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Supreme Court

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AT A GLANCE

The Supreme Court, consisting of seven members, is the highest court in Minnesota, serving as the final guardian of the Minnesota Constitution and interpreting/applying the United States Constitution.

- In 2021, 88 direct appeals and 551 petitions for further review were filed with the Supreme Court.
- The Chief Justice is the administrative head of the Judicial Branch, which includes 322 justices and judges and 2,500 employees.

The Supreme Court serves all Minnesota citizens.

PURPOSE

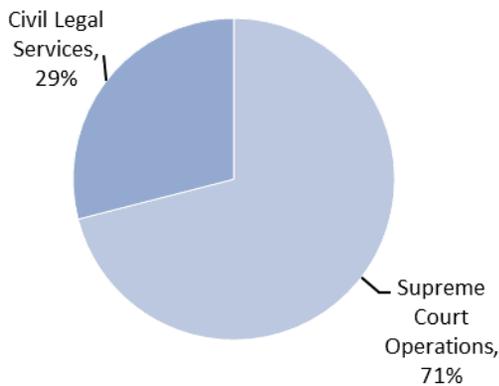
The mission of the Judicial Branch is to provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.

The Supreme Court has original jurisdiction in remedial cases as prescribed by law, appellate jurisdiction over all cases, and supervisory jurisdiction over all courts in the state. Election contests and appeals for first-degree murder cases are automatically appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is solely responsible for the regulation of the practice of law and for judicial and lawyer discipline. The Court also promulgates rules of practice and procedure for the legal system in the state.

The Chief Justice is responsible for supervising administrative operations of the state court system.

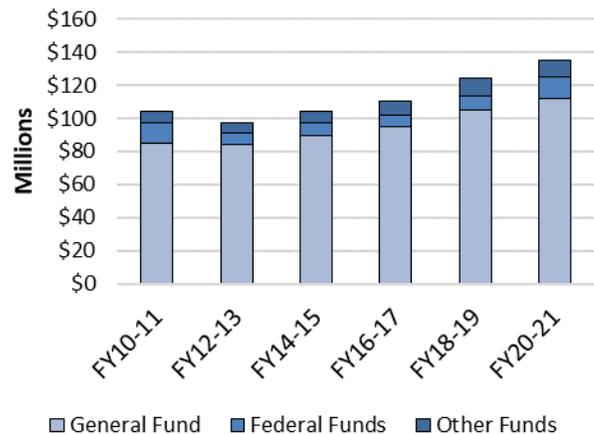
BUDGET

**Spending by Program
FY 2021 Actual**



Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)

Historical Spending



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The Supreme Court expended \$71 million in FY 2021. Of this amount, \$58 million (82%) was from state general fund appropriations. The remaining \$13 million (18%) was funded through various sources, such as federal and local government grants, Interest on Lawyers’ Trust Accounts, and fees.

STRATEGIES

As the state's highest court, the Supreme Court hears oral arguments in the State Capitol Courtroom and the Minnesota Judicial Center. The Supreme Court reviews matters on certiorari, meaning it reviews cases to set precedent, to clarify legal issues, to resolve statutory conflicts, and to answer constitutional questions. The Supreme Court considers appeals from judgments from the Court of Appeals, the Workers Compensation Court of Appeals, and the Tax Court. It hears special term matters, motions, and petitions for extraordinary relief. The Supreme Court also hears mandatory cases, including first degree murder convictions and election contests. The Court promulgates rules of practice and procedure for the legal system in the state.

In addition to hearing appeals, the Supreme Court is responsible for regulating the practice of law and making recommendations for improvement of the judicial system.

The Chief Justice is responsible for supervising administrative operations of the state court system. The Chief Justice is assisted by the State Court Administrator's Office, which provides the administrative infrastructure for the Judicial Branch, including providing finance, human resources, technology, education, communications, research/evaluation, caseload management and cross-district judicial assignments. The Chief Justice serves as chair of the Judicial Council, the policy-making entity for the Judicial Branch.

The mission of the Judicial Branch is *"To provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies."* The Supreme Court conducts its administrative functions in support of three strategic goals to deliver its mission:

1. *Access to Justice - A justice system that is open, affordable, understandable, and provides appropriate levels of service to all users.*

Ensuring access to justice for all is an enduring commitment for Minnesota's court system. It is also an increasingly challenging concern given changing court customer expectations, shifting demographics, and increased competition for scarce resources.

2. *Effective Administration of Justice - A justice system that adopts approaches and processes for the fair and just resolution of all cases.*

Over the last two decades, Minnesota courts have worked diligently to become increasingly efficient and effective. The Judicial Branch is focused on being a well-managed court system that seeks innovative ways to promote justice for individual litigants in individual cases.

3. *Public Trust and Accountability - A justice system that engenders public trust and confidence through impartial decision-making and accountability for the use of public resources.*

The Judicial Branch is accountable to the public. It is critical that the Branch maintain and continuously improve public trust and accountability, and it must meet this challenge by collaborating with court customers to eliminate disparities in the court system.

The Judicial Council conducts a rigorous strategic planning process that guides the work of the State Court Administrator's Office in support of the Judicial Branch's three strategic goals. The strategic plan is reviewed and updated biennially.

In recent years, as part of the Judicial Council's strategic planning, the Judicial Branch has begun implementing an ambitious reform agenda involving the use of technology and the re-engineering of business practices in a system-wide effort to expand services and ensure equal access to justice. The centerpiece of this effort – the eCourtMN Initiative – transformed Minnesota's courts from a paper-based environment to an electronic information environment that will ensure convenient, timely, and appropriate access to case information for all stakeholders, and result in more timely and efficient processing of cases. Electronic filing of cases, at both the trial and appellate levels, became mandatory on July 1, 2016. Current efforts focus on leveraging technology to provide

high-quality, consistent, and convenient court administration services anywhere in the state. 2021 was a transformative year in the history of the court system. A year in which judges and staff not only stepped up to keep the courts open during a time of crisis, but in which the Branch laid the foundation for a more robust, efficient, effective, and accessible court system into the future. Current efforts focus on leveraging technology to provide high-quality, consistent, and convenient court administration services anywhere in the state.

RESULTS

It is the policy of the Minnesota Judicial Branch to establish core performance goals and to monitor key results that measure progress toward meeting these goals in order to ensure accountability of the Branch, improve overall operations of the court and enhance the public’s trust and confidence in the Judiciary. Throughout the year the Supreme Court reviews performance measure results. This review is shared with the Judicial Council (the Branch’s governing body) twice a year.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on the Minnesota Judicial Branch and statewide court operations. In early March 2020, most in-person court proceedings were suspended, public access to court facilities was limited, and courthouse service windows were restricted to only telephone and email support. Currently all courthouses are open, and efforts are underway to address the significant challenges to the Judicial Branch’s timeliness goals as a result of the pandemic.

The Supreme Court timing objectives identify the Court’s performance based on the case type: Mandatory/Original Cases (e.g., First Degree Murder cases and Election Contests); Discretionary Cases (e.g., appeals from judgments from the Court of Appeals, the Workers Compensation Court of Appeals, and the Tax Court); and Expedited Cases (Appeals in termination of parental rights and adoption cases).

<i>Type of Measure</i>	<i>Name of Measure</i>	<i>FY2020</i>		<i>FY2021</i>	
		<i>Number of Cases</i>	<i>Percent that met Timing Objective</i>	<i>Number of Cases</i>	<i>Percent that met Timing Objective</i>
Results	Mandatory/Original Cases Ninety five percent of the cases will be disposed of within 180 days of submission to the Supreme Court.	96	81.5%	86	84.4%
Results	Discretionary Cases Ninety five percent of petitions for further review should be disposed of within sixty days of the filing of the request for review.	610	91%	471	82%
Results	Expedited Cases Ninety five percent of expedited appeals (termination of parental rights, adoptions) should be disposed of within 25 days of filing the appeal.	25	86%	13	81%

Data are from the *Judicial Branch 2020 & 2021 Performance Measures – Key Results and Measures Annual Reports*. The reports can be found at <https://www.mncourts.gov/>.

The Minnesota Constitution, Article VI, https://www.revisor.mn.gov/constitution/#article_6, provides the legal authority for the Supreme Court. M.S. 2.724 provides legal authority for the chief justice's administrative responsibilities: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/2.724>. M.S. 480.05 provides legal authority for the Supreme Court's rule making authority: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/480.05>. M.S. 480.13-17 provide legal authority for the position and duties of the state court administrator: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/480.13>, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/480.14>, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/480.15>, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/480.16>, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/480.17>.

Supreme Court

Agency Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base	
					FY24	FY25
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>						
1000 - General	54,070	58,343	57,751	64,348	61,582	61,582
2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue	3,715	3,783	3,189	4,118	4,127	3,986
2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue		15	5	23	22	22
2403 - Gift	1,075	1,081	251	56		
3000 - Federal	4,779	4,475	4,826	8,500	6,704	6,587
3010 - Coronavirus Relief		3,500				
6000 - Miscellaneous Agency	19					
Total	63,658	71,196	66,022	77,045	72,435	72,177
Biennial Change				8,213		1,545
Biennial % Change				6		1

Expenditures by Program

Supreme Court Operations	46,819	50,715	47,137	56,447	51,813	51,556
Civil and Family Legal Services	16,839	20,482	18,885	20,598	20,622	20,621
Total	63,658	71,196	66,022	77,045	72,435	72,177

Expenditures by Category

Compensation	35,037	35,794	36,269	38,250	38,006	37,956
Operating Expenses	8,859	10,082	8,870	15,086	11,447	11,240
Grants, Aids and Subsidies	19,079	22,580	20,256	21,652	21,657	21,656
Capital Outlay-Real Property	45	1,476	3			
Other Financial Transaction	638	1,264	624	2,057	1,325	1,325
Total	63,658	71,196	66,022	77,045	72,435	72,177

Full-Time Equivalent

	276.70	276.41	274.82	276.82	275.84	275.64
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Supreme Court

Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base FY24 FY25	
1000 - General						
Balance Forward In	0	2,643		2,766		
Direct Appropriation	56,367	57,495	60,517	61,582	61,582	61,582
Transfers In		397	175			
Transfers Out		1,907	175			
Cancellations		285				
Balance Forward Out	2,297		2,766			
Expenditures	54,070	58,343	57,751	64,348	61,582	61,582
Biennial Change in Expenditures				9,687		1,065
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				9		1
Full-Time Equivalents	241.32	242.49	241.47	241.47	241.47	241.47

2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In	1,913	2,889	2,261	2,637	1,967	1,309
Receipts	4,470	3,150	3,566	3,448	3,469	3,469
Balance Forward Out	2,668	2,256	2,639	1,967	1,309	792
Expenditures	3,715	3,783	3,189	4,118	4,127	3,986
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(191)		806
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(3)		11
Full-Time Equivalents	5.46	5.47	5.38	5.38	5.38	5.38

2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In			0	1		
Receipts		15	6	22	22	22
Balance Forward Out		0	1			
Expenditures		15	5	23	22	22
Biennial Change in Expenditures				13		16
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						55

2403 - Gift

Balance Forward In	2,388	1,382	307	56		
Receipts	48	5	1			
Balance Forward Out	1,362	307	56			
Expenditures	1,075	1,081	251	56		

Supreme Court

Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base	
					FY24	FY25
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(1,848)		(307)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(86)		(100)
Full-Time Equivalents	0.04					

3000 - Federal

Balance Forward In	927	1,022	1,047	859		
Receipts	4,814	4,490	4,639	7,641	6,704	6,587
Balance Forward Out	961	1,037	860			
Expenditures	4,779	4,475	4,826	8,500	6,704	6,587
Biennial Change in Expenditures				4,071		(35)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				44		(0)
Full-Time Equivalents	29.88	28.45	27.97	29.97	28.99	28.79

3010 - Coronavirus Relief

Direct Appropriation		3,500				
Expenditures		3,500				
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(3,500)		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						

6000 - Miscellaneous Agency

Balance Forward In	81					
Receipts	19					
Transfers Out	81					
Expenditures	19					
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(19)		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	Biennium 2024-25
Direct				
Fund: 1000 - General				
FY2023 Appropriations	61,582	61,582	61,582	123,164
Forecast Base	61,582	61,582	61,582	123,164
Dedicated				
Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue				
Planned Spending	4,118	4,127	3,986	8,113
Forecast Base	4,118	4,127	3,986	8,113
Fund: 2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue				
Planned Spending	23	22	22	44
Forecast Base	23	22	22	44
Fund: 2403 - Gift				
Planned Spending	56			
Forecast Base	56			
Fund: 3000 - Federal				
Planned Spending	8,500	6,704	6,587	13,291
Forecast Base	8,500	6,704	6,587	13,291
Revenue Change Summary				
Dedicated				
Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue				
Forecast Revenues	3,448	3,469	3,469	6,938
Fund: 2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue				
Forecast Revenues	22	22	22	44
Fund: 3000 - Federal				
Forecast Revenues	7,641	6,704	6,587	13,291
Non-Dedicated				
Fund: 1000 - General				
Forecast Revenues	447	447	447	894

Program: Supreme Court Operations

<https://www.mncourts.gov/>

AT A GLANCE

- In 2021, 88 direct appeals and 551 petitions for further review were filed with the Supreme Court.
- The Chief Justice is the administrative head of the Judicial Branch, which includes 322 justices and judges and 2,500 employees.
- The Supreme Court publicly disciplined 28 attorneys, four attorneys were disbarred, and 17 were suspended.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The Supreme Court is the highest court in Minnesota, serving as the final guardian of the Minnesota Constitution and interpreting/applying the United States Constitution.

The Supreme Court is solely responsible for the regulation of the practice of law and for judicial and lawyer discipline.

The mission of the Judicial Branch is “To provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.” The Supreme Court conducts its adjudicative and administrative functions in support of three strategic goals to deliver its mission:

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SERVICES PROVIDED

The Minnesota Supreme Court considers appeals from judgments from the Court of Appeals, the Workers Compensation Court of Appeals, and the Tax Court. It hears special term matters, motions, and petitions for extraordinary relief. The Supreme Court also hears mandatory cases, including first degree murder convictions and election contests. The Court promulgates rules of practice and procedure for the legal system in the state. The Court oversees the practice of law, including admission to the Bar, lawyer and judge discipline, and continuing legal education.

The Chief Justice is responsible for supervising administrative operations of the state court system. The Chief Justice serves as the chair of the Judicial Council, the policy making body for the Judicial Branch.

The Judicial Council conducts a rigorous strategic planning process that guides the work of the State Court Administrator’s Office in support of the Judicial Branch’s three strategic goals. The strategic plan is reviewed and updated biennially.

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<i>Type of Measure</i>	<i>Name of Measure</i>	<i>FY2020</i>		<i>FY2021</i>	
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Results	Discretionary Cases Ninety five percent of petitions for further review should be disposed of within sixty days of the filing of the request for review.	610	91%	471	82%
Results	Expedited Cases Ninety five percent of expedited appeals (termination of parental rights, adoptions) should be disposed of within 25 days of filing the appeal.	25	86%	13	81%

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Supreme Court Operations

Program Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base	
					FY24	FY25
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>						
1000 - General	39,350	43,585	40,848	46,125	43,384	43,384
2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue	1,596	1,559	1,207	1,743	1,703	1,563
2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue		15	5	23	22	22
2403 - Gift	1,075	1,081	251	56		
3000 - Federal	4,779	4,475	4,826	8,500	6,704	6,587
6000 - Miscellaneous Agency	19					
Total	46,819	50,715	47,137	56,447	51,813	51,556
Biennial Change				6,051		(215)
Biennial % Change				6		(0)

Expenditures by Activity

Supreme Court Operations	8,744	8,829	7,692	8,450	8,033	8,033
State Court Administration	35,600	39,342	36,879	45,274	41,112	40,855
Law Library Operations	2,475	2,544	2,566	2,723	2,668	2,668
Total	46,819	50,715	47,137	56,447	51,813	51,556

Expenditures by Category

Compensation	34,832	35,572	36,045	38,000	37,756	37,706
Operating Expenses	8,849	10,073	8,802	15,086	11,447	11,240
Grants, Aids and Subsidies	2,454	2,329	1,663	1,304	1,285	1,285
Capital Outlay-Real Property	45	1,476	3			
Other Financial Transaction	638	1,264	624	2,057	1,325	1,325
Total	46,819	50,715	47,137	56,447	51,813	51,556

Full-Time Equivalent

	274.74	274.41	272.82	274.82	273.84	273.64
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Supreme Court Operations

Program Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base	
					FY24	FY25
1000 - General						
Balance Forward In		2,606		2,741		
Direct Appropriation	41,647	42,775	43,589	43,384	43,384	43,384
Transfers In		397	175			
Transfers Out		1,907	175			
Cancellations		285				
Balance Forward Out	2,297		2,741			
Expenditures	39,350	43,585	40,848	46,125	43,384	43,384
Biennial Change in Expenditures				4,038		(205)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				5		(0)
Full-Time Equivalents	241.32	242.49	241.47	241.47	241.47	241.47

2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In	1,368	2,268	1,734	1,819	1,274	790
Receipts	2,380	1,020	1,293	1,198	1,219	1,219
Balance Forward Out	2,153	1,729	1,820	1,274	790	446
Expenditures	1,596	1,559	1,207	1,743	1,703	1,563
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(205)		316
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(6)		11
Full-Time Equivalents	3.50	3.47	3.38	3.38	3.38	3.38

2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In			0	1		
Receipts		15	6	22	22	22
Balance Forward Out		0	1			
Expenditures		15	5	23	22	22
Biennial Change in Expenditures				13		16
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						55

2403 - Gift

Balance Forward In	2,388	1,382	307	56		
Receipts	48	5	1			
Balance Forward Out	1,362	307	56			
Expenditures	1,075	1,081	251	56		

Supreme Court Operations

Program Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base	
					FY24	FY25
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(1,848)		(307)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(86)		(100)
Full-Time Equivalents	0.04					

3000 - Federal

Balance Forward In	927	1,022	1,047	859		
Receipts	4,814	4,490	4,639	7,641	6,704	6,587
Balance Forward Out	961	1,037	860			
Expenditures	4,779	4,475	4,826	8,500	6,704	6,587
Biennial Change in Expenditures				4,071		(35)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				44		(0)
Full-Time Equivalents	29.88	28.45	27.97	29.97	28.99	28.79

6000 - Miscellaneous Agency

Balance Forward In	81					
Receipts	19					
Transfers Out	81					
Expenditures	19					
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(19)		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						

Program: Civil and Family Legal Services

www.mncourts.gov

AT A GLANCE

- Civil Legal Services attorneys, staff and volunteers handle legal matters for Minnesota’s most vulnerable people for no charge. With expertise and compassion, Civil Legal Services provides basic legal protections so clients can achieve security, self-sufficiency, and access to opportunity.
- There is one Civil Legal Services attorney for every 5,529 eligible clients, compared with one private practice attorney for every 432 Minnesotans above legal aid income guidelines.
- 53% of clients represented are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, 17% are seniors, 23% are people with disabilities, and 66% are women.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The Supreme Court administers Civil Legal Services (“CLS”) funding. There are three sources of Supreme Court-administered CLS funding: the general fund, Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts, and attorney registration fees. The Court administers these funds through its Legal Services Advisory Committee. By statute, 85% of the general fund support is distributed on a poverty population basis to the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition (“the Coalition”), six regional CLS organizations that provide a full range of civil legal help in all 87 Minnesota counties. The remaining 15% of general fund support is awarded on a competitive basis to CLS organizations through a grantmaking process. CLS also receives funding from federal and local government grants, philanthropic foundations, United Way, private law firms, corporations, and individual private donors.

The statewide civil legal services network is a core function of the justice system. The network delivers justice to vulnerable Minnesotans and increases efficiency in the civil legal system. CLS focuses on resolving civil legal matters that directly affect the basic human needs for economic security, personal safety, shelter, and household sustenance. All CLS clients have low incomes, live with disabilities, or are elderly.

SERVICES PROVIDED

CLS opens the doors of the justice system to the most vulnerable people in communities throughout all 87 Minnesota counties. CLS creates strong and stable families and communities by helping people find solutions to civil legal disputes and delivering legal representation and advice. In 2021, CLS provided legal representation and advice to 43,762 households consisting of more than 93,570 people throughout all 87 Minnesota counties. Fifty-three percent (53%) of clients represented are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, 17% are seniors, 23% are people with disabilities, and 66% are women. Additionally, CLS provided education and self-help services to more than 600,000 people counting unique visitors to the www.LawHelpMN.org website. CLS attorneys and advocates work from offices throughout the state, enabling direct service to people in all 87 Minnesota counties. CLS is continuously innovating and expanding the www.LawHelpMN.org website, most recently re-designing the site to include an online triage portal for people seeking legal help and information. The self-help resources on the website include plain language fact sheets and easy-to-use legal forms. The website is used by the court system, public libraries, social service agencies, and the general public. Additionally, in 2021, CLS implemented a first in the national statewide network of technology access points to ensure access to civil legal aid, legal information and remote hearings at state district courts for all Minnesotans.

CLS priorities include [1] preserving housing stability and preventing homelessness due to improper eviction or foreclosure; [2] helping victims of domestic violence achieve safety; [3] maximizing the ability of people who are elderly or have disabilities to live safely and independently in their community; [4] ensuring that Minnesotans have

health care and financial security; and [5] protecting people from financial exploitation. An essential part of the state’s domestic violence intervention system, CLS gives legal help to women and children served by the state’s network of domestic violence shelters and support programs. CLS has a similar relationship with social service systems that address homelessness or independent living for seniors or people with disabilities. The CLS partnership with the Minnesota Judicial Branch is also critical. CLS creates efficiencies in the state court system by redirecting cases that are without merit or can be resolved in another manner, and by ensuring efficient use of the courts when CLS clients come before a judge. CLS also creates efficiency by providing essential infrastructure to leverage and support volunteer attorneys through training, mentoring, www.ProJusticeMN.org, and Minnesota Legal Advice Online (MLAO). Finally and critically, CLS has been engaged in nearly three years of action planning to maximize coordination in CLS intake and referral processes, driving toward the rollout of centralized phone intake through a toll free number, which will direct cases to coordinated intake hubs to open cases.

There is one CLS attorney for every 5,529 CLS-eligible clients, compared with one practicing attorney for every 432 Minnesotans above CLS income guidelines. CLS in Minnesota is forced to turn away 55 percent of eligible clients seeking its services due to lack of resources. The inability of CLS to meet the demand for its services to meet critical human needs has been persistent. CLS continues to create efficiencies through technological innovations, coordination, and leveraging volunteers to serve more eligible families and individuals, but the need for services far exceeds the capacity of CLS.

RESULTS

<i>Name of Measure</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2021</i>
Number of families and individuals receiving legal representation.	44,920	43,762
Number of children and women who are victims of domestic violence who achieved safety.	3,416	5,186
Number of families and individuals faced with foreclosure or eviction who remained housed or have improved housing conditions.	5,376	5,558
Number of seniors and people with disabilities receiving legal representation.	16,906	17,039
Number of people obtaining education and self-help resources about legal rights and responsibilities through technological innovation.	525,182	669,992

Minn. Stat. §§ 480.24 to 480.244 provides the legal authority for Civil and Family Legal Services.

Civil and Family Legal Services

Program Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base	
					FY24	FY25
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>						
1000 - General	14,720	14,757	16,903	18,223	18,198	18,198
2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue	2,119	2,224	1,982	2,375	2,424	2,423
3010 - Coronavirus Relief		3,500				
Total	16,839	20,482	18,885	20,598	20,622	20,621
Biennial Change				2,162		1,760
Biennial % Change				6		4

Expenditures by Activity

Legal Services	16,839	20,482	18,885	20,598	20,622	20,621
Total	16,839	20,482	18,885	20,598	20,622	20,621

Expenditures by Category

Compensation	204	222	224	250	250	250
Operating Expenses	9	9	68			
Grants, Aids and Subsidies	16,625	20,251	18,593	20,348	20,372	20,371
Total	16,839	20,482	18,885	20,598	20,622	20,621

Full-Time Equivalent

	1.96	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
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Civil and Family Legal Services

Program Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base	
					FY24	FY25
1000 - General						
Balance Forward In	0	37		25		
Direct Appropriation	14,720	14,720	16,928	18,198	18,198	18,198
Cancellations		0				
Balance Forward Out	0		25			
Expenditures	14,720	14,757	16,903	18,223	18,198	18,198
Biennial Change in Expenditures				5,649		1,270
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				19		4

2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In	545	621	527	818	693	519
Receipts	2,090	2,130	2,273	2,250	2,250	2,250
Balance Forward Out	516	527	818	693	519	346
Expenditures	2,119	2,224	1,982	2,375	2,424	2,423
Biennial Change in Expenditures				14		490
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				0		11
Full-Time Equivalents	1.96	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00

3010 - Coronavirus Relief

Direct Appropriation		3,500				
Expenditures		3,500				
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(3,500)		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						

Supreme Court

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Maintain Core Justice Operations

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	3,214	5,734	5,734	5,734
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	3,214	5,734	5,734	5,734
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Request:

The Judicial Branch seeks \$8,948,000 in the FY2024-25 biennium to increase the compensation of Supreme Court justices by 9% in FY2024 and 6% in FY2025, provide a 9% compensation pool for employees in FY2024 and 6% in FY2025, and to fund unavoidable health insurance premium increases in each year. The request represents a 10.31% increase in the Supreme Court biennial base budget. The request maintains the current complement of employees.

Rationale/Background:

The budget request is focused on:

- Ensuring access, fairness and equity in the judicial system;
- Recognizing the vital role judges and employees have in ensuring access to justice; and
- Helping to maintain the quality and capacity of employees and judges necessary to effectively and efficiently address a growing caseload the long-term impacts from the pandemic.

In order to continue driving innovation in the state’s justice system, the Judicial Branch needs to retain and attract skilled employees, judges, and justices that can maintain and operate a modern, efficient, and technology-based court system.

Like many employers, the Judicial Branch faces significant issues with employee recruitment and retention. The share of employees who left employment with the Judicial Branch has increased by 42% since 2018, and the number of applicants for each open position with the Judicial Branch has fallen by 51% during that same time.

Minnesota also needs to ensure that judge and justice salaries remain competitive with other public sector legal positions. Today, judges in some counties make less than the county attorneys who appear before them, and, in some cases, even less than the assistant county attorneys.

The Judicial Branch strives to ensure adequate compensation for its justices, judges, and staff. However, in recent years, the Judicial Branch compensation structure has fallen behind its public sector peers in both state and local governments.

Addressing this disparity within the public sector will ensure the Judicial Branch can continue to recruit and retain the skilled and experienced workforce it needs to continue driving innovation in the justice system and providing high-quality service to the people of Minnesota. This request will also recognize the incredible work justices, judges and court staff have done throughout the pandemic to ensure access to justice in Minnesota.

Proposal:

The FY2024-25 biennial budget request maintains the current level of services provided by the Judicial Branch. The salary increases are meant to continue efforts to protect the rights of our citizens, ensure prompt services, and deliver efficient dispute resolution, through the Branch’s ability to retain and recruit qualified, skilled staff, justices, and judges.

Impact on Children and Families:

- The change level request does not directly impact children and families.
- There are no potential positive or negative impacts on children and families.
- The change level request will enable the Judicial Branch to continue efforts to attract and retain skilled and knowledgeable employees and judges who can maintain and operate a modern, efficient, and technology-based court system. In FY17, the Branch implemented a formal pay-for-performance structure for unrepresented staff and prioritized pay-for-performance in collective bargaining, ensuring that all employee increases are based on performance. These pay-for-performance structures recognize exemplary performance and serve as performance accountability mechanisms.

Equity and Inclusion:

- The change level request is not aimed at reducing or eliminating any disparities for Racial and Ethnic groups.
- There are no potential positive or negative impacts on the identified groups.
- The change level request will enable the Judicial Branch to continue efforts to attract and retain skilled and knowledgeable employees and judges who can maintain and operate a modern, efficient, and technology-based court system. In FY17, the Branch implemented a formal pay-for-performance structure for unrepresented staff and prioritized pay-for-performance in collective bargaining, ensuring that all employee increases are based on performance. These pay-for-performance structures recognize exemplary performance and serve as performance accountability mechanisms.

Tribal Consultation:

Does this proposal have a substantial direct effect on one or more of the Minnesota Tribal governments?

- Yes
- No

IT Costs

This is not an information technology proposal.

Results:

This proposal is intended to allow the Supreme Court to continue to provide current levels of service and information to the public.

Statutory Change(s):

The proposal does not require statutory changes.

Supreme Court

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Civil Legal Services

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	6,084	11,055	15,573	20,057
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	6,084	11,055	15,573	20,057
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Request:

Civil Legal Services (CLS), a core function that ensures our legal system delivers justice to Minnesotans statewide, requests an increase of \$6,084,000 to its base funding in both years of the 2024-2025 biennium to stabilize current services. An additional \$4,971,000 is requested in FY2025 that begins the annual funding adjustment to maintain the stability of services investment and an annual \$3,300,000 increase to expand capacity and improve access to civil legal services. The total requested increase for CLS for the 2024-2025 biennium is \$17,139,000. This increase will result in increased access, the improvement of legal outcomes and the enhancement of services for low-income Minnesotans, and those with disabilities and the elderly who need civil legal services to meet their basic human needs. The requested increase will be used for compensation enhancement for CLS attorneys, whose salaries are significantly lower than their public sector counterparts, a problem that has become a crisis for CLS statewide. Additionally, the FY2025 increase will improve the capacity of CLS programs in Minnesota to serve more eligible Minnesotans. The total FY2023 CLS budget, including the state appropriation, is \$49,841,448.

Rationale/Background:

CLS opens the doors of the legal system and delivers justice to the most vulnerable people in Minnesota communities statewide. But inadequate financial resources for CLS to provide needed legal representation has been persistent for decades. Presently, CLS is forced to turn away over half of eligible clients seeking its services due to lack of resources. In addition, the client communities CLS serves – the elderly, people with disabilities, and families with low incomes – have experienced disproportionate harm as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent economic uncertainty. As a result, demand for limited CLS services is increasing, as Minnesotans seek help for civil legal problems in areas such as housing stability and homelessness prevention, consumer protection, and domestic violence safety advocacy.

CLS attorneys are the go-to experts for resolving the various civil legal problems experienced by people in times of economic crisis. CLS supports strong and stable families and communities by helping people find solutions to civil legal disputes. CLS helps victims of domestic violence achieve safety, preserves housing stability and prevents homelessness caused by illegal and improper evictions and foreclosures, protects vulnerable Minnesotans from financial exploitation, and maximizes the ability of people who are elderly or have disabilities to live safely and independently in their communities.

CLS increases efficiency in the state court system by redirecting cases that are without merit or can be resolved in another manner, and by ensuring efficient use of the courts when CLS clients come before a judge. CLS increases public access to easily understood legal resources by developing, and continuously expanding, the nationally recognized website www.LawHelpMN.org, which serves as a free resource to all Minnesotans statewide. In

addition, the return on investment (ROI) in CLS is high. The most recent Economic Impact Study conducted by the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition demonstrates that, for every dollar invested in CLS, CLS returns nearly \$4 to communities statewide. Additionally, in 2021, CLS used legal representation to protect or to recover more than \$20,279,060 in child support, household financial support, and public benefits for Minnesotans statewide.

Presently, CLS is forced to turn away over half of eligible clients seeking its services due to lack of resources. The lack of available financial resources has also resulted in a CLS compensation deficit crisis. Presently, the average starting salary for CLS attorneys is substantially below that for public defenders. This compensation deficit widens as CLS attorneys and public defenders become more experienced.

The average CLS starting attorney salary is simply not competitive. The resulting CLS compensation deficit crisis leads to CLS staff turnover, which was 37% in 2021, that in turn leads to increased CLS costs for recruiting, hiring, on-boarding, and training, only to see the cycle of turnover continue. As the turnover cycle persists from one year to the next, the impact of the crisis deepens, as CLS cannot serve as many clients as would be possible with more stable staffing. Increased general fund support to address the CLS compensation deficit will help CLS to retain the expertly skilled legal staff CLS recruits and trains, and – as a result – to be more effective and efficient in helping vulnerable Minnesotans to vindicate their most basic civil rights to meet their basic human needs.

Proposal:

The funding requested will stabilize the existing CLS program, which provides legal help to over 100,000 vulnerable Minnesotans in over 44,000 legal cases in all 87 counties statewide and incrementally decrease the number of elderly, people with disabilities and low-income Minnesotans who are eligible for CLS who are turned away each year. The intended result of the requested increases is to serve more eligible people and to see improved outcomes for Minnesotans with low incomes needing legal representation or advice to meet their need for safety, shelter, food, health care, and basic income.

CLS partners with the courts, public libraries, domestic violence shelters, social service systems, and volunteers to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. CLS has an active working group focused on maximizing coordination in CLS intake and referral processes within the existing CLS infrastructure in Minnesota, and is participating in the Civil Justice Subcommittee of the Judicial Branch’s Committee on Equality and Justice. These collaborative, system-improvement-focused efforts will result in improved and increased access to justice for the Minnesotans receiving CLS. Here is how CLS will invest the requested increase in CLS funding and how the CLS system will benefit as a result:

A minimum of \$13,839,000 of the requested increase for the FY2024-2025 biennium will be invested in CLS salary improvement. The request also includes an annual funding adjustment beginning in FY2025 to maintain the value of the salary improvement adjustment into the future. This level of increase would allow CLS to bring its starting attorney salary up to the current starting salary for public defenders and to take modest steps to address the wider gaps between CLS and public defender salaries at higher experience levels going forward. The increase would also allow for adjustments to compensation to other legal professionals to address market competitiveness, reduce turnover, and deal with salary compression issues.

Beginning in FY2025, \$3,300,000 is requested in base funding to provide additional services for the over half of the eligible elderly, people with disabilities, and low-income Minnesotans who are turned away from CLS every year due to lack of resources. To strategically address this gap in services, \$3,300,000 in additional funding is requested each year to incrementally address underfunding over a manageable period of time.

CLS continues to innovate and to refine its use of the newest and best technological platforms to facilitate the efficient and effective triaging, intake, and referral processes throughout the statewide CLS system, wherever Minnesotans go for legal help, to ensure that there is no wrong door for accessing CLS. CLS also continues to expand direct outreach to underserved communities in Minnesota to meet people where they live and work,

facilitating access to justice at locations of identifiable community need. Increasing CLS competitiveness in compensation with other public sector legal employers will help CLS providers retain key staff to facilitate these important system-improvement activities. Without the increase, CLS will continue to experience the effects of the CLS compensation deficit on CLS providers’ budgets, staffing, and services.

Impact on Children and Families:

CLS stabilizes the lives, health, safety, and well-being of children and families, ensuring that they have the foundational life stability they need to pursue economic, educational, housing, and other life opportunities. Specifically, CLS uses legal advocacy to keep children in the school of their family’s choice, which helps with the life stability and mental health of the family. Safe and stable housing is critical to the health and educational success of Minnesota’s children. CLS ensures safety and stability in families’ homes, preventing illegal evictions and homelessness, which would otherwise disrupt families’ economic security and children’s education. CLS ensures that children and their parents are safe in their homes, through domestic violence prevention and housing health and safety advocacy. CLS ensures that all children, regardless of ability, have equal access to educational opportunities. CLS secures economic and health care benefits, ensuring that families are financially secure and stable in their lives. In addition to providing legal representation services in housing, economic security, health care, disability rights, and other life- and education-stabilizing practice areas, CLS utilizes its unique network of community partners to connect clients with community-based resources and supports for child care, food and nutrition, early childhood education, health care, housing stability, mental health services, and other foundational life needs.

Equity and Inclusion:

Minnesotans who qualify for CLS, are disproportionately Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; people with disabilities; the elderly; and veterans. While most CLS providers serve all of these populations and target outreach to them, CLS has specific programs to address the unique legal needs of people with disabilities and the elderly.

In 2021, 60% of clients served by CLS were non-white (25% Black, 13% Hispanic, 5% Asian, 4% Native American, and 4% Other/Declined to Report).

Equity and Inclusion efforts are sustainable because equity is a core value of CLS and central to our mission and our cause of equal justice for all.

Results

<i>Name of Measure</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2021</i>
Number of families and individuals receiving legal representation.	44,920	43,762
Number of children and women who are victims of domestic violence who achieved safety.	3,416	5,186
Number of families and individuals faced with foreclosure or eviction who remained housed or have improved housing conditions.	5,376	5,558
Number of seniors and people with disabilities receiving legal representation.	16,906	17,039
Number of people obtaining education and self-help resources about legal rights and responsibilities through technological innovation.	525,182	669,992