

MENDOCINO

Population: 89,029 • Authorized Judges: 8 • Staff: 56 FTE

Civil Filings: 1,490 • Criminal Filings: 16,035 • Family/Juvenile Filings: 1,660 • Other Filings: 318

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Address public safety concerns by ensuring that criminal dispositions, bench warrants and DOJ reporting are current and accurate.

- **Backlog of several thousand adjudicated criminal matters are awaiting entry of disposition;**
- **Issuance of ordered bench warrants is backlogged several weeks;**
- **Mandatory DOJ reporting to update criminal justice databases is more than 12 months in arrears;**
- **Traffic dispositions and collections are months behind.**

Reduce wait time for expunging criminal and juvenile records to help people get jobs and to protect privacy.

- **Several hundred criminal cases have orders to reduce charges and/or dismiss cases but are awaiting case processing to update criminal records databases;**
- **Juvenile sealing orders are backlogged by approximately two months.**

Protect families with emergency orders and restore family stability with mediated custody agreements.

- **2-month delay for family mediation, necessitating many emergency temporary orders;**
- **Family law facilitation is only available three days per week.**
- **3-month delays for non-custodial parents to gain regular visits with children.**

Help more self-represented litigants in family and housing cases with at the Self Help/Facilitator's office.

- **While self-help is available four days a week, staffing is lean and unable to assist in all needed case types;**
- **Drop-in legal assistance is limited to three days a week;**
- **Guardianships and complex legal assistance are limited to appointments on one day per week.**

Ensure the availability of court clerks in clerk's office and courtrooms to expedite handling of cases.

- **Clerk's office closes at 3:00 daily;**
- **Civil litigants must use a drop-box after hours; drop-box documents are often defective;**
- **A shortage of courtroom clerks causes delays in conducting court proceedings.**

PRIORITIES FOR REINVESTMENT

Assuming an additional investment in operations funds, we intend to...

- Add 5 new clerical positions to reduce wait times by 15 minutes per person and ensure that court proceedings can go forward as scheduled; add at least 1 new technology analyst;
- Address inflationary cost increases and make needed adjustments to recruit qualified candidates and retain experienced staff.
- Replace end-of-life technology equipment and infrastructure to improve network performance.
- Add desktop scanners in clerk's office and courtrooms to begin transition to paperless files.