



# Superior Court of California County of Marin BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL  
OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 2015

## Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

- *Lessen impacts on public service by enhancing technology (phone/website) and continued business process reengineering of service delivery systems*
- *Extend the life of existing case management systems until a funding solution is found to replace these systems*
- *Relocate jury assembly to a decommissioned courtroom to make it easier to staff and support this function using Courthouse Construction Funds*
- *Increase funding to OPEB trust to ensure that the court is able to meet current and future retiree health obligations*

### Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- Staff court reporters have dwindled from 14 to 8; parties are advised to bring their own court reporter to civil and family evidentiary hearings
- Court has lost a 1.5 interpreters; positions will not be re-filled

### Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Clerks' offices counters/phone hours are being restored because there is insufficient staff to assist with after-hours drop box
- 4 public windows have been closed in clerk's office, making wait times longer

### Courtrooms and Court Houses

- With overall reduction of 2 judicial positions (4 SJOs retired, 2 positions converted to judgeships and 2 positions eliminated), court has decommissioned 2 courtrooms

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

- Since 2008, the court has lost 65 staff positions (37% of workforce) to layoffs, retirements and other separations
- Possible furloughs/layoffs anticipated in FY 2015-16
- Loss of interpreter coordinator and fiscal analyst; duties absorbed by others

### Availability of Judicial Officers

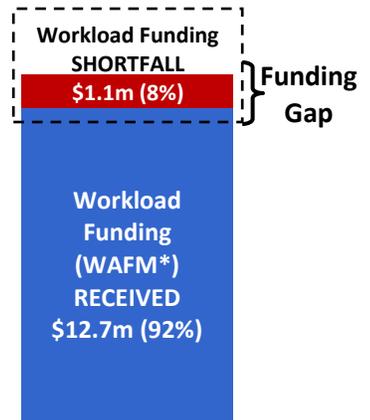
- The court now only has .8 FTE SJO (traffic and AB1058)
- The court has reduced the number of criminal departments from 7 to 4 over the past 3 years
- The court is using volunteer attorneys and mediators to offer additional ADR programs in discovery facilitation, settlement conferences, unlawful detainers, small claims and civil harassment

### Jury Services

- Staff shortages have caused public phone hours to be reduced to 2 hours per day
- Court is planning to close the jury assembly room when no jurors are present and redeploy those staff to other work units.

## 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 Marin was calculated at \$13.8 million but the court received \$12.7 million. See reverse for a detailed explanation of how WAFM is calculated.**



## Court Demographics

Population Served	255,846
Square Miles Covered	828
Total Number of Court Facilities	2

## Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Faye D'Opal
Court Executive Officer	Kim Turner
Executive Office Contact	(415) 444-7398

## Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

*The primary challenge is the continued reduction of workforce. In the last year alone, the court has lost 10 more positions that will not be replaced. Work associated with those positions has been absorbed by existing staff. It is hard to demonstrate to staff that they are valued when their workload increases but their compensation has remained the same for 7 years. Labor actions are imminent if this does not change soon.*

## **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.