

## **Task Force on Trial Court Fiscal Accountability Charge**

### **FOCUS**

The Task Force on Trial Court Fiscal Accountability will focus on implementing specified recommendations of the Trial Court Funding Workgroup and Trial Court Budget Working Group Funding Methodology Subcommittee as directed by the Judicial Council on April 26, 2013. The recommendations of these two bodies were designed to bring greater equity to California trial court funding and help ensure the delivery of quality justice, and equal access to justice statewide. This task force will sunset on June 30, 2014, unless extended by the Chief Justice.

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The task force's overall responsibility is to review and provide recommendations for the state-funded trial court system relating to the adoption and use of uniform standards and procedures; operational efficiencies through the use of economies of scale; and structural efficiencies, consistent with the goals of the Lockyer-Isenberg Trial Court Funding Act of 1997. In carrying out these duties, the task force shall consider the following:

- Evaluate how the judicial branch can promote and implement efficiencies and best practices and improve accountability and transparency.
- Review and develop indicators that demonstrate anomalies in expenditures and point to equal access and quality of justice to determine whether courts are operating efficiently and expending funds to promote equal access consistent with the Judicial Council's identified priorities.
- Analyze opportunities for cost savings that can be implemented on a statewide basis to achieve uniformity and equal access to justice across the state.
- Examine the area of trial court personnel costs and the current approach for funding and negotiating such costs to determine if there are opportunities for cost containment or savings.
- Determine methods to effectively measure quality of justice.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

The task force will include no more than 15 voting members and consist of trial court presiding judges and court executive officers appointed by the Chief Justice in the following manner:

- Representative of the diversity of state trial courts, to include:
  - Urban, suburban, and rural courts; and
  - Number of judgeships.
- Consistent with California Rules of Court, rule 10.31(c), the Chief Justice will appoint the chair of the task force.
- Consistent with California Rules of Court, rule 10.70, task force oversight will be assigned to the Judicial Council Executive and Planning Committee.
- Membership may include a presiding judge and court executive officer from the same court.
- Task force membership requires a commitment of several hours per month on average but may vary considerably from month to month.

### **TASK FORCE STAFFING**

AOC staff from the following offices will provide assistance to the task force:

- Chief of Staff, lead AOC staff
- Special Projects Office
  - Manager and Senior Court Services Analyst
- Court Operations Special Services Office
  - Office of Court Research Manager and Senior Research Analyst
- Fiscal Services Office
  - Manager or Supervising Budget Analyst
- Legal Services Office
  - Attorney
- Additional assistance provided by various subject matter experts throughout the AOC (i.e., Center for Families, Children & the Courts, Criminal Justice Court Services Office, Trial Court Administrative Services, etc.) on an as-needed basis