

Iowa Judicial Branch FY 24 Budget Request Overview

Investing in Human Capital – Salary increases for judges and court staff: Total amount to be known upon the conclusion of contract negotiations.

Iowans in all 99 counties benefit from the services provided by the 1,700 judicial officers and employees. These judicial officers and employees are members of your communities. The education, experience and abilities of these individuals are the best assets of the judicial branch.

- This year’s requested judicial salary increase is based on the **8.7%** social security cost of living adjustment. **\$4,047,162**
- Increase in state’s contribution to Judicial Retirement System. **\$290,000**
- Operational increases: Salary adjustments for contract and non contract employees, the equitable extension of executive branch salary adjustments and the projected increase in health insurance rates are unknown at this time. The funding needed will be known upon the conclusion of contract negotiations.

Investing in Human Capital-New Personnel

- Year 3 of a five year plan to add 4 district associate judges and 10 staff (e.g. court reporters, judicial specialists, law clerks) to address increasing workload and provide more timely resolution of Iowans’ disputes. **\$1,364,118**
- Additional staff to fully implement best practices in finance, human resources, cybersecurity and security: **\$847,726**
- Additional judicial specialist positions in judicial districts: **\$260,747**
- Staff attorneys for the court of appeals and supreme court: **\$779,616**
 - Court of Appeals Staff Attorneys (2): The Iowa Court of Appeals currently decides around 1100 cases per year. In lieu of requesting the additional judges, the court has chosen the more economical alternative of relying on part-time senior judges. However, staff attorneys are needed to provide support for senior judges.
 - Supreme Court Staff Attorneys (6): The Iowa Supreme Court employs 1 law clerk per justice and 4 staff attorneys. In recent years, the court has devoted time to updating rules and forms, including EDMS rules, forms for self-represented litigants, civil, criminal, family, juvenile, and appellate rules. The 4 existing staff attorneys spend much of their time on rules and forms and are often unable to provide additional legal support on the 100+ published opinions that the Court decides annually.

Services for Iowa’s delinquent youth: \$15,543,000

HF 2507 required the transfer of Graduated Sanctions and Court Ordered Services funds from DHHS to the Judicial Branch.

Indigent Defense

There is an indigent defense crisis across the state. Contract attorneys are vital to ensuring that the rights of Iowans are maintained. While not part of the judicial branch budget, the judicial branch supports efforts to increase funding for indigent defense across the state.

FY 2023 appropriation \$ 190,100,550

FY 2024 budget request \$197,689,919 (increase of \$7,589,369 (4%))