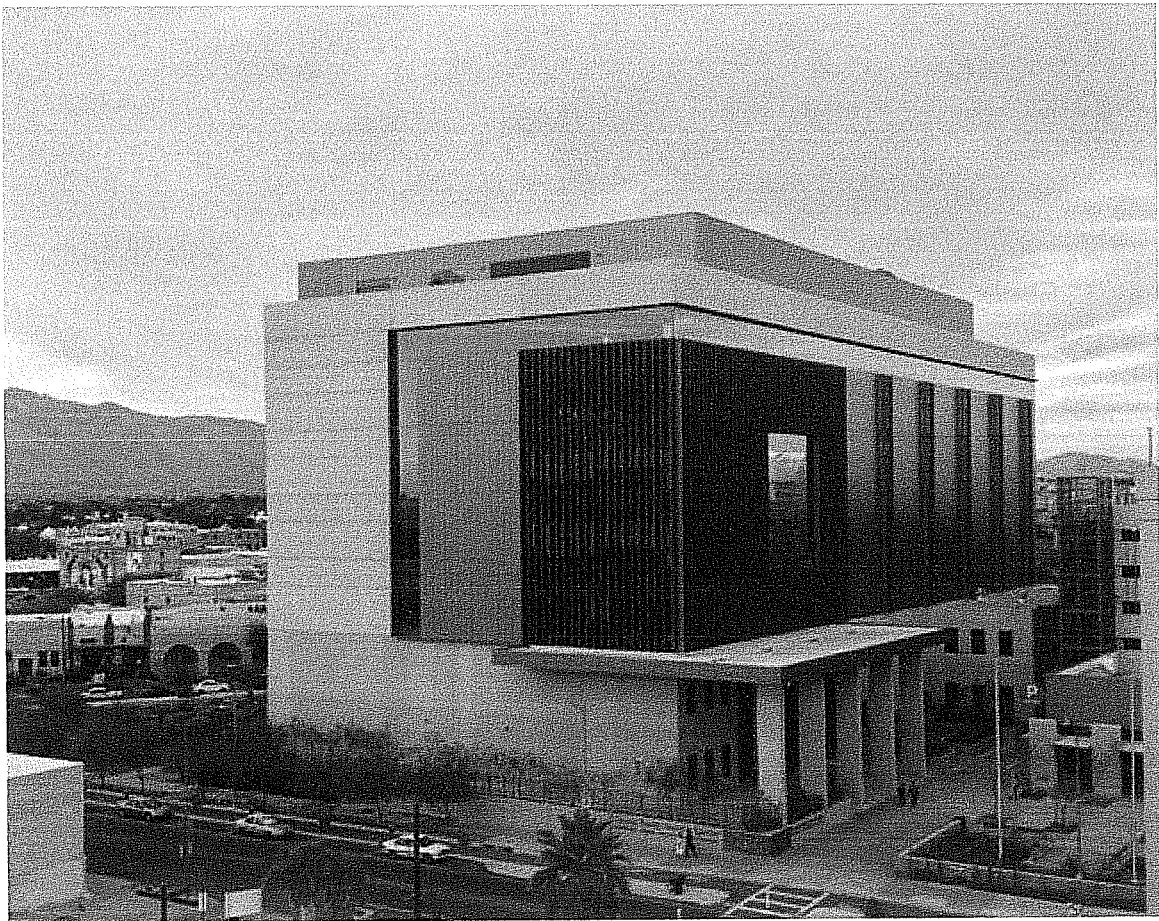


Pima County Consolidated Justice Court FY 2018-2019 Budget Submission Executive Summary



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PCCJC FY2018-2019 Executive Summary

General Fund Expenditures

For fiscal year 2018-2019, the Pima County Consolidated Justice Court (PCCJC) General Fund base budget is \$7,175,175. The court has 116 general fund FTE's and an additional 18.5 FTE's funded by special revenues.

General Fund Revenues

Revenues are budgeted at the target level of \$6,866,692, unchanged from FY18. Court revenues currently exceed our targeted budget by 2% as a result of the new state-wide FARE collections program. However, legislation introduced and passed this year may have a negative impact on revenue in the coming year. This may be offset by the increase in civil filings and civil traffic cases.

Special Revenue Funds

Below are brief updates of our most significant special revenue funds:

Judicial Collection Enhancement Fund

The Judicial Collection Enhancement Fund (JCEF) has an annual revenue stream of approximately \$300,000. During FY19 the Court will utilize these funds to provide funding for two call center agents. Incoming calls have increased to over 157,000 annually compared to 99,000 just two years ago. The increase is attributed to the change in collection vendors. When the court contracted with Valley Collection Services, the vendor fielded all calls regarding collections. Under the statewide FARE program it became the court's responsibility. In order to maintain an abandonment rate of less than 10% it is necessary to increase staffing levels. JCEF monies also fund eight civil case management clerks because civil case filings have continued to increase annually. In FY18 the court anticipates over 3,000 more filings than the previous year. Civil case filings generate the most paperwork and are the most complicated cases to process.

Justice Court Automation Fund

The Court Automation Fund has an annual revenue stream of approximately \$500,000. FY19 funds will be utilized for the computer replacements, software licenses and six staff. The court has an outstanding IT department. IT staff continually work to automate court processes which result in significant dollar savings in staff resources and general fund expenses.

Justice Court FARE Special Revenue Fund

With PCCJC's implementation of the State FARE program, the Court now receives an annual disbursement of funds from the State. In FY18, the Court received a disbursement of nearly \$195,000.00. Implementation of FARE has dramatically increased our call volume as well as individuals at our customer service windows. Funding has been utilized to employ four case processing clerks and one call center agent necessary due to the increased workload of the state collections program.

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Innovations in Process

PCCJC prides itself on exceptional customer service, improved access to courts and engaging in cooperative partnerships with other county departments to create efficiencies system-wide. To this end we dedicated our resources in FY18 to the following:

- Implemented post-card reminders to defendants and litigants resulting in savings in staff resources and operational expenditures. Over 7300 mailers have been sent since March 2018.
- Automated the evictions caseload creating paper-less "files. This has increased efficiency on the bench, and significantly saved staff resources and supplies.
- Implemented a Defensive Driving School (DDS) portal. DDS schools send payments to the court electronically instead of manual checks that took numerous staff hours to process.
- Developed a fine payment application that automatically applies one fine payment to multiple cases. Future efforts will entail consolidating all cases into one single payment plan rather than applying funds individually to multiple cases.
- Developed a bulk mail application that includes bar codes for returned mail. This has significantly reduced the time it takes to process returned mail.
- Partnered with Pima Animal Care Center to create a community restitution program.
- Improved the management and adjudication of cases which has in turn reduced pro tem expenses. For the first time in several years we will under-spend our pro tem budget.
- Improved access to justice by providing greater services on-line such as submitting motions and proofs of licenses, insurance and vehicle registration, audio requests and access to the court calendar via a mobile phone.

MacArthur Grant Initiatives

In cooperation with the County and other local courts, the Court has implemented and/or continued several programs to meet the goals of the MacArthur Grant - namely reducing jail days and creating improved access to justice by bringing the court into the community. To that end the court has:

- Contacted defendants through automated phone and text messages of hearing dates, payment due dates, and active warrants.
- Implemented monthly "Night Court" and quarterly "Saturday Court". To date approximately 6,000 people have benefited from these events. Over 1,500 warrants have been quashed, and just under 1,000 driver licenses reinstated.
- Quashed 4,960 warrants in coordination with the county attorney's office. Active warrants are now just below 13,000, an all-time low.

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- Reduced jail days by accelerating the Pretrial Conference hearing for in-custody defendants and approving Home Detention for the majority of defendants sentenced to a jail term.

FY2018-2019 Initiatives

In keeping with our goal to improve efficiencies and reduce expenditures, the Court will be working on the following initiatives in FY19:

- Eliminate expensive carbon copy forms and provide fill-able forms on-line. This should significantly reduce printing costs as well as improving customer service.
- Create the ability to bar code documents which will save considerable staff resources. This will allow us to reallocate staff to other high volume areas of the court.
- Distribute warrants to law enforcement agencies and the county attorney electronically reducing costs and enhancing efficiency.
- Partner with University of Arizona Police to file citations electronically saving numerous staff hours processing paper citations.

FY2018-2019 Challenges

In FY19 the court will be faced with some challenges primarily as a result of newly passed legislation. HB2169 authorizes a judge to mitigate civil traffic fines if the fine would be a hardship on the defendant or his/her family. Consequently, judges are more likely to impose much lower fines or Community Restitution. This may negatively impact revenues; however, defendants may actually be able to pay their fine, if affordable, rather than having it go into collections. Further, judges may order defendants to perform their community restitution with county agencies which, in turn, benefit our community. The bill also changes the classification of Driving on a Suspended License from a misdemeanor to a civil traffic violation. While it will increase civil traffic hearings, it should decrease criminal arraignments as well as warrants issued for failure to appear.

In addition to legislative changes, the Administrative Office of the Courts recently entered into a new contract with the FARE collections vendor. These changes take effect January 2019 and will require significant modifications to our case management system. This will consume the court's IT resources for several months preventing our ability to continue technological advancements in the court.

Conclusion

The judges and staff of PCCJC are committed to advancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the court. Not satisfied by the status quo, the court will continue to strive to take advantage of technology whenever possible to enhance court services, reduce costs and partner with other agencies to achieve greater results.