

JUSTICE NEWS

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Executive Office for Immigration Review Announces Case Completion Numbers for Fiscal Year 2019

The Justice Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) today announced the agency's case completion numbers topped 275,000 cases for fiscal year 2019 (FY19), the second highest number of case completions in EOIR's history. This number marks an increase of roughly 80,000 case completions from fiscal year 2018 (FY18), the same year that EOIR established case completion goals for immigration judges in response to years of declining or stagnant productivity. The FY19 numbers are nearly double the number of completed cases from just three years ago.

"Our immigration courts are doing everything in their power to efficiently adjudicate immigration cases while respecting due process rights, but efficient adjudication alone cannot resolve the crisis at the border," said EOIR Director James McHenry. "While EOIR is doing an unprecedented job adjudicating cases fairly and expeditiously, the nearly one million case backlog will continue to grow unless Congress acts to address the crisis at the border."

As part of a continued effort to return the rule of law to America's immigration system, the Justice Department has introduced initiatives to improve EOIR's efficiency in adjudicating cases without compromising due process. The Department has also worked to reduce EOIR's "backlog" of cases by hiring new judges, expanding court capacity, and emphasizing the importance of timely completing cases consistent with the law. However, due to the high volume of immigration cases filed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) driven by the ongoing border crisis, EOIR's pending caseload was approximately 987,000 as of the end of FY19. The 444,000 new cases filed by DHS in FY19 is the highest number in history and is well over the historical average of 225,294 from FY09 to FY16.

EOIR had 442 immigration judges as of Sept. 30, 2019, the highest number in its history. Additionally, 92 new judges were hired in four classes over FY19, and another class of judges is expected to join EOIR in November 2019. On average, immigration judges who performed over the whole year completed 708 cases each in FY19.

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