

# FY2024 Immigration Court Data: Case Outcomes

February 3, 2025

Immigration courts within the U.S. Department of Justice’s Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) adjudicate [formal removal proceedings](#) for foreign nationals whom the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has charged with an immigration violation under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). During removal proceedings, immigration judges (IJs) determine whether such individuals (*respondents*) are subject to removal from the United States; and if so, whether they qualify for relief or protection from removal for which they have applied (e.g., asylum and withholding of removal). Respondents who fail to appear for their hearings are ordered removed in absentia.

This Insight reviews immigration court outcomes for FY2024, including removal proceedings decisions, in absentia removal orders, and asylum application decisions. Another [CRS Insight](#) describes FY2024 caseload data, including case receipts and the pending cases backlog.

## Removal Case Decisions

Possible outcomes for removal proceedings are the following:

- **Removal order:** The IJ orders the respondent to be removed.
- **Dismissal:** The IJ grants a party’s motion to dismiss proceedings (including as a matter of DHS prosecutorial discretion) [under specified conditions](#).
- **Termination:** The IJ may terminate cases [under certain circumstances](#), such as when DHS’s charge cannot be sustained or the respondent has obtained U.S. citizenship or a lawful immigration status.
- **Relief granted:** The IJ grants the respondent a form of relief from removal, such as asylum (described below) or, less commonly, [cancellation of removal](#).
- **Voluntary departure:** The IJ grants the respondent’s request to leave the United States during a specific timeframe at his/her own expense without being ordered removed.
- **Withholding or deferral of removal:** The IJ issues a removal order but grants protection under the [INA](#) or the [United Nations Convention Against Torture](#), respectively, from return to a country where the respondent’s life or freedom would be threatened or where

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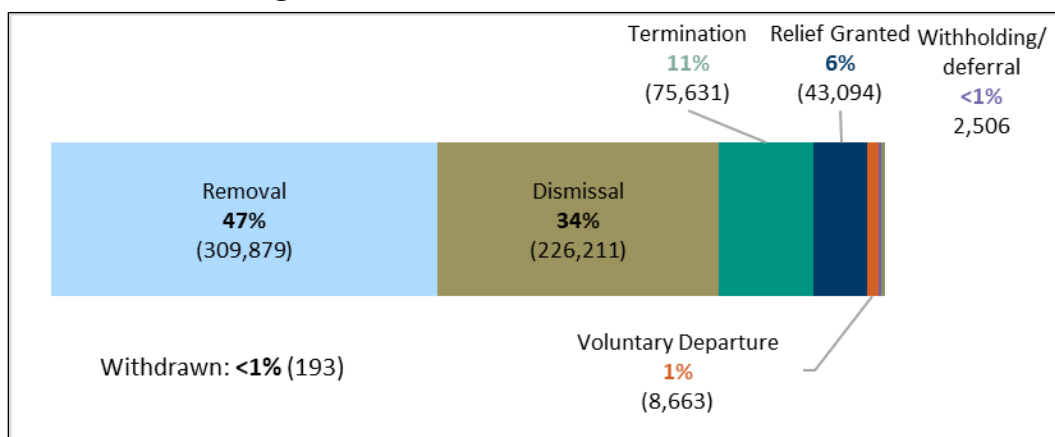
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it is more likely than not that he/she would face torture. These protections provide no path to U.S. lawful permanent resident (LPR) status and permit DHS to remove the respondent to a third country.

In FY2024, EOIR issued 666,177 initial case decisions (parties may [file an appeal](#)). The most common decision was issuance of a removal order (47%), followed by dismissals and terminations (collectively, 45%). Such outcomes may reflect DHS's use of prosecutorial discretion to dismiss nonpriority cases; they may also capture other circumstances, such as when the respondent, since the initiation of proceedings, has obtained a lawful status or humanitarian protection from removal.

Approximately 6% of decisions were grants of relief (such as asylum); less than 1% were grants of withholding or deferral of removal. Voluntary departure represented 1% of outcomes.

**Figure 1. Removal Case Outcomes, FY2024**



**Source:** EOIR, "FY2024 Decision Outcomes," Adjudication Statistics, October 10, 2024.

**Notes:** N = 666,177. Figure includes outcomes for removal proceedings and deportation and exclusion proceedings, the precursor to removal proceedings.

## In Absentia Removal Orders

Individuals who fail to appear for any of their hearings [must be ordered removed in absentia](#) by the IJ if DHS presents "clear, unequivocal, and convincing evidence" that notice of the hearing was provided to the respondent and the respondent is removable. The removal order [may be rescinded](#) if the respondent demonstrates the failure to appear occurred because of exceptional circumstances (e.g., serious illness), not receiving notice, or being in federal or state custody.

Among the 309,879 removal orders issued in FY2024 (**Figure 1**), 222,223 were [in absentia removal orders](#). How to measure the rate at which respondents fail to appear for their hearings [has been subject to debate](#). [EOIR publishes rates](#) that are the number of in absentia removal orders divided by the number of initial case completions in a given year. [Some argue](#) this method fails to account for the large volume of pending removal cases (3.6 million at the end of FY2024) (i.e., that EOIR's rate fails to account for court appearances by individuals whose cases have not yet been adjudicated).

## Asylum Decisions

Individuals may qualify for [asylum](#) if they demonstrate persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. Persons granted asylum, and their spouses and minor children, may remain in the United States and are authorized to work. After one year of physical presence in the United States, they may apply to adjust to LPR status.

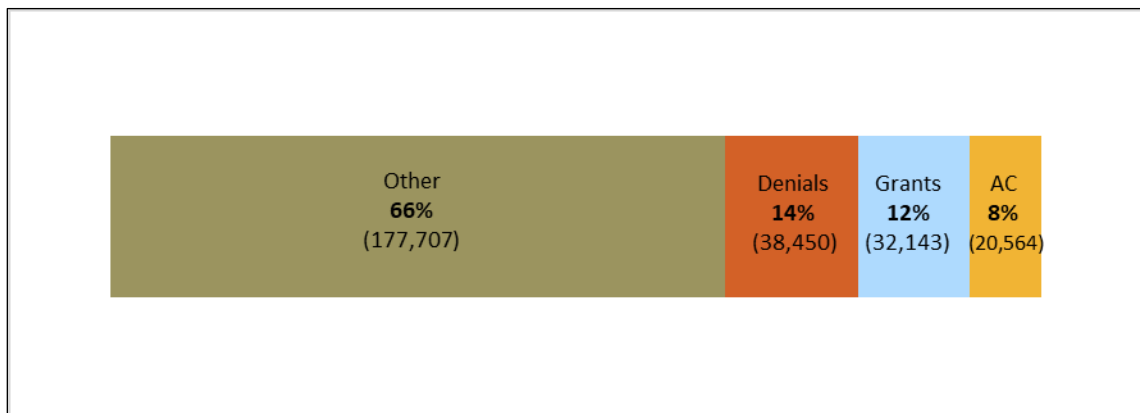
During removal proceedings, respondents may [apply for asylum](#) as a form of relief from removal; these *defensive* asylum applications are adjudicated by IJs. In addition, IJs adjudicate applications during asylum-only proceedings for individuals who may be removed without being placed in removal proceedings, including crewmembers, stowaways, and individuals who entered under the [Visa Waiver Program](#).

Otherwise, individuals who are physically present in the United States and not in removal proceedings, regardless of their immigration status, may apply for [affirmative asylum](#) with DHS's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). If a USCIS asylum officer determines an applicant is ineligible for asylum and [appears to be inadmissible or deportable](#), the officer refers the application to EOIR. Therefore, EOIR's asylum outcomes include decisions on both defensive asylum applications initially filed in immigration court and affirmative referrals.

EOIR's FY2024 asylum application outcomes included asylum granted; asylum denied; applications that were abandoned, not adjudicated, and withdrawn (collectively, "Other" in **Figure 2**); and cases that were administratively closed. [Administratively closed cases](#) are temporarily removed from the docket (e.g., cases that were [deemed nonpriority cases during that fiscal year](#), cases in which the respondent pursues an application for relief outside immigration court) [until they are recalendared](#). EOIR does not consider administrative closures to be case completions.

In FY2024, EOIR reported 268,864 asylum decisions (**Figure 2**). About two-thirds (66%) were "Other" outcomes. These may reflect terminated and dismissed removal cases, as described above. Individuals whose cases are dismissed or terminated [may pursue an affirmative asylum application with USCIS](#). Outcomes also included denials (14%), grants (12%), and administratively closed cases (8%).

**Figure 2. Asylum Outcomes, FY2024**



**Source:** EOIR, "Asylum Decision Rates," Adjudication Statistics, October 10, 2024.

**Notes:** N = 268,864. Figure includes removal, deportation, exclusion, and asylum-only proceedings. AC = administratively closed cases.

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