



Superior Court of California County of Santa Barbara

BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 2015

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

Hiring Freeze has resulted in 26% vacancy factor • Domestic violence temporary restraining orders are not processed the day they are filed • Backlogs in completing criminal dispositions number in the thousands • Closing Santa Barbara Juvenile Court and consolidating operations into centralized location • Default dissolutions now take over 5 months to be processed and returned

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- Self-help services have been reduced due to a reduction in the court's funding allocation
- Lompoc division may be without self-help services
- Child custody mediations that took 3 weeks to schedule in FY 2007-08 have extended to 5 weeks to schedule in FY 2013-14

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

Hiring freeze in reporter services leaves court waiting hours for an available reporter

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Fewer employees are available to process paperwork and serve the public
- Public counters that closed at 4:30pm in FY 2007-08 now close at 3:00 pm daily
- Phone hours to be reduced by an additional 1 hour

Closed Courtrooms 1 and Court Houses 1

- Solvang Clerk's Office Closed
- Traffic cases to be consolidated in Santa Maria in 2015

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

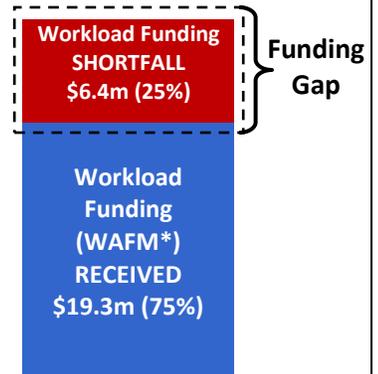
- 68.8 full-time staff positions reduced since FY 2007-2008 by attrition
- 26 % Vacancy among staff
- No pay increase for six years

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

- Jurors must walk across public streets through unsecured areas to reach the court buildings prior to reaching security screening
- The Historic Courthouse has no perimeter security screening
- Inmates are escorted through public areas to reach trial courtrooms due to lack of secure internal corridors, elevators or stairwells

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 Santa Barbara was calculated at \$25.7 million but the court received \$19.3 million. See reverse for a detailed explanation of how WAFM is calculated.



Court Demographics

Population Served	435,697
Square Miles Covered	3,789
Total Number of Court Facilities	8

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. James E. Herman
Court Executive Officer	Darrel E. Parker
Executive Office Contact	(805) 614-6594

Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

Court users are experiencing backlogs and delays in services caused by fewer employees and resources to serve the public

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 case weights (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.