



# Superior Court of California

## County of San Luis Obispo

### BUDGET SNAPSHOT



February 2015

#### Budget and Program Priorities for FY 2015-16

- Restore self-help services to 2008 level
- Maintain or increase collaborative courts in light of Proposition 47
- Increase court efficiencies through deployment of Odyssey Case Management System

#### Self-Help / Mediation / Facilitator Services

Increase the use of interns and volunteers to restore self-help services

#### Court Reporters / Interpreter Services

- Maintain court reporters in family law
- Expand the use of interpreters in civil matters

#### Counters / Clerks / Telephones

- Maintain current counter hours of 8:30 -4:00, Monday – Friday
- Due to staffing shortages fewer clerks will be available to help customers and answer phones

#### Courtrooms and Court Houses

Closure of the South County Courthouse in Grover Beach resulted in closure of one of the court’s 15 courtrooms, which handled criminal misdemeanors, traffic, small claims, unlawful detainers, and limited civil; this closure requires police agencies and the public to travel farther for these services

#### Staff Impacts / Furloughs / Layoffs / Unfilled Vacancies

- 26% fewer staff than FY 2007-08
- Only critical positions are being filled
- Half of all management positions unfilled

#### Court Security / Safety / Facilities

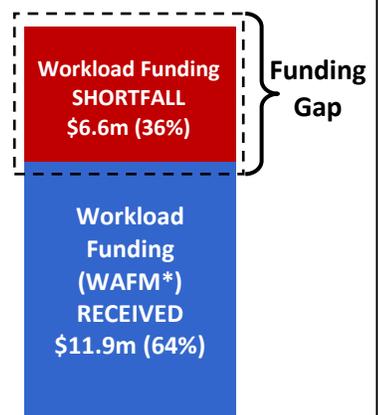
- Insufficient building maintenance including paint, carpet, janitorial and landscaping
- Insufficient lock-ups and in-custody holding in the courtrooms result in security concerns

#### Availability of Judicial Officers

Staffing shortages have reduced our ability cover courtrooms with court reporters and courtroom clerks. Some proceedings must proceed without court reporters

#### 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 San Luis Obispo was calculated at \$18.5 million but the court received \$11.9 million. See reverse for a detailed explanation of how WAFM is calculated.



#### Court Demographics

Population Served	272,357
Square Miles Covered	3,616
Total Number of Court Facilities	4

#### Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Dodie A. Harman
Court Executive Officer	Susan E. Matherly
Executive Office Contact	(805) 781-1528

#### Budget Challenges for FY 2015-16

The 1% Reserve is the greatest challenge to San Luis Obispo Courts. Without reserves, we are unable to fund cash shortfalls within a given fiscal year and may require us to reduce access to justice by cutting staff and services to maintain sufficient cash flow. Reserves allow the court to augment unfunded and under-funded statutory and legislative mandates.

## 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.