



# Superior Court of California County of Los Angeles BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL  
OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

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## Court Service Highlights in the Current Year

- Proactive implementation of traffic ticket/infraction amnesty program
- Interpreter services greatly expanded thanks to efficiencies in interpreter management
- Online services improved
- Outdated case management systems are being replaced

### Court Service Highlights in Detail

#### Proactive implementation of traffic ticket/infraction amnesty program

Through the first four months of the program, Los Angeles has handled 365,000 calls, collected \$4 million, and removed 25,000 DMV holds.

#### Interpreter services greatly expanded thanks to efficiencies in interpreter management

Interpreter services are now provided to litigants, regardless of income, in non-mandated areas including juvenile dependency, elder and dependent abuse, unlawful detainers, domestic violence matters, probate conservatorship and guardianship matters, civil harassment, family law and small claims cases.

#### Online traffic services improved

Improved online services have increased website usage and reduced courthouse crowding. In our Traffic division, an online assistant provides custom information on citation processing options in six languages.

#### Outdated case management systems are being replaced

All court case management systems will be replaced as of September 2017, funded by one-time savings from FY 2013-14.

#### Business process reengineering creates efficiencies:

- Traffic - courtrooms are now paperless.
- Civil - online self-scheduling of hearings.
- Criminal - online data sharing with justice system partners.
- Family law - reduced wait time for mediations and child custody evaluations.
- Significant efficiencies and organizational restructuring were achieved with cooperation of employee representatives.

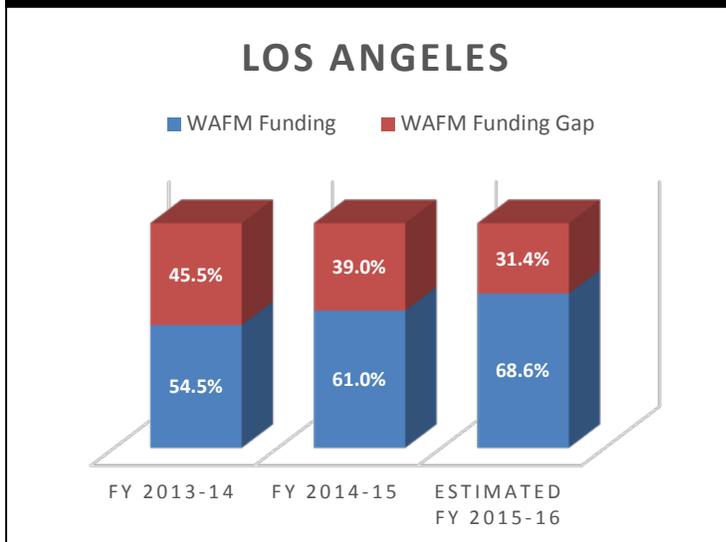
### Budget Challenges and Priorities

LA Superior Court is funded at less than 70% of its workload-based funding need.

The greatest need is for **ongoing** funding for staff expansion to fill basic needs. The most critical need is to hire staff to expand access to justice, reduce delays and backlogs by restoring full-service courtrooms, and bring back court-employed Court Reporters.

Much-needed innovations are too often blocked for lack of funding due to the overly restrictive statutory 1% limitation on carry-over fund balance.

### Workload Allocation & Funding Gap (see reverse)



### Court Demographics

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Population Served                | 10,041,797 |
| Square Miles Covered             | 4,752      |
| Total Number of Court Facilities | 38         |

## 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.