



# District Courts

**FY 2027 Budget Hearing Presentation**

**Submitted by: Diana O'Neal, Administrative Director of the Courts**

# Dustin P. Rowe Chief Justice



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The majority of the judiciary in Oklahoma is composed of Judges of the **District Court**. Often these Judges serve as the first contact a party may have with the judicial system. District Court Judges hear both civil and criminal matters, and they are the backbone of the judiciary. Appeals from the District Courts in civil matters are considered by the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Appeals in criminal matters from the District Courts are considered by the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals.

Nine Presiding Judges are elected by their peers to assist in the administration of Oklahoma's trial courts. These judges, representing separate geographic areas, meet monthly with members of the Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals to discuss the administration of justice and any developments affecting Oklahoma's judiciary. These meetings provide an effective forum for exchanging information by and between the trial judges and appellate judges.

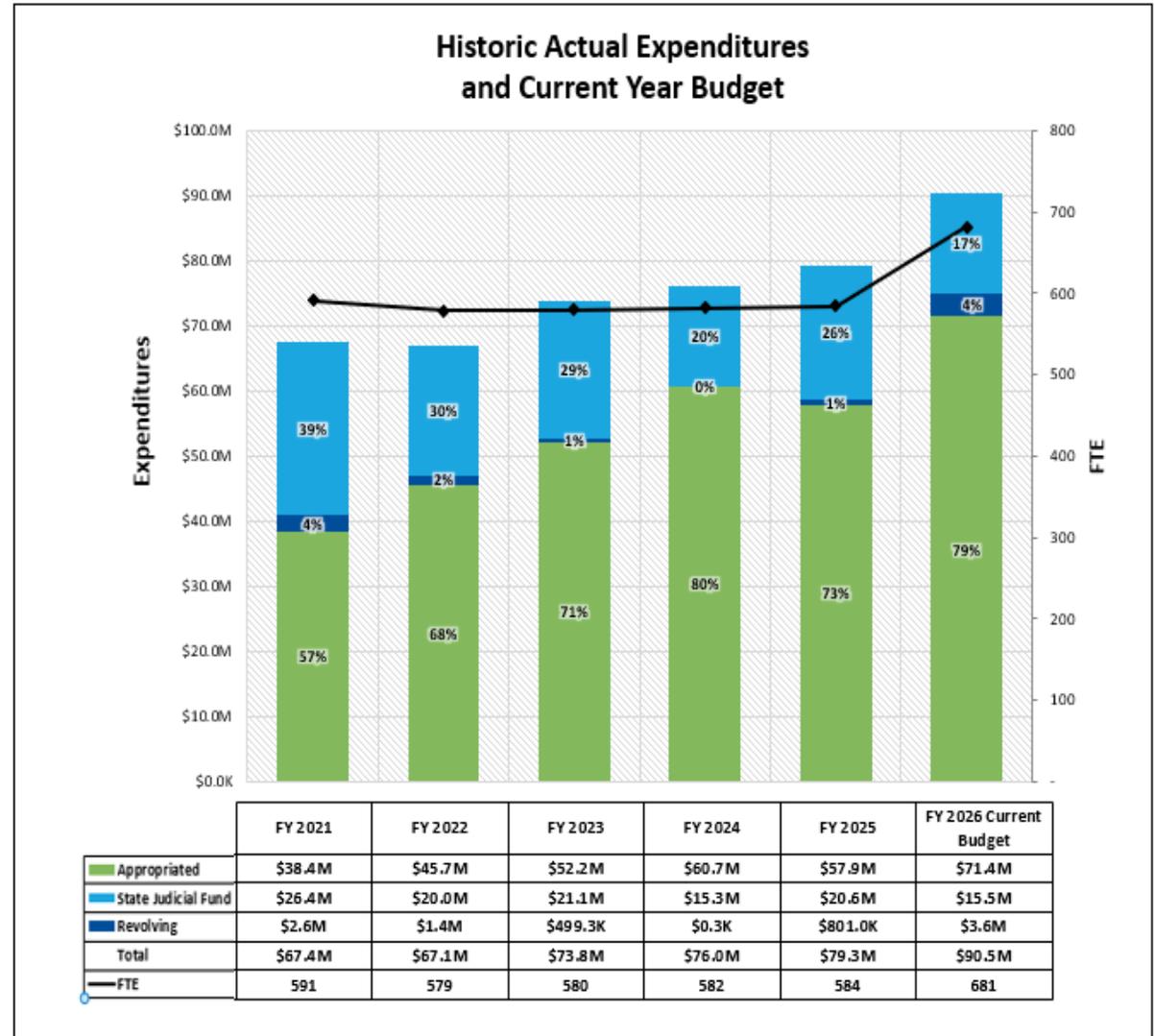
# Total Historic Actual Expenditures (FY 2021-25) and Current Year Budget (FY 2026)

## Explanation of Changes and Trends

The budget has increased over the past couple of years due to legislative funding for new judicial positions, judicial education and salary increases for judges, court reporters and bailiffs.

For FY26, to account for the decline in State Judicial Fund collections, the Legislature appropriated additional funds through General Revenue.

Additionally, beginning in FY26, appropriations were provided to establish Business Courts.



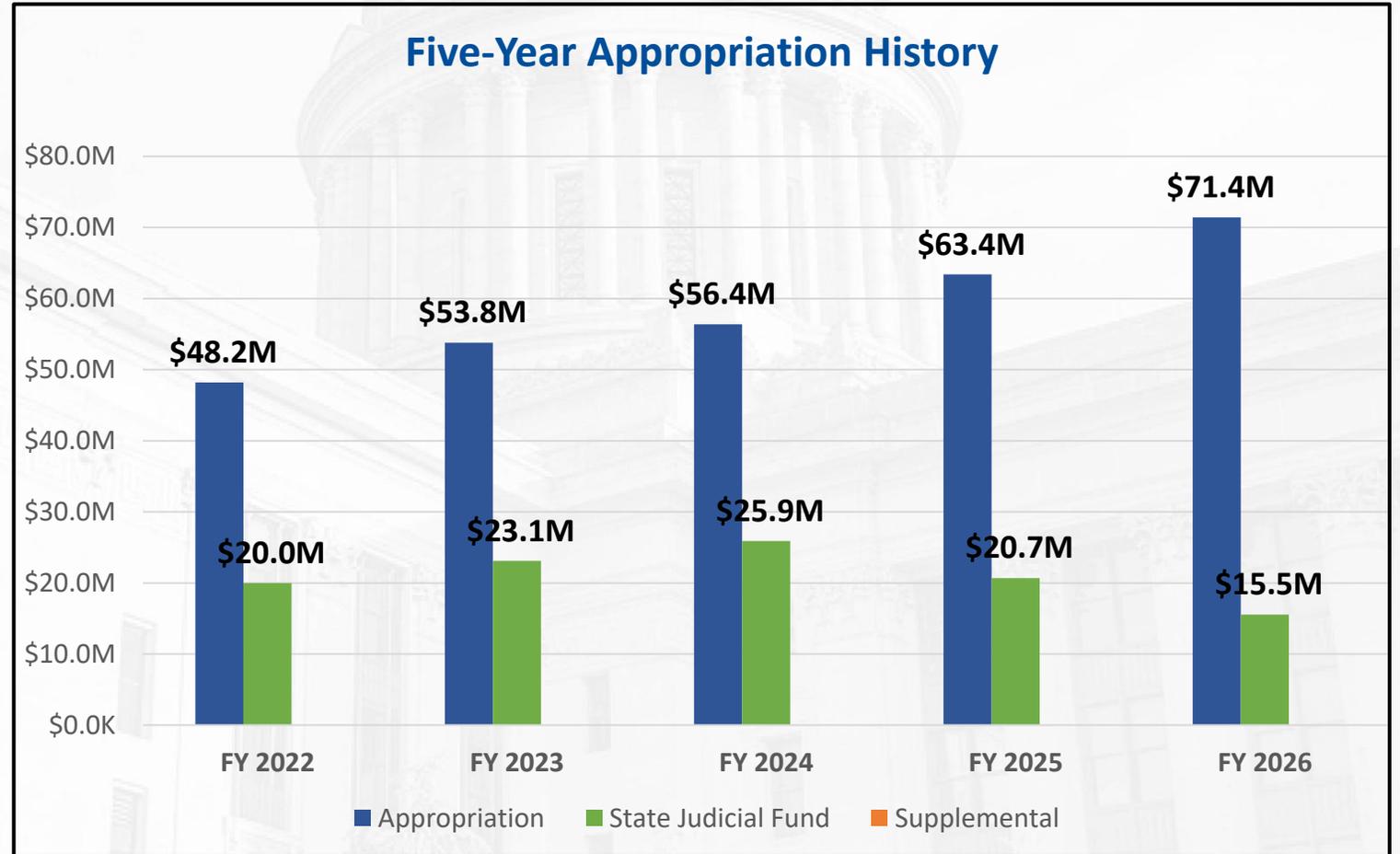


# FY 2026 Budgeted Full Time Equivalents (FTE)

|   | FY 2026 Budgeted FTE |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>Total FTE</b>                          | 681                  |
| <b>Supervisor FTE</b>                     | 253                  |
| <b>Supervisors to Total FTE Ratio (%)</b> | 37%                  |
| <b>Current Budgeted but Unfilled FTE</b>  | 67                   |

# Appropriation History

| Fiscal Year | Legislated Appropriation (\$)<br>(Includes supplementals and SRF/ARPA.) |
|-------------|---|
| FY 2022     | 68,241,076  |
| FY 2023     | 76,911,733  |
| FY 2024     | 82,320,695  |
| FY 2025     | 84,137,442  |
| FY 2026     | 86,960,297  |



\*Includes Supplemental and Statewide Recovery Fund (ARPA) appropriations.



# Financial Resource Analysis

| Carryover  | FY 2022     | FY 2023      | FY 2024      | FY 2025      |
|--|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total appropriated carryover amount expended (\$)                  | \$126,822   | \$2,696,486  | \$4,351,597  | \$40,421     |
|  |             |              |              |              |
| Historical Cash Balances   | FY 2022     | FY 2023      | FY 2024      | FY 2025      |
| Year End Revolving Fund Cash Balances <i>(All Revolving Funds)</i> | \$4,886,920 | \$10,663,343 | \$12,532,490 | \$15,775,976 |

| Revolving Class Fund # <i>(Unrestricted only)</i> | Revolving Class Fund Name <i>(Unrestricted only)</i>   | Current cash balance (\$) | Projected FY 2026 year-end cash balance (\$) |
|---|--|---------------------------|--|
| #   |  | \$                        | \$   |
| #   |  | \$                        | \$   |
| #   |  | \$                        | \$   |
| #   |  | \$                        | \$   |
| #   |  | \$                        | \$   |
| #   |  | \$                        | \$   |
|   | <b>Total Unrestricted Revolving Fund Cash balance:</b> | \$                        | \$   |



*Unrestricted funds are those that are not limited by state or federal law, rule, regulation, other legally binding method, or donor restriction.*

# FY 2024 – 2025 Appropriation Change Review

| <i>Purpose of appropriation increase or decrease</i>        | <i>Amount FY 2024</i> | <i>Amount FY 2025</i> | <i>Total amount received FY 2024 - 25</i> | <i>Total amount expended by 11/1/2025</i> | <i>Included in FY 2026 approp? (Yes/No)</i> | <i>If not expended fully, please explain.</i> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| HB1396- CSR certificate increase and equipment allowance    | \$451,000             |                       | \$451,000                                 | \$451,000                                 | Yes   |   |
| HB2376- Special Judge annual leave payout                   | \$1,655,000           | \$(1,655,000)         |   | \$1,655,000                               | No  |   |
| Education and training for Judges                           | \$400,000             |                       | \$400,000                                 | \$400,000                                 | Yes   |   |
| New Judge positions   | \$976,061             | \$401,250             | \$1,377,311                               | \$1,377,311                               | Yes   |   |
| HB2430- Juror fee increase to \$50 (decrease to SJF)        | \$1,926,881           |                       | \$1,926,881                               | \$1,926,881                               | Yes   |   |
| Judicial Salary Increase                                    |                       | \$3,170,497           | \$3,170,497                               | \$3,170,497                               | Yes   |   |
| Reallocation to Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals |                       | \$(100,000)           | \$(100,000)                               |   |   |   |
|   |                       |                       |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Totals</b>   | \$5,408,942           | \$1,816,747           | \$7,225,689                               | \$8,980,689                               |   |   |



*\*Do not include SRF / ARPA appropriation increases.*

# FY 2026 Appropriation Change Review

| <i>Purpose of appropriation increase or decrease</i>          | <i>Amount of increase or decrease (\$)</i> | <i>Does this need to be included in your FY 2027 appropriation? (Yes/No)</i> | <i>If yes, included in appropriation for same purpose? (Yes/No)</i> | <i>If not included for same purpose, please explain.</i> |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| New Special Judge positions in Oklahoma and Canadian Counties | \$822,855                                  | Yes  | Yes   |  |
| Business Courts   | \$2,000,000                                | Yes  | Yes   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |
| <b>Total adjustment</b>                                       | <b>\$2,822,855</b>                         |  |   |  |



*\*Do not include SRF / ARPA appropriation increases.*

# Incremental & Supplemental Request Summary

| Request Name |  | FY 2027 Incremental Appropriation Request Amount (\$)<br>{or FY 2026 for Supplementals} | Type of Request:<br>Recurring, One-time, or Supplemental |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| 1            | Judicial Salary Increase                           | \$8,728,202   | Recurring  |
| 2            | Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) Salary Increase | \$2,234,700   | Recurring  |
| 3            | Secretary Bailiff Salary Increase                  | \$1,616,433   | Recurring  |
| 4            | Staff Salary Increase                              | \$72,224  | Recurring  |
| 5            | New District Judge in Oklahoma County              | \$473,771   | Recurring  |



# (1) Incremental Budget Request

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Name of Request: Judicial Salary Increase</b>   |              |
| Type: Recurring  | \$ 8,728,202 |
| Describe why these funds are needed.<br><br>The Board on Judicial Compensation recommended a 17.58% judicial salary increase. This increase will help attract the best and brightest to serve in the Judiciary and will put our judicial salaries in line with the regional average. |              |



# (2) Incremental Budget Request

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Name of Request: Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) Salary Increase</b>  |              |
| Type: Recurring   | \$ 2,234,700 |
| Describe why these funds are needed.<br><br>In an effort to reduce the shortage of Certified Shorthand Reporters, a salary increase is necessary to help attract/recruit and retain more Reporters. |              |



# (3) Incremental Budget Request

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Name of Request: Secretary Bailiff Salary Increase</b>  |              |
| Type: Recurring  | \$ 1,616,433 |
| Describe why these funds are needed.<br>In an effort to attract and retain qualified court staff within District Courts, a salary increase is necessary. |              |



# (4) Incremental Budget Request

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Name of Request: Staff Salary Increase</b>  |          |
| Type: Recurring  | \$72,224 |
| Describe why these funds are needed.<br><br>In an effort to attract and retain qualified court staff within District Courts, a salary increase is necessary. |          |



# (5) Incremental Budget Request

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Name of Request: New District Judge in Oklahoma County</b>   |           |
| Type: Recurring   | \$473,771 |
| Describe why these funds are needed.<br><br>Based upon recent caseload and census data, one additional District Judge is needed in Oklahoma County. |           |

