



COUNCIL BUDGET STAFF REPORT

CITY COUNCIL of SALT LAKE CITY

TO: City Council Members

FROM: Sylvia Richards
Policy and Budget Analyst

DATE: May 21, 2024

RE: FY2025 BUDGET - JUSTICE COURT

PROJECT TIMELINE:

Briefing: May 21, 2024

Budget Hearings: May 21 and
June 4, 2024

Potential Action: June 11 or 13,
2024

ISSUE AT-A-GLANCE

The Justice Court handles misdemeanor criminal citations, small claims, traffic citations, and traffic school for moving violations. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget proposes a total budget of \$5,958,110 and 43 full-time employees. There is an increase of \$468,390 or 8.5% as compared to the FY 2024 Adopted budget. The proposed budget does not include any new programs or services.

Information regarding the proposed budget is included on pages 49, 51, 57-58 and 209-213 of the Mayor's Recommended Budget Book FY 2025.

The primary increases to the budget include:

Request for 1.0 New FTE - Community Outreach Case Manager (\$73,635 for ten months or \$88,363 annually including benefits)

The Justice Court indicates it has increased its efforts to assist individuals who are unhoused. The number of individuals who were seen in court in 2024 has increased by 20%, and the number of cases heard in 2024 has increased by 103% as compared to 2022. As a result of the increase, the Mayor's Recommended Budget requests a dedicated Case Manager position to investigate, organize and assist with the needs of the homeless population.

Request for 10-Passenger Van (\$62,000)

Due to the increased demands to assist the unhoused in various ways, the Court is requesting a 10-passenger van for their ongoing needs. The Court Administration indicates that the "weekly demand of the current outreach events with employees and equipment, secondary meetings, conferences,



training etc., the Court is trying to be as efficient and effective as possible with transportation needs. They indicate they have outgrown the Fleet Services loaner program. **NOTE: The funding request of \$62,000 for the van was moved to the Fleet budget which will be reviewed by the Council on May 30th.**

Additional personnel and compensation items

- \$(3,125) Pension Change
- \$15,375 Personal Services Base to Base Changes
- \$25,250 Health Savings Account
- \$90,540 Insurance Rate Increase
- \$251,987 Salary Proposal

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Performance measurements for the Justice Court are found on the last page of this staff report.

Remote Hearings vs. In-Person Hearings

Based on information provided by the Justice Court, the statistics below indicate that while remote hearings are highly preferred, in-person hearings are increasing.

	FY23	FY24
Annual Total Sessions*	1,069	1157
Remote	863 or 80.73%	809 or 69.92%
In-Person	206 or 19.27%	348 or 30.8%

*A "session" for purposes of tracking is defined as any given timeslot on a judge's calendar on any given day. Each timeslot can contain multiple hearings.

Court patrons are scheduling their arraignment hearings through doodle software which allows them to select a date and time that works for their schedule, which has drastically decreased the failure to appear rate, and is a valuable service provided to the community.

Familiar Faces

Familiar Faces is an example of one Justice Court program which reaches out to individuals experiencing homelessness who may have multiple low-level offenses and frequent interactions with law enforcement and the criminal courts. Working with community partners, the goal is to provide resources such as housing, employment, peer support and other benefits in a familiar, accessible, environment. Court cases can be dismissed if participants demonstrate willingness to complete incremental tasks each week indicating improvement in their quality of life and self-sufficiency, and access to resources to exit homelessness. This program promotes stability, accountability, access to court and community resources.

The program was implemented in August of 2023, and the Court is currently working on program structure, a needs questionnaire, and data collection. Current data includes the number of events, participants, and cases. With the needs questionnaire, and future planning, the Court will be able to gather additional data regarding common barriers, outcomes, and potentially recidivism.

Justice Court Background

The Salt Lake City Justice Court is the largest municipal Court in the State of Utah with a very high volume of misdemeanor cases. The Court is a limited jurisdiction Court under the umbrella of the Utah State Court system.

The Justice Court is responsible for and processes Class B and C misdemeanor, infractions and small claims cases, jury trials, appeals and expungements, video hearings, prisoner transports, and daily interaction with jails throughout the State of Utah. The Court monitors and tracks probation, warrants, community service, and restitution, collections of monetary penalties, appeals, expungements, and plea in-abeyance cases. The Court also provides traffic school, coordination of interpreter services, and any ADA needs that arise.

The Justice Court judiciary, employees, and security team describe their environment as “dedicated to open and transparent access to the Court, bringing justice for all, and providing a safe and civil environment for dispute resolution”.

Mission Statement:

Ensure the highest standards of justice, professionalism, responsiveness, and respect for those we serve.

Vision Statement

Creating a Court that is just, equitable, and trusted by all.

Court Core Values

Excellence

Having the desire to succeed and the motivation to reach our full potential, going above and beyond in to accomplish the task at hand.

Respect

Recognize and appreciate the value of each individual and their experience and situation.

Integrity

Doing what we say we are going to do, applying honesty and accountability with openness.

Community

Bridging the gap between Court, community, and other agencies, improving access to resources and information.

Unity

Supporting one another and fostering growth while reaching our goals and adhering to our values.

Attachment: Justice Court Performance Measurements

SALT LAKE CITY JUSTICE COURT*Kate Fairchild, Court Administrator***Department Performance Measures**

Performance Measures	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target	2025 Target	State Average
Access & Fairness - Percent of Justice Court customers satisfied with service received.	NA	NA	N/A	>90%	>90%	NA
Time to Disposition - 95% of criminal case dispositions should meet established guidelines for Time to Disposition (6 months).	58%	58%	64%	>95%	>95%	79%
Age of Acting Pending Cases - 95% of all criminal cases should have a disposition within a 180-day time frame.	50%	67%	73%	>95%	>95%	74%
Criminal Case Clearance Rate - A Clearance Rate of 100% means the court has disposed of as many cases as were filed, i.e., the court is keeping up with its incoming caseload.	90%	112%	102%	>100%	>100%	104%