

STATE COURTS SYSTEM

FY 2015-16 LEGISLATIVE BUDGET REQUEST

updated January 28, 2015

➤ State Courts System Pay Issues (Issue #4401A80) – Judicial Branch #1 Priority*

1. The Supreme Court requests the second year funding request for \$5,902,588 in recurring salary dollars branch wide, effective July 1, 2015, to complete the necessity of addressing a wide range of salary issues affecting the State Courts System (SCS).

In Fiscal Year 2014-15, the first year funding request in order to retain highly skilled employees and to experience more equity with other government salaries, the SCS requested \$18,828,193 in recurring salary appropriation. However, recognizing the considerable size of such a request, the SCS proposed a two-year implementation period. The 2014 Legislature provided \$8,132,614 for the first year implementation period. That funding is assisting the judicial branch in making significant headway in addressing retention and salary equity between the branch and other governmental entities for similar positions and duties.

Retaining existing employees with valued expertise and recruiting highly skilled applicants remain priorities of the judicial branch, as a knowledgeable workforce ensures continued development of efficiencies in the operation of the State Courts System. Although positively impacted by the 2014 legislative funding, the branch must continue its progress in reaching its Long Range Strategic Plan goal of supporting competency and quality. Success in this regard continues to depend on the branch's ability to attract, hire and retain highly qualified and competent employees. As Florida's economy continues to improve, the employment environment is sure to become increasingly competitive. The State Courts System needs to be able to retain and recruit top talent in all of its elements to ensure that justice is served in the most efficient and effective manner to the people of Florida.

2. For many of the same reasons, judicial salaries also top the branch's list of priorities. Although a specific dollar amount is not being requested as part of this LBR, it is imperative that the State of Florida be able to recruit and retain quality judges. It only makes sense that the quality of justice for Florida's citizens is directly impacted by the quality of the men and women that Florida elects or appoints as judges. And, it also seems obvious that competitive salaries are essential to the State's ability to attract a high number of highly qualified attorneys willing to run and apply for judicial openings -- or willing to stay on the bench for a full judicial career after their election or appointment. There have already been a number of qualified jurists who have left the bench early -- as well as a demonstrable drop in qualified applicants -- as salaries for Florida judges have seriously lagged behind inflation and behind attorney salaries in Florida, federal judicial salaries, and judicial salaries in comparable states.

The State Court System respectfully requests that the legislature implement a multi-year strategy to fully restore judicial salaries to a competitive level, while continuing to benchmark judicial salaries in Florida consistent with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.244(b).

STATEWIDE PAY ISSUE TOTAL: \$5,902,588 (recurring)

*Amended from the original October 2014 LBR submission through the supplemental LBR process.

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SUPREME COURT

➤ **Case Processing Support (Issue #3001700): 3.0 FTE; \$114,944 (recurring)**

• **Death Penalty Case Processing: 1.0 FTE; \$33,102 (recurring)**

1.0 Deputy Clerk II position to monitor the proceedings in all courts (trial court, supreme court and the federal courts) of all persons convicted and sentenced to death.

• **eFACTS Technical Support: 1.0 FTE; \$32,688 (recurring)**

1.0 User Support Analyst to provide eFACTS technical support by resolving technical problems with the system and interactions with the portal.

• **Case Processing Support: 1.0 FTE; \$31,600 (recurring)**

1.0 Deputy Clerk I position to assist with processing and scanning documents that are filed by mail, by self-represented litigants who lack access to electronic filing, and for archiving other paper that is still received and generated during the processing of cases.

• **Library Operations: \$17,554 (recurring)**

To maintain current legal research subscriptions for the highest appellate court in the state and the fourth largest state in the United States.

➤ **Supreme Court-Meet Acceptable Security Standards (Issue #6800600): 3.0 FTE; \$220,111 (\$12,339 non-recurring)**

3.0 Deputy Marshal positions to meet acceptable security standards and effectively secure Supreme Court Building.

➤ **HVAC Component Replacement (Issue #7000310): \$30,113 (non-recurring)**

To replace the HVAC system chiller control panel in the Supreme Court Building.

➤ **Interior Space Refurbishing (Issue #7000260): \$237,360 (recurring)**

To allow the marshal's office to maintain a five-year refresh cycle for space and finishes refurbishing to keep the Supreme Court Building in appropriate and safe working order.

➤ **Supreme Court Travel Expenses (Issue #4100020): \$209,930 (recurring)**

To fund travel reimbursements for supreme court justices whose residence is outside of his or her official headquarters.

SUPREME COURT TOTAL: 6.0 FTE; \$812,458
(\$42,452 non-recurring)
General Revenue

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DISTRICT COURTS OF APPEAL (DCA)

➤ **Fixed Capital Outlay: \$26,660,988 (non-recurring)**

- **2nd DCA Courthouse Acquisition (Issue #990S000/080021): \$100,000 (non-recurring)**
Placeholder to proceed with Department of Management Services managed architectural/engineering tasks related to acquiring a consolidated courthouse facility in Tampa.
- **3rd DCA Court Remodeling for Security and Building Systems Upgrades (Issue #990M000/080179): \$9,134,036 (non-recurring)***
To complete remodeling of the court building for security, ADA, and core systems upgrade multi-year phase project for which initial funding was provided by the legislature in 2014. The supplemental funding will facilitate the completion of court security remodeling and upgrading the core building systems.
- **4th DCA Courthouse Construction (Issue #990S000/080071): \$16,784,446 (non-recurring)***
To continue construction of a new courthouse and a new parking garage to serve the court and seven executive branch departments currently operating on the state-owned property on which the courthouse is being constructed.
- **5th DCA HVAC Renovation (Issue #990M000/080184): \$642,506 (non-recurring)**
To complete a two-phase plan to replace the court's circa 1980 air chiller and the three associated air-handling units for which initial funding was provided by the legislature in 2014.

➤ **Statewide Building, Facilities Maintenance, and Operational Upkeep (Issue #7000210): \$400,000 (recurring)**

- To address operational needs for facilities maintenance and repairs for the four facilities located in Lakeland, Miami, West Palm Beach, and Daytona Beach.

➤ **2nd DCA Additional Lease Space-Tampa (Issue #7000220): \$293,800 (\$114,500 non-recurring)**

To acquire and secure additional space at the current leased facility for additional staff and to provide additional judicial offices in the Tampa courthouse.

➤ **Appellate Court Travel Expenses (Issue #4100020): \$143,881 (recurring)**

To fund travel reimbursements for a district court of appeal judge whose residence is outside of his or her official headquarters.

DISTRICT COURTS OF APPEAL TOTAL: \$27,498,669
(\$26,775,488 non-recurring)
General Revenue

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TRIAL COURTS

- **Trial Court Technology Strategic Plan (Issue #36250C0): 65.0 FTE; \$25,606,097 (non-recurring)***

The resources required to operationalize the multi-year comprehensive strategy for addressing trial court technology needs.

- **Case Management Resources (Issue #3001600): 34.0 FTE; \$5,633,712 (\$218,960 non-recurring)**

Funds 92.0 Court Program Specialist II positions to assist in the processing and management of cases through the judicial system. Case managers perform intake, screening, evaluation, monitoring, tracking, coordinating, scheduling, and referral activities guiding cases to disposition; reduces delay; provides certainty and predictability in how a case is progressing through the system. 58 unfunded FTE will be utilized as part of this request.

- **Court Interpreting Resources (Issue #5303100): \$1,367,126 (recurring)**

To comply with the intent of the Supreme Court order (SC 13-304) and increase court interpreting services funding in the amount of \$1,233,292 based on anticipated increases in contractual expenditures and increase in growth in the non-English speaking population. Increase salaries in the amount of \$133,834 of 31.5 FTE non-certified court interpreters to the base salary for certified court interpreters upon obtaining certification.

- **Trial Courts General Counsel Support (Issue #3000120): \$1,242,440 (\$23,800 non-recurring)**

Funds 10.0 General Counsel positions in each of the circuits that do not currently have one (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 8th, 12th, 14th, 16th, 18th, and 19th Circuits). General counsels provide direction, legal research, and advice and counsel to chief judges, trial court administrators, human resource managers, court interpreters, and court reporters, as well as the judiciary. General counsels negotiate and review contracts, ordinances, resolutions, administrative orders, and other legal instruments for the circuit. Unfunded FTE will be utilized as part of this request.

- **Law Clerks to Support Death Penalty Legislation (Issue #3000080): \$2,023,729 (\$66,640 non-recurring)**

Funds 27.5 Law Clerk positions to assist trial court judges in processing the complex and legally significant matters related to a sentence of death. Unfunded FTE will be utilized as part of this request.

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TRIAL COURTS (continued)

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| <p>➤ Compensation to Retired Judges (Issue #4402000): \$950,910 (recurring)
Increase compensation to retired judges to bring senior judge daily compensation in line with the average daily compensation of civil traffic infraction hearing officers, from \$350 per day to \$500 per day.</p> |
| <p>➤ Courthouse Furnishings-Nonpublic Areas (Issue #5402000): \$891,699 (non-recurring)
The Fourteenth and Seventeenth Circuits request furnishings for non-public spaces in new and renovated courthouse facilities, which are a state responsibility.</p> |
| <p>➤ Problem Solving Courts Education and Training (Issue #3800010): \$100,000 (non-recurring) **
Statewide training and education to judges and court staff responsible for managing cases involving individuals with mental illnesses and substance use disorders.</p> |

TRIAL COURTS TOTAL: 99.0 FTE; \$37,815,713
(\$26,907,196 non-recurring)
General Revenue

**New issue submitted through the supplemental LBR process.

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OFFICE OF THE STATE COURTS ADMINISTRATOR (OSCA)

➤ **Replacement Hardware for SCS Network Infrastructure (Issue #24010C0):
\$1,846,682 (\$1,846,682 non-recurring)***

Replace 67 routers for the wide area network connecting the Supreme Court, District Courts of Appeal, Circuit Courts, and Courts throughout the state.

➤ **Operational Support for the SCS (Issue #3003015): 11.0 FTE; \$1,217,473
(\$151,001 non-recurring)**

- **Court Services Workload: 4.0 FTE; \$516,942 (\$121,895 non-recurring)**
\$341,679 for 2.0 Court Statistic Consultants, 1.0 Senior Court Analyst II, and 1.0 Senior Analyst I positions; and \$175,263 for staff augmentation, software development, licensing, hardware, and equipment for the development of the Judicial Data Management Service (JDMS) project.
- **Florida Appellate Courts Technology (eFACTS) Application Support: 3.0 FTE; \$338,801 (\$12,474 non-recurring)**
1.0 Information Resource Management Consultant, 1.0 Information Systems Consultant II, and 1.0 Senior Information Systems Consultant positions to principally support the eFACTS application.
- **Technology Resource and Planning Support: 1.0 FTE; \$103,064 (\$4,158 non-recurring)**
1.0 Technology Resource and Planning Consultant to support the ongoing development and implementation of an enterprise view of technology for the judicial branch.
- **Court Education Workload: 1.0 FTE; \$86,857 (\$4,158 non-recurring)**
1.0 Court Education Program Consultant to continue building and enhancing electronic and distance learning capacity so that educational content is delivered in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- **Payroll and Benefits Support: 1.0 FTE; \$71,445 (\$4,158 non-recurring)**
1.0 Personnel Services Specialist for support in handling payroll and benefit matters for all OPS positions in the State Courts System, currently being handled by an OPS position.
- **General Services Support: 1.0 FTE; \$100,364 (\$4,158 non-recurring)**
1.0 General Services Administrator to assist the unit in statewide administration of contracts and grants, as well as other procurement and related duties.

**OFFICE OF THE STATE COURTS ADMINISTRATOR TOTAL: 11 FTE; \$3,064,155
(\$1,997,683 non-recurring)
General Revenue**

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Certification of New Judgeships (Issue #3009310)

➤ **State Courts System: \$9,918,452 (\$176,120 non-recurring)***

Supreme Court of Florida Opinion No. SC14-2350, *In re: Certification of Need for Additional Judges*, certified the need for 35 additional circuit and county judgeships for FY 2015-16.

- Circuit Court – 3 circuit judgeships (one in the 1st circuit and two in the 5th circuit)
- County Court – 32 county judgeships (eight in Miami-Dade county; eight in Hillsborough county; five in Palm Beach county; three in Duval county; two in Lee county; and one in Lake, Citrus, Orange, Broward, and Seminole counties).
- Executive Direction – The Florida Cases Southern 2nd Reporter request is based on the total number of judges certified. Costs are calculated at \$500 per judge.

TOTAL: \$9,918,452
(\$176,120 non-recurring)
General Revenue

*Amended from the original October 2014 LBR submission through the supplemental LBR process.