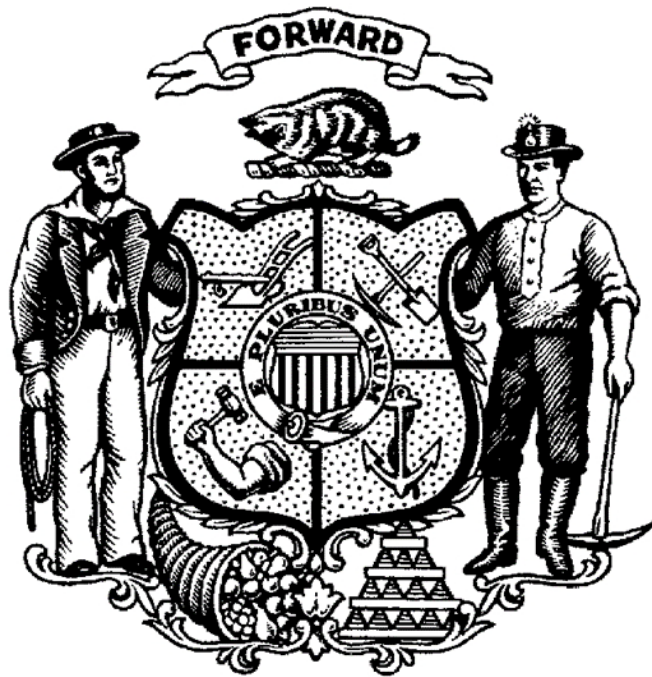


State of Wisconsin

Circuit Courts



Circuit Court Budget Request

2025 – 2027 Biennium

October 2, 2024

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The Wisconsin Court System Budget Cover Letter is located under Supreme Court Budget Submission.

COURT DESCRIPTION

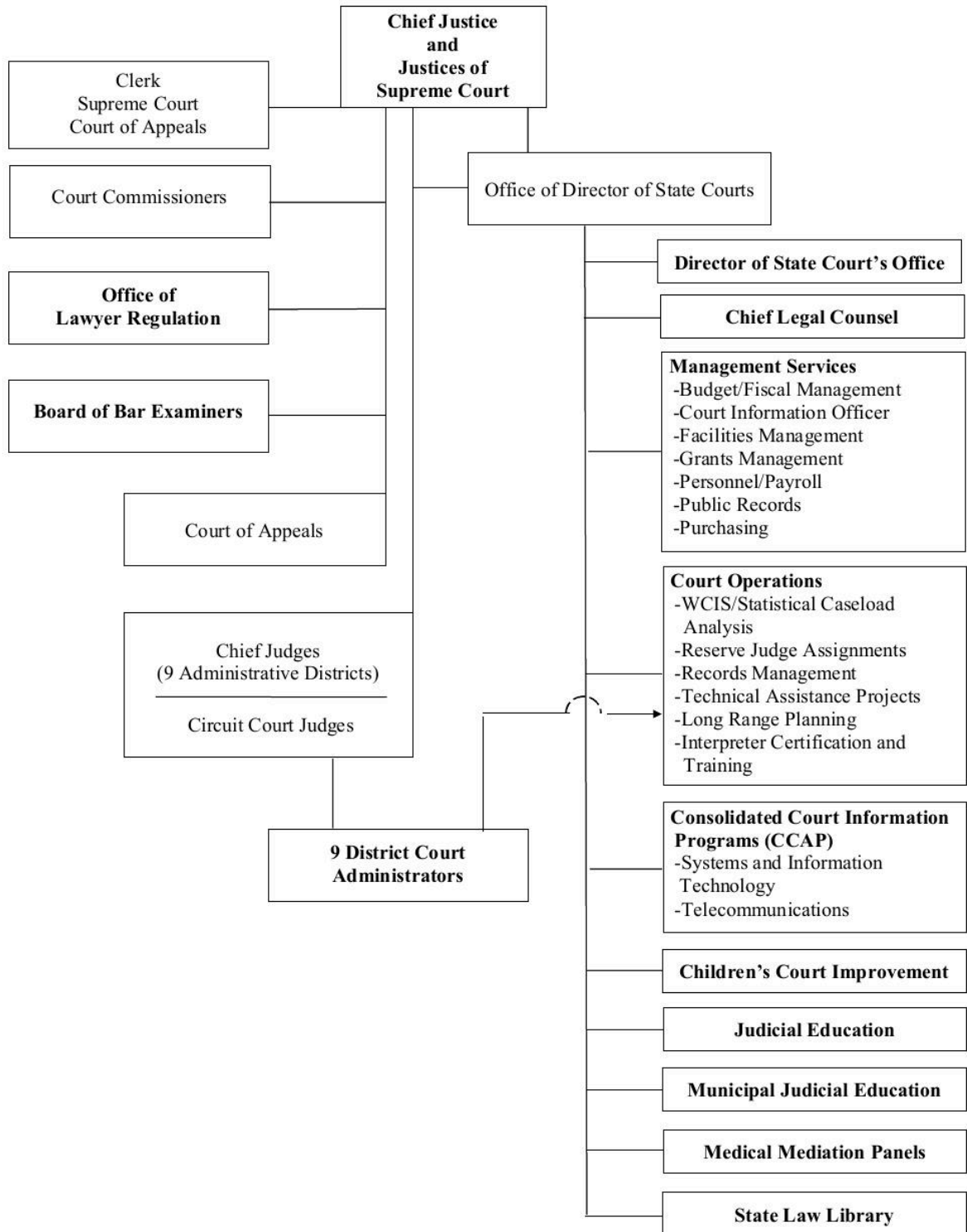
The Circuit Courts are Wisconsin's courts of general jurisdiction and consist of 261 judicial positions in 69 judicial circuits. 2019 Wisconsin Act 184 authorized the creation of 12 additional circuit court branches across two biennia. As of August 1, 2021 there were 253 judicial positions and as of August 1, 2022 there were 257 judicial positions. The last four circuit court branches were created in the 2023-2025 biennium on August 1, 2023 increasing judicial positions to 261.

Each county in the state is a circuit, with the exception of Pepin and Buffalo, Menominee and Shawano, and Forest and Florence, which are paired to form three circuits. A circuit may consist of more than one branch (judge) where the volume of litigation warrants. Of the 69 circuits, 48 contain multiple branches.

The Circuit Courts have original jurisdiction in all criminal, civil, juvenile, family and probate cases unless exclusive jurisdiction has been given to another court. The courts have appellate jurisdiction over orders and judgments of the municipal courts and the responsibility to review decisions and orders of state administrative agencies.

For purposes of management, the Circuit Courts are divided into nine administrative districts. Each district has a chief judge appointed by the Supreme Court and a district court administrator, who administers the business of the judicial branch in that district in cooperation with the director of state courts at the direction of the chief justice.

Wisconsin State Court System



Agency Total by Fund Source

Circuit Courts

2527 Biennial Budget

		ANNUAL SUMMARY						BIENNIAL SUMMARY			
Source of Funds		Prior Year Total	Adjusted Base	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE	Base Year Doubled (BYD)	Biennial Request	Change From (BYD)	Change From BYD %
GPR	L	\$28,354,298	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	0.00	0.00	\$56,785,800	\$56,785,800	\$0	0.00%
GPR	S	\$92,445,810	\$97,529,400	\$93,384,700	\$93,384,700	551.00	551.00	\$195,058,800	\$186,769,400	(\$8,289,400)	-4.20%
Total		\$120,800,108	\$125,922,300	\$121,777,600	\$121,777,600	551.00	551.00	\$251,844,600	\$243,555,200	(\$8,289,400)	-3.30%
PR	L	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	0.00	0.00	\$465,400	\$465,400	\$0	0.00%
PR	S	\$0	\$0	\$104,600	\$137,100	1.75	1.75	\$0	\$241,700	\$241,700	0.00%
Total		\$232,700	\$232,700	\$337,300	\$369,800	1.75	1.75	\$465,400	\$707,100	\$241,700	51.90%
Grand Total		\$121,032,808	\$126,155,000	\$122,114,900	\$122,147,400	552.75	552.75	\$252,310,000	\$244,262,300	(\$8,047,700)	-3.20%

Agency Total by Program

Circuit Courts

2527 Biennial Budget

		ANNUAL SUMMARY					BIENNIAL SUMMARY			
Source of Funds	Prior Year Total	Adjusted Base	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE	Base Year Doubled (BYD)	Biennial Request	Change From (BYD)	Change From BYD %
01 Court operations										
Non Federal										
GPR	\$120,800,108	\$125,922,300	\$121,777,600	\$121,777,600	551.00	551.00	\$251,844,600	\$243,555,200	(\$8,289,400)	-3.29%
L	\$28,354,298	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	0.00	0.00	\$56,785,800	\$56,785,800	\$0	0.00%
S	\$92,445,810	\$97,529,400	\$93,384,700	\$93,384,700	551.00	551.00	\$195,058,800	\$186,769,400	(\$8,289,400)	-4.25%
PR	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$337,300	\$369,800	1.75	1.75	\$465,400	\$707,100	\$241,700	51.93%
L	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	0.00	0.00	\$465,400	\$465,400	\$0	0.00%
S	\$0	\$0	\$104,600	\$137,100	1.75	1.75	\$0	\$241,700	\$241,700	0.00%
Total - Non Federal	\$121,032,808	\$126,155,000	\$122,114,900	\$122,147,400	552.75	552.75	\$252,310,000	\$244,262,300	(\$8,047,700)	-3.19%
L	\$28,586,998	\$28,625,600	\$28,625,600	\$28,625,600	0.00	0.00	\$57,251,200	\$57,251,200	\$0	0.00%
S	\$92,445,810	\$97,529,400	\$93,489,300	\$93,521,800	552.75	552.75	\$195,058,800	\$187,011,100	(\$8,047,700)	-4.13%
PGM 01 Total	\$121,032,808	\$126,155,000	\$122,114,900	\$122,147,400	552.75	552.75	\$252,310,000	\$244,262,300	(\$8,047,700)	-3.19%
GPR	\$120,800,108	\$125,922,300	\$121,777,600	\$121,777,600	551.00	551.00	\$251,844,600	\$243,555,200	(\$8,289,400)	-3.29%
L	\$28,354,298	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	0.00	0.00	\$56,785,800	\$56,785,800	\$0	0.00%
S	\$92,445,810	\$97,529,400	\$93,384,700	\$93,384,700	551.00	551.00	\$195,058,800	\$186,769,400	(\$8,289,400)	-4.25%

Agency Total by Program

Circuit Courts

2527 Biennial Budget

		ANNUAL SUMMARY					BIENNIAL SUMMARY			
Source of Funds	Prior Year Total	Adjusted Base	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE	Base Year Doubled (BYD)	Biennial Request	Change From (BYD)	Change From BYD %
01 Court operations										
PR	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$337,300	\$369,800	1.75	1.75	\$465,400	\$707,100	\$241,700	51.93%
L	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	0.00	0.00	\$465,400	\$465,400	\$0	0.00%
S	\$0	\$0	\$104,600	\$137,100	1.75	1.75	\$0	\$241,700	\$241,700	0.00%
TOTAL 01	\$121,032,808	\$126,155,000	\$122,114,900	\$122,147,400	552.75	552.75	\$252,310,000	\$244,262,300	(\$8,047,700)	-3.19%
L	\$28,586,998	\$28,625,600	\$28,625,600	\$28,625,600	0.00	0.00	\$57,251,200	\$57,251,200	\$0	0.00%
S	\$92,445,810	\$97,529,400	\$93,489,300	\$93,521,800	552.75	552.75	\$195,058,800	\$187,011,100	(\$8,047,700)	-4.13%
AGENCY TOTAL	\$121,032,808	\$126,155,000	\$122,114,900	\$122,147,400	552.75	552.75	\$252,310,000	\$244,262,300	(\$8,047,700)	-3.19%

Agency Total by Decision Item

Circuit Courts

2527 Biennial Budget

Decision Item	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
2000 Adjusted Base Funding Level	\$126,155,000	\$126,155,000	551.00	551.00
3003 Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits	(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00
4100 Circuit Court Payment Support Position	\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00
4200 Court Interpreter Program Support Position	\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75
TOTAL	\$122,114,900	\$122,147,400	552.75	552.75

GPR Earned

2527 Biennial Budget

DEPARTMENT

PROGRAM

DATE

CODES	TITLES
625	Circuit Courts
01	Court operations

08/31/2024

Revenue	Prior Year Actuals	Base Year Estimate	1st Year Estimate	2nd Year Estimate
Opening Balance	\$32,904,710	\$32,086,300	\$32,758,100	\$33,191,800
TOTAL	\$32,904,710	\$32,086,300	\$32,758,100	\$33,191,800

Program Revenue

2527 Biennial Budget

	CODES	TITLES
DEPARTMENT	625	Circuit Courts
PROGRAM	01	Court operations
SUBPROGRAM		
NUMERIC APPROPRIATION	21	Court interpreters

Revenue and Expenditures	Prior Year Actuals	Base Year Estimate	1st Year Estimate	2nd Year Estimate
Opening Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Penalty Surcharge	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700
Total Revenue	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700
Expenditures	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$0	\$0
2000 Adjusted Base Funding Level	\$0	\$0	\$232,700	\$232,700
Total Expenditures	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700	\$232,700
Closing Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program Revenue

2527 Biennial Budget

	CODES	TITLES
DEPARTMENT	625	Circuit Courts
PROGRAM	01	Court operations
SUBPROGRAM		
NUMERIC APPROPRIATION	34	Circuit Court Support Programs

Revenue and Expenditures	Prior Year Actuals	Base Year Estimate	1st Year Estimate	2nd Year Estimate
Opening Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Internal Chargebacks	\$0	\$0	\$104,600	\$137,100
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$104,600	\$137,100
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4100 Circuit Court Payment Support Position	\$0	\$0	\$69,300	\$91,300
4200 Court Interpreter Program Support Position	\$0	\$0	\$35,300	\$45,800
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$104,600	\$137,100
Closing Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Decision Item (DIN) - 2000

Decision Item (DIN) Title - Adjusted Base Funding Level

NARRATIVE

Adjusted Base Funding Level

Decision Item by Line

2527 Biennial Budget

DEPARTMENT	CODES	TITLES
	625	Circuit Courts
DECISION ITEM	CODES	TITLES
	2000	Adjusted Base Funding Level

	Expenditure Items	1st Year Cost	2nd Year Cost
01	Permanent Position Salaries	\$67,968,300	\$67,968,300
02	Turnover	\$0	\$0
03	Project Position Salaries	\$0	\$0
04	LTE/Misc. Salaries	\$1,067,600	\$1,067,600
05	Fringe Benefits	\$24,976,100	\$24,976,100
06	Supplies and Services	\$1,972,500	\$1,972,500
07	Permanent Property	\$1,544,900	\$1,544,900
08	Unallotted Reserve	\$0	\$0
09	Aids to Individuals & Organizations	\$0	\$0
10	Local Assistance	\$28,625,600	\$28,625,600
11	One-time Financing	\$0	\$0
12	Debt service	\$0	\$0
13		\$0	\$0
14		\$0	\$0
15		\$0	\$0
16		\$0	\$0
17	TOTAL	\$126,155,000	\$126,155,000
18	Project Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
19	Classified Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
20	Unclassified Positions Authorized	551.00	551.00

Decision Item by Numeric

2527 Biennial Budget

Circuit Courts

Program	Decision Item/Numeric	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
	2000 Adjusted Base Funding Level				
01	Court operations				
	01 Circuit courts	\$97,529,400	\$97,529,400	551.00	551.00
	05 Circuit court costs	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	0.00	0.00
	21 Court interpreters	\$232,700	\$232,700	0.00	0.00
	Court operations Sub Total	\$126,155,000	\$126,155,000	551.00	551.00
	Adjusted Base Funding Level Sub Total	\$126,155,000	\$126,155,000	551.00	551.00
	Agency Total	\$126,155,000	\$126,155,000	551.00	551.00

Decision Item by Fund Source

2527 Biennial Budget

Circuit Courts

Decision Item/Source of Funds		1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
2000 Adjusted Base Funding Level					
GPR	S	\$97,529,400	\$97,529,400	551.00	551.00
GPR	L	\$28,392,900	\$28,392,900	0.00	0.00
PR	L	\$232,700	\$232,700	0.00	0.00
Adjusted Base Funding Level Total		\$126,155,000	\$126,155,000	551.00	551.00
Agency Total		\$126,155,000	\$126,155,000	551.00	551.00

Decision Item (DIN) - 3003

Decision Item (DIN) Title - Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits

NARRATIVE

Standard Budget Adjustment - Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits

Decision Item by Line

2527 Biennial Budget

DEPARTMENT	CODES	TITLES
	625	Circuit Courts
DECISION ITEM	CODES	TITLES
	3003	Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits

	Expenditure Items	1st Year Cost	2nd Year Cost
01	Permanent Position Salaries	(\$3,248,400)	(\$3,248,400)
02	Turnover	\$0	\$0
03	Project Position Salaries	\$0	\$0
04	LTE/Misc. Salaries	\$0	\$0
05	Fringe Benefits	(\$896,300)	(\$896,300)
06	Supplies and Services	\$0	\$0
07	Permanent Property	\$0	\$0
08	Unallotted Reserve	\$0	\$0
09	Aids to Individuals & Organizations	\$0	\$0
10	Local Assistance	\$0	\$0
11	One-time Financing	\$0	\$0
12	Debt service	\$0	\$0
13		\$0	\$0
14		\$0	\$0
15		\$0	\$0
16		\$0	\$0
17	TOTAL	(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)
18	Project Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
19	Classified Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
20	Unclassified Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00

Decision Item by Numeric

2527 Biennial Budget

Circuit Courts

Program	Decision Item/Numeric	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
	3003 Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits				
01	Court operations				
	01 Circuit courts	(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00
	Court operations Sub Total	(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00
	Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits Sub Total	(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00
	Agency Total	(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00

Circuit Courts

Decision Item/Source of Funds		1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
3003 Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits					
GPR	S	(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00
Full Funding of Continuing Position Salaries and Fringe Benefits Total		(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00
Agency Total		(\$4,144,700)	(\$4,144,700)	0.00	0.00

Decision Item (DIN) - 4100

Decision Item (DIN) Title - Circuit Court Payment Support Position

NARRATIVE

The Court requests 1.0 FTE PR-S Financial Auditor permanent position to support the circuit court costs program in the 2025-2027 biennium.

Circuit Court Payment Support Position DIN 4100

Circuit Court

October 1, 2024

Summary

The court system requests 1.0 FTE Financial Auditor to support the circuit court costs program in the 2025-2027 biennium.

Item Description	Ch. 20	FY26 Total Yr 1	FY27 Total Yr 2	Biennial Cost
Financial Auditor (1.0 FTE)	20.625 (1)(kb) new	\$ 69,300	\$ 91,300	\$ 160,600

Background

Each year, counties are required by statute to report their court-related costs to the Director of State Courts, in order to be eligible to receive circuit court support payments. Since 2018, the reported costs have increased from \$159.8 million per year to \$183.7 million per year, an increase of 15 percent (see Attachment A). In addition to the overall cost increases, the costs to pay for court interpreters has gone up 60 percent, from \$2.3 million to \$3.7 million per year.

The Financial Auditor position would be responsible for auditing of the CS-147 Annual Cost Reporting submitted by Counties for the circuit court support payment program as well as reviewing the county's interpreter payments to ensure that the county is only reporting eligible court interpreter costs. Under s. 758.19 (5) of the program counties are required to submit information regarding the amount of actual circuit court costs that the county incurred in the previous calendar year, and revenues collected or received by the circuit court in that year in order to receive a circuit court support payment. The statute under s. 758.19 (5)(am) suggests that this information be audited to ensure accuracy. In addition to the auditing responsibility for county payments, the Financial Auditor would also be responsible for identifying cost controls methods for county's circuit court costs, and would process vouchers, prepare timely financial reports, completely biweekly and monthly audit and reconciliation efforts, and meet statutory timelines for payments.

Proposal

This proposal is for 1.00 PR FTE Financial Auditor permanent position.

Cost Estimate, Financial Auditor = 1.00 FTE PR-S

Position Title	Funding Source	FTE	FY26 Salary*	FY26 Fringe**	Supplies & Services	Annual Cost
Financial Auditor	PR 20.625 (1)(kb)	1.0	\$ 47,800	17,700	\$ 3,800	\$ 69,300
Position Title	Funding Source	FTE	FY27 Salary*	FY27 Fringe**	Supplies & Services	Annual Cost
Financial Auditor	PR 20.625 (1)(kb)	1.0	\$ 63,800	23,700	\$ 3,800	\$ 91,300

^[1] FY26 estimates based on positions filled for 9 months.

* Salaries as of July 1, 2024

**Fringe 2025-2027 37.08%

Background of Current Circuit Court Cost Payment Program

In the 1993-1995 budget, 1993 Wisconsin Act 16, the State created the GPR-funded Circuit Court Support Payment (CCSP) and Guardian ad litem (GAL) payment programs. As part of these programs, counties were required to report annually to the Director of State Courts their actual costs for these court services.

- 1993 Wisconsin Act 16 also created a court support services fee on forfeiture judgments and most civil court filing fees including garnishments, wage earner actions, small claim actions, and third-party complaints. The surcharge became effective October 1, 1993. This surcharge collected by clerks of circuit court is paid to the State Treasurer for deposit into the State's General Fund. It was originally estimated that the surcharge would raise \$15.2 million annually to offset the costs of the newly created programs.

Other legislative actions followed to revise the CCSP and GAL payment programs:

- 1995 Wisconsin Act 27 (the 1995-1997 biennial budget act) provided additional CCSP funds to the counties, for an appropriation totaling \$11.7 million in 1995-96 and \$16.5 million in 1996-97, and the formula was revised to include the number of judgeships and population figures. The Act also widened the court costs allowable under the CCSP to include all court costs except for those costs related to "court room security, including security personnel, and costs related to rent, utilities, maintenance, rehabilitation and/or construction of court facilities."
- 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 (1999-2001 biennial budget act) increased the CCSP by \$2,250,000 annually (to \$18.7 million) and increased the base payment per branch (judge).
- 2003 Act 139 renamed the court support services fee to the court support services surcharge (CSSS).

- 2007 eight new judgeships were created under 2007 Wisconsin Act 20 and 2007 Wisconsin Act 28 (five became effective August 1, 2008, two became effective August 1, 2009 and one became effective August 1, 2010). This diminished counties' per judgeship payments under both the CCSP and GAL payment programs.
- 2009 Wisconsin Act 28 (2009-2011 biennial budget act) included a one percent across-the-board permanent reduction to both the CCSP and the GAL payment programs' appropriations effectively reducing the amount of financial assistance provided to counties under both of these programs. The CCSP payment program was reduced by \$187,400, and the GAL payment program by \$47,400 annually.
- 2011 Wisconsin Act 32 (2011-2013 biennial budget act) further reduced the funding available for these two payment programs. The court system's biennial lapse requirement includes a 10 percent annual lapse from each program during the 2011-2013 and the 2013-2015 biennia. This amounts to a reduction in the CCSP Program by \$1,855,200 annually and a reduction to the GAL Payment Program by \$469,100 annually over the four-year period.
- 2015 Wisconsin Act 55 (2015-2017 biennial budget act) effective July 1, 2016 consolidated three existing appropriations, (1) circuit court support payments; (2) guardian ad litem costs; and (3) court interpreter costs into a new biennial circuit court costs appropriation, with expenditure authority of \$24,676,800 in each year.

Act 55 removed specific payment dates and authorized the Director of State Courts to act "at the direction of the Supreme Court," in defining "circuit court costs" for purposes of making payments. For consistency, the Director used the same payment calculation methodology from prior years for the circuit court support payment and guardian ad litem costs.

Under s. 758.19 (5), Wis. Stats., the Director of State Courts shall make payments to counties for circuit court costs. The Director, at the direction of the Supreme Court, approves each program funding level and payment schedule.

- 2019, the Director restructured the court interpreter program from a reimbursement program to a semi-annual payment program.
- 2019 Wisconsin Act 9 (2019-2021 biennial budget act) effective July 5, 2019 increased the circuit court costs appropriation by \$1,200,000 GPR in 2019-20 and \$2,400,000 GPR in 2020-21 for total expenditure authority of \$25,876,800 and \$27,076,800, respectively.
- 2021 Wisconsin Act 58 (2021-2023 biennial budget act), increased the circuit court costs appropriation by \$438,700 GPR in 2021-2022 and \$877,400 GPR in 2022-2023. The increases are intend to support and hold counties harmless for the addition of four new circuit court branches in August 2021, four branches in August 2022;

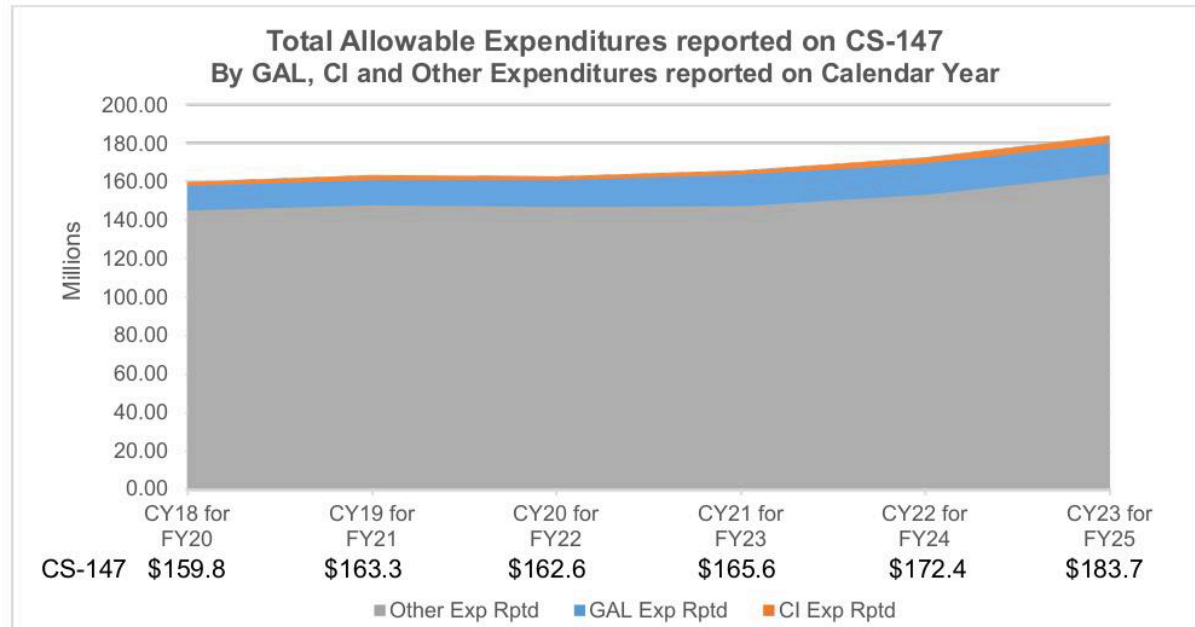
under 2019 Wisconsin Act 184, for total expenditure authority of \$27,515,500 and \$27,954,200, respectively.

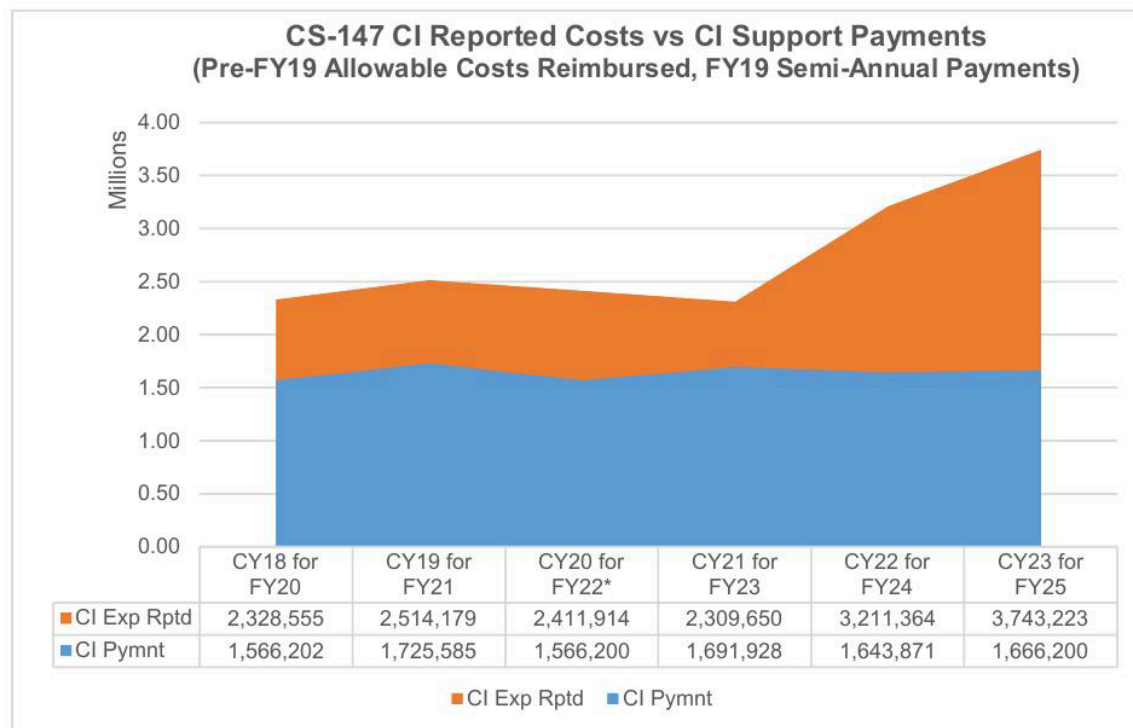
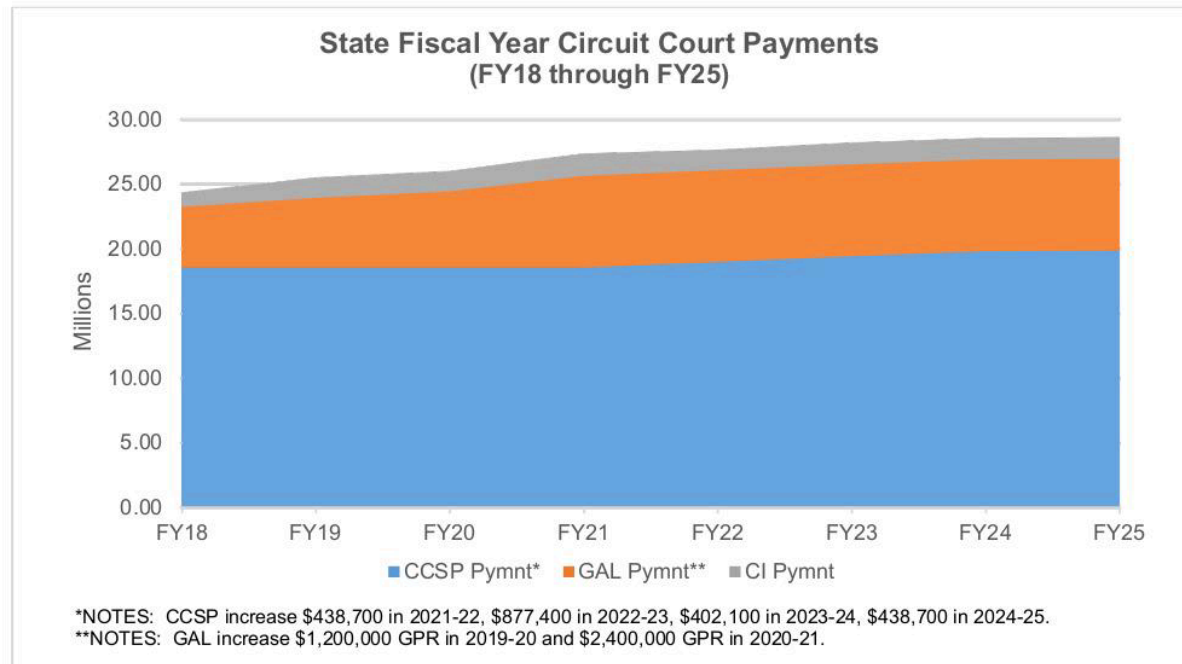
- 2023 Act 19 (2023-2025 biennial budget act), increased the circuit court costs appropriation for local assistance payments by \$402,100 in 2023-2024 and \$438,700 in 2024-2025. The increases are intended to support and hold counties harmless for the addition of four new circuit court branches in August 2023 under 2019 Wisconsin Act 184.

DRAFTING INSTRUCTIONS

Create new appropriation 20.625 (1)(kb) Circuit Court Support Program, the amounts in the schedule for support services for circuit court program costs for counties. All moneys received from the circuit court under appropriation 20.625 (1)(a) or (1)(k) or all monies transferred from any state agency or received for circuit court services provided by the court shall be credited to this appropriation account.

Attachment A





*CY20 Expenditures reported by Counties (CS-147 actual \$1,913,781) for FY22 Circuit Court Cost Payments adjusted by averaging CY19 and CY21 to smooth Court Interpreter usage impacted by the Pandemic, thus allowing for a more accurate projection of future costs.

STATUTORY LANGUAGE

Create new appropriation 20.625 (1)(kb) Circuit Court Support Program, the amounts in the schedule for support services for circuit court program costs for counties. All moneys received from the circuit court under appropriation 20.625 (1)(a) or (1)(k) or all monies transferred from any state agency or received for circuit court services provided by the court shall be credited to this appropriation account.

Decision Item by Line

2527 Biennial Budget

DEPARTMENT	CODES	TITLES
	625	Circuit Courts
DECISION ITEM	CODES	TITLES
	4100	Circuit Court Payment Support Position

	Expenditure Items	1st Year Cost	2nd Year Cost
01	Permanent Position Salaries	\$47,800	\$63,800
02	Turnover	\$0	\$0
03	Project Position Salaries	\$0	\$0
04	LTE/Misc. Salaries	\$0	\$0
05	Fringe Benefits	\$17,700	\$23,700
06	Supplies and Services	\$3,800	\$3,800
07	Permanent Property	\$0	\$0
08	Unallotted Reserve	\$0	\$0
09	Aids to Individuals & Organizations	\$0	\$0
10	Local Assistance	\$0	\$0
11	One-time Financing	\$0	\$0
12	Debt service	\$0	\$0
13		\$0	\$0
14		\$0	\$0
15		\$0	\$0
16		\$0	\$0
17	TOTAL	\$69,300	\$91,300
18	Project Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
19	Classified Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
20	Unclassified Positions Authorized	1.00	1.00

Decision Item by Numeric

2527 Biennial Budget

Circuit Courts

Program	Decision Item/Numeric	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
	4100 Circuit Court Payment Support Position				
01	Court operations				
	34 Circuit Court Support Programs	\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00
	Court operations Sub Total	\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00
	Circuit Court Payment Support Position Sub Total	\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00
	Agency Total	\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00

Decision Item by Fund Source

2527 Biennial Budget

Circuit Courts

Decision Item/Source of Funds		1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
4100 Circuit Court Payment Support Position					
PR	S	\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00
Circuit Court Payment Support Position Total		\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00
Agency Total		\$69,300	\$91,300	1.00	1.00

Decision Item (DIN) - 4200

Decision Item (DIN) Title - Court Interpreter Program Support Position

NARRATIVE

The Courts request 0.75 FTE PR-S permanent position in the 2025-2027 biennium to support the Court Interpreter Program.

Court Interpreter Program Support Position 0.75 FTE DIN 4200

Circuit Court

October 1, 2024

Summary

The court system requests 0.75 FTE Program Associate to support the Circuit Court Interpreter Program in the 2025-2027 biennium.

Item Description	Ch. 20	FY26 Total Yr 1	FY27 Total Yr 2	Biennial Cost
Program Associate (0.75 FTE)	20.625 (1)(kb) new	\$ 35,300	\$ 45,900	\$ 81,200

The requested position will perform tasks such as data entry and review, processing and logging registration payments, maintaining various program databases, proctoring the oral and written exam, and planning events, including securing space, scheduling speakers, overseeing registration, and preparing handouts and other training event materials. Having this position will allow the Court Interpreter Program Manager to focus more attention on program related questions, challenges, and additional needs including creating training opportunities and initiatives to assist with the interpreter shortage and language access challenges across the state, to continue moving our Court Interpreter Program forward.

Background

The Wisconsin Director of State Courts Office is committed to ensuring equal access to justice for all individuals throughout the court system. However, many individuals appearing in court are partially or completely excluded from participation due to disability (deafness) or because they speak a different language. To protect the rights of limited English proficient individuals the Director of State Courts office maintains a program to improve interpreter services by certifying candidates who wish to interpret during legal proceedings. Court interpreters are highly skilled professionals essential to the administration of justice.

Proposal

This proposal is for a 0.75 FTE Program Associate position to support the Court Interpreter Program. The total cost of the position would be \$35,300 PR-S in FY2025-26 and \$45,800 PR-S in FY2026-27 in the 2025-2027 biennium for additional support staff.

Cost of Proposal, Program Associate = 0.75 FTE PR-S

Position Title	Funding Source	FTE	FY26 Salary*	FY26 Fringe**	Supplies & Services	Annual Cost
Program Associate	PR 20.625 (1)(kb)	0.75	\$23,200	\$8,500	\$3,800	\$35,300
Position Title	Funding Source	FTE	FY27 Salary*	FY27 Fringe**	Supplies & Services	Annual Cost
Program Associate	PR 20.625 (1)(kb)	0.75	\$30,600	\$11,400	\$3,800	\$45,800

[1] FY26 estimates based on positions filled for 9 months.

* Salaries as of July 1, 2024

**Fringe 2025-2027

37.08%

ANALYSIS & JUSTIFICATION

The scope of responsibilities for managing the Court Interpreter Program has broadened over the last several years and are no longer able to be met by one individual. The current Program Manager is a trained court interpreter and has the skills and knowledge to manage the program very successfully. However, the Program Manager is in need of assistance with program support-oriented tasks that do not require specific expertise and knowledge of the interpreter program itself. These tasks include data entry and review, processing and logging registration payments, maintaining various program databases, proctoring the oral and written exam, and planning events, including securing space, scheduling speakers, overseeing registration, and preparing handouts and other training event materials. The current demands on the Program Manager to provide leadership and guidance is unsustainable within the current organizational structure. If additional program support is not provided, changes will need to be made as to how the court interpreter program is managed, including a reduction in the ability to recruit and train qualified interpreters. Those changes could negatively affect the availability of qualified interpreters, and would also decrease the coordination and support currently provided to counties. These impacts would have a negative consequence on the court system, as a whole, and on the ability for court hearings to be held as scheduled.

DRAFTING INSTRUCTIONS

Create new appropriation 20.625 (1)(kb) Circuit Court Support Program, the amounts in the schedule for support services for circuit court program costs for counties. All moneys received from the circuit court under appropriation 20.625 (1)(a) or (1)(k) or all monies transferred from any state agency or received for circuit court services provided by the court shall be credited to this appropriation account.

STATUTORY LANGUAGE

Create new appropriation 20.625 (1)(kb) Circuit Court Support Program, the amounts in the schedule for support services for circuit court program costs for counties. All moneys received from the circuit court under appropriation 20.625 (1)(a) or (1)(k) or all monies transferred from any state agency or received for circuit court services provided by the court shall be credited to this appropriation account.

Decision Item by Line

2527 Biennial Budget

DEPARTMENT	CODES	TITLES
	625	Circuit Courts
DECISION ITEM	CODES	TITLES
	4200	Court Interpreter Program Support Position

	Expenditure Items	1st Year Cost	2nd Year Cost
01	Permanent Position Salaries	\$23,000	\$30,600
02	Turnover	\$0	\$0
03	Project Position Salaries	\$0	\$0
04	LTE/Misc. Salaries	\$0	\$0
05	Fringe Benefits	\$8,500	\$11,400
06	Supplies and Services	\$3,800	\$3,800
07	Permanent Property	\$0	\$0
08	Unallotted Reserve	\$0	\$0
09	Aids to Individuals & Organizations	\$0	\$0
10	Local Assistance	\$0	\$0
11	One-time Financing	\$0	\$0
12	Debt service	\$0	\$0
13		\$0	\$0
14		\$0	\$0
15		\$0	\$0
16		\$0	\$0
17	TOTAL	\$35,300	\$45,800
18	Project Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
19	Classified Positions Authorized	0.00	0.00
20	Unclassified Positions Authorized	0.75	0.75

Decision Item by Numeric

2527 Biennial Budget

Circuit Courts

Program	Decision Item/Numeric	1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
	4200 Court Interpreter Program Support Position				
01	Court operations				
	34 Circuit Court Support Programs	\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75
	Court operations Sub Total	\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75
	Court Interpreter Program Support Position Sub Total	\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75
	Agency Total	\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75

Circuit Courts

Decision Item/Source of Funds		1st Year Total	2nd Year Total	1st Year FTE	2nd Year FTE
4200 Court Interpreter Program Support Position					
PR	S	\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75
Court Interpreter Program Support Position Total		\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75
Agency Total		\$35,300	\$45,800	0.75	0.75