



Superior Court of California County of Sacramento BUDGET SNAPSHOT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 2014

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

- *Significant reduction in services to victims of domestic violence*
- *Decreased staffing has affected the oversight of the quality of care for individuals under court-ordered conservatorship*
- *Delayed processing and increasing backlog of documents and pleadings in every area of the Court, e.g., six months to process Family Law judgments, and in Civil there is up to a ten month backlog of over 17,000 pleadings and documents*
- *Reduction in the number of public service counter staff/counter hours/phone hours*

Examples of Impacts to the Public

- Reduced services to victims of domestic violence, compromising public safety. Specifically, fewer workshops for victims of domestic violence to assist with restraining order applications
- No longer providing next steps and procedural assistance to Family Law litigants in person (E-correspondence only)
- Delays of up to three months in the processing and hearing of motions to expunge a criminal conviction, affecting the individual's ability to obtain employment and housing
- Reduction in number of court investigators has impaired the Court's ability to assess the quality of care for individuals under court-ordered conservatorship, which places persons unable to care for themselves at risk of physical, emotional and financial abuse
- Unable to timely provide the Court's findings and orders to families or their counsel in delinquency and dependency matters

Court Reporters

Number of court reporters has been reduced from 68.1 in FY 08/09 to 62 in FY 13/14

Public Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Telephone hours severely reduced by 22.5 hours per week in Family Law and Probate, and an average of 10 -15 hours per week in other court areas
- 26 public counter service windows have been closed across the entire court

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Hiring freeze since 2008
- Future layoffs probable

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

- Reductions to Sheriff Department's budget has caused delays in transporting in-custody defendants to court for hearings/trials
- Eliminated most after-hours security

Availability of Judicial Officers

Several needed judicial positions recently were filled, but due to prior budget cuts, critical staff, such as courtroom clerks and court reporters are not always available

Budget Considerations

Est. Revenues * FY 2013-2014	\$83,838,158
<u>Total Revenues * FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>\$95,883,855</u>
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	-\$12,045,697
* Excludes Sheriff Department-Provided Security	
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	-\$3,873,056
Share of \$60 million augmentation	\$2,625,130

Court Demographics

Population Served	1,450,121
Square Miles Covered	996
Total Number of Court Facilities	8
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	637
<u>Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>864</u>
Lost Positions in 5 years	-227 (26% reduction)
<u>Additional lost positions as of 12/31/13</u>	<u>-20</u>
Total Lost Positions Since FY2008-09	-247 (28% reduction)

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Robert C. Hight
Court Executive Officer	Tim Ainsworth (Interim)
Executive Office Contact	(916) 874-8668

Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

- *Based upon current funding levels, the Court will have a budget shortfall in 2014-15 which may necessitate further staff reductions and the cutback of additional services to the public*
- *Continued backlogs and long delays in the processing of documents and pleadings in every area of the Court*
- *Assistance to self-represented litigants will likely have to be reduced even more*
- *Insufficient funding for needed replacement of obsolete case management systems*