

Trial Court Funding

Budgetary Unification of the State Courts System



Justice
for all
Floridians

Budgetary unification of the State Courts System is the final step in eliminating the fiscal fragmentation that has resulted in disparities in the quality and availability of court services. State funding will lead to a true state court system - a quality court system in every courthouse.

In the 2003-04 budget year, the court budget equaled less than 1% of the total state budget. The implementation of Revision 7 will have a relatively small fiscal impact on the State - 170 million state dollars for the trial courts are needed in addition to the current budget to implement Revision 7. The trial courts are not asking for new services and programs to be funded by the State when Revision 7 is implemented. We are asking for adequate funding for the elements that are necessary to run the courts as outlined in the implementing legislation (HB 113A).

ADJUDICATION

Judges certification (51 circuit and 33 county judges)	\$24.1 million
Judge & JA expense-to-base	\$12.2 million
Senior Judges	\$550 thousand
Temporary Judicial Assistants (JA)	\$550 thousand
Law Clerks (353 FTE)	\$28.4 million
Masters & Hearing Officers (237.5 FTE)	\$24.08 million

DUE PROCESS

Court Reporting (224.5 FTE)	\$26.93 million
Court Interpreting (102 FTE)	\$8.59 million
Expert Witnesses (14 FTE)	\$6.24 million
Fund Shift From FCTF (5 FTE)	\$228 thousand
Jury Operations & Expense	(No Request)
Legal Materials Available to the Public (1 FTE)	\$138 thousand

CASE PROCESSING

Case Management (212.5 FTE)	\$13.7 million
Fund Shift From FCTF (93 FTE)	\$5 million
Mediation (152 FTE)	\$11 million
Fund Shift From FCTF (1 FTE)	\$81 thousand

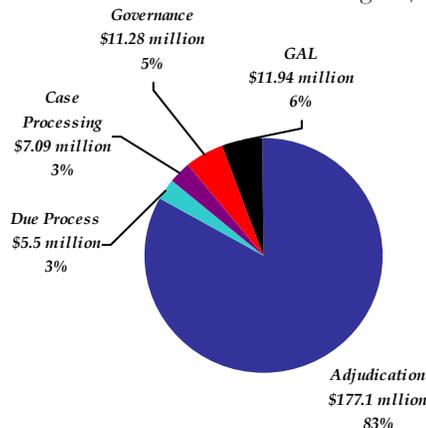
GOVERNANCE

Trial Court Administration (241.5 FTE)	\$22.5 million
Fund Shift from FCTF (5 FTE)	\$199 thousand
Resource Management System	\$1.5 million
OSCA Implementation (17.5 FTE)	\$1.5 million
Inspector General Workload (1 FTE)	\$74 thousand

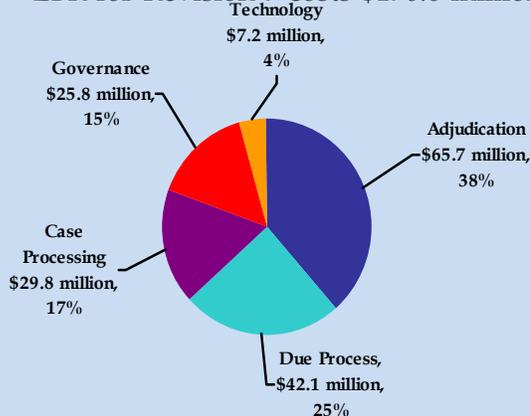
TECHNOLOGY

Technology (17 FTE)	\$7.2 million
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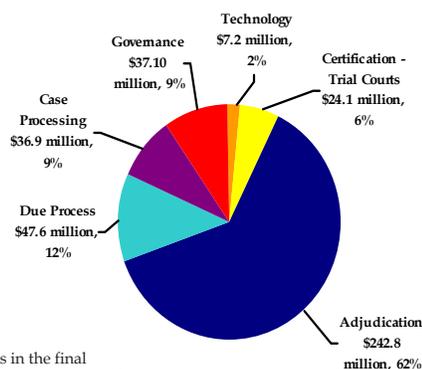
Current State Trial Court Budget \$212.9 million



LBR for Revision 7 costs \$170.6 million



Post-Revision 7 Trial Court Budget \$395.7 million*



*actual dollars in the final budget contingent upon LAS/PBS calculations.

Adjudication

Judges & Judicial Assistants - officers who exercise the judicial powers of the state as required by Article V of the Florida Constitution, and their personal staff.



Law Clerks - staff who provide research assistance and other legal support to judges in order to expedite cases.

Masters & Hearing Officers - personnel responsible for supporting and supplementing judicial efforts by performing judicial functions that are ministerial, computational, or managerial in nature in preparation of a final decision by a judge.

Case Processing

Alternative Dispute Resolution/Mediation - providing efficient and cost effective options to adversarial litigation. Mediation optimizes litigant participation in the resolution of disputes, resulting in more effective use of judicial resources.



Case Managers - staff who conserve judicial time and facilitate quality, timely, and efficient case processing by performing initial review and evaluation of cases and, screening, evaluation, monitoring, tracking, coordinating, scheduling, and referral activities leading to the disposition of a case.

Due Process

Court Interpreting - ensuring due process and constitutional rights of access to courts and equal protection by eliminating communication barriers based on disability or limited ability to understand English.

Court Reporting - ensuring due process rights by creating a verbatim record of words spoken in court, allowing for the preservation of those words and, when necessary, their timely and accurate transcription for appellate review.

Court Appointed Expert Witnesses - supporting adjudication and due process by providing independent expert testimony for the court pursuant to an express grant of statutory authority concerning scientific or technical matters in dispute, or the physical, psychological or mental condition of persons subject to the court in matters involving fundamental rights.



Governance

Court Administration - allowing judges to efficiently carry out their constitutional responsibilities to adjudicate disputes presented to them and their constitutional and statutory responsibilities for governance of the judicial branch by providing executive direction, judicial operations management, and general administrative support services.



The Bottom Line

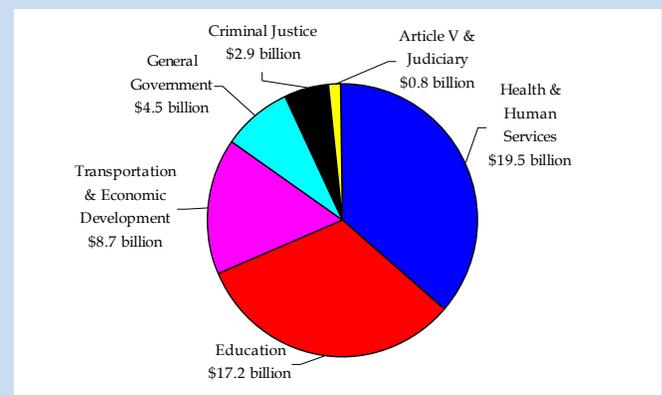
Courts perform an essential function in our American system of government. They preserve the Rule of Law by upholding our laws, protecting individual rights, enforcing public order, and providing for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Florida courts function with 11% fewer judges per capita than the national average, yet each judge handles about 31% more case filings per year than judges in other states.

Inadequate funding of the court elements will undermine the ability of the courts to handle cases promptly and to dispose of them without delay. If funding is reduced below minimum levels, backlogs are inevitable and vital public interests will be compromised.

Florida's Budget: 2003-2004

***How the State Will Spend
\$53.5 Billion in 2003-2004**



Figures do not add up because of rounding
*Source: Senate Appropriations Committee