



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 22-122

For business meeting on July 15, 2022

Title

Report to the Legislature: Supplement to Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts

Agenda Item Type

Information Only

Date of Report

June 24, 2022

Submitted by

Judicial Council staff
Don Will, Deputy Director
Center for Families, Children & the Courts

Contact

Don Will, 415-865-7557 don.will@jud.ca.gov

Executive Summary

On June 15, 2022, the Judicial Council's Center for Families, Children & the Courts submitted to the Legislature and Department of Finance the attached supplement to the *Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts*, which was provided to the Legislature in January 2021.

Relevant Previous Council Action

The Budget Act of 2018 (Stats. 2018, ch. 29) provided \$19.1 million per year in additional funding for self-help centers for a three-year period. It required that the Judicial Council prepare a cost-benefit report assessing the costs and benefits of each method by which self-help services are provided and how cost-effectiveness may vary across issue areas. *Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts* was provided to the Legislature in January 2021 and may be accessed at www.courts.ca.gov/7466.htm. The report was also provided to the Judicial Council on January 22, 2021, as an informational item.¹ The attached supplement to that report is provided in accordance with the Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 69).

¹ Judicial Council of Cal., Center for Families, Children & Cts., *Report to the Legislature: Impact of Self-Help Expansion in California Courts* (Jan. 22, 2021),

<https://jcc.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4743131&GUID=D43C742E-B101-4F56-A706-8B6B917F1A0C>.

Analysis/Rationale

The report to the Legislature was developed according to the directive in the Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 69).

Fiscal Impact and Policy Implications

No costs or policy implications are associated with the submission of this report.

Attachments and Links

1. Report to the Legislature: Supplement to Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts



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Chief Justice of California
Chair of the Judicial Council

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Chair, Executive and Planning Committee

HON. DAVID M. RUBIN
Chair, Judicial Branch Budget Committee
Chair, Litigation Management Committee

HON. MARLA O. ANDERSON
Chair, Legislation Committee

HON. CARIN T. FUJISAKI
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MR. MARTIN HOSHINO
Administrative Director
Judicial Council

June 10, 2022

Ms. Cara L. Jenkins
Legislative Counsel
1021 O Street, Suite 3210
Sacramento, California 95814

Ms. Erika Contreras
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento, California 95814

Ms. Sue Parker
Chief Clerk of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 319
Sacramento, California 95814

Ms. Keely Martin Bosler
Director, California Department of
Finance
915 L Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: *Supplement to Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts.*

Dear Ms. Jenkins, Ms. Contreras, Ms. Parker, and Ms. Bosler:

Under the Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 69), the Judicial Council is submitting *Supplement to Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts*, assessing the costs and benefits of each method by which self-help services are provided and how cost-effectiveness may vary across issue areas.

If you have any questions related to this report, please contact Mr. Don Will, Deputy Director, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, at 415-865-7557 or don.will@jud.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Martin Hoshino
Administrative Director
Judicial Council

June 10, 2022

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MH/DW

Attachment

cc: Eric Dang, Counsel, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins
Alf Brandt, Senior Counsel, Office of Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Shaun Naidu, Policy Consultant, Office of Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Anita Lee, Principal Fiscal and Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Gabriel Petek, Legislative Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Jessie Romine, Budget Analyst, Department of Finance
Margie Estrada, Chief Counsel, Senate Judiciary Committee
Mary Kennedy, Chief Counsel, Senate Public Safety Committee
Nora Brackbill, Consultant, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Matthew Fleming, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Hans Hemann, Principal Consultant, Joint Legislative Budget Committee
Eric Csizmar, Consultant, Senate Republican Policy Office
Morgan Branch, Consultant, Senate Republican Policy Office
Matt Osterli, Consultant, Senate Republican Fiscal Office
Alison Merrilees, Chief Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Sandy Uribe, Chief Counsel, Assembly Public Safety Committee
Jennifer Kim, Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee
Jay Dickenson, Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Kimberly Horiuchi, Principal Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Lyndsay Mitchell, Consultant, Assembly Republican Office of Policy & Budget
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Daryl Thomas, Consultant, Assembly Republican Office of Policy & Budget
Amy Leach, Minute Clerk, Office of Assembly Chief Clerk
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MR. MARTIN HOSHINO
Administrative Director
Judicial Council

Report title: *Supplement to Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts*

Statutory citation: Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 69)

Date of report: June 10, 2022

The Judicial Council has submitted a report to the Legislature and the Department of Finance in accordance with the Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 69).

This is a supplement to the Judicial Council's 2021 report, *Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts (Impact)*, provided to the Legislature in January 2021. The supplement uses the data collected for the *Impact* report to calculate monetized costs and benefits for those services described in that report and available to self-represented litigants statewide. All findings are consistent with the findings of the *Impact* report and present the data in the framework of cost-benefit research.

The full report can be accessed at www.courts.ca.gov/7466.htm. A printed copy of the report may be obtained by calling 415-865-7557.

Supplement to Impact of Self- Help Center Expansion in California Courts

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

JUNE 2022



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA

OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS DIVISION
CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN & THE COURTS

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

Hon. Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye
*Chief Justice of California and
Chair of the Judicial Council*

Martin Hoshino
*Administrative Director
Judicial Council*

OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS DIVISION

Robert Oyung
Chief Operating Officer

CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN & THE COURTS

Charlene Depner
Director

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*Deputy Director
Primary Author of Report*

Executive Summary

The services provided by court-based self-help centers in California create substantial, quantifiable financial benefits for the members of the public who use the services and for the courts that operate the centers. Data from the Judicial Council's *Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts* (Jan. 2021) demonstrates that in calendar year 2019, the services:

- Provided a benefit to self-represented litigants in avoided costs of as much as \$242.00 per case filing;
- Provided a benefit to court operations in avoided costs of as much as \$315.00 per case filing;
- For one-on-one services, provided a benefit to the self-represented litigant and the court of an estimated \$3.10 to \$4.18 for each dollar the service cost; and
- For workshops, provided a benefit to the self-represented litigant and the court of an estimated \$4.06 to \$5.49 for each dollar the service cost.¹

Self-help centers demonstrated that by greatly improving the efficiency of the process of seeking information and resolving a court matter, the public and the courts both achieve significant savings.

Introduction

This is a supplement to the *Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts* (“*Impact*” report), provided to the Legislature in January 2021. The supplement is provided in accordance with the Budget Act of 2021:

The Judicial Council shall complete the cost-benefit analysis of self-help services originally required by the Budget Act of 2018 (Chs. 29 and 30, Stats. 2018). At a minimum, this analysis shall calculate the monetary value of identified benefits, identify the corresponding costs, and identify the net benefit of the various self-help delivery methods by case type. Costs and benefits shall also include the impacts of self-help services on trial court operations. The completed cost-benefit analysis shall be submitted to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2023. (Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 69).)

The supplement uses the data collected for the *Impact* report to calculate monetized costs and benefits for the services that are described in that report and are available to self-represented

¹ See appendix Table B and Table C.

litigants statewide. All findings are consistent with the findings of the *Impact* report while presenting the data in the framework of cost-benefit research.

Summary

Self-help centers avoid \$3 to \$5 in costs to public and the courts for each dollar the service costs.

The court-based self-help center assists the self-represented litigant by providing information on the court process and ensuring that the litigant has filled out the court forms completely and with all the necessary information for the clerk to process the filings and the judge to review them and make a decision. By doing so, the work of the self-help center increases the efficiency of the court process and decreases the number of times a litigant has to interact with the court to complete all the steps in a case.

This analysis looks only at the costs and benefits related directly to the member of the public's interaction with the self-help center and the court. The assistance received by the self-represented litigant at the self-help center allows the litigant to avoid additional trips to court and lost wages. The increased efficiency of the court process brought about by the self-help center's assistance allows the court to avoid the costs of longer or additional courtroom hearings and court clerk operations.

The services provided by court-based self-help centers to self-represented litigants in calendar year 2019 and detailed in the *Impact* report provided a significant return on the investment made by the \$19.1 million self-help funding expansion of fiscal year 2018–19. Table 1 summarizes benefit-to-cost net amounts and ratios for the two services provided by almost all courts—one-on-one extended encounters and workshops—shown for the three case types that are also provided by almost all courts: family, civil, and probate/guardianship. All service and case types demonstrate a positive ratio of monetized benefits per filing. This ratio is calculated by dividing the sum of benefits to the litigants and courts by the sum of costs to litigants and courts. A case filing for civil or family litigants who received self-help assistance through one-on-one services yielded more than \$3.31 for every \$1.00 spent by the courts; more complex probate cases yielded approximately \$1.87 for every \$1.00 spent.² The weighted average benefits ratio across all case types for one-to-one services was \$3.32 per filing. Civil workshops yielded \$5.87 per filing in benefits for every \$1.00 spent by the courts, with family workshops at \$4.11 and probate at \$3.00.

The \$322 in net benefits provided by self-help centers for each filing includes savings to litigants of \$112 in avoided costs from participating in the court process and \$210 in avoided costs to the courts (see Table 7).

² All costs and benefits were calculated in three ranges and are reported in appendix Table B. The median range of costs and benefits is used for all tables and findings in the narrative of this supplement.

Table 1. Benefit-to-Cost Amount and Ratio per Filing*			
One-on-One	Family	Civil	Probate
Benefits	\$322	\$322	\$322
Costs	\$97	\$89	\$172
Net Amount	\$225	\$233	\$150
Ratio	3.31	3.63	1.87
Workshop			
Benefits	\$322	\$322	\$322
Costs	\$78	\$55	\$107
Net Amount	\$244	\$267	\$215
Ratio	4.11	5.87	3.00
* Discrepancies in ratios are the result of rounding; see appendix Table B.			

Substantial benefits to litigants and society beyond those related directly to the court process have been quantified in numerous studies. This supplement focuses on costs avoided through improved efficiencies at the court. Other benefits to litigants—such as avoided medical costs, avoided homelessness, and resolution of consumer debt—are described in a recent report from the World Bank, *A Tool for Justice: The Cost Benefit Analysis of Legal Aid* (see note 11).

Discussion

Supplement Focuses on One-on-One and Workshop Services Provided by Self-Help Centers

Except when otherwise specified, all data used in this supplement is taken from *Impact of Self-Help Center Expansion in California Courts* and measures self-help services and litigant characteristics in calendar year 2019.³ Self-help services provided by all courts statewide include brief services, one-on-one services, and workshops, as follows:

- Brief services generally last less than five minutes and include information and referral or quick assistance with the next steps for a self-represented litigant (*Impact*, p. 37).
- One-on-one services last more than five minutes—on average 40 minutes—and include extended assistance on court proceedings, forms, and filings (*Impact*, p. 41).
- Workshops provide extended assistance with court proceedings, forms, and filings in a structured setting for a group of self-represented litigants (*Impact*, p. 53).

This supplement focuses on one-on-one and workshop services, which account for the great majority of self-help center workload. Brief services make up 6 percent of the self-help center

³ Any new measures imputed from the *Impact* data were discussed and confirmed by a group of five self-help center experts (“expert interviewees”), which included two judicial officers and three self-help center directors.

workload and play an essential function in triaging issues and linking self-represented litigants to the appropriate service. Table 2 shows the number of self-represented litigants served through one-on-one and workshop services, which represent 79 percent of the self-help centers’ total workload.

Table 2. Customers Served by One-on-One and Workshops, 2019		
Extended Encounters 2019	<i>n</i>	Percentage
One-on-One	510,560	87%
Workshops	78,196	13%
Total	588,756	100%
<i>Source: Impact Table 1, Calendar Year 2019 Self-Help Encounters by Type of Service, p. 175, reanalyzed to reflect total number of workshop participants.</i>		

Customer Self-Help Visits Are Converted to Estimated Case Filings

Not all visits to a self-help center result in filing a case. To measure the impact of self-help services on the efficiency of court hearings, we first needed to estimate the number of self-help cases that went to hearings. Using filings rather than visits or services within a visit allows us to estimate the number of hearings that a self-represented litigant will need to attend. It also allows us to estimate courtroom and court clerk costs consistent with the Judicial Council’s Resource Assessment Study model, which is based on filings.⁴

In many case types, more than one extended contact with the self-help center may be necessary to resolve the customer’s question. Consulting subject-matter experts, we determined that the first visit to the self-help center within the year was the best estimate of the number of filings represented by the customers of the self-help centers. In 2019, the proportion of first visits was 39 percent of total customers (*Impact*, Table 29, p. 193). This estimate was confirmed by the expert interviewees.⁵ Table 3 derives an estimate of filings represented by all customers of the self-help centers.

⁴ The Resource Assessment Study model uses weighted filings, which means caseweights are applied to different categories of filings (e.g., criminal, civil, family). Applying caseweights takes into account the amount of case processing time (in minutes) that staff take per filing.

⁵ The 39 percent figure represents 2.6 encounters per filing. The expert interviewees provided estimates of the ratio of encounters to filings by case type, which, when weighted, averaged 3.1 with a range of 2.9 to 3.3, so the 2.6 encounters used in this supplement is somewhat lower. However, it is directly tied to 2019 data, and changing the ratio to 3.1 would not affect the calculations in this supplement.

Table 3. Annual Filings Estimated From Customer Encounters by Case Type, 2019		
Case Type	Percentage of Self-Help Encounters	Estimated No. of Annual Filings
Family Law	77%	176,803
Civil	19%	43,627
Probate	3%	6,888
Other	n/a	
Total	100%	229,615

Source: Impact Table 10, Calendar Year 2019 Self-Help Center One-on-One In-Person and Total Encounters by Area of Law, p. 181, and unpublished workshop data. Total encounters (Impact Table 1) were applied to the case type proportions in Table 10, and “Other” encounters (0.5 percent of total) were dropped.

Not all extended encounters at the self-help center relate to a case filing, and some visits include multiple encounters related to multiple filings. Multiple visits related to a filing may also take place over more than one year. To estimate the number of extended encounters related to a single filing, we used data from the 2017–18 Family Law Facilitators/Self-Help Center Survey to calculate an estimate of approximately 1.5 encounters per filing.⁶ (Source: Judicial Council of California, Family Law Facilitators/Self-Help Center Survey (2017–18), *unpublished*.)

Court Costs Are Based on Judicial Council Resource Assessment Study/Workload Model

Cost estimation of self-help center services was done using a cost model developed to allocate funding to AB 1058 Child Support Program family law facilitators and support staff for fiscal year 2021–22.⁷ This cost model uses the same metrics and methodology in calculating costs as the Judicial Council’s Resource Assessment Study (RAS)/Workload Formula model,⁸ with the exception that attorney and nonattorney staff were based on averages of actual salaries collected by the Judicial Council. The RAS model calculates direct salary costs, costs of supervision and support, office expenses and equipment, and full benefits costs, weighted by county governmental spending indices.

⁶ Of all respondents to the Family Law Facilitators/Self-Help Center Survey (314,504), 45.6 percent reported it was their first visit to a self-help center, 19.9 percent reported their second visit, and 34.5 percent reported more than two visits. The median is calculated at 1.5, between 1 and 2 visits.

⁷ Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *Child Support: Updating Workload Data for the AB 1058 Child Support Commissioner Funding Methodology, Adopting a Family Law Facilitator Program Funding Methodology, and Adopting 2021–22 AB 1058 Program Funding Allocations* (May 14, 2021), <https://jcc.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4956466&GUID=240C4C25-A432-4C2D-9E22-A9F84C423E66>.

⁸ For an overview of the study: Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *Trial Courts: Update of Resource Assessment Study Model*, (June 13, 2017), <https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5338582&GUID=FA2962D0-141A-40D4-B9CA-CB5C2467A49C>. For the most recent update: Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *Judicial Branch Budget: Workload Formula Adjustment Request Process Policy Update* (Apr. 26, 2019), <https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7188751&GUID=A90AB7DB-FA13-43B5-8817-947ABF3AB919>.

We tested whether this model required modification in applying it to self-help centers. In fiscal year 2020–21, the average Family Law Facilitator attorney salary was \$112,489, and the average Self-Help Center Attorney was \$116,992, a difference of only 4 percent. The relative allocation of attorney and support staff was essentially identical for both programs, with the Family Law Facilitator program using RAS to allocate 32 percent attorney staff and 68 percent nonattorney staff, and self-help centers reporting 33 percent attorney staff and 67 percent nonattorney staff (*Impact* Table 2, Increase in Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) from 2017 to 2019, p. 176). Based on these findings, we determined that costs derived from the Family Law Facilitator model were applicable to self-help centers.

The model estimates that the full cost to courts for a Family Law Facilitator or self-help program is \$202,984 per full-time equivalent (weighted as described above between attorney and nonattorney positions). The full cost divided by the model’s estimate of 98,550 staff workload minutes per year is \$2.06 per minute. This number, based on court need, represents the upper range of actual costs. We established a lower range based on the direct costs of self-help center staff. The cost per FTE of 336 FTE staff with a statewide allocation of \$30,300,000 is \$90,178, or \$0.92 per minute. Cost-benefit calculations in the text of this supplement are done using the approximate midpoint of this range, or \$1.50 per minute, with ranges of calculations provided in the supplemental tables.

One-on-One and Workshop Services Cost Are Based on Impact Report

The *Impact* study’s Table 6, Time Spent on One-on-One Services (p. 179), estimates the time that the one-on-one extended services described above require by case type. Table 19, Average Duration and Preparation Time by Workshop Topic as of June 2019 (p. 187), provides the same information for workshops, including each workshop’s preparation and delivery time. Table 19 has been reanalyzed to provide averages by the three main case types. This supplement’s Table 4, below, displays by case type the cost of one-on-one and workshop services per encounter and per filing, using the \$1.50-per-minute median court cost described above. The workshop estimates show the cost of the workshop per participant, using the average six participants per workshop derived from *Impact*’s Table 17, Workshop Overview as of June 2019 (p. 185). For example, the actual average time of a family law workshop, including preparation and delivery, is 208.8 minutes, or 3 hours and 29 minutes. Dividing this figure by six participants results in 34.8 minutes per participant.

Table 4. Cost of Services per Filing			
Cost of Services	Minutes	Cost per Person	Weighted by 1.5 SHC Visits per Filing
One-to-One			
Family	43.3	\$65	\$97
Civil	39.4	\$59	\$89
Probate	76.5	\$115	\$172
Workshops			
Family	34.8	\$52	\$78
Civil	24.4	\$37	\$55
Probate	47.7	\$72	\$107
<i>Impact</i> , Tables 6, 19 reanalyzed by case type. Estimate of statewide self-help center cost per minute, Judicial Council Resource Allocation Study methodology.			

Monetized Benefits to Self-Represented Litigants Are Based on Avoiding One Day of Lost Wages

Numerous benefits to self-represented litigants and the courts were discussed and rated by focus groups for the *Impact* study and are presented in that document’s Figure 41 (p. 152). For this analysis we chose benefits for which costs could be determined with available and accepted metrics and that have a basis in previous research. The most consequential benefit to self-represented litigants identified in the *Impact* report and previous research to which a monetary value can be assigned is the avoidance of unnecessary trips to court.

The last cost-benefit study conducted on self-help centers in California was *The Benefits and Costs of Programs to Assist Self-Represented Litigants*, by John Greacen (2009; “Greacen”). Greacen focused on avoided costs to courts, but also conducted a survey in Merced County that estimated that the cost for self-represented litigants to travel to court for a hearing averaged \$79.28 per litigant (Greacen, p. 8). This cost in today’s dollars is \$103.85 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index calculator). It is important to note that although self-represented litigants can often access self-help centers remotely or at their own convenience, hearing times are set by the court and often result in lost wages for litigants. We used the California minimum wage of \$14 per hour (for employers of 26 or more persons) to set a day’s wages, and we calculated loss avoided in the amount of \$112 in today’s dollars.

Greacen concludes that self-help centers reduce appearances in court for litigants by one hearing per case (Greacen, p. 12). This metric is consistent with the discussions in the *Impact* report of the effect of successful filings for default judgment with the assistance of the self-help center, and the effect of orders after hearing prepared by the self-help center (*Impact*, pp. 156–157). The

hearing-avoided metric was also confirmed by the expert interviewees consulted for this supplement.

Monetized Benefits to the Courts Are Based on Avoiding 10 Minutes of Hearing Time and 20 Minutes of Clerk Time

The Judicial Council estimates a total courtroom cost of \$17 per minute.⁹ Greacen calculates a 5-to-15-minute range of time saved in courtroom hearings when a litigant has been assisted by a self-help center (Greacen, p. 12). This estimate is consistent with determinations in the *Impact* report, where interviewees estimated a 50 percent savings in time over hearings scheduled in 20-minute blocks (*Impact*, p. 156, and unpublished data from the study). We use an average of 10 minutes of hearing time saved per filing for the courts at \$17 per minute or \$170 per filing. This estimate was confirmed by the experts interviewed for this supplement.

Greacen in 2009 and those interviewed for the *Impact* study in 2019 concluded similarly that self-help services save court clerk time. Greacen estimates a savings of 1.0 to 1.5 hours of clerk time for a litigant who has been assisted by the self-help center. Clerks interviewed for the *Impact* study estimated a savings of 5 to 45 minutes. We use an average of 20 minutes saved in clerk time. Here we use a clerk cost of \$2 per minute from the Resource Assessment Study to estimate \$40 in savings to the courts. In this case, the expert interviewees did not agree on a consistent metric, although only one interviewee disagreed with the 20-minute estimate (suggesting 5 minutes). Interestingly, three experts suggested the savings as up to 50 percent of the clerk’s time saved.

Table 5 summarizes the benefits calculated for each filing.

Table 5. Monetized Benefits	
Benefit	Monetary Value
Cost of court visit avoided by litigant	\$112
Savings to court: 10 minutes of courtroom hearing time	\$170
Savings to court: 20 minutes of clerk time	\$40
Total Benefits	\$322
<i>Sources: Impact Chap. 14; Judicial Council of Cal., 2021–22 Estimated Judgeship Costs; Benefits and Costs of Programs to Assist Self-Represented Litigants, John Greacen 2009.</i>	

Total Benefit-to-Cost Estimates Are Consistent With Prior Research and Have a Weighted Average of More than 3:1 for One-on-One Services and 4:1 for Workshops

Table 6 summarizes the benefit-to-costs estimate by case type and service type.

⁹ Judicial Council Resource Assessment Study and Judicial Needs Assessment, 2018–19 to 2020–21.

Table 6. Net Benefits and Benefit-to-Cost Ratio per Filing			
One-on-One	Family	Civil	Probate
Amount	\$225	\$233	\$150
Ratio	3.31	3.63	1.87
Workshop			
Amount	\$244	\$267	\$215
Ratio	4.11	5.87	3.00
See Table 1 or appendix Table B for detailed data.			

If we weight these ratios by the proportion of each case type, the overall benefit-to-cost metrics are as shown in Table 7.¹⁰

Table 7. Weighted Net Benefits and Benefits-to-Cost Ratio per Filing	
One-on-One	Weighted Total
Benefits	\$322
Costs	\$97
Net Amount	\$225
Ratio	3.32
Workshop	
Benefits	\$322
Costs	\$74
Net Amount	\$248
Ratio	4.35

When we compare these overall estimates to Greacen’s estimates (Greacen, p. 1), we find that the benefit-to-cost ratios of one-on-one encounters are very close: 3.32 in this supplement and 3.85 in Greacen.¹¹ The workshop ratios are different, at 4.35 in this supplement to 7.69 in

¹⁰ Weighted averages are calculated in this way: the cost of the service by case type (Table 4) is multiplied by the percentage the case type represents in self-help center encounters (Table 3). For one-on-one services, the weighted cost is $(\$97 * 77\% \text{ (family)}) + (\$89 * 19\% \text{ (civil)}) + (\$172 * 3\% \text{ (probate)}) = \97 . This figure is divided into the \$322 benefit per service, which in this model is constant across all case types: $\$322/\$97 = \$3.32$ benefits per \$1.00 cost.

¹¹ In the recent *A Tool for Justice: The Cost Benefit Analysis of Legal Aid*, the World Bank conducted a global review of cost-benefit analyses related to legal aid, finding and summarizing 50 studies. Of these studies, only two are identified as making an effort to quantify court costs. One is the Greacen report discussed in this supplement; the other, from Australia, is *Economic Value of Legal Aid: Analysis in Relation to Commonwealth Funded Matters With a Focus on Family Law* (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2009). This report looked only at benefits to the court system and found a benefits-to-cost ratio ranging from 1.60 to 2.25, consistent with that of this supplement when the avoided cost of lost time to individuals is removed from the calculations. (World Bank, *A Tool for Justice* (Sept. 2019), <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/592901569218028553/pdf/A-Tool-for-Justice-The-Cost-Benefit-Analysis-of-Legal-Aid.pdf>.)

Greacen. Note that Greacen estimated a very high value for clerk time saved: 1.0–1.5 hours (p. 13) and identifies this as a principal cost savings for workshops (p. 12). Note, also, that Greacen provides ratios as costs divided by benefits. To make them consistent with this report, Greacen’s ratios are inverted and reported as benefits to costs.

Additional Considerations: Remote Services, Statewide Services, and Benefits Estimation

Remote Services. The data collected for the *Impact* study covers calendar year 2019. Table 21 of the study (p. 188) reports that 8 percent of extended self-help services were delivered remotely. By August 2020, at the height of the pandemic, approximately 75 percent of services were being delivered remotely (*Impact*, Figure 35, p. 140). It is unclear where the ratio of remote to in-person self-help services or hearing appearances will settle. See *Impact* Chapter 13, *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic* (p. 139), for more information on changing services.

Statewide Services. This supplement focuses on two services: one-on-one extended encounters and workshops. Numerous other services are profiled in the *Impact* study as functions that add value to one-on-one and workshop services. They include document assembly, settlement services, and preparation of orders after hearing. None of these services is statewide; they take place in a subset of courts, as described in the *Impact* study. Our objective in this study has been to provide monetized costs and benefits for services that are available statewide.

Benefits Estimation. This supplement takes a very conservative approach to estimating both costs and benefits, so that the ratios reported are unlikely to be overstated (in fact, they are likely to be *understated*). The comparison with the ratios reported in Greacen bears this out. It is the experience of self-help center staff and judicial officers that self-help services provide significant additional monetary benefits to litigants and courts. Additional direct benefits include the benefits of services in addition to one-on-one and workshops described in the *Impact* study. The studies analyzed in *A Tool for Justice: The Cost Benefit Analysis of Legal Aid*¹² provide numerous examples of benefits to litigants beyond avoided time in court. These benefits include avoiding assault and medical costs in the case of restraining order assistance, avoiding homelessness in eviction defense, and resolving consumer debt issues. For courts, avoiding continuances is frequently named as a significant cost savings. These benefits are more complex and this supplement does not attempt to estimate and monetize them.

¹² *Ibid.*

Appendix: Ranges of Benefits to Costs

Table A estimates ranges for costs and benefits. The middle-range metrics are discussed in the main supplement. Table B provides detailed metrics by all ranges and Table C provides weighted metrics by range. This appendix discusses the rationale for the low and high ranges:

- *Court-based self-help center staff cost (per minute)*. Low range is based only on direct allocation and staff full-time equivalents for the program. High range is the estimate for the positions consistent with the RAS/Workload Formula model.
- *Courtroom cost (per minute)*. This number is not provided in a range.
- *Clerk cost (per minute)*. This number is not provided in a range.
- *Cost of lost day (one day low-income salary)*. Low range was calculated in Greacen. High range is the top range (400 percent of low income) eligible for Covered California (www.healthforcalifornia.com/covered-california/income-limits).
- *Minutes saved in hearings (per filings)*. Range is based on ranges reported in Greacen and *Impact*.
- *Minutes saved in clerk time (per filing)*. Range is based on ranges reported in Greacen and *Impact*.

Table A. Assumptions and Ranges			
	Low	Middle	High
Court-based self-help center staff cost (per minute)	\$0.92	\$1.50	\$2.06
Courtroom cost (per minute)	\$17.00	\$17.00	\$17.00
Clerk cost (per minute)	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00
Cost of lost day/One day low-income salary	\$79.28	\$112.00	\$242.00
Minutes saved in hearings (per filing)	5	10	15
Minutes saved in clerk time (per filing)	10	20	30

Table B. Range Estimates of Benefits and Costs									
Type of Service	Minutes	Cost of Service	Total Cost per Filing (1.5 multiplier)	Savings to Litigant	Savings in Hearing Time	Savings in Court Clerk Time	Total Benefits per Filing	Net Benefits per Filing	Benefit-to-Cost Ratio
One-to-One									
Family	43.3	\$39.84	\$59.75	\$79.28	\$85.00	\$20.00	\$184.28	\$124.53	3.08
Civil	39.4	\$36.25	\$54.37	\$79.28	\$85.00	\$20.00	\$184.28	\$129.91	3.39
Probate	76.5	\$70.38	\$105.57	\$79.28	\$85.00	\$20.00	\$184.28	\$78.71	1.75
Workshops									
Family	34.8	\$32.02	\$48.02	\$79.28	\$85.00	\$20.00	\$184.28	\$136.26	3.84
Civil	24.4	\$22.45	\$33.67	\$79.28	\$85.00	\$20.00	\$184.28	\$150.61	5.47
Probate	47.73	\$43.91	\$65.87	\$79.28	\$85.00	\$20.00	\$184.28	\$118.41	2.80

Middle Range									
Type of Service	Minutes	Cost of Service	Total Cost per Filing (1.5 multiplier)	Savings to Litigant	Savings in Hearing Time	Savings in Court Clerk Time	Total Benefits per Filing	Net Benefits per Filing	Benefit-to-Cost Ratio
One-to-One									
Family	43.3	\$64.95	\$97.43	\$112.00	\$170.00	\$40.00	\$322.00	\$224.58	3.31
Civil	39.4	\$59.10	\$88.65	\$112.00	\$170.00	\$40.00	\$322.00	\$233.35	3.63
Probate	76.5	\$114.75	\$172.13	\$112.00	\$170.00	\$40.00	\$322.00	\$149.88	1.87
Workshops									
Family	34.8	\$52.20	\$78.30	\$112.00	\$170.00	\$40.00	\$322.00	\$243.70	4.11
Civil	24.4	\$36.60	\$54.90	\$112.00	\$170.00	\$40.00	\$322.00	\$267.10	5.87
Probate	47.73	\$71.60	\$107.39	\$112.00	\$170.00	\$40.00	\$322.00	\$214.61	3.00

High Range									
Type of Service	Minutes	Cost of Service	Total Cost per Filing (1.5 multiplier)	Savings to Litigant	Savings in Hearing Time	Savings in Court Clerk Time	Total Benefits per Filing	Net Benefits per Filing	Benefit-to-Cost Ratio
One-to-One									
Family	43.3	\$89.20	\$133.80	\$242.00	\$255.00	\$60.00	\$557.00	\$423.20	4.16
Civil	39.4	\$81.16	\$121.75	\$242.00	\$255.00	\$60.00	\$557.00	\$435.25	4.58
Probate	76.5	\$157.59	\$236.39	\$242.00	\$255.00	\$60.00	\$557.00	\$320.62	2.36
Workshops									
Family	34.8	\$71.69	\$107.53	\$242.00	\$255.00	\$60.00	\$557.00	\$449.47	5.18
Civil	24.4	\$50.26	\$75.40	\$242.00	\$255.00	\$60.00	\$557.00	\$481.60	7.39
Probate	47.73	\$98.32	\$147.49	\$242.00	\$255.00	\$60.00	\$557.00	\$409.51	3.78

Table C. Weighted Net Benefits and Benefits-to-Cost Ratio per Filing			
Cost of Services	Low	Middle	High
One-to-One			
Total Benefits	\$184	\$322	\$557
Total Costs	\$60	\$97	\$133
Net Benefit	\$125	\$225	\$424
Benefit-to-Cost Ratio	3.10	3.32	4.18
Workshops			
Total Benefits	\$184	\$322	\$557
Total Costs	\$45	\$74	\$102
Net Benefit	\$139	\$248	\$455
Benefit-to-Cost Ratio	4.06	4.35	5.49