



NEWS RELEASE

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Council Approves Revisions to Funding Methodology for the Trial Courts

Changes include establishing an absolute funding floor for courts

SACRAMENTO—At its [public meeting](#) on February 20 in Sacramento, the [Judicial Council](#) approved [recommendations](#) from its [Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee](#) to make several revisions to the Workload-Based Allocation and Funding Methodology that was originally approved by the council last year at its April business meeting.

The methodology provides a transparent and equitable distribution of trial court funding, based on workload and the amount of time necessary to carry out that workload, among each of the 58 trial courts.

However, a strict application of the original workload-based model results in unrealistically low funding for the state's smallest courts. To address this issue, changes to the methodology approved by the council today include the establishment of an absolute funding floor for courts.

Other actions and discussions that took place at the council meeting:

State-Level Reserve Funding for Superior Court of Kings County: By statute, the Judicial Council after October 31 and before March 15 of each year may distribute the remaining funds from the 2 percent state level reserve set-aside in the Trial Court Trust Fund if there has been a request from a trial court(s) for unforeseen emergencies or unanticipated expenses for existing programs. At its meeting today and consistent with its action last year, the council considered [recommended options](#) and voted to approve the Superior Court of Kings County's application for \$130,000 in supplemental funding for 2nd-year deployment costs of its new case management system, which is desperately needed to replace the antiquated legacy system that will no longer be supported by the county. In accordance with the reserve policy, the council also voted to distribute to all courts after March 15 a proportionate share of the unallocated funds from the 2 percent state-level reserve.

Funding for Criminal Justice Realignment, Court-Appointed Dependency Counsel, and Workers' Compensation Liabilities: The council approved a [recommendation](#) from its Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee to allocate \$7.64 million in funding from the Trial Court Trust Fund and the State Trial Court Improvement and Modernization Fund for costs associated

with criminal justice realignment, court-appointed dependency counsel, and the settlement of workers' compensation tail claim liabilities.

California State Auditor Report on AOC Procurement Practices: The council discussed and accepted a [report](#) on an audit released by the California State Auditor in December. The audit was the second required by the Judicial Branch Contract Law, passed in 2011. The State Auditor assessed implementation of the Judicial Branch Contract Law by the Supreme Court, Courts of Appeal, Administrative Office of the Courts, and Habeas Corpus Resource Center. The audit found that although these entities are generally complying with the law's requirements and with the provisions of the Judicial Branch Contracting Manual, they need to improve certain practices. The AOC reported that many of the auditor's recommendations have been implemented, work continues on addressing others, and an update on progress towards addressing all of the recommendations will be made at the council's April business meeting.

An archived audiocast of the entire meeting broken out by topic will be available on the [February 20 council meeting webpage](#) early next week.

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