



# Superior Court of California County of Kern BUDGET SNAPSHOT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
OF THE COURTS  
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 2014

## Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

*Increased funding in 2013-2014 will forestall planned additional service reductions and enable modest improvements in access for court users in 2014-2015.*

### SERVICE

#### Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- Family Law Facilitator appointments are filled by 10:00 am each morning, requiring staff to turn away family law and self-help clients daily.

#### Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- Only Family Law Abandonment, Contempt and Domestic Violence have court reporters in Civil/Family Law.
- All other reporter services in family law and civil were terminated in FY 2013-14.

### ACCESS

#### Closed Courtrooms (3) and Court Houses (2)

- All operations counters / phones close daily at 3 p.m. and Fridays at noon.
- Taft Regional Facility closed 4 days per week.
- Lake Isabella Regional Court closed indefinitely.
- Abandoned phone calls have increased from 20% to 40% due to staffing vacancies.

### STAFFING

#### Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Employee vacancy rate anticipated to be 16% by end of FY 13-14, with corresponding service level reductions.
- Deleted 44 positions; 7.9% of total authorized in FY 08-09.
- Vacancies in Family Court Services result in an inability to complete required guardianship investigations in a timely manner.

### JUDICIAL OFFICERS

#### Availability of Judicial Officers

- Currently, 6 judicial vacancies (13% of allocation). Three judicial positions remain unfunded.
- Felony filings have increased by 27% in last ten years.
- As a result of AB109, felony hearings have more than doubled since 2011.

### Budget Considerations

Budgeted Revenues* FY 2013-2014	\$58,167,301
<u>Total Revenues* FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>\$54,850,735</u>
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	<b>-\$3,316,566</b>
<small>*Excludes Sheriff-Provided Security</small>	
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	<b>-\$1,208,069</b>
Share of \$60 million augmentation	\$1,597,067

### Court Demographics

Population Served	850,006
Square Miles Covered	8,162
Total Number of Court Facilities	10
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	353
<u>Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>478</u>
Lost Positions in 5 years	<b>-125</b> (26% reduction)
44 positions have been eliminated	

### Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Colette M. Humphrey
Court Executive Officer	Terry McNally
Executive Office Contact	(661) 868-4934

## Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

- Kern Court employees already pay 4% share of pension benefits; increased costs for retirement and health care in FY 14-15 will require continuing with 15 employee vacancies to offset increases not funded in budget.*
- Elimination of all but 1% of fund balances will necessitate more conservative hiring practices for staffing, will minimize infrastructure and technology investments, and increase cash flow concerns related to payroll needs.*