



Superior Court of California County of Madera BUDGET SNAPSHOT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 2014

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

Ensure equal and fair access to all who need our services and provide public service in an efficient manner. Keep our courtrooms and self-help office open to the public. These priorities may be negatively affected in FY 2014-15. Reduced funding has left us no choice but to cut staffing levels, which has resulted in delays in processing paperwork, longer wait times for customers, and increased complaints from the public.

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

Without restored funding levels, our court may be forced to contract these services out. If forced to enter into a contract, the services would be limited, meaning a reduction in services to the public as only the mandatory case types will be assisted.

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

With current funding levels, we anticipate the need to reduce the number of court reporters, resulting in no transcripts for civil and family law cases, no real-time read back of transcripts during criminal trials, and an increase in complaints to judicial officers.

Closed Courtrooms / Court Houses

Our Sierra Division, which is located 50+ miles from the main courthouse, could possibly close due to funding shortfalls, requiring customers to travel 50-75 miles each way to access the judicial system.

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

We anticipate implementing layoffs in the next year. We have not filled vacancies, other than critical positions, for 5 years. We are currently and will continue to furlough staff for 8 hours per month. Resulting in increased backlog of workloads and longer processing times.

Budget Considerations

Budgeted Revenues* FY 2013-2014	\$8,441,012
<u>Total Revenues* FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>\$9,717,014</u>
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	-\$1,276,002
<small>*Excludes Sheriff-Provided Security</small>	
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	-\$273,553
Share of \$60 million augmentation	\$239,028

Court Demographics

Population Served	152,074
Square Miles Covered	2,153
Total Number of Court Facilities	3
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	97
<u>Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>109</u>
Lost Positions in 5 years	-12 (11% reduction)

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. D. Lynn Jones
Court Executive Officer	Bonnie Thomas
Executive Office Contact	(559) 661-2896

Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

As a result of years of budget reductions, our court is now experiencing backlogs in all areas. Criminal complaints data entry is months behind; self-help/facilitator appointments are being set 4 – 5 weeks out; record searches have a 6-week waiting period; small claims, civil, family law and probate matters take 1 – 2 weeks to process and return; traffic citation data entry is 4 weeks behind; collection referrals are months behind, hindering drivers from clearing holds on their licenses and delaying revenue collection for the state.