



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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MEMORANDUM

Date

October 14, 2020

Action Requested

Please Review

To

Hon. Kyle S. Brodie, Chair
Hon. C. Todd Bottke, Vice-Chair
Judicial Council Technology Committee

Deadline

October 20, 2020

Contact

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From

Heather L. Pettit, Chief Information
Officer/Director of IT
Judicial Council Information Technology

Subject

Court Modernization Funding

At its September 25, 2020 meeting, the Judicial Council approved 13 program categories to be funded with the \$25M for the modernization of court operations through the use of technology that was included in the California Budget Act of 2020 for fiscal year 2020/2021. The council also delegated to the Technology Committee the task of making the individual allocations and reporting back to the council.

Following the meeting, the Technology Committee sought additional input from the trial courts to ensure that the approved categories continued to reflect their modernization priorities. They confirmed that to be so. They did, however, request clarifying language to confirm that certain programs would be included with the scope of the approved categories. That clarification would give courts additional flexibility in improving access to justice through modernization and the use of technology.

Please review and consider approving the (a) recommended allocations for funding the \$25 million in court modernization funding and (b) clarified program language discussed during the October 9, 2020 Technology Committee open meeting.

If these items are approved, Judicial Council Information Technology (JCIT) will proceed with the process of allocating the funding and the updated language will be submitted to the Judicial Council for consideration.

(a) Proposed funding allocations:

The court modernization funding allocations are recommended as follows:

\$12.5 million – Direct allocation to the Superior Courts of California (i.e., trial courts)

- Using the pro-rata Workload-based Allocation and Funding Methodology (WAFM)¹ based methodology
- With minimum allocation to each court of \$40,000
- For use on any of 8 approved programs*
 - Remote Appearance Technology
 - Digital Evidence
 - Automated Messaging (notifications and reminders)
 - Digitizing of Documents
 - Virtual Customer Service Center
 - Trial Court Digital Services
 - Next Generation Data Center and Cloud Solutions
 - Data Governance

\$10.0 million – Branch funding for branchwide initiatives, trial court grant programs, and Judicial Council support services; distributed across approved program areas

\$2.5 million – Funds to be held in reserve to account for unexpected expenses, to capture additional modernization opportunities, or leverage efficiencies that may arise

(b) Clarified language of program categories:

Following the September Judicial Council meeting, some courts expressed concern that the “Trial Court Digital Services” category was restricted to improving court websites. They noted that digital services in fact include a broad range of modernization efforts that would improve access for court users. The report to the Judicial Council included website improvements in its program description, but that description was intended to be illustrative, not restrictive. Digital services can take many forms, depending on a given court’s level of technological maturity, and a clarification of that point will help the efficient, effective allocation of funds. For this reason, it

¹ <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/trial-court-funding-formula-explained#:~:text=What%20is%20WAFM%3F,the%20workload%20at%20each%20court.>

is proposed that the Trial Court Digital Services program category be clarified to reflect that diversity of projects.

Original program description:

Trial Court Digital Services: Deploy mobile-friendly and customizable trial court website templates with integration to statewide digital services, such as intelligent chat.

Proposed revised program description:

Trial Court Digital Services: Provide digital services for the virtual and physical courthouse that would include projects such as, but not limited to, improved websites, branchwide online programs, courtroom technology for public access, jury selection, electronic recording (where permitted by law), and digital calendars/communications.

cc: Martin Hoshino, Administrative Director
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Fran Mueller, Deputy Finance Director
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