

Superior Court of California County of Tehama BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 2015

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

Priorities in FY 2015-16, if adequate funding is allocated, are to restore public counter and telephone hours, re-engineer business practices for improved access, increase revenue by enhancing collection of local fees, expedite mandated reporting, and expand technology by way of a new case management system and e-filing.

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

Self-Help Center previously open 5 days a week was reduced to 4 days a week in FY 2011-12 then to 3 days a week in FY 2012-13. In FY 2015-16, the Center remains open only 3 days a week.

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

Interpreters are scheduled only on specific days to reduce costs.

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

Clerks' offices and telephone hours have been reduced to 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

Closed Court Houses (Corning Branch Court)

Tehama Court's Corning facility closed indefinitely on July 1, 2013

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Implemented furloughs of up to one hour per week for all employees except two managers in FY 2010-11 through FY 2012-13
- Employees are now required to pay their entire contribution toward retirement
- Two clerk vacancies remain unfilled and savings have been redirected for operating expenses
- Vacancy rate is approximately 10%

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

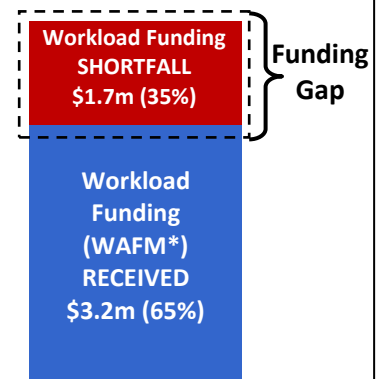
Inadequate security allocation resulted in elimination of the roving bailiff position; a weapons screening officer is reassigned to cover the bailiff position when feasible to do so. The Court is also unable to afford to install security cameras in critical areas throughout the courthouse

Availability of Judicial Officers

Tehama Superior Court has 4 judges and one quarter-time commissioner, however our judicial workload, identifies a need of essentially 6 judicial officers.

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 Tehama was calculated at \$4.9 million but the court received \$3.7 million. See reverse for a detailed explanation of how WAFM is calculated.



Court Demographics

Population Served	63,717
Square Miles Covered	2,962
Total Number of Court Facilities	2

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. John J. Garaventa
Court Executive Officer	Caryn A. Downing
Executive Office Contact	(530) 527-6198

Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

While the Governor's proposed budget provides \$179.9 million in new funding for the judicial branch, Tehama will continue to face challenges for FY 2015-16. Litigants will continue to have a longer wait at the public counters and on the telephones. Mandated reporting to DMV and DOJ will continue to be delayed. If the Court does not receive a mid-year reallocation for the Family Law Facilitator and Child Support Commissioner Grants, services may need to be reduced as the additional funding would have to come from the court operations. Additionally, the cap of 1% on court fund balances, which normally would be available for long term planning, entering into long term contracts, and new courthouse relocation costs, restricts the Court's ability to negotiate better pricing with vendors.

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' 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.