



# Superior Court of California County of Riverside BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL  
OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 2015

## Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

*Continued restoration of access to justice both on-line and at courthouses; increased self-help services for the unrepresented public; enhancement of technologies to reduce delays and increase operational efficiencies.*

### Public Service (In Person, Phones, Automated)

Recently restored 14 positions to resume public services at the counters, on the phones and via email; added 13 positions to more efficiently maintain electronic court records and perform digital archiving of older cases; upgraded court website to expand these services:

- Options for handling cases and accessing records
- Information for families in contested matters
- Self-help materials for unrepresented litigants
- Online educational videos
- Additional options for handling jury service

### Self-Help / Dispute Resolution / Family Services

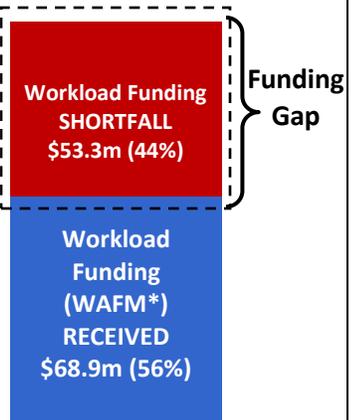
- Restored three positions to enhance services to in family law and probate (families, children, and the elderly)
- Continued dispute resolution services in civil cases
- Increased self-help services by 80 hours/week
- Added two civil self-help assistance days/month in the Desert Region
- Implemented triage pilot program to assist family law litigants prepare for court

### Courtrooms

- Avoided closing additional courtrooms
- Planning addition of 3-5 courtrooms with assigned judges (Banning/Hall of Justice); court to fund staffing
- Opened probate services to litigants in the Mid-County Region

## 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 Riverside was calculated at \$122 million but the court received \$68.9 million. See reverse for a detailed explanation of how WAFM is calculated.**



## Court Demographics

Population Served	2,292,507
Square Miles Covered	7,303
Total Number of Court Facilities	14

## Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Harold W. Hopp
Court Executive Officer	W. Samuel Hamrick, Jr.
Executive Office Contact	(951) 777-3162

## Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

*Continued augmentation in funding after more than five years of reductions is still critically needed to maintain timely and local case hearings, efficient case management, and overall public access to justice. Court has been forced to shift judicial and staffing resources due to Proposition 47; continuing to assess the impacts and resources required.*

## **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.