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RIVERSIDE COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

Superior Court of California
County of Riverside

Annual Report

2017 - 2018



Riverside Historic Courthouse Interior

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Introduction

Message from the Presiding Judge



Becky L. Dugan
Presiding Judge

As one can see reading through Riverside Superior Court's 2017-2018 Annual Report, our stellar employees have accomplished much, in spite of our many challenges. Our goal remains constant – to continue to increase access to justice for all court users, and to use our limited resources as efficiently as possible to achieve that result.

We have been able to make significant strides toward that goal this year. For the first time in many years, the court received an adequate budget from the legislature. The increased budget, and four new judgeship positions, made it possible to re-open our western-most court in Corona. Our new case management system, eCourt, is progressing well. We continue to receive funding to expand interpreter services throughout our system. Two new courthouses, in Indio and Menifee, have also been funded and are in the process of being built. These are just some of the accomplishments in 2017-2018.

It has been my great honor to serve at the helm of Riverside Superior Court for the last two years. I conclude my term knowing that our court is in excellent hands as we confidently move toward the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Becky L. Dugan".

Becky L. Dugan
Presiding Judge

Message from the Court Executive Officer



W. Samuel Hamrick, Jr.
Court Executive Officer

This report tells the current story of the Riverside Superior Court. As a former Supreme Court Clerk of Court once told me, "what you count, counts." You will see that we have counted a lot with statistics illustrating the dedicated hard work of judicial officers, court staff, the Bar, justice partners and law enforcement. All working to provide access to justice to the many citizens of Riverside County and elsewhere who rely on our efforts.

Riverside Superior Court is a growing court in a growing county. In recent years, we received four additional judgeships, built new courthouses in Banning and Murrieta, planned new courthouses for Indio and Menifee, and embarked on the implementation of a new case management system to maintain our position on the cutting edge of court technology.

It is a privilege to work to provide access to justice in Riverside County, this is our story and it is an honor to share it with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Samuel Hamrick, Jr.".

W. Samuel Hamrick, Jr.
Court Executive Officer

County Profile

The Riverside Superior Court is the state court of original jurisdiction for Riverside, California. With 15 courthouses spread over nearly 7,300 square miles, the court is the fourth largest trial court in California in terms of population, geographic area served, and the number of cases filed each year.

The court generally divides its operations and court locations into three geographic regions: Desert, Mid-County, and Western.

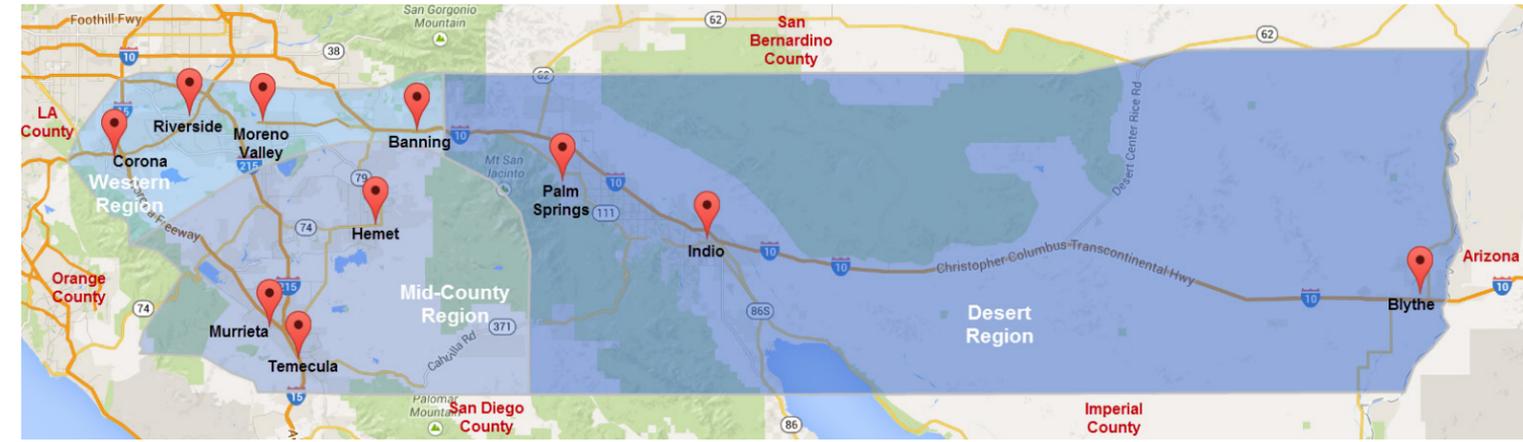
Demographics

As one of the two counties making up Southern California's Inland Empire, Riverside County has experienced tremendous population growth. The number of residents calling Riverside County home more than doubled between 1990 and 2018. Fueled in part by the availability of affordable housing, the county's population increased more than 52% since 2000 as large numbers of people relocate from coastal communities in Orange, Los Angeles, and San Diego counties.

Indicators suggest that migration from coastal to inland communities will likely continue. The California Department of Finance projects the county's population will reach nearly 2.7 million by 2025, a nearly 11% increase compared to 2018.

As the graph below demonstrates, the court's number of authorized judicial positions has not kept pace with increases in population and workload.

According to the Judicial Council of California, Riverside Superior Court needs 116.2 judicial officers in order to manage its existing caseload. With only 81 judicial officers (66 judges, 14 commissioners, and 1 hearing officer), the court should have an additional 36 judicial officers hearing cases.



(Above) Map showing the geography of Riverside County and the court's three regions.

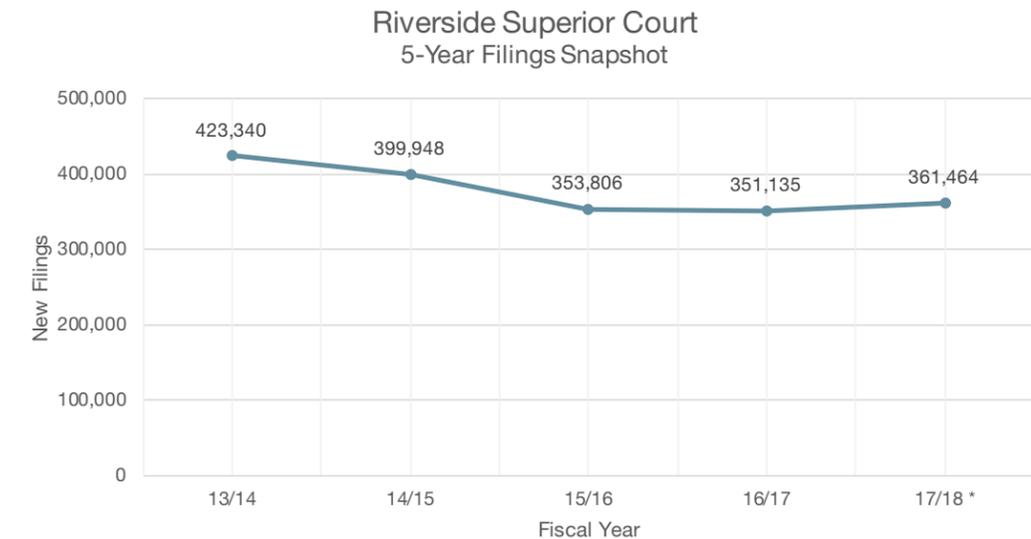
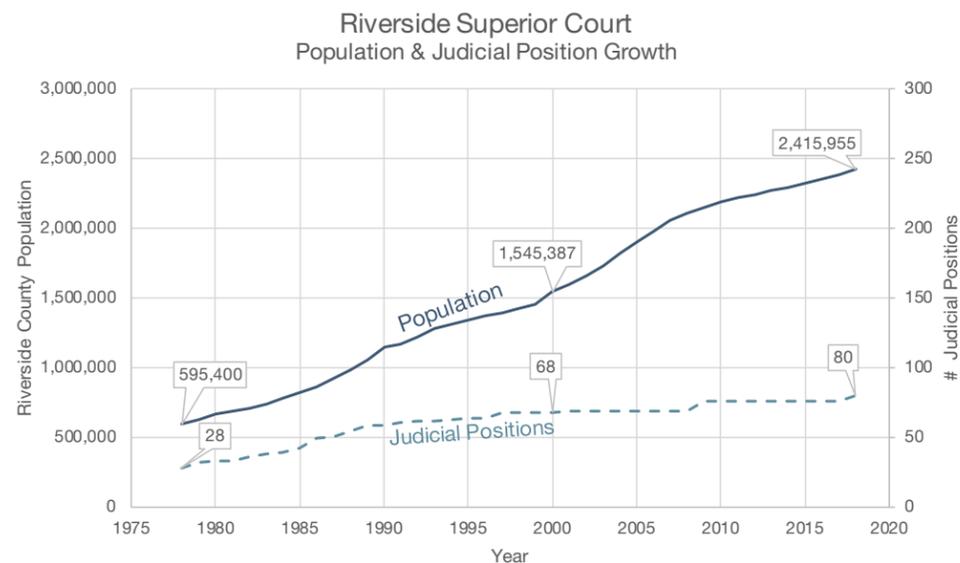
Filings & Workload Trends

During this fiscal year, the court received over 361,464 new filings (not including Probate and Mental Health cases) – an increase of approximately 3% compared to the prior fiscal year.

Consistent with other counties throughout California, Riverside County has seen an overall decrease in court filings over the last several years. Significant changes to the state's criminal justice system during that time, including Proposition 47 (2014) and Proposition 64 (2016), contributed to a decline in criminal filings – particularly felony cases.

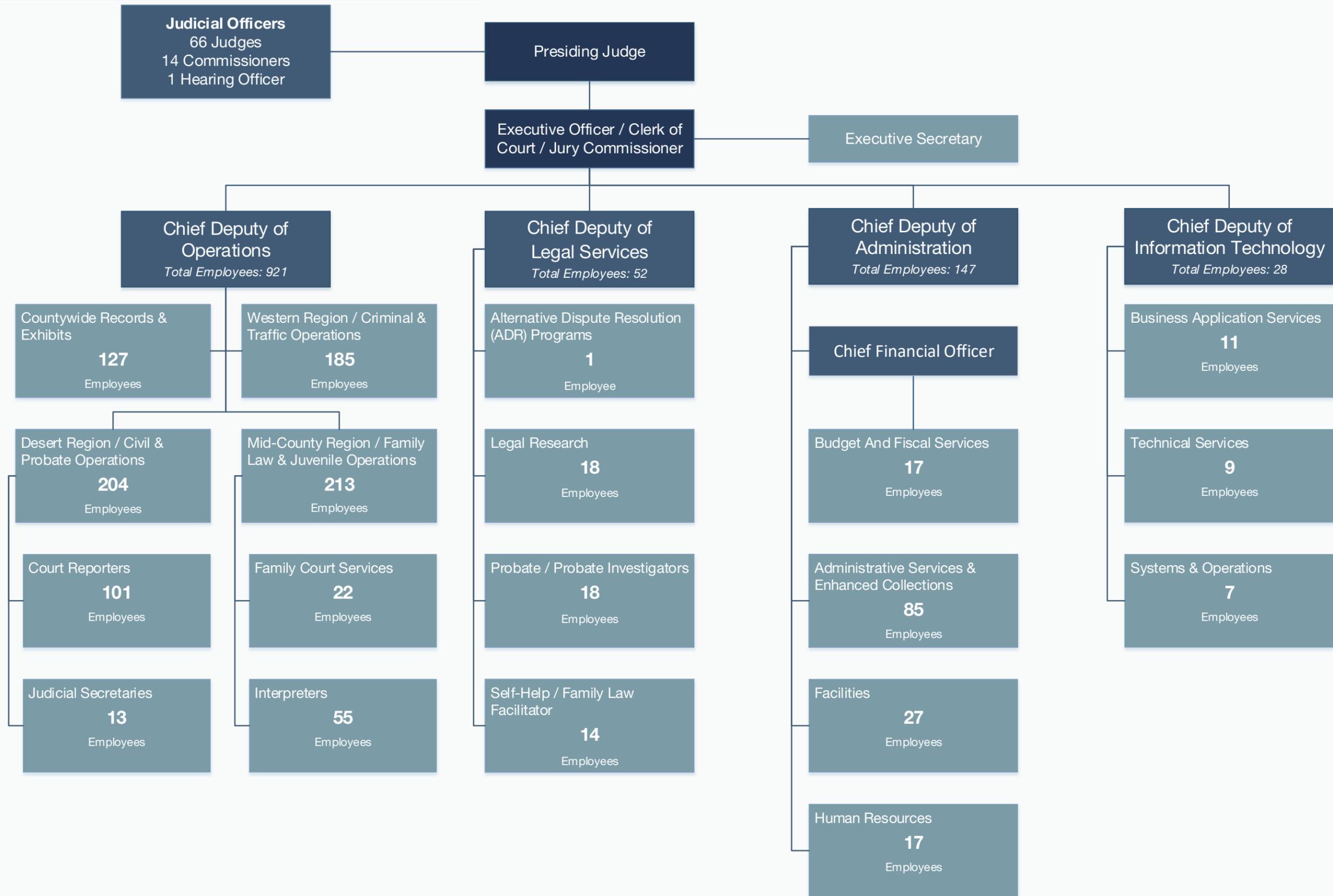
Although the volume of new filings the court receives ebbs and flows from year to year, the percentage of new cases that now include complex and significant issues such as mental health and/or substance abuse continues to increase.

Because of the issues involved, these cases typically require additional judicial officer time, which adds further strain to the court's per judicial officer caseload – already one of the highest in the state.



* Note: 17/18 filings data does not include Probate or Mental Health cases.

Organizational Structure



Note: Employee counts include both filled and vacant positions as of Aug. 31, 2018.

Technology & Innovation

Case Management System Implementation

One of the court's primary responsibilities is to maintain an accurate record of all case activities. At the heart of fulfilling this responsibility is the court's computer system – often referred to as a case management system (or CMS) – into which staff enters all newly filed documents, minute orders, and case actions.

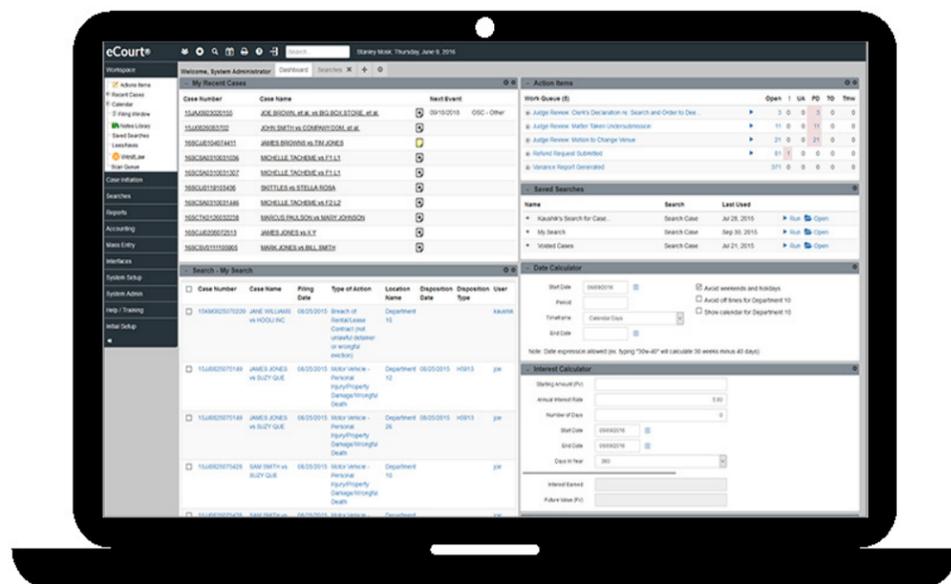
For many years, the court has relied on a computer system known as the Integrated Case Management System (or ICMS). Just as a computer running Windows 95 doesn't have the same functionality as one running the latest operating system, the court's aging CMS infrastructure sometimes struggles to fully meet the demands of modern, efficient court operations.

In mid-2016, the court began efforts to design, configure and implement a modern CMS known

as eCourt. The eCourt CMS will introduce new and improved functionality, is capable of interfacing with other court information systems and features a modern, user-friendly interface.

Implementing eCourt has proven a significant endeavor, involving court staff from many areas, including: operations, court technology, fiscal services, interpreters, and appeals. On December 4, 2017, those efforts culminated in the successful implementation of eCourt for all Probate and Mental Health cases. The second case type to implement eCourt was Family Law, which rolled out on August 6, 2018.

The court plans to continue migrating all remaining case types to eCourt over the next 24 – 36 months. The new CMS also paves the way for the court to implement electronic filing (eFiling) in the near future.



(Above) eCourt Case Management System. Image courtesy of Journal Technologies Inc.

Court Innovations Grant Program

Recognizing the need for innovative responses to the challenges facing the judicial branch after years of budget reductions, the Legislature appropriated \$25 million in 2016 to fund a competitive grant program administered by the Judicial Council of California, known as the Court Innovations Grant Program. In March 2017, the Judicial Council awarded Riverside Superior Court approximately \$875,000 in grant funds over three years to develop three innovative projects:

- Traffic Avatar;
- Self-Help and Jury Check-In Kiosks; and
- Electronic Courtroom Check-In.

The project teams' hard work and determination resulted in the court achieving several significant milestones.

Traffic Avatar

On May 1, 2018, the court launched its new online traffic avatar, named "Iris", which is available on the court's website to assist customers with their traffic/non-traffic infraction cases. Fluent in six languages – English, Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Mandarin, and Cantonese – Iris assists customers with many common transactions such as: paying a ticket, determining eligibility for/requesting traffic school, requesting an extension, and providing a proof of correction. Iris is also available 24/7 to answer many common questions that would otherwise require a customer to visit a courthouse or call the court directly.

The court hopes to expand the types of transactions with which Iris can assist as well as increase the number of supported languages. Consistent with the goals of the Court Innovation Grant Program, the court is in the process of sharing technical and programmatic information with other courts to assist in their efforts to deploy a Traffic Avatar.



"Iris," the court's Traffic Avatar, is available on the court's traffic web page to assist visitors with many common questions and transactions.

Self-Help and Jury Check-In Kiosks

The court's Self-Help and Jury Check-In Kiosks are an innovative approach to helping court visitors and jurors navigate court facilities. Innovation Grant funds allowed the court to deploy two kiosks (one Self-Help Kiosk and one Jury Check-In Kiosk) each at the court's four main justice centers: Banning Justice Center (Banning), Larson Justice Center (Indio), Southwest Justice Center (Murrieta), and the Hall of Justice (Riverside).

Self-Help Kiosks

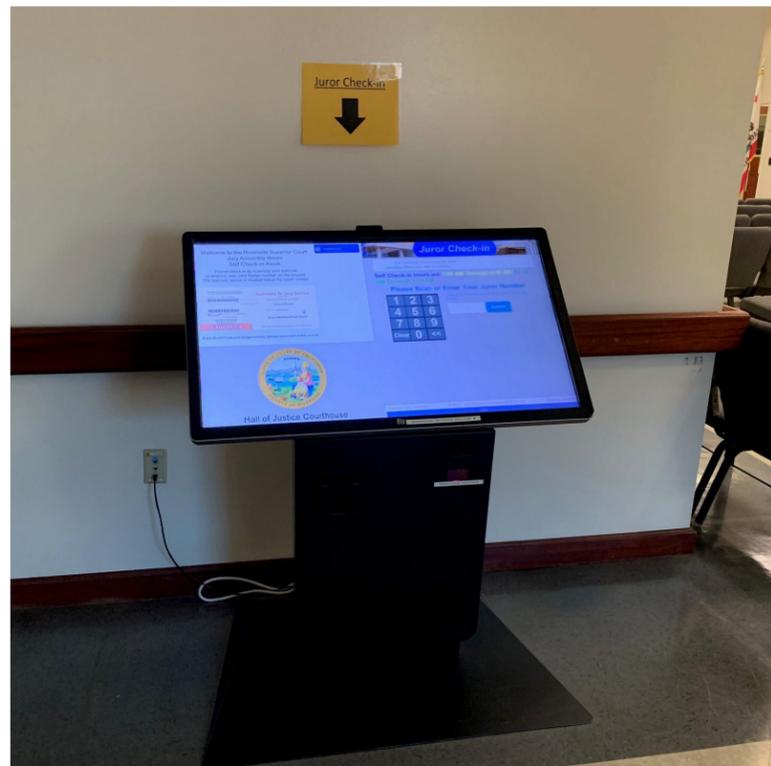
Located in the main concourse at each justice center, the Self-Help Kiosks feature an easy-to-use interface that allows visitors to quickly access directions to their destination – whether that’s a courtroom, the jury assembly room, or the clerk’s office.

For many visitors, the kiosks offer a quick and convenient alternative to conventional public services. However, for visitors with limited English proficiency, the kiosks mean improved language access in the courts. The kiosks offer assistance in six languages - English, Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Chinese (traditional and simplified), and Korean – which means the devices are able to assist even when an interpreter or native-speaking court staff are not immediately available. The kiosks also inform court users about the availability of free language services and how they can request an interpreter.

The court began deploying the Self-Help Kiosks this year, beginning with the Banning Justice Center on April 20, 2018, followed by the Larson Justice Center (Indio) on May 5, 2018, the Southwest Justice Center (Murrieta) on May 11, 2018, and finally the Hall of Justice (Riverside) on May 15, 2018. The court plans to add additional functionality to the Self-Help kiosks and to install them at additional courthouses throughout the county in the near future.

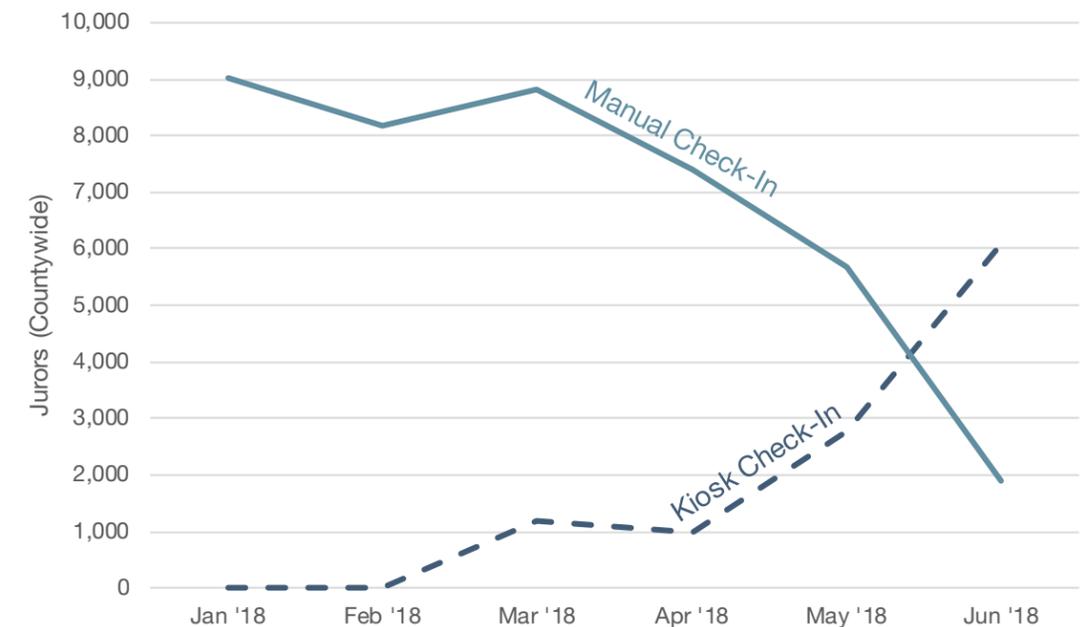
Jury Check-In Kiosks

Similar to their Self-Help counterparts, the Jury Check-In Kiosks are located in the jury assembly rooms and feature an easy-to-use interface designed to enable jurors to check-in quickly and without having to wait in line for staff assistance.



(Above) Jury Check-In Kiosk at the Hall of Justice in Riverside, CA

Jury Check-In Kiosk Usage



In March 2018, the court began to deploy the Jury Check-In Kiosks, installing one in each jury assembly room. Since March, the number of jurors using the check-in kiosks has increased dramatically, increasing from nearly 1,200 in the first month to over 6,000 just four months later.

The Jury Check-In Kiosk project also yielded significant efficiencies and ongoing cost-savings for the court, reducing by nearly 75% the number of full-time staff needed to check-in jurors. This savings means staff who previously assisted with juror check-ins are now available to assist in other understaffed areas throughout the court.

Based on the success of the Jury Check-In Kiosks, the Judicial Council approved additional funding to add a second Jury Check-in Kiosk at each justice center, which will allow the court to serve an even larger number of jurors.

The court plans to install the additional kiosks within the next fiscal year.

Electronic Courtroom Check-In

The court’s Electronic Courtroom Check-In project aims to streamline the process by which litigants and attorneys notify courtroom staff and the judicial officer that a party is present. Although technology has reshaped many courtroom processes, the current manual check-in process has remained relatively unchanged over time, despite often causing bottlenecks and delaying the start of courtroom proceedings.

Using advances in wireless proximity sensor technology, the court plans to deploy sensors outside courtrooms which will allow parties to “touch and check-in” to the courtroom using a compatible smartphone. The proximity sensors will also interface with the court’s case management system to enter which parties appeared at the hearing automatically.

Efforts to develop the Electronic Courtroom Check-In solution are ongoing – stay tuned!

Court Programs & Rebuilding Access to Justice

New Southwest Juvenile Courthouse

On August 2, 2017, the court, Riverside County Supervisor Chuck Washington (Third District) and the Riverside County Economic Development Agency held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly constructed Southwest Juvenile Courthouse.

Located adjacent to the existing Southwest Justice Center on Auld Road in Murrieta, the 14,371 square foot Southwest Juvenile Courthouse contains two courtrooms – one courtroom dedicated to juvenile delinquency and the other to juvenile dependency matters – as well as a clerk’s office, space for childcare services for litigants with court business, security offices, and holding areas.

Relocating juvenile operations to the new Southwest Juvenile Courthouse allows the court to better serve the fast-growing Mid-County region, in part by freeing up two courtrooms at the Southwest Justice Center for other cases.

Costing approximately \$15 million, the County of Riverside built the new Southwest Juvenile Courthouse to replace space the court vacated as part of Riverside County’s efforts to expand the John J. Benoit Detention Center in Indio (formerly known as the Indio Jail).

The Southwest Juvenile Courthouse formally opened to the public on August 14, 2017.



(Above) The new Southwest Juvenile Courthouse as photographed in September, 2017.

(Left; from left to right): Assistant County Executive Officer/Economic Development Agency Robert Field, Judge Mark A. Cope, Judge Sean Lafferty, Riverside County Supervisor Chuck Washington, Juvenile Presiding Judge Judith Clark, and District Director for Senator Richard Stone, Glenn Miller cut the ceremonial ribbon at the Southwest Juvenile Courthouse on August 2, 2017.

National Adoption Day

This year, the Riverside Superior Court celebrated the 10th Annual Riverside County Adoption Finalization Day, which is part of National Adoption Day, a one-day event held across the country each year to raise awareness of the more than 117,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families.

On Saturday, November 4, 2018, families gathered at the Historic Courthouse in Riverside where Judges Irma Asberry, James Latting, David Gunn, David Chapman, and Craig Riemer – aided by court staff – finalized the adoption of 55 children to 36 families.

Several families were there to finalize adoptions of multiple children, including one family which formally welcomed five children into their home! The adopted children ranged in age from 11 months to 13 years old.



(Above) Judge Irma Poole Asberry presides over an adoption finalization in Department 3, Historic Courthouse



The court would like to thank the judges, court staff, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services, Adoption and Placement Services Region, and the community volunteers whose invaluable contributions made the event successful.

(Left) Judges and court staff listen to introductory remarks during the 10th Annual Riverside County Adoption Finalization Day

Interpreter Services Expansion

On April 2, 2018, the court expanded the availability of free interpreter services. With that expansion, the court now provides interpreter services (at no cost) for parties in the following case types:

- All Family Law cases, including Domestic Violence matters
- All Elder Abuse cases
- All Civil Harassment cases
- Unlawful detainer cases
- Termination of Parental Rights cases and cases that involve child custody or visitation;
- Conservatorship and Guardianship cases
- Criminal
- Traffic
- Juvenile Delinquency
- Juvenile Dependency
- Child Support (AB1058)
- Mental Health

To increase awareness of this expansion, Interpreter Services posted new signs – translated in Spanish,

Traditional Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian, Tagalog, Arabic, and Farsi – in all public service areas that inform the public of free language services.

The Riverside Superior Court is committed to providing language access in all case types. However, due to resource and scheduling constraints, interpreters for case types other than those listed above are subject to the availability of qualified interpreters.

In order to ensure the court can accommodate requests, parties needing an interpreter are encouraged to request one as soon as possible in advance of any court appearance(s).

Did You Know ?

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 40% of Riverside County residents age 5 and older speak a language other than English at home.

Expanded Self-Help Services

A significant percentage of litigants appearing in the Riverside Superior Court do not have an attorney representing them. Increasingly, many self-represented litigants (SRLs) turn to the court's Self-Help Centers for legal information, which is available through a variety of workshops and other assistance programs designed to guide self-represented litigants through legal processes and prepare them for their day in court.

The court operates four full-service Self-Help Centers at the Southwest Justice Center (Murrieta), the Riverside Self-Help Center, the Larson Justice Center (Indio), and the Hemet Courthouse. Intermittent services are also available at courthouses in Banning, Blythe, and Moreno Valley.

The Riverside Self-Help Program sustained high levels of demand this fiscal year. With 13 full-time staff, the Self-Help Centers rendered approximately 124,000 instances of assistance to self-represented litigants. Family Law services currently make up the majority of self-help support.

This year the Self-Help team continued implementing a new electronic customer queuing system, which allows for seamless referrals to the court's Self-Help Centers. After piloting it at the Southwest Justice Center and the Moreno Valley Courthouse, the queuing system expanded to the Larson Justice Center this year.

Looking forward, the court intends to continue initiatives that improve and expand services at its Self-Help Centers, such as:

- Opening new Self-Help Centers at the Palm Springs and Corona Courthouses;
- Increasing the availability of appointment services;
- Implementing online scheduling; and
- Revamping the court's Self-Help website to make it more user-friendly and accessible to a larger audience.

Self-Help Information Center Locations



Blythe Courthouse

265 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Banning Justice Center

311 E. Ramsey Street
Banning, CA 92220

Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Corona Courthouse

505 S. Buena Vista Avenue
Rm. 201
Corona, CA 92882

Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Hemet Courthouse

880 N. State Street
Hemet, CA 92543

Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Larson Justice Center

46-200 Oasis Street
Indio, CA 92201

Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Palm Springs Courthouse

2355 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

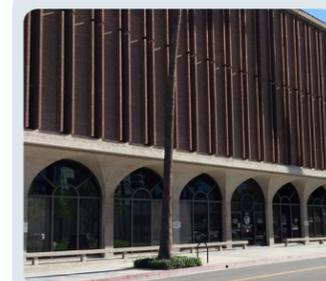
Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Riverside Family Law Courthouse

4175 Main Street
Riverside, CA 92501

Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Riverside Self-Help Center

3535 10th Street - 2nd Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Hours:
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Collaborative Courts

The Riverside Superior Court maintains a variety of collaborative court programs. While specific programs and eligibility requirements vary, collaborative courts generally employ a problem-solving approach to justice, in contrast to the conventional, adversarial justice system.

In a collaborative court setting, the judge, prosecution, defense counsel, service providers, and various other agencies work together to identify and address the root causes of the behavior that resulted in the person becoming involved in the criminal justice system. Most notably, participants agree to court-supervised substance abuse treatment and agree to participate in other services and evidence-based programs when appropriate.

Collaborative Court Programs

- Veterans Court
- Mental Health Court
- Domestic Violence Court
- Family Preservation Court
- Juvenile Drug Court



Headwinds

Like many counties in California, Riverside has experienced an overall decline in collaborative court participation in recent years. While the drivers of this trend are many and complex, observers generally attribute the headwinds to several recent, sweeping changes to the state's criminal justice system.

The primary incentive collaborative courts offer to encourage defendants to participate – treatment instead of incarceration – is now much less attractive. For example, Proposition 47, which voters approved in 2014, reclassified many offenses from felony to misdemeanor. That reduction in severity also affected sentencing, where a misdemeanor charge carries a maximum commitment of 364 days (one day short of a year) in county jail. However, in practical terms, many defendants often serve only a fraction of that time because Riverside County jails remain overcrowded.

This dynamic has changed the cost-benefit calculus for many defendants. Given the choice between a potentially very short jail sentence and participating in a collaborative court, which requires many months of formal probation supervision, participation in substance abuse treatment and random drug and alcohol tests, some defendants choose jail time.

Despite these challenges, the court and its collaborative partners remain committed to those who choose the path to a better life for themselves, their families, and the community.

Program Spotlight - Veterans Court

On May 25, 2018, the Riverside Veterans Court honored its seventh graduating class in a ceremony held in Department 1 at the Historic Courthouse. The ceremony, presided over by Judge Mark Mandio, featured keynote speaker Dr. Bryan Reece, President of Norco College.

Each of the veterans graduating from the program successfully completed a minimum 18-month intensive treatment program (or 12-month program for veterans convicted of certain misdemeanors), which includes regular drug and alcohol testing, weekly individual and group counseling, mental health services, self-help meetings, as well as support from mentor veterans and Veterans Court partners.

Implemented in January 2012, the Riverside Veterans Court offers a treatment-based alternative to incarceration for veterans in the community charged with committing crimes linked to issues such as traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, or mental health issues resulting from his or her service in the U.S. armed forces.

Judge Mark Mandio currently presides over the program, which is a collaborative effort between the court and other agencies including the District Attorney, Public Defender, Department of Probation Department of Mental Health, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).



(Above) Veterans Court graduates, collaborative partners, and honored guests at the Veterans Court graduation ceremony in Department 1, Historic Courthouse.

Looking Forward

Reinvestment

On June 27, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed the Budget Act of 2018, which included a significant reinvestment in the judicial branch. While financial and resource constraints remain, over the next year the court intends to complete several high priority initiatives that will expand access to justice throughout Riverside County.

Corona Courthouse Reopening

One of the projects planned for the next fiscal year is the reopening of the Corona Courthouse, currently scheduled for January 2019. Financial constraints caused the closure of the Corona Courthouse in 2003.

Since then and with no other courthouses nearby, residents living near the county's western edge, bordering Orange County, have made the nearly 15-mile journey to the city of Riverside to conduct most court business.

In July 2012, the court restored limited services at the courthouse – hearing traffic and non-traffic infraction matters only on Fridays each week. The reopening of the Corona Courthouse marks a significant restoration of court services for the western region.



(Above, Left to Right) Court Executive Officer W. Samuel Hamrick Jr., Presiding Judge Becky Dugan, and Judge Harold Hopp greet Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes at the Corona Courthouse Reopening, Oct 5, 2018



(Above, Left to Right) Judge Mark Petersen, Judge Harold Hopp, Assistant Presiding Judge John Vineyard, Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes, Presiding Judge Becky L. Dugan, Commissioner Tamara Wagner, Altie Holcomb (representing Senator Richard Roth), Judge Christopher Harmon, and Judge Steve Councilis with legislative scrolls commemorating the reopening of the Corona Courthouse, Oct. 5, 2018

Beginning in January 2019, two judicial officers will hear limited civil, civil harassment, traffic, small claims, and unlawful detainer cases at the Corona Courthouse. The clerk's office will be open during regular business hours Monday through Friday, excluding court holidays. The court will also offer Self-Help and collection services.

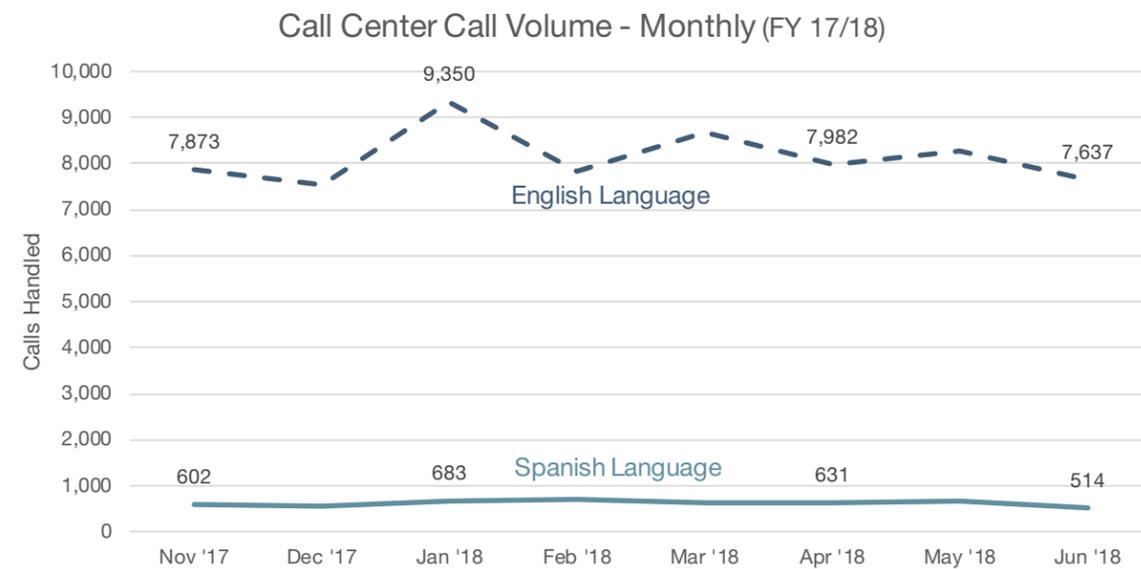
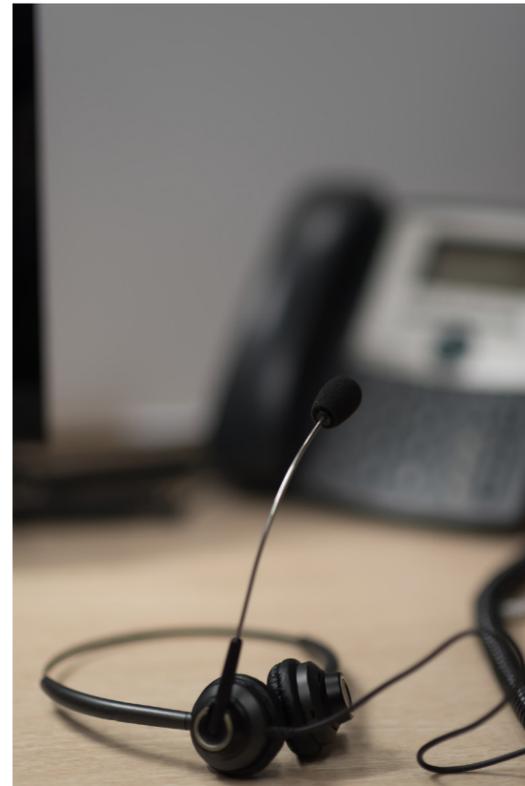
Parties are encouraged to refer to the court's website for up-to-date information regarding the reopening of the Corona Courthouse.

Call Center Expansion

Another project slated for next fiscal year is an expansion of the court's call center. The court's existing call center receives on average over 8,000 calls each month related to traffic/non-traffic infraction cases. With the expansion, the call center will answer inquiries relating to all case types (for example, family law, civil, criminal, and juvenile matters) as well as add additional staff to handle an expected increase in call volume.

Increasing telephonic public services may come as welcome news to many residents – especially those living long distances from a courthouse.

Court services are also available 24/7 via the court's website or in person at clerk's offices during regular business hours.



Note: Data prior to Nov. '17 not available due to implementation of new call center phone system.

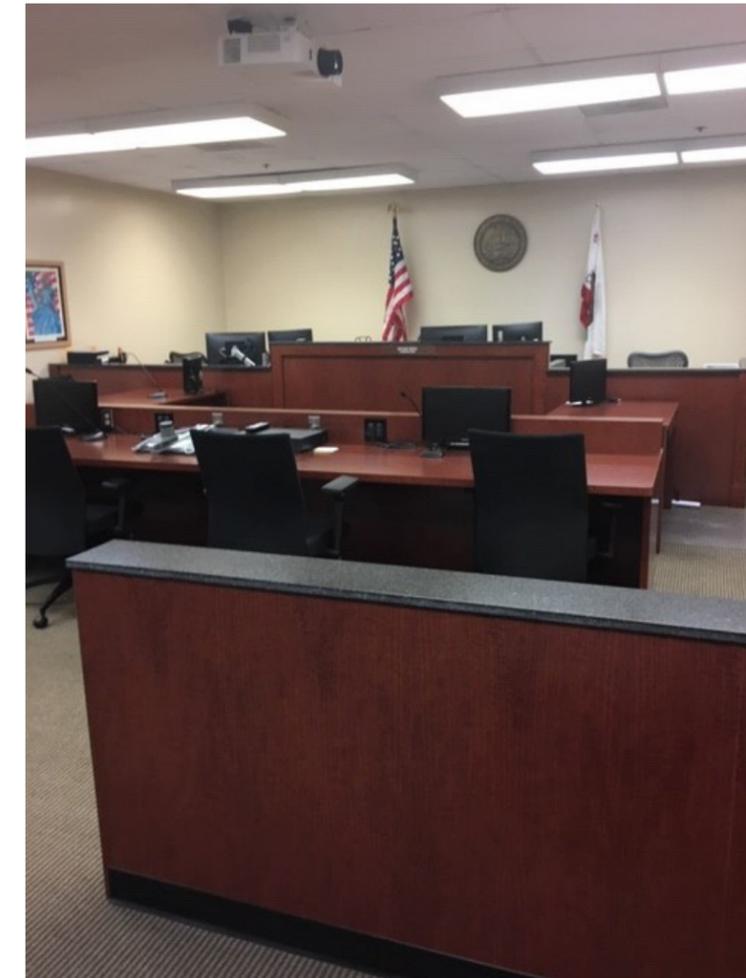
Palm Springs Updates

As part of an ongoing initiative to expand access to justice, streamline operations, and lessen congestion at the Larson Justice Center in Indio, in late 2018 the court will relocate probate operations from the Larson Justice Center to the Palm Springs Courthouse. The Palm Springs Courthouse will also see its "Community Court" expanded to a full-time courtroom, which will hear civil harassment, traffic, small claims, and unlawful detainer cases.

To accommodate the additional courtroom and an expected increase in visitors, the court will reconfigure the three-courtroom Palm Springs Courthouse. Reconfiguration plans call for converting the existing jury assembly room into a fourth courtroom.

Using additional space at the facility leased from Riverside County, the court will also build a new jury assembly room and Self-Help Center and add additional workspace for court staff.

Relocating probate operations to the Palm Springs Courthouse will allow the court to realize efficiencies by consolidating probate operations with civil operations already located at the facility. The two civil courtrooms at the Palm Springs Courthouse, Departments PS1 and PS2, will remain open.



(Above) Newly constructed Department PS4 at the Palm Springs Courthouse (formerly the jury assembly room).

Facilities

Indio Juvenile and Family Law Courthouse

Once completed, the new Indio Juvenile and Family Law Courthouse will replace the court's existing, substandard Indio Juvenile Courthouse and consolidate family law operations currently located at the Larson Justice Center.

Built in 1955, the existing Indio Juvenile Courthouse has only two small courtrooms which hear juvenile delinquency and dependency matters. A review of the facility by the Judicial Council of California found the existing courthouse, "has many security issues, including a lobby that is too small to house modern security-screening equipment. It also is unsafe, overcrowded, and has numerous physical, seismic, accessibility, and efficiency issues, limiting the court's ability to provide access to justice for desert region residents."

Issues with the existing courthouse facility were so severe that in 2008 the Judicial Council ranked replacement of the existing Indio Juvenile Courthouse as the **number one priority** out of 41 other, "Immediate Need" projects statewide. Over the next several years, progress was slow but steady as the Judicial Council acquired land for the new courthouse, selected an architect, and completed early drawings. By 2012, in an effort to balance the state's finances during the height of the Great Recession, the Legislature slashed funding for courthouse construction and work slowed considerably.

This year, after several years of delay, the Legislature allocated approximately \$45 million in its 2018 budget for the construction phase – meaning work on the new Indio Juvenile and Family Law Courthouse can resume.

Once completed, the 53,255 square foot Indio Juvenile and Family Law Courthouse will contain



(Above) Architect's rendering of the planned Indio Juvenile and Family Law Courthouse

five courtrooms, one each for juvenile delinquency and juvenile dependency, as well as three family law courtrooms. The courthouse will also include a Self-Help Center.



(Above) Architect's rendering of the planned Menifee/Mid-County Civil Courthouse

Menifee/Mid-County Civil Courthouse

Originally constructed in 1969, the existing Hemet Courthouse has undergone two additions over the years in order to keep pace with the growing need for court services in the mid-county area. A review of the facility by the Judicial Council found the courthouse, "is overcrowded and has severe physical, functional, accessibility, and efficiency issues." Such facility restrictions limit the services available at the Hemet Courthouse. Aside from the Hemet Courthouse, the closest full-service courthouse in the mid-county region is the Southwest Justice Center in Murrieta, located roughly 20 miles away.

In 2008, the Judicial Council designated replacement of the Hemet Courthouse as an "Immediate Need" project, ranking it the 16th highest priority project. The State Public Works Board in 2015 approved a site in the Menifee Town Center for the future courthouse. As part of the Budget Act of 2018, the Legislature allocated \$5.6 million to complete working drawings and nearly \$75.8 million for the construction phase.

Based on the current project schedule, construction of the nine courtroom, 89,000 square foot courthouse should begin in fall 2019 and be completed in early 2022.

Challenges and Advocacy

Judgeships (Judges)

The acute shortage of judgeships in Riverside County is a long-standing challenge.

According to the latest Judicial Needs Assessment, Riverside Superior Court needs 116 judges in order to keep up with its caseload. With only 66 judges, 14 commissioners and 1 hearing officer, the court should have 36 additional judges hearing cases. The Judicial Council's 2018 Court Statistics Report illustrates the impact of not having enough judges to hear its cases: the court receives, on average, 4,620 new case filings each year per judicial position – the third highest ratio of all 58 counties in the state (ranked first among courts with more than 15 judicial officers)

As the map on the right reveals, the Judicial Needs Assessment also highlights an imbalance in judicial resources between counties. While courts such as Riverside and San Bernardino face an acute need for additional judgeships, many courts have a greater number of authorized judgeships than is necessary based on workload.

Over the last year and a half the Legislature, Governor, and Judicial Council took meaningful steps to address this imbalance. From 2017 through 2018, Riverside County received four additional judgeships. These positions provide modest (but desperately needed) additional judicial resources that will help the court to better manage its tremendous caseload moving forward.

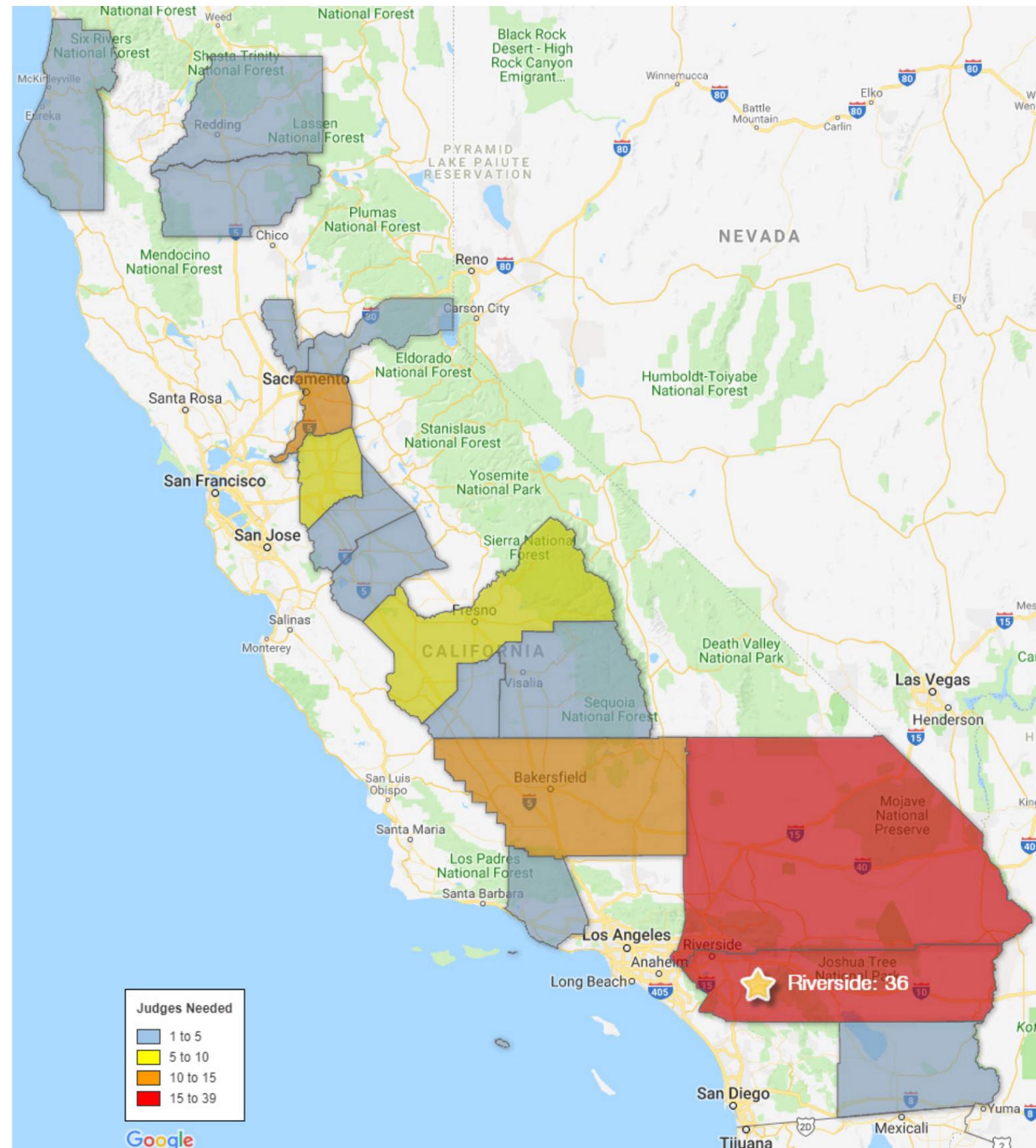
Assigned Judges Program Changes

A change in state policy affecting the Assigned Judges Program (AJP) could delay the positive impact of the additional resources the court received this year.

For many years, the court has relied on the invaluable assistance of retired judges (via the AJP) to ease the impact caused by its shortage of judicial resources and to keep courtrooms open. Effective July 1, 2018, many of the retired judges on which the court has relied may become ineligible to participate unless the Chief Justice approves a temporary exception.

Narrowing the pool of eligible retired judges complicates an already challenging situation for the court. For example, finding retired judges willing to cover assignments in the desert region – where summer temperatures can reach a sweltering 120 degrees – is often difficult.

The court hopes to continue working with the Judicial Council to minimize the impacts of the policy change and to advocate for flexibility, recognizing the unique circumstances, geography, and severe shortage of judges in Riverside County.



(Above) Choropleth map showing California counties needing additional judgeships. Source: 2018 Judicial Needs Assessment. Image courtesy Google.

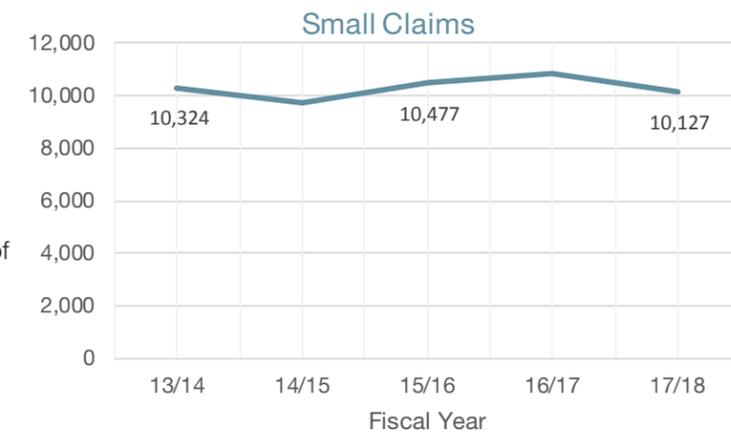
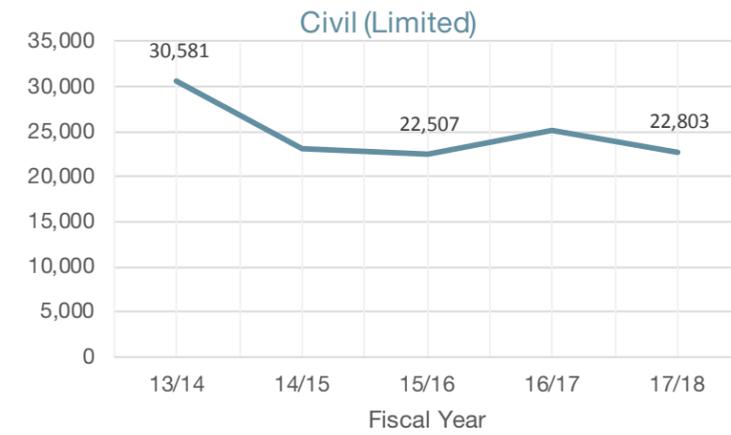
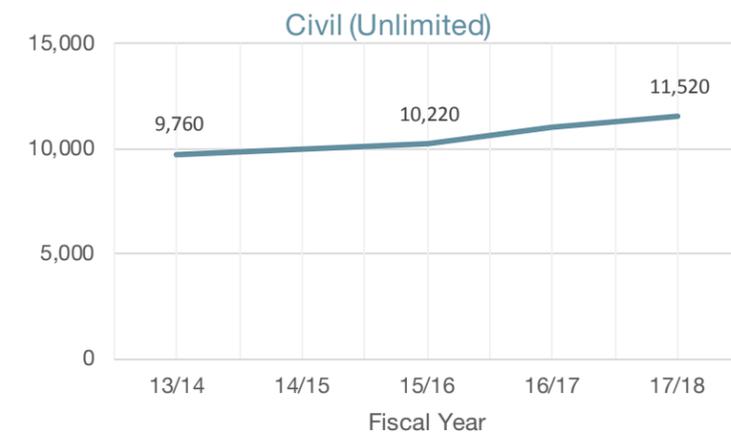
By the Numbers

Filings and Workload

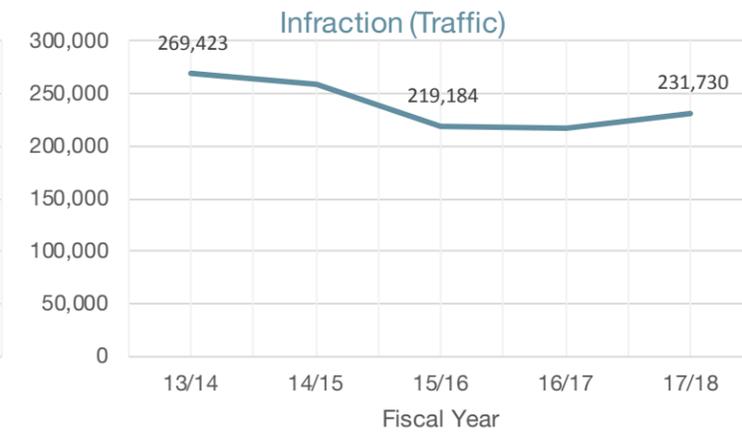
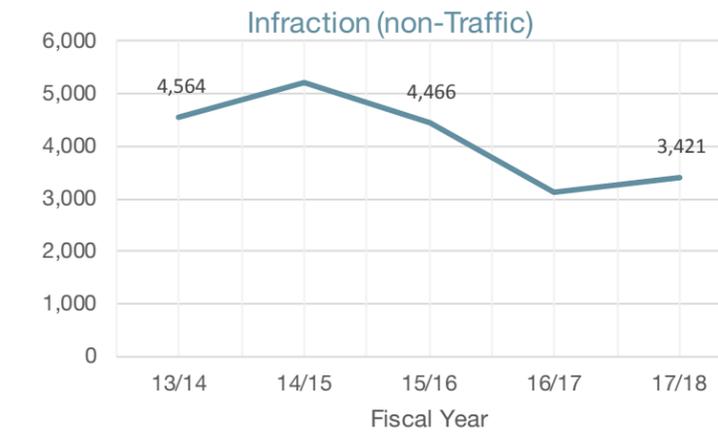
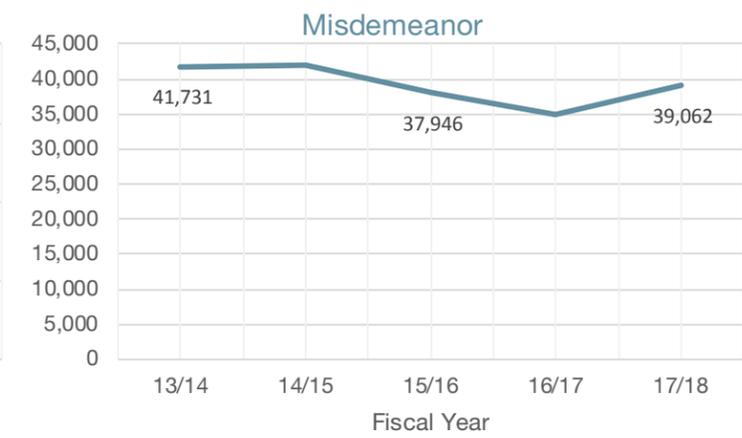
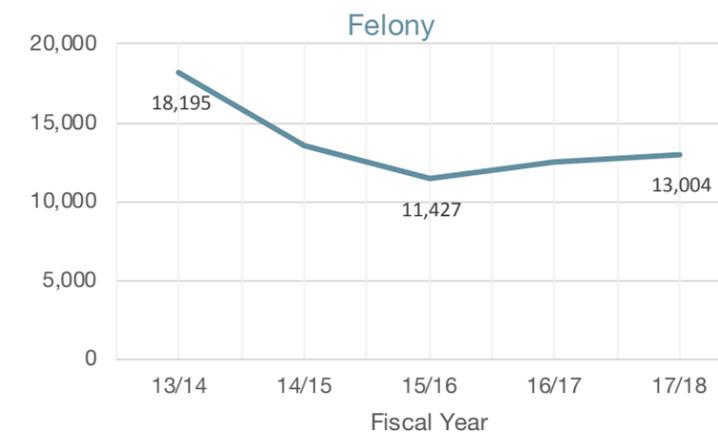
Case Type	New Filings (Fiscal Year 17/18)
Civil (total)	44,450
Unlimited	11,520
Limited	22,803
Small Claims	10,127
Criminal (total)	55,487
Felony	13,004
Misdemeanor	39,062
Infraction (non-Traffic)	3,421
Infraction (Traffic)	231,730
Family Law	25,130
Juvenile (total)	3,874
Juvenile Dependency	1,428
Juvenile Delinquency	2,446
Mental Health	n/a ¹
Probate	n/a ¹
Habeas Corpus	443
Appellate	350
Total Filings (all case types)	361,464 ²

Five Year Filing Trends ³

Civil



Criminal & Traffic

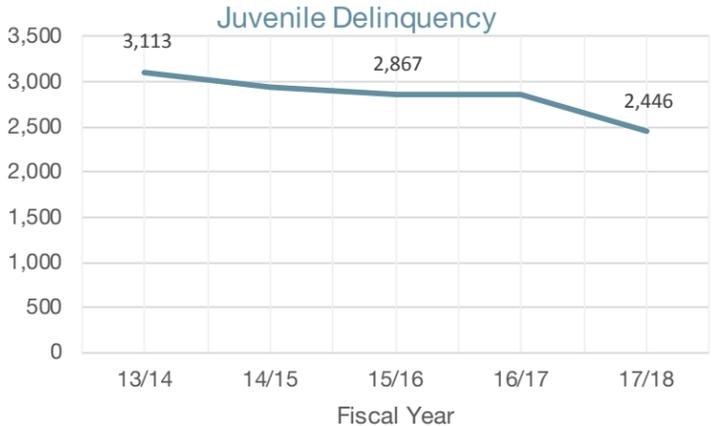
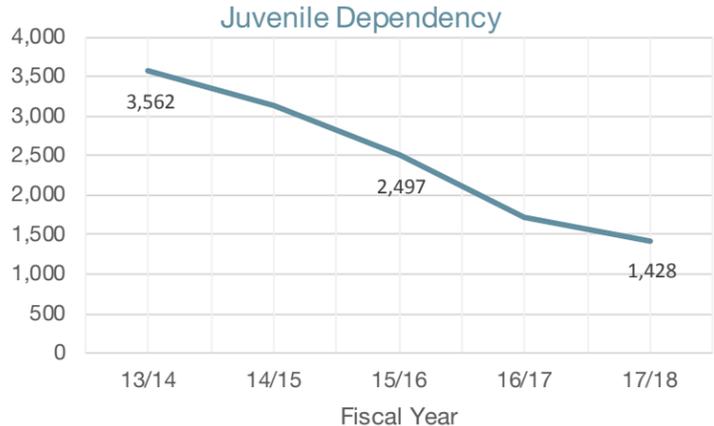
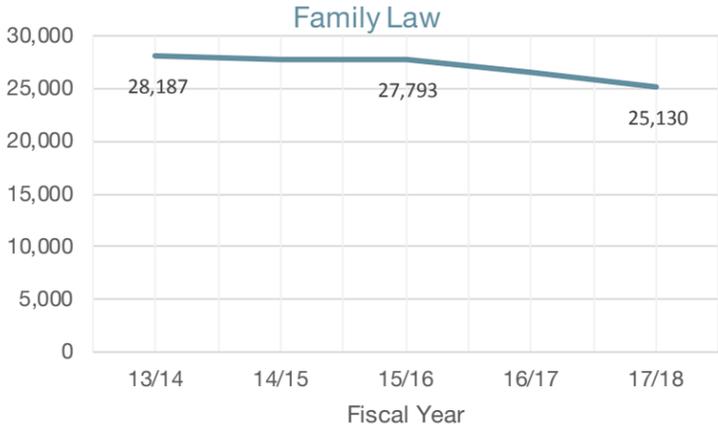


¹ Probate and Mental Health filings data not available at time of publishing.

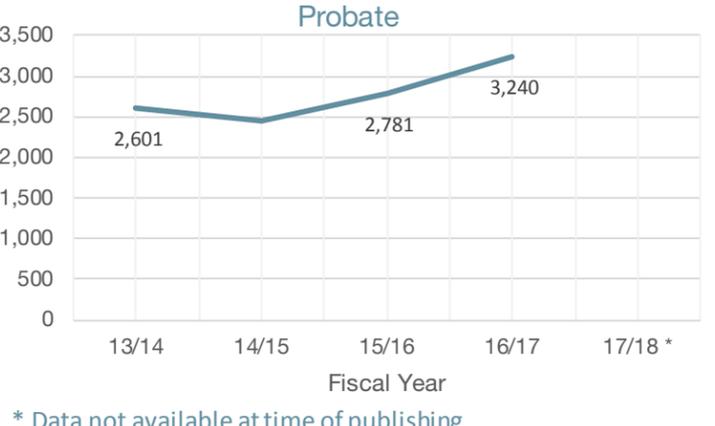
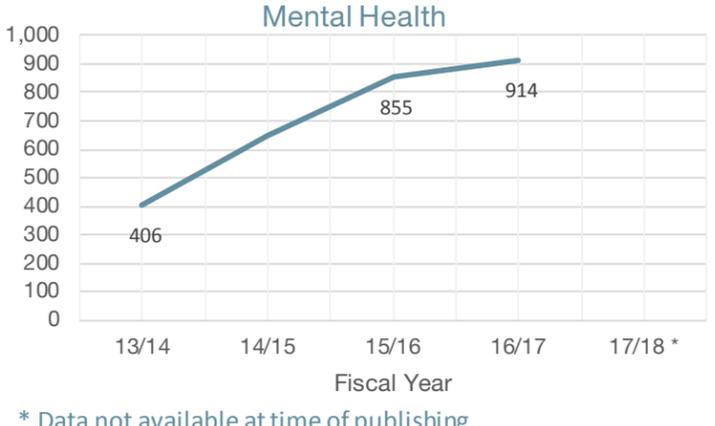
² Total Filings (all case types) excludes Probate and Mental Health filings.

³ Data Source: Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (Nov '18)

Family Law & Juvenile

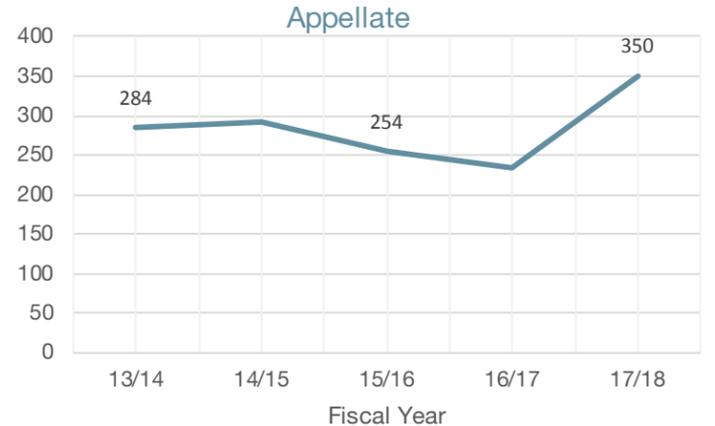
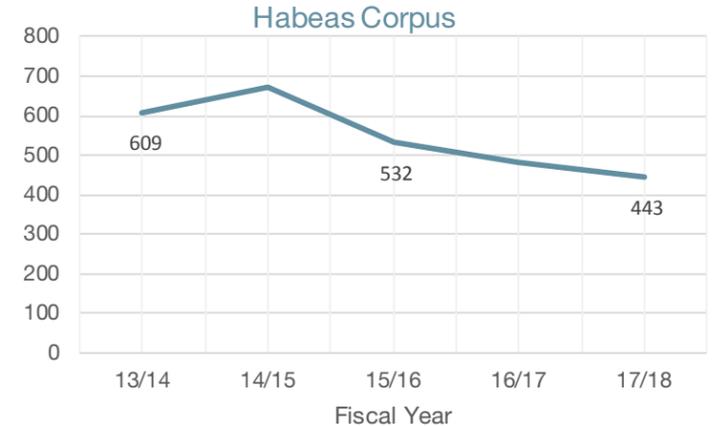


Mental Health, Probate, Habeas Corpus, and Appellate



* Data not available at time of publishing

* Data not available at time of publishing



Jury Services

The U.S. Constitution, together with the Sixth and Seventh Amendments, guarantees the right to a speedy trial by an impartial jury. The court's Jury Services Division is committed to fulfilling this fundamental right for persons having matters before the court by providing a sufficient number of qualified jurors from a representative cross-section of the community.

One-Day or One-Trial Jury Service



One-Day or One-Trial Jury Service is a statewide policy designed to improve jury service in California. Adopted by the Judicial Council of California in 1999, the policy reduces unproductive waiting time of jurors as well as the potential for lost income. For employers, it reduces the uncertainty of when and for long employees summoned for jury duty will be unavailable for work.

Eligible Californians are required to participate in jury service only once every 12 months. Jurors satisfy this requirement in one of four ways:

1. **Be assigned to on-call or standby jury service.** The juror calls or visit the court's online Jury Web Portal to determine if they must appear in person. A potential juror may serve no more than 1 day of on-call service or 5 days on standby telephone service.
2. **Appear in person for jury service.** The juror appears in person at the courthouse. If not chosen for trial or assigned to a courtroom for jury selection on the first day of scheduled service, the juror has satisfied his or her obligation.
3. **Appear in person for jury service, be assigned to a courtroom for jury selection, but not chosen for trial.** Dismissal by a judicial officer satisfies the juror's obligation.
4. **Appear in person for jury service, be assigned to a courtroom for jury selection, and be chosen for a trial.** Service in that trial to verdict or until dismissed by the judicial officer satisfies the juror's obligation.

Year At-A-Glance



511,075
Jury Summons Mailed



97,312
Jurors Reported for Service



7,878
Jurors Sworn



568
Jury Trials Held

Records Management

Although the Riverside Superior Court has since July 1, 2012 maintained most new case files electronically, the vast majority of court records (87%) begin as paper documents filed in the clerk's office. The court's Records Management Division is responsible for imaging (scanning) and performing quality assurance on all newly filed documents as well as maintaining and tracking the court's inventory of paper case files, records, and exhibits.

It is a monumental task by any standard: the court receives and files several **million** new documents each year. Despite this, the Records team rises to the occasion all the while emphasizing accuracy and quality of the court's case records.



(Above) Paper case files and documents, boxed in storage. At 22.5 feet tall and 69 feet long, the nearly 2,500 boxes of case files on this storage rack represent only a very small fraction of the court's case file inventory.

Climbing the Mountain of Paper



2,062,656
Documents Scanned



10,063,315
Pages Quality Assured
(Paper & Fax Filings)



102,753
Paper Case Files Converted
to Electronic Format



2,416,924
Documents Quality Assured
(Paper & Fax Filings)



54,890
Document Copy
Requests Fulfilled

Interpreter Services

The Interpreter Services Division is responsible for recruiting, coordinating, and scheduling interpreters for court proceedings and public services. The Interpreter Services Division is also spearheading efforts to improve language access throughout the Riverside Superior Court. During this fiscal year, Interpreter Services received and fulfilled 15,276 requests for interpreter assistance.

Case Management System Upgrades

The court's ongoing efforts to implement a modern case management system (CMS), known as eCourt, presented an opportunity for Interpreter Services to streamline its operations and further improve language access. In collaboration with the project team, Interpreter Services designed a customized Interpreter module for the new CMS. Some highlights of the new system include:

- Staff can enter interpreter requests in a one-step process;
- Language needs can be added onto the case with a flag and are visible at-a-glance;
- Interpreter scheduling is now automated, eliminating manual duplication of information and reducing the possibility of error;
- Court staff can quickly access interpreter schedules, allowing them to quickly determine the availability of an interpreter; and
- Improved data collection and reporting features.

Probate and Family Law cases were the first to use the new interpreter module. All other case types will transition to the new interpreter module as they migrate to eCourt.

Training and Recruitment

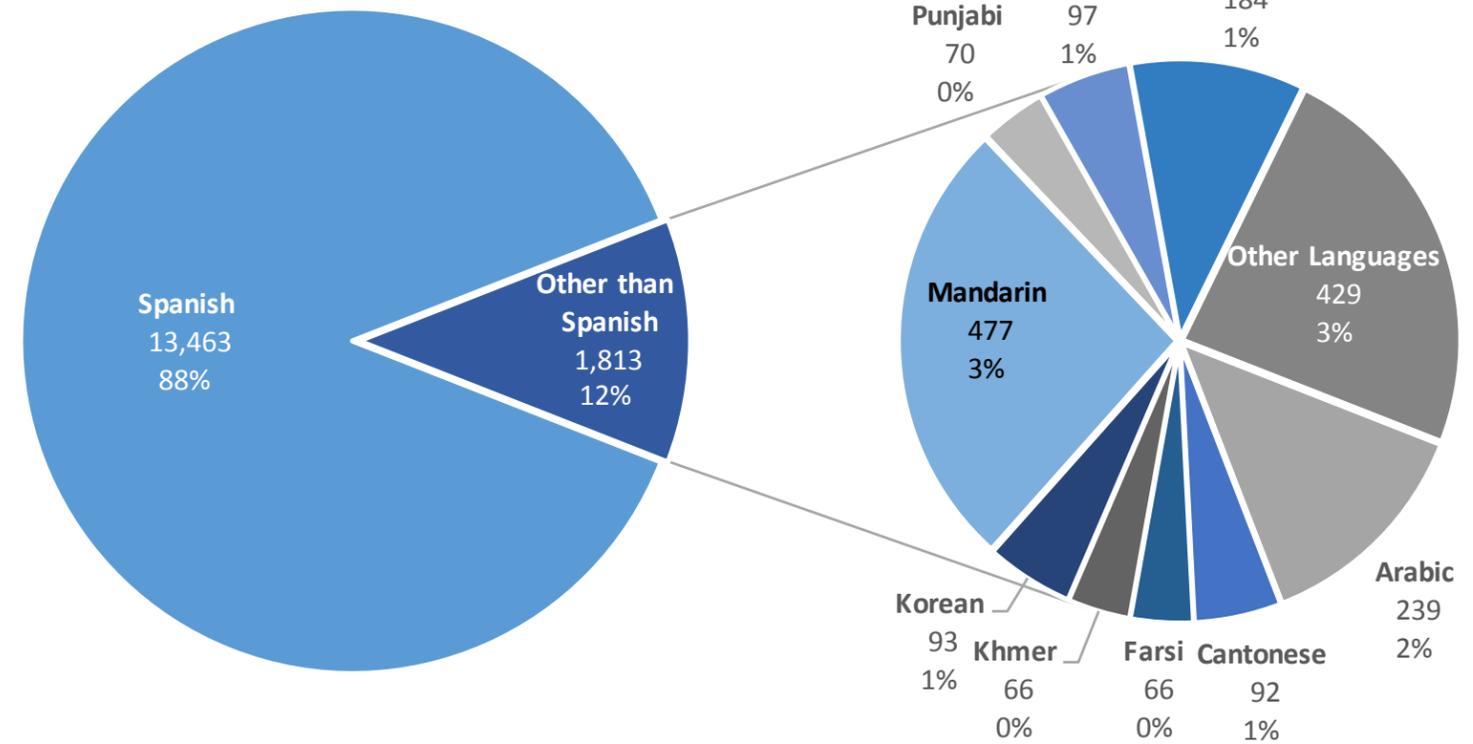
In order to meet rising demand, this year the court hired its first full-time Mandarin language interpreter.

The court also collaborated with the Judicial Council and the California Court Association to coordinate a training workshop series geared to support the Language Access Plan and to lay the groundwork for the future expansion of court interpreters into the few remaining civil case types where interpreters are not already mandated. The workshop series will begin in fiscal year 2018/2019, focusing on the following goals:

- Promote recruitment of qualified interpreters, targeting existing bilingual and provisionally qualified interpreters who aspire to become certified court interpreters.
- Provide additional training to current court interpreters in the areas of civil and probate, relying upon expert interpreters from each subject matter.
- Trainings will be offered in two formats, one specific to Spanish and another that is Language Neutral (for languages other than Spanish).

#	Language	Requests
1	Spanish	13,463 (88%)
2	Mandarin	477 (3%)
3	Arabic	239 (2%)
4	Vietnamese	184 (1%)
5	Tagalog	97 (1%)

Interpreter Requests



15,276
Total Interpreter Requests

2017/2018 Budget Snapshot

Fiscal & Budget Services Divisions

The Fiscal & Budget Services Divisions perform all accounting and budgeting functions on behalf of the court. The court's budget for this fiscal year totaled over \$159 million. The largest source of funding for court operations – 55% of total revenues – was the Trial Court Trust Fund (TCTF), which is the primary source of funding for the judicial branch. A combination of state and federal grant funds, reimbursements for specific court functions (such as judicial salaries, interpreters, and jury fees), and local revenues comprised the remaining court funds.

Like most other courts in the state, staff salaries and benefits are the court's largest expense item, totaling nearly 80% of expenditures. As of May 2018, the court employed 1,043 full time equivalents (FTEs), which includes all staff and subordinate judicial officers (commissioners and hearing officer).

1% Fund Balance Limit

Beginning in 1997, state law permitted courts to maintain local fund balances – often called a "reserve". Courts used these funds to make large, one-time urgent purchases that are difficult to absorb within a court's existing budget and to lessen the impact of changes in state funding - much like a household might save for emergencies or set aside money to save for an upcoming purchase.

Effective July 2014, state law prohibits courts from carrying over funds in excess of 1% of its operating budget from one fiscal year to another; any funds held in excess of the 1% cap triggers a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the court's funding for the next fiscal year.

This new restriction places courts like Riverside in a "use it or lose it" predicament, which complicates long-term and strategic planning efforts. For example, the court in 2011 purchased a new VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) phone system at a cost of nearly \$2 million. Incidentally, the new phone system also saved the court approximately \$800,000 per year over the cost of its existing phone system. However, without reserve funds, it would have been extremely difficult for the court to afford such a significant, one-time investment.

The restrictions have also created cash-flow challenges. As an illustration, 1% of the court's yearly operating budget – the maximum amount of unrestricted reserve funds the court can carry over – is roughly \$1.5 million. That amount falls far short of even covering the court's payroll, which averages around \$4.4 million per pay period.

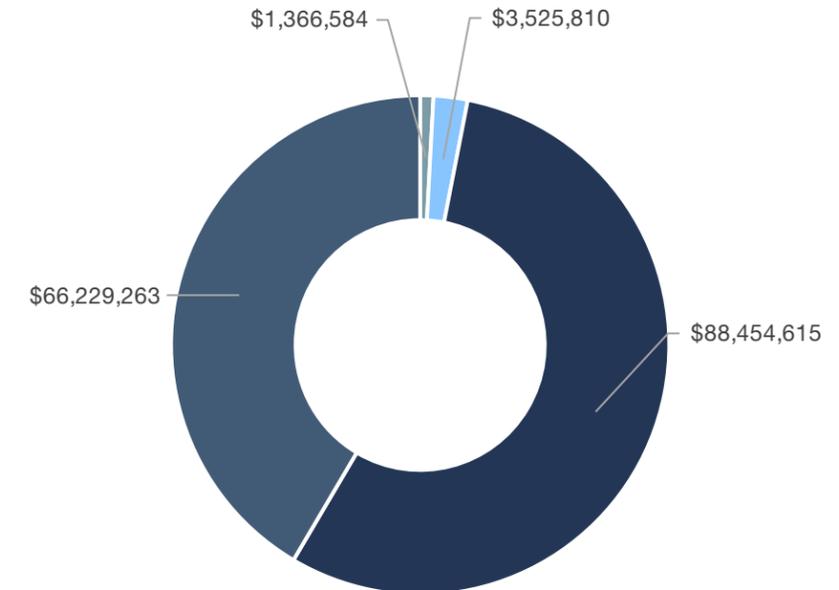
In response to the 1% fund balance limit, the court's finance team continues to develop innovative tools that allow for more precise budgeting and expense monitoring.

 **\$ 159,576,272**
Total Annual Budget

 **1,043**
Total FTEs (filled)

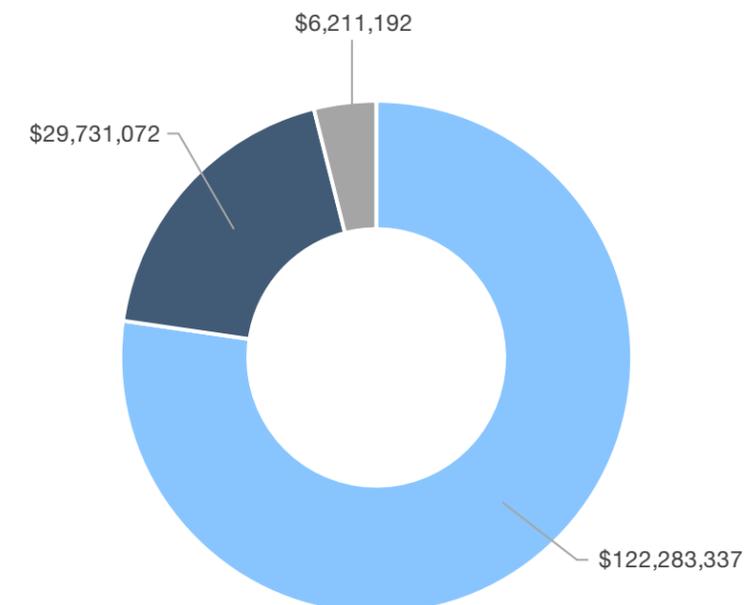
Revenues

- Fund Balance (Unrestricted)
- Fund Balance (Restricted)
- State Trial Court Funding
- Reimbursements and Other Revenue



Expenses

- Personnel Services (Salaries and Benefits)
- Operating Expenses and Equipment
- Restricted/Committed Funds



Court Directory

Desert Region

Blythe Courthouse
265 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Self-Help

Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (760) 775 - 8500
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (760) 342 - 6264
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384

Indio Juvenile Courthouse
47-671 Oasis Street
Indio, CA 92201

Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (760) 393 - 2617
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (760) 342 - 6264
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384

Larson Justice Center
46-200 Oasis Street
Indio, CA 92201

Self-Help

Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (760) 393 - 2617
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (760) 342 - 6264
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384

Palm Springs Courthouse
3255 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (760) 393 - 2617
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (760) 342 - 6264
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384



(Above) Southwest Justice Center - Murrieta, CA

Mid-County Region

Hemet Courthouse
880 N. State Street
Hemet, CA 92543

Self-Help

Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (951) 306 - 3561
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384

Southwest Justice Center
30755-D Auld Road
Murrieta, CA 92563

Self-Help

Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (951) 704 - 7634
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384

Southwest Juvenile Courthouse
30755-G Auld Road
Murrieta, CA 92563

Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (951) 704 - 7634
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384

Temecula Courthouse
41002 County Center Drive #100
Temecula, CA 92591

Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
Clerk's Office (951) 704 - 7634
Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463
Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076
Traffic (951) 222 - 0384



(Above) Larson Justice Center - Indio, CA

Western Region

<p>Banning Justice Center 311 E. Ramsey Street Banning, CA 92220</p> <p> Self-Help</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p>Clerk's Office (951) 572 - 5408 Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463 Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076 Traffic (951) 222 - 0384</p>
<p>Corona Courthouse 505 S. Buena Vista Avenue Rm. 201 Corona, CA 92882</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p>Clerk's Office (951) 777 - 3147 Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463 Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076 Traffic (951) 222 - 0384</p>
<p>Moreno Valley Courthouse 13800 Heacock Street Bldg. D #201 Moreno Valley, CA 92553</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p>Clerk's Office (951) 777 - 3147 Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463 Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076 Traffic (951) 222 - 0384</p>
<p>Riverside Family Law Courthouse 4175 Main Street Riverside, CA 92501</p> <p> Self-Help</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p>Clerk's Office (951) 777 - 3147 Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463 Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076 Traffic (951) 222 - 0384</p>
<p>Riverside Hall of Justice 4100 Main Street Riverside, CA 92501</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p>Clerk's Office (951) 777 - 3147 Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463 Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076 Traffic (951) 222 - 0384</p>
<p>Riverside Historic Courthouse 4050 Main Street Riverside, CA 92501</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p>Clerk's Office (951) 777 - 3147 Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463 Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076 Traffic (951) 222 - 0384</p>
<p>Riverside Juvenile Courthouse 9991 County Farm Road Riverside, CA 92503</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p>Clerk's Office (951) 777 - 3147 Enhanced Collections (877) 955 - 3463 Jury Services (951) 275 - 5076 Traffic (951) 222 - 0384</p>
<p>Riverside Self-Help Center 3535 10th Street – 2nd Floor Riverside, CA 92501</p> <p> Self-Help</p>	<p>Hours: Monday - Friday (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)</p> <p><i>Telephonic / Clerk's Office services not available</i></p>



(Above) Banning Justice Center - Banning, CA

The Superior Court of California, County of Riverside produced this annual report to increase public understanding of the justice system in Riverside County, California.

For additional copies, please contact:

Riverside Superior Court
Executive Office
4050 Main Street
Riverside, CA 92501
(951) 777 - 3163



<https://www.riverside.courts.ca.gov>

