

Redbook

LBO Analysis of Executive Budget Proposal

Judiciary/Supreme Court

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Attachment:

Appropriation Spreadsheet

LBO Redbook

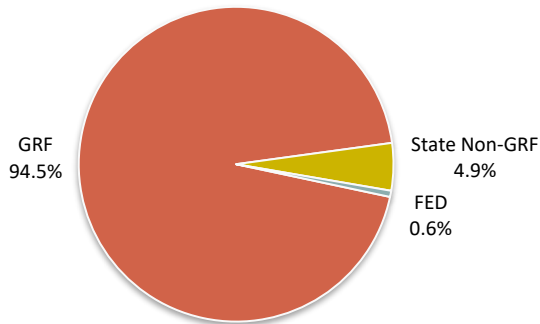
Judiciary/Supreme Court

Quick look...

- The Judiciary/Supreme Court’s (JSC) budget consists of three major components: (1) the operation of the Supreme Court, (2) the payment of the salaries and benefits of Ohio’s judges, and (3) the payment of the salaries and benefits of the employees of the district courts of appeals.
- Total budget recommendations: \$233.1 million in FY 2026 and \$239.5 million in FY 2027.
 - Sources of the budget: GRF (94.5%), state non-GRF (4.8%), and federal grants (0.6%).
 - Approximately 90.5% of the Court’s budget is for personal services (payroll).

Fund Group	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
General Revenue (GRF)	\$197,140,018	\$214,242,000	\$219,804,388	\$226,851,250
Dedicated Purpose (DPF)	\$11,338,418	\$11,500,909	\$11,190,583	\$11,193,522
Fiduciary (FID)	\$220,390	\$308,500	\$313,800	\$318,500
Federal (FED)	\$2,005,662	\$1,810,355	\$1,810,907	\$1,157,600
Total	\$210,704,487	\$227,861,764	\$233,119,678	\$239,520,872
% change		8.1%	2.3%	2.7%
GRF % change		8.7%	2.6%	3.2%

**Chart 1: JSC Budget by Fund Group
FY 2026-FY 2027 Biennium**



**Chart 2: JSC Budget by Expense Category
FY 2026-FY 2027 Biennium**



Biennial total: \$472.6 million

Agency overview

As specified in Article IV of the Ohio Constitution, the Supreme Court of Ohio can be viewed as having two distinct general requirements:

- Ruling upon legal matters, including cases arising under the U.S. Constitution or the Ohio Constitution, cases originating in the courts of appeals, cases in which there have been conflicting opinions on the same question from courts of appeals, cases involving the death penalty, and appeals arising from the actions of certain administrative agencies;
- Regulating the admission to and practice of law, promulgating rules of practice and procedure in Ohio courts, and exercising general superintendence over all Ohio courts.

The Court itself is comprised of a chief justice and six justices who are elected in even-numbered years to six-year terms. The majority of the cases heard by the Court are appeals from the state’s 12 district courts of appeals.

Summary of proposed budget

The proposed budget provides a total appropriation of \$233.1 million in FY 2026 and \$239.5 million in FY 2027. The table and Chart 1 shown in the “**Quick look**” section present the recommended appropriations by fund group. As shown on Chart 1, GRF accounts for 94.5% of the Court’s budget during the biennium followed by state non-GRF (4.8%) and federal (0.6%).

Chart 2 in the “**Quick look**” section shows the recommended appropriations by object of expense. Of the total biennial appropriation recommendation, 90.5%, or \$427.8 million, is allocated for payroll costs; followed by purchased personal services (3.1%, or \$14.7 million); supplies, maintenance, and equipment (3.8%, or \$18.0 million); and subsidies (2.6%, or \$12.2 million). The remainder, or \$24,000, is allocated to transfers and nonexpense.

Analysis of FY 2026-FY 2027 budget proposal

R.C. 107.03(D) states that “no alterations shall be made in the [budget] requests for the legislative and judicial branches of the state filed with the director of budget and management” Therefore, the Governor has made no alterations to the budget request submitted by the Supreme Court of Ohio.

Operating Expenses – Judiciary/Supreme Court (ALI 005321)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
GRF ALI 005321, Operating Expenses – Judiciary/Supreme Court					
\$183,306,685	\$183,949,969	\$191,727,723	\$207,543,000	\$213,543,246	\$220,494,519
% change	0.4%	4.2%	8.2%	2.9%	3.3%

This GRF line item’s appropriation, which is expected to support nearly 92% of the Court’s total biennial budget, is allocated for three major expenditure categories, in order of magnitude, as follows: (1) the payment of the state portion of the salaries and benefits of more than 700 judges, (2) the operating costs of the Court’s administrative structure, and (3) the payment of

salaries and benefits for 292 staff of the appellate courts. The cost projections for each of these categories is shown in the table below followed by a detailed description of each category of expense.

Major Expenditure Categories of GRF Line Item 005321		
Components	Estimated FY 2026 GRF Cost	Estimated FY 2027 GRF Cost
Judges' Salaries	\$126,353,392	\$128,767,363
Courts of Appeals Staff	\$42,474,657	\$44,847,297
Administrative Operations	\$44,715,197	\$46,879,859
Total	\$213,543,246	\$220,494,519

Compensation

Judges' salaries

This category of expense includes the following:

1. The state's portion of the salaries and benefits of the justices and judges of certain Ohio courts: seven justices of the Supreme Court (state share 100%), 69 judges of the courts of appeals (state share 100%), 394 judges of the courts of common pleas (state share approximately 93%), and 249 judges of the municipal and county courts (state share approximately 60%);
2. Each of the 88 clerks of the courts of common pleas is provided additional compensation equal to one-eighth of the annual amount of that clerk for acting as the clerk of the court of appeals; and
3. Each retired judge sitting on a court of common pleas, a court of appeals, a municipal court, or a county court is paid a per diem for each calendar day worked. The Chief Justice is vested with the authority to assign temporarily a judge to serve in a court. The requested budget includes intermittent use of 109 retired assigned judges.

Courts of appeals staff

This component funds 100% of the salaries and fringe benefits for 292 staff of the state's 12 courts of appeals.

Administrative operations of the Supreme Court

This category of expense includes the Court's administrative structure, including the following divisions: Administrative, Clerk, Legal Resources, Judicial and Education Services, Court Services, Information Technology, and Facilities Management. There are an estimated 231 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff positions that support the Court's administrative operations.

Pay increases

S.B. 296 of the 132nd General Assembly established a ten-year schedule of salary increases for statewide elected officials, members of the General Assembly, judges, and the majority of local elected officials beginning in CY 2019 generally and in CY 2020 for judges. Additionally,

certain nonjudicial job classifications may be subject to pay increases during the upcoming biennium. Fringe benefits increases are also anticipated (e.g., health insurance costs). For all judges, court of appeals staff, and administrative staff, the Supreme Court anticipates GRF outlays of \$213.5 million in FY 2026 and \$220.5 million in FY 2027. For comparison, GRF compensation costs for FY 2025 are estimated to total \$207.5 million.

S.B. 296 increased the annual salaries of the Ohio Supreme Court justices and judges of the courts of appeals, courts of common pleas, municipal courts, and county courts by 1.75% over the preceding calendar year through CY 2028. The state will pay for all of the increases, as the local shares of judicial salaries will be held at their current levels.

The state pays one-eighth of the county-paid compensation for common pleas court clerks also serving as the clerk of the court of appeals. For CY 2026 and CY 2027, the total annual statewide increases will be \$13,700 and \$13,950, respectively.

State Criminal Sentencing Commission (ALI 005401)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
GRF ALI 005401, State Criminal Sentencing Commission					
\$1,043,838	\$1,111,321	\$1,044,890	\$2,481,000	\$1,506,142	\$1,601,731
% change	6.5%	-6.0%	137.4%	-39.3%	6.3%

This GRF line item is used for the operation of the State Criminal Sentencing Commission which is a 31-member commission originally created by S.B. 258 of the 118th General Assembly. The Commission reviews sentencing statutes and sentencing patterns and makes recommendations on statutory changes to the General Assembly.

Law-Related Education (ALI 005406)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
GRF ALI 005406, Law-Related Education					
\$212,500	\$487,500	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
% change	129.4%	-23.1%	0.0%	-33.3%	0.0%

This line item is earmarked in full by the executive budget for law-related education. In each fiscal year, \$250,000 is earmarked for distribution to the Ohio Center for Law-Related Education for the purposes of providing continuing citizenship education activities to primary and secondary students, expanding delinquency prevention programs, increasing activities for at-risk youth, and accessing additional public and private money for new programs. The Center is a nonprofit organization that delivers a variety of law-related and citizenship education programs and materials to teachers and students of primary and secondary schools.

Ohio Courts Technology Initiative (ALI 005409)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
GRF ALI 005409, Ohio Courts Technology Initiative					
\$3,572,075	\$3,703,286	\$3,992,406	\$3,843,000	\$4,505,000	\$4,505,000
% change	3.7%	7.8%	-3.7%	17.2%	0.0%

This GRF line item's appropriation is used to facilitate the exchange of information and warehousing of data by and between Ohio courts and other justice system partners, including: (1) the continuing development and maintenance of the Ohio Courts Network (OCN), (2) operation of the Commission on Technology and the Courts which aids in the orderly adoption and use of technology in the courts, and (3) grants to local courts to support the adoption and use of relevant technology.

Attorney Services (ALI 005605)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
DPF Fund 4C80 ALI 005605, Attorney Services					
\$10,652,457	\$10,711,296	\$10,965,598	\$10,856,149	\$10,718,083	\$10,721,022
% change	0.6%	2.4%	-1.0%	-1.3%	0.0%

This line item is used to pay for various services and activities of the Court, including the Office of Disciplinary Counsel, the Board of Commissioners on Grievances and Discipline, the Clients' Security Fund, and the Attorney Services Division. The line item is supported by money appropriated from the Attorney Registration Fund (Fund 4C80), which consists of attorney registration and continuing legal education fees. The available funding is expected to support 43 full-time equivalent staff positions.

Temporary law. A related ongoing temporary law provision: (1) increases the line item's appropriation if deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of the Court, (2) prohibits the Director of Budget and Management or the Controlling Board from transferring money from Fund 4C80 to any other fund, and (3) requires any interest earned on the fund's money be credited to the fund.

Court Interpreter Certification (ALI 005617)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
DPF Fund 5HTO ALI 005617, Court Interpreter Certification					
\$372	\$7,000	\$0	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000
% change	1,781.7%	-100.0%	--	0.0%	0.0%

This line item provides for language experts to rate, or grade, the oral examinations of those applying to become certified court interpreters. It is supported by money appropriated from the Court Interpreter Fund (Fund 5HT0), which consists of court interpreter certification fees. The proposed budget allocates 100% of each fiscal year's appropriation for purchased personal services (i.e., contracts for services).

Temporary law. A related temporary law provision: (1) increases the line item's appropriation if deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of the Court, (2) prohibits the Director of Budget and Management or the Controlling Board from transferring money from Fund 5HT0 to any other fund, and (3) requires any interest earned on the fund's money be credited to the fund.

Civil Justice Grant Program (ALI 005626)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
DPF Fund 5SP0 ALI 005626, Civil Justice Grant Program					
\$369,899	\$327,055	\$331,484	\$500,000	\$425,000	\$425,000
% change	-11.6%	1.4%	50.8%	-15.0%	0.0%

This line item is used for grants to not-for-profit organizations and agencies dedicated to providing legal aid to underserved populations, to fund innovative programs directed at this purpose, and to increase access to the judicial services of that population. It is supported by money appropriated from the Civil Justice Grant Program Fund (Fund 5SP0), which consists of: (1) \$150 of every pro hac vice fee charged to attorneys from other states trying cases in Ohio, and (2) revenues from a voluntary \$50 donation made as part of the biennium attorney registration process.

Temporary law. A related temporary law provision: (1) increases the line item's appropriation if deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of the Court, (2) prohibits the Director of Budget and Management or the Controlling Board from transferring any of the money in Fund 5SP0 to any other fund, and (3) requires any interest earned on the fund's money be credited to the fund.

Grants and Awards (ALI 005609)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
DPF Fund 5T80 ALI 005609, Grants and Awards					
\$7,084	\$90,465	\$294	\$90,760	\$1,000	\$1,000
% change	1,177.0%	-99.7%	30,766.5%	-98.9%	0.0%

This line item is used to distribute grants and awards that the Court has received for a designated purpose or purposes and credited to the Grants and Awards Fund (Fund 5T80). Of significance, the fund received \$90,000 from the Cleveland Foundation in FY 2023 to promote

fair sentencing across county courts, and to accelerate the participation of the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas in the Ohio sentencing data platform. Although, originally budgeted, the Court does not expect to receive any grant money to this line item in FY 2025.

Temporary law. A related ongoing temporary law provision: (1) increases the line item's appropriation if deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of the Court, (2) prohibits the Director of Budget and Management and the Controlling Board from transferring money from Fund 5T80 to any other fund, and (3) requires any interest earned on the fund's money be credited to the state's GRF.

Continuing Judicial Education (ALI 005601)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
DPF Fund 6720 ALI 005601, Continuing Judicial Education					
\$50,000	\$36,416	\$41,042	\$45,000	\$37,500	\$37,500
% change	-27.2%	12.7%	9.6%	-16.7%	0.0%

This line item is used to pay for the expense of providing continuing education courses to judges and other court personnel. It is supported by money appropriated from the Judiciary/Supreme Court Education Fund (Fund 6720), which largely consists of fees paid by judges and other court personnel for attending continuing education courses.

Temporary law. A related, ongoing temporary law provision: (1) increases the line item's appropriation if deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of the Court, (2) prohibits the Director of Budget and Management or the Controlling Board from transferring moneys from Fund 6720 to any other fund, and (3) requires any interest earned on the fund's money be credited to the fund.

County Law Library Resources Boards (ALI 005620)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
FID Fund 5JY0 ALI 005620, County Law Library Resources Boards					
\$208,014	\$247,224	\$220,390	\$308,500	\$313,800	\$318,500
% change	18.8%	-10.9%	40.0%	1.7%	1.5%

This line item, which consists of money forwarded from each county law library resources fund and credited to the Statewide Consortium of County Law Library Resources Boards Fund (Fund 5JY0), provides funding for the operation of the Statewide Consortium of County Law Library Resources Boards. The Consortium was established in 2011 for the purposes of: (1) negotiating contracts that each county law library resources board may use for purchasing or obtaining access to legal research and reference materials, (2) cataloging existing resources held by county law library resources boards and facilitate the sharing of those resources,

(3) developing and recommending guidelines for the collection of or access to legal resources, and (4) providing consultation and assistance to county law library resources boards.

Temporary law. A related temporary law provision: (1) increases the line item’s appropriation if deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of the Court, (2) prohibits the Director of Budget and Management or the Controlling Board from transferring money from Fund 5JY0 to any other fund, and (3) requires any interest earned on the fund’s money be credited to the fund.

Federal Grants (ALI 005603)

FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Introduced	FY 2027 Introduced
FED Fund 3J00 ALI 005603, Federal Grants					
\$1,702,057	\$2,078,008	\$2,005,662	\$1,810,355	\$1,810,907	\$1,157,600
% change	22.1%	-3.5%	-9.7%	0.0%	-36.1%

This line item is used to support grants awarded by the federal government.

Temporary law. A related, ongoing temporary law provision: (1) increases the line item’s appropriation if deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of the Court, (2) prohibits the Director of Budget and Management and the Controlling Board from transferring money from Fund 3J00 to any other fund, and (3) requires any interest earned on the fund’s money be transferred or credited to the state’s GRF.

**FY 2026 - FY 2027 Appropriations - As Introduced
All Fund Groups - Detail**

Main Operating Appropriations Bill

Detail by Agency			FY 2024	Estimate FY 2025	Introduced FY 2026	Introduced FY 2027	FY 2025 to FY 2026 % Change	FY 2026 to FY 2027 % Change
JSC Judiciary/Supreme Court								
GRF	005321	Operating Expenses - Judiciary/Supreme Court	\$191,727,723	\$207,543,000	\$213,543,246	\$220,494,519	2.89%	3.26%
GRF	005401	State Criminal Sentencing Commission	\$1,044,890	\$2,481,000	\$1,506,142	\$1,601,731	-39.29%	6.35%
GRF	005406	Law-Related Education	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	-33.33%	0.00%
GRF	005409	Ohio Courts Technology Initiative	\$3,992,406	\$3,843,000	\$4,505,000	\$4,505,000	17.23%	0.00%
General Revenue Fund Subtotal			\$197,140,018	\$214,242,000	\$219,804,388	\$226,851,250	2.60%	3.21%
4C80	005605	Attorney Services	\$10,965,598	\$10,856,149	\$10,718,083	\$10,721,022	-1.27%	0.03%
5HT0	005617	Court Interpreter Certification	\$0	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	0.00%	0.00%
5SP0	005626	Civil Justice Grant Program	\$331,484	\$500,000	\$425,000	\$425,000	-15.00%	0.00%
5T80	005609	Grants and Awards	\$294	\$90,760	\$1,000	\$1,000	-98.90%	0.00%
6720	005601	Continuing Judicial Education	\$41,042	\$45,000	\$37,500	\$37,500	-16.67%	0.00%
Dedicated Purpose Fund Group Subtotal			\$11,338,418	\$11,500,909	\$11,190,583	\$11,193,522	-2.70%	0.03%
5JY0	005620	County Law Library Resources Boards	\$220,390	\$308,500	\$313,800	\$318,500	1.72%	1.50%
Fiduciary Fund Group Subtotal			\$220,390	\$308,500	\$313,800	\$318,500	1.72%	1.50%
3J00	005603	Federal Grants	\$2,005,662	\$1,810,355	\$1,810,907	\$1,157,600	0.03%	-36.08%
Federal Fund Group Subtotal			\$2,005,662	\$1,810,355	\$1,810,907	\$1,157,600	0.03%	-36.08%
Judiciary/Supreme Court Total			\$210,704,487	\$227,861,764	\$233,119,678	\$239,520,872	2.31%	2.75%
Main Operating Appropriations Bill Total			\$210,704,487	\$227,861,764	\$233,119,678	\$239,520,872	2.31%	2.75%