

**Caseload Report for County Legal Operations: Child Welfare Cases
Office of Chief Counsel**

1st Quarter Report, SFY 2017-2018

Introduction

The Office of Chief Counsel's County Legal Operations section (CLO) represents the Arkansas Department of Human Services ("the Department") in child welfare and adult protective services cases and appeals from such cases. CLO also represents the Department in administrative hearings involving the placement of individuals on the Arkansas Child Maltreatment Central Registry and the Arkansas Adult Maltreatment Central Registry where the individual challenges the Department's true finding of maltreatment and is represented by an attorney, as well as appeals of administrative hearings to circuit courts and appellate courts.

As part of CLO's representation in child welfare cases, CLO attorneys represent the Department in dependency-neglect cases held before circuit courts across the state. CLO attorneys also provide legal services related to family-in-need-of-services cases where a circuit court orders a juvenile into the custody of the Department or otherwise orders the Department to provide services. The numbers presented in this section include dependency-neglect and family-in-need-of-services cases in which a CLO attorney is involved.

Number of Pending Child Welfare Cases

During the 1st quarter of state fiscal year 2017-2018 (SFY18), the number of child welfare cases decreased from 3,555 to 3,526. This represents a net loss of 29 cases, or 0.81%. The loss corresponds to 549 cases opened, 581 cases closed, and a correction of 23 cases that were confirmed as closed, but not reflected in previous closed-case reports.

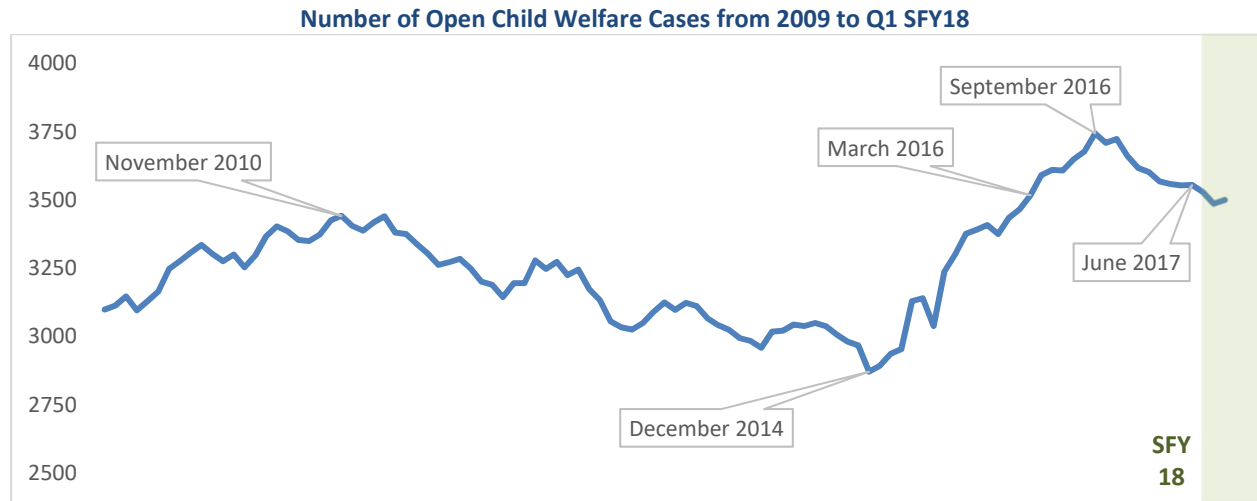


Figure 2.

Since January 2009, the number of child welfare cases has increased from 3,098 at the end of January 2009 to 3,526 at the end of September 2017, which represents a net gain of 428 cases, or 13.81%. During the same period, the average number of child welfare cases was approximately 3,270. By comparison, the average number of child welfare cases open during the 1st quarter of SFY18 was approximately 3,505.

N.B. OCC does not have a comprehensive case management or reporting system. Consequently, OCC began an audit program in August 2016 to hand count each caseload at least once per year to ensure the accuracy of the reported caseload numbers and the consistency of those numbers month-to-month. Since August 2016, the audit reduced the number of reported cases by a net of 166 cases, which explains *Figure 2's* bend in the number of child welfare cases during SFY17 to date relative to the number of cases opened and closed illustrated in *Figure 3* below.

Number of Opened and Closed Child Welfare Cases Per Month

As of the end of the 1st quarter of SFY18, the number of cases opened per month averaged 183.00 and the number of cases closed per month averaged 193.67. The 1st quarter, therefore, had a net average closure of approximately 10.67 cases per month with the number of cases opened ranging from 155 to 200 cases per month and the number of cases closed ranging from 166 to 235 cases per month.

The average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY18 was roughly consistent with the average number of cases opened from January 2009 to September 2017, but the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18 was substantially higher than the average number of cases closed from January 2009 to September 2017.

Specifically, the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (183.00) was 1.02% higher than than the average number of cases opened from January 2009 to September 2017 (181.16). The average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (193.67) was 9.94% higher than the average number of cases closed from January 2009 to September 2017 (176.16).

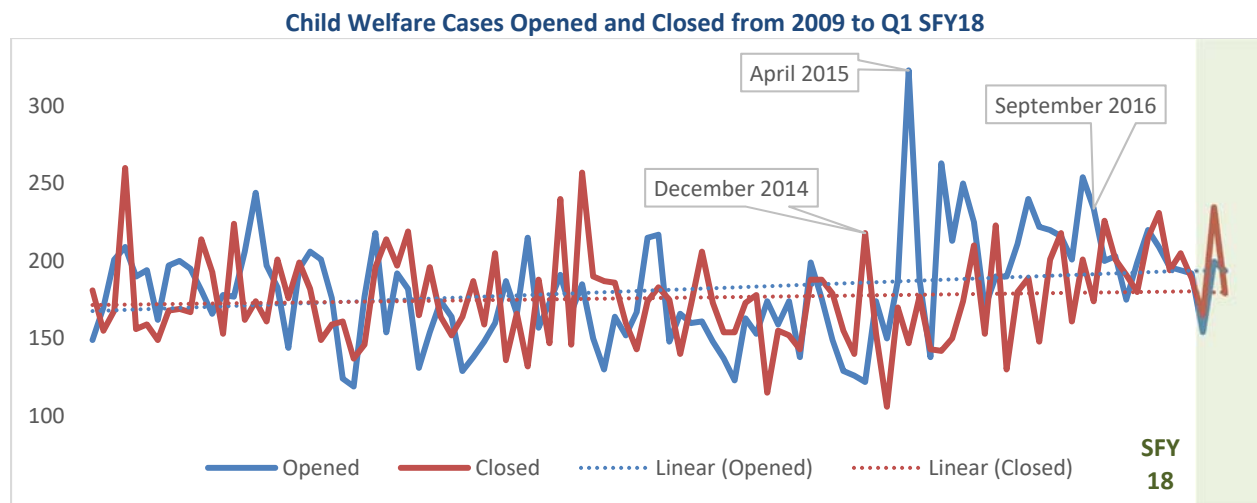


Figure 3

Although the available data do not yet support any conclusions to explain the changes in the number of opened and closed cases from January 2009 to September 2017, the data is helpful in describing the nature of the changes in the number of child welfare cases that have occurred over time.

For example, the average numbers of opened and closed cases during the 1st quarter of SFY18 are particularly helpful when compared to the averages during two specific preceding periods: (1) the period from December 2014 to September 2016 during which CLO experienced 21 months of nearly uninterrupted growth in the total number of child welfare cases (“the sustained-growth period”), and (2) the period from October 2016 to June 2017 during which CLO experienced 9 months of nearly uninterrupted decline in the total number of child welfare cases (“the sustained-decrease decline”).



Comparing the Sustained-growth and Sustained-decline Periods to the 1st Quarter of SFY18.

The average number of cases opened and closed from December 2014 to September 2016 was substantially higher than the average number of cases opened and closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18. Specifically, the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016 (208.23) was 13.79% higher than the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (183.00). Likewise, the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27) was 11.57% lower than the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (193.67).

The average number of cases opened and closed from October 2016 to June 2017 was also higher than the average number of cases opened and closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18. Specifically, the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2017 (198.67) was 8.56% higher than the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (183.00). Likewise, the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2017 (203.56) was 5.11% higher than the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (193.67).



Comparing the Sustained-decline Period to the Sustained-growth Period.

The average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2017 was lower than the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016 while the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2017 was substantially higher than the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016. Specifically, the average number of cases opened from

October 2016 to June 2017 (198.67) was 4.59% lower than the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016 (208.23). By contrast, the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2017 (203.56) was 18.85% higher than the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27).



Comparing the 1st Quarter of SFY18 to the Sustained-growth and Sustained-decline Periods.

The average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY18 was lower than the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2017 and the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016. Specifically, the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (183.00) was 7.89% lower than the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2017 (198.67) and 12.12% lower than the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016 (208.23).

The average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18 was lower than the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2017, but substantially higher than the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016. Specifically, the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (193.67) was 4.86% lower than the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2017 (203.56) and 13.08% higher than the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27).

Child Welfare Cases: July 2017, by County

County	Judicial District	End-of-Month Caseloads			Hearing Details		Outcomes					
		Cases	New	Closed	Days	#	Adjudication		Termination		Adopt.	Guard. / Cust.
							Won	Lost	Won	Lost		
Arkansas	11E	14	0	3	1	11	2	0	0	0	1	0
Ashley	10	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	38	2	2	4	16	0	0	1	0	2	0
Benton	19W	99	3	15	4	52	8	0	1	0	4	8
Boone	14	60	4	3	3	20	3	0	0	0	0	1
Bradley	10	10	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	23	0	4	1	4	1	0	1	0	1	0
Chicot	10	11	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	9E	14	4	1	3	8	1	0	1	0	0	0
Clay	2	24	2	0	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cleburne	16	34	3	3	2	17	2	0	1	0	2	1
Cleveland	13	12	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	30	2	0	3	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conway	15	55	3	1	5	23	2	0	0	0	1	0
Craighead	2	108	5	6	4	54	2	0	0	0	1	0
Crawford	21	110	4	6	9	51	13	0	0	0	2	3
Crittenden	2	46	4	3	1	15	3	0	0	0	0	0
Cross	1	34	0	0	1	13	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dallas	13	7	0	0	1	4	0	0	2	0	0	0
Desha	10	13	1	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drew	10	27	1	3	1	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faulkner	20	81	6	11	5	46	6	0	2	0	4	2
Franklin	5	44	1	2	2	11	0	0	0	0	1	0
Fulton	16	39	2	1	2	19	2	0	0	0	0	1
Garland	18E	82	2	7	4	23	6	0	0	0	0	7
Grant	7	18	2	0	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Green	2	114	7	13	3	41	8	0	5	0	1	0
Hempstead	8N	12	4	3	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	46	1	3	3	17	2	0	1	0	1	0
Howard	9W	5	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independence	16	72	5	2	3	24	3	0	1	0	0	0
Izard	16	23	3	1	3	13	4	0	1	0	0	0
Jackson	3	52	5	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jefferson	11W	105	4	4	4	27	7	1	1	0	0	0
Johnson	5	30	1	0	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lafayette	8S	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee	1	7	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0

Lincoln	11W	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Little River	9W	9	1	3	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	15	57	0	0	4	15	1	0	1	0	0	1
Lonoke	23	86	4	2	3	21	3	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	4	34	1	0	1	9	2	0	0	0	0	0
Marion	14	15	1	1	1	7	1	0	0	0	0	1
Miller	8S	80	2	7	3	31	3	0	0	1	0	0
Mississippi	2	43	0	1	1	18	1	0	0	0	1	1
Monroe	1	8	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	4	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	5	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	9	0	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	1	0
Ouachita	13	18	2	3	2	12	1	0	1	0	0	0
Perry	6	7	0	0	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	35	1	0	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pike	9W	10	1	1	2	9	2	0	0	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	66	4	0	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Polk	18W	20	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Pope	5	45	2	3	3	18	0	0	1	0	1	0
Prairie	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	320	8	12	31	104	11	0	11	0	8	0
Randolph	3	30	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saline	22	50	3	3	4	21	4	0	0	0	0	0
Scott	15	28	0	1	2	17	1	0	1	0	1	1
Searcy	20	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	451	15	16	21	123	19	1	8	0	4	3
Sevier	9W	20	2	2	1	7	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sharp	3	34	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
St. Francis	1	34	1	0	2	9	1	0	0	0	0	0
Stone	16	12	2	3	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union	13	49	1	0	2	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
Van Buren	20	17	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	4	216	4	3	12	45	5	0	0	0	4	1
White	17	95	4	2	3	35	6	0	0	0	1	0
Woodruff	1	17	3	0	2	8	1	0	0	0	0	0
Yell	15	39	4	3	3	17	1	0	1	0	1	0
Totals		3,524	154	166	215	1,169	148	2	43	1	43	32

Child Welfare Cases: August 2017, by County

County	Judicial District	End-of-Month Caseloads			Hearing Details		Outcomes					
		Cases	New	Closed	Days	#	Adjudication		Termination		Adopt.	Guard. / Cust.
							Won	Lost	Won	Lost		
Arkansas	11E	15	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Ashley	10	18	2	1	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	38	0	0	4	16	0	0	0	0	1	1
Benton	19W	99	8	8	6	62	6	0	3	0	1	8
Boone	14	59	3	4	3	25	2	0	1	0	0	5
Bradley	10	10	0	0	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	21	2	3	2	14	1	0	0	0	1	2
Chicot	10	12	1	0	1	8	1	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	9E	15	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clay	2	22	1	3	3	17	0	0	2	0	0	1
Cleburne	16	32	4	4	5	27	2	0	0	0	2	3
Cleveland	13	11	0	1	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	30	0	0	2	17	1	0	2	0	0	0
Conway	15	51	2	6	3	15	3	0	1	0	1	0
Craighead	2	104	4	8	6	63	5	0	2	0	1	0
Crawford	21	100	1	9	5	49	6	0	5	0	2	5
Crittenden	2	50	4	2	3	42	2	0	1	1	0	0
Cross	1	30	0	4	2	17	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dallas	13	9	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Desha	10	13	1	1	2	10	0	0	0	0	1	0
Drew	10	30	3	0	1	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faulkner	20	76	4	9	4	33	9	0	3	0	0	2
Franklin	5	43	1	2	4	20	2	0	1	1	1	0
Fulton	16	41	5	2	1	15	3	0	1	0	0	1
Garland	18E	80	3	5	5	24	2	0	1	0	0	3
Grant	7	21	3	0	4	12	1	0	0	0	0	0
Green	2	113	6	7	5	57	9	0	5	0	0	0
Hempstead	8N	12	0	0	2	6	1	0	0	0	1	0
Hot Spring	7	42	1	4	4	25	4	0	0	0	4	0
Howard	9W	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independence	16	71	5	6	4	33	4	0	1	0	1	3
Izard	16	20	1	4	1	10	3	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	3	48	0	4	2	25	1	0	0	0	3	0
Jefferson	11W	104	5	6	7	51	5	0	1	0	0	1
Johnson	5	29	2	3	3	18	2	0	0	0	1	0
Lafayette	8S	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	25	1	2	1	11	0	0	2	0	0	1
Lee	1	8	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Lincoln	11W	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Little River	9W	10	1	0	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	15	58	4	3	7	31	2	0	2	0	1	2
Lonoke	23	87	6	5	5	32	4	0	0	0	7	0
Madison	4	36	3	1	2	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marion	14	12	0	2	1	6	0	0	1	0	1	2
Miller	8S	77	3	6	4	38	4	0	0	0	3	0
Mississippi	2	39	5	9	3	27	3	0	0	0	0	1
Monroe	1	9	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	4	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	4	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	8	0	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ouachita	13	20	2	0	2	15	2	0	0	0	0	0
Perry	6	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	36	3	2	1	13	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pike	9W	11	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	70	6	2	4	39	4	0	1	0	1	0
Polk	18W	21	1	0	1	10	5	0	1	0	0	0
Pope	5	40	0	5	5	21	3	0	2	1	1	0
Prairie	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	322	19	17	36	108	10	0	11	0	13	7
Randolph	3	29	3	4	2	19	3	0	2	0	2	1
Saline	22	53	5	2	6	22	4	0	3	0	0	0
Scott	15	26	0	2	2	8	1	0	0	0	0	2
Searcy	20	6	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	450	21	22	30	189	9	0	13	0	8	2
Sevier	9W	21	3	2	3	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp	3	35	3	3	5	30	4	0	1	0	1	2
St. Francis	1	28	0	6	2	8	1	0	0	0	2	0
Stone	16	12	0	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0
Union	13	52	5	2	3	36	4	0	1	0	0	0
Van Buren	20	15	3	5	2	10	0	0	2	0	2	0
Washington	4	215	15	13	19	66	12	0	1	0	3	1
White	17	93	3	5	6	43	6	0	0	0	0	0
Woodruff	1	17	0	0	2	9	2	0	0	0	0	0
Yell	15	37	3	5	3	19	0	0	1	0	0	0
Totals		4,480	199	235	272	1,617	165	0	74	3	66	56

Child Welfare Cases: September 2017, by County

County	Judicial District	End-of-Month Caseloads			Hearing Details		Outcomes					
		Cases	New	Closed	Days	#	Adjudication		Termination		Adopt.	Guard. / Cust.
							Won	Lost	Won	Lost		
Arkansas	11E	17	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ashley	10	15	2	5	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	40	2	0	3	13	2	0	1	0	0	0
Benton	19W	103	9	5	4	44	3	0	5	0	1	0
Boone	14	56	4	7	2	23	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bradley	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	20	2	3	4	14	1	0	0	0	1	2
Chicot	10	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	9E	15	0	0	1	7	3	0	0	0	0	0
Clay	2	20	2	4	1	5	0	0	1	0	1	0
Cleburne	16	31	0	1	3	13	3	0	0	0	0	1
Cleveland	13	12	1	0	1	5	3	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	29	0	1	2	16	3	0	1	0	0	1
Conway	15	54	3	0	3	18	2	0	0	0	1	0
Craighead	2	105	5	4	3	44	4	0	1	0	1	0
Crawford	21	96	4	7	6	50	2	0	2	0	2	7
Crittenden	2	55	6	1	2	16	2	0	2	0	0	0
Cross	1	30	1	1	1	14	0	0	3	0	0	0
Dallas	13	9	0	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0
Desha	10	14	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drew	10	30	2	2	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faulkner	20	82	7	1	5	28	2	0	3	0	1	1
Franklin	5	33	1	11	3	8	1	0	1	0	0	0
Fulton	16	44	3	0	3	13	2	0	1	0	0	0
Garland	18E	80	5	5	4	32	3	0	0	0	1	4
Grant	7	20	1	2	3	14	0	0	0	0	1	0
Green	2	108	2	7	3	28	3	0	0	0	1	0
Hempstead	8N	13	1	0	1	7	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	43	2	4	2	16	4	0	3	0	1	0
Howard	9W	3	0	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independence	16	75	4	0	4	19	7	0	2	0	0	0
Izard	16	24	2	2	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	3	50	4	3	2	32	5	0	2	0	2	0
Jefferson	11W	106	6	4	5	23	3	0	1	0	0	0
Johnson	5	30	3	2	2	13	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lafayette	8S	6	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	25	1	1	2	9	0	0	2	0	1	0
Lee	1	7	0	1	1	7	1	0	0	0	0	1

Lincoln	11W	4	2	2	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	2
Little River	9W	12	3	1	2	6	0	0	0	0	1	0
Logan	15	57	3	3	3	18	1	0	1	0	1	2
Lonoke	23	88	3	2	4	27	7	0	1	0	2	1
Madison	4	36	2	2	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marion	14	9	0	3	1	7	0	0	1	0	2	1
Miller	8S	77	2	2	3	24	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mississippi	2	43	5	1	2	21	3	1	0	0	0	1
Monroe	1	9	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ouachita	13	22	2	0	3	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perry	6	9	2	0	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	36	1	1	2	11	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pike	9W	14	3	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	67	1	3	2	31	11	0	3	0	0	1
Polk	18W	23	3	1	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	0
Pope	5	40	2	2	3	10	0	0	0	0	1	0
Prairie	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	322	12	12	31	96	4	0	12	0	4	4
Randolph	3	29	3	3	3	8	0	0	1	0	1	0
Saline	22	52	3	4	3	13	1	0	0	0	2	0
Scott	15	26	2	2	2	8	1	0	2	0	0	4
Searcy	20	6	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	447	16	18	27	156	15	0	9	0	9	2
Sevier	9W	23	5	3	2	10	1	0	1	0	0	0
Sharp	3	33	2	1	4	15	4	0	1	0	1	2
St. Francis	1	27	0	1	3	14	1	0	0	0	0	0
Stone	16	9	1	3	2	7	1	0	0	0	0	0
Union	13	54	3	1	3	21	1	0	1	0	0	0
Van Buren	20	16	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	4	218	12	10	30	87	11	0	5	0	5	3
White	17	90	8	11	7	49	3	0	1	0	3	0
Woodruff	1	17	1	1	2	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Yell	15	39	2	0	3	8	1	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		3,494	194	180	249	1,277	132	1	71	0	49	40