

# Minnesota eviction data — why LSC, HOME Line, and Eviction Lab numbers differ

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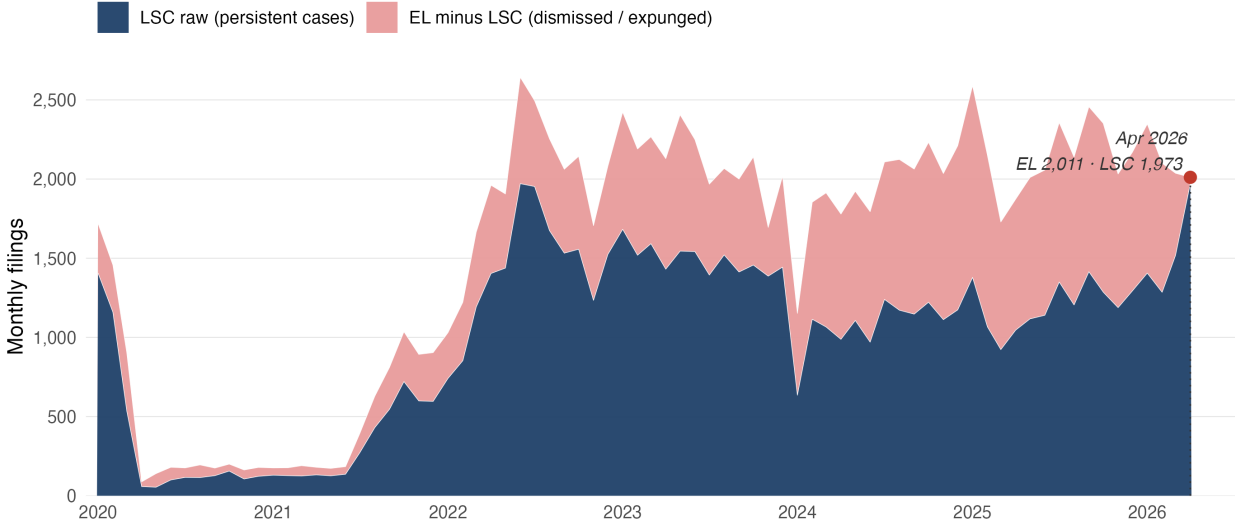
## 1. The three sources report different totals — and that’s the point

In comparing Minnesota eviction counts across LSC, Eviction Lab, and HOME Line, I noticed substantial differences. HOME Line and Eviction Lab both pull from MCRO (Minnesota Court Records Online, the public-facing case search). They capture eviction filings as initially recorded. LSC’s data feed reflects a later view: cases that have been **dismissed or expunged** under Minnesota’s automatic-expungement statute (Minn. Stat. § 484.014 subd. 3) are removed from the public-access channel that LSC consumes.

In effect, LSC is a more accurate count of **who is actually being evicted** — filings that survived court-side cleanup and proceeded to a real outcome. The two MCRO-based sources include cases that were filed but later dismissed (tenant paid, parties settled, landlord withdrew, procedural defect).

### Minnesota eviction filings — what persists vs. what gets removed

Dark blue: LSC raw count (persistent cases). Light red: Eviction Lab minus LSC (dismissed or expunged cases removed from court records).



Sources: Legal Services Corporation raw ucb\_cases.csv (2026-05-01 drop); Eviction Lab monthly MN (May 2026). Apr 2026 is too recent for court cleanup — the light-red layer will grow for that month over the next 6–12 months as cases are dismissed and expunged.

The dark blue area is LSC’s count — the cases that persist on the court record. The light red area is the gap between Eviction Lab and LSC — a close proxy for the volume of cases dismissed and expunged out of LSC’s view. The light red band thickens dramatically starting in 2024, when Minnesota’s expungement statute became mandatory and motion-less. For April 2026 the light red band is near-zero — court cleanup hasn’t run yet for that cohort.

## 2. LSC’s vintage-to-vintage drift confirms the dismissal mechanism

LSC delivers quarterly data drops, and the same calendar month can have different filing counts in different drops. For Minnesota, every newer LSC drop reports *fewer* cases for previously-recorded months. The plausible explanation is that court cleanup continues between LSC pulls — dismissed cases that were still on the public record at the time of the 2024 drop have since been expunged, and so they’re gone from the 2026 drop.

Yearly MN eviction totals (raw ucb\_cases.csv, eviction case\_type, deduped on case\_key) across three LSC drops:

Year	2024-05-14 drop	2025-11-20 drop	2026-05-01 drop
2016	15,970	15,879	15,867
2017	15,851	15,742	15,725
2018	15,106	14,966	14,933
2019	15,319	15,091	15,068
2020	4,134	4,067	4,055
2021	3,999	3,950	3,942
2022	17,546	17,152	17,074
2023	6,404*	18,011	17,928
2024	—	13,052	12,948
2025	—	13,242*	14,410
2026 (Jan–Apr)	—	—	6,182

\* Partial-year coverage (2024 drop only includes through Apr 2023; 2025 drop only includes through Oct 2025).

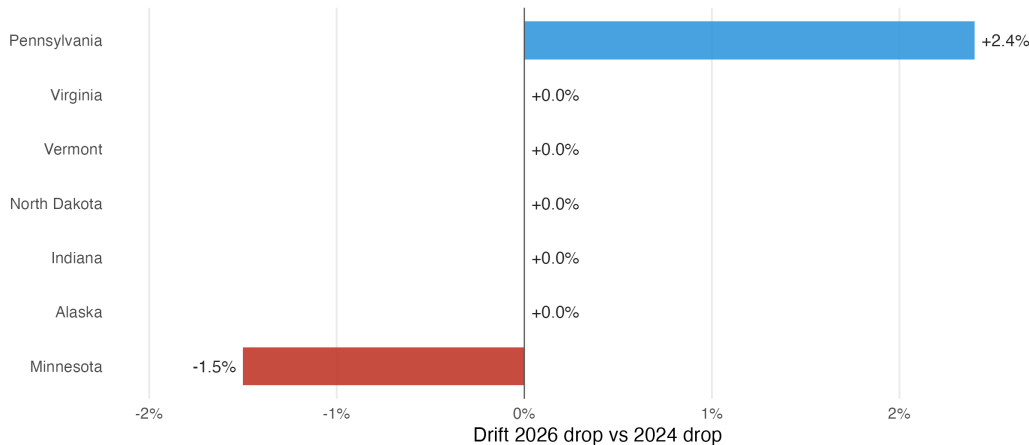
For complete years in two or more vintages, **every year shows a small but consistent decline** in the newer drops — a few dozen to a few hundred cases per year. The drift is small (about 1.5% over five years) but systematic, and it accelerates in the most recent cohorts where dismissal-expungement processing is still ongoing.

## 3. Minnesota is the only state showing this pattern

LSC delivers raw ucb\_cases.csv for seven states. Comparing the 2024 and 2026 drops on the 88 months they both cover (Jan 2016 – Apr 2023):

### MN is the only LSC partner state with case-count loss across drops

Change in eviction-case count between 2024-05-14 LSC drop and 2026-05-01 LSC drop, on the 88 months all three vintages cover (Jan 2016 – Apr 2023).



Source: LSC raw ucb\_cases.csv across three drops, eviction case\_type, deduped on case\_key. MN is the only state with mandatory automatic eviction expunger

Five of seven states — Alaska, Indiana, North Dakota, Vermont, Virginia — are completely byte-stable. Pennsylvania moved the *other way* (+2.4%), which is consistent with retroactive data backfill rather than removal.

Minnesota is the only state with a negative drift. This is also the only state in the LSC partner pool with a **mandatory, motion-less, dismissal-triggered, public-removal expungement regime in effect at scale** (PA has no statute; VA requires a tenant petition and waiting period; IN requires a tenant motion). The drift signature aligns precisely with the legal mechanism.

## What this means for the April 2026 spike

April 2026 filings are up across all three sources — Eviction Lab 2,011, HOME Line 1,977, LSC raw 1,973 (within 2% of each other). The court cleanup for that cohort hasn't happened yet. Using the steady-state expungement rate observed in the 2024+ cohort (~45%), the persistent April 2026 LSC count will likely settle between **1,100 and 1,300** as dismissals and expungements process over the next 6 to 12 months. If a higher share of April 2026 filings proceed to default judgment (no appearance from the tenant), the persistent count will be on the higher end of that range, because § 484.014 subd. 3 only expunges dismissed / foreclosure-only / tenant-prevailed / party-agreed cases — not judgments on the merits.

## Appendix: what dismissal and expungement mean for tenants — the “Scarlet E”

A natural follow-up question to the methodology above: when a Minnesota eviction case gets dismissed or expunged, does the tenant actually walk away clean — or does the filing still follow them when they apply for housing?

Housing researchers call this the “**Scarlet E**” — the lasting stigma of an eviction filing on a renter's record, regardless of how the case was resolved. Landlords and tenant-screening companies routinely flag *any* eviction lawsuit as a red flag, so a tenant who paid off their landlord and got dismissed could still be denied housing years later because the lawsuit was on the public record. Minnesota's 2024 expansion of § 484.014 subd. 3 was specifically designed to address this.

**In principle, expungement does remove the Scarlet E.** The statute defines expungement as “*the removal of evidence of the court file's existence from the publicly accessible records.*” That means MCRO searches, courthouse public-access terminals, the Register of Actions display, and bulk data feeds gated on the public-access flag all stop showing the case. Any tenant-screening pull running from one of those channels after expungement should not see the case.

### Three caveats matter for the actual experience of MN renters:

1. **Tenant-screening companies retain historical records.** Vendors like CoreLogic SafeRent, RentGrow, Experian RentBureau, TransUnion SmartMove, and similar buy court data on regular intervals and cache it in their internal databases. If a screening company captured a case during the window when MCRO showed it, expungement does not reach into that cache — the court's order applies to the court file, not to private vendors that may have already replicated it. So a 2023 dismissed eviction that was expunged in 2024 may still appear in a screening company's historical file unless they separately re-pull and reconcile. Federal “right to be forgotten” legislation for tenant records has been proposed but is not currently in force.
2. **Pre-2024 dismissed cases mostly never got expunged.** Before January 1, 2024, expungement in MN required either a tenant-initiated motion (subd. 2's discretionary path) or fitting one of the older narrow mandatory categories. Most dismissed eviction cases from 2016–2023 never had expungement applied — the tenant simply had to live with the Scarlet E. The 2024 reform technically reaches those cases (the statute applies to all cases including older ones), but processing them takes time and depends on the courts working through the backlog. The slow trickle of expungements visible in our older-cohort vintage drift (the small –5 to –20 monthly deltas for 2016–2021 in the data) is the court catching up on this backlog.
3. **Cases that proceed to formal eviction judgment get no expungement at all.** This is the most important caveat for the bigger story. § 484.014 subd. 3 covers dismissals, foreclosure-only filings, defendant-prevailed cases, and party-agreed expungements. It does **not** cover judgments for plaintiff on the merits — meaning the tenant lost, or didn't appear. The post-*Sela* (April 2025) and post-*Weidner* (February 2026) appellate rulings struck down the two clauses that might have eventually expunged some of these (the three-year-post-order clause and the settlement-fulfillment clause), so as of 2026 there is essentially no statutory path to remove a judgment-eviction from a Minnesota tenant's public record.

**Why this matters for the April 2026 spike.** About 2,000 MN renters were sued in April 2026, confirmed across all three data sources. Roughly half of those filings will likely be dismissed and expunged under MN's 2024 reform — those tenants get the Scarlet E removed (subject to caveat 1 above). **The other half will have a permanent eviction judgment on their housing record that follows them for the rest of their renting life.** If the spike is concentrated in households where the tenant couldn't appear in court — because of detention, displacement, fear of contact with the court system, or lack of representation — then this is the cohort that ends up with the permanent Scarlet E. That distinction is invisible in EL and HOME Line aggregates but is testable in LSC's case-level data, which is one more reason the LSC pipeline is the right tool for investigating this surge.

## References

- Minn. Stat. § 484.014 — <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/484.014>
- 2023 housing omnibus: SF 2909 (signed May 19, 2023; expungement provisions effective Jan 1, 2024)
- *Sela Investments v. J.H.*, A24-1380 (Minn. Ct. App. April 2025) — struck down the three-year automatic expungement clause
- *Weidner Apt. Homes v. B.F.*, A25-0951 (Minn. Ct. App. February 2026) — struck down settlement-fulfillment automatic expungement
- HOME Line, “Eviction Filings Update: April 2026” — <https://homelinemn.org/11827/eviction-filings-update-april-2026/>
- HOME Line, “22,000+ Evictions in Minnesota Each Year” CLE slides (July 2025) — <https://homelinemn.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/July-2025-CLE-Slides.pdf>
- Eviction Lab MN tracker — <https://evictionlab.org/eviction-tracking/minnesota/>
- MCRO public case search — <https://mncourts.gov/access-case-records/mcro>