



Superior Court of California County of Placer BUDGET SNAPSHOT

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JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Alan V. Pineschi, Presiding Judge

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Court Service Highlights in the Current Year

- Restored staffing levels to enable reopening one courtroom previously closed during recession.
- Increased self-help center staffing and services.
- Expanded interpreters to nearly all civil and family cases.
- Focusing on technology improvements to expand public self-service and enable e-services.

Court Service Highlights in Detail

Restored staffing levels to enable reopening one courtroom closed during recession

The Placer Superior Court reduced staffing by more than 40% during the recession earlier this decade, necessitating closing two courtrooms and severely limiting the use of a third.

Restored funding has allowed nominal growth. That growth was sufficient to reopen one courtroom, resulting in a significant reduction in civil trial delays. Family law litigants continue to face significant delays in court hearings, however. Addressing these delays is a key priority for the court if additional funding is provided in FY 2016-17.

Increased self-help center staffing and services

Self-help center staffing increased by 33%, improving our ability to provide one-on-one services, reduce delays in completion of orders after hearing, and expand availability to self-represented litigants immediately following court hearings.

Expanded interpreters to nearly all civil and family case types

Interpreters are now provided in all case types except small claims. Between 7/1/15 and 1/31/16, the court was able to fulfill all requests. Additional efforts in the current year focus on prioritization for language interpreters in the translation of signage and forms. Funding for actual translation is a priority for FY 2016-17.

Focusing on technology improvements to expand public self-service and enable e-services

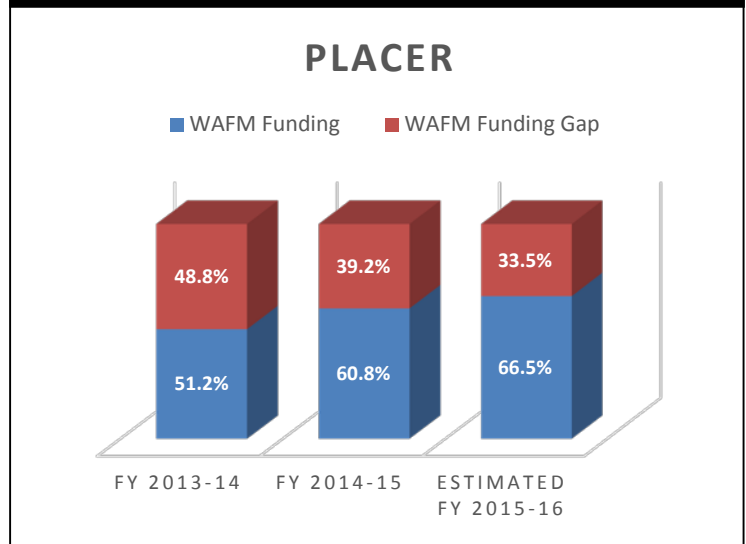
Implementation of a modern case management system continues – by June 30 we will be providing expanded online information of criminal case status and outcomes, initial transition to e-case files in criminal and an expanded juror on-line portal. Priorities for FY 2016-17 include implementing a modern system for civil and family law and initiating e-filing activities.

Budget Challenges and Priorities

Budget constraints continue to impact:

- Setting of family law matters due to closed courtroom and lack of sufficient judicial officers.
- Provision of the court record in family law proceedings.
- Investments in technology necessary to support heightened demand and delivery of e-services.
- Availability of court appointed experts, due to existing appointment rates.

Workload Allocation & Funding Gap (see reverse)



Court Demographics

Population Served	366,115
Square Miles Covered	1,503
Total Number of Court Facilities	6

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.