

Superior Court of California County of Tuolumne BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 2015

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

Our Court is committed to providing fair and equal access to justice, and a high level of service to our self-represented population, despite deep budget cuts and a resulting staffing shortage that has been the reality since 2007. Our priority remains to find better and more efficient ways to best serve the public, which continues to be impacted by reduced and interrupted service delivery.

Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

- Self-Help Attorney/Family Law Facilitator onsite only 12 hours per week, resulting in increased demand for assistance; appointments are scheduled weeks out
- Dispute Resolution (DRPA) mediators are very successful in bringing Small Claims and Civil Harassment claims to dismissal; Court is currently unable to expand this valuable program

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- Court reporter position remains unfilled due to budget reductions
- Court has no interpreters on staff and no resources to certify staff; interpreters must be brought in from out of county at a premium cost

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Public hours remain 8am to 3pm daily to allow staff to complete processing and meet court deadlines and calendars
- Criminal Division struggles to meet the demand for timely new case entry, and is unable to keep dedicated Justice Partner window

Closed Facilities

Court is unable to lease space needed to restore the Jury Assembly Room, which was of tremendous benefit to the public

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Remaining 12.5 vacancies will remain unfilled
- Staff morale continues to be challenged by workload distributed among fewer staff and resulting backlogs and higher stress levels
- Staff has not received COLA's since 2007

Court Security / Safety / Facilities

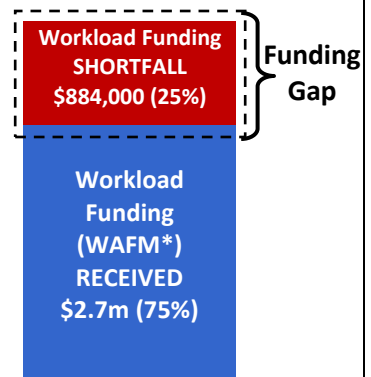
For the past 5 years, the County Sheriff has been unable to assign the perimeter security deputies provided for in the Court/County MOU due to funding and/or recruitment/retention issues

Technology

- As a result of the 1% limit on fund balances, we are unable to replace our aging case management and document management systems, computer servers, and key business applications, potentially resulting in security and resumption vulnerabilities, as well as an inability to address the need to provide digital documents and records
- We are unable to expand our efforts to scan files located at archives for online/e-access and reduced storage needs

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 Tuolumne was calculated at \$3.5 million but the court received \$2.7 million. See reverse for a detailed explanation of how WAFM is calculated.**



Court Demographics

Population Served	53,604
Square Miles Covered	2,274
Total Number of Court Facilities	2

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Donald Segerstrom, Jr.
Court Executive Officer	Jeanine D. Tucker
Executive Office Contact	(209) 533-5556

Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

- *Even with the restoration to the branch of some funding this year, the Court continues to face the challenges of budget and staff reductions and the inability to negotiate COLAs following multiple years of concession bargaining.*
- *All investments to improve delivery of services and enhance efficiencies have stalled due to the 1% limit on our fund balance. We cannot fully automate minute orders in all courtrooms, upgrade the phone system, or contract for payroll services.*

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.