



Superior Court of California County of Napa BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 2015

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

- Improving slowed processing of court documents in civil and family law clerk's offices due to staff and funding reductions
- Addressing delays in processing and filing documents, which lead to significant loss of documents, confusion on applicable timelines, and delays in concluding courtroom hearings

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- Family court mediation staff has been reduced by 33% , as has Self-Help center staff
- Longer waits for child custody, visitation and support mediation services, as well as delayed dissolution judgments
- Mediation appointments are scheduled out a week or more; walk-in services have been eliminated

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- Laid off 3.5 full time court reporter positions
- Elimination of court-provided reporting in all civil and family law, misdemeanor and traffic calendars, which means there is no written record for 50-75% of all civil, probate, adoption and family law cases and court events
- Court interpreters required to take furlough days in FY2009-10

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Longer waiting lines and delayed services due to staffing shortages
- Public access to clerks' office services has been reduced by 7¹/₂ hours per week

Courtrooms and Court Houses

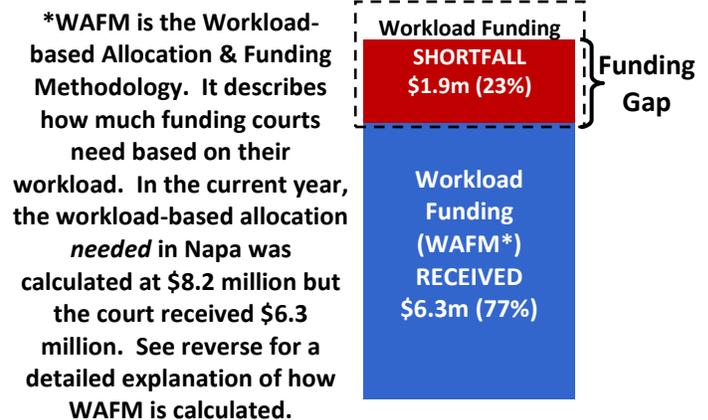
- All courthouses close every Friday at 2:30 pm
- Also closed all day the days before and after Thanksgiving, as well as on Christmas and New Years eves

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Implemented layoffs in FY 2011-12 and 2012-13
- 78 positions and 15.5 FTEs vacant and/or abolished in last 5 years
- Possible need to eliminate 10 additional positions
- Implemented mandatory furloughs 4 years ago, up to 18 days a year, which remain in place
- Eliminated plans for added compensation for court appointed counsel despite an increasing caseload

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

Perimeter security staff has been reduced by 25%



Court Demographics

Population Served	139,255
Square Miles Covered	788
Total Number of Court Facilities	3

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Rodney G. Stone
Court Executive Officer	Richard D. Feldstein
Executive Office Contact	(707) 299-1111

Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

- Addressing diminished pro per assistance and family law mediation services.
- Increasing public access from an 18% reduction in time dedicated for filings and customer service.
- Maintaining our expanded use of electronic case documents to increase efficiency.

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.