



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

For business meeting on: December 11, 2014

Title

Judicial Workload Assessment: 2014 Update of Judicial Needs Assessment and Proposed Revision to Methodology Used to Prioritize New Judgeships

Agenda Item Type

Action Required

Effective Date

December 11, 2014

Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected

None

Date of Report

November 7, 2014

Recommended by

Workload Assessment Advisory Committee
Hon. Lorna A. Alksne, Chair
Leah Rose-Goodwin, Manager, Court
Operations Services

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Executive Summary

The Workload Assessment Advisory Committee recommends that the Judicial Council approve the *Need for New Judgeships in the Superior Courts: 2014 Update of the Judicial Needs Assessment* for transmission to the Legislature and the Governor. This report, which fulfills the requirements of Government Code section 69614(c)(1), shows that nearly 270 new judicial officers are needed to meet the workload-based need for new judgeships. This report also includes information about the conversion of additional subordinate judicial officers to fulfill the reporting requirement of Government Code section 69614(c)(3). The advisory committee further recommends that the Judicial Council adopt a revision to the current methodology that is used to prioritize any new judgeships that may be authorized and funded by the Legislature for the trial courts. The proposed revision to the Judicial Council's methodology will allow smaller courts whose workload need is substantial, but less than the one full-time equivalent threshold currently required, to be eligible for consideration for a new judgeship.

Recommendation

The Workload Assessment Advisory Committee recommends that the Judicial Council, effective October 27, 2014:

1. Approve the attached report, *The Need for New Judgeships in the Superior Courts: 2014 Update of the Judicial Needs Assessment*, for transmission to the Legislature and the Governor; and
2. Approve a modification to the methodology used to prioritize any new judgeships that may be authorized and funded for the trial courts.

Previous Council Action

The methodology for determining the number of judgeships needed in the trial courts was approved by the Judicial Council in August 2001.¹ At that meeting, the Judicial Council also directed staff to assess statewide judicial needs using workload standards developed by the National Center for State Courts. That initial needs assessment and priority ranking was approved by the Judicial Council at its October 26, 2001, meeting.²

At its August 9, 2004, meeting, the council approved technical modifications to the judicial workload methodology and modified the priority ranking of the new judgeships.³ At its February 23, 2007, meeting, after the state Legislature created 50 new judgeships,⁴ the council approved a subsequent reranking of the remaining 100 top-priority judgeships to reflect changes in workload since the 2004 report. The council also approved the methodology for identifying the number and location of subordinate judicial officer positions that should be converted to judgeships.

In October 2007, Assembly Bill 159 (Stats. 2007, ch. 722) was enacted, authorizing 50 additional new judgeships; these positions, however, remain unfunded and unfilled. AB 159 also authorized the conversion of 162 vacant subordinate judicial officer positions, identified according to the council-approved methodology, at a rate of no more than 16 per year. Assembly Bill 2763 (Stats. 2010, ch. 690) authorized 10 additional conversions per year if the conversions were to result in judges being assigned to family or juvenile law calendars previously presided over by SJOs.

Updates of the assessed judicial need were approved by the Judicial Council, as directed by statute, in 2008, 2010, and 2012.⁵

¹ <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/judneedsreview.pdf>

² <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/stateassess.pdf>

³ <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/0804item6.pdf>

⁴ In September 2006, Senate Bill 56 was enacted (Stats. 2006, ch. 390), authorizing 50 new judgeships; funding in fiscal year 2006–2007 was provided for one month and ongoing thereafter.

⁵ <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/100808item1.pdf> (2008);

<http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/20101029infojudge.pdf> (2010); and <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/jc-20121026-item2.pdf> (2012)

The council has made two recent revisions to the methodology used to calculate judicial need. In December 2011, the council approved updated caseweights that measure the amount of time that judicial officers need for case processing work.⁶ And, in December 2013, the council adopted a recommendation that any judgeships approved and funded be based on the most recent Judicial Needs Assessment approved by the council.⁷

Rationale for Recommendation

The ability to have a critical criminal, family law, domestic violence, or civil matter addressed by the court should not be based on the judicial resources in the county in which one happens to reside. Access to the courts is fundamentally compromised by judicial shortages, and securing adequate judicial resources for the courts is a top priority for the Judicial Council. Reports on the critical shortage of judicial officers have been submitted to the council since 2001 and, since that time, have formed the basis of council requests to the Legislature to create new judgeships.

Government Code section 69614(c)(1) requires that the Judicial Needs Assessment be updated biennially in even-numbered years. The 2014 Needs Assessment, which reports on the filings-based need for judicial officers in the trial courts, shows that 269.8 FTE judicial officers are needed in 35 courts.⁸ Without these needed resources, courts that have been determined to have a critical need for new judgeships will have to continue to try to process their caseloads with an insufficient number of judicial and support staff.

In addition to updating the Judicial Needs Assessment, the Workload Assessment Advisory Committee (WAAC) is charged with making periodic updates to the models used to assess the need for judicial officers and to allocate any new judgeships that may be authorized and funded for trial courts. The methodology for prioritizing judgeships has remained unchanged since its adoption. When the Judicial Workload Study was updated in 2009–2011, the SB 56 Working Group (the precursor to WAAC) discussed the need to review the methodology, but tabled it for review until after the workload study was updated. WAAC's approved 2014 Annual Agenda called for reviewing the prioritization methodology and determining if changes should be made.

Courts whose assessed judicial need, as measured in the biennial Judicial Needs Assessment, is greater than those courts' number of authorized judicial positions are each eligible for consideration for a new judgeship. Currently, courts must have a need for at least 1.0 FTE judicial officer to become eligible for a new judgeship.

Eligible courts are then ranked in priority order using a methodology based on the same process used to allocate congressional seats following the decennial census. The methodology applies a

⁶ <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/jc-121211-item3.pdf>

⁷ Assembly Bill 2745 (Stats. 2014, ch. 311) amends Government Code section 69614.2 to reflect this change.

⁸ The 2014 Needs Assessment is based on a three-year average of filings from FY 2010–2011 through FY 2012–2013.

percentage factor to a court’s net need (difference between authorized positions and workload-based need). A subsequent adjustment is made to the list to evaluate the need for subsequent judgeships in the same court, based on the relative need in other courts. A ranking score is assigned to each judgeship needed in each court on the basis of these criteria and then a priority list is generated based on the ranking score assigned to each needed judgeship.

To illustrate, Table 1 shows the first 10 courts, in rank order of need, that appear on the ranking list that is based on the 2014 Judicial Needs Assessment. The Superior Court of San Bernardino County has the highest rank score and is thus assigned the first judgeship to be allocated; the Superior Court of Riverside County has the second highest score and thus received the second judgeship. Courts can appear on the list multiple times; in the list shown below, the Superior Courts of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties each occupy three positions on the list because the judicial need in those courts is so acute.

Table 1: Portion of Priority Ranking for New Judgeships

County	2014 Judicial Need	Authorized and funded Judgeships and Authorized SJO Positions	Net need	Rank Score	Priority Ranking for New Judgeship
San Bernardino	143.0	86	57.0	1,242,691.5	1
Riverside	127.4	76	51.4	1,134,909.4	2
San Bernardino	143.0	86	57.0	352,438.0	3
Riverside	127.4	76	51.4	321,246.0	4
Kern	58.0	43	15.0	211,234.7	5
Los Angeles	629.5	585.3	44.2	169,732.4	6
San Bernardino	143.0	86	57.0	163,172.9	7
Riverside	127.4	76	51.4	148,432.0	8
Stanislaus	32.6	24	8.6	125,034.3	9
Fresno	60.7	49	11.7	124,270.1	10

The proposed modification would reduce the eligibility threshold from the current 1.0 FTE needed to get on the list for a new judgeship to 0.8 FTE. The lower threshold would benefit smaller courts with relatively low numbers of authorized judicial positions and workload need that falls just below the 1.0 FTE threshold. Those courts are disadvantaged by the current policy, even though their workload need, expressed as a percent of total available judicial resources, may exceed that of larger courts. To illustrate, a court with 2.3 FTE authorized judicial positions and a judicial workload need equivalent to 3.1 FTEs has a need for 0.8 FTE judicial officers (3.1 minus 2.3). That difference represents a 35 percent shortfall over the number of authorized positions (0.8 over 2.3); put another way, the court is operating with 35 percent fewer judicial resources than their workload-based need.

Lowering the threshold to qualify for a new judgeship to 0.8 FTE does not mean that the court would be authorized or funded for a partial judgeship. Judges are authorized in whole number

increments, and any court receiving a judgeship under this revised policy would receive a full-time judge.

The next few tables compare the current methodology to the proposed policy. Table 2 shows the list of courts that would be eligible for consideration for a judgeship using the results of the 2014 Judicial Needs Assessment. The list is sorted by the number in the far right column—the number of judgeships needed based on the 2014 Judicial Workload Assessment. Under the current prioritization methodology, all of the courts in the non-shaded area of the chart (San Bernardino through Butte) would be eligible to get on the ranking list for a new judgeship because the net judicial need is greater than 1.0 FTE.

If the proposed 0.8 FTE threshold were approved, then three additional courts would qualify for consideration for a new judgeship: the Superior Courts of Del Norte, Lassen, and El Dorado Counties. Each of these courts needs at least 0.8 FTE of a judicial officer, but less than 1.0 FTE. And, in each of these courts, that judicial officer FTE need translates to a significant shortfall in judicial resources compared to authorized positions. For Del Norte, that need is 34 percent above authorized positions (0.9 divided by 2.8); for Lassen, 40 percent; and El Dorado, 10 percent.

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Table 2: Courts Eligible for Consideration for a New Judgeship Based on 2014 Assessed Judicial Need

	A	B	C	D
County	Authorized and funded Judgeships and Authorized SJO Positions	2014 Assessed Judicial Need	Funded AJN- AJP (B-A)	% need over AJP (C/B)
San Bernardino	86.0	143.0	57.0	66%
Riverside	76.0	127.4	51.4	68%
Los Angeles	585.3	629.5	44.2	8%
Kern	43.0	58.0	15.0	35%
Fresno	49.0	60.7	11.7	24%
Orange	144.0	155.6	11.6	8%
Sacramento	72.5	81.8	9.3	13%
San Joaquin	33.5	42.3	8.8	26%
Stanislaus	24.0	32.6	8.6	36%
Ventura	33.0	40.4	7.4	22%
Placer	14.5	19.4	4.9	34%
Merced	12.0	16.7	4.7	39%
Shasta	12.0	16.4	4.4	36%
Sonoma	23.0	26.1	3.1	14%
Tulare	23.0	25.9	2.9	13%
San Luis Obispo	15.0	17.9	2.9	19%
Kings	8.6	11.4	2.8	33%
Humboldt	8.0	10.6	2.6	33%
Imperial	11.3	13.8	2.5	22%
Solano	23.0	25.0	2.0	9%
Madera	9.3	10.9	1.6	17%
Tehama	4.3	5.8	1.5	34%
Sutter	5.3	6.7	1.4	27%
Butte	13.0	14.2	1.2	9%
Del Norte	2.8	3.7	0.9	34%
Lassen	2.3	3.2	0.9	40%
El Dorado	9.0	9.9	0.9	10%
Santa Cruz	13.5	14.2	0.7	5%
Monterey	21.2	21.8	0.6	3%
San Benito	2.3	2.8	0.5	23%
Calaveras	2.3	2.8	0.5	20%
Amador	2.3	2.7	0.4	19%
Lake	4.8	5.2	0.4	9%
Yuba	5.3	5.6	0.3	5%
Napa	8.0	8.2	0.2	3%
Total need:			269.8	

Though revising the threshold to a lower number increases the number of courts that qualify for a new judgeship, getting on the qualification list does not guarantee that a court will receive a judgeship if fewer than the full number of needed judicial positions were allocated to the courts. Previous requests for new judgeships have been based on only the first 150 new judgeships needed. If the new methodology were adopted, a court could qualify for a new judgeship, but have a lower position on the priority list and therefore not receive a new judgeship until enough new judgeships were authorized.

The following tables show how the proposed change in methodology would affect the prioritization of new judgeships. To evaluate the effect of the proposed policy change, the following two tables compare how new judgeships would be allocated based on the 2014 Judicial Needs Assessment under both the current and proposed methodology.⁹

Table 3 shows the allocation using the current methodology and qualifying threshold, whereas Table 4 shows how the new judgeships would be allocated if the threshold were lowered to 0.8 FTE. Judges are allocated in whole-number increments (e.g. the Superior Court of Riverside County would be allocated 51 judgeships, even though their need is 51.4 FTE, and the Superior Court of Tulare County would be allocated 2 judgeships, even though their need is 2.9 FTE). Therefore, the total judgeships allocated in Table 3 is 250, which is the total number of whole-number judgeships needed for all courts who need at least 1.0 FTE judicial officer. Table 4 shows the allocation for all courts who need at least 0.8 FTE of a judicial officer. Three additional courts qualify using this threshold; therefore, Table 4 shows the allocation of 253 new judgeships.

As a means of illustrating the effect of the proposed policy, the shaded boxes in Tables 3 and 4 show changes in the allocation list over the first 100 judgeships. For example, if the new methodology were adopted, the Superior Court of Lassen County would receive one of the judgeships in the first group of 50 allocated, while San Bernardino would lose one. In the second set of 50 judgeships shown (judgeships 51-100), the Superior Courts of Kern and Tulare Counties would lose judgeships, and the Superior Courts of Del Norte and El Dorado Counties would each gain a judgeship.

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⁹ The first 50 judgeships shown would be those that were authorized but never funded under AB 159 (Stats. 2007, ch. 722). In 2013, the Judicial Council adopted a recommendation that any new judgeships authorized and *funded* by the Legislature would be allocated according to the most recent judicial needs assessment. The statute was updated as part of AB 2745 (Stats. 2014, ch. 311).

Table 3: Allocation of Judgeships Using 2014 Judicial Needs Assessment and Current Allocation Methodology (1.0 FTE threshold)

	1-50 (Also referred to as second set of 50, or AB 159 judgeships)	51-100 (third set of 50)	101-150	151-200	201-250	Total
San Bernardino	10	9	11	13	13	56
Riverside	9	8	11	12	11	51
Los Angeles	3	4	6	10	21	44
Kern	3	4	3	3	1	14
Fresno	2	3	3	2	1	11
Orange	1	2	3	3	2	11
Sacramento	2	1	3	2	1	9
San Joaquin	2	2	2	2	0	8
Stanislaus	2	3	2	1	0	8
Ventura	2	2	1	2	0	7
Merced	2	1	1	0	0	4
Placer	2	1	1	0	0	4
Shasta	2	1	1	0	0	4
Sonoma	1	1	1	0	0	3
Humboldt	1	1	0	0	0	2
Imperial	1	1	0	0	0	2
Kings	1	1	0	0	0	2
San Luis Obispo	1	1	0	0	0	2
Solano	0	1	1	0	0	2
Tulare	1	1	0	0	0	2
Butte	0	1	0	0	0	1
Madera	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sutter	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tehama	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	50	50	50	50	50	250

Table 4: Allocation of First 250 judgeships Using the 2014 Judicial Needs Assessment and Proposed New Allocation Methodology (0.8 FTE threshold)

	1-50 (Also referred to as second set of 50, or AB 159 judgeships)	51-100 (third set of 50)	101-150	151-200	201-250	Total
San Bernardino	9	9	11	14	13	56
Riverside	9	8	10	12	12	51
Los Angeles	3	4	6	9	22	44
Kern	3	3	4	3	1	14
Fresno	2	3	3	2	1	11
Orange	1	2	3	2	3	11
Sacramento	2	1	2	3	1	9
San Joaquin	2	2	2	2	0	8
Stanislaus	2	3	2	1	0	8
Ventura	2	2	1	2	0	7
Merced	2	1	1	0	0	4
Placer	2	1	1	0	0	4
Shasta	2	1	1	0	0	4
Sonoma	1	1	1	0	0	3
Humboldt	1	1	0	0	0	2
Imperial	1	1	0	0	0	2
Kings	1	1	0	0	0	2
San Luis Obispo	1	1	0	0	0	2
Solano	0	1	1	0	0	2
Tulare	1	0	1	0	0	2
Butte	0	1	0	0	0	1
Del Norte	0	1	0	0	0	1
El Dorado	0	1	0	0	0	1
Lassen	1	0	0	0	0	1
Madera	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sutter	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tehama	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	50	50	50	50	53	253

Comments, Alternatives Considered, and Policy Implications

Comments

This proposal was discussed at the March 13, 2014 WAAC meeting. Since the methodology for allocating new judgeships is a function that is statutorily delegated to the Judicial Council, the proposal was not circulated for public comment. Smaller courts have spoken informally with the Trial Court Liaison office in support of such an adjustment.

Alternatives Considered

WAAC members discussed alternatives to the 0.8 FTE threshold, considering higher and lower options. After discussion, the committee reached a consensus that setting the threshold at 0.8 FTE struck the right balance between creating an opportunity for smaller courts with high workload need and allocating any new judicial resources as effectively as possible.

Policy Implications

The committee considered the timing of making this recommendation to the council, given that the branch has not received any new judgeships since 2007 when the second 50 judgeships were authorized (though not funded) with AB 159. While the lack of new authorized judgeships makes discussion of an allocation methodology somewhat abstract, the committee decided to move forward with its recommendation because it presented an opportunity to make a policy change at a more neutral time when new resources aren't at stake. Also, since the Chief Justice's Blueprint for a Fully Functioning Judicial Branch and the Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee have prioritized funding of new judgeships, the committee felt it made sense to do this work now in preparation for a future funding request.

Implementation Requirements, Costs, and Operational Impacts

There are no costs to the branch associated with these recommendations, other than the staff time needed to prepare said reports and analyses. The funding associated with any new judgeships that may be authorized for the judicial branch as a result of this analysis is incorporated into the budget change proposals and/or the legislation that is sponsored to request new judgeships.

Relevant Strategic Plan Goals and Operational Plan Objectives

The workload study update is consistent with Goal II, Independence and Accountability, of the strategic plan, and related operational plan Objective II.B.2.d, in that a statewide workload model creates "nonpartisan mechanisms for creating new judgeships" (Objective II.B.2.d).

Attachments

1. *The Need for New Judgeships in the Superior Courts: 2014 Update of the Judicial Needs Assessment*

The Need for New Judgeships in the Superior Courts: 2014 Update of the Judicial Needs Assessment

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE UNDER
GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION
69614(C)(1)&(3)

NOVEMBER 2014



JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA

WORKLOAD ASSESSMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Access to Justice Requires Having Sufficient Judicial Resources

Government Code section 69614(c)(1) requires the Judicial Council to report to the Legislature and the Governor on or before November 1 of every even-numbered year on the need for new judgeships in each superior court, using the uniform criteria for the allocation of judgeships described in Government Code section 69614(b). Government Code section 69614(c)(3) requires the Judicial Council to report on the status of the conversion of additional subordinate judicial officer positions to family or juvenile assignments.

The public's right to timely access to justice is contingent on having adequate judicial resources in every jurisdiction. The number of judgeships authorized and funded by the Legislature has not kept pace with workload, leaving many courts with serious shortfalls—as high as nearly 70 percent—between the number of judgeships needed and the number that have been authorized and filled.

Securing new judgeships is one of the core elements of the Chief Justice's Three-Year Blueprint for a Fully Functioning Judicial Branch and has been a top priority for the Judicial Council for many years.¹

Quantifying the Need for New Judgeships in the Superior Courts

California is a pioneer in the measurement of judicial workload-based need, having been the first state to use a weighted caseload methodology to assess the need for judicial officers, beginning in 1963.² Since then, weighted caseload has become a nationally accepted methodology for measuring judicial workload. The current methodology used to assess the need for judicial officers in the superior courts is based on a time study conducted in 2010, in which over 500 judicial officers in 15 courts participated. The time study findings resulted in the development of a set of caseweights that quantify the amount of case processing time needed for different case types, taking into account the full range of possible case processing outcomes and their relative probability of occurrence. The caseweights that resulted from the 2010 time study were approved by the Judicial Council in December 2011.

The caseweights are used to estimate judicial officer need by multiplying each caseweight by a three-year rolling average of filings for that casetype and dividing by the available time in minutes that judicial officers have to hear cases. The result is expressed in full-time equivalent judicial positions (FTEs).

¹ See, for example, Judicial Council reports from August 24, 2001; October 26, 2001; August 27, 2004; February 23, 2007; October 24, 2008; October 29, 2010; and October 25, 2012.

² Henry O. Lawson and Barbara J. Glente, *Workload Measures in the Courts* (Williamsburg, VA: National Center for State Courts, 1980).

2014 Statewide Judicial Need Shows a Critical Need for New Judgeships

Consistent with reports submitted in previous years, the 2014 Judicial Needs Assessment shows that there is a critical shortage of judges relative to the workload needs in California’s trial courts. Table 1 summarizes the statewide judicial need compared to available resources based on a three-year average of filings from fiscal years 2010–2011 through 2012–2013, showing that 2,171.3 FTE judicial officers are needed statewide, compared to 1,963.3 FTE authorized and funded positions. While Assembly Bill 159 (Stats. 2007, ch. 722) authorized 50 new judgeships for the superior courts, those positions have neither been funded nor filled.

Table 1 shows the total assessed statewide need for judicial officers has declined by 5 percent since the 2012 Judicial Needs Assessment. Lower overall filings counts in recent years account for the slight decline in statewide assessed judicial need.

Table 1: Statewide Need for Judicial Officers, 2012 and 2014 Judicial Needs Assessments

Year	Authorized Judicial Positions (AJP) ¹	Authorized and Funded Judgeships and Authorized Subordinate Judicial Officer Positions	Assessed Judicial Need (AJN)
2012	2,022	1,972	2,286.1
2014 ²	2,013.3	1,963.3	2,171.3
Change (2012 to 2014)	-8.7	-8.7	-114.8

¹ Includes the 50 judgeships that were authorized by AB 159 (Stats. 207, ch. 722) but never funded nor filled.

² AJP changed since the last assessment because the Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, was authorized to add two SJO positions in FY 2011–2012 based on workload need. Also, several courts requested that the Judicial Council’s Executive and Planning (E&P) Committee approve changes in the number of authorized commissioner FTEs following a refresh of that data in September 2014. These changes, which are reflected in the table, are mostly requests for reductions in FTEs and were confirmed by E&P at its October 9, 2014 meeting.

Nearly 270 Judicial Officers Needed Statewide to Meet Workload Demand

Judicial need is calculated by taking the difference between the assessed judicial need in each court and the number of authorized/funded positions in each court. The assessed judicial need in each court compared to the number of authorized and filled positions is shown in Appendix A. Calculating the *statewide* need for judgeships is not as simple as subtracting the number of authorized and funded positions from the assessed judicial need. That calculation would show a need of just over 200 judgeships; however, net statewide calculations of judicial need do not accurately identify the branch’s need for new judgeships because judgeships are not allocated at the statewide level but are allocated to individual trial courts.

By way of illustration, the branch’s smallest courts are statutorily provided with a minimum of two judgeships and are authorized to have at least 0.3 FTE of a federally funded child support commissioner, for a total of 2.3 FTE judicial officers, even though the workload need in those courts may translate to a much smaller number of judge FTEs. As Appendix A shows, under a pure workload analysis, one of California’s two-judge courts would need only 0.2 FTE judicial officers, but it has 2.3 FTE authorized positions. That court thus shows a negative number in the

need for new judicial officers. This negative number does not and should not offset the 57 judicial officers that San Bernardino needs to meet its workload-based need. In other words, the fact that some courts may have more authorized positions than assessed judicial need under a pure application of the weighted caseload methodology does not take away from the needs in other courts. As a result, a net calculation of need, adding these positives and negatives, provides an artificially low estimate of judicial need in California courts.

The actual statewide need for new judgeships is calculated by adding the judicial need among only the courts that have fewer judgeships than their workload demands. Based on the 2014 Judicial Needs Assessment, 35 courts need new judgeships, for a total need of 269.8 FTEs (Table 2). This is nearly 14 percent higher than the 1,963.3 authorized and funded judicial positions. The need estimate does not include judicial vacancies, resulting from retirements, elevations, or other changes, that have not yet been filled.³

Table 2: Need for New Judgeships, by Court

	A	B	C	D
County	Authorized Judicial Positions ¹	2014 Assessed Judicial Need	Funded AJN-AJP (B-A)	% need over AJP (C/B)
Amador	2.3	2.7	0.4	19%
Butte	13.0	14.2	1.2	9%
Calaveras	2.3	2.8	0.5	20%
Del Norte	2.8	3.7	0.9	34%
El Dorado	9.0	9.9	0.9	10%
Fresno	49.0	60.7	11.7	24%
Humboldt	8.0	10.6	2.6	33%
Imperial	11.3	13.8	2.5	22%
Kern	43.0	58.0	15.0	35%
Kings	8.6	11.4	2.8	33%
Lake	4.8	5.2	0.4	9%
Lassen	2.3	3.2	0.9	40%
Los Angeles	585.3	629.5	44.2	8%
Madera	9.3	10.9	1.6	17%
Merced	12.0	16.7	4.7	39%
Monterey	21.2	21.8	0.6	3%
Napa	8.0	8.2	0.2	3%
Orange	144.0	155.6	11.6	8%
Placer	14.5	19.4	4.9	34%
Riverside	76.0	127.4	51.4	68%
Sacramento	72.5	81.8	9.3	13%
San Benito	2.3	2.8	0.5	23%
San Bernardino	86.0	143.0	57.0	66%
San Joaquin	33.5	42.3	8.8	26%
San Luis Obispo	15.0	17.9	2.9	19%
Santa Cruz	13.5	14.2	0.7	5%
Shasta	12.0	16.4	4.4	36%
Solano	23.0	25.0	2.0	9%
Sonoma	23.0	26.1	3.1	14%
Stanislaus	24.0	32.6	8.6	36%
Sutter	5.3	6.7	1.4	27%
Tehama	4.3	5.8	1.5	34%
Tulare	23.0	25.9	2.9	13%
Ventura	33.0	40.4	7.4	22%
Yuba	5.3	5.6	0.3	5%
Total need:			269.8	

¹ Includes authorized and funded judgeships, not including judgeships that were authorized under AB 159. Also includes authorized subordinate judicial officer positions.

³ Judicial vacancies are reported monthly here: <http://www.courts.ca.gov/15893.htm>

Status of Conversion of Additional SJO Positions to Family and Juvenile Assignments

As directed by Government Code section 69614(c)(3), this report also addresses the implementation of conversions of additional subordinate judicial officer (SJO) positions (above the 16 authorized per year) that result in judges being assigned to family or juvenile assignments previously held by SJOs (as authorized by Gov. Code, § 69615(c)(1)(C)).

Conversions of additional positions were authorized for fiscal year 2011–2012 (Gov. Code, § 69616). Under this authority, four SJO positions were converted to judgeships—one each in the Superior Courts of Alameda (June 2012), Los Angeles (January 2012), Orange (January 2012), and Sacramento (March 2012) Counties. At the time of the 2012 Judicial Needs Assessment, the Governor had not yet appointed judges to fill those newly created judgeships; however, the courts in which the conversions took place committed to assigning judges (whether the newly appointed judges or other sitting judges) to either family or juvenile calendars that were previously presided over by subordinate judicial officers. The courts who converted those positions have confirmed that those family and juvenile calendars are now presided over by judges.

Conversions of 10 additional positions were authorized for fiscal year FY 2013–2014 (Gov. Code, § 69617). No SJO positions were converted under this authority.

Lack of Adequate Judicial Resources Is a Barrier to Access to Justice

The public's right to timely access to justice should not be contingent on the resource levels in the county in which they reside or bring their legal disputes. All Californians deserve to have the proper number of judicial officers for the workload in their jurisdiction. This report highlights the critical and ongoing need for new judgeships in the superior courts.

Appendix A: Assessed Judicial Need Compared to Authorized Positions

County	A	B	C	D
	Authorized Judicial Positions ¹	2014 Assessed Judicial Need	Funded AJN-AJP (B-A)	% need over AJP (C/B)
Alameda	85.0	70.1	-14.9	n/a
Alpine	2.3	0.2	-2.1	n/a
Amador	2.3	2.7	0.4	19%
Butte	13.0	14.2	1.2	9%
Calaveras	2.3	2.8	0.5	20%
Colusa	2.3	1.6	-0.7	n/a
Contra Costa	46.0	42.5	-3.5	n/a
Del Norte	2.8	3.7	0.9	34%
El Dorado	9.0	9.9	0.9	10%
Fresno	49.0	60.7	11.7	24%
Glenn	2.3	2.0	-0.3	n/a
Humboldt	8.0	10.6	2.6	33%
Imperial	11.3	13.8	2.5	22%
Inyo	2.3	1.6	-0.7	n/a
Kern	43.0	58.0	15.0	35%
Kings	8.6	11.4	2.8	33%
Lake	4.8	5.2	0.4	9%
Lassen	2.3	3.2	0.9	40%
Los Angeles	585.3	629.5	44.2	8%
Madera	9.3	10.9	1.6	17%
Marin	12.7	11.8	-0.9	n/a
Mariposa	2.3	1.3	-1.0	n/a
Mendocino	8.4	7.3	-1.1	n/a
Merced	12.0	16.7	4.7	39%
Modoc	2.3	0.8	-1.5	n/a
Mono	2.3	1.1	-1.2	n/a
Monterey	21.2	21.8	0.6	3%
Napa	8.0	8.2	0.2	3%
Nevada	7.6	5.4	-2.2	n/a
Orange	144.0	155.6	11.6	8%
Placer	14.5	19.4	4.9	34%
Plumas	2.3	1.4	-0.9	n/a
Riverside	76.0	127.4	51.4	68%
Sacramento	72.5	81.8	9.3	13%
San Benito	2.3	2.8	0.5	23%
San Bernardino	86.0	143.0	57.0	66%
San Diego	154.0	153.3	-0.7	n/a
San Francisco	55.9	53.8	-2.1	n/a
San Joaquin	33.5	42.3	8.8	26%
San Luis Obispo	15.0	17.9	2.9	19%
San Mateo	33.0	31.1	-1.9	n/a
Santa Barbara	24.0	23.4	-0.6	n/a
Santa Clara	89.0	69.6	-19.4	n/a
Santa Cruz	13.5	14.2	0.7	5%
Shasta	12.0	16.4	4.4	36%
Sierra	2.3	0.2	-2.1	n/a
Siskiyou	5.0	3.4	-1.6	n/a
Solano	23.0	25.0	2.0	9%
Sonoma	23.0	26.1	3.1	14%
Stanislaus	24.0	32.6	8.6	36%
Sutter	5.3	6.7	1.4	27%
Tehama	4.3	5.8	1.5	34%
Trinity	2.3	1.6	-0.7	n/a
Tulare	23.0	25.9	2.9	13%
Tuolumne	4.8	4.3	-0.5	n/a
Ventura	33.0	40.4	7.4	22%
Yolo	12.4	11.2	-1.2	n/a
Yuba	5.3	5.6	0.3	5%

¹ Authorized judicial positions include both judgeships and subordinate judicial officer positions. Authorized judgeships consist of those codified in Government Code sections 69580 through 69611 plus the 50 judgeships that were authorized and funded with SB 56 (stats. 2006, ch. 390) but not the 50 judgeships that were authorized with AB 159 but never funded. Since 2006, there have been a few changes to AJP resulting from changes in authorized subordinate judicial officers. In FY 11-12, the Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino was authorized to add two SJO positions based on workload need. Also, in September 2014, Judicial Council staff refreshed the authorized commissioner FTE, and several courts have requested that the Executive and Planning Committee of the Judicial Council approve changes--mostly reductions--in the number of authorized commissioner FTE. The table has been updated to reflect those requested changes, which were approved by E&P at their October 9, 2014 meeting.