



Superior Court of California
County of San Mateo
 BUDGET SNAPSHOT

January 2014

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

Our judiciary and staff have worked diligently and in partnership with our unions and justice partners to create efficiencies and savings, to effectively utilize technology and consolidate our workforce to provide the best trial court services possible with the resources available. With a minimum \$266 million restored back to the trial courts, we would be able to start restoring access to justice as follows:

- Re-open two courtrooms and add back the courtroom and clerical staffing to support them
- Potentially implement a term employment program that restores staff positions at 15% less cost
- Increase by one-third the number of available calendars lost from the cutbacks
- Restore public telephone and counter hours to pre-2013 time schedules
- Replace 25+-year-old county criminal case management system to accommodate realignment cases and to achieve further budget and staff efficiencies

Calendars:

- Criminal arraignment calendars reduced from 9 to 6 per week, and pre-trial calendars reduced from 8 to 6 per week
- Traffic arraignment calendars reduced by 50% and traffic trial calendars reduced from 9 to 5 per week
- Small Claims calendars reduced by 50%
- Civil trials limited to 1 to 2 trials per week
- Reduction of three trial departments (approx. 25%)

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- Phone and counter hours for ADR and Family Court Services reduced by 50%
- Wait times for self-help services exceed three hours with the public lining up before 7:00 am
- ADR Program reduced by 60% and processing of ADR referrals have lengthened by 30-60%

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Reduced public counter and phone hours in all clerk's offices by over 30%. The Clerk's Offices are only open until 2:00 p.m. Mon-Thurs and until noon on Fridays
- Jury Division phone hours reduced by 43% since 2009
- Backlogs in clerk's office processing of documents resulting in civil default judgments taking a year or more to process, and family law judgments taking 3 months to process

Closed Courtrooms (4) and Court Houses (2*)

- Closed the equivalent of four courtrooms
- *No courthouses have been completely closed, but the majority of operations at San Mateo branch are suspended and operations at the South San Francisco branch have been severely curtailed. The Court considered closing the South San Francisco Branch entirely, but decided to keep criminal preliminary hearings there to minimize the impact on the public, witnesses, victims, and partner agencies.
- One courtroom that was originally designated to be closed in 7/13 was kept open as a result of this year's partial restoration

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Reduced budget by 109 filled positions (approx. 30%), including court commissioners, over last five years through layoffs, attrition, and voluntary incentive programs
- Mandated 10 furlough days in FY 09-10; may consider furloughs as a temporary option in the future; Court eliminates positions as they became vacant
- Some staff positions originally slated for layoffs in 9/13 were restored as a result of the partial restoration.

Availability of Judicial Officers

- Reduction of 57% of its Commissioner positions (4 of 7). One commissioner position originally slated for layoff in 7/13 was restored as a result of the partial restoration.

Budget Considerations

Budgeted Revenues* FY 2013-2014	\$36,954,202
<u>Total Revenues* FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>\$43,184,215</u>
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	-\$6,230,013
<small>*Excludes Sheriff-Provided Security and perimeter security erroneously placed in Court's budget</small>	
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	-\$862,253
Share of \$60 million augmentation before application of WAFM	\$1,113,257

Court Demographics

Population Served	729,443
Square Miles Covered	741
Total Number of Court Facilities	5 (3 open, 2 substantially closed)
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	262
<u>Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>359</u>
Lost Positions in 5 years	-97 (27% reduction)

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Robert D. Foiles
Court Executive Officer	John Fitton
Executive Office Contact	(650) 261-5016

Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

- Reductions in staffing and courtroom closures have caused delays in traffic, civil, child custody and family law matters
- Delays in criminal case processing due to reduced and consolidated calendars starting to occur
- Civil trial assignments are limited to one to two trials per week. Additional trial delays are nearly 6 months, and increasing.
- Delays in processing civil default judgments, to one year or longer; family law judgments may take three months
- Wait times on the phone can be up to 45 minutes; wait times in line can be up to 30 minutes.