

Washington State Judicial Branch

2025-27 Biennial Budget

Provide Stable, Ongoing Program Funding

Agency: Administrative Office of the Courts

Decision Package Code/Title: ZC – Provide Stable GF-S Program Funding

Agency Recommendation Summary Text:

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) requests the 2025-27 carryforward funding be shifted from the Judicial Stabilization Trust Account (JSTA) to the General Fund-State for: 1) Whatcom County water rights adjudication; 2) pass-through to local courts for court-appointed attorney and visitor requirements; 3) program and reporting requirements for the Office of Public Guardianship and 4) ensuring the integrity of person records in the AOC case management systems. This is ongoing work requiring long-term, stable funding that cannot be provided by the JSTA fund balance. (General Fund-State)

Fiscal Summary:

	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennial	FY 2028	FY 2029	Biennial
Staffing						
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001-1	\$5,788,000	\$5,788,000	\$11,576,000	\$5,788,000	\$5,788,000	\$11,576,000
Fund 16A-1	(\$5,788,000)	(\$5,788,000)	(\$11,576,000)	(\$5,788,000)	(\$5,788,000)	(\$11,576,000)
Total Expenditures						
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Package Description:

This technical request would provide stable, ongoing GF-S funding for four programs:

- 1) Support for Whatcom County activities related to adjudications filed by the Department of Ecology to resolve water rights in the Nooksack Basin Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) I. (\$644,000 ongoing per biennium)
- 2) Local court costs associated with the court-appointed attorney and visitor requirements under the Uniform Guardianship Act (UGA), Chapter 11.130 RCW. (\$6,000,000 ongoing per biennium)
- 3) Program and reporting requirements for the Office of Public Guardianship under Second Substitute Senate Bill 5825 passed in the 2024 supplemental budget. (\$4,188,000 ongoing per biennium)
- 4) Dedicated, technical and business staff who lead corrective maintenance on person records. Courts in Washington have always been concerned with accurately capturing key information about the people involved in court cases throughout the state. This information is captured as a person record in a court case management system which stores the information needed to identify an individual. Correctly matching person records from the court case management systems is necessary for compiling a complete case history for individuals, as well as for transmitting data to other state agencies. (\$744,000 ongoing per biennium)

Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents.

This is a technical request ensuring a stable, long-term funding source supports these ongoing programs.

Explain what alternatives were explored by the agency and why this was the best option chosen.

The alternative of continuing the programs in a fund source that would require routine transfers from the GF-S is not sustainable.

What are the consequences of not funding this request?

The AOC would continually have to request GF-S transfers to the JSTA to ensure long-term funding for the programs.

Is this an expansion or alteration of a current program or service?

No.

Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions:

This is a technical shift of the ongoing, carryforward level.

How does the package relate to the Judicial Branch principal policy objectives?

Sufficient Staffing and Support

This request would ensure stable funding for ongoing programs.

How does the package impact equity in the state?

Address any target populations or communities that will benefit from this proposal.

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Describe the how the agency conducted community outreach and engagement.

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Consider which target populations or communities would be disproportionately impacted by this proposal.

Explain why and how these equity impacts will be mitigated.

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Are there impacts to other governmental entities?

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Stakeholder response:

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Are there legal or administrative mandates that require this package to be funded?

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Does current law need to be changed to successfully implement this package?

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Are there impacts to state facilities?

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Administrative Office of the Courts
Maintenance Level – ZC – Provide Stable GF-S Program Funding

Are there other supporting materials that strengthen the case for this request?

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

Are there information technology impacts?

Not applicable, this is a technical request.

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