

**South Carolina Judicial Branch  
Regarding FY 21-22**

**Constitutional Subcommittee  
House Ways and Means**

**Key Officials Attending Meeting:**

Representative Bruce Bannister, Chairman

Representative Chip Huggins

Representative Joe Daning

Blythe Littlefield, Budget Analyst

Donald W. Beatty, Chief Justice, South Carolina Supreme Court (734-1090)  
[dbeatty@sccourts.org](mailto:dbeatty@sccourts.org)

Tonnya K. Kohn, State Court Administrator, South Carolina Judicial Branch  
(734-1802) [tkohn@sccourts.org](mailto:tkohn@sccourts.org)

Paul J. Magargle, Jr, Director, Office of Fiscal Services (734-0642)  
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## **Tab 2 - Judicial Budget Summary**

# South Carolina Judicial Branch

## Mission

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

## Overview

The Judicial Branch is one of three branches of government that is responsible for providing a core government function to the citizens of South Carolina. Per South Carolina Constitution Article V, the Judicial Branch oversees the unified court system of South Carolina which is comprised of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Circuit Courts, Family Courts, Master-in-Equity Courts, Probate Courts, Magistrates Courts and Municipal Courts. The Judicial Branch is responsible for administrative functions of the Appellate, Circuit, and Family Courts.

## Budget Priorities

### Priority 1: **Court Position Funding**

Recurring – \$14,000,000

Appropriate general funds for 168 Judicial Branch employees' salaries.

- Previous state budget reductions compelled us to fund salaries and employer contributions with court fines and fees so as to avoid furloughs or reductions in force.
- These front-line employees provide essential services in courtrooms throughout the state. Many of these positions are statutorily mandated.
- Court fines and fees are an unstable source of revenue. COVID-19 has severely affected court fines and fees collections. At the close FY 20, SCJB incurred a loss of \$838,000 of fines and fees dollars. We are projecting a loss of \$2.963 million for FY 21. This represents a combined loss of \$3,801,000. Current projections anticipate loss to continue into FY22.
- As these employees provide essential state services, their jobs should therefore be sustained by state-appropriated funds.

### Priority 2: **Hybrid (Virtual) Courtroom Project**

Non-Recurring – \$7,600,000

Fund hybrid (virtual) courtroom solution for 95 courtrooms.

- As the state and nation continue to battle the ongoing health crisis, SCJB has developed a secure, easy to use, and cost effective technical solution to assist the courts in ensuring court proceedings continue in spite of closures and social distance guidelines.
- SCJB has created a new hybrid (virtual) courtroom solution that will enable simultaneous in-person and remote participation through built in video conferencing, streaming, screen sharing, audio/video recording, and annotation capabilities.
- Funding will provide internet connection, supporting equipment, infrastructure/security, and equipment for court staff operating the hybrid (virtual) courtroom.

## South Carolina Judicial Branch

### Priority 3: **Digital Court Reporter Project**

Recurring – \$500,000

Appropriate general fund appropriations to support recurring costs to support Digital Court Reporter Project.

- Funding to provide managed solutions, support, maintenance, storage, web/cloud technology, and equipment refresh required for Digital Court Reporter Project.

### Priority 4: **Digital Court Reporter Project**

Non-Recurring – \$1,400,000

Fund the Judicial Branch's expansion of Digital Court Reporter Project to 59 courtrooms statewide.

- Like jurisdictions nationwide, we have struggled to maintain a court reporter workforce sufficient to keep our family and circuit courts operating at full capacity.
- We cannot attract enough qualified traditional court reporters to replace those who are reaching retirement age.
- By the end of 2020, we have successfully installed digital court reporting in 31 courtrooms around the state to supplement our traditional court reporting workforce. We have worked with state technical colleges to develop a digital court reporting education program to ensure we can staff this program going forward.
- The additional funds will permit us to acquire equipment, better manage court records and information, and enhance the reliability of stored data.
- Failure to continue to supplement the dire traditional court reporter shortage will result in an ever-increasing need to cancel family and circuit court terms of court.

### Priority 5: **Case Management System (CMS) Modernization**

Non-Recurring – \$10,000,000

Fulfill the Judicial Branch's remaining funding needs to modernize online case management.

- We provide an online Case Management System (CMS) to the trial courts in South Carolina.
- Trial courts, county clerks, attorneys, the general public, and law enforcement agencies rely on CMS for time-sensitive, critical information.
- The extent to which these individuals, entities, and agencies depend upon CMS in their mission-critical daily operations cannot be overstated.
- Our CMS application is based on an antiquated application design model that is rapidly approaching the end of its life cycle.
- We received \$7 million from Capital Reserves for the CMS modernization project in 2018-2019 and an additional \$11 million from State Supplemental Non-Recurring Appropriations in 2019-2020.

## South Carolina Judicial Branch

- Vendors have responded to an RFP for a new statewide CMS. Including vendor-estimated labor costs, all vendor estimates exceeded the original projected \$20 million.
- We request an additional \$10 million so that we may select the most cost-effective solution to serve South Carolina’s trial courts, legal community, public users, and law enforcement.

Priority 6: **Judicial Council**

Recurring – \$200,000

Recurring appropriations requested for operations of the Judicial Council

- Council members’ duties include to study, survey, report, investigate, and make recommendations towards the improvement of the administration of justice in South Carolina.
- Funds are to be provided by General Assembly for operations of the council per S.C Code of Laws 14-27-60.

Total Recurring – \$14,700,000

Total Non-Recurring – \$19,000,000

Total Request - \$33,700,000

**Tab 3 - Accountability Report-  
NA to Judicial Branch**

**Tab 4 - Budget Request Summary  
Priority Order**

FY 21-22 Budget Priorities Summary

Judicial Branch

| Budget Priorities |   | Funding   |  |            |                 |       |         |            |        |          |         | FTEs  |  |  |
|-------------------|---|---|--|------------|-----------------|-------|---------|------------|--------|----------|---------|-------|--|--|
| Priority No.      | Priority Type (recurring / non-recurring / other funds adjustment / federal funds adjustment) | Priority Title  | Priority Description   | Recurring  | Non - Recurring | Other | Federal | Total      | State  | Other    | Federal | Total |  |  |
| 1                 | B1 - Recurring  | Court Positions and Administrative Support  | Request restorations of general appropriations of 168 FTEs for statutorily mandated positions and other administrative staff that support the state judicial system.   | 14,000,000 | -               | -     | -       | 14,000,000 | 168.00 | (168.00) | -       | -     |  |  |
| 2                 | B2 - Non-Recurring  | Hybrid (Virtual) Courtroom Project  | Request non-recurring appropriation to outfit 95 courtrooms to hybrid (virtual) courtroom solution that will enable simultaneous in person and remote participation in court proceedings.                                      | -          | 7,600,000       | -     | -       | 7,600,000  | -      | -        | -       | -     |  |  |
| 3                 | B1 - Recurring  | Digital Court Room Reporter Project (DCRP)  | Funds requested to support recurring costs for managed solutions, support, and maintenance of the Digital Court Reporter Project.  | 500,000    | -               | -     | -       | 500,000    | -      | -        | -       | -     |  |  |
| 4                 | B2 - Non-Recurring  | Digital Court Room Reporter Project (DCRP)  | Request non-recurring appropriations to fund the remaining equipment necessary to expand to Digital Court Reporter Project to 59 courtrooms statewide.   | -          | 1,400,000       | -     | -       | 1,400,000  | -      | -        | -       | -     |  |  |
| 5                 | B2 - Non-Recurring  | Case Management System Modernization  | Request non-recurring appropriations for modernization project.  | -          | 10,000,000      | -     | -       | 10,000,000 | -      | -        | -       | -     |  |  |
| 6                 | B1 - Recurring  | Judicial Council  | Request funding for mandated per diem, subsistence and mileage for members of the council per S.C. Code 14-27-60, and other projects established for the improvement of the administration of justice per S.C. Code 14-27-100. | 200,000    | -               | -     | -       | 200,000    | -      | -        | -       | -     |  |  |
| 7                 | B1 - Recurring  | Information Technology Project Systems Manager and Systems Programmer/Developer III | Request 3.00 other funded FTE positions created in interim in FY20 to be made permanent.   | -          | -               | -     | -       | -          | -      | 3.00     | -       | 3.00  |  |  |
| TOTALS            |   |   |  | 14,700,000 | 19,000,000      | -     | -       | 33,700,000 | 168.00 | (165.00) | -       | 3.00  |  |  |



## **Tab 5 - Mitigating Costs**

## **Mitigating Costs**

The Judicial Branch (Branch) has been forced to take actions to mitigate costs not only because we are operating under a continuing resolution and no additional funds were awarded, but the Branch is addressing budget reductions due to loss revenue in FY2020 and FY2021, as well. Due to COVID-19, the Branch experienced a reduction of \$838,000 in fines and fees in FY2020. We are estimating a reduction of \$2,963,000 in fines and fees in FY2021; resulting in a combined loss of \$3,801,000. Based on current conditions, reduced collections in fines and fees may continue into FY2022. In order to mitigate costs due to revenue losses, the Judicial Branch has limited hiring to essential positions and limited travel for the Justices, Judges, and the Administrative staff.

**Tab 6 - Proviso  
Request Summary**

**Constitutional Subcommittee Proviso Request Summary FY 2021-2022**

| <b>Proviso # in FY 20-21 Act</b> | <b>Renumbered FY 20-21 Proviso #</b> | <b>Proviso Title</b>               | <b>Short Summary</b>   | <b>Agency Recommended Action (keep, change, delete, add)</b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| 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   |
| 57.5                             | 57.3                                 | Judicial Expense Allowance         | Judges deemed full-time shall received \$1,000 per month as expense allowance.   | Keep   |
| 57.6                             | 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   |
| 57.7                             | 57.5                                 | BPI/Merit                          | Judicial Department employees shall receive base and merit pay as the same percentages granted to classified state employees.  | Keep   |
| 57.8                             | 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   |
| 57.9                             | 57.7                                 | Travel Reimbursement               | Judicial Department employees traveling on official business must be reimbursed according to Proviso 117.20(J).  | Keep   |
| 57.10                            | 57.8                                 | Interpreters                       | Appropriations for interpreters must be expended for costs associated with appointed interpreters in judicial proceedings.   | Keep   |
| 57.11                            | 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   |
| 57.12                            | 57.10                                | Surplus Property Disposal          | Authorizes donation of surplus technology equipment directly to counties for court-related purposes.   | Keep   |
| 57.13                            | 57.11                                | Judicial Carry Forward             | The Judicial Department is authorized to carry forward unexpended funds.   | Keep   |
| 57.14                            | 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   |
| 57.15                            | 57.13                                | Magistrate's training              | The Judicial Department shall provide annual magistrates training on domestic violence.  | Keep   |
| 57.16                            | 57.14                                | Judges' Salary Exemption           | Prohibits judges' salary and related employer contributions from across-the-board reductions.  | Keep   |
| 57.17                            | 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   |

|       |       |  |  |      |
|-------|-------|--|--|------|
| 57.18 | 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 |
| 57.19 | 57.17 | Appellate Court Fee                    | The Judicial Department is authorized to retain funds collected by the SC Appellate Court Rules.   | Keep |
| 57.20 | 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 |

## **Tab 7 - Judicial Provisos**

**Judicial Branch**  
**2021-2022 Part IB Provisos**

**Section 57- B040**

**57.1.** (JUD: Prohibit County Salary Supplements) County salary supplements of Judicial Department personnel shall be prohibited.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.2.** (JUD: County Offices For Judges) Every county shall provide for each circuit and family judge residing therein an office with all utilities including a private telephone, and shall provide the same for Supreme Court Justices and Judges of the Court of Appeals upon their request.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.3.** (JUD: Judicial Expense Allowance) Each Supreme Court Justice, Court of Appeals Judge, Family Court Judge and Circuit Court Judge and any retired judge who receives payment for performing full-time judicial duties pursuant to Section 9-8-120 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, shall receive one thousand dollars per month as expense allowance.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.4.** (JUD: Special Judge Compensation) In the payment of funds from "Contractual Services", and "Administrative Fund", that no special judge shall be paid for more than a two week term within a fiscal year except that this restriction will not apply in case of an ongoing trial.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.5.** (JUD: BPI/Merit) Judicial employees shall receive base and average merit pay in the same percentages as such pay are granted to classified state employees.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.6.** (JUD: Supreme Court Bar Admissions) Any funds collected from the Supreme Court Bar Admissions Office may be deposited into an escrow account with the State Treasurer's Office. The department is authorized to receive, expend, retain, and carry forward these funds.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.7.** (JUD: Travel Reimbursement) State employees of the Judicial Department traveling on official state business must be reimbursed in accordance with Section 117.20(J) of this act.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**Judicial Branch**  
**2021-2022 Part IB Provisos**

**57.8** (JUD: Interpreters) The funds appropriated in this section for "Interpreters" shall be used to offset costs associated with interpreters appointed in judicial proceedings under Sections 17-1-50, 15-27-155, and 15-27-15. The selection, use, and reimbursement of interpreters shall be determined under such guidelines as may be established by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.9.** (JUD: Reimbursement Receipt Deposit) Amounts received as payment for reproducing, printing, and distributing copies of court rules and other department documents shall be retained for use by the department.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.10.** (JUD: Surplus Property Disposal) Technology equipment that has been declared surplus may be donated directly to counties for use in court-related activities.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.11.** (JUD: Judicial Carry Forward) In addition to the funds appropriated in this section, the funds appropriated for the Judicial Department in the prior fiscal year which are not expended during that fiscal year may be carried forward to be expended in the current fiscal year.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.12.** (JUD: Case Management Services) The Judicial Department shall retain revenue generated by charging a fee for technology support services provided to users of the State case management system. These funds may be expended and carried forward to offset the costs of supporting and maintaining the case management system.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.13.** (JUD: Magistrates' Training) From the funds appropriated to the Judicial Department, the department shall provide magistrates annual continuing education on domestic violence, which may include, but is not limited to:

- (1) the nature, extent, and causes of domestic and family violence;
- (2) issues of domestic and family violence concerning children;
- (3) prevention of the use of violence by children;
- (4) sensitivity to gender bias and cultural, racial, and sexual issues;
- (5) the lethality of domestic and family violence;
- (6) legal issues relating to domestic violence and child custody;
- (7) procedures, penalties, programs, and other issues relating to criminal domestic



**Judicial Branch**  
**2021-2022 Part IB Provisos**

violence, including social and psychological issues relating to such violence, the vulnerability of victims and volatility of perpetrators, and the court's role in ensuring that the parties have appropriate and adequate representation;

(8) procedures and other matters relating to issuing orders of protection from domestic violence.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.14.** (JUD: Judges' Salary Exemption) For the current fiscal year, judges' salaries and related employer contributions in Part IA, Section 57, are exempt from mid-year across-the-board reductions.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.15.** (JUD: Judicial Department Applicability) For purposes of this act and any other provision of law that would have any effect on the expenditure of state revenue through the applicability of the particular provision or through compliance with a mandate or requirement of the provision, the terms "state agency" or "agency" do not include any component of the Judicial Department unless the provision of law specifically includes these entities and the inclusion only applies for purposes of the particular provision.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.16.** (JUD: Court Costs Carry Forward) The Judicial Department shall retain the funds collected from costs related to court proceedings (including the cost of hearings, investigations, prosecution, service of process and court reporter services) under Rules 413 or 502 of the SC Appellate Court Rules, or from costs related to the appointment of a receiver or an attorney to assist the receiver under Rule 413, that are assessed against a party. The department is authorized to receive, expend, retain, and carry forward these funds which shall be used for the same purpose.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.17.** (JUD: Appellate Court Fee) The Judicial Department shall retain the funds collected as required by the SC Appellate Court Rules. The department is authorized to receive, expend, retain, and carry forward these funds which shall be used by the department.

**Action Requested: Keep**

**57.18.** (JUD: Interpreter Training and Certification) The Judicial Department shall collect and retain funds received from applicants for interpreter training and certification tests. These funds shall be used to offset expenses incurred for the SC Court Interpreter Certification

**Judicial Branch**  
**2021-2022 Part IB Provisos**

Program. The department is authorized to receive, expend, retain, and carry forward these funds.

**Action Requested: Keep**

## **Tab 8 - Judicial Cash Carryforward**

SC Judicial Branch  
FY20 Cash Carryforward Summary

| Title   | Description   | Amount                  |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| General Fund  | Recurring Appropriations  | \$ -                    |
| <b>Fines and Fees Committed for General Operations and Special Projects</b> |   |                         |
| Circuit Crt-Filing Fee  | Committed for personal services/fringe  | \$ 1,094,113.80         |
| Magistrate Crt-Filing Fee   | Committed for operating expenses  | \$ 5,150,863.67         |
| Law Enforcement Surcharge   | Committed for operating expenses  | \$ 3,308,438.04         |
|   | <b>Total Cash Balance for General Operations</b>  | <b>\$ 9,553,415.51</b>  |
| <b>Restricted, Committed, and Obligated for Special Purposes</b>            |   |                         |
| Operating Revenue   | Miscellaneous Revenue, Bar Exam Operations, Receiver/Commission Operations                                | \$ 1,142,873.43         |
| Special Deposits  | Restricted for Office of Disciplinary Counsel, Receiver, and IT Operations                                | \$ 4,004,950.65         |
| Judicial Development  | Restricted for approved projects  | \$ 6,938,359.77         |
| Case Management   | Committed for general operations of Case Management System  | \$ 7,400,756.60         |
| Sale of Assets  | Restricted to replace office equipment  | \$ 2,030.36             |
| Capital Reserve Fund  | Restricted for Capital Reserve Projects: Disaster Recovery, E-Filing, Bldg Renovations, CMS Modernization | \$ 12,868,470.67        |
|   | <b>Total Cash Balance for Restricted/Special Purposes</b>   | <b>\$ 32,357,441.48</b> |
|   | <b>Total SCJB Cash Balance</b>  | <b>\$ 41,910,856.99</b> |

## **Tab 9 - FTE Count**

**2021 FTE Count  
as of 12/22/2020**

| <b>Program</b> | <b>Program</b>                    | <b>Functional Area</b> | <b>Funding</b> | <b>Filled</b> | <b>Vacant</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 01010000       | Supreme Ct                        | B040_0004              | State          | 41            | 11            | 52           |
| 01010000       | Supreme Ct                        | B040_0004              | Other          |               |               |              |
| 01050000       | Board of Law of Examiners         | B040_0005              | Other          | 5             |               | 5            |
| 01200000       | Office of Disciplinary Counsel    | B040_0015              | Other          | 12            | 2             | 14           |
| 01250000       | Commission on Conduct             | B040_0029              | Other          | 8             |               | 8            |
| 03000000       | Court of Appeals                  | B040_0011              | State          | 69            |               | 69           |
| 03000000       | Court of Appeals                  | B040_0011              | Other          | 2             |               | 2            |
| 05000000       | Circuit Court                     | B040_0006              | State          | 151           | 15            | 166          |
| 05000000       | Circuit Court                     | B040_0006              | Other          | 30            | 10            | 40           |
| 10000000       | Family Court                      | B040_0007              | State          | 161           | 5             | 166          |
| 10000000       | Family Court                      | B040_0007              | Other          | 16            | 1             | 17           |
| 15000000       | Court Administration              | B040_0008              | Other          | 21            | 6             | 27           |
| 15000000       | Court Administration              | B040_0008              | State          | 1             |               | 1            |
|                | Court Administration (Judges Sch) | B040X0012              | State          | 1             |               | 1            |
| 15300000       | Finance and Personnel             | B040_0010              | Other          | 18            | 3             | 21           |
| 15300000       | Finance and Personnel             | B040_0010              | State          | 2             |               | 2            |
| 15400000       | Information Tech                  | B040_0016              | Other          | 30            | 11            | 41           |
| 15400000       | Information Tech                  | B040_0016              | State          | 2             |               | 2            |
|                | Information Tech (CMS)            | B040X0019              | Other          | 7             | 2             | 9            |
|                |                                   |                        |                | <b>Filled</b> | <b>Vacant</b> | <b>FTEs</b>  |
|                |                                   |                        | State          | 428           | 31            | 459          |
|                |                                   |                        | Other          | <u>149</u>    | <u>35</u>     | <u>184</u>   |
|                |                                   |                        | Total FTE      | 577           | 66            | 643          |

## **Tab 10 - Other Information**



# South Carolina Judicial Branch

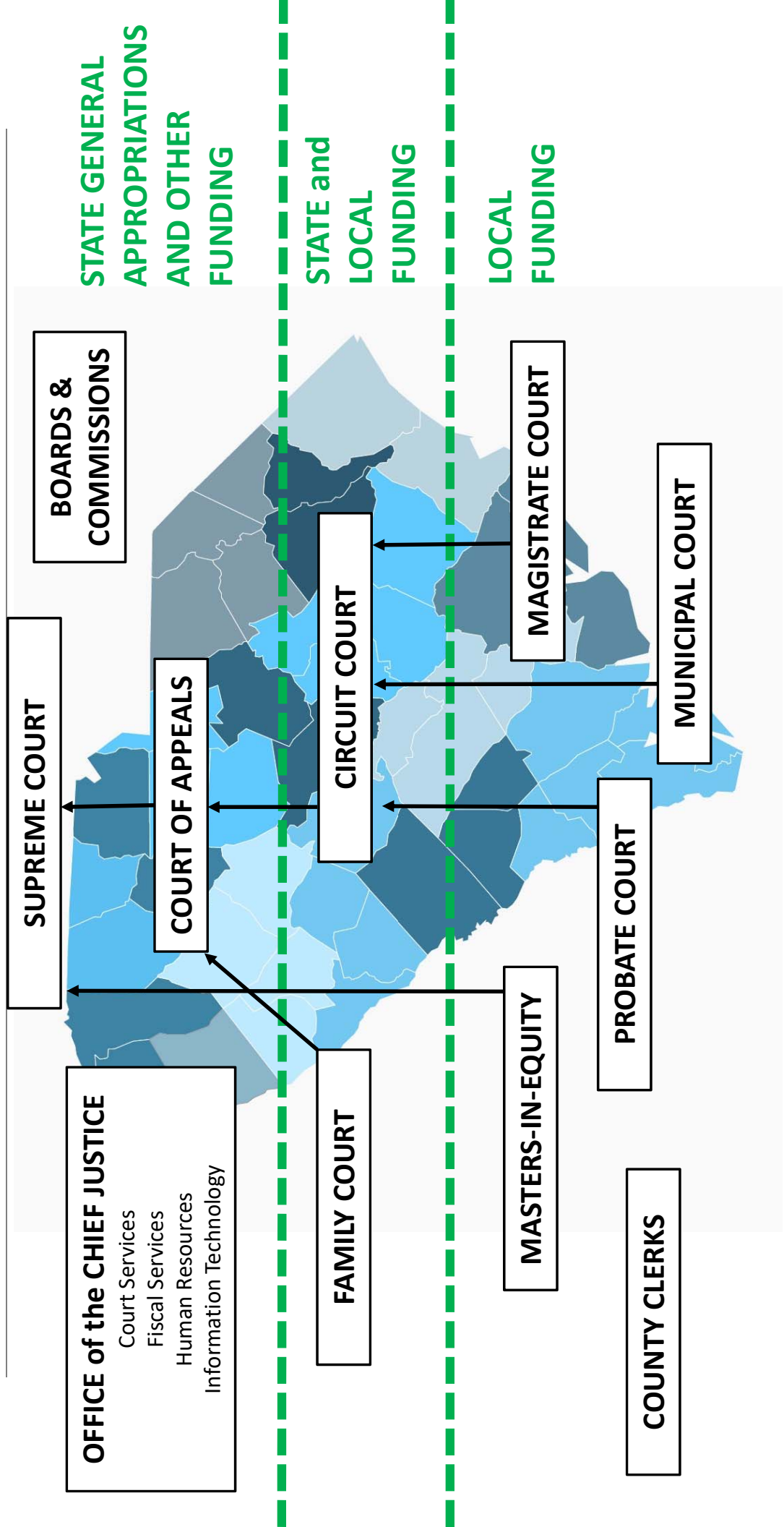
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January 6, 2021



# 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.



# SCJB Programs and Accomplishments

## • **Courtroom Video Conferencing**

- To help trial courts continue with hearings during COVID-19, we implemented video conferencing for Family and Circuit Courts. Since April 2020, these courts have held more than 18,000 video hearings via Webex technology. We have found that video conferencing works effectively, and we will continue using this tool going forward. We intend to request funding to assist the efforts of courts in rural areas to hold hearings via video conferencing.

## • **Digital Court Reporter Project\***

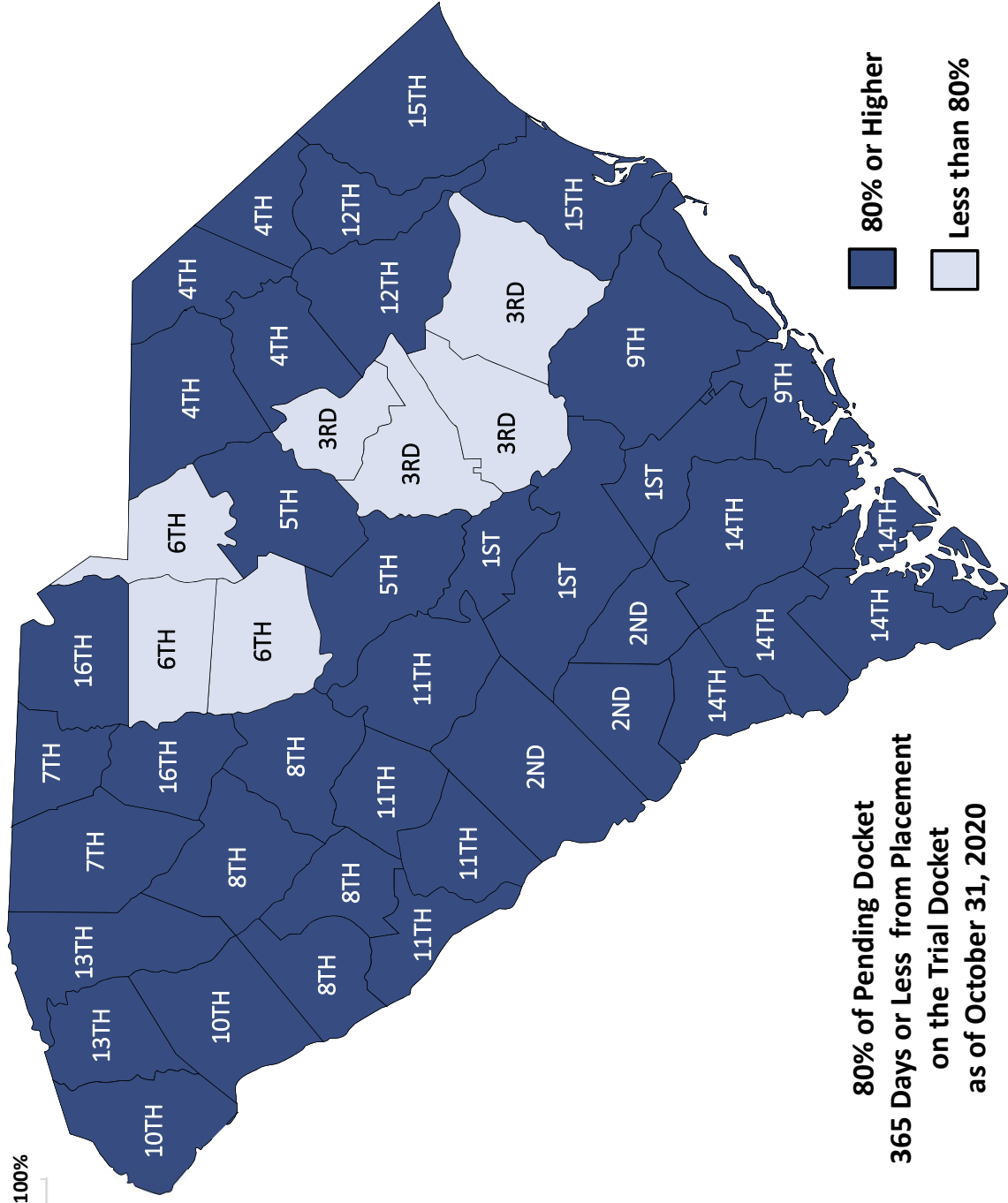
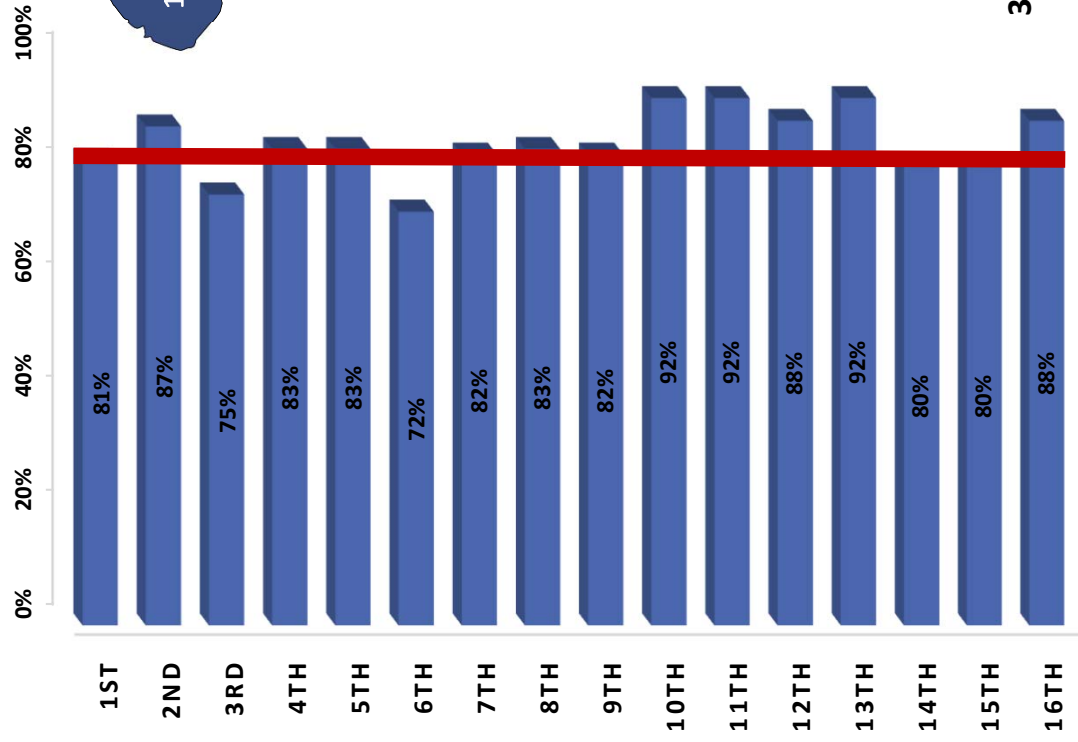
- Over the past decade, many court reporters reaching retirement age and a decrease in training programs has led to staffing concerns. SCJB has focused on making sure the record continues to be captured during court proceedings. We have expanded our methods to include not only stenography and voice writing, but also digital court reporting. We have partnered with Horry Georgetown Technical College to develop the Digital Court Reporter Program, which successfully produces certified digital court reporters who go on to work in South Carolina courts. Additionally, some of our stenography and voice writing court reporters have become certified in digital court reporting. Our staff that captures the record, which includes staff to support the digital court reporting program, has increased by 13 percent since 2018. Today, with that increase and a significant number of our court reporters being able to capture the record using more than one method, we are able to ensure that all scheduled terms of court may proceed and that the record of those proceedings is captured. As of December 2020, digital court reporting has been implemented in 31 South Carolina courtrooms.

## • **Case Management System Modernization\***

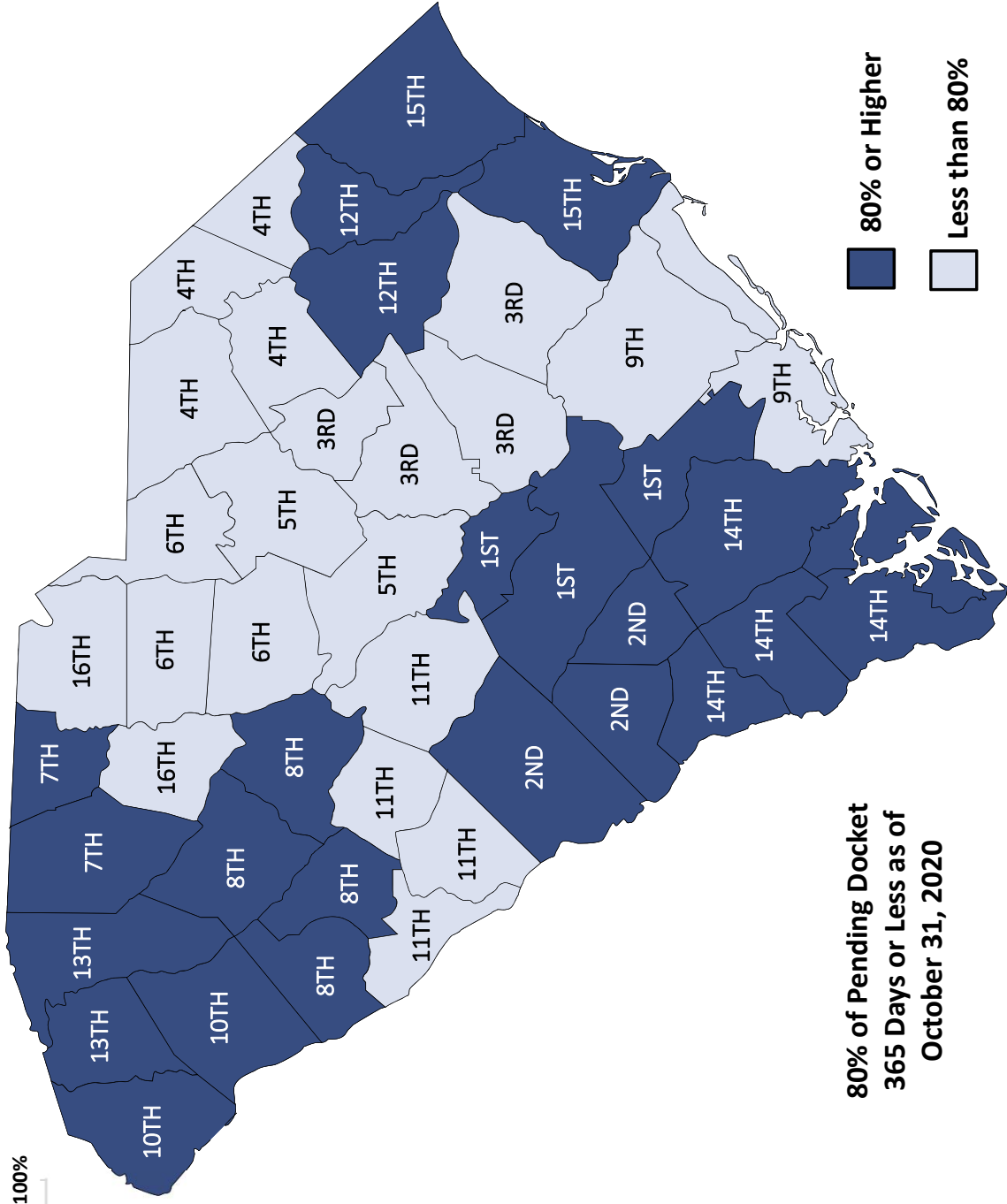
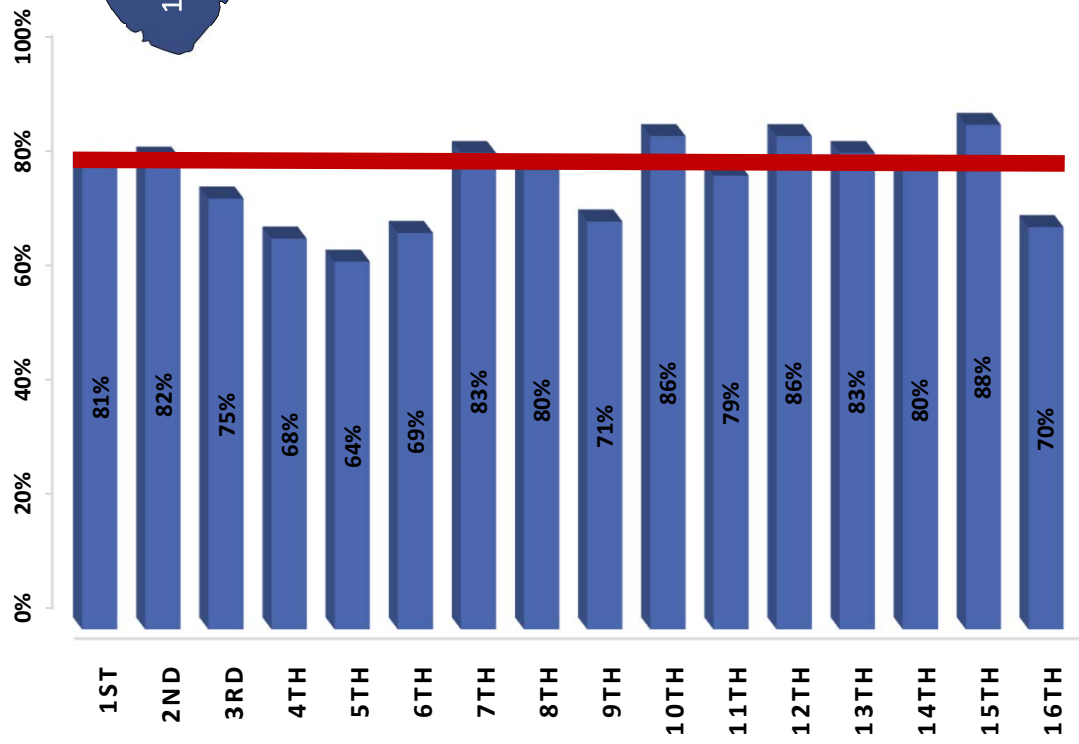
- The Judicial Branch has undergone a comprehensive review of the court system's case management system needs. In the coming years, we will be deploying a new case management system with improved functionality and enhanced features.

\* Funding provided by nonrecurring appropriations

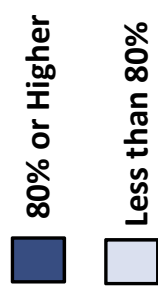
# South Carolina / Common Pleas Court Circuits Meeting Benchmark



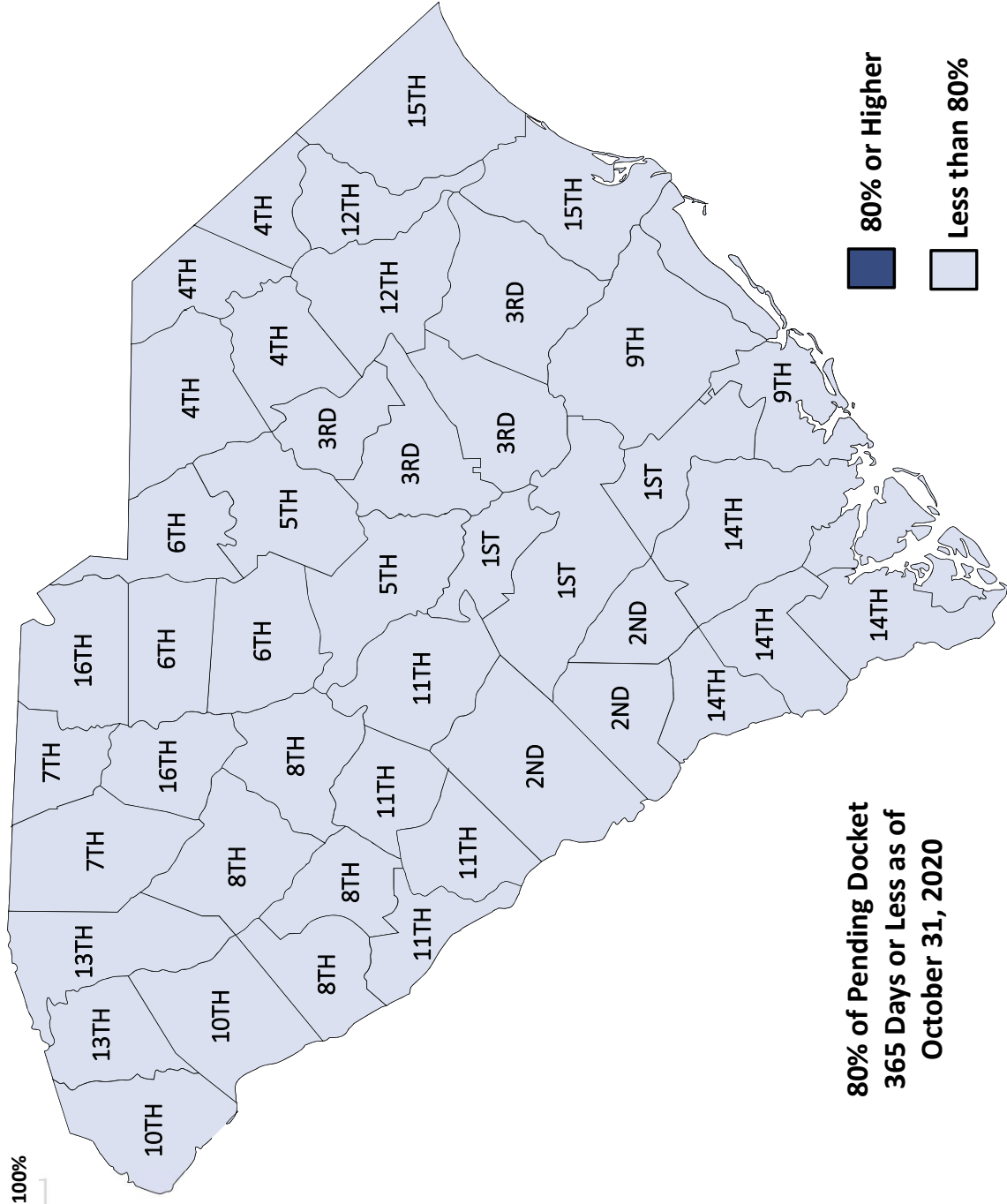
# South Carolina / Family Court Circuits Meeting Benchmark



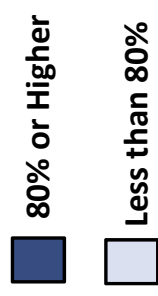
**80% of Pending Docket  
365 Days or Less as of  
October 31, 2020**



# South Carolina / General Sessions Court Circuits Meeting Benchmark



**80% of Pending Docket  
365 Days or Less as of  
October 31, 2020**



# SCJB Fiscal Summary

The South Carolina Judicial Branch is one of the three branches of South Carolina's government, yet SCJB receives less than 0.79% of State Recurring General Appropriations. SCJB's reliance on erratic funding sources threatens our ability to provide citizens of South Carolina with a fair and efficient forum for the just resolution of civil, criminal and family disputes. Returning to state recurring general appropriations will allow the Judicial Branch to use fines and fees monies to begin projects that have languished due to lack of funding.

Urgent needs for **recurring appropriations** include:

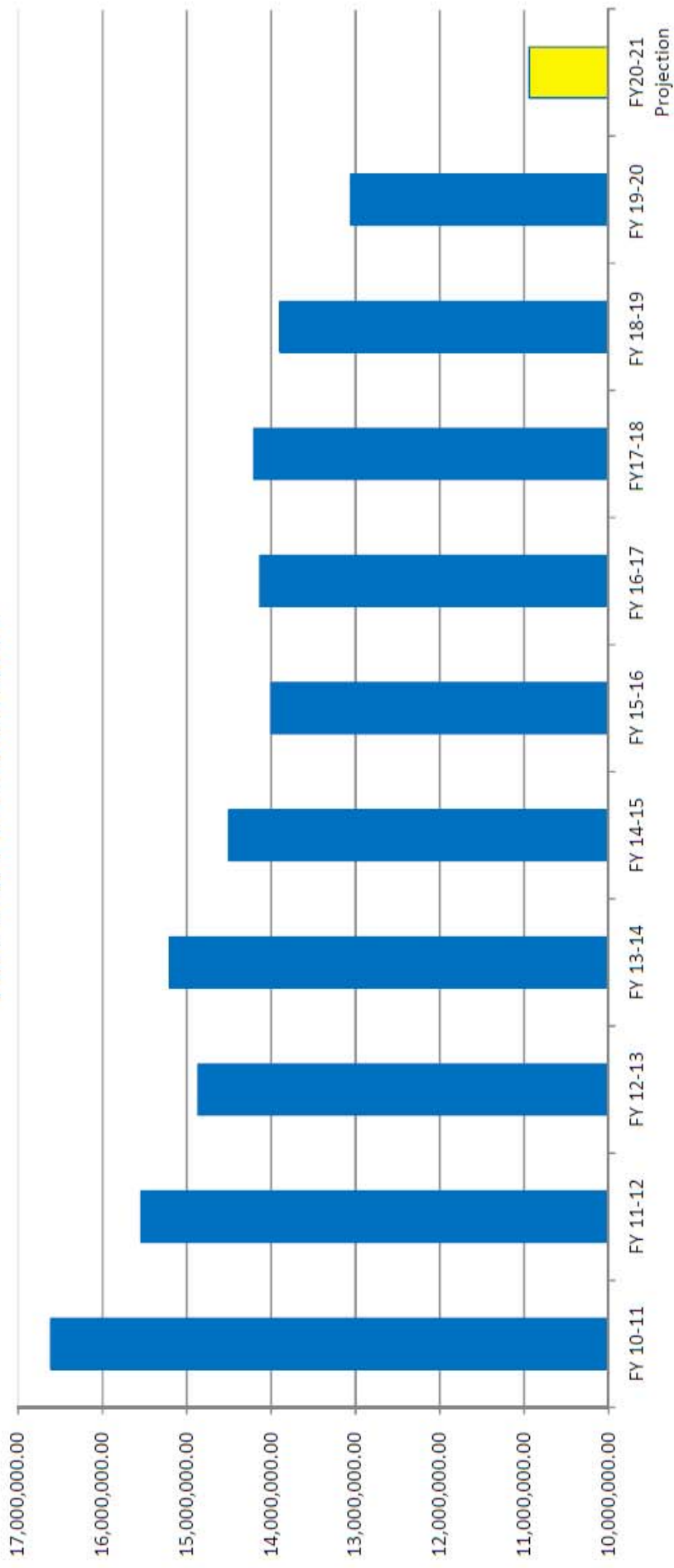
- Appropriate general funds for 168 Judicial Branch employees' salaries which are currently funded through unstable fines and fees;
- Recurring appropriation for Digital Court Reporter Project;
- Appropriations for Judicial Council, S.C. Code Ann. § 14-27-60.

Urgent needs for **non-recurring appropriations** include:

- Establish hybrid (virtual) courtroom solution to enable simultaneous in-person and remote participation in court proceedings;
- Expansion of Digital Court Reporter Project to 59 courtrooms statewide;
- Modernization of the antiquated/vulnerable statewide Case Management System.

# SCJB Fines and Fees Revenue

SCJB  
Fines and Fees Revenue





# SCJB Fines and Fees Received

| FISCAL YEAR                        | Circuit/Family Court Motion Fees | Alimony/Child Support Fees | Circuit/Family Court Filing Fee - \$100 | Circuit/Family Court Filing Fee - \$50 | General Sessions Law Enf Surcharge | Magistrates Law Enf Surcharge | Municipal Law Enforcement Surcharge | Magistrate Court Filing - \$25 | Magistrate Court Filing - \$10 | Traffic Education Program | Total Fines and Fees Received |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| FY 2010 - 2011                     | \$3,045,706                      | \$3,089,474                | \$2,038,817                             | \$4,093,223                            | \$32,239                           | \$834,518                     | \$776,352                           | \$997,522                      | \$1,701,364                    | \$3,240                   | \$16,612,455                  |
| FY 2011 - 2012                     | \$2,671,844                      | \$3,095,558                | \$1,845,400                             | \$3,753,517                            | \$32,032                           | \$800,381                     | \$693,947                           | \$879,700                      | \$1,768,713                    | \$1,139                   | \$15,542,231                  |
| FY 2012 - 2013                     | \$2,609,364                      | \$3,009,723                | \$1,697,768                             | \$3,441,417                            | \$33,748                           | \$786,798                     | \$639,698                           | \$858,694                      | \$1,787,069                    | \$1,692                   | \$14,865,971                  |
| FY 2013 - 2014                     | \$2,434,928                      | \$3,157,422                | \$1,625,114                             | \$3,203,841                            | \$33,444                           | \$800,744                     | \$638,075                           | \$1,011,348                    | \$2,296,374                    | \$2,942                   | \$15,204,232                  |
| FY 2014 - 2015                     | \$2,389,249                      | \$3,176,246                | \$1,551,752                             | \$3,131,051                            | \$34,202                           | \$805,824                     | \$627,084                           | \$950,304                      | \$1,834,865                    | \$2,099                   | \$14,502,676                  |
| FY 2015 - 2016                     | \$2,190,122                      | \$3,250,248                | \$1,458,508                             | \$2,940,997                            | \$33,235                           | \$739,520                     | \$600,589                           | \$1,071,277                    | \$1,715,470                    | \$2,447                   | \$14,002,413                  |
| FY 2016 - 2017                     | \$2,144,341                      | \$3,321,056                | \$1,476,258                             | \$2,974,653                            | \$30,635                           | \$728,729                     | \$555,833                           | \$1,171,349                    | \$1,728,392                    | \$2,403                   | \$14,133,648                  |
| FY 2017 - 2018                     | \$2,148,261                      | \$3,257,588                | \$1,493,711                             | \$3,009,293                            | \$31,198                           | \$704,854                     | \$527,051                           | \$1,277,353                    | \$1,752,805                    | \$3,052                   | \$14,205,168                  |
| FY 2018 - 2019                     | \$2,193,170                      | \$3,062,625                | \$1,414,131                             | \$2,858,085                            | \$30,585                           | \$672,808                     | \$508,609                           | \$1,432,004                    | \$1,718,420                    | \$3,060                   | \$13,893,497                  |
| FY 2019 - 2020                     | \$2,102,448                      | \$2,698,399                | \$1,405,393                             | \$2,891,317                            | \$26,509                           | \$576,221                     | \$396,401                           | \$1,453,852                    | \$1,501,566                    | \$3,333                   | \$13,055,439                  |
| % Change from FY 18-19 to FY 19-20 | -4.14%                           | -11.89%                    | -0.62%                                  | 1.16%                                  | -13.33%                            | -14.36%                       | -22.06%                             | 1.53%                          | -12.62%                        | 8.92%                     | -6.03%                        |



# SCJB Budget Request 2021-2022

- Priority 1: Court Positions Funding - \$14,000,000 (Recurring)
  - We request that general funds be appropriated for 168 Judicial Branch employees' salaries. These front-line employees provide essential services in courtrooms throughout the state. If state court fines and fees continue to decrease, they will not be sufficient to fund operations and pay these employees in the coming years.
- Priority 2: Hybrid (Virtual) Courtroom Project-\$7,600,000 (Non-Recurring)
  - We request funding for a hybrid (virtual) courtroom solution to enable court proceedings in 95 courtrooms to continue in spite of closures and social distance guidelines during health crisis and other disasters. This solution enables simultaneous in-person and remote participation through built in video conferencing, streaming, screen sharing, audio/video recording, and annotation capabilities.
- Priority 3: Digital Court Reporter Project - \$500,000 (Recurring)
  - We request funding to provide managed solutions, support, maintenance, storage, web/cloud technology, and equipment refresh required for Digital Court Reporter Project.
- Priority 4: Digital Court Reporter Project - \$1,400,000 (Non-Recurring)
  - We request funding to expand Digital Court Reporter Project to 59 courtrooms statewide. We cannot attract enough qualified traditional court reporters to replace those who are reaching retirement age. We have successfully installed digital court reporting in 31 courtrooms around the state to supplement our traditional court reporting workforce. Failure to continue to supplement the dire traditional court reporter shortage will result in an ever-increasing need to cancel family and circuit court terms of court.

# SCJB Budget Request 2021-2022

## Priority 5: Case Management System Modernization - \$10,000,000 (Non-Recurring)

- We request the remaining funding needed to modernize the online case management system (CMS). The extent to which trial courts, county clerks, attorneys, the general public, and law enforcement agencies depend upon CMS in their mission-critical daily operations cannot be overstated. The current CMS application is based on an antiquated application design model that is rapidly approaching the end of its life cycle. Vendors have responded to an RFP for a new statewide CMS. We request \$10 million so that we can select a vendor and update this critical system.

## Priority 6: Judicial Council - \$200,000 (Recurring)

- We request funding for the operations of the Judicial Council. Funding to be provided per SC Code of Laws 14-27-60.

|                            |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Total Recurring            | \$14,700,000        |
| <u>Total Non-Recurring</u> | <u>\$19,000,000</u> |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$33,700,000</b> |



# South Carolina Judicial Branch

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*End of Presentation*