

Superior Court of California

County of Inyo

BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 2015

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

- Enhance staff efficiency and effectiveness through continuous service delivery evaluation and the implementation of new case management system.
- Improve access to justice through enhanced website with increased functions and user friendly interface.
- Replace key staff including Information Technology position(s) to ensure that court operations are on-going without disruption to services.
- Continue to provide quality customer service with reduced staff and fewer public access hours.

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- The remote location of our court causes additional strain on Court Reporter Services. There are currently two reporters available locally to provide services. If hours are reduced to only cases required by law those Reporters will likely be required to find work elsewhere thereby reducing access for required case types. Currently in the event that additional reporters are required they travel 4+ hours and often require the court to pay hotel and mileage for their services.
- Inyo Court currently pays hotel and mileage expenses for an interpreter's 5-hour drive from Los Angeles

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

Clerk counter and phone hours have been reduced in both Bishop and Independence.

Courtrooms and Court Houses

Court filings are limited by location therefore court users are required to travel great distances to file paperwork in one designated location/branch.

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

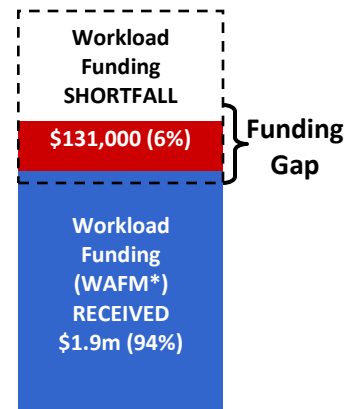
- There are currently three (3) vacant clerk positions, two (2) vacant IT positions and an Assistant Court Executive Officer position that will not likely be filled thereby further increasing the workload of the remaining staff.
- Staff has recently had to pay increased contributions to retirement and health care benefits in order to avoid layoffs. Additional contributions will be required in coming years.

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

Both Bishop and Independence Courts are held in leased facilities that have reached capacity with poor infrastructure and rely greatly on local governmental agencies.

Funding Shortfall

***WAFM is the Workload-based Allocation & Funding Methodology. It describes how much funding courts need based on their workload. In the current year, the workload-based allocation needed in Inyo was calculated at \$2.0 million and the court received \$1.9 million. See reverse for a detailed explanation of how WAFM is calculated.**



Court Demographics

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Population Served | 18,590 |
| Square Miles Covered | 10,227 |
| Total Number of Court Facilities | 3 |

Court Leadership

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Presiding Judge | Hon. Brian Lamb |
| Court Executive Officer | Pamela M. Foster |
| Executive Office Contact | (760) 873-6728 |

Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

- Administering Justice over 10,000 square miles with a remote population causes unique issues that are greatly impacted by even small budget reductions. Caseload impacts on a small staff cause delays in the processing of paperwork that then impacts our law enforcement partners. With six vacant positions (26% reduction in total staffing) even the small shortfall proposed will result in further staff reductions.
- Maintaining technology systems in today's technology based environment is key to continuing to operate effectively and efficiently.

The Workload-based Allocation & Funding Methodology (WAFM)

The Workload-based Allocation & Funding Methodology (WAFM) calculates the total funding needed for California's 58 trial courts based on case filings, workload and other factors.

To do this, WAFM relies on results from what we call the Resource Assessment Study (RAS) model to estimate total staffing needed using a weighted caseload model. Developed in partnership with national experts, the RAS model is based on a time study of over 5,000 case processing staff in 24 California trial courts. The study established a set of caseweights (amount of time in minutes to process a case from initial filing through any post-disposition activity) understanding that certain types of filings take more time and resources to handle than others. The weighted filings are used to estimate total staff needed in each court.

The WAFM model converts the staff need data into dollars, taking into account average salaries, benefits, operating expenses and equipment, and the local cost of labor using the Bureau of Labor Statistics as a benchmark. A "funding floor" is applied to the smallest trial courts because there is a basic operating threshold that must be met in order to provide service to the public. In other words, California's small courts do not have economies of scale, and yet there are basic expenditures that even the smallest courts must make. The result is, for each court, an estimate of the core operations funding required to adequately process its workload. This is known as the court's WAFM share.

Starting in FY 2013-14, a portion of each court's allocation is being recalculated according to its WAFM share. (A court's WAFM share is different from the courts' historical share of the statewide funding. The WAFM calculation tells us what the trial courts need to function based on current filings, whereas the historical share was based on the amount each court received from its county.)

Unfortunately, the total WAFM funding needed for all 58 courts exceeds the funding currently appropriated in the state budget by as much as \$800 million. (This is the WAFM funding gap.) To manage the budget reductions resulting from the implementation of WAFM in the absence of full trial court funding, the Judicial Council approved applying WAFM incrementally to each court's historical share of statewide funding, applying it 100% only to "new" money appropriated in the budget. New money is any undesignated general court operations funding increase above the FY 2012-13 State funding level.

The rules of application adopted by the Judicial Council are as follows:

- Each year beginning in FY 2013-14, and through/including FY 2017-18, incrementally more of the historical (base) funding (using FY 2012-13 as the base) will be subject to WAFM, until 50% of the FY 2012-13 base is distributed according to WAFM;
- All undesignated court operations state funding increases after FY 2012-13 are distributed according to the WAFM shares; and
- For each dollar of new state funding, one dollar of the historical base will be reallocated using WAFM.