



Superior Court of California County of Shasta BUDGET SNAPSHOT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 2014

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

Previously reduced clerk's office hours must be restored to 8:30 to 4:30 in order to restore service to the public. Additional staff must be added to the Family Unit in order to decrease backlog and ensure that domestic violence restraining orders are processed prior to expiration of temporary orders. Self-Help Center staffing desperately needs to be increased because the current demand for assistance far surpasses what we can accommodate. This court has worked tirelessly to convert its records to digital to save leased space costs. The court has saved millions by doing the project in-house. As a result of our hard work and efficient use of resources, the lease will be terminated 4/30/14.

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- Reduced Small Claims Advisor contract by 50% so that there is less access to small claims advice for the public.
- Can only afford one staff attorney in the Self-Help Center, so when the attorney is in court or not available, there are no Self-Help services for litigants that cannot afford legal services. The public's demand is tremendous for legal assistance.
- Our return court dates for cases involving child custody matters are set two months out because we do not have enough staff in the Family Court Services Division (specifically, we do not have sufficient child recommending counselors).

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

Court reporters are provided in criminal and juvenile cases only; in all other case types parties must provide their own or no record is made.

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

Clerks' office hours, including telephone hours, reduced from 8:30-4:30 to 8:30-2:00.

Closed Courtrooms and Court Houses

Our branch court operations have been reduced, from 5 days/week, to one day per month. This requires people to travel over 100 miles for services in Redding.

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Court uses Marshal's Office for security, which has had to absorb the same reductions as court divisions resulting in courtrooms operating without security staff, which is very unsafe.
- Court employees went on strike in November 2013 because their pay is inadequate.
- We eliminated retiree health benefits for new employees.

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

The new courthouse capital project has been delayed two years.

Budget Considerations

Budgeted Revenues* FY 2013-2014	\$15,388,265
<u>Total Revenues* FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>\$17,568,288</u>
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	-\$2,180,023
<small>*Excludes Sheriff-Provided Security</small>	
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	-\$241,412
Share of \$60 million augmentation	\$323,090

Court Demographics

Population Served	177,823
Square Miles Covered	3,847
Total Number of Court Facilities	5
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	185
<u>Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>173</u>
Change in staffing over 5 years	12

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Gregory S. Gaul
Court Executive Officer	Melissa Fowler-Bradley
Executive Office Contact	(530) 245-6761

Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

Unless the funding for the trial courts is increased by at least \$300 million for FY 2014-15 this Court will be looking at significant layoffs. There is no money left in the fund balance to absorb reductions from prior years. Layoffs will result in the elimination of civil case processing services and further backlogs in family law cases. Without adequate funding restored, office hours will remain reduced, and the branch court will be limited to operating one day per month. The latest judgeship survey shows Shasta needs 3.6 additional judges to accommodate the growing workload. Statewide statistics reflect that Shasta Superior Court is one of 7 courts in the state that show an increase in filings, and only two courts had a higher percentage increase. Shasta provides Collections services for our court and county, as well as for those in Glenn, Yuba, Sierra, Tehama, Lassen and Colusa. We collected over \$13 million in criminal fines and civil fees last year, benefitting our local jurisdictions as well as the State. Every dollar collected results in \$.82 to the State. If layoffs occur, this unit will be disbanded because we receive no trial court funding for these employees.