

2019-20 Budget

Potential Issues and Suggested Responses

BBC Members,

We recognize that many aspects of budget proposals and issues can be technical, and questions can be difficult to respond to. With that in mind, it is perfectly reasonable and appropriate to say you are not certain about details and commit the Judicial Council of California budget staff to respond back to the member or their staff. In those instances, simply note the question on the sheets provided in the BBC packet to advise us.

Issue 1

Why didn't the branch submit a request for discretionary funding for the trial courts?

Response:

- The trial courts received \$122.8 million in discretionary funding in the 2018 Budget Act.
- Based on current estimates, trial courts as a whole are funded at over 90% of their need.
- Additionally, filings continue to trend downward reducing workload in the trial courts.
- The 2019-20 Governor's Budget funds many of the priorities identified by the Judicial Council, in particular information technology and facility needs.
- One of the top priorities for funding is for much needed judgeships in courts with the greatest need.

Issue 2

How did trial courts use the \$150 million new funds included in the 2018 Budget Act (\$75m/\$47.8m/\$19.1m)?

Response:

Use Category	Responding Courts
Increase Staffing via hiring	43
Increase Employee Salaries/Benefits	30
Records Management/CMS Improvements	23
Extend Service Hours/Days	22
Technological Improvements	21

Funding for Court Reporters in Family Law

- 39 counties indicated that they were currently fully staffed in court reporters for family law.
- 13 courts indicated that they were not.

Self-help funding

- The new self-help funding has allowed for an expansion of service to the public.
- At least 27 courts were able to expand hours of operation or service locations and the same number of courts were able to expand the number of casetypes that would receive self-help assistance.
- Courts also highlighted new technology, enhancements to allow for more remote access, and increased services in other languages.

Issue 3

Court filings have gone down consistently over the past few years. Why do the trial courts still need more funding?

Response:

Decreased filings do not equate to decreased workload.

- Overall filings declined 5% from last year, but most of the decline is (about 74%) in high volume, low workload matters such as misdemeanors (traffic and non-traffic) and infractions.
- When those casetypes are taken out of the analysis, statewide filings have actually increased by 3%

There has been an increase in filings that are more time-consuming and more resource intensive:

- Mental health matters continue to increase; they are up 8% since last year
- Civil unlimited cases are up again; 5% since last year
- Conservatorship/guardianship and estates/trusts are also up about 5%

Issue 4

There are courts that say they've been harmed by the workload formula. Is that true and has the Judicial Council done anything about that?

Response:

- True, but many more courts benefited, and overall, all Californians benefited by a more equitable sharing of funding.
- The updated funding method that was developed in collaboration with the trial courts and adopted by the Judicial Council in January 2018 continues the Branch's commitment to equity.
- Courts are much closer to equitable funding with the adoption of the workload formula.

Equity maps

Before WAFM: Baseline



After WAFM: FY17



▲ Funding floor applied



Credit: maps produced using R package "choropleth"

- The \$47.8 million included in the 2018 Budget Act moved 34 courts towards equity, without needing to move funding from other courts.
- WAFM was a 5-year funding plan to address inequities in court funding harmful to many courts and communities. The 5-year implementation ended June 2018.
- Based on current estimates, trial courts as a whole are funded at over 90% of their need.