



How Immigration Mandamus Lawsuits End: Most Are Dropped Before a Ruling

Original analysis of 55,212 records from the Federal Judicial Center, FY2009–FY2025 (Oct 1, 2008 – Sep 30, 2025).

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Of the 11,046 immigration delay and other immigration actions that federal district courts closed in fiscal year 2025, 7,918 (71.7%) were voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiff. Judges entered judgment on a motion in 4.2% of cases. The court records do not say why a plaintiff dismissed, so the share is not a measure of how many applications the government approved.

72%

Voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiff, FY2025

4%

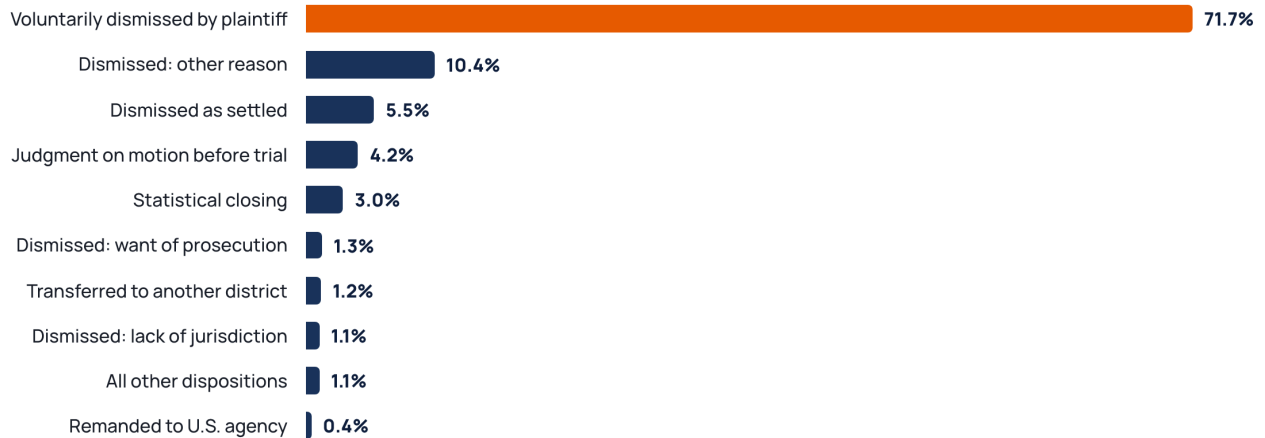
Decided by judgment on a motion, FY2025

11K

NOS 465 cases closed in FY2025



How NOS 465 cases ended, FY2025



Source: Settlement Insight analysis of data from the Federal Judicial Center

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What the court records show

- Most suits are withdrawn.** 7,918 of 11,046 cases closed in FY2025 (71.7%) ended with a voluntary dismissal; another 5.5% were closed as settled.
- Usually before the government answers.** 86.2% of the voluntary dismissals came before issue was joined, meaning before the government defendants had filed their answer.

3. **Half end with no court action.** 50.1% of all FY2025 terminations (5,537 cases) closed with no court action recorded, matching the federal judiciary's own count exactly.
4. **Rulings are rare and mostly favor the government.** Judges entered judgment on a motion in 468 cases (4.2%); 443 of those (94.7%) were recorded in favor of the defendants.
5. **Volume grew 12.7*.** Terminations rose from 868 in FY2009 to 11,046 in FY2025, while the voluntary-dismissal share rose from 44.8% to 71.7%.

How we measured

Data come from the Federal Judicial Center's Integrated Database (IDB) of federal civil cases, cumulative file with cases terminated through June 30, 2026, as loaded into our database on Oct. 10, 2026. We selected all cases with nature-of-suit code 465 (Other Immigration Actions) and a termination date from Oct. 1, 2008, through Sept. 30, 2025, a total of 55,212 records. FY2026 is incomplete in the file and is not counted.

Fiscal years follow the federal judiciary's reporting year (Oct. 1 to Sept. 30), assigned by termination date. Outcomes use the IDB disposition code: 12 is "dismissed: voluntarily," 13 "dismissed: settled" and 6 "judgment on motion before trial." "No court action" combines procedural-progress codes 1 and 3; "before issue joined" uses codes 1, 2, 11 and 12. Judgment direction comes from the IDB judgment field. Days are counted from filing date to termination date.

Calibration: our FY2025 count of 11,046 closed NOS 465 cases, and 5,537 closed with no court action, match Table C-4 of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts for the 12 months ending Sept. 30, 2025, exactly.

Checked against published figures

- Other Immigration Actions (NOS 465) civil cases terminated in U.S. district courts, 12 months ending Sep 30, 2025: published 11,046, our count 11,046 (exact match). [Table C-4. U.S. District Courts–Civil Cases Terminated, by Nature of Suit and Action Taken, During the 12-Month Period Ending September 30, 2025](#)
- Of those, cases terminated with no court action (FY2025): published 5,537, our count 5,537 (exact match). [Table C-4. U.S. District Courts–Civil Cases Terminated, by Nature of Suit and Action Taken, During the 12-Month Period Ending September 30, 2025](#)

Limitations

- Nature-of-suit code 465 has no separate flag for mandamus. It also contains other immigration challenges that are not delay suits, and it covers suits against any federal agency, not only USCIS. The records do not identify which agency or which application type was at issue.
- A voluntary dismissal is not a recorded win. The IDB does not record why a plaintiff dismissed; reasons can include the agency acting on the application, an agreement between the parties or the plaintiff abandoning the case.
- Rows are termination records, not unique cases: in FY2025, 11,046 records cover 11,016 distinct docket numbers, and 69 records were reopened cases. Table C-4 counts the same way.

- Courts can report terminations late, and later IDB releases may add or correct FY2025 records. The FY2025 total matched the official table as of this release.

Data files

- [Immigration delay lawsuits by federal district, FY2025](#) (CSV, 21 rows)
- [Immigration delay lawsuit outcomes by fiscal year, FY2009–FY2025](#) (CSV, 17 rows)
- [How Other Immigration Actions ended, FY2025](#) (CSV, 10 rows)

How to cite

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