

Table of Contents

District Courts

<i>Agency Profile</i>	1
<i>Agency Expenditure Overview</i>	4
<i>Agency Financing by Fund</i>	5
<i>Agency Change Summary</i>	8
<u>Change Item(s)</u>	10
<i>Maintain Core Justice Operations</i>	10
<i>Court Case Backlog</i>	12
<i>Mandated Psychological Services Deficit</i>	14
<i>New Treatment Courts</i>	16
<i>Courtroom Technology Enhancements</i>	17
<i>Contract Interpreter Payment Rate Continuation</i>	18
<u>Additional Documents</u>	20
<i>Federal Funds Summary</i>	20

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

AT A GLANCE

- In 2021, 860,604 cases were filed in district court.
- District Court proceedings are held in 104 locations throughout all 87 Minnesota counties.
- District Courts are organized into ten judicial districts for administrative purposes.
- There are 296 judges at the District Court level.
- District Courts serve all Minnesota citizens.

PURPOSE

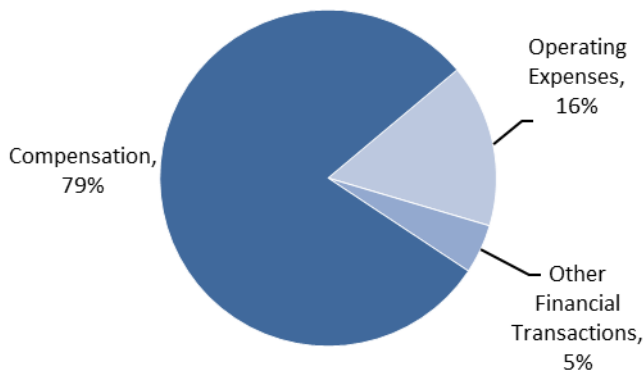
The mission of the Judicial Branch is to provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.

District courts are the backbone of the state’s court system. District courts provide access to the justice system across the state, with courthouses located in all 87 counties. For administrative purposes, district courts are divided among ten judicial districts. A chief judge serves as the administrative head in each judicial district. Judicial District Administrators assist the Chief Judge in carrying out his/her responsibilities. Court administration staff at the county level manage scheduling, case flow, finance, personnel and juries.

District Court judges hear everything from traffic tickets, civil and family conflicts, and first-degree murder trials. Some district courts may have separate divisions, such as criminal, civil, probate, family, and juvenile courts.

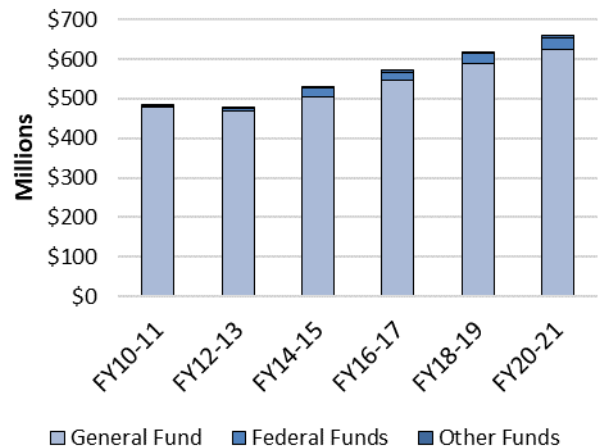
BUDGET

**Spending by Category
FY 2021 Actual**



Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)

Historical Spending



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The District Courts spent \$349 million in fiscal year (FY) 2021. Of this amount, \$332 million (95%) was from state general fund appropriations, while the remaining \$17 million (5%) of funding was received from various sources, such as federal and local government grants and donations from foundations.

STRATEGIES

The District Court conducts its 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.

In recent years, 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. 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 Judicial Branch, improve overall operations of the court and enhance the public's trust and confidence in the Judiciary. Throughout the year, the district courts are directed to review performance measure results. This review is shared with the Judicial Council (the Branch's governing body) twice a year. An important goal is whether courts handle cases in a timely manner. 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.

<i>Type of Measure</i>	<i>Name of Measure</i>	<i>Previous</i>	<i>Current</i>	<i>Dates</i>
Results	Statewide Clearance Rate – The Clearance Rate measures whether courts are disposing of as many cases as are filed in the same year.	95%	102%	FY2020 and FY2021
Results	Statewide Time to Disposition - Time to Disposition assesses the length of time it takes a court to process cases.	93% disposed of within Judicial Branch time objectives.	88% disposed of within Judicial Branch time objectives.	FY2020 and FY2021
Results	Statewide Pending Rate for Juvenile Delinquency Cases – Assesses the number of cases that have not been disposed of during the timing objective standard of 99% disposition within 6 months.	19.9% of cases are pending after 6 months.	24% of cases are pending after 6 months.	FY2020 and FY2021

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

The Minnesota Constitution, Article VI; https://www.revisor.mn.gov/constitution/#article_6, provides the authority for the District Court. Minn. Stat Chapters 484, 485, 486, 491, 491A, 492, and 493; <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/part/JUDICIARY>, provide the legal authority for district court operations.

District Courts

Agency Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
					FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>								
1000 - General	294,249	332,127	306,179	349,340	333,988	333,988	377,705	381,994
2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue	1,911	1,578	1,704	4,019	1,786	1,786	1,786	1,786
2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue		25	27	5	2	2	2	2
2403 - Gift	121	123	135	293	20	20	20	20
3000 - Federal	15,056	7,569	12,606	18,339	11,071	11,071	11,071	11,071
3010 - Coronavirus Relief	518	5,900						
3015 - ARP-State Fiscal Recovery			5,154	4,807				
6000 - Miscellaneous Agency	2,082	2,216	2,563	2,550	1,937	1,025	1,937	1,025
Total	313,937	349,539	328,366	379,353	348,804	347,892	392,521	395,898
Biennial Change				44,244		(11,023)		80,700
Biennial % Change				7		(2)		11
Governor's Change from Base								91,723
Governor's % Change from Base								13

Expenditures by Program

District Courts	313,937	349,539	328,366	379,353	348,804	347,892	392,521	395,898
Total	313,937	349,539	328,366	379,353	348,804	347,892	392,521	395,898

Expenditures by Category

Compensation	265,900	275,473	283,131	291,215	286,357	286,357	320,056	331,745
Operating Expenses	41,144	54,329	39,100	72,509	56,151	56,151	66,169	58,769
Grants, Aids and Subsidies	1,038	1,464	1,262	1,276	1,276	1,276	1,276	1,276
Capital Outlay-Real Property	296	1,860	116	1,926	1,926	1,926	1,926	1,926
Other Financial Transaction	5,559	16,412	4,757	12,427	3,094	2,182	3,094	2,182
Total	313,937	349,539	328,366	379,353	348,804	347,892	392,521	395,898

Full-Time Equivalent

	2,619.49	2,641.90	2,707.73	2,707.73	2,659.69	2,659.69	2,739.69	2,659.69
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District Courts

Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base FY24 FY25		Governor's Recommendation FY24 FY25	
1000 - General								
Balance Forward In		15,444		20,194				
Direct Appropriation	309,002	317,202	326,372	329,146	333,988	333,988	377,705	381,994
Transfers In	4,116	6,212	3,998	129	449	449	449	449
Transfers Out	4,116	6,712	3,998	129	449	449	449	449
Cancellations		19						
Balance Forward Out	14,753		20,193					
Expenditures	294,249	332,127	306,179	349,340	333,988	333,988	377,705	381,994
Biennial Change in Expenditures				29,143		12,457		104,180
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				5		2		16
Governor's Change from Base								91,723
Governor's % Change from Base								14
Full-Time Equivalents	2,571.93	2,578.79	2,608.14	2,608.14	2,608.14	2,608.14	2,688.14	2,608.14

2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In	1,906	2,020	2,237	2,232				
Receipts	1,948	1,731	1,649	1,712	1,711	1,711	1,711	1,711
Transfers In	71	43	51	75	75	75	75	75
Balance Forward Out	2,014	2,217	2,234					
Expenditures	1,911	1,578	1,704	4,019	1,786	1,786	1,786	1,786
Biennial Change in Expenditures				2,233		(2,151)		(2,151)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				64		(38)		(38)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
Full-Time Equivalents	6.99	7.36	7.29	7.29	6.16	6.16	6.16	6.16

2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In		5	5	4				
Receipts		24	27	1	2	2	2	2
Transfers In	5							
Balance Forward Out	5	5	5					
Expenditures		25	27	5	2	2	2	2
Biennial Change in Expenditures				7		(28)		(28)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						(87)		(87)

District Courts

Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

2403 - Gift

Balance Forward In	233	247	234	243				
Receipts	130	111	144	50	20	20	20	20
Balance Forward Out	241	234	243					
Expenditures	121	123	135	293	20	20	20	20
Biennial Change in Expenditures				184		(388)		(388)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				75		(91)		(91)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
Full-Time Equivalents	0.46	0.50	0.79	0.79	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68

3000 - Federal

Balance Forward In	9,538	6,038	9,195	6,916	48	48	48	48
Receipts	10,971	10,706	10,327	11,471	11,071	11,071	11,071	11,071
Balance Forward Out	5,454	9,174	6,917	48	48	48	48	48
Expenditures	15,056	7,569	12,606	18,339	11,071	11,071	11,071	11,071
Biennial Change in Expenditures				8,319		(8,803)		(8,803)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				37		(28)		(28)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
Full-Time Equivalents	40.11	48.54	44.71	44.71	44.71	44.71	44.71	44.71

3010 - Coronavirus Relief

Direct Appropriation	518	5,900						
Expenditures	518	5,900						
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(6,418)		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(100)				
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								
Full-Time Equivalents		6.71						

District Courts

Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25

3015 - ARP-State Fiscal Recovery

Balance Forward In				4,807				
Direct Appropriation			9,961					
Balance Forward Out			4,807					
Expenditures			5,154	4,807				
Biennial Change in Expenditures				9,961		(9,961)		(9,961)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures						(100)		(100)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								
Full-Time Equivalents			46.80	46.80				

6000 - Miscellaneous Agency

Balance Forward In	22,734	24,004	37,216	31,886	912		912	
Receipts	3,357	15,428	(2,769)	(28,424)	1,025	1,025	1,025	1,025
Transfers Out	5							
Balance Forward Out	24,004	37,216	31,884	912				
Expenditures	2,082	2,216	2,563	2,550	1,937	1,025	1,937	1,025
Biennial Change in Expenditures				815		(2,151)		(2,151)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				19		(42)		(42)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

District Courts

Agency Change Summary

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	Biennium 2024-25
Direct				
Fund: 1000 - General				
FY2023 Appropriations	329,146	329,146	329,146	658,292
Base Adjustments				
Current Law Base Change		5,042	5,042	10,084
Program or Agency Sunset		(200)	(200)	(400)
Forecast Base	329,146	333,988	333,988	667,976
Change Items				
Maintain Core Justice Operations		25,278	45,388	70,666
Court Case Backlog		8,421		8,421
Mandated Psychological Services Deficit		1,996	1,996	3,992
New Treatment Courts		422	422	844
Courtroom Technology Enhancements		7,400		7,400
Contract Interpreter Payment Rate Continuation		200	200	400
Total Governor's Recommendations	329,146	377,705	381,994	759,699
Dedicated				
Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue				
Planned Spending	4,019	1,786	1,786	3,572
Forecast Base	4,019	1,786	1,786	3,572
Total Governor's Recommendations	4,019	1,786	1,786	3,572
Fund: 2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue				
Planned Spending	5	2	2	4
Forecast Base	5	2	2	4
Total Governor's Recommendations	5	2	2	4
Fund: 2403 - Gift				
Planned Spending	293	20	20	40
Forecast Base	293	20	20	40
Total Governor's Recommendations	293	20	20	40
Fund: 3000 - Federal				
Planned Spending	18,339	11,071	11,071	22,142
Forecast Base	18,339	11,071	11,071	22,142
Total Governor's Recommendations	18,339	11,071	11,071	22,142
Fund: 6000 - Miscellaneous Agency				
Planned Spending	2,550	1,937	1,025	2,962

District Courts

Agency Change Summary

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	Biennium 2024-25
Forecast Base	2,550	1,937	1,025	2,962
Total Governor's Recommendations	2,550	1,937	1,025	2,962
Revenue Change Summary				
Dedicated				
Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue				
Forecast Revenues	1,712	1,711	1,711	3,422
Total Governor's Recommendations	1,712	1,711	1,711	3,422
Fund: 2001 - Other Misc Special Revenue				
Forecast Revenues	1	2	2	4
Total Governor's Recommendations	1	2	2	4
Fund: 2403 - Gift				
Forecast Revenues	50	20	20	40
Total Governor's Recommendations	50	20	20	40
Fund: 3000 - Federal				
Forecast Revenues	11,471	11,071	11,071	22,142
Total Governor's Recommendations	11,471	11,071	11,071	22,142
Fund: 6000 - Miscellaneous Agency				
Forecast Revenues	(28,424)	1,025	1,025	2,050
Total Governor's Recommendations	(28,424)	1,025	1,025	2,050
Non-Dedicated				
Fund: 1000 - General				
Forecast Revenues	16,963	16,500	16,848	33,348
Total Governor's Recommendations	16,963	16,500	16,848	33,348

District Courts

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	25,278	45,388	45,388	45,388
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	25,278	45,388	45,388	45,388
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Recommendation:

The Governor recommends \$70,666,000 in the FY2024-25 biennium, and \$45,388,000 per fiscal year ongoing, to increase the compensation of District Courts judges 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 10.58% increase in the District Courts 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 and judges 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 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 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 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 and judges.

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 District Courts to continue to provide current levels of service and information to the public.

Statutory Change(s):

The proposal does not require statutory changes.

District Courts

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Court Case Backlog

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	8,421	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	8,421	0	0	0
FTEs	80	0	0	0

Recommendation:

The Governor recommends \$8,421,000 in onetime funding for FY2024 to fund the Judicial Branch’s court case backlog. The request represents a 1.26% one-time increase to the District Courts biennial budget.

Rationale/Background:

The Judicial Branch has adopted a strategy and long-term goal for addressing the major criminal case backlog that developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Proposal:

The Judicial Branch’s highest priority for FY2024-25 is to address the criminal case backlog. Senior (retired) judges and temporary staff have been employed to assist the district courts in resolving the cases that have not been addressed because of the pandemic, while, at the same time, keeping current on new cases being filed. The requested funds would permit the Judicial Branch to continue the use of temporary resources.

Impact on Children and Families:

Elimination of the criminal case backlog will benefit all Minnesotans, who rely on the courts to deliver timely access to justice and resolution of their cases.

Equity and Inclusion:

The Judicial Branch is committed to providing equal access to justice. Addressing the criminal case backlog will benefit all citizens who interact with the court

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 a technology proposal.

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 district courts are directed to review performance measure results. This review is shared with the Judicial Council (the Branch's governing body) twice a year. An important goal is whether courts handle cases in a timely manner.

Statutory Change(s):

This proposal does not require statutory changes.

District Courts

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Mandated Psychological Services Deficit

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	1,996	1,996	1,996	1,996
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	1,996	1,996	1,996	1,996
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Recommendation:

The Governor recommends \$3,992,000 in the FY2024-25 biennium, and \$1,996,000 per fiscal year ongoing, to fund the mandated psychological services budget deficit. The request represents a .60% increase in the District Courts biennial base budget.

Rationale/Background:

The Judicial Branch is responsible for the cost of providing psychological examinations under Rule 20 of the Criminal Rules of Procedure and under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 253B, civil commitments, including commitments of persons who are mentally ill and dangerous, persons with sexual psychopathic personalities, and sexually dangerous persons.

The Judicial Branch is experiencing significant increases in the court-related cost of providing psychological examinations in criminal and civil commitment cases. These costs grew by 32% from FY2019 to FY2021.

In addition, on July 1, 2022, the Judicial Branch assumed the cost of providing competency examinations previously funded by the Department of Human Services.

Proposal:

This change item is not a new initiative. It is aimed at addressing a budget deficit in the mandated psychological services budget and at meeting the statutory and court rule mandates to provide psychological services to individuals who interact with the Judicial Branch on a daily basis.

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 request is sought to comply with statutory and court rule mandates that the Judicial Branch fund court-related costs of examinations under Rule 20 of the Criminal Rules of Procedure and under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 253B, civil commitments, including commitments of persons who are mentally ill and dangerous, persons with sexual psychopathic personalities, and sexually dangerous persons.

Statutory Change(s):

The proposal does not require statutory changes.

District Courts

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: New Treatment Courts

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	422	422	422	422
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	422	422	422	422
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Recommendation:

The Governor recommends \$844,000 in the FY2024-25 biennium, and \$422,000 per fiscal year ongoing, to fund the New Treatment Courts. The request represents a .13% increase in the District Courts biennial base budget.

Rationale/Background:

Since 2017, the Judicial Branch has used a funding formula to provide a stable funding source for existing treatment courts. Under the funding formula a jurisdiction which seeks to establish a treatment court must seek approval by the Judicial Council and take advantage of the training provided by the federal government and start-up funding provided by state and federal grants and/or local or state (non-Judicial Branch) secured funding. When the funding expires, the treatment court may apply for Judicial Branch funding. The criterion for funding includes a minimum number of participants and a justice partner cash or in-kind match.

Over the next biennium, four treatment courts will apply for Judicial Branch funding, as the grant funding for these courts is set to expire. The funds sought will enable the four treatment courts to continue operations.

Proposal:

This change level request is not a new initiative. The request will provide funding for four treatment courts facing a discontinuation of grant funding.

Tribal Consultation:

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

Yes

No

IT Costs

This proposal is not a technology project.

Results:

The Judicial Branch will continue to offer the services of treatment courts in counties throughout the state.

The Judicial Branch recently developed and implemented a statewide treatment court management information system (MIS) to support performance management, program evaluation, and case management.

Statutory Change(s):

The proposal does not require statutory changes.

District Courts

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Courtroom Technology Enhancements

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	7,400	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	7,400	0	0	0
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Recommendation:

The Governor recommends \$7,400,000 in onetime funding for FY2024 to fund courtroom technology enhancements. The request represents a 1.11% one-time increase to the District Courts' biennial budget.

Rationale/Background:

A cornerstone of the Judicial Branch's efforts to offer remote hearing services to court users and justice partners is the need to equip courtrooms throughout the state with high quality technology equipment.

Proposal:

Funds sought will enable the Judicial Branch to continue efforts to integrate and upgrade courtroom technology. This includes:

- Courtroom wiring and infrastructure to meet the bandwidth capacity needs of fully remote courtroom activities
- Side bar technology
- Video conferencing equipment
- Upgraded Virtual Protocol Network (VPN)
- Upgraded Interpreter equipment and capabilities
- Evidence Display Capabilities

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 a MNIT technology proposal.

Results:

The Judicial Branch is committed to providing quality in-court and remote services to the citizens of Minnesota and justice partners. An advisory committee has been established to advance, monitor, and evaluate the ability of the district courts to provide in-court and remote hearings to the citizens of Minnesota. If resources are not available, the Judicial Branch will consider alternative methods to provide these services.

Statutory Change(s):

This proposal does not require statutory changes.

District Courts

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Contract Interpreter Payment Rate Continuation

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	200	200	200	200
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	200	200	200	200
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Recommendation:

The Governor recommends \$400,000 in the FY2024-25 biennium, with \$200,000 per fiscal year ongoing, to fund the increase in the hourly fee paid to contract interpreters, provided by the 2021 Legislature. The request represents a .06% increase in the District Courts biennial base budget.

Rationale/Background:

The 2021 Legislature provided a one-time appropriation to increase hourly fees paid to qualified certified and uncertified interpreters who are independent contractors and assist persons disabled in communication in legal proceedings. As a result, contract court interpreter payment rates were increased by 8% for the FY2022-2023 biennium. This request seeks to fund the increase on a permanent basis.

Proposal:

In 2021, the legislature provided a one-time appropriation of \$200,000 in both FY2022 and FY2023 to increase the contract interpreter hourly fee (Minn. Laws 2021, 1st Sp., Chapter 11, Article 1, Section 4 (c)). This request would provide funds to permanently fund the increase, beginning with the FY2024-FY2025 biennial budget.

Impact on Children and Families:

A permanent increase in the contract interpreter fee paid will enable the Branch to continue to provide quality interpreter services in response to constitutional, statutory, and court rule requirements. This will benefit all Minnesotans.

Equity and Inclusion:

The Judicial Branch is mandated to provide accurate interpretation of court proceedings so that non-English speakers and those disabled in communication are afforded equal access to justice. Continuation of the current contract interpreter fees paid will further this mandate.

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:

The Judicial Branch's Court Interpreter Program actively tracks the use of contract court interpreters. The Branch will monitor the availability of contract interpreters and will adjust recruitment and retention practices if the number of available contract court interpreters diminishes.

Statutory Change(s):

The proposal does not require statutory changes.

District Courts

Federal Funds Summary

(Dollars in Thousands)

Federal Agency and CFDA #	Federal Award Name and Brief Purpose	FY 2022 Actuals	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Base	FY 2025 Base	Required State Match or MOE?	FTEs
Justice CFDA 20.616, CFDA 20.608 (Funds pass through the Dept. of Public Safety)	Administration (NHTSA) Judicial Ignition Interlock/Substance Abuse Court Federal funds to support Treatment Courts (DWI, Drug & Family Dependency Treatment Courts)	\$ 2,022	\$ 1,281	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100	Yes	5.89
Department of Health & Human Services CFDA 93.563 (Funds pass through the Department of Human Services)	Expedited Child Support Program Reimbursement for the federal share (66%) of Expedited Child Support.	\$ 9,459	\$ 13,648	\$ 6,971	\$ 6,971	Yes	33.23
Department of Health & Human Services CFDA 93.243	Second Judicial District Treatment Court Unit Expansion and Enhancement Federal funds to expand substance abuse treatment capacity in adult treatment drug courts and adult tribal healing wellness courts.	\$ 260	\$ 400	\$ -	\$ -	No	-
Department of Justice CFDA 16.021	Justice Systems Response to Families Federal Funds to improve the response of all aspects of the civil and criminal justice system to families with a history of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, or in cases involving allegations of child sexual abuse.	\$ 81	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 197	No	-
Department of Justice CFDA 16.590	Office of Justice Program – Office of Violence Against Women - To encourage States, Indian tribal governments, State and local courts (including juvenile courts), tribal courts, and units of local government to treat domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking as serious violations of criminal law.	\$ 126	\$ 27	\$ -	\$ -	No	-
Department of Justice CFDA 16.585	Office of Justice Program – Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program - Federal Funds to equip courts and community supervision systems with the necessary tools and resources, utilizing the most current evidence-based practices and principles, to intervene with participants who abuse substances while preparing them for success in the community.	\$ 657	\$ 2,533	\$ 2,550	\$ 2,554	Yes	4.59

District Courts

Federal Funds Summary

(Dollars in Thousands)

Federal Agency and CFDA #	Federal Award Name and Brief Purpose	FY 2022 Actuals	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Base	FY 2025 Base	Required State Match or MOE?	FTEs
Department of Justice CFDA 16.043	The Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) Grant Program provides financial and technical assistance to states, state courts, local courts, units of local government, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments to implement and enhance the operations of Veterans Treatment Courts.	\$ -	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 249	No	1.00
	Federal Fund [3000 Fund] – Agency Total	\$ 12,605	\$ 18,339	\$ 11,071	\$ 11,071		44.71
US Department of the Treasury CFDA 21.027	Court Backlog To help the courts with staffing and related costs needed to reduce the significant case backlog that has resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.	\$ 5,154	\$ 4,807	\$ -	\$ -	No	46.80
	ARP-State Fiscal Recovery [3015 Fund] - Agency Total	\$ 5,154	\$ 4,807	\$ -	\$ -		46.80
	Federal Funds - Agency Total	\$ 17,759	\$ 23,146	\$ 11,071	\$ 11,071		91.51

Narrative

In FY2024 and FY2025 the Trial Courts will receive federal funding for Child Support, NHTSA Judicial Ignition Interlock/Substance Abuse Court, the Office of Justice Program (OJP) Department of Justice, and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which provides funds to help deal with the pandemic. In addition, the Second Judicial District Treatment Court Unit Expansion and Enhancement grant expands substance abuse treatment capacity in adult treatment drug courts and adult tribal healing wellness courts. The NHTSA Judicial Ignition Interlock/Substance Abuse Court and OJP grants fund the treatment courts which include DWI, Drug, Family Dependency Treatment, Mental Health, and operations of the Veteran Treatment Courts. The OJP grant also helps improve the response of the criminal justice system to families with a history of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and cases of child sexual abuse. The Expedited Child Support Program receives federal reimbursement at a rate of 66% for eligible expenditures, so less spending with state appropriated dollars would result in a proportionate decrease in federal reimbursement. In FY2023 the Second Judicial District Treatment Court Unit Expansion and Enhancement grant does not require a match. The remaining grants require a state spending match of approximately 25%. Estimates were based on past funding.