

Serving the Judicial Branch of California in 2016 – Year in Brief

for the Judicial Branch

Stakeholder Partnerships: To inform the council’s statewide policy development and implementation, staff visited, worked with, and shared and gathered information from courts throughout the state as well as stakeholder groups at all levels of government, and professional, community, volunteer, and non-profit organizations.

Youth Courts: More than 300 youth and adults participated in the 11th Youth Court Summit with theme of Generational Agents of Change. A project of the Judicial Council and the CA Association of Youth Courts, the summit brings together bench officers, community leaders, court staff, youth, youth focused organizations, and juvenile justice and education partners to share ideas and best practices. Youth design and lead workshops along with youth court professionals. California currently has 78 youth courts in 21 counties.

for the Superior Courts

Financial Management: Issued 236,607 jury checks, 4,500 tax forms, and \$2.3 billion of accounts payable checks; reconciled 232 bank accounts monthly; processed 87,676 court deposits totaling \$3.9 billion, and 719 electronic fund transfers totaling \$975 million.

Payroll Support: Added a 12th court, Superior Court of Humboldt County, to the Phoenix Payroll system; implemented, for all courts participating in Phoenix Payroll, online access to W-2s through the Employee Self-Service function; and completed compliance reporting processes to meet the requirements of the Affordable Care Act and the CA Government Compensation reporting program.

Labor Relations: Assistance as chief negotiator/consultant for successor memoranda of understanding, personnel policy meet and confer, or side letter bargaining for 20 trial courts; labor relations advice on 62 different matters across 27 trial courts including contract administration and application, grievances, request for information, and unfair practice charge responses.

for the Public

Online Newsroom: A new, searchable [Newsroom](#) on the California Courts public website spotlights important messages and key initiatives via news releases, feature stories, and other web content with the goal of increasing public access to information and understanding of the court system.

Court Construction: Five new courthouses were completed to serve the residents of [Kings](#), [Sutter](#), [Merced](#), [Tehama](#), and [Santa Clara](#) Counties. Construction is under way on new courthouses for [Alameda](#), [San Joaquin](#), and [San Diego](#) Counties.

for the Chief Justice

Civic Learning and Engagement: Stemming from the Chief Justice’s [civic learning initiative](#), which seeks to increase access to justice by improving civic knowledge and participation in California K-12 education, annual Civic Learning Awards were presented to schools that serve as models in providing civic education—nine awards of excellence and more than 70 awards of merit. The initiative also contributed to a greater focus on civic learning in the new California History-Social Science Framework for educators, approved in 2016.

Judicial Resources: Approximately 33,000 service days were coordinated for courts using the Assigned Judges Program.

Future Reforms: Supported five working groups of the Commission on the Future of California’s Court System as they finalize their recommendations for the Chief Justice for presentation in 2017; held four public comment sessions in the state; targeted stakeholder groups for input and insight; and conducted research and coordinated meetings for the 50+ commission membership.

for the Council

Operations: Prepared 210 reports on judicial administration issues for the 11 public business meetings of the Judicial Council, and supported 30 standing [advisory committees](#) and task forces and working groups.

Advocacy: On legislative, policy, and budget matters, monitored and reviewed more than 600 bills, facilitated more than 200 meetings between legislators/legislative staff and Judicial Council and Bench-Bar Coalition members, and coordinated participation by presiding judges, court executives, and members of the civil and criminal bar, at legislative hearings. Supported the council’s [Policy Coordination and Liaison Committee](#) in formulating positions on more than 70 legislative bills. Four council-sponsored proposals were signed into law addressing: Court records-misdemeanors, disposition of courthouse property, the conversion of subordinate judicial officers to judges, and the reduction of peremptory challenges in misdemeanor trials.

for the Supreme Court and Courts of Appeal

Access to Judicial Proceedings: [Began live streaming Supreme Court oral argument sessions](#). The broadcasts have real-time captioning in English and Spanish, and a companion document to the stream that identifies the justices, attorneys, cases, and the issue(s) under review. The broadcasts are also archived on the California Courts public website.

Technology Enhancements: An electronic filing solution for expediting document filing and processing was deployed for the Courts of Appeal of the fourth appellate district in Riverside, San Diego, and Santa Ana, and the sixth appellate district in San Jose.

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Fiscal Resource Management

Budget Services: Helped develop a process that has allowed 16 trial courts access to almost \$8.3 million allocated from the Trial Court Trust Fund to complete their case management system implementation.

Contract Administration: Managed 66 contract solicitations and processed 833 new agreements or purchase orders. Also administered 48 contracts for dependency counsel representation for parents and children on behalf of 19 volunteer courts participating in the Judicial Council Dependency Representation Administration Funding and Training program. The average number of clients served statewide on a calendar year is approximately 152,770.

Research, Innovation, and Efficiency

Court Innovations Grant Program: To help promote innovative and efficient court programs that serve the public, a program and application structure was developed and issued for the \$25 million competitive [grant program](#) for trial and appellate courts, which resulted in the submission by courts of 117 innovations grant proposals for consideration for grant awards by the council in March of 2017.

Trial Court Workload Resource Assessment: Completed an update to the workload study—the foundation of the trial court funding model—that helps ensure that the needs of the trial courts are being accurately measured and addressed. This effort involved 15 courts and thousands of court employee participants. Staff traveled to the courts over the course of several months to interview staff, collect and then compile all of the data used to help make budget allocations through the Workload Allocation Funding Methodology process.

Education, Training, and Development

Professional Development: Delivered more than 130 statewide live programs, 30 regional judicial and administrative programs, and more than 100 distance mediated products, including broadcasts, online courses, webinars, and videos. In addition, maintained 45 judicial benchbooks, guides, and handbooks.

Technology

California Courts Protective Order Registry: A new data exchange was delivered to key case management vendors to enable the electronic exchange of protective order data and forms, eliminating the need for manual routing and speeding up processing time for both the registry and the CA Department of Justice. This registry, which currently contains 106,765 active orders, serves 43 courts and their respective law enforcement agencies, as well as providing read-only access 13 tribal courts throughout the state.

E-Filing: Provided subject matter expertise for adoption of state-wide technical information exchange standards for e-filing and substantive rule changes to facilitate modern e-business and e-service practices including searchability of e-filed documents, bookmarking of electronic exhibits, and changes to appellate forms to reflect e-filing practices.

Access

Remote Interpreting: A video remote interpreting pilot project was developed with the goal of expanding language services for limited English proficient and other court users throughout the state. Video remote interpreting is a core element of the Judicial Council's Language Access Plan.

Toolkit: A [Language Access Toolkit](#) provided new resources for courts to help further improve access for court users.

Fairness

Criminal Justice: Secured a grant from the US Department of Justice to develop a tool to assist courts in the determination of ability to pay criminal fines and fees; supported development of new Rules of Court to standardize procedures and improve notice to defendants in infraction cases; developed sample forms for court use in response to the passage of an initiative legalizing marijuana; and developed a series of webinars on national drug court standards.

Effective Program Administration

Accountability: Audits were completed for five superior courts (Contra Costa, Fresno, Humboldt, Kern, and Kings), and streamlined the audit approach to focus on key operational and risk management issues, and value add processes for greater efficiency at the superior courts.

Workers' Compensation: 1,230 open workers' compensation claims were managed through the Judicial Branch Workers' Compensation Program for trial and appellate courts, and state level judicial branch entities.

Legal Services: Managed 521 claims and lawsuits brought against the trial and appellate courts, 59 labor arbitrations, and 20 matters before the Public Employment Relations Board; responded to 143 requests from the trial and appellate courts for legal advice related to court administration; and responded to 128 requests from the trial and appellate courts for legal assistance in the area of transactions and business operations.

Managing Court Facilities: 69,243 service work orders were completed in 2016, and 1,800 facilities modifications requests were funded for \$73.5 million.