

Colorado Judicial Branch

Cases and Parties without Attorney Representation in Civil Cases

Fiscal Year 2025



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Table of Contents

Report Information	3
Domestic Relations	4
District Civil	5
County Civil	7
Pro Se Rate by Party Type	8

Cases and Parties without Attorney Representation in Civil Cases FY2025

Providing appropriate resources for pro se parties in the courts is important both as an access to justice issue for citizens and for the efficient operation of courts across the state.

The following tables identify the volume of parties and cases that come before the court without attorney representation. All of these measures have been limited on the time period the case was initially filed; in this sample, the time period is fiscal year 2025 (July 2024 through June 2025). There are several similar, but distinct ways to measure this activity.

Case Level Pro Se Rate: The first measure calculates the number of cases in which no attorney has entered an appearance on the case- meaning neither side has representation. This measure is significant because it illustrates the number of cases in which it is possible no one involved in the case has had experience with the courts or the legal system.

Party Level Pro Se Rate: The second measure calculates the number of parties without representation involved in court cases. This measure allows us to more fully illustrate the number of litigants who come into the court without representation. This measure can also provide further direction for court policy and resources as it can demonstrate which side of a case has representation in various case types.

Caveats and limitations: These measures are based on the moment in time the data was extracted from the court's database. The attorney representation numbers will change over time. A party that did not have an attorney on the day the data was extracted may get an attorney in the future. At the same time, a person who had an attorney at the beginning of their case may choose to proceed without an attorney in the future. Due to the way the data must be extracted, once an attorney has entered an appearance for a party, that party and case will still be measured as having an attorney. This data was extracted in Jul 8, 2025.

We have calculated these measures in three civil case classes: domestic relations, county civil and district civil. These three case classes are highlighted due to the higher volume of pro se litigant participation historically. However, it is important to note that these three case classes represent only a fraction of the cases filed in Colorado in Fiscal Year 2025. In fact, the cases included in this analysis (202,847) account for only 35% of the total number of cases filed in Fiscal Year 2025 (580,506). Therefore this report does not represent all pro se litigant activity in the State of Colorado, but rather offers a glimpse into pro se activity in a few key areas. More detailed analysis follows.

This report does not include Denver County Court filings.

Domestic Relations Cases Filed in FY2025

Judicial District	Total Cases	Total Cases without Attorney	Case Level Pro Se Rate	Total Parties	Total Parties without Attorney	Party Level Pro Se Rate
1	2,431	1,548	64%	4,959	3,574	72%
2	3,875	2,796	72%	8,010	6,477	81%
3	162	130	80%	353	308	87%
4	5,483	3,704	68%	11,107	8,469	76%
5	470	257	55%	958	637	66%
6	361	235	65%	728	534	73%
7	589	416	71%	1,210	952	79%
8	1,699	1,057	62%	3,484	2,492	72%
9	531	317	60%	1,091	797	73%
10	1,135	840	74%	2,407	1,970	82%
11	480	335	70%	980	761	78%
12	310	248	80%	638	552	87%
13	458	321	70%	942	740	79%
14	283	182	64%	572	413	72%
15	130	102	78%	262	217	83%
16	213	163	77%	443	375	85%
17	3,169	2,188	69%	6,548	5,143	79%
18	3,186	2,105	66%	6,515	4,967	76%
19	2,105	1,341	64%	4,365	3,238	74%
20	1,296	843	65%	2,649	1,935	73%
21	1,008	711	71%	2,073	1,648	79%
22	160	123	77%	321	266	83%
23	1,694	918	54%	3,424	2,181	64%
Total	31,228	20,880	67%	64,039	48,646	76%

Domestic Relations cases include dissolutions of marriage and civil unions, allocation of parental responsibility, administrative support orders, marriage invalidity, as well as legal separation. The parties included in this measure were petitioner, co-petitioner, and respondent. As this table demonstrates, 67% of the domestic relations cases filed in fiscal year 2025 had no attorney on the case, meaning that every party involved was pro se. However, within that group of cases filed, there were 64,039 parties and of those parties, 76% did not have representation when the data was extracted. When this data was broken out by specific case types, the party pro se rate was fairly consistent with the overall rate.

District Civil Cases Filed in FY2025

Judicial District	Total Cases	Total Cases without Attorney	Case Level Pro Se Rate	Total Parties	Total Parties without Attorney	Party Level Pro Se Rate
1	1,921	190	10%	5,853	2,469	42%
2	4,863	793	16%	14,665	6,142	42%
3	109	36	33%	303	185	61%
4	2,648	313	12%	7,814	3,210	41%
5	554	30	5%	2,609	1,580	61%
6	241	30	12%	899	514	57%
7	366	44	12%	1,236	559	45%
8	1,138	102	9%	3,562	1,436	40%
9	377	36	10%	1,145	487	43%
10	506	67	13%	1,462	641	44%
11	310	51	16%	995	476	48%
12	189	40	21%	634	320	50%
13	236	43	18%	679	350	52%
14	229	16	7%	849	370	44%
15	47	15	32%	140	78	56%
16	116	28	24%	360	207	58%
17	2,053	143	7%	5,897	2,255	38%
18	2,819	340	12%	8,392	3,193	38%
19	992	75	8%	2,897	1,138	39%
20	1,016	113	11%	3,122	1,188	38%
21	437	66	15%	1,324	641	48%
22	82	12	15%	236	115	49%
23	1,422	128	9%	4,260	1,677	39%
Total	22,671	2,711	12%	69,333	29,231	42%

In this case class both tax liens (distrain warrants) and residential foreclosures (Rule 120s) have been excluded from the measure. Tax lien cases are filed administratively with no attorney, and have experienced volatile filing volumes in the past several years, skewing the pro se numbers in this category. Similarly, foreclosure cases almost always have an attorney representing the filing party, which is generally a bank, while the responding party (the homeowner) rarely does. The parties included in these cases were plaintiff/petitioner (including 3rd, 4th, 5th party plaintiffs), respondent/defendant (including 3rd, 4th, 5th party defendants) and intervenors and interpleaders (included as filing parties).

This table demonstrates that in 12% of cases no party has an attorney. More dramatically, the table

District Civil Cases Filed in FY2025

shows that of the 69,333 parties involved in these cases, 42% were not represented when the data was extracted.

County Civil Cases Filed in FY2025

Judicial District	Total Cases	Total Cases without Attorney	Case Level Pro Se Rate	Total Parties	Total Parties without Attorney	Party Level Pro Se Rate
1	14,022	1,759	13%	30,493	17,726	58%
3	547	149	27%	1,147	721	63%
4	25,257	4,120	16%	53,955	31,775	59%
5	1,220	325	27%	2,610	1,636	63%
6	1,022	387	38%	2,224	1,510	68%
7	2,185	535	24%	4,641	2,856	62%
8	7,745	1,362	18%	16,693	9,860	59%
9	1,874	325	17%	4,077	2,412	59%
10	6,175	1,251	20%	13,460	7,942	59%
11	1,909	506	27%	3,982	2,491	63%
12	1,391	422	30%	2,898	1,869	64%
13	1,844	433	23%	3,862	2,362	61%
14	808	232	29%	1,718	1,101	64%
15	445	184	41%	966	692	72%
16	836	276	33%	1,850	1,244	67%
17	24,989	2,474	10%	54,835	31,615	58%
18	25,638	2,602	10%	56,557	32,768	58%
19	11,284	1,498	13%	24,533	14,266	58%
20	5,760	1,215	21%	12,014	7,177	60%
21	4,537	1,413	31%	9,592	6,305	66%
22	583	240	41%	1,228	866	71%
23	8,876	981	11%	18,948	10,692	56%
Total	148,947	22,689	15%	322,283	189,886	59%

County Court civil cases are made up primarily of collection cases (“money”). In addition, county court civil cases include eviction cases (“forcible entry and detainer”), as well as restraining order and name change cases. Parties included in this measure were plaintiffs, petitioners, defendants and respondents. While only 15% of county civil cases had no attorney, 59% of parties had no representation at the time the data was extracted. Denver County Court is not included in this report.

Pro Se Rate by Party Type - Cases Filed in FY2025

Filing Parties - Petitioner, Co-Petitioner, Plaintiff (including 3rd, 4th, 5th), Intervenors and Interpleaders

Case Class	Total Parties	Total Parties with Attorney	Total Parties without Attorney	Party Level Pro Se Rate
Domestic Relations	44,646	11,030	33,616	75%
District Civil	26,419	22,214	4,205	16%
County Civil	153,600	125,839	27,761	18%
Total	224,665	159,083	65,582	29%

Responding Parties - Defendant, Respondent (including 3rd, 4th, 5th)

Case Class	Total Parties	Total Parties with Attorney	Total Parties without Attorney	Party Level Pro Se Rate
Domestic Relations	19,923	4,813	15,110	76%
District Civil	42,933	17,891	25,042	58%
County Civil	168,764	6,562	162,202	96%
Total	231,620	29,266	202,354	87%

What these two tables demonstrate is while the total number of parties in county civil without attorneys is 59%, the total number of responding parties in the case without representation is 96%. This gives us a more accurate picture of the number of cases in which one party is represented, most often the filing party, while the other is not. At the same time, it is interesting to note in domestic relations cases, the pro se party rate is similar for both filing and responding parties.

As stated previously, the value of this analysis is in helping the courts to better anticipate and serve the needs of those seeking the services of the courts, regardless of whether they are represented by an attorney or not. For further information or questions about this data, please contact courtdatarequests@judicial.state.co.us.