

Judiciary - Supreme Court

	FY 2025 ACTUAL	FY 2026 ESTIMATE	FY 2027 BASELINE
OPERATING BUDGET			
<i>Full Time Equivalent Positions</i>	205.0	208.0	208.0
Personal Services	8,459,700	8,911,400	8,949,200
Employee Related Expenditures	3,724,100	4,655,800	4,681,000
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	4,994,300
OPERATING SUBTOTAL	17,053,000	19,311,100	19,374,100 ^{1/}
SPECIAL LINE ITEMS			
Automation	19,126,900	25,114,100	25,114,100 ^{2/ 3/}
Child and Family Representation Pilot Program	0	600,000 ^{4/}	0
County Reimbursements	187,900	187,900	187,900 ^{5/}
Court Appointed Special Advocate and Vulnerable Persons	6,575,700	6,840,800	6,840,800
Courthouse Security	751,700	752,100	752,100
Commission on Judicial Conduct	618,000	802,800	802,800
Digital Evidence Software	280,000	0	0
Domestic Relations	685,900	726,700	726,700
Fair Jury Improvement Fund Deposit	1,620,000	1,620,000	1,620,000
Judicial Nominations and Performance Review	572,600	641,900	641,900
Juvenile Monetary Sanctions Funding Backfill	250,000	250,000	0
Model Court	660,800	660,800	660,800
State Aid	4,209,400	5,962,100	5,962,100
State Foster Care Review Board	3,507,700	3,680,500	3,680,500
AGENCY TOTAL	56,099,600	67,150,800	66,363,800 ^{6/}
FUND SOURCES			
General Fund	29,459,000	31,325,600	30,538,600
<u>Other Appropriated Funds</u>			
Confidential Intermediary and Fiduciary Fund	256,000	702,400	702,400
Court Appointed Special Advocate and Vulnerable Persons Fund	6,774,200	7,048,600	7,048,600
Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund	3,961,800	4,779,700	4,779,700
Defensive Driving School Fund	2,616,600	4,498,500	4,498,500
Judicial Collection Enhancement Fund	11,371,100	15,849,400	15,849,400
State Aid to the Courts Fund	1,660,900	2,946,600	2,946,600
SUBTOTAL - Other Appropriated Funds	26,640,600	35,825,200	35,825,200
SUBTOTAL - Appropriated Funds	56,099,600	67,150,800	66,363,800
Other Non-Appropriated Funds	32,641,000	40,487,400	40,487,400
TOTAL - ALL SOURCES	88,740,600	107,638,200	106,851,200

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/ 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)
- 3/ 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)
- 4/ This appropriation is a continuing appropriation and is exempt from the provisions of section 35-190, Arizona Revised Statutes, relating to lapsing of appropriations. (FY 2026 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/ General Appropriations Act funds are appropriated as an Operating Lump Sum with Special Line Items by Agency.

Operating Budget

The Baseline includes \$19,374,100 and 109.7 FTE Positions in FY 2027 for the operating budget. These amounts consist of:

	FY 2027
General Fund	\$14,561,000
Confidential Intermediary and Fiduciary Fund	702,400
Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund (CJEF)	12,200
Defensive Driving School Fund	902,500
Judicial Collection Enhancement Fund (JCEF)	3,196,000

Adjustments are as follows:

Judicial Salary Increase

The Baseline 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.

Automation

The Baseline includes \$25,114,100 and 15 FTE Positions in FY 2027 for Automation. These amounts consist of:

General Fund	7,657,000
Court Appointed Special Advocate	207,800

and Vulnerable Persons Fund (CASAVP)

CJEF	1,752,000
Defensive Driving School Fund	3,596,000
JCEF	11,901,300

These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

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 Baseline 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 Baseline 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 Baseline 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 Baseline includes \$6,840,800 and 23.5 FTE Positions from the CASAVP Fund in FY 2027 for Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) and Vulnerable Persons. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

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 Baseline includes \$752,100 from JCEF in FY 2027 for Courthouse Security. This amount is unchanged from FY 2026.

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 Baseline includes \$802,800 and 5 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the Commission on Judicial Conduct. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

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

Digital Evidence Software

The Baseline 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 Baseline includes \$726,700 and 4.9 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Domestic Relations. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

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 Baseline 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 Baseline includes \$641,900 and 4.6 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for Judicial Nominations and Performance Review. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

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

Remove Backfill Funding

The Baseline 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 Baseline includes \$660,800 and 1 FTE Position 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.

State Aid

The Baseline includes \$5,962,100 and 3.3 FTE Positions in FY 2027 for State Aid. These amounts consist of:

CJEF	3,015,500
State Aid to the Courts Fund	2,946,600

These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

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 Baseline includes \$3,680,500 and 40 FTE Positions from the General Fund in FY 2027 for the State Foster Care Review Board. These amounts are unchanged from FY 2026.

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

Other Issues

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 (JECF) to support county probation departments.

SUMMARY OF FUNDS	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate
Alternative Dispute Resolution Fund (SPA3245/A.R.S. § 12-135)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: The fund consists of 0.32% of notary bond fees, 0.35% of fee collections on civil filings in the Superior Court, and 1.69% of civil filings in Justice of the Peace Courts in counties with populations greater than 500,000 people and 1.89% of civil filings in Justice of the Peace Courts in counties with populations less than 500,000 people.		
Purpose of Fund: To supplement local courts' funding for alternative dispute resolution programs.		
Funds Expended	416,100	709,300
Year-End Fund Balance	1,042,500	881,700
Certified Reporters Fund (SPA2440/A.R.S. § 32-4007)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Fees, costs and penalties relating to reporter certification.		
Purpose of Fund: For reporter certification.		
Funds Expended	71,700	117,700
Year-End Fund Balance	77,400	60,200
Confidential Intermediary and Fiduciary Fund (SPA2276/A.R.S. § 8-135)		Appropriated
Source of Revenue: A portion of Superior Court fees; fees received by state and local registrars for certified copies of birth certificates; and fees collected through fiduciary registration with the Supreme Court.		
Purpose of Fund: To train and certify confidential intermediaries, who facilitate contact between adoptees/adoptive parents and birth parents while protecting court and agency records. Monies are also used to train and certify private fiduciaries, who serve as court appointed guardians or representatives, and to establish the Sibling Information Exchange Program, which facilitates contact between a former dependent child of biological parents, adoptive parents, guardians, and the child's sibling or siblings.		
Funds Expended	256,000	702,400
Year-End Fund Balance	971,000	804,900
Court Appointed Special Advocate and Vulnerable Persons Fund (SPA2275/A.R.S. § 8-524)		Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Revenues consist of 30% of the state lottery unclaimed prize monies.		
Purpose of Fund: For operating the Court Appointed Special Advocate program, which trains volunteers to advocate for abused and neglected children in Juvenile Court proceedings.		
Funds Expended	6,774,200	7,048,600
Year-End Fund Balance	18,509,100	18,252,400
Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund (SPA2075/A.R.S. § 41-2401)		Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Includes allocations of the Criminal Justice Enhancement Fund (CJEF). CJEF consists of a 42% penalty assessment on fines, violations, forfeitures, and penalties imposed by the courts for criminal offenses and civil motor vehicle statute violations.		
Purpose of Fund: 12.38% of CJEF monies allocated to the courts are used to reduce juvenile crime, 8.59% is used to enhance the court's ability to process criminal and delinquency cases and salaries of Superior Court judges, and 4.16% is used to provide drug treatment services to adult probationers. The portions of the fund dedicated to juvenile crime reduction and drug treatment are included in the Superior Court's budget, while the case processing portion is part of the Supreme Court's budget.		
Funds Expended	3,961,800	4,779,700
Year-End Fund Balance	1,879,100	1,230,000
Defensive Driving School Fund (SPA2247/A.R.S. § 28-3398)		Appropriated
Source of Revenue: A fee, not to exceed \$15, imposed on each person who attends a defensive driving school, and \$500 initial certification and \$50-\$250 recertification fees paid by defensive driving schools. The fees are set by the Supreme Court.		
Purpose of Fund: To monitor defensive driving schools for compliance with claims and court policy, to supervise their use by the courts in Arizona, and to expedite the processing of highway traffic offenses. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has also used these monies to fund court automation projects throughout the state.		
Funds Expended	2,616,600	4,498,500
Year-End Fund Balance	1,986,100	1,453,300

SUMMARY OF FUNDS	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate
Drug Treatment and Education Fund (SPA2277/A.R.S. § 13-901.02)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Fifty per cent of the monies deposited in the Judiciary Drug Treatment and Education Fund shall be distributed to the Arizona Parents Commission on Drug Education and Prevention established by A.R.S. § 41-1604.17		
Purpose of Fund: To fund programs that increase parental involvement and education regarding the problems caused by the abuse of alcohol and controlled substances.		
Funds Expended	644,100	637,500
Year-End Fund Balance	0	100
Fair Jury Improvement Fund (SPA2382/A.R.S. § 21-222)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: The fund consists of fees established by the Supreme Court on court filings paid to the clerk of the Superior Court. The fees supporting the fund are repealed from and after December 31, 2030.		
Purpose of Fund: To pay juror replacement and supplemental earnings after 1 day of service. Monies in the fund are used to reimburse counties for these juror costs. Statute specifies that not more than 3% of the fund is to be used on administration of the fund. The fund is repealed from and after June 30, 2031.		
Funds Expended	1,042,200	2,502,400
Year-End Fund Balance	6,187,000	6,584,100
General Adjudication Personnel and Support Fund (SPA1098/A.R.S. § 12-117.01)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Monies appropriated to the fund by the Legislature.		
Purpose of Fund: For the Supreme Court to provide additional personnel for general adjudication, case management, and other support equipment and the Department of Water Resources for additional personnel, equipment, and services related to general adjudication. The fund is exempt from A.R.S. § 35-190, relating to lapsing of appropriations. Expenditures from this fund are not displayed to avoid double counting General Fund monies.		
Funds Expended	0	0
Year-End Fund Balance	0	0
Grants and Special Revenue (SPA2084/A.R.S. § 35-142)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Monies provided from various sources, private and public, for specific programs and projects.		
Purpose of Fund: To expend grants as required by the contribution.		
Funds Expended	30,018,800	36,072,800
Year-End Fund Balance	24,013,900	24,583,000
Judicial Collection Enhancement Fund (SPA2246/A.R.S. § 12-113)		Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Electronic case filing and access fees; 27.78% of Supreme Court fees, 18.74% of Superior Court fees, 19.42% of Court of Appeals fees, 19.18% of Municipal Court fees, and 15.74% to 17.27% of Justice of the Peace fees; time payment fees assessed for late court payments; fees paid for court-ordered diversion programs, and a \$20 probation surcharge on fines, penalties, and forfeitures imposed by the courts for criminal offenses and civil motor vehicle statute violations. Maricopa County retains any probation surcharge imposed in its county.		
Purpose of Fund: To train court personnel, improve and enhance the court's ability to collect and manage monies assessed or received by the court, to fund court automation projects likely to improve case processing or the administration of justice, and for probation services.		
Funds Expended	11,371,100	15,849,400
Year-End Fund Balance	8,874,100	6,269,900
Juvenile Probation Services Fund (SPA2193/A.R.S. § 8-322)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Monies appropriated to Juvenile Treatment Services and Juvenile Diversion Consequences and allocated by the Administrative Office of the Courts.		
Purpose of Fund: To fund programs for juvenile probationers required as conditions of diversion. These programs are intended to reduce the number of repetitive juvenile offenders and provide services, including treatment, testing, independent living programs, residential foster and shelter care, and for juveniles referred to the juvenile court for incorrigibility or delinquency offenses. Expenditures from this fund are not displayed to avoid double counting General Fund monies.		
Funds Expended	0	0
Year-End Fund Balance	0	0

SUMMARY OF FUNDS	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate
Public Defender Training Fund (SPA3013/A.R.S. § 12-117)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Two dollars of the \$20 surcharge on each person paying a court order penalty, fine, or sanction on a time-payment basis.		
Purpose of Fund: For training of public defenders. Allocation of monies is made to each county Public Defender Office in proportion to the number of felony cases assigned to that office in the last fiscal year.		
Funds Expended	448,100	447,700
Year-End Fund Balance	4,400	4,400
Smart and Safe Arizona Fund (SPA1120/A.R.S. § 36-2856)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: The fund receives revenues from a 16.0% excise tax on the sale of recreational marijuana products and license and registration fees.		
Purpose of Fund: To pay costs incurred by state agencies to implement the provisions of Proposition 207, which legalized the adult use of recreational marijuana. After agencies pay administrative costs, the remaining funds are distributed 33.0% to community college districts, 31.4% to municipal police and fire departments, 25.4% to the Highway User Revenue Fund, 10.0% to the Justice Reinvestment Fund, and 0.2% to the Attorney General.		
Funds Expended	0	0
Year-End Fund Balance	0	0
State Aid to the Courts Fund (SPA2446/A.R.S. § 12-102.02)		Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Legislative appropriations, a portion of court filing fees, and a portion of fees, fines, penalties and forfeitures collected on criminal offenses and civil motor vehicle violations.		
Purpose of Fund: To provide state aid to the Superior Court, including the clerk of the Superior Court, and Justice Courts for the processing of criminal cases. Monies are distributed to each county based on a formula using Superior Court felony filings and county population.		
Funds Expended	1,660,900	2,946,600
Year-End Fund Balance	683,200	1,265,100
State Court Fleet Operations and Replacement Fund (SPA3800/A.R.S. § 12-102.04)		Non-Appropriated
Source of Revenue: Proceeds from sales of the Supreme Court's surplus motor vehicles, legislative appropriations, and revenues received from fees.		
Purpose of Fund: To make payments to ADOT to acquire vehicles and maintain the state court motor vehicle fleet.		
Funds Expended	0	0
Year-End Fund Balance	0	0