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July 21, 2026

To: Recalled Judges of the Judicial Settlement Conference (JSC) Program
From: J.T. Blackstone, Alternative Dispute Resolution Program Specialist
Re: JSC Quarterly Impact Brief, July 2026

In 2026, the Judicial Settlement Conference Program has continued to expand its reach and increase its impact across Virginia.

This quarter saw a steady increase in Domestic Relations matters handled by JSC judges, making up approximately 58% of total cases referred.¹ Tort-Personal Injury and Commercial litigation cases also comprised a significant number of JSCs during this quarter. As displayed in the brief below, the JSC program continues to boast an impressive settlement rate and receive steady referrals from some of the most active Circuit Courts in the Commonwealth.²

Also, we are excited to announce the addition of two new JSC Judges. The Hon. Patricia West will serve the Second Judicial Circuit. The Hon. James W. Updike will serve the [Twenty-Second](#), [Twenty-Third](#), and [Twenty-Fourth](#) Judicial Circuits, starting this month. As these jurisdictions include previously under-served localities such as Danville, Pittsylvania, Roanoke, and Bedford - we are thrilled by the opportunity to expand program access in this region.

Please see the July 2026 Quarterly Impact Brief attached for additional information.

As always, we appreciate your service to this program and your commitment to ADR in Virginia. If you have any questions regarding how to refer litigants to our program, please contact (804) 692-0375 or disputeresolution@vacourts.gov

Best Regards,

J.T. Blackstone
Alternative Dispute Resolution Program Specialist
Dispute Resolution Services

JB/jy

¹ Cases categorized by the case type "Domestic Relations" include divorce, equitable distribution, spousal support, and child support.

² https://www.vacourts.gov/static/courtadmin/aoc/djs/programs/cpss/csi/stats/cc_filings.pdf

THE JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE PROGRAM IN VIRGINIA

Quarterly Impact Brief | July 2026

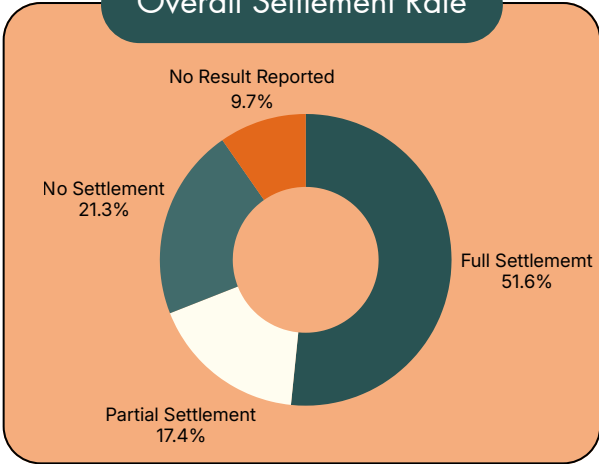
By J.T. Blackstone, ADR Programs Specialist

Big Picture

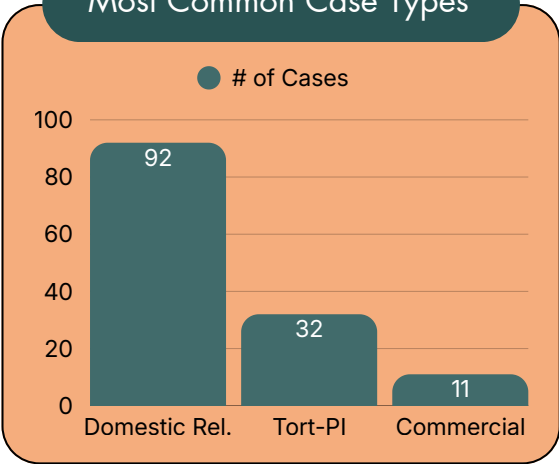
This quarter once again demonstrated the many benefits of the Judicial Settlement Conference (JSC) Program in Virginia’s Circuit Courts, particularly in Domestic Relations matters. With almost 70% of cases resulting in settlement, our judges continue to prove JSC as an effective method of dispute resolution for parties across the Commonwealth.

Also, we are excited to announce the addition of a two new JSC Judges who will begin serving the program this month. The Hon. Patricia West will serve the Second Judicial Circuit. Additionally, the Hon. James W. Updike will serve the Twenty-Second, Twenty-Third, and Twenty-Fourth Judicial Circuits. We look forward to continuing the work of the JSC Program for litigants across Virginia.

Overall Settlement Rate



Most Common Case Types



Highest Referring Courts

The Hampton Roads Region outperformed many other areas of the Commonwealth this quarter. Virginia Beach Circuit led the way in referring 24 total cases to JSC, followed by Chesapeake Circuit with 17. Dispute Resolution Services (DRS) will continue to partner with courts to expand the program into underserved areas of our state.

