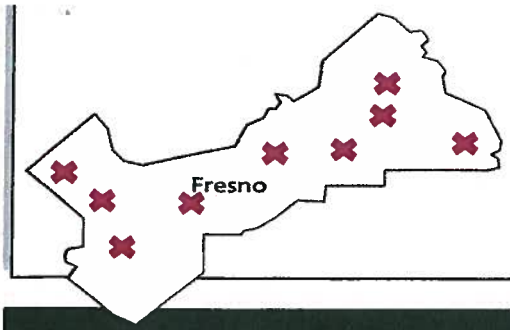


At the Crossroads of Justice
Snapshot: Fresno Superior Court

✖ **Marks the spot a Courthouse closed in Fresno County**

Key Budget Issues

- The Judicial branch receives ONLY 1 Penny for every Dollar of General Funds. Over the past 5 years Trial Courts have experienced ongoing reductions of $475.1 million. Fresno Superior Court's share equals $11,000,000 million and since 80% of this court's funding is used for staff salaries – the trickledown effect is an inability to serve the Public with greatly reduced staff.

Budget Impacts

Reduced Public Access: Self-Help/Mediator/Facilitator Services

- Self Help Center is a critical need to serve your constituents of whom: 80% of all Family Law cases are represent themselves; Language other than English spoken at home is 43%;
- Self-Help Center is closed every Wednesday.
- SHC turns away approx. 250-350 customers a week;

= 400% reduction in the quantity of public served.

"Funding cuts to the courts is funding cuts to the most vulnerable of our population."

–Noreen Nalia Staff Attorney, Central California Legal Services

✖ Closures: Courtrooms and Courthouses

- Closed over 71% of courthouses by closing 9 outlying courts and 1 downtown location.
- As a result of these closures, courtrooms were also reduced adding more people and workload to an already busy downtown courthouse
- Increase to Civil of 4,000 Limited Civil – 800 Small Claims cases

Reduced Protection: Court Reporters

- Laid off all CSRs in FY 2012/13 from non-mandated case types.
- No record in Family Law or Guardianship cases where children's welfare & protection are at risk.
- Users must bring their own CSR in Civil, Family Law & Probate cases.

Reduced Public Access: Public Service Counters

- With continued reduction in budget and staff, anticipate Clerk's office hours to be reduced two hours per day thus delaying justice to the citizens of Fresno County.

Staff Reductions: Furloughs, Layoffs, Unfilled Vacancies

- Laid off eight full time and 2 extra help employees in FY 2012/13.
- All employees furloughed in FY 2008/09 – 2012/13 (= to 5% pay cut).
- Anticipate future layoffs in FY 2013/14.

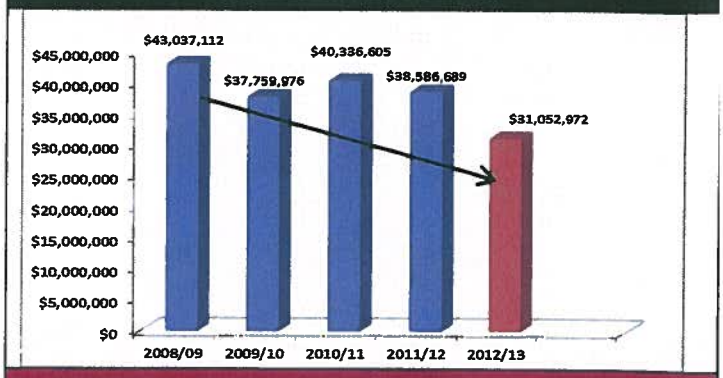
Workload Impact: Backlogs

- Minimum of 3 Months to get Child Custody Order.
- Felony Home Courts: daily calendar from 80 cases to 140 cases daily.
- Hundreds of Minute Orders each day do not get entered.

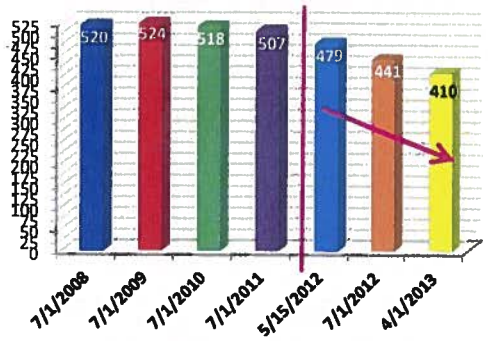
Construction Funds Taken Means

- Fresno's major remodel of 1960s Courthouse **cut**.
- Jury Assembly Room continues *w/o restrooms* for jurors.
- Lobby/*Security Screening* continues to be *inadequate*.
- Courthouse not ADA compliant

Reduction to FSC = 30%



80% of our Funds is used for Staff Salary



Judicial Workload/Employees as of April 2013:

Population served	945,711
Judicial officers (4 judgeships remain vacant)	53
Judicial officers needed	62
Filled staff positions	410

"Cannot continue at this level and quality as our resources decline – it is an impossible equation."

–Hon. Jonathan B. Conklin Assistant Presiding Judge, Fresno Superior Court

Case Statistics (Fiscal Year 2010-11)

Criminal filings	169,282
Civil filings	24,335
Family Law filings	12,659
Juvenile (Dep. & Delinquency)	3,682
Jury trials	168

Court Leadership

Presiding Judge	Hon. Gary D. Hoff
Court Executive Officer	Sheran L. Morton

"Courts are where the ultimate trust is." ***–Pamela Kallsen, Executive Director, Marjaree Mason Center***