

JUDICIAL BRANCH

Budget Committee Report

KLRD Analyst: Pratt
KLRD Summary: Vol. I, Pg. 121

DOB Analyst: Gunn
GBR Analysis: Vol. II, Pg. 212

Executive Summary

Summary of Total Expenditures, FY 2023 – FY 2027				
	SGF	All Other Funds	Total	FTE Positions
FY 2023 Actual	\$ 172,534,073	\$ 13,759,400	\$ 186,293,473	2,002.0
FY 2024 Actual	186,480,044	12,911,782	199,391,826	2,010.5
FY 2025 Actual	211,254,701	9,311,259	220,565,960	2,035.0
FY 2026				
Approved, with Reappropriations	\$ 230,166,036	\$ 10,055,909	\$ 240,221,945	2,035.0
Agency Revised Estimate	230,166,036	10,135,769	240,301,805	2,038.5
Special Committee on the State Budget	230,160,716	10,095,839	240,256,555	2,035.0
House Committee of the Whole	229,835,716	10,095,839	239,931,555	2,037.0
Senate Committee of the Whole	229,835,716	10,095,839	239,931,555	2,038.0
Legislative Approved	229,835,716	10,095,839	239,931,555	2,037.0
Governor's Recommendation	230,166,036	10,135,769	240,301,805	2,038.5
FY 2027				
FY 2026 Approved, without Reappropriations	\$ 229,860,716	\$ 10,055,909	\$ 239,916,625	2,035.0
Agency Request	236,217,539	9,932,320	246,149,859	2,043.5
Special Committee on the State Budget	231,675,589	8,879,468	240,555,057	2,035.0
House Committee of the Whole	232,865,680	9,924,468	242,790,148	2,038.0
Senate Committee of the Whole	231,975,589	9,924,468	241,900,057	2,038.0
Legislative Approved	232,562,384	9,924,468	242,486,852	2,037.0
Governor's Recommendation	236,217,539	9,932,320	246,149,859	2,043.5

The Kansas Constitution vests the judicial power of the State in one court of justice, which is divided into the Supreme Court, district courts, and other courts as provided by law. The Supreme Court has general administrative authority over all the courts in the state. The Judicial Branch's budget includes funding for the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, personnel costs of the district courts and some funding for technology, and a number of judicial and professional review boards and commissions. Most non-salary costs of the district courts are funded by the counties. While individual counties pay operating expenses for district courts, pursuant to [KSA 20-348](#), the agency pays the salaries of all Judicial Branch judges and employees. Under this funding structure, the state appropriation for the pay of all judicial personnel accounted for approximately 89.3 percent of all Judicial Branch expenditures in FY 2025.

The Judicial Branch submits its budget directly to the Legislature under [KSA 20-158](#) and provides it to the Director of the Budget to include in *The Governor's Budget Report* under [KSA 75-3721](#).

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FY 2026

Summary of Legislative Recommendations, FY 2026				
	SGF	All Other Funds	Total	FTE Positions
Approved, with Reappropriations	\$ 230,166,036	\$ 10,055,909	\$ 240,221,945	2,035.0
Agency Revised Estimate	230,166,036	10,135,769	240,301,805	2,038.5
Special Committee on the State Budget (SBC)				
Change from Agency Revised Estimate	\$ (5,320)	\$ (39,930)	\$ (45,250)	(3.5)
TOTAL – Special Committee	\$ 230,160,716	\$ 10,095,839	\$ 240,256,555	2,035.0
House Committees				
General Government Budget	\$ (325,000)	\$ -	\$ (325,000)	2.0
Appropriations	-	-	-	-
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-
Subtotal – House Change from SBC	\$ (325,000)	\$ -	\$ (325,000)	2.0
TOTAL – Current House Position	\$ 229,835,716	\$ 10,095,839	\$ 239,931,555	2,037.0
Senate Committees				
Ways and Means [General Government]	\$ (325,000)	\$ -	\$ (325,000)	3.0
Ways and Means	-	-	-	-
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-
Subtotal – Senate Change from SBC	\$ (325,000)	\$ -	\$ (325,000)	3.0
TOTAL – Current Senate Position	\$ 229,835,716	\$ 10,095,839	\$ 239,931,555	2,038.0
Legislative Approved				
Conference Committee	\$ (325,000)	\$ -	\$ (325,000)	2.0
Governor's Vetoes	-	-	-	-
Veto Overrides	-	-	-	-
Subtotal – Approved Change from SBC	\$ (325,000)	\$ -	\$ (325,000)	2.0
GRAND TOTAL – Final Approved	\$ 229,835,716	\$ 10,095,839	\$ 239,931,555	2,037.0

Agency

The **agency** requests a revised estimate of \$240.2 million, including \$230.2 million SGF, in expenditures and 2,038.5 FTE positions for FY 2026. This is the same as the amount previously approved by the 2025 Legislature, though the revised estimate includes an increase of 3.5 FTE positions above the number of positions previously approved by the 2025 Legislature.

Although the amount of expenditures in the Judicial Branch's revised estimate does not change from the amount previously approved by the 2025 Legislature, there are several adjustments throughout categories of expenditures. Namely, the agency reduced contractual services expenditures for the Office of Judicial Administration by \$325,000 SGF in order to fund the creation of one interactive Learning Center exhibit within the Supreme Court Law Library in FY 2026. Similarly, the Judicial Branch reclassified \$300,000 SGF in capital outlay expenditures as capital improvement expenditures that were previously approved for the completion of the Garden Level remodel of the Judicial Center in FY 2026.

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The FTE increase specifically concerns the Judicial Branch's request for full-time positions associated with specialty courts (3.0 FTE) and a part-time position associated with the Elder Justice Innovation Grant (0.5 FTE). The 2025 Legislature approved a \$1.5 million SGF transfer to the Specialty Court Resources Fund for specialty court operations and specialty court personnel costs in FY 2026. As such, the agency requests an additional 3.0 FTE positions in FY 2026 in order to reconcile the previously approved transfer for specialty court operations and personnel costs. The agency indicates these additional positions are intended to serve as a stopgap while the 2026 Legislature evaluates the agency's enhancement request for Regional Specialty Court Coordinator positions for FY 2027.

Special Committee on the State Budget

The **Special Committee** concurs with the agency's revised estimate in FY 2026, with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$5,320 SGF to not reappropriate unspent operating expenditures from FY 2025 into FY 2026.
2. Delete \$39,930, all from the Elder Justice Innovation Grant fund, and 0.5 FTE positions to not create and fund a 0.5 FTE position associated with the Elder Justice Innovation Grant in FY 2026.
3. Delete 3.0 FTE positions associated with specialty court operations in FY 2026.

House Committees

House Committee on General Government Budget

The **House Committee on General Government Budget** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation in FY 2026, with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$325,000 SGF to not fund the creation of one interactive Learning Center exhibit within the Supreme Court Law Library in FY 2026.
2. Add 2.0 FTE positions associated with specialty court operations in FY 2026.

House Committee on Appropriations

The **House Committee on Appropriations** concurs with the House Budget Committee's recommendation in FY 2026.

House Committee of the Whole

The **House Committee of the Whole** concurs with the House Committee's recommendation in FY 2026.

Senate Committees

Senate Committee on Judiciary

The **Senate Committee on Judiciary** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation in FY 2026, with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$325,000 SGF to not fund the creation of one interactive Learning Center exhibit within the Supreme Court Law Library in FY 2026.
2. Add 3.0 FTE positions associated with specialty court operations in FY 2026.

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Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The **Senate Committee on Ways and Means** concurs with the Senate Committee's recommendation in FY 2026.

Senate Committee of the Whole

The **Senate Committee of the Whole** concurs with the Senate Committee's recommendation in FY 2026.

Conference Committee

The **Conference Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation in FY 2026, with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$325,000 SGF to not fund the creation of one interactive Learning Center exhibit within the Supreme Court Law Library in FY 2026.
2. Add 2.0 FTE positions associated with specialty court operations in FY 2026.

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Budget Committee Report

FY 2027

Summary of Legislative Recommendations, FY 2027					
	SGF	All Other Funds	Total	FTE Positions	
FY 2026 Approved, without Reappropriations	\$ 229,860,716	\$ 10,055,909	\$ 239,916,625	2,035.0	
Agency Request	236,217,539	9,932,320	246,149,859	2,043.5	
Special Committee on the State Budget (SBC)					
<i>Change from Agency Request</i>	<i>\$ (4,541,950)</i>	<i>\$ (1,052,852)</i>	<i>\$ (5,594,802)</i>	<i>(8.5)</i>	
TOTAL – Special Committee	\$ 231,675,589	\$ 8,879,468	\$ 240,555,057	2,035.0	
House Committees					
General Government Budget	\$ 303,296	\$ 1,045,000	\$ 1,348,296	3.0	
Appropriations	886,795	-	886,795	-	
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-	
<i>Subtotal – House Change from SBC</i>	<i>\$ 1,190,091</i>	<i>\$ 1,045,000</i>	<i>\$ 2,235,091</i>	<i>3.0</i>	
TOTAL – Current House Position	\$ 232,865,680	\$ 9,924,468	\$ 242,790,148	2,038.0	
Senate Committees					
Ways and Means [General Government]	\$ 300,000	\$ 1,045,000	\$ 1,345,000	3.0	
Ways and Means	-	-	-	-	
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-	
<i>Subtotal – Senate Change from SBC</i>	<i>\$ 300,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,045,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,345,000</i>	<i>3.0</i>	
TOTAL – Current Senate Position	\$ 231,975,589	\$ 9,924,468	\$ 241,900,057	2,038.0	
Legislative Approved					
Conference Committee	\$ 886,795	\$ 1,045,000	\$ 1,931,795	2.0	
Governor's Vetoes	-	-	-	-	
Veto Overrides	-	-	-	-	
<i>Subtotal – Approved Change from SBC</i>	<i>\$ 886,795</i>	<i>\$ 1,045,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,931,795</i>	<i>2.0</i>	
GRAND TOTAL – Final Approved	\$ 232,562,384	\$ 9,924,468	\$ 242,486,852	2,037.0	

Agency

The **agency** requests \$246.1 million, including \$236.2 million SGF, in expenditures and 2,043.5 FTE positions for FY 2027. This is an increase of \$5.9 million, or 2.5 percent, in expenditures and an increase of 8.5 FTE above the amount previously approved by the 2025 Legislature.

The agency's request includes \$5.6 million in expenditures and 5.0 additional FTE positions for the following seven enhancement items for FY 2027:

- **Learning Center:** \$300,000 SGF. The agency requests funding to further the creation and installation of an interactive exhibit within the Supreme Court Law Library of the Judicial Center.
- **Specialty Courts:** \$1.0 million (3.0 FTE). The 2025 Legislature approved a \$1.5 million transfer from the SGF to the Specialty Court Resources Fund for specialty court operations, including salaries and wages and other personnel costs, in FY 2026. Of the amount previously transferred, the agency plans to spend \$322,970 to create and fill 3.0 FTE Regional Specialty Court

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Coordinator positions for FY 2027. In addition, the agency requests a continuation of the \$1.5 million transfer from the SGF to the Specialty Court Resources Fund for FY 2027. Of the amount requested, approximately \$1.0 million would be expended on the following items for FY 2027: grants to district courts, a drug testing subsidy program, statewide training and technical assistance, electronic monitoring services, program materials and equipment, and printed materials on recovery. According to the agency, the remaining \$455,000 would go toward many of the same services for FY 2028.

- **Court Services Juvenile Coordinator:** \$103,296 SGF (1.0 FTE). The agency requests funding to create and fill 1.0 FTE Court Services Juvenile Coordinator position for FY 2027. The position would be tasked with coordinating and fielding internal questions related to juvenile justice, as well as collecting juvenile-specific data.
- **Rural Justice Initiative:** \$886,795 SGF (1.0 FTE). The agency requests funding to implement the provisions of 2025 SB 214 which would, among other provisions, create the Rural justice Initiative for law school loan repayments for FY 2027.
- **Non-Judge Salary Increase:** \$3.5 million SGF. The agency states that although recent salary increases have strengthened the judicial workforce in Kansas, the cost of living is making those adjustments less impactful. As such, the agency requests funding to provide the equivalent of a 2.5 percent across-the-board pay increase for non-judge employees.
- **Hospitality Language.** During the 2025 Interim, the agency experienced an issue concerning use of SGF appropriations to pay for food for non-judicial staff at training events in FY 2026. As such, the agency requests proviso language be included in the appropriations bill to allow such expenditures to be processed for FY 2027.

Absent the requests for enhancement funding, the agency's request includes an all-funds increase of \$646,284 in expenditures and 3.5 FTE positions above the amount previously approved. Although there are a variety of funding shifts throughout various programs within the agency's request, the increase in expenditures is primarily related to anticipated employer contributions to fringe benefits, including contributions to judicial retirement. The FTE increase relates to the agency's request for full-time positions associated with specialty courts (3.0 FTE) and a part-time position associated with the Elder Justice Innovation Grant (0.5 FTE). However, the agency has stated that the 3.0 FTE positions identified under All Other Adjustments in FY 2026 as a temporary stopgap could not be deleted by the agency from the budgeting system for FY 2027. Thus, the 3.0 FTE positions identified here would be deleted if the agency's enhancement request for 3.0 FTE Regional Specialty Court Coordinator positions is approved for FY 2027.

Special Committee on the State Budget

The **Special Committee** concurs with the agency request for FY 2027, with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$300,000 SGF to not fund the creation and installation of an interactive exhibit within the Supreme Court Law Library of the Judicial Center for FY 2027.
2. Delete \$1.0 million, all from the Specialty Court Resources Fund, to not adopt the agency's enhancement request for funding specialty court operations for FY 2027. Further, do not transfer \$1.5 million SGF to the Specialty Court Resources Fund for FY 2027.
3. Delete 3.0 FTE positions to not adopt the agency's request for Regional Specialty Court Coordinator positions for FY 2027.

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4. Delete \$103,296 SGF and 1.0 FTE position to not adopt the agency's request to create and fill a Court Services Juvenile Coordinator position for FY 2027.
5. Delete \$886,795 SGF and 1.0 FTE position to not adopt the agency's request to provide student loan repayments for practicing attorneys, nor create and fill a Rural Justice Coordinator position for FY 2027.
6. Delete \$3.5 million SGF to not adopt the agency's request to provide a 2.5 percent salary increase to non-judge employees for FY 2027.
7. Delete language to not provide clarification that the agency can expend SGF moneys on hospitality items for FY 2027.
8. Delete \$7,852, all from the Elder Justice Innovation Grant fund, and 0.5 FTE positions to not create and fund a 0.5 FTE position associated with the Elder Justice Innovation Grant for FY 2027.
9. Delete 3.0 FTE positions associated with specialty court operations for FY 2027.

House Committees

House Committee on General Government Budget

The **House Budget Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation for FY 2027, with the following adjustments and notations:

1. Add \$1.0 million, all from the Specialty Court Resources Fund, and transfer \$1.0 million SGF to the Specialty Court Resources Fund, to partially adopt the agency's request for specialty court operations for FY 2027.
2. Add 2.0 FTE to partially adopt the agency's request for Regional Specialty Court Coordinator positions for FY 2027.
3. Add language to provide that moneys transferred to the Specialty Court Resources Fund may be expended on an additional 2.0 FTE positions for FY 2027, provided that SGF moneys transferred to the Specialty Court Resources Fund may not be transferred to another item of appropriation for FY 2027. Add language to provide further that the agency must submit a report to the House Committee on General Government Budget on or before June 30, 2027, of all expenditures made from the Specialty Court Resources Fund for FY 2027.
4. Add \$103,296 SGF and 1.0 FTE position to adopt the agency's request to create and fill a Court Services Juvenile Coordinator position for FY 2027.
5. Add \$200,000 SGF for the administration of expungement clinics provided by the Kansas Legal Services for FY 2027.
6. The House Committee on General Government Budget requests that the full House Committee on Appropriations include non-judge employees of the Judicial Branch when considering global salary adjustments for FY 2027.

House Committee on Appropriations

The **House Committee on Appropriations** concurs with the House Budget Committee's recommendation for FY 2027, with the following adjustments:

1. Add \$886,795 SGF for the Rural Justice Initiative to increase the number of rural attorneys practicing in Kansas for FY 2027, provided that if 2026 HB 2595 or any other legislation relating

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to programs for the Rural Justice Initiative is not passed during the 2026 Legislative Session and enacted into law, then the moneys will lapse on July 1, 2026.

2. Add language to clarify that the agency can expend SGF moneys on hospitality items for FY 2027.

House Committee of the Whole

The **House Committee of the Whole** concurs with the House Committee's recommendation for FY 2027.

Senate Committees

Senate Committee on Judiciary

The **Senate Committee on Judiciary** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation for FY 2027, with the following adjustments and notations:

1. Add \$1.0 million, all from the Specialty Court Resources Fund, and transfer \$1.0 million SGF to the Specialty Court Resources Fund, to partially adopt the agency's request for specialty court operations for FY 2027.
2. Add 3.0 FTE to adopt the agency's request for Regional Specialty Court Coordinator positions for FY 2027.
3. Add \$200,000 SGF for the administration of expungement clinics provided by the Kansas Legal Services for FY 2027.
4. Add \$100,000 SGF for the administration of drivers' license clinics provided by the Kansas Legal Services for FY 2027.
5. The Senate Committee on Judiciary requests that the full Senate Committee on Ways and Means consider non-judge employees of the Judicial Branch when considering global salary adjustments for FY 2027.
6. The Senate Committee on Judiciary requests that the full Senate Committee on Ways and Means consider adding funding for the Rural Justice Initiative upon passage of 2025 SB 214 for FY 2027.

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The **Senate Committee on Ways and Means** concurs with the Senate Committee's recommendation for FY 2027.

Senate Committee of the Whole

The **Senate Committee of the Whole** concurs with the Senate Committee's recommendation for FY 2027.

Conference Committee

The **Conference Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation for FY 2027, with the following adjustments:

1. Add \$1.0 million, all from the Specialty Court Resources Fund, and transfer \$1.0 million SGF to the Specialty Court Resources Fund, to partially adopt the agency's request for specialty court operations for FY 2027.

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2. Add 2.0 FTE to partially adopt the agency's request for Regional Specialty Court Coordinator positions for FY 2027.
3. Add language to provide that moneys transferred to the Specialty Court Resources Fund may be expended on an additional 2.0 FTE positions for FY 2027, provided that SGF moneys transferred to the Specialty Court Resources Fund may not be transferred to another item of appropriation for FY 2027. Add language to provide further that the agency must submit a report to the House Committee on General Government Budget on or before June 30, 2027, of all expenditures made from the Specialty Court Resources Fund for FY 2027.
4. Add \$586,795 SGF for the Rural Justice Initiative to increase the number of rural attorneys practicing in Kansas for FY 2027, provided that if 2026 HB 2595 or any other legislation relating to programs for the Rural Justice Initiative is not passed during the 2026 Legislative Session and enacted into law, then the moneys will lapse on July 1, 2026.
5. Add \$200,000 SGF for the administration of expungement clinics provided by the Kansas Legal Services for FY 2027.
6. Add \$100,000 SGF for the administration of drivers' license clinics provided by the Kansas Legal Services for FY 2027.
7. Add language to clarify that the agency can expend SGF moneys on hospitality items for FY 2027.