



Central (Mechanicsville)



Northern (Manassas)



Eastern (Norfolk)



Western (Roanoke)

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE UPDATE

Alka B. Lohmann, Director

Presented to the Forensic Science Board

October 7, 2026

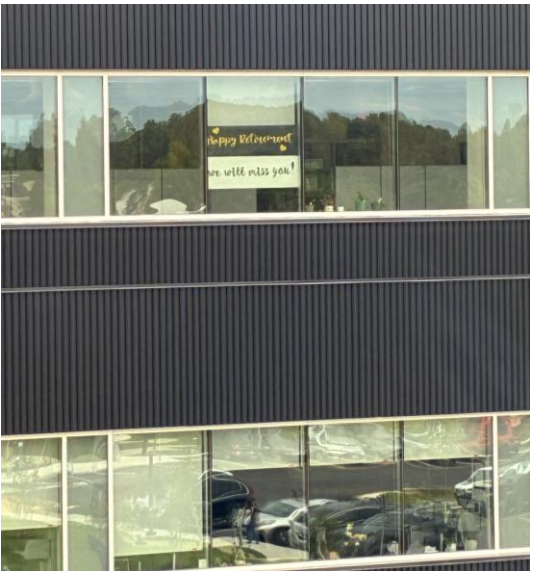




Thank you Director Jackson!

- Retired after 31 years of dedicated service
 - Effective July 31, 2026
- Thank you to all who celebrated with us!
 - Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Stanley Meador
 - Sheriff's Association Executive Director John Jones





SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 2083

Commending Linda C. Jackson.

Agreed to by the Senate, June 29, 2026

WHEREAS, for more than three decades, Linda C. Jackson has provided outstanding leadership to the Department of Forensic Science as director, ensuring that the organization upholds its mission to provide timely, high-quality forensic analysis to law-enforcement agencies throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Linda Jackson began her career at the Department of Forensic Science in 1995 as a controlled substances forensic scientist; and

WHEREAS, Linda Jackson went on to serve as a section supervisor, controlled substances section chief, and chemistry program manager, before being appointed in 2013 by Governor Robert F. McDonnell as the organization's first woman director; she was reappointed to serve as director under four successive administrations; and

WHEREAS, among her many achievements as director, Linda Jackson oversaw the opening of the new Department of Forensic Science Central Laboratory in Mechanicsville; and

WHEREAS, Linda Jackson has been an active leader in the national forensic science community, serving on the Scientific Working Group for the Analysis of Seized Drugs, the National Commission on Forensic Science, the Board of Directors for the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors, and the National Institute of Justice Forensic Laboratory Needs Technology Working Group; and

WHEREAS, under Linda Jackson's leadership, the Department of Forensic Science has supported the criminal justice system by delivering reliable services to law-enforcement agencies while consistently maintaining its independence and upholding its commitment to impartiality, integrity, and transparency; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Linda C. Jackson hereby be commended on the occasion of her retirement as director of the Department of Forensic Science after 31 years of expert leadership and dedicated service; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Linda C. Jackson as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for her legacy of contributions to the criminal justice system in the Commonwealth.

ENROLLED

SR2083ER



Staffing Update

- Director of Technical Services - Theresa Staropoli (September 10, 2026)
- DFS Counsel - Will Wittenbrook
- Forensic Biology Assistant Program Manager - Amy Jo Townley
- Information Security Officer - Balaji Kantheti retired September 1, 2026



CERTIFICATE OF ACCREDITATION

The ANSI National Accreditation Board

Hereby attests that

**Virginia Department of Forensic Science
Central Laboratory**
8850 Times Dispatch Boulevard, Suite 100, Mechanicsville
Virginia 23116 USA

Fulfills the requirements of

ISO/IEC 17025:2017

Accreditation Requirements for Forensic Testing and Calibration (2023)

FBI Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories:2025

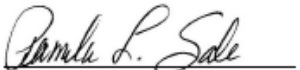
FBI Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Databasing Laboratories:2025

In the field of

Forensic Testing

This certificate is valid only when accompanied by a current scope of accreditation document.

The current scope of accreditation can be verified at www.anab.org.


Pamela L. Sale, Vice President, Forensics

Expiry Date: 31 January 2030
Certificate Number: FT-0051



Accreditation

- Certificates and Scopes are available on the DFS website: <https://dfs.virginia.gov/about-dfs/accreditation/>
- Current cycle expires January 31, 2030
- July – 15 became Technical Assessors
- Surveillance Assessment without Witnessing – week of September 14

Forensic Science Week

- Annual Service Awards
- 59 recipients
- Ranging from 5-30 years of service to the Commonwealth



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Abigail D. Spanberger
Governor

September 22, 2026

Alka B. Lohmann, Director
c/o Virginia Department of Forensic Science Western Laboratory
6600 Northside High School Road
Roanoke, Virginia 24019

Dear Director Lohmann and Staff:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I am delighted to extend my warmest greetings to all attendees of the 2026 Service Awards for the Virginia Department of Forensic Science.

Since its formal establishment in 2005, the Department of Forensic Science has remained steadfast in supporting the Commonwealth's criminal justice system by providing reliable, timely, and high-quality laboratory services. This important mission is sustained by the scientists and professionals who work diligently to advance the field, support investigations, and help uphold the integrity of the justice system. During National Forensic Science Week, we recognize the vital contributions of these dedicated professionals throughout the Commonwealth and our nation.

As you gather today, know that the Commonwealth is grateful for your service and your continued dedication to advancing Virginia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Abigail D. Spanberger".

Abigail D. Spanberger



Forensic Training

- Forensic Science Academy - 117th Session graduated June 12



- 118th FSA Session began September 21, 2026
Graduation – November 20

Board of Pharmacy Expedited Scheduling



Six (6) compounds were recommended to BoP on April 15, 2026:

- o-desmethyltramadol
- Chlorphine
- Cychlorphine
- 4-acetoxy-N-methyl-N-ethyltryptamine
- 4-bromo-alpha-PVP
- 3-methyl phencyclidine

The compounds were considered at the Board's June 16th meeting and are pending final approval.

The Board also considered scheduling of 23 drugs consistent with federal scheduling action and pending final approval, including:

- 5 fentanyl-related substances
- 5 benzimidazole-opioid substances
- 12 cannabimimetic agents
- Hexahydrocannabinol (HHC)



Breath Alcohol Updates

- Draeger Alcotest 9510
 - Software received and tested
- Pending updates to Forensic Advantage Breath Alcohol Database (FA BrAD)
 - Allow for communication with field instruments
 - Test Database updated and testing in progress
- All breath test operators will need to be trained and licensed on the new instrument
- Exhibited at the VACA Summer Conference
 - Will develop and offer training opportunities for judges and attorneys



Image from: https://www.draeger.com/en-us_us/Products/Alcotest-9510



Case Transfers and Outsourcing

- Internal case transfers are continuing
 - Firearms (majority from Western)
 - Latent Prints (from Northern)
- Outsourcing
 - Non-persons cases for DNA testing – Bode Technology, Lorton, Virginia (600 cases in FY26, estimating 400 cases in FY27)
 - OCME Toxicology cases (Western ended August 31)
 - Controlled Substances – THC quantitation for edibles only – NMS Laboratories, Willow Creek, PA



Western Firearms Review

- Firearms comparisons were halted in April 2025
- Firearms comparisons are not on the Scope of Accreditation for the Western Laboratory
- We do not intend to reestablish firearms comparison capabilities in the Western Lab in the near future
- Case reviews by external provider are ongoing
- DFS reviewed the corrective action process with our Firearms & Toolmarks Subcommittee at its April 2026 meeting to solicit feedback
- Defense bar notification was sent on May 5th to supplement CA notifications
- We will provide assistance by way of evidence reexaminations or case file documentation reviews within our available resources



Outreach/External Participation

- Presented “DFS Update” to Virginia Association of Commonwealth’s Attorneys’ 87th Annual Summer Conference – August 1
- 2026 Virginia Unified Readiness Summit
- Upcoming:
 - National Association of Forensic Science Boards – October 13-15, 2026
 - VACA Executive Program - December



Evidence Receiving

- Engaging with agency submitters to increase understanding of submission guidelines and policies
 - 22 agencies have participated to date
- Hosted the International Association for Property and Evidence, Inc. (IAPE)
 - 2 Day Evidence Management Training course
 - 1 Day Advanced Concepts in Evidence Management Course
 - September
 - Central Laboratory
- Actively engaging regional Evidence Management groups
- Provided Evidence Submission training for representatives from law enforcement agencies
 - Western Laboratory (July)
 - Eastern Laboratory (September)
- Hosting the Virginia Association for Property and Evidence Professionals (VAPEP) at the Central Laboratory October 13, 2026

Evidence Receiving

- The Central Evidence Receiving Section flooded following a storm in July
- Conference Rooms were used as temporary workspaces to continue assisting agencies





COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
A Nationally Accredited Laboratory
dfs.virginia.gov

8850 Times Dispatch Boulevard, Suite 100
Mechanicsville, Virginia 23116
(804) 786-2281 FAX (804) 746-4465

DFS POLICY NOTICE

TO: All Agencies Served by DFS
FROM: Alka B. Lohmann, Department Director *Alka B. Lohmann*
DATE: September 11, 2026
RE: Updated Submission Policy for Cannabis/Marijuana

The budget language passed by the 2026 Special Session I of the General Assembly establishing the retail marijuana market included changes to Title 4.1 offenses that require an update to the Department's submission guidelines for cannabis/marijuana evidence. The table on the following page summarizes the current updated submission guidelines for marijuana evidence and is applicable to evidence submitted alone or with other suspected controlled substances.

As a reminder, for cannabis edibles, DFS can identify cannabinoids that may be present in a food product but cannot quantify the THC concentration. The Department established a contract with a private laboratory, NMS Laboratories, to provide this analysis. For edible items, initial examination and qualitative identification of THC isomers will be performed by the Department. Should the item(s) be suitable for THC quantitation by NMS Laboratories, a DFS examiner will contact the submitting agency to determine if this type of analysis is needed. If multiple edible items have been submitted, DFS will work with the submitting agency to determine which evidentiary items should be submitted for this further analysis. If testimony is required for the quantitative results, it must be provided by NMS Laboratories. DFS strongly encourages the use of video testimony to limit billable time and travel expenses.

DFS anticipates that additional revisions to its cannabis/marijuana submission guidelines will be necessary to address additional legislative changes that will become effective July 1, 2027. We will notify customers of those revisions at that time.

If you have any questions regarding these cannabis/marijuana submission guidelines, please contact the Controlled Substances Section Supervisor at the DFS Laboratory that provides service to your agency:

Laboratory	Section Contact	Phone Number
Central (Richmond)	John Przybylski	(804) 588-4154
Eastern (Norfolk)	Brian Meinweiser	(757) 355-5958
Northern (Manassas)	Juli Cruciotti	(703) 334-9726
Western (Roanoke)	Rebecca Hutchison	(540) 283-5930



Submission Guidelines for Cannabis/Marijuana as of July 1, 2026

Offense	Policy
Possession of marijuana and marijuana products (§ 4.1-1100)	Accepted: Quantities over 4 ounces Accepted with Limitations: Contested civil offenses (greater than 2 ounces but less than 4 ounces) submitted by law enforcement Not Accepted: Quantities under 2 ounces or uncontested civil offenses
Home cultivation of marijuana (§ 4.1-1101)	Accepted: Five or more separately packaged plants or portions thereof, if a plant count is needed Not Accepted: Four or less plants, or portions thereof
- Possession of marijuana and marijuana products by individuals under the age of 21 (§ 4.1-1105.1) - Other misdemeanors with no weight thresholds (§§ 4.1-1107, 4.1-1108, 4.1-1109, 4.1-1110 and 4.1-1112) - Manufacture, Sell, Distribute or PWID Marijuana (§ 18.2-248.1) - Offering for sale or selling at retail a substance that has total THC that is outside the legal limit for hemp products (§ 3.2-4112) or industrial hemp extracts (§ 3.2-5145.1) and would, therefore, meet the definition of marijuana under Virginia Code §§ 4.1-600 and 18.2-247 - Distribution of marijuana to persons under 18 (§ 18.2-255) - Possession of marijuana by prisoners (§ 53.1-203(6)) and delivery of marijuana to prisoners (§ 18.2-474.1)	Accepted: All weighable quantities (not residue amounts) seized during criminal investigations or were the subject of controlled purchases Not Accepted: Edibles in violation of labeling and packaging requirements as described in §§ 3.2-4123 or 3.2-5145.4:1 or inhalants in violation of labeling and packaging requirements as described in § 3.2-4123 [contact the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) for enforcement guidance]

Statistics



Evidence Receiving

January – September 2026

Central

- 10,691 received

Western

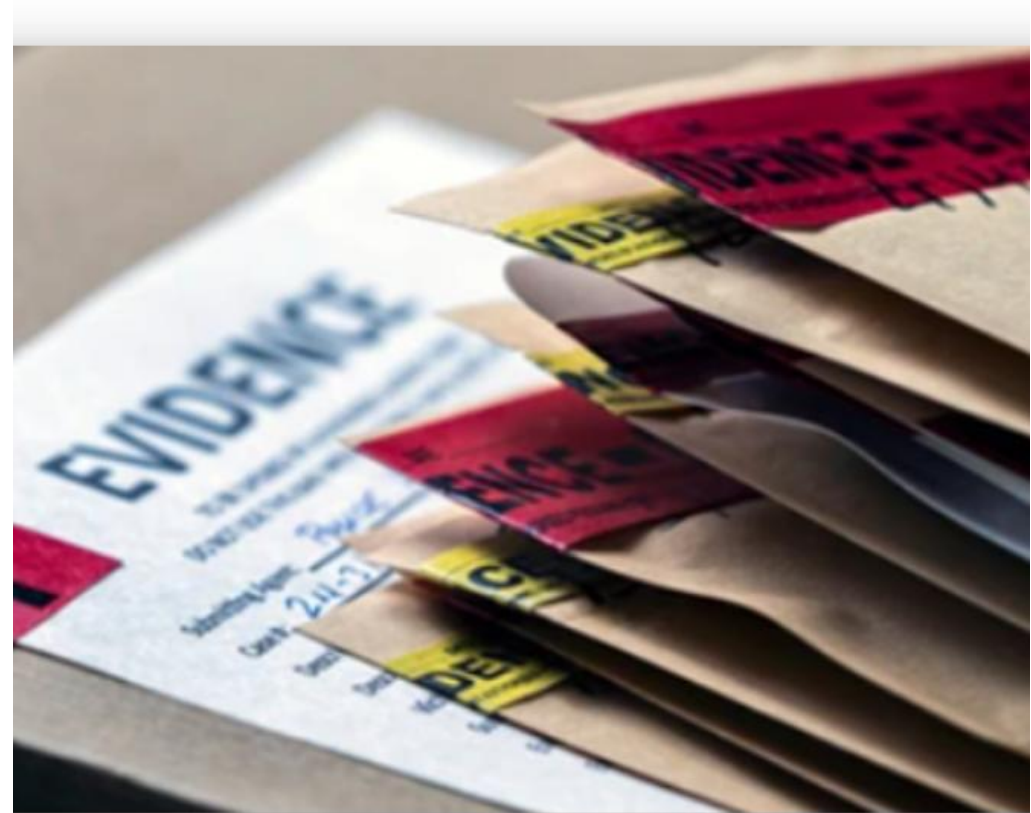
- 10,146 received

Northern

- 7,737 received

Eastern

- 6,878 received





Toxicology Statistics

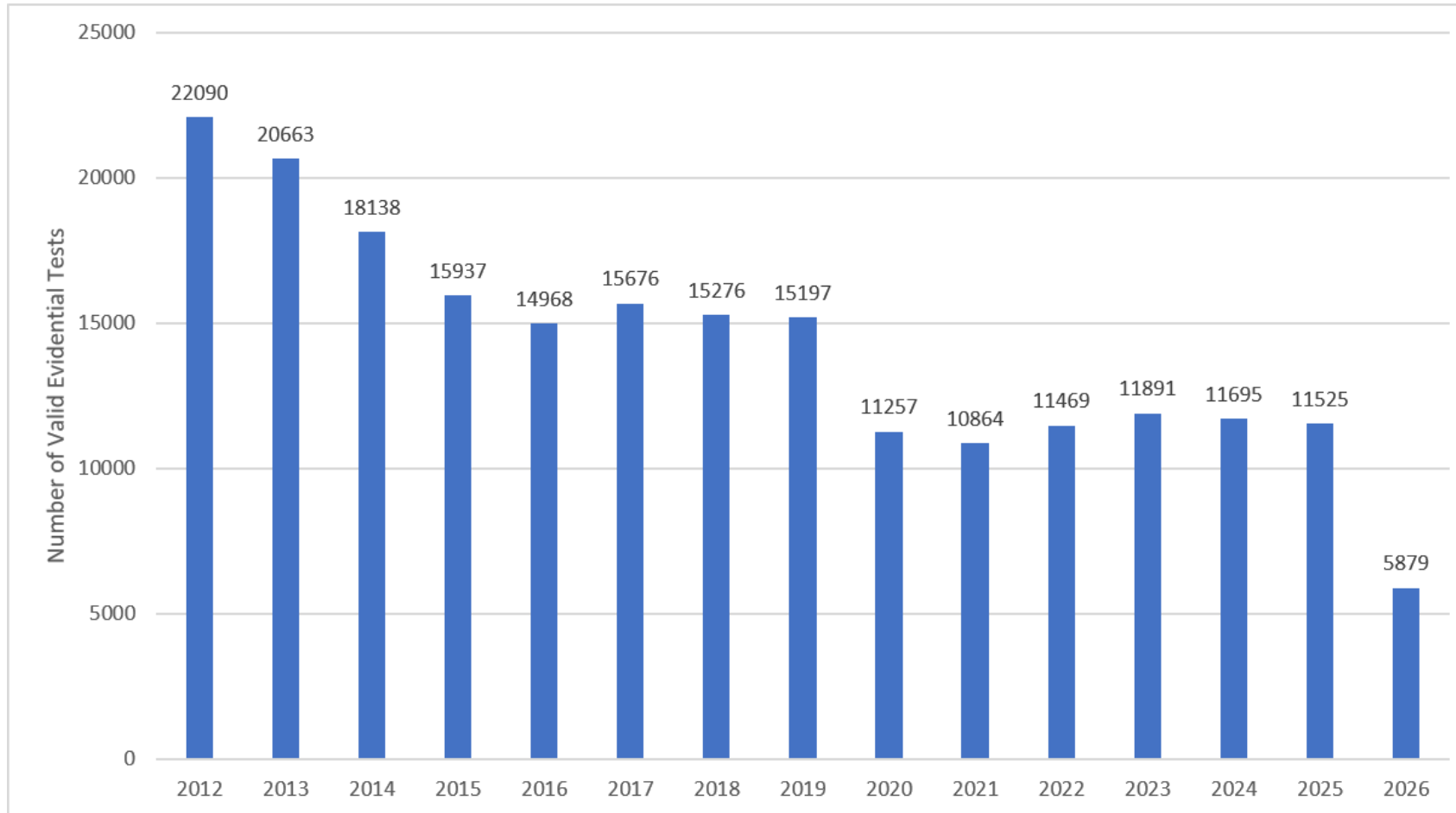
Cases submitted by examination type

	2023	2024	2025	First Half 2026
OCME*	5,386	4,976	4,043	1,786
DUID	2,825	2,316	2,633	1,313
DUI	28	-	-	-
DUI+THC	2,584	2,326	2,673	1,571
Tox-Other	673	682	629	325

*Outsourcing of OCME cases began in late 2023, ended August 30, 2026



Breath Alcohol Statistics



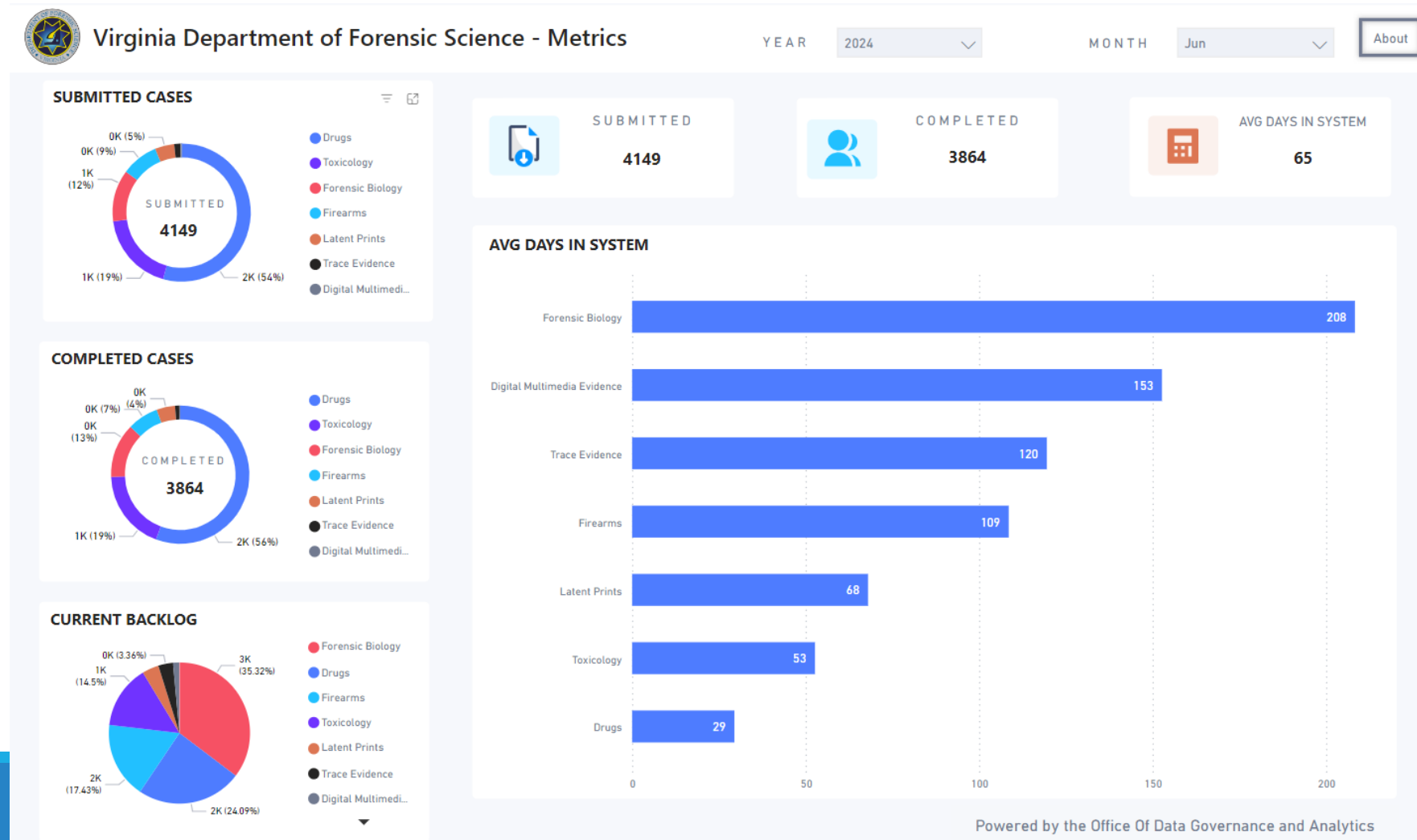
*January - June 2026



Dashboards for Case Statistics

- Project with the Office of Data Governance and Analytics (ODGA)
- Public dashboard provided for interactive performance statistics

<https://dfs.virginia.gov/about-dfs/case-statistics-dashboard/>



Budget and Resources



Staffing and Budget – FY27

- Maximum Employment Limit: 376 (349 GF + 27 NGF)
- Current Staffing: 325 GF + 20 NGF (all GF positions are in-recruit)
- All FY2026 funds were expended, including the FY2025 carryover funds that paid for the Breath Alcohol equipment

	Item Details(\$)		Appropriations(\$)	
	First Year FY2027	Second Year FY2028	First Year FY2027	Second Year FY2028
Total for Department of Forensic Science.....			\$67,823,555	\$67,874,591
General Fund Positions.....	349.00	349.00		
Nongeneral Fund Positions.....	27.00	27.00		
Position Level.....	376.00	376.00		
Fund Sources: General.....	\$64,966,190	\$65,017,226		
Federal Trust.....	\$2,857,365	\$2,857,365		



Facility Update

- Paul B. Ferarra Building at 700 North 5th Street
 - DFS/OCME continue to complete surplus/disposal of equipment furniture not relocated to new facility
- Biotech 8 leased space
 - Lease terminated
- Eastern Laboratory roof replacement
 - Contractor selected, in process of scheduling work



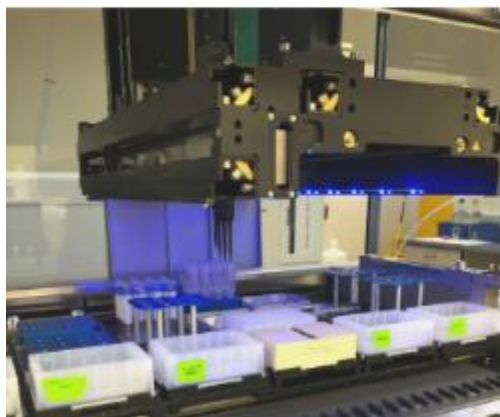
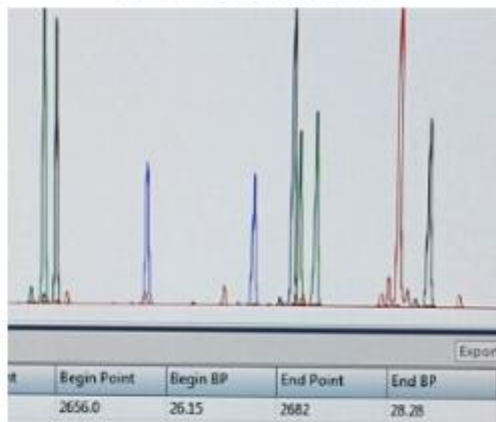
Grant Awards

- **FY25 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Grant – \$1,858,249** was awarded by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). The funds are to be used to support personnel, training, and purchase of equipment and supplies. The grant period is October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2027.
- **2027 Highway Safety Grant Program – \$364,034** in federal funds was awarded by Virginia DMV for the DFS Breath Alcohol Section. Funding is provided for reimbursement of training travel costs for law enforcement officers, supplies needed for breath alcohol classes, continuing education for DFS Breath Alcohol personnel, and the retention of the grant-funded Breath Alcohol Forensic Scientist position. The grant period will be October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027.
- **2027 Highway Safety Grant Program (TREDS Project) – \$580,393** was awarded by Virginia DMV to DFS under its TREDS (Traffic Records Electronic Data System) Program. DFS received funds to retain two part-time FLS II positions and six full-time FLS III positions to assist in the Toxicology Sections statewide to increase capacity. The award requires a match of 25%. The grant period will be October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027.
- **FY25 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Program** – DFS has applied for \$237,778 from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) as the State Administering Agency. DCJS informed that they have been awarded funds from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and will be issuing DFS funding via a subaward. These funds will be used toward training and continuing education of scientific staff in the Chemistry, Physical Evidence, and Toxicology program areas. The final grant amount and project dates are TBA.



Grant Approval Request – Testing and Interpretation of Physical Evidence

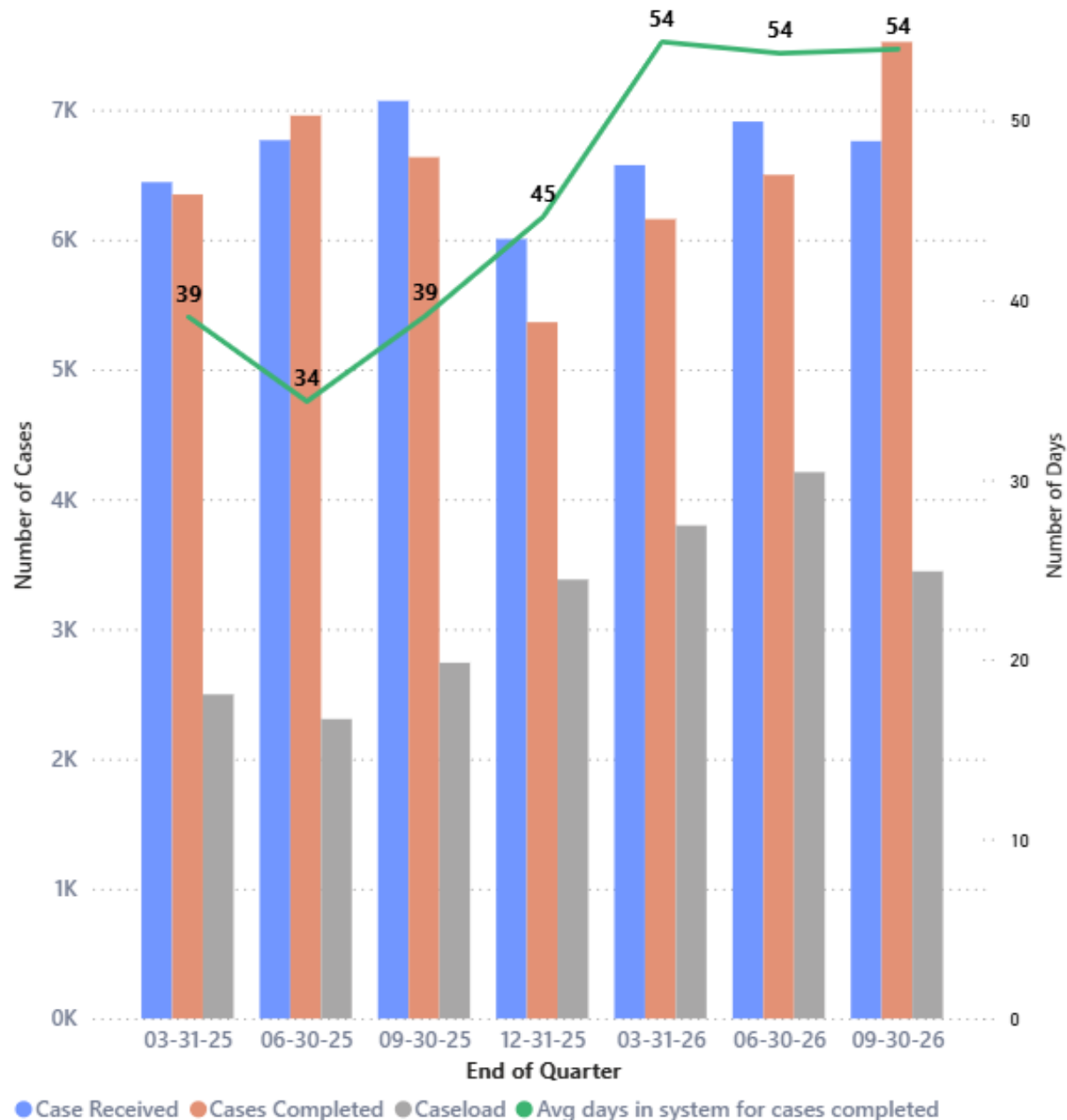
- FY25 Research and Evaluation for the Testing and Interpretation of Physical Evidence in Publicly Funded Forensic Laboratories from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ).
- The goal of this research project is to develop, validate, and compare high resolution mass spectrometry techniques for the screening of seized drugs. This research would satisfy the NIJ's intent to identify and inform the forensic community of best practices through the evaluation of existing and emerging laboratory protocols and/or have a direct and immediate impact on laboratory efficiency and assist in making laboratory policy decisions.
- Total Budget = \$561,700



Thank you!



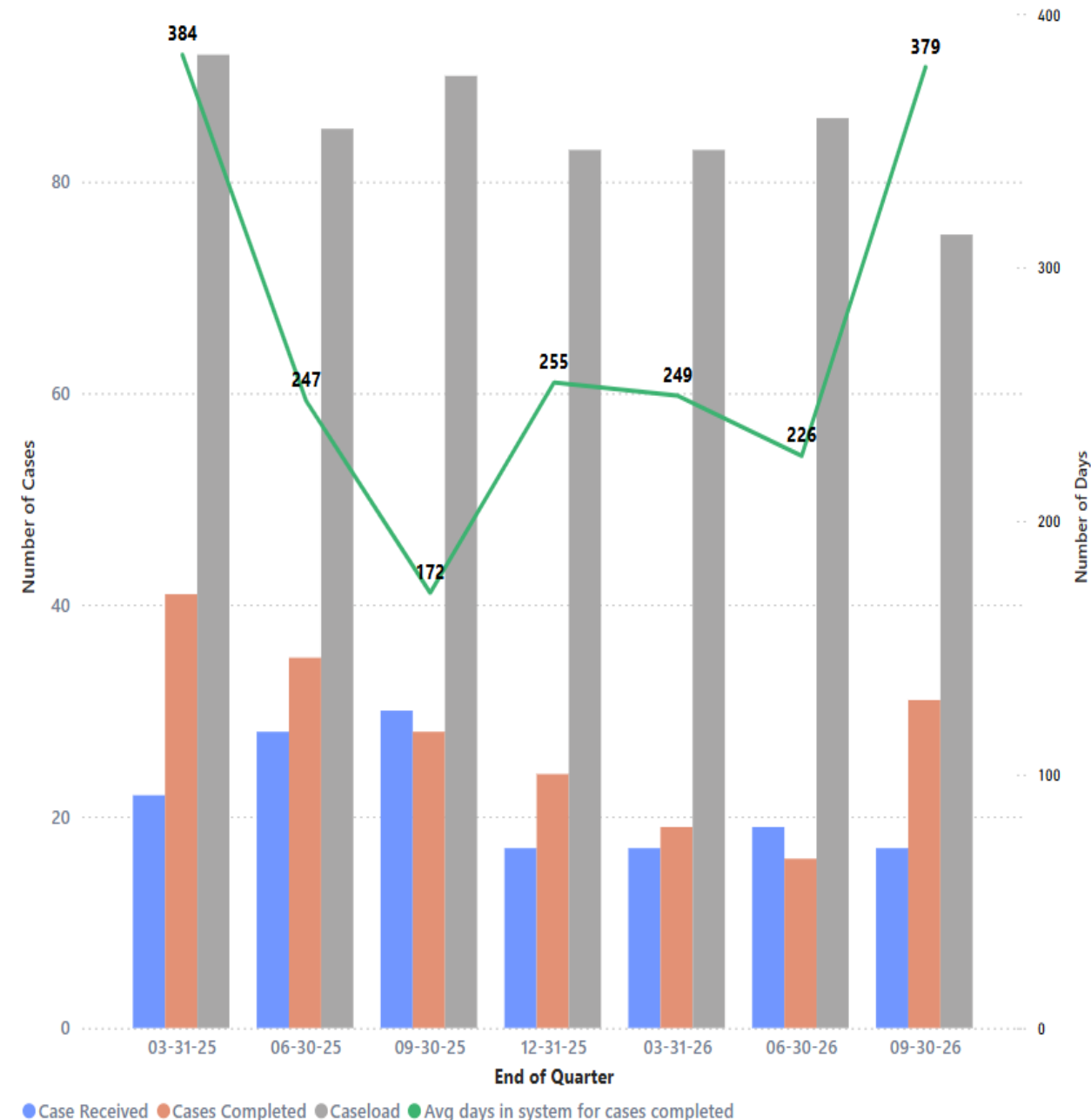
Controlled Substances



End Date	Case Received	Cases Completed	Caseload	Avg days in system for cases completed
03-31-25	6,443	6,348	2,497	39
06-30-25	6,766	6,956	2,307	34
09-30-25	7,069	6,635	2,741	39
12-31-25	6,005	5,364	3,382	45
03-31-26	6,574	6,158	3,798	54
06-30-26	6,910	6,499	4,209	54
09-30-26	6,759	7,523	3,445	54



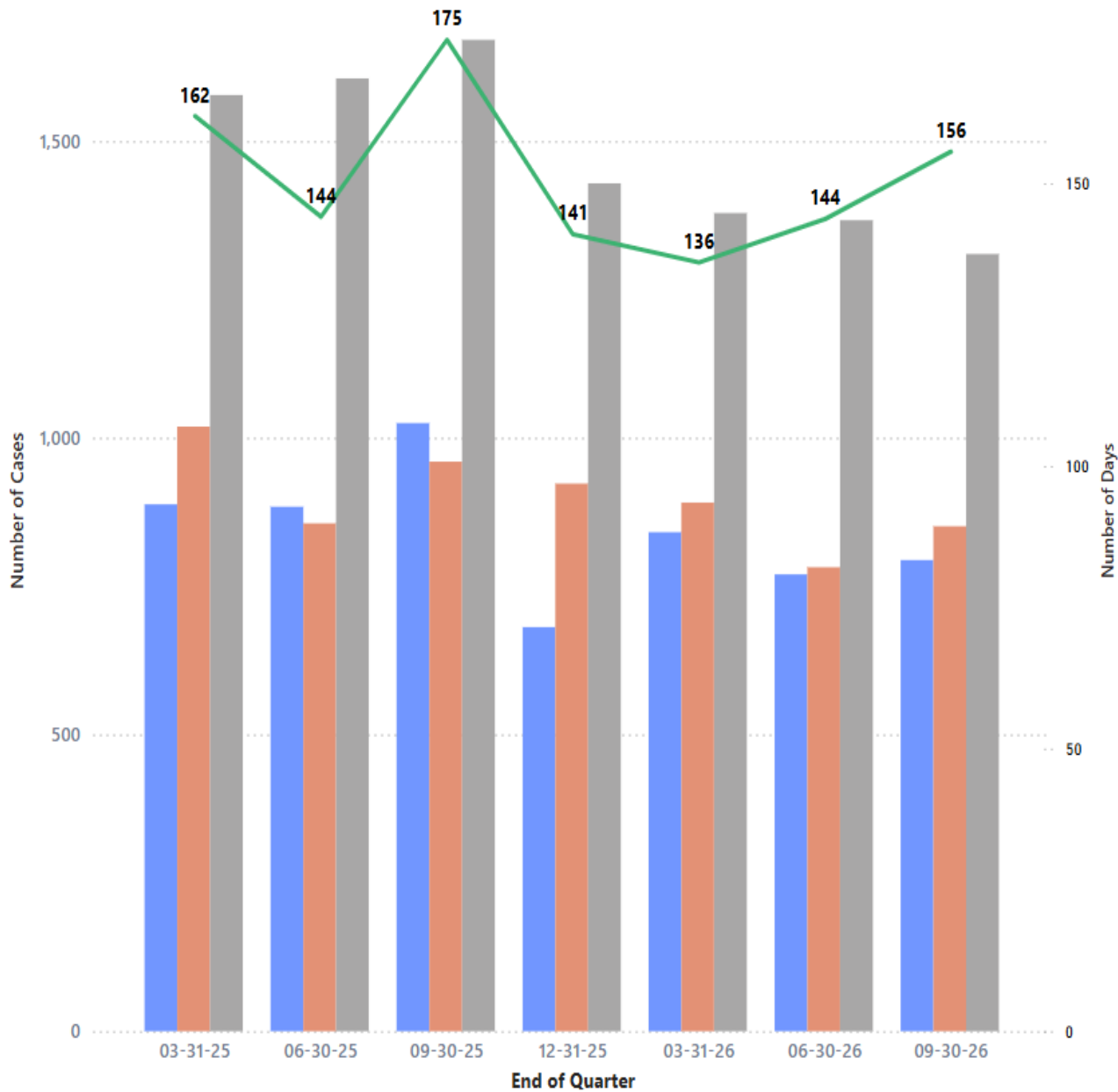
Digital & Multimedia Evidence



End Date	Case Received	Cases Completed	Caseload	Avg days in system for cases completed
03-31-25	22	41	92	384
06-30-25	28	35	85	247
09-30-25	30	28	90	172
12-31-25	17	24	83	255
03-31-26	17	19	83	249
06-30-26	19	16	86	226
09-30-26	17	31	75	379



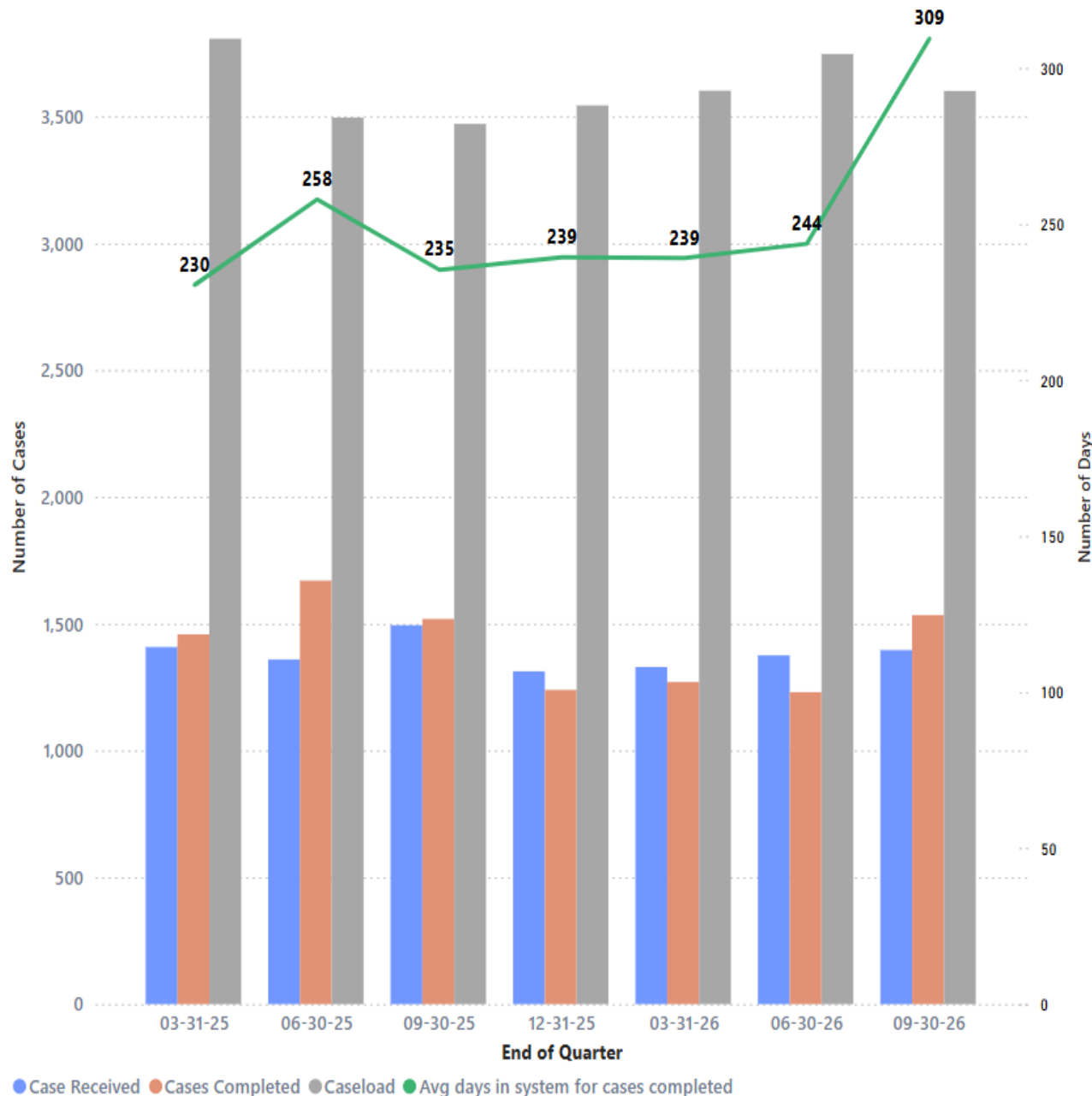
Firearms & Toolmarks



End Date	Case Received	Cases Completed	Caseload	Avg days in system for cases completed
03-31-25	888	1,019	1,578	162
06-30-25	884	856	1,606	144
09-30-25	1,025	960	1,671	175
12-31-25	681	923	1,429	141
03-31-26	841	891	1,379	136
06-30-26	770	782	1,367	144
09-30-26	794	851	1,310	156



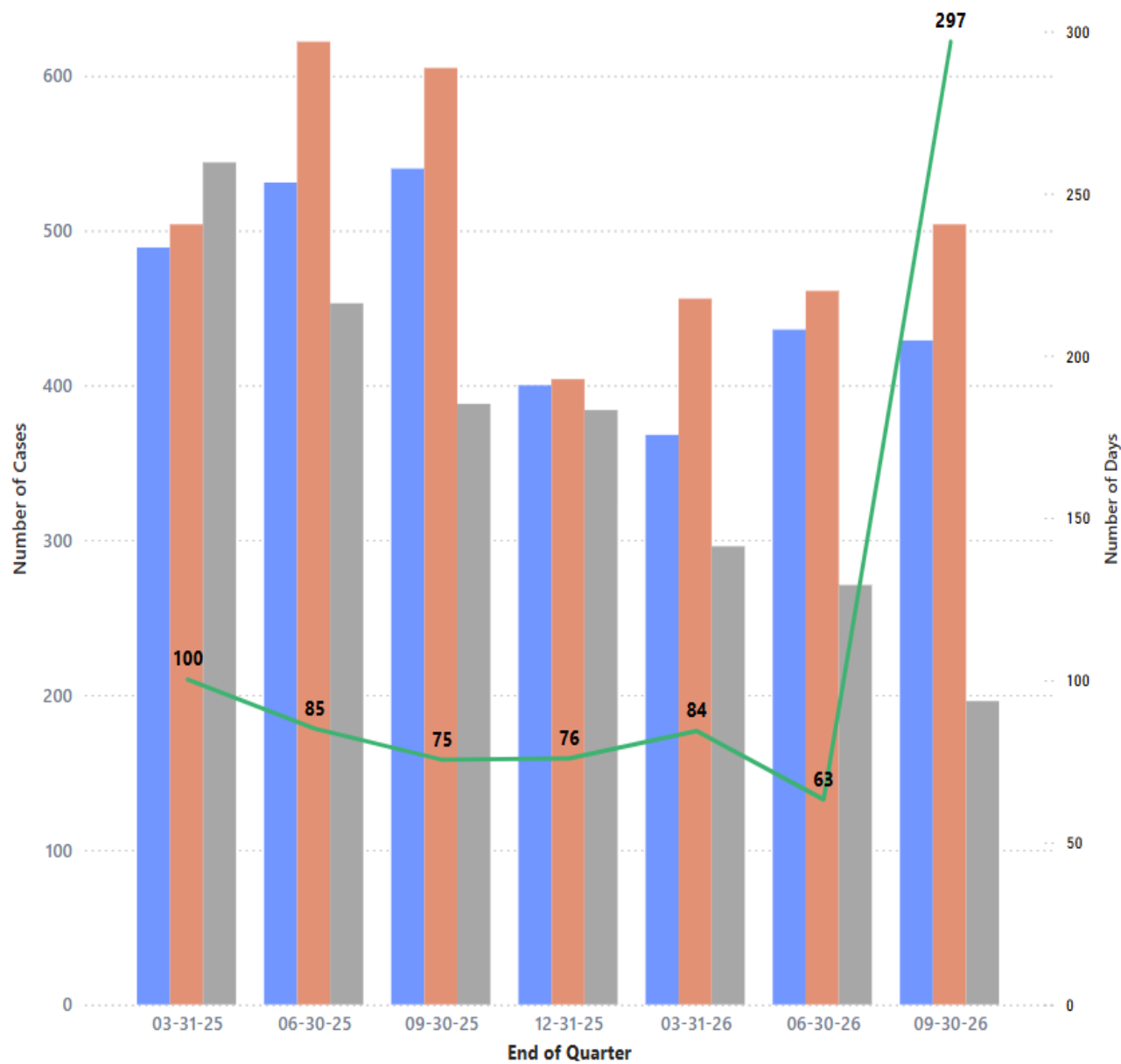
Forensic Biology (DNA)



End Date	Case Received	Cases Completed	Caseload	Avg days in system for cases completed
03-31-25	1,408	1,458	3,807	230
06-30-25	1,359	1,670	3,496	258
09-30-25	1,494	1,519	3,471	235
12-31-25	1,312	1,239	3,544	239
03-31-26	1,329	1,270	3,602	239
06-30-26	1,375	1,230	3,747	244
09-30-26	1,396	1,534	3,601	309



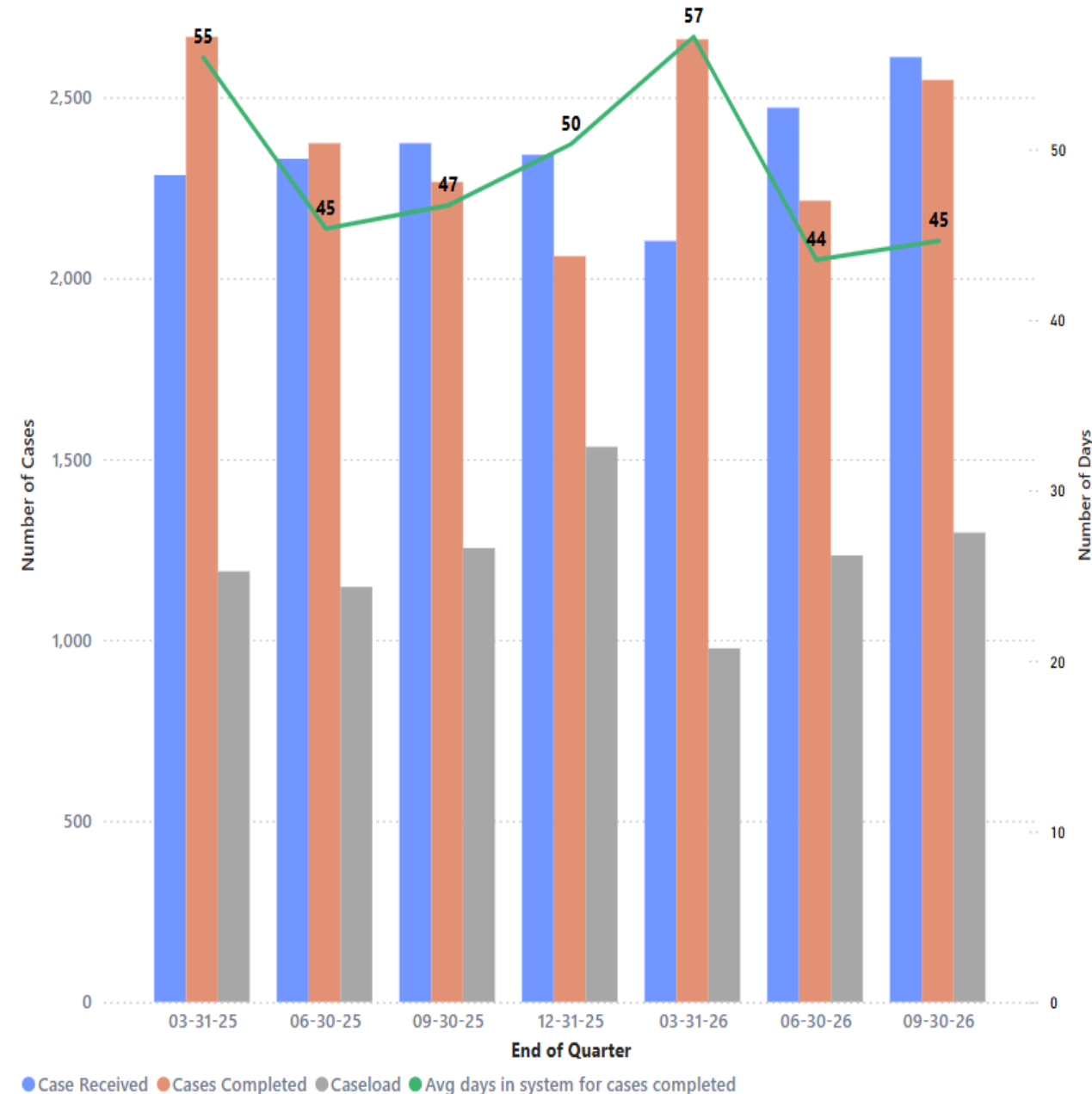
Latent Prints & Impressions



End Date	Case Received	Cases Completed	Caseload	Avg days in system for cases completed
03-31-25	489	504	544	100
06-30-25	531	622	453	85
09-30-25	540	605	388	75
12-31-25	400	404	384	76
03-31-26	368	456	296	84
06-30-26	436	461	271	63
09-30-26	429	504	196	297



Toxicology

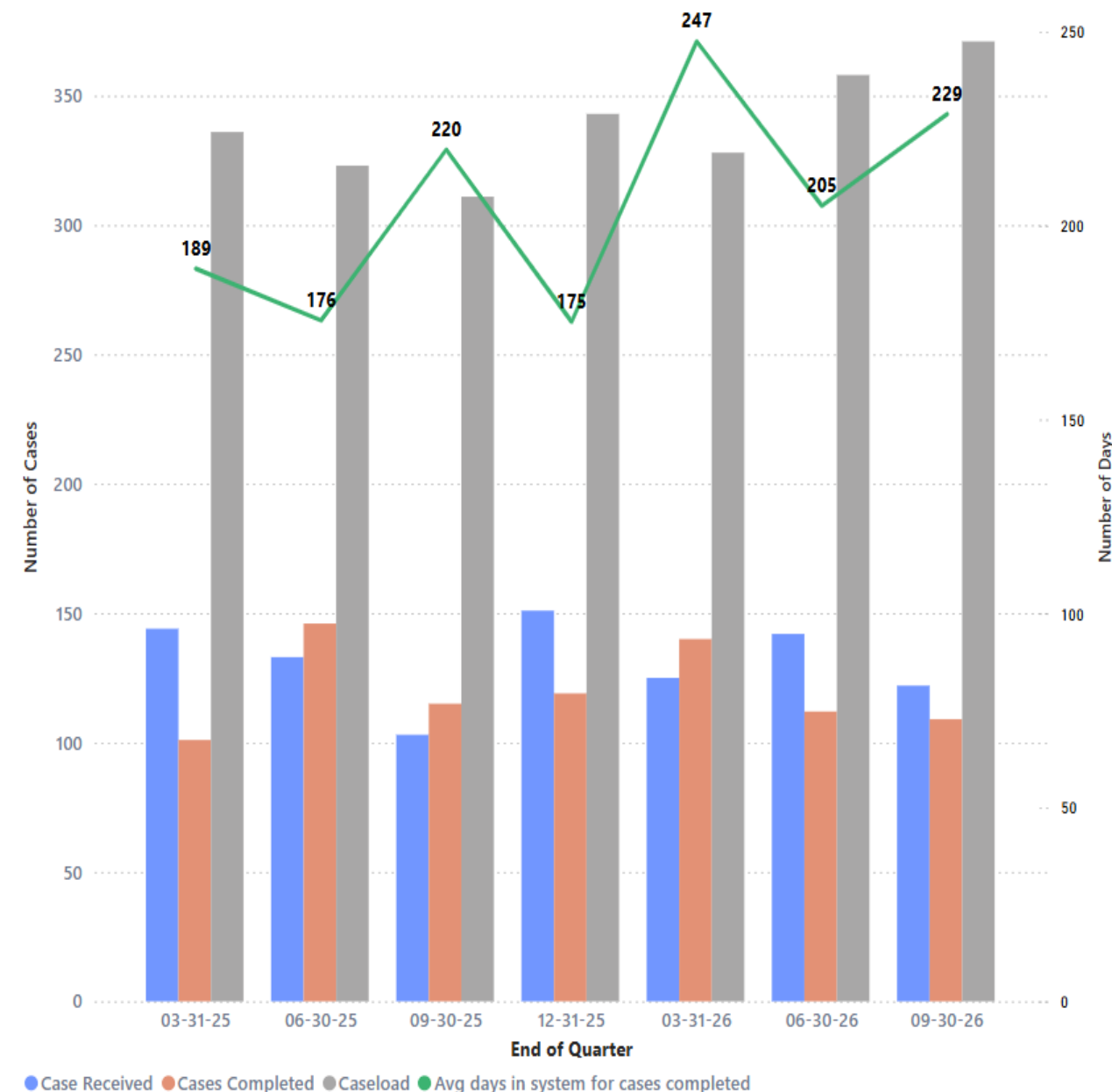


End Date	Case Received	Cases Completed	Caseload	Avg days in system for cases completed
03-31-25	2,285	2,667	1,190	55
06-30-25	2,330	2,373	1,147	45
09-30-25	2,373	2,266	1,254	47
12-31-25	2,341	2,061	1,534	50
03-31-26	2,103	2,660	977	57
06-30-26	2,471	2,214	1,234	44
09-30-26	2,611	2,548	1,297	45

- For move, outsourced from the Central District from March 1 – April 17, 2026.
- Western OCME to outsource suspected overdose cases to private laboratory through August 30, 2026



Trace Evidence



End Date	Case Received	Cases Completed	Caseload	Avg days in system for cases completed
03-31-25	144	101	336	189
06-30-25	133	146	323	176
09-30-25	103	115	311	220
12-31-25	151	119	343	175
03-31-26	125	140	328	247
06-30-26	142	112	358	205
09-30-26	122	109	371	229