



State of the Judiciary in San Diego County 2014/2015 Budget Effects on San Diego County

The 2014/2015 California budget (approved by the Legislature on June 15, 2014) provides a glimmer of hope, primarily by illustrating Governor Brown's recognition of the importance of proper funding for our courts. However, his "two year funding approach" does not solve the immediate needs in San Diego.

While the Workload Allocation Funding Model (WAFM) will restore some funding to San Diego, it is less than a quarter of what the courts need to remain functional and to "stay afloat."

In fact, San Diego's courts are now looking at a significant deficit. Because of the WAFM, declining filings, doubling the reallocation of historical funding slated to occur next year, and unfunded local cost increases, it is possible that the existing deficit will increase substantially over the next year.

What is clear is that the restored funds for San Diego will not cover the court's increased operating costs. The real impact of the budget passed by the Legislature is that the courts need to contemplate further cuts in services in order to stay within the approved budget. The San Diego Superior Court administration is looking at how to address this deficit without further compromising services and access to justice for San Diegans.

Statewide, the budget represents an improvement. But in San Diego County, reinvestment and restoration of funding remains critical. Therefore, the San Diego County Bar Association's Court Funding Action Committee will continue to bring the real world impacts of the budget deficit to light and educate our elected officials and the San Diego community at large of the issues related to our funding gap.