

**Damon Allen Act  
Bail Proceedings and Public Safety  
Report System  
FY 2024 Report**

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## The Damon Allen Act

In September 2021, during the Second Called Special Session of the 87th Legislature, Senate Bill 6, also known as the Damon Allen Act, was enacted. The Damon Allen Act established procedures for setting bail and the reporting of bail information, certification and reporting requirements for charitable bail organizations, amended procedures regarding cash bail bonds, and specified additional training requirements for all magistrates. The bill also required the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to implement a public safety report system for statewide use for officials in each county and each municipality that perform magistrations.

The system was designed for magistrates to review a Public Safety Report produced by the system with a summary of criminal history information. After review, and bail form is completed through the system indicating the Bail type, amount, and conditions.



Officer Damon Allen

Photo courtesy Texas Department of Public Safety

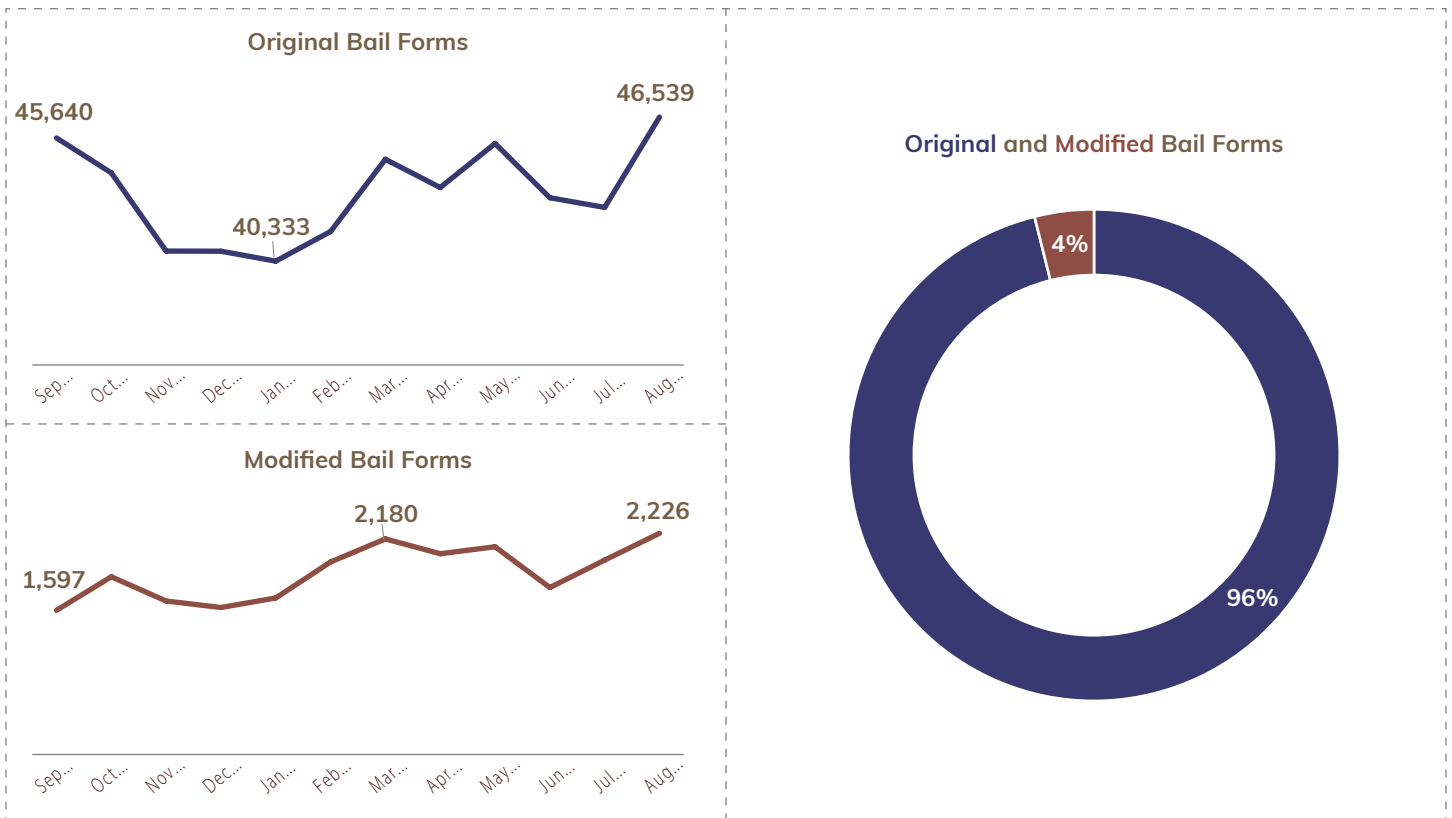
## PSRS User Information

The Public Safety Report System (PSRS) began operations April 1, 2022, as required by legislation. As of August 31, 2024, there were 7,174 active users and 240 counties with completed magistrations in the system. Some counties share jurisdiction with other counties and only complete bail forms under one county. A total of 541,492 bail forms were completed from September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2024, compared to 540,783 bail forms in fiscal year 2023, less than a one percent increase.

## PSRS Data for Fiscal Year 2024 (September 2023 to August 2024)

Government Code Section 71.0351(a)(1)(A-C) requires the clerk of each court setting bail in criminal cases to report in their Judicial Council Monthly Court Activity Reports the number of defendants for each category of offense, the number of personal bonds, and the number of surety or cash bonds. This information is now captured in the Bail Form information submitted through OCA’s PSRS. The information in the PSRS may be updated at any time; therefore, users should be aware of the possibility of retroactive changes to the data.

A total of 541,492 bail forms with 724,492 offenses were completed from September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2024. Some bail forms included more than one offense per bail form. If there is a change to the bail amount or bail type in the original bail form (form created following arrest) a modified bail form must be completed. Four percent of all bail forms completed in FY 2024 were modified bail forms.

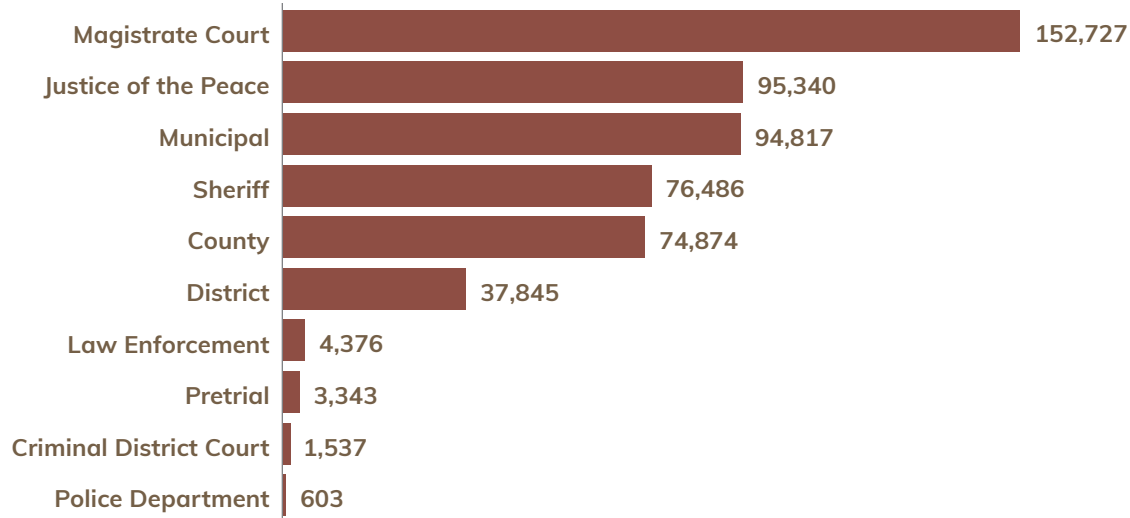


## Completed Bail Forms Statistics

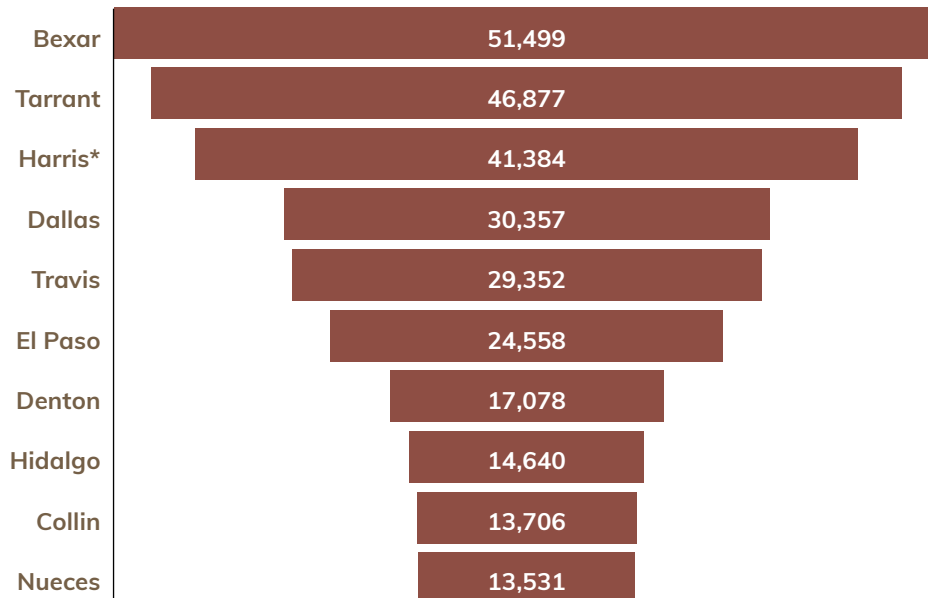
The following four charts illustrate the type of locations processing bail forms, the top ten counties completing bail forms, reported offenses by level, and the top reported offenses comparison of FY23 and FY24.

### Locations

Each county conducts magistrations or registers bail decisions through one or more of the listed locations.



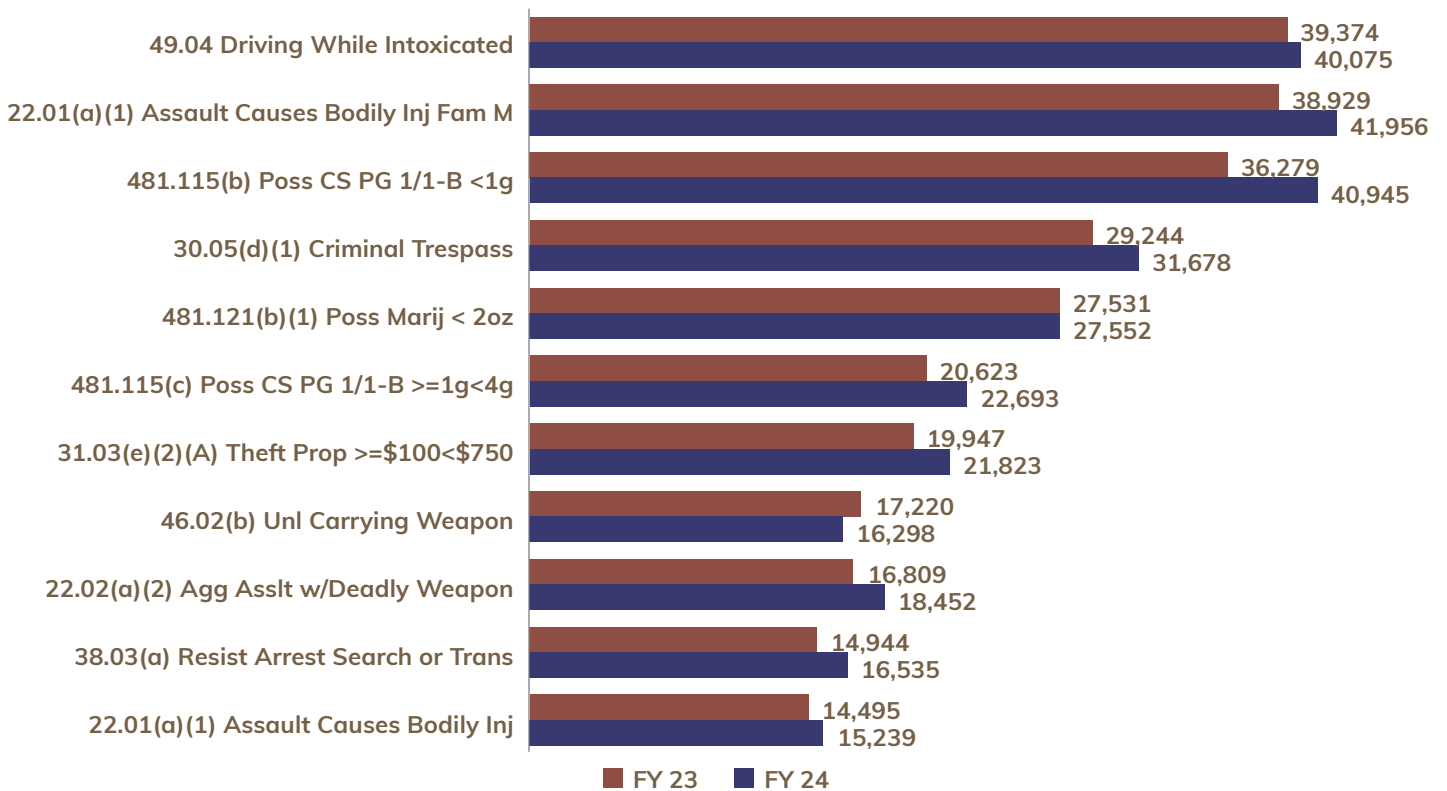
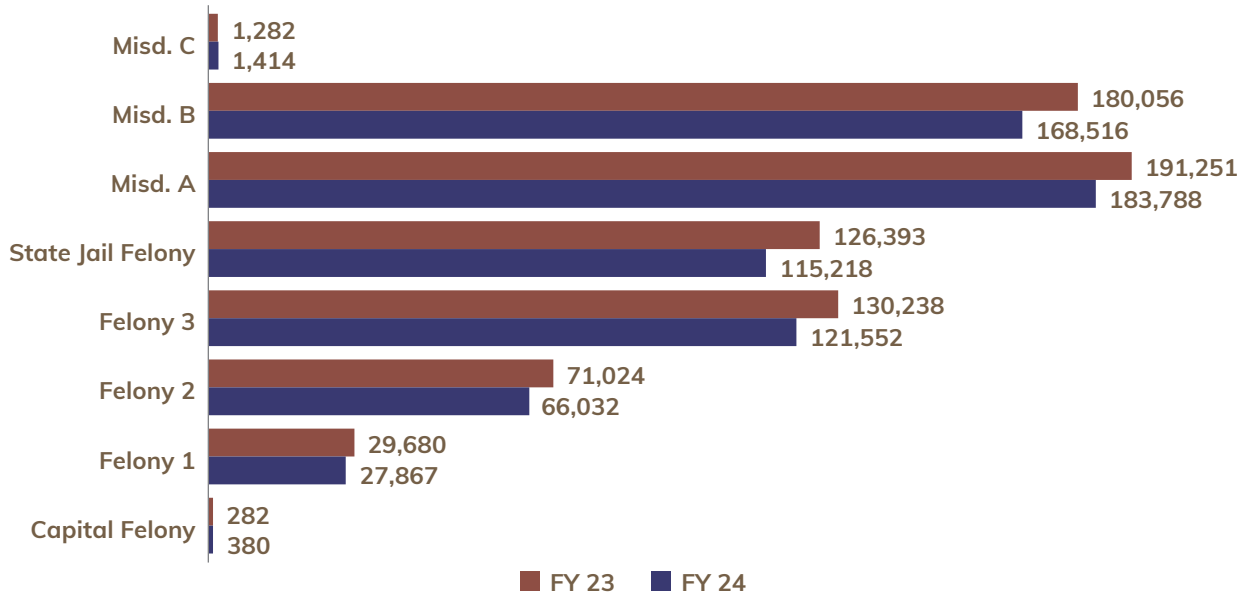
### Counties With Most Completed Bail Forms



\* Harris County is required by a consent decree resulting from the O'Donnell et al. v. Harris County et al. class action lawsuit, to follow a local rule that ensures that people charged with most misdemeanor offenses are released promptly after arrest on a personal bond without having seen a judge. Therefore, there are defendants in Harris County who will not have a bail form completed after their arrest.

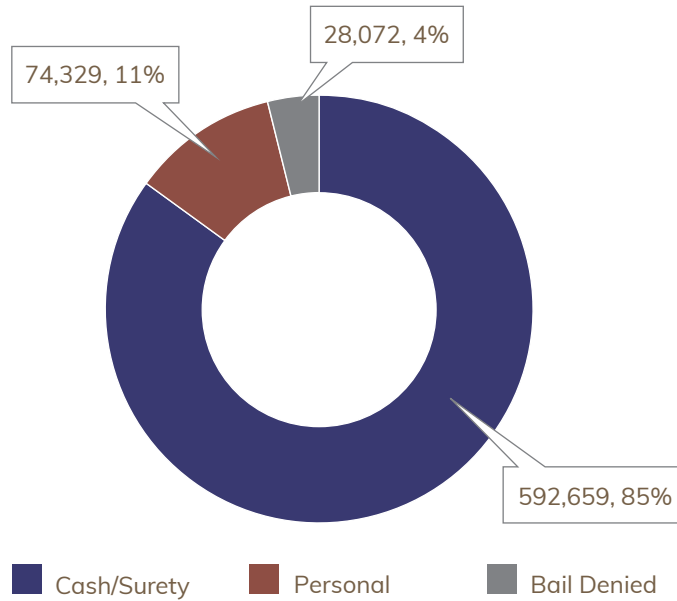
## Offense Information

The following two charts show a comparison of offense statistics for fiscal years 2023 and 2024 (FY23 and FY24).

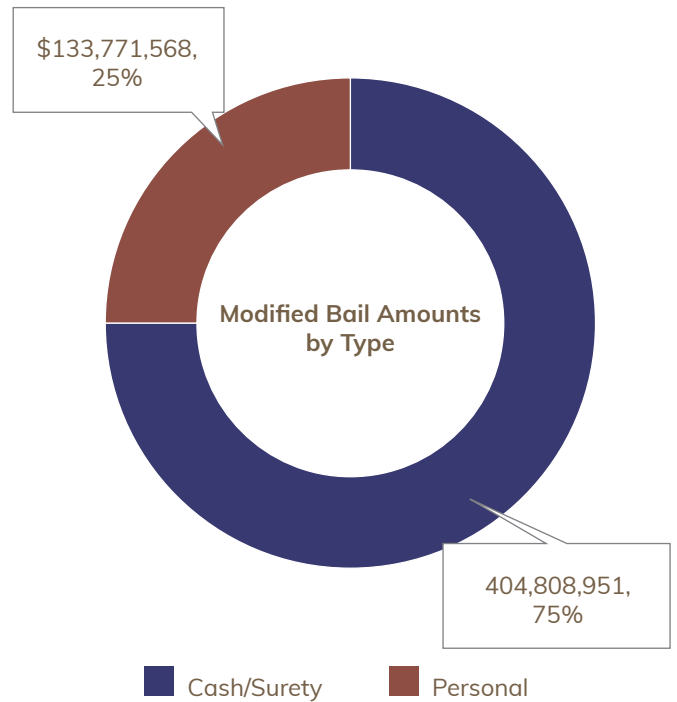
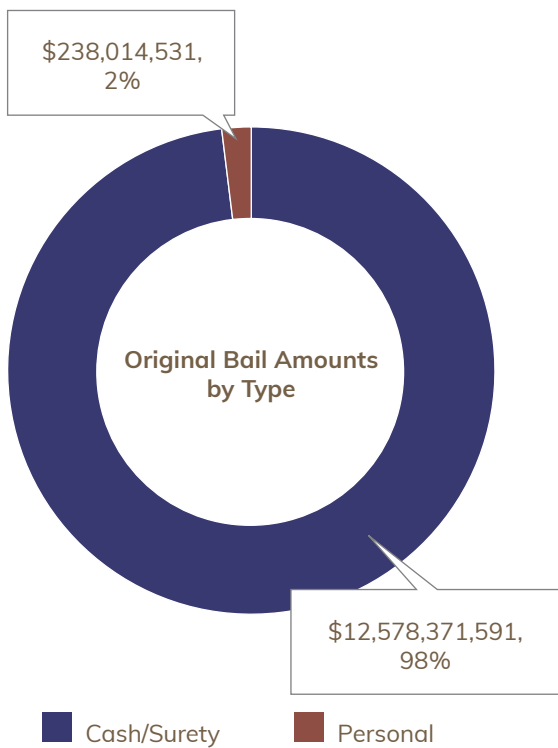


### Bail Decisions

The Public Safety Report System reports three different types of bail decisions: Cash/Surety Bail, Personal Bail, and Bail Denied.

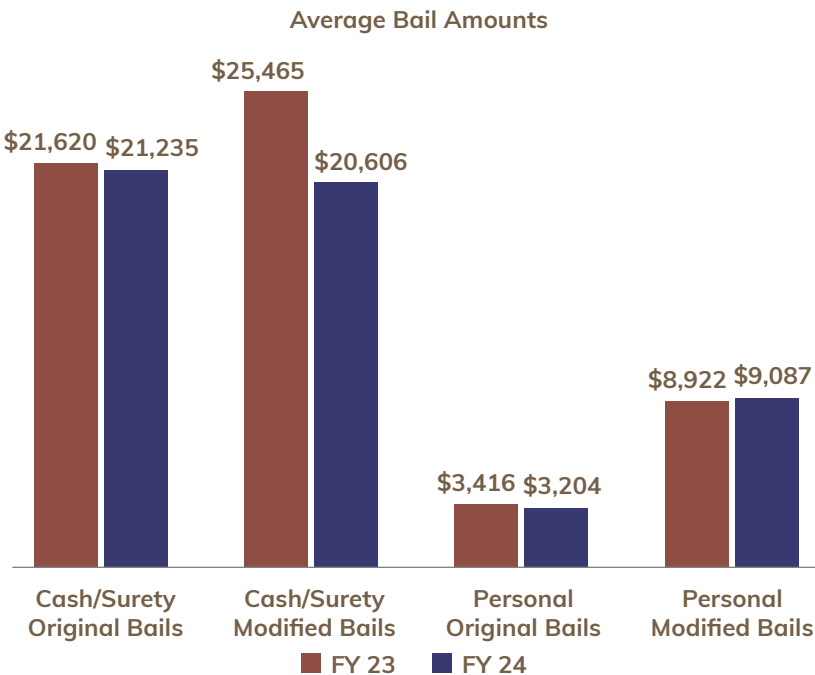


An enhancement allowing users to modify bail forms was completed in July 2022. This allows users to indicate when there is a change to bail amount or type after the original bail decision. The system captures all bonds assigned, and if the bond amount or type was modified after the initial arrest, a modified bail form would reflect the new amount or type. The following two charts demonstrate the difference in original and modified bail types.



## Average Bail Amounts

The average amount of cash/surety bail ordered for bond modifications has decreased while other average bail amounts have remained consistent from FY23 to FY24.

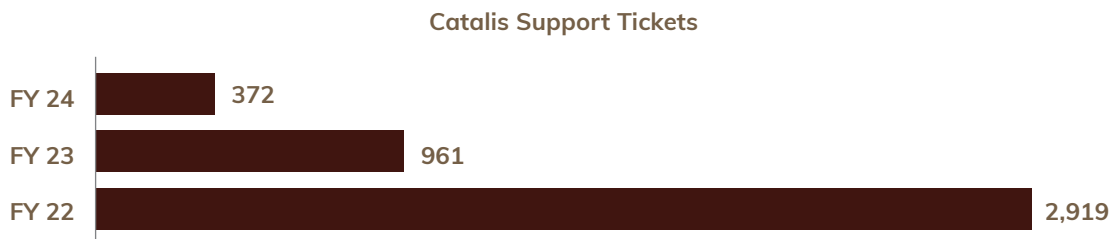


## PSRS Training & Support

The Pretrial and Bail Section provides technical assistance to users through our website, [www.txcourts.gov/bail](http://www.txcourts.gov/bail), the pretrial inbox at [bail@txcourts.gov](mailto:bail@txcourts.gov), monthly Q&A sessions, a quarterly newsletter, and attendance at various statewide conferences. The Bail team also provides one-on-one in-person and online training when requested by users.

## Catalis Support

Catalis, the PSRS vendor, has been providing support to PSRS users via email at [support@automon.com](mailto:support@automon.com), chat, calls, and through instruction and videos in the PSRS help center. As expected, the volume of tickets and requests for assistance has continued to decrease this fiscal year as the users have become more familiar with the system. A chart detailing yearly support tickets is below. Following is a comparison by category from fiscal year 2023 and 2024, along with email requests for assistance to the OCA bail inbox.

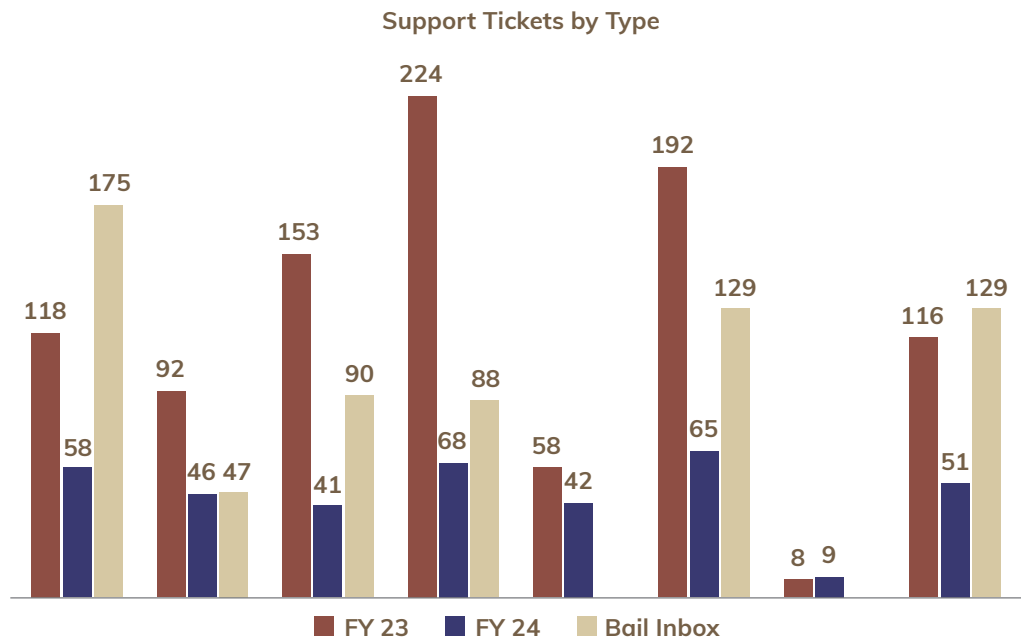




## Support Tickets by Type

Support tickets are divided into eight broad categories. **Criminal History** involves any issues with criminal histories, TLETS, and state identification or FBI numbers. **Lockout** occurs when a user entered their password too many times and they will receive a notice to contact the administrator. **Other Log in Issues** include any other problems the users have accessing the system. **Multifactor Authentication (MFA)** includes all requests for the user's MFA to be reset. **OCA Requests** are data requests, enhancements, support, or API questions from OCA to Catalis. **Procedure Questions** include proper use of the system, workflow questions, form questions, or how to delete or modify information. **System Issues** designate any system wide problems occurring in the PSRS. **User Accounts** relate to the set-up of new accounts, password issues, email changes, updating permissions and roles.

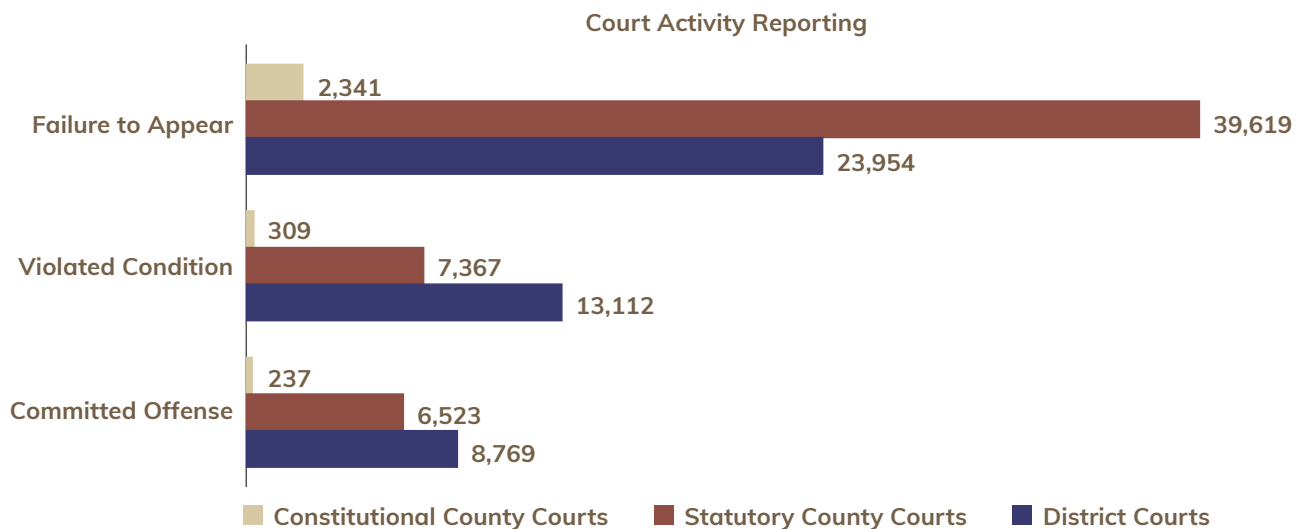
A system update occurred January 30, 2023, in which the OCA Bail Team members were given access to reset user's MFA. This resulted in a substantial decrease in Catalis MFA tickets, which went from an average of 29 tickets per month to an average of five per month. OCA does not have a ticketing system for requests for assistance from the PSRS users, however, did begin tracking email requests for assistance to the Bail Inbox in January 2024. The chart indicates bail inbox tickets from January through August 2024.



## Court Activity Reporting and Directory System

Section 71.0351(a)(2-3) requires the reporting of the number of defendants released on bail who have subsequently failed to appear, violated a condition of release, and who committed an offense while released on bail or community supervision. This information is being captured in the District and County Criminal section of the Judicial Council Monthly Court Activity Reports. Data is captured by case counts, not defendant count, given that court case management systems and the Judicial Council Monthly Court Activity Reports are designed to track cases.

Since this data started being reported, Failure to Appear has remained the most reported category of these data elements across all three court levels.



## Charitable Bail Organizations

Charitable bail organizations are required to submit a report to the sheriff of a county in which the organization paid a bail bond for a defendant. This report must be submitted by the 10th of each month. The sheriff then should provide a copy of the report to the OCA.

There has been a significant decline in the number of charitable bail outs reported. In fiscal year 2023, four counties reported a total of 638 bail outs. In fiscal year 2024, two counties have provided charitable bail reports to OCA – Bexar and Harris. Texas Organizing Project posted 78 bail bonds in Bexar County. Grassroots Leadership posted five bail bonds in Harris County. There have been no reports submitted since May 2024.

## Required Forms

Senate Bill 6 required OCA to develop statewide procedures and forms to be used by courts to facilitate the refund of funds paid toward monetary bonds and/or application of the cash funds towards the defendant’s outstanding court costs and other fees. These forms are available on the OCA website for courts and clerks to access.

## Enhancements to the PSRS

OCA through the vendor, Catalis, has implemented multiple enhancements to the PSRS. Recent enhancements include two Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) which allow courts to electronically send information from their case management systems (CMS) to the PSRS, reducing the workload of inputting the same information in both systems. One API involves taking arrest information from the user’s CMS and entering it in the PSRS. The other API allows users to submit bail forms from the CMS to the PSRS or from the PSRS to the CMS. The user is still required to electronically certify the bail form in the PSRS.

Other enhancements include the ability to enter separate cause numbers and bail amounts for multiple offenses on the same arrest, the availability of additional reports, improved formatting throughout the system, identification of juveniles entered in the system who are certified as adults (the PSRS should only have adult arrests entered), ability to indicate enhanced or mitigated offenses, and allowing administrators

to add or remove discretionary bail conditions which are populated on the bail forms.

OCA upgraded the bail website where publicly accessible information on the PSRS is posted, to include data dashboards at [Bail Dashboard \(txcourts.gov\)](https://txcourts.gov) which display the required reporting elements. This data is updated daily to reflect the most recent information.

### **Upcoming Enhancements**

Upcoming enhancements include a check box for Judges to indicate when the bail decision is mandatory under Code of Criminal Procedure Article 17.151, a criminal history search status that indicates when no criminal history was found for the defendant rather than no search has been conducted, ability to change/update the cause number on a modified bail form, and the “Completed Magistrations” page will indicate bond modifications.

## **Bail Related Education**

### **Judicial Education**

Judicial officers who set bail for defendants charged with Class B misdemeanors or higher offenses are required to complete eight hours of judicial education on the duties of magistrates and setting bail, followed by two hours of continuing education during the fiscal biennium. The judicial education is being provided through the Texas Center for the Judiciary, Texas Municipal Court Education Center, Texas Justice Court Training Center, and Texas Association of Counties. To date, OCA has received notification of nearly 3,200 judicial officers completing the eight hours of training.

### **Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Required Training**

Users of the PSRS who have access to criminal histories are required to complete training based on their type of access. Any PSRS users with access to Criminal Justice Information (CJI) (including Texas Crime Information Center [TCIC] and National Crime Information Center [NCIC]) through Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (TLETS) must take the CJIS Security Awareness Training. Training shall be taken within six months and annually thereafter. Individuals who only access hard or electronic copies of TCIC and NCIC responses, and do not query for criminal history information themselves, must obtain and maintain a Criminal Justice Practitioner (CJP) certification. Individuals who query TCIC and NCIC for criminal history information must complete at least the 8-hour TLETS Mobile Access Certification Course. Criminal Justice Practitioner and Mobile Access certification must be renewed biannually following the original certification.

DPS Required Certifications and Training			
Potential Users	Will user need to query TCIC / NCIC for CHRI?	Certification Required, per DPS	PSRS Permissions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Law Enforcement</li> <li>Jails</li> <li>Magistrates</li> <li>Court Staff</li> </ul>	Yes	<b>TLETS Mobile Access Certification</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8-hour live training</li> <li>Provided by DPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Query for CHRI from TCIC/ NCIC through the PSRS.</li> <li>View CHRI already in the PSRS.</li> </ul>
	No	<b>Criminal Justice Practitioner Certification</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2-hour online training</li> <li>Provided by DPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>View CHRI in the system retrieved by a user with a TLETS User ID and TCIC/NCIC access.</li> <li><b>Note:</b> If the user has the TLETS Mobile Access Certification, the CJP Certification is not needed.</li> </ul>
	N/A Both user types required	<b>Criminal Justice Information Service (CJIS) Security Awareness Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online training, self-paced</li> <li>Provided by DPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any users with access to Criminal Justice Information through TLETS must take this certification.</li> <li>This includes users who query for CHRI and user who only view CHRI.</li> </ul>

