CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND JUDICIAL BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) incarcerates people convicted of the most serious and violent felonies, supervises those released to parole, and provides rehabilitation programs to help people reintegrate into the community. The Department strives to facilitate the successful reentry of the individuals in its care back to their communities, equipped with the tools to be drug-free, healthy, and employable members of society by providing education, treatment, and rehabilitative and restorative justice programs. The Budget includes total funding of approximately $14.6 billion ($14.2 billion General Fund) for CDCR. Of this amount, approximately $4.2 billion General Fund is for health care programs, which provide incarcerated individuals access to mental health, medical, nursing, and dental care services.

The adult incarcerated population is projected to continue its overall long-term downward trend over the next few years. Spring projections estimate the average daily adult incarcerated population for 2025-26 to be 90,126, an increase of 1.1 percent from the fall 2025 projections, and 87,611 in 2026-27, a decrease of less than 0.01 percent from the fall projections. Over the longer term, the population is projected to decline to 85,210 incarcerated individuals by June 30, 2030. As stated in CDCR's recent Alternatives to Incarceration report, while the overall population is projected to continue its decline, the number of adult incarcerated individuals age 55 and older has grown from 7 percent of the incarcerated population in 2010 to 21 percent—currently more than 19,000 incarcerated individuals. Older incarcerated individuals tend to have complex needs that drive higher costs. In 2024, individuals 60 and older represented 14 percent of the prison population but accounted for approximately 27 percent of health system expenses.

Based on spring projections, Proposition 36, passed in November 2024, is expected to increase CDCR's population by 592 in 2025-26 and 1,547 upon full implementation. The active supervised person average daily population is projected to be 33,785 in 2025-26, declining to 33,125 in 2026-27. This population is projected to decline further to 31,028 by June 30, 2030.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

The Budget includes resources to address essential CDCR workload and baseline costs:

- **Corcoran State Prison Honor Housing**—$9.7 million General Fund and 49 positions in 2026-27, and $12.6 million and 65 positions in 2027-28 and ongoing, for the reactivation of two housing units within Corcoran State Prison Facility 3C to be used as honor housing units utilizing a single-cell setting with a focus on normalization and dynamic security, which helps create a physically and socially safe space where the incarcerated population can focus on programming, education, and rebuilding family connections without the fear of violence, bullying, or other negative pressures. The reactivation of Corcoran 3C as an honor housing unit is being done in conjunction with the deactivation of facilities at California State Prison, Solano and Avenal State Prison, while also reactivating different housing units at Avenal State Prison and a facility at the California Institution for Men. Combined, this results in a systemwide reduction of 75 beds. The net effect of these reactivations and deactivations is a decrease of $2.4 million General Fund and 14 positions in 2026-27 and an increase of $0.6 million General Fund and 2 positions in 2027-28 and ongoing.
- **Incarcerated Firefighter Pay**—$15.8 million ($5.2 million General Fund) in 2026-27, and $13.3 million ($2.6 million General Fund) in 2027-28 and ongoing to implement Chapter 681, Statutes of 2025 (AB 247). The General Fund portion is to develop a payroll system capable of tracking and paying an increased wage to incarcerated firefighting hand crews, and the reimbursement authority will enable CDCR to pay incarcerated firefighters the federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour, while on an active fire incident, through CALFIRE's E-Fund.

- **Statewide Fire Alarm Replacements and Fire Watch**—$15.2 million one-time General Fund in 2026-27 for overtime for staff to patrol for fires, as mandated by the Office of the State Fire Marshal, and reappropriation of prior year funding to complete fire alarm replacement projects.
- **Tattoo Removal**—$1.2 million General Fund in 2026-27 and ongoing to continue the success of the Tattoo Removal Program, which helps incarcerated people remove unwanted tattoos to prepare for reentry.
- **ADA Facility Improvements**—$23.1 million one-time General Fund in 2026-27 to complete accessibility improvements at eight institutions.
- **Food Funding Adjustment**—$10.9 million ongoing General Fund to address projected increases in food costs for the incarcerated population resulting from recent statutory changes that require at least 60 percent of the agricultural food products the department purchases to have been grown or produced in California, and a change to the methodology of future food cost adjustments that incorporates the cost of statutory requirements and actual food costs.
- **Industrial Worker's Compensation – Institution Claims and Regional Staffing**—$7.2 million General Fund and 34 positions in 2026-27, decreasing to $5.6 million in 2030-31 and ongoing, to regionalize and augment CDCR's Return-to-Work Coordinator staffing, which will reduce industrial workers' compensation caseloads and costs over time.
- **Workers' Compensation Costs**—$100 million one-time General Fund to help address a major baseline cost pressure for the department.
- **Lump Sum Payments**—$90.9 million one-time General Fund to pay accrued leave balances to employees upon their retirement or separation from state service. While CDCR has historically absorbed these costs through salary savings, that flexibility has been greatly reduced due to lower vacancy rates, largely a result of prison closures in recent years.
- **Audio-Video Surveillance Systems**—$10 million one-time General Fund to complete the installation of audio-video surveillance systems, which completes the installation of these systems at all prisons.

SOLIDIFYING STRUCTURAL BALANCE

The Budget includes General Fund solutions to achieve a balanced budget. These include:

- **Operational Improvements**—In September 2025, the Department of Finance and the Boston Consulting Group entered a contract to identify and develop process improvements within CDCR to achieve ongoing savings. The Budget reflects General Fund savings of approximately $20 million in 2025-26, $43 million in 2026-27, $82 million in 2027-28, $100 million in 2028-29, and $116 million ongoing beginning in 2029-30. In addition, CDCR and Finance will continue to evaluate other areas that could present future savings opportunities. As such, the Budget also assumes additional ongoing annual savings of $100 million General Fund beginning in 2027-28.
- **Unallocated Reduction**—The Budget reflects additional unallocated General Fund savings of $75 million in 2027-28, growing to $150 million in 2028-29 and ongoing.

PRISON CAPACITY

The adult prison population has steadily declined in recent years, which has allowed CDCR to eliminate its reliance on contract prison capacity and terminate the lease of the California City Correctional Facility (California City). CDCR has also closed three adult institutions, including the Deuel Vocational Institution (Tracy), California Correctional Center (Susanville), and Chuckawalla Valley State Prison (Blythe), and will close a fourth institution, the Correctional Rehabilitation Center (Norco), by October 2026. These four closures will save approximately $594 million General Fund annually by 2027-28.

Apart from the four full prison closures, since 2021-22, CDCR has closed facilities in six other male institutions and the Folsom Women's Facility within Folsom State Prison. Since 2024-25, CDCR has also deactivated several other housing units and facilities. This approach has allowed CDCR to maintain the use of its programming space, supporting the continuation of rehabilitative programming while simultaneously reducing the number of available beds and achieving additional savings. The cumulative savings from all these measures will reach approximately $4.9 billion by 2027-28.

In assessing capacity, CDCR takes into consideration a variety of factors for the safety and security of its population, specialized bed needs, and available medical and mental health care, educational, and rehabilitation programming space, while also assessing the amount and type of space needed to provide services and a more normalized living environment to support the incarcerated population.

The Administration remains committed to meeting the needs of staff and the incarcerated population, while right-sizing California's prison system to address space needs as the state transforms the carceral system to one more focused on rehabilitation in preparation for reentry into communities. While the prison population continues to decline, the aging population represents a larger percentage of the overall population and continues to drive medical costs. The Administration's transformational efforts take these factors into consideration.

REHABILITATION, REENTRY, AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Increasing access to rehabilitative and reentry programs is integral to improving post-release outcomes for incarcerated individuals and reducing recidivism. CDCR operates a wide range of rehabilitative programs with the goal of supporting individuals in successfully reintegrating into their communities following their release from prison.

The Budget reflects the following to support rehabilitation and reentry programming:

- **Pre-Release Community Correctional Reentry Centers**—$67 million General Fund to continue supporting seven male community reentry program sites, six female community reentry program sites, and one community reentry program for mothers of young children. In addition, CDCR has executed contracts for four additional sites to increase capacity by 397 beds and plans to pursue an additional 240 beds across three sites, all to be activated by 2028. Upon full implementation, CDCR will have 1,892 reentry beds at 21 sites.
- **Post-Release Community Reentry Programs**—$5.3 million General Fund in 2026-27, increasing to $14.3 million General Fund in 2030-31, to increase contract rates for post-release reentry programs. This completes the right sizing of all post-release reentry programs, a process that started in the 2024 Budget Act.
- **Free Voice Calling for Incarcerated Individuals**—$27.3 million ongoing General Fund to provide access to free voice calling services for incarcerated individuals.
- **Community-Based Organizations**—$37.6 million General Fund to support community-based organizations providing in-prison programming, including $20 million one-time for Rehabilitative Investment Grants for Healing and

Transportation (RIGHT) and $5 million ongoing for the Hope and Redemption Team (HART) program. In addition, the Budget includes $6 million one-time for the Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition, $5.5 million one-time for the Home After Harm program, and $1.1 million one-time for Impact Justice to support the Menopause Project, all of which are funded through the Board of State and Community Corrections.

HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

The Budget continues the state's commitment to delivering quality health care services to incarcerated individuals. This includes approximately $4.2 billion General Fund in 2026-27 for CDCR health care programs, which provide incarcerated individuals access to medical, nursing, mental health, and dental care services that are consistent with the standards and scope of care appropriate within a custodial environment.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

- **Subsistence and Personal Care Medical Funding**—$14.6 million General Fund in 2026-27, and $12.2 million in 2027-28 and ongoing, to fund one-time purchases of medical supplies and adjust the Subsistence and Personal Care budget to reflect actual costs.
- **Medical Classification Model Adjustment**—$8.9 million General Fund and 60.6 positions in 2026-27 and ongoing to address increased medical appointments and medication administration.
- **CalAIM Reimbursement Augmentation**—A net-zero shift of $11.8 million in 2026-27, and $7.2 million in 2027-28 and ongoing, from General Fund to reimbursement authority to allow the department to collect additional pharmaceutical reimbursements tied to the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal Justice Involved Initiative.
- **Electronic Health Record System Enhancement**—$2.2 million General Fund in 2026-27, $2.2 million in 2027-28, and $4.5 million in 2028-29 and ongoing to provide resources to add artificial intelligence notetaking functionality within CDCR's electronic health record system.

MENTAL HEALTH RECEIVERSHIP

In August 2025, the *Coleman* Court appointed a Receiver over CDCR's Mental Health Program and granted the Mental Health Receiver all powers vested by law in the Secretary of CDCR, as related to the administration, control, management, operation, and financing of CDCR's Mental Health Services Delivery System and provision of mental health services to class members.

The Budget includes resources to support both the Office of the *Coleman* Receiver and the Mental Health Program and relies on the Mental Health Staffing Special Deposit Fund (SDF) for certain expenses relating to human resources, risk management, and centralizing and expanding the use of internships for clinical classifications. The SDF was established by the *Coleman* Court for the accumulation of fines imposed on CDCR for staffing vacancies above ten percent for specified clinical staff. In total, the state deposited $155.2 million into the SDF; however, the appeals court later adjusted accrued fines to approximately $113 million. Based on the proposals included in the Budget, the balance of the SDF will be exhausted by 2028-29. Specifically, the Budget includes:

- **Mental Health Receiver Staffing**—$40.3 million from the SDF, $5.2 million General Fund, $1 million Behavioral Health Services Act Funding, and 26 positions in 2026-27; $39.1 million SDF, $5.1 million General Fund, $2.6 million Behavioral Health Services Act Funding, and 26 positions in 2027-28; $9.9 million SDF, $26.8 million General Fund, $2.6 million Behavioral Health Services Act Funding, and 26 positions in 2028-29; and $40.2 million General Fund in 2029-30 and ongoing to support the staffing costs of the Receiver's Office, continue clinical staff bonuses ordered by the court, expand the use of internships and other training programs for mental health clinicians, and augment various mental health and administrative positions to promote the hiring and retention of mental health clinicians.
- **Mental Health Crisis Intervention Teams**—$7.4 million General Fund and 36 positions in 2026-27 and ongoing to pilot the use of Crisis Intervention Teams at three institutions, including two male and one female institution. This is a joint proposal between CDCR and the Mental Health Receiver's Office. The use of the Crisis Intervention Teams is intended to allow assessment of an emergency physically closer to the source of the stressor to allow staff to address concerns that could otherwise lead or have led to self-harm or suicidal behavior.
- **Mental Health Resource Teams**—$3.6 million General Fund, $1.2 million Behavioral Health Services Act Funding, and 18.9 positions in 2026-27, and $7.3 million General

Fund, $1.2 million Behavioral Health Services Act Funding, and 37.8 positions in 2027-28 and ongoing, to expand the use of Resource Teams. This is a joint proposal between CDCR and the Mental Health Receiver's Office. The goal of a Resource Team is to help Psychiatric Inpatient Program and other high-risk, high-needs mental health patients develop pro-social skills, avoid stagnation, and optimize their ability to advance under psychiatric care. CDCR currently has three Resource Teams at California State Prison, Sacramento; Salinas Valley State Prison; and the San Quentin Rehabilitation Center. This proposal will expand Resource Teams to three new institutions in 2026-27 and three additional institutions in 2027-28, for a total of nine Resource Teams statewide.

- **Tele-Mental Health Adjustments**—$8.9 million General Fund and 69 positions in 2026-27, and $13.5 million and 119 positions in 2027-28 and ongoing, to support expanded use of tele-mental health services.

PUBLIC SAFETY

PROPOSITION 47 SAVINGS

Proposition 47, passed in 2014, requires misdemeanor rather than felony sentencing for certain property and drug crimes. Proposition 47 invests savings from reduced prison utilization in prevention and supporting community programs; funds are allocated according to the formula specified in the ballot measure, which requires 65 percent be allocated for grants to public agencies to support various recidivism reduction programs (such as mental health and substance use treatment services), 25 percent for grants to support truancy and dropout prevention programs, and 10 percent for grants for victim services. The Budget estimates net General Fund savings of $89.1 million in 2026-27.

Proposition 36, passed in 2024, established a treatment-mandated felony for drug possession that can be charged under specified circumstances. Proposition 36 is projected to increase the state prison population and therefore decrease savings associated with Proposition 47 in future years. Remaining Proposition 47 monies may be used to fund court-ordered treatment programs to address the new treatment-mandated felony offense. Allowable uses may include expanding or enhancing court-ordered substance use disorder and/or mental health treatment or providing case management and wraparound services that facilitate successful reintegration into the community, including housing, employment support, and job training.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE GRANT

The California Community Corrections Performance Incentive Act, Chapter 608, Statutes of 2009 (SB 678), was created to provide incentives for counties to reduce the number of felony probationers sent to state prison. Since its inception, the program has allocated more than $1.6 billion to counties for their role in reducing prison admissions. In recent years, annual funding was held constant due to the COVID-19 Pandemic's effect on probation populations, law enforcement practices, and court processes. The 2025 Budget Act included statutory changes to modify the formula to specify a fixed statewide annual allocation of $103.7 million General Fund. This amount may be reduced if counties exceed their baseline return-to-prison rates, and increased if counties exceed performance expectations, compared to performance in calendar years 2022 and 2023. The Budget estimates $132.2 million General Fund in 2026-27 for the program.

BOARD OF STATE AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), in addition to responsibilities such as oversight of local detention facilities and review of in-custody death incidents, administers up to 20 state and federal grant programs, totaling approximately $400 million annually for more than 400 individual grant agreements. Some of these grants include Proposition 47, the Adult Reentry Grant, and the California Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (CalVIP).

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

- **Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Grant Program**—$15 million ongoing General Fund to administer a competitive grant program for federally recognized tribes supporting efforts to identify, collect case-level data, publicize, and investigate and solve cases involving missing and murdered Indigenous people. To date, $37.3 million has been allocated to BSCC for these grants: $4 million in 2022-23, $16 million in 2023-24, and $17.3 million in 2024-25.
- **CalVIP**—$60 million Gun Violence Prevention and School Safety Fund in 2026-27 to support CalVIP. Funding for CalVIP is continuously appropriated based on revenue in the Gun Violence Prevention and School Safety Fund.

- **Gun Violence Prevention**—$3 million one-time General Fund in 2026-27 to support the Broken by Violence program, a community-based gun violence prevention program.
- **Youth Diversion**—$20,000 one-time General Fund in 2026-27 to support the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Vital Intervention Directional Alternatives program.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

As the chief law officer of the state, the Attorney General has the responsibility to see that the laws of California are uniformly and adequately enforced. This responsibility is fulfilled through the diverse programs of the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Department provides litigation services on behalf of the people of California; serves as legal counsel to state agencies; provides oversight, enforcement, education, and regulation of California's firearms laws; provides evaluation and analysis of physical evidence; and supports the data needs of California's criminal justice community. The Budget includes total funding of approximately $1.4 billion, including $518.4 million General Fund, to support the DOJ.

FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The 2024 Budget Act included $25 million one-time General Fund to defend the state against enforcement and legal actions taken by the federal government, which was available through June 30, 2026. Of that amount, $21.8 million has been distributed to the DOJ and other state entities for litigation to defend California against federal actions.

Since January 2025, DOJ has filed 73 cases against the federal government to protect Californians' rights and interests, including the protection of federal funding that supports critical programs. This includes $107 billion in funding for California's Medicaid programs, $2 billion in National Institute of Health contracts and grants, billions more in public health funding, and $200 million in education stabilization funding, among others.

The 2025 Budget Act included $14.2 million ($12.3 million General Fund and $1.9 million Unfair Competition Law Fund) in 2025-26 and $13.9 million ($12 million General Fund and $1.9 million Unfair Competition Law Fund) in 2026-27 and ongoing for the DOJ to defend California against federal actions. This is in addition to baseline funding of $2.5 million

General Fund within DOJ's budget to defend California against federal actions that was first authorized in the 2018 Budget Act.

The Budget includes approximately $28 million General Fund in 2026-27, and $24 million General Fund annually in 2027-28 and 2028-29 to defend California against adverse federal actions. This includes an augmentation of $10 million General Fund annually through 2028-29, and a one-time augmentation of $4.2 million General Fund in 2026-27 from funds remaining in the initial appropriation in the 2024 Budget Act. This leaves a balance of $3.2 million from the 2024 Budget Act that is reappropriated through July 30, 2027, and is available to address statewide federal accountability workload.

ANTITRUST LITIGATION FUNDING

In response to the federal government's recent retreat from enforcing antitrust laws, the Budget includes $14.3 million special funds in 2026-27, declining to $10.5 million in 2029-30, to address an anticipated increase in antitrust workload. The lack of federal oversight in this area leaves California individuals and businesses vulnerable to predatory business practices that threaten affordability and consumer rights.

California has been a leader in this area, dedicating $8 million annually since the 2023 Budget Act, specifically to prosecute antitrust violations in the gas and oil, technology, and agricultural sectors. These resources allow DOJ to conduct independent investigations and litigation and to enforce California's antitrust laws in these sectors of the economy.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

- **Firearms IT Systems Modernization (FITSM) Project**—$11.2 million one-time General Fund in 2026-27 for DOJ to continue to work on the Stage 3 and 4 in the Project Approval Lifecycle process in 2026-27.
- **Dealers' Record of Sale Authority Alignment**—$8 million annual General Fund to maintain the current service level for activities funded by the Dealers Record of Sale Special Account in 2026-27 through 2028-29.
- **Online and App-Based Illegal Gambling Enforcement**—$1.1 million Unfair Competition Law Fund and 3.0 positions in 2026-27 and ongoing to conduct investigations and litigation against illegal online and app-based gambling operations.

- **Completing Organized Retail Criminal Enterprise Investigations**—$2.2 million one-time General Fund to provide DOJ with resources to resolve 27 existing cases stemming from the original funding provided in 2022-23.
- **Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse: Federal Grant Authority**—$16.2 million ongoing ($4.1 million False Claims Act Fund and $12.1 million Federal Trust Fund) to accept a federal grant award from the Office of Inspector General to support expanded investigations, enforcement activities, and prosecutions related to Medi-Cal fraud and elder abuse.
- **Legal Services Revolving Fund Ongoing Workload**—$10.8 million ongoing Legal Services Revolving Fund to maintain current service levels and address increased demand for legal services from client agencies.
- **Fingerprint System Modernization**—$4.3 million Fingerprint Fees Account in 2026-27, $5.5 million in 2027-28, and $1.1 million in 2028-29 and ongoing to upgrade biometric identification systems to cloud-based infrastructure.
- **Registry of Charities and Fundraisers New Online System IT Support**—$260,000 Registry of Charities and Fundraisers Fund in 2026-27 and $251,000 in 2027-28 and ongoing to manage the Registry's upgraded infrastructure, provide technical support to end users, and assist with hardware, software, data management, and reporting.
- **Chaptered Legislation**—$13.5 million ($10.4 million General Fund) in 2026-27, reducing to $5.9 million ($2.5 million General Fund) ongoing in 2029-30, to implement various chaptered legislation related to improving public safety, adding protections related to artificial intelligence, and supporting consumer protection.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

The California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) serves as the state's leadership hub during all major emergencies and disasters. This includes responding, directing, and coordinating local, state, and federal resources, and mutual aid assets across all regions to support the diverse communities across the state. Cal OES also builds disaster resilience by supporting local jurisdictions and communities through planning and preparedness activities, training, and facilitating the immediate response to an emergency through the longer-term recovery phase. During this process, Cal OES serves as the state's overall coordinator and agent to secure federal government resources through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Budget includes $3.3 billion ($653.3 million General Fund) and 1,927.8 positions for Cal OES.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

The Budget includes the following resources:

- **Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) Transition**—$141.9 million one-time State Emergency Telephone Number Account to continue NG 9-1-1 deployment to create a cohesive network with public safety-grade resiliency, and significantly reduce operational complexity for Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). This funding will also be used to create a modern, reliable system for the greater Los Angeles region prior to the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games and a safer future for large-scale events and beyond. The Budget includes an additional $3 million to conduct an audit and a technical evaluation of the development and implementation of the system to facilitate a reliable long-term system.
- **Southern Emergency Operations Facility**—$12.5 million ongoing General Fund to hire and onboard staff and bring the Southern Emergency Operations facility online to full functionality to absorb Southern Region staff and operations once the facility is complete.
- **Nonprofit Security Grant Program**—$80 million ongoing General Fund to support physical security enhancements for nonprofit organizations that have historically been targets of hate-motivated violence.
- **Victims of Crime Act Supplemental Funding**—$50 million one-time General Fund to supplement decreasing federal funding supporting a variety of services for victims of crime. This one-time augmentation will alleviate the service level reductions that would otherwise be necessary.
- **Vertical Prosecution Grant Program to Combat Human Trafficking**—$10 million one-time General Fund for Cal OES to administer a competitive Vertical Prosecution Grant Program aimed at preventing human trafficking. Vertical prosecution, where a single prosecutor handles the case from beginning to end, is often favored for cases involving particularly sensitive crimes, like human trafficking, because that prosecutor can become more knowledgeable about the details of the case, develop a comprehensive legal strategy for the matter, and establish rapport with the victims.
- **Victims of Human Trafficking Grant Program**—An increase of $10 million one-time General Fund, for a total of $20 million, to provide services for victims of human trafficking.

- **Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Forensic Examinations**—$3 million one-time General Fund to expand access to technology-driven solutions that support standardized sexual assault and domestic violence forensic examinations across California.

JUDICIAL BRANCH

The Judicial Branch consists of the Supreme Court, courts of appeal, trial courts, the Habeas Corpus Resource Center, and the Judicial Council. The Judicial Council is responsible for managing the resources of the Judicial Branch. The trial courts are funded with a combination of General Fund, county maintenance-of-effort requirements, fines, fees, and other charges. Other levels of the Judicial Branch receive most of their funding from the General Fund. The Budget includes total funding of $7.5 billion ($3.8 billion General Fund) in 2026-27 for the Judicial Branch, of which $3.1 billion is provided to support trial court operations.

TRIAL COURT INVESTMENTS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The Budget continues the Administration's commitment to expanding access to justice by investing an additional $70 million ongoing General Fund to address increasing trial court operation costs. Between the 2021 and 2026 Budget Acts, trial court operations have cumulatively received over $2.5 billion General Fund to promote fiscal equity among the trial courts and improve existing service levels.

The Budget also includes statutory changes to extend the sunset dates for remote proceedings for criminal and civil cases through January 1, 2032, to help preserve access to justice for court users by continuing to provide the option to participate remotely.

To further expand access to justice by addressing judicial workload needs, the Budget includes $100 million General Fund in 2026-27 and $44 million ongoing to add 13 superior court judgeships over the next five fiscal years, including associated security costs, support staff and facility modifications. Specifically, this funding adds three judgeships each year in the next four fiscal years, and an additional judgeship in the fifth year, for a total of 13 by 2030-31. This augmentation enables the Judicial Branch to fill 13 of the 26 judgeships authorized by Chapter 482, Statutes of 2023 (SB 75). With this funding, the Administration has committed to spending $126.3 million ongoing General

Fund to support the addition of 61 judgeships based on the Judicial Needs Assessments since 2019.

The Budget includes $20 million Trial Court Trust Fund (TCTF) annually in 2026-27 and 2027-28 to address rising court interpreter costs and support language access and interpreter services in all case types in the trial courts. These resources will draw down the accumulated balance in the TCTF resulting from savings of previous allocations to the Judicial Branch and provide increased flexibility for trial court operation costs. This is in addition to the baseline funding of $135 million ongoing for the Court Interpreters Program.

MAINTAINING COURT FACILITIES

The Budget includes $150 million one-time General Fund for the most critical deferred maintenance in trial courts. The Judicial Council has accumulated a backlog of critical maintenance projects, which has resulted in essential infrastructure systems deteriorating to the point of failure. This is in addition to the $138.5 million one-time General Fund included in the 2021 and 2023 Budget Acts for the same purpose.

The Budget also includes $36 million General Fund in 2026-27 and $35 million General Fund in 2027-28 to complete the ongoing facility modification to provide Fire Life Safety upgrades at the Central Justice Center in Orange County. This is in addition to the one-time $64 million General Fund included in recent Budget Acts for the same purpose.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The Budget includes $62 million one-time General Fund in 2026-27 for 11 new and continuing Capital Outlay courthouse projects in the counties of Nevada, Plumas, Kings, San Joaquin, Sutter, Los Angeles, Lake, Kern, and Placer and $1.7 billion Lease Revenue Bond authority for new and continuing Capital Outlay courthouse projects in the counties of San Luis Obispo, Solano, Nevada, Plumas, Los Angeles, Lake, San Joaquin, Kern, and Placer.

The Budget also includes Control Section 4.85, which authorizes, upon appropriation, up to $1.3 billion General Fund and Lease Revenue Bond authority in 2027-28 for new and continuing Capital Outlay courthouse projects in the counties of Fresno, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Orange, and Santa Barbara.

PROPOSITION 36

Proposition 36, approved by voters in November 2024, increased punishment for specified theft and drug crimes and created a new court process for specified drug crimes. The Budget provides $50 million one-time General Fund, available over three years, to continue implementing Proposition 36. This includes $20 million for pretrial services, $20 million for behavioral health services through the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), and $10 million to address court workload.

This builds on the $100 million one-time General Fund included in the 2025 Budget Act for the implementation of Proposition 36, which is available for expenditure until June 30, 2028. Specifically, the $100 million is allocated as follows: $50 million to DHCS for county-based diversion programs and substance use disorder treatment for justice-involved individuals, $20 million to the Judicial Council to address increased court workload, $15 million to the Judicial Council for programs and services for individuals released pretrial, and $15 million to the Office of the State Public Defender for grants to indigent defense providers, including public defenders.

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE, RECOVERY, AND EMPOWERMENT (CARE COURT)

To increase CARE Act petitions and referrals, the Budget includes $3.5 million one-time General Fund in 2026-27, to be distributed by the Judicial Council through the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission of the State Bar of California, for public defenders to help integrate CARE Court as the first intervention to be sought in lieu of criminal court options.

The Budget also includes $1.5 million one-time General Fund in the California Health and Human Services Agency budget to train and support first responders, homeless outreach workers, and street medicine teams to strengthen the CARE Act referral and petition timeline.

The Budget maintains $35 million ongoing General Fund for CARE Court, initially implemented in 2023, to continue providing individuals with clinically appropriate, community-based, and court-ordered CARE Plans, and $17.4 million ongoing General Fund to support public defender and legal services organizations who provide legal counsel to CARE participants.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

- **Legal Aid Augmentation**—$30 million General Fund one-time in 2026-27 to the Equal Access Fund; including $750,000 to the Legal Aid Repayment Assistance Program.
- **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)**—$20 million General Fund one-time in 2026-27 to expand the CASA program capacity, recruitment, and training.
- **Court-Appointed Counsel**—$11 million General Fund in 2026-27 and ongoing to further increase the hourly rate of court-appointed counsel by $25 at the Supreme Court (to $180 per hour) and Courts of Appeal (up to $165 per hour), which provides representation for indigent appellants. This is in addition to the $6.3 million ongoing General Fund in the 2025 Budget Act for the same purpose.
- **Continuation of Courts of Appeal Workload**—$3.9 million Appellate Court Trust Fund in 2026-27 and $4.9 million General Fund in 2027-28 and ongoing to continue to address the courts' existing workload, reduce backlogs, and prevent case delays in appellate districts.
- **Appellate Court Security**—$1.6 million Appellate Court Trust Fund annually in 2026-27 through 2029-30 to continue resources for appellate court security previously funded on a limited-term basis.
- **Incompetent to Stand Trial Procedures (SB 820)**—$4.3 million General Fund annually in 2026-27 through 2029-30 to support trial courts with the implementation of new Incompetency to Stand Trial and involuntary medication order procedures pursuant to Chapter 330, Statutes of 2025 (SB 820).
- **Los Angeles Spring Street Courtrooms Relocation**—$4.6 million one-time General Fund in 2026-27 to support the relocation of 17 courtrooms and operations from the Spring Street Courthouse in Los Angeles, which is subject to divestment by the federal government.
- **State Court Facilities and Construction Fund (SCFCF) Backfill**—$31 million General Fund in 2026-27 and $46 million in 2027-28 and ongoing to continue to backfill a projected shortfall in the SCFCF and to maintain existing service levels.
- **Trial Court Employee Health Benefits**—$23.9 million General Fund in 2026-27 and ongoing for trial court employee health benefit and retirement costs. The state began consistently funding the increased retirement health benefit and retirement costs for the trial courts in 2014-15.