

Superior Court of California County of Tulare BUDGET SNAPSHOT

February 2016



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Gary L. Paden, Presiding Judge

LaRayne Cleek, Court Executive Officer

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Court Service Highlights in the Current Year

- Implemented final stages of new Case Management System for Criminal/Traffic/ and Juvenile
- Providing more services at the South County Justice Center
- Improving online access for the public

Court Service Highlights in Detail

Implemented Criminal, Traffic and Juvenile Modules of the new case management system

We implemented the final eCourt case management system on September 28, 2015. This system is already improving efficiency in case processing. All case types are now on the same case management system.

Providing more services at the South County Justice Center

The Court has returned all case types to the South County Justice Center. This provides significantly more access for residents and law enforcement in the south county region. In addition, the Court also opened a full service Family Law division in the south county, and added a Family Law mediator, which means that south county residents no longer have to travel to Visalia for these services.

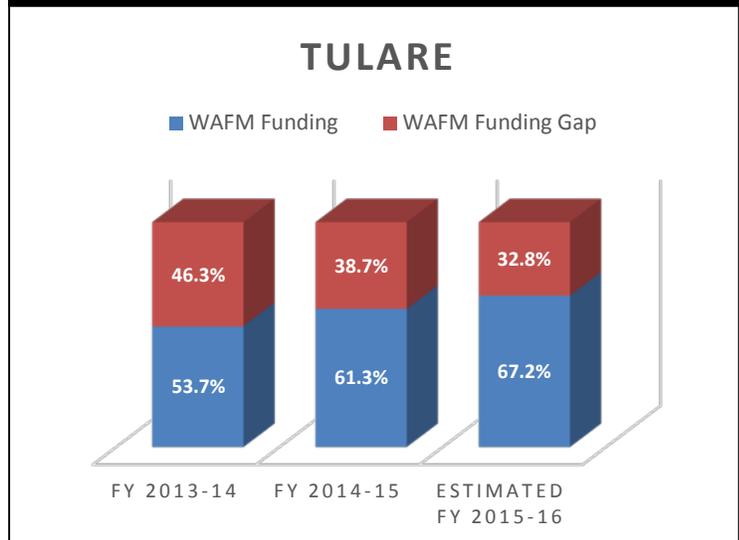
Improving online public access

The court now accommodates e-filing for certain civil documents. Moreover, the public can now search case data from home or wireless devices. We have added functionality to our website that allows it to be viewed in a mobile version for smartphones and tablets, and we are also adding functionality to the Court's web portal to simplify search and remote payment options for court users.

Budget Challenges and Priorities

- The entire 3rd floor of the South County Justice Center is not opened due to a lack of staff and judicial resources, making it sorely underutilized.
- The Court continues to deal with the ongoing weekly challenges of securing certified court interpreters for criminal case types, slowing our ability to provide interpreters in Civil matters.
- The Court does not have the resources to adequately implement a new court records management system.
- Positions remain vacant or frozen due to a lack of funding.

Workload Allocation & Funding Gap (see reverse)



Court Demographics

Population Served	454,143
Square Miles Covered	4,863
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.