



Superior Court of California County of Lake BUDGET SNAPSHOT

February 2016



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Andrew S. Blum, Presiding Judge

Krista LeVier, Court Executive Officer

(707) 263-2575

Court Service Highlights in the Current Year

- **Veteran’s Collaborative Court**
- **Expanded Self-Help Services**
- **New Real-Time Court Minutes software**
- **New Lakeport Courthouse**

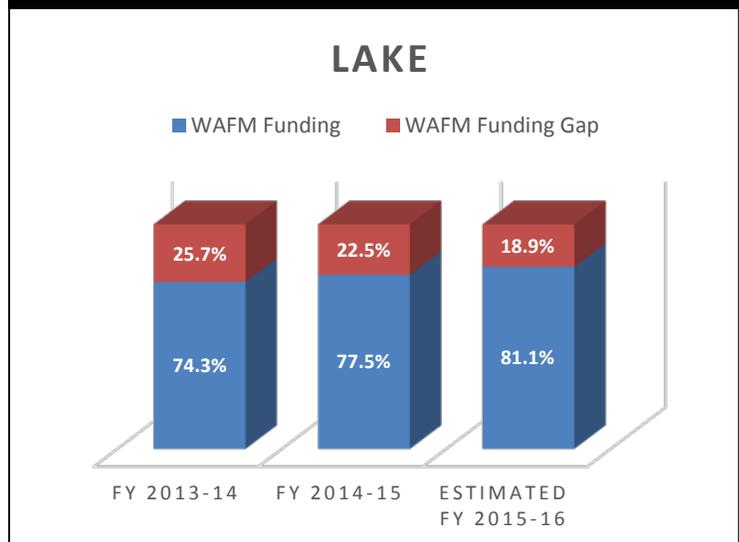
Court Service Highlights in Detail

- **Veteran’s Collaborative Court** - Recidivism Reduction Grant funding has allowed the court to establish a Veteran’s Court which provides services to veterans who come in contact with the criminal justice system.
- **Expanded Self-Help Services** - Increased services related to the family law court calendars. Staff from the self-help center attend the court calendar and assist litigants on the spot. The court has also expanded the use of remote self-help workshops. A presenter is at one location and, via videoconferencing, is able to present the workshop to litigants in multiple court locations in Lake, Butte and Tehama Counties.
- **New Real-Time Court Minutes software** - This technology is an enhancement to our current case management system which will allow courtroom clerks to prepare the court minutes in real time. This will significantly decrease post-hearing staff time needed to complete follow-up work. The project is being completed with reserve funds and would not have been possible under the current 1% fund balance cap.
- **New Lakeport Courthouse** - The court is very excited to have a new courthouse project funded under SB 1407. The project will replace the current main courthouse which is severely overcrowded, lacks adequate security, is seismically unsafe, and has failing systems. The courthouse is expected to be completed in 2019.

Budget Challenges and Priorities

- Public Counters and phones are only open from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm daily due to budget reductions.
- One-time funding is necessary to allow us to invest in technology that would create efficiencies and increase the public’s access to justice.
- Despite the Governor’s statement that overall Judicial Branch funding is 10.5% higher than in FY 2007-08, Lake Superior Court’s overall revenue is down 28%.
- Without a significant increase in funding for trial court operations, additional service reductions may be unavoidable in FY 2016-17.

Workload Allocation & Funding Gap (see reverse)



Court Demographics

Population Served	64,699
Square Miles Covered	1,330
Total Number of Court Facilities	3

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' traditional share of the statewide funding. The WAFM calculation tells us what the trial courts need to function based on current filings, whereas the traditional share was based on the amount each court received from its county not taking into consideration the courts' filings or staff needs.)

Unfortunately, the total WAFM funding needed for all 58 courts exceeds the funding currently appropriated in the state budget. (This is the WAFM funding gap.) California's trial courts are underfunded by at least a collective \$444 million. The underfunding is made worse for those courts that experience a reduction of funding based on their WAFM share. 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, applying it fully only to new money appropriated in the budget.

The rules of application adopted by the Judicial Council are:

- Each year beginning in FY 2013-14, and through/including to 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 12-13 base is distributed according to WAFM;
- All new state funding is 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.