

Judiciary - Supreme Court

	FY 2025 ACTUAL	FY 2026 ESTIMATE	FY 2027 APPROVED
OPERATING BUDGET			
<i>Full Time Equivalent Positions</i>	205.0	208.0	208.0
Personal Services	8,459,700	8,911,400	8,984,400
Employee Related Expenditures	3,724,100	4,655,800	5,385,300
Professional and Outside Services	240,200	539,300	539,300
Travel - In State	208,700	169,900	169,900
Travel - Out of State	35,400	40,400	40,400
Other Operating Expenditures	4,384,900	4,994,300	5,035,800
OPERATING SUBTOTAL	17,053,000	19,311,100	20,155,100 ^{1/ 2/}
SPECIAL LINE ITEMS			
Operating Budget Lump Sum Reduction	0	0	(364,000)
Automation	19,126,900	25,114,100	25,692,700 ^{3/ 4/}
Child and Family Representation Pilot Program	0	600,000	0
County Reimbursements	187,900	187,900	187,900 ^{5/}
Court Appointed Special Advocate and Vulnerable Persons	6,575,700	6,840,800	6,898,200
Courthouse Security	751,700	752,100	755,800
Commission on Judicial Conduct	618,000	802,800	835,700
Digital Evidence Software	280,000	0	0
Domestic Relations	685,900	726,700	763,100
Fair Jury Improvement Fund Deposit	1,620,000	1,620,000	1,620,000
Judicial Nominations and Performance Review	572,600	641,900	669,200
Juvenile Monetary Sanctions Funding Backfill	250,000	250,000	0
Model Court	660,800	660,800	660,800
Probation Electronic Monitoring System Operating Costs	0	0	1,300,000 ^{6/}
State Aid	4,209,400	5,962,100	6,021,800
State Foster Care Review Board	3,507,700	3,680,500	3,829,400
AGENCY TOTAL	56,099,600	67,150,800	69,025,700 ^{7/}
FUND SOURCES			
General Fund	29,459,000	31,325,600	31,353,400
<u>Other Appropriated Funds</u>			
Confidential Intermediary and Fiduciary Fund	256,000	702,400	721,800
Court Appointed Special Advocate and Vulnerable Persons Fund	6,774,200	7,048,600	8,411,200
Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund	3,961,800	4,779,700	4,869,600
Defensive Driving School Fund	2,616,600	4,498,500	4,552,500
Judicial Collection Enhancement Fund	11,371,100	15,849,400	16,169,700
State Aid to the Courts Fund	1,660,900	2,946,600	2,947,500
SUBTOTAL - Other Appropriated Funds	26,640,600	35,825,200	37,672,300
SUBTOTAL - Appropriated Funds	56,099,600	67,150,800	69,025,700
Other Non-Appropriated Funds	32,641,000	40,487,400	40,487,400
TOTAL - ALL SOURCES	88,740,600	107,638,200	109,513,100
AGENCY DESCRIPTION — The Supreme Court consists of 7 Supreme Court Justices, judicial support staff and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). The Supreme Court, as the state's highest court, has the responsibility to review appeals and to provide rules of procedure for all the courts in Arizona. Under the direction of the Chief Justice, the AOC provides administrative supervision over the Arizona court system.			

FOOTNOTES

- 1/ Included in the operating lump sum appropriation for the supreme court is \$1,000 for the purchase of mementos and items for visiting officials. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 2/ Pursuant to section 41-1904, Arizona Revised Statutes, as of January 1, 2027, the annual salary for the chief justice of the supreme court is \$242,000 and the annual salary for the other justices of the supreme court is \$235,000. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 3/ On or before September 1, 2026, the supreme court shall report to the joint legislative budget committee and the governor's office of strategic planning and budgeting on current and future automation projects coordinated by the administrative office of the courts. The report shall include a list of court automation projects that receive or are anticipated to receive state monies in the current or next two fiscal years as well as a description of each project, the number of FTE positions, the entities involved and the goals and anticipated results for each automation project. The report shall be submitted in one summary document. The report shall indicate each project's total multiyear cost by fund source and budget line item, including any prior year, current year and future year expenditures. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 4/ Automation expenses of the judiciary shall be funded only from the automation line item. Monies in the operating lump sum appropriation or other line items intended for automation purposes shall be transferred to the automation line item before expenditure. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 5/ Of the \$187,900 appropriated for county reimbursements, state grand jury is limited to \$97,900 and capital postconviction relief is limited to \$90,000. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 6/ The amount appropriated for probation electronic monitoring system operating costs in fiscal year 2026-2027 shall be used for the continued operation of a statewide mobile electronic monitoring system for sex offenders on probation supervision and may only be used for contracted statewide mobile electronic monitoring platform services, including:
 1. Approved mobile devices and data services.
 2. Software licensing and maintenance.
 3. Officer training.
 4. Contractor compliance intervention services directly related to operation of the program.The administrative office of the courts may authorize participating criminal justice and supervision agencies to use the statewide mobile electronic monitoring platform and related services, which may include the state department of corrections, county sheriff's offices, probation departments, pretrial services, diversion programs and specialty courts. Beginning in fiscal year 2026-2027, the administrative office of the courts shall submit quarterly expenditure, enrollment, compliance and utilization reports for the system to the governor, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives. If any monies remain from the appropriation from the probation electronic monitoring system operating costs line item in fiscal year 2026-2027 after satisfying all obligations pursuant to this section, the administrative office of the courts may use the remaining monies to operate the system for other violent offender populations. (General Appropriations Act footnote)
- 7/ General Appropriations Act funds are appropriated as an Operating Lump Sum with Special Line Items by Agency.

Operating Budget

The budget includes \$20,155,100 and 109.7 FTE Positions in FY 2027 for the operating budget. These amounts consist of:

	<u>FY 2027</u>
General Fund	\$15,248,000
Confidential Intermediary and Fiduciary Fund	721,800
Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund (CJEF)	12,200
Defensive Driving School Fund	918,800
Judicial Collection Enhancement Fund (JCEF)	3,254,300

Adjustments are as follows:

FY 2025 Judicial Salary Increase

The budget includes an increase of \$63,000 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for full implementation of a pay increase for Supreme Court justices.

The FY 2025 General Appropriations Act increased the Supreme Court Chief Justice salary from \$212,000 to \$222,000 on January 1, 2025 and to \$232,000 on January 1, 2026. Additionally, the FY 2025 General Appropriation Act increased the Supreme Court Associate Justice salary from \$205,000 to \$215,000 on January 1, 2025 and to \$225,000 on January 1, 2026. The FY 2025 budget's 3-year spending plan included an additional \$63,000 in FY 2027 for full implementation.

2027 Judicial Salary Increase

The budget includes an increase of \$60,900 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for a pay increase for Supreme Court justices. The FY 2027 General Appropriations Act increases the Supreme Court Chief Justice salary from \$232,000 to \$242,000 on January 1, 2027. Additionally, the FY 2027 General Appropriations Act increases the Supreme Court Associate Justice salary from \$225,000 to \$235,000 on January 1, 2027.

The FY 2027 budget's 3-year spending plan increases this appropriation to \$121,800 in FY 2028 for full year implementation.

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$720,100 in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments. This amount consists of:

General Fund	626,100
Confidential Intermediary and Fiduciary Fund	19,400
Defensive Driving School Fund	16,300
JCEF	58,300

(Please see Agency Detail and Allocations section.)

Operating Budget Lump Sum Reduction

The budget includes a one-time decrease of \$(364,000) from the General Fund in FY 2027 for a lump sum reduction. Agencies receiving a lump sum reduction will apply the reduction to the operating lump sum appropriation in the FY 2028 budget request submittal. Agencies have discretion in how the reduction in spending is achieved. The FY 2028 Baseline Book will incorporate the agency's planned reduction into the operating budget display.

Automation

The budget includes \$25,692,700 and 15 FTE Positions in FY 2027 for Automation. These amounts consist of:

General Fund	7,903,300
Court Appointed Special Advocate and Vulnerable Persons Fund (CASAVP)	213,000
CJEF	1,783,100
Defensive Driving School Fund	3,633,700
JCEF	12,159,600

Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$578,600 in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments. This amount consists of:

General Fund	246,300
CJEF	31,100
CASAVP	5,200
Defensive Driving School Fund	37,700
JCEF	258,300

The Automation line item provides funding for court automation projects throughout the state. Automation costs are to be solely funded from the Automation line item. As required by a General Appropriations Act footnote, any additional monies expended from other line items for automation projects are to be transferred to the Automation line item prior to expenditure.

Child and Family Representation Pilot Program

The budget includes no funding and 1 FTE Position in FY 2027 for the Child and Family Representation Program. Adjustments are as follows:

Remove One-Time Funding

The budget includes a decrease of \$(600,000) from the General Fund in FY 2027 to remove one-time funding for the 3-year Child and Family Representation Pilot Program.

The FY 2026 Criminal Justice Budget Reconciliation Bill (BRB) (Laws 2025, Chapter 237) established a 3-year program in the AOC to improve legal representation by attorneys appointed to represent juveniles, parents and guardians during juvenile court proceedings. The FY 2026 appropriation is non-lapsing.

County Reimbursements

The budget includes \$187,900 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for County Reimbursements. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

The County Reimbursements line item provides reimbursement to counties for grand jury expenses and for state-funded representation of indigent defendants in first-time capital postconviction relief proceedings. Statute limits reimbursements to counties for grand jury expenses and state-funded representation of indigent defendants in first-time capital postconviction relief proceedings to the amount appropriated for those purposes.

A General Appropriations Act footnote limits the appropriation for the State Grand Jury to \$97,900 and for Capital Postconviction Relief to \$90,000.

Court Appointed Special Advocate and Vulnerable Persons

The budget includes \$6,898,200 and 23.5 FTE Positions from the CASAVP Fund in FY 2027 for Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) and Vulnerable Persons. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$57,400 from the CASAVP Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

This line item administers and monitors a community-based volunteer advocacy program for abused and neglected children in the Juvenile Court System and to review conservatorship filings for vulnerable persons.

Courthouse Security

The budget includes \$755,800 from JCEF in FY 2027 for Courthouse Security. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$3,700 from JCEF in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

The Courthouse Security line item includes funding for training, assistance, and grants to courts to meet the minimum standards of courthouse security as adopted by the Supreme Court.

Commission on Judicial Conduct

The budget includes \$835,700 and 5 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the Commission on Judicial Conduct. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$32,900 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

The Commission on Judicial Conduct investigates and resolves all complaints of judicial misconduct.

Digital Evidence Software

The budget includes no funding in FY 2027 for the Digital Evidence Software line item. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

Monies in this line item fund digital evidence software portal costs for all case types.

Domestic Relations

The budget includes \$763,100 and 4.9 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Domestic Relations. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$36,400 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

The Domestic Relations line item provides coordination and technical support for groups formed to develop and review policies and programs related to domestic relations and child support.

Fair Jury Improvement Fund Deposit

The budget includes \$1,620,000 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the Fair Jury Improvement Fund Deposit line item. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

Laws 2025, Chapter 55 changed the name of the fund from the Arizona Trial and Digital Evidence Fund to the Fair Jury Improvement Fund and extended the repeal date to June 30, 2031.

Monies in this line item are used for replacement and supplemental earnings for petit jurors in the Superior Court eligible after 1 day of jury service.

Judicial Nominations and Performance Review

The budget includes \$669,200 and 4.6 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Judicial Nominations and Performance Review. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$27,300 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

This line item funds administrative costs to oversee the nominations for the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Superior Court in Maricopa, Pima, Pinal, Coconino and Yavapai Counties, as well as evaluating the performance of all merit retention justices and judges. The results of the performance evaluations are provided to the voters before each retention election.

Juvenile Monetary Sanctions Funding Backfill

The budget includes no funding in FY 2027 for the Juvenile Monetary Sanctions Funding Backfill line item. Adjustments are as follows:

Remove Backfill Funding

The budget includes a decrease of \$(250,000) from the General Fund in FY 2027 to remove one-time funding for a juvenile monetary sanctions backfill.

The FY 2024 3-year spending plan originally included one-time funding for this project in FY 2024 and continued this one-time appropriation in FY 2025 and FY 2026. A General Appropriations Act footnote specified that the Supreme Court may only spend monies from this line item if the legislation eliminating certain court fees for juvenile is signed into law. Laws 2023, Chapter 162 was signed into law in May 2023.

Monies in this line item provide backfill funding to replenish revenues lost from the repeal of juvenile monetary sanctions. Laws 2023, Chapter 162 repeals certain court-ordered fees for juveniles, exempts juveniles from court surcharges and assessments, and prohibits courts from charging a juvenile or the juvenile's parent or guardian for the costs of court-ordered treatment, counseling, and other services.

Model Court

The budget includes \$660,800 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Model Court. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

Monies in this line item fund a Dependency Alternative Program (DAP) coordinator in the AOC and the remaining monies are passed through to counties to improve processing of dependency cases. DAP is a voluntary program for eligible families that provides access to legal and child welfare services to quickly determine the best option for a child's custody and prevent a dependency case.

Probation Electronic Monitoring System Operating Costs

The budget includes \$1,300,000 in FY 2027 for the Probation Electronic Monitoring System Operating Costs line item. Adjustments are as follows:

One-Time Funding

The budget includes a one-time increase of \$1,300,000 from the CASAVP Fund in FY 2027 for operating costs for the Judiciary's community supervision electronic monitoring system.

The budget includes a footnote that requires that this funding be used for the operation of an electronic monitoring system for sex offenders on probation supervision and specifies that monies may be expended on platform services directly related to the operation of

the system. Additionally, the footnote allows the courts to authorize participating criminal justice and supervision agencies to utilize the system and requires courts to submit quarterly reports on expenditures, enrollment, compliance, and utilization to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives. Any remaining monies in the appropriation may be used to operate the system for other violent offender populations.

State Aid

The budget includes \$6,021,800 and 3.3 FTE Positions in FY 2027 for State Aid. These amounts consist of:

CJEF	3,074,300
State Aid to the Courts Fund	2,947,500

Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$59,700 in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments. This amount consists of:

CJEF	58,800
State Aid to the Courts Fund	900

The State Aid line item provides state aid to counties for the payment of judges pro tempore salaries, and for projects designed to improve the processing of criminal cases in the Superior Court and Justice Courts.

State Foster Care Review Board

The budget includes \$3,829,400 and 40 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the State Foster Care Review Board. Adjustments are as follows:

Statewide Adjustments

The budget includes an increase of \$148,900 from the General Fund in FY 2027 for statewide adjustments.

The State Foster Care Review Board line item coordinates local volunteer review boards for foster care children in out-of-home placement.

Other Issues

This section includes information on the following topics:

- Statutory Changes
- Fund Transfers
- Court Surcharges and Assessments

Statutory Changes

The FY 2027 Criminal Justice BRB makes the following changes:

- As permanent law, requires the Administrative Office of the Courts to submit an annual report to the Governor, Speaker of House, President of the Senate, JLBC, OSPB, and Secretary of State by December 1 on the enforcement and collection of restitution, fines, fees, surcharges, and assessments under A.R.S. § 13-810, including detail on amounts ordered and collected, collection rates, and instances in which a person was incarcerated due to nonpayment.

Fund Transfers

The budget includes the following transfers from this agency's funds to the General Fund:

	FY 2026
CASAVP Fund	\$3,000,000
JCEF	1,000,000

Court Surcharges and Assessments

A.R.S. § 41-1273 requires the JLBC Staff to submit a report to the Committee on or before December 1, 2019 and once every 7 years thereafter detailing all statutory surcharges and assessments imposed on criminal and civil fines, penalties, forfeitures, traffic violations and local ordinances. Statute requires that the report include the current amount of each surcharge and assessment authorized by statute, the amounts collected, and the purposes for which these monies were used.

According to the most recent JLBC Staff report published in August 2019, statute imposed surcharges totaling 78.0% and assessments totaling \$44.00 per fine. Additional specific statutory surcharges and assessments are not included in the report, for example, statute imposes a \$250 assessment on DUI charges.

The August 2019 report included FY 2018 collection data from the courts totaling \$75.8 million. The largest surcharge collected the Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund (CJEF) Surcharge which accounted for \$33.7 million in FY 2018, making up 44.4% of the total. CJEF collections fund a variety of programs in state and local law enforcement. The largest assessment imposed by the courts is the Probation Assessment. The Probation Assessment is \$20 on each fine or penalty and accounted for \$9.7 million in collections in FY 2018, or 12.8% of total

collections. Revenue from the Probation Assessment is deposited into the Judicial Collections Enhancement Fund (JCEF) to support county probation departments.