 10 below shows the distribution of median pending times for superior court felonies. Each dot represents a county's median pending time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar pending times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in pending times.

Caswell County had the highest median pending time for superior court felonies in FY 2019 at 713 days. Robeson County (606 days) and Catawba County (678 days) were also significant outliers. Noncore counties had the widest range in pending times at 658 days, followed by 567 days in micropolitan counties and 527 days in medium metro counties. Each of these wide ranges is largely driven by the presence of the previously discussed outliers. Once again, large central metro counties had the smallest range in median pending times at 10 days. In addition, the lowest median pending times in each classification, as seen by the light blue dots, tend to increase as classifications become more urban.

Figure 10 – FY 2019 Median Superior Court Felony Pending Time Ranges by NCHS Classification



In Table 8, we present the five counties with the lowest median felony pending times in FY 2019 by NCHS classification.²⁴

Table 8 – Lowest FY 2019 Median Superior Court Felony Pending Times²⁵

County	FY19 Median Days Pending
Noncore Counties	
GRAHAM	55
ASHE	86
ALLEGHANY	97
SWAIN	102
MITCHELL	130
Micropolitan Counties	
TYRRELL	39
CAMDEN	158
RICHMOND	172
WILKES	178
TRANSYLVANIA	195
Small Metro Counties	
NASH	156
EDGECOMBE	166
ALAMANCE	171
WAYNE	172
JONES	227
Medium Metro Counties	
CHATHAM	151
STOKES	152
YADKIN	153
CUMBERLAND	173
BURKE	195
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
CURRITUCK	194
UNION	198
GASTON	209
CABARRUS	215
ROWAN	228

²⁴ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

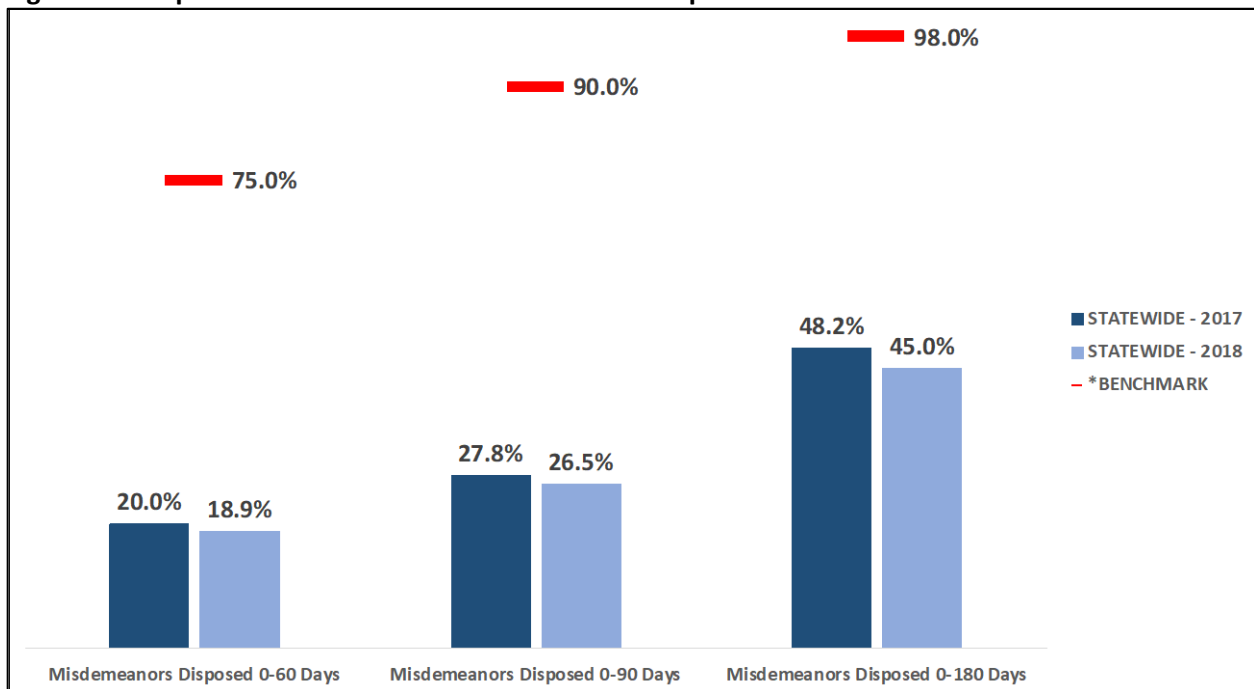
²⁵ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Currituck) and Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Union, Gaston, Cabarrus, and Rowan).

Non-Traffic Misdemeanors

In FY 2018, the statewide median disposition time for superior court non-traffic misdemeanors was 209 days, reflecting an increase of 20 days over the FY 2017 median (189). The lowest 2018 median was 68 days in Allegheny County, and the highest median was 471 days in Clay County. Figure 11 below shows the percent of cases that met NCSC disposition benchmarks. 18.9% of cases were disposed within 60 days relative to the NCSC benchmark, which calls for disposing 75% of cases within this time period. This was a 1.1 percentage point decrease from FY 2017. 26.5% of cases were disposed within 90 days compared to the 90% NCSC benchmark. This was a 1.3 percentage point decrease from FY 2017. Finally, 45% of cases were disposed of within 180 days (3.2 percentage point decrease from FY 2017) relative to the 98% benchmark.

IN 2018, THE MEDIAN DISPOSITION TIME FOR NON-TRAFFIC MISDEMEANORS IN SUPERIOR COURT WAS 209 DAYS

Figure 11 – Superior Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Times and NCSC Benchmarks



*NCSC benchmarks for non-traffic misdemeanors are 75% disposed within 60 days, 90% disposed within 90 days, and 98% disposed within 180 days.

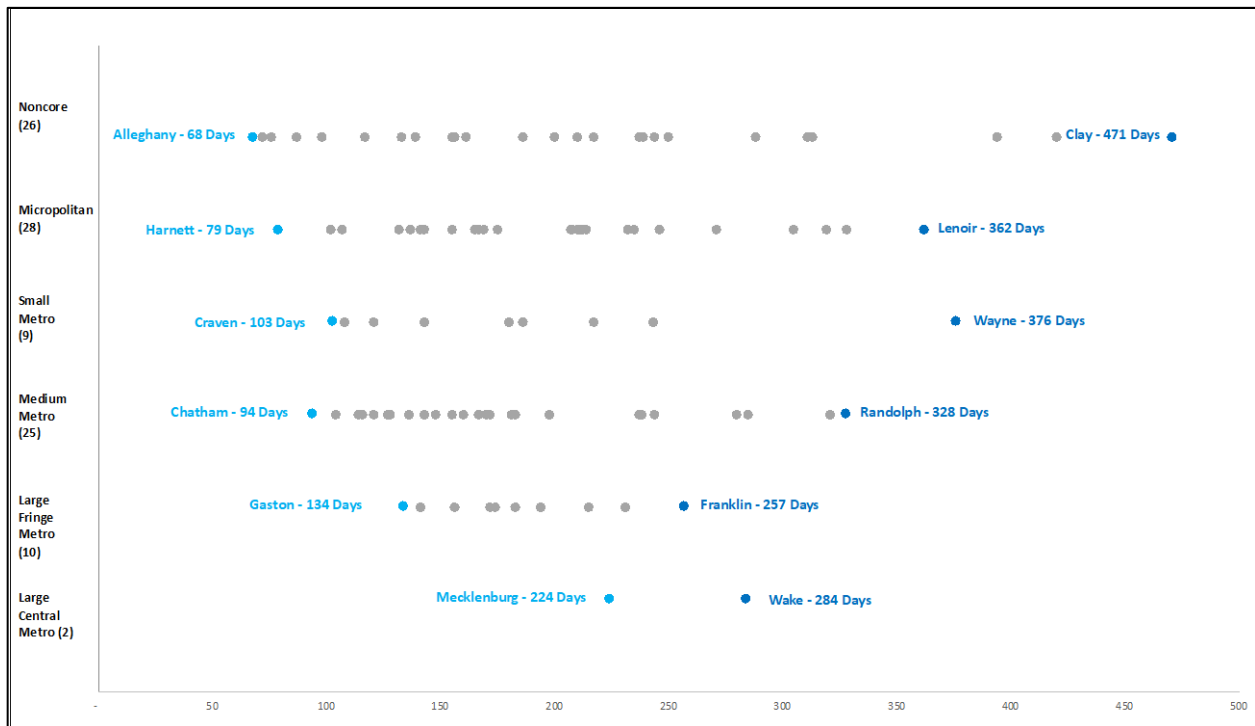
The statewide median pending time for superior court non-traffic misdemeanors was 226 days in FY 2019. This was an increase of 28 days over the FY 2017 median (198 days) and an increase of 13 days over the FY 2018 median (213 days). 2019 median pending times ranged from a low of 57 in Tyrrell County to a high of 1,369 in Graham County. In 2019, only two counties had median pending times that exceeded 1,000 days: Graham County as just noted, and Cumberland County (1,131 days). The next highest median pending time in 2019 was in Catawba County (780 days).

Disposition Times

Figure 12 below shows the distribution of median disposition times for superior court non-traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county’s median disposition time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar disposition times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in disposition times. As a reminder, the data presented for large central metros reflects FY 2017 data due to the presence of data integrity and dismissal programs in FY 2018 and 2019.

Clay County had the highest median disposition time for superior court non-traffic misdemeanors in FY 2018 at 471 days. The lowest was in Alleghany County—another noncore county—at 68 days. Accordingly, noncore counties had the widest range in disposition times at 403 days, while large central metro counties again had the smallest range at 60 days. As seen by the light blue and dark blue dots in Figure 12, there is also a general decline in the highest disposition time in each classification as the classifications become more urban, while there is a general increase in the lowest disposition time as classifications become more urban.

Figure 12 – FY 2018 Median Superior Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Time Ranges by NCHS Classification²⁶



²⁶ The large central metro category reflects FY 2017 data. See Data Source and Years for further explanation.

In Table 9 below, we present the five counties with the lowest median non-traffic misdemeanor disposition times in FY 2018 by NCHS classification.²⁷

Table 9 – Lowest FY 2018 Median Superior Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Times²⁸

County	FY18 Median Days Disposed
Noncore Counties	
ALLEGHANY	68
AVERY	72
SAMPSON	76
DUPLIN	87
YANCEY	98
Micropolitan Counties	
HARNETT	79
JACKSON	102
WILKES	107
MCDOWELL	132
RICHMOND	137
Small Metro Counties	
CRAVEN	103
EDGECOMBE	108
ALAMANCE	121
NASH	143
JONES	180
Medium Metro Counties	
CHATHAM	94
CALDWELL	104
STOKES	114
CUMBERLAND	116
YADKIN	121
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
GASTON	134
CURRITUCK	141
JOHNSTON	156
LINCOLN	172
UNION	174

²⁷ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

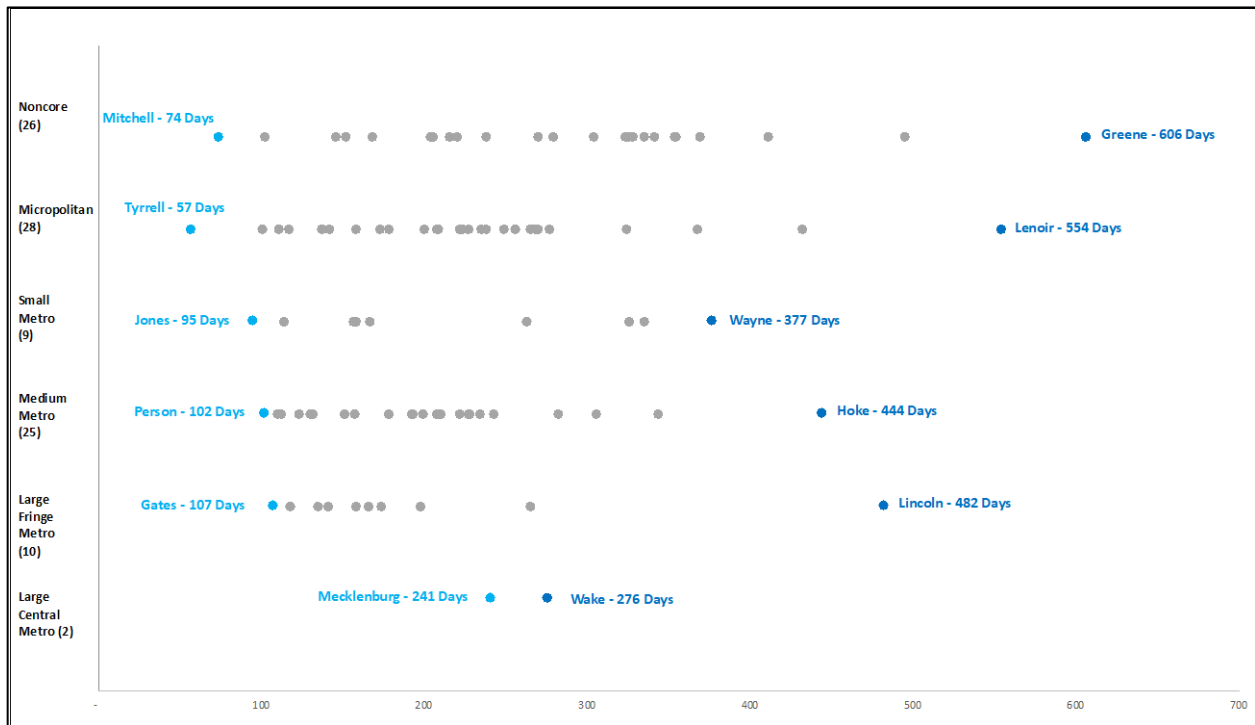
²⁸ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Gaston, Union, and Lincoln), Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Currituck) and Raleigh (Johnston).

Pending Times

Figure 13 below shows the distribution of median pending times for superior court non-traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county's median pending time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar pending times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in pending times. Counties with median pending times more than 300 days above the next highest median were excluded from the figure, as these extreme outliers distort the remaining data. For superior court non-traffic misdemeanor pending times, Graham County (1,369 days; noncore classification), Cumberland County (1,131 days; medium metro classification), and Catawba County (780 days; medium metro classification) were excluded.

After the extreme outliers, Greene County had the longest median pending time for superior court non-traffic misdemeanors at 606 days. Tyrrell County had the lowest median pending time at 57 days. Noncore counties also had the widest range in median pending times at 532 days. As a note, noncore counties still have the widest range if the extreme outliers are included (1,295 days). The large central metro classification again had the smallest range in medians at 35 days. In addition, the lowest median pending times in each classification tend to increase as the classifications become more urban, though these changes are relatively modest until a significant increase for large central metro counties.

Figure 13 – FY 2019 Median Superior Court Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Time Ranges by NCHS Classification



In Table 10, we present the five counties with the lowest FY 2019 median non-traffic misdemeanor pending times by NCHS classification.²⁹

Table 10 – Lowest FY 2019 Median Non-Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Times³⁰

County	FY19 Median Days Pending
Noncore Counties	
MITCHELL	74
SWAIN	102
ASHE	146
BLADEN	146
MACON	152
Micropolitan Counties	
TYRRELL	57
WILKES	101
CARTERET	111
JACKSON	117
TRANSYLVANIA	137
Small Metro Counties	
JONES	95
NASH	114
EDGECOMBE	157
ONSLOW	158
ALAMANCE	167
Medium Metro Counties	
PERSON	102
STOKES	110
CALDWELL	113
CHATHAM	124
BURKE	130
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
GATES	107
ROWAN	118
CURRITUCK	135
UNION	141
GASTON	158

²⁹ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

³⁰ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Gates, Currituck) and Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Rowan, Union, and Gaston).

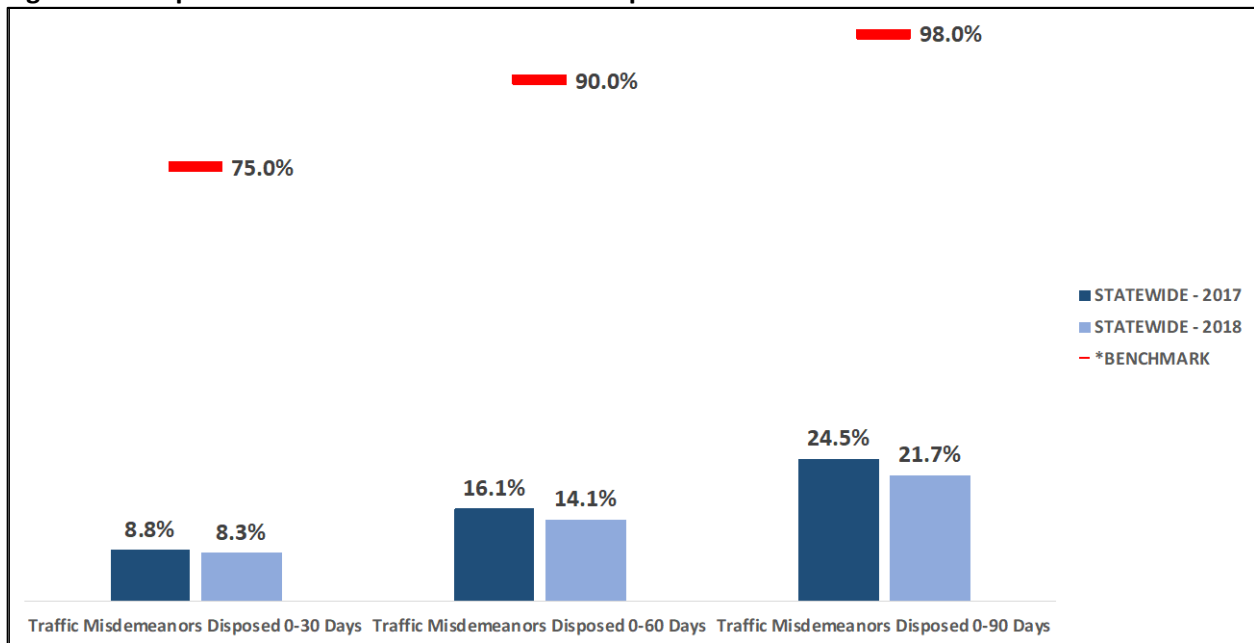
Traffic Misdemeanors

The FY 2018 median statewide disposition time for superior court traffic misdemeanors was 207 days—an increase of 19 days over FY 2017. The lowest median disposition time in FY 2018 was 9 days in Graham County; the highest was 1,411 in Cherokee County. In 2018, Cherokee County was the only county for which median disposition time exceeded 1,000 days. The county with the next highest median disposition time was Swain County at 689 days.

IN 2018, THE MEDIAN
DISPOSITION TIME FOR
TRAFFIC MISDEMEANORS IN
SUPERIOR COURT WAS 207
DAYS

Figure 14 below shows the percentage of superior court traffic misdemeanor cases that met NCSC benchmarks in these years. 8.3% of cases were disposed of within 30 days in FY 2018, which was a decrease of .5 percentage points from FY 2017 and below the NCSC benchmark, which calls for disposing of 75% of cases within this time period. 14.1% of cases were disposed within 60 days (2 points below FY 2017) compared to a 90% NCSC benchmark. 21.7% of cases were disposed of within 90 days, which is a 2.8 percentage point decrease from FY 2017 and below the 98% NCSC benchmark.

Figure 14 – Superior Court Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Times and NCSC Benchmarks



*NCSC benchmarks for traffic misdemeanors 75% within 30 days, 90% within 60 days, and 98% within 90 days.

In FY 2019, the statewide median pending time for superior court traffic misdemeanors was 223 days, an increase of 45 days as compared to the FY 2017 median (178 days) and a decrease of 6 days from the FY 2018 median (229 days). The FY 2019 range included a low of 31 days in Ashe and a high of 7,405 days in Wilson. Wilson County’s median pending time was far in excess of any other county rate; Catawba County had the next highest 2019 median pending time (992 days).

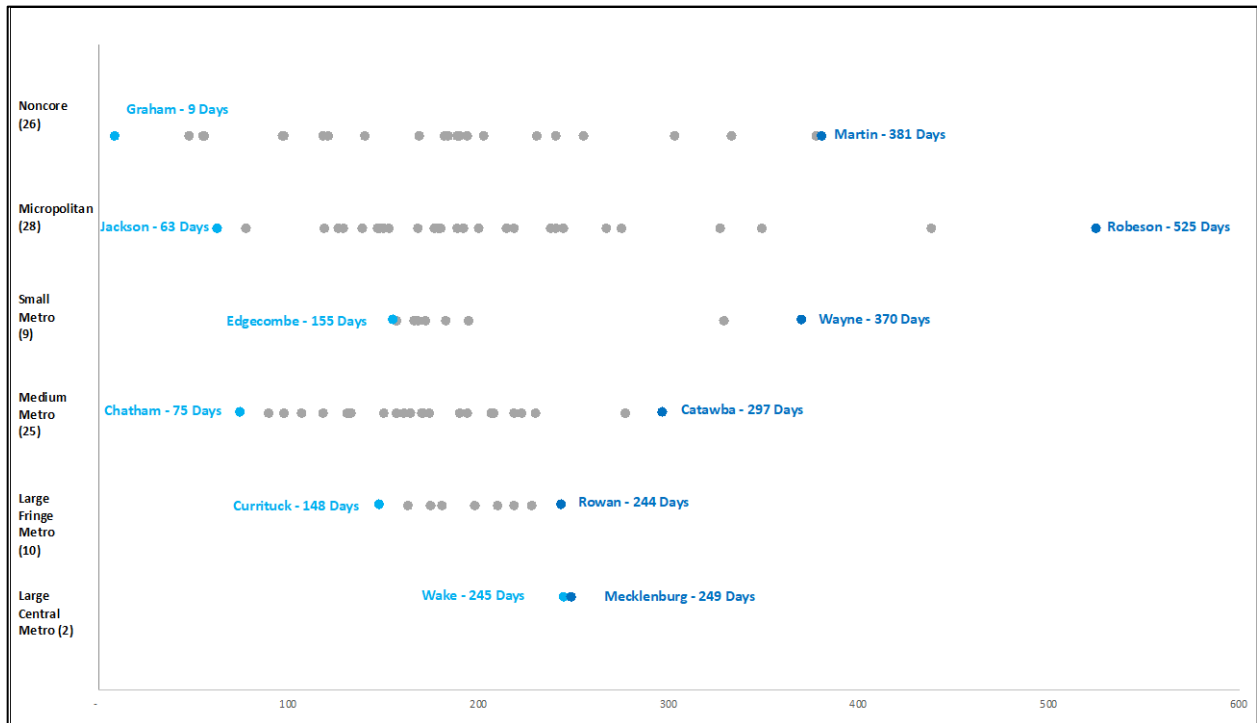
Disposition Times

Figure 15 below shows the distribution of median disposition times for superior court traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county’s median disposition time, and the minimum and

maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar disposition times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in disposition times. As a reminder, the data presented for large central metros reflects FY 2017 data due to the presence of data integrity and dismissal programs in FY 2018 and 2019. Counties with median disposition times more than 300 days above the next highest median were excluded from the figure, as these extreme outliers distort the remaining data. For superior court traffic misdemeanor disposition times, Cherokee County (1,411 days; noncore classification), Swain County (689 days; noncore classification), and Lincoln County (610 days; large fringe metro classification) were excluded.

After the extreme outliers, Robeson County had the highest median superior court traffic misdemeanor disposition time in FY 2018 at 525 days. Graham County had by far the lowest median disposition time at 9 days. With extreme outliers removed, micropolitan counties had the widest range in disposition times at 462 days (noncore counties had the widest range at 1,402 days when extreme outliers are included). Large central metro counties had by far the smallest range at 4 days. Generally, the lowest median disposition times—shown by the light blue dots—in each category again increase as the classifications become more urban, though there is a significant decrease in the lowest disposition time for medium metro counties relative to small metro counties.

Figure 15 – FY 2018 Median Superior Court Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Time Ranges by NCHS Classification³¹



³¹ The large central metro category reflects FY 2017 data. See Data Source and Years for further explanation.

Table 11 presents the five counties with the lowest FY 2018 median superior court traffic misdemeanor disposition times in FY 2018 by NCHS classification.³²

Table 11 – Lowest FY 2018 Median Superior Court Traffic Misdemeanor Disposition Times³³

County	FY18 Median Days Disposed
Noncore Counties	
GRAHAM	9
ALLEGHANY	48
CLAY	55
ASHE	56
YANCEY	97
Micropolitan Counties	
JACKSON	63
MCDOWELL	78
DARE	119
NORTHAMPTON	126
WILKES	129
Small Metro Counties	
EDGECOMBE	155
CRAVEN	157
JONES	166
NASH	168
PAMLICO	172
Medium Metro Counties	
CHATHAM	75
MADISON	90
YADKIN	90
STOKES	98
CUMBERLAND	107
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
CURRITUCK	148
GASTON	163
UNION	175
JOHNSTON	181
IREDELL	198

³² Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

³³ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA's largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Currituck) and Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Gaston, Union, and Iredell), and Raleigh (Johnston).

Pending Times

Figure 16 below shows the distribution of median pending times for superior traffic misdemeanors. Each dot represents a county's median pending time, and the minimum and maximum medians are highlighted in each category with light blue and dark blue, respectively. Tightly clustered dots indicate several counties in a given NCHS classification experienced similar pending times, whereas a wide spread of dots demonstrates variability in pending times. Counties with median pending times more than 300 days above the next highest median were excluded from the figure, as these extreme outliers distort the remaining data. For superior court traffic misdemeanor pending times, Wilson County (7,405 days; micropolitan classification), Catawba County (992 days; medium metro classification), and Robeson County (815 days; micropolitan classification) were excluded.

After the extreme outliers, Polk County had the highest median pending time for superior court traffic misdemeanors in FY 2019 at 796 days. Ashe County had the lowest median pending time at 31 days, followed closely by Chatham at 38 days. With the outliers removed, noncore counties had the widest range in pending times at 765 days, though micropolitan counties have the widest range when the outliers are included (7,344 days). Large central metro counties again had the smallest range at 53 days. Consistent with several other charge types, the lowest median pending times by classification tend to increase as the classifications become more urban, though these increases are relatively small until a significant increase in the minimum for large central metro counties.

Figure 16 – FY 2019 Median Superior Court Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Time Ranges by NCHS Classification



Table 12 below presents the five counties with the lowest FY 2019 median superior court traffic misdemeanor pending times in FY 2019 by NCHS classification.³⁴

³⁴ Because Wake and Mecklenburg are the only two counties categorized as large central metros, we do not identify top performers in that category.

Table 12 – Lowest FY 2019 Median Superior Court Traffic Misdemeanor Pending Times³⁵

County	FY19 Median Days Pending
Noncore Counties	
ASHE	31
DUPLIN	103
ANSON	104
SWAIN	124
HYDE	165
Micropolitan Counties	
SCOTLAND	61
RICHMOND	81
JACKSON	82
RUTHERFORD	96
TYRRELL	109
Small Metro Counties	
JONES	97
NASH	111
EDGECOMBE	142
PAMLICO	144
ALAMANCE	167
Medium Metro Counties	
CHATHAM	38
ORANGE	64
STOKES	78
CALDWELL	115
PENDER	117
Large Fringe Metro Counties	
UNION	136
GATES	145
GASTON	149
JOHNSTON	187
CURRITUCK	194

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³⁵ As a reminder, a county is classified as a large fringe metro when it is in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that has a population of 1 million or more and does not meet the requirements of a large central metro: containing the entire population of the MSA’s largest principal city, having its entire population contained in the largest principal city, or containing at least 250,000 inhabitants of any principal city of the MSA. The five large fringe metros listed here are in the following MSAs: Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (Union, Gaston), Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (Gates, Currituck), and Raleigh (Johnston).

Appendix A – NCHS Classifications

These categories were last updated in 2013 and reflect population data as of that time.

Table 13 – North Carolina Counties by NCHS Classification

County	Rural - Urban Classification
ALAMANCE	Small Metro
ALEXANDER	Medium Metro
ALLEGHANY	Noncore
ANSON	Noncore
ASHE	Noncore
AVERY	Noncore
BEAUFORT	Micropolitan
BERTIE	Noncore
BLADEN	Noncore
BRUNSWICK	Medium Metro
BUNCOMBE	Medium Metro
BURKE	Medium Metro
CABARRUS	Large Fringe Metro
CALDWELL	Medium Metro
CAMDEN	Micropolitan
CARTERET	Micropolitan
CASWELL	Noncore
CATAWBA	Medium Metro
CHATHAM	Medium Metro
CHEROKEE	Noncore
CHOWAN	Noncore
CLAY	Noncore
CLEVELAND	Micropolitan
COLUMBUS	Noncore
CRAVEN	Small Metro
CUMBERLAND	Medium Metro
CURRITUCK	Large Fringe Metro
DARE	Micropolitan
DAVIDSON	Medium Metro
DAVIE	Medium Metro
DUPLIN	Noncore
DURHAM	Medium Metro
EDGECOMBE	Small Metro

County	Rural - Urban Classification
FORSYTH	Medium Metro
FRANKLIN	Large Fringe Metro
GASTON	Large Fringe Metro
GATES	Large Fringe Metro
GRAHAM	Noncore
GRANVILLE	Micropolitan
GREENE	Noncore
GUILFORD	Medium Metro
HALIFAX	Micropolitan
HARNETT	Micropolitan
HAYWOOD	Medium Metro
HENDERSON	Medium Metro
HERTFORD	Noncore
HOKE	Medium Metro
HYDE	Noncore
IREDELL	Large Fringe Metro
JACKSON	Micropolitan
JOHNSTON	Large Fringe Metro
JONES	Small Metro
LEE	Micropolitan
LENOIR	Micropolitan
LINCOLN	Large Fringe Metro
MACON	Noncore
MADISON	Medium Metro
MARTIN	Noncore
MCDOWELL	Micropolitan
MECKLENBURG	Large Central Metro
MITCHELL	Noncore
MONTGOMERY	Noncore
MOORE	Micropolitan
NASH	Small Metro
NEW HANOVER	Medium Metro
NORTHAMPTON	Micropolitan

County	Rural - Urban Classification
ONSLow	Small Metro
ORANGE	Medium Metro
PAMLICO	Small Metro
PASQUOTANK	Micropolitan
PENDER	Medium Metro
PERQUIMANS	Micropolitan
PERSON	Medium Metro
PITT	Small Metro
POLK	Noncore
RANDOLPH	Medium Metro
RICHMOND	Micropolitan
ROBESON	Micropolitan
ROCKINGHAM	Medium Metro
ROWAN	Large Fringe Metro
RUTHERFORD	Micropolitan
SAMPSON	Noncore
SCOTLAND	Micropolitan
STANLY	Micropolitan
STOKES	Medium Metro
SURRY	Micropolitan
SWAIN	Noncore
TRANSYLVANIA	Micropolitan
TYRRELL	Micropolitan
UNION	Large Fringe Metro
VANCE	Micropolitan
WAKE	Large Central Metro
WARREN	Noncore
WASHINGTON	Noncore
WATAUGA	Micropolitan
WAYNE	Small Metro
WILKES	Micropolitan
WILSON	Micropolitan
YADKIN	Medium Metro
YANCEY	Noncore