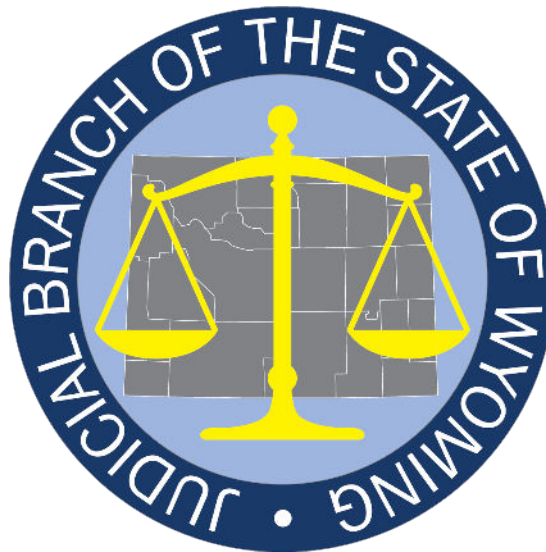


JUDICIAL BRANCH



SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET 2023-2024

Supreme Court of Wyoming
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

KATE M. FOX
CHIEF JUSTICE



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October 19, 2022

Senator Drew Perkins
Representative Bob Nicholas
Joint Appropriations Committee
200 West 24th Street
Capitol Building, E201
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Re: Wyoming Judicial Branch budget

Dear Chairman Perkins, Chairman Nicholas and members of the Joint Appropriations Committee,

The task of the Wyoming Judicial Branch has been transformed since you and I began to practice law. Judges must still be learned in the law, have compassion, handle their dockets efficiently, and maintain a professional demeanor. They must also manage increasing numbers of self-represented litigants, an epidemic of mental illness, and a deluge of administrative and regulatory requirements – from mastering electronic court automation programs to addressing Americans with Disability Act standards. Wyoming's judges bear a heavy administrative burden that is not carried by other state court judges in the nation. Part of this is due to the historical structure of the courts, but much of this burden can be attributed to the limited resources in the Administrative Office of the Courts. Shifting the administrative burden to Court Administration would provide the judges with more time to do what they do best – decide cases. However, to recognize this goal, Court Administration must be adequately staffed.

Court Administration was, not so long ago, an office that performed very limited functions for the Branch. But the demands of the public, attorneys, the Legislature, and the courts themselves have created responsibilities for Court Administration that far outstrip its current resources. Court Administration has undertaken several resource-intensive projects to reduce delays, save money and make the courts more accessible. These include:

- Implementation of eFiling and a new case management system in the District Courts (four district courts by the end of 2022).
 - Requires dedicated staff to select, configure, train, and rollout the system, and to provide continuous training to court staff as positions turn over.
 - Implementation of these systems in each court takes multiple staff members more than 100 hours to complete.

- Data requests and data accuracy.
 - Staff time is required to pull data out of the Judicial Branch data warehouse, with considerable time spent validating the data to ensure accuracy.
 - Increasing data accuracy requires intensive training with clerks and appropriate configuration of the systems feeding the data warehouse.
 - Staff invest time in collaboration with Executive Branch agencies to ensure the data they need from the Judiciary in the future will be reliable.
- Remote interpretation of court proceedings for litigants with Limited English Proficiency through KUDO software application.
 - Federal law requires that courts provide court interpreters in certain circumstances. KUDO allows for remote interpretation without interrupting the flow of court proceedings, which is especially useful in Wyoming where the pool of interpreters who can speak uncommon languages is limited.
 - KUDO may provide a cost savings to the State by allowing interpreters to join remotely, reducing travel and providing a time saving to the courts.
 - Implementation and training for this software demands substantial Court Administration staff time. The benefit to the public is faster court dockets, but the cost is in the additional administrative workload.
- Continued investment in courtroom technology.
 - The Wyoming Judiciary was ahead of most other states in its ability to adapt to remote court hearings during the pandemic, and it has been a cost and time savings for litigants, judges, and attorneys who no longer have to travel vast distances for short hearings.
 - Maintenance of this technology in our 73 courtrooms across the State is imperative and requires staff resources.
- Compliance with federal law.
 - This is a continuous resource-intensive project. Understanding, researching, and staying up to date on federal requirements for the courts is a substantial task. Recommending and implementing policies to comply with federal law creates an additional load on Court Administration.

This list, though not exhaustive, includes a few of the things we are doing. Our administrative staff has grown somewhat over the years, but for the most part we have gradually added tasks without commensurate staff to perform them. And there are issues we should be addressing but are not, because we simply don't have the people. You will see in this supplemental budget request that we are asking you to fund a few positions. Furthermore, we will be asking for additional positions in the coming years. I realize these are hard times and I understand you have many requests beyond the Judiciary's to consider. I would not ask if I were not convinced that additional

resources are critical to the continued effective functioning of Wyoming's courts, and necessary for the citizens and businesses of Wyoming.

The three positions requested in this supplemental budget include:

1. Data trainer – A data trainer will assist in creating a uniform data standard, recognizing trends in the data-entry process, and training to ensure data is entered correctly and consistently throughout the State, resulting in accurate Judicial Branch data that can be relied upon by the legislature and other entities.
2. Staff attorney – Compliance with federal law – ADA, FLSA, FMLA – is a task often borne by judges. With additional legal help within Court Administration, the judges' time could be better spent hearing and deciding issues. An attorney within Court Administration to provide branch-wide support and a uniform approach to federal compliance would lift a significant administrative burden from the judges, and help ensure more robust compliance.
3. Audio and visual support – Maintenance of the audio/visual equipment requires a specialized skill, and the Judicial Branch is currently dependent on the vendor to provide that maintenance. The addition of this position will be a potential cost savings to the State by limiting the support and maintenance contracts with the vendor and will provide the Branch with an experienced staff member who can more timely respond to issues.

Finally, I fully support additional salary increases for State workers, including Wyoming Judicial Branch employees. The raises in 2022 were much appreciated, and helped us retain our employees. There is still room to get them closer to market. Our ability to recruit and retain qualified Judicial Branch employees is critical to fulfilling the constitutional mandate of the courts to ensure every citizen's right to access is maintained. Every loss of an employee and every lengthy recruitment period further drains the Branch's resources and its ability to fulfill its mission to provide just, speedy, and efficient resolution of every action brought before the courts.

I thank the Committee for its hard work on behalf of the people of the State of Wyoming, and I ask that you consider these critical needs of the Wyoming Judicial Branch so that we can continue to provide access to justice through the timely, fair, and impartial resolution of Wyoming citizens' legal disputes.

Sincerely,



Kate M. Fox
Chief Justice

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WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH

The critical mission of the Judicial Branch is to provide a fair and impartial forum that is accessible to all for resolution of legal disputes. The Wyoming and United States Constitutions created three separate and co-equal branches of government, each charged with unique duties. The Legislative Branch, based on the concept of majority rule, makes law through the passage of statutes, which are then enforced by the Executive Branch. The Judicial Branch interprets the law through the adjudication of disputes as they apply to actual events in the lives of the citizens of Wyoming. As envisioned by the founders over two hundred years ago, when the judicial system protects the rights of one, the rights of all remain secure.

The Wyoming Constitution vests judicial power of the state “in a supreme court, district courts, and such subordinate courts as the legislature may, by general law, establish and ordain from time to time.”¹ The Supreme Court has general appellate jurisdiction statewide in both civil and criminal cases; it also has “general superintending control over all inferior courts, under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by law.”² Five justices, one of whom serves as the chief justice, sit on the Supreme Court. Each justice serves an eight-year term and holds successive terms upon retention by the statewide electorate, until they reach the age of 70, when they must retire.³

The district courts are constitutionally created trial courts of general jurisdiction in the state. There are district courts in all 23 counties, organized into nine judicial districts. The district judges preside over felony criminal cases, large civil cases, as well as juvenile and probate matters. They also hear appeals from lower court decisions. The jurisdiction of the district courts is unlimited except for matters the Legislature has allocated to the circuit courts. As a result, the work of the district courts includes the most serious cases and controversies in the state. Each district court judge serves a six-year term and holds successive terms upon retention by the electorate of the judicial district where the district court judge presides, until they reach the age of 70.⁴ The district courts are each independent and are free of the administrative and fiscal control of the Supreme Court.⁵ Since the legislature authorized three new district judge positions in 2022, there are now 26 district court judges, each with a chamber staff of three – a court reporter, judicial assistant, and staff attorney, with a 27th judge to be appointed by 2024 upon completion of a suitable courtroom and chambers in Campbell County. The clerks who handle the case files are elected county officials and their staffs are county employees.

On March 15, 2019, Governor Gordon signed into law SEA0076 creating a chancery court whose purpose is to provide a forum for streamlined resolution of commercial, business, and trust cases. The act establishes a court with jurisdiction to decide claims including breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty, fraud, derivative actions, the Uniform Commercial Code, and the Uniform Trust Code. The chancery court began operating in December of 2021, and is fully electronic. Until a chancery court judge is appointed, a panel of district court judges will preside over cases brought before the chancery court. Upon appointment, the chancery court judge will serve a six-year term and hold successive terms upon retention by the statewide electorate. The chancery court is under the supervisory control of the Supreme Court.

1 Wyo. Const. art. 5, § 1; Wyo. Const. art. 2, § 1.

2 Wyo. Const. art. 5, § 2.

3 The 2022 legislature voted to place a proposed constitutional amendment on the November 2022 ballot to raise that age to 75.

4 See n. 3.

5 Wyo. Stat. § 5-2-102(b).

The circuit courts are statutorily created limited jurisdiction trial courts. The geographic boundaries of the circuit courts are the same as the nine judicial districts for the district courts, and there are circuit courts in all 23 counties. The civil jurisdiction of the circuit courts covers small claim cases, forcible entry and detainer cases and civil cases in which the damages or recovery sought do not exceed \$50,000. Circuit courts also hear family violence, stalking, and sexual assault protection order cases. The criminal jurisdiction of the circuit courts covers all misdemeanor cases. Most citizens of Wyoming who come into contact with the Judicial Branch are seen in the circuit courts. As a result, the circuit courts are known as the people's courts of Wyoming. Each circuit court judge serves a four-year term and holds successive terms upon retention by the electorate of the judicial district where the circuit court judge presides. The circuit courts are under the supervisory control of the Supreme Court. Circuit court judges do not have chambers staff, but the circuit court clerks who manage the case files are employees of the Judicial Branch.

The Wyoming Judicial Branch has just over 300 employees statewide. Under the supervision of the Wyoming Supreme Court with the direction of the Wyoming Judicial Council (formerly the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration), Court Administration provides support to the courts in all the ways necessary to ensure the effective operation of the Judicial Branch. This comes in many different forms, including fiscal and budget, human resources, court security, technology, software and applications, and legal.

Adequate funding for the Judicial Branch is crucial. Without that funding, the Branch's ability to sustain the high-quality and timely resolution of legal disputes is compromised. Former Chief Justice Michael K. Davis emphasized the importance of the courts' role in citizens' lives in his 2021 State of the Judiciary address, "Under both the Wyoming and United States Constitutions, the Judicial Branch has the obligation to hear and decide all cases that come before it in a timely manner. This is true whether those cases involve criminal charges, domestic violence protection, claims for damages, or any one of the many types of cases over which Wyoming courts have jurisdiction by virtue of the constitution or Wyoming statutes. The courts do not choose, and cannot choose, what cases are brought before them – they are simply mandated to move each and every case filed to a conclusion in a prompt manner that provides due process to the litigants. The phrase 'The Rule of Law' is one that resonates with all of us. The courts apply, protect, preserve and defend the Rule of Law – not in some grand and sweeping manner, but in each and every case that comes before them, no matter how seemingly great or small it may seem to be. There is no such thing as an unimportant case to the litigants involved."⁶

⁶ Chief Justice Michael K. Davis, State of the Judiciary, January 12, 2021.

WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH EXCEPTION REQUESTS

WYOMING SUPREME COURT

0100 Administration (General Fund)

\$ 356,629 On-Going Data Trainer, Staff Attorney and Audio/Visual Support Positions

0200 Judicial Nominating Commission (General Fund)

\$ 30,000 One-Time Increased Transportation Expense

0500 Circuit Courts (General Fund)

\$ 30,240 On-Going Housing Allowance

0900 Branchwide Resources (General Fund)

\$ 50,000 On-Going Commissioner/Magistrate Services

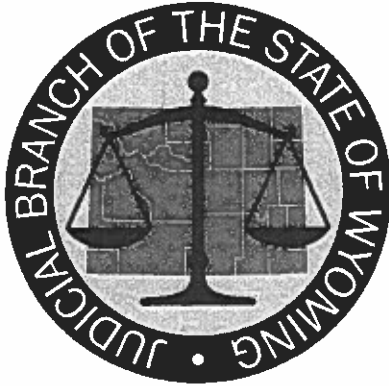
Total One-Time Funding Requests	\$	30,000
Total On-Going Funding Requests	\$	436,869
	\$	<u>466,869</u>

DISTRICT COURTS

Judicial District 9B/#134 (General Fund)

\$ 25,920 On-Going Housing Allowance

Total On-Going Funding Requests	\$	25,920
	\$	<u>25,920</u>



STATE OF WYOMING

2023-2024

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST

SUPREME COURT 101

Agency Name and Number

Submitted by:

Signature

Kate M. Fox

Name

Kate M. Fox

Title

Chief Justice

Person(s) responsible for the preparation of this budget:

Elisa Butler, State Court Administrator

Claire Smith, Chief Fiscal Officer

AGENCY: SUPREME COURT
 DIVISION: ADMINISTRATION
 UNIT: ADMINISTRATION

AGENCY NUMBER: 101
 DIVISION NUMBER: 0100
 UNIT NUMBER: 0101

UNIT OVERVIEW

ADMINISTRATION

The Supreme Court serves a number of roles within the Judicial Branch. First and foremost, the Court produces well researched and written opinions that interpret the law and provide precedent for trial courts, attorneys, and litigants. The Supreme Court also ensures the courts within the Judicial Branch (district, circuit, and chancery) have adequate administrative support for the smooth operations of the courts throughout Wyoming. The funding for this Division enables the Supreme Court to meet its constitutional, statutory, and operational requirements. Inadequate funding of this Division would result in reduced support to the courts throughout the state, impacting citizens' access to timely resolution of their legal disputes.

The Administration Division includes funding for:

- Personnel and operating costs for the Supreme Court Justices' chambers;
- Personnel and operating costs for the Supreme Court Clerk's Office; and
- Personnel and operating costs to provide administrative, legal, operational, technology, fiscal, and human resources support to all circuit courts, district courts, the chancery court, and the Supreme Court.

STANDARD BUDGET REQUEST

100 Series – Personal Services: The 100 series funds are used to provide salaries and benefits for 32 full-time employees and three temporary employees of the Supreme Court.

200 Series – Supportive Services: The 200 series funds are used for necessary operating costs for judicial services on a statewide basis.

400 Series – Central Services/Data Services: The 400 series funds are used to cover telecommunications costs.

900 Series – Contractual Services: The 900 series funds are used for necessary contractual services within the Division.

Total 2023-2024 Appropriation

\$ 11,336,807

EXCEPTION BUDGET REQUEST

The Wyoming Judicial Council sets policies for the Judiciary, exercises administrative supervision over the courts in the state, and promulgates rules of practice and procedure for all courts. In 2021, the Judicial Council created a task force, the Judicial Branch Innovation (JBI) task force, that is leading a branch-wide, post-pandemic examination of how to improve Wyoming's court system. The task force includes one retired judge, two justices, two district court judges, two circuit court judges, and the state court administrator as a non-voting member. A project team from the National Center for State Courts helps lead and facilitate the meetings providing valuable insight on practices in other states. The task force meets monthly to identify and prioritize challenges facing the delivery of justice in Wyoming. One key area for improvement identified by JBI is the

shortage of administrative support due to inadequate staffing in the Administrative Office of the Courts. This results in a high administrative burden on judges when compared to other states, giving Wyoming judges less time to address the legal disputes of Wyoming's businesses, citizens, and government.

The budget reconciliation process following the 2022 legislative session resulted in the Administration Division of the Wyoming Supreme Court (WSC) inadvertently receiving three full-time positions in its BFY23 appropriation. The positions have no associated funding. The WSC requests these positions be funded to provide additional statewide administrative support for judges.

1. Data trainer – Data is at the core of important policy decisions throughout the state. The Judicial Branch is unique in its ability to gather and distill information from legal cases into data points that can be used to make better and more effective policy. The data, however, is only useful if the entry of that information is done correctly and consistently. In many courts, the workload prevents clerks from being adequately trained. A data trainer will assist in creating a uniform data standard, recognizing trends in the data-entry process, and training to ensure data is entered correctly and consistently throughout the state resulting in accurate Judicial Branch data that can be relied upon by the Judicial Branch, other government entities, and the public.

0103 Salaries	\$ 70,000
0105 Employer Paid Benefits	\$ 29,201
0221 In State Travel	\$ 8,400
0420 Telecommunications	<u>\$ 318</u>
	\$107,919

2. Staff attorney – Judges throughout the state perform an inordinate amount of administrative duties in comparison to other states. This is largely due to inadequate staffing in the Administrative Office of the Courts and the historical structure of the Judicial Branch. The work of the task force and the Judicial Council has broken down the structural barriers, but the staffing issues remain. Compliance with federal law – ADA, FLSA, FMLA – is a task often borne by judges. With additional legal help within the Administrative Office, the judges' time could be better spent hearing and deciding issues. An attorney within the Administrative Office to provide branch-wide support and a uniform approach to federal compliance would lift a significant administrative burden from the judges freeing up their time to hear and decide the people's cases.

0103 Salaries	\$103,000
0105 Employer Paid Benefits	\$ 37,471
0420 Telecommunications	<u>\$ 318</u>
	\$140,789

3. Audio and visual support – Prior to the pandemic, the Legislature wisely decided to invest in technology for the Judiciary. This resulted in much less disruption to the courts than experienced in nearly every other state in the country. The availability of technology allows hearings to take place remotely, resulting in efficiencies not only for the courts but for the citizens and attorneys who participate in the judicial process. Maintenance of the audio/visual equipment requires a specialized skill, and the Judicial Branch is currently dependent on the vendor to provide that maintenance. The addition of this position will be a cost savings to the state by limiting the support and

2023-2024 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET**AE – UNIT BUDGET REQUEST NARRATIVE**

AGENCY: SUPREME COURT
DIVISION: ADMINISTRATION
UNIT: ADMINISTRATION

AGENCY NUMBER: 101
DIVISION NUMBER: 0100
UNIT NUMBER: 0101

maintenance contracts with the vendor. The position would also provide the Branch with an experienced staff member who can more timely respond to issues without the need to schedule time with the vendor.

0103 Salaries	\$ 70,000
0105 Employer Paid Benefits	\$ 29,201
0221 In State Travel	\$ 8,400
0420 Telecommunications	<u>\$ 320</u>
	\$107,921

This is an on-going request. Costs below are for the second year of the current biennium and will need to be biennialized for BFY25.

TOTAL REQUEST:

0103 Salaries	\$243,000
0105 Employer Paid Benefits	\$ 95,873
0221 In State Travel	\$ 16,800
0420 Telecommunications	<u>\$ 956</u>
	\$356,629

The Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court recommends approval of the Exception Budget Requests.

AGENCY	SUPREME COURT	Wyoming On-Line Financial System Code				
DIVISION	ADMINISTRATION	AGY	DIVISION	UNIT	FUND	APPR UNIT
UNIT	ADMINISTRATION	101	0100	0101	001	101
1		2		3		4
Description	Code	2023-2024 Appropriation Budget Bill		Supplemental Request		Total Agency Request
						5 Supreme Court Recommendation
EXPENDITURES						
SALARIES SET BY LAW	0101	1,750,000		-		1,750,000
SALARIES CLASSIFIED	0103	5,293,869		243,000		5,536,869
EMPLOYER PD BENEFITS	0105	1,883,051		61,617		1,944,668
EMPLOYER HEALTH INS BENEFITS	0196	1,281,502		34,256		1,315,758
PERSONAL SERVICES	0100	10,208,422		338,873		10,547,295
REAL PROPERTY REP & MT	0201	5,900		-		5,900
EQUIPMENT REP & MNTC	0202	10,280		-		10,280
UTILITIES	0203	13,500		-		13,500
COMMUNICATION	0204	34,303		-		34,303
DUES-LICENSES-REGIST	0207	102,813		-		102,813
TRAVEL IN STATE	0221	30,995		16,800		47,795
TRAVEL OUT OF STATE	0222	3,320		-		3,320
PERMANT ASSIGNED VEHICLES	0223	16,864		-		16,864
SUPPLIES	0230	1,500		-		1,500
OFFICE SUPPL-PRINTING	0231	48,633		-		48,633
EDUCA-RECREATNL SUPP	0236	93,599		-		93,599
SOFT GOODS&HOUSEKPNG	0237	480		-		480
OFFICE EQUIP-FURNISH	0241	19,181		-		19,181
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	0200	381,368		16,800		398,168
CENTRAL-SER DATA-SER	0410	-		-		-
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	0420	40,597		956		41,553
CENT. SERV./DATA SERV.	0400	40,597		956		41,553
PROFESSIONAL FEES	0901	12,000		-		12,000
CONSULTING SERVICES	0902	-		-		-
SPECIAL PROJ & SVCS	0903	694,420		-		694,420
CONTRACTUAL TRAVEL	0905	-		-		-
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	0900	706,420		-		706,420
EXPENDITURE TOTALS		11,336,807		356,629		11,693,436
SOURCE OF FUNDING						
GENERAL FUND	1001	11,336,807		356,629		11,693,436
GENERAL FUND	G	11,336,807		356,629		11,693,436
TOTAL FUNDING		11,336,807		356,629		11,693,436
AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES						
FULL TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		38		-		38
PART TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		-		-		-
AT-WILL EMPLOYEE CONTRACT COUNT		-		-		-
TOTAL AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES		38		-		38

AGENCY: SUPREME COURT
 DIVISION: JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION
 UNIT: JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION

AGENCY NUMBER: 101
 DIVISION NUMBER: 0200
 UNIT NUMBER: 0201

UNIT OVERVIEW**JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION**

In 1972, the Wyoming electors adopted a merit-based judicial selection method now preserved in the Wyoming Constitution. This system creates a Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC) that reviews expressions of interest and interviews applicants for vacant judicial positions at the circuit, chancery, district and Supreme Court levels. The Commission submits the names of three nominees to the Governor, who then appoints the person who will fill the judicial vacancy.

The Commission is made up of six volunteers – three members of the Wyoming State Bar, and three electors of Wyoming who are non-lawyers, with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court as Chairman. The members of the Commission do not receive fees, salary, or other compensation, but do receive reimbursement for in-state travel. Applicant interviews are conducted in person, in the communities in which the vacancies occur.

STANDARD BUDGET REQUEST

200 Series – Supportive Services: Funds are used for the necessary operating costs associated with the interviewing and selection of judges statewide.

Total 2023-2024 Appropriation

\$ 34,942

EXCEPTION BUDGET REQUEST

The Wyoming Supreme Court requests an increase in funding for BFY23 for travel for members of the JNC in the amount of \$30,000. With the unprecedented level of retirements within the Judicial Branch over the last two years, the volunteer members of the JNC are spending significant time traveling as part of the nomination process. Interviewing nominees for judicial positions does not lend itself well to remote meetings as the one-on-one contact with a nominee is vital in determining who should be advanced to the Governor for appointment. For many JNC members, this means an additional one to two days of travel for each day of interviews. Based on the age of many judges, the Judiciary may have up to ten retirements prior to June 2024. The increased funding will allow the JNC to use state transportation resources for interviews associated with filling those positions. The time saved by commission members will ensure continued diligence and engagement by JNC members in nominating worthy judicial candidates. We will reassess travel needs for the 2024-2025 biennium.

This is a one-time request.

0221 Travel In-State

\$ 30,000

The Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court recommends approval of the Exception Budget Request.

AGENCY SUPREME COURT		Wyoming On-Line Financial System Code				
DIVISION	JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION	AGY DIVISION	UNIT	FUND	APPR UNIT	
UNIT	JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION	101	0200	0201	001	201
1		2	3	4	5	
Description	Code	2023-2024 Appropriation Budget Bill	Supplemental Request	Total Agency Request	Supreme Court Recommendation	
EXPENDITURES						
COMMUNICATION	0204	391	-	391	391	
TRAVEL IN STATE	0221	34,027	30,000	64,027	64,027	
OFFICE SUPPL-PRINTING	0231	524	-	524	524	
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	0200	34,942	30,000	64,942	64,942	
EXPENDITURE TOTALS		34,942	30,000	64,942	64,942	
SOURCE OF FUNDING						
GENERAL FUND	1001	34,942	30,000	64,942	64,942	
GENERAL FUND	G	34,942	30,000	64,942	64,942	
TOTAL FUNDING		34,942	30,000	64,942	64,942	

2023-2024 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET**AE – UNIT BUDGET REQUEST NARRATIVE**

AGENCY: SUPREME COURT
DIVISION: CIRCUIT COURTS
UNIT: NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

AGENCY NUMBER: 101
DIVISION NUMBER: 0500
UNIT NUMBER: 0591-0594

UNIT OVERVIEW**NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

Fremont County, Sublette County, and Teton County

STANDARD BUDGET REQUEST NARRATIVE

100 Series – Personal Services: The 100 series funds are used to provide salary and benefits for four judges, 14 full-time clerks, and one part-time clerk.

200 Series – Supportive Services: The 200 series funds are used to cover the necessary operating costs for the circuit courts in Lander, Riverton, Pinedale, and Jackson.

400 Series – Central Services/Data Services: The 400 series funds are used to cover telecommunications costs.

900 Series – Contractual Services: The 900 series funds are used to pay for contractual services, which include the services of a court magistrate. Magistrates are asked to sit for the judges when the judge is out of town on business, ill, on vacation or when a conflict of interest occurs. Funds are also used to pay language interpreters.

Total 2023-2024 Appropriation

\$ 4,275,488

EXCEPTION BUDGET REQUEST

On July 1, 2022, Governor Gordon approved a \$360/month increase in the housing allowance, from \$1,630/month to \$1,990/month, based on calculations provided by the Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division. The Judicial Branch provides the same benefit to its employees, excluding judges, who reside in eligible counties. Due to the timing of the approval of this increase, the additional funds were not requested during the 2022 budget session and are now being requested in this supplemental budget. The Wyoming Supreme Court has one circuit court located in Teton County, the only county that qualifies for the housing allowance. This court has three full-time employees and one part-time employee. The total funds requested are \$360 for twenty-four months for 3.5 employees, or \$30,240.

0103 Salaries - Housing

\$ 30,240

The Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court recommends approval of the Exception Budget Request.

AGENCY	SUPREME COURT	Wyoming On-Line Financial System Code				
DIVISION	CIRCUIT COURTS	AGY	DIVISION	UNITS	FUND	APPR UNIT
UNIT	NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT	101	0500	0591-0594	001	501
1		2	3	4	5	
Description	Code	2023-2024 Appropriation Budget Bill	Supplemental Request	Total Agency Request	Supreme Court Recommendation	
EXPENDITURES						
SALARIES SET BY LAW	0101	1,160,000	-	1,160,000	1,160,000	
SALARIES CLASSIFIED	0103	1,391,884	30,240	1,422,124	1,422,124	
EMPLOYER PD BENEFITS	0105	859,746	-	859,746	859,746	
EMPOYER HEALTH INS BENEFITS	0196	711,086	-	711,086	711,086	
PERSONAL SERVICES	0100	4,122,716	30,240	4,152,956	4,152,956	
EQUIPMENT REP & MNTC	0202	5,908	-	5,908	5,908	
UTILITIES	0203	7,500	-	7,500	7,500	
COMMUNICATION	0204	22,244	-	22,244	22,244	
DUES-LICENSES-REGIST	0207	4,229	-	4,229	4,229	
MISCELLANEOUS	0210	294	-	294	294	
TRAVEL IN STATE	0221	22,315	-	22,315	22,315	
OFFICE SUPPL-PRINTING	0231	46,446	-	46,446	46,446	
EDUCA-RECREATNL SUPP	0236	11,517	-	11,517	11,517	
SOFT GOODS&HOUSEKPNG	0237	629	-	629	629	
INSURANCE-BOND PREMS	0254	2,700	-	2,700	2,700	
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	0200	123,782	-	123,782	123,782	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	0420	6,104	-	6,104	6,104	
CENT. SERV./DATA SERV.	0400	6,104	-	6,104	6,104	
PROFESSIONAL FEES	0901	22,886	-	22,886	22,886	
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	0900	22,886	-	22,886	22,886	
EXPENDITURE TOTALS		4,275,488	30,240	4,305,728	4,305,728	
SOURCE OF FUNDING						
GENERAL FUND	1001	4,275,488	30,240	4,305,728	4,305,728	
GENERAL FUND	G	4,275,488	30,240	4,305,728	4,305,728	
TOTAL FUNDING		4,275,488	30,240	4,305,728	4,305,728	
AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES						
FULL TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		18	-	18	18	
PART TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		1	-	1	1	
TOTAL AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES		19	-	19	19	

AGENCY: SUPREME COURT
 DIVISION: BRANCHWIDE RESOURCES
 UNIT: BRANCHWIDE RESOURCES

AGENCY NUMBER: 101
 DIVISION NUMBER: 0900
 UNIT NUMBER: 0901

UNIT OVERVIEW**BRANCHWIDE RESOURCES****STANDARD BUDGET REQUEST**

100 Series – Personal Services: Funds in the 100 series cover the unfunded liability for annual leave and sick leave buy-outs for long term employees who retire or terminate employment with the Judicial Branch. Because of the fiscal impact on a court budget when an employee retires, the buy-out can require the position to be vacant for several months. In the district courts or smaller circuit courts, this is not a practical solution. These funds are only used as a contingency when sufficient funds are not available in a court's individual budgets. Funds not used for the specific purpose of leave buy-outs revert to the general fund.

200 Series – Supportive Services: Funds in the 200 series are used for operational expenses that impact all or many courts throughout the Branch. Funds are pooled in this unit as opposed to being appropriated to each individual court. Funds in the 200 series may also be used to provide travel reimbursement for members of the Wyoming Court Security Commission.

900 Series – Contractual Services: Funds in this series cover the cost of hourly magistrates providing judicial services to drug courts in the State. In some counties where the judge is not able to provide judicial services to the drug court, an hourly magistrate is hired. Funds in the 900 Series are also available to cover the additional expense of court security in high profile cases, as well as other critical court operation and security needs. Finally, funds in this series are used to facilitate continuing judicial education for the five justices, 50 judges, and four full-time magistrates.

Total Standard Budget Request**\$ 616,849****EXCEPTION BUDGET REQUEST**

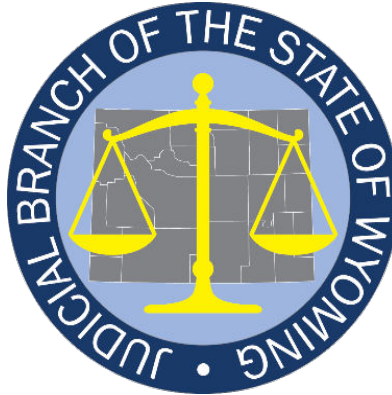
The Judicial Branch Innovation task force was created, in part, to address concerns related to turnover in the Judiciary and issues with job satisfaction of judges. One issue consistently identified by judges throughout the state that leads to dissatisfaction is the inability to take leave. Deciding complex issues that affect people's lives is stressful and requires respite to ensure judges remain engaged and to prevent burnout. Busy dockets often result in judges being on the bench the entire day, leading to judges consistently working nights and weekends to draft opinions in the cases they spent the work-day hearing. Many circuit court judges are on-call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to ensure warrants can be approved and signed when needed. The constant grind of the job without time to recharge creates mental and physical exhaustion for the judges. While technology provides some relief in allowing judges to cover for one another more efficiently, it does not resolve the issue. The WSC is requesting a pool of funds for hiring commissioners and magistrates who can handle limited judicial processes for judges, allowing them to take leave as needed. This is an ongoing request.

0901 Professional Fees

\$ 50,000

The Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court recommends approval of the Exception Budget Request.

AGENCY DIVISION UNIT	SUPREME COURT BRANCHWIDE RESOURCES BRANCHWIDE RESOURCES	Wyoming On-Line Financial System Code				
		AGY 101	DIVISION 0900	UNIT 0901	FUND 001	APPR UNIT 901
1		2		3	4	5
Description	Code	2023-2024 Appropriation Budget Bill	Supplemental Request	Total Agency Request	Supreme Court Recommendation	
EXPENDITURES						
SALARIES CLASSIFIED	0103	150,000	-	150,000	150,000	
EMPLOYER PD BENEFITS	0105	-	-	-	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	0100	150,000	-	150,000	150,000	
UTILITIES	0203	500	-	500	500	
COMMUNICATION	0204	500	-	500	500	
DUES-LICENSES-REGIST	0207	216,839	-	216,839	216,839	
TRAVEL IN STATE	0221	2,666	-	2,666	2,666	
TRAVEL OUT OF STATE	0222	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	
SUPPLIES	0230	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	
OFFICE SUPPL-PRINTING	0231	2,500	-	2,500	2,500	
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	0200	229,005	-	229,005	229,005	
PROFESSIONAL FEES	0901	237,844	50,000	287,844	287,844	
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	0900	237,844	50,000	287,844	287,844	
EXPENDITURE TOTALS		616,849	50,000	666,849	666,849	
SOURCE OF FUNDING						
GENERAL FUND	1001	616,849	50,000	666,849	666,849	
GENERAL FUND	G	616,849	50,000	666,849	666,849	
TOTAL FUNDING		616,849	50,000	666,849	666,849	
AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES						
FULL TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		-	-	-	-	
PART TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		-	-	-	-	
TOTAL AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES		-	-	-	-	



TO: Joint Appropriations Committee

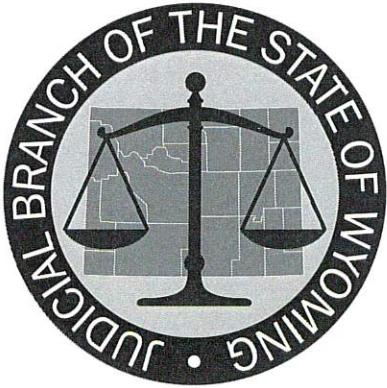
FROM: District Court Conference Budget Review Committee

RE: Wyoming District Court Supplemental Budget Request for the 2023-2024
Biennium

The District Court Budget Review Committee consists of three district judges: Daniel Forgey, Richard Lavery, and Catherine Rogers. The committee reviewed the 2023-2024 supplemental budget request for Agency 134 JD9B and approves the request as indicated below.

Supplemental Budget Request for Agency 134 JD9B:

Code 0103-Salaries (Housing Allowance)	Requested and Approved:	\$25,920
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STATE OF WYOMING

2023-2024

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST

JUDICIAL DISTRICT 9B 134

Agency Name and Number

Submitted by:

Signature *mel 10*

Name Melissa M. Owens

Title District Judge JD9B

Person(s) responsible for the preparation of this budget:

AGENCY: JUDICIAL DISTRICT 9-B (JACKSON)
 DIVISION: ADMINISTRATION
 UNIT: ADMINISTRATION

AGENCY NUMBER: 134
 DIVISION NUMBER: 0100
 UNIT NUMBER: 0101

UNIT OVERVIEW

The Ninth Judicial District consists of Fremont, Sublette and Teton Counties. (W.S. 5-3-101). Pursuant to statute, the Ninth Judicial District has three judges (W.S. 5-3-102). It is important to note that the mix of court business is quite different in each county and each district -- on account of population and distance differences, tax resource differences, political characteristics, and a myriad of community-based differences. The Ninth Judicial District serves approximately 73,000 citizens. While Teton County does not see the volume of criminal, juvenile, and family law cases more populated jurisdictions experience, Teton County consistently has the heaviest civil docket in the state.

STANDARD BUDGET REQUEST NARRATIVE

100 Series – Personal Services: The 100 series funds are used to provide for a judge, judicial assistant, staff attorney and court reporter. These funds also provide payment of transcription fees to the court reporter and benefits for all court employees.

200 Series – Supportive Services: The 200 series funds are used to cover the necessary operating costs for judicial services in Teton County.

400 Series – Central Services: The 400 series funds are used to provide hardware/software support from the Department of Administration and Information.

900 Series – Contractual Services: Funds in the 900 series are used to pay for a contract court reporter in the event the full-time court reporter is not available and for a court commissioner, if necessary. They also cover the cost of interpreters to facilitate compliance with federal law and the Supreme Court of Wyoming Language Interpreters Policy.

2023-2024 Total Appropriation

\$1,349,629

EXCEPTION BUDGET REQUEST

On July 1, 2022, Governor Gordon approved a \$360/month increase in the housing allowance, from \$1,630/month to \$1,990/month, based on calculations provided by the Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division. The Judicial Branch provides the same benefit to our employees, excluding judges, who reside in eligible counties. Due to the timing of the approval of this increase, the additional funds were not requested during the 2022 budget session and are now being requested in this supplemental budget request. Judicial District 9B is located in Teton County and qualifies for the housing allowance. The total additional funds requested are \$360 for 24 months for three employees, or \$25,920.

0103 Salaries – Housing

\$ 25,920

The District Court Budget Committee recommends approval of the Exception Budget Request.

AGENCY	JUDICIAL DISTRICT 9-B	Wyoming On-Line Financial System Code				
DIVISION	ADMINISTRATION	AGY	DIVISION	UNIT	FUND	APPR UNIT
UNIT	ADMINISTRATION	134	0100	0101	001	101
1		2	3	4	5	
Description	Code	2023-2024 Appropriation Budget Bill	Supplemental Request	Total Agency Request	District Judges Budget Comm. Recommendation	
EXPENDITURES						
SALARIES-SET BY LAW	0101	320,000	-	320,000	320,000	
SALARIES CLASSIFIED	0103	459,364	25,920	485,284	485,284	
SALARIES OTHER	0104	-	-	-	-	
EMPLOYER PD BENEFITS	0105	330,449	-	330,449	330,449	
EMPLOYER HEALTH INS BENEFITS	0196	172,249	-	172,249	172,249	
PERSONAL SERVICES	0100	1,282,062	25,920	1,307,982	1,307,982	
REAL PROPTY REP & MNT	0201	-	-	-	-	
EQUIPMENT REP & MNTC	0202	-	-	-	-	
UTILITIES	0203	1,800	-	1,800	1,800	
COMMUNICATION	0204	1,384	-	1,384	1,384	
DUES-LICENSES-REGIST	0207	2,064	-	2,064	2,064	
ADVERTISING-PROMOTION	0208	-	-	-	-	
DATA PROCESSING	0209	-	-	-	-	
MISCELLANEOUS	0210	-	-	-	-	
TRAVEL IN STATE	0221	30,736	-	30,736	30,736	
TRAVEL OUT OF STATE	0222	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	
PERM ASSIGNED VEHICLE	0223	-	-	-	-	
OFFICE SUPPL-PRINTING	0231	7,650	-	7,650	7,650	
EDUCA-RECREATNL SUPP	0236	7,392	-	7,392	7,392	
SOFT GOODS&HOUSEKPNG	0237	645	-	645	645	
OTH REPAIR-MAINT SUP	0239	-	-	-	-	
OFFICE EQUIPMENT	0241	-	-	-	-	
DP REPRODUCT OTHER EQ	0242	-	-	-	-	
OFFICE EQUIP-FURNISH	0246	-	-	-	-	
REAL PROPERTY RENTAL	0251	-	-	-	-	
MAIN CONTRACTS EXTERNAL	0292	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	0200	53,671	-	53,671	53,671	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	0420	2,455	-	2,455	2,455	
CENT. SERV./DATA SERV.	0400	2,455	-	2,455	2,455	
PROFESSIONAL FEES	0901	11,441	-	11,441	11,441	
CONTRACTUAL TRAVEL	0905	-	-	-	-	
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	0900	11,441	-	11,441	11,441	
EXPENDITURE TOTALS		1,349,629	25,920	1,375,549	1,375,549	
SOURCE OF FUNDING						
GENERAL FUND	1001	1,324,483	25,920	1,350,403	1,375,549	
GENERAL FUND	G	1,324,483	25,920	1,350,403	1,375,549	
TOTAL FUNDING		1,324,483	25,920	1,350,403	1,375,549	
AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES						
FULL TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		4	-	4	4	
PART TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT		-	-	-	-	
TOTAL AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEES		4	-	4	4	