

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

*1st Quarter Report, SFY 2018-2019*

## **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 2018-2019 (SFY19), the number of child welfare cases decreased from 3,062 to 3,037. This represents a net loss of 25 cases, or 0.01%. The loss corresponds to 492 cases opened, 492 cases closed, and a correction of 25 cases that were confirmed as closed, but not reflected in previous closed-case reports.

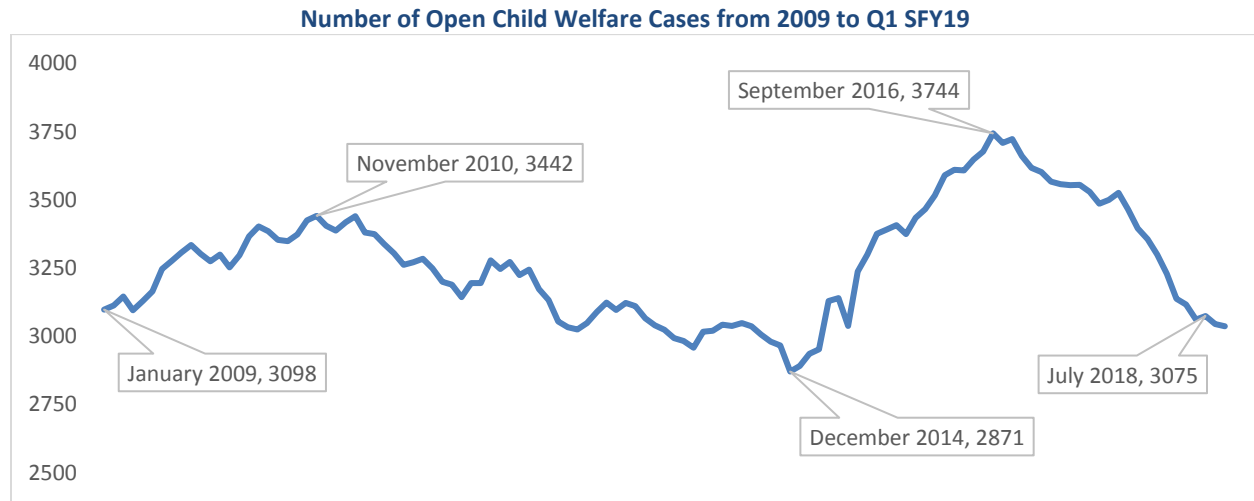


Figure 2.

Since January 2009, the number of child welfare cases has decreased from 3,098 at the end of January 2009 to 3,037 at the end of September 2018, which represents a net loss of 61 cases, or 1.97%. During the same period, the average number of child welfare cases was approximately 3,266. By comparison, the average number of child welfare cases open during the 1st quarter of SFY19 was approximately 3,052.

**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 277 cases, which explains *Figure 2's* bend in the number of child welfare cases during SFY19 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 SFY19, the number of cases opened per month averaged 164 and the number of cases closed per month averaged 164. The 1st quarter, therefore, had a net average closure of approximately 0 cases per month with the number of cases opened ranging from 150 to 171 cases per month and the number of cases closed ranging from 154 to 189 cases per month.

The average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY19 was slightly lower than the average number of cases opened from January 2009 to September 2018. Likewise, the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY19 was slightly lower than the average number of cases closed from January 2009 to September 2018.

Specifically, the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY19 (164) was 8.31% lower than the average number of cases opened from January 2009 to September 2018 (178.87). The average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY19 (164) was 7.54% lower than the average number of cases closed from January 2009 to September 2018 (177.37).

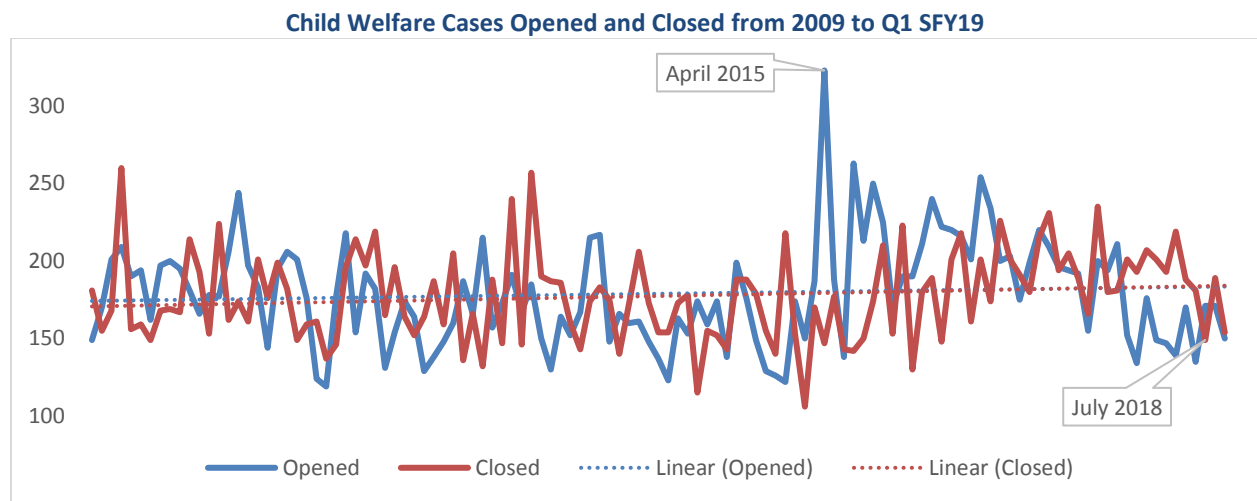


Figure 3

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 2018, 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 SFY19 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 2018 during which CLO experienced 18 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 essentially paused during the 1st quarter of SFY19. Previous reports reflected the sustained-decrease period extending from October 2016 to June 2017, but the data demonstrate that the sustained decrease period continued through June 2018 and paused at least temporarily during the 1st quarter of SFY19.



#### Comparing the Sustained-growth and Sustained-decline Periods to the 1st Quarter of SFY19.

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 1st quarter of SFY19 and slightly higher than the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY19. Specifically, the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016 (208.23) was 26.97% higher than the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY19 (164). Likewise, the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27) was 4.4% higher than the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY19 (164).

The average number of cases opened and closed from October 2016 to June 2018 was also higher than the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY19 and substantially higher than the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY19. Specifically, the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2018 (178.57) was 8.89% higher than the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY19 (164). Likewise, the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2018 (198.90) was 21.28% higher than the average number of cases closed during the 1st quarter of SFY19 (164).



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

The average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2018 was substantially 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 2018 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 2018 (178.57) was 14.24% 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 2018 (198.90) was 16.13% higher than the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27).



### Comparing the 1st Quarter of SFY19 to the Sustained-growth and Sustained-decline Periods.

The average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY19 was lower than the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2018 and substantially lower than the average number of cases opened from December 2014 to September 2016. Specifically, the average number of cases opened during the 1st quarter of SFY19 (164) was 8.16% lower than the average number of cases opened from October 2016 to June 2018 (178.57) and 21.24% 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 SFY19 was substantially lower than the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2018, and slightly 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 SFY19 (164) was 17.55% lower than the average number of cases closed from October 2016 to June 2018 (198.90%), but 4.24% higher than the average number of cases closed from December 2014 to September 2016 (171.27).

## Child Welfare Cases: July 2018, 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	1	0	1	7	0	0	1	0	0	0
Ashley	10	23	3	0	1	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	35	2	3	3	17	1	0	0	0	0	0
Benton	19W	102	5	9	10	56	11	0	3	0	1	3
Boone	14	31	1	7	4	29	5	0	2	0	1	5
Bradley	10	7	2	0	1	6	2	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	18	2	1	2	10	2	0	1	0	1	0
Chicot	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	9E	9	0	2	2	8	0	0	2	0	1	0
Clay	2	15	1	1	1	9	2	0	1	0	0	0
Cleburne	16	27	0	4	3	19	4	0	0	0	3	0
Cleveland	13	5	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	19	1	2	2	10	1	0	0	0	1	0
Conway	15	34	2	1	3	11	0	0	0	0	2	0
Craighead	2	79	11	5	3	36	1	0	0	0	2	2
Crawford	21	68	4	8	4	25	2	0	1	0	6	2
Crittenden	2	77	9	2	6	32	10	0	1	0	0	0
Cross	1	24	2	0	1	11	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dallas	13	5	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Desha	10	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Drew	10	24	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Faulkner	20	85	6	9	5	36	6	0	2	0	2	4
Franklin	5	26	2	0	1	7	4	0	0	0	0	0
Fulton	16	23	0	2	1	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Garland	18E	73	11	5	6	21	2	0	0	0	0	0
Grant	7	17	2	1	4	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green	2	97	4	2	2	18	3	0	0	0	1	0
Hempstead	8N	11	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	36	0	2	2	14	0	0	2	0	1	0
Howard	9W	8	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independence	16	49	2	2	2	19	1	0	1	0	0	3
Izard	16	32	3	1	1	12	3	0	3	0	2	1
Jackson	3	38	1	7	1	20	1	0	1	0	1	2
Jefferson	11W	64	2	5	5	21	4	0	0	0	0	2
Johnson	5	34	5	3	2	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lafayette	8S	7	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	27	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee	1	9	1	0	1	8	1	0	0	0	0	0



Lincoln	11W	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Little River	9W	18	3	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	15	52	1	1	4	21	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lonoke	23	106	4	2	5	43	7	0	1	0	2	0
Madison	4	31	0	1	1	4	1	0	1	0	0	0
Marion	14	13	0	0	1	5	2	0	0	0	0	0
Miller	8S	50	2	1	6	17	1	0	0	0	0	1
Mississippi	2	59	2	3	4	17	4	0	0	0	0	0
Monroe	1	10	0	0	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	5	0	1	2	5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Newton	14	3	0	1	2	4	1	0	0	0	1	0
Ouachita	13	21	3	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0
Perry	6	6	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	33	1	1	3	13	0	0	2	0	0	0
Pike	9W	13	1	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	68	9	3	1	22	2	0	0	0	0	3
Polk	18W	20	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	0	0	0
Pope	5	38	3	2	5	24	5	0	2	0	1	0
Prairie	17	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	265	7	16	30	87	6	0	1	0	11	2
Randolph	3	31	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saline	22	29	1	5	3	16	1	0	0	0	4	0
Scott	15	21	1	0	2	12	0	0	0	0	2	0
Searcy	20	6	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	352	16	10	27	106	6	0	11	1	4	1
Sevier	9W	26	2	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp	3	37	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
St. Francis	1	32	2	0	2	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stone	16	15	0	0	2	7	1	0	0	0	0	0
Union	13	41	2	3	2	18	2	0	0	0	0	2
Van Buren	20	13	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	4	243	11	1	21	35	9	0	1	0	0	0
White	17	76	6	6	8	41	8	0	2	0	1	0
Woodruff	1	21	0	1	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yell	15	36	2	2	3	19	1	0	1	0	0	0
Totals		3,075	171	149	238	1,107	130	0	49	1	52	35

## Child Welfare Cases: August 2018, 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	16	0	1	1	6	2	0	1	0	0	0
Ashley	10	21	0	2	1	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Baxter	14	31	2	3	4	20	3	0	2	0	1	0
Benton	19W	107	12	7	7	46	3	0	1	0	4	1
Boone	14	32	3	2	2	20	0	1	0	0	1	0
Bradley	10	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	19E	21	4	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chicot	10	8	0	2	1	12	0	0	2	0	0	2
Clark	9E	8	0	1	2	5	0	0	0	0	2	0
Clay	2	14	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cleburne	16	29	2	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	13	8	3	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	19	0	0	2	12	1	0	0	0	0	0
Conway	15	35	4	3	3	13	1	0	1	0	1	0
Craighead	2	78	3	4	2	20	5	0	2	0	2	0
Crawford	21	66	2	4	3	32	4	0	0	0	1	0
Crittenden	2	80	5	2	2	42	12	0	0	0	0	1
Cross	1	27	4	1	3	17	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dallas	13	8	3	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Desha	10	7	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drew	10	23	2	3	1	16	1	0	1	0	0	1
Faulkner	20	88	6	3	4	38	6	0	3	0	2	0
Franklin	5	25	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Fulton	16	24	0	0	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Garland	18E	77	10	6	7	38	5	0	2	0	1	0
Grant	7	14	0	3	1	9	1	0	2	0	0	0
Green	2	83	8	22	6	42	6	0	1	0	5	5
Hempstead	8N	11	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	37	3	2	4	19	0	0	3	0	0	0
Howard	9W	7	0	1	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independence	16	50	9	3	3	19	7	2	0	0	1	0
Izard	16	34	2	0	1	13	3	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	3	38	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jefferson	11W	59	2	7	5	39	3	0	0	0	0	5
Johnson	5	31	0	3	5	19	4	0	0	0	1	0
Lafayette	8S	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	24	0	3	2	10	1	0	0	0	0	2
Lee	1	10	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0

Lincoln	11W	5	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Little River	9W	18	0	0	4	9	0	0	1	0	0	0
Logan	15	55	3	1	3	14	2	0	1	0	0	0
Lonoke	23	103	2	5	4	27	3	0	1	0	1	0
Madison	4	33	2	1	2	15	5	0	3	0	0	0
Marion	14	11	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Miller	8S	52	5	3	5	19	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mississippi	2	55	1	5	4	39	5	0	1	0	0	2
Monroe	1	9	0	1	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	5	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ouachita	13	22	2	1	2	10	2	0	0	0	0	0
Perry	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	30	1	4	3	9	1	0	0	0	0	1
Pike	9W	15	3	1	1	7	0	0	1	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	70	6	4	2	40	13	0	2	0	2	2
Polk	18W	21	1	0	1	9	1	0	1	0	0	0
Pope	5	36	1	2	4	16	3	0	1	0	0	0
Prairie	17	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	268	12	7	26	79	4	0	3	0	4	1
Randolph	3	30	1	2	2	15	3	0	2	0	0	0
Saline	22	32	4	1	4	12	2	0	0	0	0	1
Scott	15	21	0	0	2	7	2	0	0	0	0	0
Searcy	20	6	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	348	11	14	29	150	14	0	13	0	4	0
Sevier	9W	25	2	3	3	11	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp	3	35	1	3	1	26	3	0	0	0	2	0
St. Francis	1	27	0	5	3	17	2	0	0	0	2	0
Stone	16	14	0	1	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union	13	38	1	4	4	22	1	0	0	0	3	2
Van Buren	20	13	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	4	228	9	23	37	106	15	0	4	0	7	4
White	17	79	7	4	8	35	3	0	0	0	1	0
Woodruff	1	20	1	2	2	5	0	0	0	0	1	0
Yell	15	37	1	0	3	10	0	0	1	0	0	0
Totals		3,045	171	189	256	1,294	162	3	57	0	50	30

## Child Welfare Cases: September 2018, 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	1	3	1	8	1	0	1	0	0	0
Ashley	10	20	1	2	1	10	1	0	1	0	0	0
Baxter	14	28	1	4	3	10	1	0	1	0	2	0
Benton	19W	102	8	13	9	67	7	0	7	0	2	4
Boone	14	29	1	4	2	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bradley	10	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	3	1	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	0
Carroll	19E	25	5	1	2	19	8	0	8	0	0	0
Chicot	10	8	1	1	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	0
Clark	9E	8	2	2	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	0
Clay	2	15	1	0	2	9	3	0	3	0	0	1
Cleburne	16	29	3	3	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	13	8	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia	13	20	1	0	2	7	1	0	1	0	0	0
Conway	15	37	2	0	3	13	2	0	2	0	0	0
Craighead	2	79	4	3	6	50	9	0	9	0	1	1
Crawford	21	66	3	3	4	36	4	0	4	0	0	1
Crittenden	2	82	4	2	2	23	2	0	2	0	0	1
Cross	1	28	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Dallas	13	7	0	1	1	4	2	0	2	0	0	0
Desha	10	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drew	10	23	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faulkner	20	90	5	3	5	32	2	0	2	0	1	1
Franklin	5	24	1	2	4	16	1	0	1	0	0	0
Fulton	16	30	4	0	1	11	1	0	1	0	0	1
Garland	18E	79	5	3	6	31	12	0	12	0	1	0
Grant	7	14	1	1	1	5	2	0	2	0	0	0
Green	2	84	5	4	4	30	2	0	2	0	2	1
Hempstead	8N	10	0	1	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Spring	7	37	2	2	2	14	1	0	1	0	1	0
Howard	9W	7	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Independence	16	51	2	0	2	24	3	0	3	0	0	0
Izard	16	30	0	3	1	7	2	0	2	0	0	0
Jackson	3	40	4	2	3	29	1	0	1	0	1	0
Jefferson	11W	59	3	3	3	14	1	0	1	0	0	0
Johnson	5	31	0	0	2	13	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lafayette	8S	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	24	1	1	1	7	2	0	2	0	0	1
Lee	1	10	0	0	1	9	1	0	1	0	0	0

Lincoln	11W	5	0	0	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0
Little River	9W	19	2	1	2	6	2	0	2	0	0	0
Logan	15	53	0	2	3	15	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lonoke	23	104	2	1	4	27	4	0	4	0	0	0
Madison	4	33	1	2	2	11	1	0	1	0	3	0
Marion	14	11	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Miller	8S	55	4	1	5	29	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mississippi	2	57	4	2	1	10	1	0	1	0	0	2
Monroe	1	9	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	18W	5	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	8N	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton	14	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ouachita	13	24	7	5	3	20	0	0	0	0	1	0
Perry	6	4	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillips	1	26	1	5	2	20	1	0	1	0	1	0
Pike	9W	16	1	0	1	7	2	0	2	0	0	0
Poinsett	2	73	7	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Polk	18W	21	2	2	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pope	5	35	0	1	4	16	2	0	2	0	0	0
Prairie	17	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	6	264	5	11	26	90	12	0	12	0	4	1
Randolph	3	30	1	1	3	16	1	0	1	0	1	1
Saline	22	35	4	1	2	18	2	0	2	0	0	0
Scott	15	22	1	0	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Searcy	20	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sebastian	12	343	9	14	24	112	8	0	8	0	3	0
Sevier	9W	25	0	0	3	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp	3	31	0	1	1	26	3	0	3	0	0	1
St. Francis	1	25	0	2	2	18	1	0	1	0	2	0
Stone	16	12	0	2	2	8	1	0	1	0	0	1
Union	13	40	2	0	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Van Buren	20	13	0	0	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	0
Washington	4	224	10	10	23	70	7	0	7	0	2	3
White	17	78	6	7	8	46	8	0	8	0	2	0
Woodruff	1	20	2	2	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yell	15	34	0	3	3	11	0	0	0	0	1	0
Totals		3,037	150	154	220	1,186	137	0	45	2	33	21