



Superior Court of California County of Sacramento BUDGET SNAPSHOT



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Kevin R. Culhane, Presiding Judge

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Court Service Highlights in the Current Year

- **Implementation of traffic ticket/infractions amnesty program**
- **Launching of a pilot Veterans Treatment Court**
- **Managing Proposition 47 workload**

Court Service Highlights in Detail

Implementation of amnesty program

The court worked with county and private collection partners to ensure that the amnesty program was available to the public starting on the inception date. Through December 31, 2015 the court had processed nearly 3,000 participants and over 9,300 cases, including the return of 72 previously suspended driver's licenses.

Veterans Treatment Court

Veterans Treatment Court is a new pilot court established in collaboration with law enforcement and community treatment providers. The goal of this pilot is to offer veterans of the United States Armed Forces a comprehensive, treatment-based alternative to incarceration for non-violent criminal offenses. Veterans who qualify participate in treatment, counseling, and various other services for a period of 12 to 18 months. Upon successful completion of the program, the majority of veterans will have the charges against them dismissed.

This court is in addition to our other collaborative treatment courts - Drug Court, Community Realignment Re-entry Court, Loaves & Fishes Court (Homeless Court), Mental Health Court, and Violation of Probation (VOP) Court.

Prop 47 workload

The court has utilized one-time funding to implement the various components of Proposition 47. In so doing, the court has processed approximately 5,204 cases related to Prop 47 workload.

Other court highlights

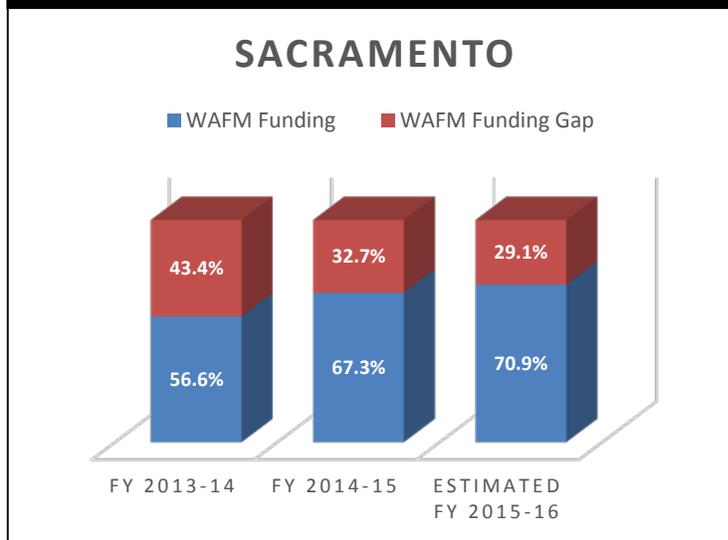
New Courthouse

The Court recently obtained approval for a scope change to permit construction of a single unified courthouse in downtown Sacramento. The project is currently at the preliminary design stage.

Budget Challenges and Priorities

- Although a few limited services have been restored, there continues to be reduced services for Family Law litigants such as limited in-person procedural aid, very few self-help workshops, and minimal services for domestic violence victims.
- Staff reductions of more than 190 people since 2008 continue to result in backlogs of documents and pleadings in many court areas. The limited staff also results in reduced services to the public such as limited telephone hours and the closure of a number of public-counter service windows.
- Despite the lack of funding, we continue to make needed improvements to various outdated case management systems to increase efficiency and public access.

Workload Allocation & Funding Gap (see reverse)



Court Demographics

Population Served	1,454,406
Square Miles Covered	996
Total Number of Court Facilities	10

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.