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# **COLORADO**

## **Commission on Judicial Discipline**

**January 21, 2026 SMART  
Act Hearing**

Jim Carpenter, Commission Chair  
Bob Gardner, Commission Member  
Anne Mangiardi, Executive Director

# Commission on Judicial Discipline's Constitutional Mandates

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- Protect the public from improper conduct by judges
- Preserve the integrity of the judicial process
- Increase public confidence in the judiciary
- Educate judges and the public regarding improper judicial behavior
- Provide for the fair and expeditious disposition of allegations of judicial misconduct

# The Commission

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## JUDGES

District Judge Jill Brady (Vice-Chair)  
County Judge Sara Garrido  
District Judge Reed Owens  
County Judge Meredith Patrick Cord

## ATTORNEYS

Bob Gardner  
Ingrid Barrier

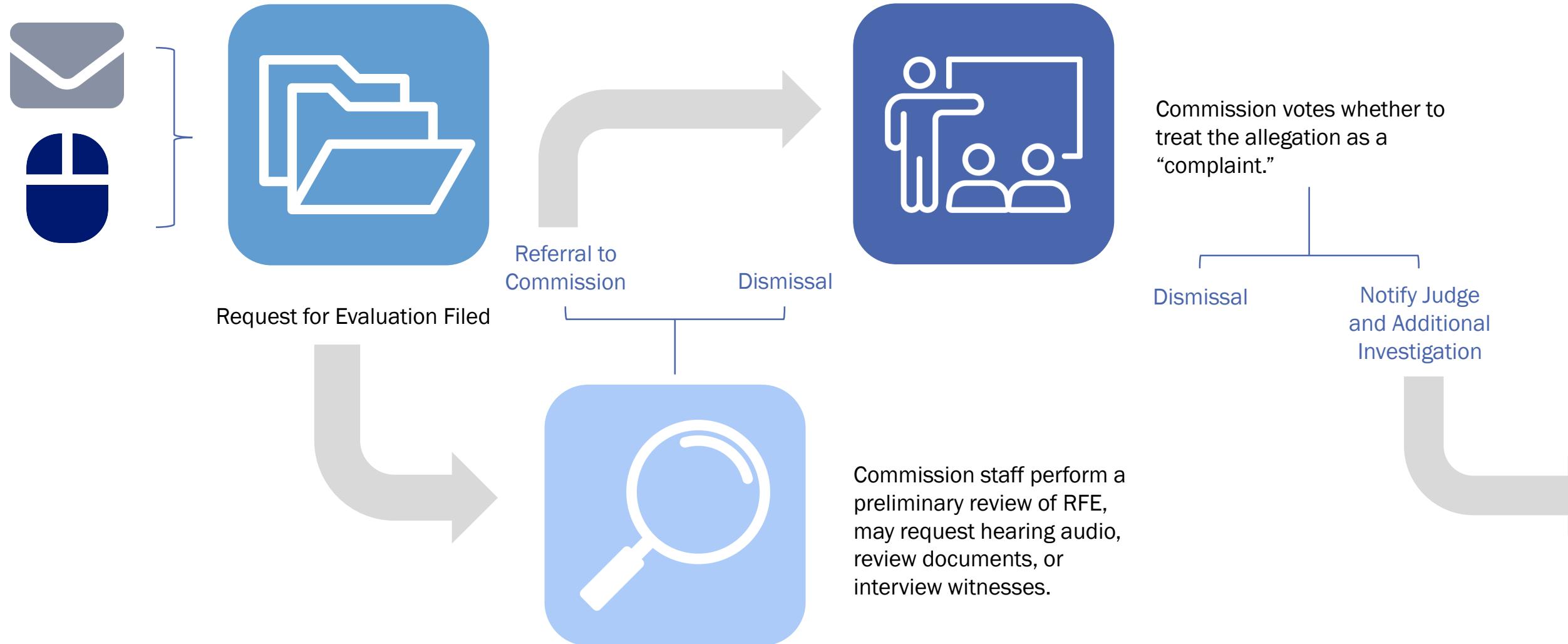
## CITIZENS

Jim Carpenter (Chair)  
Stefanie Trujillo (Secretary)  
Emily Tofte Nestaval  
Courtney Sutton

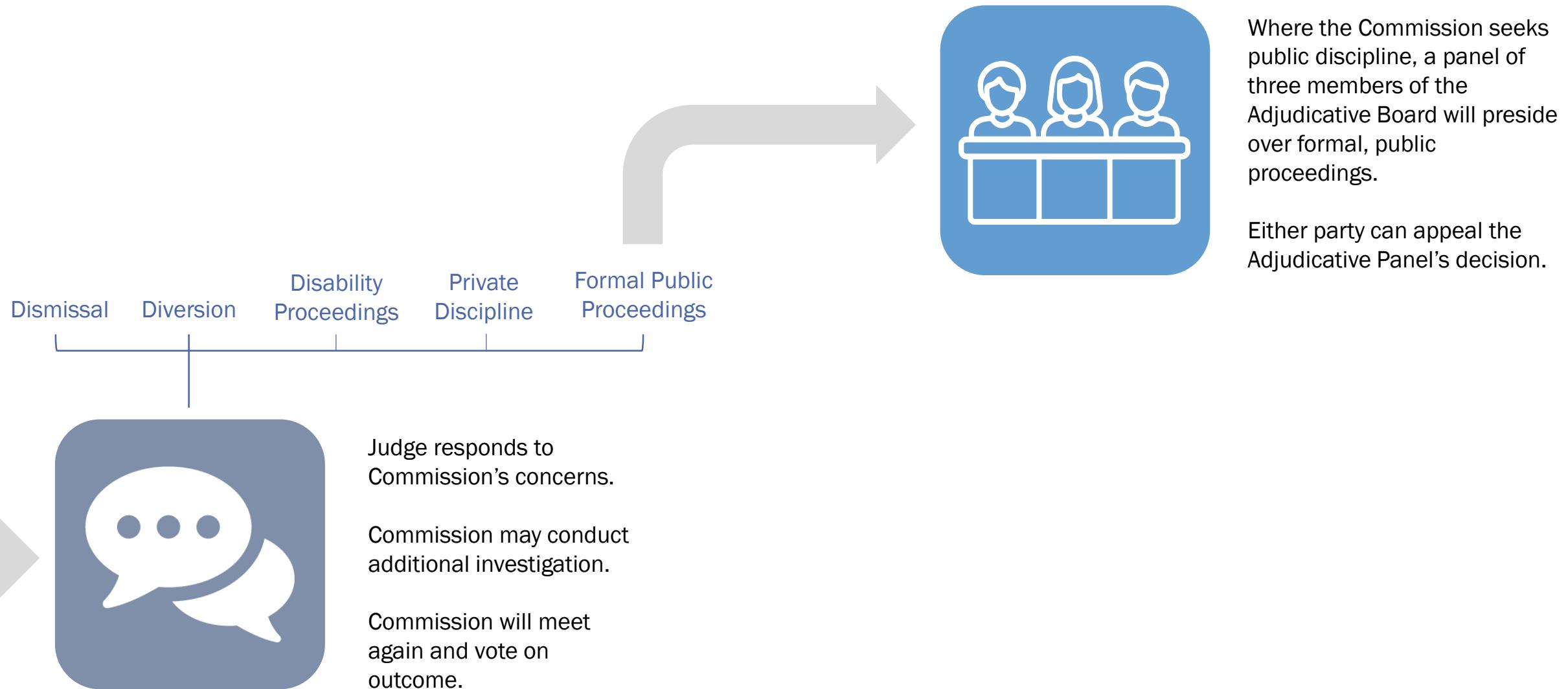
## OFFICE

The Commission is supported by the Office of Judicial Discipline staffed by the Executive Director, Special Counsel, Investigator, Office Manager, and Paralegal.

# Judicial Discipline Process



# Judicial Discipline Process



# 2025 Events: Implementation of Amendment H

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- Members of Independent Judicial Discipline Adjudicative Board appointed by Supreme Court and Governor
- Members of Judicial Discipline Rulemaking Committee appointed by Commission, Supreme Court and Governor
- First post-Amendment H public discipline proceedings held before Adjudicative Board
- Rulemaking Committee promulgated first rule revisions

# 2025 Events: Website Improvements, Education, and Outreach

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- **Website Improvements:**
  - Online Request for Evaluation Form went live May 1, 2025
  - New FAQ page answers the public's most frequent questions in accessible language
  - Searchable database of past cases went live this week
- **Education and Outreach:**
  - Outreach to Attorneys: CLE programming
  - Outreach to Public: Revised flyer sent to self help office for each District
  - Outreach to Judges: Presentations at Judicial Conference and at individual Judicial Districts

## Colorado Public Judicial Discipline Database

### Filter by Year

-- Select an option --

### Filter by Type of Judge

-- Select an option --

### Filter by Judicial District

-- Select an option --

Year	Judge's Name	Determination	Case Summary	Type of Judge	Judicial District
1984	Alvin D. Lichtenstein	Dismissal	<p>The Commission on Judicial Discipline alleged that, during a sentencing hearing in a second-degree murder case, District Judge Alvin D. Lichtenstein made remarks that undermined public confidence in the judiciary and brought the judiciary into disrepute, in violation of Canon 2A of the Colorado Code of Judicial Conduct. The Commission recommended a public reprimand. The Colorado Supreme Court found that "Although the sentencing comments contain some phraseology which, when read in isolation, might have offended the sensibilities of others, the full context of the sentencing hearing indicates that the choice of words was no more than an awkwardly executed effort to place on record the confused and highly emotional state of the defendant at the time of the killing, which, in the judge's opinion, constituted a mitigating circumstance justifying a sentence below the presumptive range. The judge's comments were not intended to be disrespectful of the law, the victim, or anyone else; nor [did] they reasonably lend themselves to such a connotation in the full context of the hearing." The Supreme Court of Colorado concluded that the judge's remarks did not violate Canon 2A, rejected the Commission's recommendation for public reprimand, and directed the Commission to dismiss the complaint.</p>	District Court Judge	2nd - Denver
			<p>Eagle County District Judge William L. Jones was publicly reprimanded after a formal evidentiary hearing for delaying the issuance of a decision in an uncomplicated civil case for over two years after it was submitted for decision. This misconduct was aggravated by the fact that Judge Jones received multiple inquires from the parties asking for a decision in the case, and he had previously been privately reprimanded for similar delays. Judge Jones was publicly reprimanded for violating Canon 3 A(5) of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which requires prompt disposition of court business, and Colo. RJD 5(a)(2), which addresses willful or persistent failure to perform judicial duties.</p>	District Court Judge	5th - Clear Creek, Eagle, Lake, Summit
			<p>By agreement with the Colorado Commission on Judicial Discipline, County Court Judge Robert A. Rand stipulated to his resignation and public censure based on the following misconduct: (1) joking inappropriately about the physical appearance of attorneys and Judicial Department staff with whom he interacted, (2) engaging in ex parte communications with lawyers about plea negotiations, (3) failing to recuse in a case where a party's sister was the judge's paralegal, and (4) engaging in off-the-record conversations with parties about their cases after the conclusion of hearings. Judge Rand was publicly censured for violating Canon Rules 1.2 (appearance of impropriety), 2.8 (demeanor towards counsel and court staff), 2.9 (ex parte communications), and 2.11 (disqualification).</p>	County Court Judge	8th - Jackson, Larimer
			<p>The Colorado Supreme Court approved the dismissal of disciplinary proceedings against County Court Judge Jonathan L. Walker after he agreed to retire, effective February 15, 2017. The Supreme Court ordered that the</p>	County Court	4th - El Paso,

# Searchable Public Discipline Database

# 2025 Events: Expanded Investigations

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- Commission hired a full-time investigator in November of 2024:
  - Investigator conducts at least a preliminary investigation on every RFE
  - Initial investigation typically includes close review of RFE and review of court records
- Investigations in 2025:
  - Reviewed hearing audio in 36 RFEs
  - Reviewed hearing transcripts in 5 RFEs
  - Conducted 43 interviews



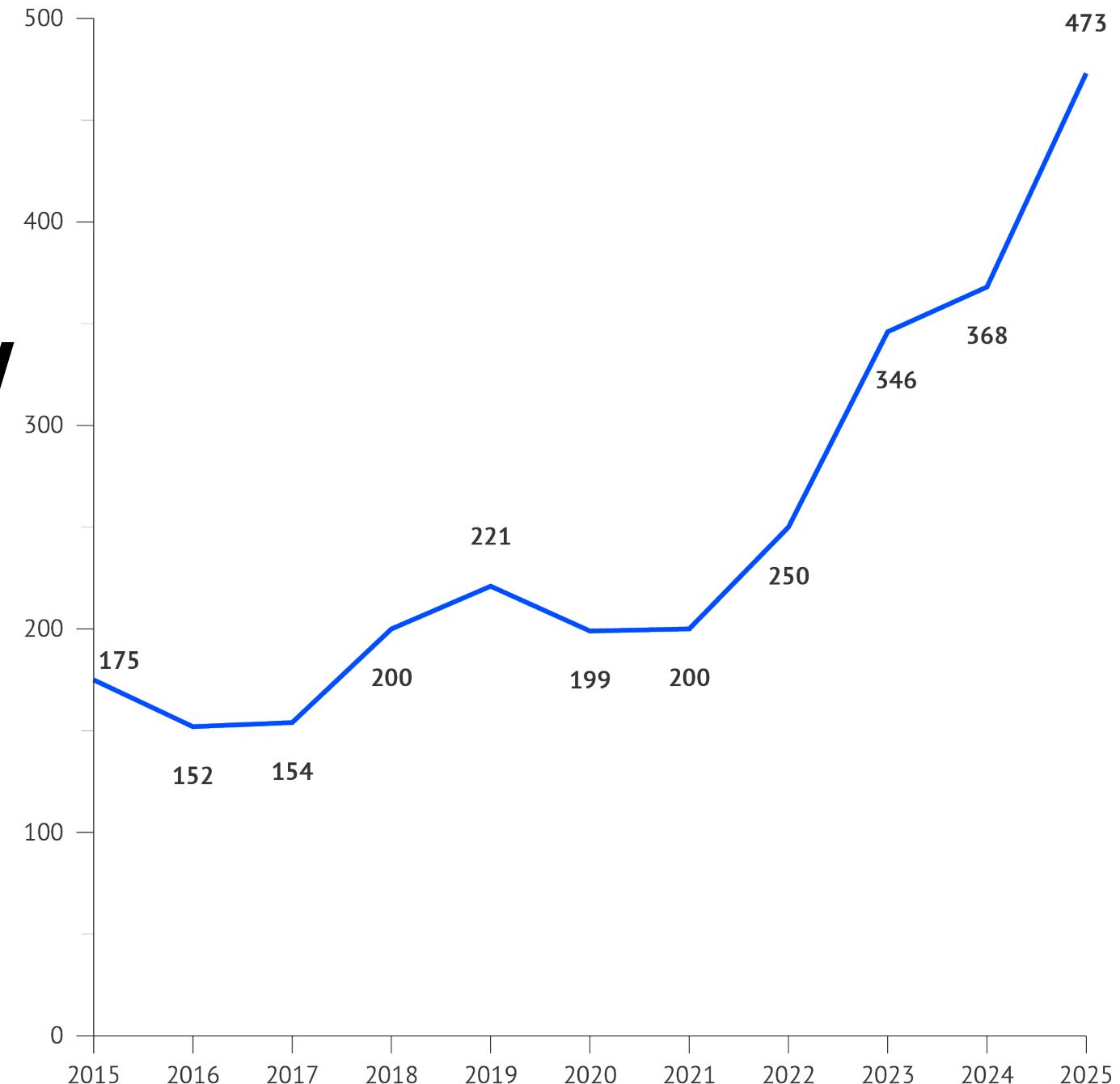
# 2025 Data and Statistics

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# Number of RFEs Continues to Grow

This total does not include:

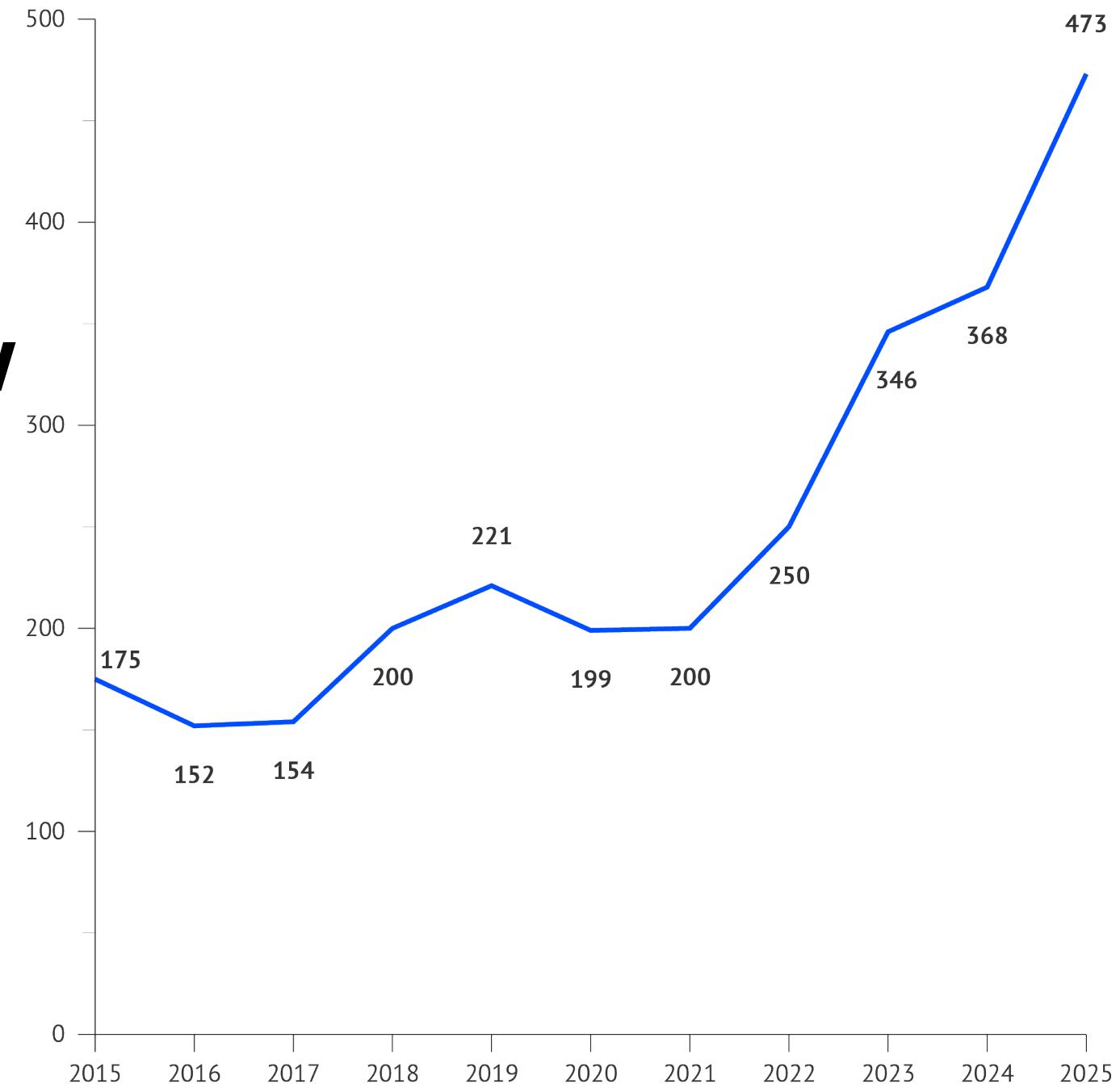
- 179 inquiries about Federal Judges, Magistrates, and others outside the Commission's Jurisdiction; and
- 265 similar RFEs about the same judge and incident resulting from viral social media posts.



# Number of RFEs Continues to Grow

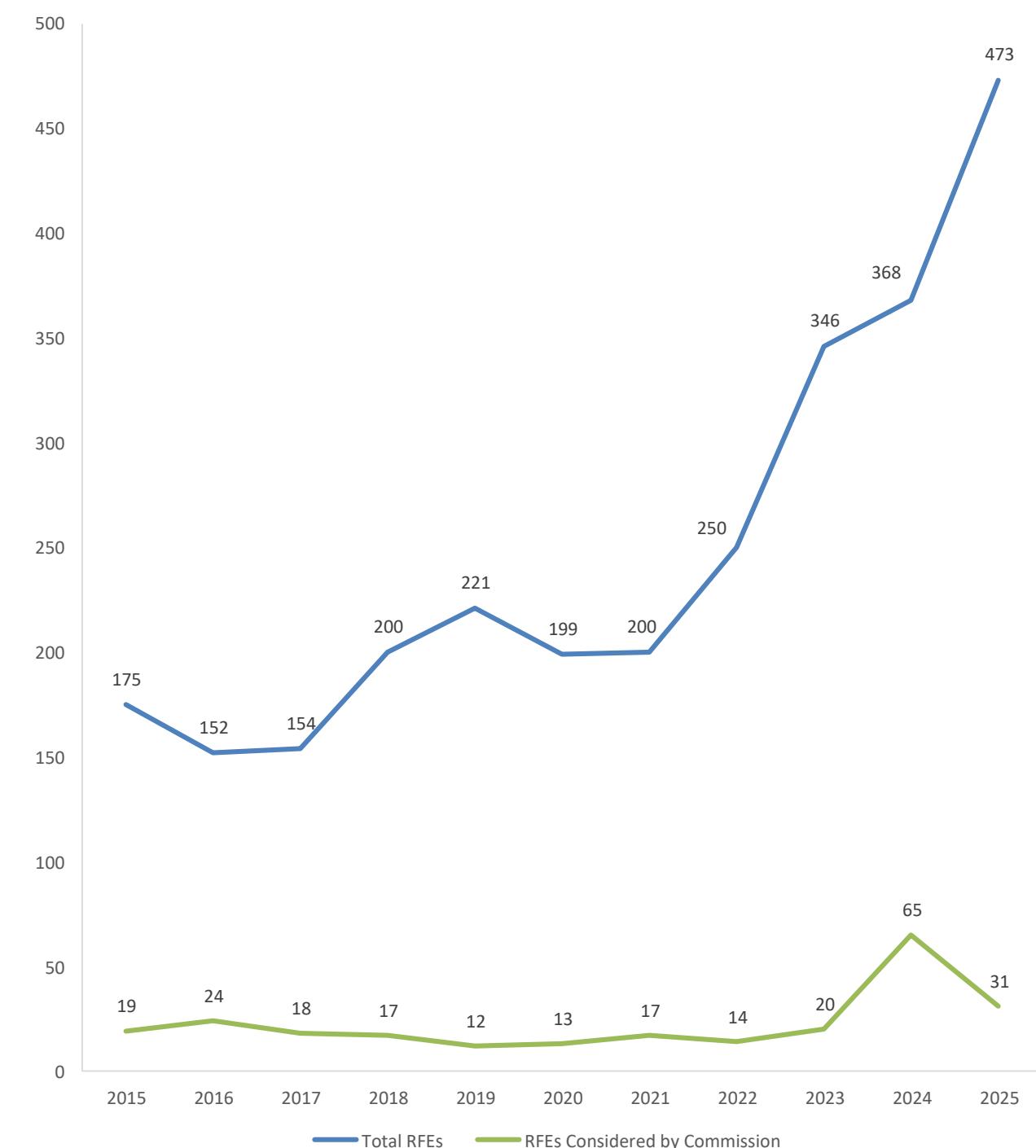
Factors leading to this increase:

- RFEs from new sources, including attorneys and other professionals;
- Continued increase in referrals from Judicial Department; and
- Increased public awareness from news coverage.

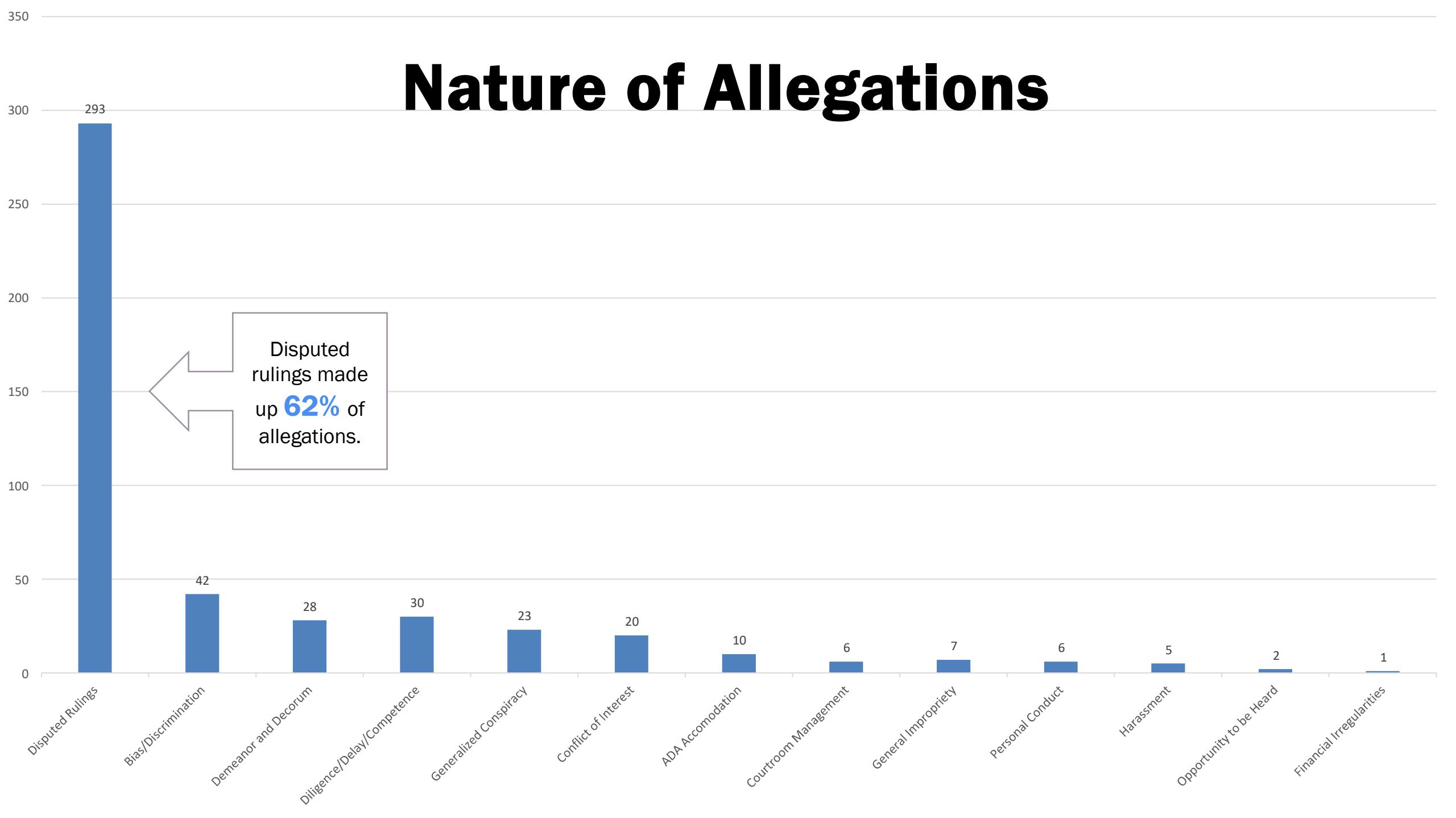


# Number of Cases Considered by the Commission

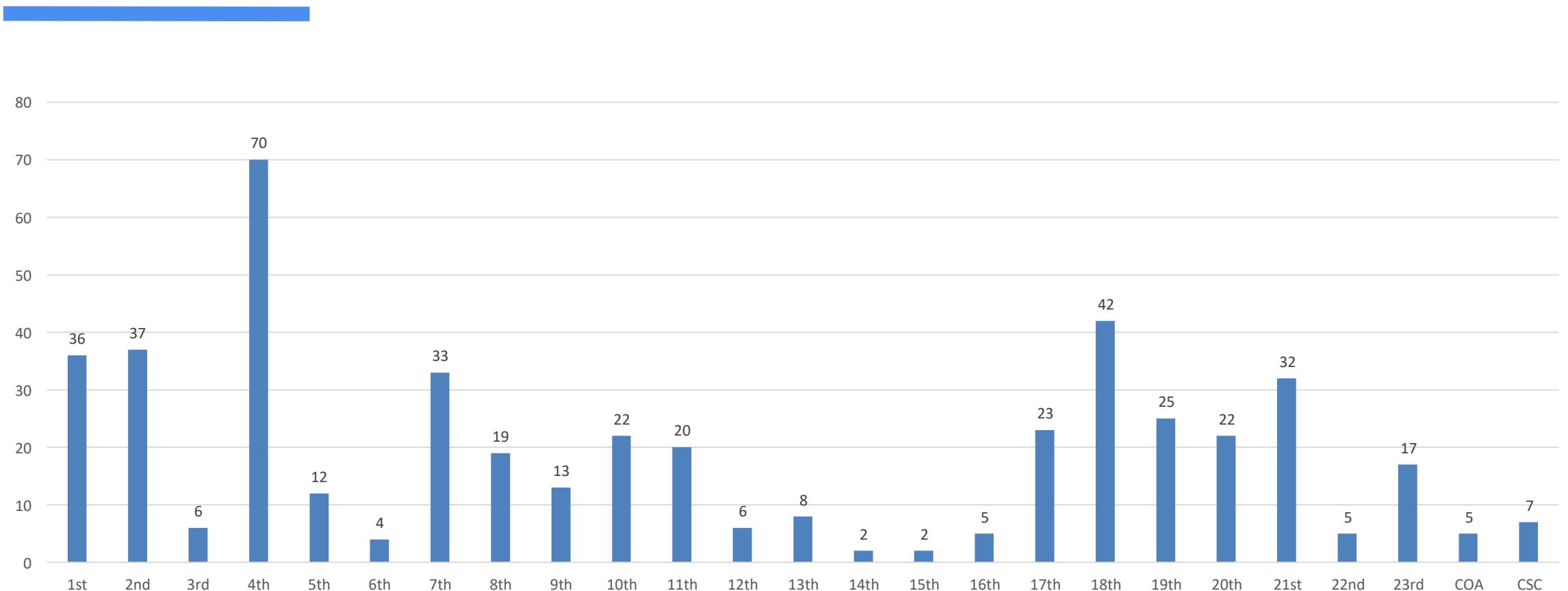
- Colorable allegations of misconduct have increased, but not at the same rate.
- Commission considered 31 RFEs in 2025.
- Historical average: 17 RFEs per year (based on 2015 through 2021).
- Unusual number of RFEs considered in 2024 due to 48 Personal Financial Disclosure matters.



# Nature of Allegations

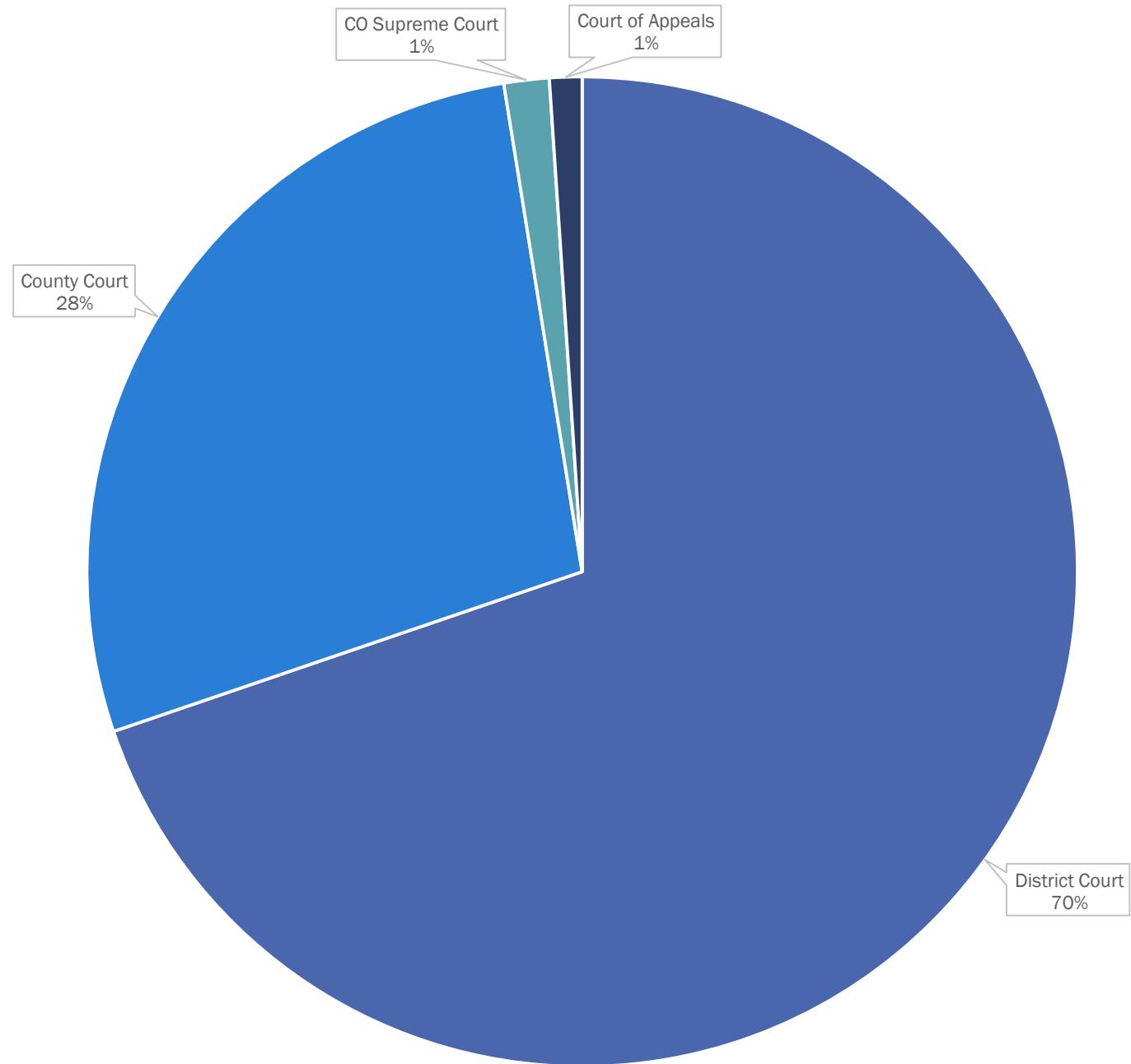


# Number of RFEs by Judicial District

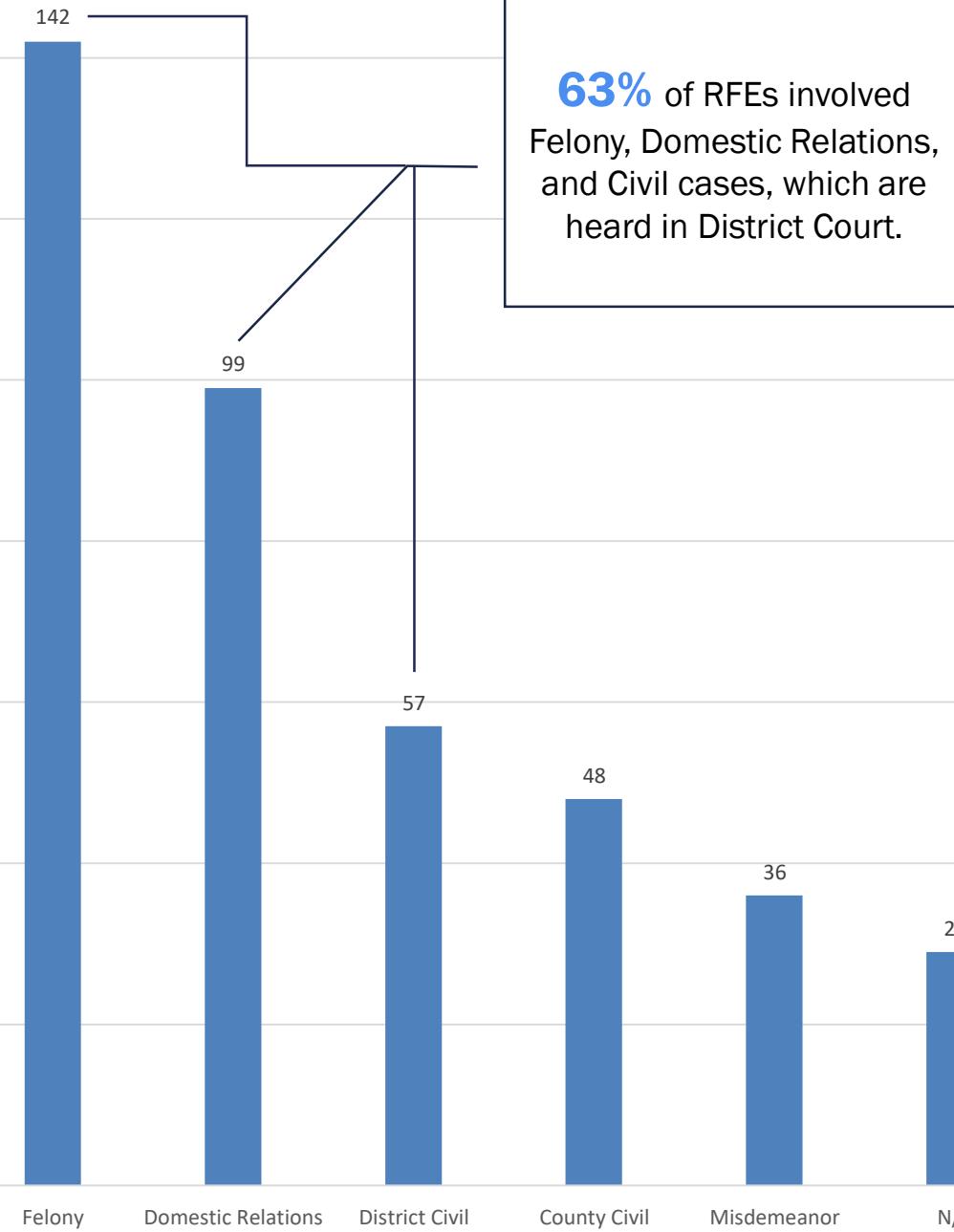


# RFEs by Type of Judge

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# RFEs by Case Classification



- Data for matters considered by the Commission in 2025.
- From data self-reported by Judges to the Judicial Department.
- Commission omits or aggregates any data that might identify an individual judge.

Demographic	No.
Male	12
Female	12
White	19
Person of Color	5
Under 50 Years Old	5
50-60 Years Old	10
Over 60 Years Old	9

## Demographic Data: Judges

- Data for 31 matters considered by the Commission in 2025.
- Data is from optional demographic survey included in RFE form.
- Many complainants choose not to share demographic information.

Demographic	No.
Male	10
Female	5
White	10
Black or African American	2
American Indian or Alaska Native	3
Hispanic or Latino	4
35-44 Years Old	2
45-54 Years Old	2
55-64 Years Old	4
Over 65 Years Old	6

## Demographic Data: Impacted Persons



# 2025 Discipline

- 31 matters brought before the Commission.
- 18 matters dismissed without discipline.
- 3 matters dismissed “with concern.”
- 3 diversion agreements initiated or completed in 2025.
- Private discipline imposed in 3 cases.
- 3 formal proceedings initiated or completed in 2025.

# 2025 Trends and Patterns

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## Delays Continue to be a Concern:

- 8 of the 31 matters considered by the Commission involved delayed orders.
- Delays are often driven by overwhelm, workloads, personal stresses.

## Increased use of Diversion Agreements:

- Commission may require monitoring, mentorship, education or other means to address underlying causes.
- Matter dismissed upon successful completion.

## Rural Judges:

- Rural judges often have fewer opportunities for informal support and mentorship.
- Part-time County Court judges are especially likely to miss out on opportunities to learn from colleagues.

## Judicial Experience Levels:

- New judges experience a steep learning curve.
- Experienced judges are more likely to suffer from burnout and compassion fatigue.

# 2026: What's Next

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## Continued outreach to the public

- We saw in 2025 how impactful outreach and education is, and we plan to continue these efforts in 2026
- More trainings for judges and attorneys
- Outreach to local law schools
- Continue to expand efforts to reach other legal professionals and litigants

## Rulemaking Continues

- The Commission is independent from the Judicial Discipline Rule-Making Committee
- We look forward to seeing more revised rules in 2026

# Questions?

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Colorado Commission on Judicial Discipline

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