



Superior Court of California County of Fresno BUDGET SNAPSHOT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 2014

Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2014-15

- Increase public access, which has been severely limited by budget cuts, courthouse closures, and staff reductions.
- Provide our staff with a cost of living adjustment; restore step increases; stop all furloughs that result in salary reductions.
- Maintain and increase the use of technology to provide efficiencies to increase access at all levels and for all users.
- Manage sufficient cash on hand to make payroll; a 1% reserve is inadequate.

Self-Help / Facilitator Services / Language Assistance

- Turn away approximately 250-350 customers a week, a 400% reduction in the quantity of public served
- 80% of all Family cases are *pro per*, emphasizing the critical need for our self-help center
- Languages other than English spoken at home by 43% of population

Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- Laid off all reporters in FY 2012-13 from non-mandated case types
- Users must bring their own reporters in civil, family law, and probate cases

Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Clerk's office hours have been reduced for all civil case types
- Self Help Center closed every Wednesday

Closed Courtrooms (12) and Court Houses (9)

- Closed 9 outlying courts and 1 downtown location (71% reduction)
- Closed numerous courtrooms as a result
- Felony Home Courts has daily calendar of 80 to 140 cases per day

Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- Overall vacancy rate is 26%; an additional 5% over FY 2012-13
- Backlogs increasing due to severe reduction in staff
- Laid off eight full time and 2 part time employees in FY 2012-13
- All employees furloughed 96 hours per year since FY 2008-09

Availability of Judicial Officers

We have one unfilled judgeship, and two approved but, as yet, unfunded judgeships

Budget Considerations

Budgeted Revenues* FY 2013-2014	\$55,340,951
<u>Total Revenues* FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>\$59,609,630</u>
Five-Year Revenue Reduction	-\$4,268,679
<small>*Excludes Sheriff-Provided Security</small>	
Current Year Unfunded Employee Health Benefits and Retirement Costs	-\$2,544,918
Share of \$60 million augmentation	\$1,538,195

Court Demographics

Population Served	945,711
Square Miles Covered	6,018
Total Number of Court Facilities	5
Filled Staff Positions FY 2013-2014	429
<u>Filled Staff Positions FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>542</u>
Lost Positions in 5 years	-113 (-21% reduction)
Positions lost since June '13	-30 (26% vacancy rate)

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Jonathan B. Conklin
Court Executive Officer	Sheran L. Morton
Executive Office Contact	(559) 457-2010

Budget Challenges for FY 2014-15

- Inability to make each biweekly payroll out of a one percent reserve fund.
- Dire need for **ongoing** funds to restore cuts our staff has painfully endured for each of the past 4 years including furloughs, zero cost of living adjustments, freezes on step increases and in-combination promotions.
- Unreimbursed benefit costs are more than \$2.5 million dollars.
- Increasing access to court users requires more employees to timely complete the work, which requires more **ongoing** money.
- Expand the use of technology to increase access to all users.