

**South Carolina Judicial Branch
Regarding FY 26-27**

**Constitutional Subcommittee
House Ways and Means**

Key Officials Attending Meeting:

Representative Micah Caskey, Chairman

Representative Richie Yow

Representative David Hiott

Ryan Tooley, Budget Analyst

John W. Kittredge, Chief Justice, South Carolina Supreme Court

Paul J. Magargle, Jr, Director, Office of Fiscal Services

Mission

To provide a fair and efficient forum for the just resolution of civil, family, and criminal matters.

Vision

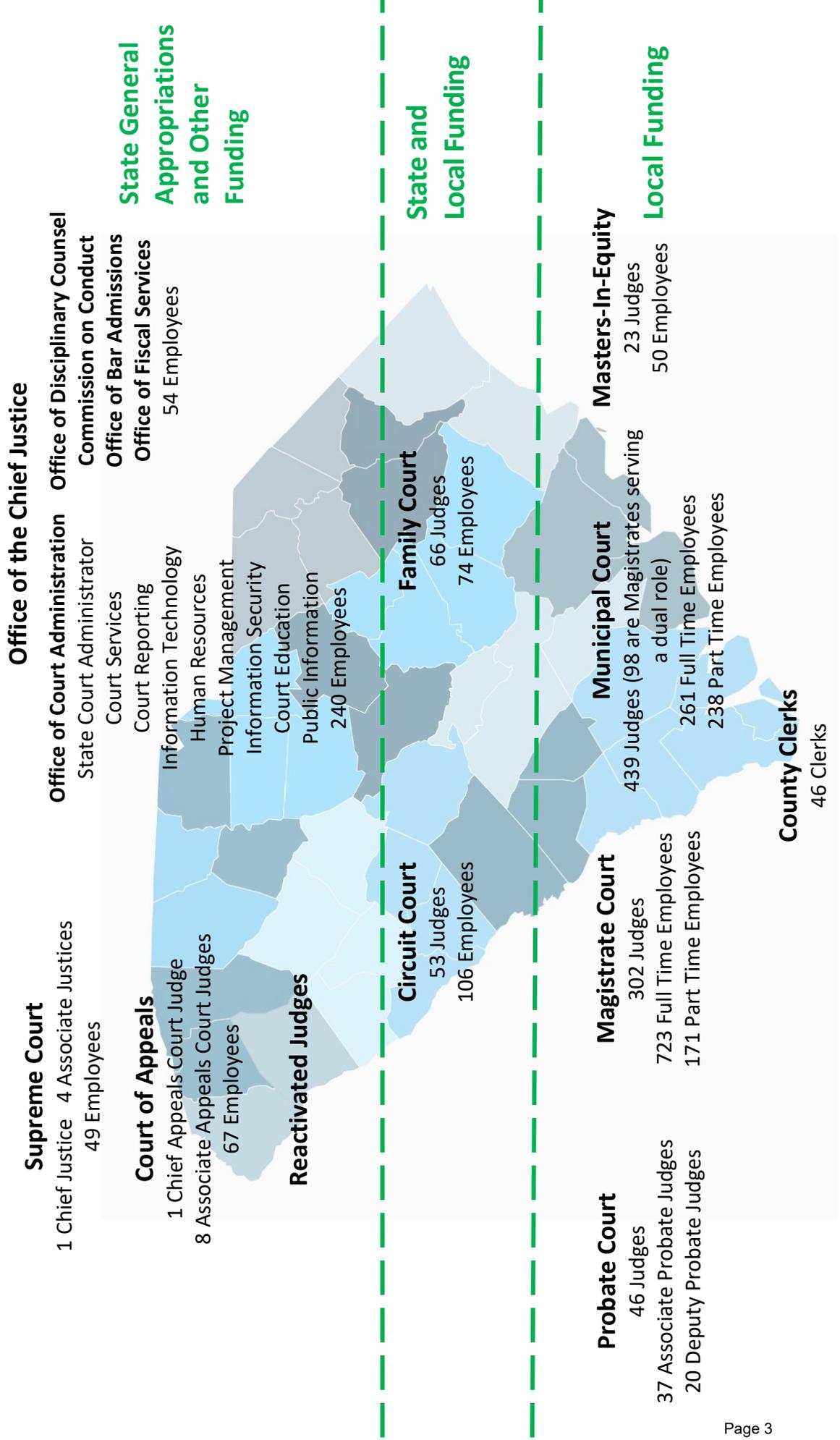
The Judicial Branch works constantly to provide a court system that not only is fair but is perceived as fair, in which all persons are treated equally and all matters are resolved in an unbiased and just manner according to the law as established by the United States Constitution, the Constitution of South Carolina, state statutes, and the common law.



**SOUTH CAROLINA
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

South Carolina Judicial Branch

The mission of the South Carolina Judicial Branch is to provide a fair and efficient forum for the just resolution of civil, family, and criminal matters.



South Carolina Judicial Branch FY26-27 Budget Request Summary

Recurring Funds:

Priority 1: Family Court Judge Salaries

Recurring - \$675,000

- In accordance with *S.C. Code Ann. § 14-1-200*, family court judges are paid less than circuit court judges. Family and circuit courts play an equal and vital role in the administration of justice in South Carolina and should have their salaries equalized.

Priority 2: Circuit Court Judges

Recurring - \$3,000,000

- Due to the increase in population and case filings in the fifth, sixth, tenth, and fifteenth circuits, the Judicial Branch is requesting four new circuit court judge positions. The Judicial Branch is requesting sixteen (16) FTEs for the additional judges and staff.

Priority 3: Court Staff Interpreters and Bar Exam Office Administrator

Recurring - \$0.00

- The Judicial Branch is requesting that five (5) interim State FTE positions for Court Staff Interpreters and one (1) interim other funded FTE position for the Bar Admissions Coordinator be made permanent. No funding is requested for the Court Staff Interpreters, as the recurring funding for these positions has been provided since FY2025.

Non-Recurring Funds:

Priority 4: Case Management System Modernization

Non- Recurring - \$20,000,000

- For the FY2026 budget, the Judicial Branch requested \$45 million to accomplish a unified case management modernization. I want to thank you for providing \$25 million towards this request. The Judicial Branch is asking for the remaining \$20 million to accomplish a unified case management system modernization.

Priority 5: Rural County Courthouse Stabilization Fund

Non- Recurring - \$19,750,000

- The Judicial Branch is asking for \$19.75 million to establish the Rural County Courthouse Stabilization Fund. The fund would provide financial assistance to rural counties for the renovation of county courthouses that are not operational or are at imminent risk of not becoming operational or secure for the public.

Proviso Request:

- Add new proviso related to budget request priority one, authorizing the Judicial Branch to pay family court judges ninety five percent of the salary fixed for Associate Justices of the Supreme Court.
- Delete Proviso 57.20 Calhoun and Supreme Court Building Office Space, funds have already been redirected so proviso is no longer needed

South Carolina Judicial Branch

Constitutional Subcommittee Proviso Request Summary FY26-27

Proviso # in FY 25 26 Act	Renumbered FY 26-27 Proviso #	Proviso Title	Short Summary	Agency Recommended Action (keep, change, delete, add)
57.1	57.1	Prohibit County Salary Supplements	Prohibits county salary supplements to Judicial Department personnel.	Keep
57.2	57.2	County Offices for Judges	Counties must provide Circuit and Family Court Judges an office with utilities. Also, provide an office with utilities to Supreme Court Justices and Court of Appeals Judges upon request.	Keep
57.3	57.3	Judicial Expense Allowance	Judges deemed full-time shall received \$1,500 per month as expense allowance.	Keep
57.4	57.4	Special Judge Compensation	No special judges shall be paid for more than a two-week term within a fiscal year, does not apply in cases of on-going trials.	Keep
57.5	57.5	BPI/Merit	Judicial Department employees shall receive base and merit pay as the same percentages granted to classified state employees.	Keep
57.6	57.6	Supreme Court Bar Admissions	The Judicial Department is authorized to receive, expend, retain, and carry forward funds collected from the Supreme Court Bar Admissions Office.	Keep
57.7	57.7	Travel Reimbursement	Judicial Department employees traveling on official business must be reimbursed according to Proviso 117.20(J).	Keep
57.8	57.8	Interpreters	Appropriations for interpreters must be expended for costs associated with appointed interpreters in judicial proceedings.	Keep
57.9	57.9	Reimbursement Receipt Deposit	The Department is authorized to retain funds collected for reproducing, printing, and distributing copies of court rules and other documents.	Keep
57.10	57.10	Surplus Property Disposal	Authorizes donation of surplus technology equipment directly to counties for court-related purposes.	Keep
57.11	57.11	Judicial Carry Forward	The Judicial Department is authorized to carry forward unexpended funds.	Keep
57.12	57.12	Case Management Services	The Judicial Department is authorized to collect/retain revenue from fees for support services for the Case Management System.	Keep
57.13	57.13	Magistrates' training	The Judicial Department shall provide annual magistrates training on domestic violence.	Keep
57.14	57.14	Judges Salary Exemption	Prohibits judges' salary and related employer contributions from across-the-board reductions.	Keep
57.15	57.15	Judicial Department Applicability	Acknowledges, as the third branch of government, the Judicial Department is not required to respond to mandates or provisions that do not specify "South Carolina Judicial Department".	Keep
57.16	57.16	Court Costs Carry Forward	The Judicial Department is authorized to collect/retain funds collected from costs related to court proceedings under SC Appellate Court Rules 413 or 502.	Keep
57.17	57.17	Appellate Court Fee	The Judicial Department is authorized to retain funds collected by the SC Appellate Court Rules.	Keep
57.18	57.18	Interpreter Training and Certification	The Judicial Department is authorized to receive, expend, retain, and carry forward funds collected for interpreter training and certification tests.	Keep
57.20	57.19	Travel Court	Upon approval of the Chief Justice, Supreme Court Justices and Judges of the Court of Appeals or any Acting Justice on the Supreme Court or Acting Judge of the Court of Appeals may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred for traveling term of court held outside of Richland County.	Keep

57.21	57.20	Calhoun and Supreme Court Building Office Space Renovations	Request to change authority for FY23 non-recurring award, removing Court of Appeals new courtroom from the purpose, and modifying office space to include the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court Building.	Delete
57.23	57.21	Reactivated Judge Program	In the current fiscal year, the provisions of Section 9-8-120(3) of the South Carolina Code requiring a retired judge or justice to serve without pay until service of three or more consecutive months of full judicial duties as an acting a justice or as a judge prior to receiving the difference between retirement payment and active pay are suspended. Upon approval of the Chief Justice, a retired judge or justice shall receive \$400 a day for full judicial duties.	Keep
57.24	57.22	Chief Administrative Judge Allowance	Authorize \$1,000 administrative allowance for Chief Administrative judges.	Keep
	57.23	Family Court Judges	Notwithstanding provisions of <i>S.C. Code Ann. § 14-1-200</i> , the South Carolina Judicial Department is authorized to pay family court judges ninety-five percent of the salary fixed for Associate Justices of the Supreme Court.	ADD

**SC Judicial Branch
FY2026 Budget vs Actual
Recurring Authorization for All Fund Types Plus Statewide Carryforward Appropriation**

Fund Class	Commitment Item	Description	Budget	FY26 Expenditures	Budget Remaining
			Authorization	Projected	
State	501002	Chief Justice	245,286.00	245,286.00	-
State	501041	Associate Justice	934,424.00	934,424.00	-
State	501042	Chief Appeals Ct Judge	231,269.00	231,269.00	-
State	501043	Associate Appeals Ct Judge	1,822,120.00	1,822,120.00	-
State	501044	Circuit Ct Judge	11,762,025.00	11,318,173.00	443,852.00
State	501045	Family Ct Judge	14,260,610.00	13,198,373.00	1,062,237.00
State	561000	Reactivated Judge	1,506,000.00	474,784.00	1,031,216.00
State	561000	FCCMS	3,000,000.00	1,200,000.00	1,800,000.00
State	501050	Taxable Subsistence	965,000.00	819,152.00	145,848.00
State	501060	Unclassified Positions	33,920,319.35	31,046,750.00	2,873,569.35
State	501070	Other Personnel Svc	218,836.00	218,836.00	-
State	513000	Employer Contributions	34,309,346.00	33,965,476.00	343,870.00
State	512001	Other Operating	15,820,112.00	12,582,475.00	3,237,637.00
State	561000	Statewide Carryforward	19,408,668.16	-	19,408,668.16
State Total			138,404,015.51	108,057,118.00	30,346,897.51
Other	501060	Unclassified Positions	5,790,731.76	4,514,125.00	1,276,606.76
Other	501070	Other Personnel Svc	169,268.24	85,514.00	83,754.24
Other	512001	Other Operating	6,890,300.00	1,176,672.00	5,713,628.00
Other	513000	Employer Contributions	2,625,000.00	2,114,283.00	510,717.00
Other	561000	Other Operating	3,000,000.00	486,341.00	2,513,659.00
Other Total			18,475,300.00	8,376,935.00	10,098,365.00
Federal	512001	Other Operating	617,993.00	578,283.00	39,710.00
Federal Total			617,993.00	578,283.00	39,710.00
Total Recurring All Fund Types			157,497,308.51	117,012,336.00	40,484,972.51

**SC Judicial Branch
FY2025 Budget vs Actual
Recurring Authorization for All Fund Types Plus Statewide Carryforward Appropriation**

Fund Class	Commitment Item	Description	Budget Authorization	FY25 Expenditures Actual	Budget Remaining
State	501002	Chief Justice	240,477.00	240,476.88	0.12
State	501041	Associate Justice	916,104.00	916,104.00	-
State	501042	Chief Appeals Ct Judge	226,736.00	226,734.96	1.04
State	501043	Associate Appeals Ct Judge	1,786,398.00	1,669,321.37	117,076.63
State	501044	Circuit Ct Judge	11,531,422.00	10,758,618.27	772,803.73
State	501045	Family Ct Judge	13,346,487.00	12,895,194.92	451,292.08
State	561000	Reactivated Judge	500,000.00	181,551.64	318,448.36
State	501050	Taxable Subsistence	1,045,000.00	974,393.91	70,606.09
State	501060	Unclassified Positions	29,043,774.74	28,224,565.37	819,209.37
State	501070	Other Personnel Svc	734,021.26	723,784.95	10,236.31
State	513000	Employer Contributions	33,754,664.00	33,653,638.05	101,025.95
State	512001	Other Operating	14,822,000.00	12,556,341.31	2,265,658.69
State	561000	Statewide Carryforward	17,503,757.14	-	17,503,757.14
State Total			125,450,841.14	103,020,725.63	22,430,115.51
Other	501060	Unclassified Positions	8,608,476.88	3,976,918.70	4,631,558.18
Other	501070	Other Personnel Svc	300,309.05	169,269.03	131,040.02
Other	512001	Other Operating	6,656,829.00	1,588,339.04	5,068,489.96
Other	513000	Employer Contributions	3,556,385.07	1,776,171.26	1,780,213.81
Other	561000	Other Operating	3,001,000.00	-	3,001,000.00
Other Total			22,123,000.00	7,510,698.03	14,612,301.97
Federal	512001	Other Operating	835,393.00	570,183.07	265,209.93
Federal Total			835,393.00	570,183.07	265,209.93
Total Recurring All Fund Types			148,409,234.14	111,101,606.73	37,307,627.41

SC Judicial Branch
FY 25 Carry Forward Summary

Fund State	Title	Description	Ending FY 25 Cash 6/30/25
1001	General Appropriations Recurring General Appropriations	Recurring Appropriations	22,430,115.51
		Total Recurring Appropriations	22,430,115.51
Other	Fines and Fees Committed for General Operations and Special Projects		
3086	Circuit Crt-Filing Fee	Committed for personal services/fringe	2,468,211.33
3733	Magistrate Crt-Filing Fee	Committed for operating expenses, renovations, special projects	2,011,870.63
39C7	Law Enforcement Surcharge	Committed for operating expenses, renovations, special projects	1,497,860.63
			5,977,942.59
Other	Restricted by Statute or Committed for Special Purpose		
3035	Operating Revenue	Miscellaneous Revenue, Bar Exam Operations, Receiver/Commission Operations	2,182,222.42
3037	Special Deposits	Restricted for Office of Disciplinary Counsel, Receiver, and IT Operations	9,498,178.48
3352	Case Management-Operations	Restricted for operations of current Case Management System	14,060,835.69
3275	Judicial Development	Committed by Chief Justice Kittredge for CMS Modernization project	34,717,630.74
3275	Judicial Development	Committed by Chief Justice Kittredge for Building Renovations	9,000,000.00
3958	Sale of Assets	Committed for replacement of office equipment	4,246.21
		Total Special Purpose	69,463,113.54
1001	Non-Recurring Carryforwards		
3634	Non-Recurring General Fund	Restricted for CMS Modernization	21,000,000.00
1001	Capital Reserve	Restricted for CMS Modernization	4,424,025.07
1001	Non-Recurring General Fund	Restricted for Digital Court Reporter Project	1,282,679.24
1001	Non-Recurring General Fund	Restricted for Hybrid Virtual Court Program	6,290,572.33
1005	Non-Recurring General Fund	Restricted COA renovations	1,641,410.00
1005	Non-Recurring General Fund	Restricted for Legal Fees	4,910,241.37
3634	Capital Reserve	Restricted for E-filing development	1,595,797.29
3634	Capital Reserve	Restricted for Disaster Recovery Project	1,085,910.87
		Total Non-Recurring Carryforwards	42,230,636.17
Federal	State Court Improvement Grant	Restricted for State Court Improvement Grant	(6,765.00)
		Total Federal	(6,765.00)
		Total SCJB Carry Forward Balances	140,095,042.81

Rural County Courthouse Stabilization Fund-

Bamberg County Courthouse



