



# Judicial Council of California

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## REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

*Item No.: 25-020*

For business meeting on February 21, 2025

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**Title**

Allocations and Reimbursements to Trial  
Courts: Midyear Reallocation of Court  
Reporter Funding

**Report Type**

Action Required

**Effective Date**

February 21, 2025

**Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected**

None

**Date of Report**

February 7, 2025

**Recommended by**

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

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### Executive Summary

Senate Bill 170 (Stats. 2021, ch. 240), which amended the Budget Act of 2021, included \$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. At its business meeting on July 12, 2024, the Judicial Council directed staff to survey the courts for a one-time redistribution of unspent funds in fiscal year (FY) 2024–25 to ensure the full appropriation is maximized. The Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee recommends approving a midyear reallocation of court reporter funding for FY 2024–25, with the total amount of funding available for the one-time redistribution allocated as proportions of the total amount of funding requested by courts.

### Recommendation

The Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee (TCBAC) recommends that the Judicial Council, effective February 21, 2025, approve the following:

1. Reallocate the total amount of funding available, \$820,000 of projected unspent court reporter funding in fiscal year (FY) 2024–25, to courts as proportions of the total amount of

funding requested by the courts and including any technical adjustments to account for the final amount available prior to distribution as outlined in Attachment A; and

2. Delegate authority to Judicial Council staff to reallocate unspent funding to trial courts that have identified additional unmet need in late spring 2025, in efforts to maximize the use of the full allocation.

### **Relevant Previous Council Action**

The Judicial Council approved the allocation methodology for the first year of this funding in FY 2021–22 at its January 21, 2022, meeting and directed Judicial 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 July 21, 2023, meeting based on the same allocation methodology but with updated data. The council approved the FY 2024–25 allocations for \$20 million at its July 12, 2024, meeting and also 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 July 21, 2023, meeting 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.

### **Analysis/Rationale**

Judicial Council staff conducted the survey after allocations were distributed to the courts, asking for an estimate of potential unspent funding available in FY 2024–25 for the one-time reallocation process. The survey requested two key estimates needed to identify unspent court reporter funding in FY 2024–25 to be reallocated:

1. For courts that would not be able to use all their allocated funding for court reporters in FY 2024–25, an estimate of the amount of funding that would not be used in the current fiscal year and that would be available to be returned for the reallocation process; and
2. For courts that would be able to use additional funding for court reporters beyond their initial allocation in FY 2024–25, an estimate of the amount of additional funding that could be used in the current fiscal year.

A total of 18 courts indicated through the survey that they would be able to return a portion of their court reporter funding in FY 2024–25 for this reallocation process. The total amount of funding estimated by these 18 courts is \$820,000. The list of courts and estimated amount of unspent funding is outlined in Attachment B.

A total of 15 courts indicated they would be able to use additional funding for court reporters beyond their initial allocation in FY 2024–25. The total amount of funding identified by these 15 courts is \$10.2 million. The list of courts and estimated amount of additional funding requested is outlined in Attachment C.

According to the survey results, the preliminary amount of funding available for reallocation is \$820,000, which is not sufficient to cover the \$10.2 million in additional funding that is requested by the 15 courts. To ensure the funding is provided to the courts as timely as possible, the reallocation will take place in the March 2025 distribution, and the final amounts may change pending updated estimates.

Trial court feedback was received in response to the midyear survey that outlined the challenges in providing an accurate estimate for final court reporter expenditures for FY 2024–25 at the time the survey was conducted.

### **Reallocation methodology**

On January 9, 2025, the TCBAC voted to approve (with 18 yes votes, 3 no votes, and 3 absences) a methodology for the one-time reallocation of additional funding to 15 requesting courts. This methodology would account for the total amount of funding available and allocate it to the requesting courts as proportions of the total amount of funding requested by these courts in FY 2024–25.

Additionally, the TCBAC approved a recommendation to delegate authority to Judicial Council staff to reallocate unspent funding to trial courts that have identified additional unmet need in late spring 2025 to maximize the use of the full allocation for FY 2024–25 to increase the number of court reporters in family law and civil cases.

Each of the requesting courts would be allocated the same proportion (i.e., 8.02 percent) of the amount of additional funding they requested through the survey. For example, if a court requested \$100,000 in additional court reporter funding in the survey, then the court would receive 8.02 percent of this requested amount, or approximately \$8,020, in additional funding. The recommended one-time reallocation of additional funding to the 15 courts is outlined in Attachment A.

### **Policy implications**

No policy implications are associated with this report.

### **Comments**

No public comments were received on this item.

### **Alternatives considered**

The Funding Methodology Subcommittee of the TCBAC considered an alternative option for the one-time reallocation of funds to the courts requesting additional funding. This alternative methodology would allocate additional funding to the requesting courts according to their proportion of the total funding initially allocated to them in FY 2024–25. For example, if a court's first allocation was 10 percent of the total funding initially allocated to the requesting courts, then that court would receive 10 percent of the \$820,000 available for reallocation, or around \$82,000, in additional funding.

Members of the Funding Methodology Subcommittee voted on this alternative reallocation methodology, which did not pass.

### **Fiscal and Operational Impacts**

The recommended one-time reallocation of funds for FY 2024–25 would provide greater utilization of the full allocation of court reporter funding to increase the number of court reporters in family law and civil cases, as intended by the budget language.

### **Attachments and Links**

1. Attachment A: *Recommended Reallocation of Court Reporter Funding*
2. Attachment B: *Courts Returning Unused 2024–25 Funding for Court Reporter Reallocation*
3. Attachment C: *Courts Requesting Additional Funding in 2024–25 for Court Reporter Reallocation*

# Attachment A: Recommended Reallocation of Court Reporter Funding

Court	Initial Allocation	Additional Funding Requested	Amount of Funding Available for Reallocation	Funding Available as a Proportion of Amount Requested	Reallocation of Additional Funding
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$18,842,638</b>	<b>\$10,232,734</b>	<b>\$820,486</b>	<b>8.02%</b>	<b>\$820,486</b>
Kings	\$124,578	\$329,372		8.02%	\$26,410
Los Angeles	\$9,553,044	\$692,000		8.02%	\$55,486
Madera	\$166,742	\$74,500		8.02%	\$5,974
Mendocino	\$74,629	\$25,000		8.02%	\$2,005
Nevada	\$72,304	\$60,000		8.02%	\$4,811
Orange	\$2,156,003	\$2,429,126		8.02%	\$194,773
Riverside	\$1,756,704	\$2,691,597		8.02%	\$215,819
San Diego	\$2,179,163	\$2,000,000		8.02%	\$160,365
San Francisco	\$703,092	\$566,000		8.02%	\$45,383
San Joaquin	\$557,652	\$55,000		8.02%	\$4,410
San Mateo	\$376,647	\$602,023		8.02%	\$48,272
Santa Barbara	\$258,026	\$76,465		8.02%	\$6,131
Solano	\$306,758	\$200,000		8.02%	\$16,037
Tuolumne	\$54,146	\$153,919		8.02%	\$12,342
Ventura	\$503,150	\$277,733		8.02%	\$22,269

**Attachment B: Courts Returning Unused 2024–25 Funding for Court Reporter Reallocation**

<b>Court</b>	<b>Initial Allocation</b>	<b>Funding Returned for Reallocation Process</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,462,898</b>	<b>\$820,486</b>
Alpine	\$25,000	\$16,667
Colusa	\$25,000	\$20,000
El Dorado	\$118,271	\$111,183
Glenn	\$25,000	\$25,000
Lassen	\$25,000	\$25,000
Marin	\$142,636	\$67,636
Mariposa	\$25,000	\$25,000
Merced	\$203,529	\$50,000
Modoc	\$25,000	\$25,000
Mono	\$25,000	\$25,000
Monterey	\$262,987	\$100,000
Santa Cruz	\$146,060	\$15,000
Shasta	\$173,496	\$125,000
Sierra	\$25,000	\$25,000
Siskiyou	\$42,778	\$40,000
Sutter	\$83,408	\$60,000
Tehama	\$64,733	\$40,000
Trinity	\$25,000	\$25,000

## Attachment C: Courts Requesting Additional Funding in 2024–25 for Court Reporter Reallocation

Court	Initial Allocation	Additional Funding Requested for Reallocation Process
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$18,842,638</b>	<b>\$10,232,734</b>
Kings	\$124,578	\$329,372
Los Angeles	\$9,553,044	\$692,000
Madera	\$166,742	\$74,500
Mendocino	\$74,629	\$25,000
Nevada	\$72,304	\$60,000
Orange	\$2,156,003	\$2,429,126
Riverside	\$1,756,704	\$2,691,597
San Diego	\$2,179,163	\$2,000,000
San Francisco	\$703,092	\$566,000
San Joaquin	\$557,652	\$55,000
San Mateo	\$376,647	\$602,023
Santa Barbara	\$258,026	\$76,465
Solano	\$306,758	\$200,000
Tuolumne	\$54,146	\$153,919
Ventura	\$503,150	\$277,733