

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA
Business Management Services
Report to the Workload Assessment Advisory Committee

(Action Item)

Title: Action by Email: Vote on Proposed Approach for Missing and Uncertified 2018-19 Filings Data in the Resource Assessment Study Model

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Issue

The Workload Assessment Advisory Committee will need to consider an interim solution to fill in missing and unvalidated data for courts that did not complete certification onto the upgraded Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) 3.0 platform in time for FY 2018-19 filings data reporting. These data are needed to calculate the Resource Assessment Study (RAS) FTE need for FY 2020-21 workload formula allocations.

Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) Data Reporting and Certification

The Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) compiles trial court statistical data used in in the Resource Assessment Study (RAS) model. The Judicial Council approved new data reporting definitions and standards for JBSIS in January 2018, taking effect July 1, 2018 for fiscal year 2018-19 data. Following technical upgrades to the JBSIS platform and local implementation of the changes to each court's case management system.

Before submitting data to JBSIS 3.0, trial courts had to certify their data reporting process and to verify correct data mapping.¹ To become certified, courts must submit about twelve different JBSIS reports, one for each major casetype category and each containing about 100 data elements. Judicial Council staff analyze the submitted files to confirm whether the reported values are consistent with prior submissions. After the analysis is completed and reviewed with the submitting court, courts are certified for JBSIS data reporting and may begin submitting data to JBSIS.

¹ Certification is an infrequent event, occurring only when new versions of JBSIS have been released or when a court transitions from one reporting platform to another; the last major change to JBSIS occurred over ten years ago.

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JBSIS 3.0 was opened for data reporting on May 1, 2019. The cutoff date to submit 2018-19 filings data for RAS and the Workload Formula was March 16, 2020.² Two courts did not complete certification by that date—Santa Clara and Plumas. Santa Clara’s certification was delayed in part because the court needed a patch from their CMS vendor to resolve a data mapping issue that was discovered after they transitioned to JBSIS 3.0 data reporting. Further, the court was unable to complete the validation process due to local staffing issues occurring at the beginning of 2020.

Plumas made an initial attempt to schedule certification in mid-2019, but was unable to complete their certification and submission of court data. Court closures and staffing limitations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic prevented further progress on data certification in those courts.

Relevant Branch Policies

The Resource Assessment Study serves as the foundation for the trial court funding model (the workload formula). The RAS model uses a three-year average of filings data, multiplied by caseweights that measure workload for each casetype, and divided by the annual, average amount of time staff have in order to perform their work.

Data management and data quality policies for JBSIS data submissions are designed to ensure consistency in court data used in allocation models and for data auditing purposes. To conform with the JBSIS data management policy for data quality control, approved by the Judicial Council at its May 17, 2019 meeting, courts must submit the data used in the RAS model directly into the JBSIS data warehouse, and the same set of fiscal year filings data must be utilized in all three years of the workload model in which it appears, unless a court makes documented corrections per the quality control policy.

Analysis

The FY 2020-21 workload formula is based on a three-year average of filings (FY 2016-17, FY 2017-18, and FY 2018-19). Santa Clara and Plumas are missing certified and validated FY 2018-19 filings data for all casetypes. If the three-year average were computed using two years of data and one year of zero values, the workload estimates for these two courts would be inaccurate and underestimated. Therefore, staff considered various approaches to compute temporary proxy values for FY 2018-19 data, including:

1. Use a five-year average of filings to input missing FY 2018-19 data;
2. Use a two-year average of filings (FY2016-17 and FY 2017-18);

² The Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee reviews and approves trial court allocation recommendations at its May meeting, and the recommendations are presented to the Judicial Council at its July meeting.

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3. Estimate the percent change (from FY 2016-17 to FY 2017-18) in filings by casetype in each of the two courts and apply that percentage to FY 2017-18 filings to create a proxy for FY 2018-19; or
4. Estimate the statewide percent change (from FY 2017-18 to FY 2018-19) in filings by casetype and apply that percentage to FY 2017-18 filings by casetype in each of the two courts to create a proxy for FY 2018-19. This is the RECOMMENDED approach.

The last approach, option #4, is most consistent with branch policies and principles for data quality. It utilizes three years of filings data and reflects recent statewide data trends rather than being based on less-current data. While the methodology may disadvantage a court whose filings patterns do not match the statewide trend, courts should be submitting their own data to JBSIS consistent with branch policy.

The first three approaches had disadvantages that outweighed their relative ease of implementation. The first scenario, using a five-year average, is a longer range than typically used in branch workload formulas and skews the results towards older, less current filings data. The second option, using a two-year average, does not utilize the most recent data available and does not reflect recent data trends. The third approach is not feasible to implement in courts where small caseloads can result in large year to year percent changes in filings.

If option #4, the recommended approach, is approved it would be utilized only to calculate the FY 2020-21 workload formula allocations. The proxy values would not be used in the Court Statistics Report and would not be entered into the JBSIS data warehouse. Judicial Council staff will work with the two courts to complete certification at a later date.

Action by Email

Approve the recommended approach to apply the statewide average change in filings by casetype from FY 2017-18 to 2018-19 to Plumas' and Santa Clara's FY 2017-18 filings to fill in missing FY 2018-19 filings data. This approach would only be used for the 2020-21 workload formula and would not be used in the Court Statistics Report and would not be entered into the JBSIS data warehouse.

The voting options are:

- Vote YES to approve the recommended action.
- Vote NO to reject the recommended action.