



February 13, 2026

Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors
Tucson, Arizona

Re: Proposed Division Director, Justice Court Classification – February 17, 2026 Agenda Item

Chair and Members of the Board,

It has come to the attention of several Justices of the Peace that a new job classification titled *Division Director, Justice Court* is being introduced by the Pima County Superior Court and is scheduled for consideration on your February 17, 2026 agenda.

Based on available information, this position appears to arise from Administrative Order 2025-207, which transferred administrative authority of the Ajo Justice Court to the Superior Court. Since December 3, 2025, the elected Justice of the Peace for Ajo has formally requested documentation identifying the factual basis for that administrative action. To date, no such documentation has been provided. Prior to Administrative Order 2025-207, the Ajo Justice Court operated for many years without this level of external administrative supervision.

Prior to AO 2025-207, Ajo Justice Court completed its three-year audit cycle. The Senior Statistical Analyst with the Court Services Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts provided a positive evaluation of the court's statistical reporting, and recently Pima County Superior Court conducted its own financial review with no findings.

Currently, the Ajo Justice Court reports through multiple levels within the Superior Court administrative structure, including Daniela Buchberger (Ajo Court Administrator/Deputy Director), Xavier Verdugo (Director/Consolidated Court Operations Manager), Tina Matteson (Superior Court Deputy Director for Consolidated Justice Court), and Ron Overholt (Superior Court Administrator). Laine McDonald serves as the Superior Court Liaison for the Consolidated Justice Court, and Cassandra Urias, Superior Court Deputy Director, provides additional assistance. Ralph Garcia and Anthony Elias, also provide court management training and operational support.

The addition of a new Division Director position would further expand this supervisory structure. For a small rural justice court, the cumulative level of administrative oversight raises legitimate questions regarding proportionality, fiscal efficiency, and long-term necessity—particularly in the absence of publicly documented findings identifying the need for expanded supervision.

Establishing a permanent classification tied to these administrative transfers may also suggest that the current arrangements are intended to continue indefinitely. If the underlying

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Administrative Orders were modified or rescinded, it is unclear what transition plan would govern the continuation or dissolution of positions created pursuant to those orders. Accordingly, we respectfully request clarification on the following:

1. If Administrative Order 2025-207 were rescinded, what would occur with respect to this proposed position?
2. If the Administrative Orders transferring administrative authority from the Pima County Consolidated Justice Court were rescinded, what transition plan exists?
3. What timeline, if any, governs the duration of these supervisory arrangements?
4. Are these positions structured with sunset provisions or contingency language tied to the continuation of the underlying Administrative Orders?

Before the County approves an additional position with significant salary and long-term benefit obligations, we respectfully request an opportunity to meet with the Board to discuss:

- The projected cost of this classification, including long-term fiscal exposure;
- The cumulative amount the County has paid to date for supervisory functions provided by the Superior Court;
- The legal authority relied upon for continued supervision; and
- The anticipated end dates, transition plans, or restoration framework for local administrative control.

This request is not made in opposition to responsible court administration. Rather, it is made in the interest of fiscal transparency, procedural fairness, and public trust. As elected judicial officers accountable to the voters of our precincts, we believe meaningful dialogue is appropriate before further structural or financial commitments are made.

We respectfully ask that consideration of this position be deferred until these issues can be addressed publicly.

Thank you for your service to the residents of Pima County. We remain available at your convenience.

Respectfully,

Hon. Sara Mae Williams
Presiding Justice of the Peace
Pima County
Ajo Justice Court

Hon. Charlene Pesquiera
Justice of the Peace
Pima County Precinct 4
PCCJC

Hon. Renee Garza
Justice of the Peace
Pima County, Precinct 9
PCCJC