



# Superior Court of California County of Shasta BUDGET SNAPSHOT

February 2016



JUDICIAL COUNCIL  
OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Gregory S. Gaul, Presiding Judge

Melissa Fowler-Bradley, Court Executive Officer

(530) 245-6761

## Court Service Highlights in the Current Year

- **Enhanced and expanded public service to pro per litigants in Shasta and Trinity Counties**
- **Implemented Recidivism Reduction program**
- **Improved technology to increase public access**

## Court Service Highlights in Detail

### Enhanced and expanded public service to pro per litigants in Shasta and Trinity Counties

Shasta expanded Family Law Facilitator and Self-Help services to neighboring Trinity County. Shasta’s attorney travels to Trinity for in-person assistance and is available by telephone when needed. The attorney also spends an afternoon each week providing assistance at the Child Support Services Office in Shasta County. Self-help services have been expanded to include guardianship and landlord-tenant disputes in addition to family law matters.

### Implemented Recidivism Reduction Grant program to address increases in crime and failures to appear

The program created a partnership between the court and county agencies to reduce crime and more efficiently utilize jail bed space. “Risk to reoffend” research is used to evaluate newly arrested individuals and submit recommendations immediately/electronically to on-call judges for release after hours. Higher risk individuals are released with GPS devices, and compliance checks are regularly conducted in the field to ensure offender accountability.

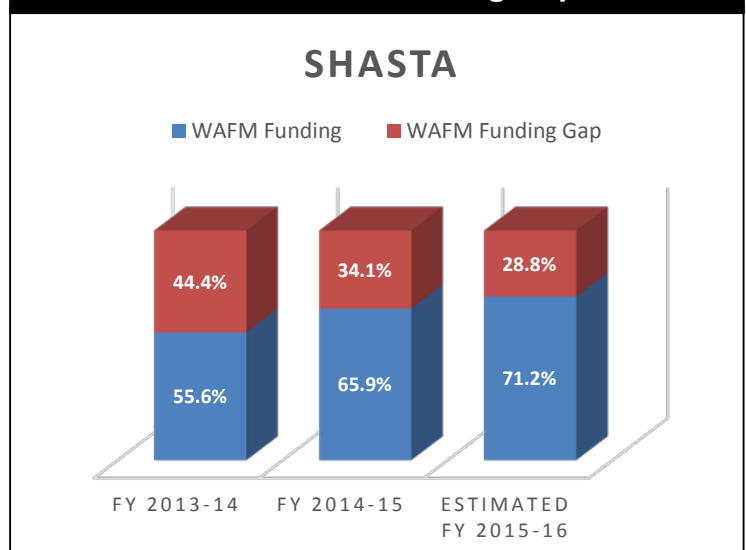
### Technology improvements

The court’s website was updated and expanded to provide much more information online to better assist the public. Many links have been added, including a new application that allows persons seeking a career in the courts to apply online.

## Budget Challenges and Priorities

- Recruiting and retaining qualified employees has been a major obstacle throughout the past year. Many of the positions that were vacated due to layoffs or retirements/resignations have proven very difficult to fill, resulting in continued workload backlogs.
- Inadequate facilities continue to plague our operations and ability to provide service to the public. An entire unit of staff had to be permanently moved to newly leased space at significant cost due to HVAC crash and OSHA complaints pertaining to mold.

## Workload Allocation & Funding Gap (see reverse)



## Court Demographics

Population Served	177,412
Square Miles Covered	3,847
Total Number of Court Facilities	4

## 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 caseweights (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' traditional share of the statewide funding. The WAFM calculation tells us what the trial courts need to function based on current filings, whereas the traditional share was based on the amount each court received from its county not taking into consideration the courts' filings or staff needs.)

Unfortunately, the total WAFM funding needed for all 58 courts exceeds the funding currently appropriated in the state budget. (This is the WAFM funding gap.) California's trial courts are underfunded by at least a collective \$444 million. The underfunding is made worse for those courts that experience a reduction of funding based on their WAFM share. 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, applying it fully only to new money appropriated in the budget.

The rules of application adopted by the Judicial Council are:

- Each year beginning in FY 2013-14, and through/including to 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 12-13 base is distributed according to WAFM;
- All new state funding is 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.