

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

2nd 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 2nd quarter of state fiscal year 2017-2018 (SFY18), the number of child welfare cases decreased from 3,526 to 3,356. This represents a net loss of 170 cases, or 4.90%. The loss corresponds to 462 cases opened, 601 cases closed, and a correction of 31 cases that were confirmed as closed, but not reflected in previous closed-case reports.

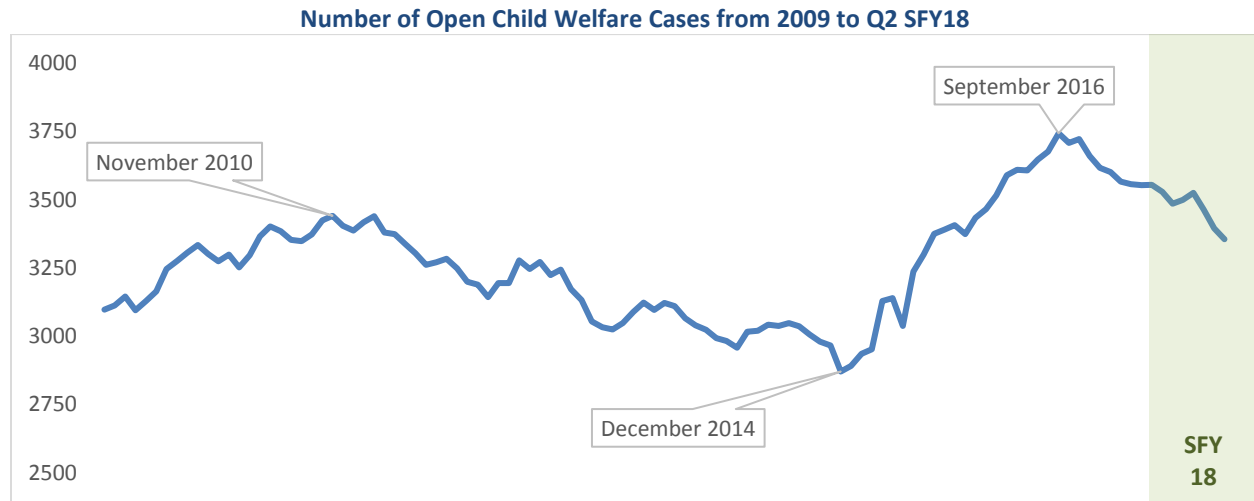


Figure 2.

Since January 2009, the number of child welfare cases has increased from 3,098 at the end of January 2009 to 3,356 at the end of December 2017, which represents a net gain of 258 cases, or 8.33%. During the same period, the average number of child welfare cases was approximately 3,276. By comparison, the average number of child welfare cases open during the 1st quarter of SFY18 was approximately 3,406.

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 200 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 2nd quarter of SFY18, the number of cases opened per month averaged 154.00 and the number of cases closed per month averaged 200.33. The 2nd quarter, therefore, had a net average closure of approximately 46.33 cases per month with the number of cases opened ranging from 134 to 176 cases per month and the number of cases closed ranging from 193 to 207 cases per month.

The average number of cases opened during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 was substantially lower than the average number of cases opened from January 2009 to December 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 December 2017.

Specifically, the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (154.00) was 14.77% lower than the average number of cases opened from January 2009 to September 2017 (180.69). The average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY18 (200.33) was 13.26% higher than the average number of cases closed from January 2009 to September 2017 (176.87).

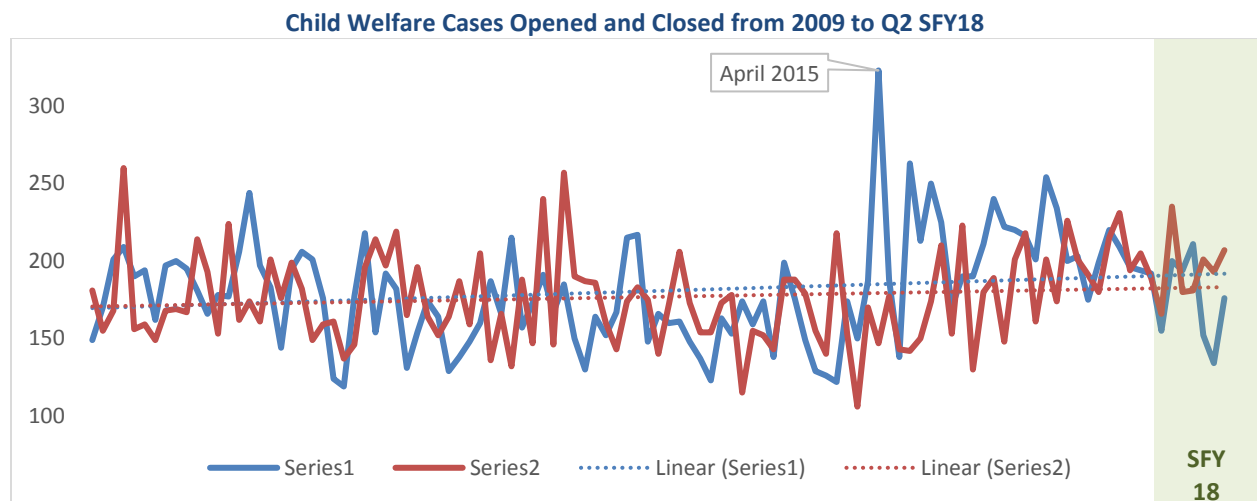


Figure 3

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 December 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 2nd 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 period”).

N.B. The decline that started during the sustained-decrease period continued through the 1st and 2nd quarters of SFY18 as well, which constitutes now 15 months of nearly uninterrupted decline in the total number of child welfare cases.



Comparing the Sustained-growth and Sustained-decline Periods to the 2nd 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 during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 and substantially lower than the average number of cases closed during the 2nd quarter of SFY18. Specifically, the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016 (208.23) was 35.21% higher than the average number of cases opened during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 (154.00). Likewise, the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27) was 14.51% lower than the average number of cases closed during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 (200.33).

The average number of cases opened and closed from October 2016 to June 2017 was also substantially higher than the average number of cases opened during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 and slightly higher than the average number of cases closed during the 2nd quarter of SFY18. Specifically, the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2017 (198.67) was 29.01% higher than the average number of cases opened during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 (154.00). Likewise, the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2017 (203.56) was 1.61% higher than the average number of cases closed during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 (200.33).



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 2nd Quarter of SFY18 to the Sustained-growth and Sustained-decline Periods.

The average number of cases opened during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 was substantially 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 2nd quarter of SFY18 (154.00) was 22.48% lower than the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2017 (198.67) and 26.04% lower than the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016 (208.23).

The average number of cases closed during the 2nd quarter of SFY18 was slightly 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 2nd quarter of SFY18 (200.33) was 1.59% lower than the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2017 (203.56) and 16.97% higher than the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27).

Child Welfare Cases: October 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	0	0	1	8	2	0	0	0	0	0
Ashley	10	17	3	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	39	1	2	3	17	0	0	0	0	0	2
Benton	19W	102	12	13	5	64	8	0	2	0	3	0
Boone	14	59	5	2	4	42	4	0	0	0	0	0
Bradley	10	10	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	20	0	0	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Chicot	10	13	1	0	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	9E	15	0	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0
Clay	2	20	0	0	2	12	1	0	0	0	0	1
Cleburne	16	30	3	4	2	19	4	0	1	0	0	2
Cleveland	13	9	0	3	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	31	3	1	2	5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Conway	15	57	5	2	3	18	2	0	1	0	1	0
Craighead	2	103	4	6	4	47	2	0	0	0	0	0
Crawford	21	95	4	5	6	36	1	0	2	0	5	2
Crittenden	2	59	4	0	2	19	4	0	1	0	0	1
Cross	1	30	0	0	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dallas	13	9	0	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0
Desha	10	15	1	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drew	10	30	1	1	1	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faulkner	20	84	12	10	5	50	5	0	1	0	3	1
Franklin	5	34	5	4	4	24	4	0	2	0	0	5
Fulton	16	44	0	0	1	12	3	0	1	0	1	1
Garland	18E	83	7	4	6	29	2	0	3	0	1	3
Grant	7	20	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green	2	109	9	8	4	34	4	0	3	0	3	0
Hempstead	8N	12	0	1	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	37	0	5	4	23	0	0	1	0	5	0
Howard	9W	5	2	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0
Independence	16	74	4	5	2	28	4	0	1	0	1	0
Izard	16	27	4	1	1	10	3	0	0	0	0	1
Jackson	3	49	1	2	2	22	4	0	0	0	1	0
Jefferson	11W	104	3	5	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0
Johnson	5	28	1	3	2	19	4	0	1	0	0	0
Lafayette	8S	7	1	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	26	2	1	2	12	1	0	1	0	1	0
Lee	1	7	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1

Lincoln	11W	4	0	0	5	28	1	0	0	0	0	0
Little River	9W	14	2	0	3	5	1	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	15	62	5	0	4	24	6	0	1	0	1	0
Lonoke	23	90	4	2	5	22	2	0	0	0	0	1
Madison	4	39	3	0	2	7	2	0	3	0	0	0
Marion	14	9	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Miller	8S	75	2	4	5	27	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mississippi	2	48	8	3	2	26	3	0	0	0	0	0
Monroe	1	8	0	1	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	6	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	7	0	0	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ouachita	13	26	5	1	1	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Perry	6	9	0	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	37	2	1	1	12	3	0	0	0	0	0
Pike	9W	13	0	1	2	10	2	0	0	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	69	5	4	2	20	0	0	2	0	0	3
Polk	18W	24	1	0	1	8	1	0	2	0	0	0
Pope	5	37	2	5	4	22	3	0	1	0	2	0
Prairie	17	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	312	7	13	35	107	6	0	5	0	4	1
Randolph	3	28	1	2	1	17	4	0	0	0	0	1
Saline	22	50	3	5	5	32	6	0	2	0	0	0
Scott	15	26	1	1	2	12	1	0	0	0	1	0
Searcy	20	6	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	437	13	24	31	172	25	0	13	0	9	5
Sevier	9W	23	0	0	3	9	2	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp	3	35	4	1	3	37	7	0	2	0	1	1
St. Francis	1	31	4	0	3	19	1	0	0	0	0	0
Stone	16	11	3	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	0
Union	13	55	2	1	3	32	4	0	1	0	1	1
Van Buren	20	14	2	4	2	10	3	0	2	0	2	0
Washington	4	230	23	11	25	67	10	0	4	0	1	5
White	17	92	7	5	5	58	7	0	3	0	0	0
Woodruff	1	17	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yell	15	40	2	1	3	8	5	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		3,526	211	181	256	1,470	180	0	64	1	50	38

Child Welfare Cases: November 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	0	0	1	8	3	0	0	0	0	0
Ashley	10	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	39	2	2	2	15	1	0	0	0	0	0
Benton	19W	101	6	7	7	61	3	0	2	0	3	0
Boone	14	54	1	6	2	27	1	0	1	0	0	2
Bradley	10	8	0	2	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	19	2	3	2	10	1	0	1	0	0	2
Chicot	10	16	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	9E	14	0	1	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clay	2	20	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	0
Cleburne	16	29	3	3	4	18	4	0	2	0	0	2
Cleveland	13	9	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	29	1	3	2	19	0	0	0	0	0	1
Conway	15	54	0	3	3	13	2	0	1	0	0	0
Craighead	2	101	4	6	5	43	3	0	4	0	4	2
Crawford	21	92	3	6	6	44	6	1	1	0	3	6
Crittenden	2	61	3	1	1	12	1	0	0	0	0	1
Cross	1	28	3	5	3	22	0	0	1	0	0	0
Dallas	13	9	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Desha	10	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drew	10	29	0	1	1	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faulkner	20	86	6	4	4	37	9	0	0	0	0	1
Franklin	5	29	0	5	3	12	1	0	1	0	3	0
Fulton	16	41	0	3	2	7	1	0	0	0	1	0
Garland	18E	85	6	4	6	34	4	0	5	0	1	3
Grant	7	18	0	2	3	10	0	0	2	0	1	0
Green	2	112	8	5	3	43	7	0	1	0	4	0
Hempstead	8N	12	0	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	40	3	0	4	23	2	0	3	0	0	0
Howard	9W	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independence	16	77	5	4	1	13	1	0	0	0	0	3
Izard	16	29	4	2	1	7	2	0	0	0	0	1
Jackson	3	51	3	1	2	13	1	0	0	0	0	1
Jefferson	11W	78	2	9	5	42	4	0	1	0	2	0
Johnson	5	29	2	1	2	17	2	0	0	0	0	0
Lafayette	8S	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	25	2	3	3	13	3	0	1	0	3	0
Lee	1	6	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0

Lincoln	11W	6	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Little River	9W	16	2	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	15	60	1	3	3	21	4	0	3	0	1	0
Lonoke	23	95	5	0	5	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	4	42	3	0	1	6	2	0	1	0	0	0
Marion	14	9	0	0	1	10	1	0	0	0	0	0
Miller	8S	69	1	7	4	16	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mississippi	2	49	4	3	2	22	0	0	0	0	1	0
Monroe	1	8	1	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	2	0	1	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	7	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	6	0	1	1	6	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ouachita	13	23	1	4	2	12	3	0	0	0	1	1
Perry	6	9	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	36	0	1	2	10	4	0	0	0	0	0
Pike	9W	13	0	0	1	4	1	0	1	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	69	3	3	2	35	4	0	0	0	0	1
Polk	18W	24	0	0	1	11	3	0	2	0	0	0
Pope	5	36	0	1	2	17	1	0	1	0	0	0
Prairie	17	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	314	11	13	24	99	10	0	3	0	8	6
Randolph	3	27	0	1	1	9	3	0	0	0	1	0
Saline	22	50	3	3	3	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scott	15	26	1	1	1	8	2	0	1	0	1	0
Searcy	20	5	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sebastian	12	420	10	27	24	156	20	0	9	0	7	7
Sevier	9W	21	0	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	0
Sharp	3	34	1	4	3	27	5	0	5	0	0	1
St. Francis	1	33	3	1	3	16	1	0	1	0	0	0
Stone	16	13	3	1	1	12	4	0	0	0	1	0
Union	13	57	3	1	3	23	0	0	0	0	0	0
Van Buren	20	13	1	2	1	5	0	0	0	0	1	0
Washington	4	229	14	15	24	86	19	0	3	0	4	5
White	17	88	3	7	5	46	6	1	1	0	0	0
Woodruff	1	17	0	0	1	9	1	0	0	0	0	0
Yell	15	39	1	2	2	13	3	0	1	0	0	0
Totals		3,465	152	201	221	1,617	163	2	63	0	53	48

Child Welfare Cases: December 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	0	3	1	7	1	0	0	0	1	0
Ashley	10	18	1	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	39	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benton	19W	97	3	8	5	53	4	0	2	0	3	0
Boone	14	54	1	1	2	10	3	0	0	0	0	1
Bradley	10	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	19	0	0	3	13	1	0	1	0	1	2
Chicot	10	15	1	2	2	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	9E	16	2	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Clay	2	19	1	2	1	12	1	0	0	0	3	0
Cleburne	16	28	2	3	2	12	2	0	0	0	0	2
Cleveland	13	8	1	2	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	29	3	3	2	13	3	0	0	0	2	0
Conway	15	51	2	2	3	15	2	0	0	0	0	0
Craighead	2	101	0	0	4	54	2	0	3	0	3	1
Crawford	21	90	1	3	1	16	2	0	0	0	0	2
Crittenden	2	59	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cross	1	28	1	1	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dallas	13	8	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	0
Desha	10	15	0	0	2	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drew	10	27	0	2	3	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faulkner	20	96	16	6	5	48	7	0	2	1	3	2
Franklin	5	27	0	2	3	13	1	0	0	0	1	1
Fulton	16	38	0	3	1	14	1	0	0	0	1	0
Garland	18E	85	2	2	4	23	9	0	1	0	0	2
Grant	7	18	1	1	2	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green	2	107	4	9	4	52	6	0	2	0	3	0
Hempstead	8N	12	0	0	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	41	3	1	2	13	1	0	2	0	1	0
Howard	9W	5	1	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Independence	16	75	1	3	1	17	2	0	0	0	0	2
Izard	16	28	2	3	1	14	2	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	3	51	4	4	2	25	3	0	1	0	1	0
Jefferson	11W	70	2	10	2	39	4	0	0	0	2	5
Johnson	5	26	0	3	3	15	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lafayette	8S	7	0	1	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	28	4	1	3	7	0	0	0	0	1	0
Lee	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Lincoln	11W	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Little River	9W	17	1	0	2	7	3	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	15	60	3	3	5	27	1	0	1	0	2	1
Lonoke	23	89	1	2	3	22	3	0	0	0	0	1
Madison	4	35	1	5	2	15	2	0	3	0	0	0
Marion	14	9	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Miller	8S	75	6	0	4	18	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mississippi	2	48	3	4	2	14	8	0	1	0	0	1
Monroe	1	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	6	0	1	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ouachita	13	21	0	2	1	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Perry	6	9	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	37	2	1	1	13	2	0	2	0	0	0
Pike	9W	13	0	0	2	5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	69	0	0	2	20	2	0	1	0	2	1
Polk	18W	24	1	1	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	1
Pope	5	35	0	1	2	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prairie	17	6	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	311	10	13	20	56	5	0	4	0	10	2
Randolph	3	23	1	5	3	12	0	0	2	0	1	1
Saline	22	48	3	5	2	18	2	1	0	0	2	1
Scott	15	26	1	1	1	7	0	0	0	0	1	0
Searcy	20	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	401	9	29	18	113	10	0	2	0	17	5
Sevier	9W	22	4	3	2	13	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp	3	37	4	1	2	5	2	0	1	0	0	0
St. Francis	1	32	2	3	2	11	1	0	2	0	1	0
Stone	16	13	0	0	1	7	1	0	0	0	1	0
Union	13	55	0	2	2	23	3	0	1	0	0	0
Van Buren	20	14	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	4	220	10	19	17	69	12	0	2	0	1	1
White	17	88	2	2	4	26	4	0	0	0	0	0
Woodruff	1	17	1	1	1	5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Yell	15	39	2	1	3	14	2	0	1	0	1	0
Totals		3,396	134	193	188	1,146	131	1	41	1	66	35