

MILESTONES

1973 Judicial Council and California Judges Association form the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) to provide continuing education to judges.

1981 Judicial Council begins ethnic and gender fairness education program for state judges.

1992 Council adopts a rule of court mandating education for judicial officers new to a family law assignment.

1994 CJER merges with the Administrative Education Unit of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to become the educational arm of the state judicial system, serving judges and court staff.

1996 Council adopts a rule of court mandating three weeks of education for new judicial officers.

1997 Chief Justice Ronald M. George asks state's presiding justices and judges to lead efforts in fairness education for their colleagues and staff.



Education Programs Provided in 2000

1-day programs:	35
2- to 3-day programs:	39
5- to 7-day programs:	24
More than 7-day programs:	2
Total programs:	100

The Education Division of the AOC, which includes the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER), is the educational arm of the state judicial system, providing training and education for judges and judicial branch personnel. Education programs in 2000 covered such topics as access and fairness, technology, domestic violence, drug courts, complex civil litigation, and a variety of legal and administration issues.

Judicial Assignments

- In 1999–2000, retired judges served 29,477 days of assignments to the trial courts, an increase of 22% over 1998–1999 when 26,125 days of service were provided.
- 60% of these assignments were for case overload in the trial courts.
- The average number of days utilized over the last five years has been 25,705.
- Trial courts are requesting increasing assignments due to overload and the judicial vacancy rate.

CJER has expanded educational programs for retired judges who assist the trial courts not only in caseload management but in making it possible for new judges to obtain essential training.

Education

The effectiveness of judges, court personnel, and other judicial branch staff will be enhanced through high-quality continuing education and professional development.

2000 HIGHLIGHTS

NEW CURRICULUM DESIGNS

- ◆ The Administrative Office of the Courts' Education Division held a new Futures Conference on Judicial Branch Education to assess future trends and determine their impact on the California courts and the resulting implications for judicial branch education. The information generated at the conference served as the basis for the CJER Governing Committee's most recent Long-Range Plan for Judicial Branch Education.
- ◆ The changing educational needs of judges, court executives, and staff are the focus of an 18- to 24-month curriculum development process that aims to produce new educational designs for entry, continuing, and advanced programs using a variety of contemporary delivery methods.

TECHNOLOGY

- ◆ Distance delivery of judicial education is ready to be launched in 2001. Computer-based training modules, some from national vendors and some designed specifically for California courts, will be available on a secure Web site. Broadcasting and videoconferencing will become routine, and localized education options will be explored.

ETHICS

- ◆ A new statewide Qualifying Ethics Program will be offered to judges participating in the council's Commission on Judicial Performance insurance program. More than 50 sessions during 2001 and 2002 will enable the state's more than 2,000 judicial officers to participate.

SPECIAL AREAS

- ◆ Curricula are being developed and refined to enhance judicial knowledge in key areas such as domestic violence, complex civil litigation, and pro per litigation. Special committees will assess the educational needs of judges who hear civil, criminal, family, juvenile, and probate matters.

RESPONSIVENESS

- ◆ Responding to the needs of California's 38 smallest counties, Education Division staff will visit local courts, perform needs assessments, and make training and education available locally. Staff also will establish a network of training coordinators, conduct train-the-trainer programs, and support resource sharing among counties.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

- ◆ The Education Division continues its year-round offerings to ensure fairness in proceedings, promote uniform court practices, and improve court administration.
- ◆ New annual programs include training for appellate court staff and research attorneys.

FAMILY LAW

- ◆ The Judicial Council's Center for Families, Children & the Courts provides ongoing training for the state's child support commissioners, family law facilitators, court administrators, and court clerks.
- ◆ The center holds an annual multidisciplinary Beyond the Bench Conference to improve court services to families and children. Over 900 professionals, judicial officers, attorneys, court administrators, social workers, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) attended the 2000 conference.

California's justice system has seen many changes throughout its history, but the public's rightful demand for impartial and competent judicial officers and court staff remains constant. All judicial officers and court personnel must maintain professional competence throughout their careers and develop the necessary expertise to serve the public, comprehend and resolve the new disputes and challenges coming before them, and administer court operations effectively.



Goal VI

MILESTONES

1975 Electronic recording is permitted in certain municipal and justice court proceedings.

1987 California Supreme Court is automated.

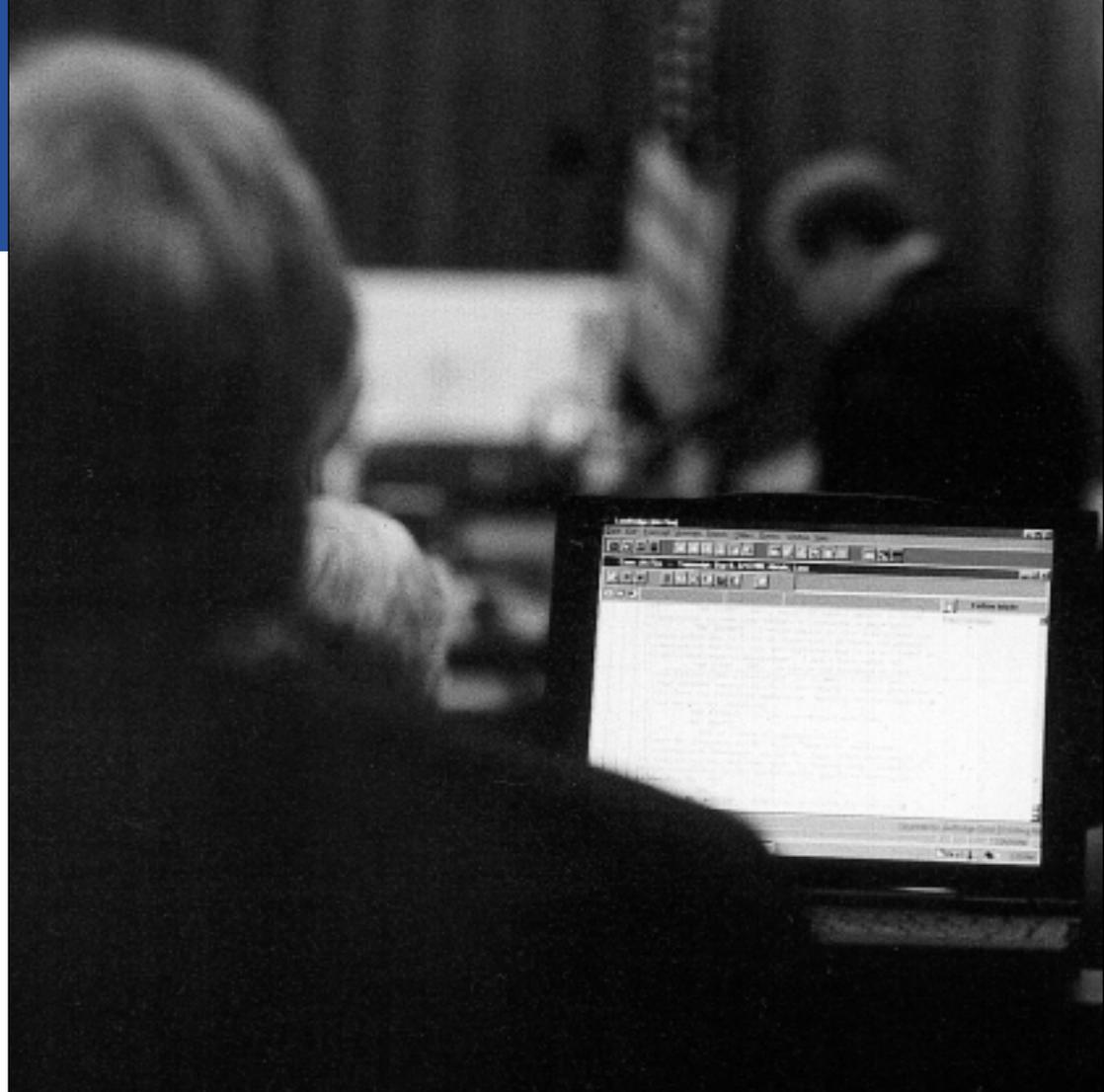
1990 Judicial Council rule of court permits court filings by fax.

1992 Trial court automation standards are adopted.

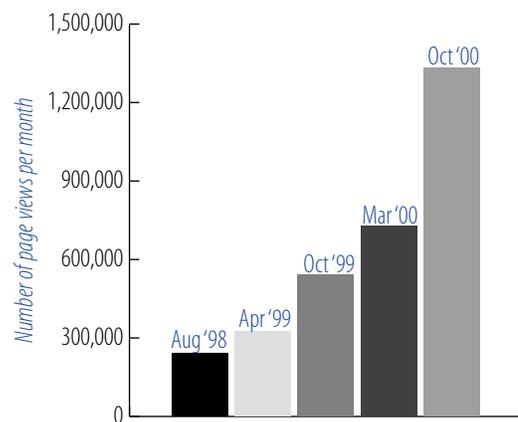
1996 California Courts Web site is launched, featuring court rules, forms, appellate court opinions, and reference materials.

1998 Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) is developed to automate the collection of case-related statistical data from the trial courts.

1999 Judicial Council adopts a standard of judicial administration permitting e-filing in all courts and governing privacy and access to electronic information.



**Visitors to California Courts Web Site
1998–2000**



The California Courts Web site has become a popular information source for the public, attorneys, and the courts. Between 1998 and 2000, the number of page views jumped over 500 percent to more than 1.3 million views per month. Appellate court opinions, rules of court, Judicial Council forms, and general information about the courts rank among the most visited sections.

Progress in Court Technology

- Every trial court has at least one technology support employee.
- 58 courts have access to the Internet and e-mail capability.
- Superior Court of Sacramento County launched a Web-based small claims electronic filing system in 2000.
- Superior Court of Orange County will install the state's first ATM-type kiosk for juror payment.

Thanks to funding for technology, the California court system has seen significant recent improvements in equipment, staffing, and services. Further progress is expected, especially in the areas of case management automation, equipment upgrades, and staffing.

Technology

Technology will enhance the quality of justice by improving the ability of the judicial branch to collect, process, analyze, and share information and by increasing the public's access to information about the judicial branch.

2000 HIGHLIGHTS

JUDICIAL BRANCH STATISTICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (JBSIS)

◆ Court caseload data (1977 to present) became available to all court staff in 2000 via the new JBSIS Web page on Serranus, the secure Web site for the judicial branch. Using new Administrative Office of the Courts' (AOC) JBSIS standards, data will be collected automatically by court case management systems and transmitted continuously to the AOC database.

TACTICAL PLAN FOR COURT TECHNOLOGY

◆ The Judicial Council adopted the first-ever branchwide *Tactical Plan for Court Technology* to coordinate technology funding, procurement, and resource management in the trial courts.

◆ Four regional trial court technology groups are developing plans for ensuring functionality of technology investment, achieving economies of scale, collaborating on common technology solutions, and encouraging innovation in the application of technology. The plans will address needs for basic technology tools, enhance public access to court information, and develop innovative electronic government (e-government) initiatives.

E-FILING

◆ In 2001 the council will invite comment on statewide rules on privacy and access to court information and e-filing.

◆ Trial courts are testing systems to improve access to court information through innovative technologies such as Web portals and eXtensible Markup Language (XML).

COURT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

◆ The trial courts replaced 4,625 outmoded personal computers.

◆ Court management systems are being certified as meeting California-specific requirements, which minimally include compliance with statutes and the Rules of Court, connectivity with state justice agencies, and conformity with reporting requirements such as those established in the JBSIS standards.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

◆ The AOC is developing a plan for telecommunications infrastructure, which will enable the courts to exchange data with other courts, key state justice system partners, and federal justice agencies.

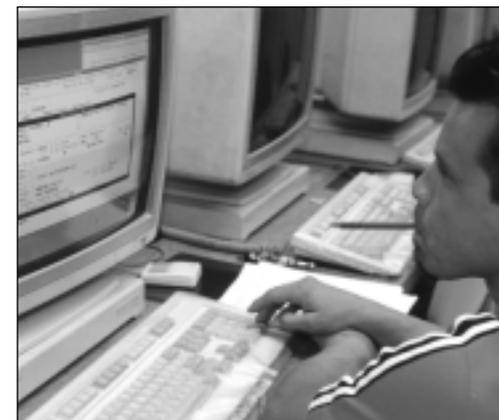
ACCESS TO COURT INFORMATION

◆ Information about cases before the Courts of Appeal became available on the Internet in 2000, which allows parties to be electronically notified when an action is taken.

◆ The Supreme Court launched a new automated case management system.

◆ The trial courts worked to expand their Web sites in 2001 to include assistance for self-represented litigants. Innovative courts are striving to facilitate e-government transactions, such as paying traffic tickets or conducting routine court business online.

Courts continue on a journey of automation to make them increasingly more efficient, accessible, and accountable through improved information management and case processing. In 2000 courts continued to pursue new ways to collaboratively integrate technology into judicial and administrative procedures that serve the public interest.



Funding Justice in the New Century

The mission of the California judiciary—to fairly, accessibly, effectively, and efficiently resolve disputes arising under the law—comes at a price. The Legislature, by passage of the Lockyer-Isenberg Trial Court Funding Act of 1997, recognized that it is the state’s obligation to financially support this mission. As Chief Justice Ronald M. George pointed out during his 1997 “State of the Judiciary” address shortly after the bill was enacted: “Obtaining a stable and adequate source of funding for our courts is without doubt one of the most important reforms in the California justice system in the 20th century.” In fiscal year 2000–2001 the promise of stabilized trial court funding is beginning to be realized, with less than a quarter of the cost of operating the trial courts coming from counties. State General Fund revenues support 53 percent of the Trial Court Trust Fund appropriation, and 24 percent is supported by designated civil fees, fines, and forfeitures. As can be seen from the graph, trial courts have received funding increases each year since passage of the act in 1997. The state’s proportion of trial court funding also has increased each fiscal year since 1997–1998.

FISCAL YEAR 2000–2001

Many changes are taking place that affect the administration of the trial courts and provision of services to the people of California. Principal among these is implementation of the Trial Court Employment Protection and Governance Act of 2000, which fundamentally changes the status of all court employees and increases the administrative duties of the courts beginning in January 2001. The Judicial Council also is working to align the trial court budget process more closely with that of the rest of California government.

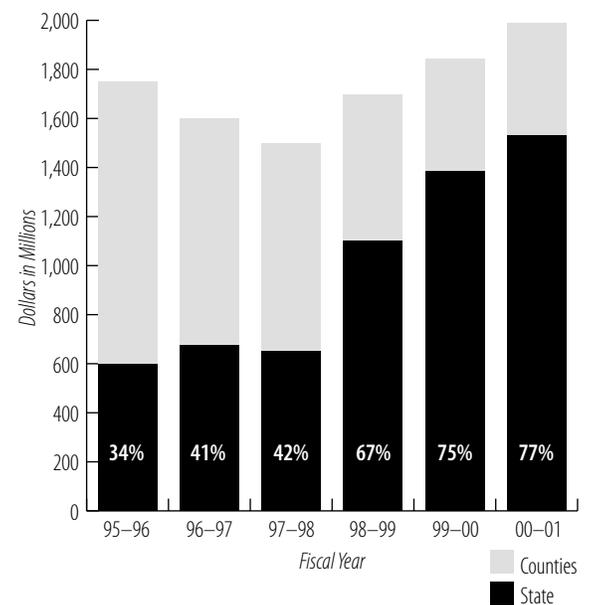
In planning for fiscal year 2000–2001, California realized much higher revenues than previously projected. As can be seen in the table, statewide spending for this year is estimated to be more than 13 percent higher than in fiscal year 1999–2000. The judiciary’s budget increased by 11 percent from last fiscal year.

Judicial Branch Funding

Fiscal Years 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 (in millions of dollars)

	<i>Fiscal Year 1999–2000</i>	<i>Fiscal Year 2000–2001</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
Supreme Court	\$ 32.3	\$ 34.5	6.8%
Courts of Appeal	147.0	159.0	8.1%
Judicial Council	118.0	127.0	7.6%
Habeas Corpus Resource Center	10.4	10.6	1.9%
Commission on Judicial Performance	3.6	3.7	2.7%
Total—State Operations	\$311.3	\$334.8	7.5%
Trial Court Trust Fund	\$1,741.3	\$1,936.6	11.2%
Trial Court Improvement Fund	68.2	86.4	26.6%
Modernization Fund	35.2	37.3	5.97%
Total—Trial Courts	\$ 1,844.7	\$ 2,060.3	11.4%
Judiciary Total	\$ 2,156.0	\$ 2,395.1	11.09%
State Budget	\$77,511.0	\$88,054.0	13.6%
Judiciary as a percentage of the overall State Budget	2.78%	2.72%	

History of Trial Court Funding



FISCAL YEAR 2001–2002

The Judicial Council sets the direction and provides the leadership and resources critical to advancing the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The council's proposed judicial branch budget submitted to the Governor for fiscal year 2001–2002 aims to achieve that goal. The budget, which is subject to approval by the Governor prior to inclusion in his proposed budget and approval by the Legislature and the Governor prior to enactment, includes funding to:

◆ **Promote trial court accountability through:**

- Implementing standardized fiscal systems for the trial courts;
- Encouraging trial court accountability for state resources through internal and external fiscal review and audits; and
- Improving grants management, facilities, and accounting services provided by the AOC.

◆ **Enhance customer service to the courts and within the AOC by:**

- Increasing the number of judges and justices, and related staff positions, available to resolve disputes in the trial and appellate courts;
- Providing additional funding and staff to provide caseload relief in the appellate courts, address workload issues in trial courtrooms, and provide more services to the courts;
- Increasing the trial court and AOC staff available to provide administrative services needed to meet the requirements of the Trial Court Funding Act and the Trial Court Employment Protection and Governance Act;
- Supporting pilot projects in civil case mediation in the Courts of Appeal, self-help centers and community outreach in the trial courts; and
- Funding better services for children and families, counsel for children in dependency cases, and court-appointed counsel in the appellate courts.

◆ **Manage judicial branch technology initiatives including:**

- Improving public access to court information and data sharing through Internet technology, public information kiosks, and intercourt teleconferencing;
- Certifying and upgrading or replacing case management systems in many courts, including a common case management system for the Southern California courts;
- Instituting a planned, multiyear asset management program to renew technology in the courts; and
- Building local area networks for improved office automation, data communications, and information management in the courts.

◆ **Increase the stability of trial court operations through:**

- Attracting and retaining experienced and qualified judges through salary increases and benefits improvements;
- Assisting the trial courts in their efforts to provide for salary and benefits increases and other improvements to make the courts an attractive place to work; and
- Funding salaries and benefits for Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Habeas Corpus Resource Center, and AOC staff.

Caseload Summary

Supreme Court

Supreme Court filings increased 14 percent over last year (8,310), reaching a record level of 9,445 in 1999–2000. Dispositions grew 10 percent. Petitions for review from criminal appeals and original proceedings rose from 2,389 filings in 1994–1995 to 3,570 filings in 1999–2000. Original habeas petitions increased from 1,269 to 2,654 during this period.

Courts of Appeal

Filings and dispositions in the Courts of Appeal have remained relatively constant during the past three years following a period of significant increase in 1990. In fiscal year 1999–2000, filings totaled 25,038 and dispositions declined slightly from 28,363 to 28,203. Dispositions by written opinion increased to 13,890 from 13,701 so that in 1999–2000, 46 percent of appeals were disposed of by written opinion.

Trial Courts

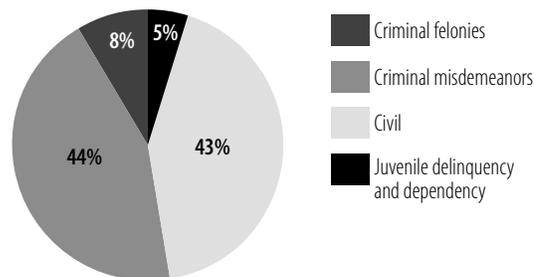
Trial court filings have stabilized at high levels during the past decade. In 1990–2000 they rose just under 1 percent over the previous fiscal year from 8.6 million to 8.7 million.* Criminal misdemeanor filings account for 44 percent of court caseload; civil filings 43 percent. Although felony and juvenile delinquency/dependency filings combined make up only 13 percent of caseload composition, they consume a disproportionate amount of court resources because such cases require frequent hearings, motions, and jury trials. Moreover, new crime-related legislation, such as laws to toughen prosecution and sentencing, also places demands on court resources and staff.

Other factors adding to workload complexity include the dramatic increase in self-represented litigants and litigants needing interpreters as well as new legislation designed to improve justice in family court. In dependency cases, for example, courts now hold more contested hearings due to the shortened time frames for family reunification and the stringent timelines for case reviews.

The numerous court appearances and actions needed to process all such complex case types are not counted as separate filings.

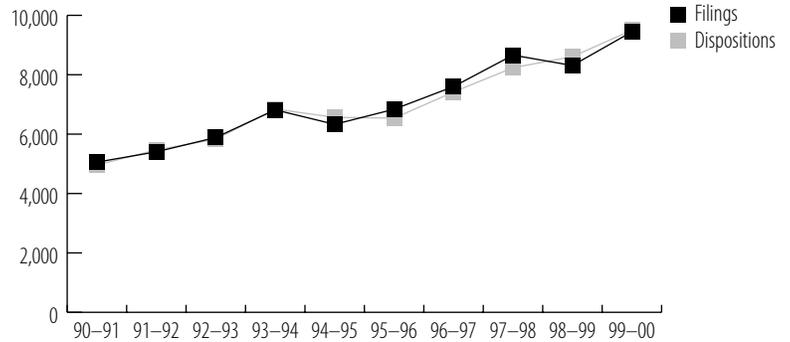
Trial Court Caseload Composition

1999–2000



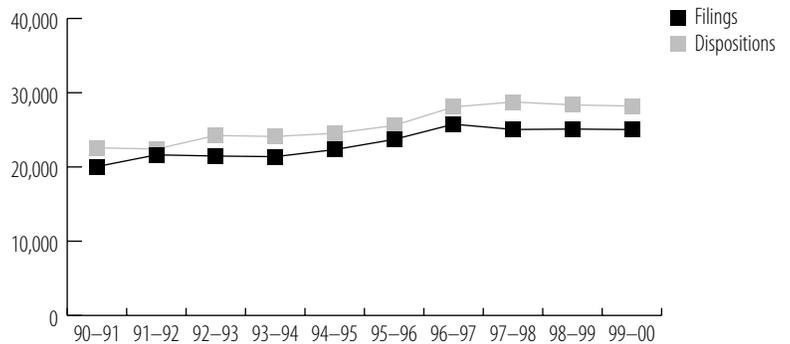
Total Supreme Court Filings and Dispositions

1990–1991 to 1999–2000



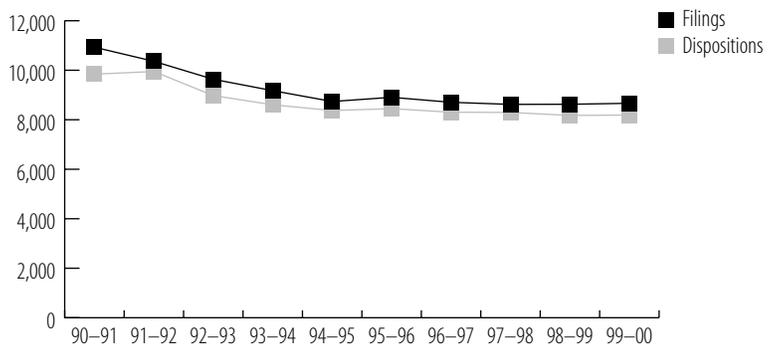
Total Courts of Appeal Filings and Dispositions

1990–1991 to 1999–2000



Total Trial Court Filings and Dispositions

1990–1991 to 1999–2000 (in millions)



*Due to trial court unification, AOC reporting practice no longer treats criminal appearances in superior courts as filings separate from the appearance of the same defendant in preliminary proceedings at the former municipal courts. This has resulted in the reporting of 149,501 fewer criminal filings than would have been reported under the previous practice.

California Judicial Branch

In California, as in the U.S. government, the power to govern is divided among three branches: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The California court system, the nation's largest, serves over 34 million people with more than 2,000 judicial officers and 18,000 court employees.

THE COURTS

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT

- ◆ 1 Chief Justice, 6 associate justices;
- ◆ Hears oral arguments in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento;
- ◆ Has discretionary authority to review decisions of the Courts of Appeal and direct responsibility for automatic appeals after death penalty judgments.

COURTS OF APPEAL

- ◆ 105 justices;
- ◆ Six districts, 18 divisions, 9 court locations;
- ◆ Review the majority of appealable orders or judgments from the superior courts.

SUPERIOR COURTS

- ◆ 1,499 judges, 437 commissioners and referees;
- ◆ 58 courts, one in each county, with from 1 to 55 branches;
- ◆ Provide a forum for resolution of criminal and civil cases under state and local laws. State and local laws define crimes, specify punishments, and define civil duties and liabilities.

BRANCH ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

Administrative Office of the Courts

- ◆ The Judicial Council is the constitutionally created 27-member policymaking body of the California courts; its staff agency is the Administrative Office of the Courts.

BRANCH AGENCIES

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE

- ◆ Responsible for the censure, removal, retirement, or private admonishment of judges and commissioners. Decisions subject to review by the California Supreme Court.

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

- ◆ Confirms gubernatorial appointments to the Supreme Court and appellate courts.

HABEAS CORPUS RESOURCE CENTER

- ◆ Handles state and federal habeas corpus proceedings in capital cases; provides training and resources for private attorneys who take these cases.



The 27-member Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. Established in 1926, the council observes its 75th anniversary in 2001.

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