

*Study Finds New York City Family Courts Resolving Child Support Cases Faster After
Pandemic Backlog*

Groundbreaking analysis draws on nearly 800,000 cases

July 8, New York City — Brooklyn families waited an average of 18 months for a child support order in 2022. By 2025, that wait had dropped to four months, according to a new report from Her Justice, a nonprofit organization that **provides free legal help to women and gender-diverse people living in poverty** in New York City.

The report, *Inside Family Court: An Analysis of New York Child Support Court Data*, analyzes, for the first time, five years of anonymized statewide child support filings from the court system's own internal case management data. The data — from 2019 and 2022-2025 — provide insight into how families experience the court, how that experience changed over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, and which court interventions work.

Key Findings

Among the positive interventions: **Recently piloted triage and settlement processes in the New York City courts appear to be reducing wait times for child support orders and addressing the post-COVID case backlog.**

- For 2025, the year these interventions began, the report found significant progress in the duration of child support cases in the Bronx (12.9 months in 2022 to 6.4 months in 2025); Brooklyn (18.1 months in 2022 to 4.3 months in 2025); and Queens (16.4 months in 2022 to 6.7 months in 2025).
- The triage program identifies what each case needs early and gives families the information they need to move their cases forward more quickly. This means families who want to agree on child support have an opportunity to settle cases without delay. This reform reflects changes Her Justice has [long advocated for](#), including through legislation the organization drafted, currently introduced in the New York State Legislature as S.245/A.3531.

Still, the report found persistent challenges: **A high percentage of petitions statewide were dismissed without any action.**

- Across all years, 30% of child support filings were dismissed, meaning the court discharged the petition and closed the case without action.
- This category accounted for three times the percentage of filings as those that ended with an order of support. Further study is warranted to determine why so

many cases were dismissed without action, as well as the effects of such dismissals on court operations, resources, and litigants.

The report also raised new questions: **Petitioners most commonly requested modification of child support orders.**

- Across all years, the most common relief families sought in child support petitions across the state was modification of a prior order (34%).
- It would be valuable to conduct analyses with more data on modifications to understand why families seek such changes and how repeated engagement with the court affects them.

A System Largely Out of Public View

Child support orders are essential for many families — especially those living in poverty — but the courts that decide these cases remain largely out of public view. In 2025 alone, more than 130,000 child support cases were filed, accounting for nearly one-third of all Family Court filings. Yet more than 90% of parents go through these cases without a lawyer, and there is little public information about how the system works or the outcomes families experience.

For decades, Her Justice has helped thousands of parents navigate New York’s child support system. Building on Her Justice’s years of family court representation, research, and advocacy, this report offers an unprecedented look at statewide child support court data. Such analysis must inform court improvements, legislative reforms, and investments to make the child support system work better for New Yorkers.

The goal is simple: when children are owed financial support, they should get it as quickly as possible.

“Transparency of court data is critical to accountability. Her Justice’s report demonstrates how anonymized case management data can illustrate large-scale trends in the family courts,” said **Rachel Braunstein, Her Justice’s Senior Director of Policy**. “Court system data should be publicly available so that government, researchers, and reformers can collaborate, wherever possible, in evaluating family court functionality, determining the impact and effectiveness of interventions, and supporting solutions for reform.

Policymakers can help ensure transparency by including evaluation measures in new laws and policies. Only with system-wide data on case features and outcomes can we know how closely calibrated the courts’ promise of justice is to the results they ultimately deliver to families in New York.”

“Our civil courts shape families’ lives, with profound, generational effects. So access to justice for New Yorkers requires that we know what’s actually happening in our courts,” said **Lex Korberg, Her Justice’s Executive Director**. “Her Justice has handled many thousands of family court cases. This breadth of experience has shown us how delays in court processes harm families who depend on the courts for essential relief. We are excited about the possibility that the kinds of information presented in this report — for example, how many court appearances are typical in a case or for how long families can expect the process to last in their borough or county — could be made accessible to New Yorkers to help inform their decisions about whether and how to engage with the child support courts.”

Her Justice is grateful for OCA’s partnership in making this research possible and looks forward to continuing this work. Additional data could help shed light on which court practices best support families — including the role of legal representation for litigants as well as the effect of virtual versus in-court appearances — all of which must inform efforts to make the child support system more accessible and effective.

[Click here to view the 2026 report on Her Justice’s website.](#)

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