

HUMBOLDT

Population: 134,648 • Authorized Judges: 8 • Staff: 81.0 FTE

Civil Filings: 2,123 • Criminal Filings: 21,954 • Family/Juvenile Filings: 2,098 • Other Filings: 572

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Budget reductions created by the decline in civil assessment revenue and increased mental health evaluation costs have resulted in reduced court staff and limited assistance to the public.

- **Public hours are limited to 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM, and telephone hold times are unreasonable (up to 35 minutes).**
- **Without funding to keep parity with the new minimum wage a shorter work day for staff (7.5 hours) has been negotiated to increase the staff hourly pay rate.**
- **Strain on staff has contributed to increased Worker Compensation issues, stress problems, and absenteeism issues. Workers Compensation costs are up 221% from four years ago.**
- **Records management, including records destruction, is delayed several years which has required the court to incur costs of for off-site storage (elimination of storages costs are not sufficient to hire staff for records management). Delays are also experienced in criminal warrant recalls, criminal dismissals and records sealing.**
- **Reduced access for those in the remote areas of the County.**

Help more self-represented litigants in family and housing cases with at the Self Help/Facilitator's office.

- **Limited walk-in service and public workshops for 'pro-per' litigants.**
- **A three week backlog for preparation of Court ordered documents.**
- **Under-serving probate, guardianship, conservatorship parties.**

Protect families with emergency orders and restore family stability with mediated custody agreements.

- **Dependency attorneys – without social worker support - average 250 clients.**

Reduce wait time for businesses and individuals to get money owed in civil disputes.

- **1 to 2-month delay in returning trust deposits.**

Miscellaneous Budget Issues.

- **37 Pending serious felony cases, including homicides and sex crimes.**
- **263% increase in mental health evaluation costs over the past two years without funding.**
- **45% decline in Civil Assessment revenue in the past two years.**

PRIORITIES FOR REINVESTMENT

Assuming an additional investment in operations funds, we intend to...

- Restore public clerk's office hours inclusive of filling frozen staff positions to include establishing a Records management division to include research and copy requests duties.
- Mitigate the increase in mental competency expenses and decline in civil assessment revenue.
- Expand Self-Help Center Services including workshops, service to walk-in clients and establish a probate examiner position to improve service for probate, guardianship and conservatorship parties
- Address inflationary cost increases and make needed adjustments to recruit qualified candidates and retain experienced staff