



Judicial Council of California

455 Golden Gate Avenue · San Francisco, California 94102-3688

www.courts.ca.gov

REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 25-117

For business meeting on July 18, 2025

Title

Allocations and Reimbursements to Trial Courts: Funding for Court Reporters in Family Law and Civil Law Case Types

Report Type

Action Required

Effective Date

July 18, 2025

Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected

None

Date of Report

June 16, 2025

Recommended by

Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee
Hon. Jonathan B. Conklin, Chair
Ms. Rebecca Fleming, Vice-Chair

Contact

Marshall Comia, 916-263-1905
Marshall.Comia@jud.ca.gov

Executive Summary

Senate Bill 170 (Stats. 2021, ch. 240), which amended the Budget Act of 2021, included a \$30 million ongoing General Fund to the Judicial Council for establishing a methodology to allocate funding to all trial courts to increase the number of court reporters in family law and civil cases. The budget language in the Budget Act of 2022 and ongoing expanded the use of this funding; however, these changes do not impact how these funds are allocated to the courts. The Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee recommends approving an allocation of the ongoing \$30 million to all trial courts, as specified, for fiscal year 2025–26.

Recommendation

The Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee recommends that the Judicial Council, effective July 18, 2025, approve the \$30 million allocation to the trial courts as outlined in Attachment A.

This recommendation was presented to the Judicial Branch Budget Committee on May 16, 2025, and approved for consideration by the Judicial Council.

Relevant Previous Council Action

The Judicial Council approved the allocation methodology for the first year of this funding in fiscal year (FY) 2021–22 at its meeting on January 21, 2022, and directed council staff to update the allocation methodology used for this ongoing funding, accounting for the most recent data available each year thereafter. The council subsequently approved the allocations for FY 2023–24 at its meeting on July 21, 2023, based on the same allocation methodology but with updated data. The council approved the FY 2024–25 allocations for \$20 million at its meeting on July 12, 2024, and directed staff to survey the courts for a one-time redistribution of unspent funds in FY 2024–25 to ensure the full appropriation is maximized.

The council subsequently approved an additional allocation of \$10 million for FY 2024–25 at its meeting on September 20, 2024, for a total of \$30 million in ongoing funding for court reporters, completing the distribution of court reporter funding for FY 2024–25 to the trial courts. At its meeting on February 21, 2025, the council approved a midyear reallocation of \$820,000 of projected unspent court reporter funding for FY 2024–25, which was available for the one-time redistribution and allocated in proportion to the total amount of funding requested by courts.

Analysis/Rationale

In FY 2021–22, the Funding Methodology Subcommittee of the Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee (TCBAC) established the Ad Hoc Court Reporter Funding Subcommittee, consisting of members of TCBAC, to develop an allocation methodology recommendation for the first year of funding. The recommendation was presented to TCBAC at its meeting on November 30, 2021, and to the Judicial Branch Budget Committee on December 7, 2021. The Judicial Council approved the recommendation at its business meeting on January 21, 2022,¹ and directed council staff to update the allocation methodology on an ongoing basis using the most recent data available.

The council-approved allocation methodology was developed based on the *2020 Update of the Judicial Needs Assessment* (JNA), which was the most current study at the time. Judicial workload, as described by the JNA, is measured by a court’s assessed judicial need and was identified as the best metric for the allocation methodology because of the parallel workload drivers between judgeships and court reporters. In addition, the assessed judicial need data includes separate noncriminal and criminal judicial workload metrics by court. Using the noncriminal judicial need, consistent with the requirements in the budget language to increase the number of court reporters in family law and civil case types, the proposed methodology for allocating the funds to the trial courts is as follows:

¹ Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *Allocations and Reimbursements to Trial Courts: SB 170 Funding for Court Reporters in Family Law and Civil Law Case Types* (Dec. 15, 2021), <https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=10358386&GUID=7F337175-0808-4A38-AC68-F7AB5C9403FD>.

1. Identify the proportion of judicial workload, as measured by the assessed judicial need, for noncriminal need by court.
2. Apply a \$25,000 funding floor to all courts. Doing so would result in an increased amount—compared to using a purely proportional calculation to 11 courts totaling \$275,000—which represents an approximate 0.25 full-time equivalent using the average salary for court reporters from Schedule 7A.
3. After applying the funding floor amount to 11 courts, allocate the remaining \$29.725 million proportionally to all other courts based on their noncriminal judicial need.
4. Allocate the funding in one lump sum, on council approval.

The assessed judicial need data used in the allocation methodology for FY 2025–26 was updated based on the 2022 JNA,² and the details of the allocations by court are included as Attachment A.

Annual reconciliation process

Because this funding is intended solely to cover the costs associated with increasing the number of court reporters, any unspent funds are required to revert to the General Fund each fiscal year. Judicial Council staff have already developed a reconciliation process to pull back any remaining funds not used by the end of the year.

Policy implications

No policy implications are associated with this report.

Comments

Public comments were not solicited for this proposal because the recommendation is within the Judicial Council’s purview to approve without circulation.

Alternatives considered

The recommended allocations are based on the methodology approved by the council in January 2022. The committee did not consider modifying the previously approved allocation methodology other than updating the data used.

Fiscal and Operational Impacts

The recommended allocation methodology would provide courts with funding to increase the number of court reporters, as intended by the budget language.

² Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *The Need for New Judgeships in the Superior Courts: 2022 Update of the Judicial Needs Assessment* (Nov. 2022), https://courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/courts/default/2024-12/report-to-the-legislature_2022-update-of-the-judicial-needs-assessment.pdf.

Attachments and Links

1. Attachment A: Court Reporter Allocations for FY 2025–26

Court Reporter Allocations for FY 2025–26

Initial Allocation of \$30M based on Noncriminal 2022 AJN				Allocation of \$30M with Funding Floor of \$25,000					
Court	Noncrimin al AJN *	Proportion of Statewide AJN (%)	Proportion of \$30M	Funding Floor Court?	Floor Funding	Revised AJN			
						Proportion for Non-floor Courts(%)	Allocation of Non floor Funding	Final Allocation	Change with Floor
Statewide	1,067	100	\$30,000,000		\$275,000		\$29,725,000	\$30,000,000	\$0
Alameda	36.8	3.45	\$1,035,628			3.45	\$1,031,041	\$1,031,041	-\$4588
Alpine	0.1	0.01	1772	X	\$25,000			25000	23228
Amador	1.1	0.11	31681			0.11	31541	31541	-140
Butte	6.1	0.57	170509			0.57	169753	169753	-755
Calaveras	1.3	0.12	36871			0.12	36707	36707	-163
Colusa	0.5	0.04	13233	X	25000	0.04		25000	11767
Contra Costa	23.2	2.18	653080			2.19	650187	650187	-2893
Del Norte	1.2	0.11	34107			0.11	33956	33956	-151
El Dorado	4.2	0.40	118797			0.40	118271	118271	-526
Fresno	28.4	2.67	799663			2.68	796121	796121	-3543
Glenn	0.8	0.08	22664	X	25000	0.08		25000	2336
Humboldt	4.5	0.42	126583			0.42	126022	126022	-561
Imperial	4.4	0.41	124280			0.42	123729	123729	-551
Inyo	0.5	0.05	14140	X	25000	0.05		25000	10860
Kern	24.9	2.33	699077			2.34	695980	695980	-3097
Kings	4.5	0.42	125132			0.42	124578	124578	-554
Lake	2.4	0.22	66690			0.22	66394	66394	-295
Lassen	0.8	0.07	22384	X	25000	0.07		25000	2616
Los Angeles	341.3	31.99	9595553			32.14	9553044	9553044	-42508
Madera	6.0	0.56	167484			0.56	166742	166742	-742
Marin	5.1	0.48	143271			0.48	142636	142636	-635
Mariposa	0.4	0.03	10220	X	25000	0.03		25000	14780
Mendocino	2.7	0.25	74961			0.25	74629	74629	-332
Merced	7.3	0.68	204434			0.68	203529	203529	-906
Modoc	0.4	0.04	10649	X	25000	0.04		25000	14351
Mono	0.3	0.03	8108	X	25000	0.03		25000	16892
Monterey	9.4	0.88	264158			0.88	262987	262987	-1170
Napa	3.6	0.34	101381			0.34	100932	100932	-449
Nevada	2.6	0.24	72625			0.24	72304	72304	-322
Orange	77.0	7.22	2165597			7.25	2156003	2156003	-9594
Placer	9.3	0.88	262673			0.88	261509	261509	-1164
Plumas	0.6	0.06	18029	X	25000	0.06		25000	6971
Riverside	62.8	5.88	1764521			5.91	1756704	1756704	-7817
Sacramento	43.7	4.10	1228562			4.11	1223119	1223119	-5443
San Benito	1.4	0.14	40658			0.14	40478	40478	-180
San Bernardino	69.2	6.49	1946259			6.52	1937637	1937637	-8622
San Diego	77.9	7.30	2188860			7.33	2179163	2179163	-9697
San Francisco	25.1	2.35	706220			2.37	703092	703092	-3129
San Joaquin	19.9	1.87	560134			1.88	557652	557652	-2481
San Luis Obispo	6.0	0.56	167914			0.56	167170	167170	-744
San Mateo	13.5	1.26	378323			1.27	376647	376647	-1676
Santa Barbara	9.2	0.86	259174			0.87	258026	258026	-1148
Santa Clara	30.9	2.90	869883			2.91	866029	866029	-3854
Santa Cruz	5.2	0.49	146710			0.49	146060	146060	-650
Shasta	6.2	0.58	174268			0.58	173496	173496	-772

Court Reporter Allocations for FY 2025–26

Initial Allocation of \$30M based on Noncriminal 2022 AJN				Allocation of \$30M with Funding Floor of \$25,000					
Court	Noncrimin al AJN *	Proportion of Statewide AJN (%)	Proportion of \$30M	Revised AJN					
				Funding Floor Court?	Floor Funding	Proportion for Non-floor Courts(%)	Allocation of Non floor Funding	Final Allocation	Change with Floor
Statewide	1,067	100	\$30,000,000		\$275,000		\$29,725,000	\$30,000,000	\$0
Sierra	0.1	0.01	2864	X	25000	0.01		25000	22136
Siskiyou	1.5	0.14	42968			0.14	42778	42778	-190
Solano	11.0	1.03	308123			1.03	306758	306758	-1365
Sonoma	10.8	1.01	304216			1.02	302868	302868	-1348
Stanislaus	14.1	1.32	395570			1.32	393817	393817	-1752
Sutter	3.0	0.28	83779			0.28	83408	83408	-371
Tehama	2.3	0.22	65022			0.22	64733	64733	-288
Trinity	0.7	0.06	18668	X	25000	0.06		25000	6332
Tulare	13.3	1.24	373261			1.25	371607	371607	-1654
Tuolumne	1.9	0.18	54387			0.18	54146	54146	-241
Ventura	18.0	1.68	505389			1.69	503150	503150	-2239
Yolo	5.3	0.50	149071			0.50	148410	148410	-660
Yuba	2.5	0.23	69763			0.23	69454	69454	-309

* Assessed Judicial Need (AJN) based on the updated 2022 data.

Noncriminal case types: Civil, Family, Juvenile, Probate, Mental Health

Criminal case types: Felony, Misdemeanors, Infractions