



Superior Court of California County of Sierra BUDGET SNAPSHOT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 2014

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

Service to the public has been negatively affected by low staffing levels, especially at the public counters and in civil case processing functions; Judicial Council's budget committee approved an adjustment to the current funding method allowing for a minimum floor funding of the smallest California rural Courts which will bring much-needed relief.

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- As of December 2012, shared family law facilitator's office and non-grant funded self-help services with Nevada Court were reduced by 25%
- Sierra is now unable to reach or rely upon regular business hours service by the facilitator's staff due to severe reduction in office hours
- Self-Help satellite office contract has been cancelled

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- All court reporting is contracted; the Court reorganized its calendar of cases requiring a court reporter to achieve a 30% cost savings over prior years
- Any single felony case requiring an interpreter can exceed this small court's total annual budget for interpreter services

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

Shared Traffic services court with Plumas Sierra Regional Courthouse has reduced counter/phone hours, closing at 4:00pm Monday thru Thursday and 3:00pm on Friday

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Staff reduced through retirement and voluntary separation
- Court has 33% vacancy rate, including 2 full-time clerks
- All staff furloughed one day per month from July 2009 through December 2010

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

In-Custody transfers are walked through the clerk's office
No restroom facilities on Court offices floor pending further transfer of facilities in County/Court shared Courthouse
FY13/14 Critical Need Courthouse Repairs: Multiple Heat System & Roof/ Back Wall Facilities project approved to start April 2014

Budget Considerations

Budgeted Revenues* FY 2013-2014	\$633,448
<u>Total Revenues* FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>\$832,186</u>
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	-\$198,738
<small>*Excludes Sheriff-Provided Security</small>	
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	-\$15,152
Share of \$60 million augmentation	\$7,615

Court Demographics

Population Served	3,152
Square Miles Covered	962
Total Number of Court Facilities	1+1 shared
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	4
<u>Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>6</u>
Lost Positions in 5 years	-2 (33% reduction)

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. John P. Kennelly
Court Executive Officer	Lee Kirby
Executive Office Contact	(530) 289-3698

Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

- Any further layoffs or vacancies would force court closures as the current staffing level of 3 staff and the court executive officer is below the minimum necessary to open and operate the court.
- Clients seeking self-help services must drive two hours roundtrip, over a 7,000 foot-high mountain pass that is often closed due to snow and ice, from Loyalton to Downieville, for assistance.