



Judicial Council of California

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PATRICIA GUERRERO
Chief Justice of California
Chair of the Judicial Council

MICHELLE CURRAN
Administrative Director

October 31, 2024

Hon. Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

Hon. Mike McGuire
Senate President pro Tempore
1021 O Street, Suite 8518
Sacramento, California 95814

Hon. Robert Rivas
Speaker of the Assembly
1020 N Street, Room 367
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Deferral of California Superior Courts Judicial Needs Assessment Report

Dear Governor Newsom, Senator McGuire, and Speaker Rivas:

Government Code section 69614(c)(1) requires the Judicial Council to report to the Governor and the Legislature on or before November 1 of every even-numbered year on the need for new judgeships in each of the 58 California superior courts. I am writing to advise you that this report is delayed.

The judicial needs assessment is based on an extensive judicial officer time study and a resulting set of workload caseweights that quantify processing time needed for different case types. Time study updates are generally made every five years to ensure that changes in law and court case processing practices are reflected in the analysis. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the planned study update, which was originally scheduled to commence in 2023, will not be conducted until 2025. Additionally, the report relies on the number of court filings in various case type categories for the three most recent fiscal years (FY 2020–21 through 2022–23), which includes years impacted by the pandemic.

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The public's right to timely access to justice is contingent on having adequate judicial resources in every jurisdiction, and new judgeships authorized and/or funded by the Legislature and the Administration over the past few years have provided relief to courts most in need of additional judicial resources. The Judicial Council wants to ensure that the judicial needs assessment for the state is based on up-to-date case filings and accurate judicial workload measures. Deferring the report for this year will afford that surety. We look forward to providing the updated report once the time study results have been finalized.

Sincerely,



Michelle Curran
Administrative Director
Judicial Council

MC/tc

cc: Hon. Patricia Guerrero, Chief Justice of California
Mr. Luis Céspedes, Judicial Appointments Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Ms. Cara L. Jenkins, Legislative Counsel, Office of Legislative Counsel
Ms. Erika Contreras, Secretary of the Senate
Mr. Eric Dang, Counsel, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire
Ms. Emelyn Rodriguez, General Counsel, Office of Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
Ms. Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly
Ms. Anita Lee, Principal Fiscal and Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Mr. Gabriel Petek, Legislative Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Mr. Mark Jimenez, Principal Program Budget Analyst, Department of Finance
Mr. Henry Ng, Budget Analyst, Department of Finance
Ms. Margie Estrada, Chief Counsel, Senate Judiciary Committee
Ms. Mary Kennedy, Chief Counsel, Senate Public Safety Committee
Ms. Liah Burnley, Principal Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mr. Hans Hemann, Principal Consultant, Joint Legislative Budget Committee
Mr. Eric Csizmar, Consultant, Senate Republican Policy Office
Mr. Morgan Branch, Consultant, Senate Republican Policy Office
Mr. Matt Osterli, Consultant, Senate Republican Fiscal Office
Ms. Alison Merrilees, Chief Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee