



Superior Court of California County of San Luis Obispo BUDGET SNAPSHOT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 2014

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

- Maintain current levels of telephone and clerk window staffing.
- Continue to reduce backlogs in filing documents and recording judgments.
- Avoid additional staff and service reductions.
- Increase court efficiencies available from new case management system.
- Establish E-filing.

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- Reduced staff results in few services and less access to justice.
- Grant funded mediation services in Civil have been eliminated.
- Lost work space for Self-Help Center.

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

Eliminated three court reporter positions in civil courtrooms and will likely eliminate three more plus the court reporter supervisor position if additional funding is not allocated.

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Public telephone hours have been reduced; counter hours have not, but the wait times are much longer.
- Traffic/small claims night court had to be eliminated.

Closed Courtrooms

Closure of the South County Courthouse in Grover Beach resulted in closure of one of the court's 15 courtrooms, which handled criminal misdemeanors, traffic, small claims, unlawful detainers, and limited civil. Now, police agencies and the public must travel farther to attend/appear in court.

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Have only laid off three temporary court reporter positions; we did eliminate all temporary positions and will have to impose layoffs without budget reinvestment.
- Imposed hiring freeze and offered early retirement incentives.
- Judges and staff clean their own work areas because janitorial services have been eliminated.

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

- Aging facilities and insufficient funds for repairs and maintenance are causing HVAC equipment and degraded plumbing to run-to-failure.
- Inadequate funding has prevented the replacement of broken and damaged juror seating.

Budget Considerations

Budgeted Revenues* FY 2013-2014	\$17,348,445
Total Revenues* FY 2008-2009	\$19,265,798
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	\$1,917,353
*Excludes Sheriff-Provided Security	
Less CMS One-Time Funding	-\$2,321,999
Adjusted funding reduction	-\$4,239,352
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	-\$221,969
Share of \$60 million augmentation	\$432,381

Court Demographics

Population Served	271,483
Square Miles Covered	3,616
Total Number of Court Facilities	3
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	130
Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009	149
Lost Positions in 5 years	-19 (13% reduction)

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Dodie A. Harman
Court Executive Officer	Susan E. Matherly
Executive Office Contact	(805) 781-1528

Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

The Court continues to meet the challenges of workload demands with greatly diminished staffing levels. Once reserves are fully depleted this fiscal year, the Court must find a way to address unanticipated equipment costs, long or complex trials that require additional resources, or other budget challenges. Trials only occur four days per week; telephones are not answered on Fridays resulting in long lines at the counter. As self-help services are reduced, there are additional backlogs in family law processing, more continuances, and longer waits for court hearings and trials. Family law is the most likely target for additional reductions and many litigants will no longer have a court reporter to create a record for appeal and other purposes.