

NYS Division of Budget

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor
Mary Beth Labate, Budget Director

Judiciary

[Commentary of the Governor on the Judiciary Budget](#) (PDF)

Agency Web Site: <http://www.nycourts.gov/admin/financialops/Budgets.shtml> 

Mission

The Judiciary is one of the three branches of New York State government. The mission of the Judiciary is to provide a forum for the fair and prompt resolution of civil and family disputes, criminal charges, disputes between citizens and the state, and challenges to government action. Other matters within the jurisdiction of the Judiciary are administration of decedents' estates, presiding over adoptions and proceedings to protect children and incapacitated persons, and regulation of the admission of lawyers to the Bar and their conduct and discipline. Each year more than four million new cases are filed in the New York State Courts.

Budget Highlights

The Judiciary's General Fund Operating Budget requests \$1.85 billion, excluding fringe benefits, for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. This represents a cash increase of \$36.3 million, or 2.0%. The appropriation request is \$1.87 billion, which represents a \$48.2 million, or 2.6%, increase.

After five years of essentially flat budgets from 2009-10 to 2013-14, the 2014-15 enacted budget was a step toward ameliorating the harm caused by the no-growth budgets while also addressing cost increases. In 2015-16, the Judiciary will again face significant cost increases including mandatory salary increases for represented nonjudicial employees and contractual security increases. In addition, this budget reflects new and annualized costs for 25 Family Court judgeships authorized during 2014 and City Court judgeships authorized in 2013.

To meet these costs and the constitutional duty to maintain service to the public, it is necessary for the Judiciary to seek an increase in the 2015-16 budget. The proposed budget would allow the courts to maintain their current staffing levels, and fill a limited number of positions that are critical to operations. Funds would also be used to ensure that courtrooms can remain open to the public until 5 p.m. each day. Additional funds are also requested for civil legal services to ensure that the most vulnerable New Yorkers are not without counsel in cases involving the essentials of life.

The Judiciary's All Funds budget request for Fiscal Year 2015-2016, excluding fringe benefits, totals \$2.09 billion, an appropriation increase of \$51.3 million or 2.5% over the 2014-2015 All Funds budget. In addition to the requested increase in the General Fund, increases are requested in the Judiciary Data Processing Offset Fund, and the Attorney Licensing Fund. As with the General Fund, these increases are requested to allow the Judiciary to maintain current staffing levels and fill a limited number of positions that are critical to court operations.

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Exhibit 7-a